

# Cream of the Crop

**Faculty accorded the designation  
George Lynn Cross Research,  
David Ross Boyd and Regents'  
Professor rank at the top of the  
University honor roll.**



**T**hree special professorships—the George Lynn Cross Research, the David Ross Boyd and the Regents’—are the University’s way of saying to its most outstanding faculty, “well done.” Since the positions were created more than 50 years ago, the University has named 98 Cross, 101 Boyd and 53 Regents’ professors. *Sooner Magazine* biennially recognizes those earning these prestigious titles.

■ BY MARGARET FRENCH ■

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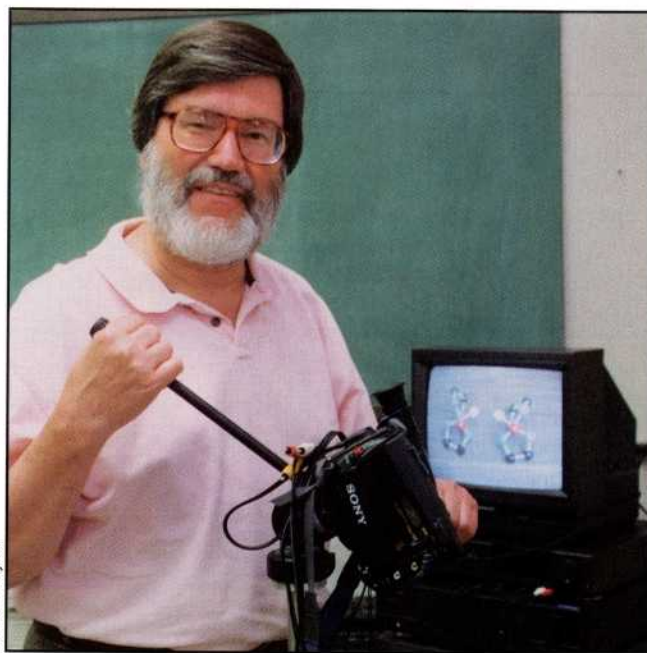
All three professorships provide an immediate cash award and a subsequent salary increase of \$6,000 each.

The George Lynn Cross Research Professorships were founded in 1943 and later renamed for Cross upon his retirement as the University's seventh president. The first distinguished professorships were conceived as a means of retaining the University's top faculty. The title pays tribute to a faculty member's career of outstanding leadership in his or her discipline and peer recognition for distinguished contributions to knowledge or creative work.

The David Ross Boyd Professorships were established in 1945 to honor the institution's first president, a member of the teaching faculty throughout his tenure. The positions cite exemplary teaching—in the classroom or laboratory, in student/faculty conferences and through individual guidance and counseling.

In 1946, the Regents' Professorship was added to the distinguished awards. The appointment praises exceptional, long-term contributions to the University, the academic community or discipline and notable achievements in academic administration or professional service.

The 1998 and 1999 newest inductees to the ranks of the University of Oklahoma's most distinguished faculty are spotlighted on the following pages.



Robert Taylor

■ **Michael R. Abraham** directs research and educational programs concerned with the instructional aspects of the discipline of chemistry. Under his leadership, the department now offers a Ph.D. in chemistry with an emphasis in chemical education, one of few such degree programs in the country.

Since joining the OU chemistry faculty in 1974, Abraham's research interests have been three-pronged. A primary focus is on instructional strategies and their effect on student learning of science concepts, particularly the learning cycle approach, an instructional strategy based on modern philosophical and psychological theories of the nature of science and learning. Also on his agenda are conceptions (or misconceptions) that students develop in chemistry—despite formal educational efforts—with current efforts addressing misconceptions related to atomic and molecular models and how student conceptions of the models influence learning. Abraham additionally is investigating the role of computers in chemical education. He became a David Ross Boyd Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry in 1999.

■ **Mary Margaret Holt** began her career in dance at the age of 15 with a San Francisco Ballet apprenticeship, followed by study at George Balanchine's School of American Ballet, where she also performed with the New York City Ballet. Following eight years with the Houston Ballet, dancing a wide variety of solo and principal roles in classical and contemporary repertoire, Holt became an OU faculty member in 1980.

During her OU tenure, Holt has choreographed more than 20 ballets, musicals and operas; she also has led Oklahoma Festival Ballet, of which she is artistic director, on four international tours. She is the recipient of a Presidential Professorship. After serving the University in administrative capacities, including the interim deanship of the College of Fine Arts, Holt was named Regents' Professor of Dance in 1998, the same year she became director of the School of Dance.



