



# THE OKLAHOMA STATE SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**Mid-Decade Progress  
1980-81 thru 1985-86**

*March 1987*

OKLAHOMA PUBLICATIONS CLEARINGHOUSE  
OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARIES  
200 N. E. 18th ST.  
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73105



BOB F. ALLEE  
Chairman  
Elk City

AVALON B. REECE  
Vice-Chairman  
Muskogee

J.D. HELMS  
Secretary  
Oklahoma City

SCOTT E. ORBISON  
Assistant Secretary  
Tulsa

JOE F. GARY  
Durant

JOFFA KERR  
Oklahoma City

BERT H. MACKIE  
Enid

JULIAN J. ROTHBAUM  
Tulsa

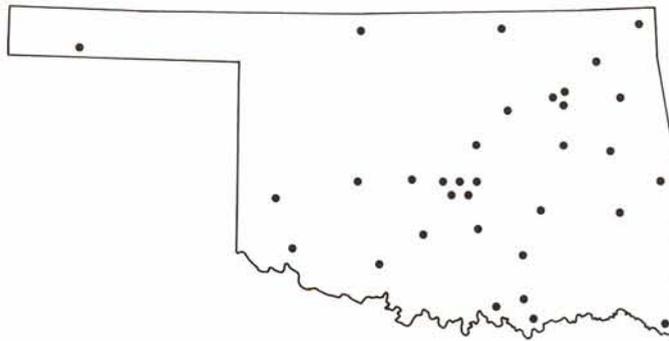
RUSSELL D. VAUGHT  
Midwest City

J.A. LEONE  
Chancellor

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education in compliance with Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and other federal laws and regulations do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, handicap, or status as a veteran in any of their policies, practices, or procedures. This includes, but is not limited to, admissions, employment, financial aid, and educational services.

This publication, printed by OU Printing Services, is issued by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education as authorized by 70 O.S. 1981, Section 3206. 5,000 copies have been prepared and distributed at a cost of \$5,288. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

## Locations in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education



## SHAPING HIGHER EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA



In the first half of the 1980's, new policy directions were set for the State System of Higher Education that will have far-reaching effects for years to come in admissions and retention, program review, bachelor's degree standards, student assistance, academic libraries and educational outreach including telecommunications. These policy decisions recognize the changing nature of higher education nationally and the State System within Oklahoma.



During the first two decades of its existence, the State System's main focus was on survival. Following the momentous decision by the governor, legislature and voters of the state in 1941 to create a state system of higher education coordinated by a state-level board, there was an inevitable looking-over-the-shoulder. The system was small, weak and vulnerable—18 state colleges and universities enrolling fewer than 40,000 students at most and operating on very restricted funding. Great credit must go to the regents and administrators for their success in holding the system together from 1941 till 1961.

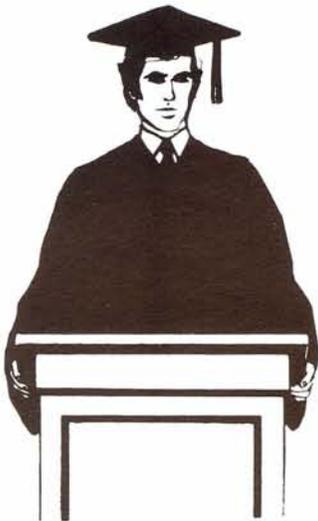
When the 1960's dawned, American higher education was faced with the challenge of accommodating the "baby boom" growth in enrollments. Oklahoma was part of that demographic trend that changed the nature and scope of higher education. For the next 20 years the focus of state-level policy was access, providing higher education for the increasing numbers of students seeking it. From the fall of 1961 to the fall of 1981, enrollments in the State System grew from some 40,000 students to more than 145,000. At the same time, the number of institutions increased from 18 to 27 with the addition of community and junior colleges and a new free-standing medical school. The civil rights and women's movements brought not only more but different kinds of students into higher education. Facilities and programs were expended rapidly in an attempt to meet the



need. By and large, these efforts were successful and another great debt is owed to those who saw the challenge and responded.

