THE DAILY CLIPS

April 19, 2012

News, commentary, and opinion
compiled by East Carolina University News Services:

The Greenville Daily Reflector
The Raleigh News & Observer
The New York Times
The Wall Street Journal
USA Today
The Charlotte Observer
The Fayetteville Observer
The Greensboro News & Record
Newsweek
U.S. News & World Report
Business Week
Time

East Carolina University News Services
Web site at http://www.ecu.edu/news
252-328-6481
The new Children’s Emergency Department at Vidant Medical Center is expected to begin accepting patients on April 30.

The opening will shift patients 18 and younger away from the main emergency department unless trauma care is needed.

The move also means that younger patients will be treated in a more soothing environment geared toward distracting them from their ailments and injuries, a hospital official said Tuesday at the board of trustees meeting for the center.

Construction of the pediatric department started in July. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held in early June when the exterior work is completed at the department, which is at the rear of the hospital and not adjacent to Vidant Children’s Hospital.

Only 5 percent of the 126 hospitals in North Carolina have dedicated pediatric emergency departments, so the facility will expand the hospital’s reach.

“Children aren’t just little adults; they are unique patients with unique needs” that the facility will meet, said Dr. Van Smith, vice president of cardiovascular and emergency services and executive director of East Carolina Heart Institute at Vidant Medical Center.

He said projections show the department will treat about 18,000 patients annually.

“And I think we’re positioned well to handle that degree of volume,” he said.

The department will house 14 exam rooms, 16 treatment areas around a central nursing station, and two resuscitation rooms adjacent to the ambulance entrance.

Inside, the décor is similar to the aquatic theme and colors used at the children’s hospital, with some added touches.
There are touch-screen stations in the lobby to keep patients occupied. A digital interactive “fish pond” can be tapped, producing an effect similar to stepping into a puddle, Smith said.

Patient rooms have variable lighting that can be dimmed and colors that can be changed. There also is an option of having lights that appear as stars.

“They kind of twinkle in the ceiling,” Smith said. “We’re trying to create an environment that reduces anxiety for our children” and their caregivers.

Other state-of-the-art features include flooring that contains a system of interactional lighting to help guide people to their destination.

Inside each room are computers that tie into the electronic medical records system.

In other matters, the board heard a report on efforts to reduce the number of pressure ulcers, commonly called bed sores, that patients acquire during hospital stays.

It’s not just regular “turning” of patients, it’s also ensuring that they have a “moisture maintenance” diet, Brian Floyd, the hospital’s executive vice president, said.

“We’ve learned that beds weren’t always functional,” he said. A process was instituted to ensure that beds were repaired as needed and that any orders for beds to protect a patient’s skin were delivered promptly.

“We want to reduce pressure ulcers by 50 percent,” Floyd said.

He also said that the hospital has fewer nursing vacancies than last year. To help lower turnover, nursing contracts now expire mid-year, not at the start of summer.

On the financial side, the hospital’s income from operations for March was $6.9 million, a $4.6 million increase from February. This increase was attributed to higher patient payments, according to a letter to the board from Dave McRae, chief executive officer of Vidant Health, the system that includes Vidant Medical Center.

Contact K.J. Williams at kwilliams@reflector.com or 252-329-9588.
UNCC international students reassigned from Center City
Until building is certified by federal program, international students can use building, but can’t take classes there.

By David Perlmutt
dperlmutt@charlotteobserver.com
Posted: Thursday, Apr. 19, 2012

After taking classes for most of the spring semester in UNC Charlotte’s Center City Building uptown, as many as 100 international students have been told they won’t be able to finish the classes in the building.

University officials discovered in November that because the building is considered a separate campus, they are required to get the building accredited “as an instructional site” by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, UNCC spokesman John Bland said Wednesday.

And because the international students – most of them graduate students enrolled in UNCC’s MBA program – take classes there, the building also must be certified by the Student and Exchange Visitor Program. The federal program manages students who are in the United States to study.

Yet the building, which opened in uptown’s First Ward at the beginning of the fall semester, can’t be certified until it is accredited, Bland said.

