



News

13 November,
2018

Southwestern Oklahoma State University
Sayre Campus

Medical Laboratory Technician
&
Radiologic Technology

Higher Education
in Sayre



Sayre Junior College merged with
Southwestern Oklahoma State University
in July 1987.



The Medical Laboratory Technician and Radiologic
Technology programs began accepting students
in August 1968.



Higher education was first established
in Sayre when grades 13 and 14 were
added to the high school.

History of Higher Education in Sayre Celebrated in 2018

The Sayre campus of Southwestern Oklahoma State University has been involved in a 30/50/80 celebration in 2018.

SWOSU Bernhardt Instructor of History Landry Brewer recently compiled a story on the history of higher education in Sayre and the 30/50/80 anniversaries. It has been 30 years since Sayre Junior College (SJC) merged with Southwestern Oklahoma State University, 50 years since the Medical Laboratory Technician and Radiologic Technology programs began, and 80 years since higher education began in Sayre with the founding of SJC.

In honor of the celebration, Brewer shares the following story:

Students at Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Sayre are continuing the tradition of higher education in the Beckham County seat that began 80 years ago.

Which was before World War II.

Before *Gone with the Wind* and *The Wizard of Oz* hit the silver screen.

Before American Presidents were term limited.

All because 80 years ago, Sayre's residents understood the need for higher education.

Supported by progressive and visionary members of the Sayre community, Sayre Junior College was founded in 1938 under legislative authorization permitting public schools to add a 13th and 14th year of study. Sayre Public Schools and 18 other Oklahoma school districts added these years of study, and the Oklahoma Community College system was born.

Fifty-eight students enrolled in Sayre Junior College classes for the 1938-39 academic year. They came from Berlin, Carter, Cheyenne, Delhi, Doxey, Erick, Grimes, New Liberty, Sayre, Sweetwater and Willow.

Sayre Junior College's first president was O.H. McMahan. Wylie C. Quattlebaum served as Dean of Administration; N.D. Griffin was Dean of Men and Registrar; and Elsie L. Turney was Dean of Women and Librarian. Tuition was \$30 per semester for full-time students, or \$3 per credit hour for part-time students.

A member of the Southwestern Athletic Conference of Municipal Junior Colleges, the Sayre Junior College Yellow Jackets competed in basketball, track, tennis and baseball.

The first degrees were awarded in May 1940—to 16 graduates.

President McMahan resigned in 1942 and was succeeded by B.H. Willoughby.

As with many other higher education institutions, SJC closed during World War II and reopened in 1946.

President Willoughby was succeeded by Ferrill Martin who served from 1947 until 1954. Arch Alexander, Dean of Sayre Junior College, then became president and served until 1965.

Harry Patterson, who had served as Dean since 1956, became the college's 5th president and held that title until 1984. He was succeeded by Sayre Junior College's 6th and final president, Paul Conner.

Conner was president when, in 1987, the Oklahoma legislature merged Sayre Junior College with Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford. SWOSU-Sayre was born under the leadership of SWOSU President Leonard Campbell.

According to the September 12, 2001 edition of the *Sayre Record and Beckham County Democrat*, the merger marked the end of the Oklahoma Community College system that began in the 1930s. Sayre Junior College was Oklahoma's last remaining community junior college of the 19 that began under the Community College Assistance Act.

From 1938 until 1942, then from 1946 until 1956, Sayre Junior College shared facilities with Sayre High School. Then, in 1956, SJC moved to the current location.

In 1968 a dormitory, Mackey Hall, was built to provide housing for 104 students and included a lounge, cafeteria and living quarters for house parents.

Over the years, campus buildings were enlarged, and a library, classrooms and faculty offices were added.

In 1985, campus dorms were phased out, and Mackey Hall was converted into classrooms.

The SWOSU-Sayre Medical Laboratory Technician and Radiologic Technology programs, begun by instructor Chris Christian, began accepting students in 1968.

Seven people have served as Dean of the SWOSU-Sayre campus. Don Roberts served from 1984 until 1999. Dr. Forest Redding was Dean in 2000. Dr. Bet Becker, Dr. Dave Allen and Dr. Dan Dill served in 2000 and 2001. Dr. Jim James was campus Dean from 2002 to 2011. Since 2011, Sherron Manning has served as Dean of the College of Associate and Applied Programs at the Sayre campus.

Since the 1987 merger, the Sayre campus has been guided by four SWOSU Presidents. Dr. Leonard Campbell served as president until 1990. From 1990 until 2001, Dr. Joe Anna Hibler was SWOSU president. Dr. John Hays served as university president from 2001 until 2010. Since 2010, Dr. Randy Beutler has served as president of Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford and Sayre.

Today SWOSU-Sayre offers two-year Associate in Science and Associate in Applied Science degrees. An Associate in Science degree prepares students to transfer to the Weatherford campus or elsewhere and complete a bachelor's degree. An Associate in Applied Science degree prepares students to enter the workforce.

In addition to traditional on-campus courses in Sayre, SWOSU-Sayre students may take general education classes that are offered at Great Plains Regional Medical Center in Elk City or online classes.

Additionally, among the approximately 500 students who enroll each fall and spring semester in SWOSU-Sayre classes, many are high school students who take SWOSU classes from their high schools. Several classes are taught on campus at Sayre and, using cameras, microphones and TV monitors, are broadcast live to between 12 and 15 western Oklahoma high schools. More than 100 western Oklahoma high school juniors and seniors get their first taste of college every fall and spring in these SWOSU classes that are taught by Sayre-campus faculty members.

Several Weatherford campus classes for Education, Psychology, Business and Allied Health majors are also broadcast to several receiving sites, including the Sayre campus. These classes allow many students to take most, if not all, of their upper-division classes in their major at Sayre.

Much has changed since 1938. What has not changed is the need for higher education in western Oklahoma.

Imbued with the spirit of advancement and enrichment that learning brings, progressive, visionary members of the Sayre community recognized the need for higher education in far Western Oklahoma in 1938.

In 1987, that same spirit guided the merger of Sayre Junior College with Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

Through the years, that spirit has recognized the vital role of higher education in enriching our lives socially, culturally and economically.

And, 80 years after higher education in Sayre began, that spirit lives on in the administration, faculty, staff and students of Southwestern Oklahoma State University in Weatherford and Sayre.

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