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ECU considers additional campus housing
By Josh Humphries
The Daily Reflector
Wednesday, March 24, 2010
The East Carolina University Board of Trustees is exploring options for new residence halls on campus.
Members of the board’s facilities and resources committee held a special meeting Wednesday to investigate ECU’s bond ratings and debt capacity in an effort to move forward with building plans while the economic environment remains hospitable.
“I think we really need to look at the housing issue,” trustee Mark Tipton said. “I think we need to look at what projects we can move up that would be in line with the master plan to fulfill our mission as an economic engine in eastern North Carolina.”
Kevin Seitz, vice chancellor for finance, said the university is in a good position to obtain loans. The university’s bond ratings recently improved, and the university has available debt capacity of about $100 million.
Officials said they want to be sure that any new project is at least partially self-supporting. Housing is funded at the university level; classroom and office buildings are funded through the N.C. General Assembly.
“We are trying to make projects self-funding,” Seitz said.
Residence halls are funded mainly through fees charged to students who live on campus. Auxiliary services attached to housing also contribute to those funds.
The committee began looking at plans to increase and improve housing options on campus at its last regular board meeting.
As enrollment grows, ECU faces the problem of losing its Carnegie designation as a residential campus. To maintain that designation, at least 25 percent of undergraduate students must live on campus.
Plans are in the early stages but include recommendations to demolish Belk Hall and replace it, convert some dorms from traditional-style rooms to suite-style rooms and to add a residential hall.
The committee also investigated the possibility of housing on the university’s west campus near Pitt County Memorial Hospital but found that there is only demand for about 100 beds, which is not enough to justify a building.
Officials will continue looking at ways to improve its residence halls — market studies indicate students want more living and storage space as well as privacy. To remain competitive, the university will revamp many of its buildings.
ECU officials will begin developing plans and financial options to support new housing with updates from Seitz and the university’s financial advisers.

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Children and parents listen to storytelling at the 2009 Youth Arts Festival. More than 100 artists will demonstrate talents in music, dance, theater and the visual arts at this year’s festival, scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday on ECU’s mall.

Contributed photo

Children work with clay at an exhibit by the ECU Ceramics Guild at the 2009 Youth Arts Festival.

Contributed photo
ECU festival exposes children to arts

By Kristin Day
The Daily Reflector
Wednesday, March 24, 2010

In times of economic hardship, arts programs usually are the first to go from public school curriculums.

“But luckily, we’ve held on to our art programs in North Carolina,” said Dindy Reich, coordinator of the Youth Arts Festival and faculty member at ECU’s School of Art and Design. “Art just impacts every other subject as well. It’s a problem-solving, creative activity that uses your brain to make connections. Those connections may be in math or science or anything else.”

The importance of artistic exposure for kids is a key element celebrated at the Youth Arts Festival, scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday on ECU’s mall in the center of campus in front of Joyner Library. The event is free and open to the public.

Reich said the festival helps kids understand that art isn’t just about painting and drawing — it opens the door to different ways to express oneself.

Now in its sixth year, the celebration coincides with Youth Arts Month, sponsored by the North Carolina Art Education Association. On Saturday, more than 100 artists will demonstrate talents in music, dance, theater and the visual arts.

Children will have the opportunity to visit with artists showcasing activities such as wheel-thrown ceramics, traditional watercolor painting, weaving, felting, paper-making, printmaking, sculpture, metal working, Japanese calligraphy and portraiture.

Some stations will give children a chance to create works of art with the help of ECU art students and professionals.

Amber Josey, a senior at ECU, volunteered for last year’s event and is on the publicity committee and arts organizations committee for this year’s festival.

“The kids were so enthusiastic about learning new art forms (many of which they’ve never seen before) and getting to take those items home with them,” Josey said.

“Parents seemed to be pleased with the amount of activities offered and the fact that the festival is free.”