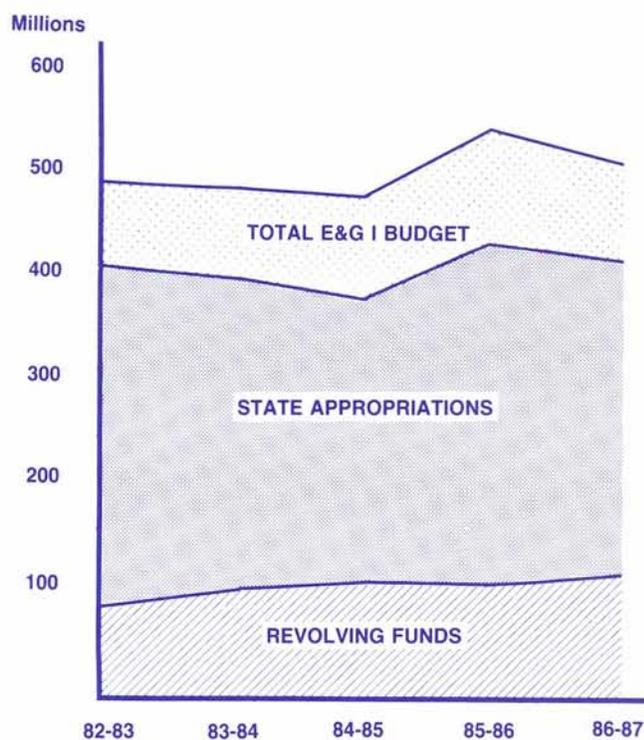
The 1980's have brought a different kind of challenge to higher education, both nationally and in Oklahoma. Enrollments no longer increase by leaps and bounds. Gone are the great federal aid programs for facilities and program development. A new kind of student body is emerging—older, more highly motivated and demanding. Waves of paranoia have swept the land raising concerns about the quality of educational programs, about the proficiency of institutional management, and about the value of the entire higher education endeavor.

In Oklahoma these problems have been exacerbated by a downturn in the state's economy that has affected higher education's ability to react to the new concerns facing it. Out of this atmosphere of questioning and uncertainty have grown new policy directions that promise to push, if not lead, the State System ahead in meeting the special challenges of the times. They provide the framework for improved program quality and institutional efficiency, research for economic development and the discovery of new knowledge, and continuing higher education using advanced technology.



*State Regents Take Their Work Seriously, Spending Long Hours Without Remuneration Except The Satisfaction Of Knowing They Have Helped People Reach Their Educational Goals*

**STATE SYSTEM FINANCING 1982-1987**



*More Than 239,000  
Students Enrolled  
In State System  
Colleges And Uni-  
versities During  
1985-86.*



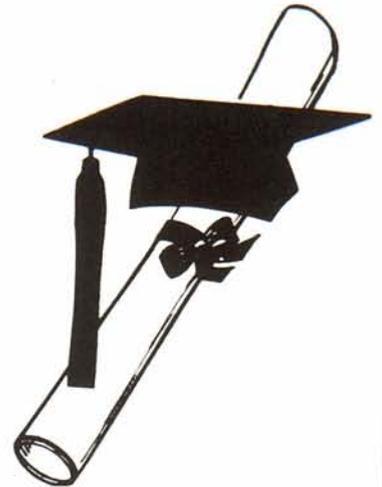
## BACCALAUREATE DEGREE STANDARDS

---

One of the most important policy decisions in the history of the State System was made in March 1984 when a policy on minimum standards for the baccalaureate degree was adopted. The bachelor's degree requirements were developed with State Regents' staff leadership by the Council on Instruction, a study group made up of the chief academic officers of all state colleges and universities.

Included in the degree requirements are a total of 120 semester credit hours of work, a minimum of 40 semester hours of upper-division courses, 30 hours to resident credit at the awarding institution, a minimum of 40 hours of general education, a minimum of 30 hours in the student's major and a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. The policy allows for institutions to add other requirements with State Regents' approval and suggests that 15 of the final 30 hours in a student's program be taken at the institution that confers the degree.

