Financial Outlook for FY13: A Conversation with the Senior Vice President

Each July, The Business Affairs Advisor conducts an interview with Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration Tim Burgess. This year’s conversation examines the budget and the prospect for changes on the near horizon.

Business Advisor: It appears that we wrapped up Fiscal Year 2012 in good standing. How do things bode for FY13?

Burgess: You’re right about that. We finished FY12 in about as good a position as we’ve been in in three years, due to a combination of factors: a relatively small budget cut that we were able to absorb centrally; better funding from the state, with legislators again fully funding the University System’s formula; and a reasonable tuition increase. This strong finish enabled us to accomplish some of the salary compression adjustments we’ve been talking about for months. On the faculty front, we increased the amount that professors receive when they are promoted, and we went back several years to include people in that increase; we also gave the deans a pool of money to allow them discretion to recommend salary adjustments to the provost for a limited number of their most productive and competitive faculty members. On the staff front, we raised the minimum hiring rate for UGA employees from $21,000 to $22,000, and we then made adjustments to counter the salary compression that resulted from that bump in the MHR. This resulted in a salary increase for everyone earning $40,000 or less. That’s about 70 percent of staff at the University and about 84 percent of the Facilities Management (formerly PPD) staff.

Our next step in FY13 will be for Human Resources to complete the compensation study it is conducting. We expect to be done by December. We want to position ourselves so that if the legislature at least opens the door for a pay increase, then we will be ready to begin the process of realigning our compensation plan using market-based assessments and comparisons. It might take a few years to accomplish this, but we want to be positioned to start.

Business Advisor: And are you optimistic about the chance for an FY14 salary pool?

Burgess: Last fall and into the early part of winter, there was active conversation among legislative leaders, the state budget office and other key players about the possibility of merit increases in Fiscal Year 2014. There hasn’t been much of that conversation in the last (continued on page 13)
UGA Health Sciences Campus Opens

Classes are set to convene at the University of Georgia Health Sciences Campus on Prince Avenue in a matter of weeks. Students in the GHSU/UGA Medical Partnership arrive on August 6, with students from the College of Public Health following on August 13. In all, more than 800 faculty, staff and students are expected to converge on the campus this fall semester.

“We started the development of this campus more than five years ago when the University made its initial proposal to repurpose the old Navy Supply Corps School after the Navy vacated it,” said Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration Tim Burgess. “You can’t underestimate the amount of planning and labor that has been put into this massive effort by people across the campus. All of that work is about to bear fruit, but this is only Day One. We have at least two to three more years of significant, detailed work before we can say that we are utilizing every building and have a fully functional campus.”

The University will host an open house for the community on August 22, at which time all of the renovated facilities in Phase I will be available for view. Academic facilities include:

- Winnie Davis Hall, to house the administrative offices of the Georgia Health Sciences University/University of Georgia Medical Partnership;
- Russell Hall, to serve as the primary classroom facility for the Health Sciences Campus (with general purpose classrooms on the 2nd floor and the Medical Partnership’s clinical teaching areas on the 1st);
- George Hall, to serve as an auditorium lecture hall;
- Miller Hall, to house the College of Public Health’s Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, as well as its Institute for Evidence-Based Health Professions Education;
- and the former conference area of Wright Hall to house the College of Public Health’s Center for Global Health.

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University Childcare Center Thriving

Even though it has only been open six months, the University Childcare Center has already reached several important milestones and will soon be at enrollment capacity.

Human Resources oversees the contract and reports the following highlights:

- Currently, 91 spaces are filled at the Center: 77 children in full-time slots and the rest in part-time.
- Twenty-five families receive reduced tuition.
- Approximately 70% of the children’s parents are affiliated with UGA.
- The UCC has commitments for 130 families in August and expects to reach enrollment capacity (146) by November.
- All 13 classrooms are open.
- Waiting lists exist for all age groups.
- A Family Coordinator came on board in mid-July to help prepare for the fall. Her major roles include increasing and maintaining parent communication, coordinating with community resources, and assisting the director and assistant director.
- The music program began the week of May 28. All ages (infants - age 4) receive music instruction each week.
- Weekly Spanish classes for ages 2-4 started in March.

