

The Case of Lester O'Bannon: What Does "Tenure" Mean?

Background

Born: Lester S. O'Bannon, Stanford, KY, 1894

Graduated: University of Kentucky, 1915, B.M.E

Hired: Asst Professor, UK, Dept. of Mech. Eng., 1920

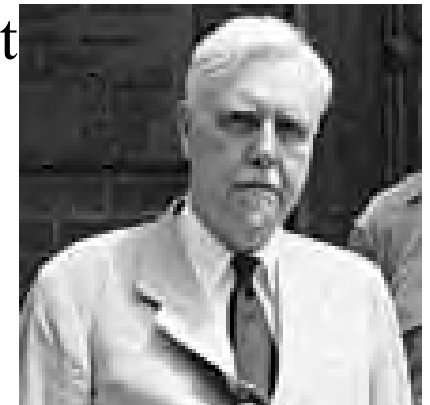
Promoted: From Asst. Prof to (full) Professor, 1927

Appointed: Head, Dept. Mechanical Engineering, 1935

Shortly thereafter, Professor O'Bannon voiced strident criticism of the new Dean of Engineering's ("Colonel" James Graham) plans for construction of several new University buildings. O'Bannon considered he could for a while 'escape' Dean Graham by requesting a temporary transfer to the College of Agr. to help that college with an air conditioning system problem.



Prof. O'Bannon



Dean (Colonel) Graham

Ky General Assembly 1934: Enacted the **tenure** law for the University of Kentucky: "*no president, professor or teacher shall be removed except for incompetency, neglect of or refusal to perform his duty, or for immoral conduct.*" (KRS 164.230)

July 23, 1936- Board of Trustees Approves President's "transfer" of O'Bannon from College of Engineering to College of Agriculture

Dear Mr. O'Bannon:

6/24/36

Your appointment as Research Engineer in the Experiment Station has been confirmed by President McVey. It is to become effective July 1, 1936, at the rate of \$350 a month. This appointment is for the period of one year, expiring June 30, 1937.

Thomas Cooper
Dean and Director

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky met in President McVey's office at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 23, 1936. The members of the Committee present were James Park, R. Miller Holland and Robert G. Gordon. President Frank L. McVey, D. H. Peak, secretary of the Board, and James H. Graham, Dean of the College of Engineering, were present. In the absence of Richard C. Stoll, Mr. Park was elected chairman of the meeting.

Professor L. S. O'Bannon was transferred from the College of Engineering to the College of Agriculture. His salary is to be \$4200 a year. Under the agreement of transfer \$2450 of this is to be paid from Experiment Station Funds and \$1750 from College fund, the charge of \$1750 to be made to Engineering budget.

One Year Later, COE Dean Graham Asserts to O'Bannon That His Transfer to the College of Agriculture is Permanent; (but no confirmation to O'Bannon yet by President that transfer is permanent)

My dear O'Bannon

I have your letter of April 1, wherein you express your wish to transfer for duty within this College next September. My thought that you will continue your present work with the Experiment Station is more than a mere assumption especially as there exists no place for you within the plans for the future development of this College.

Excerpt April 7, 1937

James H. Graham
Dean

June 3, 1937 BOT minutes refer to O'Bannon as now a member of the "Staff" of College of Agriculture's Experiment Station

The Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky met in President McVey's office at the University June 3, 1937, at 10:30 a.m., this being the regular June meeting, continued from Tuesday, June 1, 1937. The members of the Board present were Judge Richard C. Stoll, Vice-Chairman; Louis Hillenmeyer, J. B. Andrews, Judge John Cooper, Dr. George Wilson, R. Miller Holland, James Park, J. C. Newcomb and H. S. Cleveland. President F. L. McVey and Secretary D. H. Peak were present.

Transfers

Lester S. O'Bannon, transferred to Experiment Station staff.

10/12/37 – Faculty in UK Senate Express Support for O’Bannon by Electing O’Bannon into President’s “University Council” of Deans

“The Council consists of the President (chairman), the Deans...together with four members elected by University Senate, two elected each year).

It is charged with the administration of the requirements and regulations established by the Senate.”

