

Social Science Students' Council of the University of Western Ontario
CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Effective: March 16th, 2011

Supersedes: None

PREAMBLE:

The Social Science Students' Council ("SSSC") strives to conduct its business and political affairs in conformity with the highest ethical and moral standards, thereby ensuring that the University community has complete confidence in the integrity of the SSSC. The SSSC expects that all of its members will act in a manner that will enhance the SSSC's reputation by showing integrity in all of its dealings.

1.00 SCOPE

1.1 This policy applies to the following individuals:

- (1) any Voting Member and Non-Voting Member sitting on Council, as more fully defined in section 5.00 of the SSSC Constitution;
- (2) SSSC volunteers;
- (3) at-large members of SSSC committees; and,

2.00 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

2.1 A conflict of interest arises where the private or personal interests of an individual are sufficient to influence or appear to influence the objective exercise of her duties. This would include:

- (1) where the private or personal interests of an individual conflict with the interests of the SSSC, or
- (2) where the individual has a financial interest in a third party that is doing or is seeking to do business with the SSSC.

2.2 A conflict of interest may present itself in one of three forms:

- (1) an actual conflict of interest: where it can be clearly demonstrated that a conflict of interest exists;
- (2) a potential conflict of interests: where a result could lead to a conflict of interest arising; and,
- (3) a perceived conflict of interest: where an actual or potential conflict of interest may not exist, but an outside perspective into the surrounding circumstances leads or could lead to a perception that a conflict of interest exists.

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- 2.3 A conflict of interest arises where an individual has or appears to have an opportunity to use her authority, knowledge, or influence derived from her position to improperly benefit the individual or another person. This would include:
- (1) participating in the hiring, appointment or promotion of a family member, including a spouse, parent, in-law, sibling, child or stepchild;
 - (2) having personal financial dealings with an individual or company whose business with the SSSC involves the individual's sphere of responsibilities; and,
 - (3) participating in the management of a company which is a supplier of materials or services to the SSSC.
- 2.4 A conflict of interest arises if gifts, gratuities or favours of any kind are exchanged between an individual and any individual or company whose relationship with the SSSC involves the individual's sphere of responsibilities.
- (1) Cash payments in any amount must not be accepted or given as a gift or favour under any circumstances.
 - (2) This policy does not apply to incidental gifts and other benefits that are below a value of thirty dollars (\$30) and that are received as a result of general business practices.
- 2.5 A conflict of interest arises if an individual accepts outside employment or engages in outside activities which may interfere with the efficient performance of the individual's duties.

3.00 REPORTING

- 3.1 Where it is questionable as to whether a conflict of interest exists, it is incumbent upon the individual to consult with the SSSC President and disclose the particulars. If it is the SSSC who has the conflict, she must consult with the SSSC Speaker of Council.
- 3.2 SSSC Members and volunteers are obligated to report any conflict they might have or appear to have, and to report any apparent conflict of interest observed amongst other Members.
- 3.3 At the discretion of the Council, failure to report a conflict of interest could be grounds for impeachment and forfeiture as defined in section 10.00 of the SSSC Constitution.
- (1) In less serious cases failure to report a conflict could result in a Member being censured by the Council. Censure is a formal reprimand of a Member by the Council, and is considered by Robert's Rules of Order as "an alternative to more serious measures against misconduct or dereliction of duty." A motion to censure is considered by Roberts' Rules as a "question of privilege affecting the assembly" and can be moved and seconded by any voting member without notice of motion, and requires a majority vote for adoption.

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