

# Clemson's Bureaucratic Explosion

By [fitsnews](#) • on February 18, 2009



It's no secret that the leadership of Clemson University likes to hoard taxpayer cash in secret slush funds while jacking tuition rates on parents across the state.

That was the big scandal last year – the discovery of an undisclosed \$140 million slush fund amassed by President James Barker and the University's Board of Trustees while they were busy doubling in-state tuition costs (click [here](#) for more on that).

This year's scandal?

It's more of the same hypocrisy and intellectual dishonesty – which has become standard operating procedure from a President and Board of Trustees who continue to act like they're above the taxpayers of this state.

On the one hand, Barker complains to a sympathetic mainstream media that his school's funding is being slashed – despite the fact that Clemson's budget has grown by more than \$100 million over the past five years.

“Our current appropriation for education is about what it was in 1995,” Barker told the school's trustees just last week, which certainly sounds awful.

Of course what Barker doesn't tell you is that the University's total budget (including public service activities) has jumped from \$346 million to \$621 million over the past 13 years – including the current year's \$38 million reduction in state funds.

You can read more about the truth behind the higher ed budget scam by [clicking here](#), but the bottom line is that Barker is blatantly misleading the public about Clemson's true financial health.

Why would he do that? We may have found at least one compelling reason.

According to a report on Clemson's administrative costs prepared by Clemson professor John D. Bednar and distributed to lawmakers this week, President Barker has *doubled* both his executive staff and his office budget over the last three years.

In 2006, Barker's office employed 14 people at a total personnel cost of \$1,081,356, excluding fringe benefits. Last year, it employed 27 people at a total personnel cost of \$2,182,114 excluding those same benefits.

That's a 100% increase, people.

And let's not forget the 21.5% raise Barker had approved for himself in 2006.

Also, within Barker's office, one attorney in particular has been awarded double-digit pay raises in each of the past two years – including a 24.2% pay raise last year.

Her name? Erin Swann, daughter of Board of Trustees Vice-President Joseph D. Swann.

Clemson's Office of the Provost and Office of University Advancement have seen similar increases in personnel and payroll costs over the last three years.

Personnel costs in the Office of the Provost have increased by more than 30% – from \$6,208,154 in 2006 to \$8,901,044 last year. The number of employees has also increased over that time period, from 104 to 147.

Personnel costs in the Office of University Advancement have more than doubled – from \$4,199,554 in 2006 to \$9,363,184 last year. The number of employees also jumped from 85 to 119 over that time period.

“Over the past three years, while the Clemson University Family in general has experienced painful budget cuts, close to or below-cost-of-living pay increases, stringent reductions in programs and personnel, freezes in filling or outright elimination of vital positions in many departments, reductions in academically related travel, and many other reminders of the economic crisis gripping not only our community but the country as a whole ... the President's office, the Provost's office and the Office of University Advancement clearly have not,” the report concludes.

And yet this massive new bureaucracy – which recently commissioned 11 separate task forces to report on cost-saving ideas – is targeting everybody but themselves.

Just last week, University Provost Doris Helms had this to say to the [\*Anderson Independent-Mail\*](#) about Clemson's budget situation:

“What we are trying to do as a university is make the major cuts sort of be things that have the least affect on faculty and students,” Helms said Monday night. “It's about protecting the core of what we do and the quality of the educational experience.”

Specifically, Helms said the school is contemplating “significant administrative cuts in salary, personnel and programs in academic affairs,” which is the division of the University that handles student registration, financial aid, graduate and undergraduate studies, the University's international office, its office of teaching effectiveness and innovation, and other responsibilities.

Oh, the University's Board of Trustees also approved a 5.5% tuition hike last summer.

Since 2001, annual in-state tuition at Clemson has more than doubled – from \$5,090 to \$10,378.

Not surprisingly, Clemson refuses to agree to a tuition cap proposed by Gov. Mark Sanford. The school has also arrogantly insisted that its charter precludes it from participating in a [Board of Regents](#) system that would create a true governing body for higher education with the authority to set tuition, fees and enrollment levels at all state-supported colleges and universities, as well as do away with unnecessary programs and (ideally) entire campuses.