Renovation for Phase II commenced in early July. Facilities in that phase include Rhodes Hall, to accommodate the administrative headquarters (dean’s office) of the College of Public Health; and Scott Hall, the former officers’ club facility, to serve as a student center/dining hall for the campus. Both facilities will be ready for occupancy in Fall 2013. University Housing also plans to renovate Brown Hall (a former dormitory/hotel) to serve as a residence hall.

For additional information on the UGA Health Sciences Campus, contact Assistant Vice President and Director of HSC Administration Kathy Pharr at 706-542-1361 or pharr@uga.edu.
Organizational Changes Within Finance & Administration

As of July 1, the organizational chart for Finance and Administration looks a lot different.

George Stafford, who had been serving previously in a retire/rehire role as Associate Vice President for Auxiliary and Administrative Services, now becomes an Executive Assistant to Senior Vice President Tim Burgess, working on strategic initiatives and special projects.

Stafford’s former division has been subdivided. Auxiliary Services now reports to Mike Floyd, promoted from Executive Director of Food Services to Associate Vice President for Auxiliary Services. Units under his direction include: Food Services, Parking Services, Campus Transit, the UGA Golf Course, the UGA Bookstore, Bulldog Bucks, University Printing and Vending Services.

The University Police Department and the Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness report to Senior Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration Ryan Nesbit.

Administrative Services, headed by Kathy McCarty, now falls under the auspices of the Controller’s Division, which has been renamed as the University Business and Accounting Services Division (UBAS). Administrative Services includes Campus Mail and Duplicating Services, Central Receiving, Central Office Supply, Records Management, Insurance and Claims Management, the Administrative Services Warehouse, and Directory Assistance.

In addition to this transfer, several other internal restructurings in UBAS are in effect.

Associate Controller Bob McGee will retain responsibility for Payroll Services and assume new responsibilities for Global Business and Tax Support.

Associate Controller Chad Cleveland will retain responsibility for Accounting, Property Control, and Contracts and Grants Accounting, and will now also oversee Accounts Payable and Procurement.

In support of this overall organizational realignment, Business Process Manager Chris Wilkins will become IT Director and be responsible for information technology support services, Web presence and information security within Business and Accounting Services as well as for the Budget Division and several other units of Finance and Administration.

In addition, Fiscal Compliance Officer Crystal Rogers will add to her fiscal compliance responsibilities oversight for the development and delivery of a new fiscal certification program.

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Finally, the Physical Plant Division will be renamed the “Facilities Management Division.” The name change is intended to improve the organizational description for clients and create better alignment with other UGA peers and the Board of Regents.

“I believe that all of these changes will better position our division for the challenges in front of us as we strive to meet the needs of the University community,” said Senior Vice President Tim Burgess in announcing the reorganization.

To read the full announcement, click here. To read a memo about the Facilities Management name change, click here.

UGA Food Services Receives National Grand Prize Award for Residential Dining Concepts

University of Georgia Food Services has received the Grand Prize from the National Association of College and University Food Services (NACUFS) in the Loyal E. Horton Dining Award contest for best residential dining concepts.

Named for a NACUFS founder, past president and innovator, the Loyal E. Horton Dining Awards celebrate exemplary menus, presentations, special event planning and new dining concepts, and provide an avenue for sharing ideas and creative presentation in campus dining services.

Judging took place from April 18-21 at the NACUFS office in Okemos, Michigan at which time UGA Food Services was announced the Gold winner for best residential dining concepts in the large school category. They then went on to compete against the small, medium and large school Gold winners of the residential dining concepts Loyal E. Horton Award. UGA Food Services was recognized as the Grand Prize winner during a luncheon at the NACUFS national conference.

The category of residential dining concepts evaluates all-you-care-to-eat facilities and a food service program’s ability to bring creativity, atmosphere, nutritional quality and variety into their menu, presentation, marketing, and nutrition and wellness.

