State shortfall has officials sweating
By Ginger Livingston
The Daily Reflector
Monday, January 24, 2011

A $3.7 billion budget shortfall awaits the General Assembly when it convenes at noon Wednesday.

While the 170-person body will devote the coming spring and summer to closing the budget gap through spending cuts and some revenue growth, local leaders in education, health care and government are ultimately responsible for enacting those changes.

“We don't necessarily want to create alarm in the community, but a very disheartening situation exists with the state budget,” said Michael Cowin, Pitt County Schools assistant superintendent of financial operations.

Most budget discussions leading up to the new legislative session have focused on education.

Leaders with the University of North Carolina system said last week that a 15 percent budget cut would mean a $405 million reduction systemwide, most of which would come from the academic side.

The state Department of Public Instruction, working with a scenario of a 10 percent reduction, said 5,300 teaching and 13,259 teaching assistant positions could be lost along with nearly 2,000 other positions statewide.

The main question local officials have is how much will be cut from their departments and agencies. State budget writers initially said cuts could range from 5 percent to 10 percent. Now some legislators and budget officials are predicting cuts ranging from 15 percent to 20 percent.

The General Assembly's newly elected Republican majority has promised no tax increases to cover the debt which stems from the loss of federal stimulus money and the expiration of temporary state sales taxes and income tax surcharges.

Officials at East Carolina University have been meeting with members of the local delegation and the new legislative leaders to talk about the dental school and the importance of funding $5 million over the next two years for its operational budget so accreditation can be completed as classes start this fall.
Pitt County commissioners are scheduled to have a Friday breakfast with the county’s five-person delegation to discuss their budget concerns and legislative goals. The Pitt County Board of Education is working to set up a similar meeting in Raleigh.

“At this point, with the General Assembly getting ready to convene, our best luck at getting five of them together was for us to bring a delegation to Raleigh,” Superintendent Beverly Reep said at a recent meeting.

Officials at East Carolina University, Pitt Community College, city and county government and University Health Systems last week shared details about how funding cuts would affect their agencies and what legislative priorities they have beyond the budget.

**East Carolina University**

East Carolina University has lost close to $100 million to budget cuts in the last three years, said Philip Rogers, executive assistant to the chancellor. If a predicted 20 percent cut is necessary that would take another $60 million from the $306 million the university receives from the state. The university's total budget of $800 million comes from multiple sources.

“Two years ago (more than) 90 percent of our cuts came from the administrative functions of the university,” Rogers said.

One such cut involved Rogers taking on the roles of the university's chief of staff and legislative liaison along with his job as policy analyst for Chancellor Steve Ballard.

“This year, with the state budget shortfall, we're going to have much less flexibility,” Rogers said. Information about potential cuts about staff and faculty and program changes wasn't available.

“We're not really talking specifics with (faculty, staff, students and alumni) but we are trying to prepare them from a broad perspective about how deep the cuts will be because we don't want anyone to be surprised,” he said.

The university's top budget priority is securing $3.5 million this coming fiscal year and another $1.5 million in fiscal year 2012-13 for the dental school, Rogers said.

When the Legislature adopted its current budget there was a pledge to fund the money, he said. However, the leadership has changed in the General Assembly now that Republicans are the majority in both chambers.

University officials already are meeting with legislative leaders to explain that losing the funding could halt the dental school's accreditation process and hamper the start of classes this fall, said Dr. James R. Hupp, dean of the School of Dental Medicine.
“So far these individuals, these Republican leaders have been understanding,” Hupp said. “Fortunately, we have very strong support from the North Carolina Dental Society and they are a very influential group.”

The university also will ask the Legislature to change language in a state scholarship program for dental students that will allow ECU students to apply. Currently, the scholarship rules limit the fund to University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill applicants.

Along with the dental school, leaders at the Brody School of Medicine hope their program can be spared the worst of the budget cuts. Sixty-six percent of the medical school's revenues come from its family medicine practice, said Dr. Paul R.G. Cunningham, dean of the Brody School of Medicine and senior associate vice chancellor for medical affairs.

However, those dollar amounts are dropping as third-party payers cut back reimbursements, the federal government has reduced Medicare and Medicaid payments and the family medicine practice takes on more indigent clients.

Already the Brody School of Medicine has gone from receiving 53 percent of its revenues from the state in fiscal year 1989-90 to 22 percent during fiscal year 2009-10, Cunningham said.

Implementing a 15 percent budget cut at the Brody School of Medicine could result in program eliminations.

Patients services, such as the medical clinic in Bethel, a program that assists abused children and the school's genetics laboratory also could be closed, Cunningham said.

**Pitt Community College**

“The community college system has been growing by leaps and bounds and we've been ahead of the pack for a number of years,” said Pitt Community College President Dennis Massey. “We've grown well over 30 percent in the last three years, that's approaching 9,000 credit students.”

The General Assembly has made additional money available to fund enrollment growth in recent years. Those extra dollars have allowed PCC to meet its students' growing demands despite having to return $500,000 to the state because of budget cuts.

“We hope and pray they will pay us for the enrollment increase we had this year in the coming year,” Massey said. Getting money for enrollment increases would cushion any budget cuts the system may sustain. Without that money, “We won't have as many courses and sections for people to take (classes) and that will be frustrating,” Massey said.

Beyond the budget, Massey said his biggest concern is what the federal government will do to support the Pell Grant money which helps students pay for school.
Over the last year the number of students qualifying for Pell grants increased from 26 percent to almost 40 percent, Massey said.

“If financial aid doesn't increase, a lot of people won't be able to pay for classes,” Massey said. “There are major implications but we'll do the best we can to provide programming for our community.”

Pitt County Schools
Forty percent of the state's budget is spent on public education, Cowin said, so it's unlikely the deficit can be resolved without cutting those dollars.

“We'll do everything we can to minimize the impact on the classroom but the reality is an impact of this magnitude has an impact everywhere,” Cowin said.

To give school board members and the community an idea of what the system is facing, Cowin has calculated what cuts a 10 percent budget reduction would require. Pitt County would lose 83 teaching and 139 teaching assistant positions along with 34 other positions.

