

Budget Woes Worry Utah Educators

Continued From B-1

posed cuts are equal to the budgets of Snow and Dixie colleges and the College of Eastern Utah combined. In addition, the 444 faculty positions cut from the state's nine schools are more than the entire faculty at Weber State College, according to Commissioner of Higher Education Wm. Rolfe Kerr. "If we don't get the 6 percent cutback and a tax increase, higher education will indeed be in trouble," he said.

College presidents have said they won't use any money they may get back to restore programs and faculty. Rather, they'll use funds from their own budget cuts to improve libraries and raise faculty salaries. Yet reallocated money won't correct deficiencies in the higher education system without corresponding state help. For instance, the U. will redirect \$500,000 from internal cuts to its library. But to bring acquisitions up to levels of comparable research universities, the school's library must have \$2 million.

As to wages, each Utah institution has its horror story. A USU physics professor quit for a job at an observatory for an annual salary increase of \$15,000. A USU math professor went to work at Brigham Young University for \$9,000 more. S USC most out-

standing teacher left for a job at another college of comparable size with a budget double that of S USC. Officials at the state's two-year colleges complain faculty salaries are below wages of teachers in local high schools.

Faculty are prepared for austerity but there's a fear there could be a general collapse of the system, said Richard F. Riesenfeld, professor and chair of the U. of U. department of computer science. "An academic crisis is like a run on a bank," he said. "If word gets out deposits aren't secure, people will want to take their money somewhere else. Right now, there's a fear the institution isn't sound."

"I just got here, and I'm already thinking about packing up," said David W. Hoepfner, professor and chair of the U.'s Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering, who in six months developed new research support totaling \$218,000 annually. "You can't have economic development without engineers, yet, we've taken some large cuts. How serious is Utah about development?"

Ultimately, budget crunches will reach into every Utah home with a child in college. Students won't necessarily be attending any school of their choice as they have in the past. Because university classes are more expensive to conduct, remedial, voca-

tional and undergraduate students will be directed to the state's technical colleges, and the smaller schools will assume a larger vocational role. In short, the state will move to "community colleges" that offer vocational and lower-level college educations.

Yet, some educators fear that if the technical schools become community colleges, vocational courses will suffer. Bitter fighting may erupt this January when bills will be introduced to allow the changes.

This year has been wrenching for educators, concedes Dr. Peterson. But students must understand they can still get a superb education in Utah. Taxes are essential, but there are other ways to fund schools as well. Officials are looking to federal funds from research, private giving and student fees and tuition to help pay college costs. The most painful of all ways to find more money has been eliminating faculty, a process Commissioner Kerr said was necessary to assure the public that educators are trying to be as efficient as possible.

"People's jobs weren't cut because of incompetence, they simply weren't deemed to be the most essential part of the university," said Dr. Peterson. "But if we work together, programs will be even better."

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Dr. Michl's decision is an especially hard blow to the College of Science, which already has lost seven professors to other universities this year. He is an elected member of the prestigious National Academy of Sciences and has lectured at numerous international symposia, both markers of his standing in the global scientific community.

"Michl is the most visible, internationally recognized scientist we have in our department. His loss was a major one," said Jack Simons, chairman of the U. Chemistry De-



Josef Michl

partment. "Almost immediately people all over the world were asking, 'Why?'"

His and other departures from the College of Science means the loss of \$2.5 million in federal research money — 23 percent of the external funding coming into the college. Remaining faculty members fear that major out-of-state universities will continue

throughout the university to quit "in droves." "I live comfortably and I can only drive one car at a time. My own salary wasn't a big factor in my leaving," said Dr. Michl. "But salary freezes in Utah have been a concern because salaries attract and keep good faculty. It's vital to work in a good environment."

More importantly, the Texas offer includes a \$1 million endowed chairmanship, which guarantees that research money will be available, flexible, and independent of federal grant funding. The U. of U. Chemistry Department has tried unsuccessfully for five years to obtain a similarly endowed chairmanship. Texas also has a better library.

Despite near-record unemployment in their state, Texas University officials say they've been able to avoid salary freezes and set up endowments, partly because of income the higher education system receives from managing two million acres of land. The state's governing board of regents has matched more than 900 endowments from business and individuals the past few years, 65 of them worth \$1 million.

By contrast, the U. has had to absorb seven budget cuts in 10 years.

Dr. Michl said his decision to leave Utah was influenced by previous budget cuts and was reached long before Gov. Norm Bangerter told educators to trim another three percent to make up for \$48 million in revenue shortfalls. Dr. Michl is quick to add, however, that U. of U. administration has been supportive, he's grateful for experiences at the university, and Utah is a beautiful place to live.

"It's difficult to single out one particular event or reason that influenced my decision to leave," he said. "I suspect that's true for others as well."

High School Students Worry About Cuts

Teachers Fear Higher Education Isn't Making the Grade

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By Dawn Tracy
Tribune Staff Writer

Higher education in Utah is in trouble.

Library acquisitions are below standard, equipment is old and some of the brightest faculty members are quitting.

College and university presidents warn they're fighting the odds to retain top faculty and programs in the face of sustained budget cuts. During most of the past 10 years the state's nine colleges and universities have not kept pace with inflation, despite increased appropriations.



Cracks in the Campus

A Salt Lake Tribune
Special Report

Worse, the state's two university presidents are predicting a "mass exodus" of faculty members to states that can afford quality programs if the Legislature doesn't reinstate a 6 percent budget cut and impose a significant tax increase in January.

