

# SWOSU Hosting Robotics Competition on December 4

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University is hosting its second annual First Tech Challenge robotics competition on Saturday, December 4, and nearly 300 high school students from three states will be on the Weatherford campus for the event.

The FTC is sponsored by the SWOSU Department of Industrial and Engineering Technology Department. This year's theme is "Get Over It" and area residents are invited to the SWOSU Wellness Center to view the competition that will begin around 9:30 a.m. and continue throughout the day until approximately 6 p.m.

Students from the following Oklahoma high schools will be competing: Ada, Altus, Ardmore, Bokchito, Bristow, Claremore, Clinton, Colbert, Enid, Geary, Kingfisher, Konawa, Newcastle, Mount St. Mary, Western Heights, Piedmont, Ponca City, Red Rock, Salina, Sapulpa, Taloga, Tulsa Memorial, Union City, Watonga, Weatherford, Holdenville and Crooked Oak. There will also be two teams from Texas and one team from Arkansas.

Teams of up to 10 students purchase a kit for the construction of a robot. Teams are then responsible for designing, building and programming the robot to compete against other teams' robots. During the competition, the robots are judged and awarded based on their programming skills, ability to overcome floor challenges and the construction of their robot. Two winning teams will advance to a national competition in St. Louis.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for many gifted high school students to be recognized for their hard work and achievements," said Brad Fitzgerald, an instructor in the SWOSU Department of Industrial and Engineering Technology. "This isn't as much about winning as it is teaching students problem solving, professionalism and teamwork in a really great atmosphere."

Many SWOSU students will be volunteering at the event as judges, referees, inspectors, as well as helping with registration. Students have also been assisting the various high schools with building and programming their robots.

"It is a great situation for our students," Fitzgerald said. "They get to put their skills into practice while helping these high schools build up their technology departments."

For more information about the competition, contact Fitzgerald at [brad.fitzgerald@swosu.edu](mailto:brad.fitzgerald@swosu.edu) or 580.774.3161 or 580.774.3162.