

University of Oklahoma - Norman Campus

Institutional Academic Plan for 2006-2007

Part I. Annual Report.

A. Summarize current academic programs and services in the following areas:

1. Technology (use in classroom, faculty and curriculum development, student support services, and distance education offerings).

Connectivity

The University of Oklahoma is tops in the Big 12 in connectivity, was named one of the 100 “Most Wired” campuses by Forbes, and, more recently, was named to PC Magazine’s Top 20 “Most Wired” campuses. OU’s “Most Wired” campus includes:

- **High Speed Connections** – OU IT provides data ports in all residence hall rooms and university-owned apartments and in many classrooms at a transfer rate of 10/100 Mbps. Network connections are also available in most public areas and in staff and faculty offices. IT’s network team is planning a core network upgrade to provide increased reliability and speed to users.
- **Convenient and Secure Wireless** – By summer 2007, OU IT will cover more than 60% of campus with wireless coverage, including most priority areas identified by students. OU IT plans to have a wireless point of presence in every building on campus by 2008. We recently added strong wireless coverage in the OMU courtyard, Adams Center, and the South Oval, from Bizzell Library to Copeland Hall. We are currently installing or extending wireless coverage inside Bizzell Library, Couch Tower, and large classrooms in Dale Hall, George Lynn Cross, and the Physical Sciences Center.
- **Sooner Connect** – Soonerconnect is our VPN client with download speeds ranging from 128k-3mbps, providing faster access to bandwidth intensive network resources from any computer.

Partnerships

OU IT has partnered with several departments and organizations hoping to leverage IT’s organizational infrastructure. Currently, OU IT maintains major partnerships with the College of Engineering, College of Architecture, Student Affairs, Athletic Department, and Administrative Affairs.

Some notable partnership successes include:

- Using technology to track attendance at mandatory COE events
- Increasing network storage space for both COE and COA students
- Placing Digital Media Displays in the John and Mary Fagin, Dean’s Faculty Recognition Room in the COE

- Developing a “virtual lab” for COA students, allowing access to any of the architecture lab software from their own computers
- Supporting COA’s Design Build Competition

Research

The OU Supercomputing Center for Education and Research (OSCER), managed by OU IT, is a valuable resource aimed at teaching the practical and powerful uses of supercomputing to researchers and students. OSCER’s “Supercomputing in Plain English” workshops have facilitated knowledge sharing across the University, while OSCER’s innovative “rounds” program has provided HPC expertise to dozens of research groups. A recent National Science Foundation CI-TEAM grant will expand OSCER’s education and research facilitation to more than a dozen other institutions.

The National Weather Center, the most technology rich building on campus, houses over 550 weather researchers from NOAA and the University of Oklahoma. OU IT coordinated the installation of over 40 miles of networking cable and superior collaboration and audio/visual tools in the NWC enabling groundbreaking joint weather research.

Security

We have extended our security staff to provide 24/7 monitoring of intrusion attempts against core campus services. Additionally, through our SecureOU initiative, we are educating students, faculty, and staff about secure and responsible network use. Our Security Team is currently implementing Symantec’s Security Awareness Training for faculty and staff. We also offer free Symantec Anti-Virus to all students, faculty, and staff.

Services

We provide the technology services necessary to enable and enhance the educational experience for students, faculty, and staff:

- WebCT and Desire to Learn (D2L) Course Management Software
- Post-It file sharing space for exchanging large files up to 1GB
- Online enrollment, bursar payment, grades, schedules, transcripts, and financial aid registration
- Listserv to facilitate the creation and maintenance of email distribution lists
- Parking permit signup
- Remote voicemail management
- Student government elections
- An aggressive classroom technology renovation schedule to provide a reliable and consistent faculty/technology interface, including training, checkout, and support
- Application Training to help faculty and staff achieve and maintain a current skill set with the latest software applications
- Self-Service test scanning and Drop off service for test scanning

