



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 3359-11-17 Conflict of interest, conflict of commitment, scholarly misconduct, and ethical conduct.

Effective: [May 9, 2026](#)

- (A) The university shall develop policies to address ethics concerns for university employees. This includes conflicts of interests and conflicts of commitments for university employees. The policy shall require preapproval of potential conflicts with a process to review the potential conflicts and the ability to manage the conflicts, if appropriate, consistent with applicable laws and university rules and policies. The policy will be administered by the office of human resources.
- (B) The university shall develop policies to address research integrity and employee financial interests in companies licensed under university intellectual property. This policy will be administered by the office of research administration. Disclosures under this policy may be in addition to disclosures under the university's conflict disclosure process.
- (C) The university shall develop policies for scholarly misconduct by employees, visiting scholars, or students in research and scholarship. The policy will be administered by the office of academic affairs.
- (D) The university shall develop policies for nepotism, spousal hiring, and consensual relationships. The policy will be administered by the office of human resources.
- (E) The university shall develop policies for activities of sponsored programs by employees, visiting scholars, or students in research and scholarship. These policies will be administered by the office of research administration and be based on the following principles:
 - (1) University employees are prohibited from independently submitting or negotiating proposals or contracts for any externally sponsored research or other sponsored programs on behalf of the university. Proposals, and any subsequent negotiations, awards, other agreements, or changes, are to be processed through and require the prior written authorization of the university through the office of research administration.
 - (2) All university employee involvement in proposals for sponsored research or other programs at other institutions must be approved in advance through the office of research administration. University employee involvement in a program or project at another institution that might be conducted appropriately at the university of Akron as part of normal employee duties, could result in situations that place students and staff in conflicts of interest, and also deprive students and colleagues of the faculty members or other employees, primary intellectual energies. A bona fide subgrant or subcontract agreement of equitable terms,



3359-11-17

2

normally involving one institution as fiscal agent and the other(s) as subgrantee(s), negotiated in advance between the university and the other institution(s) and naming the university employee among the key personnel for the project, is an appropriate means for a university employee or team to participate in inter-institutional research projects or other sponsored programs.

- (3) University employees must receive specific prior written approval from the senior research officer to divert funded research opportunities or other sponsored program support from the university to other institutions or external entities.
 - (4) A university employee will inform students and all workers engaged in research or other sponsored programs to be conducted under his or her supervision of all details, policies, and procedures concerning the project needed for the students and workers to perform their role. These include full disclosure of the terms of the agreement in support of the activity, including copyrights or patent rights arising from the research; policies and procedures governing scholarly misconduct; and other as applicable (e.g. health and safety regulations, protection of human rights, ethical care and use of animals, radiation safety, biohazard safety).
 - (5) It is the responsibility of each university employee to disclose promptly to the senior research officer any situation or proposal in which the objectivity of a university employee or participant in a research project could be reasonably questioned.
- (F) The university shall develop policies and procedures for intellectual property and technology transfer. These policies will be administered by the office of technology transfer based on the following principles:
- (1) Inventions and patent rights of university employees developed or obtained during the course of the individual's employment contract with the university belong to the university unless otherwise stipulated in a specific written university patent rights agreement signed by an authorized university official delegated such authority by the university board of trustees. Computer software developed by university employees during the course of the individual's employment contract with the university or using university resources is the property of the university.



3359-11-17

3

- (2) Inventions or discoveries made using any university facilities or other university resources belong to the university even if the inventors are not university employees, unless otherwise stipulated in a specific written university patent rights agreement signed by an authorized university official delegated such authority by the university board of trustees.
- (3) University intellectual property, including inventions and computer software, is to be managed under rule 3359-2-05 of the Administrative Code. The university will share with inventors and software authors any net royalties or royalty-type income that may be gained as a direct result of licensing or attempting to license the intellectual property.
- (4) University employees are to disclose in a timely manner to the university: (a) their own creation or discovery of inventions and computer software which are developed using university resources regardless of sponsorship; (b) any discoveries and inventions utilizing university resources, including those resulting from their participation in sponsored research or other sponsored programs, other remunerative outside activities in their field of academic interest or specialization, or any other activities of an outside commercial enterprise including any university employee-owned or employee-managed company; and/or (c) the creation or discovery of inventions of any others associated with them when that development involved any university resources.
- (5) No university employee is to provide confidential or proprietary information, including disclosures or other information regarding inventions or other intellectual property, to a company or other entity or its agents without prior disclosure to and specific permission from the university board of trustees upon recommendation of the vice president for research.