

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
CONFLICT OF COMMITMENT
FINANCIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

4.9 Faculty Authored Textbooks. Amendments to the Alabama Ethics law passed by the 1986 Legislature place faculty of state-supported institutions of higher education within the purview of the conflict of interest standards set forth in the law. Advisory Opinion No. 1130 issued by the Alabama Ethics Commission on August 21, 1987 concluded that a faculty member ...who is also author is not permitted to make the decision as to whether his or her publication will be used. The opinion approved a process where ...the decision is made by either administrative officials of the institution, or by a textbook committee composed of other faculty members and administrative officials within the institution.

The purpose of reviewing faculty authored textbooks is the inherent potential conflict which may arise by requiring students to purchase course materials for which the faculty authored and may stand to gain financially. Therefore, faculty must submit self-authored course materials that will be required for student purchase for peer review prior to textbook assignments to such faculty member's students. By appointment of the dean, each academic department or college/school is required to have a textbook selection committee composed of faculty and administrator(s). The textbook selection committee is responsible for reviewing the materials for the course, considering alternative textbooks or materials, and informing the faculty member and department head and dean of their decision. Considerations may include 1) appropriateness of the text for the course, 2) extent to which text is used outside the University, and cost effectiveness to the students. At minimum, requirements for use of self or co-authored textbooks include:

- Management plan, to include annual monitoring by departmental textbook committee
- Three textbooks be placed on reserve in the University Library for student access/use
- Course syllabus to include a declaration to students disclosing that the textbook is authored by the instructor and copies held on reserve in the University Library.