In November, the university requested an exemption of the rule from the international student program. It was denied last week, and students were told Tuesday that faculty would be contacting them by Friday with information on where their classes will be held until the semester ends May 12.

The students can still use the building – meet friends or study groups there, or use its bookstore and bagel and coffee bar – but they can’t take classes there.

“They are not banned from the building,” Bland said. “These students … are essential, welcome and valued as part of the fabric of the UNC Charlotte community.”

The temporary reassignment only affects F-1 students, the most common visa status for international students.
“The faculty is working diligently to make accommodations to ensure these students are going to complete their courses and minimize any further disruptions,” Bland said. “It’s a shame that this unfortunate administrative incident is disrupting these students as they try to wrap up their semester. But it’s a government policy and regulation, and we’re committed to complying with it.”

Bland stressed that all the academic programs “are fully accredited” and that the reassignment won’t have any impact on credit for the courses the students have taken in the building.

Perlmutt: 704-358-5061

Read more here:
http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2012/04/19/3183066/uncc-international-students-reassigned.html#storylink=cpy
Wake Tech to add campus police force
By Kyle Jahner
Published Tue. April 17, 2012

RALEIGH -- Wake Technical Community College, which has witnessed a pair of gun scares during the past academic year, announced Tuesday it will establish a campus police department in July.

While the issue has had the school’s attention since the 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, Wake Tech president Stephen Scott said they began during this academic year seriously considering the use of sworn officers. He also said the two recent lockdowns “heightened our awareness” and played a role in the new force’s approval by the Board of Trustees on Tuesday.

“We reached a tipping point and feel the timing is right,” Scott said. “We want to take prudent measures to protect our faculty and our staff.”

Plans call for a chief to be hired, leading to a gradual expansion to 14 sworn officers. The department would aim to prevent crime, serve as a deterrent, and allow for rapid response to campus emergencies, Scott said.

In establishing a sworn police force, Wake Tech joins all universities and 14 other community colleges in the UNC System, as well as most private universities located in Wake County except William Peace University.

Wake Tech – a five-campus, 64,000-student institution – has twice locked down a campus in the past six months. In January, the main campus was locked down for 90 minutes by Wake County Sheriff deputies when a domestic threat against a student lead authorities to believe a man with a gun could be on the campus. No gun was found, but the man was later arrested for the threat.

Another lockdown shut down the North Raleigh campus – along with two nearby elementary schools – when a man wearing camouflage and holding a rifle was seen in the vicinity. The location was not far from legal hunting grounds, though, and the situation was later determined not to be a threat.

Scott said the timing was also right from a business sense since the contract with their security company, Wake Tech Security, was due to expire at the end of the year. He expects to retain elements of the company’s services where a sworn officer would not be necessary, but said the firm’s role would be reduced.
Officers at Wake Tech won’t be new for two of the campuses, which last fall each added a school resource officer employed by local law enforcement. The main campus had a Wake County Sheriff’s deputy and the North Raleigh campus had a Raleigh police officer.

Jahner: 919-829-4822

Read more here: http://www.newsobserver.com/2012/04/17/2007022/wake-tech-to-add-campus-police.html#storylink=cpy
NCSU to alter enrollment model due to budget cuts
Published April 18, 2012
By Claire Williams | The Daily Tar Heel

As UNC-system administrators discuss new enrollment funding models, schools throughout the system are already planning changes.

Following years of extensive budget cuts, N.C. State University is slowing its freshmen enrollment growth to fit available resources and maintain academic quality.

The university’s new long-term enrollment plan includes increasing graduate and transfer student enrollment.

To implement the enrollment plan, NCSU administrators will hire more tenured and tenure-track faculty to expand the school’s research capacities and advise graduate students.

Tina Valdecanas, chief strategy and branding officer at the Research Triangle Park, said an increased focus on research at NCSU will bring more research dollars to the area.

In a NCSU report about the enrollment plan, the university said it expects a 38 percent increase in incoming transfer students, and a 22 percent increase in incoming master’s students by 2020. This year, 1,027 transfer students entered the university, along with about 2,000 master’s students.

Admitted freshmen are projected to increase by only 1 percent in 2020. This year’s freshman class totaled 4,564 students.

