

Summary Update Number 5, September 23, 2004

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The purpose of this and previous Summary Updates is to keep all Faculty informed of recent events that have occurred and of initiatives currently in progress. All Summary Updates may be found on the webpage for the Faculty Council.

### Recent Actions by OSU Regents

At their September 10 meeting in Stillwater, the OSU Regents formally approved the Strategic Plan. The formation of a Planning Council was announced. This Council will have the responsibility of developing detailed plans that, hopefully, will lead to the realization of the goals of the Strategic Plan. Mr. Joe Weaver and Professor David Buchanan will be co-chairs of the Council. I have asked Professor Birne Binegar, current Chair of the Long Range Planning and Technology Committee, to serve as the Faculty Council's representative.

The Regents also considered and passed a motion placed on the floor by Regent Douglas Burns. This motion charged the OSU Administration to initiate studies of the average student/faculty ratios and the average faculty salaries by rank and department at all Big 12 institutions. Moreover, the Regents asked the Administration to begin the process of formulating detailed plans whereby OSU might attain or exceed these averages within a reasonable and stated timeframe. The ensuing discussion indicated that it is the intent of the Regents to adopt a suitable plan to make this happen.

In his response to the charge, President Schmidly informed the Board that the Administration had already begun the studies and the process of developing plans to lower

student/faculty ratios and raise faculty salaries to the Big 12 average.

During the public portion of the meeting, I spoke briefly to express the thanks of the Faculty. After the meeting, several of the Regents approached me with comments that clearly indicated their determination to achieve these goals. Previously, I have not been particularly optimistic of our chances of achieving these goals. However, the sincerity and determination I observed at the Regents meeting have changed my view. I now believe that there is a significant chance that these goals are within our reach.

### Faculty/Administration Actions

On Monday, September 20, the Administration opened new lines of communication between students, staff, faculty, and administration by including the Presidents of the SGA and GPSGA, and the Chairs of the Staff Advisory Council and the General Faculty as participants in the meeting of the OSU Cabinet on the third Monday of each month. The Cabinet includes the President, the Provost and Chief of Staff, all Vice-Presidents, and the Athlete Director. To my knowledge, this is the first administration in the history of the University to take this step. I anticipate that this action will serve us well in the years to come.

The top three priorities for use of the \$500 M bond monies have been changed. They are now 1. OSU Science and Technology Research Center, 2. Restoration and Renovation of South Murray Hall for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and 3. New Classroom Building for use by both NOC and OSU. The bond and other money to be expended on these projects are as follows:

Project	Bond Money	Other Money
Science Center	\$ 72.705 M	\$ 3.295 M
South Murray	\$ 8.8 M	\$ 8.00 M
Classroom	\$ 1.0 M	\$ 3.00 M

Northern Oklahoma College will contribute \$ 3.0 M to the classroom building. There will be two floors, one dedicated to use by NOC, the other to OSU. NOC and OSU will split the maintenance costs..

I regard the revised plans as an excellent response to the recommendations the Faculty Council has made to the Administration and to the Regents. Our recommendations were that the South Murray renovation be given higher priority than the classroom building for NOC and that NOC should fund an appropriate share of the cost of the classroom building in proportion to the space that they would have. The classroom project was scaled back from four floors to two floors, the money saved was transferred to South Murray, and NOC is now bearing 43% of the cost and an equal share of the maintenance.

## Recent Faculty/Administration Actions

The Administration currently proposes to extend the athlete bonds on Gallagher-Iba Arena from 2024 to 2034. This extension will provide \$9.625 M in funding to initiate Phase IIA of the stadium renovations (concession stands, bathroom facilities, and some structural modifications under the north stands). The total cost of the extension will be \$33.9 M to be paid by student fees that are currently \$3 per credit hour. At our meeting on September 14, the Faculty Council voted 17 to 6 in favor of a motion opposing this extension. The A&S Student Council has voted 11 to 4 in favor of a motion approving the bond extension. The SGA will vote on the issue next Wednesday. The alternative to the extension is to raise ticket prices. The Stillwater Chamber of Commerce has been approached with no success. The City profits significantly from the stadium renovations but the Chamber refuses to support it financially.

The Administration has approved the Council's recommendation for the establishment of non-tenure track Research Professorships.

## Pending Projects and Actions

Negotiations are in progress to provide increased employee access to their vested TIAA-CREF funds. Vice-President Bosserman has suggested a compromise proposal that is currently being considered by the Retirement and Fringe Benefits Committee.

The Faculty Committee is trying to craft acceptable policies governing the establishment of non-tenure track clinical professorships. This is proving to be very difficult.

The Academic Standards and Policies Committee is actively investigating the policies and practices associated with the use of student teaching evaluations, academic appeals, student dishonesty charges, the dropping of courses, and academic reprieve and forgiveness.

I anticipate that the report of the investigation of the IT Division will be forthcoming within the next month.