

Chapter 14

“Fewer flappers and jelly beans”

1924-1926

Although funding remained inadequate, the 1924-25 school year opened with more personnel stability than in earlier years. With several exceptions, the department heads returned. Ray Ballard, a 1923 graduate of Phillips University, replaced Howard Williams as professor of physical education and coach of most of Northeastern's athletic teams. In the history department, Jessie Helen Sims, B.J. and M.A., University of Missouri, replaced Ermine Owen as an associate professor of history. In 1921-22 Sims had served briefly as dean of women. Alpha Graham, critic supervisor for junior high, was appointed dean of women. Several months after the beginning of the fall semester, Ina Knerr, librarian since 1922, resigned to accept a position at the University of Arkansas.¹ Fall enrollment exceeded 500, and Mr. Emerson reported enrollment in the extension department was “growing fast.” The new school year would have been off to an excellent start except “while President Hammond and his family were in church Monday evening, some one stold [*sic.*] all of his chickens—excepting one old ‘setting’ hen.”²

While sports were a major part of life at Northeastern since its establishment, during 1924 the athletic program experienced a transformation. In the spring semester, an editorial in the *Northeastern* urged the athletic council or the student body to select a name for the school's teams. “Northeastern should have a name for her athletic teams so that the student body and citizens of Tahlequah could speak of Northeastern's teams not as ‘Our boys’ or ‘The Town Team,’ but as some characteristic or distinguishing name,” the writer asserted.³ By the fall the “Pedagogues,” “Normalites,” and “N-Men” were heard and seen less frequently as more people associated Northeastern with its Native American antecedents. “Redmen” and “Redskins” were used interchangeably

¹ “Miss Knerr Resigns,” *Arrow-Democrat*, 2 October 1924, 3. “Dean Addresses Women,” *Northeastern*, 23 September 1924, 1.

² “College Notes,” *Arrow-Democrat*, 11 September 1924, 1. “College Notes,” *Arrow-Democrat*, 18 September 1924, 1. “College Notes,” *Arrow-Democrat*, 25 September 1924, 1. “College Notes,” *Arrow-Democrat*, 2 October 1924, 1.

³ “Name Our Athletic Teams,” *Northeastern*, 19 February 1924, 2.

for several years. Another name dropped during the four years of the Ford administration was resurrected after Hammond assumed leadership of Northeastern. In the school's official documents "the Northeastern Athletic Field," built under the supervision of President Gable, was again called "Gable Athletic Field."

In announcing the hiring of the new coach, the local newspaper reported, "In Coach, Ray Ballard, we have a prince. No coach has better training. He, for several years, was director of Athletics at Phillips University. Prior to coming to Phillips he took a special course in Athletics at Notre Dame under the renowned athletic instructor, Knute Rockne, and also a special course in Basket Ball at Wisconsin University, under Dr. Meanwell."⁴

While the editor of the *Tahlequah Arrow-Democrat* was often guilty of unrestrained boosterism, his comment in September that "Athletics at Northeastern is being placed on a firm foundation" may have had a basis in fact. The team's opening game against the University of Arkansas did not inspire confidence although Northeastern did manage to cross their opponent's goal line once. The final score was 54 to 6.⁵ In mid-October the local Kiwanis Club voted to sponsor the college football team. Members attended a Friday morning pep rally and persuaded most businessmen to close their establishments so they and their employees could support the team Friday at 2 p.m. when Northeastern met perennial powerhouse Southeastern. Led by the school band and Kiwanians, the "entire city and college" marched through Tahlequah to Gable Field. Although Northeastern finished on the short end of a 21 to 7 score, the game was a moral victory for the home team which averaged twenty pounds a man less than the visitors.⁶

November 21 marked the high point of the football season and the first homecoming football game, a tradition that continues into the twenty-first century. After losing the first four games of the season, the Tahlequah eleven faced a team from Kansas City University in Northeastern's first homecoming game. Pre-game festivities began Thursday night with a mass rally at which team captain Henry Littlefield of Tahlequah, Coach Ballard, and President Hammond fired up the crowd. The following morning at

⁴ "College Notes," *Arrow-Democrat*, 11 September 1924, 1.

⁵ "College Notes," *Arrow-Democrat*, 25 September 1924, 1. "College Notes," *Arrow-Democrat*, 2 October 1924, 1.

⁶ "Kiwanians Back Northeastern Foot Ball Team," *Arrow-Democrat*, 16 October 1924, 1. "College Notes," *Arrow-Democrat*, 23 October 1924, 1.

an alumni assembly, Jack Paden, a member of the class of 1913, praised the students' spirit and expressed his appreciation for the homecoming idea. At 1 p.m., the Northeastern fans gathered at the end of the pavement below the campus. With the green and white float of Homecoming Queen Margaret Sims, a Keota freshman, leading the way, the students paraded through Tahlequah and returned to Gable Field where Sims was crowned just before kick-off. There the local newspaper editor predicted, "the Redmen are prepared to put up the biggest fight that was ever staged on the college gridiron."

