



## Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy

Responsible Administrators: Office of Research, Office of Faculty Affairs, Office of Human Resources

Responsible Offices: Office of Faculty Affairs, Division of Research, Office of Human Resources

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Approvals:

Kate Hausbeck Korgan, Acting Executive Vice President and Provost

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Date

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3/17/26

Date

## Statement of Purpose

As a public institution of higher education, the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (“UNLV”) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct in all its activities. The purpose of this policy is to establish the requirements for disclosing, reviewing, managing, and eliminating conflict of interest and/or conflict of commitment situations at UNLV.

This policy reflects UNLV’s legal responsibilities under state and/or federal laws and regulations, as well as Nevada System of Higher Education (“NSHE”) policies, emphasizing the need for transparency, compliance, and accountability. If questions arise regarding potential conflicts of interest and/or conflicts of commitment, individuals are encouraged to consult with their supervisor or authorized university officials to ensure all activities align with the institution’s values and legal obligations.

## Units Affected by this Policy

This policy applies to all faculty, staff, affiliates, and other individuals involved in university activities for whom an actual or perceived conflict of interest and/or conflict of commitment would compromise UNLV’s credibility and standing as an institution of public trust.

## Who Should Read this Policy

This policy should be read by all faculty, staff, affiliates, and other individuals involved in university activities. Understanding and adhering to this policy is essential for maintaining the integrity of UNLV’s operations.

## Policy

### Authority

The authority for managing conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment at UNLV is derived from a combination of sources, including but not limited to:

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- Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS), [Section 396.110](#), which allows the Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents to prescribe rules for governing the system, along with [Sections 281A.400 – 281A.550](#), which define ethical standards and requirements for public officers and employees.
- Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Board of Regents Handbook, [Title 4, Chapter 1, Section 27](#), which delineates the personal use of System property or resources; [Title 4, Chapter 3, Sections 7 and 9](#), which outline standards and procedures related to nepotism and compensated outside professional services; [Title 4, Chapter 10, Section 1](#), which explains the purchasing policy and prohibited conflicts of interest; and [Title 4, Chapter 12, Sections 1 through 11](#), which detail intellectual property, research, and entrepreneurial activity.
- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), [Title 42, Chapter 1, Subchapter D, Part 50, Subpart F \(42 CFR Part 50 Subpart F\)](#), as well as [Title 45, Subtitle A, Subchapter A, Part 94 \(45 CFR Part 94\)](#), which establish standards to promote objectivity in research and prevent bias.
- Federal research administration guidelines, including the [National Science Foundation \(NSF\) Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide \(PAPPG\)](#) and the [National Institutes of Health \(NIH\) Financial Conflict of Interest Regulation](#), which specify requirements related to conflicts of interest.

This policy supersedes all previous UNLV policies and procedures related to conflict of interest and conflict of commitment and shall be applied in conjunction with other relevant university, system, and external rules and regulations.

### Guiding Principles

UNLV is committed to fostering an environment of transparency, integrity, and ethical conduct in all its academic and administrative activities. All university employees and affiliates are expected to carry out their duties in a manner that upholds these values and avoids actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment.

Engagement in outside activities, including consulting, public service, and other professional endeavors, are recognized as valuable for personal and professional development and for advancing the university's mission. However, such outside activities must not detract from an individual's primary responsibilities or improperly influence their decisions and actions in their role at UNLV.

A Conflict of Interest ("COI") arises when an individual's personal, financial, or other outside activity or interest may adversely affect, compromise or be incompatible with the obligations of an employee to the institution. A Conflict of Commitment ("COC") arises when external activities interfere with an individual's capacity to fully meet their obligations to the university.

Members of the UNLV community are required to proactively identify and disclose any situations that may constitute a COI and/or COC. The university will review these disclosures and, when necessary, implement measures to manage or eliminate conflicts, ensuring the credibility and reputation of UNLV remain intact.

### Scope

This policy applies to all UNLV employees, including faculty, staff, and administrators, regardless of employment status or appointment type, holding a position with a Full-Time Equivalent ("FTE") of 50% or greater, and all funded researchers regardless of FTE. It also extends to individuals involved in officially sanctioned activities, such as volunteers, visiting scholars, consultants, and other affiliates, when their actions could impact the university's interests.

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Although all university employees and affiliates are expected to engage in professional and ethical conduct, particular responsibilities under this policy vary based on a person's role and specific relationship with UNLV (see section on Roles and Responsibilities). Individuals should consult with their supervisor to better understand their obligations under this policy. Supervisors are responsible for providing guidance with regard to outside professional and scholarly activities, ensuring proper disclosure, and implementing any necessary management plans.