- A Sooner Account with access to the university's OUNet system, email account, personal web space, and knowledgebase
- More than 25 total computer labs equipped with over 1,000 Dell and Macintosh workstations, printers, internet access, digital media stations, and work areas designed to meet the guidelines specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Complimentary \$10 printing allowance for computer labs
- Technology support 24 hours a day 7 days a week

The Center for Independent and Distance Learning, CCE, partners with over 35 academic departments to develop distance courses. This center has creating approximately five new on-line and CD Rom courses each semester and currently has approximately 50 online or CD Rom courses converted and available for students. These courses include Business Communication, General Chemistry, Personal Finance, Introduction to Human Relations, Principles of Marketing, Human Resource Management, Calculus & Analytical Geometry I and II, Intro to Logic, Developmental Psychology, and Sociology of the Family.

Within CCE, the College of Liberal Studies converted its Bachelor of Liberal Studies and Masters of Liberal Studies degrees to full online delivery starting Fall 2003. In addition, its Internet Guided Independent Study (IGIS) program, which includes accelerated face-to-face courses supplemented by online delivered companion activities, is dramatically increasing in enrollments.

The University of Oklahoma Libraries works with all colleges to insure that all distance students receive excellent library support for their courses through strategic development of on-line electronic databases and journals. Their website design (<http://libraries.ou.edu>) integrates access to research collections and reference and information services from their libraries in Norman, OKC, and Tulsa. The Associate of Research Libraries (ARL) ranking published in Spring 2006 placed the OU library system at 48th among the 117 ARL libraries, 4th in the BIG 12, and first in the state in resources.

OU has many on-line web-based student services, and will be implementing more. In Fall 2004, we implemented the new advising/degree audit system for students who entered OU in Fall 2002. While ADA systems are one of the most complex software applications in higher education, we feel that this ADA system, combined with our online enrollment system and online payment system offer the best web-based services for higher education students in Oklahoma.

The on-line payment service within the Bursar's office allows anyone (students, faculty or staff) to pay bills from the convenience of any computer. This also allows for more convenient lifting of enrollment "stops" after bill payment so a student can then proceed to enroll from anywhere in the world. Both on-line enrollment and on-line payment expand the "window" for students to perform these functions beyond the traditional 8-5 timeframe.

Through <http://webapps.ou.edu/student-services>; students can access their grades, class schedules and unofficial transcripts. The Sooner Information Network (SIN) facilitates email

communication from anywhere in the world through the SIN website; and OU uses e-mail as an official means of communication with all students. For students and faculty who live and work off-campus, OU has partnered with two Internet service providers, Cox Communications (cable modem services) and Southwestern Bell (DSL service) to provide high-speed Internet access and connectivity. Soonerconnect provides a broadband connection to the Internet with download speeds ranging from 128K-3mbps, thus, providing faster access to bandwidth intensive resources, including OU's extensive online course and library materials. A special "Student Select" program allows students to purchase copies of Microsoft Office Professional software from the OU Bookstore at substantial discount.

In our largest college, Arts & Sciences, over 550 (65%) instructional faculty were using D2L or Web CT as course management systems. The instructional faculty in the College of Atmospheric & Geographic Sciences and College of Engineering were early users of course management systems as well.

In the School of Meteorology, their undergraduate curriculum has been re-designed to achieve a greater balance between theory and practice applications. They are using an interactive CD learning module in laboratory exercises and continue to develop the Oklahoma Weather Lab (OWL) that provides lower-division students the opportunity to learn practical forecasting skills in a replication of a true forecast office environment.

The College of Engineering has a fully integrated laptop computer/wireless network system. All their classrooms have either wireless or ethernet connections, most have both. All courses are supported by course web pages and most utilize electronic submission of homework and projects. With the extension of the wireless network to University Libraries, and Gittinger Hall, Engineering students can use their wireless laptops in many other locations around campus.

The College of Fine Arts offers digital audio courses in recording technology (music), sound editing and design (drama), and digital film and photography (art).