*The result of the policy will be quality assurance that every State System bachelor's degree will represent a similar accomplishment on the part of the student with ample opportunity for faculty assessment of progress and achievement.*



## ADMISSIONS STANDARDS

### *New Admissions Standards Were Adopted In A Joint Meeting With The State Board Of Education.*



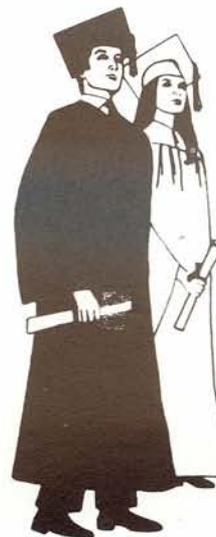
**F**ollowing up on the landmark policy on minimum standards for the baccalaureate degree, a year later a major revision was made of the policy on admission and retention.

The policy revision gained statewide notice when it was adopted in a joint meeting of the State Regents and the State Board of Education, presided over by Governor George Nigh. It provides for the first time prescribed high school courses for admission to public colleges in Oklahoma. The policy revision culminated some two years of study and review of State System academic standards.

The new policy requires high school graduates to have completed four units (years) of English, two units of laboratory science, three units of mathematics and two units of history, including one unit of American history. In addition, students will be required to have four units from a list of prescribed and recommended electives, bringing the total number of required units to 15.

The three-tiered admissions plan for state colleges and universities requires students going to the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University to be in the upper half of their high school graduating class. Students admitted to the regional and four-year institutions are required to be in the upper two-thirds of their class while the two-year colleges maintain "open door" admissions. The policy also provides for probationary admissions, admissions standards for transfer students, special admissions, and retention standards based on cumulative grade point averages.

The policy took effect in 1985 except for the high school curricular requirements which take full effect in 1988, giving the public schools enough time to prepare 1984-85 freshman students to meet college and university admission standards. In spite of the 1988 effective date high schools began phasing the course work in immediately and students began taking advantage of it. Results of the American College Testing assessments administered to the 1986 entering college freshmen revealed that those students who had opted to fulfill the new requirements, even though they were not officially required yet, scored an average of 21.9 while those students who did not take the new curriculum scored an average of 16.8. *These ACT test results, preliminary though they are, indicate the soundness of the new policy in achieving the desired result—academically better prepared college freshmen.*



*New Admissions Standards Promise Better Qualified Students For Oklahoma's Colleges and Universities.*

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM REVIEW

**D**uring the 1960's the State Regents directed the preparation of a landmark series of self-studies of the State System, the most complete since the initial study of the coordinating board published in 1942 (*A System of Higher Education in Oklahoma*). One of the revelations uncovered in those self-studies was that State System institutions—then numbering 18—were carrying on their books some 3,400 educational programs to serve an enrollment of about 40,000 students. Obviously, not all these programs could be of high quality, given the size and support of the State System at the time, nor could many be considered viable and non-duplicative.



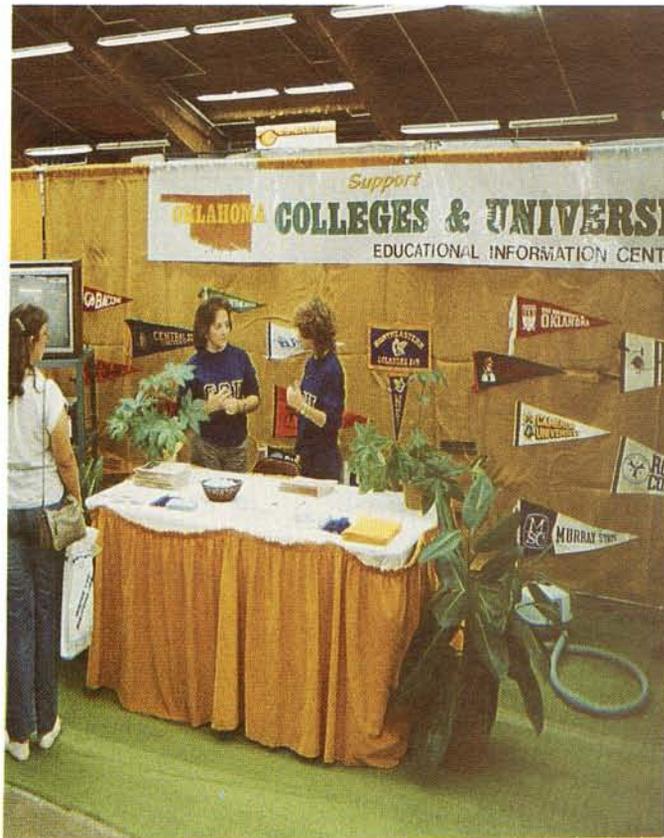
*State Regents Use Their Annual Planning Retreat To Focus On Critical Issues In Oklahoma Higher Education.*