Cowin said he believes a large portion of the losses could be absorbed through retirements and individuals leaving but he wouldn't rule out lay-offs. Discussions about budget cuts typically focus on how they affect the classroom, Cowin said. However, there also could be a statewide, $20 million reduction in transportation funding just as gas prices are climbing.

Local school leaders, teachers and the public have to be very vocal about what could happen in the classroom, he said.

The North Carolina Association of Educators has a plan for helping teachers find their voice. The organization is sponsoring a conference in March for National Board Certified teachers to educate them on effectively lobbying legislators.

The action was prompted by the suggestion from some groups that the state eliminate the 12 percent salary increase traditionally given to nationally board certified teachers.

There is one bright spot for Pitt County Schools, Cowin said. The system received $4.6 million from the federal government to fund education jobs which will cover some salaries for one year.

Pitt County

“There has been little communication so far with counties about what we can expect,” said Pitt County Manager Scott Elliott. His hope is the Legislature will have a spending plan in place before July so the Board of Commissioners will know what expenses they'll have to fund.
Elliott points to the 2009-10 budget when the General Assembly reduced payments to counties housing state prisoners in local jails and shifted the responsibility of renting office space for probation and parole from the state to the county.

Those moves and others left Pitt County with $400,000 in unfunded expenses two months after its budget was approved. County departments were forced to extend hiring freezes and put off purchases and other programming to cover the debt, Elliott said.

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“To balance our budget, with all the constraints we have due to the economic conditions, it will be tough to have revenues meet expenditures (even) without the General Assembly passing on costs,” Elliott said.

The county is adding an additional $350,000 in reoccurring funding to the school system budget to hire staff at Lake Forest Elementary School, which opens this fall. The majority of Pitt County commissioners have stated they won't raise taxes to balance the budget for the 2011-12 fiscal year, Elliott said.

That is why Pitt and other counties worry about preserving local revenue streams. Local government leaders on the county and municipal levels want assurances that no taxes or fees collected by the state and distributed locally will be claimed by the state. Pitt County commissioners also are opposing any effort to privatize the state Alcohol Beverage Control system, Elliott said. The county gets more than $1 million annually in tax revenue from liquor and mixed beverage sales.

The commissioners also are opposing efforts to shift the state's existing responsibility for transportation funding, road construction and road maintenance to county government. There are issues beyond the budget that Pitt County commissioners want to bring before the legislature.

They support continued efforts to allow counties greater flexibility in the use of E-911 funds. The commissioners will ask the General Assembly to change the interest rate the county charges on delinquent real and personal property taxes. Pitt County's rate is 2 1/2 percent; commissioners want it increased to 5 percent.

The commissioners also want state law changed to allow counties to publish delinquent tax notices online instead of in a local newspaper.

**City of Greenville**

Like Pitt County, officials with the City of Greenville are concerned about the protection of local revenue streams and state payments for local services.

The city receives $356,706 in revenues directly from the state. That covers fire protection for state-owned facilities, said City Manager Wayne Bowers. However, officials are keeping an eye on monies collected by the state and redistributed to counties and municipalities, including the sales tax, electric utilities franchise tax and local video programming tax.
Those funds can be held back to balance the budget by an act of the General Assembly. Bowers said Wednesday he isn't aware of any intention to do so, though it has happened in the past.

University Health Systems
Greenville-based University Health Systems of North Carolina is gearing up to make new political connections at the state and federal level.

“It's going to be a tough time in the General Assembly for us,” said Joel Butler, UHS chief external affairs officer. “We have a different group of folks.”

Democrats are no longer in control of the General Assembly, and that means entities like UHS need to change their lobbying strategies and forge new connections.

Michelle Brooks, UHS vice president of Community Benefit and Government Affairs, said that staff were meeting with new legislators. “And I'm telling you it's a challenge. Most of them have no health care experience at all,” she said.

She said that UHS would support East Carolina University's new School of Dental Medicine in any requests for funding.

Jackie Drake, Kathryn Kennedy and K.J. Williams contributed to this report.

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The fix that ECU's med school is in

KINSTON—Enhancing Medicaid reimbursements for the state's two public medical schools does not take anything away from other providers. But it does help those schools bear their load, especially in the case of East Carolina University.

Unlike Duke and UNC, the business model of the ECU medical school, established by the state in 1974, is nearly impossible to financially execute in 2011 and beyond.

One key difference: Unlike Duke and UNC, ECU, where I serve on the Board of Trustees, does not own its affiliated hospital. Pitt County Memorial Hospital in Greenville is a private, not-for-profit entity. So-called Stark Laws prohibit the hospital from transferring money to ECU unless it is for services rendered. Unlike the others, ECU's medical school does not own profitable testing and diagnostic departments such as radiology.

Federal and private medical insurance plans reimburse hospitals more than medical practice plans such as ECU Physicians for items such as chemotherapy drugs. Duke, WakeMed and UNC can bill for these products and services at higher rates through their hospitals. Those hospital corporate parents can support their physician plans.

ECU Physicians, the medical practice of the Brody School of Medicine, is similar to a larger version of a community doctor's office. The practice is primarily a fee-for-service, primary-care organization with many obstacles to profitability. Our patient base is largely older, poorer and less well-insured than what private-practice physicians in the Greenville area serve. The patient base is also less affluent and less insured than those served by WakeMed, Duke and UNC.
ECU Physicians does not have the investment reserves of WakeMed, nor the impressive endowment and reserves of Duke. We do not enjoy the profits of a large research enterprise to offset costs.

The tripartite mission of our medical school, defined by the North Carolina General Assembly, is:
• to increase the supply of primary-care physicians who serve the state;
• to improve the health status of residents of eastern North Carolina; and
• to enhance the access of minority and disadvantaged students to a medical education.

History has shown that ECU has served this mission well. We rank No. 2 among medical schools nationally for producing primary care physicians. We are No. 7 nationally in fulfilling our social mission, according to study by George Washington University. More than half of our medical graduates practice in North Carolina.

