

POLICY

Effective Date: July 8, 1993

Revised: November 20, 2012

Approved by: President Bruce Shepard

Authority: [RCW 42.52](#); [26.60](#); [42.17.020](#)
[EO 11246](#)

Cancels: Section H - Administrative Policies and Procedures on Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, and Discrimination

See Also: [POL-U1600.02](#) Providing Equal Opportunity and Prohibiting Discrimination and Retaliation
[POL-U1600.01](#) Requesting An Appointment of Opportunity
[POL-U1600.06](#) Prohibiting Consensual Intimate Personal Relationships Between Supervisors and Supervisees
 United Faculty of Western Washington University Agreement

POL-U5410.01 EMPLOYING FAMILY MEMBERS AND SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

This policy applies to all non-faculty employment positions including student employment. Faculty positions are addressed in the United Faculty of Western Washington University Agreement.

Definitions:

Family Members: Individuals related to a WWU employee by biological heritage, marriage (including in-law and step relatives), registered domestic partnerships and adoption, which include spouse, domestic partner, parent, sibling, child, grandparent, grandchild or other close relative.

Significant Others: Individuals romantically or financially involved with a WWU employee or those with a relationship closely tied to an immediate family member.

1. Assistant Vice President for Human Resources Monitors Compliance and Makes Determinations

The President delegates the role of Ethics Officer to the Assistant Vice President for Human Resources (AVP) giving the AVP responsibility of monitoring compliance and making all final determinations that fall under the purview of this policy.

The AVP reserves the right to determine if a relationship falls under the definition of “family” or “significant other” in order to ensure the protection of state resources and uphold its commitment to ethical and legal operations.

POLICY

2. **All Employees Must Meet The Required Qualifications Of Their Job**
3. **Employment Opportunities Shall Not be Immediately Denied Based on Relationship but May be Restricted Due to Conflict of Interest**

Employees who have a family member or a significant other relationship may work in the same department or other comparable administrative unit except where:

- a) A direct reporting relationship exists or
- b) Other circumstances present a conflict of interest that cannot be sufficiently mitigated with additional controls.

4. **Employees and Applicants Must Disclose Relationship When Applicable**

Job applicants must disclose a family or significant other relationship on his or her employment application.

Employees must disclose a family or significant other relationship to Human Resources and their department chair or director when a potential conflict of interest (as described in section #3 above) has occurred or may occur because:

- a) A family member or significant other has applied or will apply for a position, or
- b) Their personal circumstances have or will change following employment (e.g. marry while employed or become romantically or financially involved with another employee). See POL-U1600.06 *Prohibiting Consensual Intimate Personal Relationships Between Supervisors and Supervisees*.

If, in the opinion of the AVP, a conflict of interest arises as a result of the relationship, efforts to implement sufficient controls will be made at the earliest practicable time following consultation with the appropriate vice president(s) or the President when applicable. If controls are not feasible, section #6 below will be followed.

5. **Supervisors Must Communicate Known or Possible Conflicts of Interest**

Each supervisor is responsible for notifying Human Resources of known or possible conflicts of interest covered under this policy.

POLICY

6. Employees May Participate In Informal Resolution

If it is determined that the individuals' positions present a conflict of interest which cannot be removed, the employees themselves, upon mutual agreement, may recommend which person will continue employment or be moved, if movement is possible. The final decision

will be made by the AVP for Human Resources in consultation with the appropriate vice president (or President when applicable).

7. Employees May Not Influence Process

Employees are prohibited from engaging in any activity in the attempt to influence a decision or process that involves an immediate family member or significant other as it applies to section #3 above.

In regards to the selection process, a family member or partner may refer a family member or significant other, but may not take part in or influence in any way the evaluation or selection of candidates.

8. Human Resources Will Ensure Communication on Policy

Human Resources will ensure regular University-wide communication on the *Employing Family Members and Significant Others* policy and procedures.