Board Gov. Regs. ,
Section IV, 1936

The senate of the University of Kentucky, at a meeting held yesterday in McVey Hall, elected Prof. Lester O’Bannon of the College of Engineering and Prof. J. Holmes Martin of the College of Agriculture as two of the four faculty representatives on the Universty Council. Each will serve for two years.

In addition to the four elective officers, the council is composed of the deans of the various colleges, the dean of the graduate school, the dean of men, the dean of women, the registrar and the president.

Professor O’Bannon now is on leave of absence from the College of Engineering and is doing special work in the College of Agriculture.

UK Press Release (above) Describes O’Bannon as “on leave” from COE

O'Bannon Requests to President Transfer Him Back to Engineering; BOT 3/22/38 Directs McVey to Inform O'Bannon Transfer Was Permanent

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky met in President McVey's office at the University, Tuesday, March 22, 1938, at 10:30 a.m. The members of the Committee present were Judge R. C. Stoll, Chairman; James Park and Louis Hillenmeyer, members of the Board of Trustees, President Frank L. McVey and D. H. Peak, Secretary of the Board, were present. These minutes were presented to a member of the

13. Professor O'Bannon's Letter and Request.

President McVey presented a letter from Professor O'Bannon regarding his status in the University, and requesting transfer to former position in the College of Engineering. With it other letters and data were presented. It appears that the transfer was originally made at Professor O'Bannon's request, that his transfer to the College of Agriculture was a change of duties in the University from one College to another, that such transfer was not a demotion nor did it carry with it a change in his standing in the University, and that his services were desired for the College of Agriculture. Further, the services rendered were necessary and valuable, and as the continuation of the service of Professor O'Bannon in the College of Agriculture is necessary and desirable, President McVey was requested to write him to that effect.

After 2 yr, President Now Informs O'Bannon Transfer Was Permanent

Against University Regulations, the President Causes a Premature 1938 Faculty Election to the President's Deans Council, Removing O'Bannon as the Faculty Senators' Duly Elected Council Member

**Board Gov. Regs. ,
Section IV, 1936**

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It is charged with the administration of the requirements and regulations established by the Senate.”

University Senate Minutes

Oct. 11, 1937 – “Professors J. Holmes Martin and **Lester S. O'Bannon were elected faculty members of the University Council”**

Oct. 10, 1938 – “Professors Frank Murray, Jarvis Todd and R. B. Haun were elected to the University Council to **replace Professors Koppius, Randall and **O'Bannon**”**

3/21/39 O'Bannon Raises Complaint Directly to Board of Trustees; BOT Chairman Stoll Expresses 'Outrage' at O'Bannon

Dr. F. L. McVey,
University of Kentucky,
Lexington, Kentucky.

Dear Dr. McVey:

I do not know whether you have seen a paper marked "Confidential letter to members of Board of Trustees relative to the case of Lester S. O'Bannon". This is dated March 20th and it encloses another letter dated March 21st.

It is needless for me to say that I think the criticisms of you in that letter are outrageous. What is there to do about these sort of things?

Yours very truly,

Richard Stoll

RCS:C

April 4, 1939

Board Appoints Committee to Hear O'Bannon's Complaint

The regular April meeting of the Board of Trustees, University of Kentucky, was held in the President's Office and the Student Union Building, Tuesday, April 4, 1939. The members of the Board present were Judge Richard C. Stoll, Chairman of the Executive Committee; H. S. Cleveland, Judge John Cooper, Marshall Barnes, Harper Gatton, Louis Hillenmeyer, H. W. Peters, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Lee Kirkpatrick, and Mrs. Paul G. Blazer of Ashland, new member, this being her first attendance. President McVey and Secretary D. H. Peak were present. Mrs. Blazer was

16. Professor L. S. O'Bannon - Committee to Hear.

The members of the Board of Trustees present stated that just previous to the date of this meeting, each had received a letter from Professor L. S. O'Bannon, new members stating that additional data was enclosed with the letter. It appeared from the discussion that this was a second communication received from Professor O'Bannon.

On motion and second which carried, a committee consisting of H. W. Peters, H. S. Cleveland and Lee Kirkpatrick was appointed, for the purpose of reviewing the contents of the communications of Professor O'Bannon and to have him meet with the Committee. The Committee will make report to the June meeting of the Board of Trustees.

