

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Northwestern Oklahoma State University

Alva ● Enid ● Woodward

Northwestern Oklahoma State University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association.

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PREFACE

The Employee Handbook has been prepared by the Human Resources Office as a reference for non-faculty employees. This Handbook is intended for informational purposes only and does not constitute an employment contract. It contains information about employment conditions, opportunities, policies, and procedures. It is to be used as a working guide throughout your employment at Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

It is the responsibility of each dean and supervisor, faculty or non-faculty, to enforce all provisions of these policies with respect to non-faculty employees under his or her supervision. This Handbook will assist supervisors in providing an efficient working environment for employees. It will also help to ensure uniformity of personnel policy interpretation and application throughout the University.

Northwestern Oklahoma State University reserves the right to change any of the provisions in this Handbook at any time. When revisions are warranted, staff members will be notified. Any portion of this Handbook that is determined to be invalid is severable from the other policies and statements in the Handbook and does not invalidate the entire Handbook.

Should a conflict arise between the provisions of the Handbook and the provisions, laws, or regulations of the federal or state government, or the governing or coordinating boards of regents for the University, the latter shall take precedence.

After reading this Handbook, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to discuss them with your supervisor or to call the Vice President for Administration. In the event of disagreement or misunderstanding of any item presented in this Handbook, the official interpretation rests with the Vice President for Administration.

This February 2004 edition of the Employee Handbook supersedes any previously written handbooks or policies.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Northwestern Oklahoma State University was established officially as a normal school in 1897 with the passing of a law by the Oklahoma Territorial Legislature. It has the distinction of being the second normal school in the state.

The first faculty of this school was composed of the President, James E. Ament, and two teachers. Until a building to house the new college could be constructed, the classes were housed in the Congregational Church. The school opened on September 20, 1897, with an enrollment of 68 students.

By the fall of 1899, the first building had been completed, and the school was transferred to its present site. The cost of construction of the first building was underwritten by a number of private citizens, since no appropriation for this building had been passed by the legislature.

The school became a four-year college and was designated Northwestern State Teachers College in 1919. Next, the school was expanded to include degrees in Liberal Arts as well as Education in 1939 and “Teachers” was dropped from the title. The final name change occurred in 1974 when it was renamed Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

By constitutional amendment in 1941, a newly created Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education was charged with fiscal policies and determination of function and courses of study for all of the institutions in the state system. Exercising this responsibility, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education prescribe the general curriculum requirements for Northwestern and the other state institutions.

The Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges was created by Article XIII-B of the Oklahoma Constitution on July 6, 1948, to govern the six regional universities of today: East Central University, Northeastern State University, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, and the University of Central Oklahoma. (The Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges is now referred to as the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board.)

In 1951 the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education authorized Northwestern to offer courses, transferable to the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University, applying toward a master’s degree in education. Beginning with the summer term of 1954, a fifth-year program in teacher education leading to a Master of Education degree was instituted at Northwestern as authorized by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education authorized the implementation of a fifth-year interdisciplinary sociology and psychology program leading to a Master of Behavioral Science degree in the fall of 1978. A nursing program leading to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree was established in the fall of 1981. In 1996, the Oklahoma Legislature signed into law the development of the Enid and Woodward campuses.

More than one hundred years have passed since Northwestern Oklahoma State University opened its doors. The 40 acres and no buildings of 1897 have now become approximately 415 acres and 36 buildings, including the Enid Oklahoma facilities. The three faculty members and 68 students have increased to over 200 faculty and staff members and 2,000 students.

STATE ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

Northwestern Oklahoma State University is under the control and jurisdiction of the following boards of regents and departments:

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education: This is a constitutional board of nine members, appointed by the Governor and approved by the State Senate, with one member’s term expiring each year. The duties of the Board are as follows:

- (1) It shall prescribe standards for higher education applicable to each institution;

- (2) It shall determine the functions and courses of study in each of the institutions to conform to the standards prescribed;
- (3) It shall grant degrees and other forms of academic recognition for completion of the prescribed courses in all such institutions;
- (4) It shall recommend to the State Legislature the budget allocations to each institution;
- (5) It shall have the power to recommend to the legislature proposed fees for all such institutions, and any such fees shall be effective only within the limits prescribed by the Legislature;
- (6) The appropriations are made by the Legislature for higher institutions as one amount, and the Board distributes this by certifying to the State Treasurer the amount for each institution;
- (7) It then has the authority to transfer funds from one account to another in the institution, but it cannot reduce the allotment to the institution;
- (8) It has no control or jurisdiction over the operation of the University other than the responsibilities enumerated above.

Regional University System of Oklahoma: This Board is a constitutional board, consisting of nine members, eight appointed by the Governor with the consent of the State Senate. The ninth member is the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Members of the Board serve a nine-year appointment with one member's term expiring each year. Duties and powers of the Board are as follows:

- (1) Adopt such rules and regulations as it deems necessary to govern each of the institutions under its jurisdiction.
- (2) Employ and fix the compensation and duties of such personnel as it deems necessary, including architects, attorneys, engineers, and other professional and technical persons for its operation and for the operation of the institutions under its jurisdiction. Any of such personnel having custody of public funds or other public property may be required to furnish corporate surety bonds in such amounts as may be deemed necessary by the Board, payable to the State of Oklahoma and conditioned upon a faithful accounting of all such funds and property.
- (3) Enter into contracts, purchase supplies, materials and equipment, and incur such other expenses as may be necessary to make any of its powers effective.
- (4) Authorize officials at the several institutions under its jurisdiction to act in its behalf in making of contracts, or in carrying out the powers conferred upon it.
- (5) Receive and make disposition of monies, grants, and property from federal agencies, and administer the same in accordance with federal requirements.
- (6) Accept gifts of real and personal property, money, and other things, and use or dispose of the same in accordance with the directions of the donors or grantors thereof.
- (7) Direct the disposition of all monies appropriated by the Legislature or by the Congress or derived from the sale of bonds or received from the sale of bonds or received from any other source by the institutions under its jurisdiction.
- (8) Acquire and take title to real and personal property in its name, on behalf of any of the institutions under its jurisdiction, and convey, exchange or dispose of, or otherwise manage or control, such property in the interest of such institutions, including the granting of leases, permits, easements and licenses over or upon any such real property. The

Board shall have the power to institute any legal action in the name of the Board before any court having jurisdiction of such actions. The Board shall have custody of abstracts of title and instruments affecting the ownership of or title to real property acquired for or belonging to such institutions.

- (9) Have supervision and charge of the construction of all buildings at institutions under its jurisdiction.
- (10) Determine the need for and cause to be constructed dormitories and other buildings, on a self liquidating basis, at any institution under its jurisdiction.
- (11) Establish and maintain plans for tenure and retirement of employees of the Board and of the institutions under its jurisdiction, and for payment of deferred compensation of such employees; and provide hospital and medical benefits, accident, health and life insurance, and annuity contracts, for such employees and their dependents. The Board may pay for all or a part of the cost thereof for employees, with funds available for the operation of the institution. Amounts payable by an employee for such insurance or annuity contracts may, with the consent of the employee, be deducted from his salary.
- (12) Maintain an inventory of all property belonging to each of the institutions under its jurisdiction.
- (13) Audit all accounts against the funds allocated to the institutions under its jurisdiction.
- (14) Provide penalties and forfeitures by way of damages and otherwise for the violation of rules and regulations of the Board, which may be sued for and collected in the name of the Board before any court having jurisdiction of such actions.
- (15) Do all things necessary or convenient to carry out the powers expressly granted to it by Article XIII-B of the Constitution and the Statutes of Oklahoma, or to make institutions under its jurisdiction effective for the purposes for which they are maintained or operated.
(70 O.S. 3510)

State Treasurer: All claims for purchases made by the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board, or the University, and approved by the Director of State Finance are paid by the State Treasurer.

MISSION STATEMENT

Northwestern Oklahoma State University is a community of learners that includes students, teachers, staff, administrators, and area citizens advancing learning excellence and preparing its members for service as leaders and entrepreneurs in the changing climate of northwest Oklahoma and the world.

CORE VALUES:

As part of its philosophical basis, Northwestern holds these certain values:

- Northwestern values its sense of community that extends beyond campus boundaries to include not only students, faculty, and staff, but also others who share common interests in academic, cultural, entertainment, economic, and recreational pursuits.
- Northwestern values a quality educational experience for its community of learners through innovative teaching by well-qualified faculty.

