Hardly a day goes by that some Oklahoma attorney doesn’t reach for a copy of one of the student publications from the University of Oklahoma. But he doesn’t reach for it out of idle curiosity or to catch up on activities of his alma mater; he turns to the Oklahoma Law Review as an important ready reference, full of articles, notes and comments on points of law and matters currently affecting the legal profession.

This year the Oklahoma Law Review, one of 90 such publications in the United States, celebrates its 15th anniversary with the satisfaction of a growing prestige among attorneys in the Southwest. Its circulation is small but select (about 1,300), and its comments on points of law are frequently cited in courts ranging from the New Jersey Superior Court to the Oklahoma Supreme Court and the Federal Circuit Courts. Quotations from the Review appear in texts and treatises, and the Oklahoma publication is particularly respected for articles in the field of oil and gas.

Besides the Review’s service function as a research tool for attorneys, the journal also serves as an important teaching function within the O.U. College of Law. By providing an opportunity for legal research, the Review supplies law students with experience that is difficult to acquire outside a law office. But not just any law student can work on the Law Review, for the publication is a sort of honor society as well.

In order to be an associate on the Law Review staff, a first-year law student must have better than a B-minus average. The first year is a form of apprenticeship spent in the more menial editorial tasks—checking footnotes, reading galley proofs, etc. Second and third year students with the same average may become candidates and are required to submit notes for publication as well as aiding with the associates’ tasks. When a candidate has two notes acceptable for publication, he becomes an editor, entitled to vote and to hold office. Candidates and editors may enroll in Law Review (Legal Research) and receive one hour academic credit for writing two acceptable notes. There are now 55 persons on the staff from a total law enrollment of 350.

Although the major portion of the work on the Law Review is done by the student staff, a board of faculty advisers supervises the procedure. They are professors Joseph F. Rarick, general chairman; Elbridge D. Phelps, financial adviser, Leo H. Whinery, advertising adviser, and Maurice H. Merrill, adviser on soliciting articles, editing or determining what will be published formally. In addition there is a full-time editorial adviser, Mrs. Barbara Churchill, who does most of the actual editorial work on the lead articles and provides advice and continuity in the editing of student notes from semester to semester.

The Law Review boasts a long list of scholarly articles by eminent men including contributions from Mr. Justice William O. Douglas of the U.S. Supreme Court; A. P. Murrah, chief judge of the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals; Jed Johnson of the U.S. Customs Court; Federal District Judges Edgar S. Vaught and Eugene Rice; James A. Pike, Bishop of California, Protestant Episcopal Church; Wilber G. Katz, former dean of the Law School, University of Chicago; Marcus Barth, professor of theology, University of Chicago; Jacques Ellul, professor of law, University of Bordeaux, France; Winfred Overholser, superintendent of St. Elizabeth’s Hospital, Department of Health Education and Welfare and editor-in-chief of Quarterly Re...
The University of Oklahoma student staff of the 1953 Law Review included (left to right) Fred R. Harris, managing editor; William D. Curlee, editor-in-chief, and Orpha Merrill, case editor; John L. Smith, note editor, and Deane E. McCormick, article and book review editor.

The University student staff in their student days are (left to right) standing William C. Paul, article and book review editor; Henry Taliaferro, managing editor; Lee West, case editor; Reford Bond, note editor; seated, Jean Johnson Fisk, editorial assistant, Donald Winn, editor-in-chief.