

OUTSIDE PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Objective:

To determine if faculty and administrators in the department/unit are in compliance with institutional policies when engaging in outside professional activities.

Potential Impact:

Results in unintended financial and legal consequences and possible conflicts of interest if employees are participating in professional activities outside of their UHd employment without appropriate review, approval, and documentation; additionally, the institution may be subject to negative publicity.

Helpful Tools:

- UH Board of Regents
 - 57.01.2 – Code of Ethics/ Statutory Standards of Conduct
 - [57.02 – Consulting and Paid Professional Service](#)
- UH System Administrative Memorandum:
 - [02.A.08 - Consulting and Outside Employment](#)
 - [02.A.09 - Conflict of Interest](#)
 - [UH System Records Retention Schedule](#)
- UH – Downtown Policy Statement:
 - [Personnel – 02.A.04 - Outside Employment of Faculty and Professional Staff \(Revised 2002\)](#)
 - [Administration – 01.A.12 - Standards of Conduct Policy](#)
- UH System Administrative Memorandum:
 - [Consulting and Paid Professional Services Application and Approval Form](#)

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Frequently Observed Weaknesses/Deficiencies:

- Failure to submit the [Consulting and Paid Professional Application and Approval Form](#) to the department chair, dean and/or supervisor for professional activity
- Failure to obtain approval prior to engaging in outside professional activities
- Failure to submit (annual mandatory training via WebCT Vista) an “External Consulting and Related Party Disclosure” annually summarizing activities

Best Business Practices:

1. Management should periodically communicate policies governing outside professional activities to all employees. Management may need to limit and regulate such activity depending on specific faculty or administrative circumstances.

2. Management should encourage employees to engage in activities that contribute to their growth, expand their knowledge, and advance the mission of the college.
3. Management should carefully review/scrutinize outside professional activity requests to avoid conflict with institutional obligations prior to allowing the employee to participate in outside professional activities.
4. Management should ensure that the outside professional activities do not require significant use of University facilities, supplies, and/or supporting services.
5. Ensure employees that participate in outside professional activities complete the [Paid Professional Services Application and Approval Form](#) prior to participating in the activity.
6. Ensure all full-time employees and employees who can influence purchasing decisions complete an “External Consulting and Related Party Disclosure” annually (via PeopleSoft required training). This training should be completed by all full-time employees or employees that can influence of purchasing decisions, not just employees participating in outside professional activities.
7. Approval of the [Consulting and Paid Professional Services Application and Approval Form](#) by the department chair, dean, and/or supervisor.
8. Maintain appropriate documentation/records for outside professional activities for appropriate retention periods as required by institutional and [UHS](#) policies. The system policies also need to be referenced here.

Case Scenario: A faculty member is contacted by an outside agency to present information to their group related to the faculty member’s research that is conducted at UHD. The faculty member charges the agency \$1,000 to present the research findings. The faculty member does not contact the department chair to obtain permission to conduct this outside activity. The faculty member completed the previous year’s External Consulting and Related Party Disclosure form and indicated that he had conducted external consulting during the previous year. Has the faculty member violated any UHD policy?

Case Scenario Answer: Yes, by not receiving prior authorization to conduct the outside activity, the faculty member has violation both UHD PS 02.A.04 and SAM 02.A.08.

AREA

This questionnaire is designed so that “no” answers indicate that an internal control weakness may exist and the procedure/process may need to be examined in greater detail. **Comments should be provided for “No” answers.** When such weaknesses are identified, a change in the process may be necessary OR a control may need to be put into place to address the weakness. The appropriate UH contact office (as outlined in the self-assessment text) may be contacted for assistance with identified weaknesses.

Self-Assessment of Internal Controls for Contracts	Yes	No	N/A	Comments
Are employees familiar with institutional policies and procedures regarding outside professional activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does management encourage employees to engage in outside professional activities that facilitates professional growth and/or advances the mission of the college?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does management periodically communicate information on outside professional activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the Consulting and Paid Professional Services Application and Approval Form completed by the employee and submitted to appropriate level management for approval prior to the employee participating in the outside professional activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does management ensure an “ <i>External Consulting and Related Party Disclosure</i> ” is completed annually via PeopleSoft by all full-time employees and employees who can influence purchasing decisions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does management carefully review/scrutinize the activity prior to approving?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does management ensure that outside professional activities do not require significant use of University facilities, supplies and/or supporting services?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are outside professional activity documents retained for the appropriate time period as prescribed by institutional policies? (Reference: UH System Records Retention Schedule)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

This is a living document and will be updated as revisions are necessary. Periodically, you may want to check for updates and revisions. We welcome any questions and feedback regarding the information contained in this tool including any comments regarding how this may be more useful and effective.