SYSTEM OVERVIEW
The first Oklahoma territorial legislature passed legislation creating three institutions of higher education in 1890 in order to fulfill a requirement of the Organic Act of Congress establishing the territory.

Congress required the Oklahoma territory to establish a liberal arts and professional education, agriculture and mechanical arts education and teacher training.
• During the 1920’s there were fifty-three different presidents presiding over eighteen public institutions, an average of one new president every three years. In the 1930’s fifty more presidents rotated through the system.

• These changes not only affected personnel, but accreditation as well.

• In 1931, eleven Oklahoma colleges and universities were accredited by the north Central Association of Colleges and Schools, but in 1936 only 3 institutions were still accredited.
Higher Education Prior to 1941

The first published study of the problem of coordination of higher education in Oklahoma was the doctoral dissertation of Dr. Henry G. Bennett in 1926.

He recommended that a central coordinating board be established and a state system formed.

Dr. Henry G. Bennett
President,
Southeastern State Normal School in Durant, 1919 – 1928
Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, 1928-1951
Higher Education Prior to 1941

University of Oklahoma
Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College
Oklahoma Normal School for Teachers – Edmond
Colored Agricultural and Normal University
Normal School for Teachers – Alva
Normal School for Teachers at Weatherford
Oklahoma University Preparatory at Tonkawa
Industrial Institute
College for Girls
School of Mines and Metallurgy
Connors State School of Agriculture
Murray State School of Agriculture
Cameron State School of Agriculture
Haskell State School of Agriculture
Connell State School of Agriculture
Panhandle State School of Agriculture
Northeastern Normal School at Tahlequah
East Central Normal School at Ada
Southeastern Normal School at Durant
In 1939, Gov. Leon C. “Red” Phillips named members to a coordinating board.

The board recommended that a constitutional board be established, and the 1941 Oklahoma Legislature proposed Article XIII-A of the Oklahoma Constitution.
According to the Oklahoma Constitution, Article XIII-A, all institutions of higher education shall be integral parts of a unified system to be known as the State System of Higher Education.

The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education is the State’s legal structure for providing public education at the collegiate level.

The State Regents is the Coordinating Board for the State System.

2016 Enrollment 226,575.
25 Colleges and Universities
- 2 Research Universities
- 10 Regional Universities
- 1 Public Liberal Arts University
- 12 Community Colleges
- 11 Constituent Agencies
- 2 Higher Education Centers
The State Regents

- Established in 1941 by an amendment to the constitution, Article XIII-A.
- Consists of 9 members
- Appointed by the Governor
- Confirmed by the Senate
- Appointed to 9 year terms
1. Determine functions and courses of study.
2. Prescribe standards of education.
3. Grant degrees and other forms of academic recognition.
4. Recommend to State Legislature budget allocation.
5. Allocate funds appropriated by State Legislature.
6. Tuition setting authority.
7. Allocate revolving funds.
8. Determine student fees.
9. Administer Student Scholarships.
10. OneNet.
11. Oklahoma College Assistance Program.
12. Regents Education Program.
1. Determines management policy.
2. Employing personnel, fixing salaries and assigning duties.
3. Contracting for other services needed.
4. Having custody of records.
5. Acquiring and holding title to property.

6. General academic policy and administration.
7. Student life.
8. Budget administration.
11. Auxiliary activities, budgeting and administration.
Boards of Trustees

• University Center of Southern Oklahoma - Ardmore
• University Center at Ponca City
• Quartz Mountain Arts and Conference Center and Nature Park – Lone Wolf (Altus)
2017 Public Agenda

- Increase the number of college graduates
- Enhance access and improve the quality of public higher education
- Better prepare students to meet the challenge of a global economy
2015 Median U.S. Earnings by Educational Attainment (for workers age 25 and older)

- No High School Diploma: $25,636/yr ($493/wk)
- High School Diploma: $35,256/yr ($678/wk)
- Associate Diploma: $41,496/yr ($798/wk)
- Bachelor’s Degree: $59,124/yr ($1,137/wk)
- Master’s Degree: $69,732/yr ($1,341/wk)
- Doctoral Degree: $84,396/yr ($1,623/wk)
- Professional Degree: $89,960/yr ($1,730/wk)

WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

$1,455,253
High School Graduate

$1,725,822
Some College

$1,801,373
Associates Degree

$2,567,174
Bachelor’s Degree

$2,963,076
Master’s Degree

$3,982,577
Doctorate

$5,254,193
Professional

$1.1 M more in a Lifetime than HS Grad

Lifetime Earnings!

