

Preface: Organizational Profile

P.1 Organizational Description



The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) is one of 25 institutions in the Oklahoma state system of higher education overseen by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE). It is one of eleven public institutions in the state currently designated as a “regional” university, although it is Oklahoma’s third largest university with a headcount that is 62% larger than the next largest regional.

UCO is Oklahoma’s oldest public institution of higher education. In 1890 the Oklahoma Territorial Legislature established the Territorial Normal School in Edmond in order to train future teachers. Old North Tower, which has become an icon for the university, was completed in 1893. In 1919, the institution’s name was changed from the Territorial Normal School to Central State Teachers College and the training program expanded to offer a four-year bachelor’s degree in education. Two decades later, Central State Teachers College became Central State College and the Oklahoma Legislature authorized the institution to grant both Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degrees. In 1991, Oklahoma lawmakers gave the institution its current name – the University of Central Oklahoma, which more appropriately represents the school’s comprehensive educational offerings and its unique role in serving the people of central Oklahoma.

P.1a Organizational Environment

P.1a(1) Main educational programs, offerings, and services

Undergraduate students at UCO enroll in one of five colleges:

- College of **Arts, Media & Design**
- College of **Business Administration**
- College of **Education**
- College of **Liberal Arts**
- College of **Mathematics and Science**

UCO awards nine bachelor’s degrees in 118 majors under 62 separate programs of study. Students may also pursue minors or double majors in other program areas.

Graduate students pursuing one of UCO’s six types of terminal master’s degrees enroll in the **Jackson College of Graduate Studies and Research**. Degrees can be earned in 48 majors under 26 separate programs of study, all managed by the five academic colleges listed above.

UCO students take the majority of their courses in traditional classroom settings on the UCO campus. These are delivered most directly through the university’s 34 academic departments and one school. At UCO, a “school” is treated administratively in the same way as a department and, for simplicity, any discussion of “departments” should be understood to include this school as well.

Depending on the nature of each of these courses, typical classroom experiences may include lectures, recitations,

and/or laboratories. Student internships and practicum experiences have increased dramatically in recent years. Other delivery mechanisms include courses offered over the internet and through interactive video, independent studies, weekend courses, and intersession courses (offered between semesters). While these nontraditional courses are currently a small percentage of UCO’s overall credit hour production, the number of students participating in them continues to rise significantly each year.

In addition to a wide range of traditional degree programs, UCO offers a number of regionally and nationally distinct programs. These, coupled with a comparatively large student body that places it in the top 10% of universities nationally, have begun to separate UCO from the other regional universities in the state. This was recognized in a 2002 site visit by a team of reviewers from UCO’s primary accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (referred to as either “HLC” or “NCA”), who recognized the university’s emerging unique position in Oklahoma higher education.

P.1a(2) Organizational Culture

UCO’s mission, along with its vision and long-range strategic plan, were developed in 1998 from the bottom up through contributions from more than 500 individuals from various constituencies, including faculty, students, staff, alumni, and the business community. The heart of the mission, outlined in Figure P.1-1, is to provide its students with excellent instruction.

The academic mission and values were developed in order to provide a structured framework for strategic planning in the

UCO’s Mission

UCO exists to provide excellent undergraduate, graduate and continuing education to enable students to achieve their intellectual, professional, personal and creative potential.

UCO must also contribute to the intellectual, cultural, economic and social advancement of the communities and individuals it serves.

UCO’s Beliefs and Values

UCO’s fundamental responsibility is excellent teaching, which involves instilling and fostering in students the joy of learning, the ability to think critically and a desire to achieve their creative potential.

Our other major responsibilities include scholarly activities, research and service to students, to other individuals and to the larger community.

A college degree should represent an education which enables its recipients to become good citizens and responsible, independent adults who embrace learning as a lifelong endeavor.

Great universities must require and encourage a free flow of information, ideas and opinions in a community which fosters social justice, values diversity and demands the highest standards of ethical conduct, mutual respect and civility.

UCO as an institution, and all its constituents, must be committed to continuous processes of self-examination and self-improvement which encourage innovation, receptiveness and adaptation to change.

UCO must seek and maintain open and mutually beneficial relationships with its surrounding communities, and must also view itself and its graduates as part of an increasingly interdependent global society.

UCO’s core values are Character, Civility, and Community.

Figure P.1-1 University Mission and Values.

university’s academic departments and programs. These are outlined in Figure P.1-2.

Academic Mission

Helping students learn so that they may become productive, creative, ethical, and engaged citizens.

Academic Values

Integrity – We earn trust through honesty and ethical leadership.