- Northwestern values each individual as part of a diverse community of learners and seeks to support each person in a respectful and nurturing way toward attainment and realization of their full potential and life goals.
- Northwestern values an affordable and accessible education and is committed to developing resources to help its community of learners achieve their educational goals.
- Northwestern values the opportunity for its community of learners to develop academically, personally, socially, and spiritually in a safe environment through freedom of inquiry.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS:

As part of its strategic planning process, Northwestern has developed seven strategic directions that will serve as a blueprint for future success and that will drive the decision-making process.

1. Northwestern will enhance the quality of the educational experience by providing opportunities for students to reach their fullest potential in a personalized, student-centered learning environment.
2. Northwestern will increase its enrollment by actively recruiting and retaining students.
3. Northwestern will strengthen the university community by encouraging and supporting diverse, intellectually-stimulating, and community-building activities.
4. Northwestern will expand its support for teaching excellence.
5. Northwestern will seek and build strategic alliances and partnerships with its targeted constituencies and strengthen existing relationships.
6. Northwestern will continue to identify and develop institutional distinctiveness and comparative advantages.
7. Northwestern will actively work to find and secure outside funding to support programs and initiatives.

NONDISCRIMINATION EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICY

This institution, in compliance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, and other federal laws and regulations, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, physical or mental disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services. Inquiries concerning the application of these programs should be made to the Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Alva, OK 73717, (580) 327-8415, or the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, Mo. 64114, (816) 268-0550.

1. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

1.1 ADVERTISING

Vacant position notices for all jobs (other than entry level) shall be posted internally for three work days in order to provide first consideration to current employees. If the internal posting does not produce an acceptable applicant, an external search will be initiated by the hiring supervisor with the assistance of the Associate Vice President for University Relations.

For all three campuses, the internal posting requirement will be met with a listing on the official Northwestern Oklahoma State University Job Openings webpage located at: <http://www.nwosu.edu/JOBS/INDEX.HTML>

In addition, a printed posting will normally be placed for three days on the official administrative bulletin board located: Alva—hallway outside of Human Resources Room 101 of Herod Hall; Enid and Woodward—Student Commons Area.

Advertisements should be approved by the Vice President for Administration. The hiring department will place and pay for any advertisements. The Vice President for Administration shall periodically solicit applications through public advertisement.

1.2 SELECTION AND EMPLOYMENT

1.2.2 Application for Employment

Persons who wish to be considered for employment should complete and submit to the Human Resources Office the appropriate application form. The Application for Employment (Form A) should be completed for positions that meet the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) definition of “exempt” (See Section 2.2.1). For positions designated as “non-exempt” (See Section 2.2.2), the Application for Employment for Non-Exempt Positions (Form B) should be completed.

1.2.2 Screening

Supervisors shall review applications for employment on file with the Human Resources Office. The supervisor will administer the screening, interviewing, and selection process.

1.2.3 Recommendation for Employment

After the supervisor has reviewed the applications and determined qualifications of an applicant to be commensurate with the job description through an interview, the supervisor shall complete an Employee Transaction Form for Full-time Employees Only (Form C). This form shall be routed through assigned channels to the President. The President’s Office will then prepare a full-time, non-faculty

employment Letter of Appointment (Form D) for the employee to sign. For part-time employment, the supervisor initiates a Temporary Employment Action Form (Form E) and routes it through assigned channels for approval.

1.2.4 Employment

After the President approves the Employee Transaction Form or the Vice President for Administration approves the Temporary Employment Action Form, the supervisor notifies the employee and schedules a time that the employee can meet with the Human Resources Director to complete the official employment process. For full-time employees, the Secretary to the President will forward the Employee Transaction Form and a Letter of Appointment to the Human Resources Office.

1.3 FOLLOW-UP

1.3.1 Administrative Supervisor

Once the selection has been made, all applications and supporting documents shall be forwarded to the Human Resources Director for reference and filing. The administrative supervisor should forward a copy of the newly hired full-time employee's application to the President's Office for the personnel file. The administrative supervisor is responsible for sending letters to the unsuccessful applicants notifying them that the position has been filled.

1.3.2 The Human Resources Office

The Human Resources Office shall verify that all necessary employment documents are complete before directing the information to the Payroll Clerk for State of Oklahoma payroll processing. (See Section 1.4, Conditions of Employment.)

1.4 CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

The following forms must be completed in the Human Resources Office, or as otherwise designated. Other forms may be required in addition to those listed:

1.4.1 Loyalty Oath (Form F)

Each new university employee must sign a Loyalty Oath, by law, before being paid on a state payroll.

1.4.2 Employee's Withholding Allowance Certification (W-4) (Form G)

Federal law requires all employees to complete and sign a W-4 form. The employee must present a current Social Security card with the completed W-4 form.

1.4.3 Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9) (Form H)

Federal law requires all persons employed after November 6, 1986, to complete Form I-9 and to provide certain documents that prove identity and eligibility for employment in the United States.

1.4.4 Drug-Free Schools Policy (Form I)

All employees are required to sign an Acknowledgment of Understanding and Compliance with the Drug-Free Schools Policy.

1.4.5 Health Policy

The University may request a physical, psychological, or psychiatric examination from an applicant for employment after a job offer is extended or from an employee returning to work from leave that resulted from an injury or illness. Whether such a request is made will be determined solely by the administration and the examination will be at university expense. Compliance with a request for examination is a condition of employment.

If the examination shows that the individual is unable to perform the principal job duties, with or without reasonable accommodation, the job offer will be withdrawn, or in the case of a returning employee, he or she may not be permitted to return. Questions regarding accommodation for disabilities (under the Americans with Disabilities Act) may be presented to the Dean of Student Services at 580-327-8415.

1.5 TYPES OF APPOINTMENTS

Appointments are for the fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) unless otherwise stated on the Employee Transaction Form. This appointment does not change an employee's "at-will" status.

Northwestern Oklahoma State University is an "at-will" employer. The contents included in this Handbook in no way modify or amend the right of the University as an "at-will" employer in originating or terminating employment of personnel. "At-will" employment is for no specified term and is terminable at the will of either the employee or employer. Promises or representations made by anyone except the President of Northwestern Oklahoma State University concerning the conditions of employment, express or implied, do not negate the right of the University to terminate employment at any time, without notice and with or without cause.

Positions at Northwestern Oklahoma State University are categorized as one of the following:

1.5.1 Regular Full-time Employees

Regular full-time employees are those employees who work at least 30 hours per week (75%) and maintain continuous regular employment status.

1.5.2 Regular Part-time Employees

Regular part-time employees are those employees who work less than 30 hours per week and who maintain continuous regular employment status. Employees in this classification may work more than 29 hours per week on occasion, but should not average 30 hours per week or more during the appointment.

1.5.3 Temporary Employees

Temporary employees are expected to work less than three months. A temporary assignment should not be extended without the prior approval of the Vice President for Administration.

2. COMPENSATION AND CLASSIFICATION

The compensation and classification program of Northwestern Oklahoma State University is administered by the Vice President for Administration. The program also provides recognition for differences in individual ability and performance.

2.1 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The University classifies each position in accordance with its functions, duties, responsibilities, and relationship to other positions. Supervisors, with assistance from the Human Resources Office, develop descriptions for positions specifying the duties, responsibilities, supervision received, supervision given, and the education, training, and experience necessary for a person to function effectively in that position.

2.2 EXEMPT AND NON-EXEMPT CLASSIFICATIONS

The Vice President for Administration shall determine and specify, subject to the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, those classifications which shall be exempt. All classifications not specifically determined to be exempt classifications shall be considered non-exempt classifications.

2.2.1 Exempt Classification

Exempt classifications are those classifications which shall neither be entitled to the earning of, accrual of, or credit for overtime and/or compensatory time. The department supervisor has the discretionary authority to arrange the work schedule of an exempt employee.

2.2.2 Non-Exempt Classification

Non-exempt classifications are those classifications which shall be eligible for earning of, and credit for, appropriately authorized overtime and/or compensatory time. These employees, whose work must be documented and maintained in accordance with federal regulations, must maintain detailed records reflecting the actual time worked. The employee's supervisor and the Vice President for Administration must approve overtime work in advance, except in cases of emergency.