UGA Food Services has participated in the Loyal E. Horton Dining Awards program for 25 years, receiving a national record of 69 Horton awards since 1987, including six grand prizes for residential dining concepts. Shown here receiving this year’s award are (l to r): Associate Vice President Mike Floyd; Susan Van Gigch, Assistant Director of Retail Operations; Bryan Varin, Assistant Director of Meal Plan Operations; Allison Harper, Marketing Coordinator; Jeanne Fry, Executive Director of Food Services; and William McGee, Assistant Director of Food Services IT/Card Services.
F&A Family Movie Night

Staff appreciation in Finance and Administration (F&A) happens all year long, not just during a week in May.

For example, on August 3, F&A will be hosting its first-ever Family Movie Night, showing the Academy Award-winning film Hugo. Admission is free, as is parking, and each guest will receive a complimentary popcorn and soft drink. As of this writing (July 31), the Tate Center Theater is expected to be at capacity, with nearly 500 seats distributed to staff members and their families.

The Office of the Senior Vice President is sponsoring the event at the suggestion of the F&A Staff Representative Group (SRG), and members of the F&A Recognition Committee are staffing it.

Finance and Administration Holds Staff Appreciation Week

Administrators of Finance and Administration took time out to say thank you to staff members for a year of outstanding service during a series of special events in May. Finance and Administration is comprised of more than 1,700 men and women in seven divisions—Auxiliary Services, Budgets, Environmental Safety, Facilities Management, Human Resources, University Architects, and University Business and Accounting Services.

More than 275 staff members received awards for service and meritorious performance at the Seventh Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony at Hodgson Hall. Ten employees achieved the pinnacle honor of 30 years of service and received University of Georgia rocking chairs to commemorate that milestone. In addition to the four honorees shown at right are Mamie Allen, Pamela Haley and Michael Moore of the Physical Plant; and Alice Collins, J.W. King, Jr. and Mary Parrish of Auxiliary and Administrative Services.

Four employees were honored with merit awards. Shown below with Senior Vice President Tim Burgess are (l. to r.) Chris Wilkins, Controller’s Division—Tough Dawg; Celise Elder, Controller’s Division—Unsung Hero; Jimmy Lipham, UGACard Services/Bulldog Bucks—Newcomer; and Gregg Hudson, Food Services—Customer Service.

In addition, those who have been with the division for less than two years were invited to participate in a day-long orientation program called New to F&A Day. The event, designed to introduce new employees to the breadth of the division and the University as a whole while also fostering networking opportunities, included walking tours of downtown Athens and North Campus, time with community leaders and senior leaders of the division, and tours of new facilities. A record crowd of 85 staff members participated.

The week also included an Ice Cream Social at the Tate Center Grand Hall, which nearly 600 employees attended.
**Strides Made in SSN Removal**

Over the last several months, significant progress has been made on removal of SSNs from the eCheck and eTravel systems.

Effective January 2013, the eCheck/eTravel system will be modified to no longer use social security numbers. Rather than using SSNs within the eCheck/eTravel system, each record will be identified by a unique vendor number, which will be maintained within the Unified Vendor database. The vendor number will begin with “VN” and will only be used within the procurement and payables processes.

“Identifying vendors with a vendor number, instead of the taxpayer identification number, is a widely accepted accounts payable process,” said Jennifer Collins, manager of Accounts Payable. “UGA has historically used the VN number to identify vendors in the payment process, and this practice is suitable for use instead of using a SSN.”

These changes come as a result of a collaborative effort between EITS and Accounts Payable. In addition, Collins says that valuable feedback has been provided to the working group by representatives of several campus units.

The vendor search function has been expanded to include employees. The vendor search function allows the initiator to create a check request or travel authority without knowing the vendor/traveler’s SSN or UGAID. Simply searching for the name returns a list of results that can be used to select the correct vendor/traveler. Questions? Please email Accounts Payable or call 706-542-2786.

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**Travel Safety Tips for Study Abroad**

Did you know that the University of Georgia ranks 15th nationally in the number of students studying abroad or that one in four graduating seniors has studied abroad for academic credit during their time at UGA? The University has three year-round residential sites for study abroad in Costa Rica; Oxford, England; and Cortona, Italy.

