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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Whether you have just joined our great university or have been at the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) for a while, we are confident that you will find UCO to be a dynamic and rewarding place to work, and we look forward to a productive and successful association. We consider the employees of UCO to be one of its most valuable resources.

This Handbook has been written to help you to become acquainted with UCO and to assist you in finding answers to questions you may have regarding your employment at the University. We do not expect this Handbook to answer all of your questions — in fact, no handbook can set forth all the policies or procedures of an employer or cover all the circumstances that may arise in an employment setting. The University's Policies and Procedures Manual, Faculty Handbook, benefits plan documents, your supervisor, and Human Resources will also be major sources of information.

Our intention is that the provisions of this Handbook and the University’s Policies and Procedures are always in compliance with the Policies of the Regional University System of Oklahoma (RUSO). Formerly known as the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges, this administrative body was created on July 6, 1948 to preside over the six regional universities: East Central University, Northeastern State University, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, and the University of Central Oklahoma. If any part of this Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or any University policy or procedure is not in alignment with RUSO policy, the RUSO policy will supersede. A link to RUSO policies is provided: RUSO Policy

This Handbook is an important document intended to provide concise statements of certain employment-related policies and benefits provided by the University, and therefore contains guidelines and general descriptions only; it may not be the final word in all cases. Employee circumstances may be considered individually. Many matters covered by this Handbook, such as benefit plan descriptions, are also described in separate University and/or plan documents. These documents supersede any statement made in this Handbook or by any member of administration.

The Handbook is not intended to and does not create any contractual rights in favor of UCO or the employee. Oklahoma is an employment-at-will state, where an employment relationship may be terminated at the will of either the employer or the employee at any time and for any reason, with or without “cause” and with or without notice. Unless otherwise set forth in a written contract signed by a duly authorized executive of the University, all employees of the University are “at-will” employees. Therefore, the statements and policies herein, along with those in the University's Policies and Procedures manual, shall not be construed to limit or abrogate the rights of UCO or its employees under the employment-at-will relationship. Faculty members should refer to the Faculty Handbook for employment information.

Because the University’s operations may change, the University retains the right to unilaterally impose, change, and/or abandon policies, except the "at-will" provision, at any time, with or without notice, in an individual case or generally, at the sole discretion of administration. Refer to the Faculty Handbook for employment information related to tenured faculty. Any questions regarding intent and/or interpretation of this Handbook, or any other Policies and Procedures of the University, can be directed to your supervisor or to Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources.

The most recent version of this Handbook and the Policies and Procedures Manual are located on the UCO website. Changes will be posted to the UCO website, and employees should refer to this site periodically for updates. Links are provided here for your convenience. UCO Employee Handbook  UCO Policies & Procedures
EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your acknowledgment and receipt of the Employee Handbook.

I have received and understand that it is my responsibility to read and ask any questions that I may have regarding this current copy of the University of Central Oklahoma’s Employee Handbook. I also have received instruction in how to access this Handbook and the University’s Policies and Procedures Manual online.

I understand that the policies, rules, and benefits described in the Handbook and the Policies and Procedures Manual are subject to change at the sole discretion of the University at any time. I understand it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with both documents as a new hire and as an employee to periodically check the official online copies of the Handbook and the Policies and Procedures Manual to ensure my understanding and compliance.

I further understand that my employment as a staff member or non-tenured faculty member is terminable at will, either by myself or the University, with or without cause or notice, regardless of the length of my employment or the granting of benefits of any kind. Tenured Faculty employees may only be terminated for causes listed in the Faculty Handbook.

I understand that no contract of employment other than “at will” has been expressed or implied, and that no circumstances arising out of my employment will alter my “at will” status, as no one is authorized to provide any employee with a promise of treatment in any particular manner in any given situation, or an employment contract, or special arrangement concerning terms or conditions of employment. Tenured faculty should review the Faculty Handbook for information related to their employment status.

By my signature below, I affirm that I have read and understand the above statements, that I have received and read a copy of the University’s Employee Handbook, and that I had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my understanding.

Employee’s Printed Name: ____________________________________________________________

Position: ________________________________________________________________________

Employee’s Signature: ________________________________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________________________________________________

The signed original copy of this acknowledgment is to be given to your supervisor to be forwarded and filed in your Human Resources personnel file.
Dear UCO Faculty and Staff Members,

I am delighted that you are a part of the University of Central Oklahoma, an innovative learning community of more than 17,000 students and nearly 2,000 faculty and staff members. Here, you will find a place rich with opportunities for you to help our students learn and thrive, helping them become productive, creative, ethical and engaged citizens and leaders. At Central, we are intent on fostering an environment that allows you to explore and expand your professional curiosity. Your continuing personal and professional growth and development are as essential to the university as they are to you.

As a place where teaching comes first, our university community is proud of its scholarly accomplishments and demonstrated sense of service and engagement. I am confident that you will make a substantive contribution to cultivating the culture of learning and discovery here. I urge you to make a special effort to connect with our students as a teacher, staff member, mentor and model. As a member of the Central Community, you are the life force of the institution.

The University of Central Oklahoma prepares future leaders for success through our commitment as faculty and staff to provide experiences that transform lives. This transformational journey is guided by our core values of character, civility and community, and articulated in what we call the “Central Six.” It begins with the student’s selection of one of our more than 100 major areas of study, through which a foundation of discipline and knowledge develops. The journey continues, as our students are encouraged to take a role of leadership centered on learning and focused by integrity, stewardship and service. They learn, through research, scholarly and creative activities, to solve problems. They become involved in activities that will prepare them for civic engagement, ethical reasoning and lifelong learning. They learn to communicate effectively in a complex world, to function in diverse environments and to adapt to the continuously changing global society. Our students learn that health and wellness are central to living a full life, with vitality and meaning.

Our responsibility is to prepare our students for a world of change we can imagine and project, but not know with certainty. Therefore, we must offer a culture that develops habits and values, which will serve our students well as they learn, adapt and learn again in the world of increasing access, connectivity and ambiguity.

For those of you who are commencing employment with Central: Welcome! I urge you to become an engaged member of our community. For those of you who have been with us: Thank you! What we do at Central is the sum of all your efforts. Working together, we embody what it means to Live Central, investing daily in creating opportunities for all of our students!

Don Betz
President University of Central Oklahoma
RICH IN HISTORY

The University of Central Oklahoma is the sixth name for what started in 1890 as the Territorial Normal School of Oklahoma.

Through the years, it also has been known as Central State Normal School, 1904-1918; Central State Teachers College, 1919-1938; Central State College, 1939-1970; and Central State University, 1971-1991.

Regardless of the name, UCO is a place where hard-working Oklahomans, as well as students from other states and countries, realize their dreams of receiving advanced educational degrees to launch careers and provide better lives for their families.

UCO’s history includes the first class of public higher education in the new Oklahoma Territory. The class of 23 met on Nov. 9, 1891, in Edmond’s Methodist Church. The University’s landmark, Old North, is the state’s first publicly funded building to hold college classes. Classes began on Jan. 13, 1893 in the partially completed building.

Four years later, in 1897, the first graduating class — three women and two men — graduated from UCO with their hard-earned teacher certificates. In 1919, curriculum was added for a bachelor’s degree program. The first master’s degree was conferred in 1955.

UCO now has six academic colleges — Fine Arts and Design; Business Administration; Education and Professional Studies; Liberal Arts; Mathematics and Science; and the Jackson College of Graduate Studies. Today’s ever-growing campus serves more than 17,000 students who are enjoying many new and exciting developments at UCO.

While UCO’s history is still closely tied to Edmond, the University has expanded its influence and services to meet the needs of both students and the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. To learn more about the history of UCO and see the many resources available at UCO’s Chambers Library, visit http://library.uco.edu/archives/. Also, visit UCO’s Laboratory of History Museum on the mezzanine level of Evans Hall, which houses a collection and interpretation of objects, oral histories, documents and photographs that tell UCO’s history.
UCO VISION

The University of Central Oklahoma, as Oklahoma’s metropolitan university committed to helping students learn, embraces its role as a collaborative partner and leader to meet the educational, business and community aspirations of the Greater Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area. Our dynamic metropolitan region shapes the university even as the university contributes to the cultural, social, economic, and intellectual life of the region to realize our shared future. Metropolitan engagement informs every dimension of the university’s activities in cultivating learning, discovery of new knowledge, and encouraging shared leadership to the extent that this synergy will inspire others to recognize UCO as one of the nation’s leading metropolitan universities.

UCO MISSION

The University of Central Oklahoma exists to help students learn by providing transformative education experiences to students so that they may become productive, creative, ethical and engaged citizens and leaders serving our global community. UCO contributes to the intellectual, cultural, economic and social advancement of the communities and individuals it serves.

STRATEGY STATEMENT

The University of Central Oklahoma will actively respond to the needs and opportunities of the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area by pursuing innovative partnerships, by adhering to our fundamental commitment to provide transformative teaching and learning experiences to our students, by engaging our students in experiential learning activities that advance the quality of life for all, by supporting life-long learning and workforce development and expansion, and by the impactful contribution of our research and professional services expertise to the metropolitan area.

Transformative Learning

Through access to a high quality, affordable transformative teaching and learning experience, we seek to educate creative, collaborative graduates who are adaptable and engaged critical thinkers, who are receptive to new ideas, who celebrate the diversity of our region, and who will live fulfilling lives.

Experiential Education

Through the cultivating of partnerships throughout the metropolitan area and beyond, we serve the needs of our community, and provide graduates who are equipped with the skills to assist the metropolitan area to thrive in a competitive global environment.

Research and Professional Service

Through professional services and research, we provide leadership and counsel on issues vital to the health of the metropolitan region’s businesses and industry, education institutions, families, and to its cultural quality of life.

Quality of Campus Experiences

Through its ethos of inclusion, transparency, collaboration, and respect across the institution that recognizes the unique and individual value of each of its traditional and non-traditional students,
faculty, staff, administration, and alumni, the University of Central Oklahoma will be recognized nationally for its living and learning-centered environment.

CALL TO ACTION
The University of Central Oklahoma is the Leadership University, delivering education based on our shared values of Community, Character and Civility. UCO transform each student by focusing our resources on the Central Six tenets of transformative learning.

Students may be transformed with:

- Discipline Knowledge
- Leadership
- Problem Solving (Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities)
- Service Learning and Civic Engagement
- Global and Cultural Competencies
- Health and Wellness

Transformative learning is a holistic process that places students at the center of their own active and reflective learning experience.

OUR REPUTATION — BUILT ON INTEGRITY
A reputation of integrity is one of the most valuable assets an institution can possess. The University of Central Oklahoma’s reputation has been built over many years, and is dependent on the integrity, open communication and sense of responsibility appreciated by our employees. UCO is committed to promoting an environment where we feel free to exchange ideas, to communicate and express ourselves in an open and honest manner. A key element to that success is effective communication, and we must have the means to communicate easily and effectively. In addition to our everyday lines of communication UCO has two formal communication tools.

UComment
If you have a suggestion, comment or idea, UComment is UCO’s web-based communication portal available to students, faculty, staff and the public to anonymously share their thoughts with university leaders.

RUSO TIP LINE
To anonymously report more serious concerns such as fraud, theft or embezzlement the RUSO Tip Line, another web-based communication portal, is available through the Regional University System of Oklahoma (RUSO). The RUSO Tip Line is powered by Ethics Point, a web-based, commercial platform used by industry and higher education to handle such concerns. For more information, visit FAQs from EthicsPoint.