When the State Regents began educational program budgeting in 1973, institutions' educational programs came under close scrutiny. This budgeting approach compares similar programs in like-type institutions, looking at enrollments by level, costs, faculty and the other elements involved in program support. Programs without students, faculty or support immediately came to light. The Regents began approving new programs on a quid-pro-quo basis. For each new program, an institution had to delete an unproductive or unnecessarily duplicative program. The number of educational programs in the State System, now numbering 27 institutions, fell to some 1,800.

Determining whether a program is needed is not necessarily an easy task. The fact that a duplicate program exists in one or more other institutions does not *de facto* indicate unnecessary duplication. Nursing education programs, for example, are scattered throughout the state to provide training for the health care facilities and services throughout Oklahoma. Teacher education is another area in which duplication of educational programs is necessary in order to meet the needs of all the state's public schools.





*Prospective Students Visit The Higher Education Booth At The State Fair.*

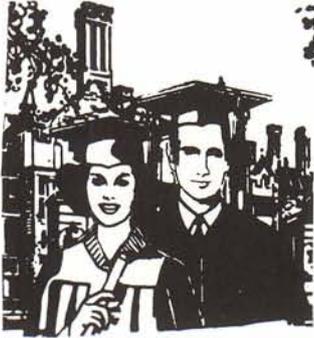
High cost technical or professional education programs with limited enrollment pose an entirely different question. When the state's needs for physicians can be met by one school and when the cost per student totals some \$150,000, duplication is likely unnecessary. Between the examples cited are programs with many shades of need balanced against number. The task of the State System is to try to strike a correct balance in every area, a task further complicated by the constant shifting of the state's needs and demands for educational programs.

In 1981 development began on a policy on educational program review, subsequently adopted in October 1985, institutionalizing the process and augmenting the review built into educational program budgeting. The program review policy gives institutions a tool by which to evaluate their own programs and provides the State Regents with comparable information on similar programs in like-type State System institutions. The policy provides criteria for institutions to use in evaluating their own academic programs, measuring their vitality, uniqueness and applicability to the institution's mission. Under provisions of the policy, 20 percent of State System programs are reviewed each year so that all programs are reviewed over a five-year period.

Program recommendations made by institutions after the policy implementation must be made on the basis of data gathered in the program review process. The State System budget recommendation for 1987-88 includes 1,621 academic programs to be operated by the 27 State System institutions. *For the first time since the creation of the State System in 1941, a systematic review process for educational programs is in place and working.*

## STUDENT ASSISTANCE

---



*Each Year The  
State Regents Help  
Thousands Of Okla-  
homa Students  
Meet College Costs  
Through Their Scho-  
larship And Loan  
Programs.*

**A**s the costs of attending college rise while society demands a greater level of training for nearly all kinds of careers, financial assistance for students who need help in meeting the expenses of their collegiate education becomes critical. American higher education has moved far beyond the days of a few campus-based scholarship programs based largely on academic merit. Federal and state governments have recognized that providing need-based programs of student assistance is an investment in the future. And in spite of pressures on both federal and state budgets to cut back on this kind of support, these programs remain both popular and critical to maintaining American higher education.

In Oklahoma, the two largest state-coordinated financial assistance programs are the Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant Program and the Guaranteed Student Loan Program. Both are cooperative efforts of the federal and state governments and the GSLP includes a third cooperative group—private lenders such as banks, savings and loan associations, credit unions and the like. New policy directions at the state level have opened both these programs to broader participation, recognizing the changing nature of the higher education student body to include a majority of older, part-time students.

---

### GUARANTEED STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM

**T**he Guaranteed Student Loan Program was also encumbered with restrictions that kept a large number of State System students from eligibility and reduced the federal government's participation in the Oklahoma program. A change in this situation aimed at easing the financial burden on greater numbers of students attending college in Oklahoma came about as a result of action by the 1984 Oklahoma Legislature.

