

**UC MERCED
RESERVE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PERSONNEL (RCAP)
RECUSAL POLICY**

Approved by RCAP on September 7, 2021

Revised October 25, 2024

Reviewed and approved by CRE on October 28, 2024

In the university, the term “conflict of interest” refers to financial or other personal considerations that may compromise a faculty member’s professional judgment in administration, management, instruction, research, or other professional activities. Conflicts of interest have the potential to bias, directly or indirectly, important aspects of the Reserve Committee on Academic Personnel’s (RCAP) endeavor, including its recommendations about candidates for appointment, merit advance, or promotion and campus policies. RCAP members must always keep this potential in mind and recuse themselves where a conflict of interest arises.

There are additional circumstances in which recusal is necessary. The need for recusal may arise from the nature of academic review, the structure of the review process, and the importance to the campus of maintaining the integrity of Academic Senate review of academic personnel matters.

Recusal Policy

- (A) RCAP members must recuse themselves in the following circumstances:
 1. They have, or have had, a family relationship with the candidate, such as that of a current or former significant other, partner, or spouse, or child, sibling, or parent.
 2. They have, or have had, a sexual relationship with the candidate.
 3. They have a private financial interest in the outcome of the case.
 4. They are aware of any prejudice, pro or contra, that would impair their judgment of the case.
 5. They have participated, or intend to participate, in deliberations about the questions at issue in the case at another level of review.
 6. They believe that their recusal is necessary to preserve the integrity of the review process.
- (B) Each member of RCAP understands that deliberations within committee meetings are confidential and private, and not to be shared outside the meeting setting.
- (C) Upon joining RCAP, all members are expected to sign a document indicating their awareness of this recusal policy and their intention to abide by it.

Comment

RCAP members are not expected to recuse themselves simply because they have published research or publicly expressed views opposed to, or supportive of, those of the candidate. In carrying out their work, RCAP members are expected to rely on their academic expertise, experience, and judgment, and so professional agreements or differences of opinion are not by themselves a basis for recusal. Indeed, members of RCAP, like all members of the academic community, are expected to understand the standards of their disciplines, to judge the work of others in light of these standards, and to express these judgments publicly when that is relevant to their own professional activities.

Grey Areas

In “grey areas” where RCAP members are uncertain regarding recusal, they are expected to disclose the potential grounds for recusal to the Chair of RCAP. Such grounds may include collaborative work with the candidate during the review period, recognizing that the nature of such work varies enormously from field to field. The Chair may then determine whether recusal is appropriate, or the Chair may seek the advice of other Committee members in making this determination. The Chair should consult the whole Committee regarding potential grounds for the Chair’s own recusal. In making its determination regarding recusal in grey areas, the Committee will take into account the fact that, by design, each member brings valuable and unique expertise to the Committee as a whole.

I have read the attached recusal policy of the Reserve Committee on Academic Personnel and agree to its terms.

NAME

DATE