Appendix B

CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES FOR THE EDITOR OF

THE RHEUMATOLOGIST

A. EDITOR

1. The following policies are intended to ensure that all manuscripts receive an unbiased judgment concerning publication and that the Editor does not engage in activities that would compromise or have the appearance of compromising his/her ability to exercise this judgment.

2. The Editor will not review, assign reviewers or make decisions on a manuscript/article where a potential conflict of interest may exist.

3. Using the American College of Rheumatology Confidential Disclosure Statement form (as used for members of the Board of Directors and committees), the Editor will file a disclosure statement, which will be kept confidential, regarding all financial arrangements with any company, either as owners of stock, consultants, advisors, or recipients of royalties, or any legal work as an expert witness or consultant over the past 5 years. The disclosures will be filed at the beginning of the editor’s term and updated annually.

4. The Editor will not engage in any legal work as an expert witness or consultant during his/her term, nor will he/she write any editorials or commentaries on specific topics where he/she has been involved in work as an expert witness or consultant during the 5 years preceding the term as Editor. An exception to the prohibition against the Editor’s serving as an expert witness may be made if the Editor is required to testify on an uncompensated basis on behalf of the institution at which he/she is employed, in his/her capacity as an employee of the institution, and not as The Rheumatologist Editor.

5. All unsolicited manuscripts submitted from the institutions of the Editor will be handled outside the normal review process, e.g., forwarded to an Associate Editor not from the same institution, for a complete review and decision process.
6. The Editor may not have any direct financial relationship with commercial entities during his/her term of service. The Editor may provide uncompensated service to commercial entities and accept reasonable travel reimbursement in connection with those services. The Editor may accept grant support from commercial entities, as long as the grant monies are paid to the institution where research is conducted, not directly to Editor. Research support and/or uncompensated services should be disclosed and updated annually in writing to the Committee on Communications and Marketing and such disclosure should be publicly available.

B. COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

1. The Editor will send copies of his/her disclosure form, and a letter stating what restrictions the Editor will impose on his/her involvement in The Rheumatologist as a result of any past or present activities that might be perceived as constituting a conflict of interest, to the Chair of the Committee on Communications and Marketing. The Editor will send a copy of the form and letter to the American College of Rheumatology, where it will be kept on file. This disclosure form and letter will be sent at the beginning of the Editor’s term and updated annually. Upon receipt of the disclosure form and letter from the Editor, the Chair of the Committee on Communications and Marketing and its ACR staff member will review both documents for adequacy and to determine if any additional steps need to be taken by the Editor to address activities that may pose a conflict or be perceived as constituting a conflict. Should the Editor disagree with their recommendations, the matter will be referred to the full Committee on Communications and Marketing for final resolution.

2. The Editor will consult the Chair of the Committee on Communications and Marketing regarding any specific questions or problems that may arise regarding disclosure or conflict of interest issues.