Final draft of ECU master plan released
By Jackie Drake
The Daily Reflector
Thursday, June 30, 2011

A final draft of the developing master plan for East Carolina University's campus was presented Wednesday, but further changes may be called for as concerns over parking and preserving historical buildings were renewed.

The placement of parking decks and the fate of Christenbury Gym, which is set to be replaced with a biosciences building, generated the most discussion at a forum held in the Croatan dining hall.

The parking and Christenbury discussions began when the preliminary draft was presented in March. The master plan outlines desired expansions to campus for the next 20-25 years and includes about $2 billion in improvements, according to Neal Kessler with Smithgroup/JJR, the planning and design firm that generated the diagrams for ECU. The goal is to have the finished plan before the Board of Trustees for final approval in September. The next step is breaking the added elements into five-year phases according to need and feasibility.

“We're nearing the final stages, but we have all summer yet to finish this planning effort,” Kessler said. “This the last opportunity for public input, but we are still asking for that.”

A new biosciences building is a top priority, he said, and Christenbury's location is ideal, being near other science buildings in the academic core of campus between Fifth and 10th streets, which is full in terms of academic buildings.
“I am here to express opposition to tearing down Christenbury,” said ECU Class of 1961 alumnus Mike Bunting, representing the Advancement Council for the College of Health and Human Performance. “We've signed a petition to preserve Christenbury because of its historical significance. We're going to fight with all we've got.”

Christenbury would not be easy to re-purpose due to the pool and gym, according to Bill Koch, associate vice chancellor for campus safety, though he did not advocate either way for preservation or demolition.

Kessler said preserving and incorporating Christenbury's facade into the new building is a possibility, and parking options are being evaluated.

Major themes of the plan include making the academic core of campus more pedestrian friendly by removing through streets and surface parking. As many as five parking decks are planned, most at the edges of campus. One deck likely will be located next to the new student center that is slated for the parking lot behind the Mendenhall Student Center.

Additions like an alumni center and a performing arts complex are planned along Reade Street. Another academic building slated for business that could have an attached parking deck is planned for the corner west of Cotanche Street and north of 10th Street, which is set to become another entrance to campus.

Planners are working with the City of Greenville, Pitt County and the Department of Transportation.

The ongoing 10th Street connector project and a planned intermodal transport center were incorporated into the plan.

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Clarke dismissed from Pirates
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Ashley Clarke, who was charged with a felony count of unlawfully obtaining a credit card last week, has been dismissed from the East Carolina women's basketball team, the university announced Wednesday.

Clarke was arrested last week along with former teammates Kim Gay and Crystal Wilson in connection with the theft of a debit card from fellow basketball player Ariana Jackson's locker in Minges Coliseum.

Jackson reported that the card had been taken from her locker and used for $423.30 in unauthorized purchases.

“Like the rest of the East Carolina community, we are disturbed and obviously disappointed by the recent events involving our program,” ECU head coach Heather Macy said in a statement. “The responsibility of mentoring and guiding our players is a continual but inexact process we take very seriously. Although it is disheartening to encounter issues along the way, it will not deter our commitment and vision to build a program based on character and integrity.”

Gay, who graduated from ECU in May, has been charged with resisting a public officer, five counts of financial card fraud and a felony count of aiding and abetting.
Wilson, who was dismissed from the team in April for a violation of team rules, faces two misdemeanor counts of credit card fraud.

Clarke played in all 31 contests last season, making 22 starts at point guard. She led the team in assists and steals, while finishing second in scoring with 9.5 points per game.

The Pirates, who currently have 13 players on their roster after Clarke's dismissal, will have six returnees from last year's squad. Among the seven newcomers are four freshmen.
Less is Morrow for ECU forward
By Tony Castleberry
The Daily Reflector
Thursday, June 30, 2011

In the process of losing about 30 pounds, Darrius Morrow found a new, improved Darrius Morrow.