12/15/39 BOT Committee Submits Its Findings on O'Bannon Case; Including the Findings That:

- Dean Graham claimed 22 COE Professors, Instructors were transferred or relieved of duties on account of “reorganization of the curriculum” of the COE
- O'Bannon made “**charges**” about “the conduct of the College of Engineering” and the “work of Dean Graham”; “**friction developed**” between O'Bannon and Graham
- O'Bannon's contention that transfer to the College of Agriculture was only temporary “**is somewhat strengthened**” by that when he transferred part of his salary remained being paid by College of Engineering
- Dean Graham, and President McVey, did not contemplate O'Bannon's return to Engineering, but “**they failed to definitely tell O'Bannon** that the transfer was of a permanent nature”
- Problems would have been avoided by “**a franker attitude** on the part of of Dean Graham and Doctro McVey at the time of the transfer”
- “**There is no place in the College of Engineering for both**” Graham and O'Bannon (Graham had threatened to resign if O'Bannon returned to COE)

Board of Trustees, Dec. 15, 1939, Adopts Position that O'Bannon's Status is as Staff Member in College of Agriculture

17. The O'Bannon Inquiry.

The order of business, the O'Bannon Case, being called, Mr. Cleveland announced that the Committee was ready to report. He, thereupon, by request of the Chairman, read the report and presented it to the Board of Trustees signed by each member of the Committee.

It was moved and seconded, the motion being carried:

That the report be accepted and filed; that Professor L. S. O'Bannon was transferred to the staff of the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station, and that his status in the University now is as a member of the staff of the Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station; that a copy of the Committee's report and a copy of this resolution be sent to Professor O'Bannon.

Spring 1940 - President Concedes to Faculty Senators That Transfer From Engineering to Agric. Changed O'Bannon's Academic Standing

At Senate Meeting, a group of **Faculty Senators supporting O'Bannon publicly challenged** the President's contention that O'Bannon's transfer from the College of Engineering (the college of his tenure) to the College of Agriculture did not change his **academic standing**: they challenged the President to write on the chalkboard the name of the College in which O'Bannon had **voting rights**. The President, his back to the Senate as he faced the chalkboard, paused for a long moment, then finally wrote "**College of Agriculture.**" (Thomas. Clark, pers. commun.)

O'Bannon Writes Second Letter of Complaint Directly to Members of the Board of Trustees (March 1940)

"Do you expect me to give up fighting when all the evidence is in my favor, and when every argument that is used against me is based on a lie?"

April 2, 1940 - Board Ignites Public Uproar by Publicly Threatening to Dismiss the Tenured Professor O'Bannon If He Does Not Apologize

The regular April meeting of the Board of Trustees, University of Kentucky, was held in the President's Office Tuesday, April 2, 1940. The members of the Board present were Governor Keon Johnson, chairman; Judge Richard C. Stoll, vice-chairman; H. S. Cleveland, Judge John Cooper, Marshall Barnes, Harper Gatton, Louis Hillenmeyer, Lee Kirkpatrick, Mrs. Paul G. Blazer, James Park, R. P. Hobson, J. C. Newcomb, and J. W. Brooker, Superintendent of Public Instruction, whose initial attendance was welcomed by the Board membership. President McVey and Secretary D. H. Peak were present.

It was moved and seconded, and unanimously adopted, that the recent letter written by Professor O'Bannon to the individual members of the Board of Trustees constitutes a grave offense against the proper administration of the University of Kentucky, and indicates that Professor O'Bannon is not competent or efficient to perform the duties of his position; that Professor O'Bannon be called upon to repudiate the statements made in that letter and to apologize to President McVey, Dean Graham and the Board of Trustees, and give assurances satisfactory to the President and the Board that there will be no recurrence of such publications, written or oral.

If Professor O'Bannon refuses to make the apology and to give satisfactory assurances, the Board will take such action as it deems advisable with reference to his connection with the University.

Ky General Assembly 1934: Enacted the **tenure** law for the University of Kentucky: "no president, professor or teacher shall be removed except for incompetency, neglect of or refusal to perform his duty, or for immoral conduct." (KRS 164.230)

Herald, Leader, C-J, Post, Enquirer Publicize

Board Threat to Dismiss O'Bannon

**"Apologize"
U. K. Orders
Of Professor
Facing Possible Ouster,
O'Bannon Apparently
Hasn't Decided Upon
Response To Trustees**

Page 1 — 4/30/40

Leader 4/30/40

U. of K. Board and President Still Await O'Bannon Apology

1940

The Courier-Journal Lexington Bureau.

