

Questions from the August 27, 2018 General Faculty Meeting & State of the University Address

1. How will OU faculty be involved in defining the open administrative positions and choosing our new campus administrators? For example, how will the existing community of researchers and supporters of research be engaged in the search for a new Vice President for Research on the Norman Campus?
2. Recently you acknowledged that there are 'have' and 'have not' Colleges and that Arts and Sciences was one of the 'have not' Colleges; but you did not indicate how, when, or if you plan to make any changes. How will you evaluate and distribute resources across academic units?

Follow up: When will you finalize the budget for this current academic year so that colleges and departments can begin planning for next year?
3. Will your audit of OU academic units only be fiscal? Or will it also include a close examination of their work climates for students, faculty, and staff?
4. A full professor reported that their salary is in the lowest 5% compared to average salaries for similar universities as reported by American Association of University Professors. Many other OU professors are in similar situations. What will you do to reverse severe compression and inversion at OU? What is your timeline for addressing these and other pay equity issues?
5. What do you plan to do to recruit and retain a diverse faculty? How will you build an environment where faculty from diverse backgrounds feel welcomed, supported, and valued?
6. Currently, the University of Oklahoma has a two-tiered insurance system, with the Norman Campus on a far less comprehensive Cigna plan and the OU Health Sciences campus on a Blue-Cross-Blue Shield plan. Originally both campuses were placed on Cigna (in 2016), but OU-HSC faculty and staff complained and were switched back to BC-BS, per their concerns about the problems and inadequacies of Cigna. Is there a plan to move OU-Norman faculty back to BC-BS, which has far more extensive networks of providers and better provider and pharmaceutical benefits, in-state and out-of-state?
7. What standards would you set for accepting and for rejecting private money within the context of academic integrity and academic freedom at a public research university?

Follow up: Currently, donor agreements at OU are typically hidden from the public due to the OU Foundation's exemption from the State of Oklahoma's Open Records Act. In the interest of "transparency", would you be willing to make donor agreements public?

8. One approach to increasing the research production of a university is to 'hire stars' from the outside; another is to 'build through the draft' by hiring talented junior faculty and helping them grow; and yet another is to invest in the development of and opportunities for faculty who are already here. Will you emphasize one of these strategies more than the others or would you pursue a mix of strategies? How will you decide when one approach was more appropriate than another?
9. Faculty development funding including but not limited to internal research grants and travel funding to conferences has been cut significantly, even severely. What approaches will be taken to fund faculty development efforts to levels that will boost research and creativity for professors?
10. You have expressed that you want to double research over the next five years. What measures will be used to quantitative and/or qualitatively account for doubling: expenditures? Awards? Proposals? Publications? Performances? Exhibits? New companies? Patents?
11. The faculty, and chairs / directors, are increasingly saddled with administrative "busy-work"; a key example is the Concur system, which has made travel accounting much more burdensome. Crimson Corner is similarly cumbersome for those at the Chair/Director level. If you wish to enable faculty to devote more time to teaching and research, how do you plan to alleviate some of the administrative overburden?
12. What are the plans for cluster and/or cohort hiring of faculty and how will those already at the University with expertise in recruitment and hiring of faculty from underrepresented groups be identified and included in these plans?