THE DAILY CLIPS

February 20, 2012

News, commentary, and opinion
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When an East Carolina University student lost her parents in a double-homicide and another student was killed in a motorcycle wreck earlier this month, counselors at the university rallied to help.

The ECU Center for Counseling and Student Development came to the aid of students after Whitley Morgan French, a 19-year-old freshman, was injured during a Feb. 4 Reidsville home invasion that took the lives of her parents, and 21-year-old student Cameron Adrian Griffin died Feb. 5 in an early morning motorcycle crash in Greenville.

In the event of such tragedies, the university contacts a student or a student’s family to check in and also alert them of available resources, including the counseling center, Matt Dwyer, licensed psychologist and director of the center, said.

“One of the most important pieces is just letting folks know, particularly if they’re in a state of shock, that there are resources that can help,” he said.

While tragic events put a spotlight on the center’s services, the director said the 12-member professional clinical staff helps students every day to cope
with problems ranging from school-related stress to major mental health disorders.

“I think the range of concerns we see for students is massive,” Dwyer said. “The students get the sense they’re able to come talk, and we can hopefully sometimes be preventative,” he said. “Our meat and potatoes, as I call it, is individual therapy and group therapy.”

On average, the center sees 200 students per month for therapy sessions, Dwyer said. The number of monthly visits varies, rising to 400 at times and decreasing during summer and winter breaks.

Dwyer said top concerns students bring to the center include symptoms of depression, symptoms of anxiety, relationship issues — which encompass romantic, family, roommate and friend relationships — and substance abuse problems.

“On one end of the continuum, we see students who are really struggling with some very significant mental health issues, who have diagnoses of schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, and who are working with those disorders to be the best student they can and manage what life is bringing them,” Dwyer said.

On the other end of the continuum, Dwyer said the center also sees students who are stressed from their class workload or the transition to college.

“We certainly see students who come in and say, ‘I’m just getting a little stressed out,’” he said. “Let me sit down with someone and just figure out how to take better care of myself.”

Regardless of the reasons that bring students to the counseling center, Dwyer said those who utilize the services need not worry about the visit being disclosed to parents, friends or university officials. Confidentiality is extremely important, he said.

“If a student comes here, nobody else knows,” Dwyer said.

Some clients worry what others think about their participation in therapy.

“Students ask, ‘Do you have to be crazy to go to the counseling center or see a therapist?’” Dwyer said.

The stigma surrounding psychotherapy is decreasing, though, as people become more knowledgeable of mental health issues and more accepting of counseling.
“Just because someone is interested in engaging in therapy, all that means is that there’s something going on in their life that they want to look at and work on,” Dwyer said. “In a way, I’m guessing almost everyone in the world has that. I can’t think of anyone I know that doesn’t have something they’re struggling with.”

The transition to college can be more difficult than students imagine, Dwyer said. Therapy can help them manage the responsibilities of being an adult.

The counseling center is a place where licensed mental health professionals react to the everyday struggles of students as well as any emergency situations that arise.

In the most tragic and campuswide incidents, staff go into emergency mode and are proactive in reaching out to all students.

On a smaller scale, with events or situations that affect a limited number of students, the university might contact a student’s roommates or hall mates in addition to contacting the student and his or her family.

“It’s also possible that, if there are roommates or hall mates, they might come forward and say, ‘I just found this out. I’m overwhelmed and don’t know what to do,’” he said.

Counseling can help regardless of whether a student visits the center as a result of everyday stress or because of a traumatic situation, Dwyer said.

“I’m biased — I’m a psychologist, so I tend to think therapy is helpful,” he said.

“This is the only time in your life you can go see a licensed psychologist for free,” Dwyer said. “Go ahead, take advantage of it.”

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Sheerer: Education misunderstandings
Sunday, February 19, 2012

Sheerer: Education misunderstandings

Recently, reader feedback and articles in The Daily Reflector have reflected ongoing confusion and misunderstanding about the way in which higher education operates. This situation is also apparent at the state and national levels as higher education has faced increased public discontent and criticism.

The attacks seem to focus on several issues: too many administrators, faculty not teaching enough and/or not being on campus throughout the day and lack of academic rigor in the curriculum.

During my 16 years at East Carolina University, I have fielded many questions around these issues and would like to offer counter arguments in response.

First, ECU, under Chancellor Steve Ballard’s leadership, has taken definitive steps to eliminate many administrative positions. Data clearly support this statement and show two things: 1) that our faculty size has increased significantly compared to the increase in administrative staff; and 2) that ECU has fewer administrative positions than many of our sister institutions within North Carolina and our national peers (those institutions that fall into the same Carnegie classification and are similar in size and complexity). We continue to create greater efficiencies across the university at all levels.

It is important for parents and families, too, to remember that middle-level administrators organize and monitor much of the work that directly impacts
students — e.g., admissions, financial aid, advisement, student affairs and health services.

