Admissions Committee

Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Policy

The Admissions Committee is charged with the essential function of evaluating candidates for admission to the Marshall University Joan C. Edwards School of Medicine (MUJCESOM) and to ensuring the exacting standards and mission that MUJCESOM values. It is the responsibility of the Admissions Committee to assure that our medical school selects students with academic qualities that will allow for success in their medical studies, as well as attributes and experiences that will result in a skilled and empathic physician with a high degree of professionalism and strong communication skills. It is the goal of the faculty, through the work of this committee, to admit students who will make a positive contribution to the educational environment of MUJCESOM.

1. For the admissions process to work appropriately, the process must be free of external influence and conflicts of interest. While fulfilling the Committee responsibilities, the faculty, staff, students, and community members are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional integrity. To that end, the Admissions Committee has developed this policy to ensure the integrity of the admissions process.
2. Each member of the Admissions Committee, the Admissions Interview Team and the admissions staff members shall be given a copy of this policy to review annually. Each member shall be asked to sign an acknowledgement of receipt and review of the policy, and as a sign of commitment to follow it in all business associated with the admissions process.
3. CONFIDENTIALITY
    - All functions of the Admissions Committee are to be held in confidence by members of the Admissions Committee, per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines. Information gathered and/or discussed during the admissions process shall only be disseminated to those individuals with a need to know to ensure a lawful and effective admissions process.

- Members of the Admissions Committee, the Admissions Interview Team, the admissions staff, and members of the staff in Information and Technology Services, are entrusted with access to information provided by, and on behalf of, applicants to MUJCESOM. This may include, but is not limited to transcripts, letters of recommendation, student essays, and various other institutional and personal documents. Members of the Admissions Committee, Admissions Interview Team and admissions staff engage in discussions and deliberations regarding the qualifications of current and past applicants to the School. Whether information comes in written or verbal form, whether or not it is marked “confidential,” and

regardless of the medium of storage, all such information, including all discussions and deliberations of the Admissions Committee, is deemed by MUJCESOM to be "Confidential Information." The disclosure of Confidential Information to anyone outside of the Admissions Committee or admissions staff, including other members of Marshall University Joan C Edwards School of Medicine faculty and staff, as well as the applicant and his/her family members, is prohibited.

- Interviews and Admissions Committee Meetings are closed meetings. If these occur virtually, committee members are responsible for securing a quiet and private place to meet and must ensure that no other parties enter the area at any time.

4. CONFLICT OF INTEREST
    - The JCESOM recognizes that the admissions process does not, and should not, operate "blindly." In fact, the admission process for a doctoral program will frequently consider the "fit' between a prospective student's interests and those of the program. However, the admissions process should consider only academic and programmatic considerations when admitting students, while providing equal opportunities and treatment to all prospective applicants. Admissions decisions on each candidate to the medical school must be made without the influence of political or financial factors with respect to any member of the admissions committee. Attention should be paid to the avoidance of a real or apparent conflict of interest in the performance of duties related to the admissions process.

- "Conflict of Interest" is defined as published by the Institute of Medicine as a set of circumstances that creates risk that professional judgment or actions regarding a primary interest be unduly influenced by a secondary interest. Primary interests include promoting and protecting research integrity, welfare of patients, and quality of medical education. Secondary interests include financial gain, desire for professional advancement, recognition for personal achievement, and favors to friends, family, or colleagues. Admissions committee members have a responsibility to avoid real or apparent conflict of interest in the selection of candidates for admission. Faculty, staff, students, and community members are expected to uphold the highest standards of professional integrity and to avoid any financial, supervisory, advisory, mentorship, personal relationships, or acceptance of gifts that may constitute a conflict of interest. To support this commitment, the Admissions Committee members and Admissions Interview Team members are annually required to sign the Conflict-of-Interest policy. Any Admissions Committee member or Admissions Interview Team member with a first degree relative applying for medical school at the MUJCESOM must recuse themselves for the entire admissions cycle. When a member becomes aware of an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest involving an applicant, the member must promptly notify the Admissions Office or Senior Associate Dean for Admissions. The member shall not participate in the applicant's interview, evaluation, discussion, scoring, or admissions decision. The Admissions Office will document the recusal and determine whether any additional action is necessary.

- In the event any admissions committee member or staff member becomes aware of conduct that could constitute a conflict of interest on the part of an Admissions Committee member, he or she must report the infraction to the Senior Associate Dean for Admissions, the Senior Associate Dean for Admissions, Advising, and Student Life or the Dean of the Medical School immediately. These deans shall investigate the allegation and take action to ensure the integrity of the admissions process.
- Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action including but not limited to 1) Counseling the individual involved; 2) Written reprimand, entered into the faculty/medical student record; 3) Banning the violator from membership on the Admissions Committee; 4) Requiring the violator to return any monies received from the improper outside relationship; 5) Requiring the violator to complete additional training on ethics/conflict of interest; 6) Termination for cause. The action will depend upon the seriousness of the violation, whether the violation is the first or repeat offense, and whether the violator knowingly violated this policy or attempted to hide the violation. Any disciplinary action taken hereunder shall follow the established procedures of the University and/or MUJCESOM.

Signature (required)

Date (required)
Name (required)

Policy was reviewed, revised, and adopted by the Admissions Executive Committee on July 10, 2013. Policy will be forwarded in August to the Admissions Committee for adoption. The Policy was reviewed, revised, and adopted by the Admissions Committee October 29th, 2013. Revised December 6, 2018. Revised September 22, 2021. Revised August 2026. Approved by Admissions Committee 9/29/2026. Approved by Dean 9/30/2026.