



Policy Chapter: Chapter 13 Research and Innovation

Policy Number and Title: 13.019 Visiting Collaborators

I. Policy Statement

As a major research institution, the University of North Texas (UNT) hosts visitors from other institutions or entities to collaborate on research topics or scholarly activities of mutual interest. UNT welcomes these collaborations and acknowledges their value in strengthening the mission of the University.

II. Application of Policy

Visiting Collaborators and all UNT employees who play a role in facilitating the collaboration.

III. Policy Definitions

A. Faculty Host

"Faculty Host," in this policy, means a full-time University faculty member who facilitates the Visiting Collaborator visit and acts as an administrative liaison between the University and the Visiting Collaborator.

B. Sponsoring Institution

"Sponsoring Institution," in this policy, means the Visiting Collaborator's regular employer.

C. Unit Host

"Unit Host," in this policy, means the Unit Administrator of the academic unit that hosts the Visiting Collaborator. The unit host facilitates access to University resources and facilities, such as office, lab, and studio space, as appropriate.

D. Unit Administrator

"Unit Administrator," in this policy, means an individual with unit supervisory responsibilities. Unit Administrators include but are not limited to, directors, chairs, associate deans, and deans.

E. Collaboration

"Collaboration," in this policy, means the process of two or more individuals working together on research or clinical, creative, or scholarly activities of mutual interest.

F. Campus Grounds

"Campus Grounds," in this policy, means all common outdoor areas owned; leased; or controlled by the University that are accessible to all students; employees; and visitors such as sidewalks, park-like areas, and malls.

G. Visiting Collaborator (VC)

"Visiting Collaborator," in this policy, is an individual who is employed by another institution

of higher education and holds faculty-equivalent credentials or is a noted subject matter expert employed in industry or government. VCs are affiliated temporarily with the University for the purposes of research, clinical activity, creative activity, and Collaboration, and in pursuit of advancing their discipline. VCs are not employees and may only receive compensation when designated as an independent contractor by the UNT Tax Office.

VCs are temporarily granted access to university facilities and resources to engage in activities under the supervision of a full-time faculty member or Unit Host of the University. A VC is permitted to engage in Collaboration or research activities from a remote location. For international VC, the duration of the designation cannot exceed the duration of the person's legal status in the United States.

VCs that receive a zero percent appointment and are participating in a joint program between UNT and another institution of higher education, or between UNT and a government/public agency, or between UNT and a private sector organization, are known as Courtesy Faculty (CF) or Courtesy Researcher (CR). CF/CR are permitted but not required to be internal to the University as part of a cross-departmental affiliation. CF/CR participating in a cross-departmental affiliation may continue to receive their contractual salary from their home department but are not considered employees of the department that they are visiting and may not receive any additional salary, benefits, or other compensation from the department they are visiting.

The designation of Visiting Collaborator excludes any one or more of the following:

- individuals who are merely visiting Campus Grounds at the University. These individuals do not require access to university resources or facilities and are not performing "hands-on" research;
- university-invited speakers/guest lecturers who provide a speech/guest lecture that is open to the university community, the public, or a University class;
- university invited dignitaries or government/diplomatic visitors;
- members of a university-recognized advisory or review boards whose visit to the University relates to their service on that board;
- employment candidates visiting campus as part of the selection process;
- current University of North Texas System Enterprise employees or employees separated within the last twelve months.
- current University of North Texas System Enterprise enrolled students (degree or non-degree seeking); or
- undergraduate and graduate students participating in an organized educational program governed by another UNT policy, Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

IV. Policy Responsibilities

A. Eligibility

1. Upon the recommendation of the Unit Host and Unit Administrators, the Vice President for Research and Innovation (VPRI) or designee may confer VC status. To be eligible for this designation, individuals must:
 - a. be employed by another institution of higher education and hold faculty-equivalent credentials or have noted subject matter expertise in a particular area;
 - b. not have been a University of North Texas System Enterprise employee within the last twelve months before VC conferral;
 - c. have a demonstrated capacity to contribute to the research and/or creative mission of the University; and
 - d. receive a letter of invitation issued by the Office of the Provost, Academic Resources.
2. VCs must pass criminal background checks in accordance with [UNT Policy 05.006, Background Checks](#).

B. Guidelines for Conferral

1. Faculty and Unit Hosts wishing to invite a VC must obtain a letter of invitation from the Office of the Provost, Academic Resources. Academic Resources requires a minimum of thirty (30) days to conduct the necessary procedures to approve the invitation letter. To obtain a letter of invitation, individuals must:
 - a. meet the definition of a Visiting Collaborator;
 - b. submit the completed and executed [VPAA40a form](#);
 - c. submit the completed and executed [Visiting Collaborator Agreement](#);
 - d. submit the completed and executed [Confidential Disclosure Agreement](#); and
 - e. receive clearances and approvals from the Office of Research Integrity & Compliance (RIC), UNT System Enterprise Cybersecurity and IT Compliance, and Innovation and Commercialization following reviews conducted by those offices.
2. Process stakeholders are required to notify University Integrity & Compliance (UIC) of collaborations that require an additional compliance risk review. UIC may withhold approval for any proposed VC covered under this policy if the visit could result in a significant risk to the University.

3. The length of stay for a VC must be at least seven consecutive days and may be conferred for one year at a time, with a maximum cumulative appointment time of five (5) years within a 10-year period.
4. Visiting Collaborators are not employees or contractors of the University of North Texas and cannot represent themselves as such.
5. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs may, upon notification given to the Faculty and Unit Hosts, terminate conferrals at any time.