Secondly, faculty have very varied workloads that focus on teaching but also include service and research. In addition to meeting their classes every week, faculty spend many hours mentoring and advising students; working on their scholarship and research; serving on master’s and doctoral committees; and writing and administering grants.

Here at ECU, in particular, many faculty involve their students in service learning in the community. That means many hours of faculty time is spent working with community agencies and their staff. Other faculty serve on numerous internal and external committees related to university and community matters or initiatives connected to their disciplines. For example, faculty serve on school task forces; public utilities boards; city council, and social service agency boards.

The impression that higher education faculty just teach and should teach more seems to come from a general knowledge of K-12 education where teachers are in classrooms and offices throughout the school day. Such is not the case with college and university environments.

On a typical work day, a faculty member’s schedule can look something like this: class at 8 a.m.; meeting with students at community site at 10 a.m.; meeting with graduate student at 11:30 a.m. about her thesis; class at 1 p.m.; work on research during the afternoon hours; faculty meeting at 4:30 p.m.; and an evening speaker in the faculty member’s discipline.

Finally, the question of academic rigor often confronts us. This is a more difficult question to address in an objective way. Sometimes I hear from faculty that many of our students are not prepared for college; and, thus, faculty have to redesign their courses to cover more basic material. On the other hand, some parents and students have expressed to me their desire for more challenging curricula.

At ECU we have responded directly to these concerns by:

- Raising admissions standards for entering freshmen.
- Providing additional tutoring and advisement to students in academic difficulty. Creating an Honors College to provide challenging curricula for our top students.
- Challenging departments to explore new methods of teaching and learning.
- Engaging undergraduate students in research with our faculty.
• Creating faculty and student living/learning communities in our residence halls.

Overall, ECU continues to work to improve in all of our academic areas. We certainly don’t have everything right; but we strive to be responsive to our critics.

Marilyn Sheerer is provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at East Carolina University.
Tying UNC system tuition to performance

BY J.B. BUXTON

RALEIGH–If you have been paying attention to the university tuition debate over the past few weeks, one word you have heard often is costs. The word you haven't heard enough about is performance.

The recent decision by the UNC system Board of Governors to raise tuition and fees on in-state students by an average of nearly 9 percent was, unfortunately, not much of a surprise. After all, the board approved an increase of 8.2 percent last year and 15.5 percent the year before. The General Assembly passed a budget with significant cuts to our universities. And not one campus chancellor or board of trustees refrained from requesting that students and families shoulder another increase.

What is surprising is that decisions about tuition and fees continue to be divorced from the performance of the institutions that collect them. In other words, the costs continue to rise no matter how well our universities do in helping students obtain degrees.

Imagine if an auto mechanic who is successful in repairing cars just one-third of the time is not only able to stay in business, but can increase prices every year. Or a doctor whose patients are misdiagnosed 25 percent of the time but is considered to be one of the best in his or her profession. We would not tolerate it. Yet we do in higher education.

Take performance in the UNC system. Let's start by agreeing that the reason students go to a university is to get a degree. Let's also agree that it's better for students - and taxpayers who support these students to the tune of more than $10,000 per year on average - if they graduate from our state-supported institutions in four years.

So what is the rate of students who enter the UNC system and graduate four years later?

Thirty-six percent. That's essentially 1 out of every 3 graduating in four years. A May 2009 report showed the highest rate across the UNC campuses was 74 percent, with the next highest at just 47 percent. Six of our campuses registered four-year rates in the teens.
Over a six-year timeframe, the statewide rate improves to 59 percent. While better, that may mean two more years of state-funded support. For students, it may mean two more years of tuition and fees - and, for many, increased debt.

Here's the bottom line: A significant percentage of the students we are asking to pay more money for their degrees will never get them.

To be fair, the graduation rate is not the only measure of institutional success, and some would suggest it doesn't offer a full enough picture. But there are no performance measures that are part of the decision to increase tuition and fees or to fund the universities, in general.

Put simply, we are asking our students to accept increased tuition, but we are not asking our universities to demonstrate increased performance.

That is just not right. It is time for North Carolina to move from being a leader in access to a leader in college completion. The UNC Board of Governors has begun this journey by implementing a plan to restrict enrollment growth at campuses not meeting performance targets.

To continue this important effort, the Board and General Assembly should take three additional steps:

- Build performance into our state funding model for higher education. Today enrollment is the main driver of higher education funding. But access without success is an empty strategy. It's time to start rewarding campuses that make progress on student success.

- Establish clear student success goals and hold our UNC system and campuses accountable. As the line from Alice in Wonderland goes, if you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.

- Build performance measures into future tuition decisions. Send a clear message to students and taxpayers that this state stands on the side of results for students.