Featured visual artists will come from throughout North Carolina, surrounding states and the School of Art and Design. Performances include an act from the Greenville Civic Ballet, the Storybook Theater, a Mariachi band from Durham, a steel-drum band called the Pirates of the Pans, and a puppet show from Amy Boyd, a teacher at D.H. Conley High School.

Headlining is the Chuck Davis African American Dance Ensemble, which also performed two years ago.

“They just do such a good job with the children,” Reich said, “because not only do they dance on our stage, but they get the children up there to perform.”
The festival, geared toward children ages 5 to teenagers, began with Richard Tichich, former director of the School of Art and Design, who enlisted Reich’s help. After he left, new director Michael Drought supported the faculty’s desire to continue the festival.
“It’s really our big service project we do for the community,” Reich said. “... They all do this for nothing.”
“They” includes about 20 students in Reich’s Community Arts Management class, including Josey, who are learning as they help plan and raise money for the festival. Student involvement helps make the festival unique, Josey said.
“It’s a way of not only bringing the children together for a day of fun, but bringing the ECU community together,” Josey said.
The ECU College of Fine Arts, under the College of Fine Arts and Communication, coordinates the event with support from Target, Pepsi, the North Carolina Arts Council and the Friends of the School of Art and Design.
Sponsors at ECU include the Visual Arts Committee, the Department of Recreation and Wellness, The College of Fine Arts and Communication, The School of Music, the School of Theater and Dance, the Office of Intercultural Student Affairs, Ledonia Wright Center and the Division of Student Life.

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Health insurance mandate to start at UNCW

By Vicky Eckstrand
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Published: Thursday, March 25, 2010 at 9:06 a.m.

Consider it an early jump into universal health care.

Starting in the fall semester, all University of North Carolina students – including those at UNCW – will be required to have health insurance.

Under requirements approved by the system’s administrators, students at UNC campuses will have to show they have health insurance on their own, through an employer or as dependents on their parents’ plans.

Under the health care bill Congress approved this week, young people will be able to stay on their parents’ health plans up to the age of 26. The insurance mandate for most of the country takes effect in 2014 in the new legislation.

If students do not have coverage through any other plan, they will have to buy insurance provided by the university system at an annual premium of $673.

The school’s plan comes with a deductible of $300 – though there won’t be co-pay or deductible charges when a student goes to their student health center.

Immunizations, wellness services and prescription medicines are covered.

More details about the plan will go online April 1, according to UNCW’s Student Health Services.

That also is when students will be able to enroll in the system’s plan or fill out their waiver information if they already have coverage.

Any student who does not sign up for waiver will automatically be enrolled in the school’s insurance plan and charged the premium.

UNCW as well as East Carolina University had offered student health insurance on a volunteer basis while many of the other campuses already required proof of coverage.

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UNC-CH repair funds lacking

CHAPEL HILL -- A decade ago, UNC-Chapel Hill leaders helped persuade voters to approve a $3.1 billion bond package for higher education construction across North Carolina by pointing to a $500 million backlog in maintenance on their campus.

The funding helped UNC-CH address half its repair backlog, but remaining needs have grown. Now, the university is in a worse jam than before.

According to a report issued Wednesday, the cost of addressing UNC-CH's deferred maintenance needs - those drafty windows, leaky roofs and balky air conditioning systems - is $645 million.

Even as they spent the better part of the last decade cutting ribbons on new buildings, UNC-CH leaders knew there wasn't enough money to maintain the ones they already had.

"There's no real institutional solution to it yet," said Robert Winston, a campus trustee since 2003 and the current board chairman. "It's been a concern of mine for a long time."

Campus officials blame a number of factors for the swollen backlog, including a history of underfunding repair and renovations to state buildings and, more recently, a legislative decision to cut a reserve fund intended to pay for building repairs.

That cut cost UNC-CH $1 million this year. If it isn't restored, UNC-CH would lose $5.6 million more in the 2010-11 academic year.

Where the money went

Universities have struggled for decades to keep on top of their repairs.