The UNC system has requested $29 million in enrollment funding from the state legislature for the 2012-13 academic year, including $11.5 million for a new performance-based funding model that was discussed by members of the UNC-system Board of Governors at its meeting last week.

The new model is designed to reward campuses for graduating more students and operating more efficiently.

Cathy Barlow, provost at UNC-Wilmington, said the university is also taking steps to operate more efficiently by bolstering its graduate program. UNC-W’s enrollment model allows for controlled growth of both transfer and freshmen student populations, she said.
“We are currently assessing our enrollment model and exploring a number of options to develop a new model in response to decreased university resources and the current economic environment,” she said.

NCSU’s smaller increase in admitted freshmen students will boost the selectivity of the university’s admissions, according to the report. It will also decrease introduction-level class sizes and increase resources available for scholarships and need-based financial aid.

UNC-CH does not plan to follow NCSU’s enrollment plan, but will grow slowly and selectively, said Bruce Carney, UNC-CH executive vice chancellor and provost.

“Their enrollment plan makes considerable sense for them, within the funding formula currently in use,” he said. “It is not our road map, however.”

And at East Carolina University, Provost Marilyn Sheerer said they are encouraging transfer students while cutting back on freshmen enrollment increases.

“Our facilities cannot handle a larger freshman class, and our faculty is at capacity in terms of serving that population.”

Contact the State & National Editor at state@dailytarheel.com
East Carolina University Continues 20-Year Partnership With Paciolan

Published April 18, 2012, 4:20 p.m. EDT

IRVINE, CA and GREENVILLE, NC, Apr 18, 2012 (MARKETWIRE via COMTEX) -- Paciolan, the leading provider of ticketing, marketing, and fundraising solutions in college athletics, today announced that East Carolina University (ECU) will be continuing its 20-year partnership with the company. During this time, ECU Athletics, ECU Performing Arts, and Student Life events will continue to leverage the integrated box office and online ticketing, Fundraiser's Advantage and email marketing solutions to serve its fans and customers through a single, on-campus system.

"It's been great working with Paciolan for the past 20 years," said Terry Holland, athletic director for East Carolina University. "Our partnership with Paciolan helps us to reach our goal of offering Pirate fans, students and donors the best services and technology available in college athletics."

For the 2012 season ticket renewal process for football and basketball, ECU is leveraging the 3D stadium and arena venue visualization system through Paciolan's partner, Ballena Technologies. Through a rich, interactive, digital venue, fans can preview, select, and purchase their season tickets, as well as view parking options available at each of the venues. ECU plans to add the integrated Ballena technology to soccer, baseball and softball this summer using a universal map that will feature drop down maps, directions and parking for each sport.

"We're extremely proud to be able to offer our fans these additional seating and parking services through Paciolan's partnership with Ballena," said Scott Wetherbee, assistant athletic director, marketing and ticket operations, at East Carolina University. "Paciolan continues to help us achieve our goals on so many fronts as we continue to elevate the services we offer our fans."

Leveraging Paciolan's Access Management scanning system, which provides detailed data on game-day attendance, ECU has achieved 50 percent print-at-home delivery for all single tickets, which helps the university save mail
costs and decreases will call lines. ECU has also leveraged their digital ticketing system to serve its 9,700 member "Student Pirate Club." As a member, students are provided a bar-coded membership card that gives them access to every football game. This summer, ECU plans to move 100 percent of all student ticket sales online, making this process fully digital from end to end.

To complement its digital ticketing strategy, ECU recently developed a season ticket booklet, which included bar-coded season tickets, parking passes and Pirate Club membership cards -- all included in one, comprehensive booklet.

Using Paciolan's Fundraiser's Advantage solution, ECU is able to maximize its donor communications to increase contributions. Integrated with the ticketing system, ECU is able to offer enhanced customer services to its season ticket holders and donors. For example, using a point system, ECU rewards priority points to donors and season ticket holders who attend events.

