



Fall classes to begin on August 17

Southeastern Oklahoma State University will begin fall classes on Monday, August 17, with face-to-face and online/remote instruction offered.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, all students, faculty, staff, and visitors must wear face coverings when they are inside buildings on campus, unless wearing face coverings is contrary to meeting educational and participation objectives as determined by faculty/staff. Face coverings are not required outdoors, but highly recommended if social distancing is not possible.

One alteration to the fall schedule as recommended earlier by the Southeastern COVID Task Force and the subcommittee on instruction (composed of faculty and department chairs) and approved by president Thomas Newsom is to move from face-to-face instruction to remote/online delivery of courses for five days (Nov. 30-Dec. 4) at the end of the semester. This will be followed by a finals week to be conducted virtually, with either online exams or alternative projects/presentations.

“The safety and health of the campus community is our top priority,” Newsom said. “Like many other schools,

we made this decision as a preventive measure. The anticipated surge of COVID in November, combined with the arrival of the flu, which can display similar symptoms, has the potential to create challenges to the health of the communities on college campuses. This risk is enhanced by the likelihood of student and faculty travel during the Thanksgiving holidays (Nov. 23-27), which could increase the chances for COVID 19 exposure.”

Students needing to stay or return to campus would be allowed to remain in the residence halls for the normal length of the semester for any remaining housing needs, including for those more voluntary activities like athletics, aviation training, and commencement ceremonies. Residents will be required to abide by any additional safety measures imposed upon their return from the break.

Another safety measure recommended by the task force and approved by Newsom involves the assignment of a single resident per room in the residence halls. This is intended to minimize the risk of exposure within the living environment.



University releases ‘Back to Campus Plan’ for Fall 2020

Southeastern Oklahoma State University has released a comprehensive 19-page “Return To Campus Plan” outlining general practices, Fall 2020 instruction, campus events, student organizations, student housing/dining, and other resources relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It may be utilized by students, faculty, staff, parents, and the public. The information may be revised/updated if conditions should change during the fall semester.

The complete document is available for viewing online at <https://www.se.edu/student-wellness/coronavirus-update/>



In concert
 Dr. Catalin Dima, left, a faculty member in the department of music at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, performs selections from Beethoven during a SE Facebook Live virtual concert on July 16. Held in the Fine Arts Recital Hall on campus, the event raised more than \$1,100 for the Shelter for the Storm Fund, which was created through the Southeastern Foundation and will be used to assist students with challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and future issues that might arise. Some 2,000 people viewed the performance, which was produced by local radio station Mix 96.1 in cooperation with Southeastern. In photo below, Bob Sullins of Mix 96.1 works the controls during rehearsals.

Rowland named director of Native American Institute

A familiar face has returned to lead the Native American Institute at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Lauren Rowland is now serving as director of the Institute, a position she held previously from 2017 to 2018.



Rowland

The Native American Institute is under the umbrella of The Center for Student Success, supervised by Dr. Marlin Blankenship, and is the administrative division responsible for undergraduate professional advising and student success at Southeastern. The Center includes the Academic Advising and Outreach Center, the Learning Center, the Online and Distance Advising Center, the Native American Institute, the

Native American Excellence in Education grant program, and Freshman Programs.

Rowland holds a master's degree in educational policy and leadership studies from the University of Iowa, and a bachelor's in mathematics education from the University of Oklahoma.

She has nine years of experience in education, serving as a math instructor and professor at the public school and college level. Rowland was also the director of College and Career Resources at the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

In her previous stint at Southeastern, Rowland served as the project director for the \$1.4 million grant for teacher preparation from the U.S. Department of Education. She also was instrumental in the securing a portion of a scholarship grant from the O.J. and Mary Christine Harvey Foundation.

Approximately 30 percent of Southeastern's enrollment is composed of Native American students. The Institute serves students in a variety of ways, providing services such as academic programs, tutoring, and cultural events.



Southeastern represented on State Communicators Council

The Oklahoma Communicators Council recently elected new officers and executive committee members for 2020-21.

Alan Burton, director of university communications at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, is one of nine members of the organization's executive committee. Amy Goddard of the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma serves as chair of the council, and Nick Trougakos of Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City is vice chair.

The Communicators Council is an advisory group that works with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. It holds monthly meetings to address issues facing communications professionals at Oklahoma's colleges and universities.