Lexington, Ky., April 30.—The University of Kentucky Board of Trustees, Dr. Frank L. McVey, president of the university, and Col. James H. Graham, dean of the College of Engineering, still are awaiting an apology from Prof. Lester S. O'Bannon, formerly head of the Department of Mechanical Engineering.

Minutes of the board of trustees, made public here today, set out that Professor O'Bannon wrote some letters to individual members of the board complaining about his dean. The result was an entry reading: "If Professor O'Bannon refuses to make the apology and to give satisfactory assurances, the board will take such action as it deems advisable."

Engineering Building. Since that time, O'Bannon has endeavored unsuccessfully to regain his old position.

Several months ago the board of trustees investigated and a committee reported there apparently was not room in the College of Engineering for both Graham and O'Bannon. After that meeting of the board, O'Bannon is said to have written the letter mentioned in the minutes of the board meeting this month. The letter was not made public.

Resolution Cited.

The resolution that came to light today said that "the recent letter written by Professor O'Bannon to the individual members of the board of trustees constitutes a grave offense against the proper

Controversy Expands University-wide; UK Students Protest Stifling of O'Bannon's Free Speech; McVey Claims Free Speech Not Involved; Students Plan Large Protest Rally

Petition Given To Dr. McVey

O'Bannon Defended By Law Students

The Harris petition averred, in part, that Professor O'Bannon had committed "no other offense than directing criticism against a patently poor building program conducted by the dean of the College of Engineering, which criticism in the light of subsequent events has proven to be highly justified."

It further stated that Professor O'Bannon had been "unjustly" removed from his position as head of the mechanical engineering department of the Engineering college and that he should be "allowed to return to his rightful place."

O'Bannon Case Brings Answer By School Head

Leader *5/3/40* Freedom Of Speech Isn't Involved In Dispute, McVey Informs Paper

"In my opinion, the type of architecture of the new buildings on the University of Kentucky campus is irrelevant to the question under discussion. Consequently many things are being said that add heat but no light to the solution of the problem. The controversy is an internal one and will be solved as such by the University of Kentucky itself."

U. K. Students Plan "Public Airing" of Row

Cirti Post Free Speech Cry Raised in Building Program Dispute

Special to The Post.

1940
LEXINGTON, KY., May 8. University of Kentucky students today announced plans for a mass meeting tomorrow night to give "public airing" to the controversy between Prof. Lester S. O'Bannon and the university Board of Trustees.

UK Students Criticize McVey Response as “Epitome of Evasiveness”; 1000 Students Rally For O’Bannon; Adopt Resolution In His Favor

ANSWER TO McVEY.

In an answer printed in the Kernel today, Mark Harris, head of a newly formed student investigating committee, called President McVey's statement “the epitome of evasiveness.”

Harris asked that the matter “be brought into the open,” asserting the McVey statement “answers nothing.” The student held that the treatment of O'Bannon constituted a threat to free speech and maintained the issue should be aired before the students and public, not settled “internally.”

“President McVey, the University of Kentucky is a public institution; the personalities involved are public servants; the law is the public law, and the controversy is a public matter,” said Harris in concluding the lengthy answer.

U. K. CLASH

Brings Voice Vote

Of 1,000 Students For Professor O'Bannon.

Cinn Eng 5/9/40

Reinstatement In Engineer
Department Demanded —
Dean Attacked, Defended.

Next up was James Humphries, graduate bacteriology student. He said when O'Bannon was transferred to the College of Agriculture four years ago the professor thought the transfer was for one year, during which he was to install a tobacco-curing system.

May 25, 1940 O'Bannon Writes "Apology" to Board

I have been judged guilty[in]that my language has been interpreted as calling the President a "liar".

excerpt

The sentence in my recent letter to the Board in which I used the word "lie" was as follows: "Do you expect me to give up fighting when all the evidence is in my favor, and when every argument that is used against me is based on a lie?"

