Non-Profit Board Service by College Employees

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to those employees to better understand their financial responsibilities when serving on a board while also being employed by the college. This policy applies to all employees with departmental or institutional budget authority or significant influence.

Dickinson recognizes the importance of a strong relationship with the greater Carlisle, as well as the extended regional and higher education communities. To that end, the college embraces its civic responsibilities and chooses to actively engage the community through its institutional commitment to and dynamic partnerships with the community and numerous organizations. In addition to this institutional role, the college’s faculty and staff are equally engaged partners with the community, volunteering their time to various efforts to include holding leadership positions on the boards and committees of many non-profit organizations. While we absolutely value and encourage this service, we also want to ensure our employees are aware of the areas where job and service may intersect. With proper informational awareness, our employees can make sound decisions that benefit the Dickinson, the non-profit, and the employee alike. Key considerations are as follows:

- Employees who serve on boards as an official Dickinson representative should use their own departmental budgets to pay for one-off expenses for event attendance as members of that board. Examples of such events include member mixers, luncheons, annual dinners or receptions.
- When an organization requests a larger sponsorship such as a significant contribution to the organization or the sponsorship of a table for an event, the request should be forwarded to Jennifer Love, assistant chief of staff in the Office of the President, for review by the Community Allocations Committee. Funds for such requests, if approved, are managed by the Office of the President.
- Should an employee be asked to make a small contribution to the organization as a board member, this becomes the employee’s personal decision and responsibility.
- If an employee is serving on a board as a member of the community, but not as an official Dickinson representative, the employee is responsible for expenses associated with being a part of the board including individual charitable contributions, event attendance, etc.

Regardless of the employee’s purpose for serving on the board, the employee has an affirmative obligation to inform their immediate supervisor about the board service. This is necessary to guard against any real or perceived conflict of interest with the service. Examples of conflict of interest include, but are not limited to:
• The non-profit entity has a contractual or vendor relationship with the college and the employee-board member has a direct or indirect influence on the business relationship between the two entities.
• The non-profit entity requests that the employee engage with the college to provide the non-profit some sort of benefit that may or may not otherwise be available to it but for the employee’s intervention.
• The employee votes on a non-profit matter that impacts the college in any way, shape or form, or the employee approves any expenditure to the non-profit on behalf of the college pursuant to their official role/capacity at the college.

These examples do not, in and of themselves, immediately equate to an impermissible conflict of interest. However, they do suggest that the employee must notify their supervisor about the potential conflict in order to determine, on a case-by-case basis, whether the employee can continue with the initiative or must recuse themselves from it. If an employee or their supervisor is uncertain whether a conflict exists, they should discuss the specific scenario with their divisional vice president, human resource services, compliance/enterprise risk management, and/or the office of general counsel.

Related Information

History/Revision Information

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