“Even though most travelers experience minimal problems during their trips, it is important to factor in safety in any travel plans,” said Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness Director Steve Harris. “That’s why we were pleased to partner with the Office of International Education (OIE) to help students and staff understand the need to be safe and prepared while traveling internationally.”

OSEP and OIE created a wallet-sized booklet called the “Are You Ready to Travel?” resource guide to enable students to be well-prepared to travel, exercise safe and healthy habits, and serve as good ambassadors for UGA. The wallet book is packed with useful information and resources including packing tips, reminders regarding the UGA Conduct Code, travel insurance, emergency contact information and procedures, safety and security precautions, and more. Nearly 2,000 copies were printed in May to be provided to various OIE programs.

For more information or to obtain a copy of Are You Ready to Travel?, contact OSEP at 706.542.5845 or osep@uga.edu.
Web-Based Vendor Form Launches

A Web-based vendor registration form will be launched this fall as an enhanced alternative to the paper vendor profile form presently used. This electronic form will become the primary method for vendors (companies and non-employee individuals) to submit their required payment and purchase order information to UGA. While this requirement may seem burdensome, Accounts Payable Manager Jennifer Collins says the information collected is required by the IRS and is therefore a necessary part of the payables process.

The submission of this form, and the subsequent processing by Accounts Payable and Procurement, will result in the creation of the vendor number. Employees will not be required to submit this form for the initial creation of their vendor number. Instead, a process initiated from within eCheck/eTravel will be used for the assignment of employee vendor numbers. Collins says the process for creating an employee record in the database will take less than 90 seconds to complete. Likewise, eCheck requests for refunds to students or customers or other “non-vendor” payments will not require submission of a vendor profile form.

This project will be implemented in two phases. The first phase, launching in September 2012, will allow the entry of SSN or vendor number to identify records and access to the Web-based vendor registration form. This phase will serve dual purposes: it will create a transition period for users to become familiar with the new process, and it will provide a real-world test of the vendor number replacement for SSN prior to the second phase, which is the January 2013 switchover when SSNs will no longer be used by eCheck and eTravel.

In the coming weeks, Accounts Payable staff will communicate more details on this initiative and offer training sessions to units.

Parking Services Recognized for Operation Safedrive

Operation Safedrive recently caught national attention by being profiled in The Parking Professional, the official magazine of the International Parking Institute.

Created as a way to help ensure that students and other University community members have safe travels during semester breaks, Operation Safe Drive provides free vehicle inspections to confirm that vehicles are in good condition before drivers head out on the road. Parking Services recently held the third annual Safedrive event, during which mechanics from Campus Transit and Five Star Automotive checked belts/blades, topped off oil, pressurized tires, and visually inspected vehicles.

“Hosting Operation Safedrive is a great way for us to provide exceptional customer service and ensure vehicles are ready for the long drives many students, faculty and staff make during semester breaks,” said Parking Services Director Don Walter. “We are very appreciative for the recognition the event receives, but more importantly, we are honored to provide a program that benefits our campus community.”
Renovations at Rock Eagle

Sutton Hall at the Rock Eagle 4-H Center in Eatonton has recently been transformed from the main dining hall into a modern, multipurpose venue. The renovation was completed in two phases and provides two large meeting rooms/exhibit halls for events and exposions which can accommodate over 600 persons. There is also a centrally located, fully-stocked gift shop with 24-hour vending and laundromat.

The dining hall was originally built in 1954 to serve the Rock Eagle 4-H Center. Named in honor of William A. Sutton, founder of Rock Eagle, the dining hall provided upwards of 3,000 meals a day during summer camps and served Rock Eagle in this capacity for more than 54 years. When the new dining hall opened in late 2008, plans were made to renovate Sutton Hall for re-use. The first phase of renovation was completed in February 2011, and the second phase was completed in time for the 2012 summer camps.

“All of the original electrical, mechanical and life safety systems have been upgraded, and this wonderful building is fully rejuvenated and ready to serve the Rock Eagle 4-H Center for the next 50 years and beyond,” said Assistant Director of Engineering and Infrastructure Bob Wallace.

