



Policy Title: Admissions Conflict of Interest Policy

Number: AD.10.04.170425

Applies to: Individuals involved in the admissions process for the MD program.

Date: 02/06/2024

1.0 Policy Statement

All Admissions Committee members, screeners, raters, interviewers, and all others involved in the MD admissions process must report all real or perceived conflicts of interest immediately upon learning of the real/perceived conflict of interest. The College of Medicine takes appropriate steps to mitigate the effect of any conflicts of interest.

2.0 Definitions

Conflict of Interest (COI): A personal, academic, financial, or other relationship with an applicant or applicant's family that may influence selection decisions.

3.0 Responsibility

Admissions Committee
Office of Student Experience (Admissions Unit)

4.0 Procedures:

Awareness of the Conflict of Interest Policy

- An annual mandatory orientation prior to the start of the interview season for all new and returning Admissions Committee members, screeners, raters, interviewers and all others, including staff, faculty, and students, involved in the admissions process is required.
- Admissions committee members receive a comprehensive admissions committee handbook containing Admissions Committee and college-related documents and information regarding all other relevant policies and procedures.
- New and returning admissions committee members may not participate in any admissions-related activities until orientation/training is successfully completed.
- Admissions Committee members, interviewers, and screeners sign and return acknowledgment of the Conflict of Interest Policy and Code of Ethics.
- Each Admissions Committee member acknowledges, annually, that they have read, understand, and will comply with this policy.

Determination of Conflict of Interest

- Applies to any individual who informs admissions decisions: Admissions Committee member, screener, reviewer, and/or interviewer
- Present in the following circumstances:
 - Related to the applicant; or,
 - Is or has been in a significant teaching, clinical, or social relationship with the applicant or applicant's family; or
 - Has a personal or financial interest related to the applicant.

Avoidance of Conflict of Interest

- Admissions Committee members, screeners, raters and interviewers are required to report any real or perceived COI encountered during the admissions process to the Vice Dean for Admissions, Student Affairs, and Alumni Engagement as soon as they are aware it exists.
- If there is doubt or question whether a conflict exists, the concerned individual must seek the counsel of the Admissions Committee Chair and/or the Vice Dean for Admissions, Student Affairs, and Alumni Engagement.

Procedure Following Declaration of Conflict of Interest

- Once a COI is identified and reported, the Admissions Committee member is removed from any aspect related to the applicant's selection decisions. Specifically, they will not screen, review, or interview the applicant and if present at the Admissions Committee meeting at which the applicant will be discussed, they are required to physically leave the room during the discussion of that applicant (if present in-person) or will be put in a virtual waiting room if attending the meeting virtually. COI recusals from committee processes are documented in meeting minutes.
- Screeners who are not members of the Admissions Committee will not screen or interview an applicant with whom they have a declared COI.
- Interviewers who are not members of the Admissions Committee will not interview or rate an applicant for whom they have previously declared a COI. If an interviewer realizes a conflict exists during the live interview, they will note on the interview rubric that they have a COI and report it to the Admissions team as soon as they complete their interviews for the session/day. The admissions team also pulls a report after each interview day to review reports of COIs by interviewers. The Admissions Committee will be instructed not to consider that the interview assessment from an interviewer with a COI. If an interview rater (conducted asynchronously) identifies a COI when they begin rating, they will notify the admissions team who will reassign that applicant's recorded session to a different rater.
- Records of COIs and identified failures to report are kept in the Admissions Unit in the Office of Student Experience along with Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics forms. If an Admissions Committee member, screener, rater, or interviewer knowingly fails to report a COI, they may be dismissed from their role in the admissions process.

5.0 Related Policies

Conflict of Interest EC.01.01.191203, WSU College of Medicine
SEPAAC Conflict of Interest SE.09.04.170808 WSU College of Medicine
EP #27 WSU
EP #45 WSU Ethics Policy
RCW 42.52.140

6.0 Key Search Words

Conflict of interest, admissions evaluators, interviewers

7.0 Revision History

Original Approval Policy number 5/6/2016 AD.10.04.160506

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