The GSLP statute was revised to allow the State Regents, acting as the state guarantee agency, to approve loans for part-time and nonresident students. As a result of these changes, then-U.S. Secretary of Education Terrel Bell came to Oklahoma in May 1984 to sign a new agreement with the state providing the potential for 100 percent federal insurance on the loans of eligible students.

Loans in the Guaranteed Student Loan Program are made by private lending institutions and co-insured by the state and federal governments.

Greatly increased loan volume, accompanied by a growing default rate, prompted new emphasis on compliance with GSLP policies and procedures by lenders, participating institutions and borrowers.

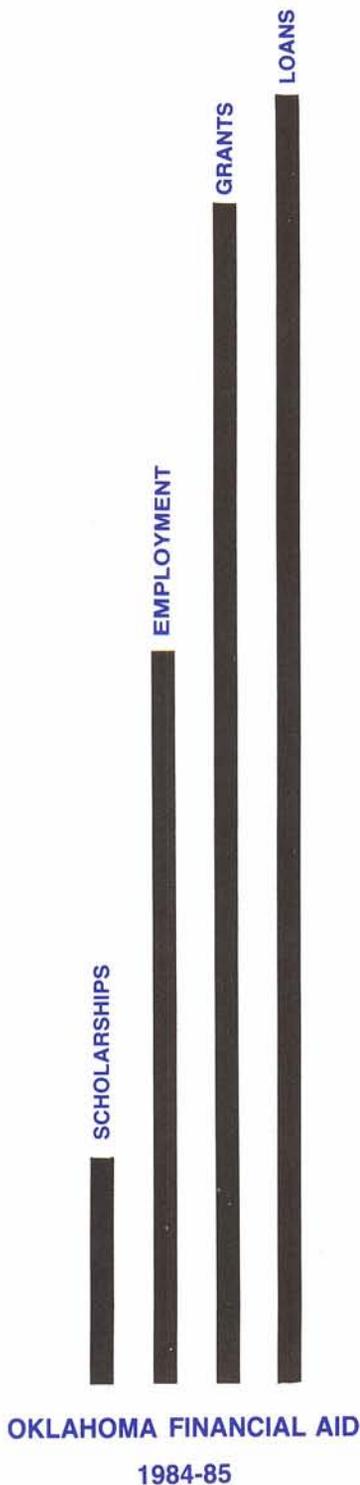
Members of the Guaranteed Student Loan Program staff conduct compliance reviews of lenders and participating institutions. During these reviews, investigators take a random sampling of loan files to review for compliance with all applicable federal and state regulations. In cases of noncompliance, the participation of the lender or institution in the Guaranteed Student Loan Program may be limited or disallowed altogether.

Efforts have been stepped up to collect past-due student loans; loan collections have tripled in the past five years, exceeding the \$2 million mark in 1986.

While Oklahoma's Guaranteed Student Loan default rate of 7 percent is well below the national average of 13 percent, defaults in the state have risen significantly since 1981. During that same period, the volume of Guaranteed Student Loans has grown by 100 percent. One reason for the increased number of defaults is stricter enforcement, requiring lenders to report defaulted student loans within a specified time or risk loss of their government guarantee. Another reason, no doubt, is the depressed economy in Oklahoma, beginning in mid-1982. Yet another reason may be attributed to increased participation in the program of non-collegiate, postsecondary trade schools whose students attend for only a short time, during which they are eligible to apply for a guaranteed student loan just as if they were enrolled at a college or university in a multi-year degree program.



*New Legislation  
Opens The Way  
For Broader Parti-  
cipation In The  
Guaranteed Stu-  
dent Loan Program.*



Not only do GSLP staff collections officers track down borrowers in default, but the GSLP also uses commercial collection agencies when internal efforts fail to find former students who have past-due loans. Also aiding in the effort to collect delinquent loans are two programs that intercept defaulted borrower's income tax refunds. One such program operates through the Oklahoma Tax Commission and was authorized by state statute in 1983 with implementation beginning in 1985. Tracing delinquent borrowers through Tax Commission records, the GSLP diverts tax refunds toward paying off student loans.

The Internal Revenue Off-Set Program operates in much the same way as the state program, but because federal income tax refunds are much larger than state refunds, intercepting them can make a greater impact on an unpaid student loan.

