

Oklahoma State University Policy and Procedures

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF EMPLOYEES

**1-0705
GENERAL UNIVERSITY
June 1997**

POLICY

1.01 It is the policy of the Board that all employees of institutions under the jurisdiction of the Board enjoy full rights and privileges of citizens to participate in political activities in the State of Oklahoma and the United States. However, students and other constituencies of publicly supported universities and colleges may rightfully expect competent services from employees of publicly supported institutions. Therefore, the welfare of the institutions requires that each employee perform the duties and responsibilities assigned to his or her position as the first priority. Moreover, outside activities of any kind should not interfere with the fulfillment of assigned duties.

1.02 Although it is the intent of the Board to encourage all employees to exercise their full rights of citizenship, including any desired political activity, the Board finds it appropriate to adopt written policy to promote, protect and preserve the basic purpose for which the institutions exist; i.e., provide worthwhile educational experiences for the constituencies of higher education. To accomplish this goal it is essential that each educational institution maintain an effective organized structure which includes.

- a. Internal administrative harmony and continuity,
- b. Uninhabited planning, evaluation and refining of educational programs,
- c. Efficient and effective use of all available resources, and
- d. A high commitment from its personnel to attaining institutional objectives.

SCOPE

2.01 The following policies are applicable to all employees engaging in political activities:

PROCEDURE

3.01 Employees are permitted to freely engage in lawful political activities of any kind provided such activities are conducted on the individual's own time, do not interfere with official duties and responsibilities, and are not inconsistent with other provisions herein.

3.02 Employees are permitted to campaign for and hold non-partisan offices, the duties of which do not interfere with official responsibilities such as a member of a school board, city council, and/or other local offices.

3.03 An employee may accept an appointed position in government requiring full-time service provided, however, before accepting such position an employee is required to request and be approved for leave without pay or resign from the institution. Any approval of leave without pay to accept an appointed position shall be for not less than the duration of the semester in which the approved leave is granted. Leave from institutional responsibilities for any period greater than one year shall be reviewed by the highest administrative levels of the institution, and written justification shall be provided to the Board in requesting this approval.

3.04 An employee who wishes to assume a major role in a partisan political campaign is obligated to discuss such plans well in advance with the appropriate supervisor. If the supervisor determines that the political activity might impinge to any extent upon the full discharge of the employee's responsibilities, the proposed political activity must be reviewed and approved through regular administrative channels to the President's Office. Through such a review, appropriate administrative officials will determine whether the proposed political activity will impinge to any extent upon the full discharge of the employee's responsibilities. If approved, the employee shall take a leave of absence without pay (after exhaustion of any earned annual leave) prior to participating actively in political activity, including but not limited to, actively campaigning for political office or directing the political campaign of another person seeking a political office.

3.05 The political activities of an employee may not involve the institution's name, symbols, or in any way imply institutional support or support of the Board pertaining to the political interest supported by the employee.

3.06 Full-time political activities are prohibited while serving as an employee.

3.07 Any employee intending to conduct a personal candidacy for a partisan elective office must obtain approval by the President's Office pursuant to Section 3.04, prior to any announcement by the employee for such office. If elected to such elective office, the employee shall resign (or retire, if eligible) from the institution.

3.08 All employees are expected to take sufficient action to assure that their political activities are consistent with the provisions of this policy.

3.09 If necessary to enforce the provisions of this policy, a review should be conducted by the highest levels of administration and governance.

Board of Regents Approved: February 6, 1981

Revised: April 26, 1996

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