This policy applies to all forms of external engagements, whether compensated or uncompensated, that may intersect with an individual's UNLV responsibilities.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Effective management of conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment require active participation, collaboration, and oversight across various levels of the university community. Each role described below plays a crucial part in upholding UNLV's standards of integrity, transparency, and accountability.

- Faculty and Staff must ensure their personal and financial interests do not compromise their responsibilities on behalf of the university. Employees holding a position requiring a FTE of 50% or greater owe their primary professional allegiance to the university. Because outside activities, whether compensated or uncompensated, may interfere with one's ability to meet institutional responsibilities or create conflicts in the allocation of time and effort, employees are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest and/or conflicts of commitment.
- Researchers have a particular responsibility to disclose potential conflicts of interest and/or commitment, especially those related to funded projects. They must identify and report any financial interests or external engagements that could influence their research. Researchers are expected to collaborate with the Division of Research, and their supervisor/department chair and unit head/dean when a management plan is needed to ensure compliance with regulations.
- Supervisors/Department Chairs are responsible for timely reviewing disclosures and approving or denying requests for compensated outside activities that may pose conflicts with university duties. They must ensure that employees have adequate workloads and are dedicating the appropriate time and effort to their university responsibilities. When conflicts are identified, supervisors/department chairs are tasked with developing and implementing management plans in collaboration with the employee and unit head/dean, and monitoring compliance within their units.
- Unit Heads/Deans are expected to lead by example in promoting ethical conduct and managing conflicts of interest within their units. By providing oversight in the establishment of management plans, unit heads/deans ensure consistent application of the Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy within their units. Their leadership is essential in fostering a culture of integrity and ensuring that the university's operations remain transparent and accountable.
- The Office of Faculty Affairs manages the disclosure process, ensures timely submissions, and is responsible for record retention three years beyond employee termination. The office reviews annual conflict of interest disclosures for non-funded researchers and administrative staff. The office is also responsible for submitting the annual Scholarly and Professional Outside Compensated Services ("SPOCS") report to NSHE verifying that all potential conflicts of interest have been reviewed and approved in accordance with the [Board of Regents Handbook, Title 4, Chapter 3](#).
- The Division of Research oversees the implementation of the Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy as it relates to research activities. The research division offers education to help researchers and research staff identify and manage potential conflicts. It also reviews conflict of interest disclosures related to research projects, particularly those involving funding, and collaborates on developing management plans. The division plays a pivotal role in

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monitoring compliance and ensuring that research activities adhere to federal regulations and funding agency requirements.

- The Office of Human Resources reviews conflict of interest disclosures for classified staff to ensure compliance with institutional policies. Human Resources plays a critical role in enforcing the Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy, particularly in cases of violations. Human Resources is responsible for taking appropriate actions in accordance with the NSHE Code and university regulations. The office also provides guidance and support to supervisors in addressing conflict-related matters, ensuring that all actions are fair, transparent, and aligned with institutional policies.
- The Conflict of Interest Oversight Committee (“COIOC”) implements two broad functions: 1) to review Significant Financial Interests disclosed by funded investigators, and 2) to serve as the “review committee” (NSHE Code Title 4 Chapter 3, Section 9.8) to hear appeals of supervisor denials of faculty requests to engage in compensated outside activities. The COIOC serves as an advisory body for policy interpretation, offers expert guidance and oversight, and helps ensure potential conflicts are effectively managed, thereby protecting the university’s interests and reputation.
- The Designated Official at UNLV, the Executive Vice President and Provost, oversees the administration of the Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy and provides support on policy-related matters.
- Affiliates at UNLV, including volunteers, visiting scholars, consultants, and other individuals involved in officially sanctioned university activities, are expected to adhere to professional standards and uphold university values. Specific requirements and expectations for affiliates will be clarified by their university contacts or collaborators, as well as the dean or vice president overseeing the relevant unit. While their roles may differ from full-time employees, affiliates must ensure that their activities align with the university’s mission and do not create conflicts that could compromise the institution’s mission.

### Procedures

Effective implementation of this policy requires a structured and systematic approach. University procedures will be designed to reduce administrative burden while ensuring transparency and accountability.

