

Reference Guide: ODU Policy on Outside Employment and Conflict of Interest

This document summarizes the key points of ODU Policy 1494 – Conflict of Interest/Outside Employment and related faculty handbook sections. It is intended as a quick reference only. Faculty must always consult the official University policy for full details.

Core Requirement

Faculty members must obtain prior written approval before engaging in any outside employment, consulting, or professional activity that may create a conflict of commitment or conflict of interest.

Requests must be submitted through the Department Chair and Dean for review.

[Use the Outside Employment Request Form for each outside engagement.](#)

What is a Conflict of Interest or Commitment?

A conflict arises when personal, financial, or professional interests could compromise—or appear to compromise—your ability to carry out University responsibilities objectively.

Examples Include:

Using University resources (labs, equipment, staff, or students) for outside work.

Claiming workload for a grant not secured through ODU or the Office of Advancement.

Performing work through your own consulting company that overlaps with your ODU responsibilities.

Consulting or employment with organizations that do business with ODU.

Outside work that interferes with teaching, research, or service obligations.

Teaching a course at another institution that duplicates or competes with ODU courses/programs.

Directing students or research in ways that benefit your personal financial interests.

Process for Requesting Approval

Key Notes

[Complete the Outside Employment Request Form.](#)

Most requests are approved, provided there is transparency and no direct conflict with ODU responsibilities.

Submit to your Department Chair for review.

Engaging in outside work without prior approval can result in serious consequences if a conflict of interest is identified.

Forwarded to your Dean for final approval.

The University is currently reviewing outside employment more closely — now is the time to ensure all activities are disclosed and approved.

Approved requests are logged by the University.

Where to Find the Full Policy

ODU Policy 1494 – Conflict of Interest/Outside Employment

Teaching & Research Faculty Handbook

Outside Employment Policy for Administrative & Professional Faculty

Questions?

If you are uncertain whether an activity constitutes a conflict of interest or need clarification on the process, contact:

Your Department Chair