



A message from President Newsom...

To the Campus Community:



It is with great enthusiasm that I greet all of you as the 21st President of Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

In beginning, I want to express my appreciation to the presidential search committee and the Board of Regents of the Regional University System of Oklahoma for

their trust and support.

During my appointment process, and over the past few weeks, one word has been commonly used to describe Southeastern - Family.

During this challenging time, it has become clear that family is at the heart of our university. I am honored and grateful to find myself inheriting this role at a university that is well positioned to meet the future needs of our state and region because of the previous leaders that have, and always will be, a part of our family.

Sean Burrage joined the university as president in a time of change, and left Southeastern with a dedicated faculty and staff, growing enrollment and solid financial standing. When he moved to the University of Oklahoma and Bryon Clark stepped in to lead the university, I am sure they had no idea that our world would be drastically affected by a global pandemic. A crisis that, in fact, would push the campus into an emergency transition to remote learning.

In retrospect, President Burrage could not have left the university in better hands. Dr. Clark, who will officially retire on May 9, has led the university through this pandemic with empathy for our students, faculty and staff, and helped chart the course back to repopulation of campus with care and concern, while positioning Southeastern to emerge from this event stronger than ever.

Because of the leadership of Presidents Burrage and Clark, there is a beginning, a middle, and an end to this crisis. With their leadership and the support of the Southeastern family, the university is in a much better place than many institutions are to thrive in what will certainly be a

new higher education environment.

Recently, the university announced our intent to move away from emergency remote learning and return to an active campus for our students, faculty and staff. We must do this intentionally, with the safety and security of our campus and community as a priority, while balancing the importance of an environment that promotes student success.

In order to achieve this goal, I will commission a task force, representative of campus and community leaders, to study all issues related to resuming classes on campus this Fall. I believe strongly in transparency and open communication, and this task force will be charged with making recommendations that guide us all back to campus in a way that is in the best interests of our university and community.

Your amazing efforts to support Southeastern has put our university in a position to meet the challenges of today and the future. Our world has been changed by recent events, and these changes have brought more clarity in our mission to “provide an environment of academic excellence that enables students to reach their highest potential.”

I thank you for your incredible ability to be innovative and flexible in order to achieve our mission. As a university, this will become increasingly important as we strive to prepare our students to be successful in life’s journey.

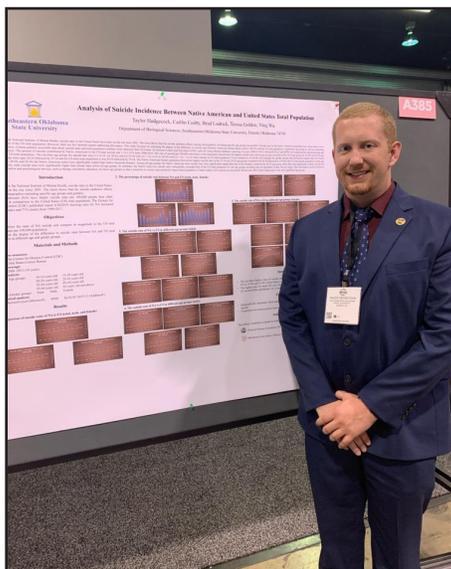
My wife Vicky and I, along with our children, Will, Katie and John, are proud that we have been asked to be a part of the Southeastern Family. I am full of hope and excitement for the future of our university and ready to get started as together we chart a path for even greater success.

I look forward to the day when you can meet the Newsoms in person, either at an event on campus or having dinner at the Magnolia House. I truly appreciate everything you do to ensure the success of our students and our university.

Go Savage Storm!

Thomas W. Newsom
President

Senior selected to represent SE at Research Day at the Capitol



Taylor Hedgecock of Bokchito was recently selected to represent Southeastern Oklahoma State University at the 25th annual Research Day at the Capitol.

He was one of 22 undergraduate students representing 16 Oklahoma colleges and universities who were identified to participate in the prestigious event, which is designed to raise awareness of the outstanding undergraduate research that is taking place at Oklahoma's colleges and universities.

Hedgecock's research project focused on mental health.

