



OKLAHOMA
PANHANDLE STATE
UNIVERSITY

Staff Handbook

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Introduction

This staff handbook is intended as a guide to University policy for all staff members of Oklahoma Panhandle State University. It contains information of a general nature as well as the procedures and policies under which the University operates. If any policy statements in this handbook are in contradiction to policy statements of the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges or of the University, such Board of Regents or University policy statements will be deemed to control over the references appearing in this document. The Board of Regents and the University reserve the right to alter the terms of official policy statements and/or this document at any time without advance notice.

A publication such as this can never be completely accurate as university policies, procedures, regulations, benefits and services will require periodic modification (unless otherwise stated). Every effort will be made to update employees as modifications occur.

This handbook is not to be construed as a contractual agreement, and it can be altered without prior notice from the University or the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges. The statements appearing in this handbook are intended only as general information items to help inform employees of selected university policies.

Mission Statement

Rooted in “Progress through Knowledge,” Oklahoma Panhandle State University is committed to promoting excellence in the preparation of students for success in a global community.

Goals

Provide excellence to all stakeholders.

- Student Learning
- Through empowerment, innovation, access, and student centered support Panhandle State will shape lifelong learners and improve student outcomes.
- Resource Optimization
- Engagement, partnerships, and collaboration will empower Panhandle State to cultivate all resources responsibly.
- Graduate Production
- Provide comprehensive student experience focused on promoting excellence across each student’s academic career to graduation and beyond.
- Life-Long Learning
- Improve the quality of life and transform the communities we serve through engagement and partnerships.

Vision

Oklahoma Panhandle State University, a national leader among regional universities, will empower its learners and community through the cultivation of life-long opportunities.

Values

- *Integrity:* We are held accountable to maintain ethical practices.
- *Inclusion:* We embrace and support our diverse cultures.
- *Excellence:* We seek continuous improvement opportunities.
- *Service:* We operate as a center for educational and cultural opportunities.
- *Sustainability:* We are stewards in the conservation of our resources.

University Government and Administration

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

Oklahoma Panhandle State University is a part of a statewide educational program called the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education. Having been established by constitutional authority in 1941, the state system is younger than Oklahoma Panhandle State University and includes all institutions of higher education supported wholly or partially by legislative appropriations.

The coordinating body, called the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, is composed of nine members. Following appointment by the governor and confirmation by the state senate, board members serve nine-year terms. One member of the board is replaced each year.

Responsibilities of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education include setting standards for higher education (including requirements for the admission of students), determining the functions and courses of study at each institution, granting degrees and other forms of academic recognition, recommending higher education's funding needs to the legislature, allocating state appropriations to individual institutions, and determining the fees of all institutions of the system.

Oklahoma Agricultural & Mechanical Colleges Board of Regents and Governance Philosophy

The Board, also referred to as the OSU/A&M Board of Regents, consists of nine members, one of whom is the President of the State Board of Agriculture. The Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoints the remaining eight members. The members are appointed for eight-year terms.

Its functions are legislative in the establishing of all general policies affecting the institutions it governs, their relation one to another, and the prescribing of such rules and regulations as may bring these policies into effect. Its judicial functions are limited to acting as a court of final settlement for matters that cannot be satisfactorily adjusted by the presidents of the colleges. Its executive power is delegated in most instances to the presidents of the institutions and their authorized administrators.

The Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges has full constitutional responsibility and authority for the control of and administration of the agricultural and mechanical colleges.

Administrative Organization

The administrative organization exists to provide leadership and to facilitate the University goals, objectives, and services. As an operating philosophy, members of the University community can best achieve the University's purposes in an atmosphere of shared governance, mutual planning and implementation of decisions, and the recognition and encouragement of contributions. A university organizational chart is provided upon request.

President

As the chief executive officer of the University, the President is responsible to the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges for the administration of the University. All authority delegated by the Board is administered through the President, who may in turn delegate responsibility and authority to other university administrative officials.

Governance Activities

Since the University depends upon an effective system of councils and committees in reaching its goals and objectives, it is important that employees be given encouragement and support to participate in such recommended governance activities. Supervisors are expected to provide opportunities for their employees to serve on university councils, committees, and task forces when appointed. Time taken during working hours to attend meetings and otherwise participate in the activities of such organizations will be considered work time and need not be made up.

Employment Policies

Equal Employment Opportunity

The University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and offers a program of Equal Educational Opportunity. It is the policy the University to take every available opportunity to ensure that each applicant offered a position at the University has been selected on the basis of qualifications, merit, and professional capability alone, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or status as a veteran.

Affirmative Action Statement

This university does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admissions, employment, financial aid, and education services.

Hiring Policies for Staff

Any vacancy for a position must be listed with the Human Resource Office. Recommendations for appointments, reappointment, promotions, and transfers will not be approved until candidates for these positions have been approved by the Vice President of the appropriate department and have been processed by the Human Resource Office. Employment of persons for less than 90 calendar days should be coordinated with Human Resource Office for determining an appropriate compensation level.

Non-exempt positions must be posted for at least five working days or until an appropriate number of candidates have been referred. Exempt positions must be listed for at least 10 - 15 working days regardless of the number of applicants. Limited exceptions to this policy for promotion or transfer of current employees of the University are referenced in the *Appointment, Promotion, Transfers, and Demotions* section. Any provision of this policy may be waived by the President when, in his/her sole discretion, circumstances so warrant. Hiring officials should notify current employees simultaneously with, if not prior to, listing the job to give the current department employees first knowledge of promotional opportunities within the department. Upon making a hiring decision, the Human Resource Office should be advised of the acceptance of the candidate selected. The Human Resource Office should then notify all other applicants that the position has been filled. All new employees will be required to provide identification and employability information in accordance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act and any applicable state or federal law.

No property or contractual interests in future employment are intended to be extended to employees whose employment relationships with the University are governed by this Staff Handbook, and no oral statements by any university official which are contradictory to the provisions of this section are enforceable. Neither this policy nor any person's employment with the University shall in any way grant such employee a claim to tenure in employment or to any years of employment attributable to tenure with the University.

Emergency Hire

In response to short-term and/or emergency needs, the University may make temporary appointments. When such appointments are made, the titles of interim, lecturer, research professional, visiting assistant professor, visiting associate professor, visiting professor, scholar, artist, or professional in residence, etc. shall be used. Appropriate search procedures should be used prior to making such appointments but may vary depending upon the nature of the position and necessity to fill vacant position. Administrators, after receiving appropriate counsel, shall be responsible for recommending appointments to temporary positions.

Employment Packet

All university employees, whether staff or faculty, shall complete and submit for their personnel files an employment packet, as well as other forms deemed necessary by the University. The University will follow all applicable state and federal laws regarding the use and safekeeping of such documents and the information contained on them.

An employee must have the required forms completed and on file with the Human Resource Office within three working days of their first day of employment. Such employment forms include

- Employee data sheet
- Personal Information
- Drug Free Workplace policy at <http://www.opsu.edu/About/Policy/>
- Loyalty Oath, required by Oklahoma state law. All individuals are required to sign a loyalty oath upon employment by the University.
- Federal and Oklahoma withholding allowance certificate (W-4). Employees use W-4 to identify for tax purposes the number of eligible exemptions. It is also the means by which eligible employees can claim tax exemption or withhold specified amounts.
- Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9). As a condition of employment, each new employee and each newly re-hired employee must have a properly completed Immigration and Naturalization Service Form (I-9) with appropriate original supporting documents to prove eligibility for employment. As required by Oklahoma HB1804, copies of supporting documents cannot and will not be accepted.

Authority and Administration

The responsibility for administration of staff employment policies and procedures is delegated to the Human Resource Office Director under the executive authority of the President of the University. The authority for employment policies stems from public laws, the Board of Regents, and the President of the University. It is understood that any position made herein may be voided by action of a superseding authority.