"We've been very pleased with the many benefits of Paciolan's fundraising solution, especially the transparency of the point system," added Wetherbee. "We're able to track these points, as well as all donations and past history, and easily display the information to our donors when they log into their accounts. There's so much we'll be able to accomplish as we continue to evolve and grow our fundraising efforts, which is very exciting to us!"

"We're proud to be working with East Carolina University as they continue leveraging our proven technology solutions to consistently achieve success with their athletics initiatives," said Dave Butler, chief executive officer of Paciolan. "It's been a wonderful 20-year partnership filled with many exciting accomplishments, and we look forward to continuing this trend for many years to come."

About Paciolan Founded in 1980, Paciolan is the leader in venue enablement, powering ticketing, fundraising and marketing technology solutions for leading organizations across North America. Collectively, Paciolan powers over 500 live entertainment organizations that sell over 100 million tickets annually. Primary markets include college athletics, professional sports, performing arts, arenas and museums. Paciolan is a wholly owned subsidiary of Comcast-Spectacor.

Visit www.paciolan.com for additional company information.

About Comcast-Spectacor Comcast-Spectacor (comcast-spectacor.com) is the Philadelphia-based sports and entertainment company which owns the
Philadelphia Flyers (NHL), the home arena for both the Flyers and the NBA's Philadelphia 76ers, the Wells Fargo Center, and four Flyers Skate Zone community ice skating and hockey rinks. In addition, Comcast-Spectacor is also the principal owner of Global Spectrum, the fastest growing firm in the public assembly management field with more than 100 facilities throughout the United States and Canada; Ovations Food Services, a food and beverage service provider; New Era Tickets, a ticketing and marketing company for public assembly facilities; Front Row Marketing Services, a commercial rights sales company; FanOne, a digital fan marketing company; and Paciolan, the leading provider of venue enablement, ticketing, fundraising and marketing technology solutions.

Copyright 2012 Marketwire, Inc., All rights reserved.
UMBC’s Hrabowski named to Time ‘influential’ list

By Daniel de Vise

Freeman Hrabowski, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, appears to be the only college president named to the Time magazine’s latest list of the world’s 100 most influential people.

UMBC president Freeman Hrabowski (Mark Gail/The Washington Post) Hrabowski unquestionably ranks among the five or 10 most important college presidents in the nation. In a two-decade tenure, he has elevated UMBC from commuter school to top-flight research university.

He has also pretty much cornered the market on African American scholarship in science, technology, engineering and math.

There are other heroic university presidents and other up-and-coming schools. But Hrabowski’s UMBC has taught the likes of Harvard and Hopkins how to teach science, with its groundbreaking course redesigns in biology and chemistry that stress teamwork and interaction over the passive lecture.

“When you think of the top science universities in the U.S., schools like MIT and Caltech may jump to mind,” writes Andrew Rotherham in his Time essay on Hrabowski. “But perhaps the most envied science program in the country is at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.”

The rest of the list seems to alternate between gravitas and whimsy. It includes education innovator Salman Khan, Newark schools Superintendent Cami Anderson, roboticist Henrik Scharfe, MIT engineer Donald Sadoway, Swedish statistician Hans Rosling and Indiana economist Elinor Ostrom, MIT economist Andrew Lo and virologist Ron Fouchier, along with Supreme Court swing vote Anthony Kennedy, comedian Louis CK and talk-show host Chelsea Handler.

By Daniel de Vise | 11:10 AM ET, 04/18/2012
Gum disease doesn’t cause heart disease, paper says

By Jennifer LaRue Huget

There are plenty of good reasons to take good care of your teeth and gums — but protecting against cardiovascular disease turns out not to be one of them.

A team of researchers has found little evidence of a cause-and-effect relationship between periodontal disease and atherosclerotic vascular disease. (Jessica Hill - Associated Press)

That’s the conclusion drawn by a team of cardiologists, dentists and infectious-disease experts who scoured hundreds of scientific studies to determine whether gum disease may cause heart disease or stroke. Their paper appears as a “scientific statement” in Circulation, a journal of the American Heart Association.

That relationship has come to seem like common wisdom, and many of us, perhaps at our dentist’s urging, have brushed and flossed extra diligently because we think it may help keep our cardiovascular systems healthy.