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce Economics and Statistics Administration – U.S. Census Bureau
Building Oklahoma’s Workforce.

Oklahoma Works brings all of our state’s workforce resources together, connecting employers, employees and job-seekers to information and programs that help build Oklahoma’s workforce.

LEARN MORE
In 2014, only 40.1% of Oklahoma’s workforce had a degree, certificate or high quality credential. However, projections show that 70% of Oklahoma’s jobs will require some education or training beyond high school by 2025. To address this skills gap, the state has set an ambitious goal of having 70% of Oklahoma’s workforce 25-64 years-old having education or training beyond high school by the year 2025, including post-secondary degrees, certificates and other high quality credentials.
In 2015, more than 6,000 students were awarded degrees and certificates in the STEM fields from Oklahoma system colleges and universities.

This represents a 32.4 percent increase in STEM degrees over the last five years.
Oklahoma’s Critical Occupation for Ecosystems

Physicians and Surgeons
Pharmacists
Physical Therapists
Veterinarians
Postsecondary Teachers
Nurse Practitioners
Petroleum Engineers
Architectural and Engineering Managers
Mining and Geological Engineers
Computer Information Systems Managers
Electronics Engineers
Chemical Engineers
Link Academic Programs to the needs of Business

- Healthcare, Allied Health and Nursing
- Engineering
- Business
- Aviation and Aerospace
- Geospatial Technologies
- Telecommunications
- Data Science and Analytics

- Oklahoma Institutions have deleted 1,205 programs since 1992.
Percent of Oklahoma Residents Who Graduate with a Bachelor’s Degree Remain In the State and are Employed In the State One Year After Graduation

Source: Data from September 2016 Employment Outcomes
Nationally, more than one-quarter (30.6 percent) of adults 25 and older have a bachelor’s degree or more compared to Oklahoma at 24.6 percent.

Source: Bureau of the Census 2015
67% of all jobs created in Oklahoma by 2020 will require some college, a long-term certificate or a college degree.

37% of all jobs created in Oklahoma by 2020 will require an associate’s degree, bachelor’s degree or higher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>Less than high school</th>
<th>High school diploma</th>
<th>Some college/no degree</th>
<th>Associate’s degree</th>
<th>Bachelor’s degree</th>
<th>Master’s degree or better</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managerial and Professional Office</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Services and Arts</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Professional and Technical</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Support</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Personal Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and Office Support</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>58</strong></td>
<td><strong>193</strong></td>
<td><strong>170</strong></td>
<td><strong>62</strong></td>
<td><strong>135</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Georgetown Center for Education and Workforce Development
The Overwhelming Majority of States That Have a High Percentage of Their Citizens with a College Degree Have a Higher Per Capita Income.

- California
- Connecticut
- Illinois
- Massachusetts
- New Hampshire
- New York
- Vermont
- Washington
- Colorado
- Delaware
- Maryland
- Minnesota
- New Jersey
- Rhode Island
- Virginia
- Wyoming

State *Per Capita* Personal Income v. Share of Adult Population with Bachelor's Degree or Higher

Source: United States Bureau of Economic Analysis
“Over the Last Two Decades, the United States has declined in Degree Completion From 1st in the World to 19th in the World”

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
1. Focus on College Readiness
2. Transform Remediation
3. Strengthen Pathways to College Degrees and Certificates
4. Increase Adult Degree Completion
5. Reward Performance
COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA
The Oklahoma Plan

- Cumulative Degrees and Certificates Awarded: 8,462
- Cumulative 4-year Goal: 6,800
ONLINE EDUCATION
Oklahoma Online Statistics