Each employee has the right to discuss, with the Human Resource Office, the terms of employment, including matters concerning hours, compensation, and working conditions.

Employment Outside the University

A person who accepts full-time employment at the University assumes a primary professional obligation to the University. All university employees must request approval of outside employment prior to that employment. All activities performed inside the University for extra-compensation must be arranged as regular assignments are, with the agreement of the appropriate department head, Vice President, and President. Any other employment or enterprise in which an employee engages for income must be understood to be secondary to their university work.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest refers to situations in which financial or other personal considerations may compromise or give the appearance of compromising an employee's professional judgment in carrying out university responsibilities such as teaching, research, contract administration, and purchasing or in which there is potential for such compromise. The term may also relate to a conflict of commitment (i.e., an employee's distribution of effort between obligations to official university responsibilities and obligations to one's outside activities). Employees must conduct university business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. Conflicts of interest do not necessarily represent an impropriety by an employee.

This policy identifies areas of conflict which are prohibited by the Oklahoma Ethics Commission and state law. It is not possible to completely eliminate the potential for all conflicts of interest, but it is important to disclose possible conflicts that may compromise or be perceived to compromise an employee's professional judgment. Employees of the University, may be required to fill out a *Conflict of Interest Disclosure* form with the Purchasing Coordinator. All information provided in that form is confidential and will be used only to manage and report conflicts of interests.

Nepotism

Except as prohibited by the laws of the State of Oklahoma, relationship by consanguinity or by affinity shall not in itself be a bar to appointment, employment, or advancement within the University.

However, no two persons who are related by affinity or consanguinity within the third degree shall be given positions in which either one is directly responsible for making recommendations regarding appointment, employment, promotion, salary, or tenure for the other, nor shall either of two persons so related who hold positions in the same budgetary unit be appointed to an executive or administrative position in that unit or to a position involving administrative responsibility over it as long as the other person remains in the unit without first receiving the written approval of the appropriate Vice President and the President. In the event a waiver is granted, performance evaluations and recommendations for compensation and promotion will be made by one not related to the individual being evaluated

Relatives within the third degree of relationship by blood or marriage are as follows: spouse; parent; grandparent; great-grandparent; parent, grandparent, or great-grandparent of spouse; uncle or aunt; uncle or aunt of spouse; brother or sister; brother-in-law or sister-in-law; niece or nephew; spouse of niece or nephew; son or daughter; son-in-law or daughter-in-law; grandson or granddaughter or their spouse; and great-grandson or great-granddaughter or their spouse.

Candidacy for Political Office

All university employees enjoy the full rights and privileges of citizens to participate in partisan political activities in the State of Oklahoma and the United States. Employees are permitted to freely engage in lawful political activities of any kind provided such activities are conducted on the individual's own time, do not interfere with official duties and responsibilities, and are not inconsistent with other provisions herein. However, students and other constituencies of the University may rightfully expect competent services from employees of publicly supported institutions. Therefore, the welfare of the University requires that each employee perform the duties and responsibilities assigned to his or her position as the first priority. Full-time political activities are prohibited while serving as an employee. Moreover, outside activities of any kind should not interfere with the fulfillment of assigned duties.

An employee who wishes to assume a major role in a partisan political campaign is obligated to discuss such plans in advance with the appropriate supervisor. If the supervisor determines that the political activity might impinge to any extent upon the full discharge of the employee's responsibilities, the proposed political activity must be reviewed and approved through regular administrative channels to the President's Office. Through such a review, the President will determine whether the proposed political activity will impinge to any extent upon the full discharge of the employee's responsibilities. If approved, the employee shall take a leave of absence without pay (after exhaustion of any earned annual leave) prior to participating actively in political activity, including, but not limited to actively campaigning for political office or directing the political campaign of another person seeking a political office.

Any employee intending to conduct a personal candidacy for a partisan elective office must obtain approval by the President prior to any announcement by the employee for such office. Employees are permitted to campaign for and hold non-partisan offices, the duties of which do not interfere with official responsibilities such as a member of a school board, city council, and/or other local offices. If elected to such partisan political elective office, the employee shall resign (or retire, if eligible) from the University.

An employee may accept an appointed position in government requiring full-time service. However, before accepting such position an employee is required to request and be approved for leave without pay or resign from employment with the University. Any approval of leave without pay to accept an appointed position shall be for not less than the duration of the semester in which the approved leave is granted. Leave from university responsibilities for any period greater than one year shall be reviewed by the President and written justification shall be provided to the A&M Board in requesting its approval.

See Board Policy 3.04, Political Activities of Employees for more information.

Political Activities

An employee who participates in political activities must do so in a manner that

- In no way interferes with the rights and privileges of other employees of the University.
- In no way interferes with the rights and privileges of students attending the University.
- In no way interferes or disrupts the normal routine operation of the University.
- In no way interferes with the assigned duties of the employee.
- Does not utilize university materials or supplies (postage, stationary, telephone, email, etc.).
- The political activities of an employee may not involve the University's name, symbols, or in any way imply university support or support of the A&M Board pertaining to the political interest supported by the employee.

Terms of Employment

Non-Exempt Staff

Non-exempt employees serve a probationary period of one year from the date of initial employment. A one-year probationary period is also served each time such an employee receives a promotion or transfer. Such subsequent probationary periods do not affect an employee's eligibility for accruing or using university benefits. The probationary period is a time for learning the job requirements and demonstrating the skill and abilities to perform the duties assigned. When the probationary period is completed, employees are assumed to have demonstrated satisfactory performance in the position.

Exempt Staff

All exempt staff are "at-will" employees and serve at the pleasure of the University. Such employees may be separated from employment with the University at any time without the need or requirement to give notice or cause for separation. No oral statement by any university official, which is contradictory to the provisions of this policy statement, is enforceable.

Work Schedules

The University reserves the right to establish and change work days and hours necessary for the orderly and efficient operation of the University. Employment with the University is considered the employee's primary employment in all cases. If it is necessary or convenient for the University to call employees in to work additional hours to promote the efficient operation of the University or to alter the hours of employees to meet the needs of the University, affected employees are required to conform to those directions, even where such actions might conflict with a second job or other personal interests of the employee. Failure to do so constitutes grounds for separation. The normal workweek shall begin at midnight Sunday and terminate the following Saturday at midnight.

Attendance and Punctuality

An employee is required to be in attendance and prepared to begin work at the assigned work location on the specified days and hours. Attendance and punctuality are objective measures for job performance evaluations. All Non-Exempt employees are expected to record time worked and absences on Banner leave report. All employees eligible for leave must complete an Absence Request Form and submit it for supervisor approval prior to time off. All documents must be submitted to Human Resource Office once approved.

An employee demonstrating excessive absenteeism or excessive tardiness shall be given the opportunity to substantiate the cause. The immediate supervisor shall evaluate the circumstances and determine the need for correction or disciplinary action. If an employee cannot report to work as scheduled, they shall notify the immediate supervisor within one (1) hour after the reporting time. In the event notification is not made, immediately upon return to work the employee shall show sufficient reasons for the lack of notification. Failure to give sufficient reasons to the immediate supervisor shall be cause for disciplinary action. Absenteeism or tardiness that is unexcused or excessive in the judgment of the immediate supervisor is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. An employee's failure to notify (personally, in writing, or by telephone) their immediate supervisor and/or the Human Resource Office of an absence from work, or who is absent without authorization from their supervisor, during the established shift or work period of three or more days shall be deemed to have resigned their position. Termination in such a case shall be placed in the personnel record as an involuntary resignation.

