February 10, 2014

Dear OPSU Senior,

Commencement 2014 is nearly here!

All forms to order academic regalia (cap and gown and tassel) and graduation photographs and announcements are available online at the OPSU website: www.opsu.edu. A link to commencement information appears on the home page. Make sure that you comply with due dates assiduously. Valuable information concerning commencement that was covered during senior class meetings and in the remainder of this letter is in the same location.

Rehearsal for commencement will occur at 5:00 p.m. in the Oscar Williams Field House gymnasium on Friday, May 16. At this rehearsal, students will learn about the senior line-up and processional, complete OPSU exit documents, and walk through the receiving line. Rehearsals usually take 90 minutes, depending on the cooperation and number of graduates.

Commencement occurs at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 17 in the Oscar Williams Field House. Seniors should arrive no later than 9:30 a.m. and proceed immediately to the location of their entry line-up. The ceremony itself may last 90 minutes during which time approximately 200 graduates will receive diploma covers.

Commencement is a time of celebration, but it must be tempered with dignity, an important element of the ceremony. Commencement is the outward recognition of a graduate’s academic accomplishment and is to be shared with family members and friends of the seniors and of OPSU. Students should understand that this very public event has a two-fold purpose: first to honor graduates and second to honor OPSU. Therefore, students should remember that commencement is a solemn and dignified event and that celebrations should occur only outside the gym at the conclusion of commencement.

Academic regalia is worn at all commencement exercises, and its roots are shrouded in deep medieval, European, scholarly traditions. No part of seniors’ academic regalia should be altered for the event. Nothing should occur during commencement to detract from the ceremony itself—no tossed beach balls, no blaring air horns, no shooting silly string to pose problems, embarrassment, and hazards for guests, seniors, or OPSU. Students may throw confetti or streamers, but care should even be given even with those merry-makers.

Students unable to attend commencement should inform the Office of Academic Affairs in writing about their intentions before Friday, May 2. Please note that students cannot reserve seating for guests prior to the ceremony. Seating for guests with disabilities will be provided in marked areas on the gym floor. In order to participate in commencement, seniors must have a “zero” balance of all accounts in the OPSU business office.

Courtesy of the president’s office, a post-commencement BBQ will be held on the OPSU plaza, and all graduates and their guests are invited to participate.

If you are a member of the Oklahoma Zeta Chapter of Alpha Chi (AX) and wish to wear academic regalia signifying your membership, go to the Brown’s Graduation website (www.brownsgrad.com), click on the AX link, and order the AX medallion (item number AX 504). Chi Alpha Sigma members may wear their red honor cords indicating membership in that organization. Members of Alpha Zeta may wear their gold and silver honor cords to
commencement. Graduates of the School of Education may wear the light blue cords received during the School of Education’s convocation. If you are an OPSU honor student according to the records of the Office of the Registrar, your school dean will bestow upon you a gold honor cord during the commencement ceremony.

Questions about rehearsal and commencement should be directed to Bobby Jenkins (bjenkins@opsu.edu, 580.349.1376, or Sewell 131), Sara Jane Richter (saraj@opsu.edu, 580.349.1472, 580.338.2357, 580.651.7357, or Hughes-Strong Hall 109) or Tito Aznar (taznar@opsu.edu, 580.349.1418, or Hughes-Strong Hall 113).

Congratulations on your graduation: a job well done!

Sincerely yours,

Sara Jane Richter  
Dean, School of Liberal Arts  
Professor, English  
Commencement Co-Coordinator

Tito Aznar  
Instructor, English  
Commencement Co-Coordinator