Guidelines for Prior Approval and Disclosure of Outside Activities
Faculty and Professional Staff

I. Introduction
The university supports and encourages faculty and professional staff to engage in outside professional activities that support the university’s mission or relate to university duties or responsibilities so long as those activities do not conflict with obligations to the university or prevent the performance of primary responsibilities expected of a faculty or staff member as provided in Regents’ Rules and Regulations, Rule 31004. Faculty and staff may not receive grant funds directly nor enter into contracts that conflict with the individual’s obligations to the university. Outside professional activity is considered an overload above and beyond the full-time obligation to the university.

All faculty and professional staff are required to request prior approval for outside activities, with some exceptions, noted below, and complete or update the disclosure of financial interests and outside activities at least annually, even if no activities are reported. Examples of such activities include providing expert testimony, serving as a scientific advisor, acting as a consultant, professional/clinical practice, and serving on a board of directors. The allowable time commitment to outside activities is subject to the stipulations outlined below.

II. Allowable Time Commitment

A. Faculty
- Faculty appointed on the instructional budget or other institutional funds may engage in up to 8 hours per week (or a maximum of 32 hours per month) in outside activities.
- Faculty appointed on 26 accounts must fulfill the minimum obligation of effort committed to each award and may engage in up to an additional 8 hours of outside activity per week as approved.
  - Note that Faculty must sign an Attestation Form when seeking permission to commit 100% effort to a 26 account. See Guidelines for Charging Faculty Summer Salary to Sponsored Projects.
- When not receiving salary from institutional funds or sponsored awards, the amount of time allowed for outside activities is unrestricted as long as the activity is approved.

B. Professional Staff and Research Scientists
- Professional staff may engage in up to 8 hours per week, but no more than 20% of the hours worked in a given month to outside activities.
- Professional staff appointed on 26 accounts must fulfill the minimum obligation of effort committed to each award and may engage in up to an additional 8 hours of outside activity per week as approved.
- Professional staff, with supervisor approval, may commit additional hours using personal leave.
III. **Pre-Approved Outside Activities**
Most outside activities require prior approval; although, certain activities are so integral to UT’s mission that they are considered preapproved if the activity does not reasonably appear to create a conflict of interest and the amount of time committed does not interfere with the individual’s university duties and responsibilities. While these activities do not require prior approval, some may require disclosure during the annual disclosure process. Pre-approved activities include:

- Serving on a US federal, state or local government agency committee, panel or commission.
- Acting in an editorial capacity for a professional journal.
- Reviewing journal manuscripts, book manuscripts, grant or contract proposals.
- Attending and presenting talks at scholarly colloquia and conferences.
- Developing scholarly communications in books, journal articles, movies, television productions and similar works, even when such activities result in financial gain, consistent with intellectual property and other applicable UT System and university policies and guidelines. **Note:** Prior approval is required if you will be paid by an outside entity to conduct research related to your area of expertise.
- Serving as a committee member, an officer, or board member of a professional or scholarly organization.
- Board service carried out for personal reasons on one’s own time if it does not create a conflict of interest or commitment (e.g., faith-based board, homeowners association, youth sports organization).

IV. **Procedures for Completing a Disclosure**

A. **When to disclose:**
- Within 30 days of beginning employment with UT Austin and annually thereafter.
- Within 30 days of obtaining a new financial interest that requires disclosure or beginning a new outside activity.
- Annually from the date of your last disclosure.

B. **Where to disclose:**
Login to the UTRMS-COI module using your UT EID and password. Select Complete or Edit Disclosure Profile and select the type of activity you need to disclose, then follow the prompts.

C. **What to disclose:**
- Personal Financial Interests
  - Payments >$600 from a single outside entity (salary, honoraria, consulting payments)
  - Royalty income
  - Gifts
  - Equity interest in publicly traded on non-publicly traded entities
- Outside activities related to your institutional responsibilities (current or during past 12 months)
– Compensated or uncompensated activities including those for which prior approval was obtained
• Substantial foreign relationships
  – Involvement in a program that is sponsored, funded, directed, or controlled by a foreign government, foreign agency, or foreign institution that results in an honorary title; employment; grant support; in-kind support, such as research facilities and equipment; or collaborative patents
• Sponsored research that is not managed through the UT Austin Office of Sponsored Projects, Office of Industry Engagement, or Dell Medical School
• Claim “No Activity” if you have no outside activities to disclose.

