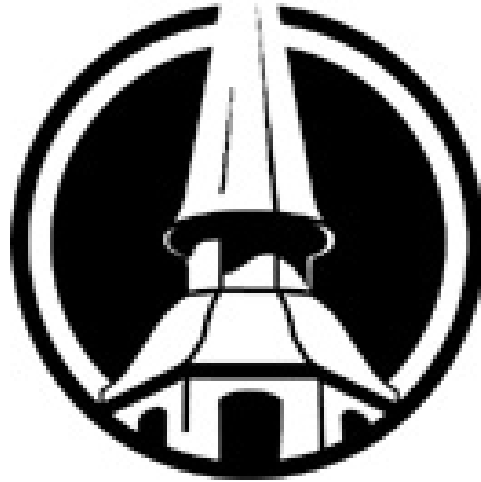


**ADMINISTRATIVE  
STAFF HANDBOOK**



November 2009

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## **PREFACE**

This Handbook has been prepared and given to you so that you may be better informed about Oklahoma Baptist University's employment practices and benefits. We appreciate the service of those of you who have been in OBU's family for some time, and we welcome our new employees.

**This Handbook is not a contract of employment.** Neither this Handbook nor University practices, policies or procedures, nor other communications from the University to you should be understood by you to create a contract or an employment agreement for any period of time. Only a formal agreement by the University made in writing and signed by you and the President could promise you employment for a term of time.

The benefits described in this Handbook may be more fully described elsewhere. For instance, they may be described in benefit manuals and policies of insurance. Those more specific and detailed explanations will prevail over the summary statements made about benefits in this Handbook if there are differences or inconsistencies.

The policies and procedures described in this Handbook and elsewhere are management guides. The University intends to follow these policies and procedures, but the policies and procedures are not contracts between the University and any employee.

Each Administrative Employee is asked to sign a statement indicating that this Handbook has been or will be carefully read by the employee and that the employee has certain understandings about it and about his or her employment. That statement will customarily be given to the employee when the employee is given a copy of this Handbook. If you are not given a statement to sign, you are expected to ask the Human Resources Office for a statement. The signed statement should be returned to the Human Resources Office.



## **SECTION 1**

### **1.0 Mission**

As a Christian liberal arts university, OBU transforms lives by equipping students to

- Pursue academic excellence
- Integrate faith with all areas of knowledge
- Engage a diverse world
- Live worthy of the high calling of God in Christ

To achieve its mission the University has adopted several goals, among which are:

To be a Christian learning community where faith and knowledge contribute to the individual's awareness: of the person and the person's obligations within a diverse and interrelated society; of truth and its force; of the joy of discovery and the beauty of existence; and of the legacy of the past, the challenge of the present, and the promise of the future.

To cultivate Christian community in which the Baptist principles of individual freedom and dignity as well as mutual kindness, respect, and concern for others are stressed.

To encourage a climate of learning where the student may develop the lifelong habit of critical thinking in the search for truth.

To identify and communicate the knowledge, experience, and values which constitute man's cultural heritage.

To provide opportunities for the student to engage in a serious study of the Bible and to learn the philosophy and tenets of the Judeo-Christian heritage; to instill an awareness of and an appreciation for the distinctive Baptist contribution to Christian theology and for the values inherent in the Christian faith; to encourage Christian commitment.

To foster an awareness of the needs of the human community and the responsibility of each individual in an active life of service.

To offer a broad-based liberal arts education and specialized professional training in mutually supportive roles.

To afford the opportunity to explore the relevance of all academic endeavors to the Christian life.

To make personnel, services and facilities of the institution available to meet appropriate educational, cultural, and religious needs of its several constituencies.

To serve the Baptist constituency through the development of informed, enlightened, sensitive leadership.

Administrators, faculty, and staff members will conduct their professional activities in a manner which is consistent with the Purpose Statement of the University.

## **1.2 Governance**

The University's Board of Trustees, elected by the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, has the power and right to govern the University. The Board is composed of thirty-two persons, eight of whom are elected each year for four-year terms. The organization of the Board is described in the University's Charter and Bylaws.

Administration of the daily operation of the University is vested by the Board of Trustees in the President of the University. The President is responsible to the Board and makes regular reports to the Board on the work and condition of the institution. The President serves as an *ex officio* member of the Board.

The President delegates specific responsibilities for University programs and operations to the administrative officers of the University, who report directly to him. Specific responsibilities for program and policy review is vested by the President in University Councils and Committees and in the University Forum, which make recommendations to the President. The power of review or final decision in all areas is lodged in the Board of Trustees or delegated by it to the President.

The President is the official representative and spokesman for the University to all constituencies. Official communication involving students, faculty members, administrative officers, or other University personnel with the Board of Trustees or the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma flows through the Office of the President. The President or his designated representative also serves as the University spokesman for communication concerning the University to the press or to the general public.

## **SECTION 2**

### **2.0 Definition of Administrator**

An administrator of Oklahoma Baptist University is defined as an employee tasked to assist in the management of the administrative operation of the university. Administrators are exempt from wage and hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

### **2.1 Offers of Employment**

Original offers of employment and notices of offers of continued employment, unless otherwise specified, are appointments for a twelve-month term (subject to earlier discharge or lay off) and expire at the end of the University's fiscal year on July 31. Unless the appointment is renewed, the administrator's employment will terminate at the end of the appointment term. The administrator will normally receive notice of continued employment by June 1 of each year. An appointment does not give the administrator any right of renewal or further promise concerning employment. The notice will specify the title of the appointment, the salary, and the period covered by the appointment. An administrator will have fifteen calendar days in which to sign and return the University's offer of employment. (Administrators, who also hold a faculty appointment, serve as faculty pursuant to policies of the Faculty Handbook.)

## **2.2 Policies and Procedures Relative to Recruitment and Appointment of Administrators**

### **2.2.1 Policy on Non-Discrimination**

In compliance with federal law, including the provision of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Oklahoma Baptist University does not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or military service in its administration of educational policies, programs, or activities, its admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic or other university administered programs; or employment. Inquiries or complaints may be directed to the Director of Human Resources in Thurmond Hall 110, who acts for the University as the designated compliance officer for coordination of the University's employment nondiscrimination policies or mailed to OBU, Box 61141, 500 W. University, Shawnee, Oklahoma, 74804 (phone 405-878-2013).

### **2.2.2 Policy and Mission**

The University will exercise its legal right to make employment preferences based on religion as the University deems that to be wise in order to fulfill its mission and purpose.

### **2.2.3 Nepotism Policy - All Employees**

No family member may be supervised by another family member without the written permission of the President at the time of initial employment and at any change in employment or family status. Employees are expected to be forthcoming and advise the Human Resources office when family relationships violate this policy. A family member should neither initiate nor participate in University decisions involving direct benefits (initial appointment, retention, promotion, salary, leave-of-absence) to members of his/her immediate family. Also, a family member should not participate in the evaluation of another family member. For the purpose of this policy, a family member is defined as one related to another in the first degree by blood or marriage.