In September, Northeastern coeds had organized a pep club to root their team on. Initially, the group had no name, but by Homecoming they had adopted a name and had inspired the male students to form their own cheering squad. With the Northeastern "Pepettes" and "Peppers" cheering their team to victory, the Redmen shut out the Kansas City team 10 to 0. Northeastern won two of its four remaining games and finished the season with three wins and six losses. In assessing the season, the sports editor of the *Tsa-La-Gi*, wrote, "Coach Ray Ballard was a good example for his athletic teams and created a loyalty hitherto unknown at Northeastern."⁷

Ballard's season did not end with the last football game. He not only coached Northeastern's basketball team, but he and his wife also refereed high school games, and he planned and directed the fifth annual interscholastic high school basketball tournament on Northeastern's campus in late February 1925. Ballard also fielded a baseball team in the spring for the first time in a number of years for students not interested in track or tennis, which he also coached. In his spare time Ballard directed the second annual track, field, and academic festival at Northeastern, April 16-18. Athletes from forty state high schools competed not only in track and field, but also in baseball and tennis. Academic competition was equally varied, ranging from orchestra to individual contests in speech, music, and a variety of other academic subjects.⁸

⁷ Students of Northeastern State Teachers College, *Tsa-La-Gi 1925* (Tahlequah, Oklahoma: Students of Northeastern State Teachers College, 1925), 100. "Homecoming Day for Northeastern," *Arrow-Democrat*, 20 November 1924, 1. "Home Coming Day Great Success," *Arrow-Democrat*, 20 November 1924, 1. "Girls Pep Club New Organization," *Northeastern*, 23 September 1924, 3. "Homecoming Day to Be Outstanding in College History," *Northeastern*, 21 November 1924, 1.

⁸ "College Notes," *Arrow-Democrat*, 8 January 1925, 2. "College Notes," *Arrow-Democrat*, 15 January 1925, 1. "Basket Ball Meet Is Scheduled on February 26, 27 and 28," *Arrow-Democrat*, 22 January 1925, 1. "Redskins Will Play Base Ball This Year," *Arrow-Democrat*, 12 March 1925, 1.

Sports was only one aspect of Northeastern's extracurricular activities. The second annual Northeastern Carnival on Friday, February 13, was declared a success, with Zula King, a Tahlequah junior, reigning as Carnival Queen.⁹ In 1924, the Blue Pencil, a literary club sponsored by Lois Gillis, was organized to "inspire its members to do original and creative work." The poetry and prose of five members of the organization were featured in the 1925 *Tsa-La-Gi*.¹⁰

The 1924-25 school year brought no major changes in the routine of life at Northeastern. State financial support for the college had been slowly increasing since the war years, but enrollment had grown over 250% while appropriations had barely doubled. The building that had once housed the Cherokee Female Seminary remained the only classroom building on campus. A story that appeared in the *Oklahoma City Times* written by city editor Walter A. Morrow graphically illustrated Northeastern's financial situation. Using statistics from a report of the state budget officer to the governor, Morrow figured per capita educational costs for each of the state-supported schools. The following table charts his findings:

Wilburton School of Mines and Metallurgy	\$476.05
Oklahoma A&M College	\$299.07
University of Oklahoma	\$237.39
Warner School of Agriculture	\$199.09
Claremore Military Academy	\$399.18
Negro A&M College at Langston	\$122.99
Average for OU, the College for Women at Chickasha, and the six Teachers' Colleges	\$153.06
Average for A&M colleges	\$254.32
Average for schools located at Miami, Claremore, Tonkawa, Langston, Wilburton	\$204.82
Northwestern State Teachers' College	\$152.89—highest of Preliminary state teachers' colleges
Northeastern State Teachers' College	\$77.44—lowest of the state teachers' colleges

Northeastern was the most poorly funded state-supported school; the article observed, "Five students may be sent to the normal school

"Track and Field Carnival to Be Record Smasher," *Arrow-Democrat*, 9 April 1925, 1. "Track and Field Meet, April 16, 17, and 18th," *Arrow-Democrat*, 16 April 1925, 1. "School Meet Great Success Here," *Arrow-Democrat*, 23 April 1925, 1. "Track Begins with Meet at Arkansas," *Northeastern*, 20 February 1925, 1. "Plans for Track and Field Meet Near Competition," *Northeastern*, 27 March 1925, 1.

