

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I have to disclose?

Harvard policies, including the [Policy on Individual Financial Conflicts of Interest for Persons Holding Faculty and Teaching Appointments](#) and the Statement on [Outside Activities of Holders of Academic Appointments](#), call for the disclosure of all outside professional activities and outside financial interests that relate to your University obligations. The [What to Include](#) text provides more detail and may be further interpreted by officials at your school to address situations that are specifically relevant to your field. A few examples follow:

- I have attended an academic conference to deliver a paper or a talk. Is that an “outside professional activity” since it took place away from Harvard?
 - No, academic conferences are generally considered to be within the professional responsibilities of a member of the Harvard faculty. (If the conference was held overseas and you were paid, you should disclose).
- I serve as a peer reviewer for academic journals in my field. Is that an “outside activity”?
 - No, reviewing papers submitted for publications in journals in your field is part of the service to the academic community that constitutes a core part of a faculty member’s job. You *may* list these activities if you would like your Faculty Affairs office to be informed of your engagement and productivity, but it is not an outside activity that must be disclosed.
- I serve on the Board of a non-profit organization, either the Board of Trustees, or an Advisory Board, or some other form.
 - Whether this should be disclosed depends more on the nature of your connection with the outside entity than on the title applied to it. If you owe a fiduciary duty to an entity other than Harvard (or your family) then you must disclose that connection. If you serve in a purely advisory or honorary capacity and are not compensated for your time, then your school may determine that such service is within the bounds of the school’s academic mission and your University responsibilities. In such cases you should consult your school officials.
- I have an honorary or visiting appointment at another institution.
 - As with Board service, the substance is more important than the title applied. If you spend no time at the other institution and receive no benefit beyond the honor of the title, you likely need not disclose it. However, two factors weigh in favor of a broad approach: even purely honorary titles may be of interest to your Faculty Affairs office in assessing your productivity and engagement (recall that OAIR is not purely a compliance system!) and any connection with a university overseas may receive special scrutiny from the government, in which context openness and transparency are always encouraged.

When should I disclose?

Each school has established a time of year when the annual disclosure will be due. You will hear from your school when that time approaches. In addition, University policy calls for updated disclosures within 30 days of the acquisition of a new financial interest, and certain sponsored research projects carry requirements that disclosures when funding is awarded.

Do I need to disclose while on leave from the University?

For a sabbatical or other planned leave, yes. If you are away on medical leave disclosure requirements will ordinarily be waived.

How do I update my disclosure?

You may log in to the system at oir.harvard.edu any time to add a new interest or modify your disclosure in any way that is appropriate. For more details, please refer to the submission guide at the system support site.

What if I do not know the exact value of my financial interest, or the exact amount I was (or will be) paid for a particular engagement?

If you have an interest to report but do not have a precise dollar value at the time that you are disclosing it, make the best estimate you can.