



**CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN
RESEARCH POLICY**

Policy Type:	Management	Initially Approved:	May 31, 2010
Policy Sponsor:	Provost and VP, Academic	Last Revised:	May 31, 2010
Administrative Responsibility:	AVP, Research, Scholarship and Community Engagement	Review Scheduled:	April, 2018
Approver:	Board of Governors		

Policy Summary: This document outlines the University's policies pertaining to Conflict of Interest in research and scholarship, along with the processes and procedures for addressing a broad range of such conflicts for staff, faculty and management.

A. OVERVIEW

The University's principal mission includes both the education of students and the generation and dissemination of knowledge. In pursuit of these missions, or as a natural outgrowth of such activities, faculty and staff often become involved in outside activities. While extramural activities benefit the University and are generally encouraged, in some circumstances such activities give rise to Conflicts of Interest (COI).

The University's COI Policy provides definitions, examples and processes for addressing a broad range of such conflicts for staff, faculty and management. The Conflict of Interest in Research Policy addresses the circumstances in which Conflicts of Interest may occur in the more specific case of Research Activity, and specifies a more extensive process for resolving these types of COI.

Activities involving research and scholarship commonly engage contributors and the University with outside partner and funding agencies. The processes described herein provide opportunities for regular declaration of COI and an assessment, management and documentation process consistent with funding agency requirements.

Faculty and staff should use good judgment, professional commitment and ethics to protect themselves and the University from potential COI. Administrators and supervisors should make employees aware of this Policy and create, by example, an atmosphere consistent with the University's missions.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to set out what constitutes a COI, to describe the procedures to be followed when faculty members or staff engage in professional work from which they derive supplementary income, and to establish procedures for other situations which could give rise to a Real, Perceived or Potential COI. The Policy aims to provide an environment for teaching, research and scholarship that ensures integrity and a high ethical standard, thereby enabling public and

professional trust and confidence in the manner in which related professional activities are conducted.

C. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all MRU Members engaging in Research Activities (hereafter Researchers).

D. POLICY STATEMENT

1. GENERAL

- 1.1 This Policy is subject to the COI in promotion and tenure committees' provisions in the collective agreement between the Board of Governors of Mount Royal University and the Mount Royal Faculty Association.
- 1.2 Researchers shall not participate in an activity or decision that involves a Real, Potential or Perceived COI unless such activity has been approved in advance and, if such approval has been given, any terms or conditions made regarding such activities or decisions have been fulfilled.
 - a. Where a Real, Potential or Perceived COI arises, it must be immediately disclosed by the Researcher(s) involved. It may be necessary that this activity be placed on hold pending assessment.
 - b. The COI will be assessed in a timely, fair and open manner per the Procedures for Addressing Conflicts of Interest in Research that accompanies this Policy.
 - c. A COI will be allowed only when it can be managed in a way that protects and serves the interests, integrity and reputation of the University, as well as its legal and contractual obligations, and will stand the test of reasonable and independent scrutiny.
 - d. Non-compliance with this Policy and its associated procedures constitutes misconduct and may be pursued under the University's policy on Integrity in Research and Scholarship.

2. USE OF RESOURCES

Use of institutional facilities or resources, other than incidental use, for the private purposes of a Researcher is not permitted unless authorized by the President or their designate. For purposes of this Policy, facilities or resources include personnel, physical facilities, equipment, computers, materials and supplies.

3. EXTERNAL REQUIREMENTS

Various governmental and other agencies that fund research are imposing increasingly stringent Conflicts of Interest requirements on investigators and institutions applying for research funding. A Researcher must comply with this Policy, the COI policy and any applicable policies imposed by other organizations, agencies or institutions.

E. DEFINITIONS

In this Policy the following terms, when capitalized, shall have the following meanings:

- (1) **Conflict of Interest or COI:** In research exists in any situation where there is potential divergence between the Researcher's personal interests and their obligations to the University such that an independent observer would reasonably question whether the Researcher's decisions are in any way motivated by considerations of personal interest, financial or otherwise. A COI may be Perceived, Real, or Potential.
- (2) **MRU Members or Members:** Includes anyone who teaches, conducts research or works under the auspices of the University and includes, without limitation: full- or part-time faculty; full-time, part-time, continuing or temporary staff; all students; adjunct faculty in their capacity as researchers or supervisors of students; instructors, research assistants or associates; and any other persons while they are acting on behalf or at the request of the University.
- (3) **Perceived Conflict of Interest:** Exists when a reasonably well-informed person could have a reasonable apprehension that a COI exists.
- (4) **Policy:** means the Conflict of Interest in Research Policy
- (5) **Potential Conflict of Interest:** is one that could develop into an actual COI. The potential for COI exists when the Member can foresee that he or she has a private interest that may be sufficient to influence a University duty or responsibility.
- (6) **Research Activity:** is an undertaking intended to extend the collective knowledge of a field through disciplinary inquiry or systematic investigation, or any activities that support such an undertaking. This includes, but is not limited to, research projects, preparing or assessing dissemination activities, and preparing or assessing funding applications.
- (7) **Researcher:** includes any MRU Member that conducts or contributes to Research Activities
- (8) **University:** means Mount Royal University

F. RELATED POLICIES

- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Integrity in Research and Scholarship Policy

G. RELATED LEGISLATION

H. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Collective Agreement between the Board of Governors of Mount Royal University and the Mount Royal Faculty Association
- Conflict of Interest Procedures
- Conflict of Interest in Research Procedures
- Integrity in Research and Scholarship Procedures

I. REVISION HISTORY

Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Description of Change	Sections	Person who Entered Revision (Position Title)	Person who Authorized Revision (Position Title)
05/31/2010	NEW			
08/10/2017	Formatting, name/title changes, gender neutral language		Director, University Secretariat	