

Degrees of Progress

News from the State Regents for Higher Education



OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Improving our future by degrees

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Concurrent Enrollment Is an Investment in Degree Completion

Chancellor Glen D. Johnson, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

Oklahoma's future economic growth requires an educated workforce. Currently, 25% of Oklahomans older than age 25 hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to the national average of 30%. Concurrent enrollment, a key component of our nationally recognized Complete College America strategic plan, is critical to Oklahoma's degree completion efforts. The state regents, business leaders, campus representatives, policymakers and legislators who served on the 2017-2018 State Regents for Higher Education Task Force on the Future of Higher Education unanimously recommended increased funding for concurrent enrollment.

To close Oklahoma's educational attainment gap, the State Regents remain focused on

initiatives that improve college readiness and increase the number of college degree holders in our state. Since 2005, the concurrent enrollment program has allowed outstanding high school juniors and seniors who meet admission and course placement requirements to earn college credit at Oklahoma colleges and universities while still in high school. Delivered via traditional instruction or online on a college or high school campus, concurrent enrollment courses are taught by qualified faculty providing the student a collegiate experience. Participation in concurrent enrollment has nearly doubled in the last decade, and in the previous academic year, more than 13,000 students from Oklahoma high schools enrolled in concurrent courses generating over 114,000 student credit hours.

The concurrent enrollment program strengthens student preparation, reduces family college costs and decreases the time required to complete a degree. Under the program, eligible high school seniors receive a tuition waiver for up to 18 credit hours of concurrent coursework in the academic year. Given the demonstrated success of concurrent enrollment as a tool to improve college readiness, some institutions have elected to provide tuition waivers for eligible high school juniors, as well.

In fiscal year 2018, campuses were reimbursed only 26% of the total cost to deliver concurrent enrollment. Recognizing the importance of the concurrent enrollment program, the governor and Legislature provided \$7.5 million in additional appropriations for concurrent enrollment in FY 2019, which moved the needle to cover approximately 87% of the cost to our campuses.



The FY 2020 appropriation for public higher education will provide the opportunity for full funding of the concurrent enrollment program. A proven driver of degree completion and ultimately, workforce development, concurrent enrollment is an investment that benefits Oklahoma students, families and employers.

We thank the Governor and Legislature for fully funding concurrent enrollment for high school seniors, which will expand college accessibility, promote college affordability and produce more graduates to fill the growing number of jobs in our state that require a college degree. One of the most important investments our state can make is to continue investing in Oklahoma students through the concurrent enrollment program.

Contents

- Guest Commentary: Collaborative Technology Effort Benefits Students, Schools, Taxpayers2
- Chancellor Johnson Receives SHEEO Exceptional Leader Award3
- John Massey Named State Regent Emeritus3
- Taylor Sworn in as New State Regent3
- COLE Awards4
- COSA Recognizes Leadership Academy Participants4
- 2019-20 College Planning Publications4
- Reach Higher Participants, Supporters Gather for Recognition Ceremony5
- State Regents Continue to Make College Courses Easier to Transfer5
- OU-Tulsa Powers Innovation Through Connectivity6
- Oklahoma Adds Three New Math Course Alternatives, Completes Math Pathways to Completion Project7
- Free ICAP Tools Available7

Collaborative Technology Effort Benefits Students, Schools, Taxpayers

President Janet Cunningham, Northwestern Oklahoma State University

President Sean Burrage, Southeastern Oklahoma State University

President Randy Beutler, Southwestern Oklahoma State University

In a day and age when cost efficiencies in higher education are more important than ever before, three Oklahoma universities have formed a unique, cost-saving partnership.

Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University and Southwestern Oklahoma State University are jointly contracted with Colleague by Ellucian for enterprise resource planning (ERP), student information systems (SIS), finance, human resources, and talent management solutions. This collaborative effort resulted in cost savings of approximately \$2.7 million, including savings in such areas as consulting and assistance, initial costs (license, maintenance, third-party software), ongoing hardware costs, and ongoing software support and maintenance. The partnership also facilitates interaction among representatives from each of our campuses as they work together to solve technical issues and address other questions that may

arise. In this way, expertise is shared and utilized by each of the participating entities.

When the new system is fully implemented, institutional data will be available in a single database and accessed through the Colleague ERP, giving faculty and administrators the ability to make data-driven decisions and virtually eliminating tedious manual processes. In addition to improved operational efficiencies, the new system will allow for the implementation of new technology, which will assist students at each university during their journey from admission to graduation.

The governing board for our three institutions, the Regional University System of Oklahoma (RUSO), has been very supportive of this partnership. Collectively, we understand that such collaborations benefit not only taxpayers, but also the students we serve by enabling efficient delivery of services.

