

Consulting Management Committee  
October 1, 2010

**Attendees**

Members: M. Aindow (Co-chair), J. Hepworth (Co-chair), A. DeBlas, R. Rubin and T. Van Hoof.  
Staff: N. Bull, S. Wetstone, E. Passan

The meeting was convened at 11:00 AM and the minutes of the 7/23/10 meeting were unanimously approved.

1. Accelerated Approval Process (“Fast Track”)

To date, the accelerated approval process has only required that the request to consult be approved by the department head (with subsequent review, but not approval, by the dean and Provost’s designee) rather than by the usual three step approval process. Its advantage has been to hasten the process so that final approval of an activity occurs prior to its start date. It has created more predictability at the departmental level as to whether an activity would be suitable for being approved. It has also reduced the need for rushing a request form between offices at the last minute, which becomes even more hectic if a key approver is away.

Such accelerated approval is only applicable to ‘academic activities’ (as defined by the department head) with a level of compensation of \$1,000 or less. The low dollar threshold was perceived to minimize the risk that a conflict of interest might exist or that the work performed would be competing with the University for work it might want to perform itself.

The Faculty Consulting Offices are recommending increasing the monetary threshold for the “Fast Track” process to \$5,000 and that rather than relying on the department head’s judgment about what constitutes an “academic activity”, a set of definitions be developed for eligible activities.

Federal government grant sponsors are at or moving to a \$5,000 threshold for defining when financial relationships might indicate an individual conflict of interest in research is a concern. Standardized definitions of eligible “academic activities” would enhance uniformity between departments and schools and lower the risk of an inappropriate designation by a department chair.

A proposed set of definitions was distributed to the committee. Each of the activities is intended to represent an accepted academic service. The nature of the contracting entity is also restricted to minimize the risk of a CoI or competition with the University. The committee felt that “per diem work as a pharmacist” did not represent a traditional academic activity.

Other groups will be invited to comment on this set of definitions including the Deans and members of the faculty senate.

In addition to the draft list of definitions, a draft policy of “Rescinding Approval for Consulting Activities Under the Accelerated Approval Process” was distributed and discussed. The intent of this process was to add a quality control step that would monitor whether department heads were appropriately approving fast track activities. If it was found they had approved an activity under

the fast track system that really didn't apply, it might be necessary to have the faculty member cease that activity.

The Committee didn't believe it was fair that an activity could receive approval and then at a later date have that approval rescinded. In fact, that would make the first approval rather meaningless. After discussion, the Committee determined there would be no need for the "rescinding approval" policy if the faculty member requesting permission to consult was required to take responsibility and formally designated which of the definitions for eligible fast track activities applied. Under current policy, if a faculty member provides incorrect information on the request form, approval is not binding and may be removed.

Dr. Bull indicated that we are currently attempting to develop an on-line system for processing requests to consult. This system would greatly facilitate the approval process and once operational, might eliminate the need for fast-track approval. Our hope is to have that system operational for FY 12, but recognize that once IT analyzes the project request, they may not be able to deliver the system that quickly. If the earlier deadline is achievable, it might be best to delay the changes to the fast track system until then. Otherwise we would be introducing new rules and a paper request form in January or February that would be superceded by an on-line system in the spring.

The Committee advocates the increase to \$5,000 but believes the draft "rescinding of approval" policy should not be implemented. Further, the per diem work as a pharmacist should be removed from the list of eligible activities

It was noted that "fast track" might not be the most appropriate terminology for this process since it doesn't necessarily explain its full intent.

The discussion will continue at the next meeting.

2. UCHC Request for Action #9 – Promotional Presentations: Deferred to the next meeting.

The committee adjourned at 11:55 AM.

Next meeting to be held on Friday, November 5, 2010 at 10 AM

Respectfully submitted by:  
E. Passan