The University president answers questions heard most frequently

Have the Army and Navy “taken over” the University for training purposes?

No, not at all. On the contrary, every Army or Navy man sent here is a student in the University of Oklahoma, enrolled by the University, and taught by University professors. Except for the fact that they are subject to military discipline and responsible in military matters to their commanding officers, in all other regards the students of the Army and Navy are like any civilian student, so far as the University of Oklahoma is concerned. Furthermore, most of the Navy students were already in civilian status at the University of Oklahoma, or in other Oklahoma colleges. All of the Army trainees were either high school graduates, some were graduates of select preparatory schools, or college men sent here for training.

What is the status of the young men assigned to the University campus in the Army Specialized Training Program and the Naval Training Program?

As I just said, they are students of the University of Oklahoma. The Navy, R.O.T.C. men continue their regular courses; that is, some are going to be newspaper men, others lawyers, many engineers. They will continue and get their degree. All V-1 and V-7 students may continue toward their degrees if they so desire. Those in the special V-12 program, of course, will take the Navy curriculum. However, the Navy curriculum is essentially a civilian curriculum and no changes are made in the courses given for the Navy, as against those given by the University. That is the reason, of course, why we are combining the Navy and civilian terms. The Army trainees, because they go to school twelve weeks and take a special curriculum, do not attend classes with civilians. The men will be here for varied lengths of time, those in the Navy, in general, being here for a longer period of time. In both cases, the Army and the Navy regard men sent to the Army Specialized Training Program Units, or the Army College Training Units, as primarily college students. The Army has granted to the Army Specialized Training Program, the third highest priority, it being succeeded only by Officer Candidate School and Aviation Cadet Training. The N.R.O.T.C. men will have the status of midshipmen, and so will the medical students of the University’s medical school.

How are these young men selected?

They were selected by screening boards. The Army trainees consisted of enlisted reservists who had been in college and who had been sent to various camps for a thirteen weeks’ processing, or college men who were found to be qualified for advanced training. In the case of the Navy, the N.R.O.T.C. proved the basis, and of course the V-1 and V-7 also were a large part of the nucleus for the V-12 Training Program. The additional trainees for the Navy came from high school students who had successfully passed the V-12 test given last April, and from a limited number of men who qualified by screening out processes in the fleet.

What effect does their presence on the campus have on housing facilities for other students?

Practically none. The large dormitory units have been taken over by the University for housing the trainees. Most of the better, privately owned rooming houses continue to take University students, and will do so this fall. We will, ourselves, take over a considerable number of fraternity houses and large houses, and operate them for civilian students. We especially will do so for freshman men and freshman women. We are already seeing the effect of the smaller units in the Roberta Lawson House for freshman women. The morale is much higher, and the personal attention that the girls get from the University Counselor is naturally much greater than before.

What steps have been taken by the University to assure civilian students living quarters of regular University standards?

Curiously enough, the living standards of students in the University of Oklahoma this fall will be higher than ever before. Most of the sub-standard houses which we had to use during the period of greatest enrollment have gone into the National Housing Agency conversion program. Better houses have stayed with the University and are still available. There is space, for instance, among these privately owned houses for a thousand civilian men, not to count the other houses the University has leased, or in the process of leasing. The fraternities, as you know, asked that their activities be frozen as soon as any of the houses were taken over by the University to house trainees. This was done by the University in fairness to the fraternities which had patriotically given up their houses. Many of these houses will be available either for additional housing for trainees or for University students, either men or women. Furthermore, the National Housing Agency is building for the University seven dormitories and a dining room, and a recreational center for nine hundred students. It is to replace the housing removed from the University by virtue of the conversion program, since most of the houses being converted had formerly housed University students. These dormitories will be fire-proof, and after the war we hope to use them for the housing of all freshman men in the University. The Counselor of Men and the Counselor of Women have taken charge of the general matter of assignment of student housing. I can say now, positively, that we will have not only ample housing for University students, but the best housing we have ever had.

How much have the Naval bases near Norman affected the student environment at the University?

Practically not at all. The Naval bases are not a part of the University of Oklahoma, as some people mistakenly believe. The Navy USO Centers are down town, and many of the enlisted men either utilize the facilities on the bases for their entertainment, or go to Oklahoma City. Some few do use the University corner, but it is a very small number, indeed.

Have conditions been such as to require any abnormal restrictions on students in the campus area?

Not at all. As a matter of fact, it has been positively amazing how little the life of students at the University has been affected by the Naval installations around Norman. The students have their own social life, and such special events as are given for the cadets of the Navy are under strict supervision and chaperonyage under what is known as the cadet plan, in which the specially selected girls are taken in buses provided by the Navy to the dances, a limited number a month, and brought back to the campus after a stated period. The campus area has remained essentially campus.

Are recreation facilities maintained exclusively for students?

Yes. Occasionally the University sponsors certain social activities for Navy personnel, but it is in accordance with the generally accepted USO standards. Miss Ima James has done a marvelous job, and so has Miss Virginia Reinecke, in seeing that the rights of University students have been fully maintained.

What is the fall schedule of the University?

The State Regents for Higher Education set as a starting date for all Oklahoma in-
The University's Schedule

Students may enroll on these dates:

Autumn Session—September 3 and 4, 1943.
Winter Semester—November 4, 5 and 6.
Spring Semester—March 2, 3 and 4.

The programs, of course, are transitory. They are, as a rule, for the duration plus six months in length. They, of course, should lead after the war to the training of veterans whose college training was interrupted. And, of course, indirectly, the fact that our housing space has been taken by the National Housing Agency resulted in the construction of the new dormitories, which will give us the finest dormitory plan for men in the state. Our task after the war will be to complete the plan for women's dormitories, an addition to those we already have. There will probably be some benefit to the University in the fact that we are obtaining a great deal of experience in training people of a common, high level, because all of the men sent here in the armed services are the cream of the college crop throughout the country. We will probably learn that we can modify our curriculum considerably and profit by the modification. There will, of course, be some physical improvements on the campus that result from the training programs that will be permanent in nature.

How has the war affected the cost of attending the University for the average student?

Cost of tuition—none. Rooms remain amazingly low in cost. The cost of food, however, has gone up, not considerably, but appreciably above the cost two or three years ago. Even so, the cost of board and room in Norman is probably lower than any where else in the state, except in similar college communities.

What about fraternities?

The fraternity men, when we approached them in regard to renting their buildings, were unanimous in demanding that we freeze the activities of fraternities, such as rushing, pledging, dances, and so on, and no fraternity would negotiate with us until we made an agreement to this effect. So, as soon as we rented the first fraternity houses for the services, we complied with our agreement with the fraternity men and froze the activities of the fraternities. Certain fraternities are continuing to go on, even though they have no rush activities, and three or four are living in one house. We are encouraging this because we, of course, want the fraternity system to resume after the war.

What about sororities?

They are not affected. They will continue as they have in the past. Perhaps the greatest change is the fact that they have doubled the number of rushes they have ever had before.

Has the University outlined special courses for training young people to take jobs important to the war effort?

Beginning in 1940, the University instructed courses designed to fit men for work in war industries. Among such courses were oxy-acetylene and arc welding, work in aircraft industry and ship building. These courses were given in the engineering shops under the direction of Professor Robert A. Hardin. More than nine hundred students have completed this course and have been placed in the various shipyards and aircraft industries over the country.