Morrow, a rising senior forward on the East Carolina men's basketball team, responded to a challenge from Pirate coach Jeff Lebo early last season and completely changed his diet, attacked workouts and practices with newfound vigor and transformed himself from a mostly effective 271-pound player into a nearly unstoppable 240-pound revelation.

“I needed that,” Morrow said of Lebo declaring that Morrow looked “out of shape” after a win over Lenoir-Rhyne on Nov. 27, 2010. “I couldn't be the best player that I could be with all that weight on me and obviously coach Lebo saw that.”

Then Lebo, and everyone else who follows Conference USA basketball, saw what Morrow's improved conditioning did for his game, and consequently, ECU's chances of winning.

Morrow's season-ending averages of 13 points and a team-high 6.3 rebounds per game last season weren't going to win him any player of the year awards, but there's no doubt he was the most valuable Pirate for most of the second half of the campaign. ECU's first-
ever win over Memphis, a pair of victories in the C-USA tournament — also a first for the Pirates — and a postseason appearance in the CollegeInsider.com Postseason Tournament all happened in large part because of Morrow's stellar play down the stretch.

In ECU's final six games of the season, Morrow, a 6-foot-8 Atlanta native, averaged 17.5 points and 10.3 rebounds per game, including a dominant performance in three C-USA tourney contests in which he posted averages of 21.7 ppg and 13.3 rpg en route to earning a spot on the all-tournament team, another Pirate first. Morrow said he knows none of that would have happened without his commitment to getting in the best shape of his life.

“I just got motivated to take weight training and conditioning seriously,” Morrow said Wednesday, his shirt drenched with sweat after one of his daily workouts. “I never really took it seriously (before).”

Team workouts and practices are enough to help most college basketball players win the battle of the bulge, but for the most part, they're left to their own devices when it comes to diet. For Morrow, that was as big a piece of his weight-loss puzzle as pounds lifted or miles clocked on a treadmill.

The change has been eye-opening for Morrow, who admits he's “never been a fruits or a vegetables guy,” but nevertheless made crucial, wide-ranging alterations to his personal menu, which he admits was not easy.

“I stayed away from the fast food,” Morrow said. “Like the other day I had some McDonald's and it didn't even taste the same ... because I knew I shouldn't be eating that. I'm just more into home-cooked meals now or eating at a good restaurant rather than going to McDonald's and putting all those calories in me.

“It was (tough) at first, until I saw the bigger picture. The sweet tea and the fried chicken, that's not going anywhere. My career is more important than that and I'm willing to do anything to make that sacrifice.”

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Basic training

Christine Kolton and Jennifer Williams — Army wives and best friends — decided to improve their triathlon prowess by becoming better swimmers. They'll make their swim-only debuts Saturday when the Surf N Sea North Shore Swim Series begins with the Aloha Salads Summer Sprint.

By Cindy Luis

They call themselves "Army Sisters."

Two women, married to U.S. Army captains who were a year apart at West Point, posted at Schofield Barracks and deployed in Afghanistan as part of the famed 2/27 ... the 2nd Battalion 27th Infantry known as the "Wolfhounds."

Jennifer Williams and Christine Kolton were fated to be friends, they say, beyond picking up packets and numbers at the same races. They had so many common bonds, from being Army wives, to believing in volunteerism, to being former collegiate athletes. Williams played volleyball at East Carolina and Kolton rowed for UNC Wilmington.
The two became running partners, eventually graduating from 5K races to marathons to sprint triathlons. Both wanted to improve on what they considered their weakest event in the triathlon, that of the opening swim leg. With husbands gone for a year, Williams, 27, and Kolton, 28, decided to better their water performances.

They will make their swim-only debut Saturday with the first event of the North Shore Swim Series: the Aloha Salads Summer Sprint, a 1-mile race from Sunset Beach to Ehukai Beach Park.