The belief has been that periodontal disease such as infections and inflammation of the gums may cause atherosclerotic vascular disease, including inflammation and blockages of the arteries, which in turn might lead to heart attack or stroke.
But in a painstaking review of about 500 published studies, researchers found little evidence of such a cause-and-effect relationship.

Though many studies have found that people with gum disease also suffer from atherosclerosis, the narrowing of the arteries that’s associated with heart disease and stroke, none have found that the one causes the other.

That’s largely because many studies haven’t sufficiently accounted for the fact that both gum disease and atherosclerosis occur more commonly among smokers, older people and people with diabetes, notes the paper. Both conditions are also characterized by production of C-reactive protein, a biological signal indicating the presence of inflammation.

The researchers aren’t out to turn folks off to dental hygiene. But they note it’s important to clarify gum disease’s role so people can shift their focus to things we know contribute to cardiovascular disease such as being overweight, not controlling blood pressure, and smoking.

The paper notes that much more research is needed to pin down the associations between gum disease and heart disease. But, they write, “In the meantime, statements that imply a causative association between PD (periodontal disease) and specific ASVD (atherosclerotic vascular disease) events or claim that therapeutic interventions may be useful on the basis of that assumption are unwarranted.”

By Jennifer LaRue Huget | 04:00 PM ET, 04/18/2012
Man spends 12 months practicing 12 different religions, and finds peace at year’s end

By Amanda Greene | Religion News Service

LUMBERTON, N.C. — Andrew Bowen sat yoga-style in his armchair, absent-mindedly fingering a set of Muslim prayer beads in his left hand as he talked about 2011 — his year of conversion.

But he’s not Muslim. In fact, the 29-year-old Lumberton resident doesn’t call himself by any of the 12 faiths he practiced for a month at a time last year.


Finding faith in God again was not Bowen’s aim. This young father of two was looking for faith in humanity.

Bowen became a Christian in high school and took “a nose dive into fundamentalism,” he said. “It just ignited a furnace in me.”

As a teen, Bowen said he was extremely critical of faiths different from his own. Once when a pair of male Mormon missionaries visited his home, Bowen said he chased them down the street as they retreated on their bicycles.

After high school, Bowen met his wife, Heather, at East Carolina University. The Bowens had two girls, Shaylie and Nevaeh, and thought their family was complete. But in 2008, Heather’s tubal ligation failed, and she was pregnant with their “miracle baby.”

But the doctors discovered the baby was behind her ovaries, an ectopic pregnancy that threatened Heather’s life.

The couple had to choose to abort the baby, something they never dreamed they would do. They were devastated.

“It was a really dark time. I went into a very deep state of depression,” Heather recalled.
But Heather and her husband dealt with the baby’s death in polar opposite ways.

She bought a devotional Bible and was baptized at a local Baptist church. He plunged into a “two-year stint of just seething hatred toward God.”

The couple fought each time Heather wanted to talk about her growing faith. Still, deep down, Bowen worried his hatred would consume him.

“The best way I can describe it was flying down the road like a bat out of hell toward a wall,” Bowen said. “With any transformation, there’s a fire that has to be applied.”

So Project Conversion was born. He would study and practice one faith each month, guided by a mentor from each belief system. But this was no reality TV stunt.

It was an obsession — his personal intervention.

“It was 110 percent balls to the wall for me,” Bowen said, describing his dedication to the project.

To find his mentors in late 2010, he had to look outside his tiny, mostly Baptist farm town. His Zoroastrian mentor lives in Chicago. His Muslim mentor lives in Fayetteville.

Truthfully, Heather was skeptical about Project Conversion at first.

But she “saw changes in him. He was more patient. There was more of a sense of peace about him,” she said.

His first two weeks each month were spent intensely reading and learning a faith’s tenets and the last half was spent exploring the faith’s practices and rituals and visiting nearby congregations. For his Sikh month, he spent five hours watching YouTube videos on how to tie a turban. During his Jewish month, he spent a weekend visiting temples with his Jewish mentor, journalist Michael Solender in Charlotte. He’s filled an entire bookshelf with holy books from his research.