If you look at the population east of Interstate 95, we would rank as the 51st state in health status. ECU serves a disproportionate share of this population. We are proud of that; it is our mission. However, our business model will not sustain it. We need the new Medicaid formula described in a recent news article.

Over the years, ECU and UNC have borne the scars of the 1970s fight to establish a medical school in Greenville. Now the universities are beginning to work together in many ways to better serve the people of North Carolina.

This issue is an example. UNC joined with us to try to garner this enhanced reimbursement for medical schools. The safety net services that are provided by the Brody School of Medicine need the support that is requested in the Medicaid payment changes.

*David Brody of Kinston is chair of the East Carolina University Board of Trustees and a former chair of the Pitt County Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees.*
Campbell plans to open medical school in 2013

Photo courtesy of Little Diversified Architectural
Campbell University plans to break ground this fall on a new medical school at its Buies Creek campus. This artist rendering depicts the new classrooms.

BY SARAH AVERY - Staff Writer
Campbell University is steaming forward with a plan to open the first new medical school in North Carolina since the 1970s, investing $60 million at its Buies Creek campus to graduate 150 doctors of osteopathic medicine a year.

The private Baptist university, which has a pharmacy school and recently began training physician assistants, aims to break ground on a classroom building this fall and enroll its first medical students by 2013.

If all goes according to plan, the new school would be the state's second-largest medical school in enrollment, behind UNC-Chapel Hill and ahead of Duke, Wake Forest and East Carolina universities.

"We think this is a perfect time to be starting a medical school," said Dr. John M. Kauffman Jr., founding dean of the new college.

Kauffman noted that the N.C. Institute of Medicine, a health policy group, predicts a serious shortage of doctors in North Carolina over the next 20
years, as the population grows and ages while many current doctors retire. In addition, health care reform is likely to add pressure for more primary care physicians.

Campbell's plan comes at a time when efforts to expand enrollments at the state's two public university medical schools have been stalled or significantly curtailed.

Before the economy tanked, lawmakers approved plans to add 40 students at ECU's Brody School of Medicine, and 80 at UNC-CH. But they didn't provide funds.

As a result, ECU has had to put its expansion on hold, while UNC-CH has scaled back plans for satellite doctor-training programs in Charlotte and Asheville. It's adding 10 students this year and another 10 in 2012 at the outlying programs, which rely on significant investments by partner hospitals in both cities.

Adding students beyond that, however, would require an infusion of taxpayer dollars, which looks unlikely in the foreseeable future, said Dr. William Roper, dean of UNC-CH's medical school and chief executive officer of UNC Health Care System.

**Filling a rural void**

As a private university, Campbell has no such concerns. Using savings, donations, loans and other funds, the university is working to clear accreditation hurdles and begin building an 85,000-square-foot classroom complex that will anchor its medical school - North Carolina's first to train doctors of osteopathy.

The discipline is equivalent to the allopathic medicine taught at the state's other medical schools.

While doctors of osteopathic medicine must complete a similar rigorous curriculum and adhere to the same practicing standards as traditional MDs, they focus on the musculoskeletal system as the center of the body's healing powers.

DOs, as they're called, are also more inclined to practice primary medicine, rather than pursue specialties.
That tendency will be cultivated at Campbell, said Kauffman, the medical school dean. He said the new school's mission will be to mint generalists who will practice in rural communities, which have long had difficulty attracting doctors.

The school will also recruit from rural areas.

"Part of our strategic plan will be to bring students from North Carolina, especially rural and underserved areas, and train them here at the medical school and send them back into communities for residency training," Kauffman said, noting that students who hail from rural settings are more inclined to return.

So, what's the cost?
That goal, however, could be impaired by the new school's projected tuition. Kauffman said Campbell hasn't set its rate, but it will be "comparable to other medical schools in the state."

In-state tuition for medical schools at state-funded UNC-CH and ECU runs about $13,000 a year, but private schools like Campbell charge more. Duke's medical school tuition is $44,000 and Wake Forest's, $41,000.

The massive debt medical students incur often deters them from pursuing lower-paying medical fields, including primary care.

Despite the cost, medical schools continue to draw strong interest, and turn down thousands more applicants than they accept.

Campbell officials said they are confident that they will be able to fill the slots they're creating, and have heard no sniping from other medical schools about encroaching in the market.

"It's been a quiet response," said Jerry M. Wallace, president of Campbell. Roper, at UNC-CH, said he "wished them all the best in their efforts."

Dr. Paul R.G. Cunningham, dean and senior associate vice chancellor for medical affairs at ECU's Brody School, welcomed Campbell's mission.
"The desire to increase primary care physicians in any part of the country is a laudable goal," Cunningham said.

That reaction is in marked contrast to the rancor in the 1970s that accompanied the creation of ECU's medical school, which many doctors and state leaders blasted as an unneeded interloper. The school has long since garnered appreciation and admiration, but the early controversy stung.

Campbell's effort, while ambitious for the number of students, may present less of a competitive challenge because it does not add new clinical or research infrastructure. There is no hospital affixed to the school or massive new investment in basic scientific research.

Its main building, estimated to cost $39 million, will consist of classrooms and teaching laboratories.

To train its medical students, Campbell is forging partnerships with about 12 community hospitals throughout the state, including WakeMed in Raleigh and Johnston Medical Center-Smithfield. The hospitals will serve as live classrooms for Campbell's third- and fourth-year medical students.

**Hospitals as classrooms**
They and other hospitals will also provide the usual residency programs and internships required after med school graduation.

"In the traditional university model, medical schools tend to be located in urban areas with large medical centers," Kauffman said. "Our model is to work with community hospitals to train physicians in communities where there are needs, and spread out from those clinical campuses and target the underserved areas of the state."

William K. Atkinson, chief executive officer of WakeMed Health and Hospitals in Raleigh, said the partnership with Campbell is a logical extension of the hospital's current role as a teaching site for both UNC-CH and ECU students.

"There's room for everybody," Atkinson said.

He said he was well-acquainted with osteopathic medicine after working in Denver for several years, where the discipline has a longer history. He said
Campbell's foray into the field is part of a broader trend of expansion for DO programs.

