AGENDA OF THE FACULTY SENATE – NORMAN CAMPUS

November 9, 2026 – 3:00 pm

Thurman J. White Forum Building

- **Call to order and determination of quorum**
- **Approval of the Senate Journal for the regular session of October 12, 2026**
- **Announcements**
- **Vote: PACFA Proposed Policy Amendments**
- **Senate Chair's Report** (attached)
- **Samuel Price, Director of the OU Testing Center**
- **Sarah Ellis, Vice Provost for Faculty: PACFA Policy updates**
- **Committee of the Whole**
  - Administrative Accountability Update
- **New Business**
- **Adjourn**

JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY SENATE

The University of Oklahoma (Norman Campus)
Regular session – October 12, 2026 – 3:00 p.m.
Thurman J. White Forum Building, 1704 Asp Ave – Conference Room A
Office: Chemistry Building, Room 207 | Phone: 405-325-6789
Email: FacSen@ou.edu | Website https://www.ou.edu/facultysenate
Note: The remarks of the Senators and others are summarized and not verbatim

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The meeting was called to order at 3:01 pm by Chair Anderson.

PRESENT: Bert (0), Bisel (0), Browder (0), Cain (1), Cavallo (0), Cavazos (0), De Sa e Silva (0), Endersby (0), Endersby (0), Fagin (0), Fahes (0), Feng (0), Ghosh (0), Gordon (1), Grinnell Davis (1), Grispino (0), Hahn (0), Hambright (0), Hill (0), Hooper (0), Jablonski (0), Kang (1), Kazempoor (0), Kershen (0) Ketchum (0), Kibbey (0), Lamothe (0), Lin (0), Liu (0), Lungmus (1), Meek (0), Mortazavi (0), Mountford (0), Muraleetharan (0), Noyori-Corbett (0), Oikeh (0), Olufowote (0), Phillips (0) Preuss (0), Sarmiento (0), Sharma (0), Smith (0), Warnken (0) Watson (0), Wood (0), Youngbull (0)

FS Chair: Rebecca Anderson
FS Chair-Elect: Julia Abramson
FS Secretary: Sarah Breen
FS Executive Committee Members (Non-senators): Jeremy Bentley, Peter Soppelsa, David McLeod, Cynthia Gordon
FS Administrative Manager: Ann Seely

Guests: Lee Camargo Quinn, HR Director of Benefits and Retirement
Sarah Ellis, Vice Provost for Faculty

ABSENT: Bhattarai (2), Cortest (1), Edgerton (2), Elliott (1), Ernest (1), Ethridge (1), Grunsted (1), Kaoutzani (1), Ling (1), Nollert (2), Quiroga (1), Schmeltzer (2)

Note: During the period from September 2026 to May 2027, the Senate holds eight regular sessions. The figures in parentheses above indicate the number of absences.

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DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM.
Quorum was achieved.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL
The Faculty Senate Journal for the regular meeting of September 21, 2026, was approved. Senator Muraleetharan moved to approve, and the motion was seconded by Senator Pruess. The vote passed and the journal was approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
Chair Anderson indicated that senator survey results have been reviewed and speakers are being arranged in response for spring meetings.

SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT, BY CHAIR ANDERSON
The report was distributed via email. Chair Anderson opened the floor to questions. Senator Muraleetharan had a question on the Simple Syllabus. Senator Muraleetharan expressed concern about whether syllabi uploaded to Simple Syllabus would become part of a searchable database that could be searched for keywords and asked why the change was required. Chair Anderson explained that the platform is being piloted through Canvas and that the spring pilot is open to all faculty. She stated that Simple Syllabus will be on the February agenda and that her understanding is that access will be limited to Canvas and syllabi will not be searchable on the public web. Senator Ghosh asked when use of Simple Syllabus would become mandatory. Chair Anderson responded that it would be required beginning in fall 2027.

SARAH ELLIS, VICE PROVOST FOR FACULTY: PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR FACULTY ACCOUNTABILITY
Sarah Ellis, Vice Provost for Faculty, presented proposed revisions to four policies addressing faculty evaluation, salary adjustments, promotion, and college administration.

Faculty Evaluation Policy
Vice Provost Ellis explained that the proposed Faculty Evaluation policy consolidates material from existing Board of Regents and Norman Campus policies, including evaluation criteria previously included in the salary adjustment policy. A substantive revision establishes a timeline for updating unit evaluation criteria when changes are needed and allows the dean and provost to implement changes if that timeline is not met. Vice Provost Ellis emphasized that evaluations should reflect faculty distributions of effort and that multiple distributions may exist within a unit to accommodate different faculty responsibilities.

Senator Muraleetharan asked which existing policies would be replaced, noting that this was not always clear. Vice Provost Ellis explained that the committee recommended repealing the separate Norman Campus policy so that a single policy would apply. Senator Muraleetharan commended the committee's work. Vice Provost Ellis noted that the extent of the restructuring made a comprehensible redline comparison impractical.

Senator Muraleetharan raised concerns about requiring provost approval for distributions of effort that differ from unit standards, suggesting that this could result in excessive centralization. He proposed requiring approval only when the deviation exceeds a specified percentage. Vice Provost Ellis acknowledged the concern and explained that current practices are inconsistent, with some adjustments handled within units and others involving deans. She noted that the provost is generally involved when there is a memorandum of understanding.

Vice Provost Ellis noted that "academic year" would be changed to "evaluation cycle" in the final sentence of the first paragraph of Section 3.

A Senator asked whether the IVE evaluation model would affect the proposed policy. Vice Provost Ellis explained that the policy establishes broad requirements for annual evaluations and identification of faculty

workload distributions without prescribing a specific evaluation process. She stated that it should therefore be compatible with the IVE model.

Senator Ghosh asked about the review cycle for identifying necessary changes to unit evaluation criteria. Vice Provost Ellis responded that this would occur through Academic Program Review, which takes place every five years. Senator Ghosh then asked whether the policy should explicitly identify that cycle. Vice Provost Ellis stated that the committee had not considered it necessary to tie the policy explicitly to Academic Program Review.

Adjustment in Faculty Salary Policy

Vice Provost Ellis explained that the proposed salary adjustment policy addresses merit raises and adjustments for salary compression and inversion. The proposed language refers to faculty "consistently meeting expectations." Senator Muraleetharan asked whether raises could be awarded as flat dollar amounts rather than percentages to reduce salary inequities. Vice Provost Ellis acknowledged the potential benefits of flat raises but noted a lack of consensus among faculty. Another Senator questioned language linking adjustments to the university's financial ability. Vice Provost Ellis responded that removing the language would not change the financial constraints on implementation. In response to a question about how IVE evaluations would inform raises, Vice Provost Ellis referred to ongoing work by Lori Snyder. Senator Jablonski asked about retention packages. Vice Provost Ellis stated that these are generally handled at the college level and were outside the committee's discussion, although the policy retains flexibility for deans.

Faculty Promotion Policy

Vice Provost Ellis explained that the Advancement in Rank policy had been renamed the Faculty Promotion Policy and substantially restructured to include provisions for non-regular faculty alongside those for ranked faculty. She emphasized that incorporating these provisions into the same document supports the enfranchisement of non-regular faculty, who are among the university's most vulnerable faculty members. She also explained that a revision addresses a discrepancy that could allow faculty to use different versions of promotion and tenure criteria.

Senator Muraleetharan asked about language concerning notification of the faculty vote in tenure cases. The discussion clarified that candidates should be informed whether the faculty supported their tenure application and may request the numerical vote.

Senator Phillips asked how promotion timelines would apply to renewable-term faculty moving between OU units and whether professional experience outside academia could count toward promotion. Vice Provost Ellis stated that unit heads and deans have flexibility to recognize meritorious performance and that faculty may be hired at a higher rank. She noted that relevant teaching ability must also be considered when hiring individuals from outside academia for teaching positions. She acknowledged that transfers between units required further consideration.

Senator Watson asked whether separate unit policies would need to be combined. Vice Provost Ellis clarified that they could remain separate if they function effectively. Another Senator asked whether ranks beyond professor were being considered. Vice Provost Ellis responded that they were not.

A Senator asked whether the provisions for non-regular faculty extended beyond lecturers and instructors to other appointment categories. Vice Provost Ellis clarified that the policy does not affect research faculty supported by soft funding who have separate appointment classifications.

Senator Pruess asked whether faculty serving five consecutive one-year renewable-term appointments would be eligible for promotion. Vice Provost Ellis confirmed that they would and encouraged units and colleges to offer longer appointments where possible.

College Administration Policy

The proposed college administration policy includes language addressing support for research and accreditation. Senators raised questions about deans' responsibilities for curriculum review, reorganization, compliance, and consultation with faculty. Vice Provost Ellis stated that the curriculum review language was unchanged from the current policy and that curriculum remains within the faculty's responsibilities. She clarified that restructuring refers to units within a college and that offering a program online represents a change in modality rather than necessarily a new program. Vice Provost Ellis emphasized that consultation with faculty and other constituents is a governing principle of the revised policy.

Several Senators expressed concern about the scope of deans' discretion, differing interpretations of policy, and the potential for overcompliance. Vice Provost Ellis responded that policy cannot eliminate differences in interpretation and noted that the proposed revisions had been reviewed by the Office of Legal Counsel. She emphasized that the policy contains multiple provisions defining and constraining deans' responsibilities. Senator Muraleetharan suggested that the committee consider recourse for faculty or units with concerns about a dean's actions, particularly when an issue requires a more immediate response than the dean's regular evaluation.

Review and Voting Timeline

The four policies were expected to return to the Faculty Senate for a vote in November. Senator Muraleetharan requested identification of the policies being replaced and the latest revisions. Senators also raised questions about the meaning of the vote and whether the review timeline allowed sufficient consideration. Senator Hambright expressed concern that the process was moving too quickly. Senator Muraleetharan noted the practice of discussing proposals at one meeting and voting at the next, while acknowledging that substantial additional revisions could require further discussion before a vote.

LEE CAMARGO QUINN, HR DIRECTOR OF BENEFITS AND RETIREMENT

Lee Camargo Quinn presented updates to benefits for 2027. Open enrollment will take place October 19–November 6. Benefits fairs were scheduled across OU campuses October 12–15, including two on the Norman Campus.

Camargo Quinn noted that the dental plans will continue through Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS). Monthly employee premiums will increase by $1.28–$3.66 for the basic plan and $2.12–$6.06 for the alternate plan, depending on coverage level. The basic plan has an annual benefit limit of $1,000, while the alternate plan has a limit of $2,000. Routine cleanings and X-rays do not count toward these limits.

The vision plan will remain with VSP, with no change in employee rates for 2027. Life, accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D), and disability coverage will continue through The Standard, with no changes to premium rates. Camargo Quinn noted that individual costs may change based on age or salary, including when employees move into a new five-year age band.

Camargo Quinn explained that flexible spending accounts (FSAs) and health savings accounts (HSAs) will move from Optum Financial and HSA Bank to Fidelity effective January 1, 2027. Employees will be able to access these accounts and their retirement savings through the NetBenefits portal. HSAs will have no investment minimum or fees, and cash balances will earn interest. The presentation listed 2027 HSA contribution limits of $4,500 for individuals and $9,000 for families. FSA contribution limits had not yet been determined. Camargo Quinn emphasized that employees must actively elect HSA and FSA contributions during open enrollment.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will move from Magellan to ComPsych effective January 1, 2027. Employees will continue to have access to six sessions per issue per year. Camargo Quinn noted that ComPsych has a large Oklahoma network of counselors, psychologists, and therapists, as well as an online platform and a catalog covering more than 200 training topics.