Student Centered – We offer an integrated, relevant educational experience.

Academic Excellence – We foster critical thinking, communication, and a passion for life-long learning.

Continuous Improvement – We achieve excellence through decisions based on information and analysis.

Collegiality – We uphold an atmosphere of mutual respect, professional behavior and academic freedom.

Community – We cultivate community involvement and civic engagement.

Figure P.1-2 Academic Mission and Values.

P.1a(3) Faculty and Staff Profile

Figure P.1-3 summarizes UCO’s faculty and staff characteristics. UCO has no collective bargaining units. Faculty views are represented through the Faculty Senate whose members and officers are elected by the faculty. UCO utilizes both full-time and part-time staff. Of the 1222 part-time staff positions, 700 are student workers and 522 are non-student help.

Instructional Faculty	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Total number	407	395	802
Members of minority groups	53	45	98
Women	186	223	409
Men	221	172	393
Full-time Staff			
Total number	998		
Members of minority groups	159		
Women	559		
Men	439		

Figure P.1-3 Faculty and full-time staff, Employee profile. (Fall 2004 *UCO Fact Book*).

P.1a(4) Major Technologies, equipment, and facilities

UCO is located on a 210-acre site in central Edmond, a northern suburb of the state capitol, Oklahoma City. Its location places it in the center of the state and at the northern edge of the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. The campus comprises 42 buildings and several athletic facilities.

In 1998 the Office of Information Technology (IT), formed a task force to develop a long-range strategic plan that would prepare the university’s technology infrastructure to meet its future needs. The plan set out four goals, a series of objectives to meet those goals, and action items describing how the objectives would be met. As its current strategic plan is reaching the end of its planning cycle, IT formed a new task force during the 2004-05 academic year to initiate a new cycle of strategic planning. Technology infrastructure is funded primarily by a Student Technology Fee that has generated over \$1 million per year since its implementation in 1994. The campus currently maintains a T1 network connection with 41 computer labs available to students across campus. The number of classrooms classified as “smart” multimedia classrooms (with internet accessibility

and audiovisual projection capability) continues to grow each year. Over \$150,000 is budgeted annually for faculty and staff technology needs. This is being increased in the coming year to allow faculty and staff computers to be rotated on 3-year cycles. Funding for these systematic computer upgrades became available when the method for administering the Student Perception of Instructional Effectiveness (SPIE) survey was changed from a more expensive, externally contracted approach to an internally managed, on-line survey.

In 2001, UCO responded to an identified need for a more versatile and comprehensive information management system. The new system, Sungard SCT’s Banner System (known on campus simply as “Banner”), impacts every aspect of campus operations and provides greater access to information at every office level.

UCO has recently added or upgraded a number of on-campus and off-campus facilities. New facilities include a multi-purpose **Wellness Center**, the extremely popular **University Suites** student housing complex, a new **Education Building**, and a **Laboratory Annex Building** addition to the science building. Updated facilities include major renovations in UCO’s two traditional residence halls (**West Hall** and **Murdaugh Hall**), a multi-million dollar renovation of **Broncho Stadium**, remodeling and expansion of the **Nigh University Center** (which provides conference and event facilities to the area community in addition to housing the bookstore, several dining facilities and a number of university offices), an expansion and remodeling of the **Chambers Library**, and expansions to both the **Communications Building** and the **Business Building**.

The new **UCO Jazz Lab** located three blocks south of campus and the **Selman Living Laboratory** in Woodward County in northwestern Oklahoma are facilities located apart from the main campus. UCO also sponsors the following widely renowned facilities: the **Center for Teaching Excellence**, the **Speech and Hearing Clinic**, the **Child Study Center**, and the **Center for Emerging Technology**.

P.1a(5) Regulatory Environment

As mandated in the state constitution, all 25 public colleges and universities in the state of Oklahoma are part of the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education overseen by the **Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE)**. The nine members of OSRHE, all appointed by the governor, set the budgetary and academic framework under which public higher education operates in the state. UCO, along with five of the other eight regional universities, is governed by the **Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges (BOROC)**. This board was also created under the state constitution and is also composed of nine members: eight appointed by the governor and one (the state superintendent of instruction) elected. The members of BOROC are responsible for directly overseeing policies related to the university’s financial, physical, and personnel affairs.

Accreditation occurs at various levels within the university. These are summarized in Figure P.1-4.