2.3 SALARY INCREASES

Administration reviews the salaries of all employees at the beginning of each fiscal year. On July 1 of each year, pending Board approval, the President's Office issues new Letters of Appointment (Form D). Any adjustments are based on work performance, promotion, demotion, labor market conditions, legislative actions, and budget constraints. Northwestern Oklahoma State University is an "at-will" employer. "At-will" employment is for no specified term and is terminable at the will of either the employee or employer.

2.4 PAYCHECKS

The Human Resources Office issues employee payroll checks on the last working day of the month for the pay period beginning the first day of that month. Human Resources Office staff forwards checks to supervisors to distribute to employees, or delivers them to employee mailboxes, if appropriate.

State employees must cash their paychecks within ninety days, per statute. Direct deposit of a paycheck is available upon request for all full-time employees and is mandatory for all newly hired in regular full-time positions. To directly deposit a payroll warrant in the financial institution of choice, the employee must sign an Automatic Deposit Transmittal Form (Form J) in the Payroll Office.

2.5 PAYROLL CHANGES

Any change in the amount of a payroll deduction should be submitted to the Human Resources Office by the eighth of the month in order for it to be effective with the next paycheck.

Changes in insurance coverage should be made in the Human Resources Office.

2.6 HOLIDAY PAY

An employee must be a regular full-time employee (See Section 1.5.1 Regular Full-time Employee) and be in paid status the day before and the day after a holiday in order to receive holiday pay. Employees, when terminating, are not eligible for any holiday pay

beyond the date of termination, even though accumulated annual leave time may encompass the holiday.

If a designated holiday falls within an annual leave period for a regular full-time employee, the holiday shall not be charged against annual leave time.

A regular full-time employee who is on paid sick leave when a university-approved holiday occurs will receive holiday pay instead of sick leave pay.

A regular full-time employee scheduled to work on a university-approved holiday will be granted an equal amount of time off with pay on a date mutually agreed to by the employee and department supervisor. If an employee is scheduled to work on a university-approved holiday and becomes ill, the employee should request sick leave for that day and receive his or her holiday as previously scheduled by the supervisor.

2.7 ANNUAL LEAVE PAYMENT

Earned, unused annual leave will be paid to all terminating regular full-time 12-month employees who have completed continuous full-time service for six months. Final payment of unused annual leave will be available on the normal pay date the month following termination, contingent on successful completion of the termination procedure. (See Section 8.4.2 Termination Procedure).

2.8 GARNISHMENTS

Each employee is expected to take care of his or her financial obligations independent of the University.

The University must process and respond to court-ordered wage assignments, garnishments, and tax levies in the legally prescribed manner.

3. HOURS OF WORK

3.1 WORK WEEK

For payroll record-keeping purposes, the work week at Northwestern Oklahoma State University begins at 12:01 a.m., Sunday, and ends at 12 midnight, Saturday. A regular full-time employee will normally be scheduled to work 40 hours per work week. Regular daily work hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with one hour off for lunch. At the discretion of the President, the official work hours may vary during summer months and by campus.

3.2 ABSENTEEISM

An employee who expects to be late or absent from work shall be responsible for notifying his or her supervisor as soon as possible after the beginning of the shift, indicating when he or she will report back to work. This allows the supervisor to make other work

arrangements as necessary. Any employee who fails to comply with this rule will be subject to disciplinary action.

In chronic or unusual cases of absenteeism, the University reserves the right to require documentation or verification of the reasons for absence. Excessive absenteeism must be noted on the employee performance evaluation and may lead to dismissal.

3.3 TARDINESS

An employee is expected to be at his or her work station at the scheduled work time. Excessive tardiness must be noted on the employee performance evaluation and may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal.

3.4 ABANDONMENT OF POSITION

An employee who has failed to report to work for three consecutive work days without notifying his or her supervisor will be considered to have voluntarily resigned his or her position.

3.5 LUNCH PERIOD

The lunch period consists of one hour daily unless otherwise scheduled by the supervisor to meet special needs. An employee may not forego the lunch period to shorten the work day or work week, or rearrange the lunch period, without the supervisor's prior consent.

3.6 WORK BREAKS

Employees **may** be granted a rest period during each four-hour work period. Rest periods are scheduled by departmental or unit supervisors and are subject to revocation or modification as work load demands vary. Rest periods are a privilege granted to employees for the purpose of promoting efficiency and productivity and may **not** be accumulated to extend lunch periods or to shorten the work day. Working through scheduled rest periods either voluntarily or because of necessity does not entitle an employee to additional compensation or compensatory time off. Rest periods should not exceed 15 minutes per four-hour period.

3.7 WEEKLY WORK SCHEDULES OR LEAVE RECORDS

Non-exempt employees must accurately maintain their own Weekly Work Schedules (Form K). This schedule is an important, legal, time-recording document. Completed schedules must be received by the Payroll Clerk four work days after the last Tuesday of each month so the regular faculty/staff payroll processing can begin. The schedules must be signed by both the employee and the supervisor.

Exempt employees must complete an Administration or Faculty Report of Sick Leave, Vacation Leave, or Special Leave (Form L) when absent from work. Absences from work

are to be anticipated as much as possible and scheduled with the supervisor. In any case, the supervisor should be notified promptly. Requests for annual leave or special leave should be submitted three working days in advance.

3.8 OVERTIME PAY OR COMPENSATORY TIME FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

The University's policy of giving compensatory time off in lieu of payment for overtime worked should be followed in every possible situation. Direct any policy exception request to the Vice President for Administration.

3.8.1 Rate and Computation

Should a non-exempt employee work more than 40 hours during the established work week (See Section 3.1, Work Week), he or she will be given compensatory time at the rate of one and one-half hours for each hour worked. Holidays, annual leave, sick leave, and compensatory time off will not be treated as hours worked for the purpose of computing compensatory time at one and one half. However, if actual hours worked plus hours paid for but not worked (holidays, annual leave, etc.) exceed 40, the employee will be given compensatory time at the rate of one hour for each hour worked. Compensatory time off must be taken during the time designated as the employee's normal work week.

If payment of overtime is approved, the rate of pay will be calculated using an hourly rate. For regular, salaried 12-month employees, hourly rate equals the annual salary divided by 2080 (the product of 52 weeks times 40 hours).

3.8.2 Authorization

Overtime hours worked and compensated with compensatory time off, at a time mutually agreeable between the employee and his or her supervisor, must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor except in cases of emergency. Payment for overtime worked must be approved in advance by the Vice President for Administration.

3.8.3 Time Limits

Compensatory time off is to be taken within one year of the date of accumulation. The maximum compensatory time which may be accrued by any affected employee shall be 60 hours (40 hours of actual overtime hours worked as defined in Section 3.8.1, Rate and Computation).

An employee transferring from one department to another is required to use accumulated compensatory time prior to transferring.

3.9 ON CALL

Some jobs may require an employee to be placed “on call,” subject to being available should his or her services be required. In some instances this may require the assignment of a personal pager to the employee.

4. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Northwestern Oklahoma State University is an “at-will” employer. The contents included in this Handbook in no way modify or amend the right of the University as an “at-will” employer in originating or terminating employment of personnel. “At-will” employment is for no specified term and is terminable at the will of either the employee or employer. Promises or representations made by anyone except the President of Northwestern Oklahoma State University concerning the conditions of employment, express or implied, does not negate the right of the University to terminate employment at any time, without notice, and with or without cause.

4.1 MANAGEMENT PROVISIONS

The University has the right to exercise customary functions of management, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. hiring, promoting, transferring, disciplining, and terminating employees in accordance with university policies;
2. reassigning an employee from one position to another position;
3. directing the work force; determining its composition, organization, and structure; and scheduling and assigning work;
4. establishing reasonable job standards, expectations, work rules, policies, and regulations;
5. determining the extent and schedule of its operations;
6. maintaining the orderly conduct of the work force, requiring job performance which meets job requirements, and terminating employees in accordance with university policies; and
7. amending, revising, revoking, or issuing policies and rules governing university employees.

4.2 EMPLOYEE PROVISIONS

Regular full-time employees may:

1. be appraised on job-related criteria;
2. express employee concerns and complaints;
3. expect to work in a safe environment;
4. expect reasonable and nondiscriminatory application of the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board, university, and departmental policies and rules; and
5. expect termination proceedings and other disciplinary action to be made in accordance with the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board and university policies.

4.3 FALSIFICATION

Any false, incomplete, or incorrect statement, answer or representation, given intentionally or unintentionally by any person, either orally or in writing, pertaining to availability, acceptability, or eligibility for employment in any department, school, classification, or position at Northwestern Oklahoma State University, or pertaining to personal information or background information on any authorized form, record or file, may result in refusal of employment by Northwestern Oklahoma State University. If such information is found after employment, appropriate disciplinary action up to, and including, termination may be taken.

