

Cross References

Quotes

On being President

Don't come forward with any ideas concerning academic matters. If you have an idea, find some friend, if you have one, on the faculty and talk with him for half an hour or so until he believes it was his idea. When it comes up at a meeting, express doubt. When it comes to your desk, agree to try it on a temporary basis. There's nothing like skepticism on the part of the President to gain support for an idea. This is the best possible way to ensure its permanence.

On the legality of his administration

Since I became President of the University during World War II, we decided to forego an inauguration. Mrs. Cross and I occasionally describe my administration as a bastard regime. The absence of an inauguration cast an air of illegitimacy over the whole term.

On student demonstrations

As a botanist, students always made a strong impression on me when they assembled on my front lawn. They invariably damaged the flowers. But students were always wanting a holiday for something. One night I was taking a walk and joined a crowd of students marching to my home to ask for a holiday. They rang the bell and were told I wasn't home. In the crowd I quietly suggested that they should visit the vice president and gave them his address. They left and no one noticed who I was. Later I had it arranged so that I couldn't legally grant holidays.

On student housing and hours

Barring problems created by a temporary housing surplus, I think every student should have the right to select his own housing, with the possible exception of freshmen. I think also that students should have the freedom to determine their own hours and activities, although some parents and several of my colleagues do not agree with me in this.

On the brassiere controversy

In the early fifties a state senator, disgruntled over some difficulty with football tickets, looked into OU expenditures when the legislature convened. He discovered a substantial sum had been used by the classics department to purchase some ancient Egyptian earrings and a brazier [a brass dish]. The senator, however, mistook "brazier" for "brassiere" and loudly protested the use of taxpayers' money to buy expensive earrings and brassieres when they could be bought at a local dime store for less than a dollar. When called before a legislative investigating committee with me over the incident, Roscoe Cate, vice president of the University, told reporters that with the exception of the "brassieres," he and I intended to "make a clean breast of the whole matter."

On University involvement

The University itself shouldn't be taking any positions, but should concern itself solely with clarifying and re-

vealing facts and interpreting issues so people who make the decisions can have a better basis for making them.

On students' involvement in their education

I believe students should be put into the planning and approving of courses and curricular requirements. I would like to see them involved in a serious way at all levels, beginning with departments and running through the schools and colleges. We haven't achieved anything like this here yet. We have a few councils which visit occasionally with administrative officials. This is a start which should be extended.

On student unrest

Young people under twenty-five generally consider those over thirty to be senile and untrustworthy in judgment and motive. Increasingly, people over thirty tend to regard those under twenty-five as anarchists or fools. Neither of these views is entirely correct, though there is a measure of truth in each. The solution of student unrest cannot be achieved through any effort of the older group to suppress the younger nor for the younger to seize power from the older. It must come from a working partnership in which decisions are reached through dialogue, discussions, and mutual understanding.

On public pressures

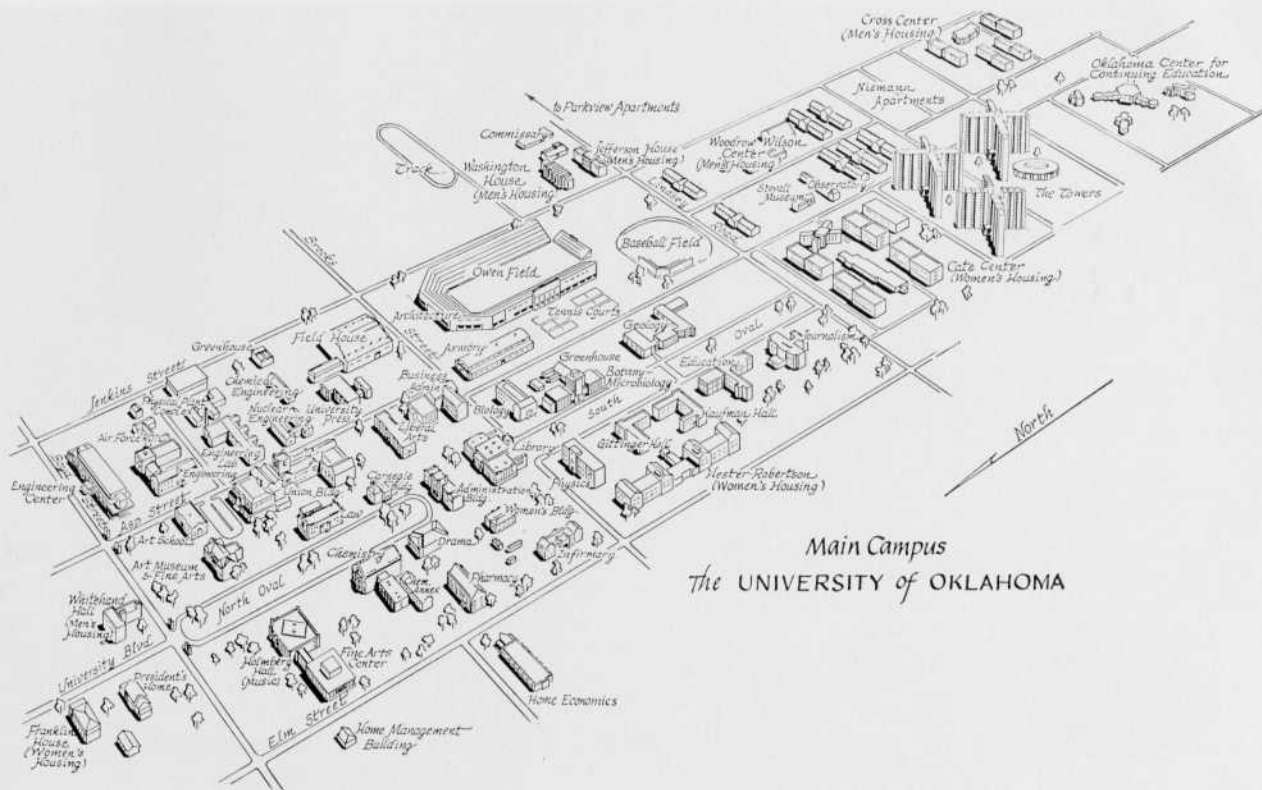
Public pressures must be acknowledged and given a fair and impartial hearing. Usually, however, the pressure must be resisted firmly, because the university that segments of the public seem to want may not be the university that the state should have. Universities which keep long-range major objectives in mind and are able to resist short-run, minor pressures are those which develop into great institutions. The university which follows this principle steadily through the years may not always be popular with the entire public. The alumni may worry about its public relations, and it may occasionally suffer from inadequate appropriations. But it will be following the only course which can lead to greatness.

