



Clemson University Not Forthcoming about Salary Figures

For 2008 Salaries, open <http://www.clemson.edu/oirweb1/fb/OIRWebpage/analyses.htm>

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The Tiger Town Observer has made requests for, and printed a salary issue for the past 15 years. But this year, such requests were met with unprecedented attempts by the University to keep said salary figures out of reach. While out of the ordinary, this fact is not surprising, given the current investigation into Clemson's use (or misuse) of financial resources.

For the past year, The Observer has been reporting to Clemson, details concerning a lawsuit that has been filed against President Barker, Provost Helms and the Board of Trustees. The allegations center around Clemson's misallocation of funds, the accrument of an \$80 million cash fund, and wasteful spending taking place at the Restoration Institute.

It is no stretch therefore, to wonder why this year, of all years, Clemson's Office of Institutional Research denied us access to a spreadsheet of the salary information. Perhaps that question can be answered by the following information.

In January of 2009, the salary report on Clemson's website listed Provost Doris Helms as receiving a 15.5 percent raise from 2007 to 2008. Now however, barely three months later, that same report shows Helms as receiving only a 7.9 percent raise in salary.

Indeed, the 2007 salary report shows Helms going from \$203,598 in 2006 to \$234,138 in 2007. However, the current report for 2008 shows the provost going from \$250,528 in 2007 to her current salary of \$270,389. There is an obvious discrepancy between the two reports- conflicting numbers for Helms' 2007 salary. Thus, it is worth asking, how did the extra \$16,390 make its way into the 2008 report?

The inconsistency reportedly first made an appearance on the site shortly after a

presentation was made to the administration in early February concerning what are considerably high raises for Clemson officials during a time of economic unrest. Thus, it gives the appearance of someone simply plugging in a different number to make it seem as though salary raises were not actually that large.

Other information to consider is that personnel costs in the President's office increased a little over 100 percent between 2006 and 2008 (\$1,100,758.50 in 2008). During that time period, the number of employees increased from 14 to 16 to 27.

In the Provost's office, personnel costs increased a little over 30 percent (\$2,692,889.50 more in 2008). The number of employees from 2006 to 2008 went from 104 to 117 to 147.

As evidenced in the salary report, in fiscal year 2008, there is one person making over \$200,000 a year and six people making over \$100,000 in the President's office. In the Provost's office, there are four people making over \$200,000 and 14 people making over \$100,000 a year.

It is apparent by the above data that while Clemson University, specifically President Barker, have had no qualms with drastically raising tuition, reducing departments and personnel, outright eliminating vital position and sending emails to the student body warning about tough times ahead, the office of the President and Provost are above feeling any effects of the state budget cuts or economic hardships. In fact, it is quite the opposite, as it appears those two offices have not only grown in size, but actually prospered during an economic crisis that affects the city of Clemson, the state of South Carolina, and the nation as a whole.

Rather, it appears as though Clemson officials are endeavoring to conceal large sums of money from the public eye. In other words, citizens, tax payers, and tuition-paying parents are not being allowed to exercise their right to have full disclosure of funds at Clemson University.

While officials at any university should enjoy job security and the high salaries they work for, they should also take the necessary steps to ensure transparency and full disclosure of said salaries. Lawsuit or not, it is a duty Clemson University is not exempt from.

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