

AC-80 GUIDELINES

(Engagements in Outside Professional Activities)

Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications

These guidelines address conflict of commitments among the professional activities of faculty.

The AC-80 policy requires colleges to note activities that need no prior permission and those that do.

While AC-80 addresses conflict of commitment among the professional activities of Penn State faculty, these Guidelines are intended to govern the policy's implementation among Bellisario College of Communications faculty. AC-80 is rightly concerned with external activities that may "compete" with University interests or that "interfere" with employees' primary University responsibilities.

This policy does not address teaching or other supplemental activities within the College or within other colleges and units of the University.

College policies regarding the awarding of tenure and promotion along with employee responsibilities and assessment encourage external activity. Such activity is presumed to be of inherent bent to the interests of both the College and the University. Faculty and employees are expected to pursue continued development of expertise and skill applications in the areas of teaching, research, and service; the presumption inherent in this expectation is that most of such activities extend the educational, service and research missions of the institution.

These Guidelines are intended to reaffirm such expectations by setting forth a College process of notification and, in some cases, approval for external activities. Since the contexts of such outside activities can vary greatly, and since the development of activities from faculty expertise cannot often be predicted, individual faculty are presumed best equipped to assess whether external activities may constitute questionable competition or interference.

Activities not approved. The following academic activities will not be approved:

- Being granted tenure at another institution of higher education (except, of course, for a faculty member who holds a visiting rank at Penn State).

Examples of activities requiring advance notification and approval. Faculty engaged in the following activities are required to notify their Department Head and seek approval from the Associate Dean or other designated Budget Administrator and Budget Executive:

- Teaching for credit at another institution of higher education during the appointment period. Such activity is discouraged during the academic calendar year. Although, per policy, teaching at another institution outside of the appointment period does not require prior approval, faculty must make a request to teach at another institution outside of their appointment period, and will be approved if the teaching does not compete with university offerings.
- Teaching at another institution while on a sabbatical or a fellowship. Sabbatical and fellowship activities require prior approval by the college. See AC17 (Sabbatical Leave).
- Faculty engagement in activities that might result in the transfer of intellectual property rights to an institution other than Penn State.

- Faculty engagement in research for hire or in-kind, whose beneficiaries are either foreign or domestic entities, without the prior approval of the Penn State's Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP).
- Chairing a doctoral or graduate committee at another institution.
- Running or carrying fiduciary responsibility for a research lab at another institution
- Accepting employment at another institution or serving in executive or management positions such as President, Chief Executive Officer, advisory or board of director with fiduciary responsibilities.
- Accepting honorary, adjunct, visiting positions or chaired appointments at another university other than Penn State. It should not matter whether such positions are full- or part-time, paid, or pro bono.

Examples of activities requiring notification. All faculty are required to disclose all Outside Professional Activities, including those for which Prior Approval was required and obtained, at least annually; within 30 days of starting a new Outside Professional Activity; prior to an application for sponsored funding; or in certain instances as identified below, prior to starting the activity. Disclosures shall be made according to the procedures developed by the Office for Research Protections. Bellisario Faculty engaged in the listed activities are required to notify in advance the Department Head and the Associate Dean or other designated Budget Administrator and Budget Executive:

- Offering short courses without academic credit at another institution, including such professional courses that are needed for licensing and whose content may overlap with similar courses offered at Penn State
- Holding an honorary chair at another institution
- Engagement in private Consulting that does not involve Research
- Practicing a profession that requires licensing (e.g., working as an attorney) and committing hours toward or beyond what is required for licensure.

Examples of activities requiring neither notification nor approval. Faculty engaged in the following activities do not require notification or approval of the Department Head, Associate Dean, the Budget Administrator nor Budget Executive:

- Serving on a master's or Doctoral committee at another institution
- Teaching that is not in the faculty member's area of expertise that was subject of their appointment and contract with Penn State
- Teaching at another institution by adjunct faculty

Related Policies:

[AC80 Faculty Outside Professional Activities and Conflict of Commitment \(Formerly HR80\)](#)

[AC64 Academic Freedom](#)

[AC 17 Sabbatical Leave](#)

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