Webb nominated for prestigious NCAA national award



Katie Webb

Former Southeastern women's basketball player Katie Webb is a 2020 nominee for NCAA Woman of the Year.

Webb, a graduate of Melissa (Texas) High School, put together a spectacular season to end her storied career at SE.

She picked up a pair of All-American honors and was named the Great American Conference Player of the Year in women's basketball and was ultimately named Southeastern's Female Athlete of the Year.

Over the season, Webb averaged a league-leading 18.7 ppg, while shooting 48.0 percent from the field and hauling in a team-best 7.6 rebounds per outing.

Webb also dished out 2.7 assists per game, snagged 1.2 steals, and blocked 16 shots.

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

In the classroom, she most recently completed her MBA and was named to the AD and the President's honor rolls, and in 2019, was CoSIDA Academic All-American.

Rooted in Title IX, the NCAA Woman of the Year Award was established in 1991 to recognize graduating female student-athletes who have exhausted their eligibility and distinguished themselves in academics, athletics, service and leadership throughout their collegiate careers.

The nominees represent all three NCAA divisions, including 259 nominees from Division I, 126 from Division II

and 220 from Division III. Nominees competed in 24 sports, with multisport student-athletes accounting for 128 of the nominees.

Member schools are encouraged to honor their top graduating female college athletes each year by submitting their names for consideration for the Woman of the Year Award.

Conference offices will select up to two nominees each from their pool of member school nominees. All nominees who compete in a sport not sponsored by their school's primary conference, as well as associate conference nominees and independent nominees, will be considered by a selection committee. Then, the Woman of the Year selection committee, made up of representatives from the NCAA membership, will choose the Top 30 honorees — 10 from each division. From the Top 30, the Woman of the Year selection committee will determine the top three honorees in each division and announce nine finalists. The NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics then will choose the 2020 NCAA Woman of the Year, who will be named this fall.



Virtual Freshman Convocation scheduled for August 17

Southeastern's 2020 Freshmen Convocation will be conducted virtually this year for the safety and well-being of our students in response to COVID-19.

Students will be able to watch the event online on Monday, August 17, at 7 p.m. on the University's website (www.se.edu/freshmanconvocation2020) and official social media pages: Facebook (www.facebook.com/southeasternoklahomastateuniversity), Twitter (www.twitter.com/se1909), and YouTube (www.youtube.com/se1909).



Southeastern president Thomas Newsom tapes his segment for Freshman Convocation.



GAC delays start of fall sports season until late September

The Great American Conference Council of Presidents has unanimously approved a plan to delay the start of all intercollegiate athletic practices until the week of August 31, with the launch of competition postponed until the week of September 28.



Teams will play current GAC schedule schedules when play resumes in late September. The GAC will formulate a plan to reschedule those games not played on the existing schedule - as well as the format for fall conference postseason events - following NCAA Division II action on the status of fall championships.

“This decision was made with a focus on ensuring that our student-athletes can have a quality athletic experience in the fall, with the top priority being the health and safety of our campuses and communities,” said Southeastern president Thomas Newsom. “I truly appreciate all of the hard work of our conference athletic directors and presidents in order to develop a plan for athletic competitions.”

The impact on Southeastern is that the first football game will now be Oct. 3 at Southwestern; the first volleyball match is set for Oct. 1 at Oklahoma Baptist; and the cross-country team will open its season Oct. 3 at the University Of Incarnate Word Invitational in San Antonio.

“I’m very supportive of the decision as the health and safety of our student athletes and fans is the number one consideration,” said Director of Athletics Keith Baxter. “I think this plan gives us the best chance to compete this fall, while also having the flexibility to adjust to the ever-changing situation.”

The conference will continue to consult with campus medical professionals, outside consultants, and local public health officials to monitor the viability of playing conditions during the reopening of campuses.

“This plan creates additional time to craft a safe and meaningful championship season for our student-athletes,” GAC Commissioner Will Prewitt said. “It affords our members the ability to open their campuses for in-person learning and allows additional time for student-athletes to acclimate back to full athletic activity.

“Our leadership has worked hard to find a path forward and join other NCAA Division II conferences that intend to compete this fall. I’m cautiously optimistic about the return of GAC competition, but work remains to ensure the health and safety of our student-athletes, their families, coaches, and administrators.”

The Council has the ability to adjust its recommendation as necessary to protect the health and safety of all involved in GAC athletics. Conference administrators and the Council of Presidents will both meet weekly to address developments as they arise.

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