



Tomorrow's Doctors, Tomorrow's Cures®

**Forum on Conflict of Interest in Academe
Rules and Regulations
August 25, 2009**

I. Name

The name of the organization shall be the “Forum on Conflict of Interest in Academe, of the Association of American Medical Colleges” (AAMC), hereinafter referred to as FOCI-A.

II. Purpose

The purpose of FOCI-A is to provide for academic leadership who oversee and manage conflicts of interest a forum to promote the highest ethical and professional standards as they carry out their missions of research, education, patient care, and service.

FOCI-A will address at the institutional and national level:

- a. The development and review of policies on conflict of interest;
- b. Consistent best practices in the implementation of these policies;
- c. Productive and principled academic-industry relationships that benefit the institutions and the public and that do not distort the integrity of institutional or individual decision-making;
- d. Education of institutional faculty and employees, trainees, and officials and enhancement of institutional cultures that promote ethical and professional behavior in institutional and personal relationships with industry; and
- e. Education of the media and the public on conflict of interest issues.

Through its discussion of and engagement in these areas, FOCI-A will endeavor to enhance public confidence and trust in the institutional oversight of conflict of interest matters.

III. Membership

The membership shall consist of persons appointed by an AAMC member dean or hospital CEO. FOCI-A members may be drawn from faculty, professional, or administrative ranks who serve in leadership roles in the oversight and management of conflict of interest matters for the institution. Examples of members include senior institutional officials such as the vice president or associate dean for research or research administration, or the vice president, dean, or associate dean who is accountable for conflict of interest oversight; the director and staff of the conflict of interest office; the chair or members of the conflict of interest committee; and others such as the research compliance officer, other senior officials including CME officials and Chief Medical

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Officers, and members of the general counsel's office. The appointed member(s) shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing authority. Each institution may have more than one member of FOCI-A, and each member shall be entitled to one vote.

The FOCI-A Steering Committee may appoint voting members to the Group from non-medical school affiliated institutions when the Committee determines that those individuals represent institutions or programs that are important to FOCI-A for their quality, affiliations with medical schools, contributions to a diverse workforce, or other key characteristics.

IV. Officers

The officers of FOCI-A shall include a Chair, a Chair-Elect, an Immediate Past Chair and Executive Secretary. The Chair and Chair-Elect shall be elected by the membership at the annual meeting or by electronic ballot as provided in Section VI. Following a two year term as Chair-Elect, the expectation is that the elected individual will progress to a two year term as Chair. Progression from the two year term as Chair to a two year term as Immediate Past Chair shall be automatic.

To be eligible for the position of Chair and Chair-elect, candidates must be formally appointed to the membership of the Group by a member dean or hospital CEO.

The term of the Chair shall be for two years and shall commence at the end of FOCI-A's annual meeting. The Chair of FOCI-A may not serve consecutive terms as Chair. Officers who have left the employ of the nominating institution may complete their term only if employed by an AAMC member institution.

The Executive Secretary shall be an AAMC staff member appointed by the AAMC President. The Executive Secretary shall coordinate the provision of appropriate staff support and assist in the general direction of FOCI-A.

Contact with major related organizations outside FOCI-A shall be coordinated with the Executive Secretary.

V. Committees

A. The steering committee shall be composed of:

Officers: The Chair, the Chair-Elect, the Immediate Past Chair, the Executive Secretary, and additional members as described below. Only persons who have served at least two years on the steering committee are eligible for election to the position of Chair-elect.

Elected Members: The Steering Committee shall elect up to 15 and no fewer than 12 members from candidates nominated by the Nominating Committee from the voting membership of FOCI-

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A. The Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations from the membership of FOCI and may also nominate members on its own. Elected members shall serve staggered terms of three years, and may be appointed to one successive term on the Steering Committee. Steering Committee terms conclude at the end of the annual meeting.

Steering Committee members who have left the employ of the nominating institution may complete their term only if employed by an AAMC member institution.

