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# NU faces possible cutbacks to operating budget by 2015

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increased efficiency.

He said Chancellor James Moeser's 1996 reallocation plan enhanced efficiency by "taxing" each department 4 percent of its budget and using the revenue to enhance and improve designated programs.

Edwards said UNL wanted to explore ways to increase its revenue from sources other than the state or tuition.

He said the Pepsi contract, which will provide UNL with \$24 million over the next decade, along with an increased effort to recruit out-of-state and international students, would increase UNL's income without raising tuition or going to the state for more money.

Regents also discussed a possible "performance-based" budgeting process, where colleges or departments would be financed according to their "output."

Edwards said the "Florida Bank" program, which was pioneered by the University of Florida in Gainesville, was a way for the university to measure a college's

contribution to the university's mission.

"This would create enormous incentives for deans and department chairs to be entrepreneurial and economizing," Edwards said.

He said the plan also would allow UNL to compare its performance with peer institutions.

Regent Rosemary Skrupa of Omaha said talks about budgets based on performance worried her, particularly within a university.

Benjamin's plan recommended five changes for U.S. colleges and universities:

■ Political leaders should direct public funds in a manner that reflects the "growing importance of education to the economic prosperity and social stability of the United States."

■ Institutions should change their governing systems so they can better evaluate academic departments, and make necessary economic changes.

■ Colleges and universities should "pursue greater mission differentiation," and serve the needs of the public.

■ Regent Charles Wilson of Lincoln said he thought the four campuses were invading on each others' missions.

■ "The University of Nebraska at Kearney wants to be (the University of Nebraska at Omaha,) and UNO wants to be UNL," he said. "Everyone wants to be a doctoral, research institution, but this state cannot support two or three doctoral institutions."

■ Other regents said "expensive" doctoral programs needed to be evaluated, and perhaps cut. Some also said not all campuses had to offer all classes, and some classes that were duplicated across campuses could be eliminated.

■ Colleges and universities should share certain programs or departments to improve efficiency.

Regent Don Blank of McCook said the NU system could cooperate with other state universities, forming shared colleges. Although he said colleges that were "vital to Nebraska's economic development," such as engineering and technology, should not be shared.

Regent Chuck Hasebrook of Walthill warned against catering to large businesses. "We can't be all things to all people," Hasebrook said, "but neither can we be all things to the biggest businesses in the state."

■ The level of education deemed "appropriate" for those in the workforce needs to be re-examined. Benjamin's plan stated that "All citizens planning to enter the work force should be encouraged to pursue - as a minimum - some form of post-secondary education or training."

UNL Academic Senate President Jim Ford questioned whether any of the recommendations, if implemented, would ensure educational quality.

He said he was worried that, in some ways, the report called for a "minimum necessary education."

Instead, Ford said, continuing Moeser's plan of increased academic and admissions standards would ensure quality.

"The American model of education is that there be equality of opportunity, but not an insurance of results," Ford said. "That is inherently inefficient, but the best way."

KEVIN COSTNER

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