Time Keeping

Non-exempt employees are required to indicate the actual number of hours worked each day. However, for the purpose of figuring bi-weekly hours, the University recognizes the practice of rounding to the nearest quarter-hour (15 minutes). Federal and state laws require the University to keep an accurate record of time worked in order to calculate employee pay and benefits. Time worked is the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties. Tampering, altering, falsifying time records, or recording time on another employee's time record will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

Hourly employees must complete the Banner timesheet on a daily basis using the clock in/out process. Timesheets must be submitted for approval on the last working shift of the pay period; failure to do so could cause a month delay in receiving a paycheck.

For information on non-exempt travel, go to: [www.opsu.edu/Offices/Human Resources/FLSA/](http://www.opsu.edu/Offices/Human_Resources/FLSA/) .

Personal Appearance and Demeanor

Employees are required to dress in appropriate attire and to behave in a professional manner. Employees should exercise good judgment in the choice of work clothes and remember to use conduct at all times in a way that best represents the University

Identification Card

The University provides an identification card to each employee and retiree. It is to be presented for securing the privileges of using various facilities and activities available to university employees. The card is good only during the period of employment or retirement and does not authorize the holder to obligate the University in any manner. Supervisors are responsible for the return of an employee's staff identification card upon termination from university employment.

Parking Permit

All faculty, staff, and students operating or parking cars, trucks, or motorcycles on campus must be registered and have a current valid university parking decal. Parking decals are obtained by registering your vehicle with the University Housing Office. Faculty and staff permits are changed every two years. Student decals are changed every year. There is no charge for registering faculty and staff vehicles. There is a minor charge for student parking permits. The only parking spots that do not require a permit are those diagonal street parking slots on Aggie Avenue and the marked visitor slots in front of Sewell Hall.

Personnel Data Changes

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the Human Resource Office in writing of any and all changes in personnel data. Educational accomplishments and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. Name changes, personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, and individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency can be changed in Self Service Banner.

General Provisions

The employment and work program of each department of the University should be managed so that the necessity for overtime work is reduced to a minimum, except for emergency situations. Non-exempt employees should be expected to work a reasonable period of overtime when conditions warrant the scheduling of overtime. The supervisor will give notice to employees scheduled to work overtime as early as possible.

Provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act place a liability upon the University for the payment of a premium for all hours that an employee not specifically exempt from overtime payment is either requested or permitted to work in excess of the statutory limitations. Under no circumstances may a non-exempt employee perform work of any nature for the University at his or her normally assigned work station, or anywhere else on university premises, in excess of the normal work schedule, unless such overtime work has been specifically authorized by the supervisor. However, all hours worked will be compensated at the appropriate rate or equivalent leave made available, pursuant to state and federal law.

Employment Status Policies

The University encourages the upward mobility of employees to positions for which they are qualified and which meet their career interests and objectives.

Salary increases normally will not be approved for employees moving from one position to another at the same or lower level. A decrease in salary may be appropriate when employees accept transfers to lower level positions. Decreases in salary should be discussed with the Human Resource Office Director before the action is taken.

Employees who have successfully completed the required probationary period of employment in their most recent positions as described herein will be referred to promotional opportunities for which they are qualified. Employees with less than six months of service in their current classification will normally not be approved for promotion or transfer.

Appointments

- “Initial appointment” refers to placing an individual on the payroll for the first time.
- Reappointment refers to placing a former employee on the payroll.
- A continuous appointment is one that is expected to continue for six months or more.
- A full-time equivalent (FTE) appointment is one requiring 37.50 hours of work per week.
- A part-time appointment is one that requires less than the designated hours of work per week.
- Temporary appointments are expected to last less than 6 months.
- Irregular appointments may last for an undefined period of time but require work on an irregular and uncertain schedule, totaling less than full-time. A designated schedule must be on file in the Human Resource Office for anyone working less than full-time.

Promotions

- The advancement of an employee to a classification with a higher pay range is a promotion. The term does not apply to pay increases for work at the same level.
- An internal promotion is a change to a classification with a higher pay range within the same department.

Transfers

- A transfer occurs when an employee moves from one department to another or to a different position within the same department. A transfer may be made with or without a promotion.
- A promotional transfer is a change to a classification in a higher pay grade within another department.
- Departments accepting employees by transfer will be responsible for the employees' accumulated PTO and extended sick leave.
- Employees interested in promotional or lateral transfer opportunities should provide Human Resource Office with updated employment application material. Also, employees seeking promotional or lateral transfers are encouraged to discuss these possibilities with their supervisor.
- Positions filled by promotional or lateral transfers will be listed in accordance with the University's staffing needs.

Demotions

- Positions that result in a demotion for employees may be filled without listing.

Training and Development

Training and development opportunities are available to employees. Workshops, seminars, and other developmental activities designed to improve the administration of university functions and individual employee skill sets will be announced as they become available.

The University is committed to employee development and training for its employees. Departments are encouraged to promote the development and training of their employees. Time off during working hours may be given for individuals' participation that provides proof of attendance. Permission to enroll in and attend employee development training opportunities during normal working hours must be obtained through regular supervisory channels.

While the University reserves the prerogative of scheduling employee development training time to meet its service requirements, it also expects department supervisors to make sure that each person under their supervision is allowed to participate in university-sponsored employee development opportunities. No employee should have to make up time spent attending these programs, provided attendance does not interfere with assigned job duties and the supervisor has approved attendance.

Performance Evaluation

One of the most important responsibilities of university supervisors is conducting evaluations of employees in their work group. Performance evaluations are basic to good personnel management and are considered a fundamental part of each supervisor's job assignment.

All employees, except student and other temporary employees, are to receive a performance evaluation annually. Evaluations may be given on a more frequent schedule when supervisors believe them to be useful. Employees placed on probation will be given an evaluation at the end of the probation period. Each employee will receive an evaluation from their immediate supervisor.

Performance evaluations are to be separated sufficiently in time from the University's budgeting schedule so that the focus of performance evaluation is on employee development but timed sufficiently with the budgeting process that performance evaluation results are meaningful in terms of annual merit increase recommendations. For this reason, regular annual performance evaluations for employees are to be given each year during the month of March. When justifiable because of the work cycle, exceptions may be made to this time period by the appropriate Vice President. Each performance evaluation is to be discussed with the employee receiving it.

Performance evaluations are to be documented and signed by the employee's immediate supervisor, the employee, and the department head as appropriate. The employee's signature is not interpreted to mean agreement with the evaluation but rather acknowledgement that the evaluation has been discussed with the employee. A copy of the written evaluation is to be given to the employee.

Progressive Discipline

Disciplinary action is considered a dimension of performance evaluation. When problems occur, they should be handled in ways that jointly support the concept of positive discipline and minimize the interruption of university services. Supervisors will direct their efforts toward employee development and success. Depending upon the circumstances and the supervisor's judgment in individual cases, repeating a step, jumping a step, or moving to immediate discharge may be appropriate.

Supervisors are expected to document disciplinary action taken. The documentation should contain a clear description of the behavior that prompted the discipline, the action taken by the supervisor, and how and in what time frame the employee's conduct must change. Oral reminders should be documented in the employee's departmental file to record that the warning was, in fact, given. All documentation must be factual and complete. A form for documenting disciplinary action is available in the Human Resource Office. The Human Resource Office is responsible for maintaining copies of all disciplinary files.

Oral Reminder

This is the first step in the procedure. It involves a discussion between a supervisor and an employee about a work performance problem. The objective is to correct the problem by indicating how the employee's actual performance falls short of the desired performance. This step should ensure that no employee is disciplined for violation of a policy or procedure of which they might not have prior knowledge.

Written Reminder

This is the second step in the procedure if an oral reminder has not corrected the problem. If the offense is of a serious nature, a written reminder is an appropriate first step. It formalizes a discussion between a supervisor and an employee about a performance deficiency.

Disciplinary Leave

This step is taken after unsatisfactory performance has not been corrected following the application of an oral and written reminder. An employee may be placed on a disciplinary leave of absence with or without pay when it is in the best interest of the University. Leave with pay will normally not exceed one day. Leave without pay usually will not exceed five working days. The University President may approve a longer period of time. It may be taken as a last and final step before discharge in the event of a major offense.