At least three members of the Steering Committee shall be Senior Institutional Officials, three members shall be Chairs of Conflicts of Interest Committees, and three members shall be Directors of Conflicts of Interest Programs or Offices.

No more than one member from an institution will serve on the Steering Committee.

The FOCI Steering Committee shall manage the affairs of the Forum.

B. A Nominating Committee, appointed each year by the Steering Committee, shall be chaired by the Immediate Past Chair. It shall make nominations for the Chair-Elect from among those who have served on the Steering Committee for at least two years and for other open positions, and such nominations shall be publicized in advance to the membership. Providing the consent of the nominee has been received, members may make additional nominations from the floor, unless the election is by electronic ballot, in which case, additional nominations must be made at least 30 days before for the election is held.

The Nominating Committee will recommend to the Steering Committee any replacement Officer or Officer-Elect, if the previously elected person is unable to serve. The Steering Committee will then make such replacement appointment, and the appointment will remain effective until the next FOCI-A election.

C. Other Standing or Ad hoc Committees may be authorized by vote of the Steering Committee of the Group.

Appointment to Committees shall be made by the FOCI-A Chair with the approval of the Steering Committee.

Committee Chairs shall be appointed by the FOCI-A Chair.

The Standing Committees and their functions shall be reviewed periodically by the Steering Committee. Those committees no longer needed may be dissolved upon recommendation of the Steering Committee.

Descriptions of the purpose and functions of each Group committee shall be appended to the Rules and Regulations. The committee description shall not be considered an official part of the

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Rules and Regulations. Major changes in the committee descriptions shall be made only with the approval of the FOCI-A Steering Committee.

VI. Meetings and Quorums.

Meetings may be designated as open or closed. Attendance at closed meetings is limited to members and persons specifically invited.

A business meeting of the FOCI-A membership shall be held at least annually.

The Steering Committee shall meet in person or by conference call. Conference calls or electronic communication may be used to conduct business of the Steering Committee and may be used, when practical, in place of other regular meetings. Fifty percent of the Steering Committee will constitute a quorum.

Fifty percent of the voting members attending a regularly scheduled meeting or conference that includes a business meeting shall constitute a quorum at the FOCI-A's business meeting.

Formal actions may be taken and elections held at meetings of the membership or the Steering Committee at which a quorum is present. At such meetings, decisions will be made by majority vote of those qualified to vote, or in the case of the Steering Committee by majority vote or by consensus.

Actions and elections may be held by electronic ballot using tools suitable for this purpose provided by AAMC. In each such case, the forwarding communication shall specify the date and time when the balloting shall close. Where actions or elections are taken by electronic ballot, the decision will be determined by a majority of votes cast within the specified timeframe.

In the conduct of meetings, the order of business shall be under the direction of the Chair who shall make all parliamentary decisions. Such decisions may be reversed by two-thirds majority of the voting members present and voting.

VII. Amendments

Subject to the approval of the AAMC Board of Directors, these Rules and Regulations may be amended or repealed and new Rules and Regulations may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at any regular meeting of FOCI-A for which prior written notice of the proposed changes has been given.

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Appendices

- A. Committees, names and duties
- B. Dates of Adoption and Amendment of the Rules and Regulations

Appendix A: Committees

1. **Outreach and Training Committee** – The Outreach and Training Committee shall be responsible for discussing and recommending to the Steering Committee the educational activities that FOCI-A should undertake on conflicts of interest. The Committee is also responsible for assisting in the design and content of the AAMC’s FOCI-A website with the goal of making it useful and responsive for the members. In that process it shall solicit input from various sources, including the FOCI-A members.
2. **Committee on Policies and Best Practices** – The Committee on Policies and Best Practices will be responsible for gathering and considering COI policies and practices from member institutions. The Committee should disseminate information about successful models and best practices in order to improve the quality of institutional efforts to protect the integrity of research, clinical care, and education, while maximizing the development and dissemination of optimal health care strategies.

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Appendix B: Dates of Adoption and Amendment of the Rules and Regulations