

## Managing Conflicts of Interest Training Role Play 2

**Instructions:** For each scenario, read the character descriptions and assign a person to play each character. Read the scenario and then read the prompt out loud to begin the role play. As the supervisor, determine:

1. the appropriate questions to ask the employee,
2. identify who at AU would be the appropriate person/office to contact for guidance,
3. the appropriate advice to give based on university policy and the AL Ethics Law, and
4. whether the conflict can be managed, and if so how.

### **ROLE PLAY:** EMPLOYEE CONFLICT OF INTEREST/COMMITMENT

**Character Description 1:** Donna Yellen is an accountant in the College of Liberal Arts. She manages the budget for the college including preparing financial statements, purchase requisitions, inventory reports, and budget reports.

**Character Description 2:** Tom Bernanke is Donna's supervisor and is the Director of Accounting and Finance in the CLA.

#### **Scenario One:** Accounting services for a small local business.

Donna provides accounting services for a lawn and landscape business in town. She uses the accounting software on her Auburn computer to prepare the financial statement and budget. She also submitted an IT ticket to install a personal copy of Quick Books on her Auburn laptop to do the lawn business payroll. The IT provider contacts the College IT manager to see if CLA has a departmental license. They reach out to Donna's supervisor, Tom, to ask whether she needs a personal copy of Quick Books for her AU job. Tom says no.

**Prompt One:** Tom approaches Donna in her office: "Hi Donna, IT said you needed Quick Books installed on your AU computer. What did you need it for?"

Donna responds: "Oh, I do some accounting and payroll for a local lawn business in my free time, so I use Quick Books."

#### **Questions to Consider:**

1. Employee has indicated that they engage in outside professional activity other than AU work. As the supervisor, how should you respond?
2. Employee is using university resources (equipment/computer/software) for private benefit which is not allowed. As the supervisor, what should you do?
3. You are aware that as public employees, AU employees cannot use their AU position for private gain according to the Alabama Ethics Law. As the supervisor, what should you do?
4. Can this conflict of interest be managed, and if so, how?

#### **Scenario Two:** Filing Tax Returns for co-workers

Donna has offered for the last couple years to help her co-workers in the College of Liberal Arts file their personal tax returns. She tells them to bring their tax documents to work or to email them to her AU email address, and she will prepare and file their returns for \$100. She provided this service for about 15 people in the College including some of her subordinates. One day, Tom overheard two employees talking in the hallway about paying Donna \$100 to file their tax return. Tom is concerned.

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**Prompt Two:** Tom approaches Donna in her office: “Hey Donna, I heard someone mention you were helping people in the College file their tax returns for \$100?”

Donna Responds: “Yes, a few people asked for some help so I offered, and I only charged \$100 since most places charge more than that.”

### Questions to Consider:

1. Employee is doing business with her subordinates/direct reports. As her supervisor, how should you respond?
2. You are aware of the University’s COI Policy prohibiting engaging in activities that could that could interfere with your AU obligations or negatively impact your AU judgment. As the supervisor, how should you respond?
3. You are also concerned about conflict of commitment and when this activity is occurring (at work or otherwise?). As the Supervisor, what should you do?
4. Can this conflict be managed, and if so how? If not, what should you do?