



# Don Betz, Ph.D.

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA PRESIDENT

University of Central Oklahoma President Don Betz, Ph.D., has enjoyed a distinguished career in higher education that spans more than 45 years, developing a reputation for teaching and encouraging students, and leadership development. He is also known for his diplomacy skills, developed through his international activities, most notably with the United Nations and its affiliated non-government organizations.

Enhancing that reputation, he currently is serving a second three-year term on the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP) executive committee and as chair of its North American Council. President Betz was selected to attend the 2011 Fulbright-Hays Seminar for Presidents Scholar, held in Oman and Jordan. The purpose was to explore opportunities for future program development in the region with stakeholders on American college campuses. Most recently, he was selected as a 2013 inductee of the Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame and received the 2012 Governor's Arts Award from the Oklahoma Arts Council in recognition of his support and advancement of the arts throughout his career.

President Betz took his post as Central's 20th leader in August 2011. He previously served as Central's provost and vice president of Academic Affairs from 1999-2005, during which he developed several initiatives and programs that helped transform Central into a leading metropolitan university.

He served as a member of the founding implementation committee for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) American Democracy Project and is the past chair of Creative Oklahoma Inc. He is also a member of the Oklahoma Academy, Leadership Oklahoma, and the Universities and Colleges President's Climate Commitment. He serves on the boards for the United Way of Central Oklahoma, the Oklahoma City Boathouse Foundation, Oklahoma A+ Schools, Great

Expectations, the DaVinci Institute, the Edmond Economic Development Authority, Allied Arts and the United Way.

Prior to returning to Central, he served as president of Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, Okla., from 2005-2008. He served as chancellor at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls from 2005 until his appointment at Northeastern, and as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs at Palmer College, Davenport, Iowa, from 1994-1999. In the 23 years prior, he fulfilled various capacities at Northeastern, including the vice president of University Relations, a professor of political science, as well as the executive director of the Educational Foundation and assistant to the president.

President Betz has also dedicated himself to advancing international relations, with a focus on the Middle East. From 1982 through 2003, he worked for and with the United Nations on Middle East issues. He founded and chaired the International Coordinating Committee on the Question of Palestine (ICCP), a U.N.-affiliated non-governmental organization (NGO) network pursuing peace in the Middle East based on U.N. resolutions. His international experience includes service with the University of Pittsburgh's Semester at Sea, Chapman College's World Campus Afloat, and journalistic experience in the Middle East.

A frequent writer and speaker, President Betz has addressed international, educational and motivational topics, and has worked with newspapers, radio and television. His lifelong interest in global issues and his passion for promoting cross-cultural understanding has led him to more than 80 countries.

President Betz holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Philosophy from the University of San Francisco as well as a master's degree and a Ph.D. in International Studies from the Korbel School of International Studies at the University of Denver.



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## Education

- Harvard University, Graduate School of Education  
Institute for Educational Management, July 1999
- Sarah Lawrence College  
NEH Summer Institute in International Relations, June-August 1976
- University of Denver  
Ph.D. and M.A., International Studies, 1973, 1969
- University of California, Berkeley  
NDFL Summer Program (Arabic Language and Culture Institute), 1969
- University of San Francisco  
B.A., Political Science, Philosophy, 1967
- Loyola University  
One Year of Liberal Arts Study, Rome, Italy, 1964-65

## Work History

- 2011-Present — President of University of Central Oklahoma
- 2008-11 — President of Northeastern State University
- 2005-08 — Chancellor of University of Wisconsin-River Falls
- 1999-05 — Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs for University of Central Oklahoma
- 1994-99 — Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs for Palmer College of Chiropractic in Davenport, Iowa
- 1982-03 — Consultant, United Nations
- 1971-94 — Faculty/Administration, Northeastern State University

## Recent Recognition

- Leadership Award, Oklahoma Center for Community and Justice, 2015
- Oklahoma Higher Education Hall of Fame, 2013
- Governor's Award, Oklahoma Arts Council, 2012
- 2011 Fulbright-Hays Seminars for Presidents Scholar, Jordan and Oman
- Named to the executive committee for the International Association of University Presidents, chairing its North American Council
- Recipient of the 1991 Medal of Excellence in University Teaching from the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence

## Past Affiliations

- President of Leadership Oklahoma
- Board member for the Educators' Leadership Academy
- Awards selection committee for the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence
- Past chair of the RUSO Council of Presidents
- Past chair of AASCU's International Education Committee

## Areas of Expertise

Higher Education, UCO and its Role as a Metropolitan University  
Leadership, Sustainability, Globalization, Diversity International Issues  
with Focus on the Middle East

## Present Affiliations

- Member of the founding implementation committee for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' (AASCU) American Democracy Project
- North American Council (NAC) of the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP)
- Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science & Technology (OCAST)
- Member of the Oklahoma Academy, Leadership Oklahoma, Universities and Colleges President's Climate Commitment, Governor's Education Advisory Council
- Board member for United Way of Central Oklahoma, the Oklahoma A+ Schools, the Edmond Economic Development Authority, the DaVinci Institute, Oklahoma City Boathouse Foundation, Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum Board of Trustees, Creative Oklahoma Inc., State Chamber of Oklahoma, and the Oklahoma Teacher & Leader Effectiveness Commission
- Frequent writer and speaker on international, educational and motivational topics

