

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **Criterion V**

#### **The Institution demonstrates integrity in its practices and relationships**

##### **Introduction**

Chapter 9 examines the institution's policies and procedures that are implemented and adhered to in order to ensure integrity and to protect the rights of individuals in various groups. The policies examined are applicable for groups within the institution as well as for external groups. Faculty, staff, student, advisory committees, and the administration developed the policies and procedures examined. Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SOSU) embraces the Center for Academic Integrity's definition of integrity as "a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action."<sup>1</sup>

##### **Expectation and Monitoring of Conduct**

###### **Regents, Faculty, and Staff**

The legal control of Southeastern Oklahoma State University, as provided by the Constitution of Oklahoma, Articles XIII-A and B, is vested in two boards—Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges.

University policies and procedures are communicated to faculty and staff by various means including Executive Memoranda, Vice President Memoranda, the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual, and the Employee Handbook. In addition to printed media, some of these materials are now available on the Southeastern Oklahoma State University website. Executive Memoranda and Vice President Memoranda provide comprehensive policy guidance. Manuals, including the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual and the Employee Handbook provide implementation guidance for policies and procedures.

The Southeastern Oklahoma State University Academic Policies and Procedures Manual is based on the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges Policy Manual. Therefore, the content of the Southeastern Policies and Procedures Manual is similar to that of the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges (BROC) Policy Manual. When changes are made to the Board of Regents manual, the Southeastern Oklahoma State University manual must be reconciled to those changes. The Board of Regents Policy Manual is reviewed annually, and some changes are usually made by action of the Board.

Additional policies and procedures may be enacted by the individual universities governed by the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges, as long as they do not conflict with Board policies. Most additions and changes to the Southeastern Oklahoma State

University Policies and Procedures Manual begin as recommendations to the President. One exception to this is the oversight responsibility the Faculty Senate has to the committee structure. The Faculty Senate in its oversight function of the committee structure makes direct changes to specified areas of the Policies and Procedures Manual such as modifications of the membership and function statements. Those entities that make recommendations to the President include the Faculty Senate, Ad Hoc Committees, or Task Forces appointed by the President, or by executive decision of the President. When the President approves a policy change or addition, a memo is sent to the recommending body and to the executive council. Upon receipt of the President's approval memo, the Southeastern Oklahoma State University Policies and Procedures Manual is amended in the Office of Academic Affairs. A current version of the manual is available at the Southeastern Oklahoma State University web site ([www.sosu.edu](http://www.sosu.edu)). Almost 65% of those surveyed indicated agreement with the statement that the faculty and staff policies and procedures are helpful tools to determine expectations. Also, approximately 55% of those surveyed agreed that the University's administration adheres to and enforces the policies and procedures for faculty and staff.

The Employee Handbook<sup>2</sup> provides staff members with an information guide about the University and its policies, staff duties and responsibilities, and the use of various facilities and services. Policies and procedures are reviewed and modified as a result of action by the federal and/or state governments, the Boards of Regents, and the administration of Southeastern Oklahoma State University. The handbook was last revised in 1992 with memoranda from the appropriate administration providing policy and procedure updates since that time. There have been updates since 1992 that were distributed via memos campus-wide. But, the basic handbook remains the same as the 1992 version.

## **Students**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University has adopted a code of student conduct to preserve the University's lawful missions, educational atmosphere, and discipline on campus. The code of conduct is available on the Southeastern Oklahoma State University website and in the Student Handbook;<sup>3</sup> however, the 1992-93 copy is the latest printed version of the handbook. The Student handbook has been decentralized from one document to many smaller pieces of information. The code guarantees the basic elements of due process and fair play by clearly identifying behavior proscriptions for a common understanding of unacceptable behavior. The procedural requirements adhere to principles of due process required by the United States Constitution as interpreted by the United States Supreme Court and guard against arbitrary actions by the University.

Behavioral violations may be reported to a variety of campus agencies and individuals such as campus police, Office of Student Services staff, residence hall counselors, and other University officials. These agencies and individuals are able to offer support and counseling as needed, while respecting and protecting the privacy rights of students mandated by law and dictated by professional ethics. The appropriate committees perform periodic review of the code of conduct with any substantive changes

being communicated in various forms by the Office of Student Services. Of those surveyed, 53% stated the code of student conduct adequately preserved and enforced the lawful missions, educational atmosphere, and discipline on campus.

## **Equity of Treatment**

### **Faculty and Staff**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University adheres to Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunities (AA/EEO) guidelines and is committed to multicultural diversity. The University's hiring practices are coordinated and monitored by the Office of Human Resources to ensure compliance with these guidelines. Search committees are apprised of the University's policies to prevent AA/EEO violations. Approximately 72% believed the Office for Human Relations ensures that search committees are apprised of AA/EEO policies.

All salaries are determined in consideration of the financial resources available and with reference to the faculty salary card. Procedures are in place to consider any exceptions to the salary card. The Academic Policies and Procedures Manual<sup>4</sup> provides clear information on the University's policy regarding faculty promotion and tenure. These guidelines allow faculty members to apply for promotion and tenure using a systematic and equitable evaluation process that includes peer review.

To provide fair job classifications and valid comparisons for compensation, ongoing evaluations of job descriptions and classifications are performed by the Office of Human Resources to promote salary equity among staff members.

### **Students**

A goal of Southeastern Oklahoma State University is to treat all students with equity and fairness in its policies and practices. Various policies are in place to ensure that students are afforded their rights and privileges as guaranteed in the United States Constitution and legislative mandates. These include the right to privacy concerning student educational records; nondiscrimination policies regarding admissions, financial aid, employment, and educational services; the rights of students with disabilities; harassment policies; and recourse for complaints or grievances. These policies are made available to students through a variety of media including the Undergraduate Catalog,<sup>5</sup> Graduate Catalog,<sup>6</sup> Schedule of Classes,<sup>7</sup> and the University website.