In tight budget times, legislators have been quick to cut renovation funding, and campuses struggle to raise private money for the needs because donors don't get excited about paying for steam pipes and roofing.

The university's Carolina First capital campaign, which ended at the end of 2007, raised $185 million for facilities, most of it new construction.

At UNC-CH, officials put the last touches on the 49th and final project funded by the 2000 higher education bond just last month, ending a $515 million construction program. And already, campus leaders are talking about going back to the 17-campus UNC system - and the legislature - for another bond issue to raise money for repairs.

Across the state, deferred maintenance costs at public universities approach $3 billion, according to a 2-year-old UNC system report.

"I don't see how there's another solution aside from the bond issue," trustee John Ellison said. "It's going
to be billions and billions of dollars, which may make it unrealistic."

Will taxpayers buy it?

Bond issue can be a good way to raise revenue, but the state's debt situation would have to be taken into consideration first, said Hannah Gage, chairwoman of the UNC system's Board of Governors. And voters would have to be convinced of the plan's merits, she said.

"I don't know what the appetite is right now with the public," she said. "They're still looking at their own finances and job situation and health care."

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Dining for success

Verily I say unto you, my favorite Bible verse, from the Gospel of Mark, "What does it profiteth a man to gain the world but lose his soul?"

My second favorite verse comes from the Gospel of Seymour, and asks "What does it profiteth a person to gain a job interview if she loses her meatball while dining with a prospective employer?"

OK, it doesn't actually say that, but you get the point. More important, Kaia Clarke gets the point and wants to make sure the students at N.C. Central University get it, too. That's why she is hosting a dinner tonight to teach some female students, who are learning how to handle themselves in corporate boardrooms, how to handle themselves in the dining room, as well.

CNNMoney.com reported that college grads in 2009 had 40 percent fewer job prospects than in the previous year and that 2010 would be only slightly better. With jobs so scarce, knowing how to negotiate a knife and fork at dinner may be as important as knowing how to negotiate a business deal.

Confession: I once squirited lemon into an interviewer's eye while aiming for my iced tea.

Clarke, 29, a grad student in NCCU's School of Public Administration, is Women's Leadership Coordinator for NCCU's women's center. "Etiquette in the 21st century," she said, "entails all of that - proper utensil use, where your fork should be placed. ... But it includes more. A big thing is cell phone use: Is it proper to text or talk at the table?"

She was asking rhetorically, but I wanted to say, sure, it's OK - if, that is, you want to ensure that the only job you get is being a rodeo clown or wearing a paper hat and going "Y'all want fries with that?"

"This is a new world," Clarke said, "and you have to deal with things like what to do with your cell phone" at the table.

I suggested where people at tables could put their cell phones, but Clarke didn't think her students would be receptive. Of course, reception on the phones there wouldn't be too great, either.

Clarke, a 2002 graduate of NCCU with a degree in biology, said, "I was spending all my time analyzing chromosomes. I realized I couldn't use my natural abilities in a lab, so I changed careers." Her natural abilities - organizing and developing programs to help students, she said - led her to restructure the leadership program, of which the etiquette class is a component.

Teaching the women how to comport themselves is cool, but what about the dudes? I asked. Don't they need to know how to pass "the punchbowl test" at business-related social events?

Jason Dorsette, coordinator of the school's Centennial Scholars Program, said 28 of his first-year male students will join Clarke's eight female upperclassmen tonight.

Combining the two groups, Clarke said, will help the women learn "how to gracefully communicate at a
table when a man is dominating the conversation."

What? Twenty-eight male freshmen dominating a conversation with eight female upperclassmen?

Hmmph. Those fellows don't stand a chance.

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Cornell Adds Fences to Bridges to Deter Suicides by Students

By LISA W. FODERARO

Cornell University this week erected temporary fencing along three university-owned bridges that cross the deep gorges on its campus, where three students have jumped to their deaths in recent weeks.

University officials are also in talks with the City of Ithaca to get permission to put up similar fencing along three other, city-owned, bridges on campus, said Simeon F. Moss, a Cornell spokesman.