So, if it’s a great new idea, some input on improving an old one, or if you have a more serious concern, you are encouraged to use UComment and/or the RUSO Tip Line.
ESSENTIAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY STATEMENTS

EMPLOYMENT AT-WILL: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Absent a contract stating otherwise, Oklahoma employers may terminate an at-will employment relationship for any reason, or for no reason, with or without “cause” or notice. In exchange, an employee may leave his or her employment for any reason, or for no reason, with or without “cause” or notice. This is known as the “at-will” rule of employment.

At the University of Central Oklahoma, all employees are at-will employees, and no representations, expressed or implied, can alter that relationship, other than a written contract signed by a duly-authorized executive of the University. No one is authorized to provide any employee with a promise of treatment in any particular manner in any given situation, or to create an employment contract or special arrangement concerning terms or conditions of employment. Faculty members should refer to the Faculty Handbook regarding information pertinent to their employment.

This is not to be confused with University guidelines and programs in place to facilitate positive, lasting employee/employer relations. Performance management, for example, provides for periodic performance reviews, progressive corrective action and positive reinforcement for good performance.

However, these programs do not change the at-will provision of Oklahoma law. They are simply guidelines that may or may not be offered or utilized based on individual circumstances or situations. Therefore, an employee’s employment is always terminable at will, either by the employee or the University, with or without cause or notice, regardless of the length of employment or the granting of benefits of any kind.

STAFF RETENTION

As provided in RUSO policy, 1.25.1, the President of UCO is the chief executive officer responsible for the internal administration thereof. So in accordance with RUSO policy 1.25.2, A professional administrator at or above the director level whose appointment is not renewed will be given written notice from the university on or before April 1, prior to termination of the current appointment. Administrators whose positions are externally funded may be non-renewed without prior notice. Failure to reappoint may be without specific cause. There shall be no right of review of such actions by the Board.

A professional administrator at or above the director level may be terminated within an existing contract period based on genuine financial retrenchment, bona fide discontinuance of a program or department, or lack of need of one’s services, and shall not have greater job protection than tenured faculty.

USE OF UNIVERSITY PROPERTY

All University equipment, including cars, trucks, all computers and networks, etc., is to be used for official business only and is not to be used for personal convenience or gain on campus, at home, or in any other location. The division or department director, or college chair, is responsible for equipment in the division, department, or college, and will designate the employees responsible for operating or using the equipment.
PERSONAL PRIVACY

Nothing contained within this Handbook may be interpreted as giving an employee an expectation of privacy. Offices, desks, computers, e-mail, file cabinets and other furniture and equipment provided by the University or from a grant are not private, although certain spaces may contain records that are specifically confidential. Each employee must ensure that there is clear access at all times to any materials or information that may be needed to conduct University business.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Equal Employment Opportunity has been, and will continue to be, a fundamental principle at the University of Central Oklahoma. Employment and career advancement is based upon personal capabilities and professional qualifications without consideration of personal characteristics such as race, gender, or age. On February 19, 2013, the University adopted the following Equal Opportunity Statement:

“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 114 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 or expression” are not protected personal characteristics under federal or state law, but were added to the Equal Opportunity Statement by the University.

University leaders are dedicated to this policy and affirm a continuing commitment of embracing and expanding positive programs with respect to recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, training, compensation, benefits, employee activities, and general treatment during employment and at termination, and as it relates to all other terms and conditions of employment.

The University will make a reasonable accommodation for qualified employees with a disability unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operations of the University. An employee seeking an accommodation should contact his or her supervisor and/or Employee Relations in the Human Resources Department as is explained in the section of this Handbook regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act.

In addition, the University will endeavor to accommodate the sincere religious beliefs of an employee to the extent such accommodation does not pose an undue hardship on the operations of the University.
Employees requesting such an accommodation should contact his or her supervisor and/or Employee Relations in the Human Resources Department.

The Office of Legal Counsel has overall responsibility for this policy and maintains reporting and monitoring procedures. Any employees with questions or concerns about equal employment opportunities in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of a Director in the Offices of Human Resources.

The University will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who raise concerns regarding equal employment opportunities in the workplace. Retaliation against an individual in any form is a serious violation and will be subject to disciplinary action as necessary, up to and including termination.

NON-HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The University of Central Oklahoma is committed to an inclusive employment environment that provides equal opportunity and access to all qualified persons. Therefore, it is the policy of the university to provide and maintain fair and equal employment practices. Discrimination or harassment because of 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, is prohibited.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY:
The University of Central Oklahoma is committed to an environment for all employees which is safe, fair, humane, and respectful and which supports and rewards employee performance on the basis of relevant considerations such as ability and effort. Behaviors which inappropriately assert sexuality as relevant to employee performance are damaging to this environment. Sexual harassment by any member of the university community is a violation of law, as well as Board of Regents’ and university policy and will not be tolerated. Employees must refrain from any harassment or discriminatory treatment of students and other employees. Sexual harassment will be dealt with promptly and confidentially by the university administration.

A. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Sexual harassment shall be defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature in the following context:

1. When submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment or academic standing;
2. When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual; or
3. When such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.
B. EXAMPLES OF PROHIBITED CONDUCT: Conduct, whether in person, in writing, by telephone, through social media, by electronic means, or otherwise, which is prohibited by this policy includes, but is not limited to:

1. Unwelcome sexual flirtation, advances, or propositions for sexual activity;
2. Continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, such as suggestive comments and sexually explicit jokes;
3. Sexually degrading language used to describe an individual;
4. Remarks of a sexual nature used to describe a person’s body or clothing;
5. Display of sexually demeaning objects and pictures;
6. Offensive physical contact, such as unwelcome touching, pinching, or brushing the body;
7. Coerced sexual intercourse;
8. Sexual assault; or
9. Actions indicating that benefits will be gained or lost based on response to sexual advances.

C. SEXUAL VIOLENCE: Sexual violence is a particularly pernicious form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence on campus, at university-related events, and against students or employees constitutes an emergency that will be reported to proper law enforcement authorities. The university may immediately suspend any employee or student reasonably believed to have committed sexual violence against a person in violation of this policy, with notice and hearing to follow promptly. The university has established procedures for timely reporting, investigation, and resolution of sexual violence incidents.

D. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE: Sexual violence includes, but is not limited to:

1. Rape as defined by 21 Okla.Stat. §1111.1;
2. Rape by instrumentation as defined by 21 Okla.Stat. §1111.1;
3. Forcible sodomy as defined by 21 Okla.Stat. §888;
4. Assault as defined by 21 Okla.Stat. §641 when committed in a sexual context, in furtherance of sexual demands, or because of a person’s sex or sexual orientation;
5. Battery as defined by 21 Okla.Stat. §642 when committed in a sexual context, in furtherance of sexual demands, or because of a person’s sex or sexual orientation;
6. Aggravated assault and battery as defined by 21 Okla. Stat. §646 when committed in a sexual context, in furtherance of sexual demands, or because of a person’s sex or sexual orientation;
7. Stalking as described by 21 Okla. Stat. §1173 when committed in a sexual context, in furtherance of sexual demands, or because of a person’s sex or sexual orientation;
8. Sexual battery as defined by 21 Okla. Stat. §1123(B);
9. Any sexual act involving a child as described in 21 Okla. Stat. 1123(A);
10. Maliciously intimidating or harassing or attempting to maliciously intimidate or harass another person because of that person’s sex or sexual orientation; or
11. Inciting others, or attempting to incite others to maliciously intimidate or harass another person because of that person’s sex or sexual orientation.

SANCTIONS: Appropriate disciplinary action may include a range of actions up to and including dismissal and/or expulsion.
RETALIATION PROHIBITED: Any attempt to penalize or retaliate against a person for filing a complaint or participating in the investigation of a complaint of prohibited discrimination and/or harassment, sexual harassment, sexual conduct with a student or employee, sexual violence, or other sexual harassment will be treated as a separate and distinct violation of this policy.

INITIATING COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION AND/OR HARASSMENT, INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Any employee (faculty, staff or student employee) or applicant for employment may initiate a complaint during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday by contacting Employee Relations or the EEO/Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Legal Counsel as indicated below.

Erika Cerda, Director Employee Relations
Employee Relations, Offices of Human Resources
Room 317D, Nigh University Center
100 N University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: (405) 974-2932 or (405) 974-2366
Fax: (405) 974-3827
cerda@uco.edu

David Herd, Interim Assistant Vice President
Offices of Human Resources
Room 204, Lillard Administration Building
100 N University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: (405) 974-2366
Fax: (405) 974-3827
Email: dherd1@uco.edu

OR

Adrienne Martinez, EEO/Title IX Coordinator
Office of Legal Counsel
Room 114, Lillard Administration Building
100 N University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: (405) 974-3377
Fax: (405) 974-3807
Email: amartinez9@uco.edu

Students and employees may initiate a complaint of discrimination or harassment against another student by contacting the Office of Student Conduct, as indicated below, or the Office of Legal Counsel as indicated above.

Chris Snoddy, Director Student Conduct
Office of Student Conduct
Room 136, Nigh University Center
100 N University Drive
Students and employees may also initiate a complaint of discrimination or harassment against a University employee, whether faculty, staff, or student employee by contacting the Dean’s office of the college where the harassment or discrimination is alleged to have occurred. The contact information for each college is as follows:

College of Business Administration, Office of the Dean
Room 100, Business Building
100 N. University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: (405) 974-2426
Fax: (405) 974-3821

College of Education & Professional Studies, Office of the Dean
Room 213, Education Building
100 N. University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: (405) 974-5701
Fax: (405) 974-3851

College of Fine Arts and Design, Office of the Dean
Room 13, Evans Hall
100 N. University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: (405) 974-3771
Fax: (405) 974-3775

College of Liberal Arts, Office of the Dean
Room 104, Liberal Arts Building
100 N. University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: (405) 974-5540
Fax: (405) 974-3823

College of Math and Science, Office of the Dean
Room 208, Howell Hall
100 N. University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Phone: (405) 974-2461
Fax: (405) 974-3824

Jackson College of Graduate Studies, Office of the Dean
Room 404, Nigh University Center
100 N. University Drive
Edmond, OK 73034
Any individual at an off-site location, such as ACM@UCO, may initiate a complaint of discrimination or harassment to any of the offices above as appropriate, or to the on-site director of the program.

After-Hours or Holiday Complaints: In the event any individual wishes to initiate a complaint of discrimination or harassment after regular university office hours, or when offices are closed for university holidays, the individual should contact the university Police Services office at (405) 974-2345.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Every reasonable effort will be made to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all parties during the investigation, consistent with and subject to the University’s need to investigate the complaint and/or implement decisions made in order to resolve the complaint. It must be understood that in order to permit the University to carry out its obligation to investigate all complaints fairly, and to ensure that non-discrimination is a reality within the University community, no representative of the University is authorized to promise complete confidentiality to any person who possesses information relevant to the investigation of a complaint, including the complainant.

Any individual who requests confidentiality before disclosing a complaint must be informed that because any apparent violation of University policy must be addressed, complete confidentiality may not be possible. An individual who insists on confidentiality as a condition of disclosing a complaint may be advised of the opportunity to consult with the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or Student Counseling Center, with whom such matters may be discussed in confidence. Consulting with EAP or the Student Counseling Center does not constitute the initiation of a complaint. Medical and mental health professionals are not representatives of the University for this purpose and are not authorized to investigate or respond to complaints.

