THE DAILY CLIPS

February 10, 2012

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UNC Board of Governors Chairwoman Hannah Gage confers with UNC system President Tom Ross as the board's Committee on Budget and Finance meets Thursday in Chapel Hill.

**UNC Board of Governors votes today on average 8.8% tuition hike**

BY JANE STANCILL - jstancill@newsobserver.com

CHAPEL HILL–Students are expected to turn out in force today as the full UNC Board of Governors votes on a plan to increase tuition and fees an average of 8.8 percent for in-state undergraduates across North Carolina's public universities next year.

On Thursday, the board's budget and finance committee approved UNC President Tom Ross' recommendations, which also call for a second year of tuition increases for in-state undergraduates that average 4.2 percent. Prices for 2013-2014 will be set later for out-of-state students and graduate students; campuses may study shifting more of the cost to those students after next year.

Ross' proposal, which passed the committee 5-1 Thursday, would increase 2012-13 in-state, undergraduate tuition and fees by 8.5 percent at N.C. Central University, 9.8 percent at N.C. State University and 9.9 percent at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Some of the UNC campuses had asked for higher tuition to help cope with state budget cuts, but Ross insisted that increases stay below 10 percent. His
plan aims to help UNC campuses stabilize after budget reductions that have led to larger class sizes and reduced course offerings.

"I tried to consider where the state is right now in terms of its own economy," Ross said. "I've tried to consider where our campuses are and the impact of the reductions that we've had to absorb over the last four years. I've tried to consider students and families who are striving to get an education, but in an environment in which the economy is tough. So I think we've had to balance all of this to be sure that we're protecting quality at the same time that we're remaining as accessible and affordable as possible. It's very tough during the times we're facing."

Various proposals for price increases have been debated at the state's public universities for months, and the process culminates with today's vote. Students from across the state are expected to protest outside the meeting in Chapel Hill. They have argued that the increases are extreme during a down economy when jobs are scarce. Tuition is always an emotional topic in North Carolina, a state with a constitutional provision for free higher education "as far as practicable."

**Student leaders agree**

The Association of Student Governments, a systemwide body of student leaders, has endorsed Ross' recommendation. Members argue that an increase is necessary to prevent academics from eroding.

"Of course, if you ask any student, they're going to say, 'No, I don't want to pay any more tuition and fees. This is ridiculous,' " said T.J. Eaves, student body president at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee. "But we all understand that the quality of education is very important to every one of us, as our degrees are going to set us off on our careers for the rest of our lives."

Eaves said class size has ballooned and faculty are cutting back on student assignments because they can't keep up with the workload. He said he no longer has to write 15-page papers. "The teachers can't do that anymore because they've got so many students," he said.

Frank Grainger, a board member from Cary, thanked student leaders for their input, but added, "I wonder if their parents were here, if they would make the same comments. They're the ones writing the checks."

Board members seem to be split on whether to impose two years of increases, which would be a departure from board practice. There's also a philosophical divide about the way tuition proceeds are carved up across the UNC system.
State law mandates that campuses set aside 25 percent of tuition revenue for financial aid for the neediest students. Some campuses propose setting aside a larger chunk to cover the cost for poor students.

But some board members adamantly oppose that method, which they say is unfair to struggling middle class students who are "taxed" to pay the bills of others.

Board member Burley Mitchell of Raleigh, a former chief justice of the state Supreme Court, said it is not right to take from one student to give to another. He wants to prohibit campuses from devoting more than 25 percent of tuition proceeds to need-based financial aid.

"Your predecessor, who I love like a brother, was wrong," he said to Ross, referring to former UNC President Erskine Bowles, who had advocated for the set asides.

'One size doesn't fit all'

Brent Barringer, a board member from Cary, said he agrees with Mitchell's philosophy, but in practice it's hard to apply one rule to all 16 campuses. Some campuses have less than 40 percent of students who qualify for need-based aid; others have 70 percent or more.

"The problem with that is one size doesn't fit all," he said. "It's at least premature, and maybe it's wrong, to think that we can apply one remedy to 16 problems."

Ross promised a full review of need-based financial aid practices and policies in the coming months. The question is not whether to have need-based financial aid, he said, but where the money comes from. A state need-based grant program was cut by $35 million last year, he said. More than 50 percent of the UNC system's 220,000 students are on need-based aid.

"The need for financial aid - because of the economy in part, because of changing demographics, for lots of reasons - has been rising," he said. "It's an issue we have to face."

