

## Outside Consulting – Frequently Asked Questions

### Are UCF employees allowed to engage in outside consulting?

The University of Central Florida recognizes that outside employment, consulting, and similar activities can further the dissemination and use of employee knowledge and expertise, as well as advance their professional competence and reputation. Employees may engage in such activities and hold financial interests, as long as they comply with the relevant UCF policies.

### What UCF policies discuss employee responsibilities regarding outside consulting?

[UCF-3.018 Conflict of Interest or Commitment; Outside Activity or Employment](#)

[UCF Policy 4-504.3 Reporting Outside Activities, Financial Interest, and Potential Conflicts of Interest of Conflicts of Commitment in Research](#)

[UCF-2.029 Patents, Trademarks and Trade Secrets](#)

[UCF Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)

### How many hours may I spend on outside consulting activities?

Employees may participate in consulting activities, but the number of hours spent on such work should be reasonable and balanced with their university responsibilities. As there is no specific university policy defining the exact number of hours allowed for consulting, employees should discuss their consulting activities and time commitment with their supervisor. The supervisor will review these to ensure there is no conflict of commitment and that university obligations are met.

### When do I report my outside consulting activities?

An employee must report the details of any planned outside consulting activity and receive approval **before** committing to it.

### How do I report my outside consulting activities?

**Faculty, Executive Service, Post-doctoral employees, select individuals identified in University positions of trust, and employees engaged in the design, conduct or reporting of research:** Log into [Huron COI](#) and update your AA-21 disclosure form with the details of the outside consulting activity. Visit the [Huron COI Help Center](#) for reference guides and videos on how to complete the AA-21 disclosure form.

**All other employees:** Submit Form HR-11, “Report of Potential Conflict of Interest or Commitment, Outside Activity or Employment” with details of the outside consulting activity.

## What happens after I disclose the outside consulting activity?

1. Once you submit the AA-21 form in Huron COI, it will be routed to your supervisor for review. Your supervisor will review the details (which include the number of anticipated hours) and determine if there is a potential conflict of commitment or other conflict of interest.
2. Next, if you are a researcher and the compensation for the activity exceeds \$5,000, the form will be routed to the Research Integrity Compliance Office. The Research Integrity Compliance Office reviews the following:
  - Could the outside activity influence the objectivity of your UCF research?
  - Are there any potential conflicts of interest related to University Intellectual Property?
  - Will any UCF resources (including students/personnel) be used in the activity?
  - Is an exemption to Florida Statute 112.313 needed? An exemption to this statute may be required if the company you are consulting for also conducts business with UCF.
3. Finally, the University Compliance and Ethics Office will make the final decision. You will receive an email from the Huron COI system with the review outcome.

## What is a conflict of commitment or conflict of interest?

A **Conflict of Commitment** occurs when an employee's devotion of time to an outside activity adversely affects their capability to meet their primary university responsibilities.

A **Conflict of Interest** is a divergence between an individual's private interests and their employment or service obligations to the university such that an independent observer may reasonably question whether the individual's actions or decisions are influenced or determined by considerations other than the best interest of the university.

## How can I avoid conflict between my consulting activity and UCF's intellectual property policy?

Employees who propose to engage in a consulting activity shall furnish a copy of Article 18 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement and the University's Patent, Trademarks, and Trade Secrets Regulation to the outside entity prior to the time an agreement is signed or, if there is no written agreement, before the consulting activity begins. The Employee should carefully read any consulting agreement to ensure University IP rights are not waived. Employees are not authorized and do not possess necessary ownership to waive University rights, and any such waiver is deemed void unless specifically authorized by the Vice President of Research or designee.

## Can UCF review my outside consulting agreement(s)?

UCF does not provide any legal counsel or advice on outside consulting agreements made between the employee in their private capacity and an outside entity.

UCF compliance departments can answer questions concerning university policies related to consulting.

## What am I not allowed to do/use during my outside consulting activities?

- Do not use University funds or resources, including facilities, personnel, students, and equipment.
- Do not utilize or share any confidential or non-public information or data from the University.
- Do not sign agreements that allow the entity to use University logos, trademarks, or service marks.
- Do not engage in University business decisions related to the entity, including decisions about purchasing products or services from them.
- Do not sign agreements that limit your ability to conduct or disseminate University research.

## Questions?

Office of Research - Research Integrity Compliance Department: [coi@ucf.edu](mailto:coi@ucf.edu)

University Compliance & Ethics: [pca@ucf.edu](mailto:pca@ucf.edu)