To the UCO Faculty:

I am pleased to introduce this handbook which contains the current policies and procedures for effective management and operation of the University of Central Oklahoma. Included are those policies and procedures unique to UCO, as well as those established by the Regional University Systems of Oklahoma and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

I encourage you to review the handbook through which you can engage effectively in university processes, inquire, recommend changes, and influence policies. Your feedback is encouraged, and I believe these opportunities offer faculty members ways to participate in decision making at UCO.

My best wishes,

[Signature]

Don Betz, Ph.D.
President
Dear UCO Faculty Members:

Welcome to another year at the University of Central Oklahoma and a new edition of the UCO Faculty Handbook.

The Handbook is a vital but living document. It contains the collective input of faculty members from across our campus, including from the UCO Faculty Senate and academic representatives such as deans and chairs of departments. Its content is meant to ensure that we work together as an academic community to produce a reasonable and equitable work environment while also being the final authority on standards for tenure and promotion processes, among others.

Like any document, the Handbook may require updates or modifications and must be constantly reviewed with the interests of the faculty in mind. I want to thank the Faculty Handbook Editorial Board for their professionalism and commitment to shared governance as they annually review the existing content of the Handbook as well as integrating new university policies that affect faculty members and their many responsibilities.

As we embark upon a new academic year, I am grateful for the concerted efforts of my colleagues across the campus to support our faculty and academic staff members in support of our efforts to help students learn. This includes President Betz and my fellow Cabinet members. Indeed, I am grateful that our work environment has once again been recognized in the Chronicle of Higher Education’s “Great Colleges to Work For” and leads nationally in categories of Collaborative Governance, Tenure and Clarity of Process, and Teaching Environment.

I look forward to seeing you on campus and working together on the important issues that make the University of Central Oklahoma a premier, student-centered university.

Sincerely,

John F. Barthell, Ph.D.
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
The University of Central Oklahoma (University) is committed to an inclusive educational and employment environment that provides equal opportunity and access to all qualified persons. The University will continue its policy of fair and equal employment and educational practices without discrimination or harassment because of actual or perceived race, creed, color, religion, alienage or national origin, genetic information, ancestry, citizenship status, age, disability or handicap, gender, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law. Discrimination or harassment in violation of this policy should be reported to the Affirmative Action Officer (Office of Legal Counsel) in person at 114D Lillard Administration, or by phone at (405) 974-3377 or fax at (405) 974-3807. After office hours or on holidays, the report may be made by contacting University Police Services at (405) 974-2345.

*Please note that “sexual orientation” and “gender identity” are not protected personal characteristics under federal or state law, but were added to the Equal Opportunity Statement by the University.

Approved by Cabinet & President June 25, 2015
The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO)’s explicit commitment to diversity is essential in fulfilling the university’s mission to provide transformative educational experiences to students so that they may become productive, creative, ethical and engaged citizens and leaders serving the global community.

Diversity encompasses a range of values, personal experiences, and worldviews that arise from differences of culture and circumstance, including differences of actual or perceived race, creed, color, ethnicity, geography, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, religion, alienage or national origin, genetic information, citizenship status, socioeconomic status, language, ability/disability, status as a veteran, marital status, learning style and immigration status, among other forms of diversity.

Diverse backgrounds broaden and deepen the educational experience and scholarly environment that are essential to achieving academic excellence. UCO promotes academic excellence and enhances the scholarly and creative environment by systematically pursuing the following goals:

- To promote diversity by encouraging students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds to enroll at and to graduate from UCO.
- To recruit and retain faculty and staff from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds.
- To foster an institutional culture that values a diverse community and that invites authentic interaction among the members of that community.

UCO recognizes that enhancing diversity in service to the university’s mission and goals requires leadership, commitment and consistency. Leaders at all levels have an obligation as they build upon this commitment to embrace and sustain diversity in every area of the university.

UCO vigorously fosters diversity on its campus and in the communities it serves. By valuing and promoting diversity, the university acknowledges uniqueness, similarities, and differences among its stakeholders while providing transformative learning experiences for its students.

UCO celebrates its tradition of inclusion and recognizes that strengthening and expanding diversity on its campus is essential to the university’s continued success.

Effective February 2011; Updated August 2017
The UCO Faculty Handbook has been prepared by the Office of Academic Affairs to provide a reference for all faculty members. It contains information, policies, and procedures relevant to the academic functions of the university. The Academic Policy Manual serves as an additional resource for the faculty, university administration, and staff and complements the information in the Faculty Handbook.

NOTE: Policies and procedures by federal law, state statute, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the Regional University System of Oklahoma (RUSO), relevant to the operation of this university, are italicized, as shown in this note. They are hereby distinguished from policies and procedures established by the University and repeated verbatim. In case of a discrepancy between RUSO and UCO policies, RUSO policies will supercede UCO policies.

Changes in the Faculty Handbook will become effective at the beginning of each new academic year (August 1), unless put into effect immediately by written authorization from the president. The Faculty Handbook may be modified, initiated, revoked, or amended only in writing by authorization of the president. Substantive changes to the handbook will require written promulgation.

The Office of Academic Affairs will provide an annual review of the handbook and post the current version on the AA website after August 1 each year. New faculty members will be provided with the URL for the document.

Academic deans will receive a printed copy.

This edition of the UCO Faculty Handbook supersedes all previous handbooks.

Effective: August 1, 2018
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