RUSO TIP LINE: In addition to the above methods to report discrimination or harassment, the Board of Regents of the Regional University System of Oklahoma, which governs the university, has established a “RUSO Tip Line” which is managed by EthicsPoint. The RUSO Tip Line allows concerns to be submitted anonymously.

An employee or applicant for employment may report incidents of discrimination or harassment online using the RUSO Tip Line. The complaining party should visit www.ruso.ethicspoint.com which is a secure server administered by EthicsPoint.

An employee, student, applicant for employment or admission, visitor, or other non-affiliated individuals may also report incidents of discrimination or harassment by calling toll-free 866-898-8438. An EthicsPoint Contact Center Specialist will facilitate the call and compile the required information from the complaining party.

EthicsPoint will forward the required information to designated RUSO and university officials who will then conduct an appropriate investigation and resolution. An employee or applicant for employment is also encouraged to continue communicating any concerns directly to appropriate campus offices, as listed above.

INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS: All complaints of discrimination and/or harassment will be investigated and resolved in accordance with university procedure located at Section 1.3, Procedure Related to the Investigation and Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Complaints, of University Policies.
MANDATORY REPORTING: Persons who wish to initiate a complaint should be referred to one of the individuals responsible for receiving or investigating such complaints as listed above.

Any employee of the university who receives a complaint is responsible for directing the complainant or otherwise referring the complaint to an appropriate individual in a timely manner. Any employee who receives a complaint against a faculty member shall refer the complaint to the Dean of the faculty member’s college, or to the Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator. Any employee who receives a complaint against a staff member shall refer the complaint to the Human Resources Department, or to the Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator.

A failure to so direct or refer shall, in and of itself, constitute a violation of the Discrimination and Harassment Policy. An employee failing to appropriately refer or direct a complaining party shall be subject to the same range of disciplinary actions as for a direct violation of the Policy.

FALSE CLAIMS: Harassment, discrimination, and retaliation claims are very serious matters, in part because of the way they can affect people and their careers. Accordingly, while all good faith, legitimate claims must be reported, such claims must never be fabricated or lodged without the utmost sincerity. Any person found to have intentionally falsified a claim of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, or who lodges a claim for malicious or improper reasons, may be subject to immediate discipline, up to and including discharge.

RETAI LATION IS PROHIBITED

The University prohibits retaliation against any individual. This includes, but is not limited to,

- Individuals who report discrimination or harassment
- Individuals who report what is believed to be unethical behavior
- Individuals who participate in an investigation of such reports
- Individuals who sustain workers’ compensation related injuries
- Individuals who request Family Medical Leave or a Reasonable Accommodation

Retaliation against an individual in any form is a serious violation and will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

Complaint Procedure - Reporting Retaliation

The University of Central Oklahoma requires the reporting of any retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe they have experienced or witnessed, or otherwise have knowledge of retaliation should report it immediately. Retaliation should be reported in the same manner as described under the Non-Harassment Policy Statement above.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL EMPLOYEES:

Employees who have experienced or witnessed conduct or actions they believe is contrary to this policy have an obligation to take advantage of the University’s complaint procedure. An employee's failure to fulfill this obligation limits the University’s ability to correct inappropriate conduct, and could affect the employee’s rights in pursuing legal action. Note: federal, state and local discrimination laws establish specific time frames for initiating a legal proceeding pursuant
to those laws.

Early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of wrongdoing. While no time limit has been established, the University requires the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken. The University of Central Oklahoma will make every effort to stop alleged retaliation, but can only do so with the cooperation of its employees.

ENHANCEMENT OF EMPLOYEE WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Employees working on federal, grant, or contract issued beginning July 1, 2013, are subject to the rights and remedies of the Program for Enhancement of Employee Whistleblower Protection. An employee of a contractor, subcontractor, grantee, or sub-grantee may not be discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for “whistleblowing”.

Whistleblowing is defined as making a disclosure that the employee reasonably believes is evidence of:

- Gross mismanagement of a federal contract or grant
- A gross waste of federal funds;
- An abuse of authority relating to a federal contract or grant;
- A substantial and specific danger to public health or safety; or
- A violation of law, rule, or regulation related to a federal contract or grant (including the competition for, or negotiation of, a contract or grant)

To qualify, the employee’s disclosure must be made to:

- The employee’s manager, an administrative or executive officer of the university, or the Office of Compliance;
- A court or grand jury;
- An official from the Department of Justice, or other law enforcement agency;
- A federal employee responsible for contract or grant oversight or management at the granting agency;
- The Government Accountability Office;
- An Inspector General;
- A member of Congress, or a representative of a Congressional committee.

An employee who believes that he or she has been subjected to prohibited reprisal may submit a complaint regarding the reprisal to the Inspector General of the agency that awarded the grant or contract.

Whistleblower protections cannot be waived by any agreement, policy, form, or condition of employment.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT POLICY STATEMENT

U.S. Department of Justice — Americans with Disabilities Act

The University of Central Oklahoma is committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendment Act (“ADAAA”). It is the University's policy not
to discriminate against any otherwise qualified employee or applicant with regard to any terms or conditions of employment because of such individual's disability or perceived disability. The University will engage in an interactive process to provide reasonable accommodations to a qualified individual with a disability, as defined by the ADA/ADAA, so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and the threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to the University. As part of the process, potential accommodations may be attempted on a trial or short-term basis.

An employee with a disability who believes he or she needs a reasonable accommodation or adaptation to perform the essential functions of their job is encouraged to contact Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources. If a disability is seen or believed to exist, UCO may initiate a discussion with the employee as part of an interactive process.

Procedure for Processing an ADA Accommodation Request

The following process will be followed for all employees requesting an ADA accommodation. Accommodations are made on a case by case basis taking into account the type and severity of the disability and the specific job requirements the employee is required to perform.

Step 1: Employee requests ADA Accommodation:
An employee may request accommodation at any time during the hiring process, when first hired or at any other time while employed by the University of Central Oklahoma. Upon making a request for ADA Accommodation, the employee is encouraged to submit the following forms to Employee Relations to clarify the request and verify the disability:

- ADA Accommodation Request Form
- Physician Medical Certification Form

Forms are available on the Human Resources website.

Once Employee Relations is in receipt of an accommodation request, Human Resources will send notification to the employee to confirm receipt and inform the employee that the Accommodation Request is under consideration.

Human Resources may request a meeting with the employee to better understand the disability and the employee’s need for Accommodation.

Step 2 (as needed): Human Resources obtains Additional Information:
Human Resources may need to obtain additional information regarding the employee’s disability and alternative accommodation options from outside resources such as the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) or the ADA National Network. In addition, Human Resources may seek input regarding accommodation options from internal resources such as the Facilities, Parking, the office of Legal Counsel, Disability Support Services, etc. Finally, Employee Relations may meet with the Employee’s Supervisor regarding the essential functions of the employee’s job.

Step 3 (as needed): Human Resources meets with Internal Resources:
Human Resources may request a meeting with internal resources such as the Employee’s Supervisor, Department head from Facilities and Parking departments, and Legal Counsel to discuss the accommodation request and to identify other possible reasonable accommodations which would enable the employee to perform the essential functions of the job.
Step 4 (as needed): Cost Analysis Performed:
The University will determine the feasibility of the requested accommodation considering various factors, including but not limited to, the nature and cost of the accommodation, the availability of tax credits and deductions, outside funding, the University’s overall financial resources and organization, and the accommodation’s impact on the operation of the University, including its impact on the abilities of other employees to perform their duties, and on the University’s ability to conduct business.

Step 5 (as needed): Human Resources makes Accommodation Determination:
As soon as administratively possible, Employee Relations, utilizing input from the internal resources and external resources if necessary, will take one of the following actions: (1) grant the requested accommodation(s); (2) grant another appropriate and reasonable accommodation(s); (3) not grant an accommodation.
A letter will be sent to the employee notifying him/her of the decision. If an accommodation is granted, the letter will detail the timeline and any additional steps for implementing the accommodation.

Step 6: Appeals:
If denied or if the employee does not otherwise agree with the determination, the employee will be advised of their right to appeal the decision by submitting a written statement explaining the reasons for the request to the Office of Legal Counsel. That decision is final. The University will continue to engage in an “interactive process,” including discussions with the employee about other accommodations that may facilitate the employee’s performance of the essential functions of his or her job.

An employee or job applicant who has questions regarding this policy, or who wants to request an accommodation, or believes he or she has been discriminated against based on a disability should notify Employee Relations in the Office of Human Resources. All such inquiries or complaints will be treated as confidential to the extent permissible by law.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AND TESTING POLICY
The University of Central Oklahoma ("the University") is committed to providing its employees with a safe workplace. Employees are required to be in a suitable mental and physical condition while at work, and to perform their jobs effectively and safely. It shall be the policy of the University that:

A. Employees are required to report to the University’s premises, work sites, vehicles, client locations or customer work sites, or any other location employees may visit as a part of their employment, with no substances that impair cognitive, psychological or physical capacity in their body (these are referred to as “prohibited substances”).

B. Employees are prohibited from the unlawful possession, use, sale, distribution, or manufacture of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages or other prohibited substances on the University’s premises, work sites, vehicles, client locations or customer work sites.

C. Employees are prohibited from the off-premises use of alcohol and possession, distribution, use, or sale of illegal drugs when such activities negatively affect job performance, job safety, or the University’s reputation.

D. Violation of any of these policies may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment.
E. Any employee who is convicted under any federal or state criminal drug and/or alcohol statute must notify a member of management or the Human Resources Department within three (3) days of the charge and/or conviction. Charges and/or convictions may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment.

F. The University may also search employer owned property or premises used by the employees, as well as the personal effects of employees (to include clothing, vehicles, containers, tool boxes, lunch pails, lockers and the like) brought onto the University’s property. The University may take into custody any illegal, unauthorized or prohibited substances or other items and may turn them over to the proper law enforcement agencies. Refusal to allow a search or interference with a search by an employee may result in disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment.

**Individuals Subject to Drug or Alcohol Testing.** All employees of the University are subject to this policy. Also, independent contractors, subcontractors, and/or employees of independent contractors or subcontractors are subject to this policy while performing work for the benefit of the University.

**Circumstances for Testing.** The circumstances under which the University may request or require drug or alcohol testing are:

A. Applicant Testing: Applicants who have received a conditional offer of employment. A positive test or a refusal to undergo testing may result in a refusal to hire.

B. For-Cause Testing: Any time the University reasonably believes an individual may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Circumstances causing testing may include, but are not limited to:
   1. Drugs or alcohol on or about the person or in the person’s vicinity;
   2. Conduct on the individual’s part that suggests impairment or influence of drugs or alcohol;
   3. A report of drug or alcohol use while at work or on duty;
   4. Information that an individual has tampered with drug or alcohol testing at any time;
   5. Negative performance patterns; or
   6. Excessive or unexplained absenteeism or tardiness.

C. Post-Accident Testing: If an employee is involved in an accident while at work (with or without immediate personal injury) and has sustained an injury (at the time of the accident or if reported subsequently), has injured another person, and/or any property has been damaged, he/she will be required to complete drug and alcohol testing.