The installation of the eight-foot chain-link fencing, which started on Monday with most students away for spring break, came after the university consulted with “many experts both local and national” on suicide prevention and bridge barriers, Mr. Moss said.

“It’s fair to say that there has been reaction, both positive and negative, from students, from residents of Ithaca, from parents and staff and faculty on campus,” Mr. Moss said. “But recent research has shown that fencing can be an effective impediment to suicide, so we feel it’s necessary to take that into account.”

The recent suicides, which began in mid-February, came after three other student suicides last semester, but none of the earlier suicides involved the gorges. It is believed that the three suicides this semester — two on consecutive days in March — were all committed from bridges that span Fall Creek, whose raging waters cut through a narrow gorge. The body of one student is still missing.

Mr. Moss said Cornell was exploring permanent barriers.

“The idea is that any longer-term solution would involve architectural elements that would fit in with the bridges,” he said. “So they certainly wouldn’t be chain-link fences.”
Permanent barriers along the bridges would require city approval, he said, and would take time to design and construct.

Since the most recent suicide, on March 12, Cornell has stationed security guards on all the bridges crossing the gorges. They are expected to remain in place at least through the end of next week, Mr. Moss said.
March 24, 2010

**College Breaks a Tradition of Silence Before Games**

By SUSAN SAULNY

GOSHEN, Ind. — At the small liberal arts college here known for its pacifist Mennonite
traditions, sporting events have never begun with the same pregame routine as almost
everywhere else — cheering hoopla for the home team, complete with a ritual salute to the flag
and the playing of the national anthem. Usually, the Goshen College Maple Leafs just huddle
and head out to play.

But a baseball double-header on Tuesday broke with generations of tradition as the school
made peace with “The Star-Spangled Banner,” playing it over the public-address system.

The players, standing alertly, turned their eyes to the flag, and most of the spectators cheered
in the bleachers. Then, in another twist, the announcer said, “Let us pray.” Almost everyone
joined in and recited the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, beginning with the words, “Lord, make
me an instrument of your peace.”

Then they played ball.

The new pregame program is an effort to come to terms with reality: almost half the student
population is non-Mennonite, and patriotic fervor is running high here in northern Indiana
and across the country.

But for many Mennonite students and other pacifists on campus, the change is a heart-
wrenching disappointment, as they hold to the church’s traditional belief that the words to the
anthem — Francis Scott Key’s paean to the Battle of Baltimore in the War of 1812 — glorify war
and exalt a kind of nationalism that they say has been so problematic throughout the world’s
violent history. They say they want their only allegiance to be to God, not a flag.

As a compromise, the college administration chose an instrumental version of the anthem,
thus omitting all mention of rockets and bombs bursting in air — though people may sing if they want.

Even that was too much, some students said. About a dozen protesters among the 100 or so spectators remained seated in the bleachers during the anthem. In keeping with pacifist habits, they did not yell or carry signs.

“We want our silence to be the power,” said Josh Miller, 22, a junior from Harrisonburg, Va., who is Mennonite. “It’s a challenging time to try to live Christ’s peace.”

In contrast, Taylor TenHarmsel, 20, and Sean Doering, 21, — who are Christian, but not Mennonite — painted “U.S.A.” in red, white and blue across their bare chests along with stripes and whooped it up at the end of the song. They said they were relieved to be able to show their spirit. “I respect some of the beliefs people have here, but I think the freedom of the flag is what allows us to be here,” Mr. TenHarmsel said. “People fought to give us the freedoms we have, and that should be respected.”

The plain-living Mennonites are Christians who descended from the same 16th-century Anabaptist group as the Amish, although they are typically more worldly, having evolved over the centuries into conservative and more progressive communities.

Goshen College, with about 1,000 students, would fall into the increasingly liberal category, much to the chagrin of students like Mr. Miller. “What does it mean to be Mennonite in 21st-century America?” he said. “It’s about integrating and not recognizing the value of being a separate and unique church.”

