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Ross urges average 8.8% hike for UNC campuses
BY JANE STANCILL - jstancill@newsobserver.com

UNC President Tom Ross has recommended average in-state undergraduate tuition and fee increases of 8.8 percent systemwide for 2012-2013 and 4.2 percent for 2013-2014.

Under Ross' plan, released Wednesday, no campus would see an increase of more than 10 percent for next year, and the systemwide average would be smaller than the 9.3 percent increase enacted for the current academic year.

Ross recommended increases that were smaller than requests from trustees on seven of the 16 UNC campuses. He left intact the requests by nine other campuses that were already smaller than Ross' 10 percent threshold.

His proposal will come as a disappointment to campus leaders at N.C. State University and UNC-Chapel Hill, who argued that they needed larger increases to help recover from state budget cuts. For the two flagship campuses, Ross recommends increases of roughly $680 more per in-state student next year - a 9.8 percent increase at NCSU and 9.9 percent at UNC-CH. NCSU leaders wanted a 10.4 percent increase, while UNC-CH trustees wanted an 11.4 percent jump.
In paring down some of the larger requests, Ross said he wanted to strike a middle ground between affordability and the need for more revenue on campuses hit hard by cuts. Last year, UNC campuses saw a state reduction of $414 million.

"I believe that these recommendations balance the campuses' demonstrated need for increased resources with the limited ability of many students and families to sustain further tuition increases in this tough economy," Ross wrote in a memo to the UNC Board of Governors, which will consider his recommendations next month.

Ross' proposed tuition plan would generate $70 million after a 25-percent set-aside for financial aid. Ross said that would recoup just 17 percent of the current year's state cut.

Ross also resisted requests from campuses to embark on a five-year escalation in tuition. He said a two-year plan is a more prudent approach.

"A two-year plan would better enable families and students to plan and give our campuses an opportunity to stabilize for the future," his memo said. "I believe we should wait, however, to see what additional savings can be realized through efficiencies, consolidations and collaborations, and whether or not additional state resources become available before considering additional increases."

Any consideration of tuition changes must be made in the context of the state's constitutional mandate for free higher education "as far as practicable," Ross said.

"The guiding principle I followed in developing these recommendations was quite simple: balance our commitment to maintain the quality of education we offer with our constitutional and moral obligation to provide affordable access to the University - particularly for North Carolina students," he wrote.

In Tuesday's State of the Union address, President Barack Obama strongly urged higher education leaders to contain costs.

"So let me put colleges and universities on notice: If you can't stop tuition from going up, the funding you get from taxpayers will go down," Obama said, eliciting applause from members of Congress. "Higher education can't be a luxury; it is an economic imperative that every family in America should be able to afford."

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UNC President Tom Ross' recommendations

2012-13 in-state undergraduate tuition and fees
N.C. Central University: $5,119 (8.5 percent increase)
N.C. State University: $7,644 (9.8 percent increase)
UNC-Chapel Hill: $7,500 (9.9 percent increase)

2012-13 out-of-state undergraduate tuition and fees
N.C. Central University: $15,692 (2.6 percent increase)
N.C. State University: $20,809 (5.1 percent increase)
UNC-Chapel Hill: $28,252 (6 percent increase)

2013-14 undergraduate tuition increase*
N.C. Central University: 2 percent increase (in-state), 0.6 percent increase (out-of-state)
N.C. State University: 3.8 percent increase (in-state), 1.4 percent increase (out-of-state)
UNC-Chapel Hill: 8 percent increase (in-state), 2.1 percent increase (out-of-state)

* Fees won't be set until next year, so at this point Ross' proposal includes only tuition for 2013-2014.
Raleigh The University of North Carolina has figured out a cure for its growing pains: stop growing.

For the second straight year, the number of students attending UNC system schools is down slightly - quite the change from the recent past, when enrollment outpaced both state population and GDP. We congratulate UNC's leadership on its shift in direction. The end to enrollment growth is a welcome development at a time when the system's resources are strained due to the prolonged economic slump.

UNC has long made access to higher education one of its highest priorities. Its leaders have wanted to make sure that every qualified person in North Carolina can get an education. But over the years, the constant push toward higher enrollments has meant that our universities have attracted many students who should not be there.

Any faculty member can tell you that most classrooms have a group of bored, disengaged, or unprepared students. Frequently, those students drop out with few additional skills, thousands of dollars of debt and a feeling of failure.