BCBS will remain the medical plan carrier, and Rightway will continue as the pharmacy benefit manager. Medical premiums for active employees will increase by 6.77%. Depending on salary tier and coverage level,

monthly employee contributions will increase by $4.84–$60.80 for the PPO plan and $1.88–$39.74 for the high-deductible health plan (HDHP).

Camargo Quinn outlined changes to both medical plans. PPO deductibles will increase from $2,000 to $2,500 for individuals and from $4,000 to $5,000 for families. Primary care copays will remain at $25, while specialist copays will increase from $35 to $40. Emergency room copays will increase from $100 to $200, with associated coinsurance increasing from 15% to 20%. Coinsurance after the deductible will also increase from 15% to 20%. HDHP deductibles will remain at $4,300 for individuals and $8,600 for families, while coinsurance will increase from 15% to 20%. HDHP out-of-pocket maximums will increase from $7,750 to $8,500 for individuals and from $15,500 to $17,000 for families.

Camargo Quinn encouraged employees to use Garner and Zero Health, both of which will remain available in 2027. Garner helps employees identify providers and reimburses qualifying costs. Camargo Quinn shared an example of an employee who used Garner and received a procedure at no cost. Zero Health offers specified services without deductibles, coinsurance, or copays when arranged through the program, including imaging, laboratory testing, certain surgeries, physical therapy, and sleep studies.

A Senator asked about the advantages of using Garner rather than Zero Health. Camargo Quinn suggested considering Zero Health for scheduled surgeries and imaging, while Garner may be useful when comparing or selecting providers. Employees were encouraged to discuss options with their physicians and use the available apps to guide their choices.

Camargo Quinn also reviewed changes to retiree medical coverage. Retirees younger than 65 will see a 7.91% premium increase and the same plan design changes as active employees. Garner and Zero Health will remain available to this group. Humana will continue to provide Medicare Advantage coverage, although medical and prescription drug coverage will be separated and plan design changes will apply. Premiums will also increase for the Humana standalone Part D plan and the Medicare Senior Supplement coverage through Cigna and HealthSpring, with no plan design changes to those options.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Senator Mortazavi moved to enter the Committee of the Whole, and Senator Kershen seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the Senate entered the Committee of the Whole at

Senator Mortazavi moved to exit the Committee of the Whole, and Senator Silva seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the Senate exited the Committee of the Whole at 4:57 p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Anderson asked if there was any new business. Senator Hambright asked whether the parliamentarian could clarify the notice required before voting on proposed policy revisions, questioning whether receiving revisions three days before a meeting satisfied a 30-day notice requirement. Chair Anderson indicated that she believed the required notice had been provided, although Senators questioned whether that requirement had been met. Senator Fahes noted that the versions presented in November would likely be similar to those discussed at the current meeting. Senator Mortazavi asked whether the policies could be discussed and voted on section by section. It was confirmed with the parliamentarian that this approach would be possible.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Mortazavi moved to adjourn, and Senator Pruess seconded the motion. The motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate Meeting of this academic year will be held on November 9th, 2026, at 3:30pm.

Sarah Breen, Faculty Senate Secretary, 2026-27

Faculty Senate Chair's Report – November 2026

Winter break will soon be here, but Faculty Senate has been engaged in many important conversations including shared governance discussions across campus this past month.

In the past month, we welcomed two speakers at the Faculty Senate meeting. First, Lee Camargo Quinn, HR Director of Benefits and Retirement spoke with senators about upcoming changes to Benefits for the 2027 calendar year, to prepare faculty for the impending open enrollment period. The chair of the Faculty Compensation and Benefits committee was also present at this meeting and plans to document these changes in their annual report as part of their committee charge. Second, Sarah Ellis, Vice Provost for Faculty presented four proposed policy changes to the Senate as part of the President's Advisory Committee for Faculty Accountability (PACFA) effort, underway this past summer. These policies were: (1) College Administration Policy, (2) Faculty Evaluation Policy, (3) Adjustment Faculty Salary, and (4) Faculty Promotion. Sarah engaged in a discussion about the proposed changes with our senators, answered questions, and received feedback on each of the four policies. The Senators were given one week to share their written feedback with Sarah Ellis and the PACFA committee. PACFA worked to consider and incorporate some of that feedback into the final versions of the policies. The Faculty Senate will vote on the revised policies at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Communication is essential for faculty engagement with senate activities, so the Faculty Senate sent out the first "In Case You Missed It" (ICYMI) email of the semester to brief our colleagues across campus about what occurred during the first Faculty Senate meeting. Although the Chair's reports will still be included with the meeting materials each month, the Faculty Senate office will continue to send out periodic ICYMI emails to ensure the highlights reach a broader audience, ideally making it is easier for you to connect with your colleagues about the work of the Senate.

The Faculty Senate Executive Committee (FSEC) continued discussions on some of the issues brought forward by faculty surrounding concerns with OUES and the success of online programs across campus, and how to best address them. After ample discussion, FSEC felt it necessary to bring forward the issues to both the Provost and President and deliberated how to best articulate the urgency of these concerns, ask for clarification on the roles and responsibilities of each office regarding online programs, and think of potential solutions to present to each office. Additionally, the Chair of the Faculty Compensation and Benefits Committee (FCBC) presented a draft report on Compression and Inversion of OU Faculty Salaries. Given the feedback from FSEC, FCBC will make minor changes to their report which will be used by FSEC to continue those conversations in the coming weeks with both the Provost and the President.

FSEC held its monthly meeting with Provost André Wright where we relayed faculty concerns about OUES and its effect on online education at OU directly to him. Some of the concerns expressed were about the lack of faculty involvement in aspects of curriculum design in online programs, with additional questions about who owns course content, and what OUES is allowed to do with the Intellectual Property of course materials designed by faculty without prior authorization from faculty. FSEC also relayed that without some clear goals and guidelines outlined for programs, it presents very large reputational risks, and actual harms, to the institution (such as our graduation rates), when online programs overlap with our in-person program curriculum. The Provost indicated he has been in conversations about the potential impacts with his team and will be monitoring the situation as it

progresses. Second, FSEC asked Provost Wright if his office has seen any issues or changes in student enrollment or success with the changing federal landscape in student loans. His office has not seen a direct impact, but he suggested FSEC follow up directly with Jeff Blahnik, Vice President for the Division of Enrollment Management & Chief Enrollment Officer, which we will do at a later date.

FSEC also met with President Harroz this past month where he provided general progress updates toward reaching goals he outlined during the State of the University address earlier in the year. He demonstrated steady progress on a couple of items so far in the year, such as expanding the OU Onward scholarship as part of OU's commitment to making higher education more affordable for Oklahoma families, ongoing monitoring of increasing healthcare costs, and a summary of ongoing conversations across campus regarding best practices for AI. Then, FSEC presented President Harroz with information surrounding financial issues regarding OUES, specifically marketing, planning department budgets, and future potentials to increase faculty hires to meet the growth of OU in an online space. FSEC expressed there is some urgency from faculty in addressing these issues, as several units with online programs went from seeing positive enrollment numbers and budgets that helped the overall unit growth, to now reduced enrollments and unsustainable budgets, which impacts several units across campus. President Harroz acknowledged the problems and the need to address them sooner than later. His plan is to continue conversations about these potential impacts with both Liz Karr and OUES at the table, then outline clear goals with the two of them this semester and report back to FSEC at our next meeting. Jeff Peters, VP of Government Affairs, also attended the meeting and provided an overview of the current federal and state legislative landscape and what we can expect in the upcoming session.

We are more than halfway through the Fall Semester and as we move through November into December, FSEC will continue to follow up with upper administration about faculty concerns with OUES and the Faculty Senate will continue reviewing proposed policy changes from PACFA and prepare for a corresponding vote by the Faculty Senate next month.

Submitted by Rebecca Anderson, 2026-27 Chair, Faculty Senate

Adjustment in Faculty Salary Policy

Introduction:

This policy establishes the principles and procedures governing faculty salary adjustments. Consistent with the University's commitment to systematic evaluation of faculty performance, salary adjustments shall be based on documented achievement and merit from established review processes. The policy also provides mechanisms for addressing salary inequities that may arise from changing conditions or circumstances beyond the University's control while preserving the integrity of the merit-based compensation system.

Policy:

1. Norman Campus

   All salary adjustments shall be based on systematic evaluations of faculty performance.

   a) Salary Adjustments
      i. Faculty who meet or exceed expectations should receive annual merit raises, within the limits of the financial resources of the University.
      ii. At times when a faculty member is recognized with a special award designating a specific merit increase in salary to accompany the award, such special monetary award will be treated as additional to any increase recommended through normal procedures.
      iii. In certain circumstances, merit salary increases may cause the salary of a faculty member to equal or exceed the salary of faculty in higher ranks.

   b) Procedures for Recommendations on Salary Adjustments
      i. The academic unit will annually collect (1) achievement data from all the academic unit's faculty and (2) evaluations of each faculty member's performance from their supervisors and from other sources identified in unit policies.

      ii. For each faculty member, the unit head (with input from Committee A, when appropriate) will prepare a recommendation based upon a comparison of faculty performance within the University and unit criteria and forward that recommendation to the dean.
      iii. The dean will review each recommendation and, if needed, will suggest any changes or adjustments. Chairs/Directors will have the opportunity to discuss these with the Dean if they disagree with the changes.
      iv. The salary recommendations from the college will be forwarded from the dean to the Senior Vice President and Provost for additional discussion, further recommendations, and administrative action.
      v. Each faculty member may request the reasons for the salary recommendation that was made. It is the responsibility of the chair to discuss such matters individually with the unit's faculty. These discussions should take place as soon as feasible following delivery of official salary notifications.

   c) Adjustments of Salary Inequities

      i. For faculty consistently meeting expectations, adjustments in salary may be needed to correct inequities caused by annual variations in available funds, changing conditions in the academic

profession or in the economy, or other elements beyond the University's control. The responsibility for making adjustments, where needed, lies primarily with the dean, who, after consultation with the appropriate academic unit, recommends to the Senior Vice President and Provost specific salary adjustments to correct inequities. Such adjustments should be treated as additional to any increase recommended through normal procedures and subject to resource availability and approval of the Board of Regents.

2. Health Campus

College Administration Policy

Definitions:

N/A

Policy:

1. College Organization
   To accomplish its academic mission, the University is divided into colleges with deans as their chief administrative officers. Each dean is responsible for an administrative organization designed to meet the particular needs of the college. Associate deans, assistant deans, and staff support the college deans in carrying out the responsibilities of their offices to fulfill the mission of the college. The programs and faculty of a college usually are divided into separate units such as schools, departments, or divisions. When a college is divided into separate units, the dean shares (or delegates) many of the specific responsibilities outlined in this policy statement with college staff and the chairs/directors of the separate units. In colleges not divided into separate units, the college organization is similar to departmental organization as described in the Departmental Administration Policy. Some colleges, particularly the Graduate College, College of Continuing Education, College of Professional and Continuing Studies, and University Libraries, are organized differently due to their unique missions within the University.

2. College Governance Documents
   College faculty and administrators shall develop written policies and procedures to provide governance for the college. These governance documents shall be subject to review and approval of the Senior Vice President and provost and must be consistent with current policies of the University Regents, President, and Senior Vice President and Provost. The college governance documents shall be reviewed regularly by the college administration and faculty to ensure that they comply with current University and college policies. The college governance documents shall address at least the following subjects:

   a. The mission of the college and any of its separate units;
   b. Administrative organization of the college;
   c. Faculty governance within the college, including college committee structure and rules and procedures for faculty meetings;
   d. Procedures and criteria for hiring faculty, staff, and administrators;
   e. Procedures and criteria for annual faculty evaluation;
   f. Procedures and criteria for promotion and tenure;
   g. Procedures and criteria for evaluation of the dean and chairs/directors;
   h. Other policies defining the operation, authority, and policies of any separate units within the college.

