



UNIVERSITY

Measure 5 impact still unknown

By Peter Cogswell Emerald Associate Editor

The State System of Higher Education is playing a waiting game with the state Legislature and governor-elect Barbara Roberts before becoming too alarmed by the passage of Ballot Measure 5.

"The process is to sit and wait," said Davis Quenzer, associate vice chancellor of budget and fiscal policies for the state system.

"Nothing has come out yet," he said. "We are waiting to see what impact it will have on the state's general fund and then see what the Legislature and the governor-elect will have to address."

Measure 5 limits property tax without providing any other means of funding to make up for lost revenue from state's general fund.

Quenzer said the state system could sit down and draw up a set of 'what if' scenarios, but this would be premature.

"This really doesn't do a lot of good," he said. "We need to see how the Legislature will solve the problem. To be talking about this without hearing what the solutions might be does not help the state system."

The University froze all major expenditures and hiring plans immediately after the measure passed. At least one University faculty member believes the University acted prematurely in calling for the freeze.

"I don't understand the freeze or why it was announced," said Frank Anderson, head of the University's math department. "I don't believe there is any need to call a freeze."

The University is the only member of the state system to have enacted a freeze. University Provost Norman Wessells said the freeze is just a matter of being cautious because of uncertainty about the future.

"In our judgment, the possibilities are sufficiently grave that we want to preserve all flexibility," Wessells said. "It is better to be cautious now and ease off on searches and other things, than to do last minute cuts, which are very damaging."

As part of the freeze, all University departments are being asked to hold off on hiring graduate teaching fellows for employment during the next academic year.

Anderson said the math department does not usually offer jobs to GTFs until January or February anyway, and he is worried that if word of the freeze spreads nationally, the University will not receive as many inquiries for GTF positions.

"It is premature to bring the freeze up now," he said. "The danger is that it might be used against the University by other universities."

Wessells said he hopes to determine the size of the measure's impact on the budget before Christmas so departments will know how many GTFs they can hire.

Also put on hold was a national search for a dean of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts. Searches for deans for the music school and the College of Arts and Sciences are being allowed to continue.

Wessells said the fact that the music school search was at an advanced level and that the College of Arts and Sciences accounts for more than half of the University's departments were key factors in the decision to allow those searches to continue.

He stressed that the search for a new dean of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts is continuing, just not on a national level.

The University is considering an internal search or may appoint someone to serve as acting dean for next year, Wessells said.



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