Kauffman, who began as Campbell's medical school dean this month, was hired from an osteopathic medical school in Blacksburg, Va., that graduated its first class in 2007.

"We see this as a tremendous opportunity to partner with community hospitals across North Carolina to provide for their work force into the future ... and provide for the needs of the state," Kauffman said.

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N.C. medical school enrollment
UNC-Chapel Hill: 160 this academic year; 170 in fall 2011; 180 in fall 2012
Wake Forest University: 120
Duke University: 100
East Carolina University: 78

About Campbell University
Located in the Harnett County town of Buies Creek, Campbell University is a private college with nearly 4,000 students at its main campus.
It was founded in 1887 by James Archibald Campbell, and for years has been affiliated with the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, but has severed governing ties.
The university launched its School of Law in 1976, which has since moved to Raleigh. Schools of pharmacy and education were established in 1985, and a divinity school was launched in 1996.
SOURCE: Campbell University

A comparison
How D.O.s and M.D.s are alike:
• Students of both disciplines complete four years of basic medical school, plus three to six years of internships and residencies.
• Both kinds of doctors can practice any specialty, including pediatrics, family practice, psychiatry, surgery, obstetrics and others.
• Both must pass comparable examinations to obtain state licenses, and are regulated by the N.C. Medical Board.
How D.O.s and M.D.s are different:
• Osteopathic medical schools emphasize training for primary care physicians.
• D.O.s practice a "whole person" approach to medicine, treating not just symptoms or illnesses, but the body as an integrated whole.
• Osteopathic physicians focus on preventive health care, and receive extra training in the body's interconnected system of nerves, muscles and bones.
SOURCE: N.C. Osteopathic Medical Association
The N.C. General Assembly convenes on Wednesday with a new balance of power in its chambers and facing the daunting challenge of the worst budget in generations. A new Republican majority will hold sway in both chambers for the first time in more than a century, and will share responsibility with a Democratic governor for addressing a revenue shortfall projected to reach $3.7 billion.

It is in the depths of crisis that the opportunity for profound and lasting change can emerge, and there will be no better chance to see through proposals for comprehensive tax reform and thoughtful government reorganization as a way of addressing the budget crisis. By embracing those priorities and working together, the two sides can put North Carolina firmly on the path of economic stability and long-term growth as a result.

Pitt County will send a delegation to Raleigh with two new faces as Republican Louis Pate replaces Democrat Don Davis in Senate District 5 and Republican William Cook takes over for Arthur Williams, Democrat, in House District 6. They are joined by Sen. Clark Jenkins from District 3, Rep. Marian McLawhorn from District 9 and Rep. Edith Warren from District 8 in pressing this community's interests while in Raleigh.

Those five members will find a landscape significantly altered from when the Legislature adjourned last year. Republicans, led by House Speaker Thom Tillis and Senate leader Phil Berger, now hold the reins of power in the General Assembly. Democrats must adjust to being in the minority though Democratic Gov. Beverly Perdue will propose a budget and thus set the starting point for debate.

She has floated only general ideas thus far, which include plans to eliminate redundancy and cut costs through government reorganization. These have met with cautious optimism from the new leadership, which has signaled its intention to cut billions from state government, stripping some services to their core. Universities are particularly concerned, which should worry this community, with East Carolina University at its heart.

Government reorganization should be a leading component to balancing the budget, and any cuts should avoid excessive harm to education at any level. However, North Carolina would be best served through comprehensive reform of the state's antiquated tax code in order to provide greater long-term stability and a foundation for economic growth.

Should this Legislature and this governor work together on those priorities, the state would not simply survive this budget crisis. It would prosper.
Family members, support their soon-to-be graduating seniors during the 27th Annual Andrew A. Best M.D. Senior Recognition Banquet for graduating minority students, held at the East Carolina Heart Institute on Saturday, Jan. 22, 2011. (Aileen Devlin/The Daily Reflector)

‘Historic time’ awaits minority doctors
By Pamela Johnson
Special to The Daily Reflector
Monday, January 24, 2011

Understanding sacrifices people have made. Understanding what giving back to the community means. Understanding who you are. Those are steps a public health professional told minority medical students they need as they move on in their careers.

Dr. Garth N. Graham, deputy assistant secretary for minority health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, spoke to the students at the Andrew A. Best M.D. Senior Recognition Banquet on Saturday at the East Carolina Heart Institute.

The 27th annual event was sponsored by the East Carolina University Student National Medical Association. In May, 69 medical students will graduate from the Brody School of Medicine. Of those, 21 are minorities.

Many of those graduating will practice medicine in underserved areas where health disparities are a major concern. Graham, who works to reduce disparities in poor and underserved areas, said the way health care is delivered in the future will require more minority health care professionals.

“Research has shown people more readily seek treatment from practitioners who share similar cultural backgrounds,” he said. “Minority practitioners are important to reduce health care disparities in those areas.”

When practitioners provide “compassionate care” patients will follow up or refer other patients, he said. This will help identify behaviors that account for the differences in the rate of illnesses affecting the poor and minorities in comparison to other parts of the country and people from other socioeconomic backgrounds.
Graham drew from experience and challenges in his life to explain opportunities and challenges facing medical students in “this historic time in health care.” First, practitioners must understand the past to be able to provide compassionate service in the future, he said.

“There is more to us than just our individual aspirations — certainly more in terms of when we work collectively to benefit the community,” Graham said. “We should inspire to serve.”

Graham reminded students to strive to attain all the things Best stood for — merit, service and compassion — on their path to success and always remember family.

In May, that's just what Brody School of Medicine students Akilah S. Crawford and Landon T. Williams will aspire to do.

Crawford, who specializes in pediatrics, said the struggle of those who have passed on before her and of those who still are here like Graham adds confidence to what she feels she can accomplish.

“Someone like Dr. Graham from a small area made it to such a high position in service and politics really inspires me,” she said.

Williams added that family was an intricate part of him achieving his goal.

