



Spring enrollment sets record

Southeastern Oklahoma State University continues to set enrollment records in a big way.

With a Spring 2021 enrollment of 5,010 students, Southeastern has recorded its highest-ever total for a spring semester. That tops the previous record for a spring semester of 4,744 in 2020. It also represents an enrollment increase of 5.6% over last spring.

Student Credit Hours also increased 3.3% compared to last spring.

And all of this comes after the University enrolled 5,339 students in Fall 2020 – the most ever since the school opened in 1909.

Even more impressive is the fact that this dramatic growth has occurred during the midst of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Sustaining our growth has truly been a collective effort among our faculty, staff, and students," said



Southeastern set a spring enrollment record

Southeastern president Thomas Newsom. "Their willingness and ability to be flexible and to adapt to change during this unprecedented time has allowed us to continue to provide a quality higher education at a very affordable cost. And the quality academic instruction and affordability, combined with accessibility, has contributed to the continued growth of our online graduate programs. We are very

optimistic about the future at Southeastern and will continue to look for innovative ways to serve our students."

Among the areas seeing significant enrollment growth were online graduate programs in Sports Administration, Curriculum & Instruction, MBA, Educational Leadership, and School Counseling.

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MLK Day of Service



In photo above, students prepare care packages for delivery to local healthcare workers and teachers. In photo at right, volunteers paint bleachers on campus.

Classes were not held on January 18 at Southeastern Oklahoma State University in observance of Martin Luther King Day.

Instead, 150 Southeastern students, faculty and staff spent time volunteering for a number of community service projects, and a Zoom program on Dr. King was hosted by student leaders.

Campus volunteers prepared and delivered care packages to local healthcare workers and teachers, and also worked on improvement/beautification projects with Durant Main Street and the Southeastern Equestrian Center.



Broken Bow student pursues studies with a purpose

Yoselin Rodriguez-Diaz appreciates the sacrifices her family has made to enable her to pursue her dream of a higher education. And while that dream may not be achieved for a few more years, she already has a purpose in mind.

"I've always liked helping people," the Southeastern Oklahoma State University junior said recently. "And I want to give back to my community."

Rodriguez-Diaz was born in Mexico, but moved to the United States when she was just two months old. She grew up in small-town Oklahoma (Broken Bow in McCurtain County), where she recalls learning to speak English by watching cartoons on television.

Today, Rodriguez-Diaz is in pre-professional studies, majoring in biology with a minor in chemistry. Her career goal is to be a physician's assistant, which requires an advanced degree beyond the bachelor's.

And as far as helping her community, she would like to eventually return to Broken Bow to open her own practice. Rodriguez-Diaz gets emotional when talking about her parents, who have worked tirelessly while encouraging their three daughters to pursue their goals.

"My parents always told us that they were going to pay for our education, but then we were on our own," she said. "They may have not always been able to be at all of our basketball games or other activities, but that was because they were working so that we could have a better life."

Yoselin's older sister, Melissa, is a Southeastern ('19) criminal justice graduate who works for the Broken Bow Police Department. She also has a younger sister.

Like many other students, Rodriguez-Diaz credits Southeastern's "small-knit community" and "small class sizes" as being keys to her success academically. She's also been involved on campus with the President's Leadership Class, Student Government Association, the Alumni Legacy Leaders, and was a participant in the Newman Civic Fellowship program.

In addition, she has assisted in the University's recruiting efforts by serving as a volunteer translator at area high school events for prospective students.

"One of the first people I met on campus was Dr. (Diane) Dixon (biology chair/professor)," Rodriguez-Diaz said. "As my academic advisor, she has helped me stay on track. Vice President (Liz) McCraw has also impacted me greatly. Overall, it has been an awesome experience for me here. Southeastern is a place where you make friends easily, and if



Southeastern junior Yoselin Rodriguez-Diaz of Broken Bow is working toward a career as a physician's assistant.

you need any help with anything, you just ask. It's like a family away from home."

But why did Yoselin choose the health care field?

"Most of my family still lives in Mexico, and we go back twice a year to visit them," she said. "When you go there, you immediately see the need for better health care services. And rural Oklahoma also needs additional health care services as well. I want to do something that can make a difference in people's lives."

