



**AMERICAN ACADEMY
OF OPHTHALMOLOGY**

The Eye M.D. Association



***COMMITTEE
MEMBER
HANDBOOK***

2012

To advance the lifelong learning and professional interests of ophthalmologists ensuring that the public can obtain the best possible eye care.

American Academy of Ophthalmology
Mission Statement

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A. Guidelines for Committee Membership

- All committee members shall be voting fellows, voting members or international members of the Academy.
- Individuals holding other classifications of membership in the Academy and nonmembers of the Academy may serve on Academy committees as consultants. Consultants may be appointed on the basis of expertise that enables the individual to make a significant contribution to the committee's work. Academy membership is not a requirement for appointment as a consultant; however, specific approval from the Senior Secretary or Executive Vice President is needed.
- Committee membership should be limited to seven members, including the chair and consultants.*
- Committee chairs, committee members and consultants are appointed for one calendar year, with reappointment based on significant contributions to the committee.
- Committee chairs, committee members and consultants may be reappointed to serve a maximum of five one-year terms on a committee.* If a committee member is appointed as chair, that member is eligible to serve a maximum of an additional five years as chair.
- To ensure that all committee members are not replaced in the same year, thereby losing continuity, you are encouraged to replace at least one member each year.
- Members should serve on no more than two Academy committees.*

*Requests for exceptions to these guidelines must be submitted to the Board of Trustees at the September board meeting.

Reaffirmed by: The Board of Trustees, June 1992

Revised & Approved by: The Board of Trustees, February 1996

Revised & Approved by: The Board of Trustees, September 2002

Revised & Approved by: The Board of Trustees, September 2003

B. Responsibilities of Committee Members

Committees are the backbone of the Academy. In order for any committee to function at full capacity it is crucial that each member fulfill his or her responsibilities.

Each committee member should:

- Support and further the goals and objectives of the American Academy of Ophthalmology
- Be an active member of the ophthalmic community and be knowledgeable and aware of factors in the external environment that may affect the committee's activities
- Be receptive to the concerns, interests, and ideas of Academy members
- Devote the time and effort required to accomplish the committee's objectives
- Attend all committee meetings and participate in all committee conference calls unless excused by the chair; excused absences should not exceed one meeting/call per year
- Pay membership dues in a timely fashion (see Section F)
- Declare any possible conflict of interest with the issue(s) being discussed and to recuse themselves from any participation or deliberation on the matter other than to respond to question of fact as may be directed by the committee chair
- Fulfill committee assignments on a timely basis
- Provide assistance and materials as requested by Academy staff

■ The Role of Consultants

Consultants are most often nonmembers of the Academy who, because of their special expertise, are asked to assist a committee. Consultants are appointed through the same process as members. Consultants have the same responsibilities as committee members, but do not have voting privileges.

C. Travel Expense Policies for Volunteers

■ Purpose

The Academy's travel expense policies serve as guidelines for the reimbursement of expenses in conjunction with Academy-related business (**other than for the Annual Meeting**) and to ensure compliance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations. In general, the Academy will reimburse necessary, actual and reasonable expenses for individuals traveling on Academy business. Academy department directors or individuals they designate are responsible for reviewing submitted expenses and for determining which expenses are allowable based on these travel expense policies.

The following policies were approved by the Academy's Board of Trustees in June 1992 & revised September 2002.

■ General

- To be reimbursed for expenses incurred, a signed *Request for Travel Expense Reimbursement* form should be submitted as soon as possible after the completion of the business travel, but not later than 60 days after the travel has been completed. **Whenever possible, expenses should be documented by receipts. All expenses over \$25 must be documented by an original receipt (credit card statements are no longer acceptable as documentation).**
- Individuals serving on committees from outside the US will **not** receive travel expense reimbursement from the Academy without EVP authorization.
- Questions concerning expenses not covered by these policies should be directed to the appropriate department director, the designated staff member, or the Academy's chief financial officer.

- An individual traveling on Academy business is responsible for any expense incurred by an accompanying relative or friend, including, but not limited to, airfare, additional room charges, and meals.

■ Air Fare

- Individuals traveling on Academy business are required to **purchase airline tickets at the lowest available non-refundable fare**. Generally, the farther in advance a ticket is booked, the lower the airfare. If the Academy makes changes to the meeting schedule that require an individual to change travel plans, the Academy will reimburse any additional charges or penalties that are incurred.
- The Academy provides reimbursement only for coach airfare (i.e., not for business or first class).
- Exceptions to these policies pertaining to airfare will be granted on a case-by-case basis for illness, family emergency, or other extraordinary circumstances.
- An individual may combine Academy business with personal travel, provided that any additional cost associated with the personal travel is paid by the individual. Subject to prior Academy approval, the total cost of business and personal air fare will be reimbursed if such cost is equal to or less than that which would have been incurred for Academy business alone.
- For individuals who use private airplanes while traveling on Academy business, the Academy will reimburse the equivalent of the lowest (14-day advance purchase) available coach air fare.

■ Hotels

- All meeting arrangements must be made by the Academy to ensure that available discounts are realized.