“Understanding your past, to appreciate family and know without them you can't go forward,” Williams said. “The values they instilled in you are the values you're going to instill in your practices.”
The inaugural program at J.Y. Joyner Library at East Carolina University honoring faculty members who published books during the previous year recognized 38 faculty members on Thursday.

The Academic Affairs Faculty Book Awards event honored faculty in the colleges and schools that are part of the Division of Academic Affairs. The awards recognized peer-reviewed books authored, co-authored or edited by ECU faculty and published between July 1, 2009, and July 30, 2010.

“Publishing a scholarly book is a significant professional achievement for university faculty. We want to recognize our scholars and reward them for their research efforts. The library is an important partner in the creation of scholarly output so it's a natural fit for us to host such an event,” said Dr. Larry Boyer, dean of Academic Library and Learning Resources.

Provost Marilyn Sheerer was at the event to congratulate the honorees. “Acknowledging our faculty who authored books is one of the most important activities in which we could engage,” she said. “Book publication represents one of our highest forms of scholarship and faculty should be duly recognized.”

Faculty members honored are as follows:
Eric Bailey, Dept. of Anthropology; Alice Arnold, School of Art and Design; Jessica Christie, School of Art and Design; Elizabeth Hodge, Dept. of Business and Information Technologies Education; Huanqing Lu, Dept. of Construction Management; Elizabeth Fogarty, Dept. of Curriculum and Instruction - Elementary Education; Mark L'Esperance, Dept. of Curriculum and Instruction - English History and Middle Grades; Peggy Yates, Dept. of Curriculum and Instruction - Elementary Education; Andrzej Grodner, Dept. of Economics; Anna Froula, Dept. of English: Film Studies; Donald Palumbo, Dept. of English; Margaret Bauer, Dept. of English; Wendy Sharer, Dept. of English; Kirk St. Amant, Dept. of English; Ken Parille, Dept. of English.
And Catherine Smith, Dept. of English; Tarek Abdel-Salam, Dept. of Engineering; Ed Howard, Dept. of Engineering; Katie Ford, Dept. of Foreign Language and Literature — Spanish; Peter Standish, Dept. of Foreign Language and Literature — Spanish; Glen Gilbert, College of Health and Human Performance; Christopher Oakley, Dept. of History; Larry Tise, Dept. of History; Hal Holloman, Dept. of Educational Leadership; Crystal Chambers, Dept. of Higher, Adult, and Counselor Education; Marjorie Ringler, Dept. of Educational Leadership; David Siegel, Dept. of Higher, Adult, and Counselor Education; David Hursh, Academic Library Services; Kaye Dotson, Dept. of Library
Science; Jami Jones, Dept. of Library Science; John Kros, Dept. of Marketing & Supply Chain Management.
And Michael Bosse, Dept. of Mathematics, Science and Instructional Technology Education; Richard McCarty, Dept. of Philosophy; Altheia Cook, Dept. of Political Science; Peter Francia, Dept. of Political Science; Bonnie Mani, Dept. of Political Science; Debra Jordan, Dept. of Recreation and Leisure Studies; and David Knox, Dept. of Sociology.

Joyner Library collects, organizes, preserves and provides access to books for education, research and enrichment. A shelf in the circulation reading room has been designated to highlight books by ECU faculty, and all works are available for check out.

The program was made possible with support from the Office of the Provost. Inspiration for this awards ceremony was drawn from the annual program of Laupus Library that recognizes scholarship by faculty in the ECU Division of Health Sciences.

For more information, contact Dawn Wainwright at 328-4090.

**ECU music faculty featured on podcasts**
ECU School of Music faculty performances and commentary are featured on “Treasured Tunes” podcasts linked from the university homepage.

The podcasts include audio music recordings by faculty, question-and-answer sessions with the performers and written podcast transcripts. The public may subscribe to the podcasts through a link to ECU's iTunes U on the website. There are also links to information about the performers and the School of Music. Faculty performers will rotate through the site.

The first podcast features Elliot Frank, ECU guitar professor. The link to the podcast is http://www.ecu.edu/cs-admin/mktg/treasured_tunes_elliot_frank_podcast.cfm or through the ECU homepage at ecu.edu.

**Lending library, virtual network unveiled**
The Center for Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education (CSMTE) at ECU will hold an open house for the educational community on Monday and will introduce a lending library and virtual collaboration network for teachers called TeachNET. The event will be held 4-6 p.m. at the CSMTE offices, 319 S. Cotanche St., Building 159, Greenville.

The center has recently undergone a redesign to better serve the needs of teachers throughout eastern North Carolina.

As part of this commitment to teachers, the regional lending library will be unveiled at the event. This library provides access to resources that many teachers do not have access to in their schools. Teachers can access the center's website at ecu.edu/cs-educ/csmte and search for items for their classroom to checkout.
And in response to feedback from area school personnel, the center also has created an online collaboration system, TeachNET. The ECU TeachNET is an innovative platform that lets teachers across the region collaborate, access content-level experts and share lesson plans and ideas all online from their work or school computers.

Many school systems are integrating iPads and iPod Touches in the classroom, so the center is also developing a mobile application that will let teachers access the TeachNET remotely in the classroom or out in the field.

The Center for Science, Mathematics, and Technology Education serves eastern North Carolina with a mission to strengthen the quality and increase the size of the teaching base in mathematics and science education and increase the pool of students who graduate from North Carolina's high schools prepared to pursue careers that require mathematics and science.

CSMTE translates the findings of educational research into practices that benefit students and teachers.

**Upcoming Events:**
Thursday: Dance 2011, featuring original choreography by ECU School of Theatre and Dance faculty and guest artists, will open in McGinnis Theatre. Performances continue through Feb. 1. Purchase tickets online at www.ECUARTS.com or call (800) ECU-ARTS.

Thursday-Friday: The U.S. Army mobile operating room for a forward surgical team will be on display on the fourth floor of the East Carolina Heart Institute at ECU, 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Thursday; 8 a.m.-noon, Friday. For information, contact: Lisa Soule, 2nd Medical Recruiting Battalion, 450-9624.