It is the duty of the Office of Administration and Finance to ensure that UCO meets its obligations as required by its

regulatory agencies. At the state level, these include following procedures and submitting reports mandated by OSRHE, the Oklahoma State Ethics Commission (Open Meeting Act) and the Office of State Finance. At the federal level, these include procedures and reports mandated by FERPA, OSHA, ADA, and the Higher Education Reauthorization Act. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) monitors UCO’s athletic program which is designated as NCAA Division II.

University Unit	Accrediting Agency
UCO	Higher Learning Commission (North Central Association of Colleges and Schools)
College of Business Administration	Association of Collegiate Business Schools and Programs
College of Education	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education; Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation
Department of Speech-Language Pathology	American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (Council of Academic Accreditation)
Department of Family, Child & Human Development	National Association for the Education of Young Children
Department of Human Environ Sciences	American Dietetic Association
Department of Family Life Education	National Council on Family Relations
Department of Chemistry	American Chemical Society
Department of Nursing	National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission; Oklahoma Board of Nursing
Department of Funeral Science	American Board of Funeral Service Education
School of Music	National Association of Schools of Music
Department of Design	Foundation for Interior Design Education Research
Child Study Center	National Academy of Early Childhood Programs (National Association for the Education of Young Children)
Veterans	State Accrediting Agency

Figure P.1-4 Current UCO accrediting agencies

Depending on what state, federal, or private grants are in operation through UCO at a given time, additional reports and procedures may be necessary to meet the requirements of these granting agencies. When university employees apply for grants from external agencies, one or more are designated as principal investigators for the projects. The application process requires approval of the UCO offices that must monitor compliance with the conditions of the grant. The project is then run by the principal investigator as monitored by the appropriate university officers. Major granting agencies at the federal and state levels include the National Science Foundation, the National Institute for Health, the Department of Education, the Oklahoma State Arts Council, and the Oklahoma State Regents.

P.1b Organizational Relationships

P.1b(1) Governance

The president, as the university’s chief executive officer, may communicate institutional priorities either to OSRHE, to BOROC, or to both. Those items dealing with coordination issues (mission, programs, data, and state appropriations)

typically fall under OSHRE, while items dealing with management (personnel, budgets, policies and procedures dealing with day-to-day operation) typically fall under BOROC.

UCO is structured into four “divisions:” Academic Affairs, Administration and Finance, Student Affairs, and Information Technology. Each division is headed by one of the four university vice presidents as outlined in the organizational charts (ORG-1 through ORG-6) and discussed in Category 2. The president works primarily through the **Executive Committee (ExCom)** which is composed of the president, the four division vice presidents, the Executive-in-Residence, and the Director of University Relations. The Vice President for Academic Affairs also serves as the Provost of the University and the Vice President for Information Technology also serves as Assistant to the President.

P.1b(2) Key Student Segments, Stakeholders and Market Segments

Student Segment	Requirements
All students (including traditional students)	Excellent instruction; advising; accessible faculty; technology; food services; parking
Non-traditional students	Instructional support; flexible scheduling
First-time freshmen	On-campus experience; orientation
Transfer students	Orientation; assessment of capabilities; articulation of courses
Minority students	Respect for diversity; sense of identity
International students	Assistance with visa status; orientation; sense of identity
Underprepared students	Instructional support; college success training
Graduate students	Flexible scheduling

Figure P.1-5 Key Requirements of Student Segments

UCO’s student population is described in 7.3a(2). Populations of measured student segments are shown in Figure 7.3-16. Key student segments and requirements are outlined in Figure P.1-5. Key stakeholder segments and requirements are shown in Figure P.1-6.

Stakeholder	Requirements
Parents of students	Excellent instruction; value; communication
State regulating agencies (OSRHE and BOROC)	Communication about current and future campus needs; opportunities for input
Feeder schools including K-12 schools and community colleges	Opportunities for input; regular communications about campus events; instructional support; continuing education opportunities; knowledge of current and future admissions requirements; articulation agreements
Community (including OKC metro and Edmond)	Opportunities for input; support for community projects; educational resources and expertise
Employers and graduate schools	Qualified candidates; opportunities for input
Alumni	Continued communication from and updates about UCO; employment opportunities; involvement

Figure P.1-6 Key Requirements of Stakeholders

P.1b(3)& (4) Partners in Learning Centered and Support Processes

A number of UCO students are required to participate in off-campus practicum experiences in order to obtain professional licensure. Education students will student teach in classrooms in one of a number of nearby school districts and nursing students participate in practicum experiences in one of 4 to 5 area hospitals. Arrangements for these programs are managed by the College of Education and Department of Nursing, respectively.