   For purposes of workers’ compensation, no employee who tests positive for the presence of substances defined and consumed pursuant to Section 465.20 of Title 63 of the Oklahoma Statutes, alcohol, illegal drugs, or illegally used chemicals, or refuses to take a drug or alcohol test required by the employer, shall be eligible for such compensation.

D. Random Testing: The University may require an individual or all members of a classification or group to be tested at random and may limit random testing to particular employment classifications or groups. Pursuant to the Standards for Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Act the University may require random testing only of employees who:
1. Are police or peace officers;
2. Have drug interdiction responsibilities;
3. Are authorized to carry firearms; or
4. Are engaged in activities that directly affect the safety of others.

E. Scheduled: As a routine part of a routinely scheduled fitness for duty medical examination or if scheduled routinely as part of the University’s written policy. Pursuant to the Standards for Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Act the University may require scheduled testing only of employees who:

1. Are police or peace officers;
2. Have drug interdiction responsibilities;
3. Are authorized to carry firearms; or
4. Are engaged in activities that directly affect the safety of others.

F. Post-Rehabilitation Testing: In those instances in which the University offers or requires an employee the opportunity to successfully complete a drug and/or alcohol rehabilitation program in lieu of dismissal or following a positive test that did not result in dismissal, the employee may be required to undergo testing for up to two years after returning to work.

Substances Which May Be Tested. Under this Policy, the University may test for drugs and alcohol.

Testing Methods and Collection Procedures.

A. Samples shall be collected and tested only by individuals deemed qualified by the State Department of Health and may be collected on the premises of the employer;

B. Only samples deemed appropriate by the State Department of Health for drug and alcohol testing shall be collected;

C. The collection of samples shall be performed under reasonable and sanitary conditions;

D. A sample shall be collected in sufficient quantity for splitting into two separate specimens, pursuant to rules of the State Board of Health, to provide for any subsequent independent analysis in the event of challenge of the test results of the main specimen;

E. Samples shall be collected and tested with due regard to the privacy of the individual being tested. In the instances of urinalysis, no employer or representative, agent or designee of the employer shall directly observe an applicant or employee in the process of producing a urine sample; provided, however, collection shall be in a manner reasonably calculated to prevent substitutions or interference with the collection or testing of reliable samples;

F. Sample collection shall be documented, and the documentation procedures shall include:

1. Labeling of samples so as reasonably to preclude the probability of erroneous identification of test results; and
2. An opportunity for the applicant or employee to provide notification of any information which the applicant or employee considers relevant to the test, including identification of
currently or recently used prescription or nonprescription drugs, or other relevant information.

G. Sample collection, storage, and transportation to the testing facility shall be performed so as reasonably to preclude the probability of sample contamination or adulteration;

H. Sample testing shall conform to scientifically accepted analytical methods and procedures. Testing shall include confirmation of any positive test result by gas chromatography, gas chromatography-mass spectroscopy, or an equivalent scientifically accepted method of equal or greater accuracy as approved by Board rule, at the cutoff levels as determined by Board rule, before the result of any test may be used as a basis for refusal to hire a job applicant or any action by an employer pursuant to 40 O.S. § 562 of this act;

I. A written record of the chain of custody of the sample shall be maintained from the time of the collection of the sample until the sample is no longer required;

J. The University will use testing services and facilities that have been licensed by the State Department of Health to test for the presence of or abuse of drugs or alcohol.

Consequences for Violating the Testing Policy.

A. Refusal to be Tested: Any individual who refuses to submit to the University’s request for drug and/or alcohol testing, or refuses to complete the required forms will be subject to termination from employment, or will not be eligible for employment, as the case may be. Interfering with and/or failing to cooperate with the testing process will be treated as refusal to be tested.

B. Adulteration, Tampering or Manipulation of Samples: Any individual who attempts to alter, tamper or manipulate any testing samples will be subject to termination from employment, or will not be eligible for employment.

Personnel Action Which May Be Taken as a Result of a Positive Test Result.

A. Any individual who violates this Policy regarding actual or intent to possession, consumption, use, transfer, solicitation or sale of illegal drugs, illegal possession or inappropriate or immoderate use of alcohol or the abuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to termination.

B. Any employee who tests positive will be subject to discipline up to and including termination. However, the University may, in its sole discretion, suspend disciplinary action or impose discipline less than termination, on the condition that the employee successfully completes a program of rehabilitation or treatment satisfactory to the employer. An employee who has been afforded this opportunity, but who does not successfully complete their rehabilitation or treatment of the program will be subject to termination from employment.

Confidential Explanation By Individual. Any individual testing positive or who has otherwise violated this Policy will be given an opportunity to offer an explanation, in confidence, to a representative of the University that is normally a medical review officer.
Records. Testing records are the property of the University. However, on written request, those records will be made available for inspection and copied to the individual tested. Testing records will be treated as confidential and will be maintained separate from other personnel records. The University will not release these records other than to the individual tested, or the University’s review officer, unless the individual tested has granted written permission for the employer to release such records, or to allow the University to comply with a valid judicial or administrative order. **Employee grants permission to the University to release testing records for purposes of unemployment, workers compensation and other employment-related legal actions.**

**Appeal Procedures.** Within 24 hours of receiving notice of a positive test, the tested individual may request a subsequent confirmation test of a sample. That individual must pay all costs of the confirmation test. If the confirmation test reverses the original positive result, the University will reimburse the individual for the cost of the confirmation test.

**Policy Changes.** The University upon ten (10) days’ notice can change any part of this policy.

**Definitions.** For the purposes of this policy, the following terms shall be defined as:

A. "Alcohol" means ethyl alcohol or ethanol;
B. "Applicant" means a person who has applied for a position with an employer and received a conditional offer of employment;
C. "Board" means the State Board of Health;
D. "Confirmation test" means a drug or alcohol test on a sample to substantiate the results of a prior drug or alcohol test on the same sample and which uses different chemical principles and is of equal or greater accuracy than the prior drug or alcohol test;
E. "Department" means the State Department of Health;
F. "Drug" means amphetamines, cannabinoids, cocaine, phencyclidine (PCP), hallucinogens, methaqualone, opiates, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, synthetic narcotics, designer drugs, or a metabolite of any of the substances listed herein;
G. "Drug or alcohol test" means a chemical test administered for the purpose of determining the presence or absence of a drug or its metabolites or alcohol in a person's bodily tissue, fluids or products. Adulteration of a specimen or of a drug or alcohol test shall be considered as a refusal to test;
H. "Employee" means any person who supplies labor for remuneration to his or her employer in this state and shall not include an independent contractor, subcontractor or employees of an independent contractor; provided, however, an independent contractor, subcontractor, or employees of an independent contractor, may be subject to a workplace drug or alcohol testing policy under the terms of the contractual agreement when the drug or alcohol testing policy applies to other workers at the job site or workers who are in the same or similar classification or group;
I. "Employer" means any person, firm, corporation, partnership, association, nonprofit organization or public employer, which has one or more employees within this state, or which has offered or may offer employment to one or more individuals in this state;
J. “Public employer” means the State of Oklahoma or any political subdivision thereof, including any department, agency, board, commission, institution, authority, public trust, municipality, county, district or instrumentalities thereof;

K. "Review officer" means a person, qualified by the State Board of Health, who is responsible for receiving results from a testing facility which have been generated by an employer's drug or alcohol testing program, and who has knowledge and training to interpret and evaluate an individual's test results together with the individual's medical history and any other relevant information;

L. "Sample" means tissue, fluid or product of the human body chemically capable of revealing the presence of drugs or alcohol in the human body; and

M. "Testing facility" means a facility which provides laboratory services to test samples for the presence of drugs or alcohol.

NOTE: Provisions related to for-cause and post-accident testing are effective October 1, 2013. Provisions related to applicant testing, random testing, scheduled testing and post-rehabilitation testing are not implemented without further approval by the cabinet and president.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Basic Leave Entitlement
The University provides up to 12 weeks per rolling 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for the following reasons:

• For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care, or child birth;
• To care for the employee’s child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
• To care for the employee’s spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or,
• For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job.

Military Family Leave Entitlements
Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.
Benefits and Protections
During FMLA leave, the University will maintain the employee’s health coverage under any “group health plan” on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee’s leave.

Eligibility Requirements
Employees are eligible after one year of employment, with a minimum of 1,250 hours worked over the previous 12 months.

Definition of Serious Health Condition
A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition involving either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee’s job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days combined with at least two (2) visits to a healthcare provider, or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

Use of Leave
An employee does not need to use this leave entitlement in a continuous manner. Leave may be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt University operations. Leave due to qualifying exigencies also may be taken on an intermittent basis.

Substitution of Paid Leave for Unpaid Leave
The University requires use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. In order to use paid leave for FMLA leave, employees must comply with the University’s normal paid leave policies.

Employee Responsibilities
The employee shall provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practical and must comply with the University’s established absence notification procedures.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the University to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection, and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions; a family member is unable to perform daily activities, hospitalization or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the University if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees are required to provide a certification (verification), and periodic recertification.

Employer Responsibilities
The University will inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If eligibility requirements are met, the notice will specify any additional information required as well as the employees’
rights and responsibilities. If eligibility is not met, the University will provide a reason for the ineligibility.

The University will inform employees if the leave meets requirements to be designated as FMLA-protected, and the amount of leave to be counted against the employee’s leave entitlement. If the University determines that the leave is not FMLA-protected, the employee will be notified.

**Unlawful Acts by Employers**
FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:
- Interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under FMLA;
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA.

**Enforcement**
An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND BUSINESS ETHICS**
The State Ethics Commission was established under Article XXIX of the Oklahoma Constitution. The Commission is charged with promulgating rules of ethical conduct of state officials and employees, including civil penalties for violations of such rules. State officers and employees are to comply with the Ethics Commission ‘Rules’ (74 O.S. Appendix Title 257). While statements below will give some general interpretations, the Ethics Commission ‘Rules’ are always controlling over any statement made in this handbook or by any member of administration. The ‘Rules’ deal with prohibitions against political activities, financial disclosure, conflicts of interest, penalties, and enforcement. Therefore, employees are compelled to stay abreast of and in compliance with current Ethics Commissions ‘Rules,’ which can be accessed at Rules.

**In General**
The University expects employees to conduct business according to the highest ethical standards of conduct. Employees are expected to devote their best efforts to the interests of UCO. Business dealings that appear to create a conflict between the interests of the University and an employee are unacceptable. UCO recognizes the right of employees to engage in activities outside of their employment that are of a private nature and unrelated to University business. However, the employee must disclose any possible conflicts so that UCO may assess and prevent potential conflicts of interest from arising. A potential or actual conflict of interest occurs whenever an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for the employee or an immediate family member (i.e., spouse or significant other, children, parents, siblings) as a result of UCO’s business dealings.

Although it is not possible to specify every action that might create a conflict of interest, this sets forth those that most frequently present problems. If an employee has any question whether an action or proposed course of conduct could create a conflict of interest, he or she should immediately contact Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources. The purpose of this policy statement is to protect employees from any conflict of interest that might arise. A violation of this policy will result in immediate and appropriate corrective disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination, and could be subject to civil penalties for violations of Ethics Commission Rules.
Outside Employment

Employees are required to obtain approval from their supervisor before participating in outside work activities. Approval will be granted unless the activity conflicts with the University's interest. Any tasks or activities associated with outside employment should not be performed during scheduled work time for the University, nor should University resources be used.