See www.ecu.edu/cs-ecu/calendar.cfm for times, places and more information on these events and other ECU upcoming activities.
THE 15TH annual Polar Bear Plunge was held Thursday at the ECU Student Recreation Center when 958 students, faculty, and staff jumped into the outdoor pool. The first 700 received a free T-shirt and students were entered into a drawing for prizes including the grand prize, a 3-foot stuffed Polar Bear donated by Coca-Cola. Canned food items were collected for a Feed the Bear campaign to benefit the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina. The Polar Bear Plunge started as a part of the grand opening of the Student Recreation Center in 1997 with 35 students taking the plunge. The event has grown each year with more than 500 jumpers in 2008 and 700 plungers in 2010.

PHOTOS BY CLIFF HOLLIS
ECU NEWS SERVICE
Student, faculty interaction made holiday season special

Our holidays were hopping as usual and actually started Nov. 30 with a special evening.

I collaborated with Ann Holland, wife of ECU Athletic Director Terry Holland, to personally host a dinner and lively ornament exchange for spouses of coaches and athletic staff — just imagine more than 40 women.

Ann generously organizes this event, each year rotating the site, to acknowledge the spouses for their support. I’d like to thank Ann and Terry for the extra things they do to make ECU athletics great.

Our friends at Jefferson’s in Uptown Greenville always help us decorate for the holidays. Each year they bring new creativity, however they have made one contribution a tradition. Recognition goes to George Snyder and Ed Glen for creating the four attention-getting soldiers that stand tall in front of the house, installing them and storing them every year. They looked fantastic in the snow and were photographed many times.

The ECU facilities crew adds the sparkle by outlining the house in white lights, dismantling and storing them for next year. It’s a big job, thanks guys!

Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge Gallery Holiday Luncheon and Early Shopping event is a unique tradition of which, as a board member, I am proud. For six years the “Kitchen Ladies,” an intimate group of loyal volunteers, has set the theme at a summer planning meeting. As the holidays approach, they gather for their annual kitchen-party to whip up home cooked delights like chicken pot pie. Consider this compliment, “If I had to pick out my favorite menu, I don’t think I could … it is whatever I just ate.” The “Kitchen Ladies” will be back next year so you can join the fun and do some convenient shopping.

For the first time this year, Steve and I hosted an International Student Reception. My favorite question for the 125 who joined us was, “How did you discover ECU?”

A Russian student told me she answered an employment ad for Pizza Hut in Nags Head because she thought she would get to serve pizza on the beach. She enjoyed the coast for a while but heard about ECU and decided to continue her education. Although I got many different answers, all reflected the growing reputation of our university. Small in number compared to total enrollment, the international students add a valuable dimension to campus life and take away an equally valuable experience.

Our student open house for about 50 ECU Scholars and Student Government Association members provided extra special interactions. We shared punch and cookies and fireside chats.

At least 400 guests showed up for our campuswide open house. If you drove by on Fifth Street, you might have seen many of them on the front porch enjoying warm treats on a very cold day. I wish I knew how many cookies were eaten or carried away. We appreciate our university community and look forward to letting them know during the holidays.

In addition to the pleasure of opening our home, we attended many other joyful holiday events and were guests of many wonderful people. We are grateful to everyone who included us in their celebrations.

To the readers, thanks for your attention and allowing me to share a glimpse of our holidays. May 2011 bring health, happiness to you.

Nancy Ballard, a former public relations professional, is married to ECU Chancellor Steve Ballard. Her column about ECU and community people and events will appear here on an occasional basis.
State of the University address

Chancellor Steve Ballard will deliver his State of the University address at 11 a.m. on Feb. 2 in Hendrix Theatre in Mendenhall Student Center. His remarks will focus on the daunting budget picture facing our state.

Students, faculty, staff and community members are invited to attend.

For those who are unable to attend but wish to view the address afterward, visit http://www.ecu.edu/chancellor/state_of_the_university.cfm.

—ECU
Dr. Mark Bowling, a specialist in pulmonary and critical care medicine, has joined the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University and its group medical practice, ECU Physicians.

Bowling joined ECU as an assistant professor in the Department of Internal Medicine. He comes to ECU from the University of Mississippi, where he was an assistant professor of medicine.

Bowling has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Mars Hill College and a medical degree from ECU, where he completed residency training in internal medicine. Bowling completed fellowships in pulmonary and critical care medicine and interventional pulmonology at Wake Forest University.

Bowling is board-certified in internal medicine, pulmonary medicine and critical care medicine. His clinical interests are lung cancer, asthma, coughing, interventional pulmonology, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and dyspnea, or shortness of breath.

He sees patients at Moye Medical Center at 521 Moye Blvd. Appointments are available by calling 744-1600.
A five-member team from the Department of Materials Management at East Carolina University has received the Treasured Pirate Award in recognition of its work in implementing the Property Equipment Tracking System (PETS), a new software program and paperless process to track surplus property.

Receiving the award were Tim Daughtry, Chuck Boulineau and Deidra Williams of Greenville, Lisa Ross of Grimesland and Jane Manning of Pactolus.

“I am really proud of this group for the way they have worked together to implement this program,” said Nellie Taylor, retired director of Materials Management who nominated the team for the award. “PETS is user friendly and easy to navigate, thanks to their hard work.”

Scott Buck, associate vice chancellor for the administration and finance division in Business Services at ECU, presented the awards during a surprise ceremony at the Central Stores warehouse.

The Treasured Pirate Award is designed to recognize special contributions of ECU employees to their college, unit or the university. Each of the five received a certificate, a Treasured Pirate pin and a gift.

Daughtry is manager of Central Stores and Surplus Property. He researched and brought the PETS system to ECU.
Boulineau is tech support analyst and systems administrator for Materials Management. He was the go-to person for technical issues that arose when setting up the PETS scanners and software program.

Manning is fixed assets coordinator with Central Stores. She was at Daughtry's side during the entire installation process, was instrumental during testing and continues to help with training.

Ross, compliance officer with Materials Management, helped develop the PowerPoint program that explains how to use the PETS program.