- Generally, hotel room rate and tax will be billed directly to the Academy. Incidental expenses should be charged to the individual's credit card and, if appropriate, submitted for reimbursement.
- When a committee member for personal reasons chooses an alternative hotel to that selected by the Academy, lodging expenses above the daily rate arranged by the Academy will not be reimbursed.
- When a volunteer is traveling on Academy business other than a committee meeting, the Academy will reimburse reasonable and necessary hotel costs, including room, tax, and reimbursable incidentals.

■ Meals

- Generally meals provided in conjunction with a meeting are intended for members and staff, unless otherwise indicated by the committee chair.
- When a social or dinner is held in conjunction with a meeting, one guest per member or staff may attend that event, with the approval of the committee chair.
- If a meal is provided in conjunction with a scheduled meeting, no individual expenses for that meal will be reimbursed.
- The cost of meals while traveling (breakfast, lunch, and dinner which are not provided by the Academy) should be reasonable **and documented by receipts whenever possible. Any meal over \$25 must be documented by an *original* receipt.**
- Business-related meals and entertainment (i.e., those that have a specific business purpose) must be documented in accordance with IRS regulations to be eligible for reimbursement. Such documentation must include the date, place, people present, their business relationship to the Academy, and the business purpose.

■ Ground Transportation

- The Academy encourages individuals to use the most economical form of transportation available, such as public transportation, hotel shuttles, or taxis. In general, the Academy does not reimburse for auto rentals except when required for business reasons or when they are less expensive than other forms of transportation.
- When rental autos are used, collision damage waiver (CDW) coverage should be purchased unless the individual uses a credit card that provides such coverage automatically.
- Individuals using personal autos on Academy business will be reimbursed at the rate currently allowed by the IRS.

■ Incidental Expenses

- The Academy will reimburse **reasonable** expenses for
 - * Ground transportation to/from the individual's home and the airport and to/from the airport and the meeting location
 - * Tips for sky caps, bellmen, etc.
 - * Luggage fees
 - * Necessary telephone charges
 - * Parking when a personal or rental auto is used and reimbursed
 - * Other incidental expenses subject to adequate documentation
- Examples of incidental expenses that will **not** be reimbursed include
 - * Hotel and airline movies
 - * Dry cleaning/laundry, greens fees, tennis court fees, ski lift tickets, health clubs, spa fees, etc.
 - * Reading material not directly related to Academy business
- **Whenever possible, incidental expenses should be documented by receipts regardless of amount. Any expense greater than \$25 must be documented by an original receipt.**
- All incidental expenses submitted for reimbursement are subject to review and approval by the Academy.

D. Representing the Academy

Committee members are viewed as representatives of the Academy. So as not to inadvertently misrepresent the Academy, it is important that you choose your words carefully and distinguish your personal views from those of the Academy.

Speakers at Academy courses or functions should not make remarks that could be interpreted as being prejudicial against a group or an individual on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, marital status, physical handicap, or medical condition.

Please review the policy statements: *Policy for Academy*, *Guidelines for the Avoidance of Inadvertent Anticompetitive Conduct*, and *Diversity Policy* (on the following pages) before speaking on behalf of the Academy.

POLICY STATEMENT

Policy for Academy Leaders

Policy:

It is the policy of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, subject to ongoing review and periodic modification by the Board of Trustees, that each Academy Trustee, Secretary, committee chair, committee member, councilor, and representative to other organizations (Academy Leader) has an obligation of loyalty and fairness to the Academy and its members as well as an obligation to discharge the duties of an Academy Leader in good faith and in a manner that is in the best interests of the Academy and its members.

Background:

The American Academy of Ophthalmology and its membership have benefited enormously from the countless hours of volunteer work Academy Leaders have devoted in service to Academy programs and activities. The quality and value of these programs are a direct reflection of these leaders and the staff.

In nominating members to serve on the Board of Trustees, and in selecting members to serve on its secretariats, committees, and task forces, the Academy seeks individuals with the experience, skills, and knowledge necessary to do the job. Equally important, the Academy selects those individuals who have a reputation for excellence, both in the quality of their efforts and in their ethical standards.

In recent years, physicians' roles have expanded beyond the traditional parameters of clinical care. In many instances, physicians are assuming leadership, consulting, or significant equity positions in business, which potentially impact or are impacted by Academy activities. If the Academy were to select only Leaders not involved in such business ventures, it would seriously limit its ability to use the most capable and experienced individuals, which would not be in the best interests of Academy members.

Evaluation:

This Policy Statement is intended to maintain the standard of excellence demonstrated by all Academy Leaders and to protect these Leaders from allegations of wrongdoing in the discharge of their duties.

Recommendation:

All references herein to an Academy Leader means the Academy Leader, a relative of the Leader, an organization in which the Leader or a relative has a material financial interest, and an organization of which the Leader or a relative is a director, trustee, officer, or employee. The term "commercial" excludes pursuits that are predominantly clinical, scientific, or academic.