In asking this question I had in mind two arguments: (1) That I had been permanently transferred to the Experiment Station at my own request; and (2)that my transfer was necessary due to reorganization of the curriculum of the Engineering College. I have never contended at any time that I thought President McVey originated these arguments.

My differences with President McVey have centered around the question whether or not I asked him for a sabbatical leave just prior to my engagement upon the special air conditioning problem at the Agricultural Experiment Station.

In a recent conference, the President stated to me that he did not remember anything about a sabbatical leave. A liar is defined as one who knowingly utters a falsehood. Therefore, it is impossible that President McVey could be a liar.

The Board is aware of the recent publicity given my case, the student petitions, and the general adverse criticism of the new buildings. No one regrets more than I the occurrence of this publicity; nevertheless, unfortunate as it may be, I am happy that it has finally focused attention upon the real issue. I have the highest respect for the integrity of the Board, and I hope the Board will consider seriously the bearing upon my case of this recent publicity; and I hope further, that, in common justice to me, it will move at the first opportunity to restore me to my rightful place in the College of Engineering.

**Controversy Expands to Citizens Publicly Protesting to Governor's Office;
(e.g. Stoll Coaches President to Support Graham/Ignore O'Bannon About
Letter Gov. Johnson Received From Citizen Supporting O'Bannon)**

Dear Dr. McVey:

June 4, 1940

I wrote you on yesterday sending you a copy of a letter from the Governor and a letter from Bernard L. Merriss, etc. and suggested that you write Merriss.

I do not think that any of us ought to pay any attention to Merriss' talk about O'Bannon, but it might be a good idea to write him telling him to the effect that when Paul Anderson died the College of Engineering was not accredited and that Graham has done everything he could to have the College accredited.

I think a letter from you to Merriss, whoever he is, would be a good thing and it is due too probably to Colonel Graham that we write him.

I am writing you this letter because I thought possibly you might have thought from the letter I wrote you yesterday that the Governor and I thought you should say something about O'Bannon, which, of course, should not be done.

Yours truly,

Richard C. Stoll

Board Then Abolishes (Faculty) Senate, Abolishes Faculty Membership to President's Council of Deans; Replaces Senate With the Council of Deans



Colonel Graham
Dean, Engineering

Governor Johnson,
ex officio chair, Board of
Trustees

Hermann Donovan
New UK President in
July 1941

Judge Richard Stoll
Vice Chair, Board of
Trustees



Previous Board Gov. Regs. , Section IV, 1936

“The **Council** consists of the President (chairman), the **Deans**...together with four members elected by **University Senate**, two elected each year).

It is charged with the administration of the requirements and regulations established by **the Senate**.”

New University Body Not Containing Faculty Is Created by Board of Trustees 4/1/41

“The [new]regulations shall become effective when the President of the University is elected and assumes the duties of his office. **Judge Stoll** then moved the adoption of the resolution ... it was adopted... [then] **Dr. H. L. Donovan** was declared elected unanimously as President ”

“shall consist of the President, the Comptroller, **Dean** of the University, the **Deans** ...[i.e no faculty]

...shall be the final authority of the University in all matters pertaining to the curricula and the recommending of the granting of degrees”

4/1/41 - BOT In Closed Session Abolishes Senate; Replaces It With Body Composed Only of Deans and Central Administrators

10 Cts. Student Owned & Operated

THE KENTUCKY KERNEL

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY


FRIDAY ISSU
Semi-weekly Kea

VOLUME XXXI. 2ND

LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY, FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1941

NUMBER 17

Reorganization Plan Shakes Campus



New President Welcomed By Doctor Cooper

I feel sure the student body will share my satisfaction in the election of Dr. Herman Lee Dorman as the sixth president of the University of Kentucky. With his experience and training, his high standing in his profession, his ability as an administrator, and his understanding of Kentucky—its needs and its opportunities—I am sure he will bring to its university an able and distinguished leadership.

I am happy to welcome him as our president, and I am confident the student body will extend a cordial welcome to him and give him their hearty support.