- **Pre-Approved Activities:** set of common academic activities that are not extensive in time/effort, and compensated at a total of \$3,000 or less within a calendar year. Activities that surpass these requirements must be approved through an Outside Activity Request Form before participation.
- **Outside Activity Request Form:** Faculty and staff pursuing an outside activity related to their role or responsibilities at UNLV are required to complete a request form and obtain approval prior to engaging in the activity. The process entails detailing the nature of the activity, the company/organization for which the activity will be performed, the estimated time commitment, and any financial compensation involved. The form must be submitted to the employee’s supervisor/chair and unit head/dean for review and approval. In addition, if the faculty/staff member has funding, the request form must also be reviewed and approved by the Office of Research Integrity and by the Vice President for Research. A copy of the completed form should be retained within the college/school, as the faculty/staff member will be asked to attach a copy of this form to their Annual Disclosure.
- **Disclosures:** There are two primary types of disclosures.
  - **Initial Disclosure:** Upon joining the university, new employees must complete an initial conflict of interest and commitment disclosure form. This form captures any existing or potential conflicts that may impact their university duties.

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- o Annual Disclosure: Every year, faculty and staff (50% FTE or greater, and all funded researchers regardless of FTE) are required to submit a disclosure form that provides a comprehensive overview of their outside activities, financial interests, and any other potential conflicts of interest or commitment for the previous calendar year.
- o Updates/Changes: If there are changes that would involve engagement in or with a new outside activity, a new outside activity request form is required to be submitted for review and assessment per this policy.
- Review of Outside Activity Requests and Disclosures: All requests for outside activities and submitted disclosures are subject to review by supervisors and unit administrators as well as relevant university offices. These reviews are conducted to assess the potential impact of the disclosed activities or interests on the individual's university responsibilities. In cases where a potential conflict is identified, the review process will include consultation with the individual to determine the appropriate course of action, such as implementing a management plan or modifying the terms of the outside activity.
- Management Plan: When a potential COI and/or COC is identified, the employee and supervisor/department chair will collaboratively develop a management plan to mitigate or eliminate the conflict. These plans are tailored to address the specific circumstances of each case and may include measures such as limiting involvement in certain university activities, requiring additional oversight, or altering the terms of an external engagement. There will be ongoing monitoring for compliance with established management plans.
- Appeals: Individuals who disagree with decisions related to requests for outside activities may submit an appeal to the Conflict of Interest Oversight Committee. The committee will review the appeal, consider all relevant information, and make a final determination (in consultation with the Designated Official if needed). The determination of the committee is final and will be communicated in writing to the individual.
- Violations and Disciplinary Actions: Conflicts of interest related to funded research that are not identified or managed in a timely manner are subject to a retrospective review and potential mitigation reports. The Division of Research is responsible for conducting the retrospective review in accordance with the applicable federal/sponsor policy based on sponsor requirements. If the retrospective review reveals potential violation of the NSHE policy, the results of the review will be referred to the appropriate university office for investigation and/or review, as appropriate.

All suspected violations of this policy will be addressed in accordance with the NSHE Handbook. The Office of Human Resources will manage the investigation. If a violation is confirmed, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken, which may range from corrective measures to termination of employment. All disciplinary proceedings will be conducted following established procedures to ensure fairness and compliance with governing rules.

### **Policy Review and Updates**

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with the NSHE Handbook and best practices in higher education. Updates to policy language will be communicated promptly through official channels, and updated training and informational resources will be made available through responsible offices.

### **Related Documents**

Guidelines for Pre-Approved Activities  
[Compensated Outside Professional or Scholarly Services Not Requiring Prior Approval](#)

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Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Board of Regents Handbook

<https://nshe.nevada.edu/wp-content/uploads/file/BoardOfRegents/Handbook/COMPLETEHANDBOOKREV308midcyclerev.pdf>

Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS): <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/nrs/>

### Contacts

Office of Faculty Affairs

<https://www.unlv.edu/ofa>

(702) 895-0043

Division of Research

<https://www.unlv.edu/research>

(702) 895-1828

Office of Human Resources

<https://www.unlv.edu/hr>

(702) 895-3504

### Definitions

**Annual Disclosure.** A required yearly submission by faculty and staff that provides a comprehensive overview of their outside activities, financial interests, and any other potential conflicts of interest and/or commitment. This process ensures ongoing transparency and allows the university to monitor and manage conflicts effectively.

**Appeals Process.** The procedure by which individuals can challenge decisions related to Outside Activity Request Form denials by supervisors. Appeals are reviewed by the Conflict of Interest Oversight Committee, whose final decision is communicated in writing.

