



UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

MEMORANDUM

April 6, 2009

TO: Mike Bullis, Larry Singell, Moira Kilde, Robert Melnick, Christine Theodoropoulos,
John Bonine, Lisa Wolverton, Ron Bramhall

FROM: Russ Tomlin, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs *RT*
Paul van Donkelaar, UO Senate President *P.D.*

SUBJECT: Joint Academic Affairs/Senate COC Working Group

CC: Jim Bean, Rich Linton, Lynette Schenkel, Meg Rowles, Peter Gilkey

Last term UO faculty and administration jointly saw wisdom in taking a more extended look at how we address potential issues of conflict of commitment.

In advance of our first meeting, both Paul and I would like to thank you for your participation in this important collaborative working group. We'd like to thank as well Robert Melnick who has agreed to serve as the chair for the group.

Conflict of Commitment (COC) represents a particularly sensitive arena in which the boundary between professional responsibility, commitment, and individual interests is not well articulated. There is University policy that conveys clearly that 1.0 FTE faculty appointments entail a commitment of 100% of professional time to one's activities and the so-called "1-in-7" rule seeks to constrain just how much additional commitment an individual could take on without obviously compromising this commitment to the UO. It is clear at this point, though, that conflict of commitment is more complex than just this. Conflict of commitment is tied deeply into faculty culture, which can differ in sometimes remarkable ways from unit to unit. Where the original COI-C draft policy called for uniform and universal disclosure from faculty, it is unclear whether the appropriate use of existing academic personnel practices, perhaps tightened up, might actually manage real conflicts adequately without the burden of universal disclosure.

All of these thoughts represent issues the working group might take up. It is our belief that a deliberate, philosophical, and thorough discussion of these issues will bring clarity and professionalism to our consideration of conflict of commitment and how we will address it at the UO.

Pam Palanuk from Academic Affairs will serve as staff to this group. She will be in touch immediately to schedule our first meeting.

We look forward to working with you on this vital faculty project.

OFFICE OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

207 Johnson Hall, 1258 University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97403-1258

T (541) 346-3081 F (541) 346-2023 academicaffairs.uoregon.edu

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