



Title	Conflict of Interest Related to Research
Policy No.	F.1.3
Approval Body	Board of Governors
Policy Sponsor	Vice President, Academic & Research
Last Revised/Replaces	April 5, 2013
Effective Date	September 27, 2017

These procedures are organized under the following headings: Standard for Assessing Actual, Potential or Perceived Conflicts of Interest; Disclosure of Actual, Potential or Perceived Conflicts of Interest; Allegations of Actual, Potential or Perceived Conflicts of Interest, Conflict of Interest Involving the Research Ethics Board (REB) members:

STANDARD FOR ASSESSING ACTUAL, POTENTIAL, OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST RELATED TO RESEARCH

The following questions, although not exhaustive, will be used to identify real, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest:

1. Would the researcher be biased in any way that would affect the goals of the research?
2. Would an outside observer question the ability of the researcher to make a proper decision in light of possible private or personal interests?

DISCLOSURE OF ACTUAL, POTENTIAL, OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST RELATED TO RESEARCH

3. Any potential conflict of interest will be voluntarily and immediately disclosed in writing by the researcher to the Vice President, Academic & Research (VPAR) or delegate.
4. A conflict is to be allowed only when it can be managed in a way that protects and serves the interests, integrity, and reputation of the College, as well as its legal and contractual obligations, and will stand the test of reasonable and independent scrutiny.
5. Where the VPAR or delegate is satisfied that the researcher can conduct the proposed study without compromise, the VPAR or delegate will provide the researcher a letter stating the same.
6. Where the VPAR or delegate determines that a more structured review is required, the VPAR or delegate will name an *Ad Hoc Conflict of Interest In Research Resolution Committee* (Ad Hoc COIRR Committee) to review voluntarily disclosed conflicts of interest. The Ad Hoc COIRR Committee will assess and resolve the potential conflict in a timely, fair, and open manner. If the conflict is irresolvable, it is in the committee's purview to deny the research.
7. The Ad Hoc COIRR Committee will consist of:

- Two (2) peers.
 - The Vice President, Academic & Research or delegate
8. The Ad Hoc COIRR Committee will communicate in writing with the researcher regarding any decision with respect to the conflict and clearly outline any conditions of managing the conflict.
 9. If necessary, researchers will be given the opportunity to relinquish or modify those interests that are conflicting such that the Ad Hoc COIRR Committee is satisfied.
 10. In the interest of facilitating research, the Ad Hoc COIRR Committee will make reasonable attempts to provide a means of managing the conflict, rather than simply disallowing the research for the sake of avoiding a conflict of interest.

ALLEGATIONS OF ACTUAL, POTENTIAL, OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST RELATED TO RESEARCH

11. Allegations of conflicts of interest related to research will be addressed under VCC policy A.3.6, Standards of Employee Conduct & Conflict of Interest. Allegations of conflicts of interest related to research and involving students will be addressed under College policies D.4.3, Student Code of Conduct (Non-educational Matters) and/or D.4.5, Student Educational Conduct. Individuals should advise the College of any perceived conflict of interest as soon as possible.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST INVOLVING RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD (REB) MEMBERS

12. To maintain the independence and integrity of ethics review, it is of the highest importance that members of the REB avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest. For example, REB members are in a clear conflict of interest: a) when their own research projects are under review by their REB; or b) when they have been in direct academic conflict, have collaborated with, or have provided support to the researcher whose proposal is under review.
13. In the cases where a member of the REB has a conflict of interest pertaining to the research under review, that person shall not be present when the REB is discussing or making decisions on that research.
14. In the cases of disagreement over conflicts of interest, both the REB member in the alleged conflict and the researcher might present evidence and offer a rebuttal concerning the nature of the conflict of interest. The other members of the REB should make a final decision regarding how to proceed.
15. Senior administrators shall not serve on the REB as their presence casts doubt on the independence of the REB's decision making.

RELATED POLICIES

Refer to F.1.3 Conflict of Interest Related to Research Policy