

1 ENGROSSED HOUSE  
2 BILL NO. 3966

By: Echols of the House  
and  
Pugh of the Senate

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7 [ higher education - School of American Civic Thought  
8 and Leadership at the University of Oklahoma -  
9 advisory board - president and vice president -  
10 director - use of funds - annual report -  
11 severability - codification - effective date ]  
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15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

16 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified  
17 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 3320 of Title 70, unless there  
18 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

19 A. There is hereby established the School of American Civic  
20 Thought and Leadership (School) at the University of Oklahoma.

21 1. It is the purpose of the School to:

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

3 b. educate students in the philosophical foundations of  
4 responsible leadership and informed citizenship,

5 c. promote and provide programming related to civic  
6 education, engagement, and discourse,

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

17 e. provide viewpoint and ideologically diverse resources  
18 to students, faculty, state government agencies and  
19 actors, educators, and the general public regarding  
20 civic affairs, and

21 f. assist in ensuring that the University of Oklahoma  
22 serves as a robust marketplace of ideas for all  
23 students and faculty.

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- 1           2. In order to carry out the purposes set forth in paragraph 1  
2 of subsection A of this section, the School is authorized to:
- 3           a. enroll students,
  - 4           b. hire tenure-track and nontenured faculty and  
5           supporting staff,
  - 6           c. develop and offer in-person courses and online  
7           instruction in new graduate and undergraduate major  
8           and minor programs,
  - 9           d. develop an undergraduate American institutions and  
10          civic knowledge course in anticipation of a future  
11          mandate requiring all University of Oklahoma students  
12          to complete such a course to graduate,
  - 13          e. offer general education and honors courses, including  
14          courses in the University of Oklahoma's Gateway to  
15          College Learning program,
  - 16          f. offer concurrent enrollment,
  - 17          g. provide and facilitate internships and other relevant  
18          experiences for students and the general public,
  - 19          h. hold events, and
  - 20          i. take other actions as appropriate, subject to the  
21          supervision of the School's director, to be selected  
22          as provided in this section, and the general  
23          supervision of the president of the University of  
24          Oklahoma (president).

1           3. Upon its establishment, the School may be physically housed  
2 on the University of Oklahoma's Norman Campus.

3           4. The School shall operate as an academic unit within the  
4 University of Oklahoma.

5           B. The School and its director, who shall be appointed as  
6 provided below, shall be advised by an advisory board (board) on  
7 matters related to the School, including, but not limited to,  
8 staffing, curriculum, policy, and programming, in accordance with  
9 the policies and procedures of the University of Oklahoma.

10          1. The board shall be composed of ten (10) members, appointed  
11 as follows:

12           a. the Governor shall appoint one member,

13           b. the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives  
14 shall appoint one member,

15           c. the President Pro Tempore of the Oklahoma State Senate  
16 shall appoint one member, and

17           d. the remaining members shall be the University of  
18 Oklahoma Board of Regents.

19          2. Members of the initial board must be appointed by December  
20 31, 2024.

21          3. All terms of the members appointed pursuant to subparagraphs  
22 a, b, and c of paragraph 1 of this subsection shall expire May 31 of  
23 the sixth year after appointment.

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1 4. The members appointed pursuant to subparagraphs a, b, and c  
2 of paragraph 1 of this subsection shall be, or have been, academic  
3 or administrative personnel at an American institution of higher  
4 education, such that, unless there is a temporary vacancy, the board  
5 should have no less than three appointees who are, or have been,  
6 academic or administrative personnel at an American institution of  
7 higher education.

8 5. After the initial appointments expire, subsequent  
9 appointments shall be six (6) years. Board members may continue to  
10 serve on the board after their term expires, but only until a new  
11 member is appointed to replace the sitting board member. Board  
12 members may be reappointed. All appointments, including to fill  
13 vacancies for unexpired terms, shall be filled in the same manner as  
14 the original appointment such that the appropriate appointing  
15 authority – the Governor, the Speaker, or the Pro Tempore – shall  
16 retain control over their respective board member's seat.

