

1 ENGROSSED SENATE  
2 BILL NO. 244

By: Daniels and Pugh of the  
Senate

3 and

4 Lepak of the House

5  
6 [ higher education - Program of American Civic  
7 Thought and Leadership at the University of Oklahoma  
- intent - report - appropriation - codification -  
8 effective date -  
9 emergency ]

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

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

14 A. There is hereby established the Program of American Civic  
Thought and Leadership at the University of Oklahoma. It is the  
15 intent of the Legislature that the purpose of the program shall be  
16 to:  
17

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

18       1. Enroll students;

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

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

23       4. Develop an undergraduate American institutions and civic  
24 knowledge course in anticipation of a future mandate requiring all

1 University of Oklahoma students to complete such a course to  
2 graduate;

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

5 6. Offer concurrent enrollment;

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

8 8. Hold events; and

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

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

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

17 E. The Program of American Civic Thought and Leadership and its  
18 director shall be advised by an advisory board on matters related to  
19 the program including, but not limited to, staffing, curriculum,  
20 policy, and programming in accordance with the policies and  
21 procedures of the University of Oklahoma. The advisory board shall  
22 be comprised of six (6) members appointed by the Board of Regents of  
23 the University of Oklahoma. Members shall be appointed by December  
24 31, 2025.

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

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

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

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

1 Committee and the House of Representatives Appropriations and Budget  
2 Committee.

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

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

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

14 Passed the Senate the 27th day of March, 2025.

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16 \_\_\_\_\_  
17 Presiding Officer of the Senate

18 Passed the House of Representatives the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
19 2025.

20  
21 \_\_\_\_\_  
22 Presiding Officer of the House  
23 of Representatives