But James E. Brenneman, the college president, said he could not disagree more, calling the decision “a whole new kind of peace movement.”

“I am committed to retaining the best of what it means to be a Mennonite college, while opening the doors wider to all who share our core values,” he said.

Goshen’s board of directors and college administrators had debated the merits of this change in policy for years. There was precedent: Mennonite colleges in Kansas, Ohio and other states played an instrumental version of the anthem. The Goshen News called the decision “a gesture worth embracing.”

Still, some wondered if the move, to be reviewed in a year, was not prompted more by pressure from outside groups and critics, particularly a conservative talk-radio host who singled Goshen out for ridicule three years ago, prompting a flurry of angry calls and e-mail messages to the college. There was also the issue of a declining Mennonite student population
and the need to recruit beyond members of the peace church.

Paul Hershberger, class of 1958, said he remembered a student body that was nearly homogeneous in religion makeup. He stood for the anthem on Tuesday, with his friend Stan King, class of 1961.

"I feel O.K. about it," Mr. King said. "At first I didn't particularly like it, but then I listened to the other side. I feel there was not much lost."

As for the Maple Leafs on the field, they lost their first game to the Sierra Heights Saints, but rebounded to win the second game. Joel King, a player, said, "We seemed a little nervous in the first two innings with the added distraction."
Before They Were Titans, Moguls and Newsmakers, These People Were...Rejected

At College Admission Time, Lessons in Thin Envelopes

By SUE SHELLBARGER

Few events arouse more teenage angst than the springtime arrival of college rejection letters. With next fall’s college freshman class expected to approach a record 2.9 million students, hundreds of thousands of applicants will soon be receiving the dreaded letters.

Teenagers who face rejection will be joining good company, including Nobel laureates, billionaire philanthropists, university presidents, constitutional scholars, best-selling authors and other leaders of business, media and the arts who once received college or graduate-school rejection letters of their own.

Both Warren Buffett and "Today" show host Meredith Vieira say that while being rejected by the school of their dreams was devastating, it launched them on a path to meeting life-changing mentors. Harold Varmus, winner of the Nobel Prize in medicine, says getting rejected twice by Harvard Medical School, where a dean advised him to enlist in the military, was soon forgotten as he plunged into his studies at Columbia University’s med school. For other college rejects, from Sun Microsystems co-founder Scott McNealy and entrepreneur Ted Turner to broadcast journalist Tom Brokaw, the turndowns were minor footnotes, just ones they still remember and will talk about.

Rejections aren’t uncommon. Harvard accepts only a little more than 7% of the 29,000 undergraduate applications it receives each year, and Stanford’s acceptance rate is about the same.

"The truth is, everything that has happened in my life...that I thought was a crushing event at the time, has turned out for the better," Mr. Buffett says. With the exception of health problems, he says, setbacks teach "lessons that carry you along. You learn that a temporary defeat is not a permanent one. In the end, it can be an opportunity."

Mr. Buffett regards his rejection at age 19 by Harvard Business School as a pivotal episode in his life. Looking back, he says Harvard wouldn’t have been a good fit. But at the time, he "had this feeling of dread" after being rejected in an admissions interview in Chicago, and a fear of disappointing his father.

As it turned out, his father responded with "only this unconditional love...an unconditional belief in me," Mr. Buffett says. Exploring other options, he realized that two investing experts he admired, Benjamin Graham and David Dodd, were teaching at Columbia’s graduate business school. He dashed off a late application, where by a stroke of luck it was fielded and accepted by Mr. Dodd. From these mentors, Mr. Buffett says he learned core principles that guided his investing. The Harvard rejection also benefited his alma mater; the family gave more than $12 million to Columbia in 2008 through the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation, based on tax filings.
The lesson of negatives becoming positives has proved true repeatedly, Mr. Buffett says. He was terrified of public speaking—so much so that when he was young he sometimes threw up before giving an address. So he enrolled in a Dale Carnegie public speaking course and says the skills he learned there enabled him to woo his future wife, Susan Thompson, a "champion debater," he says. "I even proposed to my wife during the course," he says. "If I had been only a mediocre speaker I might not have taken it."