Williams, an administrative support associate for Central Stores, assists with PETS training, which employees must complete before using the system for the first time.
Clinton I. Reges is the recipient of a $2,500 Thermoforming Division Memorial Scholarship from CMI Plastics Inc. in Ayden.

Reges is a senior at East Carolina University working on a bachelor of science degree in engineering. He was a high school honor society member and participated in wrestling, football, and track and field.

Reges serves as a volunteer wrestling coach on the middle and high school levels and also works as an assistant football coach. As a sophomore at ECU, he researched football helmets for a project in a materials and processing class, exposing him to the field of polymers and plastics.

Reges works as a production assistant for CMI Plastics, helping to design and build tooling and helping with thermoformings setups. He also works with the quality manager, learning to read customer specifications and implement them.

Reges has experience culling through parts to determine the point of origin for rejects. This job has expanded his knowledge of plastics to the point that he has determined that thermoforming is where is career will take him. He hopes to eventually work in the field of sports equipment.
Community colleges could bar students

BY JANE STANCILL - Staff Writer

The state's community colleges could soon be able to deny admission to applicants who appear to pose a health or safety threat.

On Friday, the State Board of Community Colleges voted to amend the system's long-standing open-door admissions policy. The change would allow the 58 colleges to refuse to admit prospective students who may present "an articulable, imminent and significant threat."

It's unclear how colleges would define such risks or how they would carry out the policy. That has prompted concern among some that the policy could lead to discrimination against people with mental health conditions or other disabilities.

The vote came almost two weeks after the shooting rampage in Tucson, Ariz., that left six people dead and 13 wounded, including U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords. The accused shooter, Jared Lee Loughner, had been suspended by Pima Community College in Arizona after reportedly exhibiting erratic behavior in class and shooting a video in which he called the campus "my genocide school."

The action by the North Carolina board was not prompted by the shooting in Tucson. The board began work on the issue last year.

Virginia Tech shooting

Board member Dr. Stuart Fountain of Asheboro said the impetus was the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, in which a student with a history of mental illness killed 32 people and then himself.

North Carolina college officials began to have their own questions about how to deal with potential threats among applicants, he said.

"I think the individual incident that most triggered all of this a year ago had to do with someone actually threatening an admissions counselor," Fountain
said. "That was the type of question that we were getting from our college presidents, [who were] saying, 'Hey, we need some help here.'"

The American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina has raised concerns that the new policy could be applied unfairly and arbitrarily.

"It's very broad and very vague," said Sarah Preston, policy director for the state chapter of the ACLU. "You could have 58 different interpretations of the policy."

A student who is barred from admission could appeal, according to the policy.

In North Carolina, community colleges have codes of conduct that give them leeway to suspend or expel students for violent or threatening behavior. The new policy would give colleges a way to handle applicants.

Stephen Scott, president of Wake Technical Community College, said he supports the change. "It gives a tool to help us protect the health and safety of the vast majority of our students and employees," he said.

**No criminal checks**

He acknowledged that colleges know little about incoming students in a system that enrolls more than 800,000. At Wake Tech, applications don't require criminal checks or reviews of medical records.

The policy will be useful when colleges have to decide whether to re-admit a student who's been in trouble before, Scott said. Each semester at Wake Tech, 15 to 20 students are suspended for various reasons, including violence. Only one student has been expelled in the past decade.

Community colleges have long opened their doors to any resident who has a high school diploma or is over 18. The UNC system, which has more discretion over admissions, performs limited criminal background checks on prospective students whose applications raise a red flag for problems. That practice was instituted after the Virginia Tech shooting.

The policy change will go before a state panel that reviews new regulations. If approved, it could go into effect later this year.

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By Eric Ferreri - Staff Writer

Chapel Hill—Imam Feisal Abdul-Rauf, the leader of a controversial effort to build an interfaith cultural center in lower Manhattan, will speak in March at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Abdul-Rauf will deliver the 2011 Weil Lecture on American Citizenship at 7:30 p.m. March 16 in Hill Hall on the campus. It's free and open to the public, but tickets are required.

The lecture is the featured event in a series of conversations on American citizenship. It is sponsored by UNC's Institute for the Arts & Humanities.

Abdul-Rauf, a naturalized U.S. citizen and Kuwaiti-born imam, founded and heads the Cordoba Movement, which seeks to improve understanding among people of all cultures and faiths.

Abdul-Rauf promotes the Cordoba House, a center to encourage multifaith understanding at Park51, the cultural center proposed near the site of the World Trade Center tragedy.

He will not be stumping for the project or raising money for it during his talk at UNC, said Bill Balthrop, interim director of the UNC institute.

"It is our hope that he will address broader issues and won't just focus on Park51," Balthrop said. "We hope to spark conversation, if not necessarily agreement."

Abdul-Rauf also has speaking engagements lined up at Harvard, Yale, Columbia and other universities. He will receive a $20,000 honorarium plus travel expenses from UNC, paid from private funds, Balthrop said.
Abdul-Rauf's interfaith center project, which some call the "Ground Zero Mosque," has been controversial because it is near the site of the twin towers that fell in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Although it has been dubbed a "mosque," the $100 million center would also include a fitness center, 500-seat auditorium, restaurant and culinary school, library, art studio and Sept. 11 memorial.

Many of Abdul-Rauf's critics point to comments he made in 2001, just weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks. In particular, he told "60 Minutes": "I wouldn't say that the United States deserved what happened, but the United States' policies were an accessory to the crime that happened."

(Abdul-Rauf's supporters later said his comment mirrored a belief held broadly by American policy advisers at the time).

**GOP students cool**
At UNC-CH, the College Republicans student organization declined to co-sponsor Abdul-Rauf's visit to campus in part because of that statement, said Anthony Dent, the group's chairman.

"I find that kind of statement offensive," Dent said. "But given the nature of the university, and the need for dialogue, we can't condemn bringing that kind of speaker to campus."

Abdul-Rauf is expected to draw a crowd. Hill Hall seats 552, and an overflow room is in the works.