In general, outside work activities are not allowed when they:

- Prevent the employee from fully performing work for which he or she is employed at the University, including overtime assignments;
- Involve organizations that do or seek to do business with the University, including actual or potential vendors or customers; or
- Violate provisions of law or the University’s policies or rules.

From time to time, University employees may be required to work beyond their normally scheduled hours. Employees must perform this work when requested. In cases of conflict with any outside activity, the employee's obligations to the University must be given priority. Employees are hired and continue in the University of Central Oklahoma's employ with the understanding that the University is their primary employer and that other employment or commercial involvement that conflicts with the business interests of the University is strictly prohibited.

Acceptance of Gifts

No employee may solicit or accept gifts of significant value (i.e., in excess of $50.00) or lavish entertainment or other benefits from potential and actual customers, vendors, suppliers, or competitors. Special care must be taken to avoid even the impression of a conflict of interest. The Oklahoma State Ethics Commission regularly monitors the acceptance of gifts from any vendor or individual who does business with a state entity. If any gift is received, it must be something that can be shared with other employees in the group or department. No state employee may accept any gift of an alcoholic beverage from any vendor doing business with UCO. In addition, state employees cannot accept meals from a vendor with a value in excess of $20.00 per occasion and a maximum amount of $50.00 per calendar year. Any gifts received that are not consistent with the definitions outlined in this document must be returned. An employee may entertain potential or actual customers if such entertainment is consistent with accepted business practices, does not violate any law or generally accepted ethical standards and the public disclosure of facts will not embarrass the University. Any questions regarding this should be addressed to Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources.

Reporting Potential Conflicts

An employee must promptly disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest to his or her supervisor. Approval will not be given unless the relationship will not interfere with the employee's duties or will not damage the University’s relationship.
Confidential Nature of Work

All University records and information relating to the University of Central Oklahoma or its employees, students, or customers are confidential and employees must treat all matters accordingly. No University or University-related information, including without limitation, documents, notes, files, records, oral information, computer files, or similar materials (except in the ordinary course of performing duties on behalf of the University) may be destroyed or removed from the University's premises without permission from the University.

Additionally, the contents of the University's records or information otherwise obtained in regard to business may not be disclosed to anyone, except where required for a business purpose. Employees must not disclose any confidential information, purposefully or inadvertently through casual conversation, to any unauthorized person inside or outside the University. Employees who are unsure about the confidential nature of specific information should ask their supervisor for clarification. Employees are subject to appropriate corrective disciplinary action, up to and including termination, for knowingly or unknowingly revealing information of a confidential nature.

EMPLOYMENT OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTORY (PROBATIONARY) EMPLOYMENT PERIOD

Every new employee goes through an initial period of adjustment to learn about the University, and to learn about his or her job. During this time the employee will have an opportunity to find out if he or she is suited to, and likes, his or her new position. Additionally, the introductory employment period gives the employee's supervisor a reasonable period of time to evaluate his or her performance.

The standard introductory period for any new position, transferred, or promoted employee is three months (12 weeks of work time). This period is an extension of the selection process. If it is determined the employee is not performing at the level of expectation for the position, he or she may be dismissed without further consideration, and without access to the University’s Corrective Action Guidelines or Grievance of Termination procedures.

During this time, the employee should be advised of performance expectations and be provided with training and guidance from his or her supervisor. Under appropriate circumstances, the introductory employment period may be extended. Additionally, as is true at all times during an employee's employment with the University, employment is not guaranteed for any specific time and may be terminated at will, with or without cause and without prior notice.

At the end of the introductory employment period, and provided his or her job performance is satisfactory, an employee will continue employment with the University as an at-will employee. Faculty members should review employment information in the Faculty Handbook.
PAYCHECK

Hourly, non-exempt employees are paid bi-weekly for all time worked during the past pay period. Salaried, exempt employees (whether staff or faculty) are paid monthly on the last working day of the month for the current month worked. Any error in pay needs to be immediately reported to Payroll Services at (405) 974-3353, so the University can resolve the matter quickly and amicably.

In accordance with State procedures, payroll is only paid through direct deposit. All paystub information and benefit leave balances can be monitored through personalized, private UConncet accounts accessible from any computer on or off campus. Reductions in leave balances as a result of time off taken can be delayed. It is an employee’s responsibility to know his or her available leave balances to avoid overpayment of leave benefits. Questions regarding current leave balances should be directed to Payroll Services.

TRANSFERS AND PROMOTIONS

The University of Central Oklahoma encourages employees to assume higher-level positions or lateral transfers for which they qualify. The University has an on-line job posting program (https://jobs.uco.edu) that offers employees the opportunity to apply for open positions within the University.

Generally, employees should have good performance, attendance, and punctuality records when applying for a change in position. An employee requesting consideration of a transfer/promotion to an open position will be considered for the position along with all other applicants.

EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS AND PAYROLL

Based on the conditions of employment, employees of the University of Central Oklahoma fall into one of the following categories:

✓ Full-Time ✓ Part-Time ✓ Temporary, which includes Student Employees

Full-Time

An employee, exempt or non-exempt, who is regularly scheduled to work at least 30 hours each week, is considered full-time and is eligible for benefits. The standard working hours are typically a minimum of 6 hours per day, 5 days per week.

Part-Time

Part-time employees are classified as exempt or non-exempt and work a regular schedule of less than 30 hours per week.

Temporary and UCO Student Employees

A UCO student or non-student temporary employee is hired for a specified project or time frame and may work an irregular schedule. Designated “student” employees are also classified as “temporary” employees. A student or non-student temporary employee in a non-exempt position is paid by the hour, while a temporary employee in an exempt position is paid according to the terms of hire for that individual.

Project and/or Time Frame Employment Terms
Faculty — Hired for the academic year.
Non-Student Temporary Employees — Need is re-evaluated every six months.
Students — Hired for the academic year, and re-evaluated next academic year.
   Exception: International students are re-evaluated every semester.

However, as is true at all times during an employee's employment with UCO, employment is not guaranteed for any specific time and may be terminated at will, with or without cause and without prior notice, as provided under the at-will provision of Oklahoma law.

**Payroll Week**
The payroll work week consists of seven consecutive days, Sunday at 12:01 am – Saturday 11:59 pm.

**UCO Student Employees & FICA**
Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes *do not apply* to service performed by UCO students employed by the University while the student is pursuing a course of study. (Exception: International students working more than five years.)

FICA taxes are Social Security payroll taxes collected under authority of the Federal Insurance Contributions Act. Payroll taxes collected for Social Security are, of course, taxes, but they also can be described as contributions to the social insurance system that *is* Social Security.

If a student employee becomes a permanent employee, or is no longer pursuing a course of study, UCO is required by law to withhold FICA taxes through payroll deduction.

**Exempt Employees**
Salaries are paid monthly, *exempt* from the payment of overtime or the tracking of compensatory time.

**Non-Exempt Employees**
Salaries are calculated on an hourly basis. When it is necessary for an employee to work more than eight hours in a workday, the work-week should be rearranged so that it does not exceed 40 hours worked in a work-week. If this is not possible, the employee is given compensatory (comp) time off during a later work week in accordance with UCO’s *Overtime Policy*. If a department cannot allow an employee to take comp time off as compensation for overtime, the department director shall authorize payment of overtime wages.

**Adjunct Instructor as a Secondary Job**
An administrative or staff employee whose primary position does not include or provide for classroom instruction may teach up to one class per semester as an adjunct instructor with advance written permission and approvals from his or her primary supervisor and the adjunct supervisor. Refer to the *Adjunct Instructor as a Secondary Job* policy for detailed information.

**ON-CALL DESIGNATION**
The University must be able to respond to emergency situations to protect lives and property, and to limit damage when situations so dictate. These situations necessitate that UCO have personnel available to respond
to emergencies 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. “On-call” duty is mandatory for designated employees as a condition of employment.

CALL-IN COMPENSATION
Compensation may occur when an hourly employee (deemed as essential, or not) is called in, called back, or otherwise expected to physically respond to work in response to an emergency or essential work situation directly related to his/her official duties and responsibilities per the Call-In Compensation Policy.

LUNCH BREAK
UCO administration believes that time away from work during the work-day is good for employees to allow for eating a meal, resting and relaxing, or conducting other personal business. Therefore, the University schedules an unpaid lunch break period of one hour per work-day for full-time employees, and an unpaid lunch break of shorter duration (from 30 minutes up to one hour) for part-time employees. Lunch break time is not to be accumulated, or otherwise used to shorten the workday or workweek.

PUNCTUALITY AND ATTENDANCE
Employees are hired to perform an important function at the University of Central Oklahoma. As with any group effort, operating effectively takes cooperation and commitment from everyone. Therefore, attendance and punctuality are very important. Unscheduled absences, leaving early, and/or late arrivals are expensive and disruptive, and place an unfair burden on fellow employees and supervisors. UCO expects employees to arrive on time at their work location, fully prepared, every day, for the entire duration of the shift. Failure to maintain regular attendance will result in corrective disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

UCO recognizes, however, that there are times when absences and tardiness cannot be avoided. In such cases, employees are expected to notify their immediate supervisor as early as possible (but no later than the start of the work day) by making contact through methods outlined as acceptable by the supervisor, to include alternative methods of contact in the event the supervisor is unavailable. Notifications should state the nature of the absence and its expected duration, with appropriate follow up contacts to ensure the supervisor is aware of every day that an absence is necessary. Unreported absences of three consecutive work days generally will be considered a voluntary resignation of employment with UCO.

ANTI-NEPOTISM IN THE EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES
Members of an employee's immediate family will be considered for employment on the basis of their qualifications. Immediate family may not be hired, however, if employment would:

- Create a supervisor/subordinate relationship with a family member;
- Result in both parties working within the same reporting structure (i.e. the same director or chair); or
- Create either an actual conflict or the appearance of a conflict of interest, at the discretion of administration.
This also applies when considering assignment, transfer, or promotion of an employee. For the purpose of this policy, immediate family includes spouse or significant other, parent, child, sibling, in-law, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, cousin, grandparent, grandchild, or other members of the immediate household regardless of the actual relationship to the employee.

Exceptions require RUSO Board approval. Exception requests for staff and student employees should be submitted in writing to Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources. Exception requests for faculty should be submitted directly to the Provost. Requests must detail the relationship and impending reporting structure, and the argument why a waiver should be considered. Specifically, address how the employment of all involved individuals will benefit the institution beyond the complexities such arrangements create — the process variances that will have to be made to accommodate such a waiver, as an example.

WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

Consenting romantic or sexual relationships between employees, and especially between a supervisor/manager and an employee, may at some point lead to complications and significant difficulties for all concerned — the employee(s), supervisor/manager, co-workers, and UCO. For this reason, consenting romantic or sexual relationships between a supervisor/manager and a subordinate are expressly prohibited.

If a romantic or sexual relationship between employees occurs that violates the anti-nepotism policy, the involved employees must disclose the existence of the relationship to Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources.

Upon being informed or learning of the existence of such a relationship, UCO may take all steps that it, in its discretion, deems appropriate, especially as it relates to bringing the situation into compliance with the provisions of anti-nepotism, even if one or both of the employees must leave the University’s employment. This shall apply without regard to gender and without regard to the sexual orientation of the participants in a relationship of the kind described.

