

Revision of Graduate School Policy on Advisor Conflict of Interest
Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies
Resolution 2011-12 D

Approved, Commission on Graduate Studies and Policies:	February 1, 2012
First Reading, University Council:	February 20, 2012
Approved, University Council:	March 19, 2012
Approved, President:	March 19, 2012
Effective:	Fall 2012

WHEREAS the section on Graduate Advisory Committee members of the Graduate Catalog currently states:

“Faculty are not permitted to serve as Advisor or committee member for individuals with whom they have a personal or professional relationship (e.g., spouse/partner, son/daughter, business associate, employment supervisor, etc.). See also Eligibility of Faculty/Staff for Graduate Degrees.”

WHEREAS the statement in the Graduate Catalog needs to be revised to reflect the Commonwealth’s definition of “family member” and to be consistent with major revisions to policy 13010, Individual Conflicts of Interest and Commitment, and recommendations by DRSCAP for the protection of graduate students;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Graduate Catalog policy statement on advisor’s conflicts of interest be revised as follows:

Faculty members are not permitted to serve as Advisor or committee member for family members (spouse or dependent immediate family member), nor for individuals with whom they have a close personal relationship such as partner or extended family member, or a close professional relationship such as business associate or supervisor.

A faculty member with a significant financial interest may not serve as sole advisor of a dissertation or thesis committee for a student who is funded through a university sponsored project supported by the advisor’s company, or for a student who is employed directly by the faculty member’s company. The faculty member with the conflict may serve as co-chair or committee member. If another co-chair is appointed, that faculty member must be of equal or greater rank, must not be involved with the sponsoring company, and must not be subject to undue influence by the faculty-owner. See policy 13010 for a complete description of the disclosures and protections required in such instances.

See also Eligibility of Faculty/Staff for Graduate Degrees.