**Compensated Outside Services.** Includes outside compensated work or scholarly services performed by a university employee, but does not include income derived solely from passive investments. Provision of compensated outside services is recognized as a legitimate activity unless specifically prohibited by an employee's contract of employment. Compensated outside service is not considered appropriate when it interferes with the regular work of the university employee; involves unauthorized use of university facilities, personnel, or other resources; subjects other individuals or companies engaged in private practice to unfair competition; violates the general requirements of [Nevada Revised Statutes 281A.400 -281A.410](#); or involves a conflict of interest specified by NSHE or university policy.

**Conflict of Commitment.** A situation where outside professional or scholarly service interferes with the performance of the duties of any faculty member. B-contract (9-month) faculty may engage in outside service during contractual time, but this activity must not equate to more than the equivalent of one day per work week (20% of contractual time) for full-time faculty members. During off-contract time/summer months, B-contract faculty outside professional or scholarly service must still be approved and shall not interfere with the performance of the duties of any faculty member. Employees on an A-contract (12-month) must take annual leave or furlough if providing outside service during the standard work week. Classified staff must perform outside compensated services around regularly scheduled hours. In addition, COC includes Use of University Resources for non-university activities (see Use of University Resources definition).

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**Conflict of Interest.** Any outside activity or interest that may, or may appear to, adversely affect, compromise, or be incompatible with the obligations of an employee in the institution. Conflict of interest encompasses any situation in which an employee of the university uses, or is in a position to use, their influence and authority within the university to advance their own personal or financial interest, or the personal or financial interests of individuals in the employee's household; persons to whom the employee is related by blood, adoption, or marriage within the third degree of consanguinity and affinity; or persons with whom the employee has substantial and continuing outside business relationships. For the purposes of reporting COIs to federal funding agencies, the federal definition(s) supersedes the above definition and will be used to determine which COIs must be reported.

**Designated Official.** The institutional official(s) who have been given authority to review and manage all disclosures of significant financial interests. This includes ascertaining whether any significant financial interests relate to funding; determining whether a financial conflict of interest exists; and, if so, developing and implementing a management plan that specifies actions that shall be taken to manage such financial conflict of interest. At UNLV the designated official is the Executive Vice President and Provost.

**Disclosure Form.** A form used by faculty, staff, and affiliates to report potential conflicts of interest or commitment. There are initial and annual disclosure forms, each serving to identify and manage potential conflicts throughout an individual's association with the university.

**Employee.** Any person who is employed full- or part-time by the university, including but not limited to faculty, staff, administrators, and postdoctoral scholars. Individuals or "investigators" (as defined by federal awards who are not paid but work as volunteers on funded projects) are also considered employees.

**Financial Conflict of Interest (FCOI).** A significant financial interest that could directly and significantly affect the design, conduct, or reporting of funded research or affect the performance of duties for or by an employee.

**Financial Interest.** Anything of monetary value, including but not limited to salary, or other payments for services (e.g., consulting fees or honoraria); equity interests (e.g., stocks, stock options or other ownership interests); and intellectual property rights (e.g., patents, copyrights and royalties from such rights).

**Initial Disclosure.** The first disclosure submitted by new employees upon joining the university. This form captures any existing or potential conflicts of interest or commitment that may impact their university duties.

**Institutional Conflict of Interest.** An occurrence when the financial interests of an institution or its officials may affect or appear to affect the integrity of research, education, or clinical activities.

**Investigator.** The principal investigator (PI), co-principal investigator (Co-PI), co-investigator (Co-I), project director (PD), and/or any other person at the university who is responsible for the design, conduct, or reporting of a sponsored project, which may include collaborators or consultants. Guidelines that apply to investigators also apply to individuals in the investigator's household; persons to whom the investigator is related by blood, adoption, or marriage within the third degree of consanguinity and affinity as defined by NSHE Code Title 4, Chapter 3, Section 7 (Nepotism); or persons with whom the investigator has substantial and continuing outside business relationships.

**Management Plan.** A tailored strategy developed by the university to address and mitigate identified conflicts of interest or commitment. Management plans may involve modifying the individual's

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involvement in certain activities, increasing oversight, or altering the terms of external engagements. Compliance with these plans is monitored continuously.

**Pre-Approved Activities.** Certain routine academic activities are deemed pre-approved and do not require the approval of a request for outside activities. These activities typically involve short-term commitments with compensation totaling \$3,000 or less. Pre-approved activities include, but are not limited to, preparing, publishing, or presenting scholarly works; delivering seminars or lectures sponsored by public or non-profit entities; participating in professional conferences; serving on advisory committees or review panels for academic or governmental organizations; acting as a reviewer or editor for scholarly journals; engaging in university-approved clinical practices; and serving on boards or committees of organizations where there is no substantial financial interest and no undue distraction from university obligations.