Increasing numbers of students from a wide variety of disciplines participate in internships with numerous area businesses and organizations. Intern positions provide opportunities for students and potential employers to build relationships while the students are still in school. The College of Business Administration has entered into an internship arrangement with nearby Tinker Air Force Base to help future UCO graduates fill projected shortages in that facility’s management and administrative positions. The Graduate College manages science and engineering internships awarded through the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST). The number and scope of internships managed by other academic departments, as well as which area employers participate in internships, change from one year to the next.

UCO houses and provides resources for several independent institutes and organizations. Those impacting learning processes include the **Edmond Language Institute**, the **Educators Leadership Academy**, **Oklahoma A+ Schools**, and **Great Expectations**. The **Edmond Chamber of Commerce** is housed in a small building on the southeast corner of campus. The quality and reputation of these partners reflects directly on that of the university.

Figure P.1-7 outlines UCO’s major external contract arrangements. Many of these contract arrangements are new or have been renegotiated in order to increase efficiency, provide additional revenues, and maximize the university’s limited resources. UCO’s performance contracting partnership with Johnson Controls was submitted and chosen as one of the final four selected for presentation at the 2005 Southern Association of College and University Business Officers (SACUBO) conference. The bookstore contract was renegotiated for \$70,000 in new revenues. A new vending

Contractor	Support services provided
Chartwells Food Services	On-campus dining and catering
Barnes and Noble	Campus bookstore
Johnson Controls	HVAC and energy management
Aramark Corporation	Custodial maintenance
Myers Landscaping Company	Lawn maintenance and weed control (landscape development is done by UCO personnel or through single contracts with other vendors)
American Elevator Company	Elevator inspections, maintenance and repair
Simplex-Grinnell	Fire alarm systems inspection, maintenance and repair
Boise Cascade, Unisource	Office supplies

Figure P.1-7 External contractors providing support services

contract provided \$75,000 in one-time funds with an additional \$60,000 income the first year, which increased to \$110,000 in its second year. The food service contract was renegotiated to provide approximately \$240,000 per year in new income. The new custodial contract saved \$160,000.

In Fall 2005, UCO will open a new, desperately needed dormitory (to be called “**Central Plaza**”) in the former Ramada Inn immediately south of campus. In a unique partnership arrangement, UCO will lease the 148 room facility from the two Edmond business leaders who purchased it for this purpose.

P.2 Organizational Challenges

P.2a Competitive Environment

P.2a(1) Competitive Position

UCO’s service area, which used to encompass only central Oklahoma, has expanded considerably in recent years. Through a variety of specialty programs and a growing reputation for student-centered instruction, UCO has begun to separate itself from the other regional universities in the state.

The higher education marketplace is extremely competitive in Oklahoma. Potential UCO undergraduate students can choose between one of the state’s two public research universities (OU and OSU), one of the state’s other regional universities, or one of several nationally prominent private universities (University of Tulsa, Oklahoma City University, Oklahoma Christian University, and the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma). Cost considerations, admission requirements, and location needs may restrict student choices in one direction or another. Because it only offers terminal master’s degrees, UCO’s graduate programs tend to complement rather than compete with programs at OU and OSU. Greater competition comes from universities offering “fast-track” and “on-line” master’s programs (such as Southern Nazarene University and the University of Phoenix).

P.2a(2) Key Success Factors

UCO’s success in transitioning itself beyond its historic role as a small, regional university is critically dependent on the following factors: 1) UCO’s reputation as a student-focused campus, highlighted by its commitment to maintaining small class sizes, flexible course scheduling, and accessibility of its faculty to students; 2) The quality of UCO’s academic programs; 3) The number and variety of its regionally distinct programs; 4) The comparative size of UCO’s student body relative to that of the state’s other regional institutions; and, 5) The reputation of the university as a good value. The university is currently in the process of developing a dashboard to identify and more systematically monitor items that impact these factors.

In the annual Graduating Student Survey (GSS), graduating students continue to identify, in unsolicited comments, the opportunity to get to know their instructors in small class settings as an important contributor to their success at UCO. Increased support of new or expanded programs in areas such as forensic science, recreational management,

biomedical engineering, and fine, performing, and visual arts are leading to increased enrollments in these areas.

P.2a(3) Key Sources for Comparative Data

UCO and the state's other four-year regional universities are classified in the "Four-Year Regional I" tier. OSHRE has identified 25 "peer institutions" outside of Oklahoma that fall into this same broad category for use in comparing Oklahoma schools to comparable schools in other states. Because the majority of the institutions on the state's peer list do not reflect many of UCO's characteristics (such as enrollment, location, student/faculty ratio, number of full-time faculty), UCO has developed a second set of "aspirational" peer institutions that better reflect its size and character. Both the OSHRE peer list and the UCO aspirational peer list are used in comparisons and benchmarking.

