

Applicable Rules

- **Ethics Code for Classified Employees:**
ER-MRS 24, Wis. Admin. Code
- **Ethics Code for Unclassified Employees:**
UWS 8, Wis. Admin. Code
- **Ethics Code for State Public Officials:**
Wis. Stat. § 19.45.

Other Resources:

- Employee handbook
- General Counsel Codes of Ethics for Employees of the University of Wisconsin System
www.uwsa.edu/gc-off/deskbook/ethics.htm
- University of Wisconsin System Policy on Institutional and Employee Relationships with Educational Loan Lenders
www.uwsa.edu/bor/policies/rpd/rpd13-5.htm



QUESTIONS ABOUT ETHICS: When in doubt about any ethical issue, talk to your supervisor.

Additional contacts:

Human resource directors/managers

Internal Audit Department

UW Office of General Counsel or
campus legal counsel

To download a copy of this brochure:
<http://www.uwex.uwc.edu/audit/issues/>

ETHICS IN THE WORKPLACE



Developed by the
Internal Audit Department

UNIVERSITY  WISCONSIN
COLLEGES

UW
Extension

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EMPLOYEE ETHICS

Because UW Colleges and UW-Extension are part of the University of Wisconsin System, employees are subject to ethics rules covering use of university resources, conflicts of interests and acceptance of gifts. As a general rule, an employee may not use his or her university position to gain private financial or other benefits for the employee, the employee's immediate family, or an outside organization. To avoid potential ethical violations:

ACCEPTANCE OF ITEMS OF VALUE: Don't accept items of value from a person or organization as a result of your employment at UW Colleges or UW-Extension. Anything of value includes money, property, favors, services, loans, promise of future employment, etc. This also includes food, drink, entertainment and anything else that creates the *appearance* that your official conduct may be influenced by the gift. This means:

▶ **Meals and Entertainment.** Don't accept lunch, other meals, or entertainment from vendors or prospective vendors, even if it is intended to aid you in discussing official business. If a meal or event is appropriate, it should be paid for by UW Colleges or UW-Extension through a Travel Expense Reimbursement form. Don't offer meals or entertainment to others to avoid negative perception concerning fiscal prudence.

▶ **Gifts and Gift Baskets.** Don't accept gifts, including birthday gifts, gift baskets, etc. While these gifts may be common marketing tools in corporate business, they create the wrong impression within a state agency. If a gift arrives, talk to your supervisor about gently declining the gift or asking the vendor to send it to a charitable organization.

▶ **Education and Travel.** In many cases, UW Colleges or UW-Extension employees may not accept vendor-paid travel. Vendor-paid travel should only be accepted by an employee after the situation has been reviewed and approved by the dean or division head. See UW System Financial Policy Paper (FPP) 30.

▶ **Fees, Honoraria and Expenses.** When the employee is acting as an official representative of the UW in the presentation of papers, talks, demonstrations, etc., any fees, honoraria and expenses reimbursed by non-UW sources must be deposited into the university accounts for the benefit of the UW Colleges or UW-Extension.

▶ **Items of Minimal Value.** Items of minimal value only (e.g., pens, cups, etc.) are not prohibited. Keep an eye on the appearance, however, of using a vendor-provided marketing item while at work.

▶ **Your Family.** The same rule regarding acceptance of items of value applies to members of your immediate family or household, if they receive the item as a result of your employment with UW Colleges or UW-Extension.

USE OF PUBLIC POSITION AND UNIVERSITY RESOURCES: Don't use public positions to gain anything of value. University resources such as office supplies, cell phones, meeting rooms, and work time should be used only for university purposes. Phone and e-mail may be used for minimal personal use consistent with university policies. Never use UW Colleges or UW-Extension resources, including workplace Internet access, e-mail and telephone, for outside work or political activities.

OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES: If you are an unclassified employee and you have an opportunity to do consulting or other work related to your area of expertise at UW Colleges or UW-Extension for an outside organization, you should discuss the opportunity with your dean or director to ensure that no conflict of interest will be created. Refer to UWS 8 for the applicable standards and procedures.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS: If you have a personal or familial relationship with someone or a vendor who is doing business with your department or area, disclose that relationship to your supervisor so that actions can be taken to minimize or remove any potential conflict of interest.

NEPOTISM: You may not formally or informally participate in the decision to hire, retain promote or determine the salary of a member of your immediate family. If you are a classified employee, you may not hire or promote a member of your immediate family unless that person has been certified from an open or competitive promotional register.

CONTRACT SIGNATURE AUTHORITY: Only certain individuals on campus, designated by name, have the authority to legally bind UW Colleges or UW-Extension in contracts or agreements. You should not sign a contract with an outside company unless you have been officially delegated to do so.

CONFIDENTIAL UNIVERSITY INFORMATION: You may not use or disclose confidential university information for reasons unrelated to your professional responsibilities or to gain anything of value for yourself or a member of your immediate family.

PROHIBITED PERSONAL CONDUCT:

- ▶ Falsifying records or giving false, inaccurate, or incomplete information to your supervisor, other state agencies or to employees responsible for record keeping
- ▶ Negligence in performance of assigned duties
- ▶ Unexcused or excessive absenteeism

Reporting Misuse of University

Resources: If you are aware of a situation involving misuse of university resources or other potential ethical violations, you may report this activity confidentially to your supervisor, the Human Resource Managers or the Internal Audit Department, which may investigate the matter or refer it to other campus authorities, as appropriate.