In the past few years, the UNC board has had a tuition plan that capped tuition and fee increases at 6.5 percent. Ross said he's not abandoning that plan, even though his proposals go further.

"This year there are extraordinary circumstances, and so we've presented a two-year plan," he said, "to try to put the Band-Aids on the most serious problems that we're facing so that we can stabilize our campuses. We've got a lot of work to do here. Some of that work is about being more efficient and
more effective in what we do. It's about looking at ways that we can deliver our academic program less expensively. ... We've got to do that. It takes some time. The low-hanging fruit is gone."

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**Tuition increases across the UNC system**

Proposed in-state undergraduate tuition and fees for 2012-2013. Figures do not include costs for room, food and books.

Appalachian State University: $5,962 (a 9.3 percent increase)
East Carolina University: $5,813 (a 9.3 percent increase)
Elizabeth City State Univ.: $4,150 (an 8.4 percent increase)
Fayetteville State University: $4,394 (a 7.6 percent increase)
N.C. A&T State University: $4,952 (an 8.4 percent increase)
N.C. Central University: $5,119 (an 8.5 percent increase)
N.C. State University: $7,644 (a 9.8 percent increase)
UNC Asheville: $5,807 (a 9.9 percent increase)
UNC-Chapel Hill: $7,500 (a 9.9 percent increase)
UNC Charlotte: $5,777 (a 7.8 percent increase)
UNC Greensboro: $6,085 (a 7.5 percent increase)
UNC Pembroke: $4,786 (a 4.3 percent increase)
UNC School of the Arts: $7,351 (a 9.9 percent increase)
UNC Wilmington: $6,122 (a 9.4 percent increase)
Western Carolina University: $5,772 (a 9.9 percent increase)
Winston-Salem State University: $4,960 (a 9.9 percent increase)
Students rally to protest proposed tuition hikes

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — About 75 students from schools throughout the UNC System gathered Friday morning at the Pit on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus to protest tuition hikes proposed by a Board of Governors committee Thursday.

After meeting in the Pit at about 8 a.m., the students marched to the UNC General Administration building, where the full BOG will vote on the proposed increases Friday morning. A few of the protesters were allowed in the meeting, but most were kept in the lobby and allowed to watch the meeting on a monitor.

On Thursday, the committee recommended raising tuition and fees at all campuses by an average of 8.8 percent. Following the BOG's vote, the recommendation will go before state lawmakers.

The Association of Student Governments, a group comprised of the student body presidents from each school, helped provide transportation from every UNC campus for students who wanted protest the increases.

North Carolina State University student organizer Bryan Perlmutter says more increases will close the doors of higher education to many students.
The BOG Budget and Finance Committee on Thursday agreed with UNC President Tom Ross' recommendation to raise tuition and fees by more than $400 on average for the 2012-2013 school year.

"Our board is struggling. We are all struggling with this decision," Ross said.

The cost increases Ross recommended are well below what some campus leaders said they needed and will make up just 17 percent of the $414 million cut by state legislators last year.

The budget cut forced the 16 university campuses and the School of Science and Math in Durham to drop more than 3,000 employees, cut library hours at Appalachian State University and UNC-Wilmington and prevent hundreds of North Carolina Central University students from enrolling in general education math courses, according to a UNC system report.

Reporter: Erin Hartness
Photographer: Keith Baker
Web Editor: Derek Medlin
UNC students plan protest of tuition increases
The Associated Press
Friday, February 10, 2012

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP) — Students from schools in the University of North Carolina system are scheduled to rally against tuition increases that the Board of Governors is set to consider.

Students plan to assemble Friday morning at the Pit on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus, then march to the UNC General Administration Building, where they plan to hold a rally. They're protesting proposed tuition and fee increases of up to 10 percent at the 16 universities in the system.

The Association of Student Governments had agreed to provide transportation from every UNC campus for students who want to protest. The ASG is comprised of the student body presidents from each school.

North Carolina State University student organizer Bryan Perlmutter says more increases will close the doors of higher education to many students.
New ECU facility focuses on therapy research
By K.j. Williams
Friday, February 10, 2012

More students have been accepted into advanced degree programs for mental health therapy at East Carolina University now that a donated building has been remodeled for research.

The 2,800-square-foot building was bequeathed to the university by the late Nina Belle Redditt, a Kinston native. The remodeled building at 612 E. 10th St. was put into use in mid-2011. A ribbon-cutting ceremony took place last month.