This collaboration is one example of numerous efforts to improve cost efficiencies and better serve students in Oklahoma public higher education. The success of this partnership further opens the door for all institutions to examine additional areas of enhanced cooperation going forward, including more shared faculty and programs, more shared purchasing, and shared travel.

As a state system, we work together for the benefit of our students, and we share the vision of producing globally-competitive graduates to meet Oklahoma's current and future workforce needs. We remain focused on innovation, modernization, and cost savings - key components of the recommendations provided by the Task Force on the Future of Higher Education.



Chancellor Johnson Receives SHEEO Exceptional Leader Award

Chancellor Glen D. Johnson received the State Higher Education Executive Officers' (SHEEO) Exceptional Leader Award at the association's 2019 annual meeting. SHEEO is the national association of the chief executives of statewide governing boards and coordinating boards for postsecondary education.

The Exceptional Leader Award is presented to a current state higher education executive officer from a member agency who has shown exceptional leadership, a commitment to higher education, a contribution to the greater good and service to the SHEEO association. The award recipient is selected by peer system-

heads from across the nation, and it is the organization's highest individual honor.

Chancellor Johnson has provided more than 36 years of public service to the State of Oklahoma, including over 23 years of state and national service in higher education leadership roles. As chief executive officer for the Oklahoma state system of higher education, he has served in leadership roles for SHEEO, the Southern Regional Education Board, the American Association for State Colleges and Universities and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.



John Massey Named State Regent Emeritus

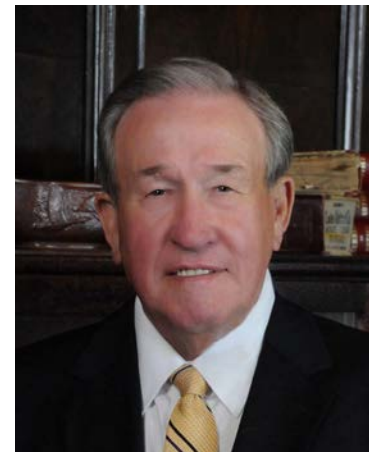
State Regent John Massey was recognized as a state regent emeritus during a recent meeting of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Massey completed his third nine-year term on the board in May, making him the first consecutive three-term State Regent in Oklahoma history, with 27 years of service.

Appointed as an Oklahoma State Regent by Gov. David Walters in 1992 to serve

a nine-year term; he was reappointed by Gov. Frank Keating for a second term in 2001; and in 2010, he was reappointed by Gov. Brad Henry for a third term.

Massey is chairman of the board of First United Bank and Trust. He is also chairman of Durant Enterprises Inc., and serves on the board of directors of the Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence.



Taylor Sworn In as New State Regent

McAlester resident and retired Oklahoma Chief Supreme Court Justice Steven W. Taylor was recently sworn in as a member of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. His appointment by Gov. Kevin Stitt was confirmed by both the Senate Education Committee and the full Senate. Taylor will serve a nine-year term and replaces Regent John Massey.

He was appointed by former Gov. George Nigh in 1984 as an associate district judge for Pittsburg County, and in 1991 he was the first associate district judge ever to be elected president of the Oklahoma Judicial Conference.

In 1994, he was elected district judge of the 18th Judicial District and in 1997 and 2003 was elected presiding judge of the 10-county East-Central Judicial Administrative District.

Taylor presided over the Oklahoma City bombing trial while serving as District Judge for Pittsburg and McIntosh counties before former Gov. Brad Henry appointed him to the Supreme Court. Before retiring from the judiciary, he served on the Oklahoma State Supreme Court from 2004 until 2017 and was chief justice from 2011-13.



COLE Awards

The Council for Online Learning Excellence (COLE), an initiative of the State Regents' Online Education Task Force, recognized the following two faculty members and a university team for their outstanding work: Dawn M. Pearce, EDU-Innovator and instructor of educational leadership at the University of Central Oklahoma, received the Oklahoma Online Excellence Award for Teaching; the Oklahoma Online Excellence

Award for Innovation was presented to the Institute for Learning Environment Design at UCO; and Marci Grant, director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, received the Oklahoma Online Excellence Award for Individual Leadership.

The State Regents created the Online Education Task Force in 2012 to review the

delivery of online education throughout the state system and to determine the extent to which the delivery of online education was accessible, efficient and effective. COLE, formed by the task force in 2016, is comprised of faculty, staff and administrators representing each tier of Oklahoma's public and private colleges and universities, as well as other entities connected to online learning technologies.