THOMAS COOPER
Acting President

Abolition Of Senate, Creation Of New Posts Termed 'Political Move'

UK Deanship Is Called
'Power Post' Of Setup

BAR ASSOCIATION ASKS TRUSTEES TO RECONSIDER

'Power Transferred
To Frankfort,'
Lawyers Say

Protesting the Board of Trustees' action in reorganizing the Univer-

Trustees' Plan For Abolition Of UK's Senate Will Be Discussed By Students

5/29/42 - President Donovan's Quarterly Report to the Board of Trustees

“For a quarter of a century we have told youth he must be critical of everything, form his own judgments and refuse to be indoctrinated. And, in his exuberance and youth, he has taken us at our word.”

.....

“Public officers deserve a higher respect that we have accorded them. The attitudes which we create in the minds of youth in our schools and through the press regarding public officials are positively destructive in character.”

....

“I have thought that it would not be inappropriate for me to share with the Trustees and my colleagues on the faculty of the University the point of view I have with regard to these fundamental issues...”

President Donovan 5/29/42

Early 1943 Conference of President Donovan with Leo Chamberlain Results in Removal of Right of Faculty to a Faculty Hearing Committee

Gov. Regs. 1936. “Before dismissal or demotion...any member of the faculty is entitled ...to have a fair trial before a special committee of the Senate and to have the recommendations of such committee presented to the Board..”

1943 Donovan Discussion With Chamberlain. “A provision was copied from the old law that before a person could be demoted or dismissed he could have a hearing before a faculty committee. This was one of the old regulations...Donovan said this was no protection for a good professor and that the poor ones did not need to be protected. Why should they be? He thought that the privilege should be limited to a hearing before the Board of Trustees and that he might if he so desired have an attorney. We decided to leave this statement out unless the question was raised at the general committee and then if there was a strong feeling that the faculty committee should be included ...we would work it out then. If the question is not raised we will just let it go.”

New Gov. Reg. Promulgated. “Before any such dismissal the person shall be entitled to a hearing in person or by counsel before the Board of Trustees.”

1946 House of Rep. Committe to Investigate Allegations Against UK; O'Bannon Testifies Before Committee

O'Bannon: “The appointing of a man [Graham]who had no previous university teaching or administrative experience to such a responsible position as a deanship could do nothing but make a mockery of the whole field of university training and professional education ...[the Board’s 1939 resolution supporting Graham] repudiated the judgment of the faculty, students and citizens, and thus established its ineptitude...[my own Graham-instigated transfer] constituted a threat to tenure and a means of evading state law” Feb. 19, 1946

“This has been the happiest day of my life. Finally there are some people who want to hear what I have to say.” - Lester O'Bannon to daughter Ellen Cleveland, upon his return from testifying before the Legislative Committee

Excerpts Mar 1946 Committee Report to Legislature:

Pursuant to appointment, your investigating committee for the University of Kentucky took under consideration charges and allegations contained in a letter written by four students of the University and addressed to the members of the Legislature.

The evidence covered a period of more than ten years last past, a large part of which Dr. Donovan was not President at the University.

Your committee has found that there is some dissension and discord among the faculty members and student body at the University which had its origin in the administration preceding Dr. Donovan's;

O'Bannon's Expression of Opinion Is Not Well Received by UK Administration; House of Rep. Urges "Dissociation" of Dissatisfied UK Faculty

Dear Mr. O'Bannon:

I have read and re-read the statement which you gave me the other day. I can not understand why you have entered into a controversy which has been construed both as a reflection upon the president of the University and an attack on the administration.

Thomas Cooper
Dean and Director

(excerpt Mar 7, 1946)

Excerpt House of Representatives Resolution Mar 21, 1946:

Be It Further Resolved that we do hereby indicate our complete confidence in the current administration of our State University and suggest to those who differ herewith and are now related as students or faculty members to the University, that they, if they continue in their dissatisfaction, promptly disassociate themselves therefrom and seek the benefits of higher education elsewhere.

Controversy Spills Outside Kentucky Border;

April 1, 1946 UK Alumni Asso. Urges BOT "sever the employment" of O'Bannon for His Opinions Expressed to the KY Legislative Hearing

Be it further RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee urges the Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky to request the resignations of Professor W. R. Sutherland and Professor L. S. O'Bannon and if said resignations are not forthwith tendered that the Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky take immediate steps to sever the employment of Professor Sutherland and Professor O'Bannon.

