

## **College of Science Promotion and Tenure Conflict of Interest**

**Updated: 2-1-2023**

The faculty handbook prescribes how to deal with conflicts of interest. Evaluators who have a relationship with a candidate should be forthcoming in making that relationship known, consistent with university policies. This includes personal relationships as well as professional relationships such as those with former advisees and collaborators. A faculty member or administrator involved in the promotion and tenure process must declare any conflict of interest that arises from these circumstances before any discussion takes place. A conflict of interest occurs when the evaluating party could realize personal, financial, professional, or other gain or loss as a result of the outcome of the P&T process, or when the objectivity of the evaluating party could be impaired by virtue of the relationship. If the P&T committee determines that the process would be compromised by the participation of the individual with a conflict of interest, that member must recuse him or herself from any discussion or voting on that particular case.

These procedures described in the faculty handbook give the authority to make the decisions to the P&T committee at the level where the potential conflict is declared. The main reason for this procedure is that the faculty members participating at that level do in most cases have the most accurate knowledge of the circumstances. Nevertheless, problems can occur because these faculty members are too close to the case. Therefore the college adds three safeguards.

Potential conflicts of interest declared by a unit P&T committee member or by the Department Head are treated at the unit P&T committee level, according to the university guidelines. When the status of a conflict of interest has been discussed at the unit level, the outcome of the discussion needs to be reported immediately to the Dean. The Dean has the authority to find a conflict of interest where the unit committee decided there was none.

College P&T committee members that are signatories of a unit level evaluation shall recuse themselves from votes on these cases. For all other cases, when the status of a conflict of interest has been discussed at the committee level, the outcome of the discussion needs to be reported immediately to the Dean. The Dean has the authority to find a conflict of interest where the committee decided there was none. The members of the college P&T committee will sign a College of Science promotion & tenure committee conflict of interest declaration prior to the committee work commencing.

If the Dean has a conflict of interest, this will be reported to the Provost for a resolution.

In all cases, it is a college rule that anybody who was the MS or PhD thesis advisor of the candidate is excluded from the promotion & tenure process.