

Cuts not new to higher ed

By Debbie Howlett
Of the Emerald

This article is the first of a three part series that explores past, present and future cuts in the University's professional schools and departments and what effect those cuts will have.

When Gov. Vic Atiyeh asked for a plan to reduce state agencies by 20 percent, shock waves rippled through Johnson Hall.

After the initial fury over the Governor's mandate, questions began echoing in many people's minds.

Where and how could the University cut that much and still function meaningfully?

Budget cuts of this magnitude are not common, said Glenn Starlin last spring when he was acting provost.

"These are the worst of times," Starlin said. That was before Atiyeh's latest proposals.

But financial trouble is not as rare as one might hope.

In the depression year of 1932, several suggestions on money-saving measures were voted on by Oregonians.

The measures included merging the University with Oregon State University and centralizing all administration functions in Corvallis. Changing the University into a teacher's college and merging the University's law school with Willamette University's in Salem also were proposed.

But the voters said no.

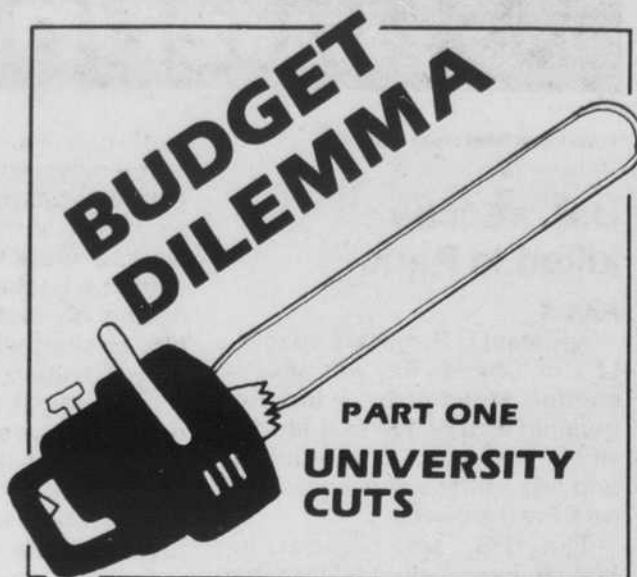
Recently, a legislator suggested that cutting one or more of the state institutions for the sake of the rest may be necessary.

Fifty years ago, on the same referendum as the mergers, voters were asked to close what was then Oregon College of Education in Monmouth. They said no again.

In the early 1970s the University was in the midst of another budget crunch. University Pres. Robert Clark was asked to cut \$2 million in 1972.

Clark convened the Hearings Panel on University Priority and asked faculty members to "cannibalize" themselves. After months of deliberation, \$1.6 million was cut from the budget and several departments suffered.

The home economics department was axed as was the Portuguese language department. The Honors College was suspended, but has since been reactivated.



The equivalent of 100 full-time positions were cut — 42 professors, 30 Graduate Teaching Fellows and 28 classified staff. Much of the reduction was accomplished by attrition and most were given one year's notice.

"It's like that story about the farmer who was experimenting giving his horse one less straw to eat each day," said Robert Trotter, dean of the music school, in 1974. "It was a successful experiment — except the horse died."

Five years after the crisis in 1972, the University shut down the school of librarianship and cut the community service and public affairs school in half.

Now, in 1982, the University is feeling the pinch again. Combating the possibility of even further closures of schools and departments, the University has raised tuition, left vacated teaching positions unfilled and proposed cutting faculty and staff salaries.

In the last 12 years the physical plant staff has decreased 7.3-percent while their responsibilities have increased 9.7-percent.

Professors have been lured to other schools and communities for many reasons, but most of them are financial ones.

And there are some who believe if the past looked thin, the 1980s will look emaciated.

Tomorrow this series will look at the present effects of budget cuts on the University's schools and departments.

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more dependent on state programs, he added.

"A major budget truth: we do not have the funds to fund the property tax relief program at its present level," he said.

Sen. Ed Fadeley, D-Eugene, co-chairer of the Joint Ways and Means Committee, said Atiyeh's two proposals — a 10 percent cut for higher education and a \$500,000 high-technology training program — are "highly inconsistent and self-defeating."

The "high-tech" plan was devised "to improve his (Atiyeh's) image, not their

(higher education) program," Fadeley said. "Most of his speech was image."

"We can't start," said Rep. Margie Hendriksen, D-Eugene, "by abolishing our state government." Budgets have been cut several times before, she said, and with other special sessions likely, programs should not be submitted to "death by inches."

Although it is not her position, Hendriksen said the Legislature is likely to approve cuts of five percent for state services, but she said lack of support for revenue bills may cause prob-

lems. Because even a five percent cut would be devastating, she said, she is proposing a revenue plan of her own. Her tax proposal would take up the slack created by Pres. Ronald Reagan's tax cuts, she said.

Some other legislators were more supportive of Atiyeh's "State of the State" proposals.

Rep. Billy Bellamy, R-Culver, said "it was one of the best speeches I've heard him give."

Rep. Robert B. Kennedy, R-Klamath Falls, agreed with the governor's economic recovery plan: "We really need some help there."

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