



## Conflict of Interest Policy

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### **Policy Statement**

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Conflict of interest policy outlines the University's approach to identifying and evaluating potential conflicts of interest and assisting its employees in addressing conflict of interest issues. This policy builds on existing conflict of interest policies and covers all University faculty and staff members.

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### **Reason for Policy/Purpose**

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By adopting this Conflict of Interest Policy, the University reaffirms the value of collaboration with both public and private institutions as a mean of fostering wide access to the practical benefits of University research and creative endeavor. By adopting this Conflict of Interest Policy, the University also (i) demonstrates its commitment to the ethical principles that guide University operations and (ii) establishes a mechanism to safeguard University and faculty integrity so that University engagement can optimally benefit society.

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### **Who Approved This Policy**

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Adopted by the University Cabinet on May 8, 2013

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### **Who Needs to Know This Policy**

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This policy is applicable to:

- 1- All University faculty members (including, full-time, part-time and visiting faculty).
- 2- All University staff members

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### **Web Address for this Policy**

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University forms and Policies

<http://www.aucegypt.edu/about/policies>

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### **Contacts**

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Disclosure Review Committee (DRC) that includes representation from the below offices :-

- 1- the Office of the Provost;
- 2- the Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance;
- 3- University's Legal Advisor;
- 4- the Chief Internal Auditor

If you have any questions on the policy or procedure for Conflict of interest policy, you may:



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**Definitions**

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<b>Conflict of Interest</b>	<p>a. Conflict of interest exists if an employee's position or authority may be used to influence or make University decisions that lead to any form of financial or personal gain for that employee or for his or her family.</p> <p>b. In academic research, the term conflict of interest refers especially to situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or may have the appearance of compromising, an investigator's professional judgment in conducting or reporting research. The bias can affect collection, analysis, and interpretation of data, hiring of staff, procurement of materials, sharing of results, choice of protocol, and the use of statistical methods. Conflicts of interest can affect all scholarly fields.</p> <p>c. A conflict of interest is material if an ordinary person would take it into account in making a decision. Only material conflicts of interest are within the scope of this policy.</p>
<b>DRC</b>	Disclosure Review Committee
<b>Employee</b>	Any person covered by this policy
<b>Family</b>	the employee's first degree relatives
<b>Financial Interest</b>	Any relationship entered into by the employee or his or her family, other than employment by the University, which could result in financial gain for the employee or his or her family. This may include, but is not limited to ownership of equity or debt instruments in a firm that conducts business with the University and consulting or contract research for a private company.

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**General Principles**

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The most effective means to address conflict of interest is through disclosure. The University hereby establishes a mandatory system under which employees must disclose and obtain evaluation of potential conflict of interest that is or may be material.



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## Policy/Procedures

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1. **Identification of Conflict of Interest.** Identifying conflict of interest is not a simple task. A University employee has a conflict of interest if his or her judgment and discretion in research or in other matters affecting the University is or may be influenced by considerations either of personal gain or financial benefit.

The following is a partial list of activities or actions that may create a material conflict of interest that should either be managed appropriately or eliminated.

- a. Consulting activities.
  - b. The purchase of goods or services for the University from businesses in which the employee, or his or her family, has a financial interest, or as a result of such purchase, may directly benefit.
  - c. Receipt of gifts, gratuities, loans, or special favors (including trips or speaker's fees) from research sponsors or vendors.
  - d. Offering access to University resources over which an employee has authority to third parties with whom the employee has a financial or business relationship.
  - e. Use of the University name or logo to sponsor or recommend any outside organization in which an employee has a financial interest.
  - f. Holding of an ownership interest by the employee or the employee's family in any real or personal property leased or purchased by the University.
  - g. Holding of an equity, royalty, or debt instrument interest by the employee or the employee's family in an entity providing to the University financial support, including research or other support or services, when such support will benefit the employee or persons supervised, directly or indirectly, by the employee.
  - h. Receipt, directly to the employee from non-University sources, of cash, services, or equipment provided in support of the employee's University activities.
  - i. Some memberships on board of directors, committees, advisory groups (or similar bodies) of governmental, for-profit or not-for-profit entity.
  - j. Use of confidential or proprietary information received as a University employee for personal gain or other unauthorized purposes
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2. **Management of Conflicts; Other Policies:** Some of the situations listed above are specifically prohibited or regulated by other University policies. In addition to the disclosing potential conflicts and following any management recommendations in accordance with this policy, faculty and staff must abide by all relevant rules and policies of the University governing their activities.
    - a. **Review of Ongoing Activities.** Increased research support from the private sector, changes in US and Egyptian law and regulations encouraging technology transfer, and the continued need of the University and its employees to demonstrate public accountability necessitate regular review in the management of conflict of interest. Some previously



acceptable activities may now require reevaluation, and ongoing activities that involve potential conflict of interest should be disclosed and reevaluated periodically. If reevaluation indicates that problems exist, provision will be made to correct them in an orderly and reasonable fashion.

b. **Protection of Academic Freedom and Integrity**

- i. No employee may enter into an agreement with an organization that provides a financial incentive for reaching a predetermined result in research or consultation. Also, no employee should interfere with the research project of any other faculty member in order to promote private interests.
- ii. For the protection of academic freedom and integrity, restrictions on publication (except for limited periods to permit filing of applications for protection of intellectual property) and/or restrictions on the dissemination of research data should not be permitted.
- iii. Special care should be exercised in the involvement of students, including fellows at the post-doctoral level, in the evaluation of commercial products or in research supported by industrial sponsors, and such activities should be evaluated with attention to avoidance of detrimental effects on the student's academic program.