⁹ *Tsa-La-Gi* 1925, 128.

¹⁰ *Tsa-La-Gi* 1925, 88-94. *Northeastern State Teachers College Bulletin: Announcement 1931-1932* (Tahlequah, Oklahoma: Northeastern State Teachers College, 1931), 17.

at Tahlequah for what one may be sent to Wilburton with a savings of \$57.65 to boot." Actually, Morrow's arithmetic was wrong. Six students could go to Northeastern for the cost of one at Wilburton with \$11.41 left over.¹¹ In remarks at a Kiwanis luncheon honoring Northeastern's basketball team, President Hammond reported on his efforts in Oklahoma City to "secure much needed appropriation for the college."¹²

Preliminary legislative action seemed less than encouraging. In early February, the *Daily Oklahoman* reported, "Northeastern State Normal has asked more than \$100,000 for buildings and repairs for buildings. The [appropriations] committee may recommend \$40,000 for this purpose and \$10,000 for equipment."¹³ Although its request was slashed by almost half, Northeastern received a substantial increase in funding. The legislature appropriated \$152,412.99 for Northeastern for the 1925-26 school year. The previous year's funding had been \$88,188.12. Forty-five thousand dollars of the money authorized was designated for "buildings and equipment."¹⁴ Before the end of 1925, work was well advanced on a gymnasium and conversion and expansion of the bathhouse into a manual arts building. With shower facilities in the new gymnasium, the bathhouse was no longer needed. Marion E. Franklin, head of the manual arts department, supervised the construction of a 42 by 60-foot addition to the north side of the old bathhouse with a budget of \$3,000. When the addition was completed in 1926, the manual arts department, except for mechanical drawing, moved from the administration building to its new facility.¹⁵

Despite the inadequate funding, Northeastern continued to expand its offerings. In the spring of 1925, courses were added in fruit growing, floriculture, and home mechanics.¹⁶ Since Northeastern instructors taught most of the hours of the day, they had assigned classrooms, like public school instructors. Many crossed academic boundaries and taught in other disciplines, and all

¹¹ "\$476 Per Student at Wilburton," *Arrow Democrat*, 29 January 1925, 1. "Summary of Enrollment from the Administrative Notebook of John Vaughan," University Archives, John Vaughan Library, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

¹² "Redskins Are Guests of Kiwanis Club," *Arrow Democrat*, 5 February 1925, 1.

¹³ "Sweeping Cut Is Made in All School Money," *Daily Oklahoman*, 11 February 1925, 1. "Legislative Ax Rests After 'Chopping' School Money: Wants of All Are Cut Down at One Whack," *Daily Oklahoman*, 19 February 1925, 7.

¹⁴ John Vaughan's enrollment statistics. Records available in Archives, Northeastern State University.

¹⁵ *Tsa-La-Gi*, 1926, 86. "Professor Franklin Builds Department," *Northeastern*, 14 April 1930, 1.

¹⁶ "College Notes," *Arrow Democrat*, 8 January 1925, 2.

had heavy extracurricular responsibilities. Although she was hired to teach history, Jessie Helen Sims also handled the journalism courses, coached the debate team, and directed the junior-senior play. Active in the Oklahoma Educational Association, Sims joined with faculty members at other Oklahoma colleges in establishing a journalism department within OEA and served as its first chairman. She not only organized its program for the state meeting in February, she was also a major force in the establishment of an Intercollegiate Press Association of Oklahoma to improve the standards of college journalism.¹⁷

Northeastern sent a large contingent to the annual OEA meeting in Oklahoma City, February 12-14. In addition to Sims, Northeastern's dean of women, Alpha Graham, chaired a session. M.E. Franklin was on the Industrial Arts program, and L.H. Bally delivered the principal address at the health session.¹⁸ At Northeastern, Sims implemented the ideas she advocated at the OEA meeting. To give her journalism students real-world experience, she persuaded the editor of the *Tahlequah Arrow-Democrat* to allow her class to write and edit the entire April 30th issue of the city newspaper.¹⁹

Northeastern's 16th convocation featured all the elements that had become part of the school's commencement tradition. On class day the seniors assembled on the lawn just below the southwestern corner of the administration building in their traditional spot in the shade of the towering walnut tree. Almost forty years earlier when the contractor was preparing to construct the female seminary building, surveyors placed the tree within the foundation of the building. Gideon Morgan, one of the three commissioners in charge of the construction of the second Cherokee female seminary building, had planted the tree a few years earlier and did not want to see it cut down. He persuaded the surveyors to move the building twenty feet to the north to spare the tree. It continued to grow, eventually providing shade for the thirteen graduating seniors sharing their final meal as classmates. Although they did not eat under the shade of the walnut tree, sixty-five students earned life

¹⁷ "Timely Topics of Northeastern College," *Arrow-Democrat*, 22 January 1925, 1. "Journalism Students Publish This Issue of Town Newspaper," *Arrow-Democrat*, 30 April 1925, 1.