The Executive Committee of the University of Kentucky Alumni Association representing 2000 Alumni after due deliberation and serious consideration and discussion unanimously passed this resolution because they sincerely believe that the action of Professor Sutherland and Professor O'Bannon before the Legislature of the General Assembly of Kentucky was unwarranted and prejudiced and unfounded.

In consideration of all existing circumstances the Executive Committee requests the Board of Trustees to give serious consideration to this resolution and the Executive Committee of the Alumni Association sincerely believes that this unfortunate incident brought about by Professor Sutherland and Professor O'Bannon absolutely terminates their usefulness to the University of Kentucky and in the best interests of the University of Kentucky this action on the part of the Alumni Association has been taken.

June 4, 1946 BOT Meeting, Chaired by Richard Stoll, Acted to Place O'Bannon on a One Year Leave of Absence

The Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky met in the President's Office at 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, June 4, 1946. The following members were present: Judge Richard C. Stoll, Vice Chairman; Mrs. Paul G. Blazer, H. D. Palmore, H. S. Cleveland, John C. Everett, T. H. Cutler, Harry F. Walters, Grover Creech, Harper Gatton, R. P. Hobson, and John Fred Williams. President H. L. Donovan and Comptroller Frank D. Peterson, Secretary of the Board, were also present.

Leave of Absence

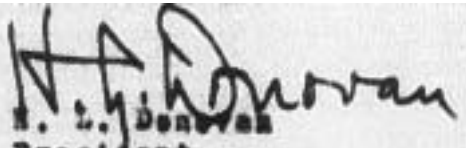
Lester S. O'Bannon, effective July 1, 1946, to June 30, 1947, with full salary.

O'Bannon, a Tenured UK Professor, Comes to Resign

My dear Professor O'Bannon:

Your letter of May 28 offering your resignation, effective July 1, 1947, was submitted to the Board of Trustees today. I was directed by the Trustees to accept your resignation as of July 1, 1947.

Excerpt June 4, 1946


H. L. Donovan
President

McVey to Thomas Clark “When the O'Bannon matter was first beginning, I had no idea that it would eventually take on the magnitude that it did.” (T. Clark, pers. comm.).

Epilogue: Professor O'Bannon left in 1946 to Univ. Michigan; finally settling in 1948 at the Texas A&M Mechanical Engineering Dept.

**Former UK Prof
Honored In Texas** LL

Prof. Lester S. O'Bannon, formerly of the University of Kentucky, has been presented an award of merit at the semiannual meeting of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers.

The meeting was at Dallas, Texas. Prof. O'Bannon now is associated with the mechanical engineering department at Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College.

O'Bannon's award was in recognition of "outstanding work in teaching and advancing the principles of the industry and profession."

He is a 1915 graduate of UK. He began his teaching career at the University in 1920 and he was named head of the Department of Mechanical Engineering in 1935. O'Bannon left UK in 1946 to serve on the staff of the University of Michigan. He went to the Texas school in 1948.



LESTER O'BANNON

**Engineers' Society Honors
O'Bannon, Formerly Of U.K.**

After a successful career at Texas A&M, Professor O'Bannon retired in 1964. As late as the 1980's, he would several times a week visit his former colleagues in the TX A&M ME Dept.

(On one occasion, several years after his retirement, he dropped in on a meeting of the Texas A&M Board of Regents to voice his opinions on changes that the University faced).

**Professor O'Bannon
died in Middleton,
Kentucky, Jan. 24, 1993,
at the age of 98**



Shortly before his death, his daughter described that he “still has his sense of humor and engineer’s way of solving problems.”

More Epilogue: During Professor O'Bannon's 1946-7 "Leave of Absence," the BOT Adopted A New Governing Regulation Stating:

“When it is to the best interests of the institution, and if the professional status of an individual is not seriously jeopardized thereby, a person may be transferred from one assignment to another, without such a transfer being regarded as a violation of his tenure rights.”

More Epilogue: During Professor O'Bannon's One Year "Leave of Absence," the BOT Adopted A New Governing Regulation Stating:

"When it is to the best interests of the institution, and if the professional status of an individual is not seriously jeopardized thereby, a person may be transferred from one assignment to another, without such a transfer being regarded as a violation of his tenure rights."

Today, 56 years later, UK still has retains above provision in the current University of Kentucky Governing Regulations (GR X.B.11)...

... and now you know the rest of the story.