



**The American University of Kurdistan**  
**Policy of Civic Honor**

Policy Number: AS032  
Effective Date: November 13, 2022

1. **Policy:** This policy establishes the framework for the regulation and management of Civic Honors awarded by the American University of Kurdistan (AUK). It governs the processes for nominating, reviewing, and approving individuals who have made significant contributions to society, the community, or the advancement of the University's mission and values. All related procedures must align with the provisions of this policy and be applied consistently and transparently. The policy supports the University's commitment to recognizing excellence, leadership, and service by ensuring that Civic Honors are granted based on merit, integrity, and alignment with institutional principles. It also reflects AUK's mission to promote ethical community service, respect for inclusion and diversity, global connectedness, and social advancement at the regional, national, and global levels. This policy will be reviewed periodically and made publicly available through official University channels. Members of the AUK community are not exempt from compliance with any policy approved by the AUK Board of Trustees (BoT).
  - a. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to outline the standards and procedures for receiving the Civic Honor Award upon graduation.
  - b. **Scope:** This policy applies to all undergraduate Students and Office of Student Affairs (OSA).

2. **Definition of Terms:**

**Administrative Unit:** Offices and departments responsible for non-academic activities that support the university's operations and student experience but are not directly involved in teaching or academic instruction.

**Civic Engagement:** Refers to active participation in addressing societal needs and promoting social responsibility, often through structured programs that directly support vulnerable groups or public welfare causes. It emphasizes empathy, citizenship, and community development.

**Civic Honor:** Refers to a formal recognition awarded to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding service, leadership, or contributions to the community, society, or the University, reflecting ethical conduct and a commitment to the public good.

**Volunteering:** The contribution of unpaid time and effort to support an organization, initiative, event, or group. It also encompasses dedicating personal time to perform acts of service that benefit one's community.

**Volunteering Contract:** A formal agreement signed by students with the Office of Human Resources outlining the terms of volunteer service. This contract is unpaid and establishes a contractual volunteer relationship, clarifying the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of both the student and the institution.

**Volunteer Confirmation Letter:** A formal document issued by an organization to verify an individual's participation in volunteer activities. It confirms the volunteer's role, duration of service, and contributions, and may be used as proof of community involvement, experience, or completion of volunteer requirements.

### 3. Responsibilities:

- a. **Issuing Unit:** The OSA holds primary responsibility for implementing this policy, managing the nomination and review process for Civic Honors, verifying eligibility of candidates, and ensuring that all awards are granted fairly, transparently, and in alignment with the University's mission and values.
- b. **Other stakeholders:** AUK Employees may recommend student activities for consideration under Civic Honors; however, final review and validation of activities rests with the OSA.

### 4. Procedures

#### a. Civic Honor: Eligibility and Requirements

- The procedures for the collection and verification of hours vary according to category; however, these procedures have been formally detailed within the policy in accordance with the specific requirements of each category.
- At the beginning of each semester, the OSA sends the Civic Honor Form (See Section 6: Related Documents) to graduating students. Students are required to complete the form and submit it to the OSA within the deadline specified by the Office in order to confirm hours claimed. Forms submitted after the stated deadline may not be considered.

All provisions governing the nomination, review, and awarding of Civic Honors shall be aligned with the following requirements:

- To be eligible for the Civic Honor Award, AUK students must complete a total of 100 hours of Civic Engagement. This includes a minimum of
  - 40 hours of on-campus volunteering
  - 40 hours of off-campus volunteering
  - 20 hours of civic engagement activities as defined in this policy.
- Civic Honors is an optional form of recognition and does not constitute a requirement for graduation.
- The hours must be completed within the timeframe from the point of the student's matriculation at AUK to their official degree completion date.
- For hours to be counted as volunteering, the activity must be independent/separate from the student's academic program requirements and should not overlap with coursework, internships, or any other mandatory program components.
- Students must have and maintain a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 in order to participate in volunteer activities on or off campus.
- Students with disabilities or documented health conditions must inform the OSA of their needs in advance so that appropriate civic engagement opportunities may be explored and, where feasible, arranged; however, the availability of suitable opportunities is not guaranteed.
- Work-study positions and any other paid activities shall not be considered eligible for Civic Honor credit.
- A maximum of 10 hours per activity or event will be counted toward the Civic Engagement requirement. For example, if a student volunteers for 50 hours in a single, major event, only 10 hours will be counted towards respective volunteering hours category. This measure ensures diverse engagement across multiple experiences.
- Examples of eligible Civic Engagement activities may include, but are not limited to:
  - Visits to orphanages, elderly homes, or centers for people with disabilities.
  - Organizing or participating in donation drives (blood, food, clothes, books).
  - Running an on-campus awareness campaign (mental health, recycling, anti-smoking, etc.)
  - Disaster relief volunteering (fundraising, emergency assistance).
  - Public awareness campaigns (health, safety, human rights, anti-drug, etc.).

