

**AMERICAN COLLEGE HEALTH ASSOCIATION (ACHA) BOARD OF DIRECTORS
POLICY AND PROCEDURE
(BOD P/P)**

BOD P/P Number:	2011-3	Date Established: September 26, 2011	
		Date Revised: May 27, 2019	
Reference:	BOD Meeting	Term:	1 Year
			2 Years
		X	Indefinite

BOD P/P Title:	PREVENTING INDUSTRY BIAS/INFLUENCE IN ACHA ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM CONTENT
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BOD Authority:	ACHA Bylaws, Article VIII, Section 1.
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Background:	<p>ACHA is accredited to provide credit for the ACHA Annual Meeting by (among others) the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), thus we are obligated to comply with their policies and procedures. The following are excerpts from the ACCME website. While not all accrediting bodies ACHA is affiliated with expressly state these principles in writing, ACHA chooses to use this as guidance for all ACHA Annual Meeting educational activities, regardless of the intent to award CME (or other) credit.</p> <p><i>“Circumstances create a conflict of interest when an individual has an opportunity to affect CME content about products or services of a commercial interest with which he/she has a financial relationship.”¹</i></p> <p><i>“One of the most important hallmarks of accredited CME is independence from commercial interests. The control of the accredited provider over all aspects of planning, presenting, and evaluating the education assures learners of that independence. As well, the provider is expected to identify and resolve conflicts of interest of those in control of content before the learner engages in the education. The provider is required to disclose to the learners – again prior to the learner engaging in the education – the presence or absence of relevant financial relationships of those in control of content as well as the receipt of commercial support for the activity.”²</i></p>
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¹ <https://www.accme.org/accreditation-rules/policies/financial-relationships-and-conflicts-interest> (Accessed April 2019)

² Criterion 7: The provider develops activities/educational interventions independent of commercial interests <http://www.accme.org/accreditation-rules/accreditation-criteria/criterion-7> (Accessed April 2019)

³ Standard 5: Content and Format without Commercial Bias <http://www.accme.org/accreditation-rules/standards-for-commercial-support/standard-5-content-and-format-without> (Accessed April 2019)

⁴ **Financial relationships** as defined by the ACCME are “those relationships in which the individual benefits by receiving a salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, consulting fee, honoraria for promotional speakers’ bureau, ownership interest (e.g., stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds), or other financial benefit. Financial benefits are usually associated with roles such as employment, management position, independent contractor (including contracted research), consulting, speaking and teaching, membership on advisory committees or review panels, board membership, and other activities from which remuneration is received, or expected. ACCME considers relationships of the person involved in the CME activity to include financial relationships of a spouse or partner.” <https://www.accme.org/accreditation-rules/policies/financial-relationships-and-conflicts-interest> ((Accessed April 2019)

⁵ ACCME definition: “A *commercial interest* is any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients. The ACCME does not consider providers of clinical service directly to patients to be commercial interests – unless the provider of clinical service is owned, or controlled by, an ACCME-defined commercial interest.” (<http://www.accme.org/accreditation-rules/policies/definition-commercial-interest>). (Accessed April 2019)

“The content or format of a CME activity or its related materials must promote improvements or quality in healthcare and not a specific proprietary business interest of a commercial interest.”³

Purpose:

To set forth a clear and concise policy and procedure that:

- Reduces conflicts of interest in annual meeting program content and presentations;
- Prevents bias in the educational content of the annual meeting;
- Enhances the Association’s compliance position with national continuing education (CE) accrediting organizations, thereby sustaining its ability to provide uncompromised education; and,
- Preserves the Association’s integrity, as well as its history of providing unbiased education to learners to advance the health and well-being of college students.

Policy:

ACHA defines a conflict of interest (COI) as a circumstance in which all three of the following criteria are present: 1) the presenter has a current (within the past 12 months) financial relationship⁴ with a company; 2) the company is a for-profit organization; and 3) the topic of the presentation is directly related to the company’s products or services.

Generally,* the Association’s policy is that if a COI is confirmed, those individuals will not be permitted to present educational sessions at the ACHA Annual Meeting. For the purpose of this policy, there are three categories of individuals who are considered to have a COI (when the topic of the presentation is directly related to the products or services of the organization):

- **Employees of commercial interest organizations⁵ (and their spouses/partners)**
ACCME policy prohibits these individuals from participating in educational activities. ACHA’s policy is in alignment with ACCME’s, thus prohibiting such individuals from presenting. They are not eligible for the exception process outlined in this policy.
- **Individuals with non-employee financial relationships with commercial interest organizations** (i.e., speaker’s bureaus, consultants, advisory board members)
ACCME policy allows these individuals to participate in educational activities when certain conditions are met, and the educational session is not promotional in nature. ACHA’s policy is in alignment with ACCME’s and will allow them to be considered for an exception.
- **Individuals with financial relationships with non-commercial interest for-profit organizations** (i.e., insurance, electronic health records, consulting firms)
ACCME policy allows them to participate in educational activities, with no conditions, other than the educational session cannot be promotional in nature. ACHA’s policy will allow them to be considered for an exception.