"I heard about it last year, when we first moved here," Williams said of the series. "I didn't have a good sense of what it was. But we heard more about it, started doing races on the North Shore, got to know the organizers.

"We wanted to train and get better and faster at swimming. Sooooo ..."

Although both work — Williams is a substitute teacher, Kolton teaches physical education classes at Hawaii Pacific University while studying for a master's degree — and are heavily involved with Schofield's Family Readiness Group, the two have made the commitment. They meet at the stop sign halfway between their homes in Waialua at 5:30 a.m. for an early run, then find mutually open spots in their day planners to get in a swim.

"I couldn't and wouldn't do this without her," Williams said of Kolton. "I called her and said, 'Hey, I'm thinking about doing the swim series. What do you think?'"

"I'll do anything for a T-shirt," Kolton joked. "It's the most important thing. And Hawaii races have great T-shirts.

"But, seriously, without her and our workouts, I'd be a mess. It gives us focus and goals."

It's hard not to think about what's going on half a world away. There have been too many reminders of the danger that comes with their husbands' jobs; Wednesday, Williams and Kolton attended a memorial service for PFC Joshua Jetton, a part of the Wolfhound family who was killed in Afghanistan on June 20.

"There's nothing we can do about what our husbands are doing," Kolton said. "We make the best of it and stay as positive as we can. Jen and I have decided to make the most of our year without the guys.

"I was standing next to her when we said goodbye to them. And I'll be standing next to her when they come home."
Tom Williams and Michael Kolton are scheduled to return in March. The soldiers receive frequent updates on their wives' training progress.

"They're both active guys and they've been good supporters," Williams said. "They take pictures at our races when they're home. I hope they're proud of us. We're proud of them."

The Koltons originally received orders to Texas but, as often happens in the military, Michael Kolton was given a chance to return to Hawaii for a second time. He attained his master's at the University of Hawaii after graduating from West Point in 2005.

The couples were reunited at Schofield last year.

"We don't know what's going to happen next for us," Williams said. "But we've told the guys they HAVE to stay together. And, we've told them whatever orders they get, we (the two women) are staying here.

"We love Hawaii. The community embraces us and makes us feel so welcome. People are always asking for my husband's address. They probably send him more care packages than I do."

The two women will spend the Fourth of July together, recuperating from Saturday's race and enjoying the festivities that are such a big part of the Schofield Barracks tradition.

At 2:27 p.m, both of their phones will chime in honor of the 2/27.

And the training partners will answer as one, "Pray for the Wolfhounds."
**ECU softball honored**

After a season in which East Carolina won its second straight Conference USA Tournament softball title and made an NCAA Regional finals appearance, Pirates coach Tracey Kee, associate head coach Natalie Kozlowski and graduate assistant coach Cristen Aona have been selected the National Fastpitch Coaches Association Mideast Region coaches of the year.

It is the second consecutive regional honor for Kee and Kozlowski and the first for Aona, who played for the two from 2007 to 2010.

**Women's basketball**

**ECU dismisses player:** Ashley Clarke, who recently completed her junior season, has been dismissed from the East Carolina program following an arrest Saturday on a felony charge of unlawfully obtaining a credit card, coach Heather Macy said.
Math test

State and local prosecutors now will pursue what N.C. Central University officials say is a sum amounting to several hundred thousand dollars paid from a secret account connected to an organization flying under the school's flag. The state auditor found questionable payments from the account to former NCCU provost Beverly Washington Jones and to Nan Coleman, head of the organization, the Historically Minority Colleges and University Consortium.

This shapes up as a huge disappointment involving people who were supposed to be acting as stewards of public funds. The account was bolstered by money from local school systems, nonprofit organizations, individuals and from NCCU itself.

The consortium included a dozen private and public colleges and universities with traditionally large minority enrollments. Its purpose was to help minority kids close the achievement gap with white students. Toward that goal, it received millions of dollars in state, federal and private grants. NCCU, a consortium member, handled the money.