This problem is not confined to the borders of North Carolina. Across the country, low graduation rates are an issue. Our state is regarded rightly as a leader in access to higher education. There is no reason we cannot become a leader in student success. Committing to action and leadership on completion - and ensuring our students have the credentials and degrees they need to success in today's economy - should be a natural next step.
To those who disagree and don't believe in the need to pair performance with price, I'd be happy to serve as your mechanic the next time your car is in need of repair.

J.B. Buxton consults with state governments, foundations and nonprofits on state education strategy. He is the former deputy state superintendent of the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.
Doctor visits aren’t always fun for young patients with cancer and blood diseases, but those at East Carolina University have something to help them smile thanks to the work and generosity of an academic honor society.

Students of the ECU chapter of Phi Eta Sigma, the national freshmen honor society, donated their time and talent last fall to paint three exam rooms in special themes at the new pediatric hematology/oncology clinic at the Brody School of Medicine at ECU. They also used society funds to provide televisions, video players and toys at the clinic. Altogether, the project cost approximately $4,500.

“When I was given this opportunity to do this service project, I knew what I wanted to do,” said Phi Eta Sigma President Julian Stalls, a 19-year-old sophomore from Williamston who was treated at ECU herself as a pediatric cancer patient. “They stay in these rooms for hours when they are here getting treated, so they need some bright colors.”

Last year, the pediatric clinic moved from the Pediatric Outpatient Center into a bland space formerly occupied by the ECU surgery department. Led by Stalls, approximately 35 students worked evenings to repaint exam rooms in jungle, undersea and ECU themes. TVs and DVD players along with iPods, games, game players, books and toys will help keep children in good spirits as they are being evaluated or receiving chemotherapy.
Pediatric staff originally asked Stalls if her group could repaint one room. Stalls insisted they do more than one room and do more than redecorate.

“It’s special,” said Dr. Beg Fuh, an assistant professor of pediatrics and sickle-cell disease specialist.

“I think when the children come and I tell them it was a child who was treated here years ago who did this, it gives them some comfort,” Fuh said.

Stalls’ mother died of breast cancer when Stalls was 13. A few months later, Stalls was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Nevertheless, she graduated from one of the state’s top high schools in Durham while commuting to Greenville for cancer treatment. She’s been in remission since 2009.

“This kid got chemo and went to the (N.C.) School of Science and Math,” said Dr. Charles Daeschner, professor and chief of pediatric hematology/oncology and Stalls’ physician when she was being treated for cancer. “I couldn’t have pulled it off.”

ECU physicians treat approximately 500 patients with sickle-cell disease and another 180 with hemophilia or other blood disorders. Another 70-85 children with cancer are receiving treatment at ECU. The patients come from eastern North Carolina, and some come from farther away if they have left for college in another city.

Students who meet academic requirements are invited to join Phi Eta Sigma during their freshman year. They are members during their sophomore year. Stalls is majoring in psychology and minoring in child development and family relations.

The importance of languages showcased

ECU will celebrate International Mother Language Day on Tuesday-Thursday to highlight the need for recognizing and preserving linguistic diversity.

Coordinating the event at ECU is Ricard Viñas-de-Puig, assistant professor of Hispanic studies, with a specialization in linguistics in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures.

“Languages and linguistic diversity are a unique asset of humankind,” Viñas-de-Puig said. “… in a time where most of the world’s languages are facing a situation of endangerment, all and any efforts are necessary to raise awareness of their presence in every community.”
“Eastern North Carolina and ECU are no exception and have become home to a significant number of very diverse languages and linguistic communities.”

Viñas-de-Puig will open the celebration with remarks on “Linguistic Diversity Starts Here: The Languages of ECU” at 5 p.m. Tuesday in Joyner Library. A screening will follow at 5:30 p.m. of the documentary, “Languages Lost and Found,” followed by a question and answer session.

On Thursday from 5 to 7 p.m. in Bate 1031, topics and speakers will include “New Millennium, Old Threats: ASL Under Pressure,” by Dr. Joseph Hill from UNC-Greensboro; “The Cherokee Immersion Program,” by Tom Belt and Hartwell Francis of Western Carolina University; and “Speakers’ Rights and Under-recognized Languages,” an open discussion with Hill, Belt and Francis.

International Mother Language Day was established by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization at their General Conference in 1999 and has been observed every year since February 2000.

For additional information, contact Viñas-de-Puig at 328-2103 or visit http://blog.ecu.edu/sites/internationalmotherlanguageday/.

‘Tribute to Motown’ set for Saturday

The annual “Tribute to Motown” concert to celebrate African-Americans’ contributions to music will be 8 p.m. Saturday at Wright Auditorium. The concert is presented by the ECU School of Music Jazz Studies Program and the Hilton of Greenville.

The concert will feature Ronee Martin, blues and jazz vocalist, and Christie Dashiell, Afro Blue featured vocalist, performing Motown classics including “Respect,” “Dr. Feel Good,” “Dancin’ in the Street,” “Sugar Pie Honey Bunch,” “Kansas City,” “My Girl.”