### **2.2.4 Vacancies**

Responsibility for anticipating administrative personnel needs resides with the appropriate administrative officer in consultation with the appropriate budget head. The department head concerned, with others as needed, screens prospective candidates for employment. If an administrative staff position is responsible to two different departments, the officers will confer together concerning the selection. The Human Resources Office acts as a clearinghouse for information and as a depository of records. All job vacancy announcements and applications should be filed with the Human Resources Office.

### **2.2.5 Appointment of Administrative Personnel**

All executive officers, administrative officers, and administrative personnel are appointed by the President in consultation with those administrators to whom the employee will report.

The precise terms and conditions of appointment will be approved by the President and stated in the notice of original offer of employment and in subsequent notices of continued employment.

In accepting an appointment at Oklahoma Baptist University, the administrator acknowledges responsibility to conduct personal and professional activities in a manner consistent with the purpose statement of the University and to work diligently to assist the University to achieve its goals and objectives.

The President will screen prospective candidates for executive officer positions. If deemed necessary, the President may appoint a search committee to assist in the screening process.

### **2.2.6 Teaching by Non-Faculty Personnel**

Administrative staff who are qualified to teach may be appointed to adjunctive faculty positions upon recommendation of the Chief Academic Officer with prior approval by the employee's administrative officer.

If an employee is asked to teach, additional compensation will be in order, commensurate with additional time required for the teaching assignment. The President will approve such joint arrangements. Such a teaching appointment will be on a term contract basis and subject to specific sections of the Faculty Handbook which apply to part-time faculty positions. Compensated teaching assignments by administrative staff will be coordinated with the task of the normal position.

Certain administrators have faculty status and their teaching responsibilities are included as a part of their contracts and are not subject to additional compensation.

### **2.2.7 Reemployment**

A rehired employee who has been out of University employment for 90 days or less will receive reinstatement of previously accrued service time and accrued benefits.

If an employee is rehired after being out of University employment for more than 90 days, and had less than 1 year of previous service, all benefits will be dated as of the new date of employment with no credit for previous experience.

If an employee with at least 1 year of prior continuous service has been out of University employment between 90 days and 1 year, insurance, sick leave and retirement benefits will be effective on the date of rehire. Continuous service credit for the calculation of vacation, service awards, and educational benefits will be granted. No continuous service credit will be granted for the time out of University employment.

If an employee has been out of University employment more than 1 year, all benefits will be as for a new employee with no credit for previous service.

## **2.3 Documents and Records**

### **2.3.1 Personnel Files**

Each employee shall have an individual personnel file, maintained by the Human Resources Office, which contains personnel actions and materials. All administrative staff employed by the University shall notify the Human Resources Office of any change of address and telephone number; otherwise, any notice sent by United States mail to the address of record shall be deemed to have been sufficiently given.

The personnel file is available only to the President, the administrator's supervisors and their professional staff, the individual administrator or his duly authorized agent, the Human Resources office, accrediting agencies, federal and state auditors, and other authorized personnel and agents of the University as necessary to the performance of their duties. The personnel file may be used by the University as evidence in any University procedure and in any external judicial or administrative proceeding and is subject to subpoena.

The administrator may, for the cost of duplication, obtain copies of materials in his personnel file. Any such copies will be made by the Human Resources Director.

### **2.3.2 Criminal Conviction**

Employees must notify the Director of Human Resources of any criminal conviction within five days of the conviction.

## **2.4 Evaluation System**

Each employee will normally receive an annual evaluation of job performance from his/her supervisor. The evaluations will require personal discussions between the supervisor and the employee.

The Performance Review program has four goals:

1. Encourage the employee's personal and professional growth.
2. Improve the employee's understanding of the job, the supervisor's objectives, and how well the employee meets these objectives.
3. Aid management in selecting qualified people for promotion, transfer, and training.
4. Provide safeguards for objectivity and fairness in the assignment of personnel.

### **2.4.1 Procedure**

The Human Resources Office will provide the appropriate evaluation form. The supervisor will complete the evaluation and sign it. A conference between the supervisor and the employee will be held to discuss the evaluation. The employee may make written comments and sign the form. The evaluation form will then be forwarded to the reviewing official. The reviewing official will review, comment if

desired, and sign the form. The completed form will be sent to the Human Resources Office to become part of the employee's personnel file.

Routinely, evaluations will be conducted at least annually with the normal review date falling before the issuance of administrative contracts for the upcoming fiscal year.

All new administrative employees are required to undergo an evaluation of their performance 90 days after their initial starting date. The orientation period and the 90-day evaluation are designed to ascertain the desirability of continued employment of the individual.

## **2.5 Promotion and Transfer**

On occasion administrative openings within the University are identified and advertised; University administrative personnel who qualify for the position and wish to apply may do so. Candidates for the position from within the University community shall be evaluated by the same criteria as others who apply for the position. Promotion is recognized by Oklahoma Baptist University as a cornerstone of good employment practice. Job performance, competence, basic skills, and attendance record will be among those things considered when evaluating a promotion or transfer.

A transfer may take place without a promotion. Any accumulated sick leave and vacation will be unaffected by transfer or promotion. Except under extenuating circumstances, personnel transferring into a position should not request to be considered for another transfer for at least 90 days. There will be a 90-day orientation period and evaluation for all promotions and transfers.

## **2.6 Termination**

At times, Oklahoma Baptist University or individual employees may find it necessary to sever their employment relationship. **When this occurs, the employment termination date is determined as the last day the employee works.** The employee will be paid for work performed and for any accrued but unused vacation time.

The types of termination are:

- Non-reappointment
- Resignation
- Retirement
- Layoff
- Discharge

### **2.6.1 Non-Reappointment**

The term "non-reappointment" means that the University will not offer an administrator further employment beyond the term of the present appointment, usually the end of the fiscal year, and that employment will terminate on the last day of the present appointment.

Normally, the administrator will receive written notice of non-reappointment and normally that notice will be given at least sixty calendar days prior to the end of the existing appointment.

Reasons for non-reappointment include:

Cancellation or redirection of a program or department.

Financial crisis.

Financial exigency.

Over staffing.

Inadequate performance of job responsibilities.

Incongruence between the interests of the administrator and the interests of the University.

The decision not to reappoint is made by the President in consultation with the other supervisors of the employee. The President will make his decision after considering all the factors he deems relevant, including but not limited to the following:

- The performance reviews of the administrator.
- The benefits to be derived by the University from the administrator's continued service in the position (the long range goals and objectives of the department and the University shall be used as the basis for making this decision).
- The effectiveness of the department as organized in meeting its goals and objectives.
- The financial health of the department.
- The financial health of the University.

### **2.6.2 Resignation**

Resignation is an action by which a member of the administration voluntarily severs employment with the University.

The University hopes that an administrator will give notice of intent to resign at the earliest possible opportunity, and certainly no later than thirty calendar days prior to the effective date of the resignation.

### **2.6.3 Retirement**

Normal retirement age for administrators is sixty-five (65). (Refer to 2.2.1 and 2.7.4.1) The administrator should provide notice of the intent to retire as early as possible, preferably no later than 90 days prior to the end of the fiscal year.