Discharge of Staff

This is not a step in the progressive discipline procedure. It may be taken when positive steps have been used but performance has not changed or when an employee has committed a major offense. A major offense involves willful misconduct, dishonesty, or insubordination, one that seriously threatens university operations or the safety and well-being of the individual or other employees, or behavior that is unacceptable to the University. Prior to discharge, an employee should be notified of concerns and given an opportunity to correct any factual errors under which a supervisor may be operating. The immediate supervisor will contact the Human Resource Office or a designee before discharging an employee. Documentation should include the employee's name, date of the incident, explanation of the circumstances resulting in the discharge, and reference to any previous disciplinary steps taken.

Termination for Cause

Termination for cause will be taken when in the opinion of the University, based upon recommendations of relevant supervisors and the Human Resource Office, it is in the University's best interest to terminate the employment relationship with an individual.

Termination for cause may be necessary because of certain actions, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assault or battery of a person on university property or at a university sponsored event;
- Theft of or on university property;
- Unexcused absence of three or more days;
- Falsifying employment applications, or time, or leave records;
- Immoral conduct or indecency on university property or at a university sponsored event;
- Insubordination;
- Unauthorized use or duplication of a university key;
- Responding to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness;
- Violating a safety rule or practice;
- Sleeping or inattention to duty or inefficiency;
- Violation of law or university regulations;
- Lack of integrity;

- The unwillingness or deliberate refusal to comply with a direct order or any established work assignment of immediate supervisor or higher-level supervisor;
- The use of obscene or otherwise objectionable language to such personnel in a threatening manner;
- Other conduct inappropriate for an employee of the University.

Disciplinary action for violation of university policies or procedures or for actions detrimental to the University, university property, or university personnel, not described herein, shall be determined by the President of the University. The refusal to perform an illegal act shall not be regarded as insubordination. Any employee requested to perform an illegal act should report such information to the Human Resource Office.

Separation from Employment

Resignations

When an employee resigns from employment with the University, they should give their supervisor as much advance notice of the departure as possible in order for satisfactory arrangements for a replacement to be made. At least two (2) weeks' notice shall be considered as minimal good business practice for employees paid on an hourly rate of pay and at least one months' notice shall be considered as minimal good business practice for salaried employees.

Wherever possible, resignations should be presented in writing to the direct supervisor. Resignations, whether orally or in writing, are not rescindable by the employee except where expressly approved in writing by the University.

Immediate Discharge

Employees may be discharged immediately as detailed in the *Termination for Cause* section in the *Progressive Discipline* section or when deemed to be in the best interest of the University. The appropriate executive officer or their designee will review termination of employees with five or more years of university service before the decisions become final. A copy of each written notice of termination, layoff, or resignation is to be sent to the Human Resource Office.

Exit Interview

The University recognizes the employee leaving may have questions or concerns to address prior to their final day of employment. An exit interview will be scheduled with all employees leaving the University's employment. Areas addressed during the exit interview include pay eligibility for unused PTO, retirement, insurance, and return of university property, keys, and campus ID.

Referrals

It is not the policy of the University to give referrals for any separated employee. Employment information given about former employees who have separated employment with the University include department where they worked, dates when they were employed, and if the former employee is eligible for rehire.

Trainee Status

Employment in a position where the individual does not meet the minimum qualifications for that position is designated as trainee status. The word "trainee" appears in parentheses after the title of the position for which the person is being trained. Positions in which a trainee status would be acceptable if full qualifications cannot be met should be advertised as such. A trainee's salary or wage should be less than the minimum rate established for that particular classification. The trainee designation will be removed from the title when the employee satisfactorily meets the qualifications for the position. The salary or wage rate should be increased to reflect the completion of the training period. A trainee should be expected to meet the basic qualifications for the position within the probationary period. Probationary periods for training will normally be for a period of six months.

Student Status

This term applies to those employees currently enrolled and regularly attending Oklahoma Panhandle State University courses for credit and whose primary purpose for being at the University is to obtain an education. A student employee must be enrolled at a minimum as a half-time student with their primary function that of a regularly enrolled, in attendance student, where its educational activities is the primary purpose of pursuing a course of study to be considered eligible to be exempt from paying FICA (social security and Medicare taxes). The student FICA exception does not apply to services performed by an individual who is not enrolled in classes during school breaks of more than five weeks.

Benefits Policies

Benefit Eligibility

Only those employees holding a part-time or full-time appointment and working at least 75% of the time are eligible for university-paid benefits. Student employment is considered temporary; therefore, student employees are not eligible for employment benefits other than Workers' Compensation and voluntary election to contribute to a 403B account.

University employment benefits are linked to the primary position for which an employee is hired. For example, Staff Psychologist/Adjunct Professor is assigned professional staff status and benefits.

If a person is hired through the faculty hiring process and acquires a staff title because of additional responsibilities, then benefits are linked to the primary academic title. If the primary responsibility shifts to staff or administrative activity, the benefits are linked to the primary administrative responsibilities.

Compensation

The University attempts to pay employees' wages and salaries competitive with those paid for positions requiring similar knowledge, skills, and abilities at the same classification.

The Human Resource Office is responsible for classification of each staff job, other than administrative officers. Before a new position is filled, the Human Resource Office should approve a classification. If a position has been previously classified but duties and responsibilities have significantly changed, a reclassification review should be requested. In general, university need will be the primary element in job classification or reclassification. Requests to reclassify positions may be initiated by individual employees, immediate supervisors, other appropriate administrative officials, or the Human Resource Office. After a review is completed, if it is determined that an employee is no longer appropriately classified, the Human Resource Office will so advise the immediate supervisors and other appropriate administrative officials and an adjustment shall be made. That adjustment may mean reclassification of the position or alteration of the job functions being engaged in by the affected employee so that the employee is appropriately classified. Reclassification may also result in pay adjustments either up or down.

Salaries and wages are reviewed annually, and increases may be given on the basis of merit. Pay rate adjustments may result in across-the-board raises. The across-the-board adjustments may be minimized in order to reward individuals in terms of work performance.

Pay

All employees are paid on the last Oklahoma State Finance (OSF) working day of each month. Employees will receive a payroll warrant in one of the following ways:

- Per State of Oklahoma laws, employees must have the check directly deposited to an account at a bank of personal choice. The Office of Personnel Management direct-deposits payroll warrants to the banks in time for deposit on the regular payday.
- Until a bank account is established (at a period of no more than 2 pay periods), employees will be issued a paper warrant paycheck that may be picked up at the Human Resource Office. Personnel are required to show proper identification when picking up payroll warrants. Paychecks will not be given to spouses, family members, or friends without a written signed and dated request by the employee to the cashier when picking up the paycheck. If a bank account can't be established, employees must receive payroll warrant electronically by Paycard.

Overtime payments are made in accordance with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) for non-exempt employees. Overtime work must have prior approval from the immediate supervisor. Compensatory time is an alternative method for compensating employees who work overtime. Terminated employees are to use or be paid for compensatory time hours prior to the effective date of their termination. Maximum compensatory time that may be awarded will be in accordance with the FLSA.

Extra Compensation as Adjunct or Other Special Faculty

The University administrators and employees are encouraged to become involved in the instructional mission of the University by teaching courses. Employees and administrators should seek adjunct or other special faculty appointments when their qualifications and availability serve to meet the instructional needs of the University.

Teaching should not interfere with or substitute for the primary duties of the employee. For classes taught during normal workhours, employees must use Paid Time Off or get supervisor's approval to work during the lunch hour or after normal business hours to make up lost time. Requests for exceptions should be forwarded to the appropriate administrators.