Columbia University President Lee Bollinger was rejected as a teenager when he applied to Harvard. He says the experience cemented his belief that it was up to him alone to define his talents and potential. His family had moved to a small, isolated town in rural Oregon, where educational opportunities were sparse. As a kid, he did menial jobs around the newspaper office, like sweeping the floor.

Mr. Bollinger recalls thinking at the time, "I need to work extra hard and teach myself a lot of things that I need to know," to measure up to other students who were "going to prep schools, and having assignments that I'm not." When the rejection letter arrived, he accepted a scholarship to University of Oregon and later graduated from Columbia Law School. His advice: Don't let rejections control your life. To "allow other people's assessment of you to determine your own self-assessment is a very big mistake," says Mr. Bollinger, a First Amendment author and scholar. "The question really is, who at the end of the day is going to make the determination about what your talents are, and what your interests are? That has to be you."

Others who received Harvard rejections include "Today" show host Meredith Vieira, who was turned down in 1971 as a high-school senior. At the time, she was crushed. "In fact, I was so devastated that when I went to Tufts [University] my freshman year, every Saturday I'd hitchhike to Harvard," she says in an email. But Ms. Vieira went on to meet a mentor at Tufts who sparked her interest in journalism by offering her an internship. Had she not been rejected, she doubts that she would have entered the field, she says.

And broadcast journalist Tom Brokaw, also rejected as a teenager by Harvard, says it was one of a series of setbacks that eventually led him to settle down, stop partying and commit to finishing college and working in broadcast journalism. "The initial stumble was critical in getting me launched," he says.

Dr. Varmus, the Nobel laureate and president of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York, was daunted by the first of his two turndowns by Harvard's med school. He enrolled instead in grad studies in literature at Harvard, but was uninspired by thoughts of a career in that field.

After a year, he applied again to Harvard's med school and was rejected, by a dean who chastised him in an interview for being "inconstant and immature" and advised him to enlist in the military. Officials at Columbia's medical school, however, seemed to value his "competence in two cultures," science and literature, he says.

If rejected by the school you love, Dr. Varmus advises in an email, immerse yourself in life at a college that welcomes you. "The differences between colleges that seem so important before you get there will seem a lot less important once you arrive at one that offered you a place."

Similarly, John Schlifske, president of insurance company Northwestern Mutual, was discouraged as a teenager when he received a rejection letter from Yale University. An aspiring college football player, "I wanted to go to Yale so badly," he says. He recalls coming home from school the day the letter arrived. "Mom was all excited and gave it to me," he says. His heart fell when he saw "the classic thin envelope," he says. "It was crushing."

Yet he believes he had a deeper, richer experience at Carleton College in Minnesota. He says he received a "phenomenal" education and became a starter on the football team rather than a bench-warmer as he might have been at Yale. "Being wanted is a good thing," he says.

He had a chance to pass on that wisdom to his son Dan, who was rejected in 2006 by one of his top choices, Duke University. Drawing on his own experience, the elder Mr. Schlifske told his son, "Just because somebody says no, doesn't mean there's not another school out there you're going to enjoy, and where you are going to get a good education." Dan ended up at his other top choice, Washington University in St. Louis, where he is currently
a senior. Mr. Schlifske says, "he loves it."

Rejected once, and then again, by business schools at Stanford and Harvard, Scott McNealy practiced the perseverance that would characterize his career. A brash economics graduate of Harvard, he was annoyed that "they wouldn't take a chance on me right out of college," he says. He kept trying, taking a job as a plant foreman for a manufacturer and working his way up in sales. "By my third year out of school, it was clear I was going to be a successful executive. I blew the doors off my numbers," he says. Granted admission to Stanford's business school, he met Sun Microsystems co-founder Vinod Khosla and went on to head Sun for 22 years.