¹⁸ "To Attend O.E.A.," *Arrow-Democrat*, 12 February 1925, 1. "College Represented At Teachers Meeting In Oklahoma City," *Northeastern*, 20 February 1925, 1.

¹⁹ "College Journalism Class to Publish *Arrow-Democrat*," *Arrow-Democrat*, 23 April 1925, 1. "Journalism Students Publish This Issue of Town Newspaper," *Arrow-Democrat*, 30 April 1925, 1.

certificates at the May commencement.²⁰

Summer enrollment continued to soar; 1,864 students, the official figure for the session which ran from June 1 to July 31, were 273 more than the previous summer. Most of the summer activities were routine; the chautauqua ran its normal five days beginning on Monday afternoon, July 13, and the faculty entertained the county superintendents at a banquet at the Sycamore Inn on July 18. Northeastern's men's quartet made an appearance in Bristow that was out-of-the-ordinary. Their one hour and fifteen minute performance at 9 p.m., Saturday, July 18, at the Roland Hotel was broadcast over KFRU (Kind Friends Remember Us), a 500-watt radio station that had made its first broadcast six months earlier. Two days before, ten women representing Tau Theta Kappa sorority presented a program of Northeastern songs and yells on the same station. Late in the summer session, the recently appointed educational director of the Oklahoma Fish and Game Commission addressed 1,600 Northeastern students urging the teachers to use their classrooms to promote conservation and preservation of natural resources. President Hammond promised to arrange subsequent conferences as the commission developed its educational program. In the summer commencement, 30 students were awarded bachelor's degrees, and 116 earned life teaching certificates.²¹ More than 240 students enrolled in the August intersession.²²

The 1925-1926 academic year began with minor changes in the college's administrative structure. Eula Fullerton replaced Alpha Graham as dean of women. Fullerton had a B.A. from the University of Oklahoma and lacked only a thesis to complete an M.A. Sue Thornton was hired to head the Music Department. She had earned a B.A. and a B.Mus. from the University of Oklahoma. Dorothy Cleaveland, B.A., St. Lawrence University, A.M. Cornell, and B.L.S., University of Illinois, accepted a position as librarian, replacing Ina B. Knerr, who had resigned the previous fall. No other

²⁰ "Survey Changed to Give Tree Chance," *Daily Oklahoman*, 5 April 1925, sec. D, 13. "Northeastern Stands As Memorial To Work Of Pioneer Settlers," *Daily Oklahoman Sunday Supplement Educational Number*, 2 August 1925, 27. "Walnut Tree Owes Its Existence to Mr. Gideon Morgan," *Arrow-Democrat*, 30 April 1925, 1. "Northeastern State Teachers College Commencement," *Arrow-Democrat* 21 May 1925, 1. Also see obituary *Cherokee County Democrat-Star*, 26 March 1937, 1.

²¹ "Tahlequah Chautauqua Assembly," *Arrow-Democrat*, 2 July 1925, 1. "College Men's Quartet to Broadcast at Bristow, Okla.," *Arrow-Democrat*, 16 July 1925, 1. "[Untitled]," *Arrow-Democrat*, 23 July 1925, 1. "Spoke at Northeastern," *Arrow-Democrat*, 30 July 1925, 1.

²² John Vaughan's enrollment statistics. Records available in Archives, Northeastern State University.

personnel changes occurred among department heads or administrative positions. President and Mrs. Hammond gave a reception at their home in honor of the new personnel attended by 150 members of the faculty and community Friday afternoon, September 18.²³

During the 1925-26 school year the student body organized and selected a student council with representatives from each class, one councilman-at-large, and a president, vice president, and secretary-treasurer. Ervin Gibson, a sophomore from Decatur, Arkansas, was selected as the council's first president. The new student association handled "matters purely of interest to the student body" and was in charge of all mass meetings of Northeastern students.²⁴

Nestled in the foothills of the Ozarks, Northeastern was the most inaccessible of the major state-supported institutions of higher learning, a point made by Governor Robertson in 1923 when he proposed removal of the school to Muskogee. When Northeastern was established in 1909, a single rail line connected the city with the rest of the state. Roads were little better than they had been at the time of the Civil War. Before World War I, automobiles were a novelty, but in the postwar years, the increasing sales of the Model T and other horseless vehicles compelled the legislature to improve the state's highways. By the end of 1925, the road to Muskogee had been straightened, shortened, and graveled, and work was scheduled to begin early the next year on a route north along the Illinois River connecting Tahlequah to the state highway between Tulsa and Arkansas.