3. General Responsibilities of the Dean
   The dean provides leadership and administrative support to the programs and faculty of the

college in performing the missions of teaching, research/creative activity, and service. The dean represents the college in relations with the University Regents, the President, the Senior Vice President and Provost, other colleges, and other administrative officers of the University. The dean is responsible to the President through the Senior Vice President and Provost and is accountable to many constituencies including the faculty, staff, students, administrators, and alumni of the college. Whenever appropriate, the dean is expected to consult with, receive advice from, and communicate college decisions and recommendations of importance to the college to the constituents. However, the dean maintains the authority and discretion to carry out the University's mission and ensure compliance with applicable policies, rules, and laws within the college.

4. Specific Responsibilities of the Dean
The following is a non-exhaustive list of responsibilities of the dean. From time to time, the Senior Vice President and Provost or the faculty of the college may suggest additional specific responsibilities. In any particular college, the specific responsibilities of the dean may vary depending on the mission, organization, and size of the college. The specific responsibilities of an individual dean in a particular college must be flexible to respect these differences between colleges.

    a. To the University at large, the Dean is responsible for:

        i. Representing the college whenever appropriate.

        ii. Implementing and disseminating information to college faculty and staff about all policies of the University.

        iii. Participating in the Dean's Council by advising the Senior Vice President and Provost concerning strategic planning, budgeting needs, University policy changes, activities, matters of mutual interest, and other priorities of the University.

        iv. Assisting the President and the Senior Vice President and Provost in the selection of deans and other University administrative officers.

        v. Providing an annual report to the President and other constituencies concerning the performance of the dean's college.

        vi. Cooperating with other colleges in the development of interdisciplinary programs consistent with University goals and objectives.

        vii. Contributing to a general spirit of University cooperation and collegiality.

    b. To the College, the Dean is responsible for:

        i. Providing leadership in the organization, operations, development, and evaluation of the instructional, research/creative activity, and service programs appropriate to the college and consistent with University and college strategic planning.

        ii. Setting priorities for college-level alumni development and fund-raising activities and assisting the college and its separate units with

implementing and maintaining an active alumni development and fund-raising program.

iii. Planning, preparing, submitting, and managing the college budget.

iv. Fostering the welfare of the entire college faculty and staff and encouraging, facilitating, and mentoring their work and professional development.

v. Recommending the appointment, promotion, and tenure of faculty according to University and college guidelines (see the Faculty Appointments Policy and Faculty Tenure Policy).

vi. Implementing personnel policies concerning faculty and staff of the college

vii. Implementing disciplinary processes, including but not limited to the imposition of minor or severe sanctions.

viii. Providing leadership to the faculty in reviewing, evaluating, and developing appropriate curricula and effective academic programs of study within the college.

ix. Provide leadership over accreditation processes as appropriate to the college.

x. Fostering an expectation of faculty excellence in research and creative activity and providing the infrastructure required to achieve that excellence.

xi. Seeking advice from faculty, chairs/directors, and staff on matters affecting the college when appropriate.

xii. Informing the college faculty and staff when it is in the best interest of a college to plan and effect reorganization among its units to respond to new circumstances or to strengthen existing programs.

xiii. Presiding over meetings of the college faculty.

xiv. Assuring that faculty and staff have access to University, college, and departmental policies.

xv. Evaluating the performance of unit chairs/directors and other administrative staff reporting to the dean according to University and college policies. (See the Departmental Administration Policy.)

xvi. Initiating procedures to search for chairs/directors and other administrative staff of the college whenever a vacancy occurs. (See the Departmental Administration Policy.)

xvii. Evaluating the facility needs of the college and periodically advising the Senior Vice President and Provost of these facility needs.

xviii. Developing strategies to recognize outstanding achievements by faculty and staff through appropriate awards and honors.

xix. Fostering a spirit of cooperation and teamwork within the college.

c. To the students in the College, the Dean is responsible for:

i. Providing an academic environment that nurtures all students in order to promote their success through counseling, professional advice, and other assistance when necessary.

ii. Providing an academic advising system that informs students of all academic requirements of the college and their progress toward meeting those requirements.

iii. Seeking advice from students on matters affecting the college.

iv. Implementing University and college procedures to ensure an ethical and equitable academic atmosphere by enforcing policies involving such issues as academic misconduct, academic grade appeals, and ethics in research.

v. Developing strategies to recognize outstanding achievement by students through appropriate awards and honors.

vi. Enforcing admission and graduation requirements of the college.

vii. On behalf of the faculty, recommending the conferral of a degree(s) for students who have met the requirements as determined by University and college regulations.

d. To external constituencies, the Dean is responsible for:

i. Cooperating with and providing college-related leadership to University units that support the alumni development, fund raising, government relations, and public relations efforts of the University.

ii. Communicating with graduates and other appropriate external constituencies concerning matters of interest to the college.

iii. Seeking advice from graduates and other appropriate external constituencies concerning matters affecting the college.

iv. Cooperating with the University in disseminating information about the college to the State Regents, the Legislature, and government entities.

5. Faculty Responsibility of a Dean
In addition to the administrative responsibilities described above, the dean may be involved in teaching, research/creative activity, and service. The extent of involvement in teaching, research/creative activity, and service should be determined by the dean in consultation with the Senior Vice President and Provost. While the dean is normally granted tenure within an academic unit of the college, the dean does not vote at faculty meetings of the unit.

6. Appointment of a Dean
   The dean is normally appointed on a twelve (12) month basis. The dean of a college shall be initially appointed to a specific term as negotiated by the Senior Vice President and Provost, thereafter renewable by the Board of Regents upon the recommendation of the President.
7. Retention of a Dean
   The dean of the college serves at the pleasure of the President upon the recommendation of the Senior Vice President and Provost and is entitled to 12-months notice of the termination or non-renewal of appointment unless good cause exists. Where termination is for good cause, it may be immediate and without prior notice. Retention or non-retention of a dean is recommended by the Senior Vice President and Provost after completion of the comprehensive evaluation process under Section 9(b) below.
8. Selection Procedure for a New Dean
   The selection procedures for a new dean are described in the Administrative Search Committees Policy.
9. Performance Evaluation of a Dean
   Evaluation of the dean's performance is carried out by the Senior Vice President and Provost. It includes but is not limited to confidential evaluation by the faculty of the college. The faculty's assessment of the performance of their dean is carried out at regular intervals, as described below. The primary purpose of an evaluation is to provide constructive information toward how well job expectations are being met by the dean. The information will be made available to the dean, as well as to the University officers to whom the dean is responsible. A summary of the performance evaluation of the dean shall be shared with the appropriate college committee or group.

    a. Annual Evaluation
       An annual performance evaluation will be conducted of all deans by the Senior Vice President and Provost. The annual evaluation shall include:

        i. A self-assessment by the dean.

        ii. Confidential evaluation by the faculty of the college conducted by the Senior Vice President and Provost.

        iii. A report to the Senior Vice President and Provost from the college faculty and staff concerning the performance of the dean using the procedures and criteria adopted by the college.

        iv. A formal consultation between the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost.

    b. Comprehensive Evaluation
       A comprehensive performance evaluation of the dean will occur at least every five years and shall be completed at least 12 months prior to the conclusion of a dean's appointed term. In addition to a compilation of the dean's annual evaluations, the comprehensive evaluation shall include input from the faculty, chairs/directors, and staff, students of the college, and other deans and administrative officers of the University. In planning the comprehensive evaluation, the Senior Vice President and Provost will respect differences among the various colleges. The comprehensive evaluation may include an external evaluation.

    c. Evaluation Procedures and Criteria
       The Senior Vice President and Provost shall develop written procedures and

criteria for the annual and comprehensive evaluation of the college dean. Evaluation procedures should provide the opportunity for input into the evaluation from the faculty, chairs/directors, staff, students, and appropriate external constituencies of the college.

10. Vacancy
    Whenever a dean position is vacant, the Senior Vice President and Provost shall appoint an interim or acting dean of the college until a permanent dean assumes responsibility for the college. Prior to the appointment, the Senior Vice President and Provost shall seek input from representatives of the faculty, chairs/directors, and staff of the college involved to obtain advice on an appropriate candidate for the interim or acting dean. (For the effect of an interim appointment on the selection procedure for a new dean, see Interim Officers Policy.)

11. Resolution of a Faculty Grievance Concerning the Dean
    Faculty complaints about the dean will normally be resolved internally through meetings between the dean and faculty representatives. If dissatisfaction is widespread and cannot be resolved by the college, the college faculty, by a majority vote, may request that the Senior Vice President and Provost establishes a five member ad hoc committee to conduct an investigation and report its findings to the Senior Vice President and Provost. The committee shall consist of three faculty members who do not hold appointments in the involved college (two of whom are selected by the Faculty Senate), a dean, and another University officer. After receiving the committee report, the Senior Vice President and Provost will determine an appropriate course of action to resolve the grievances.

Approval Authority:

Senior Vice President and Provost

Former Policy Number:

5.2.1.2 / FHPN 2.8.1

Faculty Evaluation Policy

Introduction:

This policy establishes the criteria and procedures for faculty performance evaluations. Faculty performance evaluations serve two basic purposes: to provide information to the faculty member regarding their work so that they can build upon strengths and improve on weaknesses, and to provide a documented basis for recognizing the quality of the faculty member's work and how well the faculty member meets the academic unit's evaluation criteria for adjustment in salary, promotion, award nominations, and/or tenure.

Policy:

Every faculty member, without exception, is to be evaluated annually by the appropriate academic unit according to the criteria and procedures approved for that unit.

1. Each academic unit, with the participation of the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost, shall create a policy document that 1) identifies standard percentage distributions of faculty effort across the areas of professional activity (teaching; research, and creative/scholarly activity; and professional and University service and public outreach); and 2) clearly and carefully states evaluation criteria and expectations associated with the standard distribution of effort.

2. Percentages of effort for a specific faculty member may deviate from the unit standard in some cases due to specific faculty assignments within an academic unit and/or the mission of an academic unit. Such variations are permitted if, in consultation with the dean, this is determined to assist the University in meeting its mission. As percentages of effort for a specific faculty member may deviate from the unit standards, each unit's evaluation policy must specify how expectations associated with different percentages of effort in each area of professional activity will be scaled.

3. Evaluation policy documents must be reviewed regularly through a process established by the dean and approved by the Senior Vice President and Provost. When review of a unit's policy identifies necessary changes, the unit will have a reasonable time to be established by the Provost to modify the policy and seek approval of the revised policy. If a unit does not modify its policy and seek approval within the allotted time, changes to the policy can be initiated by the dean or the Senior Vice President and Provost. The Senior Vice President and Provost's approval of the revised policy shall indicate a date on which it becomes effective. The revised policy for annual evaluation shall apply to all faculty beginning with the evaluation cycle following the effective date.

   The Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost may initiate policy review outside of the regular process, including requiring immediate changes as needed to comply with the law.

Faculty Promotion Policy

Introduction:

This policy establishes the criteria and procedures governing promotion for Regular and Renewable Term (Lecturers and Instructors) Faculty. Promotion is one important way in which the University recognizes a faculty member's achievements and reflects a positive appraisal of high professional competence and accomplishment. Promotion decisions shall be based on a thorough evaluation of a faculty member's performance in all areas of faculty activity, consistent with the academic unit's approved promotion criteria, the faculty member's letter of appointment, distribution of effort, and any special conditions pertaining to the appointment.

Definitions:

Regular Faculty: Per The Regular Faculty Policy, the Regular Faculty of the University is composed of all faculty members with regular appointments, including tenure-track, tenured, and consecutive term/renewable term appointments. Promotion pathways are as follows: Assistant Professor to Associate Professor to Professor.

