

MIZZOU

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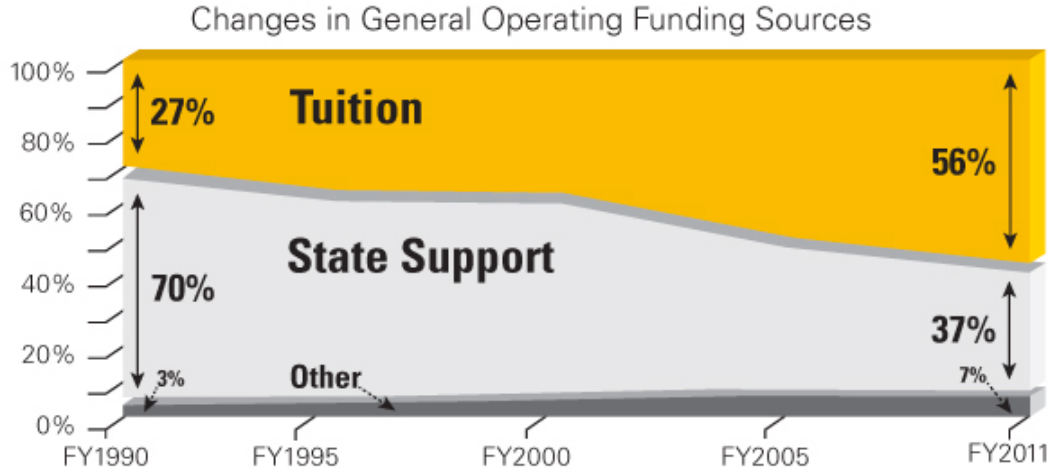
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Around the Columns

Enrollment bolsters budget

Mizzou is predicting another record enrollment for fall 2011, which would help soften the impact of another reduction in state support for the campus's general operating budget.

On May 5, after weeks of negotiation between the Missouri House and Senate, the General Assembly agreed on a fiscal 2012 budget that would reduce funding for higher education by nearly 5.5 percent. If Gov. Jay Nixon, BA '78, JD '81, signs the budget, Mizzou will see a \$10.3 million decrease in funding from fiscal 2011 levels.



It could have been worse: Nixon's original budget proposed cutting state support for Mizzou by \$12.7 million.

Tim Rooney, MU's budget officer, said that most of the roughly \$2.4 million difference between Nixon's budget and the legislature's will be used for financial aid and increased support for building maintenance and repair.

But, with a 5.8 percent increase in tuition and required fees set to go into effect July 1 and enrollment officials predicting about 1,000 additional undergraduates on campus in the fall, administrators remain determined to increase salaries for faculty and staff. Pending approval by the UM Board of Curators, the university is proposing a merit-based salary increase of 2




percent. The campus would cover about one-third of that cost, with departments shouldering the rest, Rooney said.

“That’s better than we thought six months ago,” he said. “We thought we were actually going to have to cut [department] budgets and they were going to have to cover 100 percent of the salary and benefit costs.”

Since 1990, Mizzou has relied increasingly on tuition to fund its operations. State support has dropped from 70 percent of the university’s general operating budget in 1990 to 37 percent in fiscal 2011. Meanwhile, the percentage of the budget supported by tuition has risen from 27 percent to 56 percent. Administrative overhead on grants and contracts has also risen, from 3 percent to 7 percent since 1990.

To make ends meet, Mizzou has cut spending by more than \$18 million over the past three years; put off \$187 million in building maintenance and repairs; and implemented a “soft” hiring freeze that reduced spending on salaries from fiscal 2009 to fiscal 2010. But it’s been the steady increase in student enrollment — a 26 percent increase in undergraduates since 2002 — that has “really saved us,” Rooney said.

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