The Texas A&M University System is committed to serving the needs of the people of the State of Texas through education, leadership development, research, and service. The College of Engineering allows its faculty to make their expertise available to business, industry, government, professional societies, and other appropriate entities. Such activities serve to strengthen the individual employee and contribute to improvement of education, leadership development, research, and service programs. In pursuing this mission, faculty members are obligated to inform their department heads of all new and continuing external employment prior to entering into any agreement, including those dealing with intellectual property.

These guidelines serve to inform the faculty member and department head of their responsibilities in relation to consulting and/or external employment activities.

**Process**
Faculty members are required to complete a *Texas A&M Engineering Program Faculty Request for Consulting and/or External Employment* form for each consulting or external employment request. Forms must be submitted and reviewed for approval by the department head and dean PRIOR to undertaking the activity, or the faculty member may be assessed annual leave, if accrued, or leave without pay. Per System policy, approval of external employment on an ongoing basis will be for no more than a one year duration. Upon approval of the request and prior to the activity, a *Texas A&M Engineering Program Leave Request for Approved Consulting and/or External Employment* form must be submitted to the faculty member’s department head when engaging in external employment or consulting activities on 1) official release time; or 2) annual leave, which also requires that the LeaveTraq request be attached; or 3) any time, if giving expert witness testimony/depositions.

Classifications of time available for consulting and/or external employment are defined as:

- **Official release time:** Refers to administratively approved time that a faculty member may spend away from his/her normal work duties for the purpose of engaging in consulting or other forms of external professional employment, *excluding expert witness testimony/depositions*. Official release time may be requested for investigative work other than testimony/deposition.

- **Annual leave:** Refers to administratively approved time that a faculty member may spend for expert witness testimony and/or depositions, as well as other external employment activities. A *Leave Request for Approved Consulting and/or External Employment* must be forwarded to the college manager of faculty services, indicating the company for which the leave is requested and confirming that the faculty member has filed the appropriate annual leave through the LeaveTraq system (the LeaveTraq request should be attached).

- **Weekends/holidays:** Refers to administratively approved time that a faculty member may spend engaging in consulting or other forms of external professional employment during weekends and holidays. A leave request form is not required for this activity unless it is for time spent giving expert witness testimony/deposition; for state reporting purposes a leave request must be filed anytime these activities are performed.

- **Other:** Refers to time other than the previously stated classifications and requires an explanation. Upon consideration of the request, a *Leave Request for Approved Consulting and/or External Employment* may be required.

**Requirements**
The College of Engineering has established a target maximum of 20 days of *official release time* per academic year for faculty consulting and/or external employment activities. Any consulting request in
excess of 20 days official release time must include a justification in memorandum format from the faculty member, through the department head to the executive associate dean explaining the benefit to the college, university and/or System for such extended official release time. By approving a request in excess of 20 days of official release time, the department head assures that the normal duties of the faculty member in the areas of teaching, research and scholarly publications are not being adversely affected.

- It is the responsibility of the department head and the faculty member requesting official release time to confirm that consulting/external employment is not being undertaken on any portion of time covered by federal grants or contracts. This confirmation is required on the Leave Request for Approved Consulting and/or External Employment form.

- Expert witness testimony and/or deposition activities must be reported to the State of Texas each year. If these activities are conducted during non-working hours they must still be reported through a Leave Request for Approved Consulting and/or External Employment form.

- Faculty who accept consulting or external employment under the auspices of their own companies are required to submit a separate request form for each individual company from which they accept employment, providing detailed and specific information on the nature of the employing company and the work to be done.

- In the College of Engineering, faculty members are required to hold a tenured or tenure-track positions and be employed full-time to be eligible to request official release time for external employment activities. However, all faculty are eligible to request permission to accept external employment without official release time (i.e., perform the work while on annual leave, on weekends or holidays).

- Faculty members on 9-month appointments must request approval for consulting or external employment to be undertaken during the summer months by submitting a Faculty Request for Consulting and/or External Employment form through their department head to the Dean’s Office.

- The justification for consulting or external employment must have clear value to the college, university, and/or System. Requests must be specific in this regard.

- The Faculty Request for Consulting and/or External Employment form is used to disclose the full extent of the faculty member’s activities to the College of Engineering. This disclosure protects the faculty member and the college, and no information pertinent to the request should be withheld. The faculty member also certifies that there will be no conflict of interest between the external activity and the faculty member’s responsibilities as an employee of The Texas A&M University System, and that research performed in connection with the external activity will be conducted in an objective and scientific manner and in accordance with the highest ethical standards of the profession.

- Faculty members engaging in external employment may be required to furnish reports and additional details of the employment.

- It is the responsibility of faculty members who are in the United States on a visa to ensure that they are eligible to accept external employment.

- Use of the facilities, equipment or personnel of The Texas A&M University System for consulting or external employment activities is prohibited without specific prior written approval and appropriate payment.

Reference: System Regulation 31.05.01 and System Policies 07.01 and 31.05.

Contact regarding these guidelines: Executive Associate Dean of Engineering, College of Engineering
Manager of Faculty Services, College of Engineering