



The University of Georgia

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Program Review
& Assessment

January 16, 2007

TO: Dr. Susan Mattern-Parkes, Chair
Executive Committee of the University Council

FROM: Dr. Louise Wicker, Chair
Dr. Marsha Black, Co-Chair
Program Review and Assessment Committee (PRAC)

RE: **Program Review—Proposed Conflict of Interest Policy Revision**

The PRAC requests that the attached revision to the *University of Georgia Program Review Policy* be considered for approval by the University Council.

Current Policy on Conflict of Interest

The current policy on conflict of interest in program reviews (attached) defines a number of relationships that bar faculty from participating on program review teams for Units. This policy, as intended and as applied, allows little or no room for judgments about the extent of these relationships or their actual effect on faculty members' appropriateness for service on a review team.

Problem with Current Policy

In the increasingly interdisciplinary climate of teaching and research on campus, members of PRAC and heads of Units under review find it increasingly difficult to identify UGA faculty reviewers who are familiar enough with a Unit's discipline to be effective yet who do not have one of the relationships to the Unit defined in the policy. PRAC believes that in many instances UGA faculty who may be best qualified to conduct a thorough, objective, and useful evaluation for a Unit are barred by the current policy from participating.

Proposed New Policy

The proposed new policy, **based on a model of full and open disclosure**, will allow the PRAC more flexibility in determining whether or not a number of potentially conflicting relationships should bar nominated faculty from serving on review teams for particular Units.

The main elements of the new policy are:

- Expanded list of *potentially* conflicting relationships
- Full, formal disclosure of all relationships by review team nominees
- Consideration of disclosed relationships by faculty of the affected Unit
- Judgment by PRAC on the eligibility of nominated reviewers

If you have questions regarding this request, please contact Louise Wicker (542-1055 or lwicker@uga.edu) or Allan Aycock (542-6777 or aaycock@uga.edu).

C: Dr. Karen W. Bauer, Interim Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness
Ms. Rebecca L. Macon, Registrar, w/enclosure
Mr. Allan J. Aycock, Director for Program Review and Assessment

Proposed New Conflict of Interest Policy for Program Review

Conflict of Interest: The PRAC acknowledges that persons who are actively engaged and familiar with an academic unit may best be able to assess strengths and challenges of its programs. However, it is vital to the effectiveness of program reviews that individuals involved in the review process are free of conflicts that might compromise or be perceived to compromise critical objectivity. For this reason, faculty with rank or joint appointment in the unit under review shall not participate as reviewers or as PRAC members discussing the review in committee.

PRAC will consider other potential conflicts as necessary, with particular attention to those occurring within seven years leading up to the review. Potential conflicts include but are not limited to those on the following list, which exist for faculty participating in the review of

- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member has formerly held a position.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member holds an adjunct appointment.
- ▶ a unit in which a spouse, relative, or other intimate acquaintance of the faculty member holds a position.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member is actively engaged in collaborative research with any of the unit faculty, staff, or graduate students.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member has a business or consulting relationship with any of the unit faculty, staff, or graduate students.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member has been the major professor of any of the unit faculty or staff.
- ▶ a unit in which a unit faculty member has been the major professor of the reviewer or PRAC member.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member advises or participates on graduate committees for students in the unit.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member has or has had other formal interactions.

Any relationship listed above or other potential conflict within the review team must be disclosed in writing to the full faculty of the unit under review and to the PRAC. Disclosure should include personal confirmation that the potential conflict does not compromise the critical objectivity of the reviewer. Faculty of the unit may object to individual reviewers through departmental governance procedures or directly to PRAC or to the OIE. PRAC will consider disclosed potential conflicts, written confirmation of critical objectivity, and any objection from the unit in determining whether to confirm members of the review team. PRAC will have final determination regarding review team membership. PRAC members who have any of the potential conflicts listed above or other potential conflicts relating to a unit under review must disclose those relationships to the committee, which will determine whether or not the member should participate in discussions relating to that unit.

Current Conflict of Interest Policy

From *UGA Policy and Procedures for Program Review*
Approved the University Council, January 31, 2002

Conflict of Interest: The following is a general statement of what may constitute a conflict-of-interest for review team members and for PRAC members participating in subcommittee discussion of reviews. The PRAC will address other possible conflicts as necessary.

Faculty should not participate in the review of

- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member holds or has formerly held a position.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member holds an adjunct appointment.
- ▶ a unit in which a spouse or relative of the faculty member holds a position.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member is actively engaged in collaborative research with any of the unit faculty.
- ▶ a unit in which the faculty member has been the major professor of any of the unit faculty.
- ▶ a unit in which a unit faculty member has been the major professor of the reviewer or PRAC member.