All efforts are made through the University's ADA coordinator to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities allowing them full access to higher education. Recent examples include the installation of an elevator in the Fine Arts Building and the planned installation of an elevator in both the Morrison and Administration buildings. Also, scheduling classes in classrooms that are accessible to students with disabilities has been provided. Nearly 80% of those asked believe that SOSU is making sufficient efforts through the University's ADA coordinator to provide

reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities allowing them full access to higher education.

## **Dispute-Resolution Systems**

### **Faculty and Staff**

To ensure equity in employment, employees who feel they have been treated unfairly by colleagues or supervisors are allowed access to fair and effective grievance procedures. Southeastern Oklahoma State University provides various dispute-resolution procedures for faculty and staff. The Office of Academic Affairs oversees the University's academic grievance system. The Office of Human Resources oversees policies and procedures for the resolution of complaints and grievances by staff. These offices monitor the dispute-resolution systems to ensure that legal requirements, including the protection of the due process rights, are being met.

Procedures are available to all employees to deal with a variety of complaints. Employees who have problems related to their employment are encouraged to discuss such matters with their supervisors. If informal discussion does not resolve the issue to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may file a complaint under the grievance procedures outlined in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual<sup>8</sup> and the Employee Handbook.<sup>9</sup> Harassment complaints for students, faculty, and staff are addressed under the Board of Regents for Oklahoma Colleges and Southeastern Oklahoma State University's harassment policies that clearly outline the complaint process.<sup>10</sup>

### **Students**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University provides a variety of dispute-resolution systems to students addressing admission, academic, disciplinary, and discrimination issues. These procedures are made available to students through widely distributed publications. Although there are variations in the dispute resolution processes, all have common goals of providing basic fairness and impartiality, confidentiality, privacy, preservation of dignity of disputing parties, promptness of resolution, and effective and equitable treatment. Whenever possible, students are encouraged to seek informal resolution of disputes. If informal discussion does not resolve the issue to the student's satisfaction, formal processes are openly available to the student. Specific dispute-resolution systems available to students depending upon the issue include the Academic Appeals Committee, the Graduate Committee, and access to the Office of Student Services.

## **Efforts to Enhance Diversity**

The University continues to remind everyone that diversity is that rich mixture of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, varying physical abilities, gender, ethnic and geographic backgrounds essential to the quality of campus life. Students need new skills, competencies and knowledge to meet the challenges of America's increasing diversity

and to build a better world. To provide them with these skills, Southeastern Oklahoma State University's professors, administration and staff have committed themselves to providing educational opportunities that promote the intellectual, cognitive and moral development of its students.

The University is consistently trying to create and re-evaluate its commitment to diversity. There is a struggle in providing the best education in the most open learning environment. The University continues to strive to attract and open opportunities for qualified staff that adequately represent the diverse student body. Students from diverse populations are recruited through established avenues such as college fairs, counselor contacts, etc. Also, SOSU recruits and advertises through ethnically and racially specific outlets such as the Texoma Black Expo, the State Baptist Convention, co-sponsoring of Health Fairs, the Black Alumni Chapter and the Talent Search Alumni Chapter, as well as participation in numerous parades and activities. In addition, the Henry G. Bennett Memorial Library contains the largest collection of racially and ethnically specific holdings in southeast Oklahoma. This non-exhaustive list underscores the commitment of SOSU to cultural diversity and competence.

In response to the needs of underrepresented populations, President Johnson supported the creation of two positions: Director, Office of Diversity and the Multicultural Coordinator. The University is seeking to meet the challenges facing today's students through education and the University community is always encouraged to explore the beauty of customs and traditions different from their own.<sup>11</sup> Additional information on diversity is located in Chapter 6, p. 142.

Southeastern Oklahoma State University is committed to providing a learning environment that respects the diversity of every individual, which values dialogue and communication, and allows for constant re-evaluation of individual views. According to the NCA Self-Study Survey 57% responded affirmatively that SOSU helped them understand different cultural attitudes, beliefs, and values and 62% responded favorably that the University is committed to enhancing diversity among students and faculty.

### **Intercollegiate Athletics/Student Athletics**

After a three-year provisional membership, Southeastern Oklahoma State University became a full member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) in 1998. Prior to this membership the University was affiliated with the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. As a Division II member of the NCAA, SOSU is also a member of the Lone Star Conference. Both the NCAA and the Lone Star Conference set forth bylaws, guidelines, and procedures for intercollegiate athletics and student-athletes at the University. The administration, athletic director, compliance coordinator, coaches, and staff follow these established guidelines in order to maintain institutional control of the athletics program.

Academic eligibility reports, competition reports, and squad lists are filed each year in the athletic department as well as with the Conference Office. To be able to

recruit prospective student-athletes off campus, the athletic administration and the coaches are required to pass a recruiting certification test based on NCAA rules.

All student-athletes at Southeastern Oklahoma State University must comply with NCAA rules concerning ethical conduct, amateurism, financial aid, and academic standards before being declared eligible to compete. Student-athletes must also sign forms that affirm they are aware of the NCAA drug-testing program. Not only do student-athletes have to comply with this NCAA program, they must also comply with the program mandated by SOSU Intercollegiate Athletics in regard to drug education and testing as well as education about the use of alcohol and tobacco products. This program requires student-athletes to attend substance use and abuse seminars. In addition, it explains the University's athletic drug-testing procedures.