The Durant High School graduate is a biology (biological health sciences) major with a minor in interdisciplinary medical sciences.

After graduating this spring, Hedgecock plans to pursue a PhD at the University of Tennessee (Memphis) in the fall doing research in neuroscience.

Research Day is sponsored by the National Science Foundation, Oklahoma NSF Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research, and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

Taylor Hedgecock was selected to represent Southeastern at Research Day.

Vote names Webb as GAC Greatest Basketball Player

After six rounds of voting and nearly 5,000 votes in the finals alone, Southeastern's Katie Webb was selected by fans as the winner of the Great American Conference Greatest Basketball Player of All-Time.

Webb bested Southwestern Oklahoma State's Hailey Tucker in the finals by a 58%-to-42% margin.

She opened the 64-player bracket by passing Henderson State's Kaylon Tappin in the first round, followed by Harding men's basketball player Zach Roddenberry in the second round and Harding women's standout Kristin Celsor in the third.

Webb outlasted Henderson's Hailey Estes in the final eight and bested Southwestern's Hayden Priddy in the semifinals.

She has closed out her career with a flurry of recognition, earning a pair of All-America nods in 2020 after being named the GAC Player of the Year.

Webb, who is from Melissa, Texas, is a two-time first team All-GAC selection and a two-time All-Central Region pick.

She is also a two-time conference scoring champ and ranks fourth in league history in scoring.

In 2019-20 she averaged a league-leading 18.7 ppg, while shooting 48% from the field and hauling in a team-best 7.6 rebounds per outing.

Webb also became Southeastern's number two all-time leading scorer with 1,649 points, which ranks fourth all-time in the GAC. Her 756 career rebounds is fourth all-time at Southeastern and eighth in conference history.



Katie Webb enjoyed a record-setting career at Southeastern.

Dr. Bryon Clark retiring after 30 years at Southeastern

During his 30-year career at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Dr. Bryon Clark has worn many hats – including that of interim president over the last six months.

On May 9, the Centerville, Iowa, native will be retiring as Dr. Thomas Newsom has begun his duties as the 21st president of Southeastern.



Dr. Bryon Clark will be retiring after 30 years at Southeastern.

Clark's dedication and service in leading the University were formally recognized recently with a resolution from the Regional University System of Oklahoma (RUSO) Board

of Regents. He was also designated with the honorary title of Interim President Emeritus.

Prior to his duties as interim president, Clark served as Vice President for Academic Affairs under President Sean Burrage. He also had a stint as acting president.

"When you look at the history of Southeastern, you will not find a more significant leader than Bryon Clark," said Burrage, who is now Vice President for Executive Affairs at the University of Oklahoma. "His career spanned all facets of the University, from the classroom to interim president. No one has done more to impact the long-term success of the institution."

RUSO regent Amy Anne Ford also praised Clark's efforts.

"At a critical time, Dr. Clark stepped in and provided

Southeastern with the steady guidance needed to maintain the success the University has experienced over the past several years," she said. "We all respect and admire the remarkable job he has done during some of the most challenging times ever faced by institutions of higher learning."

Clark joined the University in 1990 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences. After earning tenure, he was promoted to Associate Professor in 1994 and Professor in 1999. Prior to his duties as Vice President for Academic Affairs, Clark served as Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences, Director of General Education, Associate Dean-Dean of the School of Graduate and University Studies, and Assistant-Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Clark earned his Ph.D. in Biology from Kansas State University, his M.S. in Biology from Western Illinois University, and a B.A. in Biology from Central College in Iowa. He has been the recipient of numerous awards for teaching, research, and service, and his study and research of bats and other small mammals made him a popular speaker at schools throughout Oklahoma and Texas over the past several years.

He and his wife Margaret, a retired Southeastern professor, have a son, Gerald, who will graduate from Sherman (Texas) High School this spring and attend the University of Miami in the fall. The Clarks reside in Sherman.

Clark's retirement plans include travel, beekeeping, and volunteering with the Texas Master Naturalists.