**A warmer reception?**
University officials say they hope for a better event than they had in April 2009 when Tom Tancredo, a former congressman known for his controversial views on illegal immigration, spoke on campus. His talk ended early when student protesters repeatedly disrupted it, leading Chancellor Holden Thorp to apologize to Tancredo.

"I disagree with the imam on a lot of what he says, but I'm glad he's going to be here," said Robert Winston, chairman of the UNC-CH Board of Trustees. "We had [Tom] Tancredo, and our students weren't very nice to him. I expect our students to act in a civil way."

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Public Universities Relying More on Tuition Than State Money
By TAMAR LEWIN
COLUMBIA, S.C. — For bargain-hunting families, state colleges and universities, supported by tax money, have long been a haven from the high cost of private education. But tuition bargains are fading as the nation’s public universities undergo a profound shift, accelerated by the recession. In most states, it is now tuition payments, not state appropriations, that cover most of the budget.

The shift has been an unwelcome surprise to Ashley Murphy, a sophomore at the University of South Carolina. When she and her twin sister, Allison, picked their colleges two years ago, costs were definitely an issue, since they are putting themselves through college.

Ashley said she chose the state flagship both because she believed that public universities offered the best education and because she thought it would be cheaper than Allison’s choice, a small Baptist university where the published tuition is twice as much. But thanks to generous financial aid, Allison is paying less. And even with a campus job and a $5,000 state scholarship, Ashley struggles to make ends meet, worries about her student loans and is increasingly nervous about tuition increases.

“The whole thing is kind of scary, for somebody like me who’s paying for college myself,” said Ms. Murphy, who plans to be a teacher. “I turn 20 tomorrow, I’m already in debt, and if tuition goes up again next year, I’ll be in an even worse position.”

According to the Delta Cost Project, most of the nation’s public research universities had more than half their costs paid by tuition in 2008, and other four-year public institutions were hovering near the 50 percent mark. With three more years of tuition increases, they, too, have probably passed it, said Jane V. Wellman, executive director of the project, leaving only community colleges as mostly state-financed.

And the increasing dependence on tuition has disturbing implications for access to higher education, she said.

“In the next three or four years, we’re going to have more students who are spilling out the bottom, priced out of the expensive institutions,” Ms. Wellman said. “We’re going to be rationing opportunity. We’re moving in that direction fairly rapidly.”

Given that states still provide some $80 billion for higher education, some education policy experts say it is wrong to think of public universities as privatized. But they acknowledge that a fundamental reordering is under way — and that the era of affordable four-year public universities, heavily subsidized by the state, may be over.
“Something important is happening here,” said Pat Callan, president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. “I wouldn’t call it privatization, a word often used by presidents of public institutions who want a blank check on raising tuition. But with the shift toward more student funding, you have to wonder who owns these places — the students, because they’re paying the majority, or the state, which has invested hundreds of years in the physical plant and the brand?”

The burden on students is likely to keep growing. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 30 states face shortfalls of at least 10 percent of their budgets next year. And given the difficulties of cutting costs for Medicaid or K-12 schools, which get the biggest chunk of state budgets, appropriations for higher education are likely to shrivel further, leaving public universities ever more dependent on tuition money.

The University of South Carolina has lost almost half of its state appropriations in the last three years, gets only about a quarter of its education budget from the state and is expecting another round of deep cuts next year.

“We still have our public mission, but at this point, we have more of a private funding model,” said Michael Amiridis, the provost.

More states may soon find themselves in a similar position. In California, where tuition has been raised by 30 percent in the last two years — and where out-of-state tuition now tops $50,000, about the same as an elite private university — the governor has proposed cutting state support for the University of California by $500 million for the next fiscal year.

“If approved, this budget will mean that for the first time in our long history, tuition paid by University of California students and their families will exceed the state’s contribution to the core fund,” Mark Yudof, the president of the University of California system, told the Board of Regents. “For those who believe what we provide is a public good, not a private one, this is a sad threshold to cross.”

In Texas, legislators have proposed closing four community colleges and ending financial aid for freshmen. In Georgia, the popular Hope scholarships are likely to be slashed. In Arizona, the governor has proposed cutting financing for community colleges by half, and for four-year universities by 20 percent.

In state after state, tuition and class size are rising, jobs are being eliminated, maintenance is being deferred and the number of nonresident students, who pay higher tuition, is increasing.

“The difference between this downturn and others in the past is that this time I don’t think higher education will be able to recover the ground it’s lost,” said Scott Pattison, executive director of the National Association of State Budget Officers. “I hope I’m
wrong, but I don’t see that money coming back. And with tuition already out of reach for many folks, I don’t think there’s much ability to keep raising it.”

At the University of South Carolina, budget cuts have already pushed tuition to $9,786, more than double what it was a decade ago and well above both the national and regional averages.

“I think we’re about at the maximum tuition South Carolina parents will pay,” said Ed Walton, the associate vice president for operations. “If the strategy of shrinking state government till it drowns in the bathtub worked, we’d be rich. But as it is, something’s going to have to go as we dwindle down from here, and I don’t know what more that something will be.”

Ms. Murphy feels the budget strains both as a student and as a university employee. “My campus job just had a four-hour meeting Sunday where they told us they wouldn’t be able to hire as many people for the information center,” she said. “We used to have three people on a shift, but now, sometimes, it’s just one.”

Education officials in South Carolina say their best hope of maintaining financing is convincing the state of the importance of higher education in producing workers who will thrive in the knowledge economy, an argument that has taken hold in North Carolina, where per-student appropriations are about twice as much.

But South Carolina’s legislators are focusing their attention — and ire — on the tuition increases. This month, the day after the new governor, Nikki Haley, was inaugurated, the House Ways and Means Committee met for a budget briefing from the programs that get the most state support.

Garrison Walters, director of the Commission on Higher Education, made his case that higher education could help drive the state’s economy.

But the legislators wanted to talk about tuition.

“You say we’re not making competitive investment in higher education, but how would you answer that you all are not being responsive to the needs of the state, when you increase tuition?” one legislator said.

Another said, “If people can’t afford it, what good is it?”