Now as he’s writing a book, speaking about Project Conversion and blogging about the experience for Beliefnet.com, Bowen is still exploring all he’s learned. On Facebook, Project Conversion already has its own tribe, with nearly 1,000 likes.

“The most important thing I learned in Buddhism was how to wash dishes. Like there is nothing but this dish. It taught me finally to be quiet,” he said.
“With the Mormons, the first thing I did was apologize. It was about humility and being one of them and serving them.”

Islam “showed me how much I was wasting in my life from food to activity. Bowing with the men in the mosque was astounding,” he said.

Catholicism was “a wellspring of expression and arts in worship. It was an ocean I could bury myself in for days and not come up for breath.”

The project also touched the lives of his mentors.

“It was energizing in that it allowed us to really put on the table and discuss conversations my wife and I wouldn’t normally have had with other people,” Solender said.

Bowen was one of the best students of Wicca Greenville resident Melissa Barnhurst has had.

“He gave it a lot more than some students who’ve come to me wanting to become Wiccan,” she said.

Meanwhile, his wife worked as a labor and delivery nurse at a local hospital. Things were hard financially, at times, because Bowen wasn’t working.

And then there was November, Jainism — and Heather’s least favorite month. Bowen loved becoming a monk, meditating wrapped in his grandmother’s sheets, not bathing and walking with a broom to whisk away creatures in the Jain tradition of respecting all life.

“It was the not bathing or washing your hands,” she said. “The nurse in me was beginning to have a fit.”

Though he admits his experiment caused hardship, the couple had a deal. Bowen put his wife through nursing school. She carried the financial burdens through Project Conversion.

“We argued more than we ever did, but my kids participated in celebrations, and my wife’s Christianity opened up a whole lot more,” Bowen said.

His wife agrees.

“Faith has become a constant topic in our house,” Heather said. “We may not share a faith. We may never share a faith, but there’s definitely a respect there.”

And now?

Bowen still meditates daily using various prayer books, and he attends Mass occasionally at a Catholic church.
At its essence, Project Conversion was about burying his hatred and learning tolerance.

“For so long, I suffered with ego. So now I’m just going to make the faiths of others more beautiful to themselves,” he said. “I don’t think about God now. I just participate.”
On Campus, Opening Up Conversations About Sex

Published April 16, 2012
By DOUGLAS QUENQUA

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — For a table set up by a campus student group, this one held some unusual items: a gynecologist’s speculum, diaphragms, condoms (his and hers) and several packets of lubricant. Nearby, two students batted an inflated condom back and forth like a balloon.

“This is Implanon,” said Gabby Bryant, a 22-year-old senior who had helped set up the table, showing off a sample of the implantable birth control. “Here at Harvard, you get it for free.”

“Implanon?” said Samantha Meier, a fellow senior, who was viewing the wares. “No, you don’t.”

“My friend just got it for free,” said Ms. Bryant, resolving the matter.

It was Sex Week at Harvard, a student-run program of lectures, panel discussions and blush-inducing conversations about all things sexual. The event was Harvard’s first, though the tradition started at Yale in 2002 and has since spread to colleges around the country: Brown, Northeastern, the University of Kentucky, Indiana University and Washington University have all held some version of Sex Week in recent years.

Despite the busy national debate over contraception and financing for reproductive health, Sex Week at Harvard (and elsewhere) has veered away from politics, emerging instead as a response to concern among students that classroom lessons in sexuality — whether in junior high school or beyond — fall short of preparing them for the experience itself. Organizers of these events say that college students today face a confusing reality: At a time when sexuality is more baldly and blatantly on display, young people are, paradoxically, having less sex than in generations past, surveys indicate.

“I think there’s this hook-up culture at Harvard where people assume that everyone’s having sex all the time, and that’s not necessarily true,” said Suzanna Bobadilla, a 21-year-old junior.

Students here seemed less interested in debating the Republicans’ social agenda than in talking about how sexual mores related to their own lives. One event, “Hooking Up on Campus,” got participants talking about
perceptions that have been built up about casual sex — for instance, the idea that all women are so liberated that they are happy to have sex without commitment (a theme that is examined in depth in the new HBO series “Girls“).

