

Exon offers a 'tight but adequate' pay hike proposal



Photo by Ted Kirk

Gov. J. James Exon said he supports an increase in faculty salaries in his NU budget recommendation.

By Kate Gaul

Gov. J. James Exon said a lump sum allocation would provide the NU Board of Regents with "flexibility" to distribute state allocations "where they see fit."

Calling his \$107.7 million NU budget recommendation "tight but adequate," Exon said regents should know best what NU needs.

The regents have the ability to shift funds and they can raise faculty salaries without cutting into existing programs and without raising tuition rates, he said.

"Faculty salaries should take precedence over programs," Exon said. "The role of a university is, first, to be a learning institution, and you must have good teachers."

"Higher salaries generally bring higher quality instructors," Exon said. He called the quality of instruction at NU "good."

Professors who leave NU often do so for a position of higher prestige, but "lateral transfers"—same job title but higher pay—indicate that a university is not paying instructors adequately.

"By nature and profession, instructors move on. We lose lots of good people for various reasons. One might be that we are not compensating them properly," Exon said.

In preparing his budget recommendation, Exon said that he reviewed the detailed work that his budget staff compiled.

A Department of Administrative Services budget analyst and several assistants work full-time to prepare the NU budget.

Exon said his NU budget staff consults with NU administrators, including President Roskens and his staff, department heads and sometimes faculty.

Exon said that to compile the budget, they use "straight business budgeting techniques."

Last year's appropriations and revenue are compared and many measures including inflation are considered before his budget recommendation is made.

He said he is criticized for cutting NU's budget recommendation but that steady raises in state funding for NU go unnoticed.

According to a written explanation accompanying Exon's budget message, he said the state general fund support has increased 170 percent since 1969.

"State tax support for the university has risen from \$37.5 million in fiscal year 1969-1970 to \$101 million in fiscal year 1977-78," the report continued.

Exon said that students already pay 20 percent of the cost of education, which he claimed is high enough.

Exon did not account for a tuition raise in his budget proposal.

His budget report said UNL tuition, student fees and residence hall rates are the second highest among the Big Eight schools.

"At the same time that Nebraska taxpayers are providing significant tax support to the university and students are providing a high level of support through tuition and fees, faculty salaries are lagging behind

some institutions in the Big Eight," the report continued.

Exon's report said that according to university information, NU faculty salaries rank in the bottom half of the Big Eight schools.

In the report, Exon suggested that "alternative policies must be explored to help solve faculty problems," because of the already high level of support from the students and taxes.

Exon said that if faculty salaries are the regents' top priority, then they have the money to re-allocate funds within the university to provide for the increase.

Exon's budget allows for a 6.5 percent increase in faculty salaries. However, the regents want a 9 percent increase in faculty salaries and a 7 percent increase in other staff salaries.

David Wagaman, executive management analyst for the Department of Administrative Services, said NU can accomplish its salary goals with the money the governor has allocated.

Wagaman said that it would cost \$1.2 million to raise the salary increase percentage from 6 to 9 percent.

He said that the University Medical Center has at least a \$1.5 million surplus from its cash fund. The surplus resulted because of over-allocation from past general funds and from more effective revenue-generating programs, he said.

Wagaman said that increases over last year's budget expenditures are figured on projected need, and that salary raises and inflation are taken into account.

Throughout the budget NU has an excess and if NU does not need it in one department, the excess should be used in another area, Wagaman said.

Exon said staff increases—4,770 since 1969, are not in line with enrollment increases.

Enrollment has not increased since 1969 to justify staff additions, he claimed.

Exon's budget explanation said NU increased total employment by about 825 positions over last year. About 325 more positions were budgeted by NU for 1977-1978 period than were requested. NU's estimated revenue source budget was about \$6.5 million less than was requested for that time.

"The University has the managerial flexibility to pursue this policy of expansion. However, if the university's number one priority is in fact faculty salaries, re-allocation of positions and resources within the total university system is going to have to take precedence over continued expansion of all programs," the report said.

NU must be accountable for its expenditures, Exon said.

Exon also said that construction of new buildings is not necessary. His budget allows for maintenance of existing buildings and continued funding for works in progress.

"Some measure the success of a university by the number of buildings, but the real measure is the quality of that institution measured with other universities of that type," Exon said.

Committee recommendation awaits legislature's OK

By Margaret Stafford

Money for a 6.5 percent increase for NU faculty and staff salaries would be available to the NU Board of Regents if the Nebraska Legislature accepts the Appropriations Committee's recommendations.

