

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

SPA REGULATIONS

FOR

ACADEMIC FACULTY MEMBERS and FACULTY SERVICE OFFICERS

Effective:
July 1, 2021

Approved by Provost & Vice President (Academic) - August 12, 2022

Approved by the Faculty Council - May 19, 2022

Supplementary Professional Activity

Faculty of Science Regulations¹

The [University of Alberta Collective Agreement](#) presents general definitions, scope, and other considerations for supplementary professional activities (SPA) for members of the Association of Academic Staff of the University of Alberta.

[Article A3](#) of that agreement stipulates that each Faculty Council shall set faculty-specific definitions for “major” and “minor” SPA, as well as regulations for approval and reporting of SPA by Academic Faculty Members. [Article B3](#) sets forth the context of SPA for Faculty Service Officers.

This document sets out these SPA definitions, regulations, and procedures for the Faculty of Science as they apply to academic faculty members and faculty service officers. Reporting of real or perceived conflict of interest is governed by the policies stated in the [University of Alberta Code of Conduct: Employees’ Obligations Respecting Conflict of Interest](#), not by this document.

The material presented below operates within the context set by the Faculty Agreement, by [the University of Alberta Definitions of Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment, and Institutional Conflict](#), and by the [University of Alberta Code of Conduct: Employees’ Obligations Respecting Conflict of Interest](#), and is not intended to contravene these other sources.

Faculty members and faculty service officers are directed to review Section F in the [University of Alberta Code of Conduct: Employees’ Obligations Respecting Conflict of Interest](#), which concerns “concurrent activities” and SPA. This material is re-produced in an Appendix at the end of this document.

1. Definitions

These definitions apply to this document only.

Academic Staff Member

An academic staff member is either an academic faculty member or a faculty service officer.

Academic Year

The academic year is the twelve month period of July 1 - June 30.

Financial Benefit

Financial Benefit is the receipt or expectation of anything of monetary value, including pay or salary or other payments for services, equity, or other ownership interests (adapted from [the University of Alberta Policy on Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment, and Institutional Conflict](#)).

Financial Interest

Financial interest is an ownership position in a privately held company (adapted from [University of Alberta Policy on Conflict of Interest, Conflict of Commitment, and Institutional Conflict](#)).

¹ This document supersedes an earlier version and revises the rules around Major SPA, recognizing the Dean as the role responsible for approving Major SPA.

Paid Professional Activity

Paid professional activity is either

1. Activity for which an academic staff member receives a *financial benefit* from another institution, agency, or organization that results from the member's professional expertise as a researcher, teacher, or administrator; or
2. Activity that advances the financial *interests* of an academic staff member.

External Professional Service Activities

External professional service activities are services that an academic staff member undertakes, in recognition of the member's professional expertise as a researcher, teacher or administrator, for institutions, agencies, or organizations or for which there is no financial benefit.

Secondary University of Alberta Contract

A secondary University of Alberta contract is a teaching or research contract between an academic staff member and the University of Alberta, outside the academic staff member's normal university contract, that results in additional self-employment income to the academic staff member.

Major Supplementary Professional Activity

Major SPA is any Paid Professional Activity that involves any one or more of the following:

1. Teaching for *Financial Benefit* that takes place outside the University of Alberta, whether it is at another academic institution or for a professional development program;
2. A *Secondary University Contract*;
3. A commitment to one or more projects that in sum require a time commitment exceeding 240 hours during the 12-month academic year;
4. Any use of university facilities, or the engagement of University of Alberta staff or students, regardless of duration.

Minor Supplementary Professional Activity

Minor SPA is any paid professional activity that is not major SPA.

2. Faculty of Science Approval Procedures

Major SPA requires approval. Minor SPA does not require approval.

The request for approval of a Major SPA will be made in writing to the Dean and will indicate:

1. The category or type of client;
2. The nature of the work;
3. An estimate of the time required to perform the work;
4. The extent, if any, of the use of University facilities, supplies, support staff or students;
5. Evidence of adequate personal liability insurance, if university facilities are used or if off-site activities are undertaken as part of a Secondary University Contract;
6. Any other major paid professional activities that have already been approved in that year or which are continuing from an earlier year; and
7. The impact the activity will have on teaching, research, and service responsibilities and what actions will be taken to mitigate any negative impact.

The Dean will evaluate the request by considering:

1. Issues related to scope, context, authorization, and requirements as identified in Article [A3: Supplementary Professional Activity](#) and [Article B3: Supplementary Professional Activity](#) in the collective agreement for academic faculty members and faculty service officers, respectively,
2. Conflict of interest considerations, with respect to either the involvement of university facilities, the staff under the direction of the academic staff member or the students enrolled in classes taught by the faculty member or under the supervision of the academic staff member;
3. Compliance with these Faculty of Science regulations concerning the use of facilities, staff, or students in carrying out SPA.

Approval will be subject to the conditions specified in Article A3.05.1 and A3.05.2 of the collective agreement for faculty members (Article B3 of the collective agreement for faculty service officers), and any other condition that the Dean may impose, as long as such conditions do not contravene Articles A or B of the current collective agreement.

If the *Major SPA* will involve use of specialized facilities, then the staff member must provide evidence to the Dean of sufficient liability insurance to indemnify the University against claims (see collective agreement, A3.08 (g)).

3. Faculty of Science SPA Regulations for Use of Facilities

Major and Minor SPA must not interfere with or compromise the primary teaching or research purposes of the Faculty of Science and/or departmental facilities, including those facilities or labs under the direct supervision of the individual faculty member.

Access to facilities for approved SPA activities must not compromise the safety of other university facilities, offices, or other areas normally restricted to university staff and/or students.

The staff member who is conducting *Major SPA* with the approved use of these facilities is responsible for any damage that may occur to equipment during the SPA work and for the safety of personnel in the facilities.

Normally, the Dean will require payment to the department by the faculty member for the use of the facilities, supplies, or support staff, but only to the extent of the actual cost, including overhead. Exceptions to this include cases in which the SPA is subject to an intellectual property agreement between the UofA and the faculty member.

For cases in which facilities were approved for *Major SPA* use prior to the adoption of these regulations, the faculty member is still required to have adequate personal liability insurance and to provide evidence of that insurance (see collective agreement, A3.08 (g)).

4. Faculty of Science SPA Regulations Concerning Students

The engagement of students involved in *Major SPA*, through classroom assignments, thesis work, or other academic work for which they receive academic credit or assessment, represents a potential real or apparent conflict of interest. Academic staff members must disclose to their Dean and Department Chair the nature of student involvement in any *Major SPA*.

5. Faculty of Science SPA Reporting Procedures

Academic staff members must report both *Major SPA and Minor SPA* in the SPA section of the annual report submitted to Science's Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC), providing the following information (see Article 8.17 of the Faculty Agreement):

1. The category or type of client
2. The nature of the work
3. Estimate of the time to perform the work
4. The names and nature of any continuing contractual arrangements with outside organizations.

This reporting procedure also applies to *Major and Minor SPA* undertaken during sabbaticals, assisted leave, or secondment (see collective agreement, A3.07.2).

Academic staff members will continue to report *External Professional Service Activities* in the service section of the Faculty of Science annual report.

External Professional Service Activities that result in a nominal cash compensation in the form of an honorarium (e.g., external reviews of programs, special lectures) will be annotated with “(honorarium)” on the annual report in the section describing professional service activities. Honoraria accepted for these activities will not be considered “gifts” as defined by the [University of Alberta Code of Conduct: Employees’ Obligations Respecting Conflict of Interest](#).