UNC's past focus on access led to explosive growth. Between 2002 and 2009, enrollment grew 26.8 percent, while the state's population grew only 13 percent. For most of that time, state appropriations kept pace with enrollment. New programs, centers and institutes proliferated.

Now the rubber is hitting the road. With budget cuts for 2011-12 totaling over $400 million, class sizes have risen, students complain that they cannot get the necessary classes and prize faculty are leaving.

But the number of students, both full-time and part-time, has dropped from a peak of 222,322 in the fall of 2009 to 220,305 in 2011. If the leveling off of enrollment continues, many of these problems should sort themselves out over the next few years.
At first glance, readers may assume that the declines were caused by the recession and the rise in tuition. Those factors may have played a small role, but higher academic standards seem to be primarily responsible for the decrease.

The system has been gradually raising admissions standards. This fall, the minimum standard for admission to a UNC school was a 2.3 high school GPA and a 750 combined verbal and math score on the SAT. By focusing on quality instead of quantity, 12 of the 16 universities in the system saw a rise in average SAT scores for incoming freshmen this past fall.

Elizabeth City State University has historically had the system's lowest average SAT scores for incoming freshmen. This year the freshman class was 190 students smaller than in 2010, while average SAT scores rose from 841 to 864. At the Jan. 12 Board of Governors' meeting, ECSU Chancellor Willie Gilchrist said that an increase in the minimum SAT score requirement was largely responsible. Roughly 700 applicants who would have met the school's acceptance criteria in previous years were refused admission for the fall of 2011.

Overall enrollment also declined at N.C. Central University, because the school set stricter standards for continuing students. According to Chancellor Charlie Nelms, 556 students did not return because their grade average fell below 2.0. Previously, the standard had been roughly 1.5.

N.C. State University also saw a decline of 71 students. This admittedly tiny drop reflected a deliberate decision to put the lid on enrollment. Chancellor Randy Woodson explained after the Board of Governors meeting that "we had gotten too big." For a flagship like State, limiting enrollment and boosting the quality of its student body improve its reputation.

Making UNC schools more selective does not mean denying access to higher education. Gilchrist said that he hoped students who weren't admitted to ECSU would enroll at a community college and make themselves more college-ready. Nelms said his school has started a "reverse-transfer" agreement with several community colleges. This will allow students who were forced to leave Central because of poor grades to work their way back to the university.

In sum, there was good news for UNC this fall: a return to a system that expects its freshmen to enter prepared and to stay in school and graduate. Sometimes less really is more.
Jane S. Shaw is the president of the Pope Center for Higher Education. Jay Schalin is the Pope Center's director for state policy.
Big Hits' hits home

By Ronnie Woodward

Markiest Waller sat inside the J.H. Rose High School auditorium Wednesday night and watched his little brother Jaquan play football for the first time.

Markiest and other members of the Waller family were invited to watch a preview of CNN’s “Big Hits, Broken Dreams” special report on concussions and football, and Markiest knew which scene was going to be the most difficult to watch.

Jaquan Waller died in 2008 from second-impact syndrome and the documentary begins with the events that led to his death. Waller, 16, suffered a concussion during a Wednesday practice and suffered another one two days later during a game despite not being fully recovered.

The hour-long report by Dr. Sanjay Gupta, which premieres Sunday at 8 p.m., shows the play that caused Waller’s second concussion.

“When I saw it and when he went down, I could tell that he didn’t seem right,” Markiest Waller said. “It was eerie.”
The play, and Waller’s subsequent death, eventually led to a partnership between East Carolina University and Pitt County Schools that allows ECU to provide Pitt County’s six high schools with certified athletic trainers. A certified athletic trainer was not with the Rose football program during Waller’s death.

The documentary touches on the improvements North Carolina and Pitt County Schools have made in concussion prevention and awareness, which includes the county implementing a computer-based cognitive testing program last year.

National concussion specialists, members of the J.H. Rose coaching staff, Rampant football players and Markiest Waller are shown being interviewed.

J.H. Rose head coach Todd Lipe admitted that he was nervous while watching, but said afterward that it was accurate and he was pleased with the presentation.

“Anything dealing with Jaquan, I get emotional because those feelings come back,” he said. “It doesn’t make me the most comfortable and it’s not necessarily a happy place for me, but I thought it was well done and ultimately some good things can come out of it.”

After the preview, a panel discussion was held and members of the audience asked questions to the selected panel members. Topics ranged from the future of football to the specifics of ECU’s agreement with Pitt County Schools.