As a condition of eligibility for initial election or appointment to a position of Academy leadership and for continued service in that position, each Academy Leader shall do the following:

1. Disclose to the Academy the existence and nature of any personal or family interest in any activity that is, or reasonably could be expected to be, subject to this Policy Statement.
2. Disclose to the Academy board or committee or to the council on which the Academy Leader serves the existence and nature of any personal commercial interest, with respect to any actual or proposed contract or arrangement between the Academy and the Academy Leader, or any proposed endorsement by the Academy of any product or service of the Academy Leader, in advance of any discussion of or decision regarding the proposed contract, arrangement, or endorsement by that body, and abstain from the discussion and the decision.
3. Refrain from misusing the position as an Academy Leader to solicit, directly or indirectly, commercial opportunities for the Leader in the following ways:
 - a) By accepting the invitation of any professional or other organization to speak, at an educational or scientific meeting of the Academy or other organization, in the capacity of an Academy Leader and, in connection with that activity, referring to or soliciting, or causing or permitting others to refer to or solicit on the Leader's behalf commercial opportunities for the Academy Leader.
 - b) By soliciting or carrying out commercial opportunities for the Academy Leader and, in connection with that activity, referring to or causing or permitting others to refer to the Leader's position as an Academy Leader. In order to avoid the appearance of impropriety, there must be a clear separation by time and locale of the activities undertaken as a Leader of the Academy from activities undertaken as a commercial interest.
4. Honor and keep confidential all privileged or confidential information of or involving the Academy that is obtained by the Academy Leader by reason of or in connection with that person's position as an Academy Leader, and shall not use any of such information in connection with the Leader's commercial activities or disclose any of such information to any person or organization for any purpose whatsoever.
5. In the case of an Academy Trustee or Secretary only, avoid and refrain from any personal appearance by, or causing or permitting others to refer to, the Academy Trustee or Secretary as an Academy Leader in connection with an exhibit at any Academy meeting that promotes the commercial services or products of the Academy Trustee or Secretary.

Revised and Approved by: Board of Trustees, September 1997
Revised and Approved by: Board of Trustees, February 2001
Revised and Approved by: Board of Trustees, January 2007

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POLICY STATEMENT

Guidelines for the Avoidance of Inadvertent Anticompetitive Conduct

Policy:

The American Academy of Ophthalmology, with the advice of its legal counsel, has adopted guidelines that must be followed to avoid inadvertent anticompetitive conduct that could be attributed to the Academy. These guidelines shall apply to all of the Academy's fellows, members, trustees, officers, councilors, committee members, and representatives to other professional or governmental organizations, and employees.

Background:

The Supreme Court of the United States has held that a trade association would be liable under the federal antitrust laws for treble damages arising from unlawful acts of one of its representatives, even if those acts were not authorized by the organization, if the representative had the "apparent authority" (viewed from the perspective of outsiders) to speak or act in the name of and with the apparent endorsement or backing of the organization. The Court held that the appearance of authority could be created, for example, if the representative's unlawful acts were statements written on the organization's letterhead or if other writings or oral statements were made in the representative's capacity with the organization. The Court's holding applies to all membership organizations, including the Academy.

Evaluation:

It is essential that all personnel and representatives of the Academy be specifically aware of the types of conduct that could be found to constitute anticompetitive conduct and that they adhere to straightforward guidelines designed to avoid inadvertent anticompetitive conduct and the possible attribution of that conduct to the Academy.

Guidelines:

Except when expressly authorized in advance by the Board of Trustees of the Academy or in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees, the following guidelines shall prevail.

1. Discussions as described below shall not be conducted at any formal or informal meeting of the fellows and members, the Board of Trustees, the Council, a Council Section, or a committee of the Academy or by any Academy representative to any formal or informal meeting of any other professional or governmental organization, and must be avoided in all other contacts with actual or potential competitors.

a) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, fixing, raising, depressing, pegging, or stabilizing prices or fees; or any element of prices or fees; or establishing minimum or maximum prices or fees;

b) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, either withholding patronage or services from or otherwise discouraging dealings with, or encouraging exclusive

dealings with, any health care provider or group of health care providers, any supplier or purchaser or group of suppliers or purchasers of health care products or services, any actual or potential competitor or group of actual or potential competitors, or any patient, group of patients, or other segment of the public;

c) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, allocating or dividing geographic or service markets, customers, or patients;

d) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, restricting, limiting, prohibiting, or sanctioning advertising, or soliciting that is not false, misleading, or deceptive;

e) Discussions about, or that may have the effect of, discouraging entry into or competition in any segment of the health care market;

f) Discussions about whether or not the practices of any member, actual or potential competitor, or other person are "unethical" or "anticompetitive"; and

g) Discussions about the safety, quality, or efficacy of the products or services of, or the prices or fees charged by, any health care provider or group of health care providers, any supplier or purchaser or group of suppliers or purchasers of health care products or services, or any actual or potential competitor or group of actual or potential competitors. This does not restrict or prohibit study and reasonable discussion and assessment of the safety or efficacy of technology, drugs, and devices.

2. Minutes shall be prepared and maintained for all meetings of the fellows and members, the Board of Trustees, the Council, Council Sections, and committees of the Academy. Except for matters protected by the attorney-client privilege, all discussions conducted and all decisions reached at those meetings shall be reflected in the minutes of those meetings. Academy representatives to other organizations shall take reasonable steps to ensure that minutes of the meetings of those organizations are prepared and maintained, except for matters protected by the attorney-client privilege, and that all discussions conducted and decisions reached at those meetings are reflected in the minutes of those meetings.