Within the next two years, Southeastern Oklahoma State University will conduct a self-study of the athletic program as required by the NCAA. Until that time, the Intercollegiate Athletic Program at SOSU will continue to maintain integrity and honesty by adhering to guidelines and procedures established by the NCAA and the Lone Star Conference. According to the North Central Self-Study Survey 54% of survey respondents answered favorably that the Intercollegiate Athletic Program maintained integrity and honesty by adhering to guidelines and procedures established by the NCAA and Lone Star Conference. However, 38% had no opinion.

### **Communications with and Commitments to Prospective Students**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University seeks to attract and enroll qualified students. Like all state institutions, the admissions policies were established by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and are based on performance and curricular requirements.

The recruitment staff in the Office of Admissions and Recruitment Services communicates admissions policies to prospective students through the use of recruitment publications. To ensure accuracy and to avoid any misrepresentations, The Office of Admission and Recruitment Services revise recruitment publications such as the view book, undergraduate catalog, class schedule, and letters sent to prospective students annually.

The University actively recruits students from high schools and community colleges located in southern Oklahoma and north Texas. These events include, but are not limited to, college and career fairs, high school and community college visits, and campus visits. As a member of the Oklahoma College Day/Night Coordination Committee, the Office of Admissions and Recruitment Services adheres to the "Statement of Good Practices" set forth by the state's organization of high school/college recruiters.

## **Contractual Arrangements and Other Business Relations with Vendors**

The Oklahoma Office of State Finance and the Southeastern Oklahoma State University Board of Regents set forth purchase guidelines for Southeastern Oklahoma State University. The University further delineates procedures through the SOSU Purchasing and Inventory Procedures Manual.<sup>12</sup>

The Purchasing Department provides oversight and processing of all purchases. Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges guidelines allow for purchases under \$10,000 to be submitted without bids or multiple price quotes. Any purchase over \$2,500 requires two approval signatures. For purchases of \$10,000 or more, the bidding process is well defined and follows standards established in The National Institute of Government Purchasing (NIGP) and the state of Oklahoma. As a public institution, the integrity of the organization is of utmost importance. Every effort is taken to avoid conflicts of interest. As such, non-collusion affidavits are required with all bid submissions.

The Purchasing Department maintains a vendor list for bid requests. This list is updated frequently with additions from the state of Oklahoma and from University administrators and department chairs. Removal from the list is done only in rare instances and only for such issues as poor past performance or nonperformance. Bids are awarded on the basis of lowest and/or best without regard to ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, or other factors considered designating minority or under-represented groups.

## **University Role in Auxiliary Services**

An auxiliary enterprise is an entity that exists predominantly to furnish goods or services to students, faculty, or staff. It charges a fee directly related to, although not necessarily equal to, the cost of the goods or services. The general public incidentally may be served by some auxiliary enterprise.

Auxiliary enterprise includes Residence Halls, Food Services, Campus Book Store, Print Shop, Student Union, Student Activities, Intercollegiate Athletics, and Programs Related to Education. Some of the larger programs in Programs Related to Education are Academic Information Technology, Institutional Information Technology, Motor Pool, Continuing Education, Telecommunications, and Aerospace Operations. Each auxiliary enterprise function has a director that reports to one of the executive positions: President, Vice President for Student Services, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Vice President for Business Services. Forty-four percent responded favorably to Auxiliary Services' striving to provide excellent customer services to its constituents.

## **Relations with Individual and Corporate Donors, Alumni, Legislators, and Other Groups Served by the University**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University's relations with external constituencies are conducted primarily through the Office of University Advancement. The Director of

University Advancement is the individual responsible for directing and cultivating positive relationships with donors, alumni, the Oklahoma State Legislature, and the communities of southeastern Oklahoma served by the University. The Director of University Advancement reports directly to the President of the University. Recently there has been a significantly enhanced relationship between the University and the Chickasaw and Choctaw Nations of Oklahoma, resulting in a substantial joint gift from the two Nations to the University, and the addition of special services for the University's Native American student population.

Also involved in supporting the mission of Southeastern Oklahoma State University is the Southeastern Foundation, Inc. An independent not-for-profit corporation (501 (c) (3)), the Foundation was established in 1967 with a mission to aid and assist the educational purposes of the University. The Southeastern Foundation is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees whose membership includes professional, civic, corporate, and philanthropic leaders dedicated to higher education. The President of the University and the Director of University Advancement sit on the Board of Trustees as ex officio members.

The Foundation manages, oversees, and coordinates the University's fundraising activities and is responsible for the management and investment of charitable contributions that benefit the University. Through its operations, the Foundation cultivates and secures private sector funding, gifts, trusts and bequests; obtains corporate leadership and capital support; and manages the Foundation's endowment and investments. Also operating under the aegis of the Foundation, but independently with separate charters and by-laws, are the Aviation Alumni and the Black Alumni Association.

### **Relations with Other Institutions of Higher Education**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University is a member of the Oklahoma System of Higher Education, The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Council on Education, National Commission on Accrediting, and National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education. It is accredited by the Oklahoma State Board of Education with respect to the program of preparation for: elementary and secondary teachers' certification, superintendent's certification, and principal's certification. Southeastern is accredited by the HLC as an institution of higher education granting the bachelor's and the master's degree, and by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education for the preparation of elementary and secondary school teachers. The National Association of Schools of Music accredits the Department of Music. The School of Business is accredited by the Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs to offer the Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) and the Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) degrees.

In accordance with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education,<sup>13</sup> Southeastern Oklahoma State University fully participates in the articulation policy for

the transfer of students among Oklahoma public institutions. A student transferring to Southeastern Oklahoma State University with an Associate of Arts or an Associate of Sciences degree from any State System institution will be considered to have completed the general education requirements of the baccalaureate degree. There may be some exceptions to this policy, where some students may have to take additional courses in general education to meet minimum professional certification requirements as defined by the State.