4.4 VACANCIES

In order to be considered for a non-exempt vacancy, an employee should apply through the Human Resources Director. To be considered for an exempt vacancy, an employee should apply through the appropriate vice president in charge of the affected area, as listed in the University's Administrative Organization Chart (Form M).

For assistance in filling a vacancy, supervisors should refer to (Section 1, Recruitment and Selection) or contact the Vice President for Administration for guidance.

4.5 DEFINITIONS

4.5.1 Employment

4.5.1.1 Initial Employment refers to placing an individual on the payroll for the first time.

4.5.1.2 Reinstatement refers to placing a former employee with at least two years of continuous service on the payroll after a break in service of six months or less. (See Section 4.8, Reinstatement.)

4.5.1.3 Re-employment refers to placing a former employee on the payroll after a break in service of more than six months. (See Section 4.9, Re-Employment.)

4.5.2 Promotion

This is defined as the advancement of an employee to a classification with a higher pay range. (See Section 4.6, Promotions and Transfers, Section 4.10.1, Promotions.)

4.5.3 Transfer

A transfer occurs when an employee moves from one position to another position of equivalent responsibility within the same pay range. (See Section 4.6, Promotions and Transfers, Section 4.10.2, Transfer or Demotion.)

4.5.4 Demotion

The movement of an employee to a classification with a lower pay range. Demotions may be either disciplinary or non-disciplinary. (See Section 4.10.2, Transfer or Demotion.)

- a. A disciplinary demotion will result in decrease in pay.
- b. A non-disciplinary demotion may or may not result in decrease in pay.

4.6 PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS

Transfers can be made in order to provide equitable consideration and opportunity for qualified employees to fill job vacancies at Northwestern Oklahoma State University. An employee desiring to transfer should discuss possibilities with his or her supervisor. Arrangements for interviews and transfers will be made in agreement with the employee and supervisor.

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

Promotion will be based on qualifications such as experience, education, attendance, ability, and other job-related factors.

1. An employee interested in promotional opportunities must provide the Human Resources Director with updated employment application material as positions open.
2. When an employee transfers to a different department, all sick leave and annual leave balances transfer with the employee.

4.7 EMPLOYMENT OF RETIREES

Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System regulations require a minimum of 60 calendar days between a retiree's last day of pre-retirement public education employment and any post-retirement employment with an entity that participates in the System. Retirees may return to work after the 60-day break in service, but only within the parameters established by the Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System and only if the University has need for the services. Copies of the regulations and further information are available in the Human Resources Office.

4.8 REINSTATEMENT

An employee with two or more years of continuous full-time service before termination under satisfactory conditions, upon application and completion of proper documents, may be reinstated by the University within six months following termination, contingent on recommendation of the department supervisor and approval of the President. Reinstatement is only possible if a vacancy for which the person is qualified exists. Such an employee will have previously accrued sick leave balance and annual leave accrual rate restored to his or her employment record.

4.9 RE-EMPLOYMENT

An employee who terminates his or her employment under satisfactory conditions and who desires to return after six months, may do so upon application and completion of proper documents, with a recommendation from the department supervisor and approval by the President, if a vacancy exists for which the person is qualified. The returning employee in this category would return with no restoration of previous benefits.

4.10 PROBATIONARY PERIOD

A probationary period is used to evaluate an individual's ability to perform his or her assigned duties; communicate effectively with co-workers; follow directions, rules, and policies; work in harmony with co-workers; and present a positive image of the University. The end of the probationary period does not indicate "permanent" employment. The University maintains its right to employ "at-will" and may choose not to renew an appointment to a position, regardless of probationary status.

All regular full-time and part-time, new-hire and rehire employees are considered to be on probation during the first twelve months of employment. During this period, a supervisor will monitor closely the performance of the probationary employee to determine fitness for the position. Probationary full-time employees are eligible for benefits. (See Section 5, Employee Benefits.)

The probationary period is a time during which the employee demonstrates the skills and abilities necessary to perform the duties assigned. Every supervisor should routinely keep notes on each employee's performance, and especially document counseling sessions. As an employee's evaluation period (prior to completion of the first twelve months of service) approaches, those notes should be reviewed to consider whether the probationary employee should be retained. All Performance Evaluation Forms (Form N) are to be forwarded to the President's Office, where they become a part of the employee's permanent file. (See Section 4.11, Performance Evaluations.)

4.10.1 Promotion

Upon promotion to a new classification, an employee shall be placed in a three-month probationary period to allow the department supervisor a sufficient amount of time to measure the efficiency and productivity of the probationary employee.

Such probationary periods do not affect an employee's eligibility for accrual or use of university benefits.

4.10.2 Transfer or Demotion

A three-month probationary period is also served each time an employee receives a transfer or demotion. Such probationary periods do not affect an employee's eligibility for accrual or use of university benefits.

4.11 PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

A Performance Evaluation Form (Form N) reflecting an employee's progress becomes a permanent part of his or her personnel file. This file is referred to for salary review and promotional considerations, and is also used as background material should a supervisor feel the need to discuss improvement in an individual's work.

4.11.1 Probationary and Annual Evaluations

A supervisor will evaluate an employee prior to completion of the first twelve months of service and at least annually thereafter. (See 4.10, Probationary Period.) However, a supervisor may evaluate an employee more often at his or her discretion.

4.12 TERMINATION CLEARANCE PROCESS

Employees should submit resignations to the University in writing. Management personnel are requested to provide one month notice and all others are requested to provide ten work days notice of resignation. For pay calculation purposes, the last day of work should be listed as the official date of resignation.

The exiting employee should submit a letter of resignation to the department supervisor to be forwarded through administrative channels to the President's Office. The salary of an employee whose services are terminated before the end of the month will be pro-rated on the basis of hours worked during the month of termination.

The employee must complete a Faculty and Staff Checkout Clearance Form (Form O) before the last regular paycheck can be processed. The clearance procedure includes turning in keys and clearing all university debts. The form is available in the Human Resources Office and must be returned there when completed.

Supervisors are responsible for completing the Employee Transaction Form (Form C) and submitting to the Vice President for Administration.

4.13 KEYS

Keys shall be authorized for issue only to persons with a substantial need to lock or unlock specific facilities, and they shall be issued only after verification of administrative approval on a properly executed Key Request Form (Form P). Keys must be picked up in person at the Maintenance Office. The employee will be required to sign a Keyholder's Agreement (Form Q).

Keys remain university property, entrusted to the individual keyholder for his or her exclusive use and should never be exchanged or loaned. No one has authority to produce, duplicate, or alter a university key, except the Maintenance Office.

An employee is responsible for reporting any lost or stolen keys immediately to the department supervisor, the NWOSU Department of Public Safety, and the Maintenance Office on a Key Loss Form (Form R). When a key is lost or stolen, the employee must pay a replacement charge of \$25. If the key is found after the \$25 has been paid, \$25 will be refunded if the building was not re-keyed as a result of the key loss. Unauthorized use or duplication of a key is cause for disciplinary action. (See Section 8.4, Disciplinary Violations.)

4.14 PARKING

All vehicles parked on university property must display the appropriate parking permit tag which is available free of charge at the Dean of Student Services Office, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Parking permit tags should be attached to the rearview mirror. Vehicles found parking on campus without a permit tag will be ticketed.

As a courtesy to university visitors, certain parking areas have been designated for visitors only. Employees' vehicles parked in visitor parking will be ticketed.

An employee who receives a citation should take it to the Dean of Student Services Office. A permit holder is responsible for all charges made against his or her permit number, regardless of the identity of the driver. Therefore, employees are encouraged to remove parking permit tags from vehicles they no longer own. Cars parked in FIRE ZONES and HANDICAPPED ZONES may be towed at the owner's expense.

5. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Northwestern Oklahoma State University provides several benefits to employees which are paid by the employer. For specific coverage questions, please refer to policy booklets or call the Human Resources Office.

5.1 EMPLOYER-PAID INSURANCE

The following is intended to be a brief recitation of the coverage, but if it conflicts with the contract or law, the contract or law controls the issue.

All regular employees and faculty working 75% FTE (full-time equivalent) or more, receive these benefits. Temporary or seasonal employees are not eligible to participate.