Worker's Compensation

The University provides a comprehensive Workers' Compensation Insurance program in accordance with the Oklahoma Workers' Compensation Act at no cost to the employee. Any employee who sustains a work-related injury or illness should inform his or her supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. An injured employee may be required to be examined by a doctor appointed by the worker's compensation insurer. The Human Resource Office must be notified of a work related injury or illness prior to the close of business of the following work day. Each case will be individually evaluated and determined by the workman's compensation adjustor.

Employee Benefits

Benefits are contingent upon the availability of funds and are subject to change. The University offers various benefits to full-time employees. An employee with at least 30 hours Full Time Equivalent (FTE) benefits-eligible appointment but less than full-time must participate in the insurance program. These individuals are eligible for coverage from the first day of a complete month of employment. The University maintains a fringe benefit plan. These benefits are an integral part of the pay package and add approximately 35% to 40% to the cash portion of the pay of most employees and represent a payroll cost to the University.

The major benefits include

- Group medical,
- Term life,
- Long-term disability insurance,
- Retirement for full-time employees or active Oklahoma Teacher Retirement System (OTRS) members,
- Federal Social Security Program,
- Medicare,
- Workers' Compensation Insurance,
- Unemployment compensation.

The employee may elect additional benefits for which they will be responsible for payment. Individual retirement contributions are deducted from the employee's salary.

Detailed information concerning all benefits is available in the Human Resource Office.

Enrollment in Oklahoma Panhandle State University Courses

The University places no limitations on the number of hours of course work in which an employee may enroll outside of the individual's normal working hours. However, such course work cannot interfere with the individual's duties as determined by the individual's supervisor. Employees are highly encouraged to take advantage of the free-tuition for coursework hours taken the University. Permission to enroll in a course during the employee's normal working hours must be obtained from the employee's immediate supervisor prior to enrollment.

The supervisor should reach a decision with the employee before the time of enrollment as to whether the time spent in class must be made up. Time spent in class, unless required by the supervisor and clearly work-related in nature, must be scheduled with the supervisor's approval and does not count toward salary for non-exempt employees. Employees are expected to make up the time unless the class is work-related in nature. Time spent in class during working hours must be indicated as Paid Time Off (PTO).

As authorized by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, full-time and permanent employees enrolling in regular course work will be charged one-half the tuition fee for such work up to 15 hours per semester or 6 hours per summer session except as noted below. All university employees will be considered Oklahoma residents for purposes of tuition. Employees enrolling under the reduced fee will not be required to pay the student facilities fee, activity fee, and student health fee. Enrollment fees for hours taken over this maximum will be charged at the full rate. At the time of fee payment, the employee must present a Faculty/Staff Fee Waiver Application signed by the head of the department. This form may be secured from the Human Resource Office.

Employees will be limited to a maximum of 6 credit hours of course work each semester during their normal work hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. It will be at the supervisor's discretion to allow more than 6 credit hours during work hours. If more than 6 credit hours are allowed, the employee is responsible for taking the time from their accrued PTO or making up the time off with the supervisor's approval.

An employee's spouse or dependent children under the age of 24 enrolling in regular course work will be charged one half the tuition or such work but must pay all other fees. Persons who are employed less than 30 hours per week are not eligible for the fee reductions; all fees will be charged for their enrollment.

Leaves of Absence with Pay

Paid Time Off and Extended Sick Leave

Paid Time Off (PTO) is available to employees who hold benefits eligible appointments. Employees on limited appointments are not eligible for PTO. PTO may be used for vacation, personal illness, funeral attendance, illness of a family member, or other personal business. Employees working 9-, 10-, and 11-month contracts will earn PTO in proportion to their FTE appointment. During the 9-, 10- and 11-month non-contract period, if an employee works, PTO will be accrued.

PTO is earned on a monthly basis according to the following schedule:

Employment Category	Years of Service	Monthly Hours Worked	Annual Accrual	Maximum Accrual Allowance
Executive offices	Each year	25	300 hours	432 hours
Administrative officers, 12-month faculty, administrative staff, professional staff	1 st -15 th year	22	264 hours	336 hours
“	16 th -20 th year	24	288 hours	384 hours
“	21 st year +	25	300 hours	432 hours
9-month employee	Each year	8	72 hours	160 hours
10-month employee	Each year	9	90 hours	160 hours
11-month	Each year	10	110 hours	160 hours
All other employees	1 st -5 th year	18	216 hours	240 hours
	6 th -10 th year	20	240 hours	288 hours
	11 th -15 th year	22	264 hours	336 hours
	16 th -20 th year	24	288 hours	384 hours
	21 st year +	25	300 hours	432 hours

PTO can be accrued up to the maximum allowance listed. Time accrued beyond the maximum allowance will be deposited in an extended sick leave account. A maximum of 1040 hours may be deposited as extended sick leave. An employee may transfer accrued leave time to the extended sick leave account. Time deposited in the extended sick leave account may not be transferred back to the PTO account.

PTO and extended sick leave should be reported on an Absence Request form and on the Banner Leave Report. Time away from work because of vacation, illness of a family member, funeral attendance, or other personal business is to be reported as PTO taken. Absence due to personal illness is to be reported as PTO taken for the first seven consecutive working days per incident. When there is no accrued time in the PTO account, the first seven days per incident of illness must be leave without pay. Absence due to personal illness beyond seven consecutive working days will be deducted from the extended sick leave account as long as accrued time is available and appropriate medical documentation is provided. When there is no accrued time in the extended sick leave ability account, absence due to personal illness will be deducted from PTO. PTO taken and extended sick leave time taken will not be considered as time worked for overtime purposes. When there is not PTO or extended sick leave hours, it would be considered leave without pay.

An employee who is hospitalized overnight may access the extended sick leave account immediately without the requirement to use seven days of PTO. An employee returning to work part-time following an extended sick leave may continue to draw from the extended sick leave account for the time not worked until the physician gives a full release. Recurrence of the same illness within 30 calendar days of returning to work from an extended sick leave may be considered a continuation of the incident and charged to extended sick leave. The University will require acceptable medical documentation of illness or disability before allowing any charges to extended sick leave. Changing the employee's status to extended sick leave must be processed before any absence may be deducted from the extended sick leave account.

Duration of the extended sick leave for illness or disability is to be medically determined. No supervisor should compel an employee to return to work without a medical release. The terms of the release should be explained. Medical releases should be explicit and clearly written by the physician. Pregnancy is to be treated as any other short-term disability. An employee may continue normal duties through pregnancy or use available leave while unable to perform regular duties. Employees who utilize leave for pregnancy shall suffer no penalty, retaliation, or other discrimination.

Vacation time is to be taken from PTO. Authorized holidays falling within an employee's vacation period will not be counted as vacation time. PTO may not be used for vacation within the first four months of employment unless otherwise authorized by supervisor. Employees must comply with university policies for reporting absences and securing approval for time off work. Upon reasonable notice, a supervisor may request an employee to use a portion of their accrued PTO hours at any time this is deemed advisable.

No cash payment will be made for time accrued in the extended sick leave account. 9-, 10- and 11-month employees will not receive cash payment for accrued PTO. Twelve-month employees who terminate their employment under satisfactory conditions and who have been employed by the University more than six months in a benefits-eligible position will be paid for PTO that they have accrued not to exceed 150 hours. Cash payment to an employee in lieu of PTO will not be permitted except upon separation from the university. Terminal pay will not include credit for university-recognized holidays falling within the terminal pay period. The supervisor may recommend that terminal pay be denied to an employee discharged for serious cause.

An exception to the above would be retiring employees who, for the purposes of this policy, must meet one of the following conditions: be receiving TRS retirement or be receiving Social Security retirement.

These specified retirees or the beneficiaries of deceased employees will be paid for accrued PTO up to the maximum accrual allowance and will receive pay for holidays falling within the terminal pay period.