Martin has worked with songwriters and producers, including Burt Bacharach and Carol Bayer Sagar, and Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil. She was featured vocalist for Tom Scott on “One Day/One Night” and sang background for Elton John, Seal, Faith Hill and Tim McGraw.

Dashiell has appeared in concert performances with Smokey Robinson, Nnenna Freelon, Mary Stallings and the Smithsonian Masterworks Jazz Orchestra. She was recipient of the Down Beat Magazine 2008 and 2010...
Outstanding Soloist Awards, winning in the jazz vocal category and as soloist with Afro Blue.

“This show is in the format of the old traveling Motown Review which featured several Motown artists on each bill,” said Carroll V. Dashiell Jr., the show’s music director.

“We attempt to recreate that atmosphere with our show including professional recording artists, current students, alumni of the jazz program and jazz faculty members.”

Also performing will be Bill Ford, special guest piano/synthesizers; Jon Ozment, special guest piano/synthesizers; Carroll V. Dashiell, Jr., bass; Jeff Bair, Jeremiah Miller and Vaughn Ambrose, saxophones; Carroll V. Dashiell III, drums; Joe Phillips, guitar; Joey Stultz, ethnic percussion; Karen Peele, trombone; Steve Peckus, tenor sax; and James Old, trumpet.

Tickets are $10 for adults and $5 for students.

To purchase tickets call 800-ECU-ARTS or the ECU Central Ticket Office at 328-4788. Tickets will also be available at the door.
Debbie Hathaway, a Pitt County native and East Carolina University graduate, recently was promoted to assistant director of the Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC) at ECU.

Hathaway has been a successful business adviser for the SBTDC for seven years, counseling hundreds of small-business owners throughout the center’s 12-county region. She has a passion for helping others succeed, which is complemented by her 20-plus years of business ownership experience, a news release said.

In addition to business advising, Hathaway has taken a leadership role with the center’s activities related to the Greenville Business Plan Competition, ECU’s MBA/MSA internship program that places student interns with local businesses, NxLevel workshop for business owners, and statewide professional development training for new SBTDC business advisers.
Hathaway has received the SBTDC Executive’s Director Award for Excellence and recently completed the SBTDC’s Leadership Enhancement and Development Program.

The Small Business and Technology Development Center works with new and existing small to mid-sized businesses across eastern North Carolina to establish and expand their businesses. Business advisers engage clients primarily through one-on-one confidential counseling and SBTDC also offers monthly workshops.
UNC professors want Heels to emphasize academics

BY ANDREW CARTER - acarter@newsobserver.com

CHAPEL HILL—A group of University of North Carolina faculty members has urged the school to pursue athletic excellence "on a foundation of academic integrity" while remaining consistent to the university's overall mission.

The faculty members released a statement on Friday calling for UNC's athletics department to better align itself with the rest of the university community. Jay Smith, a UNC history professor, led several faculty meetings during the past several months about the future of athletics at UNC.

The university, meanwhile, is still waiting for the NCAA to rule on its 2010 investigation of impermissible benefits and academic fraud within the UNC football program. The scandal eventually led to the firing of football coach Butch Davis.

The statement released Friday by Smith and his group called for the UNC athletics department to reflect three primary principles: Institutional openness, educational responsibility and mission consistency.

"We hope that this statement can provide a point of departure for public discussion and a foundation that the athletic program and the University as a whole can build on in the months and years ahead," Smith said in a statement.

The statement of principles that Smith and other faculty members wrote has been endorsed by 112 members of the UNC faculty. Smith and other faculty members acknowledged UNC's mostly clean record of athletic success.

But the faculty members wrote, "in light of recent developments, however, we insist that the pursuit of athletic excellence at UNC-Chapel Hill must rest on a foundation of academic integrity and should always reflect" the three principles of openness, responsibility and consistency to the UNC's mission.

The statement also called for the UNC athletics department to "commit itself to honest, open, regular conversation" about the conflicts that exist between academic and athletic success. Faculty members demanded that "all data needed to understand the athletics department" be made readily available.
Further, faculty members insisted that "the university should commit itself to providing a rigorous and meaningful education to every student." They called for athletes to be fully integrated in the campus community, and for athletics "to be integrated into the common enterprise of the university."

The faculty members demanded that UNC create faculty-led oversight committees "to oversee athletics and ensure that it supports and remains in alignment with the University's core missions."

Carter: 919-829-8944
RALEIGH–An N.C. State student was critically injured early Sunday when a car driven by another student hit his bicycle and threw him onto the car's windshield, according to campus police.

Steven Kendal Otto was taken to WakeMed and was listed in serious condition Sunday afternoon.

Police said they charged Ross Everett Chapman, the car's driver, with driving while impaired after a test showed he had a blood alcohol level of 0.12. The limit for driving in North Carolina is 0.08.