On humor

Once you get a laugh, you've got it made. All you have to do then is to be honest and forthright—and maybe get another laugh a little later.

On the faculty

Faculty members are not merely employees of the Board of Regents or of the state, hired to do work prescribed by the board or the President. They are professional people who have met rigid professional requirements. They have been engaged, on behalf of the state, to perform professional services of an educational nature. If they are to perform satisfactory service for the state, they must have a maximum of freedom of thought and action. The professional stature of a college faculty is



Main Campus
The UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

On the overleaf is an aerial view of the campus taken in June at approximately the same angle as the above map. The striking physical growth of the University during the Cross administration is apparent when you consider that the only buildings south of Brooks Street in 1943, the year Cross became President, were the Armory, Richards Hall, and Hester-Robertson. Besides the new buildings south of Brooks, there are also those to the north which include additions to DeBarr (chemistry), Monnet (law), and Adams (busi-

ness) and to the Union and the library as well as Burton Hall, University Press, the Drama Building, and the Engineering Center. Dale Hall, the new social sciences center, on the northeast corner of Lindsey and Elm, does not appear on the map. Also not shown on the map are Kraettli Apartments, south of the Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education, and Parkview Apartments, east of Wilson Center. And the prefabs which once dotted the area now occupied by the Towers are not shown either. Happily, they're gone.

not always well understood by some citizens of the state. Some individuals who would not think of trying to tell their doctor or lawyer how to perform his professional services have no hesitancy in telling the college professor how or what he should teach.

On today's students

There has been a change in students. Freshmen who come to the campus today are more advanced compared to those of twenty-five years ago. Because of improved communication today's student is better informed about many things of which the freshman of twenty-five years ago knew nothing—like the national and international situation, for example. Today's students are more aware of the shams and pretensions and the ethical and moral decadence which characterize our society. If these young people can retain their idealism as they grow older, they may be able to halt or even reverse the trend toward deterioration which threatens us.

I couldn't look at a young man eighteen years old and tell him that he is old enough to go to Vietnam but not old enough to decide whom he will hear speak or to have a voice in campus affairs.

On handling crisis

I take no action in time of crisis except after most careful thought and rather thorough discussion with my staff. Any action should be based on logic and never on pressure or expediency. If the problem can be solved or alleviated through action from my office, I see that such action is taken. But if it appears that my office can do nothing that would be useful, I adopt the attitude that "This, too, will pass."

When you get into crisis, you show no emotion or any indication that you think it's a crisis. Panic is contagious. If I get excited when someone brings me into these things, then he gets excited and between us we spread excitement, thus causing an excited decision.

The mistakes I have made were ones in which I made hasty decisions before I had all the facts.

On Students for a Democratic Society

The SDS puzzles me somewhat. I have been interested in their ideas and have talked with some of their members. The members of the SDS are interesting people and some are quite brilliant. Certainly they have a right to exist on campus and to express their views.