



CONFLICT OF INTEREST

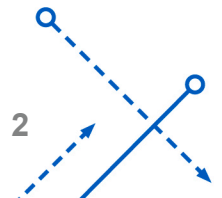
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Director of Internal Audit

Ethics Officer

Agenda

- What is a conflict of interest?
- Common conflicts of interest in Higher Education
- What you can do
- Questions

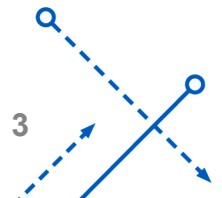


What is a conflict of interest?

When a person in a position of authority or responsibility has a personal or financial interest that could improperly influence their professional decisions.



"Yes, I am employee of the month again. And yes, I'm the one who chooses the employee of the month. And no, I don't see a conflict of interest."

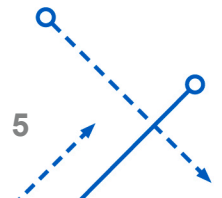


Common Conflicts of Interest in Higher Education

- Research Funding & Commercial Ties
- Faculty Student Relationships
- Hiring and Promotions
- Use of University Resources
- Institutional Decision Making

Research Funding

- **Industry Funded Research:** Funds received from a company may create pressure to produce results that benefit the company financially.
- **Intellectual Property:** Professors / Administrators / Researchers who hold patents or ownership stakes in companies tied to their research fields could be biased toward certain outcomes or steer students and projects to benefit their personal investments.

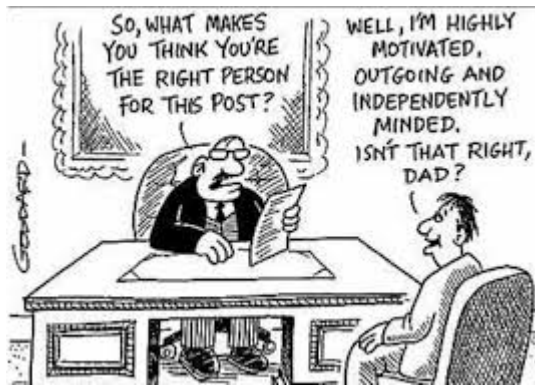


Faculty Student Relationships

- Mentorships
- Grades
- Power Imbalance
- Gifts
- Admissions
- Evaluations

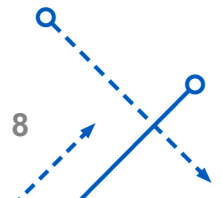


Hiring and Promotions



State and University Resources

- **Private Business Activities:** Using UB resources (e.g., labs, facilities, or staff) for personal business or profit, rather than for University-sanctioned academic purposes.
- **Consulting or Side Jobs:** Using UB position or UB name to promote personal consulting services or external business ventures, blurring the line between personal gain and academic work.



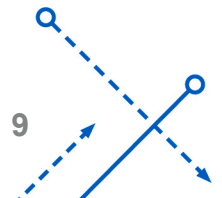
Institutional Decision Making

Vendor Contracts:

Financial ties to a company bidding for a UB contract (e.g., construction, supplies) could influence decisions in favor of that company, even if it's not the best option for the institution.

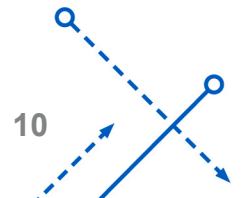
Conflicting Loyalties:

Serving on the board of a company or organization that might have conflicting goals with the UB's mission, leading to decisions that could compromise their objectivity.



What Can You Do?

- Ethics Training
- Be aware of University policies, State & Federal Laws
- Reach out if you have questions
 - Ethics Officer
 - COELIG <https://ethics.ny.gov/>
 - Research Foundation
- Speak with your supervisor and recuse from decision making when appropriate (!)
- Concerns about abuse – Ethics Hotline
<http://www.buffalo.ethicspoint.com/>



Any Questions ?