3. **Implementation**

a. **Authority.** The Office of the Legal Advisor shall develop and administer procedures to implement this policy that include at least the elements outlined in this Section.

b. **Disclosure Review.**

- i. All disclosures shall be referred to a standing committee, the Disclosure Review Committee (DRC), which shall include representation from the office of the Provost, the Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance, University's Legal Advisor and the Chief Internal Auditor. The Provost may establish School Review Committees, as appropriate, to review faculty disclosures. The DRC will keep and maintain in a secure manner such files that may be required to comply with US federal regulations on conflict of interest.

c. **Disclosure Procedures.**

- i. All employees subject to this policy shall disclose, using a standard format developed by the Disclosure Review Committee, financial interests, either as required by this policy or by government regulations or policy. The review of all disclosures shall include an evaluation of each situation on its own merits, and, if potential conflict is noted, will include a written recommendation for its management.
- ii. All disclosures by faculty will be routed to the Office of the School Dean; disclosures by all non-faculty employees shall be provided to their immediate supervisors for review and transmittal to the DRC. Deans shall provide personal disclosures to the Provost, who shall, with the advice of the DRC and the University's Legal Advisor, resolve any conflicts of interest, and who shall report on such resolution annually to the President.
- iii. Annual disclosures by faculty shall be made in conjunction with the Annual Faculty Report; potential conflicts that arise in the course of the year will be disclosed to the dean for transmittal to the DRC.
- iv. Faculty disclosures shall also be required at the time of proposal of company-funded research or clinical trials and will occur at such other times as may be required by law or



federal regulation (e.g., disclosures that may be required at the time of grant application submission) or when the employee's financial interest, as previously disclosed, changes in a manner that is relevant to the concerns of this policy.

- v. Annual disclosures by administrative staff will take place at the time of performance appraisals.
- vi. Disclosures by Officers of the University shall be made to the President, who shall, with the advice of the University's Legal Advisor, resolve any conflicts of interest and who shall report any such resolution annually to the Audit Committee of the Board of Trustees.
- vii. The President's disclosure shall be made to the Audit Committee of the University Board of Trustees.
- d. **Conflict and Confidentiality in Review.** Co-investigators or persons with a material financial interest in any entity named in the employee's disclosure shall not participate in the review of the disclosure. Persons to whom disclosures must ensure the confidentiality of the disclosure.
- e. **Identification and Management of Conflict of Interest.** The DRC shall develop procedures to promptly evaluate any conflict of interest and shall share its written conclusions and recommendations with the employee and his/her Dean or immediate supervisor. Whenever appropriate the DRC, or when necessary, the dean or his/her designee, shall attempt to resolve or manage the conflict situation in a manner appropriate and reasonable to the individual situation by obtaining employee cooperation in the implementation of the recommendations. The outcome will be recorded by the DRC. To the extent required by law, the dean or his/her designee shall report conflict disclosures and their resolution to appropriate governmental agencies.
- f. **Appeals Process.** Unresolved disagreements between faculty employees and the DRC or the dean concerning the application of this policy shall be referred for final resolution to the Provost and President, or any other representative appointed by the President.
- g. **Amendments to the Policy.** This policy may be amended by the President, or the President's designee, with the concurrence of the University Cabinet and Faculty Senate whenever changes of substance or procedures are required, and in particular to comply with governmental requirements. The Deans and administrative managers shall inform the faculty of any such required change and arrange for the dissemination of information concerning amendments made to the policy.

#### **4. Accessibility of Information**

To allow the implementation of this policy, Deans and other administrative directors may seek from employees subject to this policy any information relevant to ensuring compliance. Because the integrity and, therefore the credibility of scholarly activity and University operations are enhanced by disclosure, it is expected that employees will provide any relevant information requested. The information received shall be handled confidentially unless public disclosure is part of the conflict of interest management plan, or is required by law.

#### **5. Noncompliance with Policy**

Violations of the requirements of this policy by any employee may subject the employee to University sanctions.

#### **6. Prohibition of Illegal Activity and Corruption**

Activities which are in violation of US or Egyptian law, including the offering or acceptance



of a bribe or kickback, are strictly prohibited and may be reported to the concerned authorities when required by law.

7. **Interpretation**

Questions concerning the interpretation or applicability of this policy should be directed to the Disclosure Review Committee.

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## **History/Revision Dates**

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- Research Conflict of Interest Policy : Faculty Handbook, 2011-2012 dated on June 20, 2011
- Conflict of Interest for Trustees and Institutional Officers: Effective February 9, 2006
- Last Amended Date: May 8, 2013