

Conflict of Interest Policy--DRAFT 1.13.23

When acting in our capacity as union leaders, we have a duty to act and speak in the interest of the members we represent. This duty is both legal and moral.

A conflict of interest is defined as a situation where one's ability to act and speak fully in our members' interest is compromised. When properly recognized and acknowledged, a conflict of interest is a value-neutral situation, not a problem or a failing. The goal of this policy is not to dissuade anyone from UC-AFT leadership but rather to establish guidelines for effective and ethical leadership when a conflict of interest may be present.

When UC-AFT elected leaders, appointed stewards, and site reps are in a situation where a conflict of interest, a potential conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest arises, they have a responsibility to disclose the conflict to the UC-AFT member-leaders and staff involved and possibly to recuse themselves from union representation in the situation causing the conflict.

Examples of likely conflicts of interest for elected leaders, appointed stewards, and site reps include:

- peer review activities that intersect with grievances
- joint administrative appointments that involve personnel discussions about UC-AFT members
- household members who hold managerial appointments entailing supervision of UC-AFT members

In situations with the potential for conflicts of interest, UC-AFT leaders, stewards, and site reps should clearly identify to others when they are and are not acting in a union capacity. Outside of grievance step meetings or other contractually-sanctioned labor-management venues, they should treat as confidential all information shared with them when acting as a union representative unless they have received explicit permission to disclose such information.

UC-AFT leaders, stewards, and site reps should not

- attempt to privately negotiate dispute resolutions without the knowledge of their chapter's leadership team (board/collective, stewards, staff).
- advise members using guidance obtained exclusively from supervisors, academic personnel staff, department chairs, or other administrators. Understanding management's position on an issue can be useful, but union

representatives should seek guidance from fellow UC-AFT leaders and staff to avoid advising UC-AFT members from a management perspective.

- turn a blind eye to administrative mis-steps because of concerns about their own status in their department/program/unit/school/library.

Member-leaders navigating conflicts of interest and wondering about the parameters of their legal and moral obligations should consult with the UC-AFT President, Unit 17 VP, Unit 18 VP, VP for Grievances, Executive Director, and/or field representative for their chapter.