

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY CONFLICT OF COMMITMENT POLICY

A conflict of commitment relates to an individual's distribution of effort between a University appointment, obligation, and commitment and external professionally-related or personal activities. External activities may include involvement with professional societies; participation related to review panels, education meetings or conferences; consulting and other professional activities for pay; and business activities related to outside entities including start-up companies. A conflict of commitment can arise when the external activities burden or interfere with the faculty member's primary obligations and commitments to the University.

It is the policy of the University that all faculty members are expected to devote their primary professional loyalty, time, and energy to their teaching, research and other scholarly works, service on University committees, assistance for students, performance of necessary administrative duties, and, where applicable, patient care. Although a specific work-week is not defined for faculty members, it is expected that such membership constitutes a full-time obligation and that, with the exceptions explicitly permitted by University policies on external activities, they will not engage in other employment. Accordingly, external activities must be arranged so as not to interfere with the primary commitments.

External activities conducted by a faculty member should be of such nature as to improve effectiveness as a teacher or contribute to scholarly attainments, or should in some manner serve the interests of the University or of the community. External activities must not distract significantly from primary responsibilities and must not require such extensive absence as to cause the faculty member to neglect course obligations or to become unavailable to students and colleagues. External activities must be of such nature and conducted in such manner as will not bring discredit to the University and must not compromise any intellectual property owned by the University.

Accordingly, the maximum expenditure of time spent on external activities by a full-time faculty member should not exceed forty days during the academic year, including holidays. For those full-time faculty members appointed on a twelve-month basis, time spent on external activities should not exceed fifty days per year, including holidays. It is expected that half-days will be accumulated into full days and that time spent traveling to and from activities or engagements and preparing for them also will be accumulated and counted in the total. Individual schools and departments may implement more specific procedures and require additional information in furtherance of this policy. Faculty members should periodically re-examine the nature and extent of their external activities and conscientiously avoid engaging in activities that constitute conflicts of commitment. The Provost or Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs may grant exceptions in extraordinary cases upon recommendation of the appropriate Dean.