The Price College of Business redesigned their computer labs to facilitate group and team work, and implemented the use of "RISKMETRICS" software in Finance and Accounting classes.

The College of Journalism already has one of the best journalism facilities in the country and they are planning a further expansion to increase technology classroom and studio space.

For the Norman Campus graduate programs delivered in Tulsa, during the 2006-2007 academic year, 15 % of all course sections are planned for delivery using instructional television. Faculty resident in Tulsa attend some of their departmental meetings using video-conferencing technology. Norman Campus Programs faculty who reside in Tulsa also use videoconferencing for curriculum planning, and academic advising.

2. Academic Efficiencies (faculty sharing, partnership collaboration, course redesign, etc.)

OU - Norman Campus is working with common education to strengthen their curriculum and thus provide a smoother transition of Oklahoma students into higher education.

Examples

- * Math Department working with school districts throughout the state, working with Stacey Weinand at OSRHE to formalize this.
- * The Oklahoma Alliance for Geographic Education (OKAGE) staff work with the State Department of Education to develop curriculum guides and offer in-service training for over 1,000 Oklahoma K-12 teachers per year.
- * College of Continuing Education has a fully accredited on-line high school that provides working professionals (actors, athletes, etc. across the country) access to a high school education). This high school has high school courses that can be used by high schools across the state of Oklahoma to enhance their curriculum or by home schooling families.
- * Colleges of Education and Engineering collaborating on Engineering/technology curriculum for high schools. The K-20 Center/STEM program is one of our targeted areas of strategic research initiatives.
- * The College of Education is involved with a state-wide consortium comprised of representatives from TU, OSU, vocational and common education, and a state coalition with representation from state agencies and professional organizations to improve math and science curricula in common education throughout the state.
- * The Oklahoma Consortium for Teaching about Asia (of which OU is a part) provides secondary school teachers with training on East Asia via video technology. This project is funded by the Freeman Foundation.
- * OU-Tulsa at the Schusterman Center have several collaborations with several local school systems.

OU - Norman Campus is hiring renewable term faculty (non tenure track) with current industrial experience to enhance and broaden the kinds of expertise afforded our students in the classroom and laboratory settings.

- * Examples on the Norman Campus include faculty in Meteorology, Geology & Geophysics, Architecture, Business, Fine Arts, and Journalism.

OU - Norman Campus uses existing faculty on an overload basis to deliver instruction in some programs, and uses combinations of faculty to teach other interdisciplinary courses. Faculty are regularly shared across colleges for curriculum innovation.

Examples include:

* Delivering the Liberal Studies degree and Advanced Programs Masters degree to military bases around the world with existing faculty from throughout the University.

* Interdisciplinary courses in reservoir characterization involve faculty in the School of Petroleum & Geological Engineering, the School of Geology & Geophysics, and Sarkeys Energy Center.

* Interdisciplinary courses in paleoclimatology involved faculty from Geology and Meteorology.

* The Honors College hires “internal visitors” from among the Norman Campus faculty to spend a semester at the Honors College developing and delivering new and interdisciplinary courses to Honors Students.

The College of Education involves faculty from Arts & Sciences, Atmospheric & Geographic Sciences, and Engineering in their TE-PLUS certification committees. Education faculty consulted with the College of Engineering in the redesign of Engineering core curriculum.

OU - Norman Campus defined several areas of research strength and aggressively recruited new faculty at the level of college or higher rather than at the departmental level to insure recruitment that addressed the University strategic plan to sustain growth of research expenditures.

* An example would be the recruitment of Andrew Fagg and Amy McGovern from the University of Massachusetts into the School of Computer Science who have expertise in Phased Array Radar and Intelligence Systems.

* Several new faculty hires involve joint faculty appointments across two academic units to insure that the curricular interests of both units can be met. Examples include joint appointments between Sarkeys Energy Center and units in both Atmospheric & Geographic Sciences and Engineering, and joint appointments between the School of International & Areas Studies with Political Science, History, and Economics.

