

# Sooner Scene

## THE UNIVERSITY IS PROVIDING PROGRAMS TO HELP ALUMNI MEET RESPONSIBILITIES WITH CONFIDENCE

WE live in a changing society where ingenuity, imagination and skill are essential qualifications of successful men. In the suburbs of our towns and cities new homes, churches and shopping centers give rise to new problems as well as new opportunities. The population of the Southwest is shifting, and the nature of our cities is changing from an agrarian to an industrial economy. The University of Oklahoma is moving in the vanguard with these changes to provide the well-educated manpower, research facilities, and continuing education services.

Oklahoma and the Southwest already possess the important ingredients of successful living in an urban society. The young people of the region are energetic, ambitious, and of stable character. Modern highways, rail and air transportation are excellent, and there is even the possibility of economical water transportation in the foreseeable future linking this region to the Gulf Coast ports.

Even with these assets, sound economic development of the region will not be automatic. The people who live here must have the ability to provide the leadership, the skills, and the manpower to make this imagined future a reality. This places a critical responsibility on the University of Oklahoma. It has already demonstrated its willingness to develop programs of research and service that will prepare its graduates to meet their responsibilities with skill and confidence. The University of Oklahoma has always had a philosophy of service and has been sensitive to the needs of the region.

Here are just a few of the services that are available or are being developed to answer some of these questions:

Within recent months the University has pioneered a program in *urban science* under a \$125,000 grant from the Ford Foundation. The University is one of five state universities (the others are Wisconsin, Rutgers, Missouri, and Southern Illinois) undertaking experimental studies relating university resources to urban problems.

At the University of Oklahoma the operating premise has been that there can be a body of knowledge which can be called urban science. To establish and define this body of knowledge, a faculty committee of 26 people has been assembled from the social sciences, engineering, planning, history, and psychology. This committee is

developing a *new curriculum* which, it is hoped, will become the basis for future instruction in the new discipline of urban science.

Still another aspect of the University's service is represented by such programs and projects as the Seminars in Public Responsibility sponsored by the fund for Adult Education, in which leading citizens assemble for three days of group discussions; the President's Leadership Class, which honors and trains freshmen who have shown leadership abilities prior to admission to the University, and the recently-inaugurated Alumni Institute Seminars, which in their first meeting discussed the "Common Market" and "Emerging African Nations," an intellectual adventure which scored high with registrants.

To a far greater extent than most universities, the University of Oklahoma has undertaken to provide for the education of adults. Today it is one of the leaders in the field, with national attention focused on its efforts.

The origins of the program date back more than half a century, to the extension courses which have been characteristic of adult education generally. But the University of Oklahoma has gone far beyond the usual program. It has pioneered in the development of a new program, one which makes it possible for adults to pursue courses leading to the degree of Bachelor of Liberal Studies while spending only *thirteen weeks in residence*. This is achieved through independent study at home, primarily directed readings in three specific areas: natural science, social science and the humanities.

The major development in this field—of impressive physical proportions—is the new Oklahoma Center for Continuing Education. This \$4,000,000 complex of specially-designed buildings on the south edge of the campus was made possible through a \$1,865,000 grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, supplemented by funds from the state legislature and a special bond issue.

If there is one concept basis to this remarkable Center, it is that it should provide an *optimum setting for adult learning* in terms of comfort, safety and convenience, freedom from ordinary distractions; favorable settings for groups; and experience both in the excitement and joy of learning, as well as in community living—all of this

to a degree not often feasible or practicable in today's society.

Many types of programs are being conducted in the Center. They range from professional programs—such as speech educators' conferences and industrial arts clinics—through programs in civic and social leadership—such as conferences of juvenile problems, state highway conferences, and forums on wild life conservation—through health programs, home and family life programs, cultural and interpretive programs—whose subjects range from "Great Men and Great Issues" to music appreciation—to high school programs and host activities of all types in which the Center takes more the role of host than sponsor.

There are other types of services to business and industry. The Extension Division's Business and Industrial short courses attracted nearly 200 industrial and manufacturing firms or organizations from *most of the 50 states*, in 1961 and 1962. A new service will be a pilot school for the Southern Industrial Development Council, to be conducted by the Department of Business and Industrial Services.

Issuing at least one book edition every week, the University of Oklahoma Press, the publishing division of the University, has risen to a point of world-wide intellectual influence since its founding in 1929. The Press has been a particularly important contributor to the culture of the Southwest. It has published more than 300 scholarly books on American Indian and Western subjects. Recently, the University Press started publishing histories of the states of the West and Southwest so that the people of Oklahoma and the Southwest can better understand the historical forces which have affected their lives.

The University Press has won over 100 national citations for excellence in cover design, binding and typography. In the American Institute of Graphic Arts competition in New York, the "Grand Prix" of publishing, the University of Oklahoma Press wins one to three of the 50 awards given each year. The winning books are selected from the approximately 15,000 books of all types published in the United States each year. Among awards in 1962, University Press books won six of the fifteen awards presented by the Southeastern Library Association which selects the outstanding books of the South. The Press also won two awards from the Chicago Book Clinic which annually names the best books produced in the Middle West.

Many other examples of service could be cited. The University sponsors twenty-eight agencies that are of direct and specific benefit to segments of society. —RBG