*Every effort is made to see that students understand clearly when they take out student loans that they are required to pay them back, and then do so.*



## OKLAHOMA TUITION AID GRANT PROGRAM

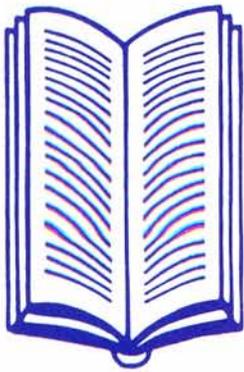
From its inception in Oklahoma in 1972 until 1982, the Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant Program operated on federal funds from the State Student Incentive Grant program, matched equally by funds appropriated by the state legislature. The total amount available never exceeded \$2.2 million and participation was limited to full-time, resident undergraduates.

The statutory regulations for the program ignored graduate students and part-time students at all levels.

Funding for the program was greatly improved when the 1982 Oklahoma Legislature increased the state funds from an equal match of the federal (\$991,546 for that year) to \$8 million, bringing the total available for grants to almost \$9 million. As a result, participation grew from 9,324 in 1981-82 to 17,248 in 1982-83.

The legislature also revised key provisions of the Tuition Aid Grant statute, increasing the size of individual grants and expanding their availability to part-time and graduate students. *For the first time, tuition assistance became available to students carrying as few as six semester credit hours at either the under-graduate or graduate levels.*

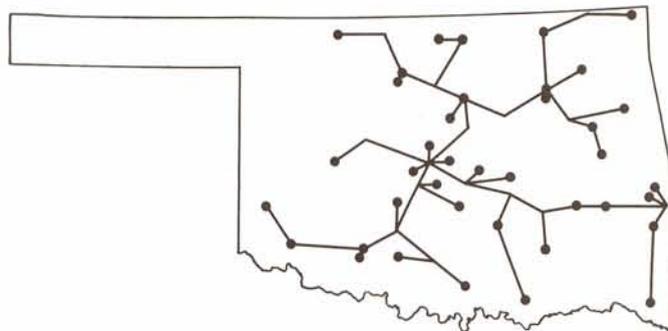
# LIBRARIES & TELECOMMUNICATIONS



In May of 1985 the State Regents published two staff studies with long-range policy implications for Oklahoma higher education, a study of Oklahoma's academic libraries and a report on a proposed educational telecommunications network for the State System.

The library study, the first comprehensive study of the academic libraries in the state since 1977, made a series of policy recommendations aimed at strengthening institutions' libraries, providing better training for librarians and preserving deteriorating library collections.

## Oklahoma Higher Education Televised Instruction System



The report, prepared by the Regents' staff with the assistance of a task force of academic librarians, found that library budgets had been disproportionately reduced over the previous three years as a result of the state's fiscal problems. One recommendation called for the State Regents to set up a special library fund to promote and support the sharing of materials among academic libraries, while asking each institution to budget funds to bring its library up to minimum national standards.

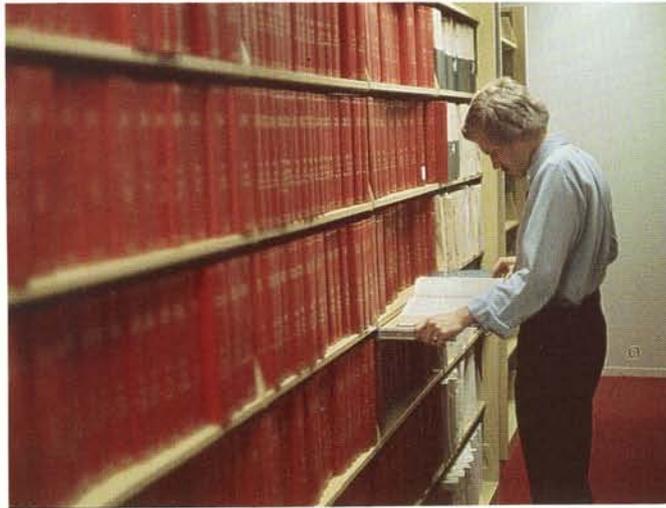
In addition, the report called for a comprehensive program of continuing education for academic librarians and the publication of an annual report of comparable library data from all State System institutions.

