

Passed by the Full-Faculty on 5/10/2011 and 12/14/2017

**Columbia Business School and Conflicts of Interest and Commitment:  
Approval for Outside Teaching**

**Recommendations of the Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Committee<sup>1</sup>**

Teaching activities are given special treatment in the Faculty Handbook (<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/handbook/>). With respect to outside teaching, the Faculty Handbook states that:

Full-time faculty may not create courses, substantial parts of courses, or courseware for other educational institutions or a commercial enterprise, nor may they accept teaching assignments outside of Columbia, unless specifically authorized in advance by the Provost on the recommendation of the appropriate dean or vice president. This policy applies ... to courses taught in person, via the Internet or by some other method of electronic transmittal.

*([http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/handbook/obligations.html#outside\\_interests\\_and\\_employment](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/handbook/obligations.html#outside_interests_and_employment))*

As well, according to the Faculty Handbook, “Faculty may not engage in outside activities that directly compete with the mission and interests of the University or are in conflict with their University responsibilities, regardless of the time they require.”

In addition, the Faculty Handbook prohibits teaching of any kind, including in Executive Education, when on sabbatical leave:

A professor may not teach or undertake any full-time employment at another institution during a sabbatical, since the primary purpose of such a leave is to provide an uninterrupted opportunity for research and intellectual refreshment. This restriction does not apply to a research position at another institution.

*(<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/handbook/instruction.html#leavesofabsence>)*

Faculty members looking for additional sources of compensation are encouraged to seek teaching and Executive Education opportunities within Columbia Business School, especially during the off-term, during which the Faculty Handbook allows for more flexibility in earning additional compensation.

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<sup>1</sup> **2011 Committee Members:** Professors Ann Bartel, Awi Federgruen, Robert Hodrick, Ray Horton, Gita Johar, Chris Mayer (Chair), and Bernd Schmitt. **2017 Committee Members:** Professors Tim Baldenius, Joel Brockner (Chair), Linda Green, Gur Huberman, Charles Jones (ex officio), Ran Kivetz, and Shang-Jin Wei

## University Policy as Applied to Business School Faculty

It is the responsibility of the Business School to ensure that its faculty members are in compliance with University policy. In order to attain the requisite compliance with University policies, the Conflicts of Interest and Commitment Committee recommends the following guidelines to help clarify when faculty must request approval in advance for teaching and which requests are likely to be supported by the Dean.

- 1) Certain types of outside teaching are allowed without requesting permission. These activities include:
  - a. Guest, compensated, and honorary lectureships or seminar presentations at another university, as long as each activity does not require more than three days per semester for any given organization and does not involve assessing student performance.
  - b. Teaching for a company, government, or an organization where Executive Education is not its primary function, as long as each activity does not require more than three days per semester for any given organization and does not involve assessing student performance.
  
- 2) Other types of activities require approval in advance from the Dean. These activities include:
  - a. Any teaching not listed in section 1 including, but not limited to:
    - i. Teaching a course, or a large part of a course, in a non-Columbia degree program in the United States or abroad, except as part of an existing partnership agreement. For the purposes of this policy, “large part of a course” means any teaching that involves more than three days of classroom time.
    - ii. Teaching in Executive Education programs for other universities or third-party education providers in the United States or abroad.
    - iii. Teaching any online courses.
    - iv. Teaching for a company, government, or an organization where the activity requires more than three days per semester for any given organization or involves assessing student performance.
    - v. Teaching where there is potential for brand dilution or inappropriate use of the Columbia name, even if it is listed in category 1 above.
  - b. Any other activity that is not described above but that has the potential to compete with an existing Columbia program or activity.

- 3) Approval for teaching requests in section 2 above will be based on the factors listed below. In general, activities will be approved if the answer to each of the following questions is “no.” The Dean may still approve teaching when the answer to one or more of the questions below is yes if there is deemed a sufficiently large benefit or sufficiently low cost for the School.
- a. Does the activity compete with Columbia programs?
  - b. Does the activity interfere with the faculty member’s teaching, research, or other Columbia Business School and Columbia University duties?
  - c. Does Columbia Business School have teaching needs that could otherwise be served by the faculty member?
  - d. Does the teaching use materials developed at Columbia Business School?
  - e. Does the activity have the potential for brand dilution or inappropriate use of the Columbia name?

The evaluation of potential conflicts is nuanced. Focusing on the difference between *conflicting* and *complementary* outside activities is critical to the effective implementation and sound decisions.

#### Examples of Approval Decisions

##### *Examples of Activities that would Normally **be Approved***

- *Teaching a PhD course in your off term at a University that does not have a Business School and/or does not normally compete or aspire to compete with Columbia University for students either in the U.S. or abroad*

##### *Examples of Activities that would Normally **Not be Approved***

- *Teaching a MBA course at a peer or aspirant School either in the U.S. or abroad.*
- *Teaching a course at a peer or aspirant School that delivers content that was developed by, or is unique to, a Columbia Business School program (e.g. an NYC Immersion Course or LEAD.)*

#### Sanctions and Periodic Review

Faculty members who do not follow these rules are subject to sanctions as judged appropriate by the Dean and specified in the Faculty Handbook. If faculty members have any questions about the appropriateness of specific activities, they should consult the Office of the Dean prior to commencing such activities.

The Dean will appoint a committee at least every six years to review the impact and effectiveness of these policies. This committee will report to the Dean and Executive Committee.

#### Current University Policies

Columbia Business School faculty members continue to be responsible for complying with all current University policies where such policies go beyond the School’s rules.