In the past five years Southeastern Oklahoma State University has aggressively pursued Articulation Agreements<sup>14</sup> with four junior colleges in north Texas: Collin County Community College, Grayson County College, Paris Junior College, and North Central Texas College. A student who is transferring from one of these colleges with an Associate of Science or Associate of Arts degree shall have acceptance of academic credits earned at the junior college, with the condition that all requirements for graduation from Southeastern be met within his or her program of studies at the junior college and Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Commensurate with the articulation agreements with the north Texas junior colleges and the articulation policy for the transfer of students among Oklahoma public institutions, Southeastern Oklahoma State University has developed a method for a seamless transition from the two-year institutions to the four-year programs at Southeastern. This method, known as the “2+2” program, allows for a student to complete a junior college associates degree and then matriculate at Southeastern and complete the baccalaureate degree in two additional years. The beauty of this program is that a complete four-year degree plan is developed with the first two years being completed at the junior college and the last two years completed at Southeastern. The student will, therefore, know exactly what to take at each institution. At the present time, Southeastern offers this option in over 30 degree programs. Nearly 73% of those surveyed believe the articulation agreements with junior colleges are adequately designed for a seamless transition from two-year institutions to a four-year institution at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Southeastern is attempting to offer selected programs at Grayson County College in Denison, Texas. To this date, approval has been granted by the Grayson County College Board of Trustees, the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges, and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Currently Southeastern is waiting for approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. If the Texas Board approves the request, the next step is complying with The Higher Learning Commission’s requirements as set out in Chapter 12 of the Handbook for Accreditation.

Southeastern Oklahoma State University has further extended its relationship with other institutions with the addition of a Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree program<sup>15</sup> in Fall 2001. The Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree is designed to offer students with an Associate of Applied Sciences (A.A.S.) degree or and Associate of Applied Arts (A.A.A.) degree from a junior or community college the opportunity to obtain a baccalaureate degree. This program would allow students who may have reached

an educational and career "glass ceiling" to continue their education and advance their career by earning a baccalaureate degree. Southeastern Oklahoma State University is the only institution of higher learning in the state of Oklahoma that offers the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences degree and the Bachelor of General Studies.

The Oklahoma City Aviation/Aerospace Education Alliance is composed of several institutions to include the University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Langston University, Rose State College, Oklahoma City Community College, Oklahoma State University OKC, Francis Tuttle, and Metro Career Technology. In August 1996 Southeastern Oklahoma State University entered into the Oklahoma City Aviation/Aerospace Education Alliance's proposal for aviation degree programs to be offered at Tinker Air Force Base. The proposal, which was adopted, offers aviation programs at Tinker at the bachelor's and master's level. Since the original inception of the degree offerings at Tinker, Southeastern Oklahoma State University became the parent university with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated June 16, 2000. However, the basic articulation agreements remain in effect' and the minimum criteria for institutions offering postsecondary on-base degree programs are being observed. One criterion in the original MOU, Serviceman's Opportunity College Navy membership, has been applied for by Southeastern; but as of the printing of this Self-Study, a final determination has not been made.

## **Integrity in Research**

### **Human Research Subjects**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University has a strong commitment to the protection of the safety, welfare, and rights of human research subjects. In 1999 SOSU created the Human Subjects Research Review Committee (HSRRC). Membership on this committee includes faculty from all three schools as well as community and student representation. Research involving human subjects may NOT be initiated without advance approval of the HSRRC.

All research involving human subjects must adhere to The Code of Federal Regulations: Title 45-Public Welfare and Title 46-Protection of Human Subjects as detailed in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual, section 3.5.11.<sup>16</sup> Southeastern Oklahoma State University is in full compliance with all relevant federal regulations in regard to the safety, welfare, and rights of human research subjects. Moreover, 78% of those surveyed believe the University has a strong commitment to the protection of human subjects.

Prior to initiating the use of human subjects in research, Southeastern Oklahoma State University faculty, administrators and students are required to receive approval from the HSRRC. Researchers must complete an application form ("Request for Approval of Human Subjects Research," available from the HSRRC chair) which describes the protocol in sufficient detail to (1) evaluate risks to the subject; (2) understand how subjects are to be recruited; (3) evaluate the potential benefits of the

research; (4) understand how data are stored; and (5) evaluate how informed consent will be obtained. HSRRC approval is required whether or not the proposed research is exempt from federal regulation. If, after an approval, a revision of the protocol is necessary, researchers must resubmit an application and receive additional approval. Approval of protocol is granted for one calendar year, after which reapplication is required. Research initiated by someone outside the SOSU community in which an SOSU faculty member is participating is also subject to HSRRC approval. In such a case, a letter of approval from the initiating institution's human subjects committee is required. In all instances, the HSRRC will contact the researcher with a written letter of approval, rejection, or with revisions necessary for approval.

## **Management of Chemical/Biological and Human Subjects Research Safety**

### **Chemical/Biological Laboratory Safety**

All chemical/biological laboratories are governed under Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) Standard 29 CFR 1910.1450.<sup>17</sup> In order to comply with this standard, Southeastern Oklahoma State University has established the following plans to ensure that the University is capable of protecting employees, students, and the general public from health hazards associated with hazardous chemicals and biological components in the laboratory. The University is also dedicated to, and capable of, keeping exposures below the permissible exposure limits specified in OSHA 29 CFR 1910, subpart Z.<sup>18</sup>

1. The Physical and Biological Science Departments have developed the SOSU Laboratory Safety Manual<sup>19</sup> and the Chemical Hygiene Plan<sup>20</sup> for use in all laboratory settings.
2. Each department has designated a Department Chemical Hygiene Officer with responsibility for lab safety and environmental compliance as directed by OSHA 29 CFR 1910.
3. The SOSU Laboratory Safety Manual provides instructions to all lab participants regarding acceptable safety and environmental standards and practices. The manual also provides emergency procedures with examples.
4. All lab participants must be issued an SOSU Laboratory Safety Manual before any lab assignments may be processed.

