

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
OUACHITA TECHNICAL COLLEGE**

SUBJECT AREA: Personnel Policies and Procedures

POLICY/PROCEDURE: Attendance and Punctuality

DATE: August 24, 1996

NUMBER: 2.48

REVISION(S):

RATIONALE

Regular and punctual attendance is essential for effective and efficient operation of the College. Both tardiness and absenteeism may cause the employee's work schedule to fall behind or work duties to be neglected, cause delays or hardships for other employees, or have unnecessary repercussions for OTC students. When patterns of absenteeism or tardiness become excessive or incidents of absenteeism or tardiness violate Board policy or state law, it may become necessary to take disciplinary action. Reference **COPP 2.43**, Payroll.

Each OTC employee is granted absence privileges through **COPP 2.52**, Sick Leave and **COPP 2.54**, Leave of Absence (Family Medical Leave) for loss of work due to personal illness or injury or that of the employee's immediate family. Annual (vacation) leave privileges are granted to certain employees as outlined in **COPP 2.51**. This policy does not override those policies but rather defines the context in which absenteeism and tardiness will be considered, promotes consistent attendance and punctuality, and establishes a mechanism for the College to recognize a committed workforce at OTC.

DEFINITIONS

Absence is the failure either to report for work or to remain at work as scheduled. Tardiness is the failure to report to work at the scheduled time. **Attendance** that meets expectations is considered to be no more than seven (7) unexcused occasions of sick leave and no more than fifty-six (56) hours of unexcused sick leave within any evaluation period. Punctuality that meets expectations is considered to be no more than eight (8) minutes tardy on three (3) occasions within any month. Non-attendance supported with documentation from a physician is excused and will not be counted in the above guidelines.

POLICY

All absences and incidents of tardiness must be reported to the employee's immediate supervisor **prior** to the scheduled time, but no later than thirty (30) minutes past the scheduled work time. In addition, all absences and tardiness must be reported in **writing** by the employee upon his/her return to work. Requests for annual leave and scheduled sick leave for doctor's appointments must be approved (receive sign-off) by the supervisor at least 24 hours in advance of the absence except in the case of emergency. Approval of such times for requests is not automatic and can be denied; immediate supervisors are authorized and expected to deny approval within the following guidelines:

1. Appropriate advance notice has not been given, unless an emergency warrants the approval.
2. The employee's absence would leave a department or function area without any workers.
3. The employee's absence would come at a critical time in meeting federal, state, or institutional deadlines on projects and would, therefore, cause undue hardship for other workers, students, or the institution in general.
4. The employee has a pattern of requesting leave that is excessive, unusual, or questionable.

An employee's pattern of absenteeism or tardiness may be considered excessive, unusual, or questionable when one or more of the following conditions exist:

1. The employee has been absent more than fifty (50) hours for personal and/or family sickness or injury in any evaluation period.
2. The employee has reported late for work on more than three (3) times in any one month.
3. The employee fails to call in tardiness or absenteeism to the immediate supervisor or supervising dean or to report the incident in writing after returning to work.
4. The employee follows a pattern of requesting or using either annual or sick leave, or both, as leave hours are earned.
5. The employee follows a pattern of taking sick leave before or after holidays or approved annual leave or of being absent on other days on a consistent basis.
6. The employee's work performance is poor or unacceptable, or other employees experience frequent and undue hardship to maintain work responsibilities or to meet project deadlines.
7. Attendance or punctuality patterns are negatively affecting OTC's students.
8. Annual leave has been denied and the employee then calls in sick or reports a family member is sick.
9. The employee fails to provide a physician's statement verifying the employee's illness after three (3) consecutive days of sick leave.

When a supervisor has reason to be concerned about an employee's pattern of absenteeism or tardiness, the following actions will be taken and documented:

1. The supervisor will discuss the concern with the employee and may request a physician's statement verifying illness, if applicable.
2. If the problem is not corrected, the supervisor will initiate disciplinary steps as outlined in **COPP 2.32**.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Patterns of absenteeism and tardiness will be considered in the annual performance evaluation of each OTC employee.

RECOGNITION OF EXCEPTIONAL ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

The Board of Trustees recognizes that acknowledging employees with good attendance and punctuality is as important as correcting poor attendance patterns in other employees. Therefore, the President will develop or cause to be developed such good attendance recognition programs as deemed appropriate.

RETURN TO WORK AFTER SERIOUS ILLNESS/INJURY

Employees who have been absent from work because of an operation or other serious illness or injury are required to present a certificate from the attending physician indicating that the employee is able to return to work and assume assigned duties.

SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

Supervisors are held accountable for the work assigned to their function area and are responsible for planning ahead and assessing the progress of that work. Approval of requests for annual and scheduled sick leave should be viewed in the context of the assigned workload, a sense of integrity and fair play to each employee supervised, and accountability. The supervisor is also responsible for awareness of attendance and punctuality patterns of those supervised and will be held accountable for indiscriminate approval of leave requests. Approval of leave requests by the immediate supervisor does not imply ultimate approval.

AUTHENTICATION (Signature):		COPP
_____	11/26/96	
President	(Date)	2.48