Conflict of Interest for Administration, Faculty and Staff
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It is the American University of Armenia's policy that faculty and staff conduct the University's affairs in accordance with the highest ethical and legal standards. To avoid a conflict between personal or professional interests and University interests, individuals must not be in a position to act on behalf of or make decisions for the University if their personal economic gain or interest may directly or indirectly influence, or have the appearance of influencing, the performance of their University duties.

A conflict of interest arises when an individual's private interests (such as outside professional, personal or financial relationships) might interfere with his or her professional obligations to the University. Such situations do not necessarily imply wrong-doing or inappropriate activities. However, in a university setting, they can compromise, or be perceived as compromising, academic values, research integrity, or the university mission. When conflicts of interest arise, they must be recognized, disclosed and properly managed or eliminated.

It is essential that all AUA administration, faculty, staff, and students understand how these divergent interests can become a problem. This policy aims to protect the University, its administration, faculty, staff and students from any of the following allegations:

- Exploitation of students for private gain
- Compromise of university priorities due to financial considerations
- Unfair access by outside entities to information or technology
- Compromise of scientific objectivity in the conduct of research
- Use of university resources and/or name for private gain
- Adverse effect by those in leadership roles on the professional or academic advancement of colleagues, staff or students as a result of outside interests

Consulting

In general, consulting is defined as professional activity related to the person's field or discipline, where a fee-for-service or equivalent relationship with a third party exists. There are many types of consulting relations and fee arrangements, and the precise form entered into may vary. The principle is that, in consulting, a person agrees to use his or her professional capabilities to further the agenda of a third party, in return for an immediate or prospective gain.

Several types of activity, other than regular University duty, are not "consulting." These are:

- Publication: Scholarly communications in the form of books, movies, television productions, art works, etc., though frequently earning financial profit for an administration, faculty or staff member and for another party (e.g., publisher), are not viewed as consultation.
- Professional Service (professional affiliation): Under this rubric falls service on national commissions, on governmental agencies and boards, on granting agency peer-group review panels, on visiting committees or advisory groups to other universities, and on analogous bodies. The fundamental distinction between these activities and consulting is that they are public or University service. Although an honorarium or equivalent sometimes may be forthcoming, these professional service activities are not undertaken for personal financial gain. Therefore, such service does not fall within the consulting category.
- "Moonlighting": Administration, faculty and staff members may pursue a variety of endeavors for financial profit that are not directly related to the person's field or discipline. These efforts are part of the administration, faculty or staff member's private life and do not come under University regulation or this consulting policy. However, such endeavors should not affect the fulfillment or quality of the individual's commitment to AUA.

Specific limitations:

- Faculty and staff may not provide **any kind of service for a fee or any other form of compensation** to any AUA student. Tutoring during office hours or advice on learning, research or career matters to AUA students should be provided as a part of university duties. Under no condition may faculty and staff receive payment or any other compensation from AUA students for tutoring or other forms of academic or professional advising.
- Faculty or staff serving on admissions committees or in the Admissions Office, Registrar's Office or AUA Extension shall not have provided services for a fee or any other form of compensation to an applicant for a minimum of three (3) years prior to the individual's application for admission to AUA. All forms of assistance to applicants by Admissions Office, Registrar's Office, or AUA Extension staff should be provided as part of university duties.
- Faculty and staff must recuse themselves from any committee directly related to the review of application materials if the case of an applicant to whom they have provided service for a fee or other form of compensation is being considered.
- Faculty or staff serving in the Financial Aid Office or on financial aid or tuition assistance committees shall not provide services for a fee, or any other form of compensation, to any applicant for financial aid. All forms of assistance to applicants by Financial Aid Office staff should be provided as part of university duties.
- Employees in the Office of Admissions who are either applicants to or students at AUA must recuse themselves from all application review.
- Staff or faculty members who have a personal or financial interest in a vendor, or potential employee or contractor may not serve on a selection committee or in a selection capacity for a position in which that vendor, or potential employee or contractor has applied.
- Faculty or staff may not receive remuneration for the conduct of teaching or research at AUA except through University channels.

Inventions and Discoveries

AUA is the owner of all inventions and discoveries that may result from the work of its employees using University facilities and resources. The AUA reserves full and exclusive rights to any patents and licenses resulting from such inventions and discoveries. The AUA may select to provide a portion of royalties resulting from such patents and licenses to the employee(s) responsible for the invention or discovery.

Guidelines for Policy Implementation

An implicit assumption underlying this policy is that outside professional activities are a privilege and not a right and must not detract from an administration, faculty or staff member's full-time obligation to his or her University duties. The nature of the consulting work should in no way detract from the prestige of the University or the professional stature of the administration, faculty or staff member. Consulting obligations undertaken should conform to this objective.

Consulting agreements involving AUA administration, faculty or staff should specifically address this concern by acknowledging that:

1. the primary duty of the Consultant, who is an AUA administration, faculty or staff member, is to AUA;
2. the Consultant is subject to AUA's policy on outside consulting activities of its faculty; and
3. the Consultant may have obligations to AUA by reason of agreements between AUA and external organizations for research or other activities performed in part by the Consultant in fulfilling his/her duties to the University.

All administration, faculty and staff members must certify to the University their compliance with AUA's policies related to conflict of interest and commitment. In addition, they must disclose their outside professional activities and any financial interests in outside entities that they and their immediate family members have before the University will approve the following proposed arrangements between such entities and AUA: a) gifts; b) sponsored projects; c) technology licensing arrangements; and d) procurements.

The basic principle of this policy statement is that there needs to be a limitation upon the time that an AUA administrator, faculty member may spend in consulting. The limits set forth below are intended to strike a fair balance between consulting and regular administration, faculty and staff duties within the University and serve to safeguard the interests of both parties.

The maximum number of consulting days permissible for an administration, faculty or staff member holding a full-time appointment at AUA is 26 days per academic year, apportioned according to one's teaching load.

Responsibility of Administration, Faculty and Staff Members

The responsibility for adhering to the limit on consulting days, and other aspects of AUA's policy, lies first with the individual faculty or staff member. The University has the right to protect itself from losses due to excess consulting and to seek reimbursement from the administration, faculty or staff member for salary and benefits covering time spent on consulting beyond the limits provided for by this policy. Administration, faculty and staff members have an obligation to report fully the level (i.e., number of days) of their consulting activities when asked to do so by the University so that it may determine that adherence to the principles set forth herein are followed.

Faculty members must be especially sensitive to potential conflicts of interest between their teaching responsibilities vis-a-vis students working under their supervision and their outside consulting interests. To avoid such conflicts, an AUA faculty member may not hire or directly supervise an AUA student in employment activities outside the University, while simultaneously serving as either the student's advisor or as a participant on that student's thesis committee, without the approval of the department chair or dean.