

Excerpted with permission from Conflict of Interest information Guidelines for the Biology Department, Unit 2, I.K. Barber School of Arts and Sciences, August 2013

1. Faculty members who have partners/spouses in our department must be very careful to ensure that there is no perceived conflict of interest.
 - a. The partner or spouse of a faculty member will excuse him or herself from any discussion involving appointment, reappointment and promotion and/or tenure regarding their partner/spouse.
 - b. The partner or spouse of a faculty member will also excuse him or herself from any discussion about merit or PSA regarding their partner/spouse.
2. Faculty members who have partners/spouses in our department must be very careful to ensure that there is no perceived conflict of interest with respect to graduate students or co-supervised graduate students or honors students. Since supervision of graduate students and undergraduate directed studies and honors students is part of what is considered for reappointment, promotion and tenure, and for merit and PSA, it is important that there not be a real or perceived conflict of interest.
 - a. If a partner/spouse co-supervises a graduate student, the committee for that graduate student should be expanded to include another faculty member.
 - b. If a partner/spouse sits on the committee for a graduate student, the committee should be expanded to include another faculty member.
 - c. Partners of faculty members supervising graduate students should not sit on the examining committee for that graduate student or on the defense committee.
 - d. Faculty members who have partners/spouses in this department should not be involved in evaluating applications of students for graduate studies who will have the partner as a supervisor, nor should they evaluate applications for employment at UBC Okanagan, scholarships or fellowships for either graduate students or undergraduate students supervised by their partner.
3. Faculty members who have children or other relatives (husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, cousins or permanent wards, close personal friends, etc) who are enrolled as students at UBCO must also be careful that there is no perceived conflict of interest.
 - a. If a child or relative is enrolled in biology courses, the faculty member must not communicate with the course instructor about the student's progress or lack thereof.
 - b. The faculty member should not sit on committees that evaluate applications for scholarships, fellowships, awards or offers of employment, if their relative is an applicant.
 - c. If a child or relative is enrolled in a biology course taught by the faculty member (which can happen in required courses), the faculty member must:
 - i. declare this conflict to the unit head
 - ii. in consultation with the unit head, develop a management plan that includes a list of actions, limits and timeliness to reduce or remove any negative impact of a conflict. This will include the establishment of a protocol for grading

accommodation based on the evaluation needs of the particular course. This protocol may include the following:

- a. a marker may be provided to mark all assignments for all students. This is designed to ensure consistency in grading practice across the entire class. Assignments and exams of the child/relative will be handed to one of the unit assistants in a sealed envelope to be distributed to the marker.
 - b. if there isn't a TA or marker, the unit head may ask another faculty member to mark the assignments and exams of the child/relative based on the key that is used by the faculty member to mark other exams.
 - c. in the case of group work, another faculty member may act as an observer and come to class to observe the groups. The faculty member will assign a grade to each group, and the observer will ensure that the marking is consistent.
 - d. In the case of a class where expertise is very specialized, the faculty member will mark the assignments/exams, and will provide them to an independent faculty member along with 5 exams/assignments from other students in the class who received similar grades.
- iii. Include in the course outline the following statement: "The Biology Department at UBCO takes seriously any real or perceived conflict of interest, and has a management plan in place to address any situation where a student has a personal relationship with a faculty or staff member. Please see the unit head if you have any questions or concerns." (Note: There is no need to specifically identify a student in your class to whom you are related or with whom you have a close relationship.)
 - iv. Provide a neutral third party that the student can go to for help in case of negative reactions from other students in the course.
 - v. Ensure that the child or relative does not have access to more information than any other student in the class such as marketing keys, exams, personal information about other students, etc. All files kept on a computer used for the course should be password protected. The faculty member should ensure that the child or relative does not have unsupervised access to his or her office at any time.
 - vi. The unit assistant will compile the marks for the course, and the final mark will be calculated and entered by the unit head or the unit assistant.