



Policy Name	Volunteer Conflict of Interest: Related to Other Professional Associations
Date Approved	November 2020
Updates	October 2024

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the interests of AUGS by: (a) preventing the personal benefits of volunteer leaders from influencing their duties to AUGS, (b) protecting AUGS competitive position, (c) preventing conflict of commitment, and (d) avoiding actual, potential or perceived inappropriate/undue influence of related professional associations.

Policy Statement

In order for AUGS to further the clinical, educational, scientific, and charitable purposes for which it was organized, and to maintain the reputation in which it is held by the public and the urogynecology community, it is important that AUGS decisions and actions not be influenced unduly by any special interests of individual members.

AUGS depends on volunteers to shape the initiatives that provide value to members. Recognizing that many members, including Board members and volunteers, have relationships with related professional associations, it is important to identify actual or potential conflicts of interest which might improperly bias decision making. As such, the AUGS Board of Directors has adopted specific guidelines for key society leaders along with a formal system for identifying, disclosing, and managing potential conflicts of interest.

Duty to Disclose

All AUGS volunteers must disclose all actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interests during their course of service to AUGS in accordance with AUGS Disclosure Policy.

Key Society Leaders

In addition to being required to disclose all actual or potential conflicts of interests with related professional associations, AUGS has set the following guidelines and restrictions for key society leaders who have influence on the Society's programs and policies.

Please see the appendix for key definitions.

Role	Restrictions
AUGS Board of Directors	May not concurrently serve as a board member on a related professional association.
PFD Week Chair and Vice Chair	May not hold other volunteer roles with related professional associations, in the following positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Committee Chair or Vice Chair of Education, Annual Meeting, or Program Development
Publications Chair and Vice Chair	May not hold other volunteer roles with related professional associations, in the following positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors • Journal Editor or Co-editor • Chair or Vice Chair of committees that publish Terminology, Clinical Publications, Systematic Reviews, or Research
<i>Urogynecology</i> Editor-in-Chief	May not hold volunteer roles with related professional associations who publish, or are affiliated with, a competing Journal in the following positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial Roles (Editor-in-Chief, other Editor roles, or Editorial Board member) with other journals • Board of Directors • Chair or Vice Chair of a committee that publishes Terminology, Clinical Publications, Systematic Reviews, or Research (There is no prohibition to serving as a reviewer for other journals.)
<i>Urogynecology</i> Associate/Assistant Editors	May not hold volunteer roles with related professional associations who publish, or are affiliated with, a competing Journal in the following positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Editorial Roles (Editor-in-Chief, other Editor roles, or Editorial Board member) with other journals • Board of Directors • Chair or Vice Chair of a committee that publishes Terminology, Clinical Publications, Systematic Reviews, or Research (There is no prohibition to serving as a reviewer for other journals.)

Appendix

Definitions

The following are definitions and examples for terms that are used in this policy.

§ **Conflict of Interest:** A conflict of interest may exist when the personal, professional, financial, or other interests of a volunteer leader may influence, or appear to influence, the judgment or conduct of that volunteer leader in a manner that may bias decision making.

§ **Related Professional Associations:** Related professional associations include national and international professional societies whose principal interests include urogynecology and reconstructive pelvic surgery including but not limited to American Urological Association (AUA)/Society of Urodynamics, Female Pelvic Medicine & Urogenital Reconstruction (SUFU), International Continence Society (ICS), International Urogynecological Association (IUGA), Society of Gynecologic Surgeons (SGS), and American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists (AAGL). It does not include national certifying organizations like American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ABOG) and American Board of Urology (ABU).