Paul Purcell, who heads one of the few investment-advisory companies to emerge unscathed from the recession, Robert W. Baird & Co., says he interpreted his rejection years ago by Stanford University as evidence that he had to work harder. "I took it as a signal that, 'Look, the world is really competitive, and I'll just try harder next time,'" he says. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame and got an MBA from the University of Chicago, and in 2009, as chairman, president and chief executive of Baird, won the University of Chicago Booth School of Business distinguished corporate alumnus award. Baird has remained profitable through the recession and expanded client assets to $75 billion.

Time puts rejection letters in perspective, says Ted Turner. He received dual rejections as a teenager, by Princeton and Harvard, he says in an interview. The future America's Cup winner attended Brown University, where he became captain of the sailing team. He left college after his father cut off financial support, and joined his father's billboard company, which he built into the media empire that spawned CNN. Brown has since awarded him a bachelor's degree.

Tragedies later had a greater impact on his life, he says, including the loss of his father to suicide and his teenage sister to illness. "A rejection letter doesn't even come close to losing loved ones in your family. That is the hard stuff to survive," Mr. Turner says. "I want to be sure to make this point: I did everything I did without a college degree," he says. While it is better to have one, "you can be successful without it."

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Davis: ‘One-and-done’ rule about to hit colleges hard

While NBA reaps benefits, many find fault in rule’s effect on NCAAs

By Ken Davis
updated 9:56 p.m. ET March 23, 2010

The Kentucky Wildcats are just four victories from celebrating another NCAA basketball championship. With all due respect to the rest of the field, the odds are favorable that coach John Calipari and his talented flock of freshmen will be trimming the nets, hugging and dancing as the confetti falls April 5 in Indianapolis.

But when the party is over, it’s also easy to imagine college basketball suffering through an unusually long hangover period — because the news that follows in the hours, days and weeks after the championship game figures to be unprecedented.

We’ve seen freshmen pack their bags and head for the NBA after one season. We’ve said quick goodbyes to stars we hardly knew, including Kevin Durant at Texas and Michael Beasley at Kansas State. But if John Wall, DeMarcus Cousins and Eric Bledsoe all leave Kentucky before their championship rings can be ordered, college basketball symbolically will feel the full impact of the so-called “one-and-done” era.

That isn’t the message college basketball wants to send.

“ I don’t think it’s the best way to go about things right now, to force kids who have no interest in being in college, to come to college for a year,” Georgetown coach John Thompson III said. “You’re seeing the consequences of that right now, in many ways. “

The Kentucky trio won’t be alone. Xavier Henry of Kansas, Derrick Favors of Georgia Tech and Avery Bradley of Texas are among other freshmen expected to leave school for the pros. College basketball, regardless of its new champion, is about to take a major hit. And with the NBA’s current collective bargaining agreement set to expire in 2011, it seems certain a heated debate is about to begin.

The NBA players’ union accepted the minimum-age rule in 2005, during the last collective bargaining negotiations. The rule, which went into effect in 2006, requires a non-international player to be at least 19 years old and one year out of high school before entering the draft.

The controversial change has worked to the advantage of the NBA, in terms of marketing players and scouting them. It has become a source of great disdain for college coaches.

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski has been a leader in opposition to the rule, saying any player who is good enough should be allowed to turn pro directly out of high school. But if a player comes to college, Krzyzewski says, he should stay long enough to take the core courses that lead to a degree. The Blue Devils coach has historically resisted signing one-and-done players.

“It’s a bad rule. I think it’s a really bad rule,” Oklahoma coach Jeff Capel said. “In my opinion, it makes a mockery of education in college and also I think it’s condescending on the NBA’s part. To be honest with you, I’m not sure how much the NBA cares about college basketball. They’re in the business of making the NBA the best product they can make it. I think the NBA is happy with the way their rule is. They get to market these kids for a year (before they turn pro).”

