

Palms says budget cuts will be noticed

President worries education will hurt

By The Associated Press

Budget cuts at the USC and other public colleges will be noticeable to students in nearly every aspect of their college life, USC President John Palms said.

The tight money situation will be visible in the dormitories, the classrooms, in extra-curricular activities and is a serious threat to the quality of public education, the president said.

Recently hired faculty members who were promised equipment and other support won't receive those this year, Palms said.

Travel and equipment budgets that already had been trimmed will be nearly eliminated.

Palms sent to the state Budget and Control Board a plan to reduce spending in the nine-campus system by \$5.3 million during the

1991-92 school year.

"It was done with a great deal of pain," he said.

The 40,000-plus students who begin classes later this month will find few new instructional tools, fewer employees on campus, including faculty, and buildings suffering from a lack of maintenance, Palms said.

While no one has been fired in the latest round of budget cuts, Palms said he's prepared to "make plans for those tough decisions" if revenues lag and the Budget Board orders further cuts.

USC has no plans to change its fall schedule to create larger classes and save money that way, as Clemson University has done. It could increase the minimum number of students required to sign up before a course will be taught, he said.

One area that won't be affected by budget cuts is USC's "core curriculum," a grouping of basic courses in a variety of disciplines every student must pass to earn a degree.

Palms met with student government leaders last week and told them their activities budget would be trimmed \$100,000 as part of efforts to distribute budget cuts equitably without hurting academic programs.

In a letter to state leaders, Palms said reducing the number of employees is one way USC will cut its expenses. Attrition — leaving positions open when employees quit or resign — will be used initially.

But Palms also wrote, "More severe measures cannot be totally ruled out at this point... Cuts of this magnitude are obviously extremely difficult."

Six teaching positions will be left vacant at the USC medical school in Columbia. Book purchases for the medical school library have been canceled.

At USC-Spartanburg, Chancellor Olin Sansbury has decided to reduce the number of part-time instructors.

Coastal Carolina College in Conway will leave vacant one faculty position, while the library budgets at USC's five two-year cam-

pus will be reduced to help leave instructional programs intact.

Palms said he's worried South Carolina's budget crisis will have a long-term effect on the future of the state's flagship university because of the method used by lawmakers to distribute funding.

"These budget cuts we're seeing now are going to extend to next year," Palms said. "And we're going to be hard-pressed to preserve what we've got right now without affecting personnel and our academic programs."

Palms said the budget problems are making his faculty members targets of aggressive recruitment efforts by other institutions in states with less severe financial constraints.

Palms said he knows of at least 10 top USC professors who have been offered jobs elsewhere. He said he hopes to produce counter-offers to keep them in the USC system.

"We're vulnerable there," he said, "I'm worried."



Palms

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