

1 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION**

2 STATE OF OKLAHOMA

3 1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

4 ENGROSSED SENATE
5 BILL NO. 244

 By: Daniels and Pugh of the
 Senate

6 and

7 Lepak of the House

8
9 [higher education - Program of American Civic
10 Thought and Leadership at the University of Oklahoma
11 - intent - report - appropriation - codification -
 effective date -

 emergency]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

20 1. Enroll students;

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

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

1 4. Develop an undergraduate American institutions and civic
2 knowledge course in anticipation of a future mandate requiring all
3 University of Oklahoma students to complete such a course to
4 graduate;

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

7 6. Offer concurrent enrollment;

8 7. Provide and facilitate internships and other relevant
9 experiences for students and the general public;

10 8. Hold events; and

11 9. Take other actions as appropriate subject to the supervision
12 of the director of the program and the academic college at the
13 University of Oklahoma.

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

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

19 E. The Program of American Civic Thought and Leadership and its
20 director shall be advised by an advisory board on matters related to
21 the program including, but not limited to, staffing, curriculum,
22 policy, and programming in accordance with the policies and
23 procedures of the University of Oklahoma. The advisory board shall
24 be comprised of six (6) members appointed by the Board of Regents of

1 the University of Oklahoma. Members shall be appointed by December
2 31, 2025.

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

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

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

21 I. By September 1, 2027, and by each September 1 thereafter,
22 the program director, in consultation with the the advisory board of
23 the program, shall electronically submit a report to the Governor,
24 the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of

1 Representatives, and the chairs of the Senate Appropriations
2 Committee and the House of Representatives Appropriations and Budget
3 Committee.

4 SECTION 2. There is hereby appropriated to the Oklahoma State
5 Regents for Higher Education from any monies not otherwise
6 appropriated from the General Revenue Fund of the State Treasury for
7 the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, the sum of Three Million
8 Dollars (\$3,000,000.00) or so much thereof as may be necessary for
9 the purpose of implementing the provisions of Section 1 of this act.

10 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2025.

11 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
12 of the public peace, health, or safety, an emergency is hereby
13 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
14 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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16 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS AND BUDGET, dated
17 04/16/2025 - DO PASS, As Amended.

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