None of the individuals specified above will be permitted to submit unsolicited presentations via the public ACHA Call for Programs process.

*** EXCEPTION PROCESS**

The aforementioned policy statements represent the norm. However, it is acknowledged that from time to time, this general prohibition may produce the unintended consequence of preventing acquisition of high quality presenters to address critical college health topics. Therefore, this policy also sets forth an exception mechanism wherein, after due diligence consideration, a presenter who has a COI may be included within the educational program.

This policy delegates decision authority for such exceptions to both the Continuing Education (CE) Committee chair (in consultation with members of the CE Committee as needed) **along with the Program Planning Committee (PPC) Chair** (in consultation with the ACHA Executive Committee as needed). In making such decisions, the chairs may consult with other ACHA leaders as appropriate. Both chairs must be in agreement before the exception is accepted or denied.

Due diligence consideration will be made by the CE Committee chair, the PPC chair, and the section planner or committee/coalition chair, and will include the steps on the attached *“Preventing Industry Bias/Influence in ACHA Annual Meeting Program Content Decision Flow Chart”* and *“Process for Resolving Conflict of Interest for ACHA Annual Meeting Presenters.”*

No more than 10% of the total Annual Meeting presentations (approximately 15 out of 150 total) will include a presenter who has been granted an exception.

If the presenters do not make the materials available to the CE Committee for review by the deadline indicated – or if they fail to make any changes requested by the CE Committee by the deadline given -- the presentation will be cancelled.

Presenters perceived as providing biased content (based on learners’ feedback) will not be permitted to make further presentations at the ACHA Annual Meeting for a minimum of five years.

In fulfilling this responsibility, the national office will ensure compliance with all organizations through which it is seeking accreditation or CE approval.

Procedure:

DECISION FLOWS:

ACHA Annual Meeting Educational Activities

When a presentation is solicited for inclusion in the ACHA Annual Meeting, in accordance with the steps outlined above, it will be assessed for approval based on the decision flow set forth in Appendix 1: *“Preventing Industry Bias/Influence in ACHA Annual Meeting Program Content Decision Flow Chart”* and *“Process for Resolving Conflict of Interest for ACHA Annual Meeting Presenters.”*

The outcome of that decision process will ultimately determine whether a presentation will be incorporated into the educational program.

Decisions by the ACHA CE Committee to award credit to educational sessions taking place at ACHA Annual Meetings are made independent of this policy. A decision to include a presenter with a COI may result in the loss of credit (for that session) by one or more CE disciplines.

ACHA Affiliate Annual Meetings

ACHA affiliates operate according to their own Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, and are not bound by this ACHA Board of Directors Policy. ACHA staff will provide guidance to ACHA affiliates (as requested) regarding inclusion of presenters with conflicts of interest.

	Decisions by the ACHA CE Committee to award credit to educational sessions taking place at ACHA affiliate meetings are made independent of this policy. A decision to include a presenter with a COI may result in the loss of credit (for that session) by one or more CE disciplines.
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Resources:	National Office	Volunteer
Human:	Chief Executive Officer Chief Program Officer Continuing Education and Exhibits Manager	President Annual Meeting Program Planning Committee Continuing Education Committee Affiliate/Institutional Program Planners
Financial:		

Preventing Industry Bias/Influence in ACHA Annual Meeting Program Content

Decision Flow Chart

Program is Submitted <u>UNSOLICITED</u> via the ACHA Public Call for Programs <u>BY</u> :			
An individual with no disclosures and no indication of any financial relationships with for-profit companies	An individual with a financial relationship with a non-commercial interest for-profit organization (insurance, EHR, consulting firm, etc.)	An individual with a non-employee financial relationship with a commercial interest organization (speaker's bureau, consultant, advisory board, etc.)	An employee of a commercial interest organization (or their spouse/partner)
Accept submission for consideration by PPC	Cannot accept <u>unsolicited</u> submission but individual may be solicited with a request for exception	Cannot accept <u>unsolicited</u> submission but individual may be solicited with a request for exception	PROHIBITED

If a program planner or committee/coalition chair decides to **solicit a presenter**, they need to have **identified a specific professional practice gap** and be able to **cite the source of the gap** (peer-reviewed literature, new guidelines or standards, listserv discussions, needs assessment data, etc.)