Special problems facing the state's academic libraries, as reported in the study, include the deterioration of many library collections due to acid decay of the paper. If left unaddressed, the report warned, this process could destroy



*A Modern Telecommunications Network Linking Every Part Of The State Is A Major Step For Oklahoma Higher Education.*





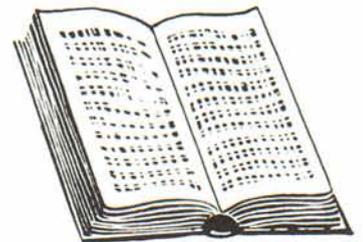
many valuable library resources, perhaps as much as 30 percent of the state's collections. The study recommended a statewide program to combat the problem and teach librarians preservation methods.

The report also suggested linking together the campus libraries electronically to share materials through telefacsimile and other means of electronic transfer. Such a network would relieve individual campus libraries of duplicative purchasing of many expensive scholarly journals and other periodical materials.

The libraries' projected use of a statewide electronic network was included among the findings of the telecommunications study. This report suggested that state colleges and universities could save as much as \$1.5 million in communications costs the first year of operation, if the existing telecommunications facilities were upgraded. It recommended enhancement of the 15-year-old Talkback TV system by linking it with facilities of the Oklahoma Educational Television Authority (public television), the Oklahoma State University Educational Television Service (with satellite teleconferencing capability), and with the state-of-the-art television production facilities of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center.

The resulting network would be able to provide statewide voice communications, computer data transmission, and library materials exchange, as well as the more traditional televised instruction, according to the report, which predicted a three-year payback on the capital investment involved in enhancing and upgrading the network.

*At a time when the Oklahoma economy was in a depressed state and state government revenues were declining dramatically, the recommendations of the two studies might have seemed impossible, though commendable, had it not been for the impetus of an out-of-state philanthropic foundation, and the progressive attitude of the governor and the legislature.*



## OKLAHOMA NETWORK OF CONTINUING HIGHER EDUCATION

**P**erhaps the most exciting news of the 1981-86 period in the development of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education was the announcement in May of 1985 by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan, of a \$5.8 million grant for the State System to improve and expand educational opportunities for Oklahoma's citizens and develop a state network of continuing higher education services.

The grant proposal provided for seven different programs to be carried out in the state over a three-to-five year period, the most ambitious of which was the development of a state-wide telecommunications network providing television, voice and data transmission among colleges, universities, academic and public libraries, county extension offices, educational information centers and other locations throughout the state.

As a result of the grant, the State Regents created the Oklahoma Network of Continuing Higher Education, an organization to oversee and supervise the implementation of the seven programs included within the total grant project. One of these programs, leadership development for higher education personnel including governing boards, administrators and faculty attracted additional support from two Oklahoma foundations—The Noble Foundation of Ardmore and Sarkeys Foundation of Norman. Additionally, recognizing the cost-saving advantages to other agencies of state government available through the telecommunications network, at Governor Nigh's request the 1986 Oklahoma Legislature appropriated \$2 million to support the enhancement of the network and authorized the State Regents to use other mechanisms to finance any remaining portion of the project.

There is little doubt that the continuing higher education network project will have long range and lasting effects on Oklahoma higher education. *The relatively small amount of money provided by foundation support at the margin (when compared with the total operating budget of the State System) is having enormous impact on the way the higher education community thinks of itself, its students and its mission. Yet, this is a program that probably could not have been conceived and funded through regular state appropriations.*



*OU President Emeritus Paul Sharp and Carnegie Foundation President Ernest Boyer Discuss National Higher Education Issues At A Leadership Development Conference.*



*University of California President Emeritus Clark Kerr Assesses The College Presidency At A Leadership Development Conference.*



*Oklahoma's Sarkeys and Noble Foundations, Along With The W. K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Michigan, Funded The Leadership Development Project.*

*The W. K. Kellogg Foundation, Battle Creek, Michigan, Funded A \$5.8 Million Grant To The State System For A Network Of Continuing Higher Education.*