## **Vertebrate Animal Subjects**

The establishment of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and the Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SOSU) Animal Care and Use Manual<sup>21</sup> enables SOSU to be in compliance with federal regulations concerning the welfare of vertebrate animal subjects. The IACUC was established in 1992 and is activated when necessary. All vertebrate animal use on campus must first be approved by the IACUC. Instructors and/or principal investigators submit proposals to the IACUC for review and approval before beginning laboratory exercises or submitting research proposals for either internal or external funding. Once approved, proposals undergo an annual review. The IACUC also provides a training session for instructors and investigators using vertebrate animals as needed.

The SOSU animal facility is housed in the Department of Biological Sciences. The facility contains two animal housing rooms; a surgery/prep room; a room for clean bedding, cages, and water bottles; and a room for dirty bedding, cages, and water bottles. Currently, vertebrate animals are not being used at SOSU for teaching purposes or in research projects. However, if the need arises instructors and/or investigators may consult the SOSU Animal Care and Use Manual for principles, procedures, and standards of care.

## **Administration of Grants and Contracts from External Sponsors**

Federal guidelines and regulations governing SOSU's costing, cost-accounting, and administration of grants, contracts, and other forms of external support for sponsored projects are described in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars A-21, A-110, and A-133.<sup>22</sup> As a recipient and sub-recipient of federal funds, SOSU is subject to the audit requirements contained in the Single Audit Act and OMB Circular A-133. The CPA firm of Cole and Reed, P.C., conducts the annual audit of federal awards at SOSU. For each annual audit:

- An unqualified report was issued on the University's financial statements.
- There were no issues of non-compliance, which were individually, or cumulatively material to financial statements.
- Major programs were found to be in compliance with regulations.
- SOSU was rated as a low-risk auditee.
- Corrective action for any reported recommendations has been taken.

In March 2001 SOSU submitted its costing policies disclosure to the Division of Cost Allocation, Department of Health and Human Services. On March 28, 2001, SOSU was notified that its disclosure "adequately discloses the cost-accounting practices

required to be disclosed by CASB's rules, regulations, and standards, and that those practices are compliant with applicable Government cost accounting regulations."<sup>23</sup>

In 2001, SOSU created the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) to assist and coordinate all university grants and contracts. In proposing new or continuing external grants, contracts, and agreements, and upon the award of such funds, faculty must complete "grant packets" available from the ORSP. These packets include forms for administrative routing and approval, and for grant and budget summaries. Only 46% of those surveyed indicated federal guidelines and regulations governing the University's administration of grants and contracts from external sponsors were made known to the faculty through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

### **Faculty Businesses and Management of Conflict of Interest**

Southeastern's policy on outside activities performed by faculty and staff, and in attendant conflict of interests, is described in the Policy Manual of the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges,<sup>24</sup> that states: "Faculty members shall determine the amount and character of the work they do outside their institution with due regard to their paramount responsibilities within it." Southeastern expects its full-time faculty and staff to have as their primary place of employment the University, and to terminate any activities that hinder complete compliance with their stated responsibilities. Only 24% of those surveyed indicated the University's guidelines on faculty businesses and management of conflict of interest were made known to faculty. Forty-four percent of those that responded had no comment.

### **Management of Intellectual Property**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University's policy on intellectual property and the distribution of net proceeds of revenue derived from inventions and copyrighted materials is described in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual, section 7.10.1 states:

All discoveries or inventions, whether patentable or unpatentable, and including any and all patents (domestic and foreign) which are made or conceived by any member of SOSU's faculty, staff, or student body, either in the course of employment by SOSU or substantially through the use of facilities or funds provided by SOSU, shall be the property of SOSU. The individual or individuals who make the discoveries or inventions which become the property of SOSU under this policy will share in income derived by SOSU from the marketing of such inventions and patent rights, according to such terms as the President of the University shall direct.

Twenty-four percent agreed that the University's policy on intellectual property and distribution of net proceeds of revenue derived from inventions and copyrighted materials were adequate and fair. Fifty-five percent of the respondents had no comment.

Under the Copyright Revision Act of 1976, 17 U.S.C. '101 et seq. (1976) works of original authorship are protected by copyright from the time they are fixed in a tangible medium of expression. Copyrighted works produced by SOSU faculty and staff are the property of the creator of that work. All rights afforded copyright owners under '106 of the Act reside with the creator unless he or she has assigned or licensed any of the enumerated rights. Decisions relative to registering of these works with the Copyright Office are left to the individual creator. Copyright in works specifically commissioned by SOSU under '201(b) of the Act shall belong to SOSU. As copyright owner, SOSU shall make decisions relative to registering commissioned works. SOSU and the creator(s) of the work may share royalties for SOSU-commissioned copyrighted works. Where SOSU service units (such as media production department) are involved with the production of a substantially completed copyrightable product, royalties shall be distributed between the copyrighted owner, i.e. SOSU faculty or staff, and SOSU as provided for in a written agreement concluded prior to work being done. In instances in which a written agreement has not been finalized prior to the completion of the copyrighted product, the standard distribution of royalties will be provided to the creator with 50% of the net income when mass production and distribution are accomplished by SOSU; and 50% of the gross income when mass production and distribution are accomplished by an outside entity. If this standard is unacceptable to either party, the matter shall be referred to the President of the University.<sup>25</sup>

The past decade has witnessed a rapid expansion in the application of information technology and new digital media to the research, instructional, and service missions of Southeastern Oklahoma State University. This expansion proved to be a substantial challenge to SOSU's position on ownership of intellectual property. In 2001, the President of the University appointed the Web Instruction Task Force (WITF). It was charged in part to review SOSU's policy in light of challenges posed by the new digital media. The report of the WITF is pending, and it is anticipated that following a period of review and comment by the SOSU community, the president will act on the WITF's recommendations.

