President, Board say lean budget will not deter AU

President Jay Gogue and Board of Trustees members said Friday they will not let an unprecedented drop in state support harm the value of an Auburn degree.

With state appropriations to the AU System reduced nearly $41 million and an $18.6 million increase in mandatory expenses in the coming fiscal year, Auburn will have to cut costs in all areas, forgo salary increases and look for more revenue from other sources, including a 12 percent increase in tuition approved at the AU Board meeting on Friday.

The tuition increase is the same percentage as the cut Auburn will sustain in the state appropriation for the 2008-09 fiscal year, which starts Oct. 1. But the tuition increase will equal only about half the total financial loss for the main campus, where the tuition revenue will be applied.

Auburn University Montgomery, the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System also face cuts because of reduced state appropriations and rising costs. Of the three, only AUM, with approximately 5,000 students, receives funds from tuition.

In-state tuition on the main campus will increase to $2,940 per semester from $2,625, effective fall semester. Other fees will also rise by 12 percent. Out-of-state tuition will rise to $8,820 from $7,875.

At the request of Trustee Jimmy Rane of Abbeville, the board asked the administration to add money to a fund for students facing exceptional financial hardship.

The AU increase was preceded by a 12 percent increase at the University of Alabama and double-digit increases at institutions across the state.

Several AU trustees said the tuition increase and shared sacrifices are the only way to preserve the academic gains of the past decade for current and future students. Trustee Virginia Thompson of Opelika, said, "As a parent, I expect Auburn to continue..."
Budget cuts, campaign success continued from page 1

moving forward. I want and expect excellence at Auburn.”

Though Bobby Lowder of Montgomery concurred, saying, “If we are going to have quality here, it is going to cost money.” He said the university cannot afford to repeat the mistakes of the early 1990s, when “We are not going to cost money.” He said the university cannot and be more competitive in that industry.”

Auburn since January 2007, also serves as associate dean for graduate studies, will come to Auburn from McNeill was a manager in "Letters & Numbers," paintings and typography by Ray Dugas of UA graphic design program and sculpture by artist June Corley, through July 6

McNeill

Mason

Flowers

Searches end with two new vice presidents, graduate school dean

Auburn last week concluded national searches with announcements of new vice president for development, a new associate provost and vice president for research and a new graduate school dean.

AU President Jay Gogue named veteran higher education fundraiser Jeffrey P. McNeill as vice president for development and Mason McQueen of Penn State University as associate provost and vice president for research.

Auburn now heads into a new era with new leadership in research, teaching and service,” said Heilman. “Auburn now heads into a new era with new leadership in research, teaching and service.”

He joined the Auburn faculty in 1990 after working with the Georgia Institute of Technology and the University of South Florida. At Auburn, he received the Alumni Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, served as acting associate dean of the Graduate School in 2005-06. He also will chair the Graduate Council, which oversees graduate faculty credentialing, curriculum and program reviews.

"George has proven himself an excellent leader during his interim position these past two years," said Heilman. "Auburn now heads into a new era with a new strategic plan that calls for increased graduate student enrollment and research. Our demonstrated leadership will serve us well.”

Flowers, an Alumni Professor in the Department of Development and in private-public partnerships will be a staple at Auburn, particularly with its new strategic plan to expand funded research.

"Mason holds a doctorate in civil engineering from Texas A&M. He is a registered professional engineer in Pennsylvania and began his career in consulting engineering practice. He began teaching at the community college level and completed his doctorate while performing research at the Texas Transportation Institute. While at Penn State, he became center director, institute director and, in 1997, associate dean of engineering.

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Researchers seek ways to make storage of nuclear waste safer

Auburn researchers are seeking new ways to store and recycle nuclear waste as the federal government seeks to boost nuclear power production.

The U.S. Department of Energy is funding AU’s Center for Actinide Science efforts to find chemical compounds that will combine with radioactive elements, allowing them to be safely stored without risk of radiation leakage. The nuclear material would be recycled for future use in energy production.

“Twenty percent of the electricity generated in the United States is from nuclear reactors,” said Tom Albrecht-Schmitt, center director. “The U.S. currently uses a one-time process and then must store the highly radioactive waste. Many other countries recycle the fuel rod components.”

Nuclear power plants use uranium fuel rods to heat water, which produces steam and drives a turbine that generates electricity. Spent fuel rods are highly radioactive and must be stored safely in water and later in metal casings for centuries until the radiation level decreases.

“The country’s research into nuclear waste storage for recycling is in the very early stages,” Albrecht-Schmitt said. “It will take 10 to 20 years to apply new research that is being developed now, but we have to make the discoveries today.”

Auburn is one of five universities in the United States with the capability and expertise to conduct research into nuclear waste storage for recycling, said Albrecht-Schmitt, who added that the Department of Energy is considering building a nuclear fuel recycling facility, perhaps at Savannah River National Laboratory in South Carolina.

The Department of Energy will evaluate and possibly use technology developed from the universities’ actinide science research, which is the study of chemically similar radioactive elements.

Albrecht-Schmitt’s AU colleagues are also researching new technology to aid the nuclear power industry. Assistant Professor Anne Gorden of the Department of Chemistry is working on making new organic ligands, or molecules that selectively recognize and bind metals, for trapping and removing radioactive elements from nuclear waste.

“A nuclear plant’s cooling water is now stored as waste,” Gorden said. “If we can extract the radioactive elements, then we could drastically reduce the amount of waste water that needs to be stored.”

AU’s Center for Actinide Science, established in 2007, has six faculty from the College of Sciences and Mathematics – including the departments of physics, geology and chemistry – conducting research. The U.S. Department of Energy has awarded $1.5 million to Albrecht-Schmitt’s research projects during the past eight years.

Art professor receives award at national exhibition

Jeffrey Lewis, a professor of art in AU’s College of Liberal Arts since 1988, has received the Alden Bryan Memorial Award at the 183rd Annual Invitational Exhibition of Contemporary American Art at the National Academy Museum in New York.

The National Academy Museum presents its nonmember invitational exhibition every two years, showcasing contemporary works by approximately 125 prominent artists from across the country.

The artists whose works are on display through Sept. 7 were selected from among more than 400 nominees. The Alden Bryan Award is one of the top three awards for works on display in the exhibition.

The National Academy Museum and School of Fine Arts, founded in 1825 to promote American art, presents a regular schedule of exhibitions of art and architecture, as well as educational programs.

Lewis, who teaches painting and drawing in the Department of Art, has also taught at Dartmouth College and Cornell University.

His artworks have been exhibited in galleries and museums nationally and internationally and are in public and corporate collections across the United States and private colleges in the U.S. and Europe. He holds M.F.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Iowa.

Summer Stages presents musical

AU Theatre is inviting fans of musical theatre out in July for a night — actually several nights — of “wine, women and song.” As part of the annual Summer Stages program, the Department of Theatre and the Department of Music in AU’s College of Liberal Arts will present the musical revue “Women & Love” at 7:30 p.m. July 9-12 and 2:30 p.m. July 13 at Telfair Peet Theatre.

AU Theatre describes “Women & Love” as “a musical celebration of women and those they love, beginning with the very first couple.” The production is directed by Daydrie Hague, with music direction by Joseph Bates and choreography by Adrienne Wilson.

“Our choice to do a musical revue this summer reflects our desire to provide a broad range of training opportunities for our students,” said Hague.

For tickets or information, contact the Theatre Box Office at 844-4154.

A dinner theatre package — hence AU Theatre’s reference to wine — is available through Ariccia. The package includes shuttle service from the AU Hotel to Peet Theatre.

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