This year, the University of Utah College of Science lost eight faculty members, who took with them federal research grants totaling \$2.5 million annually. Their departures are a replay of what happened in the U's pharmacy college four years ago when 25 percent of the faculty quit for higher-paying jobs. Now the state's flagship university is contending with still more faculty losses in education, business, medicine, health, engineering and again, pharmacy.

"Some people will say other states are worse off than we are," said U. President Chase N. Peterson. "But those states have already given up. We have to ask ourselves if we want to become an Arkansas or a North Dakota. They aren't even trying anymore."

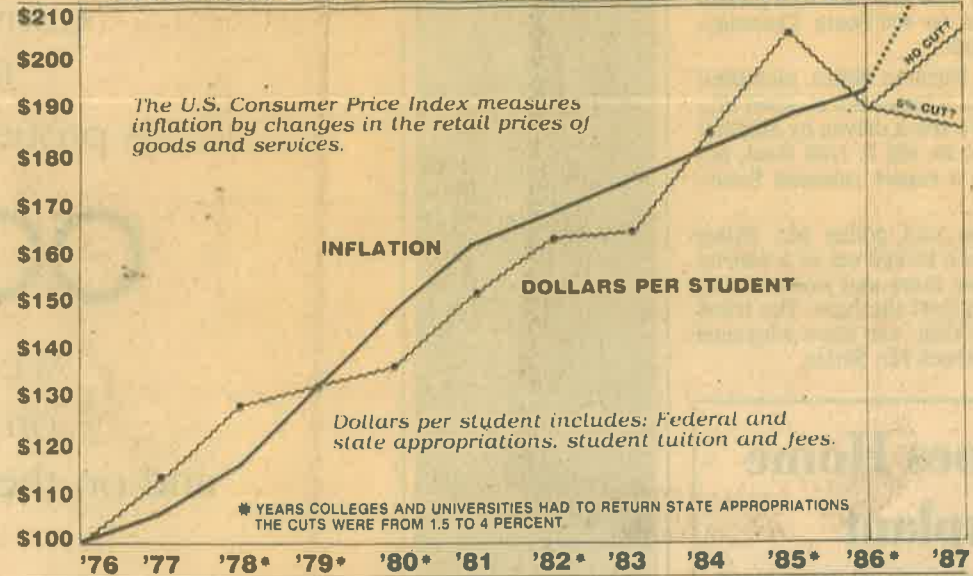
Dr. Peterson and Utah State University President Stanford Cazier are predicting a "mass exodus" of faculty as early as next fall if the higher education system doesn't get more money. The fear among faculty is that Utah doesn't have the financial base to keep up with burgeoning student population growth. And those problems will continue because while other states' population growth is declining, student growth in Utah is projected to explode.

Even if Utah's population declines, there will be no relief for the state's colleges anytime soon. Utah's population may have reached a peak in the 1970s, and by the middle of the next decade numbers could decline, say state planners. But the effect won't be felt in the higher education system for at least 18 years when children reach college age — assuming trends toward smaller families continue.

Compounding the problem is that more and more Utah high school seniors are delaying marriage or job plans and opting to go to college. The number of seniors planning on college has risen the past 10 years, from 65 to 79 percent. Dr. Cazier warns that Utahns shouldn't look to other states to educate their growing numbers of children. When Utah students attend out-of-state schools they often stay — contributing talent and paying taxes elsewhere.

Troubles in the state's higher education

HIGHER EDUCATION SPENDING IN UTAH



system go deeper than the proposed 6 percent cut that has eliminated 444 jobs and may slash \$15 million from next year's budget. The latest cuts come at a time when the state's seven colleges and two universities can least afford it, according to educators. Faculty salaries have been frozen twice and remain below average. Equipment is old. And college libraries are dangerously low in books and research periodicals, prompting concerns about accreditation.

When comparing library acquisitions at the U. with the nation's major research universities in 1982-83, the U. ranked 99th out of 104 institutions. Similarly, USU is short

450,000 volumes by two different national standards.

A one-time, 5-percent library surcharge imposed last year throughout the higher education system to correct deficiencies didn't make a dent, say officials. Southern Utah State College President Gerald R. Sherratt said it would take 22 years of similar surcharges at SUSC to make the school competitive. Snow College collections have fallen "far short" of accreditation standards, and the library at Utah Technical College at Provo/Orem meets minimum standard requirements by only 60 percent.

One bright spot is tuition charges and stu-

dent fees. Although raised considerably in recent years, tuition charges remain competitive with out-of-state public colleges. Greatest hikes for Utah schools have been for non-resident tuition. More recently, sports scholarships have been axed in many programs for out-of-state athletes. Both are indications that diversity in a state noted for its homogeneous population is a luxury Utah can no longer afford.

"At no time in the 100-year history of Utah State University have we faced a more demanding fiscal challenge than the one posed for the next two years," Dr. Cazier told USU faculty members recently.

Although higher education appropriations in Utah have risen 122 percent the past decade, education officials contend inflation and student growth have eaten up the increases. And measuring higher education expenditures against the rate of inflation may not be fair, since college costs have risen faster than inflation.

Historic cuts in state appropriations for higher education are understandable in light of revenue shortfalls, but continuing cuts create a strong belief the system has great financial difficulties, said Anthony Morgan, U. of U. vice president for budget and planning. "It depresses any sense of optimism."

This summer Gov. Norm Bangerter asked all state agencies to prepare 1987-88 budgets 6 percent smaller than this year's. In return, the governor has promised he'll ask the Legislature for a tax increase. And if revenues increase, the governor has promised that money saved from the 6 percent cut will be returned for reallocation.

In the case of higher education, the pro-
See B-10, Column 1