**Request for Outside Activities.** The formal process by which faculty and staff seek approval to engage in compensated or uncompensated external activities that may intersect with their university responsibilities. This includes filling out a request form detailing the nature, time commitment, and compensation of the activity, which must be reviewed and approved before the activity begins.

**Senior/Key Personnel.** A principal investigator (PI), co-principal investigator (Co-PI), co-investigator (Co-I), project director (PD), and any other person identified as such by UNLV in the grant application, progress report, or any other report submitted to the funding agency.

### **Significant Financial Interest.**

- (1) A significant financial interest consisting of one or more of the following interests of the Investigator (and those of the Investigator's spouse and dependent children) that reasonably appears to be related to the Investigator's university responsibilities:
  - (a) With regard to any publicly traded entity, a SFI exists if the value of any remuneration received from the entity in the 12 months preceding the disclosure and the value of any equity interest in the entity as the date of disclosure, when aggregated, exceeds \$5,000. For purposes of this definition, remuneration includes salary and any payment for services not otherwise identified as salary (e.g., consulting fees, honoraria, paid authorship); equity interest includes any stock, stock option, or other ownership interest, as determined through reference to public prices or other reasonable measures of fair market value;
  - (b) With regard to any non-publicly traded entity, a significant financial interest exists if the value of any remuneration received from the entity in the twelve months preceding the disclosure, when aggregated, exceeds \$5,000, or when the Investigator (or the Investigator's spouse or dependent children) holds any equity interest (e.g., stock, stock option, or other ownership interest); or
  - (c) Intellectual property rights and interests (e.g., patents, copyrights), upon receipt of income related to such rights and interests.
- (2) Investigators also must disclose the occurrence of any reimbursed or sponsored travel (i.e., that is paid on behalf of the Investigator) related to their University responsibilities; however, this disclosure requirement does not apply to travel that is reimbursed or sponsored by a Federal, state, or local government agency, an Institution of higher education as defined at 20 U.S.C. 1001(a), an academic teaching hospital, a medical center, or a research institute that is affiliated with an institution of higher education. This disclosure will include, at a minimum, the purpose of the trip, the identity of the sponsor/organizer, the destination, and the duration. The university official(s) will determine if further information is needed, including a determination or disclosure of monetary value, in order to determine whether the travel constitutes an FCOI with the PHS-funded research.

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- (3) The term significant financial interest does not include the following types of financial interests: salary, royalties, or other remuneration paid by UNLV to the Investigator if the Investigator is currently employed or otherwise appointed by UNLV, including intellectual property rights assigned to UNLV and agreements to share in royalties related to such rights; income from investment vehicles, such as mutual funds and retirement accounts, as long as the Investigator does not directly control the investment decisions made in these vehicles. All significant financial interests must be evaluated by UNLV to determine whether or not they pose a financial conflict of interest.

**Sponsored Project.** A research, training, service, or other type of project with identifiable objectives and/or deliverables for which external funding either is being requested or has been received.

**Supervisor.** The supervisor is the university official designated by the Executive Vice President and Provost to review conflict of interest and compensated outside services approvals/disclosures for academic and administrative faculty in a given unit. For faculty in academic departments or schools, the supervisor is the department chair or school director, and these supervisors are expected to review conflict of interest/compensated outside services approvals/ disclosures for their faculty members directly.

**Time Allocation for Compensated Outside Activities.** Compensated outside service that exceeds the limits set forth in the NSHE Handbook's section on Compensated Outside Professional Service ([Title 4, Chapter 3, Section 9](#)). B-contract (9-month) faculty may engage in outside service during contractual time (i.e., beginning of the fall semester and ending with commencement exercises each spring), but this activity must not occupy more than the equivalent of one day's time per work week (20% of contractual time). During non-contractual/summer months, B-contract faculty outside professional or scholarly service must still be approved and shall not interfere with the performance of the duties of any faculty member. Employees on 12-month contracts (A-contract) must take annual leave or furlough if providing outside service during the standard work week.

**University Responsibilities.** An investigator's professional responsibilities on behalf of UNLV, including but not limited to, activities such as research, research consultation, teaching, professional practice, institutional committee memberships, and service on panels such as University Institutional Review Boards and University Data and Safety Monitoring Boards.

**Use of University Resources.** Equipment and supplies purchased with public funds cannot be used to advance private research interests, unless a researcher has permission to use the equipment and supplies to support private research. The Use of Resources without permission is considered a Conflict of Commitment.

**Violation.** Any breach of the Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment Policy, which is managed in accordance with the NSHE Handbook and university regulations.