3. No fellow, member, trustee, officer, councilor, committee member, representative, or employee of the Academy shall have the authority to, or shall, issue any written statement on Academy letterhead to anyone on any of the subjects enumerated in item 1 above.

4. No fellow, member, trustee, officer, councilor, committee member, representative, or employee of the Academy shall have the authority to, or shall, issue any oral or written statement to anyone on any of the subjects enumerated in item 1 above, in which or in connection with which the person issuing the statement identifies his or her affiliation with the Academy or purports to act on behalf of, in the name of, or with the endorsement of or backing of the Academy.

5. Notwithstanding anything apparently or expressly to the contrary contained in the preceding items, a person who is affiliated with the Academy and who has been specifically

authorized by the Academy or its Board of Trustees or its Executive Committee to communicate in the name of and on behalf of the Academy to representatives of the executive and legislative branches of government with respect to administrative or legislative proposals that are under consideration by those branches and are of direct concern to the Academy, shall not be required to comply with item 3 or item 4 above with respect to any oral or written communication that satisfies the following conditions:

- a) Is first approved by the Board of Trustees or in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees; and
- b) Is related solely to the substance or merits of a proposal that is then the subject of administrative or legislative hearings or proceedings being conducted by the executive or legislative branch of government and that does or could, if adopted, relate to the science and art of medicine pertaining to the eye and related structures or to the provision of or in payment for services involving prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of disorders affecting the eye and related structures; and
- c) Is made by that person as a participant in those hearings or proceedings and solely in connection with that participation; and
- d) Is made directly and solely to a representative of the executive or legislative branch of government who is a participant in those hearings or proceedings with copies of such communications provided only to persons designated by the Board of Trustees of the Academy or in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees.

6. An exact copy of each written statement described in items 3, 4, or 5 above and an exact transcription of each oral statement described in items 4 or 5 above, whether or not the statement has been expressly authorized in advance either by the Board of Trustees of the Academy or in a manner determined by the Board of Trustees, shall be furnished to the Academy's Executive Vice President immediately after the statement is issued, together with a complete record of its distribution.

Approved by: Board of Trustees, February 1988
Reaffirmed by: Board of Trustees, May 1994
Reaffirmed by: Board of Trustees, September 1997
Reaffirmed by: Board of Trustees, February 2001
Revised and
Approved by: Board of Trustees, June 2007

POLICY STATEMENT

Relationships with Other Organizations

A primary goal of the American Academy of Ophthalmology is to provide continuing medical education (CME) to enhance the ophthalmologist's ability to furnish the highest possible quality of eye care for patients. Therefore, relationships with other organizations must not jeopardize the Academy's standing as a respected organization.

Policy

When appropriate and desirable, the American Academy of Ophthalmology may solicit or accept financial or other support from both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations in order to develop and/or improve activities and programs that are consistent with the Academy's mission statement. All arrangements for financial or other support must fall within the guidelines of this policy statement or be reviewed by the Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees. Support for all CME programs and activities must adhere to the *Standards for Commercial Support of Continuing Medical Education* of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). In addition, with respect to gifts to physicians and the conflicts inherent in such gifts, the Board of Trustees has adopted the American Medical Association's (AMA) guidelines as outlined in its publication entitled *Gifts to Physicians from Industry*.

Background

Financial and other support from corporations, foundations, and other organizations can contribute significantly to both the quality and scope of Academy programs, activities, and services. The Academy shares many common goals with other organizations, including corporations in ophthalmic industry, and it is appropriate for the Academy to cultivate and maintain appropriate and ethical relationships with these organizations. Such relationships must not pose conflicts of interest for the Academy, its officers, staff, members, or the sponsoring organizations, and they must be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Academy's strategic plan.

Definitions

The Academy may enter into different types of relationships or arrangements with other organizations as defined below.

Sponsorship: A financial donation to the Academy to support an Academy product or service with appropriate recognition for the donor.

Joint Sponsorship: A joint effort in which both (or all) organizations or institutions are integrally involved in planning and developing an Academy program.

Joint Sponsorship for CME: The ACCME accredits the Academy to provide CME to physicians. The ACCME publication *Essentials and Standards* includes definitions and requirements specific to the joint sponsorship of CME. These are supported by the Academy's *Guidelines for Joint Sponsorship of Continuing Medical Education Activities*. All joint-sponsorship CME efforts must conform to these ACCME requirements and Academy guidelines.

Cooperative Relationship: A relationship in which the degree of involvement of one organization or institution in the planning, developing, or implementing of a

program or service is less than that of the primary sponsoring organization or institution. The terms "in cooperation with" or "cooperating organizations" are used to describe such relationships.

Endorsement: Approval by the Academy of, or the loan of the Academy name to, a program or service developed by another organization. Endorsements must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Alliance or Collaboration: A joint effort of two entities that benefit from sharing profit, cost-savings, service, royalties, license, or name recognition.

