

## THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

### NEPOTISM POLICY

<b>Number</b>	02.01.55
<b>Division</b>	Academic Affairs
<b>Date</b>	January 1, 2018
<b>Purpose</b>	To define clearly The University of Alabama in Huntsville policy regarding the employment, evaluation, and educational experiences of family members of employees.
<b>Purpose</b>	The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama, Board Rule 106 states that, "No appointing authority shall employ or appoint a person related to him or her within the fourth degree of affinity or consanguinity to any job or position within the University" without identifying the potential conflict of interest to appropriate officials. The University of Alabama in Huntsville permits the employment and education of family members of employees as long as such activities do not, in the judgement of the University, create actual or perceived conflicts of interest. For purposes of this policy, "family member" is defined as one's spouse or domestic partner, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, or corresponding in-law or "step" relationships, as well as any other members of one's household. Whenever a potential real or perceived conflict of interest exists or arises, the employee must notify her or his supervisor so that appropriate actions can be taken to mitigate the conflict.

#### Procedure

##### Regarding Employment and/or Supervision of Family Members

The University permits the employment of qualified family members of existing employees in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Family members are permitted to work in the same University department, provided no direct reporting or supervisor to subordinate relationship exists. That is, no employee can report in "the chain of command" when one relative's work responsibilities, salary, hours, career progress, benefits or other terms and conditions of employment could be influenced by the other relative.
- Family members may have no influence over the wages, hours, benefits, career progress, or other terms and conditions of the other related staff members.
- Employees who marry while employed or who become part of the same household are treated in accordance with these guidelines. That is, if in the opinion of the University, a real or perceived conflict arises as a result of the relationship, the supervisor will work with the employees to develop appropriate safeguards to eliminate the conflict of interest.

## Regarding Evaluation and Educational Experiences of Family Members

To avoid the appearance of favoritism that may result when students engage in formal educational experiences with family members and to ensure that students are treated fairly, certain procedures must be followed. Faculty and staff are required to report potential real or perceived conflicts of interest to their supervisor who must report it and the steps taken to eliminate or mitigate the conflict of interest through the appropriate administrative channels to the cognizant vice president.

Conflicts of interest include but are not limited to:

1. Instruction of a family member, in a credit-bearing course, by faculty, staff, or teaching assistant
2. Supervision of research directly or indirectly conducted by a family member by faculty or research staff
3. Supervision of a team or some other competitive activity directly or indirectly involving a family member by faculty or staff
4. Service on the thesis or dissertation committee of a family member by faculty, research staff, or affiliate/adjunct faculty or researcher
5. Formal evaluation of a family member by faculty or staff, teaching assistant, or affiliate/adjunct faculty member or researcher. This includes but is not limited to: admissions; progress evaluations; honors or thesis committees; selection of the student for any departmental, college or university awards. A faculty member or other institutional official must recuse himself/herself from any discussion or vote relating to a matter where there is a potential for or the existence or appearance of a conflict of interest and will state publicly that there is a personal conflict.

Any exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing to the cognizant vice president and must be approved by the cognizant vice president and the president of the University after consultation with legal counsel.

**Review**      The Office of the Provost is responsible for the review of this policy every five years (or whenever circumstances require).