As the 1920s progressed so did the number of newspaper stories mentioning that members of the community were "motoring" to Muskogee, Wagoner, Tulsa or elsewhere. Roads connecting Tahlequah with the wider world remained primitive throughout the rest of the decade, but Northeastern's links to other Oklahoma cities and towns were improving. The future would present other threats to the survival of the college, but its geographic isolation would no longer be among them.²⁵

An issue that continued to affect the quality of life for students

²³ *Tsa-La-Gi* 1925, 21. Student Body of Northeastern State Teachers College, *Tsa-La-Gi* 1926, (Tahlequah, Oklahoma: Student Body of Northeastern State Teachers College, 1926), 28, 40, 44. "Reception to New Northeast. College Teachers," *Arrow-Democrat*, 24 September 1925, 1.

²⁴ *Tsa-La-Gi* 1925, 46. "Its Home Again," *Northeastern*, 30 October 1930, 2.

²⁵ "Scenic Highway Completed to Tahlequah," *Arrow-Democrat*, 17 December 1925, 1. "The Scenic Highway," *Arrow-Democrat*, 25 March 1926, 1.

in Tahlequah was called to the attention of the Chamber of Commerce by Marion Franklin, chairman of the student housing committee. He spoke of "so many homes in Tahlequah where students of Northeastern secure lodging not being modern, which students prefer" and suggested, "many of our home owners can be induced to improve them if it can be shown where such will profit, and add to their own convenience."²⁶

The 1925 football season began with students and townspeople "running amuck with optimism over the prospects of the Redmen." Unlike some earlier seasons when Northeastern's teams took the field with little practice and few veteran players, Coach Ballard had conducted grueling practices for a month before the first game and built his team of "lusty chaps with an eager desire" around a core of five or six returning lettermen. The employment of Emmett McLemore as assistant football coach reflected the increasing emphasis on football at Northeastern. He had lettered in four sports at Haskell Indian School in Kansas and played two seasons on the professional football team of Jim Thorpe, Oklahoma's most famous athlete.

The season opened at 3 p.m., Friday, September 25, at Gable Field. Many businesses in Tahlequah, including the two banks, closed for the game to allow their personnel to root for Northeastern. The game against the Oklahoma City University Goldbugs on a field turned muddy and slick by torrential rain ended with Northeastern eking out a 3 to 0 victory. Although most games were close, the Redmen won only two more, lost five, and tied two. In the second annual homecoming game against East Central, Northeastern held the team from Ada to a 6 to 6 tie.

Homecoming festivities were described as "bigger and better than ever before." Students, alums, and team boosters attended a mass meeting and bonfire on Thursday night and a special assembly sponsored by the Kiwanis Club for the opposing team, Friday morning. Pre-game activities culminated in a parade from the east entrance of the campus through town, returning to campus in time for the 3 p.m. kickoff at Gable Field. Many campus organizations built floats to escort Homecoming Queen Marguerite Sweatt, a Fort Gibson freshman, in the parade. Following the game, various classes and organizations held a reception at the community club house, and

²⁶ "Chamber Of Commerce Holds Rousing Get-To-Gether Meeting," *Arrow-Democrat*, 18 February 1926, 1.

the Red Red Rose, an organization of male teachers, gave a banquet that evening. The season ended on a high note on the Friday following Thanksgiving when Northeastern defeated Northwestern 20 to 0.²⁷

Coach Ballard had little time to savor his season-ending football triumph, for the next Monday, he issued his first official call for students interested in playing basketball to report for practice. Although Northeastern had never had a winning season, the optimistic coach publically announced his team would take the state championship. With a team anchored by six returning lettermen and seven of the best prospects over six-feet, Ballard began a regimen of daily drills and conditioning exercises. The 1926 team was built around its captain, 6' 3" forward and center Jess Morgan. The previous season Morgan had scored 163 points, an average of 12 per game before he was injured at mid-season.²⁸ Despite the coach's prediction and the hopes of the team's fans, Northeastern's basketball season proved to be lackluster. Defeat on the gridiron and court had not diminished the support of the Tahlequah Kiwanis Club. In recognition of the contributions of the organization, the *Tsa-La-Gi* staff voted to dedicate the 1926 annual to the club's members. The selection of the club was the first time in the history of the publication that the *Tsa-La-Gi* was not dedicated to an individual.²⁹

