

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION  
FOR ENGROSSED

SENATE BILL NO. 244

By: Daniels and Pugh of the  
Senate

and

Lepak of the House

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

[ higher education - Program of American Civic  
Thought and Leadership at the University of  
Oklahoma - intent - report - appropriation -  
codification - effective date -  
emergency ]

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 3319 of Title 70, unless there  
is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. There is hereby established the Program of American Civic  
Thought and Leadership at the University of Oklahoma. It is the  
intent of the Legislature that the purpose of the program shall be  
to:

1        1. Educate students in the principles, ideals, and institutions  
2 of the American political order including the character traits and  
3 durable habits necessary to sustain that order;

4        2. Educate students in the philosophical foundations of  
5 responsible leadership and informed citizenship;

6        3. Promote and provide programming related to civic education,  
7 engagement, and discourse;

8        4. Enhance education in the fields of political thought and  
9 science, American history and government, free market economics, and  
10 other related fields as appropriate, with a focus on the foundations  
11 of Western and American civilization including its great books, the  
12 rights and responsibilities of American citizenship, fundamental  
13 democratic principles and mores, and the ways in which those  
14 principles and mores are expressed in and through mediating  
15 institutions at the federal, state, and local levels;

16       5. Provide viewpoint and ideologically diverse resources to  
17 students, faculty, state government agencies and actors, educators,  
18 and the general public regarding civic affairs; and

19       6. Assist in ensuring that the University of Oklahoma serve as  
20 a robust marketplace of ideas for all students and faculty.

21       B. To carry out the purposes set forth in subsection A of this  
22 section, the program is authorized to:

23       1. Enroll students;  
24

1        2. Hire tenure-track and non-tenured faculty and supporting  
2 staff;

3        3. Develop and offer in-person courses and online instruction  
4 in new graduate and undergraduate major and minor programs;

5        4. Develop an undergraduate American institutions and civic  
6 knowledge course in anticipation of a future mandate requiring all  
7 University of Oklahoma students to complete such a course to  
8 graduate;

9        5. Offer general education and honors courses including courses  
10 intended for incoming freshman students;

11       6. Offer concurrent enrollment;

12       7. Provide and facilitate internships and other relevant  
13 experiences for students and the general public;

14       8. Hold events; and

15       9. Take other actions as appropriate subject to the supervision  
16 of the director of the program and the academic college at the  
17 University of Oklahoma.

18       C. Upon its establishment, the Program of American Civic  
19 Thought and Leadership may be physically housed on the University of  
20 Oklahoma's Norman campus as a stand-alone program.

21       D. The Program of American Civic Thought and Leadership shall  
22 operate as an academic unit within the University of Oklahoma.

23       E. The Program of American Civic Thought and Leadership and its  
24 director shall be advised by an advisory board on matters related to

1 the program including, but not limited to, staffing, curriculum,  
2 policy, and programming in accordance with the policies and  
3 procedures of the University of Oklahoma. The advisory board shall  
4 be comprised of six (6) members appointed by the Board of Regents of  
5 the University of Oklahoma. Members shall be appointed by December  
6 31, 2025.

7 F. By March 1, 2027, and by each March 1 thereafter, the  
8 program director, in consultation with the academic college and  
9 advisory board, shall develop and provide an annual strategic plan  
10 for the program to the Board of Regents of the University of  
11 Oklahoma. Initial course offerings shall be available to students  
12 in the fall semester of 2027.

13 G. Faculty of the program may be awarded tenure subject to the  
14 tenure policies of the University of Oklahoma as adopted by the  
15 Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and shall not be  
16 required to gain joint appointment in another division of the  
17 University of Oklahoma. If a faculty member is awarded tenure and  
18 the program later dissolves, the faculty member shall be relocated  
19 within another academic unit of the University of Oklahoma.

20 H. The Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma may use  
21 funds allocated to it by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher  
22 Education and charitable donations to fund the program. Allocated  
23 and donated funds shall only be used for the direct operation of the  
24 program.

1 I. By September 1, 2027, and by each September 1 thereafter,  
2 the program director, in consultation with the the advisory board of  
3 the program, shall electronically submit a report to the Governor,  
4 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of  
5 Representatives, and the chairs of the Senate Appropriations  
6 Committee and the House of Representatives Appropriations and Budget  
7 Committee.

8 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

9 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation  
10 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby  
11 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and  
12 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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