Program Planner or Committee/Coalition chair <u>SOLICITS</u> a presenter <u>WHO IS</u> :			
An individual with no disclosures and no indication of any financial relationships with for-profit companies	An individual with a financial relationship with a non-commercial interest for-profit organization (insurance, EHR, consulting firm, etc.)	An individual with a non-employee financial relationship with a commercial interest organization (speaker's bureau, consultant, advisory board, etc.)	An employee of a commercial interest organization (or their spouse/partner)
Submission accepted on behalf of that section, committee, or coalition	Proceed with the "Process for Resolving Conflict of Interest for ACHA Annual Meeting Presenters" on the following pages	Proceed with the "Process for Resolving Conflict of Interest for ACHA Annual Meeting Presenters" on the following pages	PROHIBITED

Process for Resolving Conflict of Interest for ACHA Annual Meeting Presenters

This process will apply when a program planner or committee/coalition chair **identifies a professional practice gap** and determines that the content is best covered by a **solicited** presenter who is:

- An individual with a non-employee financial relationship with a commercial interest organization (speaker’s bureau, consultant, advisory board, etc.); **OR**
- An individual with a financial relationship with a non-commercial interest for-profit organization (insurance, EHR, consulting firm, etc.)

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
Section planner or committee/coalition chair	Coordinates with all presenters to develop the learning objectives, learning outcome, and content for a session. Submits the completed Program Submission Form and all required presenter disclosures to the national office.	By the date of the PPC meeting in the fall prior to the meeting <i>(or as soon as gap is determined and presenters are identified)</i>
Section planner or committee/coalition chair	Attests to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I was actively involved in determining and writing presentation objectives • I will communicate the deadlines and expectations for the presentation to the presenters • I will actively participate in content development • I will review all presentation materials (print and/or electronic) • I will serve as a <i>Moderator</i> for the presentation 	By the date of the PPC meeting in the fall prior to the meeting <i>(or as soon as gap is determined and presenters are identified)</i>
ACHA national office staff	Sends the completed Program Submission Form and presenter disclosures to the CE Committee Chair and the PPC Chair for review.	By December 1 <i>(or within 1 week of receiving information)</i>
CE Committee Chair and PPC Chair	Assesses the potential value of the educational content to learners, and the content’s direct relevance to identified knowledge, skill, or practice gaps.	By January 1 <i>(or within 1 month of receiving information)</i>
CE Committee Chair and PPC Chair	Assesses the presenter’s qualifications and expertise: whether such is unique and is otherwise not available or attainable for the educational program.	By January 1 <i>(or within 1 month of receiving information)</i>
CE Committee Chair and PPC Chair	Assesses the program planner’s or committee/coalition chair’s commitment for direct involvement in measures to resolve the presenter’s conflict of interest (listed in the attestation above).	By January 1 <i>(or within 1 month of receiving information)</i>

CE Committee Chair and PPC Chair	<p>Make one of the following decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approve the request for an exception and allow the presentation to go forward with no changes ▪ Approve the request for an exception and allow the presentation to go forward only with the addition of a co-presenter who does not have a COI ▪ Decline the request for an exception and cancel the presentation 	<p>By January 1 <i>(or within 1 month of receiving information)</i></p>
ACHA national office staff	<p>Conveys the Chairs' decision to accept or decline the request for exception to the program planner or committee/coalition chair.</p>	<p>By January 15 <i>(or within 2 weeks of receiving information)</i></p>
Section planner or committee/coalition chair	<p>IF REQUESTED, solicits a co-presenter(s) who has no COI to work with the presenter who has a COI. <i>(It is expected that the presenter with no COI will have an equal or more active role in the presentation.)</i></p>	<p>By March 1 <i>(or within 6 weeks of receiving approval for request for exception)</i></p>
Section planner or committee/coalition chair	<p>Works with presenters to complete program content and reviews and submits all presentation materials (slides, handouts, videos) to ACHA national office. <i>(If materials are not received by this date, the presentation will be cancelled.)</i></p>	<p>By April 15 <i>(or within 3 months of receiving approval for request for exception)</i></p>
Members of the CE Committee	<p>Reviews all presentation materials. Consults with CE Committee and PPC Chairs as needed.</p>	<p>By April 30 <i>(or within 2 weeks of receiving information)</i></p>
ACHA national office staff	<p>Conveys all comments and requests for changes in materials to program planner or committee/coalition chair. Presentations will either be approved as is or approved pending changes.</p>	<p>By April 30 <i>(or within 1 week of receiving decisions)</i></p>
Section planner or committee/coalition chair	<p>If changes are requested in presentation materials, works with presenters to make changes and re-submits materials to the ACHA national office. <i>(If revised materials are not received by this date, the presentation will be cancelled.)</i></p>	<p>By May 15 <i>(or within 2 weeks of receiving request for changes)</i></p>
ACHA national office staff	<p>For all presenters receiving a request for exception to the policy, ACHA staff will disclose the conflict of interest in all conference program information.</p>	<p>By May 1</p>
ACHA national office staff	<p>Documents all measures taken to resolve the presenters' conflicts of interest in order to prevent bias in the presentation.</p> <p>Reviews presentation evaluations from the learners.</p>	<p>Summer, following the meeting</p>