Guidelines

1. In general, the Academy will proactively choose its priorities for entering into relationships and arrangements with other organizations; however, the Academy will also consider opportunities presented by other organizations.
2. All proposed arrangements and relationships must fit the guidelines outlined here or be reviewed by the Academy Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Board of Trustees, in order to ensure that acceptance of funds or use of Academy funds would not have a negative influence on Academy programs or policy or be inconsistent with the Academy's mission and goals.
3. Proposed arrangements and relationships must not compromise the Academy's reputation, the privacy of its members, the existence or identity of the Academy, its tax status, or its trademarks.
4. Participation in a specific arrangement or relationship does not in any way imply Academy approval of an organization's general policies, nor does it imply that the Academy will exert any influence to advance the organization's interests outside the substance of the arrangement itself. The Academy's name and logo may not be used in a manner that would express or imply Academy endorsement of the organization or its policies.
5. The Academy accepts funds or royalties only if acceptance does not pose a conflict of interest and in no way impacts the objectivity of the Academy, its members, officers, or employees. If sponsorship funds are supplying all or part of an employee or independent contractor's compensation, each such employee or independent contractor must disclose any financial or fiduciary relationship with the sponsoring organization. This disclosure includes loans, gifts, or income from the organization; investments of \$2000 or more in the organization; and any position with the organization, such as a director, officer, partner, consultant, trustee, or employee.
6. The Academy does not endorse or certify health or medical products or medical services produced by other companies and marketed to consumers. In no case will the Academy's name or logo be used to promote or endorse a medical product for consumers produced by others without approval of the Board of Trustees.
7. The Academy does not endorse programs developed by other organizations or institutions, except as determined by the Board of Trustees.
8. The Academy does not actively seek endorsements of Academy programs or services from other organizations or institutions except as determined by the Board of Trustees.
9. In accordance with ACCME standards, the Academy will conduct all CME programs

independently and without influence of or control by other supporting organizations. Supporting organizations shall not influence or control the program planning, program content, or execution of the activity; the program must be free of commercial bias for or against any product; and any product discussion must be objective, balanced, and scientifically rigorous. Corporate sponsors may not engage in promotional activities in the CME program location or in the CME materials, and no promotional materials may be disseminated during the CME activities. Since the Annual Meeting printed programs are not designated as CME activities, corporate advertising will be permitted in the printed programs.

10. In accordance with the AMA's guidelines outlined in *Gifts to Physicians from Industry* (adopted and approved by the Academy's Board of Trustees) and the ACCME *Standards for Commercial Support for Continuing Medical Education* (an element of the Academy's accreditation to provide CME), funding from industry to underwrite the costs of CME conferences or professional meetings should be made to the Academy and not to individual physicians. Subsidies from industry should not be accepted to pay for the costs of travel, lodging, or other personal expenses of the physicians who are attending CME conferences or meetings. Subsidies for hospitality should not be accepted except for modest meals or social events that are held as part of a CME conference or meeting. Industry support for the costs of travel and lodging for attendees who might otherwise not be able to participate in an Academy event (e.g., ophthalmologists from countries or regions with developing economies) may in certain circumstances be considered appropriate; such situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
11. Organizations that provide financial support to the Academy may be recognized. Such corporate or foundation recognition regularly occurs in Academy publications and other appropriate forums. Recognition does not include any reference to the organization's products. The institutional acknowledgment may state the name, mission, and areas of clinical involvement of the company or institution, and it may include corporate logos and slogans if they do not promote the product.
12. The Academy retains editorial control over any information produced as part of relationships or arrangements with other organizations. All intellectual property resulting from sponsorship by another organization will be the property of the Academy unless the Board of Trustees has approved an agreement to the contrary. In every case, all materials in print, broadcast, or electronic media prepared by the supporting organization must be submitted to the Academy for written approval prior to release.
13. In addition to normal reviews as needed by legal counsel, the chief financial officer and the appropriate divisional vice president, the executive vice president shall be responsible for ensuring that arrangements and relationships with other organizations adhere to the guidelines adopted by the Board of Trustees.

Approved by:	Board of Trustees, June 1998
Revised and Approved by:	Board of Trustees, April 1999
Revised and Approved by:	Board of Trustees, February 2003
Revised and Approved by:	Board of Trustees, February 2007

POLICY STATEMENT

DIVERSITY POLICY

The Board of Trustees of the American Academy of Ophthalmology recognizes that this organization is best served by representation from the broadest possible diversity of member background, experience, and thoughts. As a policy, the Board of Trustees is committed to diverse representation on the Board of Trustees and its committees, councils, and staff without regard to race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, gender, or physical disability.

Approved by:	Board of Trustees
Revised and Approved by:	Board of Trustees, February 2002
Reapproved by:	Board of Trustees, February, 2007

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E. Conflict of Interest Policy

It is the policy of the Board of Trustees of the American Academy of Ophthalmology (hereinafter “the Academy”) that committee members, because of their fiduciary duty to the Academy, should refrain from exploiting opportunities that become available because of a committee member’s relationship with the Academy. Such opportunities should properly be made available only to the Academy. It is the intent of the Board that any corporate opportunities that belong to the Academy must be referred to it (does this mean referred to the Board or referred to the Academy? If it is to the Academy, should we say "referred to the Committee chair" or "referred to the Secretary responsible for the committee" ??) for action (or non-action).