Currently, South Carolina spends approximately 17% of its general fund revenues on higher ed, compared to the national average of 10% – due to the fact that taxpayers support 33 institutions and 80 campus locations for a population of only 4 million people.

**WEB EXTRA:**

[Report on Clemson's Administrative Costs](#)

## Clemson University Salary Reports 2006-2008

Compiled by John C. Bednar, Professor Emeritus, bednarj@clemson.edu

### Office of the President

#### **2006 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 8 over \$50,000

Total salaries: \$849,359

Percentage increases above 3%:

President Barker (21.5%)      Agency Head

**2006: \$30,000 - \$49,999 (Note: Since exact salaries are not reported, the mean has been calculated. For example, if the report states that an employee made between \$46,000 and \$49,999, the figure used for that person is \$47,999.50.)**

Total employees: 6 from \$30,000 to \$50,000

Total salaries: \$231,997

**206 Total Personnel Cost (without fringe): \$1,081,356**

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#### **2007 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 9 over \$50,000

Total salaries: \$966,415

Percentage increases above 3%:

President Barker (4.9%)      Agency Head

Clayton Steadman (12.0%)      Lecturer

Renee Roux (15.4%)      Attorney IV

Erin Swann (11.3%)      Attorney III

Sandra McKinney (13.3%)      Executive Assistant II

Linda Allen (14.6%)      Administrative Coordinator II

**2007: \$30,000 - \$49,999 (Note: Since exact salaries are not reported, the mean has been calculated. For example, if the report states that an employee made between \$46,000 and \$49,999, the figure used for that person is \$47,999.50.)**

Total employee: 7 from \$30,000 to \$50,000

Total salaries: \$403,994.50

**2007 Total Personnel Cost (without fringe): \$1,370,409.50**

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#### **2008 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 14 over \$50,000

Total Salaries: \$1,670,121

Percentage increases above 3%:

Clayton Steadman (7.1%)      Lecturer Non-teaching

Angela Leidinger (26.8%)      Lecturer Non-teaching

Renee Roux (20.0%)      Attorney V

Erin Swann (24.2%)      Attorney V

Elizabeth McInnis (4.0%)      Assistant Academic Program Director

**2008: \$30,000 - \$49,999 (Note: Since exact salaries are not reported, the mean has been calculated. For example, if the report states that an employee made between \$46,000 and \$49,999, the figure used for that person is \$47,999.50.)**

Total employees: 13 from \$30,000 to \$50,000

Total salaries: \$511,993.50

**2008 Total Personnel Cost (without fringe): \$2,182,114.50**

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**Office of the Provost**

**2006 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 45 over \$50,000

Total salaries: \$3,964,185

Percentage increases above 3%)

Janice Murdoch (4.0%)	Dean
Brett Dalton (6.0%)	Lecturer
Robert Halfacre (20.4%)	Visiting Professor
Barbara Speziale (13.0%)	Associate Dean
Robert Barkley (4.0%)	Lecturer
Stanley Smith (4.0%)	Academic Program Director
Linda Nilson (4.0%)	Lecturer
Lamont Flowers (4.7%)	Academic Program Director
Jane Gilbert (10.5%)	Administrative Manager I
Lois Petzold (7.7%)	Lecturer
James Williams (10.0%)	Lecturer
Brenda Goodman (12.5%)	Administrative Coordinator I
Susan Whorton (10.0%)	Lecturer
Jeffrey Neal (7.0%)	Lecturer

**2006: \$30,000 - \$49,999 (Note: Since exact salaries are not reported, the mean has been calculated. For example, if the report states that an employee made between \$46,000 and \$49,999, the figure used for that person is \$47,999.50.)**

Total employees: 59 from \$30,000 to \$50,000

Total salaries: \$2,243,969.50

**2006 Total Personnel Cost (without fringe): \$6,208,154.50**

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**207 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 49 over \$50,000

Total salaries: \$4,647,448

Percentage increases above 3%:

Provost Helms (15.0%)	Provost
David Grigsby (12.5%)	Professor
Janice Murdoch (26.2%)	Dean
James Rafert (15.3%)	Dean
James Cross (23.8%)	Professor

