

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST PROCEDURES FOR SUBMISSION AND REVIEW  
OF ANNUAL DISCLOSURE AND EVALUATION FORM**

**The University of North Carolina at Greensboro**

[http://policy.uncg.edu/university-policies/conflicts\\_of\\_interest/coi\\_procedures.pdf](http://policy.uncg.edu/university-policies/conflicts_of_interest/coi_procedures.pdf)

*Established August 24, 2012; Revisions: May 1, 2013, June 27, 2014*

---

---

The Vice Provost shall act as the senior UNCG official assigned with oversight of campus policies and procedures for managing conflicts of interest related to both the annual disclosure process and the review of projects submitted for external funding. The applicable policy, as adopted and as it may be amended, is UNC 300.2.2, *Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Affecting EPA Employees*.

## **I. OVERVIEW**

### **A. Categories of potential conflicts of interest (from UNCG 300.2.2, Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Policy, Section IV.E.)**

1. Activities that are routinely allowable upon disclosure (Category I)
2. Activities that may be allowable following disclosure and, where necessary, the implementation of an approved Management Plan and Monitoring Procedures (Category II)
3. Activities or relationships that will require an approved management plan to be in place (Category III)
4. Activities that are not allowable under any circumstances (Category IV)

### **B. Sources of Potential Conflict Identification**

Sources through which potential conflicts are identified may include:

1. The Annual COI Disclosure process
2. Any employee who is aware of a conflict (i.e., the conflict arises after submission of the Annual Interest Conflict Disclosure Form)
3. Reviews of projects or protocols routed through any module of the UNCG SeRA<sup>1</sup> system, to include RAMSeS<sup>2</sup>, IRBIS<sup>3</sup>, ACAP<sup>4</sup>, etc.
4. External or other sources

### **C. Conflict of Interest Committee**

This committee was established, in part, as a response to the mandate emanating from several Federal agencies to have a clear set of policies and procedures related to the identification and management of conflicts of interest related to Federally-funded projects. Responsible for determination and review of

---

<sup>1</sup> SeRA: Spartan Electronic Research Administration

<sup>2</sup> RAMSeS: Research Administration Management System & eSubmission

<sup>3</sup> IRBIS: IRB Information System

<sup>4</sup> ACAP: Animal Care Application Program

Category II, III and IV conflicts, the COI committee makes recommendations to the Vice Provost for managing, reducing, and/or eliminating existing or potential conflicts of interest.

a. Composition of Committee

- i. Appointments of committee members are made by the Vice Provost for staggered two or three year terms.
- ii. Leadership is provided by a collaborative team
  - a. The Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Personnel Services will be responsible for
    - o Maintaining official personnel files and records
    - o Managing the general flow and review of the Annual Disclosure and Evaluation Forms
  - b. A Director from the Office of Sponsored Programs is responsible for
    - o Maintaining official project-based files and records
    - o Managing the general flow and review of the Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest information for externally sponsored activity
- iii. Ex-Officio or Non-Voting Members shall consist of representatives from the following administrative units
  - a. Office of Research Integrity
  - b. Office of Sponsored Programs
  - c. Office of Innovation Commercialization
  - d. Office of Contracts and Grants
  - e. Two Deans, Associate Deans or Directors of Research representing the Research Advisory Council (RAC)
  - f. General Counsel
  - g. Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Personnel Services
    - This member may cast a deciding vote when
      - A single additional vote is needed for quorum
      - A split vote exists for any reason
- iv. Voting Members (Faculty)
  - a. Three (3) center/research scientist appointees
  - b. Six (6) faculty members selected from academic departments
  - c. Voting members shall recuse themselves from votes for which they have any conflict relative to the employee or matter under discussion
  - d. Quorum shall consist of a simple majority vote

b. Committee Schedule

- i. Meetings shall be convened on a monthly basis

- ii. Additional meetings may be scheduled as needed
  - iii. Expert consultants may be invited to address committee meetings as needed
  - iv. Employees may appear before the committee as needed to discuss conflicts and options for management, reduction or elimination
- c. Review Procedures
- i. Expedited review
    - a. One or more COI Committee members may be assigned by the Chair to consult with an employee and the employee's supervisor to proactively address a perceived conflict in a timely fashion.
    - b. A subcommittee consisting of 5 voting members shall forward a recommendation to the COI Chairs for action
    - c. COI Chairs will submit formal recommendation to the Vice Provost and report action to the full COI Committee at the next full meeting
  - ii. Full Review Meetings
    - a. COI Chairs shall post all regularly scheduled meetings and circulate a meeting agenda at least one week in advance of all scheduled meetings
    - b. Cases pending review may be assigned to a primary and secondary reviewer from the voting membership
      - Reviewers will present a summary and review recommendations for resolution
      - Committee discussion
      - Chair call for a motion
      - Following a quorum vote, the COI Chair will prepare written correspondence to the employee and forward this draft to the Vice Provost
      - Vice Provost acts upon recommendation
    - c. When no cases are pending, the agenda shall reflect educational and policy development needs
  - iii. Employees may request or be invited to meet with reviewers of either Expedited or Full Review process