Many coaches, including Connecticut’s Jim Calhoun and Kansas’ Bill Self, would like to see the NBA allow players to be drafted out of high school, then force those who go to college to stay three years. That model mirrors the entry rules for Major League Baseball’s amateur draft and has been endorsed by the National
Association of Basketball Coaches.

For every player who is a success like Durant, the No. 2 overall pick, there's Javarris Crittenton of Georgia Tech, who was picked No. 19 by the Lakers in 2007 and has bounced around to various teams.

Calipari, who recruited Tyreke Evans and Derrick Rose at Memphis, has been labeled a renegade for his open pursuit of one-and-done players.

"What I do is recruit the best players I can and if they're prepared after a year to go, I influence them to go," Calipari told the St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times. "Then you just keep reloading."

Not every team is able to reload, however. Georgia Tech had two star freshmen in Crittenton and Thaddeus Young in 2007, but they lost in the first round of the NCAA tournament and the Yellow Jackets did not return to the NCAA tourney this season, losing in the second round to Ohio State.

But based on the comments of several Southeastern Conference coaches, who have to compete with that approach with Calipari at Kentucky, he might not be alone any more. LSU coach Trent Johnson said it's all about winning.

"Those guys that are one and done usually help you win a lot of games," Johnson said at the SEC tournament. "My wife likes to shop a lot, and she likes the payroll."

South Carolina coach Darrin Horn says if the players produce the way the Kentucky players have, "then absolutely you take those guys." The negative, Horn says, is replacing them after they are gone.

"I think that Ohio State would look back at the time that Greg Oden and Michael Conley were there and say they made a pretty good run at the Final Four," Tennessee coach Bruce Pearl said. "If you had a chance to do it again, would you do it again? You bet you would."

There are hidden consequences. Oden, Conley and Daequan Cook were freshmen when they helped Ohio State reach the 2007 title game and then became first-round draft picks. All were in good academic standing, but Oden failed to complete the third-quarter term. Kosta Koufos did the same thing at Ohio State last year. As a result the Buckeyes saw the team's Academic Progress Rate (APR) slip, and the NCAA took away two scholarships.

Kentucky could be facing monumental APR consequences if Daniel Orton joins his fellow freshmen in the NBA draft.

Johnson says if you take the risk "the other guys in your program need to be good students and need to be program guys, so to speak." But that goes back to Capel's comment on the educational impact — and it's a well-known fact that the majority of players turning pro early do not attend classes after the NCAA tournament.

"Unless your university or athletic department has some sort of attendance policy, if you have a kid who knows he's going to be in school one year, all he has to do is sign up for classes in the second semester," Capel said. "He never has to go, unless there is some punishment if he does miss. To me, those kids are just using college for the wrong reasons."

Capel thinks any revised rule should require players to stay in school a minimum of two years. NBA commissioner David Stern has indicated he wants to raise the minimum age to 20. But Stern became defensive in February during an appearance on the ESPN radio show hosted by Mike Greenberg and Mike Golic. On that show, Dick Vitale called on Stern to sit down with the NCAA and find a logical solution to the rule, which Vitale called an "absolute joke and fraud to the term 'student-athlete.'"

"First of all, the joke that exists is an NCAA joke," Stern said. "The idea that the NBA gets blamed for a school and a coach having a player who doesn't go to classes in the second semester, is not the NBA's fault. Someone better step up and take responsibility for that."
Stern said he knows plenty of coaches who enforce attendance rules and the players are better off for it.

Asked about the criticism that the great college players stay only one year, Stern said, “Well, that’s OK with us. It’s better than coming right out (of high school) because we get a chance to see them either in the (developmental) league, in college, or in Europe playing against more elite competition. Would we like it to be two years (in school)? Sure, but what would you give to get that?

“It’s strictly a matter of collective bargaining with the players’ association. Our rule is about our business, and we can’t change it unless we negotiate with the players’ association.”

This is one rule that can’t be changed through NCAA legislation.

“And if the NBA is not on board,” Self said, “nothing is going to happen.”

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