The event had helped dispel that rumor, Ms. Bobadilla said, by presenting statistics showing that college students were having less sex than their predecessors and by “letting people come out with their own perspectives.”

Such plain-spoken sex education is particularly important at a school like Harvard, she said, because “Harvard kids don’t want to admit they don’t know something that they feel like they should know.”

As Sex Week has spread to more campuses, it has maintained a balancing act between matters of sexual health and pleasure. Unlike typical student-run college programs in the decades following the discovery of H.I.V./AIDS, the campus events go beyond instruction on safe sex, rape prevention and sexually transmitted diseases to giving advice on how to feel more comfortable and fulfilled sexually, all, at least in theory, in a judgment-free atmosphere that embraces all lifestyles. The idea is to give the sex education that schools cannot — or choose not to.

“I think that what our generation is doing is really trying to address these issues in a way that respects individual experiences and beliefs and identities,” said Ms. Meier, 23, one of the two student organizers of Sex Week at Harvard. “And I see Sex Week as a part of that.”

Sex Week began life at Yale as Kosher Sex Week, an idea that the Yale Hillel had for generating interest in the group. But as more clubs and the faculty got involved, “one faculty member threw out the idea, why does this have to be a Jewish event?” said Eric Rubenstein, one of the founders. The decision was made to drop the kosher angle, giving birth in 2002 to what was then called Campus-Wide Sex Week.

”Everyone who was involved in it wanted it to be something relatable and real and challenging, and something that people have to consider,” said Mr. Rubenstein, 29, who now works as an oil strategist and trader for Citigroup. “It’s not just talking about your regular topics.”

Sex education has always been a part of college, one way or another. And every generation of students has tried to fill perceived gaps in the formal curricula with their own initiatives, whether through the condom giveaways of the 1990s or the explosion of student sex columns — and even
pornography magazines — in the last decade. Students call it education; parents and administrators may call it acting out.

At Harvard’s first Sex Week, which ended March 31, there were panels on talking to your doctor about sex and on careers in sexual health, but also events about the ethics of pornography; sex and religion; kinky practices like bondage; and gay and lesbian sex. After every event, organizers raffled off vibrators.

While some professors, chaplains and health care providers took part, the university itself was not a sponsor. At Yale, the name was changed this year from Sex Week at Yale to simply Sex Week because of administration pushback.

Sex weeks have faced some opposition from colleges, alumni and students nearly everywhere they’ve been staged. Some people don’t like the idea of university resources being used to promote sexual activity. Others think the events promote an irresponsible, pleasure-first approach to sex.

This year, a new group called Undergraduates for a Better Yale College began offering an alternative to Sex Week called True Love Week. In 2007, Chelsea Thompson, a Northwestern student who described herself as a Christian, formed a group called Women of Worth that hosted a spa night to give female students an alternative to Sex Week. According to the group’s blog, more than 100 women attended, including the entire softball team.

“Education does not mean giving everybody every choice they could make,” said Isabel Marin, a member of Undergraduates for a Better Yale College. “It’s giving people the right information on how they should be pursuing relationships and sexual choices. It’s not a buffet.”

But campus organizers say they are simply trying to acknowledge reality: that a lot of students have sex for the first time while they are in college, and this can muster many strong feelings and reactions.

“College classes about sexuality are always fairly academic, they don’t necessarily reflect peoples’ personal experience,” said Aida Manduley, a chairwoman of Sex Week at Brown. “We try to balance out the situation.”

In an era when explicit sexual materials are readily available by keystroke or remote control, some students found the week’s proceedings at Harvard surprisingly tame. Brenda Serpas, a freshman, attended a seminar called “Dirty Talk” and found it to be, well, not that dirty.
“A lot of people just thought it was going to be tips on how to talk dirty,” she said, “but really it wasn’t. It was just like, being consensual and comfortable in expressing yourself with your partner.”

Shana Kim, a sophomore, added: “That you have to have no shame. Be comfortable with yourself.”

“And I think that’s what the whole week was about, basically,” Ms. Kim added. “Knowing what you want, knowing how to consent to what you want and allowing other people to do the same.”