

**College of Engineering
Implementation Guidelines
for**

Policy *AD77 Engaging in Outside Professional Activities (Conflict of Commitment)*

Policy *AD77 Engaging in Outside Professional Activities (Conflict of Commitment)* sets forth the expectation that a faculty member's primary employment obligation is to their Penn State responsibilities and that their outside profession activities must not impinge, in particular, on the educational experience of our students.

The policy requires each College to develop guidelines for implementing *AD77* that, "at a minimum, identify a representative set of teaching activities that do, and do not require approval from the Budget Administrator [usually the Department Head] and the Budget Executive [the Dean]."

Outside activities that are general in nature and provide low risk for a conflict with a faculty member's Penn State responsibilities typically do not require preapproval. Activities that require more of a faculty member's time, create the possibility of conflict or competition with Penn State courses or responsibilities, or involve intellectual property ownership do require preapproval. There is a limited set of activities that present significant conflict with Penn State responsibilities that will not be approved. Representative examples of each of these categories of activities follow. These examples are not exhaustive. Faculty members should consult with their department heads if they are unsure about the need for preapproval. Faculty members should review *AD77* <https://policies.psu.edu/policies/ad77> for further context and for their obligations under other University policies when engaging in outside activities, e.g., private consulting.

An important clause of *AD77* is "[t]he University reserves the right to determine whether outside activities adversely affect the University mission. This provision applies throughout the calendar year, irrespective of the actual appointment period and subject to the discretion of the University." (Underlining added for emphasis.)

Representative example of activities that do not require pre-approval:

- Presenting a seminar or teaching one-day workshop at another institution
- Serving on a graduate student's committee at another institution, when any compensation is only for travel expenses and perhaps a small honorarium (\$1,000 or less)
- Teaching that is not for academic credit
- Teaching that is not in the general area of expertise of a faculty member's appointment at Penn State
- Teaching by Fixed Term 2 faculty members (although department heads should be aware of other teaching commitments)

Representative examples of activities requiring pre-approval (before contract is signed or specific arrangements are made):

- Holding an appointment at another institution, domestic or international
- Entering into an arrangement in which a Penn State employee would be considered an employee of another institution or company or that include intellectual property agreements
- Teaching for credit courses during a faculty member's appointment period at another institution, domestic or international (likely to not be approved unless the faculty member is on unpaid leave or it is part of an approved sabbatical plan)
- Teaching credit courses over the summer at another institution (likely to be approved for fixed-term faculty members if the course does not interfere or compete with teaching obligations at Penn State). "Summer school" type courses taught by a group of faculty members from various universities are excluded.
- Teaching non-credit workshops or short courses that extend more one day (cumulative) or require travel during a faculty member's academic appointment
- Chairing Ph.D. committees at another institution, domestic or international

Representative activities that will not be approved:

- Tenure at another institution of higher education

These guidelines have been informed by those of the Smeal College of Business, the College of Information Sciences and Technology and the College of the Liberal Arts.

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