By the mid-1920s many Americans feared the moral standards that had guided the nation were under assault. The company that provided the annual Chautauqua advertised that it offered acts free from threatening foreign influence. In promoting its spring and summer 1926 terms, Northeastern officials underscored the moral and religious atmosphere encouraged by the college and the constructive nature of small-town life. "Tahlequah is one of the best cities to be found anywhere in which to bring up a family or to train young people," according to the school's announcements. Tahlequah's five churches and the courses offered by the college in

²⁷ *Tsa-La-Gi* 1926, 84. Football Records, 1912-1929, University Archives, John Vaughan Library, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma. "Football," *Arrow-Democrat*, 17 September 1925, 1. "Tackle! Back Up Northeastern Boys Friday Afternoon," *Arrow-Democrat*, 24 September 1925, 1. "Northeastern Defeats Oklahoma City's Strong University Team 3 to 0," *Arrow-Democrat*, 1 October 1925, 1. "Northeastern Romps on Northwestern to the Tune of 20 to 0," *Arrow-Democrat*, 3 December 1925, 1. "East Side to Stage Big Day," *Daily Oklahoman*, 8 November 1925, sec. B, 2. "Go Out and Help Our Boys Win This Game," *Arrow-Democrat*, 19 November 1925, 1.

²⁸ "Redskins Have Vague Visions of Title Team," *Daily Oklahoman*, 1 December 1925, 12.

²⁹ "Athletics," *Northeastern*, 11 February 1926, 1.

the Old and New Testaments testified to the Christian environment students would encounter at Northeastern, the school's promotional literature suggested.

A dean of women devoted her full time to ensure "that the young ladies who attend Northeastern State Teachers College may have the best care and protection." Parents were assured that "the Dean keeps in close touch with every young woman in school and sees to it that only proper places, under the best conditions, are selected as their homes." Specifically, "young women are not permitted to engage rooms in the homes where men are rooming. No exceptions will be made to this rule, unless the matter is taken up with the Dean of Women and meets with her approval."

In the fall of 1925, the school's housing committee required residents of the town offering accommodations to students to provide and maintain a permanent record of housing conditions.³⁰ To ensure that everyone was familiar with the school's policies the Dean of Women, Eula Fullerton, invited women in Tahlequah who rented rooms to students to a meeting to discuss "the many problems confronting students living away from home." Edna Holland, former dean of women and now head of the Tahlequah City Hospital, explained the rooming conditions required by the National Health Association to the seventy-five women who attended the meeting. President Hammond emphasized that accreditation by the North Central Association was based on these requirements as well as scholastic standards. He also stressed, "I believe there are fewer flappers and jelly beans [the male equivalent of a flapper] in Northeastern than in any other college in the state." M.E. Franklin reemphasized a theme he had been stressing for several years—the need for more boarding houses near the college with modern facilities.³¹

Later in the fall women who rented to college students formed the "Matrons' Club of Northeastern College" to standardize housing rules for the places students live.³² In newspaper article in February 1926, headlines proclaimed, "YOUR GIRLS AND BOYS ARE SAFE AT NORTHEASTERN COLLEGE." The editor advised parents, "THAT THIS INSTITUTION DOES NOT ALLOW

³⁰ "Information Blanks," *Arrow-Democrat*, 29 October 1925, 1. "Preliminary Announcement of Northeastern State Teachers College for the Summer Session," *Arrow-Democrat*, 4 February 1926, 1.

³¹ "Open Homes To Students," *Arrow-Democrat*, 23 September 1926, 1. "Welfare Committee Meets Town Women," *Northeastern*, 29 September 1926, 2.

³² "Editorial," *Arrow-Democrat*, 18 November 1926, 1.

STUDENTS TO DRINK, [or] attend wild “Irish-Wake” parties because not so very long ago a young man and a young woman were expelled from this College for doing this very thing.” In conclusion he urged, “Send your boys and girls to Northeastern College at Tahlequah, one institution that absolutely forbids your sons or daughters to ‘tilt the cup,’ and where they are looked after, properly from all standpoints.”³³

Later in the year, school officials required that students be passing at least six hours of course work to be eligible to participate in student activities. To ensure that students had adequate study time, the executive committee of the college designated Tuesday night for club and organization meetings. President Hammond stressed that no organization could meet on any other school night, but he did grant permission for all campus groups to meet in the afternoons. The student welfare committee also decreed, “There will be no car rides for pleasure after 7 o’clock each night for students enrolled in college.” Sitting in cars parked on campus was also considered unacceptable behavior by Bill Hicks, the superintendent of grounds and maintenance, who issued cards directing offending students to report to the dean of women. While officials at Northeastern enforced a myriad of regulations to ensure parents that their children were insulated from the excesses of the Roaring Twenties, they had capitulated to the standards of fashion, which dictated that coeds bob their hair and shorten their skirts. By 1926, so few female students had long hair that a reporter for the student newspaper devoted a column to the few hold-outs.³⁴

The cost of higher education was a little more than it had been when the school was established sixteen years earlier. Although the state still charged no tuition, the incidental fee had risen to \$4, and a \$1 library fee had been imposed. Modest laboratory and breakage fees were assessed in a few courses. Students were admitted to all school athletic contests, lyceums, and other student activities sponsored by the college at no cost. Room and board ranged from \$5.50 to \$8 a week, and rooms for light housekeeping could be secured for between \$8 and \$15 per month.