C. Training

1. Visiting Collaborators must comply with:
 - a. mandatory University training requirements;
 - b. research training requirements as deemed necessary by RIC.
2. Faculty, Unit Hosts, and Unit Administrators are responsible for ensuring that VCs under their supervision are in compliance with all training requirements. Non-compliance with training requirements will result in VCs loss of UNT status.

D. Resources

The Faculty and Unit Hosts will facilitate access to University facilities and resources in compliance with University and UNT System regulations and Regents Rules. VCs are eligible to use office space, have access to resources (e.g., libraries), and have a University email address and identification card. VC access to facilities and resources must cease immediately at the termination of appointment. VC access to facilities and resources may also be revoked at any time for any reason and are not subject to appeal or due process review at the discretion of the VPRI or designee.

E. International Visiting Collaborators

An International VC may have already received sponsorship for a J-1 Visa (i.e., Fulbright) or they may need the University to sponsor them. At the outset of the approval process, the proposed VC and department host must contact the International Student and Scholars Services and provide proof of their J-1 Visa status or request sponsorship. The potential VC must provide documentation as requested by the International Student and Scholars Office. If the proposed VC intends to arrive on a J-1 visa sponsored by the University, additional criteria must be met prior to the sponsorship. An additional six (6) weeks at minimum is required to complete the immigration process from the issuance of the DS-2019, a certificate of eligibility to apply for a J-1 visa at a U.S. embassy or consulate. J-1 sponsorship may be declined if required documentation or advanced notice is not provided.

F. Export Compliance

1. Regardless of the duration or purpose of the visit, in order to comply with federal export control laws, and to comply with [UNT Policy 13.010, Export Control](#), all proposed VCs are subject to an export control review by RIC prior to the issuance of an invitation letter. The potential VC must provide documentation as requested by RIC and must inform that office of any connection with a foreign government, company or academic institution.
2. If, in the determination of the Research Security and Export Control Officer (RSECO), any proposed international VC covered under this policy creates a significant export compliance risk, the RSECO may, at the VPRI and RSECO's discretion, require internal approvals and assurances from the Unit Administrators and Faculty and Unit Hosts prior to approving such visits. The VPRI and RSECO may withhold approval for any proposed international VC covered under this policy if the RSECO determines the visit could result in any violations or significant risk of any violations of U.S. export control laws or regulations. The VPRI and RSECO may also withhold approval if the proposed visit requires an export license or approval that the RSECO determines is unlikely to be issued in a timely manner due to the nature of the applicable controls and/or limited time available to seek such license or approval.

G. Research Protection

1. Conflict of Interest (COI)

The Unit and Faculty Hosts are responsible for ensuring that all proposed VC meet and comply with requirements of [UNT Policy 13.005, Conflict of Interest for Sponsored Projects](#) and with visa sponsorship requirements. This includes submitting a COI Disclosure to RIC in the event that the VC will be responsible for research in any University research activities. RIC will review all disclosure submissions and make a determination regarding Significant Financial Interests.

2. Intellectual Property

All VCs or their Sponsoring Institutions will execute the UNT Visiting Collaborator Intellectual Property and Confidential Disclosure Agreements prior to the issuance of a Visiting Collaborator invitation letter.

Regardless of the duration or purpose of the visit, all proposed VC must file the Intellectual Property and Confidentiality Agreements with the Division of Research and Innovation, Innovation and Commercialization, prior to sharing confidential information belonging to the University with external parties.

Only University or UNT System staff with designated signature authority may execute

Intellectual Property and Confidentiality Agreements on behalf of the University and Faculty in their roles as employees of UNT. Faculty are encouraged to disclose any preliminary inventions or intellectual property developed prior to VC collaboration begins to ensure that intellectual property issues including joint ownership and possible export control issues can be managed for the protection of UNT and UNT faculty.

Confidential Information shall not be copied or reproduced by the receiving Party without the express written permission of the disclosing Party. Confidential Information shall be disclosed only to the director or employees of the receiving Party who have a "need to know" in connection with the purpose stated above. Confidential Information shall not be disclosed by receiving Party to any third party without the prior written consent of the disclosing Party.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Confidential Disclosure Agreement, information shall constitute non-confidential information when the information: 1. was in the public domain at the time of disclosure or thereafter enters the public domain through no breach of this Agreement by the receiving Party; or 2. was, at the time of receipt, otherwise known to receiving Party without restriction as to use or disclosure; or 3. developed independently by the receiving Party as demonstrated by the receiving Party, without violating the disclosing Party's confidentiality rights; or 4. becomes known to receiving Party from a source other than the disclosing Party without a breach of the Confidential Disclosure Agreement by receiving Party.

All written data delivered by disclosing Party pursuant to the Confidential Disclosure Agreement shall be and remain the property of disclosing Party, and all such written data, and any copies thereof, shall be promptly returned to disclosing Party upon written request, or destroyed at disclosing Party's option. No license or conveyance of any rights to either Party under any discoveries, inventions, patents, trade secrets, copyrights, or other form of intellectual property is granted or implied by the exchange of Confidential Information between the Parties.

H. Duration of a Designation

For International VCs, the duration of these designations cannot exceed the duration of a person's legal status in the United States.

V. Resources/Forms/Tools

[UNT Form VPAA40a](#)
[Visiting Collaborator Agreement](#)
[Confidential Disclosure Agreement](#)
[Independent Contractor or Employee Form](#)

VI. References and Cross-References

[22 C.F.R. Part 62](#)

[UNT Policy 05.006, Background Checks](#)

[UNT Policy 06.002, Academic Appointments and Titles](#)

[UNT Policy 13.005, Conflict of Interest for Sponsored Projects](#)

[UNT Policy 13.010, Export Controls](#)

VII. Revision History

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