Trustees Conflict of Interest Standards Policy

Board of Trustees – Statement of Professional Ethics

CWU Policy 105-03

Effective: October 22, 2026

Policy Review Date: 2030

Policy Executive: Board of Trustees

Responsible Office/Unit: Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Policy Statement:

This policy is adopted to ensure the highest ethical standards for all Governor-appointed trustees when fulfilling the responsibilities and service to Central Washington University. This policy communicates expectations for trustees if conflicts of interest arise when conducting official institutional business.

Applicability:

This policy applies to the CWU Board of Trustees.

Content:

Policy

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(1) The following standards apply to each member of the Board of Trustees of Central Washington University.

(2) Fiduciary Responsibilities.

A. Members of the board serve the public trust and are obliged to fulfill their responsibilities in a manner consistent with this fact. All decisions are to be made solely on the basis of a desire to promote the best interests of Central Washington University and the public good. The university's integrity must be considered and advanced at all times.

B. Trustees are often involved in the affairs of other institutions, businesses, and organizations. An effective Board may not always consist of individuals entirely free from perceived, potential, or real conflicts of interest. Although most such conflicts are and will be deemed to be inconsequential, it is every trustee's responsibility to make the Board chair and staff aware of situations at CWU that may involve the trustee's personal or business relationships.

(3) Affirmation and Disclosure.

A. The board requires each trustee annually to affirm adherence to the following standards:

1. Board disclosure of personal or business interests and relationships. Each trustee will disclose to the Board any personal or business relationship or interest that reasonably could give rise to a perceived, potential, or real conflict of interest.

    a. Public disclosure. Trustees are required by RCW 42.17.240 to file annual statements with the Public Disclosure Commission relating to business interests and receipt of gifts.

B. Disclosure of potential or real conflict of interest. In the event there comes before the Board a matter for consideration or decision that raises a potential or real conflict of interest for any trustee, the trustee shall disclose to the Chair of the Board the existence of a potential, perceived, or real conflict of interest as soon as possible.

C. Recording of disclosure in minutes. The disclosure shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting in which a vote by the Board will occur on the matter.

D. Seeking counsel regarding disclosure. In the event a trustee is uncertain as to the need to make disclosure in a particular instance, the trustee should seek counsel from the Board Chair or Secretary to the Board.

E. Trustee recusal on Board actions on issues where conflicts exist. A trustee who is aware of potential or real conflict of interest with respect to any such matter shall not vote or participate in discussion in connection with the matter.

F. Prohibition of attempted influence. A potentially beneficially interested trustee who is aware of a potential or real conflict of interest with respect to any such matter shall not attempt to influence other trustees or voting members in their discussion and vote.

(4) Situations that Constitute Conflicts of Interest.

A. While it is difficult to list all circumstances that may create a conflict of interest for individual trustees, the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 28B.35.120 defines the following situations as prohibited actions:

    1. Use authority of trusteeship to influence the outcome of a business transaction.

    2. Use of university resources for personal benefit.

    3. Use of official authority for personal gain.

    4. Receipt of gifts, gratuities, and favors.

History:

02/2018, Motion 18-05: Responsibility & Authority: Board of Trustees
Reformatted and Assigned new Policy Number - Previous Policy CWUP 1-50-030, June 2025
10/22/2026 Updates to Policy, Approved by: Board of Trustees.