

AC80 Faculty Outside Professional Activities and Conflict of Commitment College of Arts & Architecture Guidelines

The AC80 policy addresses conflict of commitment in the professional activities of faculty. A potential conflict of commitment occurs when external relationships or activities interfere with the faculty's primary professional obligation and commitment to the University. Most of the policy integrates existing policy on outside business activities and private consulting (AC80), use of university resources (FN14), and disclosure of significant financial interests (RP06). The policy also addresses teaching outside the University.

It is the **responsibility of the faculty** to bring to the budget administrator's (school director/department head, and supervisor) attention the possibility of a potential conflict of commitment. The budget administrator must work with faculty and staff members to identify, manage, or eliminate potential conflicts.

To avoid having to check with the college administration on every possible external teaching activity, the Arts and Architecture Leadership Collaborative has established the following guidelines to help faculty decide when they need to ask for pre-approval. Pre-approval means prior to accepting invitations or initiating outside activities.

The following do not require pre-approval by the Budget Administrator (School Director or Department Head) and Budget Executive (Dean):

- Occasional guest lectures and seminars at another institution.
- Serving on doctoral or master's committee at another institution, when any compensation is only for travel expenses and perhaps a small honorarium (e.g., \$2,500 or less.)
- Outside teaching that is not for academic credit, including professional education courses for licensing, etc.
- Outside teaching that is not in the general area of expertise of your appointment at Penn State.
- Musical and other creative performances and exhibitions.

Other activities may require more time, create the possibility for competition with Penn State offerings, or involve intellectual property ownership, increasing the possibility for a conflict of commitment.

Academic activities that require approval from the school director/department head and dean include, but are not limited to the following:

- Teaching or research/creative activity appointments (even short) that include intellectual property agreements;
- Teaching for credit during the academic year at another institution, domestic or international (likely not to be approved unless on an unpaid leave or it is part of an approved sabbatical plan);
- Summer teaching by teaching faculty (likely to be approved if it does not interfere with teaching obligations at Penn State);
- Chairing Ph.D. committees at another institution, domestic or international;
- Holding a professional appointment at another institution, domestic or international (such as honorary chair; likely not to be approved unless on an unpaid leave or it is part of an approved sabbatical plan);

- More than one-day workshops or short course.

Additional activities that require approval are noted in the policy.

Example of academic activity that will not be approved:

- Tenure at another institution of higher education (unless a faculty member holds a visiting rank here, or if a faculty member holds emeritus status at another institution).

Approval process

- 1) Faculty will request in writing to the budget administrator (school director/department head) permission to pursue activities that may appear to create a conflict of commitment. The request will be made by completing an [Outside Activities Request](#) form.
- 2) The budget administrator (school director/department head) will review the request form and, if approved, will submit the request to the dean for approval and will copy the HR office.
- 3) Unless the dean chooses to overturn the school director or department head's recommendation, that decision will stand.
- 4) If permission is granted to engage in the activity, permission is granted only for the activity requested. Permission is not granted for all instances moving forward.

Policies to cross reference include;

AC80 - Faculty Outside Professional Activities and Conflict of Commitment

AD77 – Engaging in Outside Professional Activities (Conflict of Commitment)

AD07 – Use of University Name, Symbols, and/or Graphic Devices

AC47 – General Standards of Professional Ethics

FN14 – Use of University Tangible Non-Capital Property, Capital Property, Supplies, and University Services

HR35 – Public Service by Members of the Faculty and Staff

HR42 – Payment of Personal Compensation by a State Agency or Department of the Commonwealth

HR91 – Conflict of Interest

IP06 – Technology Transfer & Entrepreneurial Activity (Faculty Research)

RP06 – Disclosure and Management of Significant Financial Interests

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