Renewable term (historically unranked) faculty include Lecturers (terminal degree required) and Instructors (Master's degree required). Promotion pathways are as follows: Lecturer to Senior Lecturer to Distinguished Lecturer, and Instructor to Senior Instructor to Distinguished Instructor.

Policy:

1. Norman Campus
    a. Criteria for Promotion

        i. Each academic unit, with the participation and approval of the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost, shall establish and publish specific criteria for promotion of all faculty (regular and renewable term) in that unit. These criteria must consider how different distributions of effort are reflected in expected productivity.

        ii. Decisions to promote a faculty member must be based on a thorough evaluation of his or her performance in all applicable areas of faculty activity. The candidate's performance is judged by all recommending parties against the academic unit's approved criteria, the candidate's letter of appointment, distribution of effort, and any special conditions pertaining to the candidate's appointment.

        iii. Promotion criteria must be reviewed regularly through a process established by the dean and approved by the Senior Vice President and Provost. When the review of a unit's criteria identifies necessary changes, the unit will have a reasonable time, to be established by the Provost, to modify the criteria and seek approval of the revised criteria. If a unit does not modify their criteria and have them approved within the allotted time, changes to the criteria can be initiated by the dean or the Senior Vice President and Provost. The Senior Vice President and Provost's approval of the

revised criteria shall indicate a date on which they become effective. The revised criteria for promotion shall apply to all faculty beginning with the academic year following the effective date. However, when a faculty member is under consideration for both promotion to Associate professor and tenure, the criteria for both tenure and promotion will be the same and governed by the Faculty Tenure Policy.

The Office of Senior Vice President and Provost may initiate policy review outside of the regular process, including requiring immediate changes as needed to comply with the law.

iv. The approved criteria determine the emphasis placed on the various areas of faculty activity, subject to the following conditions:

1. Criteria for promotion in all units should include attainment of high standards in teaching, research, creative/scholarly activity, and professional and University service and public outreach. Service in a given rank for any number of years is not a sufficient reason for promotion.

2. Promotion should indicate that the faculty member is of comparable stature with others in his or her field with similar workload assignments at the same stage in their careers at peer institutions.

3. Renewable term Lecturers and Instructors who have five continuous years of full-time employment at the University and have attained high standards will be eligible for promotion to Senior. Senior Lecturers and Instructors who have five continuous years of full-time employment at the University and have attained high standards will be eligible for promotion to Distinguished. Unit heads and deans may initiate earlier promotions when merit/achievement warrants.

4. Promotions should be earned on their own right and not be used as substitutes for salary increases.

b. Procedures for Promotion Decisions

i. Recommendations regarding promotion shall originate in the academic units by procedures to be determined by the Senior Vice President and Provost.

ii. The college dean or the Senior Vice President and Provost may, at his or her discretion, require an academic unit to initiate consideration of promotion for an individual faculty member. In such a case, the academic unit must follow the standard process and forward a recommendation.

iii. The evaluation *process* for promotion of regular faculty should be substantially the same as that used in tenure considerations.

iv. Primary responsibility for gathering complete information on professional activity rests with the individual faculty member. The unit head should work with the faculty member to create a promotion packet that contains all the required materials.

Candidates may include whatever materials they wish in the parts of the promotion packet that are their responsibility, in addition to the required materials. The entire promotion packet must be provided for consideration by any person or group making a recommendation.

v. All recommendations must be in writing and, with the exception of the vote of the unit's faculty members, all recommendations must include a statement of reasons for the recommendation. Notification of all such recommendations made above the level of the academic unit, up to and including the recommendation of the Senior Vice President and Provost, must be provided to the unit's chair and the candidate. The numerical result of the formal secret ballot polling of the unit's faculty members shall be provided to the candidate if the candidate makes a request.

vi. The unit head and Committee A members (if applicable) must provide their recommendations in all promotion packets. Each member shall record an independent opinion, by name, and with no obligation to represent majority departmental opinion. Reasons must be given for all recommendations.

vii. Whenever possible, a promotion should be accompanied by an appropriate increase in salary. If budgetary limitations make this impossible in any particular year, an adjustment should occur at the next budget period when funds are available. Promotions must not be delayed because of budgetary constraints.

(Regents, 2-12-76, 10-6-77, 11-10-77, 2-16-78, 3-9-78, 6-15-78, 7-19-78, 12-14-78, 5-8-80, 3-18-81, 6- 18-81, 7-22-81, 9-17-81, 9-9-82, 12-15-83, 3-8-84, 12-13-84, 12-12-85, 1-15-87, 7-23-87, 5-9-91, 6-13- 91, 7-27-93, 6-27-95, 1-14-97, 3-29-00, 1-27-04)

2. Health Campus…

Status **Active** PolicyStat ID **17552581**

Last Approved	02/2025
Next Review	03/2029
Liaison	Sarah Robbins: Assoc Provost Acad Affairs
Area	BOR>Academic Affairs
Responsible Executives	Senior Vice President and Provost, Norman

Faculty Accountability Policy

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Definitions:

N/A

Policy:

1. A faculty member is held accountable for his or her performance in fulfilling faculty duties and in meeting the requirements of academic responsibility and University policies. Persons who accept full-time employment at the University owe their first duty to the University. Any other employment or enterprise in which they engage for income must be secondary to their University duties. The most immediate agents of faculty accountability are the faculty member's chair or (for the Norman Campus) chair or director and Committee A, who should maintain close and regular communication with the faculty member. Among the various mechanisms for ensuring faculty accountability, the most important include annual evaluations for possible salary increases, annual progress towards tenure letters for tenure-track faculty on the Norman Campus, post-tenure reviews for tenured faculty on the Norman Campus, and such periodic evaluations as those for advancement in rank. These processes have the primary function of identifying meritorious performance to be rewarded, but they also provide a means by which the University may strengthen itself, by identifying needs for improved performance.
2. Meritorious and responsible faculty performance is first and foremost an individual professional obligation. But it is also the product of a cooperative effort by faculty members and administrative officers assisting one another, informing one another, and jointly seeking to assure that each faculty member's capabilities are developed fully and creatively. Performance

that is lacking in merit or responsibility, when identified, is a challenge both to the individual and to the academic unit and its leaders, in their exercise of the unit's career development responsibilities. Just as faculty members are held accountable for their performance, administrators of academic units are held accountable for their leadership in the career development of the faculty in their units.

3. Counseling, career development support, and other kinds of administrative remedies are available to academic units in their normal operations, as a means of attempting to rectify poor professional performance or breaches of academic responsibility. If normal administrative remedies fail to correct a faculty member's poor professional performance or breach of academic responsibility, the President may consider applying a minor sanction, such as a formal reprimand. Prior to any such action, the President shall have consulted fully with the appropriate academic administrative officers including the appropriate chair or director, dean, and Senior Vice President and Provost.
4. For those cases where they are needed, the University has at its disposal the more drastic measures of severe sanctions.

(RM, 3-9-22, p. 37980)

Approval Authority:

Board of Regents

Former Policy Number:

5.1.1.4 / BOR 2.1.3 / FHP 3.3

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Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
	Michelle Stephens: University Policy Director	02/2025

Faculty Accountability Policy

Introduction:

This Policy establishes expectations for faculty professional responsibilities and a framework for addressing concerns when those expectations are not met. Consistent with the University's Academic Freedom and Responsibility Policy, faculty accountability shall be administered in a manner that protects academic freedom and freedom of expression while supporting the standards of teaching, scholarship, professional conduct, and service essential to the University's academic mission.

I. Professional Responsibilities of Faculty

A. Commitment to Excellence

Faculty members are teachers and scholars whose foremost responsibility is to pursue excellence in their own work and to inspire excellence in others, with particular commitment to the learning and success of their students.

B. Responsibilities to Students

Faculty members shall respect the dignity, First Amendment rights, and intellectual autonomy of students. They shall treat students with respect, foster an environment conducive to learning and inquiry, refrain from imposing personal beliefs or opinions, and avoid abuse of their position, authority, or relationships with students.

C. Responsibilities as Teachers and Scholars

Faculty members shall pursue knowledge and truth, contribute to their disciplines, foster positive impacts on stakeholder communities, support the scholarly and creative efforts of others, and continually strengthen their effectiveness as teachers and scholars.

D. Responsibilities to the University Community

Faculty members hold positions of trust and responsibility within the University community. They shall contribute to the academic quality of their academic unit, college, and University and, when serving in administrative, governance, or committee roles, advance the purposes of the University with due consideration for the interests and responsibilities of others.

II. Faculty Accountability and Professional Development

A. Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty members are accountable for fulfilling their faculty duties and meeting standards of academic and professional responsibility. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- maintaining professional competence;
- treating colleagues, staff, and students with respect;
- disclosing and appropriately managing conflicts of interest;
- conducting research ethically, legally, and responsibly, particularly when involving human participants, animals, hazardous substances, or potentially dangerous activities;

- giving appropriate credit for the work and contributions of others, including students, colleagues, and other sources;
- ensuring that courses align with published course descriptions, are taught as scheduled, and student performance is assessed fairly and in a timely manner;
- fostering an environment free from unlawful discrimination and harassment;
- complying with University policies and applicable laws; and
- ensuring that outside employment remains secondary to the fulfillment of University professional responsibilities for full-time faculty.

B. Evaluation and Accountability

Faculty accountability is primarily maintained through established evaluation processes, including annual evaluations, annual progress-toward-tenure reviews for tenure-track faculty, post-tenure reviews for tenured faculty, and periodic reviews for advancement in rank. These processes serve both to recognize meritorious performance and to identify performance that does not meet established expectations.

C. Responsibilities of Unit Heads and Committee A

Although each faculty member bears primary responsibility for maintaining professional competence and fulfilling faculty responsibilities, unit heads should foster faculty development and address identified deficiencies through appropriate guidance and support. They should maintain regular communication with faculty members and address concerns regarding professional performance or responsibilities promptly.

D. Developmental and Corrective Measures

When faculty performance does not meet established expectations, appropriate non-disciplinary measures should ordinarily be considered before disciplinary action. These measures should ordinarily be initiated by the unit head. Such measures may include one or more of the following:

- counseling, guidance, or mentorship;
- structured professional development;
- documented, clearly defined expectations for improvement; or
- a written improvement plan established by the unit head and Committee A in consultation with the faculty member.

These measures are developmental and non-disciplinary and are distinct from sanctions. When appropriate non-disciplinary measures do not resolve a failure to fulfill faculty responsibilities, disciplinary action may be considered in accordance with applicable University policies.

III. Action for Failure to Meet Faculty Responsibilities

A. Action Outside the Regular Review Cycle

Certain concerns regarding faculty performance or conduct may warrant action outside of regular performance review cycles. Depending on the nature, severity, and circumstances of the matter, the University may pursue its established procedures for non-disciplinary corrective measures or

minor or severe sanctions, up to and including termination or abrogation of tenure, in accordance with applicable University policies and procedures.

B. Grounds for Action

Circumstances that may warrant action include, but are not limited to:

- professional incompetence;
- substantial or repeated failure to fulfill the responsibilities of instruction;
- abusive or threatening behavior;
- abuse of their position, authority, or relationships with students;
- a pattern of conduct, or a single severe incident, directed at one or more individuals that a reasonable person in that individual's position would find demeaning, humiliating, or profoundly disrespectful and that substantially interferes with others' ability to do their work, learn, or take part in the unit's governance, or an individual's access to University resources, benefits, or programs;
- substantial disruption of University operations;
- substantial misuse of University resources;
- intentional, repeated, or pervasive academic dishonesty;
- dishonesty related to employment or other professional duties, or dishonesty related to completion of records, credentials, licenses or disclosures;
- substantial, manifest, or repeated failure or refusal to fulfill professional duties and responsibilities;
- substantial, manifest, or repeated failure or refusal to comply with University policies; and
- serious misconduct involving fraud, intentional dishonesty, or violence, or criminal conduct of comparable seriousness, that materially and demonstrably impairs the faculty member's ability to fulfill professional duties or responsibilities.