## II. THE ANNUAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE PROCESS

### A. Submission Procedures

1. Reminder notice of July 1 deadline sent in June by Academic Affairs to all division administrators and to Academic Affairs upper Category managers. Other divisions to forward notice to its upper Category managers.
2. All EPA employees are required to submit the Annual Disclosure Form by July 1 to immediate supervisor or a designated administrator for First Category Evaluation.
3. New EPA hires should complete the form within the first two weeks of reporting for duty.

4. Failure to abide by the policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination.
5. Employees with a Category III Conflict may submit a COI Management Plan as an attachment to the Disclosure Form.

## **B. Review Procedures**

There are four potential levels of review for disclosures of conflict of interest.

### 1. First Level Supervisor

The First Level Supervisor shall have initial responsibility for reviewing the form and for determining compliance with this policy. That determination shall include:

- a. Is the Annual Disclosure Form completed in full?
- b. Is sufficient and clear data provided by the EPA employee?
- c. Does the information provided reveal any conflicts or potential Category II, Category III or Category IV conflicts (as defined above)?
  - i. If not, the Disclosure form is forwarded to Faculty Personnel Services
  - ii. If a conflict is identified that is shared by the First Level Supervisor, the conflict must be forwarded to the Second or Next Level Supervisor for review (see Section 2 below).
- d. If a Category II conflict is reported, did the EPA employee provide the required explanation with sufficient detail?
  - i. If sufficient detail is provided, the First Level Supervisor approves the disclosure and forwards the form to Faculty Personnel Services.
  - ii. If more information is needed, the First Level Supervisor solicits further detail from the employee, which is appended to the Disclosure Form.
  - iii. If there is uncertainty about whether a conflict falls under Category II, Category III or Category IV, the Disclosure Form is forwarded to the Chair of the Conflict of Interest Committee for further determination.
- e. If a Category III conflict is reported, is an approved management plan in place?
  - i. If yes, the Disclosure Form is forwarded to the Second or Next Level Supervisor for information and review purposes.

If no, Disclosure Form is returned to the employee pending the approval of a management plan

### 2. Second or Next Level Supervisor

The Second or Next Level Supervisor reviews Disclosure Forms and documentation for Category II conflicts for which the First Level Supervisor shares a conflict (i.e., if First Level Supervisor is co-author of text, co-PI of a sponsored project, or co-owner of a business or consulting firm).

- a. If a Category II conflict is reported did the EPA employee provide the required explanation with sufficient detail?
  - i. If sufficient detail is provided, the Second or Next Level Supervisor approves the disclosure and forwards the same to Faculty Personnel Services

- ii. If more information is needed, the Second or Next Level Supervisor solicits further detail from the employee, which is appended to the Disclosure Form.

### 3. Ad Hoc Appeals Committee

The Vice Provost may appoint an Ad Hoc Appeals Committee consisting of faculty with COI expertise to review an EPA employee's appeal of a COI Committee recommendation. Once convened, the Ad Hoc committee will proceed as follows.

- a. Elect spokesperson for the group
- b. Review appeal and originating COI documentation
- c. Consult with both employee and COI Committee as needed
- d. Make Recommendation to the standing COI Committee
- e. COI Committee will review recommendation and either
  - i. Forward a revised decision to the Vice Provost or
  - ii. Forward an affirmation to the Vice Provost that the original decision stands accompanied by draft correspondence responding to the employ
- f. Vice Provost signs the final determination letter to the employee and retains a copy in the employee's personnel file
- g. Ad Hoc Committee forwards appeal sealed review documentation to the Office of the Vice Provost for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.

### 4. COI Committee and Vice Provost

The Vice Provost is the senior administrator to whom the standing COI Committee reports. This individual also provides the authorized signature for final COI Standing Committee decisions.

#### Associate Vice Provost for Faculty Personnel Services

- a. Responsible for final Category of review of all EPA Annual Disclosure Forms for policy compliance
  - i. May refer items to the standing COI Committee for further consideration
  - ii. Provides final approval in SeRA system
- b. Maintains official EPA personnel files.

## **III. CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORD KEEPING**

Completed disclosure forms are confidential personnel records as defined by the State Personnel Records Act. The provisions of that Act governing access to and confidentiality of personnel records shall be strictly observed. The Office of the Provost shall be responsible for storage of all COI disclosure documents in the employee's official personnel file. The Conflicts of Interests Committee will maintain records in keeping with University records retention policy.