Otto and Chapman were going in opposite directions on Dan Allen Drive at Yarbrough Drive about 2:50 a.m. when Chapman turned left onto a service road that leads to the Dan Allen Parking Deck, campus officers reported. Otto shattered the car's windshield when his body hit it, they said.

Police said they obtained a search warrant to draw blood from Chapman to test for alcohol and any other impairing substances. They are awaiting analysis by the State Bureau of Investigation.

The university's directory lists Otto as a senior chemistry major from Apex and Chapman as a junior civil engineering major from Raleigh. Otto was a dean's list student last semester.
A UNC-system delegation will travel to China next month to explore new partnerships with universities there - one more example of the growing emphasis on China in American higher education.

Eight members of the UNC Board of Governors will join UNC President Tom Ross, his wife, and Leslie Boney, a UNC-system vice president, in China for about a week starting March 17. Prior to that, the Rosses and Boney will spend four days meeting with education leaders in Taiwan.

No state funds will be spent on the trip, Boney said. The Taiwan portion of the trip will be paid for by the Taiwanese Higher Education Ministry. Board members will pay their own airfare to China, as well as some expenses for meals and cultural activities. Travel and lodging within China will be paid for by Hanban, an agency affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education.

This month, the UNC board voted to accept the Chinese and Taiwanese government sponsorship of the trips.

The trip is aimed at giving UNC leaders an appreciation of China and its economic importance as the university builds a strategy for more international engagement, Boney said. The trip will be focused on four areas - Shanghai, Suzhou, Nanjing and Beijing. While in China, the group will visit six universities or education entities, two schools and an industrial park. They'll meet with UNC alumni living in China.

The goal is to strengthen ties to universities in China for mutual benefit, including student exchanges, faculty swaps and joint programs. There is no plan to establish a UNC center or campus, as Duke and others are doing, said Hannah Gage, chairwoman of the Board of Governors, who will take the trip.

"You build relationships," she said. "You don't build buildings. We'll provide better opportunities for all of our students."

UNC already has a variety of partnerships in China, including a longstanding relationship with Fudan University in Shanghai. Fourteen UNC campuses have agreements with 44 universities across mainland China. Since 2007, N.C. State University has had a Confucius Institute that
promotes Chinese language and culture. It was established by NCSU, Nanjing Normal University and Hanban, the Chinese agency sponsoring the March trip.

Interest in China is exploding as rapidly as the Chinese economy. At the same time, China is looking to transform its education system in the mold of American universities that foster creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship - areas in which the Chinese have not excelled.

For the same reason, Chinese students are coming to the U.S. in unprecedented numbers - 150 percent more in 2010 than in 2005, according to the Institute of International Education.

**More students coming**

Traditionally, Chinese students have come to the United States for graduate and professional programs. More recently, there has been a rush of undergraduates who want an American-style education and have the resources to pay for it.

With the rise of China's middle class, more families can afford to send a child to the United States, where they typically pay the full cost of education without scholarships.

That has led to questionable practices here and in China, where some universities have used agents to recruit Chinese students who may not be prepared to study in the United States. Earlier this month, an audit of Dickinson State University in North Dakota revealed that hundreds of degrees were awarded to foreign students, mostly Chinese, who didn't earn them.

Such scandals have been a cautionary lesson as universities embrace new relationships with China.

Linda McKinnish Bridges, international recruiter and associate dean of admissions at Wake Forest University, said she looks for the best and brightest Chinese students who are proficient in English and can add to the intellectual climate at the Winston-Salem university.

She traveled to China in November, where she visited 16 high schools in 14 cities, and will go again next month. Fluent in Mandarin, Bridges interviews students to assess their language skills and interests.

She is currently reviewing 600 applications from Chinese students who want to attend Wake Forest in the fall; last year, about 300 applied. Only 13 were admitted last year.
"Most everyone says, 'I am coming because I want to learn to think critically, I want to learn how to use my imagination, I want to learn to build new things and have new ideas,'" Bridges said. "On their personal essay, that comes through on a consistent basis."

Chinese students are looking to the United States more than any other place for higher education. "We're still the gold standard," Bridges said. "That is a wonderful opportunity for us in American higher education but it's also a big responsibility to do it right, do it ethically and do it in ways that benefit our institution as well as the individual students and families."

**Duke builds a campus**

Wake Forest's approach to China is on small numbers of students and focused programs.

Duke University, meanwhile, is moving to China in a big way - establishing an entire campus. Duke Kunshan University is now under construction near Shanghai, with six buildings to be financed by the city of Kunshan. Duke will pay the academic and operational costs.

The venture has created controversy on the Durham campus, where faculty critics warn about the lack of academic freedom in China and question Duke's financial investment there. After months of deliberations and meetings, Duke's Academic Council in December approved the first degree program in business.

The master's of management studies will begin with a three-year pilot program in which students will spend time in both China and Durham. But it can't enroll a single student until the Chinese government's Ministry of Education approves Duke's application.