Robert Halfacre (4.0%)	Visiting Professor
Marvin Carmichael (7.6%)	Lecturer: Non-teaching
Robert Barkley (24.3%)	Lecturer: Non-teaching
Frankie Felder (7.4%)	Associate Dean
Linda Nilson (22.1%)	Lecturer: Non-teaching
Diane Smathers (4.0%)	Professor
Daniel Wueste (3.5%)	Associate Professor
Lamont Flowers (3.5%)	Academic Program Director
Elizabeth Lomas (13.3%)	Student Services Manager I
David Fleming (4.5%)	Research Associate
Jeffrey Neal (9.6%)	Lecturer

**2007: \$30,000 - \$49,999 (Note: Since exact salaries are not reported, the mean has been calculated. For example, if the report states that an employee made between \$46,000 and \$49,999, the figure used for that person is \$47,999.50.)**

Total employees: 68 from \$30,000 to \$50,000

Total salaries: \$2,587,966

**2007 Total Personnel Cost (without fringe): \$7,235,414**

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**208 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 61 over \$50,000

Total salaries: \$5,689,087

Percentage increases above 3%:

Provost Helms (15.5%)	Provost
Debra Jackson (20.7%)	Professor
Frederick Baus III (4.0%)	Academic Program Director
Jane Gilbert (32.3%)	Lecturer: Non-teaching
Alfred Bundrick (4.0%)	Academic Program Director
Teresa Fishman (73.3%)	Assistant Academic Program Director
Debra Sparacino (34.7%)	Associate Academic Program Director
Brenda Smith (16.1%)	Executive Assistant II
Jerome Reel, Jr. (5.0%)	Visiting Professor
Robert Bennet (6.0%)	Student Services Manager I
Brian Cass (22.0%)	Information Resource Consultant II
Audrey Bodell (5.7%)	Student Services Manager I
Christopher Wood (55.8%)	Administrative Manager I
Rebecca Pearson (5.7%)	Student Services Manager I
Cathy Sturkie (16.1%)	Program Coordinator I

**2008: \$30,000 - \$49,999 (Note: Since exact salaries are not reported, the mean has been calculated. For example, if the report states that an employee made between \$46,000 and \$49,999, the figure used for that person is \$47,999.50.)**

Total employees: 86 from \$30,00 to \$50,000

Total salaries: \$3,211,957

**2008 Total Personnel Cost(without fringe): \$8,901,044**

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**Office of University Advancement**

**2006 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 29 over \$50,000

Total salaries: \$2,363,574

14% received raises above 3%.

**\$30,000 – \$49,999**

Total employees: 56

Total salaries: \$1,835,980.50

**Total personnel cost (without fringe): \$4,199,554.50**

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**2007 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 49 over \$50,000