Disagreement, criticism, the expression of ideas, and good faith participation in shared governance, including criticism of colleagues, the University, or its administration, do not by themselves constitute grounds for action under this Section III. Such expression becomes subject to action when conduct materially and substantially interferes with another person's ability to perform their work, to learn, or to access the resources, benefits, or programs of the University, or otherwise actually disrupts University operations.

C. Applicable Procedures

Any action under this Policy shall follow the applicable procedures, and afford the process set out in the Minor and Severe Sanctions policy, and as otherwise required by applicable policies. Nothing in this Policy displaces those procedures or the protections they provide.

IV. Relation to Academic Freedom and Protected Expression

In furtherance of the University's mission of teaching, learning, research, and public service, the University shall protect and support faculty academic freedom and the conditions necessary for faculty members to fulfill their professional responsibilities, as set out in the Academic Freedom and Responsibility Policy. Faculty members shall have freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas; freedom to present material, including controversial material, relevant to a course of instruction; freedom of expression as protected by the Constitution and applicable law; and freedom to address matters of institutional policy or action in their capacity as faculty members consistent with the professional responsibilities set out in Section I and provided that there is no actual disruption of University operations.

The content or viewpoint of protected expression may not itself serve as the basis for action under this Policy, but expression may be considered as evidence of motive or intent with respect to conduct that is not protected, to the extent permitted by applicable law. Protected speech, academic commentary, good faith participation in shared governance, criticism of colleagues, the University, or its administration, or the exercise of academic freedom does not constitute grounds for sanction solely because the expression is controversial, offensive, unpopular, or objectionable to the University or others. Mere disagreement, offense, or discomfort does not, by itself, constitute grounds for action under this Policy. Such expression becomes subject to action when conduct materially and substantially interferes with another person's ability to perform their work, to learn, or to access the resources, benefits, or programs of the University, or otherwise actually disrupts University operations.

The University shall not take action under this Policy in retaliation for protected expression, good faith participation in shared governance, good faith reporting, or participation in a proceeding under University policy. When conduct subject to action under this Policy is intertwined with protected expression, the University bears the burden of demonstrating that the same action would have been taken based solely on conduct not protected by University policy or applicable law.

Status **Active** PolicyStat ID **18448159**

Last Approved	07/2025
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Liaison	Sarah Robbins: Assoc Provost Acad Affairs
Area	AP>Academic Affairs
Responsible Executives	Senior Vice President and Provost, Norman

Minor and Severe Sanctions Norman Campus Policy

COPY

Introduction:

The University strives to exercise great care in selecting its faculty appointees and in conferring tenure only upon those faculty members who have demonstrated their merit for continuous appointment. For that reason, the imposition of severe sanctions, such as abrogation of tenure or termination of a non-tenured faculty member outside of the nonrenewal process should be an exceptional event. Although such measures may be required infrequently, the purpose of this policy is to establish a pre-disciplinary review procedure for severe sanctions that preserves both the integrity of the University and the rights of faculty members; and to establish procedural safeguards for faculty members against whom minor sanctions may be imposed.

Definitions:

1. Severe sanctions may include, but are not limited to, abrogation of tenure and termination of employment, loss of prospective University privileges for a stated period (for instance, loss of eligibility for a sabbatical leave of absence); a fine; or a reduction in salary.
2. Minor sanctions may include, but are not limited to, suspension of public-facing assignments, suspension of travel privileges for not more than thirty (30) **days**, and/or restitution to the University.
3. Grounds for severe sanctions: While it is not possible to specify all grounds for which abrogation of tenure, termination of employment, or other severe sanctions may be sought, they include, but are not limited to the following:

a. Professional incompetence or dishonesty;

b. Substantial, manifest, or repeated failure to, and/or refusal to fulfill professional duties and responsibilities;

c. Substantial, manifest, or repeated failure to, and/or refusal to adhere to University policies. Note that a faculty member may not appeal a prior finding of a violation of University policy by a University administrative officer or body when such finding has already been appealed under that particular policy (e.g., Institutional Equity matters, Research Misconduct, etc.); and

d. Personal behavior preventing the faculty member from satisfactory fulfillment of professional duties or responsibilities.

4. Non-disciplinary termination(s)

    1. Change in work site. A faculty member is expected to work in the state of Oklahoma (or other assigned University site), except where mutually agreed and authorized pursuant to a remote work agreement approved by the relevant college dean and Senior Vice President and Provost. This provision is not intended to alter agreements made prior to January 12, 2024 that are satisfactory to all parties or to prohibit short-term travel for field work, sabbatical leave, and the like. Changes to work locations, whether to another state or abroad, subject the University to payroll and tax burdens. Faculty members working in other states or abroad, without prior written authorization from the applicable college dean, must request such authorization within five (5) **days** of being informed of this violation. If the applicable dean does not give such authorization within twenty (20) days of this request, the faculty member shall be ineligible for continued employment.

    2. Inability to perform essential functions. A faculty member who is unable to perform the essential functions of the faculty member's position, with or without a reasonable accommodation, is ineligible for continued employment.

    3. Criminal convictions. A faculty member who has (1) pleaded guilty or nolo contendere or who has been found guilty before a court of competent jurisdiction of a violation of a law relating to dishonesty, violence, or where such plea or conviction prevents the faculty member from satisfactorily fulfilling professional duties or responsibilities, or (2) a faculty member that has violated a court order when such violations relate to the faculty member's proper performance of professional responsibilities is ineligible for continued employment. As noted below, faculty members who have been terminated pursuant to this provision may request a hearing before the Faculty Appeals Board on the grounds their plea does not prevent the faculty member from satisfactorily fulfilling their professional duties or responsibilities; however, such hearings are not forums for faculty members to change their plea or relitigate the facts that form the basis for the plea.

    4. Loss of credentials. A faculty member who has lost the professional licensure or credentials required for the faculty member's position is deemed no longer eligible for employment.

    5. Financial exigency. Tenured faculty members or faculty members terminated prior to the expiration of their appointment pursuant to the University's policy on financial exigency.

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5. A faculty member may request a hearing to challenge a non-disciplinary termination using the Procedures for Hearing Faculty Grievances set forth in the Faculty Appeals Board Policy. However, challenges to non-disciplinary terminations are limited to the following grounds as appropriate: 1) the fact of the change in worksite without authorization; 2) the inability to perform essential functions; 3) the relevance of the criminal conviction; or 4) the credentials required for the faculty member's position.
6. The University's Non-Discrimination Policy, the Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment Policy, and the Consensual Sexual Relationships Policy and their associated grievance procedures set forth the policies and procedures for all grievances, and appeals, and sanctions related to any form of discrimination or harassment prohibited by University policy and supercede these rules. Those matters are not within the jurisdiction of the Faculty Appeals Board unless jurisdiction is granted pursuant to those policies.
7. The Faculty Appeals Board is a standing body appointed by the Faculty Senate that responds to requests for a hearing with regard to alleged violations of academic freedom or academic due process, other appealable grievances concerning the alleged failure to follow University policy, or alleged unfairness in the application of University policy unresolved through administrative procedures, tenure abrogation, termination of employment actions (under enumerated circumstances), and severe sanctions.
8. Days shall mean University business days, unless otherwise specified.
9. The Complainant in a proceeding for abrogation of tenure or dismissal prior to the expiration of a term appointment is the University, represented by the President's designee. In all other cases appealing the imposition of sanctions, the party requesting a hearing before the Faculty Appeals Board is the Complainant.
10. The Respondent in a proceeding for abrogation of tenure or dismissal prior to the expiration of a term appointment is the affected faculty member. In all other cases appealing the imposition of sanctions, the Respondent shall be the Department Chair, Director, Dean, or other administrator imposing the sanction.
11. The Respondent and the Complainant are the Parties.

Policy:

1. Procedure for Abrogation of Tenure and Termination of Employment
   Except for matters governed by Institutional Equity Office policies and procedures, the procedure for abrogation of tenure and termination of employment shall follow this format:
   a. Preliminary Investigation and Meeting. When abrogation of tenure or termination of employment is considered, the appropriate administrative officer (i.e. Department Chair, Director, Dean, or Senior Vice President and Provost) must ordinarily investigate the matter and meet with the faculty member in person to discuss the matter, unless reasonably prevented from doing so.
   b. Recommendation for Abrogation. If, after investigation, the appropriate administrative officer decides to recommend abrogation, that recommendation should be conveyed to the President and Senior Vice President and Provost.
   c. President's Review and Notice. If the President agrees with the recommendation, the

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President must notify the faculty member and the **Faculty Appeals Board** in writing and request a hearing in which the University will be the Complainant. The President's notice shall include a copy of the recommendation for abrogation. If the President appoints a designee to represent the President in the proceedings, the notice will also include that information. .

d. Hearing. The **Faculty Appeals Board** will conduct a hearing in conformity with these procedures and present its recommendation to the Board of Regents. If the faculty member agrees with the President's recommendation or otherwise does not wish to contest the recommendation, the faculty member can decline to participate in a hearing and the recommendation for abrogation shall proceed to the Board of Regents as uncontested. If at any point during the hearing process, the faculty member ceases participation, the hearing process will terminate and the President's recommendation shall proceed to the Board of Regents as uncontested.

e. Board of Regents Action. The Board of Regents shall give all reasonable consideration to the recommendations of the President and, if applicable, the **Faculty Appeals Board** Hearing Committee before making a decision. In all cases, only the Board of Regents has the power to abrogate tenure.

2. Procedure for Severe Sanctions Other than Abrogation of Tenure and Termination
Except for matters governed by the Institutional Equity Office policies and procedures, the procedure for the imposition of **severe sanctions** other than abrogation of tenure and termination of employment shall follow this format:

a. Preliminary Investigation and Meeting. The conduct of a faculty member that may warrant the imposition of **severe sanctions** shall be brought to the attention of the appropriate administrative officer(s) (i. e., Department Chair, Director, Dean, or Senior Vice President and Provost), who shall ordinarily investigate the matter to include, among other things, meeting with the faculty member in person to fully discuss the matter, unless reasonably prevented from doing so.

b. Imposition of **Severe Sanctions**. If after investigation, the administrative officer determines the conduct warrants the imposition of **severe sanctions**, the Senior Vice President and Provost, or the dean with approval from the Senior Vice President and Provost, has the power to impose **severe sanctions** short of termination or abrogation

c. Request for Hearing. The faculty member may appeal the decision of the Senior Vice President and Provost to the **Faculty Appeals Board**.

d. Review for Sufficiency and Pre-hearing. The **Faculty Appeals Board** shall evaluate the appeal and determine whether to conduct a pre-hearing and/or hearing in accordance with these procedures.

e. Hearing. If a hearing is warranted, the **Faculty Appeals Board** will conduct a hearing in conformity with these procedures, and shall forward its recommendations to the President.

f. President's Disposition. The President shall give all reasonable consideration to the recommendations of the **Faculty Appeals Board** Hearing Committee and make a decision to uphold, modify, or revoke the **severe sanction**, which shall be final.

3. Leave of Absence Pending a Formal Hearing or Appeal of Severe Sanctions

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Upon consultation with or recommendation by the department chair, the Senior Vice President and Provost, or the dean, with approval from the Senior Vice President and Provost, has the power to place a faculty member on a leave of absence pending **severe sanctions** proceedings. The duration of leave may vary based on the circumstances giving rise to the hearing or appeal. Alternatively, the Senior Vice President and Provost may assign the faculty member to other duties or a redistribution of effort in lieu of leave.