5.1.1 Health Insurance

Coverage for health insurance is effective the first day of the month **following** the month in which the employee is employed in an eligible status. A pre-existing condition limitation may apply if the member and/or dependent has not been continuously covered by other group health insurance, or eligible to use military or Indian health benefits. Call the Human Resources Office for more details. Dependent coverage is available at the employee's expense.

Under certain conditions, insurance coverage may be extended beyond the time eligibility normally ceases. The insurance contracts and federal law specify reasons for coverage continuation and control whether or not the extension is allowed. These reasons include termination of employment (except for gross misconduct) or change from full-time to part-time employment. A dependent spouse may continue coverage after the employee dies, the employee is terminated for reasons other than gross misconduct, the employee changes from full-time to part time employment status, the couple divorces or agree to a legal separation. If an otherwise eligible child becomes ineligible due to one of these same reasons, marries, or fails to meet age and school attendance requirements, he or she may also apply to continue coverage. Contact the Human Resources Office for more information.

5.1.2 Life Insurance

Coverage is effective the first day of the month **following** the month in which the employee is employed in an eligible status.

Coverage equals the annual base salary (in effect on the most recent October 1st) rounded down to whole thousands and multiplied by two, with maximum coverage of \$250,000, subject to limits stated in the policy. Coverage is reduced after an employee's 65th, 70th, and 75th birthdays. Dependent coverage is available at the employee's expense for all eligible dependents. This option must be exercised within 31 days of the employee's date of full-time employment or the date the employee becomes eligible for dependent life insurance. If application is made after the 31 days, each dependent must provide evidence of insurability satisfactory to the company.

5.1.3 Long-Term Disability Insurance

Coverage begins after six full months of regular full-time employment. Benefits are integrated with workers' compensation, Social Security, and Oklahoma Teachers Retirement System disability benefits so as to not exceed 60% of monthly wage bases. The maximum monthly benefit is \$6,000 and the minimum monthly benefit

is \$100. Under the basic plan, there is a 180 calendar day elimination period before benefits begin. At the employee's option and expense, the elimination period may be shortened to 90 days. The employee must apply for this option within 31 days after the effective date for the basic coverage, or the company will require evidence of insurability at the employee's expense.

5.1.4 Vision Insurance

Vision insurance coverage is effective the first day of the month **following** the month in which the employee is employed in an eligible status. Dependent coverage is available at the employee's expense.

5.2 RETIREMENT

An employee should contact the Human Resources Office three months prior to his or her planned date of retirement.

5.2.1 Social Security

Every employee will participate in Social Security as provided by law.

5.2.2 Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement

Certain professional, supervisory, and administrative staff members, as well as faculty are required to participate in Oklahoma Teachers Retirement. Participation for other eligible employees is optional. Northwestern Oklahoma State University currently pays retirement contributions due on all "OTR contributable salaries" above \$10,000. OTR contributable salaries consist of regular annual salary and employer-paid benefits. A combination of average salary and years of service drives the benefit calculation at time of retirement.

5.2.3 TIAA-CREF (PROGRAM DISCONTINUED 7-1-04)

Northwestern Oklahoma State University makes employer-paid contributions to TIAA-CREF on the employee's behalf in the amount of six percent (6%) of annual base salary (subject to change without employee consent by the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board), provided the employee has attained age 23. There is a one-year vesting requirement in the University's contract with TIAA-CREF.

The eligible employee must complete an application in the Human Resources Office when notified of eligibility. This benefit is not retroactive in the event the employee delays completion of the application.

5.2.4 Supplemental Retirement Annuity

Regular full-time employees hired in the Regional University System of Oklahoma prior to July 1, 1995, may qualify for a supplemental retirement annuity to be paid by Northwestern Oklahoma State University after retirement with Oklahoma Teachers Retirement. For further information, contact the Human Resources Office.

5.2.5 Insurance

For a retiring employee who has been employed full-time in the Regional University System of Oklahoma for not less than ten years immediately preceding the date of retirement, and has been a member of the Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System during that time, and has elected to receive a vested benefit under the provisions permitted by the O.T.R.S. laws, the employing university shall continue to pay the group health and life insurance premiums for the retiring employee until the month they attain age 65. The retiring employee can choose to continue paying eligible dependents' group health and life insurance premiums after the official date of retirement. The retiring employee and eligible dependents may apply for continued participation in group vision and/or dental plans at the retiree's expense.

5.3 OPTIONAL BENEFITS

Northwestern Oklahoma State University also offers several optional benefits to be paid by the employee. Contact the Human Resources Office for information on any of these benefits:

1. U.S. Savings Bonds
2. Tax-deferred annuity programs
3. Cancer insurance
4. Employee and dependent dental insurance
5. Dependent medical and vision insurance
6. Dependent life insurance
7. LTD "Buy-down" of the basic benefit (See Section 5.1.3, Long-Term Disability Insurance.)

5.4 WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

All Northwestern Oklahoma State University employees are covered by workers' compensation. Health expenses directly attributable to the performance of compensable work for the University are covered under this program. The cost of the premium is paid entirely by the University.

An employee should not seek medical treatment (except in case of an emergency) without first notifying his or her supervisor of the injury. Also, after the employee receives medical treatment, he or she should contact the supervisor and the Human Resources Office to report the physician's findings. Prior to incurring medical expense for a non-

emergency, on-the-job injury, the employee must obtain a referral from the University's Human Resources Office to present to the appropriate provider.

5.5 UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

The University provides unemployment compensation benefits for eligible terminated employees or those who are laid off. Application is made with the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission.

5.6 ENROLLMENT OF EMPLOYEES IN UNIVERSITY COURSES

Northwestern Oklahoma State University encourages employees to take classes to improve themselves and to increase skill level in their work. Any non-exempt employee working full-time (eight hours per day) can take classes (up to five credit hours per week) provided he or she works during the noon hour. Annual leave may be taken in lieu of working during the noon hour.

Exempt employees are also encouraged to take courses. They should seek official approval from their immediate supervisor for an appropriate time schedule.

There are no restrictions for employees taking classes outside of the employee's regular working hours. However, such course work cannot interfere with the employee's duties as determined by the supervisor and the Vice President for Administration.

At the time of enrollment, an employee must present a completed Staff Tuition Waiver Application (Form S) to the Business Office.

5.7 CHANGE OF EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

The Human Resources Office must be promptly notified of changes of address, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents, beneficiaries, marriage or graduation of insured dependents, etc. Whenever possible, such changes should be reported before they occur to allow the Insurance Coordinator time to notify the appropriate companies and to allow time for the Payroll Clerk to make necessary changes in the payroll computer system.

6. SERVICES

6.1 HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The University provides some health services for students, faculty, and staff. The Health Services Center (located in Fine Arts, Alva campus) is staffed by a registered nurse. Clinic hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., during the fall and spring semesters. The center is equipped to handle minor injuries and illnesses.

On the Alva Campus, regular full-time employees and their family, at no cost, may use the J.R. Holder Wellness Center facilities after a brief orientation.

Some counseling services are provided at no cost to employees. Contact Student Services for more information.

6.2 UNIVERSITY FOOD SERVICES

All university employees and their families are welcome to use any university dining facilities. For catering services for functions held both on and off the campus, contact the university food service.

6.3 TELEPHONE

Employees may use the campus telephone system for conducting business between departments, locally, or with long distance. Employees are asked to limit personal calls to a minimum. Employees should use third party billing or personal credit cards for personal long distance calls that must be made at work.

University employees may use voice mailbox for leaving messages for business purposes. The mailbox acts as an answering machine for employee extensions. It will pick up both external and internal calls to an extension during no-answer or busy conditions. The employee is responsible for dialing into the voice mail system to retrieve messages. The extension number for entering the system is 8595.

A new employee must initialize his or her voice mailbox before it is fully functional. Call the Telecommunications Office at extension 8688 for assistance in initializing or opening a mailbox.

6.4 ELECTRONIC MAIL

Staff and students may employ electronic mail as a tool for communications. The University may rely upon this medium to communicate information, and staff and students will be responsible for checking and reading messages. All NWOSU students, faculty and staff will receive and be required to use NWOSU email accounts for email correspondence.

The network is provided for staff and students to conduct research and communicate with others. Communications over the network are often public in nature; therefore, general rules and standards for professional behavior and communications will apply. The network is primarily intended for the use of students and staff. Others wanting access to the network including PC's in labs must first check with the supervisor of the equipment and pay fees as set by the University.

