



Policy Name	Conflict of Interest and Commitment
Policy Number	1200.019
Effective Date	May 23, 2017
Administrative Division	Division of Research and Federal Relations
Unit	Research Compliance
Revised Date	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

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## 1.0 Policy Statement

Jackson State University ("JSU" or "University") expects, supports and encourages its faculty and staff to engage in research and to actively participate in external relationships and efforts that augment the mission of the University. However, participation in outside activities should in no way interfere with the faculty or staff member's primary obligation to act in the best interest of the University at all times. As part of this fundamental obligation, the University fully expects faculty and staff to apply their efforts appropriately and to use University resources toward University ends. These expectations are met through the establishment of standards that provide a realistic and practical expectation that the design, conduct, monitoring and reporting of research results, including research which is supported by grants, cooperative agreements and contracts, will not be impeded by bias resulting from researcher conflict of interest or conflict of commitment.

## 2.0 Purpose of Policy

When the University's name, time, and resources are used in a way that results in inappropriate personal or professional advantage, or is harmful to the University's mission, a conflict between individual and University interests may be created. The purpose of this policy is to define, and educate University administration, faculty and staff, on Conflicts of Interest and Conflicts of Commitment and on mechanisms for avoiding and/or disclosing these conflicts. This Policy establishes a standard of conduct with the goal of protecting the University community from harmful circumstances arising from real or possible Conflicts of Interest and Conflicts of Commitment.

## 3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 Conflict of Interest – A situation in which an individual's financial, professional or other personal interests may directly or indirectly affect, or have the appearance of affecting, his or her professional judgment in exercising any University duty or responsibility.
- 3.2 Conflict of Commitment – A situation that may occur when the external activities or relationships (paid or volunteer) of a member of the University faculty or staff interfere or compete (actually or potentially) with their primary obligation to the University's educational, research or service missions, or otherwise impedes the faculty or staff member's ability or readiness to perform the complete range of responsibilities associated with her or his University position.
- 3.3 Investigator - the project director (PD) or principal Investigator (PI) and any other person, regardless of title or position, who is responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of funded research, or proposed for such funding, which may include, for example, collaborators or consultants.
- 3.4 Financial Interest - an interest in a business or the receipt or right to receive certain types of remuneration over stated thresholds.

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- 3.5 Immediate Family - the immediate family of a Faculty or Staff member includes his or her spouse, parents, stepparents, siblings, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, grandparents, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law.
- 3.6 Outside Professional Activity - An outside activity is any paid or volunteer activity undertaken by a Staff or Faculty member outside the scope of his or her regular University duties. Outside Professional Activities may include consulting, participation in civic or charitable organizations, working as a technical or professional advisor or practitioner, or holding a part-time job with another employer, whether working in one's University occupation or another.

4.0 Additional Information:

- 4.1 Investigators must not, at the expense of the University, use their official positions and affiliations with the University to influence or gain advantage or advancement for themselves, family members, dependents or close personal associates.
- 4.2 Investigators must avoid allowing external activities to undermine their primary professional obligations to Jackson State University.
- 4.3 Investigators must commit to the timely disclosure of any inventions, creations, or other intellectual property interests reached during the normal course of their University activities or that were accomplished with significant use of University resources.
- 4.4 Investigators must disclose all definite, probable, and possible conflicts of interest and/or conflicts of commitment, as soon as they arise or are identified, to a designated University official for notice and evaluation. If disclosed conflicts are found to be significant, then said conflicts must be mitigated or eliminated in accordance with this policy and accompanying procedures and processes.
- 4.5 Investigators must annually disclose to the University whether they (or their spouse/domestic partner or dependent children) have a financial interest in a non-University entity or enterprise that would reasonably appear to be related to their University position or responsibilities. Disclosures of such interests must also be made when the investigator is involved in certain specific matters, including, but not limited to:
- Gifts
  - Sponsored Projects
  - Technology licensing arrangements
  - Research protocols that involve human subjects, animals or stem cells
  - Material transfer and collaboration agreements, and
  - Certain procurement matters (e.g., sole source or from a privately-held company).
- 4.6 Investigators who are full-time faculty or staff may not accept substantial management responsibilities as part of their outside professional activities. If a faculty or staff member deems it

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necessary to take on a substantial management role in an external organization, express permission must be granted by her or his department chair and dean; acceptance of such a role with an outside entity may be determined to require a leave of absence without pay.

- 4.7 Certain outside professional activities, such as submitting a proposal or serving as a director for a research or scholarly endeavor at another institution that could be conducted at Jackson State University, may generate conflicts of interest or commitment regardless of the time involved. Investigators employed by JSU, are generally prohibited from serving as principal investigators on sponsored projects that are submitted and managed through other universities, federal, non-profit, or corporate institutions. This condition does not apply to subcontracts awarded to JSU; this provision is not intended to limit the ability of investigators to participate in collaborative research or training programs with other entities, nor is it intended to limit the ability of investigators to access facilities that are not available at JSU.
- 4.8 Financial interests that are disclosed and are determined to be connected to one or more of the institutional responsibilities of the investigator will be evaluated per the JSU Financial Conflict of Interest Policy (cross reference FCOI here). If connection of the interest is confirmed to be conflicting, then the conflict will need to be eliminated or mitigated according to a plan developed in cooperation with and under the oversight of the dean of the college in collaboration with the Provost and Senior Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs. If the financial interest is not considered to result in significant and direct conflict of interest, other administrative actions, such as disclosure in proposals, publications, research presentations, etc., may be required.
- 4.9 School deans, in consultation with the Vice President for Research and Federal Relations, shall establish procedures and timeframes for appropriate review of potential or actual conflicts of interest or conflicts of commitment, both annually and at the time of initiation of new transactions, in order to eliminate, mitigate, or otherwise manage such conflicts.

#### 5.0 Employee Adherence

Employees are required to adhere to these guidelines. Willful disregard of this policy shall be considered non-compliance and may result in a formal reprimand up to and including termination. The information stated in this policy pertains and applies to applicable employees, departments and funding sources of the University.