



CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Policy Name: Conflict of Interest	Responsible Owner: Associate Vice President, Human Resources	Created: 2008 Nov
Policy Number: A02	Approval Body: Senior Management Team	Last Reviewed/Revised: 2022 April
Category: Administration	Replaces: A02.01.01 Conflict of Interest	Next Review: 2028 Feb

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- A. PURPOSE
- B. SCOPE
- C. DEFINITIONS
- D. POLICY STATEMENTS
- E. PROCEDURES
- F. SUPPORTING FORMS, DOCUMENTS, WEBSITES, RELATED POLICIES
- G. RELATED ACTS AND REGULATIONS
- H. RELATED COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

A. PURPOSE

As a public institution, Douglas College (the College) must earn and preserve the trust and confidence of its communities and stakeholders, which it does in part by ensuring that all Employees conduct themselves in a manner that avoids any real, perceived or potential Conflict of Interest between their personal or private interests and the employment responsibilities and duties they owe to the College. This policy defines Conflict of Interest, including Conflict of Commitment; affirms that all Employees must conduct themselves in a manner that avoids any such Conflicts; and establishes expectations for the disclosure and management of any Conflicts that may arise from time to time.

B. SCOPE

This policy applies to all College Employees, including visiting researchers and Students who are participating as Student researchers in the conduct of research studies at the College.

Limitation of Scope

This policy is not intended to restrict the acceptance of gifts to the College Foundation or the recognition of donors to the College.

C. DEFINITIONS

Conflict of Commitment: A form of Conflict of Interest (COI) in which the external or personal activities and undertakings of a College Employee are so substantial as to be reasonably perceived to interfere with or negatively affect the Employee’s commitment to the College.



Conflict(s) of Interest (COI): A real or potential situation in which the activities of a College Employee may reasonably be perceived to have the intention or effect of advancing the Employee's interests or the interests of one or more Related Other(s) in a way that may be detrimental or potentially harmful to the normal operations, integrity or fundamental mission of the College; includes Conflict of Commitment and activities that may reasonably be perceived as advancing the personal or private interests of the individual or Related Others contrary to the interests of the College, as well as situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise, or have the appearance of compromising, an investigator's professional judgement in conducting or reporting research.

Employee: A person who is employed by the College, including administrators, faculty members, staff and contractors, and Students when employed by the College (e.g., as Student research assistants); for the purposes of this policy, includes visiting researchers.

Related Other: Any individual with whom a College Employee has a familial, close personal and/or business relationship.

Responsible Administrator (RA): An executive of the College or an administrator responsible for the operations of a College department, Faculty or service area (e.g., Dean, Director, Registrar, Chief Information Officer).

Student: A person enrolled in studies at the College in credit or non-credit courses.

D. POLICY STATEMENTS

1. Douglas College expects its Employees to undertake their work-related duties honestly and with integrity, and to conduct themselves ethically and responsibly, in a manner consistent with College Values and with their role in a public institution entrusted with public funds and assets.
2. College Employees have the duty and responsibility to be familiar with College policy regarding COI, and to avoid and/or disclose situations that could reasonably be perceived as real or potential COI.
3. In the course of performing their College duties, Employees shall not, either directly or indirectly, demand or accept gifts, benefits, favours, services or other complimentary items, such as but not limited to offers of paid conference attendance or participation in recreational activities, from any individual, organization or corporation where such acceptance could reasonably be seen to create a real or perceived obligation on the part of the Employee, or to compromise the Employee's objectivity. Allowable exceptions to this restriction include the following:
 - a. the normal exchange of hospitality between persons doing business together;
 - b. token exchanges as part of protocol;
 - c. the normal presentation of gifts to persons participating in public functions or conferences;
or
 - d. the normal exchange of gifts or hospitality between friends.
4. When a gift or benefit is (or is about to be) offered to an individual Employee, a unit or a department of the College, the recipient(s) must discuss the acceptance of such gift or benefit with,



and obtain the approval of, the Responsible Administrator (RA), to ensure that acceptance of the gift or benefit creates no real or perceived obligation. In all cases, however, the College President has the final authority to determine what is, or is not, appropriate and may determine disposition of the gift.

