

## **ACADEMIC SENATE RECUSAL POLICY\***

In the university, the term “conflict of interest” refers to financial or other personal considerations that may compromise a faculty member’s professional judgment in administration, management, instruction, research, or other professional activities. Conflicts of interest have the potential to bias, directly or indirectly, important aspects of the councils’ work, including their recommendations about academic personnel decisions, proposals for degree programs and academic units, budgetary and planning decisions, faculty grants programs, and other areas of shared governance. Senate council/committee members must always keep potential conflicts in mind and recuse themselves where a conflict of interest arises.

### **Recusal Policy**

- (A) Senate council/committee members must recuse themselves in the following circumstances:
1. The Senate council/committee member has, or has had, a family relationship with the applicant, such as that of a current or former significant other, partner, or spouse, or child, sibling, or parent.
  2. The Senate council/committee member has a personal financial interest in the outcome of the action item.
  3. The Senate council/committee member believes that his or her recusal is necessary to preserve the integrity of the review process.
- (B) Upon joining the Senate council or committee, each member will be informed of this recusal policy and will be expected to abide by it.

### **Comment**

In carrying out their work, Senate council/committee members are expected to rely on their academic expertise, experience, and judgment, and so professional agreements or differences of opinion are not by themselves a basis for recusal.

### **Grey Areas**

In “grey areas” where a Senate council/committee member is uncertain regarding recusal, he or she may disclose the potential grounds for recusal to the Senate council or committee Chair. The Chair may then determine whether the member should recuse himself or herself, or the Chair may seek the advice of other council/committee members in making this determination. The Chair or members may suggest that a member abstain from voting when a conflict of interest exists. The Chair should consult the whole council/committee regarding potential grounds for his or her own recusal. In making its determination regarding recusal in grey areas, the council/committee will take into account the fact that, by design, each member brings valuable and unique expertise to the council/committee as a whole.

\**Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised* guides all Senate meetings.

Approved by the Senate Cabinet: May 19, 2009