The Redditt House spurred the creation of a new research facility, the Medical Family Therapy Research Academy, director Angela Lamson, who also serves as an associate professor, said. Students in the master’s program for Marriage and Family Therapy and the doctorate program for Medical Family Therapy are involved in research. Both programs are under the Department of Child Development and Family Relations in the College of Human Ecology.

“It allows us to provide training and research in a confidential environment; because we, as therapists, have to have a place that ensures people anonymity and confidentiality,” Lamson said.
At Redditt House, faculty will demonstrate research techniques in role-playing exercises — for students or other therapists — using a room equipped with a one-way window. Patients who have volunteered to be part of a research study will be aware that they’re being observed on the other side of the glass, Lamson said.

“It’s a lot easier to train that way than to go into a live setting and try to train that way,” she said.

The same type of setup is used at the adjacent ECU Family Therapy Clinic, where faculty and supervised students provide therapy based on a sliding-scale fee to the public. At the clinic, a new employee-assistance program for staff and faculty provides partial payment for the first three visits through ECU, Lamson said. The clinic is looking for more employers that need the service.

She said with the addition of Redditt House, the program has been able to provide on-site training and meeting space in support of an ongoing research project with military families at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base in Goldsboro.

The “Integrated Care for Military Couples” project began in 2011. It is used to support students’ doctorate dissertations or master’s theses. Grant funding is being sought for the program and other military research projects.

“We’re trying to learn more about the overall health of military and veteran couples,” Lamson said. “There’s just an incredible lack of research that’s being done about military couples.”

The project is beginning to use biofeedback techniques for data collection, she said.

Lamson said it’s appropriate that Redditt’s donated building will support military research. The building’s namesake retired from the Navy after 30 years.

On the civilian front, there’s an established program in place that pairs therapists and doctoral students with medical health care providers. The program has received about $1.1 million in grant funding since it began in 2006, and has involved about 55 graduate research assistants.

ECU has partnered with Greene County Health Care Inc., a provider of services to low-income patients in regional facilities, including the James D. Bernstein Community Health Center in Greenville, for the initiative.
Representatives from the facilities work together during patient appointments to treat patients. Along with addressing physical ailments, the patient’s mental health or stress-related issues are discussed.

“It’s about being a part of the health care team that’s going to help manage your physical well-being at the same time (they’re) managing your emotional well-being,” Lamson said of the holistic approach that has reached more than 30,000 patients.

She said students also work in agencies and nonprofits throughout the area. Altogether, they provided an estimated $350,000 in pro-bono work in fiscal year 2010-11.

To learn more about the research programs, contact Lamson at 737-2042. To reach the clinic, call 737-1415.

Contact K.J. Williams at kwilliams@reflector.com or 252-329-9588.
The Princeton Review’s 2012 Best Value Colleges list released Tuesday did not include East Carolina University.

The annual list names 75 public and 75 private undergraduate institutions offering excellent academics, generous financial aid and relatively low cost of attendance. ECU submitted its 2011 data to participate in the 2012 survey.

“While we might know what data sets were used, we don’t know what specific guidelines were used, so it’s tricky to draw conclusions about why or why not an institution might be listed,” Mary Schulken, director of public affairs, wrote in an e-mail on Tuesday.

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill topped the public list, while Williams College in Massachusetts came in first for private colleges. Only the top 10 schools are ranked in order; the remaining 65 are listed alphabetically. The review started with 650 institutions.

“We do know we will continue to participate and that East Carolina University meets many of the criteria benchmarked in such surveys,” Schulken said.

ECU was listed one of the best colleges in the southeast in Princeton’s 376 Best Colleges publication in August. Two graduate programs were named in the nation’s top 20 online education programs in a new ranking by U.S. News & World Report.

Contact Jackie Drake at jdrake@reflector.com or 252-329-9567 or follow her on Twitter @jackiedrakegdr.
State Rep. Edith Warren’s announcement this week that she will not seek re-election this year marks the conclusion of a sterling legislative career that the state and especially Pitt County will miss going forward. As they say, it’s now time for local folks to step up to fill her shoes.

Warren, a Democrat from Farmville, said that now “is a good time for me to move on and the torch can move on to someone else.” She has served in the Legislature from the 8th District since 1998, but newly drawn legislative district lines drastically changed her district with a majority of its area and population now in Wilson County.