In addition, the Rock Eagle 4-H Center has begun an ambitious construction program to replace 53 of the original cabins, which were constructed in the late 1950s by Georgia State prisoners who lived in a temporary confinement facility onsite. The cabins bunked up to 16 campers sharing one common bathroom with a separate room and bath for a chaperon. These were state-of-the-art buildings in their day, where some of the early campers experienced their first indoor plumbing.

After more than 50 years of service, Rock Eagle is replacing the cabins with updated facilities that provide separate bedrooms that each hold up to four campers. Each bedroom has its own bathroom, air conditioning system and Internet access. The new cabins provide a spacious common area for meetings and relaxation which are well suited for both young campers and adult groups. Each cabin provides a room designed for disabled visitors and houses up to 22 campers.

Three new cabins have been completed with the generous donations of 4-H supporters. Currently, five additional cabins are being constructed with funding provided by the state and will be ready for occupancy this fall. The state has authorized construction of seven more cabins next year.

In support of the State Historic Preservation program, three of the original cabins will be preserved for future generations to see and experience what it was like to camp at Rock Eagle in the 1950s.
Competitive Bid Threshold Increases

As of July 1, 2012, House Bill 863 has increased the competitive bid threshold on purchases from $5,000 to $25,000 until July 1, 2015. This threshold is applicable to purchases of supplies, materials, equipment or non-public works services which are not available on mandatory statewide contracts or through statutorily required sources. This legislative change is expected to increase efficiencies in the purchasing process.

“Legislators are likely to inquire about trends in data to determine if raising the bid threshold resulted in spending with small and local businesses,” said Procurement Officer Annette Evans. “With this expectation, UGA is implementing ‘sound business practices,’ as stewards of the State’s funds, to ensure monies are being spent prudently.”

These sound business practices also assist with meeting federal requirements in specific purchasing situations. A summary of the sound business practices can be found under Question 1 of the FAQs.

Note that the maximum single transaction limit for purchasing cards (P-cards) remains at $4,999. If you have questions about the new business practices or need assistance with a purchase, email the Procurement Office or call 706-542-2361.

Sustainable Practices at Work on Campus

Recycle shredded office paper. Share common office equipment and appliances. Commute to work on a bicycle or as a carpool member. Thanks to the Sustainable UGA Office Program, these are just a few ways that departments are being recognized for setting an example of sustainable practices and resource conservation on campus.

“It’s all about behavior change in the workplace,” said Sustainability Coordinator Jennifer Dunlop. “Participating in the program teaches employees realistic and attainable ways to save campus resources and dollars. That’s a valuable lesson to take home at the end of the day.”

Started in 2011, the Sustainable Office Program was designed to help departments become more sustainable in their water and energy use, waste management, purchasing practices and transportation choices. Departmental improvement also helps to meet UGA’s strategic goal for improving stewardship of natural resources and advancing campus sustainability.

To become a certified Sustainable UGA Office, a department must commit to satisfying prerequisites and implementing the required number of items in the Office Program Toolkit, which provides information and ideas for implementation in five different categories, including Water, Energy, Waste, Purchasing and Transportation. Everyone in a department must participate.

Offices that achieve certification can display the Sustainable UGA Office logo on their Web site and publications. Certified offices also receive a wall plaque, recognition on the Sustainable UGA Web site, program incentives, ongoing technical support and an invitation to bi-annual networking lunches.

If your department would like to participate, contact the Office of Sustainability at 706.542.1301 or email sustain@uga.edu.
Plan Ahead for Emergencies

Emergency planners encourage people to do three things to be prepared for an emergency: be informed about possible emergencies in your area, make plans to respond and build an emergency kit. For brevity purposes, only the development of an emergency kit will be highlighted in this article, but you can get more information about any of these topics at www.ready.ga.gov or www.osep.uga.edu.

“If a disaster such as a tornado, flood, power outage, earthquake or any unforeseen emergency occurs, you and your family may be expected to be self-sufficient for up to 72 hours,” said Office of Security and Emergency Preparedness Director Steve Harris. “Stores will quickly run out of supplies, so it is important to plan ahead. Assembling an emergency kit is very simple, but it requires some forethought about items you and your family might need during a long-term emergency.”