Committee Chairs are responsible for enforcing the Academy’s conflict of interest policies and at each meeting committee chairs are required to get all committee participants to declare any possible conflict of interest related to the issue(s) being discussed and to recuse themselves from any participation or deliberation on the matter other than to respond to a question of fact as may be directed by the committee chair.

Committee chairmen are obligated to make sure that all of their committee participants have filed a financial disclosure instrument with the Office of the Executive Vice Presidents each appointment year. Please complete the [Committee Disclosure Statement Form](#) by the deadline indicated on your official appointment correspondence. Failure to complete this form by the deadline indicated on your official appointment correspondence will result in the revocation of your committee appointment. A record of your disclosure filings can be obtained by logging into the Academy’s website.

POLICY STATEMENT

IDENTIFICATION AND RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Introduction

The American Academy of Ophthalmology provides continuing medical education ("CME"), advocacy and public information to enhance the ophthalmologist's ability to deliver the highest possible quality of eye care for patients.

The Academy has a profound duty to its members, the larger medical community and the public to ensure the integrity of all of its scientific, educational, advocacy and consumer information activities and materials. Thus **each Academy Trustee, Secretary, committee Chair, committee member, councilor, and representative to other organizations ("Academy Leader")**, as well as the Academy staff and those responsible for organizing and presenting CME activities must disclose and manage conflicts of interest or the appearance of conflicts of interest that affect this integrity. Where such conflicts or perceived conflicts exist, they must be appropriately and fully disclosed and resolved.

I FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES OF POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- A. All Academy Leaders and providers of Academy-sponsored CME must submit a Financial Disclosure Form. In the context of this Conflict of Interest policy, "CME" encompasses the Academy's full spectrum of educational activities, including those qualifying for CME credit, as well as the Academy's non-credit-bearing educational initiatives, programming and products, including but not limited to O.N.E. development and content, practice management resources, quality of care research and publications, and *Journal* article authorship, selection and review.
- B. Members of the Board of Trustees and members of the Committee of Secretaries will be asked to disclose additional information on the Academy Leader Disclosure Form indicating whether their disclosed financial relationships are under or over ten thousand dollars at the time of disclosure. CME participants involved in the creation of Preferred Practice Patterns, Rapid Technical Assessments or other BOT-approved Academy guidelines ("Academy Guidelines") will complete the Academy Leaders Disclosure form and likewise indicate whether their disclosed financial relationships are under or over ten

thousand dollars at the time of disclosure. BOT and COS members and guideline authors/reviewers who are involved in other CME activities requiring a financial disclosure will make the same activity-related disclosure as other CME providers.

- C. The Academy staff shall send an annual reminder to Academy Leaders to submit an initial Academy Leader Disclosure Form, or to review and update the Disclosure on file. The Journal and Annual Meeting participants will follow the disclosure submission procedures established for these activities. The committee Secretary responsible for creation of an Academy Guideline will obtain an Academy Leader Disclosure Form from the Guideline's authors and reviewers.
- D. The Academy may disqualify anyone who does not complete (or revise as appropriate) the applicable disclosure form after a second reminder.**
 - 1. A second reminder will state that the individual may not participate in relevant Board, committee, Secretariat, Council, Academy Representative activities, or in planning, developing or delivering any Academy CME without a current Disclosure on file. In addition, such notice will explain the consequences of not providing the Disclosure.
 - 2. If the member does not provide adequate Disclosure within thirty days of the receipt of the second notice, the member will become ineligible to participate in the CME activity in any manner until the form is received. For Academy Leaders, failure to submit the Academy Leader Disclosure Form within thirty days of the second notice will disqualify the member from participation in the committee, other Academy body or representative activities until the disclosure is received. If the Academy Leader is unwilling to complete the form, (s)he will be asked to resign from the committee, other Academy body or representative position.
 - 3. The appropriate Secretary shall be notified of the disqualification. If the disqualification is of a Secretary, the disqualification shall be reported to the BOT Executive Committee.
- E. Academy Leaders and CME participants are responsible for updating their Disclosures throughout the year for every substantial change in actual or potential conflicts of interest, whether financial or non-financial.

II AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATION OF ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS

- A. All Disclosures of financial and potentially relevant non-financial Relationships shall be sent to the Committee/Taskforce chairperson ("Chair") responsible for the planning and implementation of Academy activities.**

- B. The Chair shall alert all reviewers, panelists, committee members, and authors of all relevant financial and non-financial conflicts of interest relevant to a particular activity.
- C. **The Chair shall periodically remind all who are involved in planning and implementation of an activity to be cognizant of others' financial and non-financial disclosures, and encourage all to identify and discuss potential conflicts.**
- D. **As set forth below, Academy staff will ensure that all financial relationships with all health-related entities are made known at beginning of every activity.**
- E. For print, web-based or recorded non-live materials ("Enduring Materials"), it is staff responsibility to ensure that adequate Financial Disclosures are included in each document.
- F. For Journal Activities, Editor and Journal staff shall follow their own disclosure procedures.
- G. **All Academy staff members whose responsibilities include staffing a committee, are required to include the list of financial relationships for their Committee members, including the Committee Chair, in any and all meeting agendas and minutes, including conference calls. At the beginning of each meeting/conference call, the Committee Chair should make note that the list is included in the agenda for everyone's reference.**
- H. For Live Activities, staff shall:
 - 1. Notify the activity organizer, all faculty, panelists, other presenters of their obligations to provide adequate disclosures.
 - 2. Establish and enforce a "first slide" policy to ensure Financial Disclosure is made know to all participants prior to the activity.
 - 3. Ensure that the intent of the "first slide" policy is served by adequate "dwell time" of the slide, commensurate with the length of the text shown; ideally with simultaneous verbal presentation of the first slide content.
 - 4. Establish and enforce a policy to ensure that anyone who speaks from the audience also discloses any relevant financial interests, verbally or by other adequate means, at the time that the comments are made

(moderators may need to prompt audience participants to disclose).

