If ANY Sooner alumni imagine
that the so-called “flunk fee” which is be-
ing put into effect by the University this
year means that a rich student can flunk
with impunity while a poor student will
have to leave school if he flunks, they can
cease worrying.

Any such idea is entirely erroneous and
the University administration is doing its
best to explain to the public that the new
fee, which is correctly described as “a fee
for repeating instruction,” will be admin-
istered in such a way as to cause no unfair
hardship on the working student or one
who is trying to go to school on a shoe-
string.

There are two important angles to be
remembered:
1. The fee is not a fine or penalty de-
signed to punish the student who fails in
a course, but is designed to help pay part
of the extra expense the state incurs when
a student flunks a course and has to repeat
work, and to finance a program for re-
moving the causes of failures.
2. The fee will not be collected if the
flunking student can show that there were
extenuating circumstances.

The policy outlined by the Board of
Regents and to be followed by a student-
faculty committee that will be in charge of
administering the program, provides that
the fee can be waived if it is found that
circumstances beyond the control of the
student caused his failure.

The procedure to be followed gives the
student every possible consideration.

Suppose Bill Smith flunks three hours
of mathematics in the first semester of his
freshman year. Early in the second se-

semester when grades are complete, he re-
ceives a notice from the registry office that
he has failed in the three-hour course and
that he owes a fee of $9 ($3 per credit
hour) to the treasurer’s office unless he can
show there were extenuating circum-
stances.

Bill is told, in effect, “if you feel you
should not be required to pay the fee, ob-
tain the proper form from the registry
office, fill in the information required, and
you will be given a personal hearing be-
fore the chairman of the committee in
charge.”

Meanwhile, the student’s instructor in
the failing course has sent to the registry
office along with the failing grade report
a summary of his opinions on why the Bill
failed the course, and the registry office
also has prepared a full record of his pre-
vious scholastic work.

Thus when Bill is interviewed by the
committee chairman, there is a good back-
ground of factual information upon which
to base a decision. The committee chair-
man asks about the student’s living quar-
ters, his employment conditions if he is a
working student, his working hours, his
health—everything that might have a
bearing on his scholastic failure.

It is expected that in many cases this
interview will result in an agreement be-
tween the student and committee chair-
man as to whether the fee should be paid.
But if either student or committeeman de-
sires, the case is presented to the entire
committee, consisting of three faculty
members and two students appointed by
the president of the University, and a full
hearing is given.

University officials believe that this sys-
tem will make it possible to waive the fee
in all cases where the student is not clearly
blame, and to collect it where the stu-
dent was obviously negligent in his work.

But the program goes farther than that.
It will rapidly build up a valuable fund of
information that will show the real
causes for scholastic failures. It should
point the way for a remedial program to
reduce the number of failures by remov-
ing the causes as far as possible.

Revenue from the fees is expected to
make possible the development of a tut-
orial system that will give students in-
dividual help on their scholastic problems.
After Bill fails once in his mathematics
course, if he enrolls in it again it is quite
possible that he will fail a second time
unless the cause of the previous failure is
removed. Having failed once, he will be
required to consult a tutor and if his back-
ground for the course is faulty they will
concentrate on getting him into condition
to pass the course.

Thus the program is intended to give a
student every fair chance to pass a course,
and not just punish him when he fails.

On the other hand, this new plan will
have no affect whatever on the elimina-
tion of students who are found incapable of
benefitting from college work, or unwill-
ing to meet the required standards. The
rule for elimination of students who fail
in more than a certain proportion of their
work will continue to operate just as in
the past.

The new remedial program is not de-
signed to keep inferior students in school,
but only to give a fair chance to those who
are willing to work and show that they
can make passing grades if their handi-
caps are removed.

There is to be no lowering of scholastic
standards.

A number of University students, par-
ticularly the League of Young Democrats,
attacked the new fee, and an Oklahoma
City newspaper criticized it editorially.
However, the criticisms were substantially
refuted when full details of the new pro-
gram were explained.

Members of the University administra-
tion are enthusiastic about the possibili-
ties. They believe that the plan will pre-
vent many failures and prove of great ben-
efit to a large number of students.