### **2.6.4 Layoff**

Occasionally it may be necessary to lay off administrators prior to the expiration of the term of appointment. Such layoffs occur for reasons such as lack of work, loss of or lack of funds, market shifts, and program redirection in whole or in part. The President, with Board of Trustee approval, will determine if layoffs will be made. When the University initiates the layoff of an employee, the University will attempt to give at least two weeks notice.

### **2.6.5 Discharge**

Discharge is a separation action by which the University terminates employment of an

administrator prior to the expiration of the term of appointment.

### **2.6.5.1 Disciplinary Policy**

Oklahoma Baptist University has established the following employee disciplinary policy; however, the University has not promised or contracted with the employee to discipline only in keeping with this policy or the procedures described.

Certain employee actions will result in immediate discharge, while other actions will be dealt with in a less severe manner.

Preferably, an oral warning will be given in a formal meeting where a problem is discussed. A memo will follow to document the meeting and will be signed by both the supervisor and employee. The signed memo will be filed in the employee's personnel file.

A written warning will be given in a formal meeting where the problem is discussed. The supervisor and employee will sign the document, which will be filed in the employee's personnel file.

Preferably, notice of a discharge will be given in a formal meeting where the employee will be advised of his/her termination and any severance arrangements which need to be made.

#### **Guidelines for Discharge**

The following are management guidelines and not promises to employees that discharge may only occur in keeping with these guidelines. These guidelines are designed to emphasize reminders of expected performance rather than reprimands. The guidelines reflect the University's desire to correct the problem rather than punish the employee. The University may choose to utilize some, all or none of the steps. These guidelines neither promise the employee nor restrict the University. The identification of some of the reasons for discharge is to help the employee understand expectations. The reasons are not an exclusive list.

Reasons for discharge:

Serious and demonstrable professional incompetence.

Serious and demonstrable neglect of duties.

Falsification of credentials or experience.

Fraudulent or unethical behavior.

Misappropriation or misuse of University resources, including financial resources, physical resources and/or human resources.

Physical contact of a sexual nature with a student or employee who is not one's spouse,

Exploitation of students, staff, faculty members or their families for personal benefit or gain.

Verbal or physical abuse directed toward students, staff, faculty members or their families.

Sexual harassment.

Violation of the human rights and/or freedoms of faculty, staff or students.

Illegal discrimination, based on race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or military service.

Private conduct which compromises the fulfillment of professional duties and/or demonstrably and seriously harms the reputation of the University and/or the profession.

Engaging in or promoting sexual conduct that contradicts biblical standards for sexuality. OBU affirms the biblical understanding as a faithful commitment in marriage between a man and a woman and purity in relationships outside of marriage.

Conviction of a crime which compromises the fulfillment of professional duties and/or demonstrably and seriously harms the reputation of the University or the profession.

Violation of University policies relative to campus safety and substance abuse.

Spreading malicious rumors or gossip concerning the University, its employees or its students.

Any other just or legal cause.

Guidelines for appeal of a disciplinary action are outlined in Section 2.12 of this Handbook.

### **2.6.5.2 Discharge Procedure**

Immediate Release:

If the employee's action is of extreme severity, the employee may be released immediately. Usual discharge procedures are described below.

Discharge Procedure:

Prior to discharge notice, the employee's supervisor should take the steps outlined above (Section 2.6.5.1), if appropriate.

The supervisor should provide the Executive Officer of the area and the President with a written record containing the events leading up to the recommendation for discharge.

The Executive Officer of the area should review the recommendation for discharge. He/she may endorse the discharge recommendation and forward it to the President, or he/she may reject the discharge recommendation and forward to the President a recommendation for a lesser disciplinary action as outlined above.

The President has the ultimate authority to order a discharge and may at his discretion overrule any recommended action.

### **2.6.6 Suspension with Pay**

Suspension is the temporary separation of an administrator from the University where it is determined by the President that there is a strong likelihood that the administrator's continued presence at the University poses an immediate threat of harm or disruption to the University or to individual members of the University community. Suspension shall be with pay and shall last only so long as the threat of harm continues or until the administrator is discharged. Administrators may appeal through the grievance procedure.

### **2.6.7 Exit Interview**

Exit interviews are conducted to obtain all necessary information pertaining to the termination process. An opportunity also exists for an employee to voice concerns that need to be reviewed by the University.

All regular employees, whose employment with the University ends, should have an exit interview before leaving.

The Human Resources Office, in coordination with the employee's supervisor, will schedule the exit interview.

## **2.7 Administrative Responsibilities**

### **2.7.1 Oklahoma Baptist University Commitment to Excellence**

In 1974, the Oklahoma Baptist University Faculty, Administration, and Trustees adopted the Oklahoma Baptist University Commitment to Excellence, which provides a definition for and vision of institutional excellence.

The following Criteria for Excellence in University Administration has been adopted from the Commitment to Excellence and applied to the duties of the University administrators:

Administrative Ability:

Knowledge of the area of expertise: an administrator should both have and continue to gain knowledge of his/her administrative field. He/she should read literature related to the area of expertise, attend professional meetings and seminars, and in other ways keep abreast of the latest knowledge related to the area of responsibility.

Communication: an effective administrator will communicate ideas and instruction clearly to those supervised, to administrative colleagues, to supervisors, to members of the faculty, to students, and other members of the University community. Instruction to those supervised will be set forth clearly so that each member of the administrative unit knows what is expected and whether or not those expectations are being met. Reports to supervisors will be clear and concise. When called upon to communicate with members of the constituency, he/she will attempt to represent the University fairly and honestly. He/she will work to enhance communications between the administrative unit and others in the University community.

Organization and planning: an effective administrator will develop organizational skills and use them to lead the administrative unit toward thorough and efficient fulfillment of its responsibilities. He/she will plan personal and unit activities in such a way that assigned tasks are completed within the appropriate time frame. He/she will manage the expenditures for the administrative unit in a way that serves well the interests of the program and of the University as a whole. He/she will direct the unit in productive long-range planning to help the University meet its goals and thus fulfill its mission.

Self-criticism and improvement: the effective administrator will continually work to improve himself/herself. He/she will explore new methods and experiment with new ideas which might benefit the area. He/she will seek information to assess the effectiveness of his/her leadership.

Interest in the students: an effective administrator realizes that the primary purpose of the University is to educate students. In dealing with students, the administrator will be fair and helpful. When a student requires guidance, the administrator will provide guidance in a manner that is benevolent and humane. When the administrator is not empowered to help a student who seeks advice, the student will be directed toward those who can satisfactorily consider and address the student's concerns.

The life of the mind: an effective administrator will recognize his/her responsibilities as one who is a leader in an academic community. He/she will foster intellectual interests broader than his/her own discipline: he/she will cultivate an appreciation for literature and the arts; he/she will have a vital concern for contemporary social issues; he/she will try to be aware of developments outside of personal professional interests.

