

# Student Financial Aid - Employee Code of Conduct

## Policy No. 10-05-001

**Effective Date: September 22, 2015**

### 1. Purpose

OHSU employees are expected to act in the best interest of OHSU students. This includes advocating for appropriate and compliant student loan access. Federal regulations, in the form of in the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), mandate the adoption of a student loan Code of Conduct that prohibits a conflict of interest with respect to any student educational loan. Additional requirements may also be imposed by OHSU's institutional Code of Conduct, conflict of interest policies and state law.

OHSU does not participate in any preferred lender arrangement for any student educational loan. Any OHSU employee with responsibilities with respect to any educational loan will comply with the provisions of this Code of Conduct.

This Student Financial Aid Code of Conduct prohibits:

- A. Revenue-sharing arrangements with any lender for any student education loan.
- B. Employees with responsibilities with respect to any educational loan from receiving gifts from a lender, a guarantor, or a loan servicer.
- C. An employee with responsibilities with respect to any educational loan from accepting any fee, payment, or other financial benefit as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement or other contract to provide services to a lender.
- D. Direct borrowers to particular lenders or delaying loan certifications.
- E. Requesting or accepting from any lender any offer of funds to be used for private education loans, including funds for an opportunity pool loan as described in 34 CFR 601.21(c)(5)(ii), to students in exchange for the institution providing concessions or promises regarding providing the lender with:
  - 1) A specified number of private education loans;
  - 2) A specified loan volume of such loans; or
  - 3) A preferred lender arrangement for such loans.
- F. Requesting or accepting from any lender any assistance with call center staffing or financial aid office staffing, except that the preceding does not prohibit the acceptance of:
  - 1) Professional development training;
  - 2) Providing educational counseling materials, financial literacy materials, or debt management materials to students, provided that such materials disclose to students the identification of any lender that assisted in preparing or providing such materials;or

3) Staffing services on a short-term, nonrecurring basis to assist with financial aid related functions during emergencies, including State-declared or Federally-declared natural disasters, and other localized disasters and emergencies identified by the Secretary of Education.

G. All employees of the Office of Student Financial Aid and any OHSU employees with responsibilities with respect to any educational loan who serve on an advisory board, commission, or group established by a lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, are prohibited from receiving anything of value from the lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, except that the employee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses, as that term is defined 34 CFR 668.16(d)(2)(ii), incurred in servicing on such advisory board, commission or group.

H. Actions that create a conflict of interest with the responsibilities of an employee with respect to any educational loan.

## 2. Definitions

***Gifts related to financial aid:*** The term gift includes any gratuity, cash (or cash equivalent), favor, discount, entertainment, travel, hospitality, loan, or other item having value. Even gifts of de minimus value cannot be accepted. This includes a gift of services, transportation, lodging, or meals, whether provided in kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred. A gift to a family member of an employee, or to any other individual based on that individual's relationship with the employee, is considered a gift if the gift is given with the knowledge and acquiescence of the employee and the employee has reason to believe the gift was given because of the official position of the employee.

The term "gift" does not include any of the following:

A. Standard material, activities, or programs on issues related to a loan, default aversion, default prevention, or financial literacy, such as a brochure, a workshop, or other training;

B. Food, refreshments, training or informational material provided as an integral part of a training session that is designed to improve the service of a lender, guarantor, or servicer, if such training contributes to the professional development of the staff member.

C. Favorable terms, conditions and borrower benefits on an educational loan provided to a student employed by OHSU if such terms, conditions, or benefits are comparable to those provided to all students of OHSU.

D. Entrance and exit counseling services provided to students to meet OHSU's responsibilities of 34 CFR 682.604(f) and 682.604(g), as long as the staff are in control of the counseling and such counseling does not promote the products and services of any specific lender;

E. Philanthropic contributions to OHSU from a lender, servicer or guarantor that are unrelated to student educational loans or any contribution from a lender, servicer, or guarantor, that is not made in exchange for any advantage related to student educational loans and that is made to and in compliance with the policies of OHSU and the OHSU Foundation;

F. State education grants, scholarships, or financial aid funds administered by or on behalf of a State.

## 3. Responsibilities

On an annual basis, the Office of Student Financial Aid shall disseminate this OHSU Student Financial Aid Code of Conduct Policy to staff of the Office of Student Financial Aid and to any staff with responsibilities with respect to any educational loan to ensure staff is annually informed of the requirements. All staff of the Office of Student Financial Aid and all OHSU staff members with responsibilities with respect to education loans will comply with the provisions of the Student Financial Aid Code of Conduct as outlined in this policy. The Office of Student Financial Aid shall ensure that the Student Financial Aid Code of Conduct is published prominently on the OHSU website.

#### **4. Procedures**

Consistent with Section 1 of this policy, all employees of the Office of Student Financial Aid and any OHSU employees with responsibilities with respect to any educational loan may receive reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred in serving on such advisory board, commission or group. All employees receiving reimbursements must notify the Director of Financial Aid for record keeping and reporting purposes.

Annually, the Office of Student Financial Aid must report to the Department of Education any such reasonable expenses paid or provided to any employee of the Office of Student Financial Aid or any OHSU employee who has responsibilities with respect to education loans or other student financial aid of the institution. The report must include:

- A. The amount of each specific instance of reasonable expenses paid or provided;
- B. The name of the financial aid official, other employee, or agent to whom the expenses were paid or provided;
- C. The dates of the activity for which the expenses were paid or provided; and
- D. A brief description of the activity for which the expenses were paid or provided.

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**Related Regulations: 34 CFR 601.21, 668.16 and 682.604**

**Implementation Date: September 22, 2015**

**Responsible Office: Office of Student Financial Aid**