

# ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

### *Introduction*

The Admissions Committee is charged with the essential function of evaluating candidates for admission to the Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine (JCESOM) and to ensure the high standards and the diversity of class that the JCESOM values. It is the responsibility of the Admissions Committee to assure that our medical school selects those students with academic qualities that will allow for success in their medical studies, as well as attributes and experiences that will result in a skilled and empathic physician with a high degree of professionalism and strong communication skills. It is the goal of the faculty, through the work of this committee, to admit students who will make a positive contribution to the educational environment of JCESOM.

In order for the admissions process to work appropriately, the process must be free of external influence and conflicts of interest. While carrying out the Committee responsibilities, the faculty, staff, students and community members are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional integrity. To that end, the Admissions Committee has developed this policy to insure the integrity of the admissions process.

- I. Each member of the Admissions Committee and each admissions staff member shall be given a copy of this policy to review annually at the first fall meeting in each admissions cycle. Each member shall be asked to sign in acknowledgement of receipt and review of the policy, and as a sign of commitment to follow it in all business associated with the admissions process.
  
- II. The JCESOM recognizes that the admissions process does not, and should not, operate “blindly.” In fact, the admission process for a doctoral program will frequently take into account the “fit” between a prospective student’s interests and those of the program. However, the admissions process should, and should be seen to, take into account only academic and programmatic considerations when admitting students, while providing equal opportunities and treatment to all prospective applicants. Admissions decisions on each and every candidate to the medical school must be made without the influence of political or financial factors with respect to any member of the admissions committee. Particular attention should be paid to the avoidance of a real or apparent conflict of interest in the performance of duties related to the admissions process.
  - A. "Conflict of Interest" is defined as published by the Institute of Medicine as a set of circumstances that creates risk that professional judgment or actions regarding a primary interest be unduly influenced by a secondary interest. Primary interests include promoting and protecting research integrity, welfare of patients, and quality of medical education. Secondary interests include financial gain, desire of

professional advancement, recognition for personal achievement, and favors to friends, family or colleagues. (As defined in the JCESOM Conflict of Interest policy.) Admissions committee members have a responsibility to avoid real or apparent conflict of interest in the selection of candidates for admission. If at any time a member feels that the potential conflict may unduly influence his or her vote, he or she may ask to be recused from the voting/discussion process for that candidate and the admissions chair shall grant that request. In the specific instance in which a close family member of a member of the Committee is a current applicant, the Admissions Committee member must recuse themselves both during the day of the interview for the family member and during any meeting of the Admissions Committee when the candidate is being considered. Close family member for purposes of this policy shall include children, grandchildren, siblings, and parents of the Committee member.

- B. In the event any admissions committee member or staff member becomes aware of conduct that could constitute a conflict of interest on the part of an Admissions Committee member, he or she must report the infraction to the Associate Dean of Admissions or the Dean of the Medical School immediately. The Associate Dean or the Dean of the Medical School shall investigate the allegation and take such action as shall insure the integrity of the admissions process.
- C. Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to
  - 1) Counseling the individual involved;
  - 2) Written reprimand, entered into the faculty/medical student record;
  - 3) Banning the violator from membership on the Admissions Committee;
  - 4) Requiring the violator to return any monies received from the improper outside relationship;
  - 5) Requiring the violator to complete additional training on ethics/conflict of interest;
  - 6) Termination for cause.The action will depend upon the seriousness of the violation, whether the violation is the first or repeat offense, and whether the violator knowingly violated this policy or attempted to hide the violation. Any disciplinary action taken hereunder shall follow the established procedures of the University and/or JCESOM.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

*Policy was reviewed, revised and adopted by the Admissions Executive Committee on July 10, 2013. Policy will be forwarded in August to the Admissions Committee for adoption. . The Policy was reviewed, revised and adopted by the Admissions Committee October 29th, 2013. Revised December 6, 2018.*