Robert Taylor

■ **Madeleine W. Cunningham** joined the OU Health Sciences Center faculty in 1980 and was appointed George Lynn Cross Professor of Microbiology and Immunology in 1998. In 1999 she was named recipient of the Method to Extend Research in Time Award given by the National Institutes of Health, which provides 10 years of funding for investigators with superior reputations. External funding secured by Cunningham exceeds \$6 million.

Cunningham investigates infectious diseases that cause heart disease, primarily rheumatic fever and myocarditis. An invited lecturer, she has spoken and/or presented abstracts or workshops to groups throughout the United States and in France, Russia, Germany and India. She has edited two books, is author or co-author of a lengthy list of book chapters and articles and is a reviewer for several academic journals. She also is on review and advisory committees for the NIH, the American Heart Association and the American Academy of Microbiology. Cunningham has served in University leadership capacities and has shepherded the graduate and post-graduate work of dozens of students.



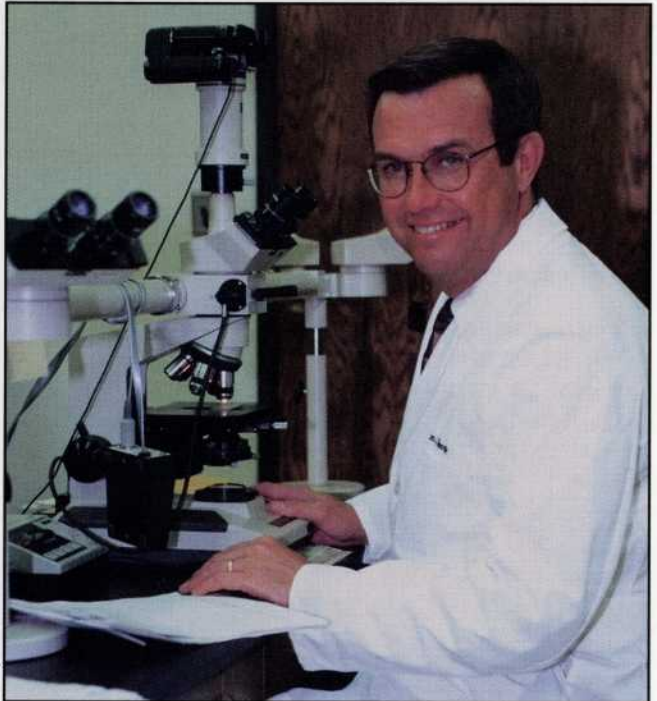
Terri Jennings



John Jernigan

■ **Michael Shaffer Gilmore's** research interests are the molecular pathogenesis of infectious diseases caused by antibiotic resistant gram-positive bacteria, advanced therapeutic design for resistant nosocomial infections and host/parasite relationships in ocular infectious disease. Named George Lynn Cross Research Professor of Microbiology and Immunology in 1999, Gilmore joined the OU Health Sciences Center faculty in 1994. He has presented invited seminars nationally as well as in France, Germany, Mexico, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

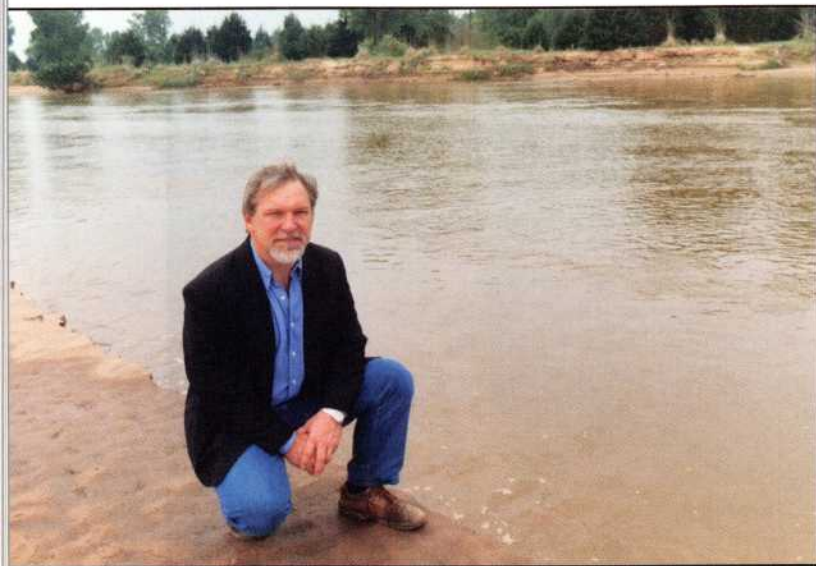
With externally funded projects in which he is involved as principal or co-investigator exceeding \$9.6 million, Gilmore also has a patent pending for method and composition for treating biological waste. Co-author of one book and more than 73 articles in the professional literature, Gilmore has overseen graduate and postdoctoral research associates and participates in campuswide administrative committees.



