

# SOONER MAGAZINE

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## Faculty Salaries

The statement that faculty salaries at the University of Oklahoma are not large enough has been made so often that there is probably a tendency among the general public, and even O. U. alumni, to take this situation for granted.

However, the effectiveness of the educational service given to Oklahoma young people by the University depends so directly upon the quality of the teaching faculty, the research staff and the administrative staff, that the real merits of the plea for higher salaries should be carefully examined.

The law of supply and demand operates in the occupational field of college teaching just as any other occupational field. As college and university enrolments increase greatly at the end of the war, there will be keen competition for competent college and university faculty members.

Even though the administrative staff of the University of Oklahoma exercises unusual ingenuity and initiative, in the long run the most able teachers and research men will go to the institutions that pay the best salaries, and the institutions paying the lowest salaries will, by and large, and with a few notable exceptions, get only the poorer teachers.

Real teaching is not easy work, nor is it something which can be done effectively by persons without proper training and certain natural aptitudes. A poor college professor stunts the mental growth of his students; he discourages initiative and intellectual curiosity of young people; and he cheats the state by failing to develop the student into a good citizen capable of taking a position of leadership in his community and in his occupational field.

Information has been collected recently on faculty salary scales at twelve schools with which the University of Oklahoma must compete in the hiring and retaining of teachers.

Oklahoma and the adjacent states of Kansas, Colorado and Arkansas are the lowest in salary scale of any in the group. Of these, only Arkansas would be lower than Oklahoma if the length of the academic year at the institutions were taken into consideration.

Comparing University of Oklahoma salaries with average salaries on a nine-month basis in the other twelve institutions, we find that Oklahoma's maximum salaries for professors are 65% of the average; salaries for associate professors are 68% of the average maximum; assistant professors' salaries are 73% and instructors' maximum salaries are 80% of the average.

A comparison of the minimum salaries in each rank with the average minimum of the other Universities, shows that O. U.'s minimum compares more favorably with average minimum salaries elsewhere, and actually exceeds the reported average minimum for some of the lowest ranks.

This obviously is one reason why the University of Oklahoma has been able to attract young men to begin their teaching careers at Norman in the lower ranks. But the low scale in the higher ranks shows why the University has difficulty in retaining the best of these men after they develop and are ready for promotion.

Since 1930, at least 40 of the University's best men in the College of Arts and Sciences alone, resigned to accept better positions elsewhere—some at very large increases in salary. There are a number of instances where faculty members went into government service or private industry at twice the amount received from the University.

These are facts which all University of Oklahoma alumni should keep in mind when the time comes for State appropriations for the 1945-47 biennium to be made. The University's plea for better financial support is based on facts.

## Cover

T. R. Benedum (center), '28law, president of the University of Oklahoma Alumni Association, presents the official charter for the Alumni Club of Oklahoma City to Kermit Hardwick, '29bus, president of the Oklahoma City Club, as Dr. George L. Cross, acting president of the University, looks on.

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