

U presidents: Inflation-plus bucks needed

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Despite the public's anti-tax sentiment, state university presidents say Lansing needs to hike their appropriations 2.5 percent faster than the level of inflation.

Their goal is to restore universities' losses of the 1979-83 recession. "We're fairly pleased with the priority Gov. Blanchard gave higher education in his proposed 1990 budget," said Joseph E. Champagne, president of Oakland University.

"There were rumors we might get a negative appropriation. Many of us made budget cuts in preparation. "But he proposed an increase of 4.8 percent — a little over 3 percent for operations and 1.8 for capital."

CHAMPAGNE was interviewed after presiding over the Economic Club of Detroit's annual panel of three university presidents.

Everyone's theme was the same: Michigan needs to increase its "investment" in state universities not just at the rate of inflation, but several percentage points higher.

"The Presidents Council proposed that, to achieve a rating of 15th in the nation (in terms of state appropriations per student), it would take inflation plus 3.5 percent more a year for five years," Champagne said. "It would start this year with 5.5 percent and then inflation plus 3.5 percent in the future."

"We're quite pleased he came out at 4.8 percent for the first year. He couldn't give all of it, but he certainly seemed to respond."



OU's Joseph Champagne governor listened

AREND LUBBERS, for 20 years president of Grand Valley State University, told the business audience that the buying power of universities is actually down 4.5 percent in the last decade.

Wayne State University president David Adamany said budget proposals of Gov. James Blanchard will strengthen research and improve Michigan's universities.

"Gov. Blanchard's 1990 budget once again gives a high priority to

"Currently we rank 31st among the states in appropriations for public universities as a percent of tax revenue."

"And we rank 26th per student enrolled in public institutions of higher education."

"This is not where Michigan used to be," said Lubbers, who announced the goal of raising Michigan to 15th in five years.

ONE AUDIENCE questioner challenged the notion that university costs had to rise faster than the rate of consumer price inflation.

But University of Michigan president James Duderstadt said, "I do not believe costs are out of line." He said higher education costs have increased at the same rate as personal income in the United States — a rate that would include consumer price inflation plus improved productivity.

Michigan State University President John Dibiaggio added, "There was a time when class assignments were heavier."

But he said universities ask more of faculty today — research — public service — knowledge has exploded. The average faculty mem-



Duderstadt blames voters Dibiaggio science hurt

ber puts in 55-60 hours a week in teaching, preparation, grading papers, public service and research."

DUDERSTADT hit hardest at public attitudes, saying the enemy is "in the mirror."

"Who's to blame? ... Our own personal priorities ... not our elected public officials," he said, citing their "Herculean efforts" to be the "education governor, the education party or the education president."

But the former engineering professor who has been at U-M's helm since mid-1988 said public officials

face "formidable constraints: the voters' desire for less crime, more prisons, no cuts in national defense, no cuts in welfare and no more taxes."

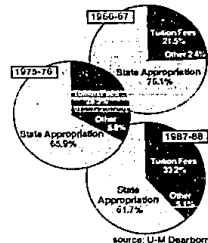
"Numerous studies, commissioned by state government and people throughout the state, have suggested that Michigan is seriously underinvesting in its knowledge infrastructure by as much as 30-40 percent relative to other states," Duderstadt said.

But the U-M chief finds the public "paralyzed" in coming to grips with school finance reform.

DIBIAGGIO, a former dentist who has been at MSU's helm since 1985, said business needs to appreciate "the pursuit of science, not just the pursuit of technology."

He quoted former MSU President Walter Adams, an economist, as finding that one effect of a corporate leveraged buyout is that "research and development budgets soon get cut."

"That can be the policy of a given corporation needing instant infusion of technology, but it must not be public science policy."



State appropriations, as a percentage of university budgets, have declined from 76 percent 21 years ago to less than 62 percent.

Blanchard's '90 budget

Here is what Gov. James J. Blanchard has recommended in state appropriations for public universities for the 1990 fiscal year beginning Oct. 1:

- All 15 higher education institutions — \$1.1 billion, up 3.6 percent.
- Oakland University — \$33 million, up 4.4 percent.
- University of Michigan-Dearborn — \$16 million, up 3.1 percent.
- U-M-Ann Arbor — \$241 million, up 3.9 percent.
- Michigan State University — \$243 million, up 3.4 percent.
- Wayne State University — \$166 million, up 3.1 percent.

WSU's Adamany: state budget good

higher education, and it will help Michigan to maintain one of the leading university systems in America.

"Some tuition increase will be required by all of our universities next year, but the governor's overall

budget proposal will help avoid tuition increases that are excessive," Adamany said.

He said special provisions in the budget would help research programs and campus physical facilities.

"All universities welcome Gov. Blanchard's increase from \$16 million to \$21 million to help renew classrooms, laboratories and libraries that are seriously deteriorating on many campuses throughout our state."

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