In cases where the President recommends abrogation of tenure or termination of employment , the President may place the faculty member on unpaid leave if, and once, the pre-Hearing panel has determined the matter will proceed to a formal hearing. Should a formal Hearing Committee find in favor of the faculty member, the faculty member will be entitled to any base compensation denied while on leave without pay. Any leave of absence, reassignment, or redistribution of effort imposed under this section is not in itself an appealable sanction.

4. Minor Sanctions
   Except for matters governed by the Institutional Equity Office policies and procedures, the chair/director of the academic unit, with approval from the dean, has the power to impose **minor sanctions**.

   A faculty member against whom the imposition of **minor sanctions** is sought must be informed in writing of the basis for the action.

   A faculty member who believes the sanctions are unfair/unsupported may appeal the sanction(s) imposed to the Senior Vice President and Provost within twenty (20) **days** of notice of the sanction(s). The Senior Vice President and Provost will review the sanction(s) imposed, meet with the faculty member if requested, and decide to affirm, modify, or revoke the **minor sanctions**. The decision of the Senior Vice President and Provost is final.
5. Appeals of Severe Sanctions (other than Abrogation of Tenure and Dismissal):
   a. Deadline for Filing an Appeal
      A **Complainant** must initiate an appeal within twenty (20) **days** after receiving notice of the imposition of the **severe sanction**. Nine-month faculty who do not have a University appointment during the summer may suspend the time for filing a grievance or responding to a grievance, from the last classroom day of the spring semester until the first classroom day of the fall semester by providing written notice to the **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair. The Chair of the Faculty Appeals Board may grant an extension for good cause shown, not to exceed twenty (20) **days.**

   b. **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair Initial Evaluation
      The **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair, with the concurrence of the Vice Chair, has the responsibility to determine if a written request for a hearing is timely and that the action appealed is a **severe sanction** within the **Faculty Appeals Board**'s review authority. If the request is timely and appealable, the process will continue. If the request is not timely and/or appealable, the Chair shall notify both **Parties** and the process will end. In cases where the Chair is unable to determine from the Request for Hearing whether the matter falls within the **Faculty Appeals Board's** review authority, the Chair may contact the appropriate party to clarify the request or cure any deficiencies in the request, if appropriate. In addition, if a matter is deemed not to be an appealable **severe sanction**, but would otherwise constitute an eligible appeal, grievance, or complaint (e.g., tenure denial), the Chair may recharacterize the

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complaint accordingly and the matter may proceed pursuant to the Procedures for Grievance Hearings set forth in Policy [Number]: **Faculty Appeals Board**. The decision of the Chair and the Vice Chair is final. Should the Chair and Vice-Chair disagree, the Chair of the Faculty Senate shall select a third member of the Faculty Appeals Board to review the request and break the tie.

c. Pre-hearing Meeting
Within ten (10) **days** of receipt of an eligible appeal, the **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair shall appoint a pre-hearing panel and hold a pre-hearing meeting with the **Complainant** and **Respondent**. The **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair will Chair the pre-hearing meeting. The purpose of the pre-hearing meeting is to determine whether an eligible appeal should proceed to a formal hearing. Ineligible appeals not previously dismissed by the Chair, or appeals that are frivolous or duplicative, should be dismissed and the President so notified. Otherwise, the process will continue to a formal hearing following the procedures in Section G. Formal **Faculty Appeals Board** Hearing Procedures.

At the pre-hearing meeting, no documents or physical evidence should be introduced, and no witnesses shall be called, but the **Parties** must appear and relate their views of the matter. A party who fails to appear and/or participate in the pre-hearing meeting is deemed to have waived future rights to participate in formal proceedings. As soon as reasonably practicable, but not more than five (5) **days** after the pre-hearing meeting, the pre-hearing panel shall determine by majority vote whether the appeal should proceed or be dismissed and notify the **Parties** in writing. The Chair shall have discretion to modify the procedures of the pre-hearing meeting as necessary to provide a fair and efficient process for all **Parties** and the **Faculty Appeals Board** members.

6. Initiation of Proceedings for Abrogation of Tenure and Dismissal
When notifying a faculty member of a recommendation of termination or abrogation of tenure, the President shall also notify the **Faculty Appeals Board** that the President, or their designee, requests a hearing. However, the University's Non-Discrimination Policy, the Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment Policy, and the Consensual Sexual Relationships Policy set forth the policies and procedures for all grievances, **appeals, and sanctions** related to any form of discrimination or harassment prohibited by University policy. Those matters are not within the jurisdiction of the Faculty Appeals Board unless jurisdiction is granted pursuant to those policies.

    a. Pre-hearing Meeting
    Within ten (10) **days** of receipt of a recommendation from the President, the **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair shall appoint a pre-hearing panel and hold a pre-hearing meeting with the **Complainant** and **Respondent**. The **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair will Chair the pre-hearing meeting. The purpose of the pre-hearing meeting is to determine whether the University's recommendation for abrogation sets forth sufficient basis to proceed to a formal hearing. Due to the seriousness of the allegations and the severity of the recommended sanctions, in cases where abrogation of tenure or termination of employment is recommended, the University has the burden of proving that it has presented sufficient grounds to move to the formal hearing stage.

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At the pre-hearing meeting, no documents or physical evidence should be introduced, and no witnesses shall be called, but the **Parties** must appear and relate their views of the matter. A party who fails to appear and/or participate in the pre-hearing meeting is deemed to have waived future rights to formal proceedings. As soon as reasonably practicable, but not more than five (5) **days** after the pre-hearing meeting, the pre-hearing panel shall determine by majority vote whether the matter should proceed and notify the **Parties**, including the President, in writing. If the **Respondent** fails to appear and/or participate, formal proceedings will cease and the President will recommend termination or abrogation of tenure to the Board of Regents.

7. Formal Faculty Appeals Board Hearing Procedure – Severe Sanctions
   All matters proceeding to a formal hearing before a **Faculty Appeals Board** Hearing Committee shall be handled according to the following procedures. The **Faculty Appeals Board** process is a lay process that relies on peer review and the common sense, sound judgment, good character, and sense of fairness of each Hearing Committee member. The **Faculty Appeals Board** procedures should strive to diminish formality and rigidity. The process is not to be considered a trial but is a system of internal review to effect a just and fair disposition of a grievance. From time to time, compliance with applicable state and/or federal law(s) may require modification of the **Faculty Appeals Board** process, which includes modification of the related hearing procedures. In addition, as this is not a formal legal process, deviations from these procedures may occur from time to time; minor procedural errors, standing alone, shall not invalidate a Hearing Committee's decision. The time intervals specified in the preceding and following sections should be maintained unless waived by the Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** for unusual circumstances or in order to allow continuing progress towards informal resolution of the complaint.

   All responsibilities of the Chair will be relinquished and passed to the vice Chair if the **appeal** at issue is from a faculty member in the same college as the Chair of if another conflict exists in the judgement of the Chair of the Faculty Senate. In addition, should the Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** be unable to fulfill their responsibilities in a timely manner, the Chair of the Faculty Senate may request the Chair delegate some or all of the duties for a particular matter to the Vice Chair. If available, the Chair or Vice Chair may delegate scheduling and logistical duties to the Administrative Manager of the Faculty Senate. Additionally, the **Faculty Appeals Board** may consult with a member of the Office of Legal Counsel for advice on relevant policies and procedures. The process may end due to lack of participation or if the appeal is withdrawn by either the faculty member or the President or President's designee.

   a. Submission of Complaint and Response
      If the pre-hearing panel votes to forward a matter for formal hearing, the Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** will request the **Complainant** submit to both the Chair and the **Respondent**, within fifteen (15) **days**, the following:

      i. Relevant policies of the administrative or academic unit, the College, the Senior Vice President and Provost's Office, the President's Office, and the Board of Regents.

      ii. The written Complaint stating in full the grounds upon which the alleged grievance is based.

      iii. A summary of the evidence upon which the Complaint is based.

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iv. A list of witnesses proposed to be called and a brief summary of the testimony of each proposed witness.

The Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** will, upon receipt of the **Complainant**'s statement, request the **Respondent** submit to both the Chair and the **Complainant**, within fifteen (15) **days**, the following:

i. Relevant policies of the administrative or academic unit, the College, the Senior Vice President and Provost's Office, the President's Office, and the Board of Regents.

ii. The written Response outlining the specific points of defense.

iii. A summary of the evidence to be used in refuting the charges.

iv. A list of proposed witnesses to be called and a brief summary of the testimony of each proposed witness.

b. Selection of Hearing Committee:

i. Distribution of List of Eligible Members and Review for Bias
When providing written notice to the **Parties** that a matter is proceeding to a formal hearing, the Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** will include the list of names of the **Faculty Appeals Board** members who are eligible to serve on the Hearing Committee. The list shall not include a member or alternate of the same academic unit or one who is related to the **Respondent** or **Complainant**. Members and alternates currently serving on another Hearing Committee shall also be ineligible. The Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** may, in the Chair's discretion, also exclude a member in the event of a known conflict of interest related to the person(s) or issue at hand.

ii. Selection and Disqualification
Within five (5) **days** after submitting the list of eligible Board members to both **Parties**, the Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** will select five (5) members of the Board to constitute the Hearing Committee and three (3) additional members to serve as alternates.

The selection of members and alternate members of the Hearing Committee shall be made by lot and shall be made in the presence of an officer of the Faculty Senate. The **Parties** shall be invited to be present or to send a representative. The Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** shall notify both **Parties** of the Hearing Committee membership. The Chair shall also notify members in writing of their selection to the Hearing Committee and of the **Parties** involved and provide a brief description of the general nature of the issue. Members who cannot serve objectively must so notify the Chair within five (5) **days**.

Within five (5) **days** of notice of the initial selection of the Hearing Committee, the **Complainant** or the **Respondent** may submit a written request to the Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** and to the other party asking that members or alternates of the Hearing Committee be

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disqualified on grounds of bias or personal interest in the case. If, however, a challenge for cause is disputed by either of the **Parties**, the **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair shall decide whether cause has been shown and, if so, replace the member or alternate, drawing again by lot.

A finalized list of Hearing Committee members and alternates will be given to all **Parties** within five (5) **days** of resolving any challenges of the membership of the Hearing Committee. The finalized list must identify which member of the Hearing Committee will serve as the Hearing Committee Chair. The finalized list must be completed within ten (10) **days** of the initial selection of the Hearing Committee and alternates by the Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board**.

Members of the Hearing Committee who are subsequently ineligible, ill, or otherwise unable to serve, shall be replaced from among alternate members by the Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board**.

8. Faculty Appeals Board Hearing Regulations
   The following regulations shall apply:

   a. Timing.
      Every reasonable effort should be made by the Hearing Committee and both **Parties** to hold the hearing as soon as possible. All Hearing Committee members are expected to prioritize Hearing Committee responsibilities above other faculty obligations. Hearing Committee members or alternates who need assistance covering class or other faculty commitments may contact the Provost's Office for assistance to ensure attendance at the hearing. Should the Hearing Committee be unable to schedule the hearing within thirty (30) **days** of receiving the **Respondent**'s response, the **Faculty Appeals Board** Chair and/or the Provost's Office may set a date for the hearing.

   b. Powers and Duties of the Hearing Committee Chair
      The Chair of the Hearing Committee shall preside over the hearing and is authorized to make decisions regarding questions of evidence and admissibility, the conduct of the proceedings, and take all such steps as necessary to maintain an orderly hearing process. The Chair of the **Faculty Appeals Board** shall provide the Chair of the Hearing Committee with a copy of the Complaint and Response as well as the accompanying summary of evidence, list of proposed witnesses, and relevant policies. The Chair of the Hearing Committee, after consulting with the legal counsel assigned to the Committee, shall have the final decision on any procedural issues raised that are not addressed by the Faculty Handbook. If necessary or desired, the Chair of the Hearing Committee may schedule a logistical meeting with the **Parties** to discuss the hearing process, evidentiary matters, or other procedural issues.