5. Monitor presentations as often as is practical to insure that the intent of the disclosure procedures is served, including recommendations for modifications in requirements as circumstances may require.
- I. Credit-bearing CME
1. All credit-bearing CME ("CB-CME") activities are planned under the guidance of an Academy committee.
 2. All CB-CME activities require the approval of a committee Chair.
 3. In the event that the Chair is conflicted, approval is granted by another designated member of the Committee who is not.
 4. The Academy CME Committee or other committee designated by the Board of Trustees shall review all Enduring Materials
 5. Staff will review checklists for all submissions before a credit code is assigned (based on the Academy-customized version of the CB-CME Activity Documentation Checklist)
 6. Every CB-CME activity must be evaluated by participant questionnaires.
 7. Every evaluation questionnaire must address the participant's impression of the presence or absence of commercial bias.
 8. The Observer Report Form shall include a request for the Observer's impression of the presence or absence of commercial bias. The Academy CME committee or other committee designated by the Board of Trustees will be advised of any significant allegations of commercial bias, based upon the frequency of the participant mentioned, and the specifics of the allegation.

III MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS

A. For CME activities, a system of peer review, committee review, staff review and cross-checks to identify and recommend possible means of resolving a conflict shall be maintained.

1. The Course committees, Mid Year Forum Planning Group or Annual Meeting committees or their Board-approved designee body shall review all submissions and abstracts as well as the Faculty Financial Disclosure for Live Activities.
2. Objectivity and the use of best available evidence should be encouraged.

3. Each person involved in the planning or execution of a particular CME activity should be encouraged to make the Chair or other person responsible for the activity aware of the need to manage a specified conflict. For CB-CME activities, the Chair or responsible person shall review all Faculty Financial Disclosure Forms and course content prior to the activity.
4. If potential conflict of interest is detected, corrections will be recommended and implemented:
 - (a) Enduring Materials shall be edited as required.
 - (b) Live Activity Presenters shall be notified of concerns regarding conflict or potential conflict of interest prior to the activity and the Chair/Program Director and Faculty shall work together to resolve or manage that conflict. Some possible steps that can be taken are:
 - Have the content reviewed and revised as necessary by experts that do not have relationships with the entity where the conflict lies
 - Limit the presentation to pathophysiology and mechanisms of disease rather than therapeutic recommendations
 - Select another speaker to present clinical implications after the primary speaker (with COI) has reported scientific discovery
 - Change focus of the presentation so that the content is not about products or services of the COI
 - Limit the presentation to research results and assign another speaker with no COI to the broader implications of clinical care if the speaker with COI is a principal investigator on a project funded by industry
 - Ask the speaker with COI to recuse him/herself
 - Ask the speaker to divest him/herself of all financial interests that have created the COI
5. **If the steps in Section III A. 4 are not sufficient or applicable for managing the conflict or perceived conflict, or conflict is detected during a presentation the Chair or person responsible for a CME activity shall request that the Board of Trustees or a committee assigned by the BOT determine an appropriate response. The response may include:**
 - (a) **Official notification and warning for the first occurrence, unless there is a failure to submit a required disclosure, as set forth in Section I above, which requires disqualification;**
 - (b) **For repeat offenses - Banning for a period of 2 years of the individual from currently scheduled or future Academy CME activity;**

(c) The Academy CME committee will notify the Academy Board of Trustees of repeat offenders, with the recommendation that an ethics challenge be filed through the procedures set forth in the Code of Ethics.

B. Resolution of Disclosed Conflicts among Academy Leaders

The Academy recognizes that Leaders often have a wide range of medical, scholarly, humanitarian and financial relationships, and participate in organizations and activities outside of the Academy. As a natural consequence of these activities, conflicts or the perception of conflicts may arise from time to time for Academy Leaders. These conflicts may be disclosed by the Leader, or identified by another Leader in an atmosphere of cooperation, rather than confrontation. The goal of effective management of these conflicts is to arrive at a collaborative and consensual, resolution, as set forth in the procedures below.