D. Conflict of interest assessment:
• If the disclosed activity falls within certain thresholds, the disclosure will be automatically approved.
• If the activity falls above certain thresholds, the disclosure will route to the Office of Research Support and Compliance (ORSC) for evaluation. If a real or perceived conflict of interest with your research may exist, the ORSC will work with you to manage the conflict.

V. Procedures for Requesting Prior Approval

A. Outside activities requiring prior approval:
Any activity other than those identified as pre-approved above requires disclosure and prior approval by the Office of Research Support and Compliance (ORSC). Examples of common outside activities requiring prior approval include:
• Consulting
• Scientific advisory services
• Serving on a board of directors or governing board, other than for a professional or scholarly organization
• Employment at an outside entity
• Academic appointment at another institution
• Expert testimony
• Submission of a funding proposal through an entity other than UT Austin

B. When to request prior approval:
• Submit a request with sufficient time prior to the start of the activity to allow for review by the Office of Research Support and Compliance and, if the activity may create a conflict of commitment with your university responsibilities, your department chair/supervisor.
• All approvals are expected to occur prospectively. In rare instances, outside activity may be approved retrospectively when the employee is called upon in an emergency or urgent situation where it would be impossible or unreasonable to obtain advance approval. In such cases, the activity must be fully disclosed and approval sought as soon as reasonably possible. Faculty should always notify their chair, dean, or supervisor in advance when they will be unable to attend to specific responsibilities.
C. **Where to request prior approval:**
   Login to the UTRMS-COI module using your UT EID and password. Select Request Pre-Approval and select the type of activity, then follow the prompts.

D. **Conflict of commitment assessment:**
   - The request will route to the Office of Research Support and Compliance (ORSC) for review. If the activity does not present a conflict of commitment with university responsibilities, the activity will be promptly approved.
   - If the activity appears to present a possible conflict of commitment, the ORSC may request additional review from your department chair or supervisor. If a conflict of commitment is identified, the ORSC staff will work with you to manage the conflict.
   - Denial of a prior approval request can only be made by the ORSC in collaboration with your department chair or supervisor.

VI. **Managing Outside Activities**
Some outside activities present a real or perceived conflict of interest or conflict of commitment with the individual’s university duties and responsibilities. These activities are not necessarily prohibited but should be managed to ensure the individual’s responsibilities to the university remain paramount. The Office of Research Support and Compliance (ORSC) makes the assessment of whether the activity presents a conflict and needs to be managed.
   - The management plan will be agreed to by the conflicted individual and department chair or supervisor.
   - The outside activity will be monitored annually by the department chair or supervisor for the duration of the activity.

VII. **Confidential Outside Activity**
If any employee wishes to engage in an activity for which some or all of the relevant information is required to remain confidential, the approving authority may approve the activity without requiring full written disclosure if the approver is satisfied there is a compelling reason to treat the information confidentially and the activity is fully compliant with applicable law, University policies, and UT system rules and policies.

VIII. **Rescinding Approvals**
An approving authority may rescind an approved outside activity upon receipt of information indicating the activity is not consistent with this policy or any applicable law, university policy, or UT System rule or policy, or if the activity negatively impacts performance of regular University duties and responsibilities. The individual for whom the activity may be rescinded shall be given notice in writing and have an opportunity to respond.

IX. **Appeals**
If a request for approval of outside activity is denied, you may request the university reconsider and provide an explanation of the final decision in writing. If you remain unsatisfied with the decision, you may appeal to your Dean. If you are still unsatisfied, you may access standard grievance procedures to the extent they are applicable.

X. **Questions**
Direct questions to the Office of Research Support and Compliance (ORSC) Outside Activities team at COI@austin.utexas.edu.