### **General Campus Safety & Environmental Management**

The Southeastern Oklahoma State University Department of Safety & Security (DSS) serves as the university regulating body in all areas concerning safety. The DSS is responsible for hazardous materials management, industrial safety, life safety, chemical and laboratory safety, human research safety, general campus safety, and emergency program management. The Departments of Occupational Safety & Health and Physical and Biological Sciences assist the SOSU Department of Safety & Security (DSS). The SOSU Emergency Program Management Team further assists the DSS. Of those surveyed only 39% agreed that the Emergency Handbook for University personnel was adequately designed to provide information for any emergency situation.

The University takes every safety precaution in all areas and acts in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Standard 29, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) section 1910,<sup>17</sup> for compliance with general campus safety, industrial

and construction safety, hazardous materials management, and chemical and biological laboratory safety. The OSHA General Duty Clause in any area where 29 CFR 1910 may not apply also governs the University. All contractors and construction operators, hazardous materials shippers, companies impacting environmental issues, and all activities whereby blood-borne pathogens or biohazards may be contacted, must adhere to 29 CFR 1910 or other appropriate federal and state health guidelines.

All emergencies involving natural disasters, fire, or aggression will be jointly managed by the SOSU Department of Safety and Security and the Emergency Program Management Team. The SOSU Manual of Emergency Preparedness<sup>26</sup> and the Federal Emergency Management Administration Manual of Emergency Preparedness<sup>27</sup> will direct emergencies of this nature. General campus safety has been reinforced by annual safety seminars sponsored by the Department of Safety and Security, Federal Emergency Management Administration, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, American Red Cross, and area law enforcement agencies on topics such as CPR, tornado safety, fire safety, personal defense, and off-the-job safety, among others.

The following are guides and procedures designed to ensure safety and environmental management on campus:

- (1) The Emergency Handbook for SOSU Personnel is available to all SOSU employees. The handbook details procedures to follow in any emergency situation. A list of emergency telephone numbers (campus safety personnel, police department, fire department, ambulance, and hospital) is included. In addition, faculty and staff telephone numbers in the departments of Biological Sciences and Physical Sciences are included. Evacuation instructions are given if a fire alarm is sounded. Procedures to follow in the event of tornadoes, fire emergencies, and medical emergencies are also provided. Instructions for dealing with electrical failures, gas leaks, plumbing failures, flooding, and elevator failures are given. The handbook provides information for handling phone-in bomb threats, written threats, and recognition of suspicious packages.
- (2) An annual Lab Safety Training Workshop is conducted at SOSU. Topics covered include: (a) laboratory awareness -- basic laboratory procedures for handling chemicals; (b) personal safety -- use of safety goggles, protective clothing, and personal hygiene in the laboratory; (c) fire prevention -- storage and handling of flammable chemicals; (d) housekeeping -- maintenance of laboratory equipment and a safe laboratory environment; (e) emergency procedures -- phone contacts and safety equipment; (f) fire extinguishers -- proper use of the fire extinguisher; and (g) waste collection -- appropriate chemical disposal.

- (3) The Biological Sciences Safety Committee monitors laboratory safety in the Biological Sciences building. The committee oversees the disposal of biohazardous materials, inspects safety equipment, provides broken glass containers, oversees the maintenance of Material Safety and Data (MSDS) sheets in the laboratories, and refers hazardous chemical wastes to the Chemistry Stockroom Manager for disposal.
- (4) The Chemistry Stockroom Manager monitors laboratory safety for the Department of Physical Sciences. The Chemistry Stockroom Manager monitors the use of safety goggles; ensures that protective gloves and aprons are available; inspects safety showers, eyewashes, fire extinguishers, and fume hoods; stores chemicals in the proper manner and location; and disposes of chemical and radioactive wastes.

### **Federal Compliance**

This section responds to the mandates of the 1998 Amendments to the Higher Education Reauthorization Act and to the Department of Education's implementation of the law through its requirements as described in Chapter 14 of the NCA Handbook of Accreditation, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition.

### **Credits, Program Length, and Tuition**

The Commission expects an affiliated institution to be able to equate its learning experiences with semester hours using practices common to institutions of higher education, to justify the lengths of its programs in comparison to similar programs found in accredited institutions of higher education, and to justify any program-specific tuition in terms of program costs, program length, and program objectives. (Handbook, p. 181)

Southeastern Oklahoma State University measures course completion in semester hours for credit, including transfer credit accepted. The University maintains 3 academic semester, two 16 weeks in length, one 8 weeks in length, during the academic year. The current year and the preceding three years are represented with the beginning and ending dates:

Table 9.1  
Academic Year Calendar  
2000-2004

SEMESTER	BEGINS	ENDS
Spring 2004	January 15 <sup>th</sup>	May 14 <sup>th</sup>
Fall 2003	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	December 12 <sup>th</sup>
Summer 2003	June 2 <sup>nd</sup>	July 25 <sup>th</sup>
Spring 2003	January 8 <sup>th</sup>	May 9 <sup>th</sup>
Fall 2002	August 14 <sup>th</sup>	December 13 <sup>th</sup>
Summer 2002	May 30 <sup>th</sup>	July 26 <sup>th</sup>
Spring 2002	January 10 <sup>th</sup>	May 10 <sup>th</sup>
Fall 2001	August 15 <sup>th</sup>	December 14 <sup>th</sup>
Summer 2001	May 31 <sup>st</sup>	July 27 <sup>th</sup>
Spring 2001	January 10 <sup>th</sup>	May 11 <sup>th</sup>
Fall 2000	August 17 <sup>th</sup>	December 15 <sup>th</sup>
Summer 2000	June 1 <sup>st</sup>	July 28 <sup>th</sup>