2015-2016 Academic Year

- 108,322 students enrolled in online courses.
- Approximately 52 percent of all students took at least one online course from Oklahoma colleges and universities.
- There were 831,524 student credit hours generated from online courses toward degree completion.
## Online Education

**Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities**

Percentage of Undergraduate Instruction Through e-Learning, 2014-15

(point change from 2013-14 shown in parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percentage 2014-15 (Change)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>24.0% (1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida*</td>
<td>17.3% (5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>16.5% (0.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>16.4% (1.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>15.8% (0.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>13.65% (0.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>13.62% (1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>12.0% (0.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>11.9% (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>11.8% (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>11.7% (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>7.2% (9.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>6.2% (2.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>2.7% (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>-- (0.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>-- (--)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Courses are e-learning when more than 50 percent of the course content is delivered electronically.

* Used an 80 percent rule to define e-learning, so figures may be lower than they would be using the more than 50 percent rule.

-- Indicates data not available

Source: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), State Data Exchange 2014-15 Indicators Report, Released in April 2016.
Public Two-Year Colleges
Percentage of Undergraduate Instruction Through e-Learning, 2014-15
(point change from 2013-14 shown in parentheses)

North Carolina (2.6) 39.0%
Kentucky (1.8) 35.4%
Virginia (0.6) 28.1%
Tennessee (0.6) 26.0%
Oklahoma (1.2) 25.6%
Arkansas (0.8) 24.9%
Texas (1.0) 23.9%
South Carolina (4.0) 21.9%
Mississippi* (1.8) 21.4%
Florida* (1.8) 20.2%
Alabama (1.5) 19.7%
Georgia (19.7) 18.3%
West Virginia (-2.7) 16.3%
Maryland (-0.3) 10.6%
Delaware (0.6)
Louisiana (--)

Courses are e-learning when more than 50 percent of the course content is delivered electronically.

* Used a 75 percent rule to define e-learning, so figures may be lower than they would be using the more than 50 percent rule
-- Indicates data not available for one or both years

Source: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), State Data Exchange 2014-15 Indicators Report, Released in April 2016.
Tuition and Mandatory Fee Increases from 2009 – 2016

Average of 4.9%

Source: Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

*OU and OSU did not implement a tuition increase in FY2013-14.
Oklahoma Ranks 5th in College Affordability
Average Student Cost of Public 4-Year Institutions of Higher Education

- Oklahoma: $14,147
- Utah: $12,970
- New Hampshire: $25,821
- National: $18,632

### College Affordability

#### Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

#### Annual Tuition and Required Fees

#### In-State Undergraduates, 2014-15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Tuition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SREB states</td>
<td>$7,313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>$10,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>$10,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>$9,839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>$9,088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>$8,388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>$8,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>$8,018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>$7,648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>$7,609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>$6,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>$6,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>$6,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>$6,401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>$6,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>$6,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>$5,688</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), *State Data Exchange 2014-15 Indicators Report – Released April 2016*
Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities
Changes in Degrees and Certificates Conferred, 2012-13 to 2013-14
(2013-14 total numbers shown in parentheses)

SREB states (617,364)

- SREB states (617,364) 1.55%
- Alabama (34,507) 4.83%
- Arkansas (20,598) 3.40%
- Oklahoma (23,833) 2.60%
- West Virginia (12,822) 2.31%
- South Carolina (23,007) 2.15%
- Florida (86,017) 2.09%
- Delaware (5,685) 1.68%
- North Carolina (51,648) 1.52%
- Maryland (28,730) 1.29%
- Texas (132,036) 1.21%
- Georgia (51,266) 1.19%
- Mississippi (15,765) 1.17%
- Virginia (51,609) 0.97%
- Kentucky (25,952) 0.69%
- Tennessee (28,326) -0.30%
- Louisiana (25,563) -0.66%

Source: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), State Data Exchange 2014-15 Indicators Report - Released April 2016
Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities  All Ranks Full-Time Faculty Salaries, 2014-15
(change from 2013-14 shown in parentheses)