³³ “YOUR GIRLS AND BOYS ARE SAFE AT NORTHEASTERN COLLEGE,” *Arrow-Democrat*, 11 February 1926, 4.

³⁴ “‘I Mind My Papa,’ Says One Long Haired Lass; Another Says Samson Is Her Ideal,” *Northeastern*, 29 September 1926, 1. “Faculty Regulates Student Activities,” *Northeastern*, 17 January 1927, 3. “Pleasure Rides End At 7 Is Regulation,” *Northeastern*, 31 January 1927, 3. “The Deans Office is Open To People Who Sit In Cars,” *Summer Times*, 13 June 1927, 1.

For those who could not afford the cost of lodging in Tahlequah, tents remained an option. During the 1926 summer term about twenty-five students and their families camped out on the east side of campus in a grove of trees behind the auditorium. Whether the tents were rented from the college or owned by the campers, most had wooden floors and sides. Inhabitants of the tent community claimed their accommodations did not affect their schoolwork, and one observer "thought that the lights shimmering through the canvas bespeak of gypsy camp or medicine show."³⁵

Many rural schools began in mid-summer and ended in late March or early April. Their schedules prevented their teachers from completing Northeastern's summer term or enrolling in the college's second spring term. To make on-campus courses available to these rural teachers, the school's executive committee created a second spring term which began April 26 and ended June 25, overlapping the end of the regular second spring term and the beginning of the summer term. Approximately 150 students enrolled in the session, and R.K. McIntosh, the college registrar, called the enrollment "very satisfactory" and predicted that the special session would be "established permanently." Although the session taxed the physical and human resources of the college, it was offered the following year with the term beginning on April 25, 1927. Since classes were not scheduled in advance, no schedule was printed. Student demand determined the courses that were offered. Northeastern pioneered the overlapping second spring term, which was soon adopted by other state colleges.³⁶

Northeastern's spring 1926 semester featured events that were by now becoming traditional. The third annual campus carnival, sponsored by the *Tsa-La-Gi* yearbook, was held in the gym on March 3 and featured the coronation of Georgia Mosier, a Tahlequah coed, as Carnival Queen. Several months later, the yearbook staff sponsored a Charleston dance contest at the Sequoyah Theater to help underwrite the cost of the 1926 *Tsa-La-Gi*.³⁷ The annual high school basketball tournament, February 25-27,

³⁵ "Students Live In Tents," *Arrow-Democrat*, 17 June 1926, 1. "Deserted Village Now Stands Where Busy People Lived in the Summer," *Northeastern*, 11 November 1926, 4.

³⁶ "Preliminary Announcement of Northeastern State Teachers College for the Summer Session," *Arrow-Democrat*, 4 February 1926, 1. "YOUR GIRLS AND BOYS ARE SAFE AT NORTHEASTERN COLLEGE," *Arrow-Democrat*, 11 February 1926, 4. "Special Spring Term Has 150 Enrollment," *Northeastern*, 13 July 1926, [3]. "Special Term To Open Here On April 25," *Northeastern*, 23 March 1927, 1.

³⁷ "Charleston Contest As College Benefit," *Arrow-Democrat*, 6 May 1926, 2.

again taxed the facilities of Tahlequah and the college as teams from northeastern Oklahoma played about fifty games in three days.³⁸ The third annual Northeastern Oklahoma Interscholastic Meet, held in mid-April, brought students from nineteen high schools to Northeastern's campus for competition in sports and academics.³⁹

While Northeastern's athletic teams had disappointing seasons, the school's debaters made 1926 a season to remember. The school's affirmative and negative teams defeated their opponents in the eastern triangle. Since no school in the western triangle won on both sides of the question, Northeastern teams were proclaimed the state champions. Debating on the topics of tax-exempt securities and child labor, Northeastern's teams lost only one judged competition during the season. Coached by Jessie Helen Sims, a member of a 1916 state high school championship team from Stigler, members of Northeastern's teams had devoted between one and three hours each evening since February preparing for the competition. Although the local paper proclaimed Northeastern's victory as the first state championship in the school's history, the team of Herman Crow of Adrian and Charles H. English of Tahlequah had won the state championship in the Triangular Debate in 1912.⁴⁰

May, the culmination of the academic year, produced a flurry of receptions, dinners, picnics, and other end-of-school activities, including a dinner for the faculty hosted by Pearl C. Crawford's home economics students. On Wednesday, May 19, seventeen seniors received bachelor's degrees and 58 students earned life teaching certificates at Northeastern's seventeenth annual commencement.⁴¹ The regular second semester, spring term ended on Friday following graduation, and the summer term began the next Monday.