Consider including the following items in a family emergency kit: a three-day supply of food, one gallon of water per person per day, can opener, flashlight with extra batteries, battery powered/hand crank radio, first aid kit, whistle, tools to turn off utilities, garbage bags, dust masks, local maps, medicine, and games or activities for children. Also, think of the unique needs of your family, including your pets and medical needs. In addition to a family emergency kit, it is important to keep emergency supplies in your vehicle.

Learn more advanced preparation strategies for your home or campus office by attending one of OSEP’s Basic Emergency Preparedness classes at Staff Training and Development. The class can also be taught to departments on request. Contact OSEP at osep@uga.edu or 706-542-5845.

UGA Food Services Advances Dining Locations

Major improvements to campus dining facilities are on the near horizon.

The renovated and expanded Oglethorpe Dining Commons opens its doors in August. Another improvement comes in the spring, when construction begins on a new Bolton Dining Commons. The current Bolton facility was built in 1963 and was last renovated in 2000.

“The facility is badly in need of refurbishment; however the scope of work needed on this facility goes far beyond changes to décor and furnishings,” said Campus Architect Danny Sniff. “Critical repairs would include removal and replacement of the roofing system, replacement of the original HVAC unit along with relevant controls and ductwork, interior redecoration, changes to the serving area, and other major changes to the infrastructure. A refurbishment project would not result in an increase in seating capacity, nor would it allow for any operational changes or exterior upgrades. That’s what led to the decision to build a new facility.”

Bolton’s replacement should be ready by summer 2014. “Building a new Bolton will give UGA Food Services the room it needs to serve more meals and prepare for future growth,” said Jeanne Fry, director of Food Services.
Green Cleaning Awarded Top Honors

The University of Georgia earned top honors for its green cleaning program in the regional best practices competition sponsored by the Southern Association of College and University Business Officers (SACUBO) this spring.

UGA’s green cleaning program has resulted in marked decreases in employee injuries, lost work hours and respiratory complaints associated with cleaning chemicals. Additionally, the program has led to a dramatic reduction in cleaning chemical expenditures.

Facilities Management Safety Coordinator Hope Thomas and Building Superintendent Jerry Heninger presented the University’s conservation plan at the SACUBO regional conference in April, where the program was announced Grand Finalist.

The green cleaning program was also profiled in the winter issue of the national College Services magazine.

Out of Toner!

The printer flashes the message that you are out of toner. You open a new box, pull the old cartridge from the machine and put in the new one. You stand there with an empty cartridge in your hand wondering, “Now what do I do with this?”

“Recycling a used toner cartridge is easy,” said Philip Weinrich, toner recycling technician for Central Office Supply (COS). “Simply put it in the box you just opened, write ‘COS’ on the box and send it with your outgoing campus mail. It’s that easy.”

All cartridges, no matter who you bought them from or what company made them, can be returned to COS. “We recently started accepting inkjets, so you can send those as well,” Weinrich added. COS uses many of the empties as part of their remanufactured toner cartridge business, which allows them to give UGA departments up to 65% savings over higher priced manufacturer’s versions.

To review a list of cartridges that COS offers, visit the COS catalogue. HP CE505X and CE285A cartridges are particularly needed to meet demand, as is the CE278A.

This year alone, more than 350 million cartridges will be thrown out to landfills, almost one million per day. During the first quarter of 2012, COS prevented more than 1,100 empties from meeting the same fate. If you have any questions on how you can be a part of helping the environment in this way, or if you need a pickup of a large quantity of cartridges, contact Philip Weinrich at 706-425-3272 or at solidrq@uga.edu.
Integrating Sustainability into the Curriculum

“This is a breeding ground for interdisciplinary relationships!” proclaimed a participant in the Integrating Sustainability Across the Curriculum Workshop held at the end of the spring semester.