Terry Stover

■ **Stephen Young** received the designation as David Ross Boyd Professor of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology in 1999. In September of that same year he began duties as dean of the College of Dentistry. A fellow in the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology and diplomat of the American Board of Oral Pathology, Young also maintains an active private practice in clinical and laboratory oral pathology.

Young began his affiliation with the College of Dentistry at the OU Health Sciences Center in 1976. The college's newest dean was recognized by the student body with the outstanding classroom instructor award in 1983, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1995 and 1998. *continued*



Robert Taylor

■ **Joseph M. Suflita** is the MAPCO Professor of Environmental Quality, director of the OU Institute for Energy and the Environment and interim associate director of the OU Energy Center. He was appointed George Lynn Cross Research Professor of Botany and Microbiology in 1998. His research focuses on the activities and interactions of microorganisms within various ecosystems to determine the metabolic fate of contaminating organic chemicals in the environment and to describe the transformations quantitatively.

Suflita, who joined the faculty in 1982, is widely published in the professional literature with more than 85 peer-reviewed articles. He is an associate director and chair-elect of the executive committee of the Integrated Petroleum Environmental Consortium (IPEC). IPEC is a partnership of universities in Oklahoma and Arkansas whose goal is to develop cost-effective and innovative technologies for pollution prevention, waste treatment and remediation in the domestic petroleum industry.



■ **Glenn Dryhurst** has served on the OU faculty since 1967 and as chair of the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry since 1981. He was named Regents' Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry in 1998. A member of the analytical chemistry team, his current research focuses on brain chemistry and the chemistry of neurodegenerative illnesses.

Dryhurst's laboratory team is exploring the fundamental chemical and neurobiological mechanisms that might underlie the selective neurodegeneration that occurs in the brain in Parkinson's and Alzheimer's diseases. Also under scrutiny is the premise that degeneration occurs as a consequence of stroke and chronic abuse of certain illicit drugs such as methamphetamine and those known as ecstasy.



Robert Taylor

■ **Jeffrey H. Harwell** has been executive associate dean of engineering since 1998. He was appointed George Lynn Cross Research Professor of Chemical Engineering and Materials Science in 1999. The Conoco/DuPont Professor of Chemical Engineering became an OU faculty member in 1982. He was director of the School of Chemical Engineering from 1991 to 1998.

An author of three books and 130 papers who holds 15 patents, Harwell conducts research into the use of surfactants for environmental remediation, surface modification, reinforced polymers and gas sorbents. His external funding is supported by nearly \$10 million in grants. Harwell has delivered plenary lectures nationally and internationally and both created and instructs for a surfactant short course that has been taught worldwide to more than 1,200 employees of 300 corporations.

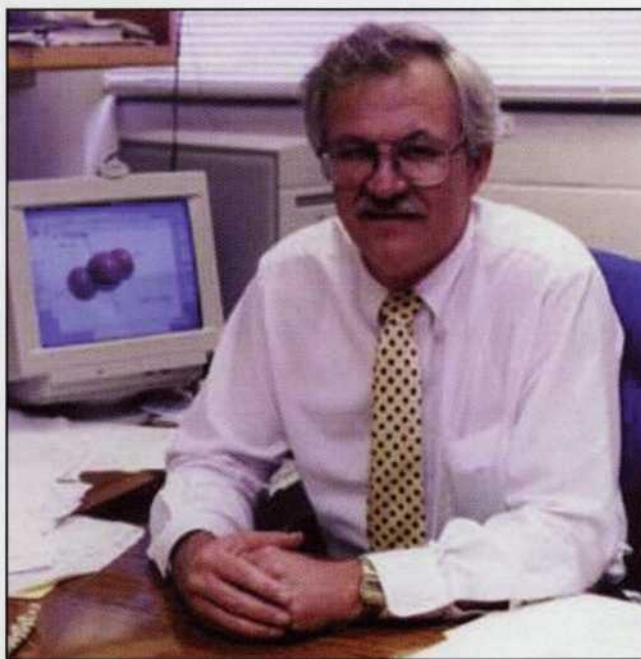


■ **Eddie Carol Smith** is the senior member of the distinguished faculty featured in this article with his OU faculty career dating from 1965. Named a Regents' Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry in 1999, he served as vice president for research and dean of the Graduate College from 1995-99, following two years in an interim capacity. He is OU's representative for the Fulbright Faculty Scholar Program and is an executive committee member of the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools.

