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## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

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Southwestern Oklahoma State University at Weatherford is located in Weatherford, 70 miles west of Oklahoma City. SWOSU is authorized to offer curricula in arts and sciences, business, teacher education, and health sciences. A branch campus at Sayre is authorized to provide Associate of Science and Associate of Applied Science degrees in both general and specialized areas of study, as well as career and technical education.

The University was established by an act of the Oklahoma Territorial Legislature in 1901 as the Southwestern Normal School, authorized to offer two years of training for public school teachers. The first classes met in 1903. Initially, four years of preparatory work for precollege students were offered. In 1920, the preparatory (academy) courses were eliminated and two additional years of college work in teacher training were added. The State Legislature approved a change of name to Southwestern State Teachers College. The first baccalaureate degrees were awarded in May 1921. Other changes in name and purposes occurred in 1939 when the institution was designated as Southwestern State College of Diversified Occupations, and in 1941, when it became Southwestern Institution of Technology. During this two-year period, the college added a school of pharmacy, degree work in the arts and sciences, and trade schools.

In 1949, the Oklahoma State Legislature changed the name of the institution to Southwestern State College, and in 1974, to Southwestern Oklahoma State University, without altering its purposes and objectives. On July 1, 1987, Sayre Junior College was merged with Southwestern Oklahoma State University at Sayre. Southwestern Oklahoma State University at Sayre was founded as Sayre Junior College in 1938 under legislative authorization which permitted public high schools to add a 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> year of study to their curricula. Nineteen public schools took this step. In 1940, the college name was changed to Oklahoma Western Junior College; however, the original name was soon adopted again, and in May 1940 the first degrees were conferred. In 1956, Sayre Junior College moved from facilities occupied jointly with Sayre High School to its present location on old Highway 66. The merger with Southwestern Oklahoma State University marked the end of the Oklahoma community college system, since Sayre Junior College was the only such institution remaining of the original nineteen.

The College of Associate and Applied Programs at Sayre is located 60 miles west of the Weatherford campus on Interstate 40. It serves western Oklahoma and the Texas panhandle. It offers open admission to high school graduates as well as to students who do not hold a high school diploma.

Southwestern Oklahoma State University offers five advanced degrees. The Master of Education degree was inaugurated in 1969. (The Master of Teaching Degree was offered during the period of 1953-1969.) Graduate programs leading to the following degrees have been added since 1969: Master of Business Administration, 1977; Master of Music, 1981; and a professional doctorate, the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD), 1998; Master of Science in School of Psychology, 2005; and Master of Management, 2007.