The Registrar’s Office maintains all official students’ academic records. The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO) an academic record as follows:

An internal document or electronic image maintained by the Office of the Registrar that reflects the unabridged academic history of the student at the institution. It is a chronological listing of the student’s total quantitative and qualitative learning experiences and achievements and may include any information pertinent to the evaluation thereof.<sup>28</sup>

According to the AACRAO a transcript is the “document which, at the request of the student or former student, is forwarded to persons or agencies for their use in reviewing the academic performance of the students” (p. 3). Southeastern Oklahoma State University follows commonly accepted practices for the maintenance of the student’s academic record and the delivery upon request of the transcript that accurately reflects a student’s academic experience.

Article XIII-A of the Constitution of Oklahoma provides that the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education “shall constitute a coordinating board of control for all state institutions...with the following specific powers: (1) it shall prescribe standards of higher education applicable to each institution; (2) it shall determine the functions and courses of study in each of the institutions to conform to the standards prescribed; and (3) it shall grant degrees and other forms of academic recognition for completion of the prescribed courses in all of such institutions...”<sup>29</sup>. Accordingly the Oklahoma State Regents have prescribed that all undergraduate programs for a bachelor’s degree shall constitute 124 credit hours with a minimum of 40 hours being in the area of general education for all public universities in the state of Oklahoma. All the requirements for undergraduate degrees can be found in the Policy and Procedures Manual for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, Chapter 2, section 5, Academic Affairs.

Southeastern Oklahoma State University fully complies with those requirements as set forth in the Policies and Procedure Manual.

Tuition is set by the Oklahoma State Legislature and administered by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. These are reviewed annually when the legislature is in session. General enrollment fees supplement state appropriations. Revenues received through fees, tuition, and state appropriations are used to provide a competent faculty, maintain instructional facilities, supply instructional materials and equipment, and provide an environment that enhances student learning.

As of the 2002-2003 Academic Year the minimum tuition and fees per semester were undergraduate-lower (\$56.05); upper, (\$57.25); and graduate, (\$75.55). Non-resident fees per semester hour were: undergraduate- lower (\$155.80); upper, (\$167.50); and graduate, (\$205.00). Additional fees per semester hour are library resource fee; student activity fee; student assessment fee; student technology fee; and student union fee. The breakdown of student costs can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog on page18; the Graduate Catalog on page 5, and the course schedule on page 16.

**Institutional Compliance with the Higher Education Reauthorization Act**

The Commission expects that its affiliated institutions comply with the Title IV requirements of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act as amended. The institution is further expected to make appropriate evidence available as part of the comprehensive evaluation for accreditation.<sup>30</sup>

Southeastern Oklahoma State University maintains full compliance with Title IV requirements of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act. Recent data from the Office of Financial Aid indicated the official default rates as follows:

Table 9.2  
FFELP Default Rate  
Fiscal Years 1991-2000

Year	FFELP Default Rate
FY 2000 (Most Recent)	7.5%
FY 1999	8.0%
FY 1998	9.5%
FY 1997	9.5%
FY 1996	13.3%
FY 1995	13.7%
FY 1994	9.5%
FY 1993	10.1%
FY 1992	9.7%
FY 1991	10.1%

Because the University maintains a FFELP default rate of below 20%, there is no requirement to implement any specific default reduction measure. Internal monitoring

efforts are used to ensure that default rates stay within acceptable levels and the staff strives to use all appropriate steps to reduce the default rate for its students.

The 1998 Amendments to the HEA eliminated the series of penalties for the Perkins Loan Program. An institution with a default rate below 25% after June 30, 1999, will not be penalized. The following data delineates the Southeastern default rates for an eight-year span beginning with the 1993-94 Fiscal Year:

Table 9.3  
Perkins Default Rate  
Fiscal Years 1993-2001

Year	Perkins Default Rate
FY 2000-2001	13.10%
FY 1999-2000	7.69%
FY 1998-1999	11.05%
FY 1997-1998	24.62%
FY 1996-1997	26.00%
FY 1995-1996	28.30%
FY 1994-1995	22.60%
FY 1993-1994	6.55%

An OMB A-133 audit of all federal programs is completed annually by the Certified Public Accountant: Cole and Reed, Oklahoma City. The annual audit of the University's financial operation is conducted for the Fiscal year, July 1<sup>st</sup>- June 30<sup>th</sup>. The financial report is completed in October, and the audit follows shortly thereafter. Copies of the report and the findings are housed in the Office of Business Services.

The Program Participation Agreement,<sup>31</sup> which expires on June 30, 2007, is the authorization by the Federal Department of Education to the University to provide student financial assistance programs authorized by Title IV of the HEA. Over the past ten years the Office for Financial Aid has had no material audit findings. Through an aggressive entrance/exit process the default rate in the student loan programs continues to be reduced.

**Southeastern's Advertising and Recruitment Materials**

All University advertising is cleared through the Public Information Office. Efforts between the University's Public Information Office and the Office of Enrollment Management ensure that the Commission's address and telephone number are included in all materials that reference SOSU's accreditation status with The Higher Learning Commission and membership in the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

### **Professional Accreditation**

As previously stated in this document, specific degree programs offered by Southeastern are accredited by related professional organizations. Southeastern does not, however, hold dual institutional accreditation nor does another single agency maintain accrediting authority over 1/3 or more of the University's offerings to students.