5. Where College Employees are invited to make job-related presentations or to use their professional skills and expertise in support of professional activities and/or community projects, the College encourages such participation provided that these activities do not
 - a. interfere or compete with the performance of their duties as College Employees;
 - b. conflict with College operations to the detriment of the College; or
 - c. impose a financial burden on the College.
6. While recognizing that College Employees may also work elsewhere, the College expects Employees to fulfill their employment roles and duties fully, without interference or conflict arising from any commitments they may owe to other employers, and to monitor their external commitments to ensure that these do not present a Conflict of Interest or negatively affect their commitment to the College.
7. Before undertaking compensated or non-compensated external activities or positions, Employees must ensure that such activities
 - a. could not reasonably be perceived as activities that compete directly with activities or interests of the College to the detriment of the College;
 - b. will not interfere with or negatively affect the performance of their duties as a College Employee;
 - c. are not performed in such a way as to use the College's name or appear to be official business of the College;
 - d. do not use College premises, services, equipment or supplies to which the Employee has access by virtue of College employment; and
 - e. do not solicit clients to a private business or consulting practice through their connections to the College (e.g., refer College Students or Employees to the private practice of the Employee or Related Other(s)).
8. A College Employee may not influence any financial transactions of the College for personal gain or gain of any Related Other(s). Where an Employee or a Related Other has a direct or an indirect financial interest in a proposed contract or transaction with the College, that Employee may not influence the awarding of such contracts or participate in such transactions.
9. College Employees shall not participate in the selection, appointment, employment supervision or evaluation of a person who is a Related Other.
10. The College shall avoid appointments that result in a College Employee supervising another Employee who is a Related Other. Where a potential COI does occur due to appointment, promotion or emergent relationship, it must be reported in writing to the appropriate RA(s) and every effort taken to avoid the COI, including, at a minimum, making alternative arrangements for the evaluation, promotion, re-appointment and/or discipline of the Employee being supervised.

11. Where an Employee is a member of a selection committee and determines that a family member or Related Other has applied for the position under that selection committee's purview, the Employee must disclose the Conflict of Interest to the selection committee's Chair and shall not serve on the committee for the duration of that particular selection.
12. College Employees shall not use or rely upon confidential College records in an unauthorized manner or for unauthorized purposes.
13. College Employees shall not without prior written authorization by the appropriate RA use or disclose information that is privileged, is not in the public domain or is accessible to them by virtue of their employment role or responsibilities.

E. PROCEDURES

1. Employees with questions about whether their outside employment or compensated or non-compensated activities might constitute a real or potential Conflict of Interest are encouraged to discuss their circumstances with their RA or HR Advisor.
2. College Employees must disclose real or potential COI in writing at the earliest opportunity to their RA, according to the following [Standard Operating Procedure](#) (for internal users only):
 - *Conflict of Interest – Disclosures and Reports [under development]*

F. SUPPORTING FORMS, DOCUMENTS, WEBSITES, RELATED POLICIES

[Administration Policies](#)

- *College Acceptance of Student Award Funds*
- *Information Security*
- *Integrity in Research and Scholarship*
- *Naming Buildings and Facilities*
- *Privacy*
- *Protected Disclosure (Whistleblower)*
- *Use of College Facilities*

[Douglas College Code of Conduct](#)

[Standards of Conduct for BC Public Service Employees](#)

G. RELATED ACTS AND REGULATIONS

[Public Interest Disclosure Act](#) [SBC 2018], c. 22

H. RELATED COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

- [Collective Agreement between Douglas College and the BC Government and Service Employees' Union \(BCGEU\)](#)
- [Collective Agreement between Douglas College and Douglas College Faculty Association \(DCFA\)](#)