Duke President Richard Brodhead went to China in January and spoke with a vice minister about the process, said Nora Bynum, managing director of Duke Kunshan University and Duke's China initiatives.

"Everything seems to be going smoothly, but I can't exactly predict when that will be completed," Bynum said. "We definitely hope to open as soon as possible."

She declined to put a date on the opening of the campus. Last year, Duke officials said DKU would open this fall, but that now is unlikely.

The Chinese government is taking a tougher look at its partnerships with American universities, according to recent media reports, because some have been unsuccessful. Bynum said that is not likely to affect Duke's application.
Will it last?

Duke's Kunshan campus is part of a bigger global strategy. Late last year, the university announced a new business degree in the United Arab Emirates. And Duke already has a medical school in Singapore in partnership with the National University of Singapore.

Partly in response to concerns about DKU, Duke last year created a China Faculty Council, comprised of about a dozen professors who have expertise in China. The group serves as a resource for Duke faculty who may want greater involvement in China and a panel that consults on regulatory issues and potential risks.

Paul Haagen, a law professor and chairman of the council, describes the development of the higher education sector in China as "extremely vigorous." In 2000, he said, there were half as many as seats in Chinese universities than on American campuses; now, he said, there are twice as many. University leaders are trying to take advantage of the opportunity in China, but no one has identified a clear model, he said.

"If you want to meet the president of an American research university, where you want to go is to China right now," he said. "Everybody is thinking about this. Part of it is there is, at least for the short term, an extraordinary openness in China. Whether that will last, I don't know. What form it will take, I think, no one knows."

Stancill: 919-829-4559

NC-system partnerships in China

A sampling of the UNC system's current involvement in China:

- A systemwide partnership since 2004 with Fudan University in Shanghai. The relationship has included student exchanges. Also, Fudan faculty have helped Western Carolina University and UNC Wilmington launch Chinese language programs.

- Twelve UNC campuses have student exchange programs with Chinese universities. In such exchanges, a certain number of students are swapped, but the students pay their home university.

- Nine UNC campuses offer short-term faculty-led summer programs in collaboration with Chinese universities.

- Five UNC campuses conduct synchronous virtual courses with Chinese partners.
- UNC’s Center for International Understanding signed a three-year deal with Hanban in 2010 to bring 45 Chinese language teachers to North Carolina public school classrooms.

**Chinese students are coming**

China, by far, sends more students to the United States than any other country, according to the Institute of International Education. In 2010-11, 157,558 Chinese students enrolled in American universities - a 24 percent increase from the previous year. Nearly 13,000 Chinese students studied at North Carolina universities in 2010-11. The biggest share was at NCSU, which had 3,235, followed by Duke with 2,485 and UNC-Chapel Hill with 1,674.
Brittany Newman, left, and Brynn Smith enjoy the empty gym after most UNC Dance Marathon participants leave for breakfast. The event has raised more than $2.8 million for N.C. Children's Hospital.

**UNC dances all day, night as charity for hospital**

BY ANNE BLYTHE - ablythe@newsobserver.com

CHAPEL HILL Katie Barbee had not had a wink of sleep in more than 24 hours. Her feet ached, and what she really wanted to do was stretch her legs across her bed.

But Barbee, a UNC-Chapel Hill junior from High Point, was among the 2,000 students in Fetzer Gym standing for a cause.

And she was not about to let a little discomfort sideline her from the 2012 UNC Dance Marathon, the last 24 hours of an annual fundraising project to support the patients and families at the N.C. Children's Hospital.

"I've never done anything so strenuous," Barbee said late Saturday afternoon with about three-and-a-half hours to go in the 24-hour event. "But it's really rewarding. It's really nice to be able to stand up so long for kids that can't."

As color lights flashed in the darkened gym, an assortment of music pulsed from speakers. The marathon session began at 7:30 p.m. Friday, and throughout the next 24 hours, there were live performances for the dancers, lots of food and activities.
The first dance marathon was held in 1999, when 100 dancers raised $40,000 for the cause. Since then, the event has raised more than $2.8 million. Last year, the 1,600 dancers raised $436,709. This year, they raised $483,210.

The N.C. Children's Hospital cares for seriously ill or injured children who need complex care.

More than 70,000 children from all 100 North Carolina counties come to the hospital in Chapel Hill, resulting in more than 200,000 visits each year to the hospital campus for diagnosis and treatment.

Each marathon dancer must raise at least $150 to participate in the event.

Though many were weary of body late Saturday afternoon, their spirits were buoyed by this year's theme: "Mission Possible."

"I wanted to quit in the middle," said a fatigued Shakeila Jones, a junior from Raleigh. "But it's for the kids."

The kids, such as Scott, a 5-year-old who mysteriously stopped growing when he was 2, or Darren, a 15-year-old with kidney disease who's been to the hospital many times, are the ones, the dancers maintain, enduring the real marathon.