Currently in Fall 2006, there are strategic research faculty searches for brand new faculty positions in process for 1) integrated life sciences, 2) applied social sciences, 3) K-20 stem research, and 4) radar hydrology that will further strengthen existing vibrant interdisciplinary research teams on the Norman Campus.

OU-Norman Campus is expanding the number of accelerated dual degree programs whereby a student can complete both a Bachelors and a Masters degree or two Masters degrees in fewer hours than would be required if the two degrees were taken separately. This is efficient for the student in terms of time and cost, and efficient for the institution facing full capacity enrollments. Examples of current accelerated dual degrees include the B.Ac./M.Ac. in Accounting, the B.A./M.A. in English; M.Lis/MBA; the B.A.-Math/M.P.A; and the B.S. in Com Sci/MS in Electrical Engineering.

The Schusterman Center in Tulsa collaborates with academic programs on both the Norman Campus and the HSC-OKC campuses, they also collaborate with Tulsa Community College and OSU-Tulsa. For example, faculty resident in Tulsa (OU-Norman program in Industrial Psychology) are collaborating with faculty in industrial engineering (OSU-Tulsa). We have signed collaborative agreements with TCC, all pertaining to degree completion paths for TCC students in Tulsa, to pursue bachelors and masters degrees.

Part II. Academic Plan for Coming Year

<http://www.ou.edu/provost/pronew/content/plan2006-2007.pdf>

A. List the institution's three to five academic priorities for the coming year and the objectives that will be used as benchmarks to achieve the priorities. Please include, if appropriate, how these academic priorities relate to high priority academic programs.

The University of Oklahoma seeks to become a leading public research university within the country, recognized for the quality of our bachelor's degree recipients and our ability to enhance the public good through economic development of our research and by providing through our faculty and through our alumni, an impact on public policy within our strategic areas of research excellence. With the strong economic climate within the country and within the state, we hope to move forward aggressively on all components of our strategic plan during the coming year.

- 1. We seek to stabilize the size of our entering freshmen class at 2,600 resident and 900 non resident freshmen, and maintain an overall student body headcount of 30,000 and improve our graduation rates.**

Over the past 4 years our first-time freshman class size as been:

	H.C.	ACT
Fall 2003	3808	25.8
Fall 2004	3614	25.8
Fall 2005	3245	25.6
Fall 2006	3343	25.6

OU – Norman will pursue a freshmen class size of 3,500 each year; given the demographic projections of declining numbers of high school graduates within Oklahoma and most of the surrounding Midwest during the next decade, this will be a challenge. We are increasing the recruitment staff, have revised the financial aid packages for OHLAP eligible and admissible students in Oklahoma or increasing scholarship support to nonresident children of alumni to address this challenge. Additionally, we are re-designing web sites to better attract prospective high school students. President Boren and many OU staff have been conducting regionally recruitment rallies during fall 2006. Finally, the University is in the middle of a major development campaign to raise 100 million dollars for scholarship endowment

An additional component of overall OU enrollment will be increasing numbers of students being admitted into health care related programs at the OU-HSC and OU Tulsa including social work, pharmacy, and nursing. Student interest is high and the state need for well-trained health care providers is documented.

Our most recent six year graduation rate is 56.2% based on the entering cohort of fall 1999 freshmen and we estimate that we will break the 60% barrier within the next 5 years

based on the academic preparedness of subsequent freshman cohorts and their 1 and 2 year retention rates. We will measure the 5 and 6 year graduation rates of students, the quality of their writing (as assessed by general education assessment), and their satisfaction with their academic majors as assessed in capstone courses, by general student satisfaction assessment and by assessment of the academic majors. We will also continue to assess the number of graduating students who have had internationally oriented courses, direct experience with international students at OU, and study abroad experiences.