UCO provides information annually to the **Common Data Set (CDS)**, a collaborative effort between institutions of higher education and publishers of comparative data with a goal of standardizing commonly defined institutional data. UCO also participates in the **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)** and **Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)** every three years. Comparative data sets are provided back to UCO in total and within identified peer groups.

UCO provides data to OSRHE for peer comparisons within the state. UCO also collects and monitors data from its own identified peer group. This data is obtained from the sources mentioned above as well as the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and US News and World Report. Summary results from these comparisons are provided in Category 7.

P.2b Strategic Challenges

UCO has identified several external and internal strategic challenges that potentially affect the university's future performance or threaten its identified key success factors:

- 1) During its 2002 site visit, the NCA accrediting team pointed out that, as UCO's current strategic plan nears completion, the university is poised to take a significant step in moving toward a higher tier. It further recommended that UCO begin the process of reexamining its mission and vision with the purpose of developing a strategic plan that will take UCO into the next phase of its growth.
- 2) UCO has been historically underfunded compared to other public universities in the state (see Figure 7.3-1). Because of this, the state's recent funding crisis was particularly difficult for UCO. The university's senior leaders have spent a great deal of time in communication with officials at the state level to bring UCO's funding up to equitable levels.
- 3) UCO, like much of higher education, faces declining enrollment challenges resulting from projected decreases in the number of Oklahoma high school graduates through the year 2014, a historically flat rate of high school students attending college in Oklahoma, and a national decline in numbers of international students entering the United States to attend college.

- 4) Recent budget constraints threaten to drive class sizes upward and increase the percentage of part-time faculty teaching classes at UCO.
- 5) UCO is challenged in its ability to attract and retain full-time faculty owing to budget constraints that lead to a lack of regular pay increases and shortages of funds to replace vacant faculty positions. Compounding this is the faculty pay schedule (see Category 3) that does not allow faculty salaries to compete at market scales in numerous academic disciplines. Similar budget constraints have affected retention of staff and administrative positions as well.

P.2c Performance Improvement System

In 2004, UCO implemented a formal CQI process based upon Baldrige criteria and managed by a newly formed **CQI Team (CQIT)**. The process, outlined in Figure P.2-1, involves five steps: 1) An annual self-study that brings together employees and managers from each area of the university to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement; 2) A synthesis and prioritization of the self-study results; 3) The formation of Action Teams to recommend improvements to a CQI Steering Committee composed of the four vice-presidents; 4) The Steering Committee gives final approval to the recommendations and, where necessary, assigns tasks and a budget; and 5) Appropriate campus areas perform the recommended actions. The results of the recommended improvements are monitored by the CQIT and communicated into the next self-study.

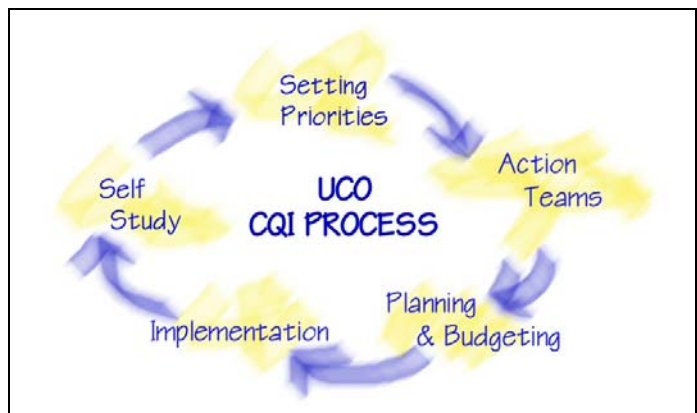


Figure P.2-1 UCO Continuous Improvement Process

Nine action projects emerged from the 2004-05 CQI process:

- Strategic Planning Process
- Alignment of Planning and Budgeting
- Student Academic Program Advisement
- Physical Campus Master Plan
- Transfer Student Process
- Database Integrity
- Development/Continuous Education
- Staff Council
- Key Process Management Identification and Integrated Flow-Charting to Reflect Accountability

Complementary CQI processes take place within each of the four university divisions. **Administration and Finance**, for example, utilizes Lean Management techniques (trademarked

by UCO as “Lean University” and described in 4.1a[3]) to identify and improve processes in that division. Within **Academic Affairs**, each academic program or school is

required to perform a Self-Study for Continuous Improvement (SSCI) every five years (see 2.1a[1]).