COSA Recognizes Leadership Academy Participants

The State Regents' Council on Student Affairs (COSA) recognized members of the 2018-19 Leadership Academy, a group of 25 student affairs professionals from 14 of the state's public and private higher education institutions, during a completion ceremony.

Academy participants receive enhanced professional development opportunities by attending skill-training workshops and seminars led by student affairs leaders.

Academy members: Kyle Jarman, Cameron University; Tegen Robinson and Kavaris Sims, Langston University; Mark Shields, Northeastern

State University; Haley Stiles, Oklahoma City University; Michael Harris, Oklahoma Panhandle State University; Rendi Glass and Kyle Gregorio, Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology; TerJuana Brooks, Jennifer Hernandez, Venesha Lankster, Alfredo Melchor and Christina Young, Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City; Nikki Phillip, Rogers State University; Steven Daffer and Erin Logan, Rose State College; James Reed, Southeastern Oklahoma State University; Heather Hummel and Jordan Selman, Southwestern Oklahoma State University; Kyle Meador, The University of Tulsa; Dawn Chelle Davidson, Dr. Harriette Dudley, Mary Glenn and Mandie Southard,

Tulsa Community College; and Bobbie Shores, University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma.

Chancellor Glen D. Johnson and 15 student affairs professionals served as faculty, including Dr. Zeak Naifeh and Jerrett Phillips, CU; Dr. John Gardner, Gardner Institute; Joshua Busby, LU; Amy Ishmael, Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College; Dr. Lee Bird and Dr. Kathryn Gage, Oklahoma State University; Dr. Ina Agnew, OSUIT; Lance Newbold, RSC; Dr. Heidi Hoskinson and Dr. Brent Marsh, RSU; Dr. Ruth Boyd, SWOSU; Dr. Jan Clayton, TCC; Dr. Sharra Hynes, University of Central Oklahoma; and Monica Trevino, USAO.

2019-20 College Planning Publications

This fall, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education will distribute thousands of publications to help Oklahoma students plan and prepare for a college education. Counselors will also receive publications to assist with students' college planning.

What's Your Plan for College?

These brochures for eighth- through 10th-grade and 11th- through 12th-grade students outline the courses they must take in high school to be admitted to an Oklahoma public college or university, as well as financial aid information, estimated college costs, salary expectations for various jobs, and information about campus comparison and selection.

Counselors' Resource Book: Oklahoma's Colleges and Universities

This online publication for high school counselors provides a profile of each college and university in Oklahoma and includes information about preparing for college, college costs and financial aid.

High School Counselor Toolkit

UCanGo2, a college access initiative of the Oklahoma College Assistance Program, produces these kits to support educators' outreach to students and parents. Each kit includes an Instructor's Guide, a Plan of Action to help counselors make the most of UCanGo2 materials throughout the year, student tools and FAFSA education resources.



Reach Higher Participants, Supporters Gather for Recognition Ceremony; State Regent Ann Holloway Provides Keynote Address

Approximately 150 Reach Higher students and their families, faculty and representatives from participating Reach Higher institutions recently gathered at the Oklahoma History Center to honor current Reach Higher participants, 2019 graduates, faculty and other educational partners.

Speakers included State Regent Ann Holloway, who shared her personal pathway toward a college degree and inspired students to persist in completing their degrees to meet their personal goals and build Oklahoma's workforce, and three current Reach Higher students and graduates, who each talked about their experiences returning to college as adult students.

Reach Higher, Oklahoma's adult degree completion initiative, offers two distinct programs to empower adult students who have earned some college credit to complete their degrees. Reach Higher: FlexFinish offers flexible enrollment and online options to working adults who wish to pursue an associate degree in enterprise development or a bachelor's degree in organizational leadership at one of 21 participating colleges and universities in Oklahoma. Reach Higher: DirectComplete offers adult students the opportunity to complete a degree program connected with workforce development needs that align with Oklahoma's *100 Critical Occupations* list.



State Regents Continue to Make College Courses Easier to Transfer

Transferring from one Oklahoma college or university to another is easier now for many of Oklahoma's undergraduate college students thanks to the State Regents' Course Equivalency Project (CEP).

The CEP facilitates student transfer by ensuring the maximum number of credit hours and course work transfer among both private and public institutions in the state. With an increasingly mobile student population, the CEP assists students in the transfer process from a two-year to a four-year school or from one four-year institution to another.

Since inception of the CEP, the State Regents have added more than 8,000 courses in 50 disciplines that are transferable among state system institutions and many independent colleges and universities. Transferable courses share faculty-developed core student learning outcomes at each institution where

they are offered, and they are guaranteed to transfer among institutions that offer those courses and list them as part of the CEP.