Employees appointed to grants and contract accounts are expected to use all earned PTO during the specified period of their appointment unless the grant or contract contains a separate account with sufficient funds to pay for accumulated leave time upon termination of the employee. If such funds are not available, PTO must be transferred into the extended sick leave account at the time the employee terminates or the grant or contract is discontinued. Twelve-month employees changing to a nine-month, ten-month, or eleven-month appointment must transfer all accrued PTO in excess of 12 days into the short-term account.

Holidays

Official university holidays are as follows:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving (Monday-Friday week of)
- Christmas (six work days)
 - The Christmas holidays are observed as follows:
 - Sunday-December 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30
 - Monday-December 22, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29
 - Tuesday-December 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31
 - Wednesday-December 24, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31
 - Thursday-December 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31
 - Friday-December 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31
 - Saturday-December 24, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31

The President of the University may designate any other workday as a holiday.

When an official holiday falls on a Saturday, the Friday preceding will be observed as a holiday. When an official holiday falls on a Sunday, the Monday following will be observed as a holiday. If the holiday is not a regularly scheduled workday, the regularly scheduled workday nearest the holiday will be selected as a day off with pay. In the event that no single regularly scheduled workday is closest to the holiday, the President will make a determination of the day off with pay one week prior to the holiday and all affected employees will be notified.

Official holidays are observed through the closing of all offices and facilities, provided functions or other essential activities can be discontinued without adversely affecting services to students and the public.

Court Duty Leave

An employee who is required to appear on a regular workday as a member of a jury panel shall be granted a leave of absence from regular duties. The compensation an employee receives during such an absence shall be the employee's regularly scheduled pay. The employee must present any jury fees or payment to the Human Resource Office.

An employee who is required through subpoena or direction by proper authority to appear before a federal, state, or local court or administrative agency to testify as a witness will be granted leave with pay at regular compensation provided that such appearances pertain to the official duties of the employee. Under state law, employees are not entitled to receive any fee for serving as a witness pertaining to their employment at the University.

Employees who are subpoenaed to appear as a witness or party in private litigation not pertaining to their official duties are not entitled to leave with pay. The time spent absent from work in such cases shall be taken from PTO or leave without pay at the employee's discretion.

When court duty occurs while an employee is on leave without pay or on a day other than a regularly scheduled workday for the employee, the employee is not entitled to leave with pay.

Military Leave

The University's military leave policy follows federal and state law. All continuous (temporary excluded) university employees working 30 hours per week or more are entitled to a leave of absence with pay for the first 30 regularly scheduled working days of military duty during any federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30), as stipulated in the law, when ordered to active or inactive duty. The leave with pay shall not be charged against PTO or other accrued benefits.

Funeral Leave

Time required for absence from work to attend a funeral of an immediate family member would be three (3) days. This would be determined by a supervisor and will not be charged to PTO. The time required for absence to attend a funeral of a friend or non-immediate family member may be charged to available PTO. For purposes of this policy, the immediate family is defined as spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, or corresponding in-law relationships.

Emergency Leave

Time required for serious illness in the immediate family, emergency personal business that cannot be handled at another time, or similar emergency situations may be charged to PTO.

Administrative Leave

Administrative leave with pay is sometimes given when it is determined to be in the University's best interest that an employee or employees not return to work for a specified period of time or for designated emergency closing of the University. Time approved as administrative leave will not be charged to PTO.

An employee may be placed on administrative leave of absence with pay pending a final decision on discipline. An employee may then be placed on disciplinary leave without pay when it is in the best interest of the University to do so. Non-exempt employee leave with pay will normally not exceed one working day. Non-exempt employee leave without pay will normally not exceed five working days. This disciplinary action will be coordinated with the University Human Resource Office and the immediate supervisor.

Leaves of Absence without Pay

The immediate supervisor may recommend leaves of absence without pay for personal reasons when it appears to be in the best interest of the University and the employee. Such leaves may not exceed one year in length. A period of leave of absence without pay does not count as service time for computation of benefits other than for retirement as specified.

When employees are granted leaves without pay for personal reasons, the University is obligated to use its best efforts re-employ the individual in either the same or a similar position within the University. If a position cannot be provided at the conclusion of the leave, the University may be obligated for unemployment compensation benefits. The immediate supervisor should consult with the Human Resource Office prior to granting leaves without pay.

Family Medical Leave Act

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) gives certain job protection to employees in an attempt to equitably balance work responsibilities with the demands of personal illness or serious injury or in caring for certain family members. Detailed FMLA information can be found at http://www.opsu.edu/Offices/Human_Resources/?page=FMLA .

Access to Records Policies

Access to Personnel File Policy

The Human Resource Office is the sole custodian of personnel files. For the purpose of making employment decisions, the University maintains individually identifiable personnel files on persons who have been or who are its employees. This policy is intended to provide guidelines for access to those records necessary to protect the privacy of its employees and the interests of the University in fulfilling its constitutional functions. Access to appropriate records shall be in accordance with the provisions of this Handbook.

Contents

Only information relevant to the person's employment with the University shall be retained in these files. Examples of this type of information include, but are not limited to:

- Information pertaining to occupational qualifications;
- Summaries of pre-employment recommendations and merit, tenure, and promotion recommendations;
- Performance and discipline matters;
- Personnel actions such as appointment, change of status, tenure, and promotion;
- Awards, elected offices, service to outside organizations, and professional associations.

Individuals may ask that materials relevant to their employment be included in their personnel file by written request to the Human Resource Office.

Confidentiality

The following personnel records may be withheld from public access:

- Those that relate to internal personnel investigations including examination and selection material for employment, hiring, appointment, promotion, documentation leading up to a final disciplinary action, or resignation;
- Those where disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy such as employee evaluations, medical documentation, payroll deductions, and employment applications submitted by persons not hired by the University;
- Those that are specifically required by law or university policy to be kept confidential.

Access

Personnel files shall be made available to individuals to review in accordance with the following guidelines, provided that the files may be inspected by persons so entitled, only under the supervision of the custodian. The University abides by the Oklahoma Open Records Act.

Supervisors or administrators shall have access to the personnel files of persons employed or being considered for employment in their areas of responsibility on a need-to-know basis and shall have authority to share the information with others responsible for personnel recommendations and/or decisions.

Other university administrators or employees showing a legitimate need for the information shall be permitted such access. Except as may otherwise be made confidential by statute or university policy, an employee shall have a right of access to their personnel file, provided:

- Letters of evaluation and/or recommendation that apply to pre-employment qualifications, tenure, and/or promotion that are solicited in confidence or sent with the expectation of confidentiality shall be deemed confidential and unavailable to the employee unless otherwise ordered by a court of law;
- An individual wishing to inspect their personnel file should submit a written request for inspection to the custodian of the file;
- If the file contains confidential records, such records must be removed before the file is opened to the individual. Upon request, employees will be advised of the type and number of documents that were not made available to the employee for their review and that will be returned to the file after the review;
- An individual may not remove or add any records to their personnel file at the time of inspection.

Correction of Record

An employee may dispute the accuracy of any material included in their personnel file. Such questions should be directed in writing to the Human Resource Office. If the questions are not resolved by mutual agreement, the employee may initiate a formal challenge through the employment grievance or discrimination complaint procedures.

Open Records Act

All university employees are state employees; as such, certain information related to their employment is subject to the Oklahoma Open Records Act. Certain information is made available to inquiring individuals upon request; this includes position, date of hire, and wage rates (gross figures only) of former or current employees.

Non-routine information may be accessible to inquiring individuals. All requests for documents shall be made during normal business hours and shall be made in writing. All requests must specify the document requested, the number of copies of the document, the name of the person requesting the document, and the date of the request. Sufficient time shall be allowed for retrieving and copying documents as requested.

