



# Retired Clemson professor says he is not alone in concern about aspects of university's finances

By John Staed

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CLEMSON UNIVERSITY — Retired Clemson University French professor John Bednar spends his springs and summers in Paris, falls in Michigan and winters at his home in Central.

Some would say this winter has been one of his discontent.

The well-spoken Bednar has been critical of the Clemson University administration, going as far to call for the resignation of President James Barker and Provost Doris Helms and a faculty vote of no confidence in the two.

His discontent is about what he says are ever-growing salaries in administration and pay increases for administrators that don't reflect what the rank and file at Clemson have received.

The concerns come at a time when the recession has cost Clemson nearly \$38 million in state money, according to Barker, making finances a touchy subject for many.

Bednar taught at Clemson from 1989 to 2005, when he retired. While on staff, he also served as director of the Language and International Trade Program. He was a member of the university's faculty senate and chairman of its finance committee, which reviewed salary issues each year.

So, this is not the first time he's looked over the salary numbers, and as chairman, he said, "There was more of a reason for me to look at that."

When the numbers were posted for 2008 salaries, "I started looking deeper and deeper," he said. "I was amazed at the high salaries."

That was in January.

Since then, he has appeared before the faculty senate twice to present salary details, fired off e-mails to media organizations and generated something of a buzz about the issue.

Bednar taught at Princeton University, the University of California at Berkeley and Penn State, he said, and has worked in business.

The difference between the salaries of faculty members and those of administrators was not always as large as it is today, he said.

"My observation on the management of higher education ... was that there has been a wider and wider

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gap between university administration and their faculties,” Bednar said.

Some of Bednar’s claims regarding Clemson have been rebuffed by the administration as misleading and inaccurate, and Barker called some of Bednar’s research on the numbers “sloppy.”

But Bednar said since he started speaking out, he’s received many e-mails from the rank and file.

“My response would be, if I am some lone person who is disgruntled, are all of those people who made comments in the faculty survey just like me?” he said.

The recent faculty survey, the first one completed in 10 years, generated 250 pages of comments and 175 comments on pay issues alone. Many of the responses were critical.

Bednar said he’s not planning to quit his commentaries.

“I am deeply concerned about all this stuff going on at Clemson,” he said. “Incensed would be a fair word to say.”

