

# SWOSU Offering New Law Enforcement Master's Program

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SWOSU program participants in a new graduate program designed for commissioned law enforcement officers recently attended a course field exercise at Quartz Mountain Nature Park. Among those attending were (front from left): SWOSU Associate Dean Dr. Chad Kinder; Shawn Wright, OSBI; Kelly Matthews, OK Probation and Parole; Scott Smith, OK Probation and Parole; and Dean Taylor, Oklahoma State Parks. Standing from left-course instructor CD Perkins; Nick Conner, Oklahoma State Parks; Bryan Burch, Clinton P.D.; Matt Ousley, Clinton P.D.; Kyle Bridges, Weatherford P.D.; R.J. Ellis, Weatherford, P.D.; Dustin Jarnigan, Weatherford P.D.; Michael Rizzi, Weatherford P.D.; Nick Rizzi, Weatherford P.D.; Aaron Gray, Hydro P.D.; Barry Hardaway, Oklahoma State Parks; and course instructor Vince Sidders.

A new graduate degree program designed specifically for commissioned law enforcement officers has been initiated by the Southwestern Oklahoma State University Parks and Recreation Management Department in Weatherford.

Chad Kinder, director of the department, said the degree is a Master of Education in Parks and Recreation Management with an emphasis in Parks and Wildlife Law Enforcement.

The program is being offered in cohort style with a mixture of compressed format weekend and online courses. The officers take each class together, completing the program in one calendar year.

There are 17 program participants in the first class. All class members are currently serving as law enforcement officers from a number of agencies. These include the Weatherford, Clinton and SWOSU Police Departments, Oklahoma State Parks, Oklahoma Probation and Parole, U.S. Forest Service and the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

Program participants just completed their first semester of study. Most program courses are taught by adjunct instructors from several different agencies. Course instructors have included Dr. Jim Davis and Bill Justice of the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office Tactical Team; John Bridges, training officer for Yukon Fire, Police and EMS; CD Perkins, park manager and ranger, Oklahoma State Parks; and Vince Sidders, U.S. Forest Service Law Enforcement. Instructors scheduled for the summer and fall semesters include Lt. Steven Cornell, Oklahoma Highway Patrol; and Dr. DeWade Langley, director of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

Kinder said demand for the program has been encouraging. Plans are underway for forming a second group of master's degree candidates for the 2010-2011 academic year. Those interested in entering the program can contact Kinder at 580.774.3291 or [chad.kinder@swosu.edu](mailto:chad.kinder@swosu.edu).