Markiest Waller took the microphone and addressed the crowd and the panel. He said after the screening that he doesn’t shy away from telling his brother’s story because he wants others to understand the importance of concussions.

“I tell it to anybody who has kids or anybody who has a passion for football because never in a million years would I think that I would be sitting here talking about my little brother dying as a result of playing football,” he said.

Pitt County Schools Superintendent Beverly Reep praised the Wallers’ cooperation.

“You have been miraculous in my opinion and I thank you for allowing us to continue to tell this story,” she said. “I know it’s not easy.”

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Gracious donor, Duke heiress Semans dies
BY JANE STANCILL - jstancill@newsobserver.com

DURHAM -- Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans, a descendant of the Duke family who was devoted to philanthropy, education, human rights and the arts, died Wednesday after a short period of declining health. She was 91.

Semans was born into extraordinary privilege as a member of the family that founded Duke University. She was great-granddaughter to Washington Duke, granddaughter of Benjamin N. Duke and Sarah Duke, and daughter of Mary Duke and Anthony Biddle. Yet she didn't get caught up in a whirlwind of ball gowns and blue bloods. She once said, "New York society terrified me. ... I'm not good at keeping up with the Joneses."

Instead, she set about living a life of substance in Durham, where she married twice, raised seven children and served in a seemingly endless number of roles, including mayor pro tem of Durham in the 1950s, trustee at Duke University and trustee of several family foundations, including the Charlotte-based Duke Endowment and The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, named for her mother.

Duke University President Richard Brodhead sent an email message to the Duke community Wednesday, saying that Semans "supported every good thing that has happened at this university." But she was more than the sum of her accomplishments, he said.
"She had a care for others and a belief in human possibility that made every encounter an inspiring event," Brodhead's email said. "All who experienced her grace, warmth, enthusiasm and can-do spirit will remember her for years to come. Duke mourns the passing of one of its greatest friends."

Semans was always there, at every Founder's Day convocation, every Duke celebration. She was a close confidante of Terry Sanford, the former Duke president and North Carolina governor. She was a big fan of men's basketball Coach Mike Krzyzewski, too.

"She was the conscience of the university," said Dr. Keith Brodie, former Duke president. "She was the go-to person when someone was going through a tough time. She wielded great power in her sweet, diminutive way."

**Devotion to Durham**

As devoted as she was to Duke, Semans was similarly committed to her adopted hometown of Durham, where she was a beloved figure across socioeconomic lines.

She was a passionate supporter of civil rights, working for affordable housing in Durham and serving for nearly three decades on the board of Lincoln Community Health Center, a provider of health care to low-income residents.

"Mrs. Semans was the heart of Durham," said Durham Mayor Bill Bell. "Mary just touched all races and all levels of income. She seemed to do it comfortably."

In 1987, Semans told Duke Magazine why she felt compelled to reach out to people: "My feeling is that we are all here for each other. I take very seriously this business of treating your neighbor as yourself, trying to be your brother's keeper. They're solid maxims for life."

She passed her advice to Duke graduates during a 1983 commencement speech. "I am pleading for an extraordinary devotion to humanity. In addition to your employment, do something that benefits the human condition."

Semans lived out that credo, taking on issues such as poverty and racial discrimination with intense intellect and fierce determination. She read several newspapers daily and was an astute observer of politics.
But she never took herself too seriously. A petite dynamo, she had a big mane of light brown curls and was known to wear mini skirts well into her golden years.

Tooling around Durham, Semans offered hugs to acquaintances in the grocery store or at the Guglhupf Bakery near her Forest Hills home. She would meet people, and a year later, remember their names and their children's names. A prolific correspondent, she mailed handwritten notes of thanks for the smallest gesture or congratulations on an accomplishment.

Doug Zinn, executive director of The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, said Semans was the definition of charm.

"She was the embodiment of goodness," he said. "If people met her just once, they felt like they knew her for a lifetime. She loved people, and she was beloved."

**Arts lover**

The influence of Semans and her late husband, Dr. Jim Semans, extended beyond Duke and Durham.

They were patrons of the arts in North Carolina, where they were instrumental in the early days of the N.C. School of the Arts, now UNC School of the Arts. They were the largest contributors to the school's former International Music Program and traveled with the students for more than 30 years on European tours, where Semans spoke French and Italian.

They gave to an international dance program at the school and established an endowment fund for the school's library, which is named for them. They donated to scholarship funds and grant programs for students to do special creative projects. The couple, whose Durham home was filled with art, relished their role at the school and nurturing young artist careers. They could be found in the front row of school performances, leading the standing ovation.