Electronic mail and telecommunications are not to be utilized by employees and students to share confidential information about students or employees.

Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity. Users should not assume that files stored on university servers will be private. (See [Electronic Communications Privacy Act 18 USC §2701 \(1988\)](#).)

The following behaviors are not permitted on university networks:

- Sharing confidential information on students or employees
- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Assisting a campaign for election of any person to any office or for the promotion of or opposition to any ballot proposition
- Using obscene language
- Harassing, insulting or attacking others
- Engaging in practices that threaten the network (e.g., loading files that may introduce a virus or installing software not previously approved). Downloading and installation of software is only allowed with prior approval from Information Technology. This also applies to the installation of hardware.
- Violating [copyright laws](#). For example, copying or downloading movies, music or other copyrighted materials is against the law. Peer to peer sharing of the copyrighted materials is also against the law.
- Using others' accounts
- Trespassing in others' folders, documents, or files
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the network for commercial purposes
- Violating regulations prescribed by ONENET
- Promoting, supporting or celebrating religion or religious institutions

The Network Supervisor will report inappropriate behaviors to the University administration who will take appropriate disciplinary action. Any other reports of inappropriate behavior, violations, or complaints will be routed to the employee's supervisor for appropriate action. Violations may result in a loss of access and/or disciplinary action.

Each employee will be given copies of this policy and procedures and will sign an acceptable use agreement before establishing an account.

6.5 LOST AND FOUND

The Dean of Student Services Office shall serve as the location for the storage and disposition of personal items found on the Alva campus. Questions regarding lost and found articles on the Enid campus can be directed to the Business Office there. For assistance with lost items at the Woodward campus, contact the Woodward Campus Dean.

6.6 EMERGENCIES

Emergency numbers are as follows:

Alva Campus...Fire, Police, Ambulance Dept.:	9-911 or 9-327-2121
Enid Campus...Fire, Police Dept.:	9-911 or 9-242-7000
...Ambulance Dept.:	9-911 or 9-242-1234
Woodward Campus...Fire, Police Dept.:	9-911 or 9-256-2280
...Ambulance Dept.:	9-911 or 9-254-3341

The University nurse is available at the Alva campus during the work day for employee or student emergency needs.

7. CONDUCT

7.1 DRESS AND GROOMING

Each member of the university community shares a responsibility in maintaining a professional image by dressing and grooming appropriately for his or her respective job assignment.

7.2 SMOKING IN PUBLIC PLACES

Tobacco usage is prohibited in all buildings on the campuses of Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

7.3 SALES SOLICITATIONS

Solicitations, disseminations of literature, picketing, or drawing of assemblages, or meeting for the purpose of promoting sales may not be done by an official group, organization, or person without clearance and permission of the Dean of Student Services. In some cases, a facility fee will be charged.

Only the Executive Vice President or the President may approve solicitation for funds. The person soliciting such funds should be a regular member of the university faculty or staff.

7.4 POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

An employee of Northwestern Oklahoma State University, or any of the other five regional universities, who participates in political activities must do so in a manner that:

1. does not imply, directly or indirectly, that the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board or any of its universities endorse such activities;
2. in no way interferes with the rights and privileges of other employees of the Board or any university;
3. in no way interferes with the rights and privileges of students attending any university;
4. in no way interrupts the normal routine operation of any university;
5. in no way interferes with the assigned duties of the employee;
6. does not utilize university equipment, supplies, paid staff time, or other university resources in support of partisan political activities.

7.5 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

A person who accepts full-time employment at Northwestern Oklahoma State University assumes a primary professional obligation to the University. Any other employment or enterprise in which an employee engages for income must be understood to be definitely secondary to his or her university work.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from sources outside the University for services rendered while performing their jobs for the University.

If the University determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance, or presents a conflict of interest, the employee may be required to terminate the outside employment or enterprise, or be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

7.6 MEDIA RELATIONS

Each staff member plays a part in shaping the University's public image. The actions and comments of each employee reflect on the University. Each employee must be conscious of this fact.

There are times when an employee may be asked by members of the general public or media to comment on aspects of the University's operation. If you are unsure about commenting, you may politely decline to answer or refer the question to your supervisor. The Associate Vice President for University Relations is the official media spokesperson for the University. Employees should also be aware that student records are confidential.

7.7 LOYALTY OATH

Before being placed on the state payroll, each new university employee must sign a Loyalty Oath. (See Section 1.4, Conditions of Employment.)

7.8 SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The Regional University System of Oklahoma Board (“the Board”) affirms its commitment to ensuring an environment for all employees and students which is fair, humane, and respectful—an environment which supports and rewards employee and student performance on the basis of relevant considerations such as ability and effort. Behaviors which inappropriately assert sexuality as relevant to employee or student performance are damaging to this environment. Sexual harassment by any member of the university community, including students, faculty and staff, is a violation of both law and the Board policy, and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment is a particularly sensitive issue which may affect any member of the university community and as such will be dealt with promptly and confidentially by the university administration. The Board reserves the right to deal administratively with sexual harassment issues whenever it deems it appropriate to do so.

7.8.1 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:

- a. when submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment or academic standing, or
- b. 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
- c. 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.

7.8.2 Examples of Prohibited Conduct

Conduct prohibited by this policy includes, but is not limited to:

- a. unwelcome sexual flirtation; advances or propositions for sexual activity;
- b. continued or repeated verbal abuse of a sexual nature, such as suggestive comments and sexually explicit jokes;
- c. sexually degrading language to describe an individual;
- d. remarks of a sexual nature to describe a person’s body or clothing;
- e. display of sexually demeaning objects and pictures;
- f. offensive physical contact, such as unwelcome touching, pinching, brushing the body;
- g. coerced sexual intercourse;
- h. sexual assault;

- i. actions indicating that benefits will be gained or lost based on response to sexual advances.

7.8.3 Retaliation

Any attempt to penalize or retaliate against a person for filing a complaint or participating in the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment will be treated as a separate and distinct violation of the Board policy.

7.8.4 Sanctions

Appropriate disciplinary action may include a range of actions up to and including dismissal.

7.8.5 Complaint Process

This policy is in addition to the current Board and university policies concerning discrimination, and applies to all students, faculty, staff, guests or visitors. Complaints alleging violation of the sexual harassment policy will be reviewed and investigated by the Affirmative Action Officer of Northwestern. Complaints may be resolved informally or may proceed through the applicable formal complaint proceedings. Complaints may be filed in the following manner:

- a. Complaints against students or student organizations shall be filed with the Dean of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management who serves as the NWOSU Affirmative Action Officer charged with reviewing and investigating such complaints. This official may assist in the informal resolution of the complaint or in processing a complaint through the applicable campus procedures for students and student organizations.
- b. Complaints against faculty or staff shall be filed with the Human Resources Director who serves as the Affirmative Action Officer charged with reviewing and investigating such complaints. This official may assist in the informal resolution of the complaint or in processing a formal complaint through the applicable campus procedures for faculty and staff.
- c. Complaints against visitors or guests should be directed to the Campus Police Office on the campus where the incident occurred.

7.9 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

Serious threats or acts of intimidation (i.e., statements or physical acts which put a reasonable person in fear of harm to himself, herself, or another), and acts of violence, with or without the presence of a weapon, will not be tolerated at NWOSU. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible suspension, termination, and/or the filing of criminal charges.

All employees, regardless of position with the University, shall immediately report acts of violence and any serious threats made against them or witnessed by them which a reasonable person would consider potentially dangerous. Such reports may be made to the employee's immediate supervisor, Campus Police, or the Human Resources Office. Employees should also feel free to report concerns about unusual or threatening behavior, even though such behavior is not perceived as a direct threat or an immediately dangerous situation when the employee in good faith is fearful for their continued safety or the safety of others. Reportable situations include those of co-workers, students, and visitors to the campus—such as spouses, job applicants, etc.

7.10 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Northwestern Oklahoma State University provides assistance for employees in dealing with personal problems such as substance abuse, including alcohol and drug abuse. For more detailed information, contact Student Services.

7.11 DRUG-FREE STATEMENT

Northwestern Oklahoma State University policy strictly prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees on Northwestern Oklahoma State University property, or as a part of any university-sponsored activity. All students and employees must abide by this policy as a condition of enrollment or employment. Continuance of employment or enrollment following receipt of this policy constitutes acceptance of this policy by the employee or student. Sanctions up to and including termination will be imposed for violation of the official Drug-Free Schools Policy. (Form I)

7.12 VISITORS AND CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE

The practice of family members or friends spending excessive time with an employee during the employee's work period is discouraged. Employees should not bring their children to the worksite as a substitute for childcare.

8. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Northwestern Oklahoma State University is an "at-will" employer. The contents included in this Handbook in no way modify or amend the right of the University as an "at-will" employer in originating or terminating employment of personnel. "At-will" employment is for no specified term and is terminable at the will of either the employee or employer. Promises or representations made by anyone except the President of Northwestern Oklahoma State University concerning the conditions of employment, express or implied, do not negate the right of the University to terminate employment at any time, without notice and with or without cause.

8.1 VERBAL WARNING

A verbal warning is usually the first step in discipline procedure. It involves a discussion between a supervisor and an employee about a minor work performance problem. The objective is to correct the problem by communicating how actual performance falls short of desired performance. The supervisor should record and maintain in the employee's departmental file the date of the discussion and a brief summary of the items discussed, to record that the warning was in fact given. If the problem persists, a written warning is appropriate.

8.2 WRITTEN WARNING

Should the verbal warning fail to effect improvement in employee performance, the supervisor should complete and ask the employee to sign a Counseling Report (Form T), and forward copies of the same to the appropriate administrator and to the Vice President for Administration. If the offense is more than minor, a written warning may be an appropriate first step. The report should contain a description of the problem, an explanation of the deficiency, a solution to correct the problem, a definition of the time frame within which correction is expected, and an evaluation of the employee's response. If the employee refuses to sign the report, this fact should be noted on the report along with the signature of a witness to attest that the employee refused to sign.

If the employee receives three written warnings within twelve months, the employee should be considered for termination.

8.3 SUSPENSION

The Vice President for Administration may recommend suspension without pay for serious incidents which may warrant discharge. In this case, the employee may be suspended pending investigation and the decision as to the extent of disciplinary action or termination.

8.4 DISCIPLINARY VIOLATIONS

8.4.1 Definition

Department supervisors may need to take disciplinary action, including termination, because of assault or battery of a person on university property or at a university-sponsored event, excessive written warnings, theft of university property, unexcused absence of three or more days, falsifying employment application or time or leave records, immoral conduct or indecency on university property or at a university-sponsored event, use of intoxicants during working hours or on campus at any time, insubordination, unauthorized use or duplication of a university key, reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, excessive absenteeism or tardiness, violating a safety rule or practice, inattention to duty, inefficiency, absence without leave, violation of law or university

regulations, disloyalty, lack of integrity, or other conduct inappropriate for an employee of the University.

8.4.2 Termination Procedure

When recommending discharge, a supervisor should request such action in writing, and seek formal approval by the President. Documentation should include the employee's name, date of the incident, explanation of the circumstances resulting in the recommendation for discharge, and reference to any previous disciplinary steps taken.

If discharge is approved, the supervisor should follow these steps:

The supervisor will immediately notify the Human Resources Office so that a date can be established for removal of the employee from the payroll and an exit interview scheduled. The salary of an employee discharged before the last work day of the month will be pro-rated on the basis of hours worked during the month of termination. The supervisor will prepare an Employee Transaction Form for Full-time Employees Only (Form C) to be routed through assigned channels for signatures. The official date of termination should be the last day actually worked by the exiting employee.

The discharged employee will be required to return university keys and equipment, as well as clear all university debts prior to the last day of work. A completed Faculty and Staff Checkout Clearance Form (Form O) must be on file in the Human Resources Office before the final paycheck will be issued.

9. TRAVEL

The Northwestern Oklahoma State University travel policy has been developed in accordance with Oklahoma Statutes. The policy covers state officials and employees who are performing substantial and necessary services for the State of Oklahoma. No travel expenses shall be incurred or reimbursed except for official business, which has been approved in advance through the Agile Fleet Commander system and official administrative signature route.

9.1 PROCEDURE

The employee should request a vehicle online through the Agile Fleet Commander system, listing destination, dates and times of travel, purpose for the trip, and items requested for reimbursement. Once the Maintenance Office has assigned a vehicle number, they will send an e-mail confirmation to the employee. (See sample Form U). This pending confirmation must be printed and submitted to the appropriate dean or supervisor, who will be responsible for listing budget limits, if required, and for verifying the essential nature of the trip. As soon as the trip is approved by administration, Human Resources and Maintenance staff will assign a university vehicle (if requested and available). An employee scheduled to enter travel status before the Maintenance

Shed is open, after hours, on weekends, or on holidays, must check out a Maintenance Shed key at the Business Office, during regular work hours.

During the trip, the employee should ask for receipts for lodging, meals (required if \$25 or more), parking, toll road, workshop registration fees, etc. Lodging receipts must be itemized, showing name, single room rate, number of people in the room, arrival/departure dates, and listing a zero balance. Registration receipts should show the actual amount paid and the number of meals included in the fee. Continental breakfasts and snacks are not considered meals.

Upon completion of the trip, the employee should complete and submit to the Human Resources Office an Application for Travel Reimbursement (Form V), accompanied by required receipts and a copy of the workshop agenda, listing the designated meeting place for the workshop. All required receipts must be firmly attached to this form and cannot be returned to the employee. It is the employee's responsibility to keep photocopies of all documents for personal reference. From the submitted information, Human Resources Office personnel prepare Office of State Finance Claim Form 19 (Form W) for the employee to sign before electronic submission to the State. The resulting warrant is printed and sent to the employee by the Human Resources Office, usually within seven workdays.

Non-exempt employees who are asked to travel for the University should contact Human Resources for assistance in completing the Weekly Work Schedule (for regular full-time employees) or the Part-time Time Sheet (for all other non-exempt part-time employees) and reporting hours worked.

9.2 SPECIAL PROCEDURE

When the mode of travel must be flight, the airline ticket arrangements must be made through the University. The employee can check information for the best price and times, but the final arrangements must be approved by Human Resources Office staff. The least expensive ticket must be purchased. However, the employee can pay the difference in amounts if another flight is more convenient or preferred.

9.3 LIMITATIONS

Reimbursement for university travel is based on actual expenses incurred, subject to limitations set forth by legislation and university travel policy. Reimbursements may not be claimed for personal services, such as hair cuts, shoe shines, etc. Reimbursements for medications, tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, personal clothing, souvenirs, entertainment, repairs to privately owned vehicles, or other similar purchases are also excluded.

9.4 UNIVERSITY FLEET VEHICLES

Oklahoma statutes prohibit the use of state-owned vehicles for private purposes. University policy states that unauthorized passengers shall not be transported in state vehicles or private vehicles used for state business. Only authorized university employees are allowed to drive state-owned vehicles.

According to Oklahoma statute, the use of state-owned vehicles to ride to and from an employee's place of residence, except in the performance of official duty, is expressly prohibited. In compliance with Oklahoma statute, smoking is prohibited in university-owned vehicles. Persons using university vehicles are expected to use seat belts and to comply with all Oklahoma Department of Highway Safety regulations. (For instructions specific to the Enid or Woodward Campus, contact the Business Office or Dean's Office there.)

9.4.1 Fuel Purchases

Each university vehicle must be returned to the Maintenance Shed or Fleet Building with the gas tank full. University vehicle drivers should utilize the University's official supplier for fuel. Location directories are kept in the glove compartment of each motor pool vehicle for your convenience in locating businesses honoring the officially authorized supplier's credit card. Each university vehicle's key ring is attached to a current fuel purchase credit card. Any other credit cards in the school vehicle are for secondary, emergency use only.

9.4.2 Check-out and Check-in Procedures

When leaving before or after office hours, a Maintenance Shed key or Fleet Building key must be obtained from the Business Office in Herod Hall during office hours. Maintenance Office staff are not responsible for giving employees access to the Maintenance Shed to pick up their scheduled vehicles when the proper procedures for obtaining a key from the Business Office have not been followed. Drivers are advised to allow themselves adequate time in case they need to move vehicles blocking access to their designated vehicle.

For Cars, Minivans, 12 and 15 Passenger Vans, Buses:

During Office Hours:

When picking up a university vehicle, an employee must come into the Maintenance Office to be dispatched. He or she will be given the vehicle's keys, a clipboard with fuel cards and a dispatch form to be filled out when returning the vehicle. When returning a university vehicle, the employee must bring the keys, fuel cards, completed dispatch form, and all fuel receipts into the Maintenance Office so the vehicle can be checked back in.

