

Changes to URMIC Industry Interactions Policy regarding Speaking Engagements

What was changed?

Given increased external scrutiny of faculty relationships with industry, and following benchmarking with peers, Section IV.G (Speaking Engagements) was updated to set clearer limits and prohibitions on non-CME speaking engagements funded directly by industry. The policy now prohibits participating in arrangements labeled as “speakers bureaus” or otherwise being identified as a potential speaker on a public list maintained by a commercial entity. It also now prohibits presentations where the company prepares the slide set or otherwise controls the content of the presentation, with certain limited exceptions (e.g., FDA-mandated trainings on safe use of a drug or device).

Also, Section IV.H (Consulting) was updated to add cross-references to other relevant University policies and guidelines, and to add a recommendation that faculty obtain legal review of consulting agreements to protect our faculty and the University from inappropriate scopes of work, limitations on other activities, or inadvertent transfer of intellectual property.

Why prohibit using company slides or being on a company’s public speakers bureau list?

Allowing URMIC faculty and personnel to have their names listed on a company’s “speakers bureau” list, to present slides prepared by the company, or to be limited to presentations where the content is dictated or controlled by the company, in effect allows the commercial entity to benefit from the prestige of our faculty and the University in order to market their product or company, rather than truly drawing on the faculty member’s expertise.

But the company tells me that FDA rules require me to use their slides...

While it is true that commercial entities are prohibited from promoting ‘off-label’ (i.e., non-FDA-approved) uses of their products, any stipulation about using their own slides is an internal directive from the company, not a governmental regulation. If the company truly wants to educate audiences in a way that benefits from the expertise of our faculty and personnel, they would allow use of self-created material. However, it is permissible to allow the entity to review the material in advance for inappropriate off-label content.

The company has a graphic presenting information that I would like to include in my presentation; can I do so?

Yes, you may include a company-prepared graphic (i.e., a diagram or data table) or other insert in your slide set, referencing the source of the graphic or insert as you would do for any other material borrowed from another individual or entity. (Of course, as per our current policy, commercial entity logos and other purely promotional inserts are not allowed.)

What about industry support of CME and other formally-accredited educational programs?

Industry support of CME programs continues to be acceptable under our policy, as long as it is compliant with CME standards. For programs that do not offer formal CME credit, it continues to be acceptable to obtain industry support *as long as this is done so in a manner consistent with CME standards* (even if the program is not accredited to provide formal CME).