While the 1804 students who enrolled were 60 short of the previous summer's total, the figure was well over twice the total enrollment of the regular terms. Summer-term activities included inter-county athletic competition, a chautauqua, the annual conference of northeastern county superintendents, and outings to the river, where Coach Ballard taught swimming three times a week.⁴² The influx of summer students and other activities strained

³⁸ "The Tournament A Huge Success," *Arrow-Democrat*, 4 March 1926, 1.

³⁹ "Muskogee Wins High School Meet," *Arrow-Democrat*, 22 April 1926, 1.

⁴⁰ "N. E. C. Debaters State Champions," *Arrow-Democrat*, 29 April 1926, 1.

⁴¹ "Food Class Entertains," *Arrow-Democrat*, 13 May 1926, 1.

⁴² "Superintendents Convene," *Arrow-Democrat*, 17 June 1926, 1. John Vaughan's enrollment

Northeastern's physical resources.

Classroom space was at a premium, particularly during the first part of the 1926 summer term when rural teachers enrolled in the second spring term were still on campus. Dorothy Cleaveland, the college librarian reported that students checked out an average of 800 books a day, and it took her, plus eight student workers, to pull and reshelve all the titles requested.⁴³

The 1926 summer session marked the beginning of several innovations at Northeastern. Since most of the students were public school teachers attending college to maintain their teaching credentials, a greater percentage of them owned automobiles than the students who attended during the regular semesters. Parking was not yet a problem, but the number of cars on campus prompted college officials to require that students and faculty register them with the dean of women. Three weeks into the term sixteen students and ten faculty members had registered their cars.⁴⁴

The first school newspaper, which appeared several months after the normal was established in 1909, had a life span of two editions (November and December 1909). Over seven years elapsed before the publication of the next campus newspaper. A few issues of the *Northeastern News* were published in 1917, but World War I disrupted the production of campus newspapers until 1919. Publication seems to have been erratic for several years, and the quality of the paper varied from amateurish newsletters with crude graphics to well edited newspapers with better lay-outs than the Tahlequah newspaper. In the summer of 1926, Jessie Helen Sims scrapped the tabloid format that had been used for the past several years and introduced a five-column, newspaper issued every two weeks. The revamped publication retained the name, *The Northeastern*, but in every other way it was dramatically improved. The articles were well written and skillfully edited; the typography was modern with echeloned headlines, multiple decks, multi-column boxes, and varied, but complementary fonts.

Since the school had no budget for publication, Sims was forced to finance the *Northeastern* from advertising revenue and

statistics. Records available in Archives, Northeastern State University. "Instructor Holds Life Saving Badge Awarded in City," *Northeastern*, 13 July 1926, 3. "Chautauqua Concludes With Thursday Program," *Northeastern*, 13 July 1926, 3. "Hold Tournament Next Week," *Arrow-Democrat*, 17 June 1926, 2.

⁴³ "Students Check Out 800 Books Each Day," *Arrow-Democrat*, 17 June 1926, 2.

⁴⁴ "Register All School Cars," *Arrow-Democrat*, 17 June 1926, 2.

subscriptions. She asked students to support the paper by contributing fifty cents a year, and she began a vigorous campaign to attract advertising. By mid-September enough students had subscribed and merchants had contracted for advertisements that the staff was able to publish 2,000 copies of each issue for distribution on campus and to mail to off-campus subscribers.⁴⁵

Sims also sponsored the college yearbook, the *Tsa-La-Gi*, which was supposed to be self-supporting. Despite several fund raising efforts, insufficient revenue had been raised to meet the expenses of the 1926 *Tsa-La-Gi*. Five hundred dollars in pledges and assessments for the annual, which cost \$2,600, had not been collected, and the yearbook's account had to be settled by the college. The 1924 and 1925 editions also had left unpaid deficits. In late September 1926, President Hammond announced that the school would not produce a yearbook for the 1926-27 school year.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ "The College Paper," *Northeastern*, 13 July 1926, 2. "Northeastern," *Northeastern*, 16 September 1926, 2.

⁴⁶ "No Annual To Appear This Year," *Northeastern*, 29 September 1926, 1.