In fact, with filing set to begin on Monday, a Wilson Democrat and Republican have already announced plans to run for the seat — an ominous sign for what it could mean to this county’s state legislative representation.

Absent a Pitt County candidate, the most populous county in the region could find its legislative delegation whittled down to one state House member, either Democrat Marian McLawhorn of Grifton, who represents District 9 but so far has not revealed her plans for the upcoming election, or former Greenville City Councilman Jack Wall, a Republican who has announced he will run for that seat.
Heading into this year’s election the county’s only state senator is District 7 Republican Louis Pate of Mount Olive, whose newly drawn district includes parts of Wayne, Pitt and Lenoir counties. The new Senate District 5, encompassing parts of Pitt, Greene, Wayne and Lenoir counties, currently has no incumbent. Also, House District 24, which includes a substantial part of northwestern Pitt, is now represented by Jean Farmer-Butterfield of Wilson.

Warren’s departure also leaves behind a record of strong regional leadership that, too, will be difficult for her successors to duplicate.

A retired school principal, Warren pointed to her efforts to maintain funding for education programs of varying types and her work in economic and rural development as high points of her legislative tenure. She also looks with regional pride at the growth in recent years at East Carolina University, including the heart institute, dental school, health sciences building and family medical center.

The region and especially Pitt County, home to so many of the institutions vital to the growth and health of this state, now cry out for prospective local leaders with knowledge of these institutions and these pursuits to step forward and, as Rep. Warren suggests, pick up the torch.
UNC says no to gender-neutral housing

By Gregory Childress

CHAPEL HILL – UNC Chancellor Holden Thorp has recommended against a proposal to implement a gender-neutral pilot housing program at the university.

In a recent memo to Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Winston Crisp, Thorp said there has not been adequate discussion with university “stakeholders” to move forward with the pilot program proposed by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Center (LGBTQC) and Gender Neutral Housing Coalition at UNC.

The proposal would have allowed students of any sexual orientation, gender or self-identified gender to live in the same room in UNC’s residence halls.

“While there has been a great deal of discussion about the proposal on campus, my concern is that we haven’t adequately explained it to our many stakeholders off campus,” Thorp said. “We owe it to this issue to ensure that people understand what we are proposing.”

Terry Phoenix, director of the LGBTQC, said Tuesday that he is disappointed by the decision, but understands the need to better explain the groups’ proposal.

“I think it’s unfortunate that student’s health and safety weren’t important enough to move forward with this proposal,” Phoenix said in an interview Tuesday. “I understand the decision but I think it’s unfortunate.”

In the group’s official response to the university, Phoenix and Kevin Claybren, who is credited with initiating the movement last spring after talks with students who expressed concern about their living situations, said they look forward to the opportunity to partner with Thorp to further explain the proposal to university stakeholders.

“To that end, the coalition will regroup and continue our efforts to create a fully inclusive, accessible and welcoming residential housing experience at UNC-Chapel Hill,” the two wrote.
Phoenix said that at the heart of the issue are student safety and the need to create an affirming and welcoming environment for students who are different.

He said LGBTQ students are often harassed, threatened with physical assault and made to feel unwelcome and unsafe.

“If we are able to have gender non-specific living quarters, it’s going to be safer for students,” Phoenix said.

While LGBTQ students, like any other at the university, can request roommates of the same sex, Phoenix said they cannot choose suitmates or dictate who lives near them in university apartments.

“You still get people who are not going to uphold the code of being welcoming,” Phoenix said.

The group had requested that the university set aside 32 spaces in suites and apartments to accommodate Gender Non-Specific Housing as an option to the traditional housing process.

Students would have had to opt-in to qualify for the housing, and no student would have been forced to live in the Gender Non-Specific Housing or prevented from living in it because of their gender or sexual orientation.

In its report to the university rationalizing Gender Non-Specific Housing, Phoenix and Claybren said that in addition to helping LGBTQ students feel safer, adding gender-neutral housing would have other benefits such as allowing two siblings of different genders to live together.

“Last year, a bother and sister wanted to room together but weren’t allowed to do so,” Phoenix said.

Also, people with disabilities who have personal care attendants of a different gender could also chose to live in gender neutral housing.

According to Phoenix and Claybren, 32 public universities (none in the UNC) and 66 private universities currently provide gender non-specific housing in some format.

