

## **Affirmative Action Policy Amendment Recommendation**

The Staff Advisory Council hereby recommends that Oklahoma State University Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy 1-0101 be amended to include “sexual orientation” in sections 1.02, 1.04, and 1.06 as follows:

1.02 to provide equal employment and/or educational opportunity on the basis of merit and without discrimination because of age, race, ethnicity, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, veterans' status, or qualified handicap.

1.04 to apply equal opportunity in the recruitment, hiring, placement, training, promotion, and termination of all employees; and to all personnel actions such as compensation, education, tuition assistance, and social and recreational programs. The University shall consistently and aggressively monitor these areas to ensure that any differences which may exist are the results of bona fide qualification factors other than age, race, ethnicity, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, veterans' status, or qualified handicap.

1.06 to provide and to promote equal educational opportunity to students in all phases of the academic program and in all phases of the student life program; and shall consistently and aggressively monitor these areas to ensure that any differences which may exist are the results of bona fide factors other than age, race, ethnicity, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, veterans' status, or qualified handicap.

Furthermore, we recommend that all university documents and policies addressing discrimination shall be reviewed, and, where categories are listed, “sexual orientation” shall be included.

### **Background for this recommendation:**

As of the end 2002, it was legal to fire an employee because of their sexual orientation in 37 states, including Oklahoma. Since the last time SAC made this recommendation, OSU has changed presidents, and it is hoped that the new president will take a different stance on this issue. Additionally, another Big 12 University (Colorado) has added sexual orientation to their official policy. The University of Missouri has included it by executive order at their campuses in Columbia, Kansas City, St. Louis and Rolla. This leaves OSU, Baylor (a non-public school) and Texas Tech as the only Big 12 schools that do not include sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies. Sexual orientation has already been added to clauses in OSU's Student Handbook, and OSU colleges such as the College of Education include it in their own non-discrimination policies. Furthermore, at the end of 2002 over 61% of all Fortune 500 companies included sexual orientation in their non-discrimination policies. In 2003, Wal-Mart added it. SAC asks, if Wal-Mart and the University of Oklahoma can add it, why can't OSU?