Service to the University: the administrator has an obligation to promote the general welfare of the University. When asked to serve on committees, he/she shall consider these tasks an essential part of professional duties. He/she will seek to enhance the development of the whole institution as well as his/her unit.

Christian faith and professional life: the administrator at Oklahoma Baptist University will perceive the relevance of the Christian faith to personal and professional life. He/she will be concerned about issues of faith, particularly those which bear upon the processes of liberal arts education. He/she will seek to practice the Christian virtues in relationships with those whom he/she works and with others in the University community. He/she will appreciate the obligation of stewardship in his/her vocation. He/she will carry on his/her work in a

manner that preserves personal and professional integrity.

### **2.7.2 Religious Beliefs**

As a church-related institution, the University has a unique responsibility both to its constituency and to the academic community. The philosophy of the University concerning its religious expression has been summarized in the following statement:

Oklahoma Baptist University was founded as an institution dedicated to the pursuit of truth within the benevolent atmosphere of the Christian tradition. Though the attitudes and beliefs of individual members of the academic community generally reflect the viewpoints of the Baptist constituency, there is no attempt to seek religious conformity from students of diverse persuasions. The freedom of the individual to develop his own spiritual insights is one of the most cherished of Baptist traditions; it is of paramount importance on this campus.

Students are encouraged to join the University faculty and administrators for worship in local churches, in chapel services, and in special annual seminars and assemblies devoted to religious emphasis.

An understanding of the purpose and goals of the University is essential for every administrator. Administrators who accept appointment to the University should be in basic sympathy with the traditions and endeavors of the institution, should seek to further its interests, and should dedicate their influence and abilities to its continuing development. Administrators should be familiar with Baptist belief as it is reflected in [The Baptist Faith and Message](#).

### **2.7.3 Professional Ethics**

No set of rules or professional code can either guarantee or replace the administrator's personal integrity. The following code is an attempt to set forth some of the more important ethical guidelines accepted by all members of the academic profession.

Administrative employees are bound to observe, in their official acts, the highest standards of ethics and morality and to faithfully discharge the duties of their position regardless of personal consideration.

Administrative employees are responsible for knowing, adhering to, and supporting the regulations and policies of the institution, both those that apply to the whole University community and those that direct the workings of the various administrative units.

Administrative employees are responsible for using designated organizational channels when seeking decision and policy determinations.

Administrative employees shall respect the integrity and confidentiality of University records. They shall not falsify or misrepresent information in University records, and they shall not disclose confidential information concerning the business of the University, its personnel, or its students.

Administrative employees shall not exploit their authority over University personnel or

students nor shall they use their positions to gain special favors. In all cases they shall treat those whom they supervise in a fair, reasonable, and humane manner.

An administrator shall not engage in any business or transaction or have a financial interest, direct or indirect, which might prevent the exercise of good judgment in performance of duties for the University. Administrators shall not compete with the University on any business opportunity of the University.

#### **2.7.3.1 Copyright Policy**

The University is covered by current fair use and copyright laws. More explicit guidelines are available in the Faculty Handbook (2.10.7.3).

#### **2.7.4 Illegal Discrimination and Harassment Policies**

##### **2.7.4.1 Principle**

Oklahoma Baptist University is committed to maintaining an atmosphere in which the age, gender, race, color, national origin, physical or mental disability, or veteran status of an individual is respected and not disparaged.

##### **2.7.4.2 Sexual Harassment**

###### **2.7.4.2.1 Principle**

Oklahoma Baptist University strives to maintain high standards of professional ethics in an atmosphere in which individuals do not abuse their personal authority or power in interpersonal relationships. Accordingly, the University prohibits sexual harassment by any member of the University community, whether faculty, staff, or student.

###### **2.7.4.2.2 Definition**

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance or other unwelcome verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) a reasonable individual would believe that his/her response to the conduct will affect his/her employment or academic status; or (2) the conduct creates an intimidating or hostile environment for work or learning. Sexual harassment can be verbal, visual, physical, or communicated in writing or electronically. Although sexual harassment may violate state or federal law, the University may consider conduct to be sexual harassment whether or not it rises to the level of illegal sex discrimination.

The following are some examples which may be sexual harassment: Requests for sexual favors; Unwanted and/or inappropriate hugging, touching, patting, or brushing another's body; Inappropriate whistling or staring; Veiled suggestions of sexual activities; Requests for private meetings outside of class or business hours for other than legitimate mentoring purposes; Use in the classroom of sexual jokes, stories, or images in no way germane to the subject of the class; Remarks about a

person's body or sexual relationships, activities, or experience.

#### **2.7.4.2.3 Informal Response to Harassment**

Any person who wishes to make an informal response to unwelcome conduct, including conduct which may be sexual or other prohibited harassment, is welcome to communicate to the other party either in person or in writing that the conduct is offensive or unwelcome and request that the conduct cease. Frequently such a communication will cause the unwelcome behavior to stop, particularly where the person may not be aware that the conduct is unwelcome or offensive. Such an informal response may be made in addition to pursuing the complaint process described below.

#### **2.7.4.3 Complaint**

Oklahoma Baptist University encourages anyone who believes that he/she has been subjected to prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment or some other civil rights violation to make a complaint promptly. A faculty member or staff employee should make a complaint to the Vice-President in charge of his/her employment area or the Director of Human Resources, OBU, Box 61141, 500 W. University, Thurmond Hall 110, Shawnee, Oklahoma 74804, phone (405)878-2013. A student should make a complaint to the Dean of Students or to the Associate Dean of Students, OBU, Box 61239, 500 W. University, Geiger Center, Shawnee, Oklahoma 74804, phone (405)878-2406. The University will investigate the complaint promptly.

#### **2.7.4.4 Confidentiality; Retaliation**

The University will undertake to protect, as much as possible, the confidentiality of persons reporting harassment or other civil rights violations, and of those accused. However, the University has a legal and moral obligation to investigate all complaints of civil rights violations and, if appropriate, to take corrective action. Therefore, complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Oklahoma Baptist University strictly prohibits retaliation against any student or employee who makes a good faith complaint of sexual harassment or other civil rights violation, or who testifies, assists, or participates in any investigation, proceeding, or hearing involving such a complaint.

#### **2.7.4.5 Investigation**

Oklahoma Baptist University will promptly investigate any claim of sexual harassment or other civil rights violation. If the investigation leads to charges of sexual harassment or other civil rights violations, the person charged will be given written notice of the charges and given an opportunity to respond.

#### **2.7.5 Workload**

#### **2.7.5.1 Work Week**

The administrative appointment at Oklahoma Baptist University requires full-time professional commitment to the institution. Office hours for administrators are normally 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. with one hour for lunch. The University recognizes that administrative duties will sometimes require overtime or time spent in off-campus activities.

It is the responsibility of the administrator to schedule in such a way that both on-campus and off-campus responsibilities can be fulfilled adequately. When an administrator is off-campus, the appropriate supervisor should know where he/she can be reached in case of an emergency.