      The Chair of the Hearing Committee shall serve as liaison for communication between the **Complainant** or **Respondent** and the Hearing Committee. Communications related to evidence and hearing procedures should be directed to the Chair of the Hearing Committee. Neither party shall communicate orally or in writing with individual Hearing Committee members during the hearing procedure. To ensure that information provided to the Hearing Committee by either party is part

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of the official documentation of the proceeding, the Chair of the Hearing Committee shall provide each party with a copy.

The Chair of the Hearing Committee is responsible for maintaining a full and accurate record of the proceedings. This shall consist of a recording and shall include copies of all exhibits and other materials distributed at the hearing.

The Chair of the Hearing Committee is responsible for submitting the report of the Hearing Committee, which shall include findings and recommendations, to the **Parties**, Senior Vice President and Provost, and President within ten (10) **days** of the conclusion of the hearing.

9. Rights of the Parties and Presentation of Evidence
    a. Representation. The **Parties** shall have the right to attend the hearing and to be accompanied by a colleague or counsel to advise them. The names of such colleague or counsel shall be provided to the Chair of the Hearing Committee at least fifteen (15) **days** prior to the hearing. Representatives may not question witnesses or address the Hearing Committee. All hearings will be closed to the public.
    b. Exchange of Materials. If requested by the Chair of the Hearing Committee, each party must provide copies of all materials to the other party and the Hearing Committee members and alternates at a date to be determined by the Chair of the Hearing Committee but at least five (5) **days** prior to the hearing.
    c. Principle of Confrontation. The principle of confrontation shall apply throughout the hearing. Both **Parties** shall have the right to present, examine, and cross-examine witnesses, and each other. Each party is responsible for securing the presence of their own witnesses; however, if either party wishes the presence of University employees, the Senior Vice President and Provost's Office shall make reasonable efforts to support that request.
    d. Burden of Proof. In matters relating to abrogation of tenure or termination of employment, the University shall bear the burden of proof which shall be by a preponderance of the evidence, i.e. whether the allegations are more likely true than not true. In matters relating to severe sanctions other than abrogation of tenure or termination of employment, the burden is on the appealing party to prove by a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., more likely than not) that the sanction is unwarranted.
    e. Hearing Committee Participation. The members of the Hearing Committee may ask relevant questions of the **Parties** and witnesses, though the Hearing Committee Chair may impose reasonable limitations or regulations on Hearing Committee questioning.
    f. Deliberation and Report. After the conclusion of the hearing, the Hearing Panel will deliberate privately. No record shall be made of the discussions during deliberation, except that the Hearing Committee's findings and recommendations regarding the matter shall be written into a Hearing Committee Report.
10. Post Hearing Procedures

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a. President's Disposition
The President shall review the Hearing Committee report and any additional information the President wishes to consider and adopt, modify, or reject the recommendations, or may return the matter to the Hearing Committee with written directions to consider any matters not sufficiently addressed in the Hearing Committee Report.

Except in cases involving abrogation of tenure and/or termination of employment, the Hearing Committee's duties are discharged when the President makes a final determination.

b. Board of Regents' Action
Except for matters governed by the Institutional Equity Office policies and procedures, or matters in which abrogation and/or termination of employment are at issue, the President shall transmit to the Board of Regents the full record of the hearing, the findings and recommendations of the Hearing Committee, and the President's recommendation. The Board of Regents shall review the materials submitted plus any additional information it wishes to consider and adopt, modify, or reject the President's recommendations, or it may return the matter to the Hearing Committee with written directions as to how to proceed.

i. If the Board of Regents chooses to return the matter to the Hearing Committee, the Committee shall review the matter in light of the Board of Regents' directions, receive new evidence or information, if necessary, and submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the President for transmittal to the Board of Regents, as before. The work of the Hearing Committee is finished when the Board of Regents makes a final determination.

ii. The full record shall be deposited in the office of the Executive Secretary of the Board of Regents. **Parties** to the case may request copies or excerpts from the full record after the completion of the Committee's work. The costs shall be borne by the requesting party.

c. Record of Proceedings
Recordings will be maintained in the Board of Regents' Office will be maintained for a period of five (5) years. Either party may request a transcript of the recording at their own expense.

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Approval Authority:

Senior Vice President and Provost

Former Policy Number:

5.1.4.2 / FHPN 3.8

Attachments

Minor and Severe Sanctions Norman Campus Policy Appendix

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
Policy Office	Michelle Stephens: University Policy Director	07/2025
	Grey Allman: Assoc Provost Acad Affairs	06/2025

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Minor and Severe Sanctions Non-Disciplinary Terminations Policy — Norman Campus

Introduction

The University strives to exercise great care in selecting its faculty appointees and in conferring tenure only upon those faculty members who have demonstrated their merit for continuous appointment. For that reason, the imposition of severe sanctions, such as abrogation of tenure or termination of a non-tenured faculty member outside of the nonrenewal process should be an exceptional event. Although such measures may be required infrequently, the purpose of this policy is to establish a pre-disciplinary review procedure for severe sanctions that preserves both the integrity of the University and the rights of faculty members; and to establish procedural safeguards for faculty members against whom sanctions may be imposed.

This policy establishes three separate pathways, each with its own procedure:

- **Pathway 1 — Minor Sanctions** (Part III). Imposed by the chair/director with the dean's approval; may be appealed in writing to the Senior Vice President and Provost, whose decision is final.
- **Pathway 2 — Severe Sanctions other than Abrogation and/or Termination** (Part IV). Imposed by the Senior Vice President and Provost (or the dean with the Senior Vice President and Provost's approval); may be appealed to the Faculty Appeals Board; decided finally by the President.
- **Pathway 3 — Abrogation of Tenure and/or Termination of Employment** (Part V). Decided by the Board of Regents after an opportunity for a hearing before the Faculty Appeals Board.

I. Definitions

A. Sanction

A sanction is an official University action taken as a disciplinary measure rather than for University operational purposes unrelated to discipline. Sanctions must be reasonably tailored to the alleged conduct and cannot violate constitutionally protected speech or scholarship. Sanctions are categorized as "severe" or "minor." Any sanction (whether minor or severe) should be documented and placed in the faculty member's personnel file and considered as part of the faculty member's annual evaluation.

B. Severe Sanctions

A sanction is severe if it directly alters the faculty member's regular compensation, rank, tenure, or employment status. Severe sanctions fall into two categories, each with its own procedure:

- **Abrogation of tenure and/or termination of employment.** Abrogation of the tenure of a tenured faculty member and/or termination of a faculty member's employment prior to

the expiration of the faculty member's appointment outside of the nonrenewal process. These sanctions follow Pathway 3 (Part V).

- **Severe sanctions other than Abrogation and/or Termination.** Any severe sanction short of abrogation of tenure and/or termination of employment, including but not limited to reduction of regular compensation and suspension without pay. These sanctions follow Pathway 2 (Part IV).

C. Minor Sanctions

A minor sanction is any sanction that is not severe. Minor sanctions follow Pathway 1 (Part III) and include, but are not limited to:

- oral or written reprimand;
- letters of censure;
- suspension of travel privileges;
- restitution to the University or to others damaged by the faculty member.
- loss of prospective privileges for a stated period (e.g., suspension of regular merit raises to which the faculty member was not already entitled through action by the Board of Regents, or discretionary decisions regarding the faculty member's promotion eligibility prior to final approval and action); and/or
- suspension of public-facing assignments including, externally directed research, University-sponsored speaking engagements, public-facing service, and other duties or privileges.

D. Grounds for Severe Sanctions

While it is not possible to specify all grounds for which abrogation of tenure, termination of employment, or other severe sanctions may be sought, they include, but are not limited to, the following:

- professional incompetence;
- substantial or repeated failure to fulfill the responsibilities of instruction;
- abusive or threatening behavior;
- abuse of position, authority, or relationships with students;
- a pattern of conduct, or a single severe incident, directed at one or more individuals that a reasonable person in that individual's position would find demeaning, humiliating, or profoundly disrespectful and that substantially interferes with others' ability to do their work, learn, participate in the unit's governance, or access University resources, benefits, or programs;
- substantial disruption of University operations;
- substantial misuse of University resources;
- intentional, repeated, or pervasive academic dishonesty;
- dishonesty related to employment or other professional duties, or dishonesty related to completion of records, credentials, licenses, or disclosures;

- substantial, manifest, or repeated failure or refusal to fulfill professional duties and responsibilities;
- substantial, manifest, or repeated failure or refusal to comply with University policies; or
- serious misconduct involving fraud, intentional dishonesty, violence, or criminal conduct of comparable seriousness, that materially and demonstrably impairs the faculty member's ability to fulfill professional duties or responsibilities.

Disagreement, criticism, expression of ideas, and good faith participation in shared governance, including criticism of colleagues, the University, or its administration, do not by themselves constitute behavior for action under this policy (see Part VIII). Such expression becomes subject to action when conduct materially and substantially interferes with another person's ability to perform their work, to learn, or to access the resources, benefits, or programs of the University or otherwise actually disrupts University operations.

E. Days

Days shall mean University business days, unless otherwise specified.

II. General Provisions Applicable to All Pathways

A. Developmental and Corrective Measures Before Any Sanction

Consistent with the Faculty Accountability Policy, appropriate non-disciplinary measures, including counseling or guidance, professional development, documented and clearly defined expectations for improvement, or a written improvement plan established by the unit head and Committee A in consultation with the faculty member, should ordinarily be considered, but are not required before disciplinary action. These measures are developmental and non-disciplinary and are distinct from sanctions described in this policy. When appropriate non-disciplinary measures do not resolve a failure to fulfill faculty responsibilities, disciplinary action may be considered in accordance with applicable University policies.

B. Matters Governed by Other Policies

The University's Non-Discrimination Policy, the Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, and Harassment Policy, the Consensual Sexual Relationships Policy, and the Research Misconduct Policy, and their associated procedures, set forth the definitions, policies, and procedures for all grievances, appeals, and sanctions related to any form of discrimination or harassment, or research misconduct, prohibited by University policy, and supersede this policy. Those matters (including matters governed by Institutional Equity Office policies and procedures and by the Office of Research Integrity) are not subject to Pathways 1, 2, or 3 of this policy and are not within the jurisdiction of the Faculty Appeals Board unless jurisdiction is granted pursuant to those policies.

C. Notification

The faculty member shall be notified in writing of the outcome of each step in all pathways.

D. Summary of Pathways

Pathway	Who investigates / imposes	Faculty member's recourse	Final decision
1. Minor sanctions (Part III)	Chair/director imposes with dean's approval, with written notice of the basis	Written appeal to the Senior Vice President and Provost within 20 days	Senior Vice President and Provost
2. Severe sanctions other than Abrogation and/or Termination (Part IV)	Appropriate administrative officer investigates; Senior Vice President and Provost (or dean with SVPP approval) imposes	Appeal to the Faculty Appeals Board within 20 days	President
3. Abrogation of tenure or termination of employment (Part V)	Appropriate administrative officer investigates and recommends; President issues written notice of recommendation	Appeal to the Faculty Appeals Board Hearing Committee within 20 days	Board of Regents

III. Pathway 1: Minor Sanctions

Step 1. Authority to Impose. The chair/director of the academic unit, with approval from the dean, has the authority to impose minor sanctions (see Part I.C).

