

Sooner Scene

By R. BOYD GUNNING

THE strength and quality of higher education in Oklahoma depends ultimately upon the willingness of the public to provide adequate support. Whether or not this support is forthcoming depends upon widespread understanding of college objectives and problems, and continued effort on the part of dedicated college faculties to do the best possible job.

One of the primary aims of SOONER MAGAZINE is to provide information about the changing scene on the O.U. campus. This may in turn help lead to better understanding. The year 1958-59 may be remembered as a year of great development at O.U. Much of this growth is of particular interest to alumni. Here is a list of important new facilities which will change the face of the campus:

1. The new \$600,000 journalism building, dedicated October 24 and 25, has evoked the praise of all who have seen it.

2. Announcement of a new multi-million dollar adult study center west of the Cross Center housing area is of tremendous significance to alumni interested in continuing their education. This development is made possible by a grant of \$1,845,000 from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.

3. The development of a great industrial research center was announced by President Cross about a year ago. This center will be located on the north campus near the Westheimer airport. Within a few weeks the first new building in this area will be started. The building will house the Sooner Computer, one of the most advanced high-speed electronic computers in the world. It is now being constructed by O.U. engineers. The computer is essential both to the basic research program of the University and the industrial research park.

4. O.U. scientists are conducting many important studies in various areas of biology. In order to provide better facilities to house such work the U. S. Department of Public Health has made a grant of \$48,000 to the University. This new building will soon be under construction.

5. In student housing a new wing is being completed for 250 girls at the Women's Quadrangle. Construction will soon begin on a new home for O.U. athletes. Nei-

ther of these units will be financed by state money.

Such additions to the campus are noticed even by casual visitors, but of equal importance, though not so obvious, is the program being operated inside the buildings. Here is where we learn about both the problems and opportunities of O. U.

The two most important factors which must be considered by those who are concerned with the future of the University are students and faculty.

Nearly twelve thousand students are enrolled at the University of Oklahoma this fall. That the number of qualified high school graduates seeking admission at O.U. will increase substantially in the next ten years should be an accepted conclusion. Those who disagree either ignore or misinterpret the facts. You can make a simple test of this assertion by merely finding out how many more pupils are enrolled in various grades of the public schools in your home town than there were five and ten years ago. The high schools will be graduating more people than ever before in the years just ahead.

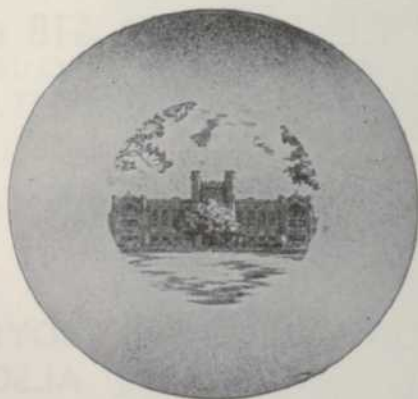
College people are concerned that reliable studies indicate only one-half of the top ten percent of high school graduates are

entering any college at all. It is very much in the national interest to train our brightest youngsters for maximum usefulness.

Serious study is being given to such problems as guidance and counseling, quality of instruction, accelerated programs for gifted students, control of extra-curricular distractions, admission requirements, and many others.

A remarkable job has been done in attracting outstanding scholars to the University faculty. They come here at salaries of \$1,000 to \$2,000 lower than those offered by competing institutions. The reasons they give for coming include such things as the democratic administration at O.U., the intellectual climate of the campus, and the freedom of personal development encouraged here. A few of the best always become so attached to Oklahoma that they stay, but all too many move on to richer fields after making a reputation for themselves at O.U.

The state of Oklahoma has every reason to take such action as may be necessary to hold the best of these scientists and teachers for our own institutions. I know of no investment that would pay greater dividends. It is necessary to plan ahead to build a greater university.



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