The appropriate supervisor is to be notified when an administrator cannot report to work due to illness, death in the family, or other similar conflicts.

#### **2.7.5.2 Emergency Closing**

Occasionally it is necessary to cancel or change the work schedule due to inclement weather or other emergency. Information may be obtained from radio, television or the immediate supervisor. If the University decides to close for emergency reasons, employees regularly scheduled to work will be paid for the hours missed due to the cancellation or change of schedule.

#### **2.7.5.3 Job Description**

The major responsibilities of each administrative position are outlined in the job description.

It is the responsibility of each administrator to competently and efficiently fulfill the duties described in the job description.

Administrators may also be asked by supervisors to fulfill particular assignments not specified in the job description.

#### **2.7.5.4 Personnel**

Administrative responsibilities for personnel management include, but are not limited to, supervision, evaluation, and efficient usage of human resources within the administrative unit.

Statutory guidelines and University personnel policies are to be followed by administrators in order to protect the legal rights of employees and the University.

#### **2.7.5.5 Files**

Administrators shall maintain accurate and complete files for the University. Protection of confidential information is imperative.

#### **2.7.5.6 Budget**

Administrators are responsible for budget management as assigned. The fiscal health of the University depends on the ability of each administrator to see that each area makes the best use of University resources, operating within budget limitations and reducing spending when it is necessary to avoid financial crisis.

## **2.7.5.7 University Service**

### **2.7.5.7.1 University and Ad Hoc Committee Assignments**

Administrators are frequently appointed to committees. The administrator shall consider committee service an important responsibility and shall participate in the work of the committee.

### **2.7.5.7.2 Chapel Attendance**

Administrators are encouraged to attend weekly chapel/assembly programs as schedules permit.

### **2.7.5.7.3 University Forum and Faculty Forum**

Administrators are expected to attend meetings of the University Forum which are called by the President twice each semester. Academic administrators are also expected to attend the monthly meetings of the Faculty Forum.

### **2.7.5.7.4 Commencement, Convocation and Other Formal Academic Occasions**

Administrators are encouraged, and may be required, to attend University Commencement, Convocation, and other formal academic occasions. Academic administrators and executive officers are expected to wear academic regalia.

## **2.7.5.8 Consulting and Off-Campus Employment**

University administration is a full-time profession; however, a reasonable amount of consulting and other remunerative activities is permitted on an overtime basis, provided they do not interfere with the administrator's effective performance of duties. Consulting and off-campus remunerative activities shall be of a professional character commensurate with the individual's capabilities, experience, and status and should promote the administrator's professional growth and development.

Administrators who have a full-time appointment with the University shall be allowed up to five days per calendar year for consulting activity upon the written approval of the President. Further days may be approved in writing by the President in cases where the consulting activity will be of direct benefit to the University. The administrator who will be off campus to fulfill consulting responsibilities shall inform the supervisor of that intent. Consulting time is not to interfere with assigned duties.

Administrators shall exercise care to distinguish between, and make clear to others, their work within the scope of their employment by the University, and their other work or activities.

## **2.8 Professional Development**

It is the obligation of each member of the Oklahoma Baptist University administration to attempt to develop professional expertise through attending professional meetings, workshops, and seminars, through reading professional books and journals, writing, and, in some cases, through acquiring formal educational experiences in the pertinent

administrative field.

### **2.8.1 Tuition for Administrators**

Full tuition for course work at Oklahoma Baptist University shall be granted to all full-time administrators immediately upon employment. The number of courses that an administrator can take is limited by work load, supervisory approval, and the current education benefit policy. Applications for the education benefit must be obtained from the Human Resources Office prior to beginning the enrollment procedure.

### **2.8.2 Dues and Memberships**

The University pays only those dues and membership fees which are for the institution and/or which provide needed publications, books, or other instructional data only through membership in the organization. No personal dues or fees will be paid unless these requirements are met.

All requests for approval of University payment of dues and membership fees should be made to the Vice President who supervises the employee's area. Approval is made by the President on the recommendation of the Vice President.

## **2.9 Leaves**

### **2.9.1 Paid Leave**

#### **2.9.1.1 Sick Leave**

A maximum of 12 days of sick leave is accrued per fiscal year (August 1 through July 31). Sick leave accrues at the rate of 1 day per month for full-time employees. Paid sick leave cannot be paid until the completion of 90 days of service.

All employees who work at least 20 through 39 hours per week on a regular basis accrue sick leave on a full time equivalency (FTE) basis.

Sick leave can be used for personal illness and medical appointments for the employee and the employee's immediate family (dependent child, spouse and parent only). Sick leave used for the employee's immediate family is limited to six days per fiscal year.

A maximum of 70 days of sick leave can be accrued and carried forward from fiscal year to fiscal year. Sick leave must be approved by the department head prior to receipt of pay for such absence. Any sick leave may require a **doctors statement** if deemed circumstances warrant such a statement; however, all extended sick leave without hospitalization will require verification of the nature and extent of the illness by means of a **doctor's statement**. If an employee is in termination status, a doctor's statement is required to use accrued sick leave.

Upon termination, an employee is not paid for accrued sick leave.

#### **2.9.1.2 Maternity Leave**

During pregnancy an employee may continue normal duties or use available leave while unable to perform regular duties. Employees who utilize leave for pregnancy shall suffer no

penalty, retaliation or other discrimination. Before and after the birth of a child or adoption of a child, the University Family Medical Leave policy will be applied as needed.

#### **2.9.1.3 Court Leave**

When an employee is summoned to jury duty or subpoenaed to appear as a witness by a proper authority to serve as a witness in any state or Federal Court where the employee is not a party, the employee may be granted time off without loss of pay or benefits. The employee is responsible for notifying the supervisor or department head of impending jury or witness duty immediately upon receipt of the notice to serve. Compensation for jury duty, excluding expense reimbursement, must be paid to the University at the Human Resources Office if the employee wishes to retain the employee's regular University compensation.

#### **2.9.1.4 Military Leave**

OBU provides reemployment and other benefits for employees engaged in military service as provided by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act. Any employee may take a leave of absence for military service in the uniformed services of the United States, including the Oklahoma National Guard. An employee going on military leave shall give advance notice of the leave to his or her supervisor as soon as practical. If advance notice cannot be given because of military necessity or other circumstances, notice shall be given as soon as reasonable after the beginning of the military leave.

An employee may elect to use any accrued vacation time during a military leave. To the extent vacation time is not used, military leave shall be unpaid. During military leave which lasts for more than 30 days, employees may elect to continue employee and dependent health insurance coverage, at the employee's expense, for up to 180 days.

Time spent on military leave shall be counted in calculating years of service for all purposes, including service awards, eligibility for vacation, and consideration for promotion. Neither vacation leave nor paid sick leave shall accrue during military leave.

Upon termination of military service, any employee who makes a timely application for reemployment shall be reemployed by the University unless reemployment is impossible, unreasonable, or an undue hardship under the circumstances. An employee returning from a military leave lasting longer than thirty (30) days shall provide official, written documentation showing that the employee is entitled to reemployment and that the application for reemployment is timely.