"As an Iowa farm boy, not once did I ever dream of being a professor or interim president, but I feel so blessed to have served as both during my 30 years at Southeastern," Clark said. "I have been humbled by the opportunities afforded to me and hope that the lives of students, faculty, staff, and the higher education community have been enriched as much as mine. Even though I am looking forward to the next phase of my life, I will always remember the people, opportunities, and memories from my time at Southeastern."

University website to recognize spring graduates

Due to restrictions in place to limit the spread of the coronavirus, Southeastern Oklahoma State University will not hold its traditional spring commencement ceremony on May 9. Instead, spring graduates may participate in the December 12 commencement ceremony in which all 2020 graduates (spring, summer, and fall) will be recognized.

In the meantime, the University will be recognizing spring graduates in a unique way online.

"SOSU 2020 Commencement Reimagined" was recently launched with each graduate having their very own webpage where family, friends, and the University community may leave written and video messages for the graduates.

Photos and other information may also be uploaded to the webpages. Graduates will also be able to share the site or photos through various social media platforms.

Family and friends may submit messages, photos, and videos to the graduates' website by using the following link:

<https://sosu2020.commencementreimagined.com>

The deadline to submit messages is May 6. On Saturday, May 9, at 10 a.m., all of the graduate websites will be available for viewing on www.SE.edu.

Update

May 2020



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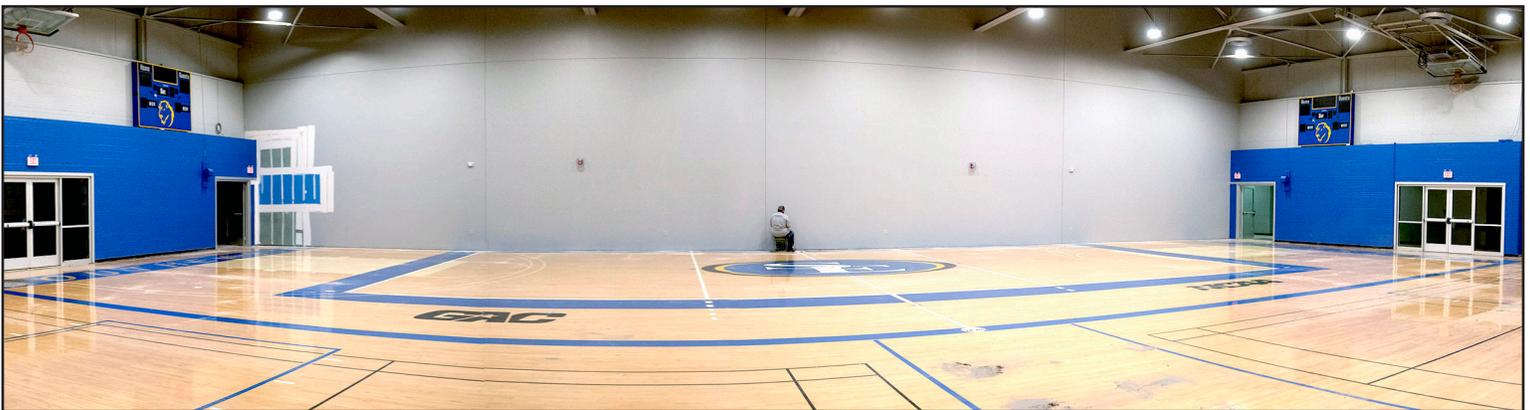
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UNDER CONSTRUCTION



Construction continues on the Semple Family Museum of Native American Art, to be located north of the Fine Arts Building and Russell Building on Montgomery/Dunlap Drive. The 5,000 square-foot multi-level facility will serve as the permanent home of the University's extensive Native American Art Collection. The museum is being funded by a gift from the Semple family, which includes Frank Semple, a retired energy industry executive; Janie Semple Umsted, a local artist and director of the Southeastern Art Gallery; Sarah Semple Brown, a Denver-based architect; the late Bill Semple and Dr. Allen William Semple and Jane French Semple. A grand opening is being planned for this fall during Homecoming.



Work is nearing completion on the "Strong Together" project in the Southeastern Department of Athletics. The project involves the renovation of existing space inside the Bloomer Sullivan Gymnasium into a 5,000 square-foot strength and conditioning facility with a turf area, as well as enhancements to the volleyball court (shown above).