Positive enrollment trend continues this spring

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The University has increased scholarship opportunities, while not raising tuition costs over the past three years. Approximately 85% of Southeastern students receive some type of financial aid; about half of graduates each year are first-generation college graduates.

While the majority of Southeastern students are from Oklahoman and north Texas, the University's student body is represented by 49 states and 56 countries.

Southeastern offers more than 45 academic programs with both traditional face-to-face instruction and online/remote deliveries of instruction.

Key returns to direct admissions, enrollment efforts at her alma mater



Shelly Key

A familiar face has returned to the campus of Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

Shelly Key, a Southeastern graduate, was recently named Executive Director of Admissions and Enrollment at her alma mater, and began her duties in late January. She previously served as Director of Admissions and Recruitment at Southeastern from 2013-2015.

Jeremy Rowland, who has been serving as Director of Admissions and Recruitment for the past four years, is moving into a new role in the Graduate Office to coordinate NC-SARA activities.

NC-SARA (National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements) allows Southeastern to offer distance education programs in each state. NC-SARA establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of courses and programs. Its purpose is to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state.

"Shelly brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, as well as a proven track record to this important position," said Southeastern president Thomas Newsom. "We are delighted to have her rejoin the University in this capacity. Over the next six months, she will be working very closely with our Dr. Tim Boatman (Vice President for Enrollment Management) as she transitions into this role. I also want to thank Jeremy Rowland and his staff for their tireless efforts in recruiting students to campus."

Boatman, who has served Southeastern in a number of

capacities over the past 21 years, recently announced his retirement, effective July 1, 2021.

"Tim has played a critical role as Southeastern has grown its enrollment at an impressive rate over the past few years," Newsom said. "He has assisted me greatly during the last year as I transitioned into the presidency at Southeastern, and his leadership and vision will be greatly missed."

A graduate of Southeastern and Texas Woman's University, Key served as Executive Director of Admissions and Recruitment at Texas A&M University-Kingsville for four years. Prior to that, she was Director of Admissions and Recruitment at Southeastern for two years.

Most recently, Key has been employed as Managing Director for Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend.

She also has experience as a Title III Grant Director at the University of North Texas, a Campus Director at North Central Texas College (Graham campus), Associate Director of Admissions at Roger Williams University in Rhode Island, Associate Director of Admissions at Texas Woman's University, and Marketing/Recruitment Coordinator at Our Lady of the Lake University in Dallas.

"I am delighted to return to my alma mater and work alongside students, faculty, academic leaders and the community to further advance the university's vision," Key said. "Southeastern Oklahoma State University has always been a special place to me, and I am both excited and grateful for the opportunity to rejoin the campus."

While a student at Southeastern, Key worked in what was then known as the High School and College Relations Alumni Office and was a member of Tri Sigma Sorority.



Campus tours provide prospective students with a unique opportunity to learn more about Southeastern.

Campus tours offered to prospective students

Campus tours – in-person and virtually – are currently being offered to prospective students at Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

The Office of Admissions and Recruitment is providing guided tours, and will answer questions about life at Southeastern. The tours are limited to one prospective student/family at a time, which will ensure individual attention.

Southeastern offers a quality education, with 45+ academic programs at an affordable cost.

The University has not raised tuition for the past three years and offers numerous financial aid and scholarship opportunities, while experiencing record enrollment over the past year.

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Back in the game



The Southeastern basketball teams returned to the court in early January (without fan attendance) for the first time since last March due to the coronavirus pandemic. Both the men's and women's teams are scheduled to play 20 games against Oklahoma opponents only during the regular season, followed by a post-season conference tournament.



SE Sports Network streams games live

Due to protocols related to the COVID-19 pandemic, attendance is limited basketball and volleyball games in the Great American Conference at this time, but Southeastern fans can still keep up with the action on the Southeastern Sports Network.

The partnership with Keystone Broadcasting, which began in 2015, carries every Southeastern basketball game, as well as football, and a selection of baseball, softball, volleyball and other sports, on Mix 96.1 FM – the flagship station of the Southeastern Sports Network.

Home basketball games will be streamed live on www.GoSoutheastern.com as well as www.Mix961.net. Fans can listen to basketball action locally at 96.1 FM as well as affiliates in Atoka (102.1 FM/107.5FM), Rattan (99.5 FM), and Valliant (94.7 FM).

For full schedules of all athletic events, visit www.GoSoutheastern.com.