After Office Hours for Cars:

The University Vehicle will already be dispatched to you. The keys along with the dispatch form will be placed in the assigned vehicle on the driver's seat. Anyone returning after hours must hang the keys on the peg board by the Maintenance Office door and place the clipboard with completed dispatch form, fuel cards, and fuel receipts in the smoke colored file hanging on the wall beneath the peg board.

When returning a university vehicle after hours, employees should use the shed key on the key ring to gain access to the Maintenance Shed, drive the vehicle into the shed, and park in the numbered parking space corresponding to the university vehicle number.

If there should ever be an instance when a university vehicle cannot be parked inside the Maintenance Shed, it should be parked in the Maintenance parking lot with the keys removed and the vehicle locked. The keys should be taken into the Maintenance Shed and placed on the peg board located on the west wall by the office door. This will enable the person scheduled to take the same vehicle early the next morning to have access to that particular vehicle's keys. The employee should never take the keys with them when leaving.

The dispatch form (Form X) should be completed and placed along with the fuel purchase slips in the smoke colored wall file located on the west wall of the Maintenance Shed.

If a university vehicle has a mechanical problem and is returned after hours, the university employee returning the vehicle should place a warning sign on the vehicle's windshield so the safety of the next passenger is not at risk. The sign reads, "DO NOT TAKE THIS VEHICLE DUE TO MECHANICAL PROBLEMS," and is kept in a black folder attached to the bulletin board on the west wall of the Maintenance Shed. Leave a message on the Maintenance department's voice mail at 327-8646, describing the nature of the problem. When scheduled to drive the car with a problem, take your own vehicle and apply for mileage reimbursement on an Application for Travel Reimbursement. (See Section 9.1 Procedure). Do not take another university vehicle since it may be scheduled for use by another employee.

After Office Hours Vans and Buses:

The university vehicle will already be dispatched to you. The keys will be hanging on the peg board by the walk-in door in the Fleet Building. The clipboard with the dispatch form and fuel cards will be placed in the assigned vehicle on the driver's seat. If you return after hours, please hang the keys on the peg board by the Fleet Building door and place the clipboard with the fuel cards, completed dispatch form and your fuel receipt in the smoke colored file hanging on the wall beneath the peg board.

Park the returned vehicle in the Fleet Building using the garage door opener attached to the visor.

Return any Maintenance Shed key or Fleet Building key to the Business Office in Herod Hall as soon as possible so others can check out that key.

If the parking gate was closed when you entered, close it when leaving.

10. LEAVE

An employee should submit a request for any type of leave to the supervisor as soon as the employee knows that such leave will be necessary or desired. Advance notice allows the supervisor to consider such leave requests when planning work schedules. When conditions do not permit a request in advance (illness, personal emergency, etc.) the employee is to notify the supervisor by telephone at the earliest possible time of the need to use leave. If the supervisor is not available the employee should notify the individual at the next level in the administrative channel. The supervisor is responsible for notifying the Human Resources Office of any absence from work which would affect payroll status.

10.1 ANNUAL LEAVE

Northwestern Oklahoma State University provides annual leave with pay for eligible employees. Regular full-time 12-month employees are eligible for annual leave.

10.1.1 Accrual

Northwestern Oklahoma State University does not credit any employee for accrued annual leave earned at another employer. Regular full-time 12-month employees accrue annual leave as follows:

Accumulation Rates Based on Years of Service	Days Per Year	Maximum Accumulation
0-5 years (1-60 months)	10	30 days
6-10 years (61-120 months)	12	45 days
11-15 years (121-180 months)	15	45 days
16-20 years (181-240 months)	18	60 days
over 20 years (241-over months)	20	60 days

Annual leave may not be earned by an employee during leave of absence without pay (except for certain qualifying military leave: See Section 10.3), suspension without pay, or financial retrenchment. Annual leave will not be granted prior to being earned.

10.1.2 Scheduling

Annual leave may be used during the period(s) mutually agreeable to the employee and his or her supervisor, and at the convenience of the University.

10.1.3 Payment

If a regular full-time 12-month employee resigns or is discharged, and successfully completes the termination process (See Section 8.4.2 Termination Procedure), the Human Resources Office staff will process full payment for unused annual leave provided the employee has worked full-time at Northwestern Oklahoma State University for a continuous six-month period immediately prior to the date of separation. (See Section 2.7 Annual Leave Payment).

10.2 HOLIDAYS

Northwestern Oklahoma State University observes certain holidays to be announced by the President. (See Section 2.6 Holiday Pay).

10.3 MILITARY LEAVE

Per Oklahoma statute, all regular full-time employees of the University who are officers or enlisted in any component of the armed forces of the United States shall, when ordered by proper authority to active duty or service, be entitled to a leave of absence for such active service without loss of status or proven performance evaluation, and without loss of pay, during the first 20 workdays of such leave per fiscal year. Military leave does not affect the accumulation of any other type of leave.

Prior approval must be obtained by submitting a copy of the duty orders to the supervisor.

Northwestern Oklahoma State University also abides by the provisions of the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) in employment issues concerning members of the armed forces.

10.4 JURY DUTY

When in obedience to a subpoena or direction by proper authority, an employee appears as a jury member for the federal government or state of Oklahoma, he or she shall be entitled to a leave of absence for such duty with full pay from the University. The employee must submit a copy of the subpoena to his or her supervisor who shall then forward it to the President's Office (for the employee's personnel file) prior to the start of the leave. If an employee is not selected for jury duty after reporting each of the required days, he or she must return to work for the remainder of the day. After completing jury duty, the employee must provide the supervisor with evidence of having

served on a jury for the time claimed. The employee is responsible for reporting to the IRS monies earned by the jury duty.

10.5 SICK LEAVE

10.5.1 Definition

Sick leave is a period of time during which an employee is unable to work because of illness, injury, or medical, surgical, dental, or optical examinations or treatment, or because the employee has been exposed to a contagious disease which would jeopardize the health of co-workers. Absence due to illness of immediate family members may be charged to sick leave. Sick leave should never be construed as “annual leave time.”

10.5.2 Rate

Regular full-time 12-month employees are eligible for sick leave with full pay based on the rate of 15 days per calendar year, with maximum accumulation of 130 days or until the employee qualifies for group long-term disability insurance benefits, whichever comes first. Employees may only use sick leave accrued prior to the date of absence.

10.5.3 Procedure

Employees, or their representatives, should notify supervisors of absences due to personal illness or injury as soon as possible. Failure to give such notice may be considered as cause for dismissal. The supervisor must be notified each day the employee is unable to work.

10.5.4 Termination

Employees who terminate employment with the University shall forfeit all unused sick leave. However, any member of Oklahoma Teacher's Retirement System who has one hundred twenty (120) days of accumulated unused sick leave at retirement may add such days to days employed by the public schools of Oklahoma (including Northwestern Oklahoma State University) in obtaining an additional year of credit toward retirement. The employee should ask Teachers' Retirement for the proper form for verification of unused sick leave at the time of termination, although he or she may not be retiring directly from Northwestern. At retirement time, Teachers' Retirement combines unused sick leave balances from all participating employers.

10.6 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

10.6.1 Definition

In compliance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Northwestern Oklahoma State University provides up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have worked for Northwestern Oklahoma State University for at least one year, and for at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve months. Unpaid leave may be granted for any of the following reasons:

- 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
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

10.6.2 Requirements

Taking of leave may be denied if the following requirements are not successfully met:

- The employee must provide 30 days advance notice when the leave is "foreseeable"
- The University will require medical certification to support a request for leave because of a serious health condition, and may require second or third opinions (at university expense) and a fitness for duty report to return to work.
- For information regarding the need for reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, contact the Dean of Student Services Office.

10.6.3 Benefits and Protection

For the duration of FMLA leave, the University will maintain the employee's health coverage under the group health plan as it was prior to the commencement of FMLA leave. The employee is responsible for paying by check or money order all premiums that normally would be withheld from pay.

10.7 VOTING LEAVE

A reasonable amount of time off with pay will be given for the purpose of voting in national, state, and local elections, not to exceed two hours in most instances. If the employee works at such a distance from the voting place that more than two hours are required, then the employee shall be allowed a sufficient time in which to cast a ballot. The supervisor should be notified no later than the day before the election of the employee's need to have time off for voting. When necessary, the law allows supervisors to adjust employees' work schedules in order to allow sufficient time off for voting.

