

March 26, 2007

To the OSU Campus:

As I am certain many of you are aware, the Oklahoma legislature reached a budget agreement which, if implemented and passed, will pose a very difficult budgetary challenge for Oklahoma State University, as well as other Oklahoma colleges and universities. The actual increase in the general appropriations bill for higher education reflects a 1.6% increase with the largest portion of that increase committed to the Oklahoma Promise program. Efforts are being undertaken to increase the allocations to higher education, but there are many competing interests requesting additional funds. We will need the best input of our University community to assist us with the development of this year's budget. I encourage each of you to become as fully informed as possible regarding higher education finances in Oklahoma.

At the most recent Faculty Council meeting an increase in promotion increments was presented to Council members and will go into effect with the FY 2008 budget. These are well-deserved increases and I am very appreciative of the work of Professors John Veenstra and Carol Moder and all of the members of the Faculty Council Budget Committee, as well as the unanimous support of the Council of Deans in bringing these increases forward.

In addition, Professor Greg Bell presented a very comprehensive report regarding proposed tuition discounts for OSU employees and dependents. Professor Bell is to be commended for his diligent efforts in bringing new enhancements to the OSU employment packages.

A number of our faculty members showcased their work at the inaugural Big 12 Innovation and Capital Formation Conference, an effort to improve access to investors that can help to move research and technology initiatives beyond the campus. Professor Jim Smay, CEAT, was selected OSU Rising Star and was joined by other OSU faculty members including Professors Lin Liu, Glenn Zhang, Allen Aplett, Robert Fulton, and Daqing Piao. Our congratulations to each of you!

The spring semester brings a number of opportunities for our colleges to recognize outstanding students, alumni, University friends, and faculty colleagues. I hope as many of you as possible will participate in recognizing the academic excellence of our University community. It is important to celebrate the exceptional things happening at OSU and I am appreciative of the contributions each of you makes to build that excellence!

Marlene Strathe