Sean Xing, a UNC-CH senior majoring in biology and French, participated in the dance marathon this year because he did not want to graduate without going through the experience. The beginning is fun, the dancers all with spring in their step. The middle is difficult, he said, but the end gave him a sense of taking part in something big.

Xing's feet hurt, he said, but "it pales in comparison to what the children in the hospital go through every day."

Meg Peters, a senior majoring in nutrition, and her cousin Becca Brenner, a 2011 UNC-CH graduate who came back after being a four-time marathoner, said they learned a few new moves - the line dance and the "wobble-with-it."

The experience has its levity, they said.

But the final hour, when the children and families get on stage and tell their stories, the tired dancers can be overwhelmed by emotion.

"Everyone's just sobbing," Brenner said.

But they leave with smiles, too.

"Its cool," Brenner said. "This can be a lot of fun and goofy. But at the end of the day, it's for the kids."
What College Students Need to Know

The popular college rankings focus primarily on prestige as measured by the SAT scores of incoming students and how many applicants are turned away. An initiative started last fall by the Obama administration could help families go beyond these limited, and far too easily gamed, indexes to learn quickly and easily how a college stacks up against its competitors nationally on important metrics like graduation rates, what a degree actually costs and how much debt a student can expect to incur by graduation day.

If the federal government makes it mandatory to disclose this information in a clear and consistent way, as it should, families will be better able to make informed college choices. And this will help put pressure on colleges that fare poorly to improve.

Critics may cast this initiative as an example of government overreach. But given that the federal government spends nearly $190 billion a year on higher education aid to students, it has a legitimate interest in making sure that the money flows to the schools that best meet their responsibilities to families and students.

Congress has taken some steps to mandate greater transparency from colleges. The 1990 Student Right to Know Act, for example, required colleges and universities that receive federal aid to disclose graduation rates. And the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act required schools to offer a way for consumers to determine actual costs after student aid is taken into account.

But many colleges have done a poor job of complying with federal disclosure rules, and much of the available information is not in one place. The administration’s new efforts would enforce reporting requirements and provide some new tools.

The new federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has developed a preliminary version of a one-page “shopping sheet” with data from the colleges that will allow students to learn how much they will need to pay, what they will owe, how the school ranks nationally in net cost, and whether students who have graduated are earning enough money to repay their loans.
The Department of Education has also created a preliminary version of a “college scorecard” with data to help students compare colleges on affordability and value. A scorecard for all colleges should be available later this year. (By federal regulation, for-profit schools are already required to report similar information, including student earnings and debt, to the government.) Some of this information can be gleaned from federal records, but making it readily available to students would be a new use of the federal data.

President Obama wants to expand campus-based aid to about $10 billion from the current $2.7 billion. He has proposed moving money away from colleges that fail to control tuition increases or provide good value to others that do a better job. That is a worthy idea in principle, but he will need strong data-based evidence to determine how colleges are doing.

The transparency initiatives are a good place to start and should be embraced by both parties in Congress. If students and families, facing higher tuition and rising debt, are to make sound choices, they need more and better information.
American University adjunct faculty vote to unionize

By Daniel de Vise

Adjunct faculty at American University voted to unionize Thursday, following the lead of their peers at George Washington University and Montgomery College.

Adjuncts are the temps of higher education. They make up more than half of all college faculty nationwide, but most work part-time “for very low wages with no benefits, job security, administrative support or academic rights,” the labor union SEIU said in a release. (I should note that those characterizations are for adjuncts everywhere, not just at AU.) About 30 percent of the courses taught at AU in the fall semester were taught by adjuncts, according to university officials.

University officials said they would not challenge the vote.
Adjuncts are typically paid by the class and are considered relatively cheap labor. At AU, according to the union, an adjunct with a doctorate teaching three classes a semester could make as little as $18,000 in a year. Adjuncts at AU are capped at three courses per term.

In response, AU spokeswoman Camille Lepre wrote, “It’s not a fair comparison to hold an adjunct that teaches a course up to a tenured or tenure track faculty member who is generally teaching four courses a year, conducting research on an area of new knowledge, advising students, supervising theses, dissertations, and internship experiences, and providing service on university committees and to the community on behalf of AU.”

A full professor at AU earns $152,000 a year.

Federal data show AU employs 688 full-time and 547 part-time faculty. The university reports that it employs 1,672 adjuncts on three-year contracts, but not all of them teach at the same time.

Adjuncts view unionization as a path to the middle class, according to the union. Some have already arrived. “Many AU adjuncts are professionals employed elsewhere, with salary and benefits,” Lepre said in an e-mail.

“This is a major step in reforming higher education, not just at American University but across the country,” said Mark Plane, an adjunct in the anthropology department at AU, in a statement.

Adjuncts often are hired “at the last minute, so it is harder to prepare for their courses.” the union release said. “They do not have office space and many work additional jobs to make ends meet so there’s less time to be available to students after class.”