#### **2.9.1.5 Bereavement Leave**

An employee will receive up to 3 days at regular straight-time pay for necessary time lost from work in the event of the death of a spouse (husband or wife), child (natural, foster, step), parent, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother or sister only. In the event of the death of a grandparent or other relative that has played a major role in the rearing of an employee, 1 day is authorized. Any time off in excess of the above will be considered vacation time or leave without pay.

#### **2.9.1.6 Holidays**

The following days are authorized University holidays. The University reserves the right to

schedule which calendar day a holiday will be observed.

- New Year's Day
- Spring Break Day - 1 day selected by the employee and approved in advance by the department head.
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving – Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

If any of the above holidays fall on Saturday, Friday will normally be the approved holiday. If it falls on Sunday, Monday will normally be the holiday.

All employees (excluding students) who work at least 20 hours or more per week on a regular basis, will be eligible for holiday pay based on full time equivalency (FTE). If a holiday falls during an employee's regularly scheduled employment period, he/she will be paid for the holiday based on the employee's regularly scheduled hours. If the holiday is at a time when he/she normally would not be working, no pay will be received for that holiday.

#### **2.9.1.6 Holidays**

The following days are authorized University holidays. The University reserves the right to schedule which calendar day a holiday will be observed.

- New Year's Day
- Spring Break Day - 1 day selected by the employee and approved in advance by the department head.
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving – Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

If any of the above holidays fall on Saturday, Friday will normally be the approved holiday. If it falls on Sunday, Monday will normally be the holiday.

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### 2.9.1.7 Vacation

All full-time and part-time employees are given vacation leave as follows:

<b>Length of service or years of experience</b>	<b>Vacation days per year</b>
0-2 years	10
2-5 years	12
5 to 15 years	15
15+ years	18

Vacation leave is prorated on an FTE basis for employees who work less than full-time. For example, an employee with 6 years of experience regularly scheduled to work 32 hours each week (.75 fte) receives 11.25 days of vacation each year.

Employees are also given their birthday as a vacation day. If the birthday falls on a regular day off, the supervisor may set an alternate day with the employee's input.

Candidates for employment with prior relevant experience may be approved to receive vacation leave based upon their years of experience. The President or his designee must approve such requests in advance of employment.

Vacation time is given at the beginning of the fiscal year or pro-rated based on the date of employment if the employee begins work after the beginning of the fiscal year. Vacation is not given to new employees until the 90-day orientation period is completed.

All part-time employees who work at least 20 hours or more per week on a regular basis are given vacation time on a pro-rated basis.

Whenever possible, the University will grant vacation at the convenience of an employee; however, departmental needs must be met and vacation should not be scheduled or taken without prior request and approval of the employee's supervisor.

Each budget unit head and supervisor is responsible for ensuring that each person under his/her supervision is scheduled for appropriate vacation time.

Vacation may not be carried forward from one fiscal year to the next. Cash payment in lieu of vacation is not permitted.

Employees will not be paid for any unused vacation time upon termination of employment. Upon resignation, employees may only be granted remaining vacation days on a pro-rated annual basis.

## **2.9.2 Leave without Pay**

### **2.9.2.1 Family/Medical Leave Act**

Occasionally, an employee may be absent from work for an extended period due to personal or family related illness or injury. All administrators who hold positions with an FTE of .50 or greater can access their accrued paid leave (vacation, sick leave) for such a leave. In addition, after 1250 hours of work during the previous 12 months of employment for the University, the employee is eligible for up to a total of 12 work weeks of leave (combined paid and unpaid) during a 12 month period in accordance with the following provisions of the federally mandated Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

Eligible reasons for family/medical leave:

Birth of a son or daughter of the employee and in order to care for the son or daughter.

Placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care.

To care for a spouse, son or daughter or parent who has a serious health condition.

For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the job.

Terms of family/medical leave:

Accrued paid vacation and sick leave shall be used initially by the employee, then leave without pay may be used to extend the leave for the remainder of the 12 weeks, if needed. While on leave of absence, employees do not receive vacation accrual, sick leave accrual, service credit, or holiday pay.

Medical leave may be taken intermittently (e.g., by working fewer days in a week or fewer hours in a day) if such a schedule is needed for medical reasons. Medical documentation from a physician will be required.

Procedures:

Requests for family or medical leave must be in writing 30 days in advance, (except for emergencies) and must include the reason for the request and the anticipated time period for the leave. For a serious health condition, the employee may be required to provide medical certification. Notification forms and forms for obtaining medical certification are available in the Human Resources Office.

Return to Work:

Eligible employees who take a family or medical leave of absence will be able to return to the same or equivalent position and employment benefits with certification from the health care provider that the employee is able to resume work.

If an employee does not return to work as agreed upon after the 12 week period, unless

other arrangements are made, he/she shall be considered to have resigned from the University effective the last day worked.

### **2.9.2.2 Extended Leaves of Absence without Pay**

Leaves of absence without pay for personal reasons may be recommended by the department manager for full-time employees when it appears to be in the best interest of the University and the employee.

Factors in Evaluating a Request:

1. The purpose for which the leave of absence is requested.
2. The length of time the employee will be away.
3. The effect the leave will have on the ability of the department to carry out its responsibilities.
4. The employee's position and length of service.

Terms:

A leave of absence of up to 6 weeks may be approved for personal reasons. One extension of six weeks may be requested in writing to the President for extraordinary situations. While on leave of absence, employees do not receive vacation accrual, sick leave accrual, service credit, or holiday pay. Health and life insurance coverage will remain effective, provided the employee prepays the appropriate premium (if applicable) on a monthly basis.

When employees are granted leaves of absence without pay, the University will make an effort to reinstate the employee to the same position he/she previously occupied or to a similar position at the conclusion of the leave.

## **2.10 Fringe Benefits**

The fringe benefit program has been developed over a period of years through careful consideration and cooperative effort. Its purpose is to provide a foundation for administrative employees which will supplement salaries by offering a variety of benefits to fill the needs of administrative employees at all points of career development. Fringe benefits are determined by the University administration and may be excluded from current taxable income as defined by the Internal Revenue Service. Fringe benefits are subject to change by the University administration. As these changes occur, every effort will be made to provide advance notice of such changes. The benefits described below are afforded to all full-time administrative employees unless otherwise determined at the time an initial contract is signed.

### **2.10.1 State and Federal Mandated Programs**

#### **2.10.1.1 Social Security and Medicare**

Participation in the Federal Social Security and Medicare Program is automatic for each administrative employee with the University and the administrative employee contributing to the program as prescribed by law.

### **2.10.1.2 Withholding Tax**

According to federal and state laws, income tax is withheld from each employee's paycheck if earnings exceed the allowance for exemptions as claimed on the Withholding Exemption Certificate (Form W-4). This certificate must be on file for each employee and may be changed or revised if the employee's exemption status changes. Such action may be completed in the Human Resources Office.

