

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Conflicts of interest occur when employees are in a position to influence decisions on policy or purchases where they may directly or indirectly receive financial benefit or give improper advantage to associates. Conflicts of commitment arise when employees are involved in outside activities that substantially interfere with their primary responsibility to the University. The term "employees" includes faculty (full-time and part-time), staff (contract and classified), and visiting faculty and staff.

Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane (AUT) expects all employees to exercise good judgement, professional commitment and the highest ethical standards in their extramural activities if those activities can in any way affect the University. Every employee has an obligation to avoid any activity, agreement, business investment or interest, or other situation that could be construed to be in conflict with the University's interest or to interfere with the employee's duty to serve the University. Where existing outside interests contravene the policy, the employee will be permitted a reasonable period, not to exceed three months, to make adjustments.

I- POLICY

- A. No employee shall have a direct or indirect interest in any business enterprise that is a competitor of the University or has dealings with the University as a supplier. An employee in a position to influence a University business decision for which he or she may receive material benefit should disclose the nature of the conflict to his or her immediate supervisor and, where possible, remove himself/herself from involvement in the decision. If the individual continues to participate in the decision process, discussion with supervisors and documentation of the potential conflict should be presented.
- B. No employee shall seek or receive, for personal or any other person's gain, any payment, whether for services or otherwise, loan (except from a bank), gift or discount of more than nominal value or entertainment that goes beyond common courtesies usually associated with accepted business practice from any business enterprise that is a competitor of the University or has current or known prospective dealings with the University as a supplier.
- C. No employee shall, for personal or any other person's gain, deprive the University of any opportunity for benefit that could be construed as related to any existing or reasonably anticipated future activity of the University.
- D. No employee shall, for personal or any other person's gain, make use of or disclose confidential information learned as a result of employment by the University. Any information that has been acquired in connection with sponsored research by University members cannot be withheld from the sponsoring organization(s) for personal benefit.
- E. No employee shall have any outside interest that materially interferes with the required time or attention that the employee must devote to the University. Employees should

not undertake or orient activities to serve the needs of an outside organization at the expense of fulfilling the mission of the University.

- F. Before considering outside employment or consulting activities, an employee should discuss with his appropriate supervisor potential conflicts of commitment or interest. Employees regularly involved in consulting activities from which they profit financially, are not in conflict as long as:
 - 1. University resources (laboratories, studios, equipment, computational facilities, and/or human resources) are not used.
 - 2. Such activities do not unduly interfere with the time and energy committed by the individuals to their primary responsibilities to the University. The allowable amount of time dedicated to consulting will be governed by the Consulting Policy.
 - 3. Such involvement does not inhibit the publication of research findings developed in the course of the individual regular University activities.
- G. The University actively encourages involvement in professional organizations, panels, advisory commissions, government, charitable and community organizations. However, such involvement should not become so dominant that University members no longer effectively satisfy their responsibilities to the University.
- H. Faculty members must exercise prudence in directing students and supervised employees toward activities from which the faculty might financially benefit. If a potential conflict exists, faculty are encouraged to consult their department chair or dean for an independent evaluation of the activities' educational merits.
- I. No employee shall act or be involved in any situation that potentially conflicts with the principle that this policy is intended to implement.

II. EXCEPTIONS

- A- Specific exceptions may be made by the President upon application in writing by the employee. Such exceptions shall be wholly discretionary and shall be adopted at such times and under such conditions as will serve the interests of the University.

III. STANDARD FOR COMPLIANCE

Prohibitions of this policy should be construed broadly rather than narrowly. A conflict of interest may be deemed to exist even though it may not result in financial loss to the University, regardless of the motive of the employee involved. If a possible conflict of interest arises, the employee is encouraged to discuss the matter with the appropriate Vice President designated by the President to determine whether such a conflict in fact exists and, if so, how it may be resolved.

IV. REPORTS AND INVESTIGATION

- A. The President may direct the internal auditing department to investigate any suspected violation of this policy by any University member.

- B. Violation of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action. The University will make the final determination for disciplinary action. Many actions are available and may be taken in a fashion consistent and commensurate with the nature of the proven acts of misconduct. Examples include:
 - 1. Probation
 - 2. Suspension
 - 3. Salary reduction
 - 4. Rank reduction
 - 5. Termination of employment

- C. The vice president or dean of each division of the University shall be responsible for appropriate dissemination of this policy.