1. The Academy Leader who discloses a conflict or potential conflict, or to whom a fellow Leader identifies a perceived conflict, prepares a statement describing the conflict and suggesting ways of resolving or managing it. If a challenged Leader believes that a conflict does not exist, a response may be submitted. If there is consensus that a conflict exists, methods for resolution include highly specific confidentiality agreements, recusal from specific discussions, activities or votes, voluntary resignation from committee Chair or other leadership positions or by other means. A "Statement of Conflict Management" is submitted by committee members to their Committee Chair, from a COS member to the COS Chair, and by BOT members to the BOT Executive Committee. If a chairperson or Executive Committee member is submitting the statement, the COS or BOT will appoint two of their members to review the Statement.
2. If the Statement of Conflict Management is accepted by the appropriate reviewer as sufficient to manage the conflict, the terms of the Statement will be accepted and distributed to the relevant committee or other Academy body.
3. If the Statement of Conflict Management is not accepted, then the reviewer will submit it to a three person review committee (Conflict Review Committee or "COR") comprised of a committee member, COS member and BOT member, appointed by the BOT Executive Committee. This review committee will work with the Academy Leader to revise the Statement of Conflict Management such that the resolution is acceptable to the Committee.
4. If the revised statement is acceptable, it shall be accepted and disseminated as above, with additional dissemination to be determined

by the "COR". Note that in some instances, an acceptable Statement may include the requirement that the Academy Leader step down from a particular position of Leadership.

5. If no revised statement is agreed to by the Academy Leader and the COR, the Academy Leader and one member of the COR will present their recommendations to the Executive Committee of the BOT, and will make a recommendation of resolution to the full BOT. The BOT vote will be binding on the Academy Leader.
6. Proposals for resolution of a conflict may not affect an Academy Leader's membership status. Egregious violations of this policy for which suspension or termination of membership may be appropriate shall be referred to the Ethics Committee, and shall be adjudicated as set forth in the Administrative Procedures of the Code of Ethics.
7. This resolution process shall apply to Academy Guideline participants.

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F. Leadership Dues Payment Procedures

Serving in a committee/leadership position in any of these organizations (AAO, AAOE, and ISRS) is considered a privilege. As such, committee members/leaders are expected to pay their dues in a timely fashion. Any committee member/leader who has not paid dues by August 31 will forfeit his/her committee/leadership position. Payment of dues after August 31 will not entitle the member to be reinstated as a leader in that calendar year, unless expressly approved by Executive Vice President/CEO.

Exceptions to this policy may be applied to international and military members who request to pay their dues at the annual meeting. Life members are allowed to have their annual fee waived; they would be allowed to continue to serve on a committee. Other exceptions may be granted by the Executive Vice President/CEO on a case-by-case basis.

G. Achievement Award Program

As a committee member, you qualify to receive points in the Achievement Award Program. The following explains the program and how you can earn an Achievement Award.

The Achievement Award Program recognizes individuals for their participation in Academy activities and their contributions to ophthalmology. This program uses a cumulative point system. An annually appointed Awards Committee is responsible for identifying individuals who have accumulated a specified number of points **and** who have made significant contributions to ophthalmology.

■ Earning Points for Consideration of an Achievement Award

The Achievement Award Program was established in 1953 to recognize individuals for their participation at the Annual Meeting. Today, the program recognizes individuals in more than 25 categories of contribution to the Academy. These categories include:

Annual Meeting:

- Instruction Course, Skills, or Breakfast with the Experts: Course Director, Senior Instructor, or Instructor
- Film or Video Production: Senior Author or Co-Author
- Scientific Paper Presentation: Senior Author, Co-Author, or Discussant
- Scientific Poster Presentation: Senior Author or Co-Author*
- Scientific E-Poster Presentation: Senior Author or Co-Author
- Scientific Exhibitor: Presenters*
- Symposia: Presiding Officer, Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, or Presenter
- Subspecialty Day: Chairperson, Moderator, Presenter, or Panelist

*Informational posters and exhibits are not awarded points.

Other categories of contribution for Academy service:

- Committee Members
- State Society Presidents
- Representatives
- Councilors
- Board of Trustees
- Participants in the Academy's Leadership Development Program
- State Society Presidents

- Authors, Co-Authors and Reviewers of Academy Educational Material

The program is based on a cumulative point system. One point is awarded for each area of contribution. Starting in 1998, an individual can earn a maximum of three points per year. (For example, if an individual serves on a committee and presents two papers, one instruction course and one poster during the Annual Meeting, they receive one point for committee participation, only one point for the papers, and one point for the instruction course. They could not receive a fourth point for the poster or the additional paper.)

Effective in 2000, any Fellow or Member who is or has been convicted of a felony shall automatically forfeit all points that may have been earned toward any Achievement Award Program prior to the date of conviction.

■ Achievement Awards Nomination Process

Achievement Award	10 points
Senior Achievement Award	30 points
Life Achievement Honor Award	60 points

Each year, the names of those individuals who have accumulated the required number of points are presented to the Awards Committee. Individuals who have accumulated 10 points are presented with the Achievement Award. Individuals who have accumulated 30 points are presented with the Academy's Senior Achievement Award.

Individuals who have accumulated 60 points are presented to the Awards Committee for consideration and determination of their significant contributions to ophthalmology. A two-thirds majority vote of the committee is required to nominate an individual for the Academy's Life Achievement Honor Award.

All award recipients are presented to the Board of Trustees. Nominees are notified of the board's determination before that year's Annual Meeting.

■ Receiving an Award

Each award recipient receives an award certificate. In addition, photographs of all Achievement Award recipients appear in the Annual Meeting Final Program. In addition, recipients' names are published in *EyeNet Magazine* and on the Academy's website. Lapel pins recognizing each category of award are available for sale.