

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE**  
**ACROSS-DEPARTMENT CONSULTANT POLICY**

**Number** 07.02.13

**Division** Vice President for Research and Economic Development - Office of Sponsored Programs

**Date** September 7, 2012; Reviewed/Revised February 26, 2024

**Purpose** To establish UAH's policy on Intra-University Consulting, otherwise known as Across-Department Consulting.

**Policy** UAH encourages, collaboration, cooperation, and consulting among its faculty members. Often, that activity originates from professional friendship or professional courtesy. Sometime it is compensated through employment of a faculty member on a grant or contract to provide partial released time or summer employment. In rare occasions it may be compensated through consulting charges to a grant or contract. Payment for consulting from sponsored awards is guided by [OMB UG 2 CFR 200.459](#)

"Since intra-university consulting is assumed to be undertaken as a university obligation requiring no compensation in addition to full-time base salary, the principle also applies to faculty members who function as consultants or otherwise contribute to a sponsored agreement conducted by another faculty member of the same institution."

Exceptions guided by [OMB UG 2 CFR 200.459 Professional Services Cost](#), are outlined below:

"However, in unusual cases where consultation is across departmental lines or involves a separate or remote operation, and the work performed by the consultant is in addition to his regular departmental load, any charges for such consulting arrangements are specifically provided for in the agreement or approved in writing by the sponsoring agency."

Definition:

Intra-University consulting is defined as that which occurs between two separate and distinct departments within UAH. A department is defined as a distinct group involved in a recognized discipline and headed by a chair or director. For the purposes of this policy, research centers which are functioning units within a college or school are not separate and distinct departments.

**Procedures** Paid intra-University consulting is allowable in those instances where the faculty member's participation in a project is nominal, i.e., less than five (5) percent effort. For example: UAH's academic year is 37 weeks with one semester 18.5 weeks. Therefore, a faculty member could do intra-university consulting up to .05 X 18.5 weeks or 37 hours per semester. Additionally, a compensated intra-

University consulting activity must be in addition to the faculty member's regular departmental duties and must take place across departmental or similar unit-lines.

**Agreements with Sponsoring Agencies:** Agreements must specify that consulting work will be performed by an employee of the institution and all associated fringes and overhead will apply. Additional expenditures related to the consulting work such as general office supplies and travel need not be specified in the agreement, however, these expenditures must be charged (at cost) to the sponsored agreement or other funds within the department receiving the consulting and cannot be included in the consulting rate. Funds allocated by the sponsor for Intra-University consulting will be budgeted in a distinct accounting code. Applicable fringes and overhead will apply.

**Procurement for Consulting Services:** When additional compensation for Intra-University consulting will occur, all institutional policies concerning procurement are applicable.

**Payment:** Compensation is processed through the University's hourly payroll system (using the object for Intra-University Consulting) bi-weekly during the consulting period.

**Rates for Interdepartmental Consulting:** Intra-University consulting payments, as provided by the sponsor in the approved project budget, shall be at a rate, including the current fringe benefit rate, which shall not exceed the then current rate for Executive Level IV Federal employee compensation. The daily equivalent rate for an Executive Level IV employee is established and published by the Federal Government at least annually and is available from the Office of Sponsored Programs.

Intra-University consulting for additional compensation is excluded from the effort reporting system.

"Incidental work (that in excess of normal for the individual), for which supplemental compensation is paid by an institution under institutional policy, need not be included in the payroll distribution systems described below, provided such work and compensation are separately identified and documented in the financial management system of the institution."

The following approvals are necessary for an Intra-University consulting agreement when additional compensation is to be provided:

- 1) The individual performing the consulting
- 2) The PI of the sponsored award
- 3) The dean or director of the department providing the consultant, confirming that consulting efforts are in addition to a normal departmental workload
- 4) The Office of Sponsored Programs
- 5) The [Cross-Department Consulting Agreement](#) form is located at [MyUAH](#), under the *Human Resources Banner*.

## **Exceptions for More Than Nominal Commitment of Time**

For involvement in a sponsored project which anticipates more than a nominal commitment of time, faculty effort should be included as a named position in the project budget with compensation requested commensurate with the proposed level of effort. No compensation in addition to full-time base salary is allowed in this case.

Exceptions - In unusual cases, exceptions may be granted, allowing the consultant to receive additional compensation for his or her efforts. In order to be considered for an exception, the following factors must be met:

- 1) The consulting must be across colleges or schools or in a remote location.
- 2) The consulting must be in addition to the faculty member's usual workload as certified by the consultant's dean or director
- 3) The consultant must be receiving no portion of his or her base salary from the college, school, or center for which he or she is consulting.
- 4) The consultant must be a tenure track or non-tenure-track faculty member at the instructor level or above.
- 5) Intra-University consulting charged to sponsored agreements must be specifically identified as such and provided for in the agreement or approved in writing by the sponsoring agency prior to any actual activity.

*Exceptions must be preapproved in writing by the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Vice President for Research and Economic Development and, if appropriate, the Vice President for Academic Affairs.*

### **Review**

The Office of Sponsored Programs is responsible for review of this policy every four years;(or whenever circumstances require).