Reproduction and Search Fees

In no instance shall the record copying fee exceed twenty-five cents (\$0.25) per page for records having the dimensions of eight and one-half (8 1/2) by fourteen (14) inches or smaller, or a maximum of one dollar (\$1.00) per copied page for a certified copy.

The requester will be charged for the employee's time (on an hourly basis according to the employee's salary) used in searching for the requested records for retrieving documents pursuant to a request which is solely for commercial purposes or which causes excessive disruption of normal business operations.

Appendix

Americans with Disabilities Act

Reasonable Accommodation Policy

The University will reasonably accommodate otherwise qualified individuals with a disability unless such an accommodation would pose an undue hardship; would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of the service, program, or activity; or would cause undue financial or administrative burdens. The term "reasonable accommodation" is used in its general sense in this policy to apply to employees, students, and visitors.

Reasonable accommodation may include, but is not limited to

- Making existing facilities readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities,
- Job restructuring,
- Part-time or modified work schedules,
- Reassignment to a vacant position if qualified.

Reasonable accommodation with respect to employment matters should be coordinated with the Human Resource Office and the disabled individual. Reasonable accommodation with respect to academic matters, including but not limited to faculty employment, should be referred to the office of the appropriate administrative officer while all other issues of reasonable accommodation should be referred to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Employees must submit the *American Disability Act (ADA) Diagnosing Professional's Documentation of Disability Form* to the Human Resource Office for reasonable accommodation to be considered.

Individuals who have complaints alleging discrimination based upon a disability may file them in accordance with university procedures.

Fair Labor Standards Act and Overtime

It is the policy of the University to comply fully with the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and its regulations. This includes but is not limited to the earning of and payment for overtime, establishment of the official workweek, and record keeping. The Human Resource Office shall post information about the FLSA and a copy of this policy to inform covered employees.

Definitions:

- **Exempt:** The position meets the FLSA tests for exemption from the overtime provisions of the Act, and compensation for overtime is not required. Generally speaking, exempt positions are faculty, administrative and professional employees, certain farm and recreation workers, student professional and temporary professional employees.
- **Non-Exempt:** The position does not meet the FLSA test for exemption from the overtime provisions of the Act, and the employee must be compensated for overtime. Generally speaking, non-exempt positions are those in the staff pay plan (except certain farm and recreation workers) and non-professional student or temporary workers.
- **Overtime:** Hours worked in excess of 40 in a workweek. Compensation for overtime hours is 1 ½ times the employee's regular pay rate. This base rate (which is multiplied by 1 ½ to get the premium rate per hour) may be affected by special situations such as standby pay.
- **Workweek:** A workweek is a period of 168 hours during 7 consecutive 24-hour periods. It may begin on any day of the week and at any hour of the day established by the employer.
- **Pay Period:** The period of time covered in a paycheck.

The normal workweek shall begin at midnight on Sunday and terminate the following Saturday at midnight. The University may designate a workweek other than the normal week for certain positions if it is deemed in the best interest of the University to do so. A full-time employee is expected to work 37.50 hours during the workweek.

An hourly rate of pay is the basis of earnings computation for persons paid on the hourly payroll. A monthly salary is the basis of earnings computation for persons paid on the monthly payroll, and annualizing the monthly rate and dividing by 1950 determines the hourly rate for overtime.

Procedures

For the purpose of computing overtime pay, holidays will be treated as hours not worked. Any additional time worked over 37.50 hours per week, up to 40 hours will be credited as compensation time at the ratio of 1 for 1. Excluded from overtime compensation are scheduled PTO, extended sick leave, and university holidays.

Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement Eligibility

Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma

All teachers entering the teaching profession in Oklahoma and certain other professionals working one-half time or more are required by State law to become members of the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) of Oklahoma. The University pays the entire Teachers' Retirement Employee contribution and TRS administration fees for all full-time employees as a part of the employee benefits package. Membership in the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma (OTRS) is mandatory for employees under the age of 60 at the initial time of their employment with the University.

If you meet the criteria below as of the last day of your continuous regular employment with OPSU, you will be considered an OPSU retiree:

- You are at least age 62 and have at least five continuous regular years of service at OPSU.
- You worked at OPSU for at least 30 years in a continuous regular appointment, no matter what your age.
- You meet the OTRS guidelines for the "Rule of 80" or "Rule of 90" (age plus years of OTRS membership). "Rule of 80" applies to employees joining OTRS prior to July 1, 1992. For those joining OTRS after June 30, 1992, the "Rule of 90" applies.

It is possible to be an OTRS retiree but not meet the OPSU retiree criteria listed above. In such a case, the employee is considered a terminated employee and is not eligible for OPSU retiree benefits. It is also possible to retire with TIAA-CREF but not meet OTRS or OPSU retirement criteria. Complete information concerning the Teachers' Retirement System of Oklahoma can be obtained by contacting the Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System in Oklahoma City, 1-877-738-6365 or www.ok.gov/trs.

Grievance and Appeals Procedures for Staff

The Human Resource Office and other personnel are available to counsel employees who have grievances. Fair and prompt consideration will be given to any personal concern or dissatisfaction about employment. The Human Resource Office Director should be contacted if a person feels there has been employment discrimination due to age, race, color, national origin, religion, gender (including sexual harassment), or qualified disability.

The following steps should be followed to resolve questions of employment dissatisfaction:

- The employee should discuss the area of concern with his or her immediate supervisor first. Further actions will follow the chain of command.
- If a complaint is not resolved through informal procedures, a written grievance may be filed to provide for hearings before a committee or for reviews at various management levels.

Formal Complaint

An employee should file a formal complaint if they believe that any condition of their employment is unjust, inequitable, a hindrance to effective operation, or is creating a problem. Suspensions, demotions, or discharge from employment shall not be considered as formal complaints, but shall be considered as basis for appeal. Salary increases, job classifications, and fringe benefits are matters determined during budget deliberations and are not considered a basis for a formal complaint. The formal complaint procedure does not apply to action taken during the employee's introductory period or to action taken under the reduction of work force policy or the non-renewal of an individual's appointment.

Determination

Meetings and investigations shall be conducted during the employee's regular working hours whenever possible. In addition, the Human Resource Office Director shall serve in the capacity of an information gathering and advisory person. The Human Resource Office Director may elect to arbitrate a decision and make a recommendation to the appropriate Vice President. The Human Resource Office Director may appoint an ad hoc committee to make recommendations regarding individual complaints.

Procedure

The employee is to present the facts in writing to their supervisor and send a copy to the Human Resource Office Director. A formal complaint must have a detailed, signed statement of the complaint, and the specific remedial action or relief sought.

If an employee receives an unsatisfactory reply or fails to receive a reply, they have the right to submit the complaint to the next level of supervision. The supervisor at this level will review all of the facts of the case and the decision rendered by the previous supervisor, then render a decision in writing to the employee. At each level, a copy of the reply to the complaint must be forwarded to the Human Resource Office Director. This procedure shall be followed when applicable through the levels of progression.

The Human Resource Office Director will make a recommendation to the appropriate Vice President for decision. The Vice President's decision shall be final. Employees may contact the Human Resource Office for additional information regarding grievance procedures.

Reduction in Force (RIF)

An RIF is the abolition of positions within any of the administrative units of the University. The Administration reorganization may be instituted in cases of budget reduction, lack of work, lack of funds, program discontinuation, technological replacement, or other reasons.

An RIF resulting in layoffs of employees shall be among the last options implemented by the appropriate administrator. Alternatives to layoffs of personnel shall be considered before implementing any layoff of employees. Such alternatives include, but are not limited to

- Reductions in operating expenses other than payroll,
- Moratorium on further hiring within the University in the affected job class(es),
- Separation of employees appointed for less than full time,
- FTE status,
- Reassignment of employees to comparable or other positions,
- Retraining of qualified employees,
- Encouragement of leaves without pay or FTE reduction,
- Encouragement of early or phased retirement,
- Demotions with reductions in pay.

