

UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND ARTS OF OKLAHOMA

Student Loan Code of Conduct

Financial Aid Office 1727 W. Alabama, Chickasha OK 73018-5322 Troutt Hall, Room 112

Phone: (405) 574-1353 Fax: (405) 574-1220 Email: financialaid@usao.edu

The following Science & Arts Student Loan Code of Conduct is developed in adherence with the requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008. HEOA requires all institutions participating in the Title IV Loan Programs to develop, publish, and administer specific bans and prohibitions on certain conduct as it relates to student lending. The following is created to ensure that student and families continue to receive sound and impartial advice from the Office of Financial Aid and all offices at Science & Arts as they relate to education loans. Accordingly, the following policies are in affect for all officers, employees and agents of Science & Arts.

The HEOA requires the prohibition of the following activities:

1. All revenue-sharing arrangements with any lender are prohibited. The HEOA defines “revenue-sharing arrangement” as any arrangement between an institution and a lender under which the lender makes private education loans to students attending the institution (or to the families of those students), the institution recommends the lender or the loan products of the lender and, in exchange, the lender pays a fee or provides other material benefits, including revenue or profit-sharing, to the institution or to its officers, employees, or agents.
2. Receiving gifts from a lender, guaranty agency or loan servicer. No officer or employee of an institution’s financial aid office (or an employee or agent who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to educational loans) may solicit or accept any gift from a lender, guarantor, or servicer of education loans. The regulations define a “gift” as any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, or other item having monetary value of more than a de minimis amount. This prohibition will apply to lenders of both federal and alternative loans.

A gift does not include the following:

- Brochures, workshops, or training using standard materials relating to a loan, default aversion, or financial literacy
- Food, training, or informational materials, offered as part of a training session provided the training contributes to the professional development of the institution’s officer, employee, or agent
- Favorable terms and benefits on an education loan provided to a student employed by the institution if those terms and benefits are comparable to those provided to all students at the institution
- Entrance and exit counseling as long as the institution’s staff are in control of the counseling and the counseling does not promote the services of a specific lender

- Philanthropic contributions from a lender, guarantor, or servicer, that are unrelated to education loans
 - State education grants, scholarships, or financial aid funds administered by or on behalf of the state
3. Accepting from a lender, or an affiliate of any lender, any fee, payment, or other financial benefit as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement or contract to provide services to or on behalf of a lender relating to education loans.
 4. Steering borrowers to particular lenders or delaying loan certifications. For any first-time borrower, an institution may not assign, through the award packaging or other methods, the borrower's loan to a particular lender. In addition, the institution may not refuse to certify, or delay the certification, of any loan based on the borrower's selection of a particular lender or guaranty agency.
 5. Requesting or accepting from any lender any offer of funds for private loans, including funds for an opportunity pool loan, to students in exchange for providing concessions or promises to the lender for a specific number of private education loans made, insured, or guaranteed, a specified loan volume, or a preferred lender arrangement. An "opportunity pool loan" is defined as a private education loan made by a lender to a student attending the institution or the family member of such a student that involves a payment, directly or indirectly, by such institution of points, premiums, additional interest, or financial support to such lender for the purpose of such lender extending credit to the student or the family.
 6. Requesting or accepting from any lender any assistance with call center staffing or financial aid office staffing, except that a lender may provide professional development training, educational counseling materials (as long as the materials identify the lender that assisted in preparing the materials), or staffing services on a short-term, nonrecurring basis during emergencies or disasters.
 7. Receiving advisory board compensation. An employee of an institution's financial aid office (or employee who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans or financial aid) who serves on an advisory board, commission, or group established by a lender or guarantor (or a group of lenders or guarantors) is prohibited from receiving anything of value from the lender, guarantor, or group, except for reimbursement for reasonable expenses incurred by the employee for serving on the board.