AOSC Conflict of Interest/Conflict of Commitment Policy

UMD policies on conflict of interest and conflict of commitment are contained in three documents, the rather vague II-3.10 which applies to the whole system and II-3.10(A) and II-3.10(B) which apply to UMCP. These documents are currently available at: http://www.ora.umd.edu/resources/um-policies.

The policies include statements about the need for reporting to the Department Chair (that includes reporting to the ESSIC Director for those of you with ESSIC appointments). Here I provide the AOSC reporting policy and also include the implications of consulting for AOSC merit pay.

1) What reporting to the AOSC Chair is required?

“First, they must provide to their unit heads (see Definition 2.a above) timely disclosure of any significant commitment to professional activities to be undertaken outside the University or outside the unit, or situations where conflict or the perception of conflict may occur. This disclosure should be made before any such commitment is finalized.”

I interpret this statement to mean that AOSC faculty should get signed authorization from the AOSC Chair prior to engaging in significant offsite consulting on a semester-by-semester basis. For these purposes, let’s call >40 hours per semester (5 days) significant. I imagine it would be a rare case in which the Chair would interfere with faculty consulting activities, but do get authorization in advance.

2) Should the AOSC Merit review committee consider accomplishments by AOSC faculty that are carried out while the faculty are consulting?

“In addition, a faculty member is continually called upon to judge the quality of work of students, staff, and other faculty members, and participation of these individuals in the external activities of the faculty member might color his or her judgment and present a conflict of commitment. The overriding commitment of the faculty member is to base these judgments on the work these individuals do at and for the University.”

I interpret this to mean that the AOSC merit review committee should not base its evaluation of the performance of the faculty on accomplishments made at and for other organizations.