Although consulting has long been recognized as a legitimate faculty role in most colleges, concern has arisen about the appropriateness of "double dipping," and particularly whether consulting and other supplemental income activities result in shirking other university responsibilities. The debate centers on six basic issues: who consults, whether it is increasing, whether faculty are shirking university responsibilities, whether they are exploiting consulting opportunities, whether they are motivated to consult primarily by economic reasons, and whether most institutional policies and procedures are adequate for governing such activity.

(LB)
Faculty Consulting and Supplemenal Income

Carol M. Boyer, Education Commission of the States
Darrell R. Lewis, University of Minnesota

Facility consulting has long been recognized as legitimate expression of the traditional faculty role and mission of most academic institutions. Recently, however, concern about the appropriateness of faculty consulting and other activities producing supplemental income has increased as such activity reportedly has increased, as public sentiment toward postsecondary education has changed, and as greater accountability has been called for. The central concern appears to be whether faculty consulting and other supplemental income activities result in "shirking . . . [other] university responsibilities" (Patton 1980). The basis for such concern is not with the earning of supplemental income per se, but with the earning of supplemental income on university time—what some observers perceive as "double dipping."

On the one side are those who argue that faculty consulting might result in neglect of students and other university responsibilities, abuses of academic freedom, conflicts of interest, and illegitimate use of institutional resources. On the other side are those who argue that faculty consulting enhances both research and teaching, that conflicts of interest and other abuses are very uncommon, and that faculty consulting benefits both the institution and society as well as the individual.

Until recently, much of the argument both for and against outside professional consulting has been inconclusive because of the anecdotal or speculative nature of evidence that could be brought to bear on the nature, the intent, or the extent of such activity. To complicate matters further, faculty consulting often has been grouped with "other moonlighting activities." To address public and institutional concern about faculty consulting and to inform policy deliberations on such activity, it is important to discriminate between consulting and all other activities that generate supplemental income.

Six Basic Issues

In view of current economic and demographic conditions as well as forecasts for higher education, the debate and policy concerns about faculty consulting and other supplemental income activities are likely to intensify. Basically, the debate involves six important issues:

- Who are the faculty who consult?
- Is faculty consulting increasing?
- Are faculty who consult shirking their responsibilities on campus?
- Are faculty exploiting their consulting opportunities to substantially increase their total earnings?
- Are faculty motivated to consult primarily for economic reasons?
- Are most institutional policies and procedures adequate for governing faculty consulting and other activities producing supplemental income?

In addressing these issues, this report has three additional, related objectives: first, to extend existing knowledge about outside professional consulting as a faculty activity—where it is done, how much of it, by whom, and with what benefits and costs; second, to contribute further to our understanding of the role of supplemental income vis-à-vis the division of academic labor both among and within institutions; and third, to contribute to more informed policy development and decisionmaking concerning these matters within colleges and universities.
Who are the faculty who consult? The evidence presented in this report shows that, compared to their faculty colleagues who do not consult, faculty who consult for pay are more likely to be employed in universities than in colleges, to hold higher academic rank, to have higher base salaries, to be among the more distinguished faculty, and to be from one of the professional fields or sciences.

Is faculty consulting increasing? Data from a number of institutional and national surveys indicate that, contrary to conventional wisdom, faculty consulting does not appear to be increasing appreciably, even though real faculty salaries have significantly declined in the past decade or so. From the research literature, it appears that approximately 35 to 50 percent of all faculty devote some portion of their time to professional consulting over the course of any two-year period, with only 15 to 20 percent consulting during a given academic year. Further, it appears that these proportions have remained relatively constant during the past decade.

Are faculty motivated to consult primarily for economic reasons? Despite the significant decline in real faculty salaries over the past decade, increasing numbers of faculty are not being induced to seek outside professional consulting opportunities to supplement their base academic salaries, nor are they substantially increasing their supplemental incomes. The steady proportion of total faculty earnings accounted for by supplemental income and the steady proportion of faculty who consult are consistent with the additional finding that, among faculty who do consult, the percentage of professional work time devoted to consulting is not related to base academic salary. These findings are particularly important because they challenge much of the current conventional wisdom about faculty consulting. Recent popular and policy-related literature, for example, implies that faculty consulting is primarily motivated by economic concerns. In fact, it appears that most faculty are motivated by other important factors, such as potential benefits to their careers, potential benefits to their instruction and research, and social demand.

Are most institutional policies and procedures adequate for promoting faculty consulting and other activities producing supplemental income? In a large number of academic institutions across the country today, such policies and procedures often fail to formally address many important considerations. Even in those institutions where the policies are already relatively concrete and specific, the procedures for implementing the policies and their comparability of such data. Second, although the literature does provide a fairly complete picture of the overall incidence and extent of faculty consulting for different time periods, little is known about individual patterns of faculty consulting over time and their particular factors. Third, little is known about whether the opportunity cost of outside professional activities is too small (and therefore borne by the individual) or to the institution. Finally, it is not clear how outside professional consulting influences faculty behavior and activities in the academic institution. The nature and extent to which faculty are influenced in their research priorities and academic objectivity by their outside professional responsibilities are almost wholly unexplored in the research literature.

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