SREB states (1.0%) $77,662
Delaware (0.7%) $100,986
Virginia (0.8%) $85,386
Maryland (7.9%) $85,349
Florida (3.5%) $83,986
Alabama (-0.7%) $80,712
Texas (-0.5%) $79,951
South Carolina (3.2%) $77,966
North Carolina (-1.8%) $76,944
Georgia (2.7%) $75,967
Tennessee (0.5%) $73,044
Kentucky (0.8%) $72,812
West Virginia (1.7%) $69,835
Mississippi (3.9%) $68,568
Louisiana (1.5%) $66,364
Oklahoma (-7.0%) $66,159
Arkansas (0.6%) $65,582

Source: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), State Data Exchange 2014-15 Indicators Report - Released April 2016
Oklahoma’s State System Schools are 23% below the national average in student debt.

In 2015, 48 percent of Oklahoma graduates, graduated without any student loan debt.

Top 10 states with the lowest student debt:
- Utah
- New Mexico
- California
- Wyoming
- Florida
- Hawaii
- Nevada
- Arizona
- Washington
- Oklahoma

2015 Average Student Debt
- $23,059 Oklahoma State System
- $24,849 Oklahoma
- $30,100 National

Source: Project on Student Debt, Fall 2016; four-year public and private non-profit schools
History of State Appropriations to Higher Education

Appropriation

Key:
- Appropriations – Black and Red

$1,200,000,000
$1,000,000,000
$800,000,000
$600,000,000
$400,000,000
$200,000,000

Higher Education Budget Share of Total State Reductions

In Summary

• For each of the last three fiscal years, Higher Education has received disproportionately large reductions when compared to the other agencies.

• From FY’14 to FY’17, Higher Education’s reduction represents 53.2% of the State’s total reductions.

Cut to All other State Agencies 46.8%
Cut to Higher Education 53.2%
Percentage Change in Appropriations to Higher Education among CCA States, FY12 to FY17

Source: Grapevine, An Annual Compilation of Data on State Fiscal Support for Higher Education
Higher Education’s Percent of Oklahoma Total State Appropriations
State Appropriations as a percent of Total Higher Education Budget

- 1988: 74.2%
- 2007: 50.8%
- 2012: 39.9%
- 2013: 39.5%
- 2014: 38.7%
- 2015: 37.2%
- 2016: 35.1%
- 2017: 30.0%
Over the last nine years, from FY’08 to FY’17, Oklahoma Universities and Colleges have increased the share of total E&G budgeted revenue for the Academic Enterprise from 75% to 78%.

In contrast, Administration Budgets have decreased from 6.6% to 5.7%.
Sports Team and Athletic Facility Reductions

- Consolidation of Administrative and Executive Positions
- Increased Class sizes
- Faculty and Staff Furloughs
- Elimination of Faculty positions
- Campus Closures
- Joint Degree Programs between Institutions
- Reducing Scholarships
- Elimination of Unfilled Positions
- Reduction of Summer School Hours
- Elimination of Student Workers
### Purchasing Enhancements
- Migration to self-insurance
- Best-price contract sharing between institutions
- Multi-institutional health insurance coverage
- Participate in Risk Management Consortium
- Re-bidding of all service contracts
- Use of group and cooperative purchasing contracts
- Upgrade of IT servers, equipment, etc.
- Updating P-card program
- Implementation of electronic payables
- Cloud based purchasing and business management

### Personnel
- Deletion of faculty positions
- Deletion of dean positions
- Deletion of professional positions
- Deletion of classified positions
- Deletion/decrease in student employee positions
- Delay filling vacant positions
- Shared faculty between institutions
- Increase employee percent of health insurance
- Discontinue employee dental insurance

### Academic Enterprise
- Consolidation/elimination of programs
- Academic prioritization program
- Increased online courses
- Shared degree programs between institutions
- Combining Campus Sites
- Realignment and restructuring of colleges
- Reduce summer semester hours/courses

### Institutional Organization
- Reorganization of departments
- Prioritization review of non-academic programs
- Refinancing of institutional debt
- 4-day summer work week (10 hours per day)
- Reduction of scholarships
- Reduction of student work-study
- Closure of athletic facilities
- Implementation of electronic payment process for tuition and fees