### **2.10.1.3 Unemployment Insurance**

All administrative employees of the University are covered by the Oklahoma Employment Security Act. The University pays all cost of unemployment insurance. Oklahoma law provides that under certain conditions weekly benefits may be paid to unemployed individuals from an unemployment insurance fund contributed to by employers. Detailed information may be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

### **2.10.1.4 Workers' Compensation**

All administrative employees are covered under the regulations of the State of Oklahoma covering Workers' Compensation. The University carries and pays the cost of Workers' Compensation Insurance. Detailed information may be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

### **2.10.1.5 Flexible Benefit Options**

Employees are allowed to set aside pretax dollars to pay annual medical/dental expenses and/or to pay dependent day care expenses. Detailed information may be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

#### **2.10.1.5.1 Premium Payment Plan**

Under the premium payment plan employees pay eligible premiums with pretax dollars by payroll reduction. Detailed information may be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

#### **2.10.1.5.2 Medical/Dental Reimbursement Account**

The Medical/Dental Reimbursement Account allows employees to reduce their salary by an amount equal to the cost of planned health care expenses not covered by medical programs. The salary reduction contributions are deposited into the reimbursement account on a pretax basis. After the employee incurs eligible expenses, he/she requests a reimbursement from his/her account. The payment received is tax free. Detailed information may be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

#### **2.10.1.5.3 Dependent Care Reimbursement Account**

The Dependent Care Reimbursement Account allows employees to reduce their salary by an amount equal to the anticipated cost of their work-related dependent day care expenses. The salary reduction contributions are deposited into the reimbursement account on a pretax basis. After the employee incurs eligible expenses, he/she requests a reimbursement from his/her account. The payment received is tax free. Detailed information may be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

## **2.10.2 Insurance**

### **2.10.2.1 Medical Insurance**

The University provides major medical insurance for full-time administrative employees at no cost to the employee. A spouse and eligible dependent children may be covered by the employee choosing to pay the required premium. The premium may be paid with pretax dollars through the Premium Payment Plan. If an employee becomes disabled or dies in service and the spouse and/or dependents are covered at the date of disability or death, access to health insurance continuation coverage is provided for them through COBRA provisions. If coverage beyond COBRA is necessary, private insurance coverage or governmental insurance coverage is available as determined by current insurance policies and by statutes.

Each administrative employee receives insurance identification cards and materials which describe the benefits when coverage becomes effective. The medical insurance program is administered by the Human Resources Office which provides applications, forms and information concerning coverage.

### **2.10.2.2 Dental Insurance**

Dental insurance is provided for full-time administrative employees at no cost to the employee. A spouse and eligible dependent children may be covered by the employee choosing to pay the required premium. The premium may be paid with pretax dollars through the Premium Payment Plan. The insurance program is administered by the Human Resources Office, which provides applications, forms, and information concerning coverage.

### **2.10.2.3 Group Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance**

The University provides, at no cost to the full-time administrative employee, group life and accidental death and dismemberment insurance policies. A detailed description and certificate of insurance for each plan is given to the covered employee. The master policies are held by the University and are on file in the Human Resources Office.

### **2.10.2.4 Long-Term Disability Insurance**

Full-time administrative employees of the University are provided long-term disability insurance. The certificate of insurance, which is issued to the administrative employee

through the Human Resources Office at the time coverage becomes effective, contains the provisions of the policy.

### **2.10.3 Retirement Plans** *(rev 4/1/04)*

The University participates in retirement plans offered by GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention (GuideStone) and by the Teachers Insurance Annuity Association/College Retirement Equity Fund (TIAA/CREF). Upon employment, a full-time or part-time support staff employee who works at least 1,000 hours annually is eligible to participate in the retirement program on a voluntary basis subject to limitations established under Internal Revenue Service regulations.

Upon employment, the University will begin contributing an amount equal to 6% of gross salary to GuideStone or TIAA/CREF retirement fund(s) chosen by the eligible employee. Employees failing to make a selection within the given time frame are automatically enrolled with GuideStone.

The amounts contributed by the University are invested by the chosen retirement plan and are fully vested to the employee after he or she completes one year of service with the university. Periodic statements are issued by the companies. In addition, telephone inquiries and transfers of deposits between the various funds managed by the companies may be transacted by the employee.

The Human Resources Office provides information, forms, instructions and calculations of the maximum amount that employees may contribute on a tax sheltered basis above the University's contribution.

### **2.10.4 Education Benefit**

The policy regarding educational benefits for OBU employees is available in the Human Resources Office.

#### **2.10.4.1 OBU Tuition for Administrative Employees**

Full-time Oklahoma Baptist University administrative employees may receive undergraduate tuition and appropriate fees free. Administrative employees who wish to arrange for tuition benefit must obtain the tuition benefit form before the beginning of the enrollment procedure from the Human Resources Office.

#### **2.10.4.2 OBU Tuition for Administrative Employee Spouses and Dependents**

Spouses and dependents may receive undergraduate tuition as outlined by the education benefits policy.

## **2.10.5 Fringe Benefits for Retired Administrative Employees**

The following fringe benefits continue for administrative employees after retirement. Other University benefits cease upon retirement.

### **2.10.5.1 Health Insurance**

Administrative employees that have reached the age of 60 with **fifteen or more years** of service are provided health insurance after retirement. If retirement occurs **prior to age 65**, the administrative employee is allowed to continue on the University group health insurance policy until he/she becomes eligible for Medicare coverage at age 65. The retired administrative employee's insurance will then be transferred to a University-paid supplemental Medicare policy.

An administrative employee who, after retiring from OBU, accepts other employment that provides health insurance is not eligible for this benefit.

Administrative employees who retire **at age 65 or after age 65** will be transferred immediately upon retirement to a University-paid Medicare supplement policy.

The spouse of a retired administrator may remain on the University group health insurance policy until the spouse reaches Medicare age by paying the required premium. The spouse must be on the University group health insurance policy at the date of the employee's retirement to participate in the OBU group health insurance policy.

Administrative employees with **less than fifteen years** of service who retire **prior to age 65** may remain on the group health insurance plan for the duration of the time allowed under federal COBRA law by paying the group rate through the University.

If a retired administrative employee dies and the spouse is covered at the date of death, coverage may continue at the spouse's expense until the spouse reaches Medicare age.

### **2.10.5.2 Life Insurance**

Subject to the provisions of the group life insurance plan, a portion of the employee's group life insurance may be retained after retirement at no cost to the retiring employee. The amount of life insurance that may be retained is based on a minimum age of 60 and length of service (minimum of fifteen years) and is outlined in detail in materials issued to each covered employee. All other life insurance coverage ceases upon retirement. An administrative employee may not be employed at another location which provides a group life insurance benefit and continue to receive this benefit.

### **2.10.5.3 OBU Tuition for Retired Employees**

Senior Citizens Tuition Assistance provides free tuition for students aged 65 or older. The program is limited to six hours per semester per student and the student pays \$25.00 per credit hour service charge. All applicable fees will be paid by the retiree.

