

# SOONER MAGAZINE

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EDITH WALKER, *Managing Editor* ELAINE LARECY, *Assistant Editor* TED BEAIRD, *Riding the Range* HAROLD KEITH, *Sooner Sports*

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## Faculty Salaries

One of the basic reasons why the University of Oklahoma has never had an adequate salary budget is that so few persons understand the real functions of a University faculty.

The common tendency of public officials and the general public is to think of all university professors as *college* professors, not realizing that there is a very important distinction.

In a *college* as distinguished from a university, the main objective is to teach undergraduate classwork, consisting largely of standard academic courses. Classes can be, and generally are, comparatively large and each professor can take care of a comparatively large number of students.

In a *university*, on the other hand, there is the same teaching responsibility with the added task of conducting research, guiding graduate work, and making some substantial contribution to the sum total of human knowledge.

Graduate work cannot be taught in large groups. In the graduate fields, the students branch into numerous avenues of specialization, and much individual attention from professors is required. A professor might conceivably teach a total of one hundred undergraduate students a week and do a good job of it. But if he were dealing with graduate students, he probably could not handle more than a dozen a week and do it properly.

Most persons would agree that a state university ought to be doing research work in both natural and social sciences, seeking the answers to numerous problems faced by the people of Oklahoma. But these same people often fail to realize that research requires substantial amounts of time, and that a professor cannot spend all of his time on teaching duties and be expected to carry on effective research.

Fortunately there is now a state agency analyzing the salary scales in the state's educational institutions. The office of the State Regents for Higher Education began collecting such information before the last session of the Legislature, but the survey was not far enough along to be of much assistance at that time.

A thorough survey, and careful analysis of the financial support needed for graduate work and research, as compared to standard college work, should result in a much more intelligent approach to the problem of preparing the University's budget estimate.

It would be a most wholesome thing if certain general standards of financial support could be worked out for the University in the very near future—long before the setting of such standards might be influenced by the political winds blowing in the next session of the Legislature.

If these standards (as to salary scales, teaching loads, opportunities for research, and so on) could be set during the political lull between legislatures, it might be possible to base them on nationally accepted standards for universities.

Oklahoma ought to be able, and willing, to give its young people a chance to secure a real *university* education in their own state.

## The Cover

A pinup Christmas present to alumni everywhere,, Bookie Bragg, O. U. co-ed from Arkansas. Photo by Richard Meek.

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