The committee's recommended budget for the three campuses is \$107.7 million. The proposal includes a 6.5 percent boost for personal services, which includes faculty salaries. The university administration had requested an increase of 9 percent for faculty and 7 percent for other staff members.

Sen. Jerome Warner of Waverly, committee chairman, said the recommendation "in no way means faculty salaries will increase 6.5 percent."

"Because of the Supreme Court ruling," he said, "the only thing we have control over is the general fund. The Board of Regents has total discretion over using that money."

The Supreme Court ruled that the regents, not the Legislature, has complete responsibility in distributing funds on campus. The Legislature only controls the amount of money UNL receives.

Warner explained that the committee's 6.5 percent increase means that general funds are increased 6.5 percent. The regents can add any funds to adjust the salaries as they see fit, Warner said.

He noted that the Legislature's considerations make no specific reference to faculty salaries.

Warner said the increase could be used to fill faculty vacancies or to raise salaries. He said regents make adjustments in July and January without Legislative direction.

"The regents can use anything from vacancies to teaching assistant salaries in determining how to spend the increase we've recommended."

Warner said the committee did not recommend a lump sum appropriation because the Legislature traditionally had allocated money by campus or by program. He said most senators want to know where money is going when they vote on allocation.

"But in the end the faculty salaries are up to the regents," Warner said. "We affect their decision by limiting the amount of money they have to work with, but we cannot determine the adjustment."

Force questions 12-month appointment significance

By John Ortman

Equity, the principle that all salaries within an institution are determined by a common standard, is in question at UNL.

UNL has two basic teaching appointment periods; a nine-month "academic appointment" and a 12-month "full-year appointment."

The issue of equity between the salaries of 9- and 12-month appointment periods is university-wide, according to Martin Massengale, vice chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR).

However, at times it has taken on the appearance of being an IANR problem.

According to figures on file in UNL Chancellor Roy Young's office, there are 571 12-month full-time equivalent positions at UNL, about 500 of which are filled by IANR personnel, UNL libraries, College of Dentistry, and administration personnel account for most of the rest of the total.

Alan Moeller, a financial and personnel assistant to Massengale, said IANR personnel are hired on a year-round basis because they are involved in research and exten-

sion activities which go on all year.

According to Extension Service Dean Leo Lucas, a member of a task force to study equity recently established by Young, personnel on nine-month appointments receive 18 percent of their regular yearly salary in addition to their salary for teaching six hours in a five-week summer session.

Because those on 12-month appointments receive 24 days of vacation a year, they are paid on the basis of a nine-month appointment plus two months, Lucas said. He explained that those on 12-month appointments then receive eleven and one quarter percent of a nine-month appointment salary for each of the two additional months they work each year.

Because the 18 percent addition works out to 14.4 percent a month, Lucas said, the task force was created to study the difference. However, Lucas stated that he believes those on 12-month appointments should receive at least 14.4 percent of their nine-month equivalent wages for each of the two additional months.

Lucas also noted that reported salary figures for those on nine-month appoint-

ments do not always reflect total salaries. He said payment for summer sessions and night classes taught for the Division of Continuing Education are not included.

Alan Seagren, director of Summer Sessions agrees, however, he explained that those on nine-month appointments have no guarantee of summer employment.

John Buskey, assistant dean of Continuing Education, confirmed that salaries for night classes are not included in salary reports. He said personnel on both nine- and 12-month appointments may teach night classes, however, most are taught by personnel on nine-month appointments.

Another issue is the conversion factor now used to show nine and 12-month salaries as equivalent. Animal Science Professor Ernest Peo, a member of both the Chancellor's task force and the IANR Liaison Committee, which also has dealt with the question, said the conversion factor is misleading.

Peo, who emphasized he was speaking as an individual and not as a member of either group, said the factor now in use makes 12-month salaries appear higher than they are

in relation to nine month salaries.

The current factor is .818, which is arrived at by dividing nine by 11 months, the length of time official policy maintains those on 12 month appointments actually work. Peo said a factor of .75, arrived at by dividing nine by a full 12 months, would be more realistic.

He gave the following example: a person making \$20,000 a year on a 12-month salary is now considered to be paid at the same rate as a person making \$16,360 for nine-months, using .818 as a conversion factor. Using .75 as the factor, the \$20,000 is only equal to a \$15,000 nine-month salary.

Peo said .75 should be adopted in the interest of accurate conversion, but added that it could be used for salary adjustments in the future.

Massengale said the issue was controversial, but that he supported the idea of equal payment for summer work.

"Anytime you deal with personnel issues it becomes a bit more sensitive than an abstract issue, because it might affect people," he said. "But I feel there should be equal pay for equal work."