### **2.10.6 Other Privileges**

The University provides a variety of privileges for administrative employees and retired employees. These include membership in the Noble Complex, admission to University concerts, general admission tickets to sporting events, use of the library, application for use of the Glorieta cabin, parking privileges, the service of a notary, discounts at the book store, discounts at the cafeteria, and discounts on tickets to University dramatic productions.

Identification cards, available through the Office of the Dean of Students, are required to utilize many of these privileges.

#### **2.10.6.1 Disclaimer**

The University reserves the right to change, increase, decrease, or eliminate these benefits at any time.

### **2.11 Salary and Compensation Provisions**

#### **2.11.1 Compensation**

Determination of yearly compensation at the time of appointment is made by the President in consultation with the appropriate Vice President(s).

Salary increases are based on the individual's merit and availability of funds. Salary increases are approved by the President in consultation with the appropriate budgeting officer. Salary increases are usually made at the beginning of the fiscal year, August 1.

#### **2.11.2 Pay Period**

Administrators are paid monthly. Payroll checks are distributed on the last working day of the month. Electronic funds transfer is available and strongly encouraged.

It is University policy not to make advances on payroll checks.

### **2.12 Grievances**

The University recognizes that problems involving employer-employee relations will arise from time to time. It is in the best interest of both the University and the employee to resolve these matters as quickly as possible and at the lowest possible level. In order that employees may be assured fair consideration, the University has established a grievance process for the impartial review of complaints, including appeals to higher levels of authority. The person making a complaint is called the "complainant" and the party named in the complaint is the "respondent."

#### **2.12.1 Subjects for Grievances**

Appropriate subjects for a grievance are:

An alleged violation of a right perceived to be held by the employee.

A complaint of illegal discrimination which has been made as provided in this handbook but which has not been resolved to the employee's satisfaction.

An allegation that a decision concerning the employee has been made based upon incorrect or incomplete factual information.

### **2.12.2 Grievance Coordinator**

The Grievance Coordinator for staff grievances will be the Director of Business Services. The Grievance Coordinator will:

- Provide information about the grievance procedure.
- Assist in seeking resolution of an alleged complaint through normal institutional channels prior to commencement of the grievance process.
- Assist any complainant in preparing a grievance. The Grievance Coordinator shall not act as an advocate, but shall be available to advise a complainant about proper procedure to ensure a comprehensive and orderly presentation of a complaint.
- Coordinate scheduling for the Grievance Committee and maintain appropriate records throughout the grievance procedure.

### **2.12.3 Filing a Complaint**

Under most circumstances a staff member should seek to resolve a problem by informally discussing the complaint with his/her immediate supervisor. If the matter is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, the employee may submit the complaint in writing to his/her immediate supervisor. The complaint should identify the complainant and the respondent and describe the specific complaint and the desired remedy.

If the problem is not resolved at this level, the employee may take the written complaint to the second level of review, the immediate supervisor's manager.

If the complaint is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, he/she may submit the complaint to the Grievance Coordinator for resolution. The written complaint should be filed with the Grievance Coordinator no later than 30 calendar days following the date of the event or discovery of the action that caused the complaint.

### **2.12.4 Response**

The Grievance Coordinator will promptly send copies of the written complaint to the respondent and the appropriate department manager. Within 7 calendar days after receiving the complaint, the respondent will submit a written answer to the Grievance Coordinator, who will send copies to the complainant and appropriate department manager.

### **2.12.5 Mediation**

Upon receiving the response to the complaint, the complainant should initiate a meeting with the Grievance Coordinator to discuss possible means of informal resolution. The

Grievance Coordinator should offer his/her services to assist in any reasonable way as a mediator to try to foster communication and understanding among the various parties involved.

#### **2.12.6 Grievance Committee**

A hearing before a Grievance Committee should be considered a final resort after all other negotiation and mediation has failed to produce an acceptable resolution of a specific complaint. However, if the complaint is not resolved through mediation, the Grievance Coordinator will cause a Grievance Committee consisting of three members to be named. The Grievance Committee will be selected by the President from OBU full-time employees if the need arises.

Whenever a conflict of interest exists among members of the Grievance Committee and a complainant, or between the Grievance Coordinator and the complainant, a substitute will be agreed upon between the complainant and the President of the University.

The Grievance Committee will designate one of its members to chair the committee.

#### **2.12.7 Hearing**

After receiving the respondent's answer, the committee will conduct a hearing as scheduled by the Grievance Coordinator. Any specified hearing deadline may be extended by mutual written agreement of the parties. The Grievance Coordinator or the chair of the Grievance Committee, if a chair has been selected, will notify all parties in writing of any extension.

In advance of the hearing, the Grievance Coordinator will provide the Grievance Committee copies of the complaint and answer. The hearing will be conducted by the chair under informal procedures. The Grievance Committee will hear the complainant first and then the respondent. The Grievance Committee will have broad discretionary power to question the complainant and respondent, to hear any witnesses present at the request of a party or the Grievance Committee, and to request additional witnesses or other evidence. The Grievance Committee may interview the parties or witnesses following the hearing.

The complainant or respondent may consult legal or other advisers in preparing for any hearing. However, in order to preserve the informal, non-judicial nature of the grievance process, advisers and representatives may not attend any hearing. The University may have its legal counsel at any hearing to assist the Grievance Committee or to protect the University's interests.

The Grievance Committee and the parties shall not discuss information of a private or confidential nature obtained in the course of these procedures. Any such disclosure, except where required by law, shall be grounds for disciplinary action.

The Grievance Committee will prepare a written report of its findings and recommendations. The report will be sent to:

The Grievance Coordinator,

The complainant,  
The respondent, and  
The appropriate department manager.

#### **2.12.8 Ruling by Grievance Coordinator**

After receipt of the committee's report of findings and recommendations, the Grievance Coordinator will make a decision accepting, rejecting or modifying the Grievance Committee's findings or recommendations. The decision will be communicated in writing to the individuals who received the committee's report and the Grievance Committee.

#### **2.12.9 Appeal to the President**

After receiving the Grievance Coordinator's ruling, the complainant or the respondent may appeal the ruling to the President of the University in writing. The President will:

Review the case in whatever manner deemed appropriate and communicate the actions to the parties directly or through the Grievance Coordinator.

The Grievance Coordinator will make a record of whatever disposition is made by the President and distribute it to the complainant, the respondent, and the department manager. The President's decision is final unless an appeal to the Board of Trustees is appropriate.

#### **2.12.10 Appeal to the Board of Trustees**

Where an action of the President has given rise to the original complaint, the final appeal will be to the Board of Trustees instead of to the President. The appeal will be made to the Chairman of the Board in writing within 10 calendar days of receiving the Grievance Coordinator's ruling. The Board of Trustees or its designated committee will review the written record and act upon the appeal no later than 7 calendar days following its second meeting after receipt of the appeal. The Board of Trustees may conduct its review in whatever manner it deems appropriate, and there shall be no right to a hearing before the Board.

#### **2.12.11 Grievance File**

The file on each grievance will be maintained in the Human Resources Office for at least 2 years. The grievance will not become part of an employee's personnel file.