

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

Approved by RCAP on September 7, 2021

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. The RCAP member has, or has 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. The RCAP member has, or has had, a sexual relationship with the candidate.
 3. The RCAP member has a private financial interest in the outcome of the case.
 4. The RCAP member is aware of any prejudice, pro or contra, that would impair his or her judgment of the case.
 5. The RCAP member has participated, or intends to participate, in deliberations about the questions at issue in the case at another level of review.
 6. The RCAP member believes that his or her recusal is necessary to preserve the integrity of the review process.

- (B) Each member of the Reserve Committee on Academic Personnel understands that deliberations within committee meetings are confidential and private, and not to be shared outside the meeting setting.

- (C) Upon joining the Reserve Committee on Academic Personnel, each member is expected to sign a document indicating his or her awareness of this recusal policy and his or her intention to abide by it.

Comment

A Reserve CAP member is not expected to recuse him or herself simply because he or she has published research or publicly expressed views opposed to, or supportive of, those of the candidate. In carrying out their work, Reserve CAP 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 an RCAP member is uncertain regarding recusal, he or she is expected to disclose the potential grounds for recusal to the Chair of the Reserve Committee on Academic Personnel. 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 the member should recuse himself or herself, 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 his or her 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.

University of California

**Academic Senate • Merced Division
Reserve Committee on Academic Personnel**

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

NAME

DATE