



News

29 July, 2021

Oklahoma's Best Kept Secret - Regional Universities Offer Best Value

Regional universities—like Southwestern Oklahoma State University—are the best kept secret of Oklahoma's higher education system. Not only do they offer students a quality education, but they are remarkably affordable, close to home, and almost half of graduates have no student debt.

For a full-time student from Oklahoma enrolled at a regional university, the average annual total cost to attend is 46% less than at OU or OSU. The Regional University System of Oklahoma takes special care to keep fees low, not creating additional costs for students since many scholarships, including Oklahoma's Promise, cover tuition and not fees. Students and parents of students currently paying for college will recognize how accessible the price is. Few prospective students realize the significance of the total course fees they'll be charged by the university they plan to attend. At some universities, academic service fees average an additional 139% of the total price of tuition, nearly five times the cost of fees at regional universities. Those interested can see the [2020/2021 Student Costs Report](#) from the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education.

Recent high school graduates can find in RUSO a traditional college and campus experience for a lower cost. In addition, the large percent of students who are non-traditional — transfer students, working adults and part-time or returning students — appreciate that RUSO provides an affordable education and is flexible enough to allow them to reduce expenses by maintaining a full-time job, living at home or taking care of family.

Regional universities provide 43% of all public bachelor's degrees in the state. RUSO graduates — numbering nearly 9,000 in 2020/2021 - receive a high-quality, affordable education close to home. Students are taught by professors with doctoral degrees in classrooms with low student to instructor ratios. Graduates go on to well-paying careers across our state in allied health, nursing, accounting, pharmacy and more. After graduation RUSO alumni become our state's teachers, administrators, public servants, engineers, entrepreneurs, forensic scientists and leaders, including such people as Chief Gary Batton of the Choctaw Nation; SWOSU Distinguished Alumnus Everett Dobson, Executive Chairman of Dobson Fiber; and Chad Richison, CEO of Paycom.

As the largest four-year university system in the state, RUSO's six public universities have campuses and satellites located in every quadrant of our state: East Central University, Northeastern State University, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University and the University of Central Oklahoma. Students from rural communities can easily locate a regional university close to home.

Those attending college for the first time, or returning after a break, should consider the benefits of earning a four-year degree at a regional university; an affordable, high quality education that will prepare them for jobs after graduation and a lifetime of successful earning.

For more information on SWOSU, visit www.swosu.edu or call 580.774.3063.

Connie Reilly is chair of the Regional University System of Oklahoma's Board of Regents