It's not uncommon for students to enroll at multiple higher education institutions throughout their academic career, and the CEP simplifies the transfer process from one college or university to another. This program brings faculty together to discuss full course content – not just course titles – and determine course compatibility among our college and university campuses, allowing students to complete their college degrees and enter the workforce more quickly and efficiently.

The State Regents' plan to improve student transfer began in 1996 with a report to the state Legislature detailing a comprehensive action plan that would alleviate some of the obstacles students face when transferring within the state system of higher education. That report

led to a second progress report in December 1997, which focused on the implementation phase of the plan, known as the CEP.

Under the CEP, which operates on a yearly cycle, up to 400 faculty members from across the state meet to discuss courses that will transfer among institutions. Once the curriculum committees for each discipline complete their reports and various academic groups review and approve committee recommendations, the State Regents accept the course equivalency reports and distribute the information to the colleges and universities each spring. The information is also available on the State Regents' website to assist students planning to transfer college courses.

OU-Tulsa Powers Innovation Through Connectivity

As classrooms become increasingly connected, adequate bandwidth is vital to the growth and development of universities and colleges across the state. A recent network upgrade at the University of Oklahoma-Tulsa (OU-Tulsa) is helping better connect students, faculty and staff by improving bandwidth services across the OU-Tulsa campus. The upgrade increases bandwidth speed tenfold, allowing the university to focus on its mission-critical functions with fully functioning IT services.



OU-Tulsa needed greater bandwidth to ensure business continuity for the university's academics, research and clinical missions. The university also needed greater capacity for disaster recovery, resulting in improved critical data backup solutions during allocated outage windows. To meet their bandwidth needs, the university partnered with OneNet to find a scalable and cost-effective solution for its network upgrade.

OneNet helped the university alleviate disaster recovery issues and improve business

continuity by upgrading the network from a 1 Gbps to a 10 Gbps bandwidth. After switching to the 10 Gbps, OU-Tulsa immediately noticed increased network connectivity performance for several customers and increased response times for data backup. The upgrade also meant that the OU IT team was able to add network storage into the Tulsa shared services data center, which increased redundancy by eliminating single points of failure.

OneNet's high-speed circuit enables the OU-Tulsa IT department to equally participate in IT service delivery, allowing for seamless integration across all three OU campuses. The integration expands IT services at the Tulsa campus, while improving disaster recovery options for the Oklahoma City and Norman campuses.

"High-speed connectivity is what powers the research and innovation that takes place at higher education institutions like OU-Tulsa," said OneNet's Executive Director, Vonley Royal. "The network upgrade will not only improve daily IT operations, but will also enable the university to expand on new and current projects."

The OU College of Engineering at OU-Tulsa is one department that will benefit from the upgrade as they work to improve travel time records for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) using high-speed connectivity. The OU College

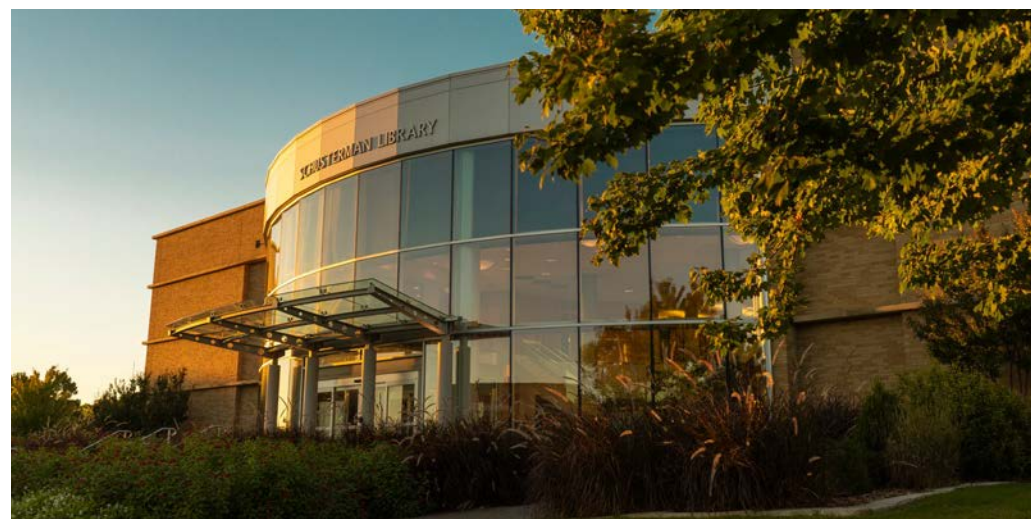


of Engineering at OU-Tulsa currently hosts and processes ODOT travel time records for the state national highway system (NHS), which are reported every five minutes for thousands of highway segments.