This plan involves a wide variety of initiatives from implementation of a web based Advising and Degree Audit System, and the establishment of a Center for Student Advancement (to assist students who are not able to meet requirements for enrolling in coursework in a particular degree-granting college), to enhancing the program for first year English Composition courses, and the ongoing undergraduate curriculum revision in all degree granting courses. Additionally the Graduation Office works to continually address any perceived or actual obstacles undergraduate students face in making progress towards their degree. See <http://www.ou.edu/retention/>

In Fall 2006, we decreased the size of all first year writing courses (ENGL 1113, ENGL 1213, EXPO 1213, EXPO 1223) to 19 or less. This allows each instructor to pay more particular attention to the work from each student. A newly hired Director of the OU Writing Center will be providing additional assistance to faculty seeking to use more writing exercises within their courses throughout the curriculum. See <http://www.ou.edu/writingcenter/>. Additionally, we reduced the course size of Freshmen Gateway and Freshmen seminar courses to provide a more personalized instruction within these classrooms.

A newly hired Director of the Program for Instructional Innovation (formerly the Instructional Development Program) launched new initiatives to engage faculty across campus in writing across the curriculum, service learning, instructional technology, and team-based learning. See <http://www.ou.edu/idp/>

Finally, we are in the initial planning stages for a centralized student academic service facility that will include freshman and undecided majors advising, tutoring, flexible classroom space, etc. We hope this will further consolidate all services to undergraduate students close to the Student Union (home to Student Affairs, Student Leadership Center), Buchanan Hall (home to admissions, registration, records, and financial aid), and the Library.

2. We seek to strategically select and grow research areas wherein the Norman Campus has a unique national niche. Targeted areas are allocated additional faculty lines and other support to insure their growth.

Revenues provided to OU - Norman campus (both direct and indirect costs) are a key in allowing us to maintain and enhance the research infrastructure.

Currently in Fall 2006, there are strategic research faculty searches for brand new faculty positions in process for 1) integrated life sciences, 2) applied social sciences, 3) K-20 stem research, and 4) radar hydrology that will further strengthen existing, vibrant interdisciplinary research teams on the Norman Campus. These searches are chaired by Deans of Colleges and monitored by the Vice President for Research to ensure we are targeting extraordinarily talented mid career faculty.

The faculty members are selected to enhance and build upon existing faculty expertise and are given start-up packages designed to insure a quick transition into the OU system. We aggressively solve transition problems related to housing and spousal hiring to insure that we capture the talent we want.

Many of these research teams are being housed on the developing Research Campus in such buildings as the Stephenson Research & Technology Building, the National Weather Center Building, and Partner's Places One and Two. Aggregating these programs, with the types of students, faculty, and research scientists attracted into these research groups allows OU to provide them with the robust technology they demand and provides further synergies among these students and personnel.

3. We seek to recruit, retain and selectively grow our faculty resources.

In order to recruit and retain excellent faculty, we seek to bring the average faculty salaries within each rank within each discipline to at least 90% of the average for that rank and discipline within the BIG 12/10. First, the salary program for FY07 (effective October 1) was absolutely critical to ensure that we retain our current faculty resources. In addition to E&G funds, additional funds were provided for the 10/1/06 raise program to address discipline compression in several compressed academic units from OU Foundation resources. The average increase for faculty on the Norman Campus as almost 6% this year and should help we make considerable progress on our faculty salary goals.

The student to faculty ratio on the Norman Campus is the worst in the BIG 12 (tied with Texas A&M). One hundred new faculty were hired at OU beginning this Fall 2006 and the net gain in regular faculty should be approximately 25.

The faculty census numbers will not be available until spring to assess either faculty salaries across the BIG 12 or student-to-faculty ratios but we are guessing that we made progress this past year and plan for more progress in 2007-2008. We need to add more faculty resources both to deliver high quality instructional programs and to continue growing research expenditures. We have targeted areas of undergraduate enrollment pressure, in our Colleges of Journalism, and Arts & Sciences wherein we want to add additional faculty lines in order to maintain the quality of the instructional programs for undergraduates and we have opened new faculty searches for possible hires in August 2007.

