

# NEWS

## *Budget cuts, who's affected?*

SPRING ARBOR UNIVERSITY MAKES BUDGET CUTS TO COMPENSATE FOR THE SHORT FALL OF ATTENDENTS.

Spring Arbor University recently made budget cuts of approximately \$2.9 million out of a budgeted \$65 million for the 2011-2012 school year. Among cuts in certain areas, the payroll of each full-time staff member was cut by two percent, a minor decrease to some staff members and a major decrease to others. Because faculty members are under contract, which cannot be changed, their payroll will be affected next year.

After a shortfall of just over 100 students for the current school year, the university realized there was not enough money within the 2011-2012 budget. Therefore, cuts had to be made to balance out the difference.

"I've described this in some ways as a perfect storm. With a 4.9 percent increase in tuition, and implementing the cost of the CCS [Cross Cultural Studies] trips, we don't know the reasons, the multiple reasons. There was a shortfall in enrollment. The magnitude of the shortfall has been more significant than

before," said Dr. Betty Overton-Adkins, Chief Academic Officer and currently standing in for President Charles Webb as he recovers from open-heart surgery.

Jerry White, Vice President for Finance and Administration said, "On-campus students were down by a little over one hundred. And there's many reasons that we could point at, but there's no solid reason why. We implemented several new projects and some of them did not come into fruition. So we have a shortfall of students; we implemented a new online proposal where we funded some expenses online. Some of our GPS [Graduate and Professional Studies], our adult undergraduate and graduate [students], did not come in at the level that we had anticipated. We do have record enrollment, but unfortunately we predicted more."

Questions have come up pertaining to the funding of the recently finished soccer complex as well as the current

renovations to the  
"What we're hoping  
pay for itself in  
was completed,  
our field. And that  
absolute revenue

There is already  
Apart from a  
Foundation and  
Chartwells Cater  
and President c  
Brent Ellis and  
amount needed

Overton-Adkins  
fund the comple





to say, 'Well, we could have done this, done that.' Now looking back in any decision most people say 'Oh, well I would have done that differently.'"

Though there are pay cuts, Overton-Adkins said the executive team did their best to equal the percentages of cuts across the board of staff and faculty payrolls. Those who receive higher salaries received higher percentage cuts and those with lower salaries received lower percentage cuts in order to equal two percent as a whole.

"What we agreed to this year, unless the faculty would agree to have their salaries cut [immediately], [is to make] immediate cuts to the staff, but we will make revisions to the faculty contracts for next year that will equal two percent. What we could do is say the faculty on the lowest end would take a lower percentage and those on the higher end could take a higher percentage so it averages out to two percent," Overton-Adkins said.

However, Overton-Adkins said there will be some positions hired for next year. "I don't see it as stopping new positions. We've adjusted the salary scale down. Is it going to be harder to attract people to Spring Arbor because our salary is lower? I think salary will be a concern. Our salaries have been lower than some universities already; however, we find that people come here missionally."

Custodian Matt Cousino said, "We have to make adjustments just like the university had to make adjustments. It hurt us [my wife, Mandy and I] more than most, since we both work here so it was a four percent cut rather than just two percent. But part of the blessing is just being here."

"The university is generous with time off. They've given us benefits that other places haven't seen in a long time. Vacation time, they're very generous with their health insurance; a lot of places don't have it all. They have a benevolent fund if people fall into hard times. This place is special that way. Even though all these things [budget cuts, retirement funding cuts] are a disappointment, it's still much better than a lot of people have it. I would much rather my salary and retirement weren't cut, but I think things will be just fine," he said.

"I think if the economy improves our [financial] packages will improve as well. We're all hoping for everything to turn around. I fully expect it to happen that way," said Cousino.

Despite the setback, Cousino said he still maintains a positive outlook on the situation. "I think we have to be careful about getting discouraged about things. That's the thief that comes to steal and kill and destroy. I don't think we as employees should go around moping and whining and complaining all the time, do you? No, we should make the best of it, we don't have to like it. It's an opportunity, an opportunity to grow."



remember any pay cuts," said Dr. Roger Varland, interim Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Art.

Both White and Varland said there wasn't much that could have been done differently to prevent the cuts from happening.

"I wish I could have seen it coming. What we're doing is, we've implemented two things, one is a budget committee made up of four members of the executive team, two faculty members, a SAPA [Staff-Administration Personnel Association] representative and a business office representative. That team is looking at the budget as a whole preparing for the [2012-2013] school year. Then the board of trustees, just this week, commissioned a task force called the Operational Efficiency Task Force, and we're going to be looking at ways to do things [pertaining to the budget] in a more efficient manner," said White.

"Hopefully with the changes we've made, we'll be able to go forward and not make any other adjustments of this nature. When we went into this process we looked at fixing it for the long-term as opposed to just getting through this year," he said.

Varland said, "Admissions tracks all kinds of [indicators]; they know when people blink. They've got apps, deposits, visits; all those numbers looked great until about sometime in May. Then all of a sudden, things weren't tracking right. In about the beginning of June, numbers started to fall. So, it was over the summer. Students had come to register. Students had put down some deposits. And then all of a sudden, 'oh, we're not coming.' So it wasn't like early on we saw it. It had never happened at that stage before. If we had low enrollments you could see it coming earlier on. All of those factors make it hard