### **Records of Student Complaints**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University, to comply with federal regulations, maintains records of the formal, written student complaints filed in the Office of Student Services. Any such records will be available for review by the Evaluation Team.

### **Third-Party Comments**

The federal regulations implementing the 1998 Higher Education Act Amendments require that accrediting agencies allow for public comment on qualifications of those institutions under consideration for accreditation. In so doing, Southeastern designed a process that would disseminate information to various public constituencies important to the institution in hopes of providing meaningful feedback through third party comments. Public constituencies included the following:

- Students – prospective, current, former.
- Local communities and counties that make up Southeastern's service region.
- Local governments, area businesses, school systems, and other post secondary institutions that interact with Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

The University chose to disseminate information to its constituencies about the NCA visit through local newspapers, campus newsletters, the University's website, and the media. In its notices Southeastern included the following elements:

- The purpose of the NCA comprehensive evaluation and site visit.
- The dates of the visit;
- The University's current accreditation status with the Commission.
- An invitation to send comments directly to the Commission that included the Commission's address and the date by which comments needed to be received.

## **Strengths and Areas for Improvement**

After examining Southeastern Oklahoma State University's policies and procedures designed to ensure integrity throughout the institution, the following strengths and areas for future improvement are enumerated:

### **Strengths**

- SOSU is committed to multicultural diversity. In response to faculty and administration attempts to improve sensitivity toward underrepresented populations on campus, two new positions were created: Director of Diversity and a Multicultural Coordinator.
- SOSU has aggressively sought to establish relations with other institutions of higher education. In the past five years Southeastern Oklahoma State University has aggressively pursued articulation agreements with four junior colleges in North Texas: Collin County Community College, Grayson County College, Paris Junior College, and North Central Texas College.
- SOSU has aggressively sought to provide innovative educational opportunities. Examples include: Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences, Bachelor of General Studies, and IETV courses in management, the Master of Business Administration, and the Bachelor of General Business.
- SOSU became a member of the Oklahoma City Aviation/Aerospace Education Alliance and became eligible to offer degree programs at Tinker Air Force Base.
- SOSU has placed all policies and procedures on the University's website for easy access.
- Southeastern continues to be in compliance with the HEA and provides those financial resources necessary to serve the University's student population.

### **Areas for Future Improvement**

- SOSU has not updated its *Employee Handbook* since the 1992 copy.
- SOSU has not updated its *Student Handbook* since the 1992-1993 hard copy. It has, however, been available on the University's Webpage since the mid '90s.

- Only 46% of those surveyed indicated federal guidelines and regulations governing the University's administration of grants and contracts from external sponsors are made known to the faculty through the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.
- Only 24% of those surveyed indicated the University's guidelines on faculty businesses and management of conflict of interest are made known to faculty. Forty-four percent of the respondents had no comment.
- Only 24% agreed that the University's policy on intellectual property and distribution of net proceeds of revenue derived from inventions and copyrighted materials are adequate and fair. Fifty-five percent of the respondents had no comment.

### **Summary**

Southeastern Oklahoma State University values its relationship with its employees, students, and external groups and has created policies and procedures that demonstrate a strong commitment to institutional integrity. Thus, SOSU feels strongly that it meets the standard promoted within Criterion Five.

## References

- (1) Center for Academic Integrity, 1999, p. 4 (*see file folder #90*)
- (2) Employee Handbook (*see file folder #32*)
- (3) Student Handbook (*see file folder #25*)
- (4) Academic Policies and Procedures Manual, Tenure and Promotion, sections 4.5 & 4.6 (*see file folder #1*)
- (5) Undergraduate Catalog (*see file folder #15*)
- (6) Graduate Catalog (*see file folder #16*)
- (7) Schedule of Classes (*see file folder #91*)
- (8) Academic Policies and Procedures Manual, section 7.4.3 (*see file folder #1*)
- (9) Employee Handbook (*see file folder #32*)
- (10) Academic Policies and Procedures Manual, section 7.4.4 (*see file folder #1*)
- (11) Diversity Report (*see file folder #92*)
- (12) Purchasing and Inventory Procedures Manual (*see file folder #93*)
- (13) State Regents Policy and Procedures Manual (*shelf, Resource Center*)
- (14) Articulation Agreements (*see file folder #94*)
- (15) Bachelor of Applied Arts, Undergraduate Catalog, p. 56(*see file folder #15*)
- (16) Academic Policies and Procedures Manual, section 3.5.11 (*see file folder #1*)
- (17) OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.1450 (*see file folder #95*)
- (18) OSHA 29 CFR 1910 subpart Z (*see file folder #95*)
- (19) Laboratory Safety Manual (*see file folder #96*)
- (20) Chemical Hygiene Plan (*see file folder #97*)
- (21) Animal Care and Use Manual ((*see file folder #98*))
- (22) Office of Management and Circulars A-21, A-110, and A-133 (*see file folder #99*)
- (23) Division of Cost Allocation, Department of Health and Human Services (*see file folder #100*)
- (24) Policy Manual of the Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges, section 3.3.2f (*shelf, Resource Room*)
- (25) Academic Policies and Procedures Manual, sections 7.10.2, 7.2.1, and 7.2.2 (*shelf, Resource Room*)
- (26) Department of Safety and Security Manual of Emergency Preparedness (*see file folder #101*)
- (27) FEMA Manual of Emergency Preparedness (*see file folder #102*)
- (28) Academic Record and Transcript Guide, p. 2 (*see file folder #103*)
- (29) State Regents for Higher Education, Policy and Procedures Manual, p. II-2-79 (*shelf, Resource Center*)
- (30) North Central Accreditation Handbook on Accreditation, p. 182 (*see file folder #104*)
- (31) Program Participation Agreement (*see file folder #105*)