Although Smith is a member of the OU College of Continuing Education Advanced Programs Executive Advisory Committee and also teaches in the human relations master's degree program, most of his formal teaching has been in biochemistry. As he leaves the deanship, he will begin focusing on curriculum development, particularly a doctorate in organizational leadership offered through the Graduate College.

■ **Ronald M. Peters Jr.** was named Regents' Professor of Political Science in 1998. He joined the OU faculty in 1976, assumed directorship of the Carl Albert Congressional Research and Studies Center in 1979 and has been curator of the Carl Albert Congressional Archives since 1986. He also has chaired the Department of Political Science since 1994. The political scientist drafted the proposal for the establishment of the Albert research center, which was initially funded by the state legislature and has received \$3 million in direct and matching federal grants and more than \$400,000 in private gifts.

Peters, whose teaching interests include political theory and American government, also developed and coordinated the Julian J. Rothbaum Distinguished Lecture in Representative Government, the first of which was presented in 1983. He is the author or co-author of 12 books or chapters and has presented papers nationwide and in England. Peters has served in administrative capacities at the departmental and University levels. *continued*



■ **C. Leroy Blank** received the David Ross Boyd Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry appointment in 1998. His analytical chemistry research interests include toxicology and the analysis of neurochemicals, transmitters and related enzymes; mode of action of chemical sympathectomy agents in vivo; post mortem degradation of central nervous system components; practical applications of electroanalytical techniques; liquid chromatography in biochemical analysis; and speciation of chlorine dioxide in environmental samples.

Blank, who came to OU in 1978, has contributed more than 53 papers/talks to local, national and international scientific meetings and authored more than 51 abstracts in connection with those activities at meetings in Australia, Japan and the Netherlands. His research is well supported with external funding in excess of \$1.7 million.



Terry Stover



■ **Rodger P. McEver's** research interests focus on the structure and function of blood and vascular cell receptors; interactions of leukocytes with platelets and endothelium; protein-carbohydrate interactions; and membrane trafficking. An invited presenter at symposia and workshops throughout the United States and in Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Wales, Spain, Italy, Denmark, Finland, Canada, Austria, Japan and England, he also is a prolific author or co-author of articles and book chapters in the medical literature.

An OU faculty member at the Health Sciences Center since 1987, McEver's current external funding approaches \$2 million. He also holds 11 U.S. and Australian patents. He received the George Lynn Cross Research Professor of Medicine distinction in 1998. He has served in administrative capacities at the departmental, college and University levels.

Robert Taylor



Terri Jennings



■ **John B. Harley** joined the OU faculty in 1982 and was named George Lynn Cross Professor of Medicine in 1999. His research currently is funded at more than \$8 million, and pending research exceeds \$6 million. Harley holds four U. S. patents and has four in process. A current research project on which Harley is principal investigator is "Genetic Association with Lupus in American Blacks," while an upcoming topic is "Potential Association of Rheumatoid Arthritis with Epstein-Barr Virus."

Harley is chief of the rheumatology-allergy-immunology section of the College of Medicine and has supervised dozens of students in their pursuit of advanced degrees. He also has overseen visiting scientists from notable facilities in England, Canada, Australia, India and Germany. Harley's publications and abstracts appear throughout the medical literature.

■ **Gregory D. Kunesh** is professor of drama and coordinator of OU's Musical Theatre Program. He was director of the School of Drama from 1979 to 1992 and was appointed Regents' Professor of Drama in 1999. Kunesh joined the OU faculty in 1975 and has been a member of the Faculty Senate and served on universitywide committees from fine arts to athletics and committees studying strategic planning and presidential search.

Kunesh was appointed to a local program panel of the National Endowment for the Arts and was elected a founding member of the Southwest Theatre Conference's College of Fellows. He has directed a number of full-length OU theatrical productions including *The Cave Dwellers*, *A Phoenix Too Frequent*, *The Male Animal*, *Crimes of the Heart* and *Miss Lulu Beth*.