The above outline is required only to be considered as possible alternatives. It is not required that such alternative options be exhausted before determining to implement an RIF or reorganization that results in laying off employees.

At any time an RIF becomes necessary, the appropriate supervisor of the affected budgetary unit(s) shall develop a proposed plan for layoff. Such plan shall consider all pertinent factors prior to making the decision as to which function and/or job classes or pay grades are to be affected, plus a determination of how many persons are to be laid off in each affected area. When options are available as to which job classification(s) to select for reduction, the appropriate supervisor shall select the classification(s) where reduction will have the least amount of negative impact upon the vital programs of that budgetary unit in addition to the least amount of negative impact upon equal employment gains of the unit. Specific job skills within pay classes may be taken into account.

Following the determination of which functions, job classes, and the individuals that are to be affected, the supervisor shall develop a listing of employees within the affected job classifications. Both seniority and competence are to be considered in making layoff determinations. In the affected classifications, the most recent employee evaluation will be used to measure competence. Employees also will be listed according to seniority as determined by personnel records maintained in the Human Resource Office. Seniority shall be determined as university-wide continuous service. Layoff(s) will be accomplished within each affected budgetary unit by job classification, removing from the University payroll the least senior employee(s) within the lowest performance level and repeating the procedure until the number of persons to be laid off equals the number of persons to be removed from the payroll. In small units where preparation of such a listing is not practical, the immediate supervisor shall use reasoned administrative judgment in accomplishing the layoff.

Prior to implementation, the layoff plan shall be submitted to the University Affirmative Action Officer, the Human Resource Office, and the appropriate Vice President for review and approval.

Employees who are scheduled for layoff shall not have "bumping rights" to positions in either the same or in lower classification(s) in any budgetary unit in which another job position may happen to be filled by an employee with less university seniority.

All persons affected by a layoff action shall be notified in writing as early as possible. A copy of the layoff notice shall be transmitted to the Human Resource Office. The written notice shall contain the following information:

- The effective date of the layoff,
- A statement advising the affected employee of eligibility to apply for unemployment compensation at the Office of Oklahoma Employment Security Commission,
- The right of the laid off employee for callback,
- The right of the laid off employee to continue to maintain eligible insurance coverage is subject to COBRA guidelines.

Employees affected by a layoff shall be placed on Leave without Pay. A review will be done at the appropriate time for employees.

Employees who are scheduled for layoff do not have the right to enter formal grievance charges in regard to layoff action, except for reasons of alleged violation of the policies and procedures governing such RIF or for alleged acts of illegal discrimination. This provision supersedes normal grievance procedures adopted by the University.

Whenever it is determined that a RIF is necessary, the appropriate Vice President shall, after consultation with the appropriate administrator, have the discretion and authority to place the affected employee(s) in vacant positions within the University for which the employee is qualified, without such employee having to compete with others in the appropriate applicant pool. Such reassignment can be through demotion in rank, lateral transfer in rank, or promotion, so long as the employee is qualified to hold the position and is considered well suited for the position by the unit administrator. Such reassignment possibilities are designed to protect current employees faced with layoff from having to compete with outside applicants from the appropriate applicant pool. This is not intended to provide a "loophole" from the University's Affirmative Action efforts.

Persons separated for such reason shall be eligible for new employment with the University, but such new employment will be under the same conditions applicable for all new employees at the time.

At the time of the layoff, all earned but unused PTO and/or compensatory leave will be paid in full prior to or at the beginning date of the layoff if financially feasible. In every case, such leave must be paid in full prior to separation of employment. Regardless of the date of payment of the unused leave, the date of layoff will be the next day following the last day worked by the affected employee.

When a vacancy occurs in a budgetary unit, which has experienced an RIF and there are still employees in layoff status, an offer of callback employment shall be made to the last laid off employee(s) within that unit who hold the same job classification. Callbacks shall be in the inverse order of the layoffs. If the first eligible person on the callback list is unavailable or does not choose to return to work, the offer will be made to the next available person on the list and repeated as often as necessary until all persons on that classification list have had the opportunity to fill the vacant position. Second priority shall be to those who meet the qualifications for the position, but do not hold that job classification. Callback of second priority persons shall be in inverse order of layoff. Persons called back to work shall not suffer loss of previously accrued seniority or loss of any benefit previously earned by such seniority. Classification and departmental and university seniority shall again begin to accrue on the first day of employment after the callback.

Vacancies not filled through the callback procedures will be listed with the Human Resource Office.

First priority for referral shall be given to those persons with the same job classification that have been laid off from other budgetary units. Second priority shall be to others who meet the qualifications for the position but do not hold that job classification. A person who refuses an offer of callback reinstatement to a position in which the person holds layoff status will be removed from layoff status at that time and will be separated from employment. Acceptance of a callback opportunity must be exercised within five (5) days of the offer. If no suitable applicant is available from the pool of layoffs, normal recruitment and referral procedures will be followed.

Campus Security

Prohibited Items

The students, faculty, and staff of the University can best learn, work, and live in an environment free from the dangers and constraints, both physical and psychological, which can arise from the presence or use of weapons, firearms, ammunition, fireworks, explosives, and dangerous chemicals on the campus. It is, therefore, the policy of the University to prohibit the possession or use of any of these items on campus, in university vehicles, or on university-sponsored trips: weapons, firearms, ammunition, fireworks, explosives, and dangerous chemicals.

Reporting Crimes and Emergencies on Campus

Reports of criminal actions or other emergencies occurring on the University campus should be made to the local law enforcement agency by dialing 911. Victims of serious crimes may request support personnel such as ministers and counselors during and after reporting.

Violence in the Workplace

The University forbids verbal or written threats or any behavior that is likely to lead to violence. Any employee who feels they have been the victim of a violent act should notify their immediate supervisor and/or the Human Resource Office Director. In severe instances, where immediate response or assistance is required, the employee should contact local law enforcement by dialing 911.

Employees who are victims of violent acts should be prepared to report who the assailant was, names of witnesses, and information detailing the events that led up to the violent act.

The University is committed to providing a work environment that is free of violence. Employees should report any act of violence which occurs on university property or at a university sponsored event.

Security of Academic and Residential Facilities

Security is provided in the maintenance of the University's facilities through limitations on hours of operation, policies on keys, restrictions of access to those bearing appropriate identification as university staff or students, and the provision of adequate lighting. In addition, the University employs a team of off-duty law enforcement and emergency management system first responders as a security force to patrol the University at night and during large planned events.

Security Procedures and Practices

The Goodwell Police Department (GPD) is staffed by commissioned law enforcement officers who have the power to arrest and bring before the proper courts persons violating the law on university property. The University's law enforcement officers cooperate with local, county, and state police authorities in the exercise of their responsibilities.

Harassment

The University is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's gender, race, ethnic background, age, religion, disability or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated. As an example, sexual conduct (both overt and subtle) can serve to create an offensive work environment.

Sexual Harassment

See Interim Title IX Policy.

Staff-Student Relationships

Staff may be in a position to exert authority and control over students. Staff must be aware of the potential for abuse of power inherent in their relationships with students. Students rely on staff for assistance and guidance in dealing with issues such as scheduling of classes, financial aid, tutoring, housing, meals, employment, educational programs, social activities, and many other aspects of university life. Those who deal with students are expected to provide them with support and positive reinforcement.

Sexual Relationships Policy

The term "sexual relationship" may include amorous or romantic relationships and is intended to indicate conduct which goes beyond what a person of ordinary sensibilities would believe to be a collegial or professional relationship.

Sexual relationships between staff and students are prohibited when the staff member has authority or control over the student. A staff member who fails to withdraw from participation in activities or decisions that may reward or penalize a student with whom the staff member has or has had an amorous relationship will be deemed to have violated their ethical obligation.