The Strategic Research Initiative plan for adding new faculty lines was described in the previous section. When hiring within the Science and Engineering areas, we have identified additional funds to support faculty start-up costs since the ability to successfully recruit within these

academic areas is tied both to competitive salaries and to competitive start-up packages.

We also are utilizing existing resources by providing extra-compensation for overload teaching – including both evening and weekend teaching and on-line teaching.

Finally, we are reviewing and monitoring the academic interest areas of incoming students carefully; with the surge of student interest in health-related careers, we need to continue to add/renovate instructional laboratories in the basic science areas and in social science disciplines (Psychology, Communications, Health & Exercise Sciences) so as not to slow their process in obtaining those courses that make them admissible to the OU HSC programs of their choice.

Having sufficient, high quality faculty is absolutely essential in order to meet the challenge of undergraduate recruitment during the next decade. Prospective students and their parents expect excellence in the classroom and adequate numbers of course sections at time of enrollment/

4. We seek to continue and stabilize our capabilities to provide training for the region and country, and alternative avenues for nontraditional students to obtain college degrees through the College of Continuing Education; we would like to maintain the level of research expenditures being generated through CCE.

As the competition to provide educational opportunities to nontraditional students increases and to obtain contracts to provide training to public and private agencies gets even stiffer, we seek to maintain and grow this service to the state, region and country which will also generate revenues that support the entire Norman Campus.

5. We seek to streamline centralized services through updated technology and to continue embedding the best practices of technology within curriculum across all academic disciplines.

At the centralized level, the Norman campus has completed implementing the PEOPLESOFT – HR, the PEOPLESOFT-Finance system, the web-based Advising and Degree Audit system (Degree Navigator), Online Enrollment system, and the Online Application system.

We are currently in the planning phase for a relational database student information system (OU SIS) that will involve a 3-4 year implementation process.

The Office of Informational Technology continues to increase wireless access to the internet through campus and we have begun to plan new buildings on campus that will capitalize of wireless access where appropriate. The Office of Information Technology works to ensure a very robust, redundant system of high band width internet access for the growing research campus.

Finally, all colleges are working with their instructional faculty to embed “best practices” technology into their curriculum.

B. Summarize the institution's three-year projections for headcount enrollment and FTE

(Refer to section II.A.1.)

C. Summarize the Institution's future plans with respect to the following

1. Technology

The IT network team will continue to maintain the finest University network in the State. Additionally, they will continue the upgrade within the residence halls, and expend and upgrade the wireless networks in the Library, Union, Sarkeys Energy Center, Carson Engineering Center, Nielson Hall, Engineering Lab, Fears Lab and Felgar Hall. OU is in the process of partnering with a world-renowned vendor to provide voice and data solutions for the entire University.

IT staff working with the Vice President for Research and 15 different academic units will continue to enhance the OU Supercomputing center for Education & Research (OSCER) and will continue to explore opportunities afforded OU by our participate in Internet2 consortium. Both these initiatives will enhance all University research by, for example, supporting fast genomic database searches, increasing the speed of forecasting site-specific weather, and using MPEG-2 video conferencing for master musician classes.

We will continue to expand our web-based student services to serve students anywhere (Norman, Tulsa, or Guam) on as close to a 24/7 basis as possible. In 2006-2007 we are maintaining on-line applications, on-line enrollment, on-line advising and degree audit, on-line payment systems, and on-line benefits enrollment for OU employees

In collaboration with academic colleges and the Provost, IT staff will expand the number of video conferencing facilities available in Norman, OKC and Tulsa. Another ten facilities should come on line in 2007-2008 including both renovation of existing classrooms and completion of new construction.

IT is working with OU staff and faculty throughout the Norman campus to provide security training and best practices to protect the existing network and technology systems and to ensure compliance with state and federal security standards.

IT has upgraded the e-mail systems throughout campus with both an Exchange email system, which provides standard email access, calendaring, and address system; and a Web-based email client access program which supports access from around the world. We have migrated to Microsoft Active Directory and are upgrading to software which provides for a consolidation of servers, stream-lined sign-on authentication and security, improved reliability, and a global address list.