Step 2. Written Notice. A faculty member against whom the imposition of minor sanctions is sought must be informed in writing of the basis for the action.

Step 3. Appeal to the Senior Vice President and Provost. A faculty member who believes the sanctions are unfair or unsupported may appeal the sanction(s) imposed in writing to the Senior Vice President and Provost within twenty (20) days of notice of the sanction(s).

Step 4. Final Decision. The Senior Vice President and Provost will review the sanction(s) imposed and decide to affirm, modify, or revoke the minor sanctions. The decision of the Senior Vice President and Provost is final. Minor sanctions are not subject to a hearing before the Faculty Appeals Board under this policy.

IV. Pathway 2: Severe Sanctions other than Abrogation and/or Termination

Step 1. Preliminary Investigation and Meeting. The conduct of a faculty member that may warrant the imposition of severe sanctions shall be brought to the attention of the appropriate administrative officer(s) (i.e., Unit Head, Director, Dean, or Senior Vice President and Provost), who shall ordinarily investigate the matter to include, among other things, meeting with the faculty member in person to fully discuss the matter, unless reasonably prevented from doing so.

Step 2. Imposition of Severe Sanction. If, after investigation, the administrative officer determines the conduct warrants the imposition of severe sanctions, the Senior Vice President and Provost, or the dean with approval from the Senior Vice President and Provost, has the

authority to impose severe sanctions short of termination or abrogation. The faculty member shall be given written notice of the imposition of the severe sanction.

Step 3. Appeal to the Faculty Appeals Board. If the faculty member wishes to contest the sanction, the faculty member must request a hearing with the Faculty Appeals Board following the Faculty Appeals Board Policy.

Step 4. President's Disposition. The President shall review the Hearing Committee report and any additional information the President wishes to consider and adopt, modify, or reject the recommendations, or may return the matter to the Hearing Committee with written directions to consider any matters not sufficiently addressed in the Hearing Committee Report (Faculty Appeals Board, section 4.C.iv.) The President's decision shall be based on the record developed at the hearing and shall set forth the reasons for adoption, modification, or rejection of the Hearing Committee's recommendations. The President's decision shall be final.

Leave pending proceedings. Paid leave or reassignment during Pathway 2 proceedings is governed by Part VI.

V. Pathway 3: Abrogation of Tenure or Termination of Employment

This Part applies when abrogation of tenure, or termination of a faculty member's employment prior to the expiration of the faculty member's appointment (including early termination of Regular Faculty on a renewable term contract), is considered. Only the Board of Regents has the power to abrogate tenure.

Step 1. Preliminary Investigation and Initial Meeting. When abrogation of tenure or termination of employment is considered, the appropriate administrative officer (i.e., Unit head, Director, Dean, or Senior Vice President and Provost) must ordinarily investigate the matter and meet with the faculty member in person to discuss the matter, unless reasonably prevented from doing so. At the initial meeting, the Dean shall provide the faculty member with (i) written notice of the charges and recommended action, (ii) an explanation of the evidence supporting the recommendation, and (iii) an opportunity to respond, in writing or orally. The faculty member may submit a written response within five (5) business days of the meeting.

Step 2. Recommendation. After an investigation, if the administrative officer decides to recommend abrogation of tenure or termination of employment, that recommendation shall be conveyed to the President and the Senior Vice President and Provost.

Step 3. President's Review and Written Notice. If the President agrees with the recommendation, the President must notify the faculty member and the Faculty Appeals Board in writing. The President's written notice shall (i) state the grounds, (ii) summarize the evidence supporting the recommendation, (iii) state the faculty member's right to request a hearing within twenty (20) business days, and (iv) state the consequences of failing to request a hearing. The notice shall include a copy of the recommendation. If the President appoints a designee to represent the President in the proceedings, the notice will also include that information.

Step 4. Appeal to the Faculty Appeals Board. If the faculty member wishes to contest the recommendation, the faculty member must request a hearing with the Faculty Appeals Board following the Faculty Appeals Board Policy.

Step 5. President's Disposition and Transmittal. The President shall review the Hearing Committee report and any additional information the President wishes to consider and adopt, modify, or reject the recommendations, or may return the matter to the Hearing Committee with written directions to consider any matters not sufficiently addressed in the Hearing Committee Report (Faculty Appeals Board Policy section 4.C.iv.) The President shall then transmit to the Board of Regents the full record of the hearing, the findings and recommendations of the Hearing Committee, and the President's recommendation.

Step 6. Board of Regents Action. The Board of Regents shall review the materials submitted plus any additional information it wishes to consider and adopt, modify, or reject the President's recommendations, or it may return the matter to the Hearing Committee with written directions as to how to proceed. If the Board of Regents returns the matter to the Hearing Committee, the Committee shall review the matter in light of the Board of Regents' directions, receive new evidence or information, if necessary, and submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the President for transmittal to the Board of Regents, as before. The work of the Hearing Committee is finished when the Board of Regents makes a final determination. In all cases, only the Board of Regents has the power to abrogate tenure.

Leave pending proceedings. Paid and unpaid leave during Pathway 3 proceedings are governed by Part VI.

VI. Leave of Absence Pending Severe Sanction Proceedings

A. Paid Leave or Reassignment (Pathways 2 and 3)

Upon consultation with or recommendation by the unit head, the Senior Vice President and Provost, or the dean with approval from the Senior Vice President and Provost, has the authority to place a faculty member on a paid leave of absence pending severe sanctions proceedings. The duration of leave may vary based on the circumstances giving rise to the hearing or appeal. Alternatively, the Senior Vice President and Provost may assign the faculty member to other duties or a redistribution of effort in lieu of leave.

B. Unpaid Leave (Pathway 3 Only)

In cases where the President recommends abrogation of tenure and/or termination of employment, the President may place the faculty member on unpaid leave after the faculty member has had the initial meeting described in Part III, Step 1, including notice of the reasons for the recommended action and an opportunity to respond, and after the five (5) business-day period for the faculty member's written response has passed. Should the Board of Regents find in favor of the faculty member after the hearing process concludes, the faculty member will be entitled to any base compensation denied while on leave without pay.

C. Not an Appealable Sanction

Any leave of absence, reassignment, or redistribution of effort imposed under this Part is not in itself an appealable sanction.

VII. Relation to Academic Freedom and Protected Expression

In furtherance of the University's mission of teaching, learning, research, and public service, the University shall protect and support faculty academic freedom and the conditions necessary for faculty members to fulfill their professional responsibilities, as set out in the Academic Freedom and Responsibility Policy and the Faculty Accountability Policy. Faculty members shall have freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas; freedom to present material, including controversial material, relevant to a course of instruction; freedom of expression as protected by the Constitution and applicable law; and freedom to address matters of institutional policy or action in their capacity as faculty members consistent with the professional responsibilities and provided that there is no actual disruption of University operations.

The content or viewpoint of protected expression may not itself serve as the basis for action under this Policy, but expression may be considered as evidence of motive or intent with respect to conduct that is not protected, to the extent permitted by applicable law. Protected speech, academic commentary, good-faith participation in shared governance, criticism of colleagues, the University, or its administration, or the exercise of academic freedom does not constitute grounds for sanction solely because the expression is controversial, offensive, unpopular, or objectionable to the University or others. Mere disagreement, offense, or discomfort does not, by itself, constitute grounds for action under this Policy. Such expression becomes subject to action when conduct materially and substantially interferes with another person's ability to perform their work, to learn, or to access the resources, benefits, or programs of the University, or otherwise actually disrupts University operations.

The University shall not take action under this Policy in retaliation for protected expression, good faith participation in shared governance, good-faith reporting, or participation in a proceeding under University policy. When conduct subject to action under this Policy is intertwined with protected expression, the University bears the burden of demonstrating that the same action would have been taken based solely on conduct not protected by University policy or applicable law.

VII. Non-Disciplinary Terminations (Not Sanctions)

Some terminations are necessary but are not the result of disciplinary action. They are not sanctions and do not follow Pathways 1, 2, or 3. These types of terminations include:

- **Change in work site.** A faculty member is expected to work in the state of Oklahoma (or other assigned University site), except where mutually agreed and authorized pursuant to a remote work agreement approved by the relevant dean and Senior Vice President and Provost. This provision is not intended to alter agreements made prior to January 12, 2024, that are satisfactory to all parties or to prohibit short-term travel for field work, sabbatical leave, and the like. Changes to work locations, whether to another state or abroad, subject the University to payroll and tax burdens. Faculty members working in other states or abroad, without prior written authorization from the applicable college dean, must request such authorization within five (5) days of being informed of this violation. If the applicable dean does not give such authorization within twenty (20) days of this request, the faculty member shall be ineligible for continued employment.

Provided, however, any such dean authorization is subject to further review, approval, modification, or rejection in accordance with the Remote Work Policy.

- **Inability to perform essential functions.** A faculty member who is unable to perform the essential functions of the faculty member's position, even with reasonable accommodation(s), is ineligible for continued employment. A determination of whether a faculty member is unable to perform the essential functions of their position even with reasonable accommodation(s) is made in consultation with Human Resources and the faculty member's unit head, and dean of their college.
- **Criminal convictions.** A faculty member who (1) has pleaded guilty or nolo contendere or who has been found guilty before a court of competent jurisdiction of a violation of a law relating to dishonesty, violence, or where such plea or conviction prevents the faculty member from satisfactorily fulfilling professional duties or responsibilities, or is substantially related to the faculty member's fitness to fulfill their professional responsibilities as a teacher, researcher, or member of the University community, including but not limited to conduct that (a) creates a demonstrable risk to the safety of students, staff, or other members of the University community; (b) renders the faculty member unable to comply with applicable accreditation, licensing, ethical, University, or grant requirements; or (c) involves dishonesty, fraud, or abuse of authority in a manner that is directly connected to the faculty member's professional role (provided that this provision shall not apply to constitutionally protected speech, scholarship, or political activity, and the underlying conduct must be reasonably likely to interfere with the faculty member's ability to perform faculty duties or to comply with applicable accreditation, licensing, ethical, University, or grant requirements), or (2) has violated a court order when such violations relate to the faculty member's proper performance of professional responsibilities, is ineligible for continued employment. As noted below, faculty members who have been terminated pursuant to this provision may request a hearing before the Faculty Appeals Board on the grounds their plea or conviction does not prevent the faculty member from satisfactorily fulfilling their professional duties or responsibilities; however, such hearings are not forums for faculty members to change their plea or relitigate the facts that form the basis for the plea or conviction.
- **Loss of credentials.** A faculty member who has lost the professional licensure or credentials required for the faculty member's position is deemed no longer eligible for employment.
- **Financial exigency.** Tenured faculty members or faculty members terminated prior to the expiration of their appointment pursuant to the University's policy on financial exigency.
- **Federal exclusion lists.** Being placed on the United States denied persons list or specially designated nationals list, or the United States Department of Health and Human Services' list of excluded individuals, in which case the University will take quick and decisive action by terminating the faculty member's employment. Prior to termination on this ground, the faculty member shall be given written notice of the listing and ten (10) business days to provide documentation establishing misidentification or that the listing has been removed. The University shall verify the listing through the responsible federal source.

Challenges. A faculty member may request a hearing to challenge a non-disciplinary termination using the Procedures for Hearing Faculty Grievances set forth in the Faculty Appeals Board

Policy. However, challenges to non-disciplinary terminations are limited to the following grounds as appropriate: (1) the fact of the change in worksite without authorization; (2) the inability to perform essential functions; (3) the relevance of the criminal conviction; (4) the credentials required for the faculty member's position; or (5) whether inclusion on the lists cited above is relevant to the employee's position.

Approval Authority: Senior Vice President and Provost

Former Policy Number: 5.1.4.2 / FHPN 3.8