Plane: “The reality is that, except for a lucky few, anyone trying to forge a career in academia will serve an indefinite time as an adjunct. The university too often treats this as business as usual, but for my fellow adjuncts, it can be a real struggle to get by.”

By Daniel de Vise | 09:58 AM ET, 02/17/2012
Gov. Rick Scott has called for an increase in education spending this year, but not for colleges and universities.

**Florida Set for New Cut in Spending on Colleges**

By LIZETTE ALVAREZ

MIAMI — Florida lawmakers contend that education is essential to high-wage jobs in the state, but the Legislature is again expected to slash millions of dollars from the budget for higher education and may usher in another round of tuition increases.

A proposal in the House would reduce state financing by nearly $250 million next year and would allow universities to increase tuition by as little as 8 percent and as much as 15 percent. A measure in the Senate would cut more than $500 million and would allow smaller institutions that are defined as colleges to raise tuition by 3 percent (the full-scale universities would not be permitted to raise tuition).

The cuts in Florida began four years ago and have continued unabated. Since 2008, state spending on education has dropped by 24 percent and is now at
2003 levels. Meanwhile, universities have raised tuition every year, putting many students in a financial bind. Florida’s 11 public universities have been raising tuition 15 percent a year for the past four years, and some of them for five years, although they still rank among the least expensive in the nation.

Forty-one states cut higher education spending last year, from 1 percent in Indiana and North Carolina to 41 percent in New Hampshire, according to a recent study conducted by the Illinois State University Center for the Study of Higher Education and the State Higher Education Executive Officers group.

Eduardo J. Padrón, the president of Miami Dade College, said the cuts in higher education spending in Florida were short-sighted.

“At a time when institutions are growing and trying to serve a lot of students who realized that the only way to become a part of the middle class is by getting a college education, the state continues to disinvest in education,” said Dr. Padrón, whose college has country’s largest enrollment (not including online schools) and graduates the most blacks and Hispanics. “There should be no question that at this point in America today, investment in higher education is paramount.”

Gov. Rick Scott, who in 2011 sought steep spending cuts to public schools, changed course this year. Calling a good education the “bedrock of any sound, sustainable economy,” Mr. Scott pushed to increase spending on public elementary, junior high and high schools next year by $1 billion, a move that would come close to making up the $1.3 billion cut last year.

But he did not include additional money for universities and colleges, although he did not advocate any reductions, either. The governor also strongly opposes letting universities raise tuition again.

“I don’t believe in tuition hikes,” said Mr. Scott, a Republican, who added that he wanted the state’s universities to focus more on science, technology, engineering and math.

Colleges and universities are in a quandary: Spending cuts, combined with a freeze on tuition, mean fewer teachers and the closing of certain programs. Under the Senate budget proposal, Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton stands to lose $47 million, one-third of the financing it receives from the state.

“The passage of the proposed budget cuts to Florida Atlantic University would have a devastating effect on the future of F.A.U.,” said Mary Jane
Saunders, the university’s president. “F.A.U. provides a $4 billion economic impact to its six-county service region, and these cuts would be shattering to all we serve.”

Dr. Padrón, whose college serves some of the state’s poorest students and who says he raises tuition as a last resort, agreed. “If we have budget cuts and we don’t have the opportunity to raise tuition, we are going to be in crisis mode,” he said.

For some universities, the situation is dire. The University of South Florida in Tampa stands to lose a crippling 58 percent of its financing under the Senate bill. It was singled out as the result of a fight with Senator JD Alexander, chairman of the Budget Committee, over the university’s unwillingness to sever its ties with its Lakeland branch.

Mr. Alexander, who is serving out his final year in the Senate because of term limits, has pushed for independence for the Lakeland campus, the University of South Florida Polytechnic, which has 4,400 students. He wants to make it the state’s 12th university, but the University of South Florida opposes the idea.

A flood of e-mails, calls and appearances at the Capitol last week by University of South Florida students and faculty members led to some relief: Senate budget writers freed up $25 million for the university.

Mr. Alexander said the cuts were calculated according to each school’s reserve fund. The University of South Florida said it did not have the most reserve funds, yet it drew the largest cut. The university will also lose out because it must absorb $25 million in costs associated with the effort to close the Lakeland campus.

The budget bill still includes language for turning the Lakeland campus into the state’s 12th university.

“I think for any university to fly in the face of an entire Legislature would be a foolhardy decision,” Mr. Alexander said last week.

Mr. Alexander’s treatment of the university has led to a barrage of criticism in Tampa, and he has been accused of being vengeful.

“The whole notion that we would set up a 12th university when we are cutting the budget for the other 11 is ridiculous,” said Pam Iorio, who served two terms as Tampa’s mayor and left the job last year. “This is just something that he wants. He wants it as a legacy project, to be able to leave office and to say in his hometown that this university was created by him.”