

Retired Clemson professor calls for President Barker to quit

By John Staed Tuesday, March 10, 2009, Anderson Independent

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY — A retired Clemson University professor Tuesday called for the resignation of the university's president and provost over what he claimed were exorbitant administrative salaries and administrative growth.

John Bednar, professor emeritus, used the "free speech" portion of the Clemson faculty senate meeting to deliver a 10-minute address questioning hiring processes, salaries and calling for the faculty to force changes at Clemson. Bednar has said the administration has grown and received large raises, then added that "this administration has wallowed in selfishness at the expense of the faculty, staff and students."

"The only group with the power to resolve this is the faculty, ... with the possible addition of the student body," Bednar said.

But Clemson President James Barker, who attended the meeting, said he had no plans to resign and addressed several of Bednar's complaints, then answered questions from the faculty. Barker said previously that Bednar's accusations are inaccurate and misleading.

"For us to make it something that it is not is a mistake," Barker said. As for raises, he said he would let a faculty senate report on pay raises "speak for itself."

Both agreed on one issue, however: Clemson is faced with difficult decisions in the coming budget year starting July 1.

Barker said the university will start the year with possibly \$38 million less funding than it started with last fiscal year. Due to shrinking tax revenues, Clemson has had to reduce its state budget funding by \$38 million this year, Barker said. But because the Legislature hasn't completed its work on next year's budgets and the state's Board of Economic Advisors has not made a prediction on future revenues, he said it is hard to provide specific numbers now.

Using a series of circles that resembled a target, he said, given that the school will start at a \$38 million deficit, then cuts are planned for next fiscal year to move from an inner circle representing the core of educating students outward to administration. The smaller cuts are at the core, he said, and larger cuts are in the outer circle, the administration.

If needed, those would be 5 percent from the academic core and the school's centers and institutes, 6 percent from its student support services, and 10 percent to 15 percent from administration and support.

Making that work, he said, "is simple to say, but hard to do."

The economic advisers are expected to make recommendations this week, he said.