LEAVING EMPLOYMENT

Voluntary

An employee leaving UCO employment is requested to give a minimum of two-weeks notice, and to submit a written resignation that includes an effective date to his or her supervisor outlining the reason(s) for leaving. A copy is to be submitted to the Offices of Human Resources to initiate the clearance process for receipt of final pay. Prior to the last day of work, the exiting employee shall make an appointment with Human Resources to learn about his or her rights to continue medical insurance under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), and to participate in an exit interview.

Involuntary

If a supervisor recommends an employee be involuntarily dismissed from employment with UCO, the employee will be afforded due process with Employee Relations in the Offices Human Resources by having an opportunity to ask questions and be given answers. If an employee feels his or her rights under UCO policy have been violated he or she may originate a grievance as provided by UCO Grievance of Termination procedures that are administered through the Office of Legal Counsel.
Grievance of Termination

This policy provides terminated employees an opportunity to assert that his or her rights under University policy have been violated, and to seek review of same under this policy. It applies to all regular employees with the exception of employees within their Introductory (Probationary) Period; faculty, who should refer to the Faculty Handbook for grievance procedures.

This process does not apply to the following matters for which separate processes are otherwise established:
1. Matters involving sexual harassment; and
2. Matters involving discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or sexual orientation.

Initiating the Grievance Process

Within ten (10) calendar days of the termination the now former employee, further referenced here as “Complainant”, shall submit the grievance in writing to his or her direct supervisor and departmental director, with copies to Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources and the Office of Legal Counsel.

The Complainant bears the burden of proof that he or she was improperly terminated under UCO Policy. The written grievance must contain:

1. A clear and detailed, signed statement of the grievance, specifically stating how the termination decision violated UCO policy;
2. A summary outlining if, and with whom the points of dissatisfaction were discussed and the results of the discussion; and
3. A witness list and/or any other supporting documentation or evidence relevant to the grievance. The Offices of Human Resources may assist the Complainant in accessing necessary and relevant documentation or evidence that is manifested by the University or on UCO-owned computers.

Initial Review

The Vice President of Finance/CFO will review the submitted Grievance to evaluate whether he/she believes UCO policy has been, or may have been, violated. This may involve asking questions of the Complainant, his or her supervisor, the Office of Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources and the Office of Legal Counsel.

Within ten (10) calendar days of receipt, the Vice President of Finance/CFO shall evaluate whether the Complainant has presented compelling reason to believe UCO policy was, or may have been, violated in the termination of the Complainant. The Vice President of Finance/CFO will return a decision to the Office of Legal Counsel to either 1) forward the matter for hearing by a grievance committee, or 2) to dismiss the grievance on grounds that there is insufficient evidence from the Complainant to indicate UCO policy was violated, thereby ending the process.

In the event the matter is forwarded for hearing, the direct supervisor, further referenced here as the “Respondent,” will be contacted by the Office of Legal Counsel and requested to submit a written response within ten (10) calendar days to the Complainant, departmental director, Employee Relations, and the Office of Legal Counsel. The response shall also contain a witness list and/or any other supporting documentation
or evidence.

Unless precluded by law, UCO may, at its discretion, informally resolve any grievance by stipulation, agreed settlement, consent order, or default. Informal agreements may be proposed to the Office of Legal Counsel at any time during the formal grievance process. The agreements must be made in writing and agreed upon by the Complainant and the President or designee of the University. The Office of Legal Counsel shall coordinate such agreements.

Requests for Extension

Requests by the Complainant, The Vice President of Finance/CFO or Respondent for an extension from 10 calendar days up to 30 calendar days to submit the written grievance, decision, or response, respectively, will be considered for good cause only when the request is communicated in writing to Office of Legal Counsel. Such requests shall fully explain the reasons for the request for extension, and shall be received by the Office of Legal Counsel at least four (4) days prior to the expiration of the initial ten (10) calendar days. The Office of Legal Counsel may, at its discretion, grant the extension, or deny the request if good cause cannot be shown.

Committee Appointment, Notice & Pre-Hearing Communications

The Office of Legal Counsel shall appoint a three- (3) to five- (5) member staff and/or faculty Grievance Committee, as well as alternates, and provide a list of the appointed members to both parties. Within twenty-four (24) hours of notification, the parties may object to any committee member or alternate by notifying the Office of Legal Counsel in writing with details explaining the reason for objection. The Office of Legal Counsel may, at its discretion, excuse the committee member and reassign an alternate, or retain the committee member if a conflict of interest cannot be shown.

Once the list of committee members and alternates is finalized, the Office of Legal Counsel will notify the parties and all committee members and alternates of the scheduled date, time, and place of the grievance hearing, the reason for the hearing, and the procedures. The communications also will contain the written grievance and written response and any supporting evidence or documentation.

Within ten (10) calendar days of appointment, the hearing facilitator, who shall not be a member of the grievance committee, shall convene the Grievance Committee to instruct on procedures, address procedural questions or concerns, and ensure that all aspects of the grievance procedure are clearly understood. The Grievance Committee shall elect a chairperson who also will serve as a voting member.

Advisors

Either party may be represented and/or assisted by a person or “Advisor” of his or her choosing in preparing and presenting a grievance. However, the advisor does not represent the individual in the hearing and may not address or question the committee members, witnesses, Complainant or Respondent. The Complainant will be expected to speak for himself or herself at all times. Advisors may not serve as witnesses during the same hearing, and his or her availability shall not hamper the timeliness or scheduling of the appeal hearing.

The Hearing

Formal rules of due process, procedure, and/or technical rules of evidence commonly applied in criminal and/or civil court, shall not be used in UCO grievance proceedings. A facilitator will oversee the formal
grievance hearing to ensure adherence to the procedure and to record the entire hearing by electronic device. The recording shall serve as official “minutes” of the hearing. Parties shall present their opening and closing statements, testimony, and evidence pursuant to UCO’s Grievance Procedures.

During the hearing, the Complainant has the opportunity to offer information on his or her own behalf and to review all information, statements, or information presented. Only evidence pertinent to the grievance may be introduced into the hearing. Determinations of pertinence shall be decided by the committee chair. The committee chair will also decide any questions or objections to hearing procedures that are raised during the hearing. The committee chair may extend the hearing time if he or she determines that the committee requires additional information to render a decision.

After the committee chair determines that all necessary information has been presented and questions answered, the committee will go into closed session and all other persons will be excused. The Grievance Committee will determine whether the Complainant has met the burden of proof that he or she was improperly terminated, and if so, identify reasonable recommendations for correction of the termination.

**Hearing Determination**

The Grievance Committee's recommendation shall be submitted to the President, with copies to both parties, within three (3) calendar days after the hearing is completed. During the three (3) calendar day period, the employee may submit a written appeal to the President related to procedural matters only. Written appeal related to procedural matters received after the three (3) calendar day period will not be considered.

Within five (5) calendar days of receipt, the President shall return a final recommendation to the Office of Legal Counsel. The President’s recommendation will uphold, modify, or reverse the Grievance Committee’s determination and shall be final.

**Confidentiality**

The names of the parties and any witnesses or Grievance Committee members, all testimony and evidence, any determinations or conclusions, and any other information related to a grievance hearing remains confidential. Both parties, any witnesses or advisors, the Grievance Committee, and other necessary officers of UCO shall maintain strict confidentiality with these matters.

Parties may submit written requests for a copy of the official recorded minutes to the Office of Legal Counsel. Copies also may be provided to other authorized representatives on a need-to-know basis.

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The University encourages a high feedback environment that involves two-way interactions between employees and their supervisors. Supervisors, in particular, have a role in the success of their employees that includes early intervention when there is a gap in performance expectations, balanced with recognition and reinforcement of good or exemplary performance.

Positive performance is an expectation of all employees at the University and documentation of such does not guarantee advancement or continued employment. Compensation changes or any other terms or conditions of employment are determined by and are at the discretion of campus leadership. Employees are encouraged to discuss their professional goals and objectives with their supervisors as part of an interactive feedback process.
ADDRESSING UNACCEPTABLE PERFORMANCE OR BEHAVIOR ISSUES

UCO has a comprehensive Corrective Action Policy. The purpose of corrective action is to address unacceptable performance, actions, or behaviors with progressive steps of discussion and documentation to clarify, as necessary, the University’s expectations and the employee’s personal responsibilities in meeting and maintaining those expectations.

The goal is to maintain the employee’s employment. However, as is true at all times during an employee's employment with the University, employment is not for any specific time and may be terminated at will, with or without cause and without prior notice. Faculty should also review related information in the Faculty Handbook.

Policy Definitions

Unacceptable performance or behaviors typically fall within the following defined categories. Examples are offered for each, but are not meant to be all-inclusive for any given category:

- Attendance — Expectation that an employee will be at work, on time, for the full duration of the scheduled work shift, including scheduled overtime and on-call assignments, every day that the employee is scheduled to work, with minimal unscheduled absences, leave-earlies or tardies.
- Performance — Problems with the quantity and/or quality of an employee’s work. Not meeting goals and/or deadlines; complaints from customers — internal or external; time management issues; etc.
- Conduct — Failure to comply. Violation(s) of standards, rules, policies, procedures, practices, or processes; insubordination; behavior that is aggressive, confrontational, or counter-productive.

Provisions

Listed are the levels of discussion and documentation, progressing in seriousness as needed, up to and including termination. The supervisor should communicate the specific variation(s) between expectation and actual performance. To the extent possible, the employee should be involved in determining the remedial initiatives required to bring about full compliance and/or acceptable performance to ensure employee agreement and acceptance of personal accountability.

- Correction Discussion
- Written Reminder
- Final Written Reminder
- Decision-Making Leave
- Termination of Employment

As with positive feedback, Counseling Discussions should be recorded with the date, a summary description of expectation vs. actual performance or behavior.

Correcting and maintaining performance or behavior for a period of time will allow an employee to deactivate the corrective action documentation in his or her file. Deactivation is accomplished through neutralization. That is, electronic employee files don’t permit “removing” the document, so documentation is neutralized (deactivated) by the employee requesting his or her current supervisor document the employee’s performance/behavior now that the active duration period has expired. Below is the eligibility
The severity of an unacceptable performance or behavior may warrant starting at, or moving along, the steps of corrective action more rapidly. When variation is being considered, supervisors may consult with Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources to consider the appropriate course of action. Reasons for such a decision may include but are not limited to:

- Deliberate violation, and/or multiple violations.
- Employee fails to demonstrate notable progress, or lacks a willingness to make improvements.
- When the supervisor is of the opinion that remedial efforts are unlikely to be successful.
- If employee refuses to commit to the outlined success steps, or fails to demonstrate a good faith effort to improve performance or correct behavior.

Examples of unacceptable conduct that may be cause for immediate termination include, but are not limited to:

- Falsification of a company record or document — deliberate or willful falsification, omission or alteration.
- The sale, purchase, use or possession of alcohol, an illegal drug, or any other controlled substance on any University grounds, or while conducting company business.
- Violation of the Electronic Information Systems Policy and/or Practices.
- Insubordination, which is defined as willful refusal or failure of an employee to perform a task, or comply with a directive, instruction or request by management.
- Unethical or illegal conduct in the course of employment or off-duty conduct that result in a criminal charge or conviction that may affect the workplace or image of UCO, or other off-duty conduct that may negatively impact the workplace or image of UCO.
- Possession of a firearm, explosive or other deadly weapon including the conversion or threatened conversion into a weapon of any object used in the workplace.
- Reckless disregard for, or willful violation of, any safety or security rule where such disregard or violation endangers the safety of any person, or the property of the University, student, or another employee.
- Verbally or physically harassing, coercing, intimidating or threatening a co-worker, supervisor, customer, student, or visitor.
- Fighting, provoking or initiating a fight or the use of threatening, abusive, intimidating or coercive language or gesture during work hours or while on University properties.
- Gross neglect of duties or job responsibilities.
- Obtaining other employment or working elsewhere during a leave of absence without approval.