The network upgrade improves recording time for the OU College of Engineering, enabling OU-Tulsa to host and process Oklahoma City and Tulsa roadways in real-time. This high-speed circuit will support OU-Tulsa's efforts to become the ODOT choice for processing national performance measurements required by Federal Highway Administration.

"Working with OneNet helped our department ensure that OU-Tulsa's mission-critical functions of teaching, research, service and clinical care can be carried out each day with fully functioning IT services," said OU-Tulsa's Director of Information Technology, Dana Saliba.

With technology at the center of higher education, OneNet's high-speed network ensures universities and colleges like OU-Tulsa have access to the connectivity they need to power their mission in the digital age. OU-Tulsa serves as an example of a higher education institution committed to advancing digital learning opportunities through connectivity.



Oklahoma Adds Three New Math Course Alternatives, Completes Math Pathways to Completion Project

Oklahoma public higher education institutions are offering three new college-level mathematics course alternatives to the traditional College Algebra course: Quantitative Reasoning, Functions and Modeling, and Elementary Statistics. The new course alternatives are a result of recommendations from the State Regents' Mathematics Success Group to make mathematics more relevant to all students' studies.

The new general education mathematics courses incorporate the type of math students need for their respective majors. Students gaining experience in alternate math pathways that support statistics, quantitative reasoning, or modeling will be able to directly apply these skills in their major, future jobs and lives.

Each public college and university has implemented its own variant of multiple

mathematics pathways. These options, which provide an alternative to college algebra as the default introductory math course, build from each institution's history, program offerings and priorities.

Rather than requiring all students to take the same math course, faculty are tailoring the "right math" with the "right major" so students can pursue a math course sequence that will better prepare them to apply the math content learned in their chosen careers. The Mathematics Success Group and campus faculty view the new math course alternatives as a "win-win-win" — students win by learning the aspects of math they need to be competent in their career fields; employers win by having employees who better understand how to apply math content within their industry; and institutions win by assisting students to successfully complete their degrees and enter the workforce faster.

In November 2015, the Charles A. Dana Center of the University of Texas invited Oklahoma to join five other states to receive support and consultation in pursuing math pathways for the state system through the Math Pathways to Completion grant project. With a designated Dana Center liaison and structured assistance, the Oklahoma Math Pathways Task Force reviewed state data, trends and opportunities related to math pathways. Oklahoma completed the project in November 2018 with the development of four gateway mathematics courses, co-requisite course models, reformation of assessment and placement policies, and initial steps toward the development of coherent mathematics pathways across postsecondary institutions.

Free ICAP Tools Available at OKcollegestart.org

Beginning with the freshman class in the fall of 2019, every student attending public high school in Oklahoma is required to complete an Individual Career Academic Plan (ICAP) as a graduation requirement. Throughout the ICAP process, students will learn about themselves, explore careers and build a plan for life after high school.

While state law requires every student to complete career and college interest surveys; update written postsecondary and workforce goals annually; take an intentional sequence of courses in high school that **reflects their postsecondary goals**; track academic progress through college readiness tests, concurrent enrollment and career certifications; and participate in service-learning or work environments, ICAPs will go well beyond these requirements.

OKcollegestart.org is one of the free online platforms school districts may use to facilitate

ICAP efforts in their schools. OKcollegestart includes an ICAP feature that allows educators to customize the activities students complete on the website as part of the ICAP process. As students complete activities on OKcollegestart.org, educators can track student progress in the Professional Center. Parents may also create OKcollegestart accounts to see the work their students are doing.

In addition to regional training workshops this fall, educators can schedule one-on-one online meetings to receive assistance as they plan, implement and track their students' ICAPs. "We know educators are eager to learn how to make the most of OKcollegestart as they implement ICAP. We're excited to offer nine workshops across the state this fall to meet their needs," said Theresa Shaklee, student portal coordinator for the Oklahoma College Assistance Program. "The work students do during the ICAP process will help prepare them for life after high school. Students coming

into the higher education system will have a better understanding of what their career and education options are and a stronger sense of the direction they're headed."

OKcollegestart.org provides free resources to help students and parents plan, apply and pay for education and training beyond high school. All user registrations come with a free email address that can be used to communicate with counselors and colleges. The dynamic Professional Center, a website for Oklahoma schools to use in conjunction with OKcollegestart.org, allows counselors to send transcripts from high school to high school and from high school to college, follow student activities on OKcollegestart.org and customize academic plans for individual students.

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Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

655 Research Parkway, Suite 200

Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Phone: 800-858-1840 or 405-225-9100

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