- Advocacy or service-learning projects tied to social issues.
- If the initiative is a student-led initiative or event, the OSA will keep track of all students engaging in such initiatives by collecting the following information:
  - Date of activity
  - Total number of hours
  - Description of Civic Engagement activity
  - Evidence of resources used
  - Photographic documentation of participation
  - Any other form of evidence requested by OSA

**b. On-Campus Volunteer Activities**

- The OSA maintains an established process to ensure accurate collection and verification of student volunteering hours for all on-campus events and initiatives.
- On the 15th of each month, an assigned OSA staff member contacts all AUK administrative units to obtain records of student volunteer participation.
- All submitted information is reviewed for completeness and accuracy before being entered into the official OSA tracking system.
- Verified data is recorded in the designated software, which serves as the University's official platform for storing volunteering and engagement records.
- The software automatically generates a co-curricular transcript that documents each student's participation and contributions throughout their studies at AUK.

All provisions governing the coordination, documentation, and verification of on-campus volunteer activities shall be aligned with the following requirements:

- On-campus service refers to volunteer activities that take place within the university grounds and are directed toward supporting the institution's operations, student community, or campus environment.
- Examples of eligible on-campus volunteer activities may include, but are not limited to
  - Assisting in campus events hosted by academic and administrative events (orientations, graduations, cultural festivals, conferences (MEPS, student-led conference and etc.)
  - Tutoring or mentoring peers in academic or skill-development programs (e.g., Peer Mentoring Program, Student-led Workshop Series Program, Health Advocates Programs, etc.)
  - Support to the Library, Leopard Radio Station, labs, and research center initiatives
  - Participating in campus improvement projects (e.g., sustainability campaigns, green initiatives, clean-up drives)

**c. Off- Campus Volunteering (Community Service)**

- Students interested in volunteering with off-campus organizations must first contact the OSA.
- The OSA will coordinate with the respective NGO, humanitarian organization, or volunteer initiative to confirm the acceptance of AUK students.
- The OSA will collect all relevant information from the external organization.
- This process ensures proper coordination, credibility, and alignment with AUK's Civic Engagement framework.
  - Date of activity
  - Total number of hours
  - Description of Civic Engagement activity
  - Assessment of the student's performance in this activity
  - Supervisor's contact information

All provisions governing the coordination, documentation, and verification of off-campus volunteer activities shall be aligned with the following requirements:

- Volunteer confirmation letters delivered by the student (electronically or in-person) to the OSA will not be accepted. All letters must be sent directly from the organizing party and/or supervisor.
- Off-campus service includes volunteer activities performed outside the university setting that serve the wider community, organizations, or partner institutions.
- Examples of eligible off-campus volunteer activities may include, but are not limited to:
  - Volunteering with local NGOs, charities, or hospitals
  - Teaching, mentoring, or tutoring in schools or community centers (e.g., Change Makers Program)
  - Supporting public events or local initiatives (marathons, fundraisers, cultural fairs etc.)
  - Environmental activities (tree planting, neighborhood clean-up, recycling projects)
  - Contributing skills-based services (IT, translation, design, health awareness campaigns) for external groups

## 5. Timeline and Communication/Implementation Plan

| Activity                            | Responsibility Party        | Timeline     | Communication Channels                  | Details  |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|---|--|
| <b>Policy Revision Announcement</b> | OSA                         | March, 2026  | University website, email, social media | Announce the revision of the policy, assessment metrics, and objectives through OSA.   |
| <b>Feedback Collection</b>          | OSA                         | March, 2027  | Surveys, suggestion boxes, email        | Gather feedback on the policy’s effectiveness, challenges, and areas for improvement.  |
| <b>Periodic Reviews and Updates</b> | OIEP, University Leadership | As necessary | Website, email, staff meetings          | Review the policy and its enforcement mechanisms & procedures annually or as necessary to ensure continued relevance and compliance. |

## 6. Related Documents

[Civic Honor Form](#)

[Policy of Student Grievance](#)

## 7. Ways to Measure Success

Participation and Completion Metrics

- Number & Percentages of students who applied and earned Civic Honor.
- Student participation rates across colleges, programs, and demographic segments (to measure inclusivity and reach).

## 8. Policy History

**a. Approved by:** Board of Trustees

**b. Adopted:** November 13, 2022

**c. Revised:** February 25, 2026