17 6. Board members shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing  
18 authority.

19 7. The president shall appoint a vice president of civic  
20 thought and leadership (vice president) by December 31, 2024. The  
21 vice president shall serve at the pleasure of the president. The  
22 vice president shall also chair the board, convene its first  
23 meeting, receive appointment notifications, and serve as an ex  
24 officio board member. If the vice president resigns, the president

1 shall name a replacement. During the period beginning when the  
2 position of vice president becomes vacant and when a new vice  
3 president is named, the board may elect from among its members  
4 someone to serve as interim chair, who shall be relieved of duty  
5 upon the president's naming a new vice president.

6 C. By March 31, 2025, the board, or a committee of the board  
7 selected by the board, shall conduct a national search and transmit  
8 to the president a list of finalists for the position of director.  
9 The president shall provide all necessary administrative support for  
10 the search. The president shall appoint the director from the list  
11 of finalists provided by the board. If the position of director  
12 becomes vacant, then the same process must be followed to appoint a  
13 new director. During the period beginning when the position of  
14 director becomes vacant and when a new director is appointed, the  
15 president may designate a member of the School's faculty to serve as  
16 acting director until the director position is filled. The  
17 president may remove the director in accordance with the policies  
18 and procedures of the University of Oklahoma.

19 1. The director shall report to the vice president.

20 2. Except for their own appointment, the director shall make  
21 all faculty and staff hiring decisions. The director shall operate  
22 the School in accordance with the policies and procedures of the  
23 University of Oklahoma.

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1           3. Faculty of the School may be awarded tenure subject to the  
2 tenure policies of the University of Oklahoma as adopted by the  
3 University's board of regents, and shall not be required to gain  
4 joint appointment in another division of the University of Oklahoma.  
5 If a faculty member is awarded tenure and the School later  
6 dissolves, the faculty member shall be relocated within another  
7 academic unit of the University of Oklahoma.

8           4. By March 1, 2026, and by each March 1 thereafter, the  
9 director shall develop and provide an annual strategic plan for the  
10 School to the president, the vice president, and the board.

11           D. The University of Oklahoma Board of Regents may use funds  
12 allocated to it by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education  
13 and charitable donations to fund the School of American Civic  
14 Thought and Leadership. Funds allocated to the School shall not  
15 supplant any existing state funding or charitable donations to the  
16 University of Oklahoma. All allocated funds and charitable  
17 donations to the School may only be used for the direct operation of  
18 the School.

19           E. By September 1, 2026, and by each September 1 thereafter,  
20 the president shall, in consultation with the director of the  
21 School, its board, and the vice president, submit an annual report  
22 to the Governor, the Speaker, the Pro Tempore, and the chairs of the  
23 legislative appropriations, budget, and finance committees with  
24 jurisdiction over budget allocations. The initial annual report

1 shall include all relevant data from the founding of the institute  
2 through September 1, 2026. The report must include:

3 1. The total amount of funding received by the School in the  
4 previous year;

5 2. A description of current faculty positions and the names and  
6 qualifications of the faculty members currently holding such  
7 positions;

8 3. The names and titles of the members of the board;

9 4. The total graduate and undergraduate enrollment of the  
10 School, and concurrent enrollment, if any;

11 5. A description of the courses and degrees offered by the  
12 School;

13 6. A description of significant community events, initiatives,  
14 and publications provided by the School during the previous year;

15 7. A description of programs at the University of Oklahoma  
16 supported by the School; and

17 8. A copy of the School's most recently issued strategic plan.

18 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2024.

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1 Passed the House of Representatives the 6th day of March, 2024.

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3 \_\_\_\_\_  
4 Presiding Officer of the House  
5 of Representatives

6 Passed the Senate the \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024.

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9 Presiding Officer of the Senate