IT will continue to provide Microsoft campus software agreements and Dell/Apple computer leasing programs to faculty and staff.

OU - Norman Campus plans to have over 75 on-line course sections offered in 2006-2007 including Introduction to Psychology, Spanish I and II, and Business Calculus. Faculty members teaching on-line courses receive support for instructional design, web page development, and multimedia production.

The College of Education has implemented an on-line student database for TE_PLUS students and graduate programs. The TE-PLUS programs are adopting electronic portfolios to assess candidate performance.

The College of Fine Arts will develop on-line course offerings in graduate music education and art history.

University Libraries, working with IT, is expanding and updating the wireless network at Bizzell Library. They have converted their electronic reserve system to D2L course management system to simplify access for students and to allow faculty to consolidate their reserves and other course materials onto one system. The Library is currently conducting a review of all serial subscriptions and President Boren will be forming a Taskforce to develop a plan for the next 5-10 years for future library development. One key question to be addressed is whether to continue collecting serials in print format or shift to electronic format. There is probably not a simple answer to this question but university libraries will need to plan over the next quarter century for this transition in a careful, thoughtful manner that ensures archival access to all volumes for journals.

The College of Journalism is beginning to use the D2L course management system in more courses and also to more efficiently coordinate administrative processes within the college. With the opening of the new Gaylord Hall, the College has state of the art classroom technology and is already planning an expansion of their facilities to provide additional classroom and studio space fully equipped with the latest technology equipment used in the profession.

2. Academic Efficiencies

OU- Norman Campus will continue to develop more accelerated dual degree programs including a B.A.-Lis/M.A.-Knowledge management, and a B.A./M.A. in Human Relations. The Colleges of Business and Engineering are developing a linked B.S. Engineering/MBA program.

The College of Arts and Sciences has identified several degree programs that can be completed by only taking evening and weekend courses. This will allow us to squeeze out a bit more utility from our existing facilities. Regular undergraduates also enjoy taking a mix of daytime and evening courses.

The Oklahoma Cinema Studies Consortium is a partnership of OU, Oklahoma City Community College, Oklahoma City University, and the Oklahoma City Museum of Art that allows students enrolled at one of the three partner educational institutions to enroll in film-related courses at the other two institutions and to have access to the physical resources of any of the partners to produce film.

The College of Education is working with University College to develop a course that better informs freshmen as to the nature of a career in education and the requirements to successfully complete the teacher education program at OU.

The College of Atmospheric & Geographic Sciences has developed four new general education courses (Aviation, Meteorology, Natural Disasters and Climate Change, Weather and Climate in Business and Engineering Decisions) that will allow undergraduates to fulfill part of their physical science general education requirements by taking a course within one of our premier academic units. This spreads the burden of providing general education physical science courses beyond physics/astronomy and chemistry/biochemistry; and it will also provide OU alumni with a unique and informed knowledge of the applied science of meteorology.

In January 2006, OU aggregated several academic units into the new College of Earth & Energy (after a Presidential taskforce reviewed the possibilities) to achieve greater synergy across the School of Geology & Geophysics, the Mewbourne School of Petroleum & Geological Engineering, Sarkeys Energy Center, and the Oklahoma Geological Survey. We expect the new College to better serve student needs for interdisciplinary coursework and to allow for better research collaboration across similar research laboratories.

The College of Engineering is currently engaged in a complete re-design of their undergraduate curriculum in response to the latest educational objectives proposed by the National Academy of Engineering. This re-design will reduce the number of required hours for an engineering degree to between 124 and 127, and allow more students to complete an engineering degree within 4 years. Both Devon Hall and the Engineering Practice Facility are currently under construction (see <http://www.coe.ou.edu/construction/index.htm>) and will enhance the college's ability to have both students and faculty conduct their research in team-based, interdisciplinary settings.