Those words were like music to the ears of the staff in the Office of Sustainability, which is on a mission to integrate sustainability into all disciplines and departments on UGA’s campus. In May 2012—with the help of several campus partners—the office hosted a two-day, interactive faculty workshop designed to provide knowledge and tools for professors to incorporate principles of sustainability into their new and existing coursework. The dynamic workshop format infused sustainability concepts through campus tours, panel discussions, group synthesis activities, individual reflection exercises and presentations by resource professionals. It fostered partnerships and networking between faculty from multiple disciplines.

“Based on the feedback we received, participants were impressed and inspired by what colleagues are doing across campus and left the workshop with specific ideas for their own courses,” said Sustainability Director Kevin Kirsche. “We intend to make the workshop an annual event and hope that it will serve as a catalyst to refine existing coursework, encourage development of new curricula, and spread the word of the relevance of sustainability in every discipline.”

Burgess’ Financial Outlook for FY13 (continued)

two to three months, but I attribute that to a cautionary perspective as to how well the state would finish FY12 and start FY13.

Now that we know the state met its budget targets and was able to put more money into reserves, the remaining question will be whether FY13 revenues will continue their upward trend or whether there are any major unknowns to counter that growth. I would suggest that, considering the strong finish to FY12, there is still a fair amount of optimism that we’ll see some sort of pay increase in FY14. We are preparing our internal financial plans for that possibility. If an increase is granted, we’ll coordinate our compensation plan with the pay increase pool and begin to make the adjustments that have long been needed.

Business Advisor: Many of our deans and business directors are understandably concerned by the financial crisis at Georgia Perimeter College. What lessons can we learn from that experience?

Burgess: The situation at Georgia Perimeter has already been the topic of conversation among the University System’s chief business officers—my colleagues at all of our sister schools—and it is likely to continue to be the hot topic for many months to come.

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There are still internal reviews being conducted by the Board of Regents so it might be the fall before we have a clear picture of exactly what happened and what it will take to right that ship. However, it is clear that there was a breakdown in the internal controls of managing GPC’s financial system. There was a disconnect between the revenues they were taking in and the expenses to which they were committing, and they apparently made up the difference by living off reserves for two to three years until the reserves ran out. The delta appears to be as much as $25 million.

There’s a very important and fundamental lesson for us to take from this. As mundane and boring as basic financial principles can be, they are absolutely essential. It’s why the core of what our business officers do in the schools, colleges and units is so important—because if they do their jobs professionally, day after day after day, it serves as the checkpoint, the protection to keep things like that from happening here. We simply have to abide by those principles, maintain our internal benchmarks and reporting mechanisms, and stay disciplined to them week after week, month after month. It’s like reconciling your bank statements: If you don’t do it, it doesn’t take long for your whole financial house to start crumbling. The role of our business managers is critical in this process, and we count on them to consistently execute their duties correctly, thoughtfully and professionally.

I will also say that this has caused the senior leadership in Finance and Administration to reassess our own internal control efforts. We’re questioning ourselves—are we watching the right things and assessing the University’s finances with the appropriate level of criticism? We are pretty comfortable and confident in our measures, but you can’t rely on that. You just can’t assume that you are immune from problems. It’s clear that the Board of Regents will be requiring more specific financial reporting of the campuses in the future. There’s an active conversation going on among the business officers and the BOR office about the type of legitimate reporting mechanisms that the campuses could do internally and then report to the central office that would daylight financial discrepancies sooner. It could be as simple as providing a routine statement of your cash position—just some basic, direct benchmarking of certain financial indicators. These are likely to be instituted at all USG institutions by the Board of Regents in the fall. A heightened level of scrutiny will undoubtedly result.

**Business Advisor: The year ahead could be quite interesting. Change is on the way on many fronts.**

**Burgess:** Indeed. Whenever you go through a major leadership change—with the president stepping down and a new president coming in—it’s going to change the conversation for the University. A new person at the top will define a new agenda with a new set of objectives and priorities. That doesn’t mean they’ll be automatically different from Dr. Adams’ strategic priorities, but it’s certain to be a period of readjustment. A changing environment is inevitable in a growing and vibrant organization like the University of Georgia. I think the key aspect to change is how well we adapt and use it. The year ahead offers all of us the opportunity to use these changes in the most effective way possible to continue to improve the University in its quest for excellence.