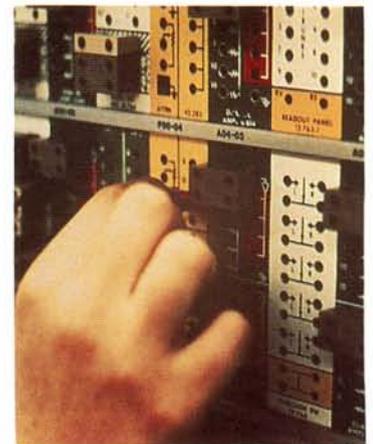
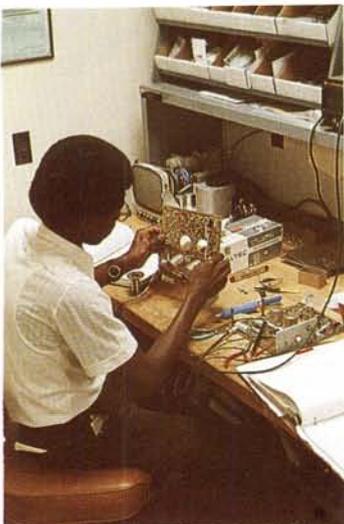
*A Distinguished National Advisory Board Assists The State Regents In Planning The Oklahoma Network Of Continuing Higher Education.*

## RESEARCH

**R**esearch expenditures in the State System topped \$100 million for the first time in 1985. Research in the State System currently attracts two dollars in external funds for every state dollar allocated to the function of research. In 1985, research expenditures increased 6.8 percent while overall operating budget expenditures went up only 3.4 percent. In 1975, the total expenditure for organized research in the State System was \$9.5 million, compared with the 1985 total of \$32.1 million, an increase of 237.4 percent.

Organized research has increased at more than twice the rate of sponsored research (funded through federal and foundation grants and contracts mostly) during the same 10-year period, reflecting the State Regents' increased commitment to funding research at State System institutions. The greatest return on the state's research investment is at the OU Health Sciences Center where more than \$16 in sponsored research was attracted for every state dollar invested in organized research there in 1985.

*Institutions, political leaders and the general public are now recognizing the wisdom of the State Regents' emphasis on increased research at the state's universities because of its obvious impact on economic development in Oklahoma.*



*The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Attracted More Than \$16 In Sponsored Research For Every State Research Dollar.*

## FUNDING

*Oklahoma's Best Opportunity For Diversifying Its Economy Lies In Strengthening The System Of Higher Education.*

State System operations budgets grew more than 40 percent between 1980-81 and 1986-87, but in the intervening years an uneven pattern of budget support has made State System management very difficult.

In 1980-81 the total operational budget of the State System was \$342.5 million, with \$270.9 million of that amount coming from state-appropriated funds and the balance from \$71.5 million in revolving funds. The next year the comparable figures were \$402.2 million total, \$325.5 million in state funds and \$76.7 million in revolving funds, an increase in total operational support of some \$60 million over 1980-81.

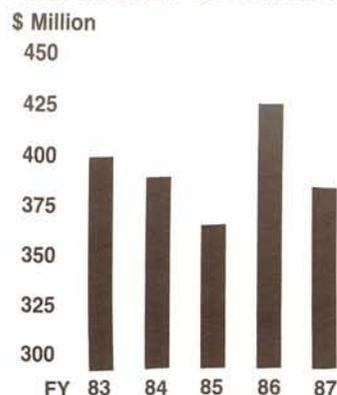
State System operations budgets took a \$61 million jump in 1982-83, in spite of a mid-year reduction of \$16.5 million due to a state revenue failure. The total was \$463 million. In 1983-84, a larger revenue failure reduced budgets by \$27.9 million, lowering total State System support to \$449 million.

The State System received a state appropriation of \$367.6 million for 1984-85, which with \$99.5 million in revolving funds, brought total operational support to \$467 million.

After the passage of the 1985 tax package, which received strong support from higher education, the appropriation for the State System increased to \$425.8 million, but was reduced mid-year by \$12.7 million in anticipation of reduced revenues for 1986-87. Total operational support for 1985-86, after the reduction, was \$511.7 million.

The legislature appropriated \$385.5 million for 1986-87, which added to \$101.3 million in projected revolving funds and the \$12.7 million carry-over from 1985-86, brought the total operations to \$499.6 million or \$157.2 million over the 1980-81 figure.

### STATE APPROPRIATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



*Adequate Funding Is An Essential Ingredient In Achieving Excellence In Both Academic And Research Programs.*



*Budget Conferences With Each State System Institution Provide The State Regents With Information For Their Annual Budget Needs Request.*



