

**Guidance on Conflicts of Interest and Related Documentation
in Faculty & Librarian Personnel Review Processes**

Office of the Provost
University of Massachusetts Boston
July 22, 2021

COI Guidance for Personnel Reviews: Appendix A

Absolute COIs that Are Disqualifying, COIs that Are Potentially Disqualifying, and Recusals in On-Campus Review Processes

COIs that **disqualify** a faculty member, librarian, or administrator from serving at any level of a personnel review process (e.g., DPC, Department Chair, CPC, Dean) for the candidate's review include immediate familial relationships, close personal relationships, financial relationships, and supervisory relationships other than those called for in the personnel review. Examples of these are:

- A spouse, child, sibling, or parent of the candidate.
- A close personal friendship that might tend to affect the individual's judgment or be seen as doing so by a reasonable person familiar with the relationship.
- A PI of a grant on which the candidate is a co-PI or vice versa.
- A financial relationship or business relationship such as co-owners of a company.
- Present association as a thesis or dissertation advisor or advisee.

COIs that have the **potential to be disqualifying** in on-campus reviews (e.g., DPC, Chair, CPC, Dean) include collaborators in scholarly activities and relationships in which there is a power differential. Examples of COIs that have potential to be disqualifying are:

- Collaborator on a project or on a book, article, report, or paper.
- Co-editor of a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings.
- Past association as a thesis or dissertation advisor or advisee.

In these cases, professional discretion, on the part of both the candidate and the individual who would have a role in reviewing the candidate, must be used to determine whether the COI is disqualifying. Useful gauges are whether the individual who would participate in reviewing the candidate can reasonably provide an objective review and whether the review would be seen as being impartial by a reasonable person familiar with the relationship. If it is determined that the COI is not disqualifying, then the review may proceed as long as the COI is declared. For example, an individual who is a co-author of a book with a candidate may serve on a personnel review committee of the candidate as long as the individual and the candidate both agree that an objective review can be provided and the individual participating in the review declares the COI (e.g., in writing in the DPC review).

An individual who is asked to serve in a committee in the review process (e.g., DPC, CPC), or who is in a role designated as part of the review process (e.g., Department Chair, Dean), has the right to **recuse** themselves from performing the review if they consider that they cannot provide an objective review.