

GUIDELINES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES and UNIVERSITY INDUSTRY RELATIONSHIPS

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

Introduction

The following guidelines on supplementary professional activity and University - Industry relationships were adopted by the Faculty of Science Council at its meeting of 2 February 1995. These guidelines are an extension of Article 8 of the Faculty Agreement concerning Supplementary Professional Activities and address article 8.20: Faculty Regulations.

Supplementary Professional Activities

Supplementary Professional Activities (SPA) are defined, for the purpose of this document, as all manner of external activity which faculty members pursue relative to their academic responsibilities. Work unrelated to their professional capabilities at the University is not relevant to this document.

The Faculty Agreement defines SPA (Article 8.07), describes the conditions for engaging in SPA (Article 8.09 - 8.11), and outlines how to report SPA activity (Article 8.12 - 8.19).

8.20 Faculty Regulations

- a) What Constitutes Major SPA Major SPA activity will involve more than 2 calendar days of activity per month. If more time per month will be spent on SPA, the faculty member must discuss this with the Department Chair and obtain written permission PRIOR to engaging in such activity.
- b) Reporting SPA Minor SPA shall be reported on the staff member's Annual Report. The report shall include an accounting of the time spent on SPA and the names of clients. Major SPA shall be reported in brief on the Annual Report, but shall be described in more detail in a letter to the Chair (copied to the Dean). The deadline for submission of this information shall be as required for the Annual Report.
- c) SPA Requirement The Faculty of Science encourages its members to engage in external professional activities with the community, government and private sector. It believes that time spent in consulting activities can enhance the pursuit of normal teaching, research and administrative duties. Although SPA is not a required activity in the Faculty of Science, SPA activity and its effectiveness shall be considered in Faculty evaluations (see Faculty Agreement article 8.16).
- d) Timing of SPA SPA can occur at any time during the year. However, SPA must not interfere with normal teaching and scholarly activities which must remain the first priority of staff members. Also, it is not normally permissible to be absent from campus during the teaching term, although in special cases absences may be allowed through written permission of the Department Chair. Thus, minor SPA that draws a staff member away from campus during the teaching term will need PRIOR written approval of the Department Chair with the assurance that appropriate arrangements have been made to cover teaching duties.
- e) Income from SPA The value of earnings from minor or major SPA does not have to be reported on the Annual Report.
- f) Regulations Governing the Use of University Facilities and Staff SPA may be dependent on the intellectual abilities of the staff member and may require little support by University facilities (eg, library use, report writing, basic computer use and printing) and will not involve support staff or students. Other forms of SPA may require the more extensive use of facilities (eg, when experimental work will be done) and could involve other staff and students. This latter type of SPA, even if minor in terms of time committed, must be discussed and approved by the Department Chair PRIOR to its initiation.

The rights of students or post-doctoral fellows must be scrupulously observed. Every effort must be made to ensure protection of their right to publish data and complete their studies.

University staff must not be drawn into the SPA of academic staff without some allowance for the reimbursement of the Department for their time. Departments may set up mechanisms for the routine use of service facilities with the SPA of faculty members, provided fees for service are also paid to the Department on a competitive basis. More complex contractual agreements need to be processed and approved according to the guidelines set out by the Research Grants Office.

- g) Professional Liability and Other Liability The University's liability insurance program provides coverage for legal liability due to bodily injury or property damage to any third parties as a result of the operations of the University. All staff and students are covered under the University's liability insurance while they are carrying out their responsibilities or activities of their employment or academic requirements. It should be noted, however, that SPA does not fall within the scope and intent of the insurance program for professional liability. Individuals who may be involved in SPA must make the necessary separate insurance arrangements.

The University also does not provide insurance coverage for the personal or professional property of staff members or students located on the University's premises. Such coverage and the cost involved are considered the personal responsibility of the individual.

(from University Research Policies & Services, section 9-1, January 1994)

- h) Conflict of Interest Faculty members may be said to be in conflict of interest when (i) their SPA adversely affects their contractual agreement with the University, or (ii) when faculty members engage in activity to their personal benefit which may be to the detriment of the University financially or otherwise. The unauthorized use of public funds for private gain is prohibited.

- g) University-Community Relations in Research. Prior to taking on obligations which may place the faculty member in conflict of interest (eg, when companies or other agencies in which a staff member has an interest enter into formal relationships with the University of Alberta) the faculty member must consult the University of Alberta Research Policies and Services manual section on Research Conduct Policies governing University-Community Relations in Research (section 5.3).

It is the responsibility of the faculty member to avoid ethical, legal, financial or other conflicts of interest and to ensure that all manner of professional activity or any other outside activity does not conflict with the obligations to, and in the interest of, the University.

Disclosure The notion of disclosure (*vide infra*) is crucial since the matter of definition of what constitutes conflict of interest often involves judgement values which differ among individuals. Prior Disclosure is required in dealing with the private sector when the dealings may be sensitive with respect to the issue of conflict of interest, which may or may not arise, or when the faculty member is making use of University resources (eg. time, space, equipment, personnel, students, or the University name).

The staff member also must consult with the Department Chair, the Dean of Science and the Vice-President (Research) indicating, in writing, what commitments are being proposed and identifying any potentially sensitive areas. The Chair must also inform the Dean and the Vice-President (Research) when the use of University resources are being contemplated. The Chair also must inform the Dean of Science and the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research whenever graduate students and/or postdoctoral fellows are to be involved.