Total salaries: \$3,999,856

43% received raises above 3%

**\$30,000 - \$49,999**

Total employees: 56

Total salaries: 2,271,971.50

**Total personnel cost (without fringe): \$6,271,827.50**

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**2008 – over \$50,000**

Total employees: 58

Total salaries: \$4,671,243

14% received raises above 1%

**\$30,000 - \$49,999**

Total employees: 61

Total salaries: \$2,419,969.50

**Total personnel cost (without fringe) \$7,091,212.50**

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**Notes:**

**From 2006 to 2008 ...**

- 1. Personnel costs in the office of the President increased slightly more than 100%. (\$1,100,758.50 more in 2008). The number of employees increased from 14 to 16 to 27.**
- 2. Personnel costs in the office of the Provost increased slightly more than 30% (\$2,692,889.50 more in 2008). The number of employees increased from 104 to 117 to 147.**
- 3. Personnel costs in the office of University Advancement increased 69% (\$2,891,658 more in 2008). The number of employees increased from 85 to 105 to 119.**
- 4. None of these figures includes fringe benefits (32.8%, the percentage used in grant proposals).**
- 5. The combined total personnel costs in the office of the President, the office of the Provost, and the office of University Advancement come to \$20,446,342 in 2008, compared to \$11,489,065 in 2006. Almost double.**
- 6. When fringe benefits are added in 2006, the total is \$15,258,255. In 2008 the total is \$27,153,248.**
- 7. Average percentage raises for employees from 2006 to 2008 were 3% in 2006, 3% in 2007 and 1% in 2008.**
- 8. In 2006, 17% of the higher category employees in the President's office received raises of more than 3% (only the President himself: 21.5%). In 2007, 67% received raises of more than 3%. In 2008, 36% received raises of more than 1%.**
- 9. In 2006, 14% of the higher category employees in the Provost's office received raises of more than 3%. In 2007, 33% received more than 3%. In 2008, 28% received more than 1%.**
- 10. In 2006, 14% of the higher category employees in the office of University Advancement received raises of more than 3%. In 2007, 43% received more than 3%. In 2008, 14% received more than 1%.**
- 11. In FY 2008, in the President's office there is 1 person making over \$200,000 a year and there are 6 people making over \$100,000. In the Provost's office there are 4 people making over \$200,000 a year and 14 people making over \$100,000 a year. And in the office of University Advancement, there are 2 people making over \$200,000 a year and 12 people making over \$100,000.**
- 12. Remember: percentage raises are incrementally higher according to the base. In other words, 3% of \$20,000 is \$600. 3% of \$200,000 is \$6,000. In 2008, the Provost got a \$36,251 raise!**

**Observations:**

**It is obvious from the data before you that, over the past three years, while the Clemson University Family in general has experienced painful budget cuts, close to or below-cost-of-living pay increases, stringent reductions in programs and personnel, freezes in filling or outright elimination of vital positions in many departments, reductions in academically related travel, and many other reminders of the economic crisis gripping not only our community but the country as a whole ... the President's office, the Provost's office and the Office of University Advancement clearly have not. Without any significant increase in the size of the student body or the faculty ... in fact, quite to the contrary as far as the faculty and staff are concerned ... the offices of the President, the Provost and University Advancement have burgeoned, apparently prospering in these desperate times, and increasing their budgetary expenses dramatically.**

**Moreover, beyond this raw and very public data, considerable monies are provided to the Administration of Clemson University every year from the Clemson Foundation without any detailed publishing of from whom and for what those funds were raised and are spent. A full and open accounting of these funds, particularly those related to the offices of the President and the Provost, is necessary in order for our community to have full transparency concerning the fiscal operations of Clemson University. Without it, we simply do not have the information required to formulate sound opinions about the financial well-being of our institution and the fiduciary conduct of our top administrators. In appearance, large sums of money spent on and/or by our administrators are being hidden from us. In other terms, we do not enjoy the knowledge which, in the spirit of our state's laws and the stated goals of our Administration concerning transparency, we are supposed to have as members of this Family.**

**It is time for a full accounting. As this brief overview suggests, there are troubling signs in the Administration of Clemson University that mirror the conduct of those who have paid themselves outrageous bonuses as their institutions fail financially. And even more questionable decisions lead from the President's office directly to the Board of Trustees. Why, for example, is the daughter of a member of the Board working in the President's office as an attorney? Why has she received such high raises over the past two financially difficult years (11.4% and 24.2%)?? And why is President Barker's son currently employed in the Office of University Advancement? The vast majority of Clemson Family employees do not enjoy this kind of relationship. And why are former members of the Faculty Senate or their spouses employed in the Administration? Does that suggest the possibility of inappropriate or undue influence over the Senate leadership when it comes (or came) to criticism of the Administration? And why are these salary reports, small portions of which are in front of you, dated October 1<sup>st</sup> and only made available in January? Does the Administration not want this information made available in a timely manner?**

**Sadly, the list goes on. It is time for a full accounting. It is time for the bare facts and hard truths to surface. It time for all of us to have access to them and to face them as a family. It is time for this community to assume its full collective fiscal responsibility. No one in any position of leadership at Clemson University ... from the Board of Trustees to the President and on down ... can expect the Clemson Family to stick together as a family, to make the collective sacrifices that close-knit families have to make if they want to survive, if it is not provided with all of the information pertinent to that survival ... by the family leaders whose duty it is to keep them informed. Family members left in the dark will only feel greater anger and frustration and bitterness when all of these questions are eventually answered.**

**Than you.**