Definitions/examples provided are guidelines only, and do not include all possible offenses in any given
category.

Any recommendation for a decision-making leave or termination should be reviewed by Employee Relations. An employee will have an opportunity to speak with Employee Relations to offer information, ask questions and be given answers prior to a termination action.

RECOGNIZING AND REINFORCING DESIRED PERFORMANCE

In support of ongoing, positive feedback administration is encouraged to create timely, positive consequences to recognize and reinforce good work performance. The goal is to channel desired behaviors and performance, and to incentivize employees to strive to do their very best.

In addition to this form of ongoing encouragement and inspiration, the University has a number of award programs to recognize and honor employees who demonstrate exceptional performance. Visit the UCO website, Employee Recognition Awards, to learn more or to nominate a deserving co-worker.

SERVICE AWARDS

Employees are regularly recognized and thanked for their service through honorable mention in the monthly employee newsletter. Upon reaching certain milestones, employees are further recognized with a commemorative pen and note of appreciation. At 10 years of service, and with every 5 years of service thereafter, employees also select a personalized gift and enjoy a Celebration Reception in their honor.

BENEFITS OVERVIEW

In addition to good working conditions and competitive pay, it is the University of Central Oklahoma’s practice to provide a combination of supplemental benefits to all eligible employees. In keeping with this goal, each benefit program has been carefully devised. These benefits include time-off such as vacations, holidays, funeral leave and disaster leave, in addition to insurance and other plan benefits. We are constantly studying and evaluating our benefits programs and policies to better meet your present and future requirements. These policies have been developed over the years and continue to be refined to keep up with changing times and needs. The next few pages contain a brief outline of the benefits programs UCO provides for employees and their families. Of course, the information presented here is intended to serve only as guidelines.

The descriptions of the insurance and other plan benefits merely highlight certain aspects of the applicable plans for your general information only. The details of those plans are spelled out in the official plan documents, which are available for review upon your request from the Benefits Specialist in the Offices of Human Resources. Additionally, the provisions of the plans, including eligibility and benefits provisions, are summarized in the summary plan descriptions (SPDs), which may be revised from time to time. In the determination of benefits and all other matters under each plan, the terms of the official plan documents shall govern over the language of any descriptions of the plans, including the SPDs and this handbook.

Further, the University of Central Oklahoma (including the officers and administrators who are responsible for administering the plans) retains full discretionary authority to interpret the terms of the plans, as well as
full discretionary authority with regard to administrative matters arising in connection with the plans and all issues concerning benefit terms, eligibility, and entitlement.

Benefits are provided to all regular employees working 30 hours or more, and employees may extend benefits to their eligible dependents by paying the associated premium costs. Employees can only change coverage during open enrollment (typically during the month of October), or in the case of a qualifying event — such as marriage, divorce, birth, adoption, death, loss of other coverage, etc.

While UCO intends to maintain these employee benefits, it reserves the absolute right to modify, amend or terminate these benefits at any time and for any reason.

**BENEFIT OPTIONS**

**Health Insurance**
UCO pays for health insurance for the employee. Coverage for health insurance is effective the first day of the month after employment begins. If an employee is verifiably covered by another plan, he or she may be entitled to receive a pre-determined dollar amount that UCO would otherwise pay towards the employee's UCO provided health coverage. Employees may cover a spouse and/or a child(ren) at a cost. Employees and/or dependents are eligible to continue health insurance through the provisions of COBRA (a federally mandated program) in the event of an employee’s termination, death, divorce, or when a dependent child reaches maximum age eligibility.

**Dental Insurance**
A comprehensive dental plan is offered at a cost to the employee and eligible dependents.

**Vision Insurance**
Vision benefits are offered at a cost to the employee and eligible dependents.

**Section 125 and Flexible Spending Accounts**
UCO offers an IRS-approved Section 125 Plan which allows specific insurance premiums paid by the employee to be withheld on a pre-tax basis. Under the Section 125 Plan these deductions are not subject to Social Security, federal or state taxes.

UCO also offers a Flexible Spending Account (FSA) option that allows employees to designate pre-determined dollar amounts to be withheld for qualified out-of-pocket medical expenses and/or for dependent day care expenses. These pre-tax dollars are payroll deducted over the course of a calendar year. UCO’s claims administrator offers a pre-loaded debit card to use for medical expenses.

**Life Insurance**
Basic life insurance and Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) coverage is paid by UCO for all benefited employees at twice their annual salary up to a maximum of $250,000. Coverage is effective the first of the month following the employee’s start date.
Voluntary life insurance with AD&D is available at a cost to the employee. Coverage amounts range from $10,000 to $500,000 or up to five times the employee’s salary, whichever is less.

Dependent life insurance for a spouse and/or child(ren) is available at a cost to the employee. Coverage is available with guaranteed issue in options of $10,000, $20,000 or $50,000 with AD&D.

**Long-term Disability**

Long-term disability is paid by UCO for employees with benefits. If an employee is sick or hurt and unable to work for six months, at the end of six months and with a qualifying disability, the employee may begin drawing approximately 60% of their base pay. The benefit may continue as long as the employee is disabled, up to age 65. There is a six-month waiting period before a new employee is eligible for long-term disability.

For a cost, the long-term disability plan offers a 3-month buy-up instead of the standard 6 months. If sick or hurt and unable to work, the employee may begin drawing 60% of their current salary at the end of the 3 months rather than the 6 months. Benefits may continue as long as the employee is disabled up to age 65.

**Retirement**

Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement (OTRS) is **required** for all permanent full-time employees at the University of Central Oklahoma. OTRS is **optional** for non-exempt, hourly employees working an average of 20 or more hours per week. The employee contributes 7% of the first $10,000 of OTRS base wages, which includes cost of benefits paid by the University per fiscal year. UCO contributes on OTRS base wages that exceed $10,000 per fiscal year. Eligibility for participation with 100% vesting begins on the first day of employment.

Retirement benefits for those with at least 10 years of service may include, but not necessarily limited to:

- University-paid UCO Wellness Center Membership
- Non-expiring parking permit
- Retiree/Emeritus Campus ID
- UCO Library Privileges

**Supplemental Retirement**

A 403(b) and a 457(b) are available for employees to contribute pre-tax dollars through payroll deduction to mutual fund options. Maximum contribution amounts are based on IRS guidelines.

**Leave Share**

The University funds and offers a Leave Share Program to alleviate hardship and bridge the financial gap for employees who have exhausted their leave (including vacation and compensatory time) due to a hardship caused by a severe or extraordinary illness or injury.

1. Full-time active employees with 80 hours of sick leave accrued and at least one year of service will be enrolled in the Leave Share Program each year in the month of January. Those participating in the program must have ongoing sick leave balance of at least (80) hours immediately prior to the hardship caused by a severe illness or injury. This will allow participation in the program for the calendar year should the need arise.
2. Employee has exhausted, or will exhaust all annual leave and sick leave due to illness, injury, impairment, physical or mental condition, which is of an extraordinary or severe nature, and involves the employee or a related person of the employee. To receive Leave Share for the care of a related person, an appropriate licensed medical professional's statement must be submitted to the Human Resources Office documenting the employee as the primary caregiver.

3. Employee must be off work for at least two (2) weeks, whether paid or unpaid, prior to application for Leave Share.

4. Employee's injury or illness is not covered by the Oklahoma Workers' Compensation System.

5. Leave Share ends when the employee (or their related person) has been released by an appropriate licensed medical care professional's statement, death, or the employee has been on leave for three (3) months, whichever comes first.

6. Leave Share will run concurrently with the Family Medical Leave Act. Employees will contact the Human Resources Office to complete FMLA forms.

7. If Leave Share is requested more than once during a 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any Leave Share, the Leave Share committee will review the request and make a judgment based on their findings. Regardless, a maximum of three (3) months full pay is available in any twelve (12) month period.

8. Approval or denial of Leave Share is final and is not subject to any appeal, grievance or arbitration procedure applicable to employees.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

Deer Oaks EAP is a confidential program offered to employees, dependents and household members as part of contracted services through an outside provider. Everyone needs extra support at times. Life presents challenges in many different forms, be it caring for an ailing loved one, alcohol or drug misuse, troubled relationships, worry over a child's behavior, need for financial counseling, etc. It is at these times that advice from a caring, professional counselor can make all the difference. Counselors are available nationwide 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The EAP coordinates with UCO benefits and insurance providers when referrals are needed for extended counseling, medication, etc.

Deer Oaks work/life specialists provide a concierge service that can assist with identifying resources for a wide variety of providers or services. Additional legal, financial planning, and identity theft recovery support is available at no to reduced charge.

**INCOME PROTECTION**

**SICK LEAVE**

- Eligible after the first month of employment
- Personal or family member illness, injury, or medical appointment
- 10 hours per month / 15 days per year
- 1,040 hours / 130 days maximum accrual

**INJURED ON THE JOB**

The [UCO Workers’ Compensation](#) program is intended to provide medical treatment, disability leave, and supplemental wages, as necessary, to eligible employees in the event that they experience a work-related injury or illness.
If an employee is injured in the scope of employment, regardless of how minor it may seem, the employee shall report the injury to his or her supervisor and to the Workers' Compensation Coordinator within 24 hours of the accident. The Workers’ Compensation Coordinator will arrange for a drug screen in accordance with policy, any needed medical treatment, and will assist in completing required injury-reporting paperwork.

If after hours and for life threatening injuries call Police Services (or proceed directly to the nearest emergency room as necessary, and contact Police Services as soon as possible thereafter). Police Services will initiate the proper notifications and arrange any needed emergency transport to an approved emergency medical facility.

Without first reporting the injury and seeking medical attention through the Workers' Compensation Coordinator or Police Services, an employee could have out-of-pocket expenses or experience treatment delays.

**LIGHT DUTY PLACEMENT**

The University of Central Oklahoma recognizes the value of permitting employees returning from an illness or injury to temporarily work on a light duty basis. The University will strive to arrange for a temporary work assignment for employees unable to perform their regular job duties due to work-related or non-work related injuries, illness or recovering from surgery.

**MILITARY LEAVE**

All UCO employees who are officers or enlisted in any component of the United States armed forces shall, when ordered by proper authority to active duty or service, be entitled to a leave of absence for such active service. There will be no loss of employment status and no loss of pay for up to 30 working days, per federal fiscal year (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30).

**FAMILY POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT**

**LACTATION SUPPORT**

UCO has been recognized as a **Breastfeeding Friendly Worksite – Gold Star Employer** by the Oklahoma State Department of Health, the Coalition of Oklahoma Breastfeeding Advocates, and the Oklahoma Healthy Birth Alliance. UCO provides designated lactation areas on campus for faculty, staff, and students. Each location offers a clean, comfortable, and private environment for nursing parents to express their breast milk during their time on campus. Please visit our [Worksite Lactation Policy](#) for additional information.