### Facility Maintenance
- 20x2020 Energy Conservation Program
- Energy performance contracts
- Review of outsourced contracts to maximize cost savings.
## BUDGET
### Impact of FY17 Budget Cuts on State System Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OU System</td>
<td>-$37,617,743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSU System</td>
<td>-$37,123,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCO</td>
<td>-$8,212,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECU</td>
<td>-$2,717,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSU</td>
<td>-$5,713,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEOSU</td>
<td>-$2,901,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SWOSU</td>
<td>$3,516,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CU</td>
<td>-$3,353,913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU</td>
<td>-$2,889,002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NWOSU</td>
<td>-$1,576,859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPSU</td>
<td>-$1,119,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSU</td>
<td>$2,175,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAO</td>
<td>-$1,149,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASC</td>
<td>-$999,014</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSC</td>
<td>-$1,056,041</td>
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<tr>
<td>EOSC</td>
<td>-$1,007,787</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSC</td>
<td>-$897,296</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEO A&amp;M</td>
<td>-$1,381,221</td>
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<tr>
<td>NOC</td>
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<td>OCCC</td>
<td>$3,920,638</td>
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<td>RCC</td>
<td>-$990,822</td>
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<td>RSC</td>
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<td>SSC</td>
<td>-$927,816</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCC</td>
<td>-$5,688,443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOSC</td>
<td>-$894,537</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
State Appropriations
Change in Sources of Budgeted Revenue

- $153.4 million (-15.9%)
- $61.8 Million (-2.5%)
- $4.0 million
$87.6 million

Tuition and Fees FY’16 to FY’17
Other FY’16 to FY’17
Total Budgeted Revenue FY’16 to FY’17
Our views | Regents approve top-down review

Task force offers chance to boost higher education

The Oklahoman
3/28/2017

Lawton has long been the home of Cameron University. For about the past 30 years, Cameron has had a branch campus in Duncan — which is just 40 miles from the university. Is this arrangement really the best use of taxpayer dollars?

The same might be asked of any number of other branch campuses throughout the system — Rogers State in Bartlesville (and Pryor), Northern Oklahoma College in Enid, etc. — and perhaps it will be by a task force that’s set to review the state’s higher education system.

Glen Johnson, the system’s chancellor, announced formation of the task force last week. Those on the task force, Johnson said, “will be looking at the fiscal stability of each institution within the system, particularly in relationship to the budget cuts that have occurred the past several years.”

Higher education saw its state appropriation get cut by $137 million, or 16 percent, for the current fiscal year. That followed a year in which its budget was reduced by $12 million. Those have resulted in staff reductions and fewer course offerings at the 25 universities within the system, presenting real challenges. However, it’s unrealistic to believe higher ed will see those funds restored by the Legislature any time soon, if ever, so this review is a good way to determine whether available funds are being used as productively as possible.

It also may help to build some goodwill with members of the Legislature who feel the higher education system is bloated and can stand a thorough scrubbing. Some higher ed officials believe the large cut made in 2016 was essentially lawmakers sending that message.

We like what we’re hearing from Johnson and from members of his board regarding this review. Johnson said there is “not only a commitment but excitement that this is absolutely where we need to be right now.”

Ronald White, a regent from Oklahoma City, said the task force is “an opportunity for us to go forward and modernize things. We’ve continued to see our system do more with less money in the last few years, and now we’ve got to look at other alternatives.”

Members of the task force will be named next month. They will include regents, college and university representatives, private citizens, and designees of the governor and legislative leaders. Those named to the panel will look at all aspects of higher education, from degree completion, initiatives to online education to operational efficiencies and possible restructuring within the system.

Oklahoma’s comprehensive and regional universities do good work with the 414,000 students in the system. Their mission is more important than ever, because Oklahomans need college graduates to meet the demands of the 21st-century workforce. But it’s safe to assume there are areas where improvement is possible.

Regent Andy Lester, of Edmond, said he considers the task force “a wonderful opportunity to see the record straight, fix what needs to be fixed and move forward.” We commend the regents for approving the idea, and look forward to seeing what results from this effort.
Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

The Task Force on the Future of Higher Education