

Sooner Scene

It has been traditional in American colleges to provide advice and counseling for students on academic and social problems. College counselors are expert in helping students adjust study habits, in rearranging schedules to allow enough time in the day for the necessary work to be done, and in general, to help them find themselves on the college campus and to reach a degree of maturity in this new setting.

This fall the University of Oklahoma created a new position and employed Ronald K. Green as a counselor to help students solve their financial problems. Mr. Green comes to the University from Southern Illinois University where he was coordinator of student financial assistance. He will work out of the office of the dean of students in helping students in need of financial aid.

He will co-ordinate these efforts on the campus with a thorough knowledge of available assistance in various departments and colleges by way of loans, scholarships, or part-time employment. Mr. Green will be able to advise the student on how to seek the proper assistance and, in some cases, to counsel him in devising a personal budget.

The University of Oklahoma has a number of loan funds. The largest of these are the Lew Wentz Foundation, the O.U. Student Loan Aid Association, the Murray K. Sells Fund, the Sally B. Clark Fund, the S. J. Sarkeys Fund and the National Defense Loan Fund.

Since 1926 when it was established, the Lew Wentz Foundation has provided assistance for 3,556 students. The earliest organized loan fund was the O.U. Student Loan Aid Association, which is made up of funds received as memorials to a number of individuals and other gifts which came to the University. This fund was started in 1918 and since that time 5,875 students have borrowed a total of \$519,609 from the fund, yet the total principal of the fund has never exceeded \$70,000 at any time.

The newest of the major loan funds is the National Defense Fund, nine-tenths of which comes from the federal government. The conditions under which students may borrow this money are quite liberal. The applicant must be a full-time student, in good standing, in a degree program at the University or who has been accepted for admission to such status. The borrower must be a United States national and willing to take a loyalty oath.

Applicants are evaluated on the basis of need, and the law requires that students in two categories be given special consideration over other applicants—those with superior academic background who intend to teach in elementary and secondary schools, and students with superior capacity or preparation in science, mathematics, engineering or a modern language. The competition for these loans has been rather keen, and there are many more applicants than there is money available.

Another type of assistance available to students is in the form of scholarships and fellowships. Students will apply through Mr. Green's office for this assistance as well as for loans. The University has a very limited number of scholarships, and the competition for these has been fierce. For the school year 1960-61 the University scholarship committee awarded only 197 undergraduate scholarships. Most of these were for amounts sufficient to pay only University fees.

The committee has found that for every scholarship that can be awarded there are from six to eight students almost equally deserving, who cannot be helped because of lack of funds. In some cases we have found that even with scholarships, some of our most promising students are forced to accept scholarships elsewhere because of the limited value of the scholarships O.U. has to offer.

No intercollegiate rules govern academic scholarships, and we are often outbid for the top applicants who have indicated a preference for O.U. For example, last spring 3 of the top 10 scholarship applicants rejected the O.U. scholarship offer.

The third category of assistance is in the field of part-time employment. Here, too, a student is in need of advice from an experienced counselor. It is not unusual for a working student to become over-committed to his job and because of this to become an academic casualty. Hundreds of O.U. students have part-time employment and assist with their college expenses in this way. Mr. Green, working in cooperation with the University employment office, is available to help students find work and to offer advice about the importance of carefully budgeting the time that is left for studying.

—R. BOYD GUNNING

IMAGE IS NOT AVAILABLE
ONLINE DUE TO COPYRIGHT RE-
STRICTIONS.

A paper copy of this issue
is available at call number
LH 1 .06S6 in
Bizzell Memorial Library.