**VACATION, HOLIDAYS and OTHER TIME OFF**

**VACATION**

- 15 days - 1st – 3rd year (pro-rated 1st year, eligible to take after 6 months)
- 16 days - 4th year
- 17 days - 5th year
Any compensatory time balance must be exhausted before using vacation leave, even if this action will result in a loss of vacation leave due to the maximum accrual. See complete policy for specific, length of service maximums. Note: Executive level accruals will vary from this schedule.

HOLIDAYS

A complete list of paid holidays is announced at the beginning of each new calendar year. Generally, the following holidays are observed:

- New Year’s Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Spring Break (designated days)
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (designated days)
- Christmas (designated days)

PERSONAL LEAVE

- Reduces sick leave accrual
- Up to 40 hours, or 5 days per fiscal year
- Used for events which only the employee can attend to such as, last minute repair needs; child’s school; closing on the purchase or sale of a home; etc.

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEAVE

- Provides benefitted employees with paid time off to volunteer for external community service.
- May take the equivalent of up to two regularly scheduled workdays (up to a maximum of sixteen (16) hours) per fiscal year for community activities.
- Must be requested in advance and approved by the immediate supervisor, and appropriately recorded with the VSLC.

DISASTER LEAVE

- Reduces sick leave accrual
- Up to 80 hours, or 10 days per year
- To be used when immediate family members, household, or other properties deemed to be part of a disaster require the employee’s care.
FUNERAL LEAVE

- Up to 3 paid days for immediate family
- 1 paid day for extended family member
- Vacation or Personal Leave may be granted for additional days, or to attend a funeral for someone other than a family member.

OTHER BENEFITS AND PERKS AS A UCO EMPLOYEE

- Tuition assistance (that can be used by the employee or eligible dependents)
- Customizable learning and training tracks through Professional Education
- Discounted admission to most UCO athletic games
- University-paid UCO Wellness Center membership
- UCO Library Privileges
- University-paid parking
- Barnes & Noble Bookstore (employee discounts)
- Post Office
- Print Shop
- Banking facilities
- Central Tech Store (Apple Authorized Reseller; employee discounts)
- Free *New York Times* and *VISTA* newspapers
- University-paid anti-virus software for home and office use
- Access to meal plans and “flex” dollars for savings at on-campus eating establishments
- Special order “take home” dinners from on-campus catering
- Additional UCO Perks and Discounts can be found here

SAFE, HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS

TOBACCO FREE

The University of Central Oklahoma is committed to providing its students, employees, and visitors a safe and healthy environment free from tobacco use. UCO’s comprehensive tobacco-control program consists of prevention, cessation and policy.

SAFE WALK

UCO Police Services operates a service for the Campus community called Safe Walk. This service is intended to make people feel comfortable moving to their cars or between buildings on campus by requesting an employee from Police Services to accompany them.

Most students and employees feel comfortable walking on campus, but on occasion, concerns may develop based on individual schedules and locations. This service is intended to help alleviate those concerns, and a
call to Police Services is all that is needed. In addition to being accompanied from one location to another, The Safe Walk system can be used to report suspicious activity or to request assistance for any reason.

WELLNESS CENTER

The UCO Wellness Center exists to raise the quality of life of those around it. In turn, the greatness of the programs and services are raised by the quality of the people who use them. It is with this in mind that all UCO students, employees and the surrounding community are invited to add to the collective health and well-being of the community.

OU PHYSICIANS AT UCO

Located in the Wellness Center, OU Physicians Health & Wellness Clinic at UCO is a medical facility where students, employees and the surrounding community can access medical care. Services include immunizations, annual wellness exams, sports physicals among other services.

SAFETY PROGRAMS

Environmental Health & Safety oversees Fire Code Compliance, Occupational Health & Safety, Risk Management, Safety Programs, Standard Operating Procedures, and Workers' Compensation. UCO’s safety programs have been developed with students, employees, and visitors in mind. Employees complete an annual safety training that addresses a number of safety hazards, and teaches self-protection.

SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS

The University of Central Oklahoma is a nationally recognized leader in sustainability best practices. Starting with our award-winning energy conservation programs to our innovative landscape management techniques, we are constantly on the cutting edge of sustainability initiatives.

UCO sustainability efforts focus on the three tenets of sustainability - the economy, the environment and equality for all.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

UCO Emergency Management (EM) is here to provide emergency preparedness training and guidance to the UCO campus. Emergency Management has a number of programs and procedures in place to respond to a wide range of emergencies that may include taking shelter during severe weather, environmental health crises, public safety incidents, and other unique emergency situations.

In the event of an emergency, the University relays critical information using the most
appropriate options including Central Alert, Facebook, *Centralities*, the UCO home page, e-mail, an automated message line, the local radio/TV stations, door-to-door notifications and posters.

**Central Alert**

Central Alert is UCO's emergency notification system. It allows authorized UCO officials to send news and instructions simultaneously to individuals through landline phones, cellular phones, text messaging, e-mail and pop-up message to campus computers.

Registration for Central Alert is accomplished by accessing the Central Alert Channel on the Home Tab in the University's portal, **UCOnnect**. Employees are encouraged to regularly confirm and update personal notification preferences and contact information.

**ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION**

**BUM-A-BIKE PROGRAM**

Employees can be a part of the nationally recognized **Bum-A-Bike** program. UCO’s sturdy Bronze and Blue cruisers are available at no charge with a UCO ID through a simple check-out at Parking & Transportation Services (NUC 309A) Monday – Friday, 8am -5pm. These bikes are a great way to get exercise, improve health, and get from one place to another, both on and off campus! Bikes are checked out for two weeks at a time and then returned for a safety check. Bum-A-Bikes can continue to be checked out for as long as they are available.

**CITYLINK TRANSIT**

UCO has partnered with the City of Edmond to provide free bus services throughout the city. The Broncholink specifically services nearby apartment complexes and circles UCO every 30 minutes from 7:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday thru Friday. All routes and schedules can be viewed at the [CityLinkEdmond.com](http://CityLinkEdmond.com) website.

**CAR POOLING – “GREEN RIDE”**

Green Ride is an eco-friendly way to commute through carpooling and rideshare. UCO supports Green Ride by offering a dedicated parking lot just for carpoolers. [GetAroundOK.com](http://GetAroundOK.com) is one known web-based program that allows registrants to find carpool partners throughout the Oklahoma City metro area.

**GET CONNECTED**

Information and access is but a click away! Below are links to sites of personalized information like UCOnect and the Learning Center. Remaining links and information further demonstrate
UCO’s commitment to provide access and otherwise stay in contact with employees to receive input, and deliver the latest information about what’s happening around campus.

**UCO OFFICIAL WEBSITE**

[http://www.uco.edu](http://www.uco.edu)
The University’s website is for *everyone*! Employees usually find the Search Option and [A-Z Index](http://www.uco.edu) especially helpful to find just about *everything* one could possibly be seeking, including an on-line [Campus Directory](http://www.uco.edu) of contact information for all UCO employees and departments.

**UCONNECT**

[http://UCOnnect.uco.edu](http://UCOnnect.uco.edu)
UCOnnect is the University’s internal portal for students, faculty, and staff for news and communication that can be personalized. Users find a campus calendar, news feeds, and access to other information of interest. Central Alert is accessed here to register and regularly update personal contact preferences.

More specifically for employees UCOnnect provides “self-serve” employment-related access under the School Services tab and the Broncho Central Services link. Here employees can review and update addresses, emergency contacts and other personal information; print an employment verification form; view pay stubs; check leave balances; and calculate Teachers’ Retirement salary to assist in estimating retirement income.

**LEARNING CENTER**

[http://learningcenter.uco.edu/uco/](http://learningcenter.uco.edu/uco/)
The University’s web-based learning management system is provided exclusively for UCO faculty and staff to participate, schedule, and track their training and professional development activities. The Course Catalogs, which are updated frequently to provide new content, include hundreds of titles for Microsoft Office, Adobe, other technologies, and various soft-skill and safety titles. The searchable list of titles is available from the course catalog link.

**MANAGER’S TOOLKIT**

Human Resources has developed the Management Toolkit for those who supervise others. Our goal is to give you anytime access to information and resources we hope you find helpful in supervising faculty, staff and/or student employees. In the Content section you will find information related to:

- **Hiring** - updating and posting job descriptions; setting up a search committee; learning the dos and don’ts of interviewing.
- Processing changes for current employees - adding or changing duties; promotions; salary changes.
- Identifying [professional development](http://www.uco.edu) and training opportunities for you and your employees.
- Dealing with extended absences - illnesses; maternity; FMLA; unpaid leaves of absence; income protection pay; leave share.
- Addressing [employee relations issues](http://www.uco.edu) in need of your attention and correction.
• Gaining ideas and support from HR in **recognizing, reinforcing and rewarding** good performance.
• **Performance management** - creating goals and objectives; options for completing assessments/evaluations; recording annual ratings.
• **Records management** - information on document storage requirements.

The Management Toolkit is located in D2L, and can be found at [learn.uco.edu](http://learn.uco.edu).

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**UCOmment**

Do you have a suggestion, comment or idea for UCO? Visit UCOmment to share your ideas. [http://broncho2.uco.edu/ucomment/main_menu.aspx](http://broncho2.uco.edu/ucomment/main_menu.aspx)

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**RUSO Tip Line**

To anonymously report more serious concerns such as fraud, theft or embezzlement, use the RUSO Tip Line. [http://www.uco.edu/resources/EthicsPoint-redirect.asp](http://www.uco.edu/resources/EthicsPoint-redirect.asp)
**BRONCHO BEAT**

**UCO: Broncho Beat Collection**

*Broncho Beat* is the Employee Newsletter published electronically each month by Employee Relations in the Offices of Human Resources. The purpose is to consolidate and share information of interest to employees, and to recognize and celebrate employees’ birthdays, years of service, community involvement, accomplishments, volunteer opportunities, holidays and events, new employees, accomplishments, and more.

**CENTRALITIES**

*Centralities* is UCO’s daily e-mail news service, published by University Communications, with brief summaries of information, often accompanied with links to additional information.

**APPLY FOR A NEW POSITION ON CAMPUS OR REFER A FRIEND**

[https://jobs.uco.edu](https://jobs.uco.edu)

At the University of Central Oklahoma an employee’s career is more than just a “job.” It's an opportunity to develop and enhance skills, to network and establish lasting relationships, and to lead a fulfilling work-life balance. Maybe that's why UCO is ranked as one of the “Great Universities to Work For” by the Chronicle of Higher Education, and why it is certified as a “Healthy Workplace” by the Oklahoma Department of Health.

As the University continues to grow with a need to add new employees to the UCO family, employees are often the best recruiters and are therefore encouraged to recommend qualified applicants for employment. Additionally, current employees are encouraged to assume higher-level positions or lateral transfers for which they may qualify. The provided link directs to the on-line job posting program that facilitates the application process for open positions within the University.
### HANDBOOK TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

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<tr>
<td>Employee Assistance Program</td>
<td>866-327-2400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>405-974-2366</td>
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<td>IT Help Desk</td>
<td>405-974-2255</td>
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<td>Legal Counsel</td>
<td>405-974-3377</td>
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<td>Police Services</td>
<td>405-974-2345</td>
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<td>Professional Education</td>
<td>405-974-2655</td>
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<td>Purchasing, Payables &amp; Travel</td>
<td>405-974-3340</td>
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<td>Weather Closings</td>
<td>405-974-2002</td>
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<td>Wellness Center</td>
<td>405-974-3150</td>
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<td>Workers’ Compensation</td>
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