

Cornell University Library

Consulting Guidelines for CUL Academic Staff

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist CUL academic staff in understanding the responsibilities and processes associated with the provision of consulting services.

Members of the Cornell University Library staff are encouraged to be active in professional organizations by engaging in research, writing, and other scholarly activities that advance the goals of the profession, the Library, and the University. While these activities may include teaching and outside consulting, it is expected that the primary obligation of every CUL staff member is to fulfill his or her job responsibilities. Library staff may not undertake outside activity that conflicts with this primary obligation.

Depending on the nature of the consulting, librarians may be eligible to consult on work time, personal time, release time or some combination thereof. Librarians or CUL units may receive financial remuneration as a result of consulting activities. Some consulting activities are in the interest of the library profession and/or such activities may broaden the abilities of the individual to do his or her professional work. The CUL professional staff member should confer with his/her supervisor when considering an outside consulting activity on Cornell time, and may need to obtain approval of his/her supervisor and the CUL administration, depending upon the nature of the consulting.

DEFINITIONS

A "Consultant" is an individual or group of individuals engaged to provide professional and expert advice or services.

"Consulting" is defined as library-related teaching and services to individuals, units, agencies, or organizations, both inside and outside the university, which are not included within the academic employee's job responsibilities, and which may or may not involve financial compensation to the librarian or the Cornell University Library.

APPLICATION

These guidelines apply to all librarians and archivists or others holding an academic appointment in the Cornell University Library. The term "librarian(s)" includes archivist(s) wherever the latter are not specifically named.

GUIDELINES

I. Overview

Professional consulting may be divided into those activities undertaken on scheduled work time and those undertaken on personal time. In each case, librarians should be informed by the following guidelines and should fulfill a number of obligations.

Whether compensated or not, a librarian should not undertake consulting activities if it can be determined that such activities create a conflict of interest with the university. See the Cornell University Conflicts Policy at: http://www.policy.cornell.edu/cm_images/uploads/pol/Conflicts.html for further guidance. If in doubt, the librarian should consult with his/her supervisor and, if necessary, the appropriate Associate University Librarian (AUL) or the University Librarian.

Since many different situations occur with consulting opportunities, the following procedures may need to be modified or combined to address the individual circumstances. For example, opportunities for librarians to teach academic courses frequently involve a combination of some work being performed during the normal workday and some work being done on personal or release time. With the supervisor's approval, it may be appropriate to split the compensation for such a teaching situation between the individual and CUL.

Some activities, such as making a presentation at a library conference or conducting a workshop for a library group, are considered to be professional development opportunities and do not fall under the consulting guidelines. If, however, the librarian receives outside compensation for the workshop or presentation, the guidelines below would apply. If questions remain about whether an activity should be considered consulting or professional development, discussion should occur with the appropriate department head and/or AUL.

Use of University/Library name and resources The Library supports use of the University and/or Library's name in consulting work that furthers the Library's mission and goals. However, librarians who engage in private consulting should clearly identify that they are doing so as independent professionals and not as representatives of Cornell University Library. In either situation, University facilities, services, or supplies should not be used in the course of consulting unless the librarian has received the prior approval of his or her supervisor.

II. PROCEDURES

1. Professional Consulting Activities Undertaken on Personal Time Outside of Work

- a) Personal time is time outside of normally scheduled work hours, accumulated vacation time, or approved leave of absence.
- b) Approval – It is recommended, but not required, that librarians inform supervisors about their professional consulting and teaching activities to be undertaken outside of worktime.
- c) Compensation – Librarians are free to accept compensation for engaging in consulting activities on personal time. The fee charged is at the discretion of the consultant.

2. Professional Consulting Activities Undertaken on Work Time

- a) Work time is considered to be the librarian's normally scheduled work hours.
- b) Approval – Librarians are responsible for conferring with their supervisors when considering consulting activities and before making a commitment. Consulting activities undertaken during scheduled work time must be approved in advance by the supervisor and the appropriate AUL.
- c) Compensation – Librarians are not entitled to receive personal compensation for consulting on work time. However, they should discuss with their supervisor and or AUL whether it is appropriate to charge a fee for services rendered. Any fee payment should be made to Cornell University Library. The librarian's operating unit and CUL administration will share these payments equally.

In some departments consulting is an integral part of the departmental mission. Revenue-sharing arrangements in these departments will be considered on an individual basis after discussion with the Director of Finance and Administration.

3. Professional Consulting Activities Undertaken on Consulting Release Time

- a) Academic staff members are allowed to consult 12 days per fiscal year with pay. This consulting release time does not accumulate from year to year. Consulting involving time beyond that allowed, or necessitating an absence from the library longer than seven consecutive days, may be undertaken only when approved by the AUL or the University Librarian.
- b) Approval – Librarians are responsible for conferring with their supervisors when considering consulting activities and before making a commitment. Consulting activities undertaken on release time must be approved in advance by the supervisor and tracked within the unit.
- c) Compensation – Librarians are free to accept compensation for engaging in consulting activities on release time. The fee charged is at the discretion of the consultant. In the event personal compensation is not desired, payment may be made to CUL. Such arrangements should be discussed with the supervisor and/or AUL in advance.

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