Additionally, six of UNC’s peers – University of Pennsylvania, University of California-Berkeley, Duke University, Emory University, Johns Hopkins University and University of Michigan-Ann Arbor offer gender non-specific housing.
College Endowments: Why Even Harvard Isn’t as Rich as You Think

We all assume schools are sitting on a big pile of cash that they could use to lower tuition. Here's why that's not true

By Andrew J. Rotherham | @arotherham |

It seems everyone has an opinion about what colleges and universities should do with their endowments. Use them to lower tuition! Let students attend for free! Improve facilities! Hire more professors! When the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) released its annual report on endowments last week, the big numbers
grabbed headlines — Harvard’s endowment, the nation’s largest, grew 15%, to $31.7 billion. Less attention was directed to Southern Virginia University’s endowment of $574,000, which won’t provide too many scholarships at a place that costs more than $18,000 a year. A few weeks ago I had lunch with a college president whose school has an endowment of about $20 million. It may sound like a lot of money, but he was consumed with fundraising efforts just to make ends meet. So the next time you hear someone pitching an idea for what a college should do with its endowment, think about these five reasons that the reality of how college endowments work is different from the rhetoric.

1. **Most schools don’t have them.** There are 2,719 four-year colleges in the U.S. (and another 1,690 two-year colleges), according to the most recent Department of Education figures. Most higher-education institutions have no endowment, says William Jarvis, managing director and head of research at the CommonFund Institute, which helps NACUBO with its endowment surveys. But as with everything else around higher education, it’s the elite schools — which tend to be the ones that have large endowments — that drive the conversation. Endowments just aren’t a big factor at most of the institutions of higher education in this country.

2. **Many endowments are not that big.** The endowments at schools like Harvard or Yale (No. 2, with $19.3 billion) or even public universities like the University of Texas (No. 3, at $17.1 billion) get the attention. But of the 823 U.S. colleges and universities that responded to a NACUBO survey (which also included Canadian schools), only 73 had endowments that topped $1 billion; 137 had less than $25 million. Of the U.S. schools in the NACUBO survey, the median endowment size is $90 million. Not too shabby, but at the standard expenditure rate, an endowment that size generates only about $4.5 million in spendable dollars per year. That’s a decent chunk of change, but hardly enough to eliminate student debt and rely on investment returns instead. Even Cooper Union, the famously no-tuition college in New York City (No. 126, at $607 million), is struggling financially, and indicated this past fall that it is considering charging tuition for the first time in a century.

3. **The recession is still taking a toll.** Endowments on average earned 19% returns on their investments in the last fiscal year, according to NACUBO. Who wouldn’t like earnings like that? But they lost about the same amount in 2009. Many schools have not fully rebounded from the downturn: 47% of endowments have less than they did in 2008, according to NACUBO.
4. **Donors don’t always write blank checks.** When your alma mater calls you and asks for a donation, it’s really hoping you’ll give to its general fund, where the use of your donation is unrestricted. Donations you give for scholarships or specific degrees, programs or activities can be used only for those purposes. It’s the same with large donations, and large donations frequently come with donor restrictions — for instance, a specifically endowed chair for a professor or a particular area of research. Sometimes a school can renegotiate with a donor to increase flexibility, such as using proceeds from an endowed chair for another purpose until a suitable hire can be found. Such revisions get complicated when the donors are no longer living. Bottom line: a lot of the money in those big endowments has claims on it, including at Harvard (where, by the way, I am a member of the visiting committee at the Graduate School of Education.)

5. **Endowments are not all cash.** Remember the various exotic investments that helped trigger the financial meltdown? Just like other big-time investors, endowments were attracted to private-equity deals, real estate, hedge funds, commodities and the like. NACUBO estimates that 54% of endowments are tied up in these alternative and illiquid investments.

This style of endowment investing was pioneered by Yale’s David Swenson and subsequently became known as the “Harvard-Yale” model. A few years ago, when the downturn began, the endowments of those two schools — and all the others that had followed their example — got hammered. Back then, everyone wanted to be like Harvard and Yale — and they got their wish.

When Ken Redd, NACUBO’s director of research and policy analysis, asked endowment leaders what they’re most worried about, they said another fiscal crisis that could trigger a shortage of cash. In that way, endowments are just like many Americans: overextended, with big dreams and not enough cash on hand.

Rotherham, a co-founder and partner at the nonprofit Bellwether Education, writes the blog Eduwonk. The views expressed are solely his own.