The public arts school in Winston-Salem was in mourning Wednesday.

"Mary Semans was the mother of UNCSA, and like the great mother she was, her love for the school was unconditional," said UNCSA Chancellor John Mauceri. "That she led, supported and inspired this school from the moment it was imagined to the cusp of its 50th birthday was in and of itself miraculous. It is hard to imagine going forward without her. ... If there was one word to describe Mary Semans it would be 'beautiful' in every sense of that word."
The Semanses also were big supporters of the N.C. Museum of Art in Raleigh. In 1966 at the state museum, her family foundation established the Mary Duke Biddle Gallery for the Blind, among the world's first sculpture collections meant to be experienced through touch.

**Life as a Duke**

Mary Duke Biddle was born in New York City on Feb. 21, 1920. Her father, a U.S. Army general, later became a diplomat and was U.S. Ambassador to Poland when Hitler invaded the country in 1939. Later, he served as ambassador to Spain.

She was raised in Manhattan, where her early education included trips to great museums, theater and listening to radio news with her father. But her parents separated when she was in her teens, and her mother returned to Durham with the children. They lived for a time with her grandmother, Sarah Duke, who was devoted to the university and to the state. "We were brought up to think the governor of North Carolina was someone sacred," Semans said in a 1969 interview.

At 15, she enrolled at Duke to study history. She graduated in 1939 and married Dr. Josiah Trent, who would become a professor of surgery at Duke. The couple had four daughters, but Trent died of lymphoma in 1948. A young widow with four children, Mary Trent carried on. She ran for Durham City Council and won.

A few years later, she married Semans, another Duke surgeon and professor of urology. They had three children together and were married more than 50 years until Semans' death in 2005.

Throughout her life, Semans received dozens of awards, honorary degrees and tributes. The atrium at Duke's Nasher Museum of Art is named the Mary D.B.T. Semans Great Hall. And a100-year-old fountain was restored in her honor and moved to the center of the rose garden at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens, a place named for her grandmother.

Semans is survived by her seven children: Mary Trent Jones of Abingdon, Va.; Sarah Trent Harris of Charlotte; Dr. Rebecca Trent Kirkland of Houston; Barbara Trent Kimbrell of Sullivan's Island, S.C.; Jenny Semans Koortbojian of Durham; James Duke Biddle Trent Semans of Chapel Hill; and Beth Semans Hubbard of Los Angeles; 16 grandchildren and 29 great-grandchildren.

A funeral service is planned for Monday at 2 p.m. at Duke Chapel. Funeral arrangements are being handled by Howerton-Bryan Funeral Home.
News researcher Brooke Cain contributed.
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Read more here: http://www.newsobserver.com/2012/01/26/1807182/what-theyre-saying.html#storylink=cpy
East Carolina and BYU have agreed to a two-year home-and-home football series in 2017 and 2018 according to a joint announcement by both institutions Wednesday.

In 2017, the Pirates will open the series by welcoming the Cougars to Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium before following with a trip to LaVell Edwards Stadium in Provo, Utah, a year later.
Daniel Boone Vause

HOOKERTON - Memorial service for Daniel Boone Vause, 60, will be held on Saturday, Jan 28, 2012 at 1 p.m. at Farmer Funeral Service-Ayden. Inurnment will follow in the Snow Hill Cemetery.

Dan was born on June 6, 1951 to Charles and Pearl Vause. He was raised in Hookerton and graduated from Greene Central High School. He served in the U.S.A.F. Dan attended Edgecombe Community College and received an Associates Degree. He was employed with the Brody School of Medicine as an HVAC Technician. Dan was an avid music lover and enjoyed playing bluegrass with his many friends. He was a lover of nature. He enjoyed fishing and was a true outdoorsman. He often times rescued neglected and homeless animals.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Dan is survived by his daughter, Amy Melissa Vause of Hookerton; two brothers, Charles Vause of Kentucky, Colman Vause of Hanover, Va.; sister, Penny Calder, of Garner. He is also survived by several nieces and nephews. Dan leaves behind two loving pets, his dog, Roxanne and a cat, Dobber.

The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service from noon to 1 p.m. at the funeral home. Flowers are welcome or if one wishes, donations may be made to the Lenoir Co. Animal Shelter, in Dan's memory.

Arrangements by Farmer Funeral Service-Ayden.

Please share condolences online at www.Farmerfuneralservice.com.

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