

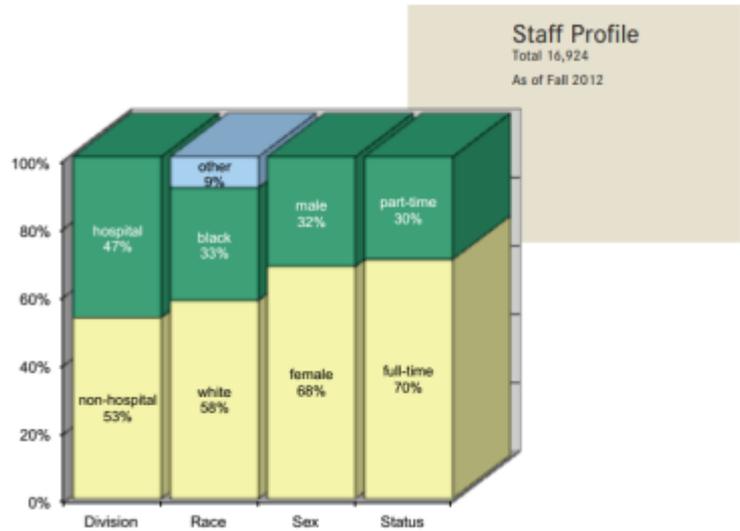
This morning The Terminal sent an email to Jim Bakken, director of media relations at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), requesting a breakdown of revenue sources at the school for the last 3-5 years. We were specifically asking for those numbers to be broken down between research and non-research sources.

It is our contention that the original decision to announce the discontinuation of UAB's bowling, rifle, and football teams would be understood in a much broader context once folks take a closer look at that data. We've since found other ways to make our case.

The key to this approach to the story is taking a step back and looking at the entire university and not just athletics and its budget in a vacuum. Many of the arguments associated with saving the program are based on proving UAB can afford to pay for athletics. If you base it purely on cash in hand and access to the money in the budget, this is a true statement — the school can afford to field a full slate of teams. If you remember it is one department in one of the state's most valuable resources — and one that recently hasn't been able to provide for merit raises, etc. — you realize it becomes a flimsy proposition quickly.

[A look at the 2013 financial report](#) (particularly pages 5 and 6 for purposes of our initial statement of facts) gives us the first lovely graphic accompanying this article. It shows the appropriations received by UAB from the state of Alabama from 2009 - 2013. It essentially suggests that appropriations have remained flat for that time frame. [The findings reported by Yellowhammer News back in September](#) shows that the total decline has been slow, but steady — a result of the recognition of UAB's importance to the state economy. The decline for UAB (5%) incidentally is not nearly as precipitous as the ones for the main campus in Tuscaloosa (20.7%) and Huntsville (19.2%) during that same 1987-2012 time period they referenced. This will come into play at the end of this piece.

A look back at [this piece filed by former Birmingham News reporter Hannah Wolfson in September 2011](#) shows that the budgets for all three schools in the university system rely heavily on increasing enrollment numbers. Officials have tried very hard to resist raising student fees and tuition, even though that's the only non-research related funding potentially under the school's control. It's what allows them to pay for non-hospital and non-research faculty related positions. It also allows for the subsidy for athletics. Basically, non-research related funding is what's used to pay for most of the non-hospital positions at UAB. That would be the reason for the use of the second graphic taken from the report in this piece. The inability to see significant increases in funding means you can't afford cost of living increases, non-capital efforts, or (as evidenced on Tuesday) pay raises for coaches in athletics if the program is being propped up via a subsidy from the academic side. Research funds can't necessarily be used because they're basically earmarked for specific projects.



One thing to remember as you look at when this article was filed is what else was going on at the time — the UAB on-campus stadium effort. It provides the basis for another theory as to why [it was never taken up by the Board of Trustees for consideration two months later](#).

Following this to its logical conclusion, it can be hypothesized that Ray Watts didn't cut football because he was out to hurt UAB; he cut football to keep UAB from suffering a fate similar to [the current situation at the University of Maryland - a hiring freeze for all non-research related positions](#). It would also explain not only why Carol Garrison resigned before but why [Judy Bonner announced her resignation late last year at Alabama](#). It also explains why the university has been so excited with regard to its recent increases in research funding, specifically from the National Institutes of Health.

Incidentally, [Maryland did just announce this brand new project](#) — one that won't be affected by their hiring freeze. This is after [they made a move back in 2012 that may look familiar to those who've been following the UAB situation](#) — except they chose to keep football.

There are other effects to this effort — ones we're continuing to investigate at this time.