The goal is noble. But the audit found that Coleman, who was fired in 2009, had "questionable" purchases that included car repairs on vehicles she and her husband apparently owned. Some of the money also went for his travel expenses, women's clothes and hair care products. Two ATM withdrawals on the account were made after Coleman had been fired.

As for Jones, she initially told auditors that the money she got was reimbursement for travel, but then, looking at checks presented by the auditors, said "maybe" she was paid for some type of services.

This is a mess, hurts the university's credibility and calls for a hard press by prosecutors and their investigators. Chancellor Charlie Nelms did alert University of North Carolina system officials and fired an auditor who conducted an internal audit that Nelms found inadequate. He turned the matter over to the state, the proper course.

Now UNC system President Tom Ross has to review this inexcusable situation, and he'd be wise as well to determine what sorts of other accounts or organizations are within campuses of the university system that might need more intense oversight. There needs to be a thorough review, system-wide, and possibly a new regulatory structure.
Demolition has begun on the 50-year-old student bookstore. The architect, G. Milton Small, taught at NCSU and helped lift the school's College of Design to national prominence.

N.C. State bookstore is toast despite an effort to save it

BY JAY PRICE - Staff Writer

RALEIGH–A landmark on the N.C. State University campus is vanishing.

Demolition has started on the 50-year-old student bookstore, to the disappointment of some preservationists. A photo of the building's distinctive "folded-plane" walkway canopies appeared this spring in Preservation Magazine, published by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The building is being torn down to make way for a major addition and renovation to the Talley Student Center.

The university plans to spend $120 million to remake the student center, expanding it by two-thirds, to 283,000 square feet. The plan for the first of the project's two phases includes replacing the bookstore with green space and a small part of the addition, as well an underground loading dock.

All the work on the student center is expected to be completed by fall 2014, said Lisa Johnson, the university architect.

The demolition will be finished in about three weeks, she said.
The blog Goodnight Raleigh!, which covers local architecture, history and art, started a campaign this past winter to persuade the university to save the bookstore.

Blogger John Morris said some of its design elements, such as the canopies, floor-to-ceiling glass and unusual brickwork, were unique on campus. Also, he noted, it provided a link to a lofty period in the history of the university's College of Design. The architect, G. Milton Small, taught there briefly and was one of a group that helped lift the school into national prominence.

Small led a Raleigh firm that designed a host of other modernist buildings and homes in the area.

Even supporters, though, admitted that the bookstore's charms were subtle. The current dean of the design college, Marvin Malecha, has said that while the bookstore and canopies have aesthetic value, they weren't distinctive enough to merit a campaign to preserve them. That's particularly true, he said, given that the student center renovation is expected to be an attractive design, and that its architect, Turan Duda, is a noted NCSU alumnus.

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Adviser defends role with UNC players

BY J.P. GIGLIO - staff writer

To the NCAA, Todd Stewart is a financial adviser who provided more than $7,000 in improper benefits to North Carolina football players.

From Stewart's own perspective, he's a DJ from Washington, whose connection to the Tar Heels football program extends no further than a longtime friendship with former UNC defensive tackle Marvin Austin.

In a 40-minute interview with The News & Observer and Charlotte Observer, Stewart said he is being used as a scapegoat by the NCAA and the University of North Carolina. He said he did "good things" over the years for his friend Austin, but he denied the NCAA's assertions that he paid for trips made by Austin and UNC teammate Greg Little or that he offered other improper benefits.

He also denied ever working with Pro Sports Financial, the Fort Lauderdale, Fla.-based group of financial advisers named in the June 21 Notice of Allegations delivered by the NCAA to UNC.

"My name is out there for what went on, but it's untrue. It's all lies," Stewart said in a phone interview Friday. "At the end of the day, the NCAA needed to pin it on somebody, and I was the only one who would talk to them."

The NCAA's Notice of Allegations connects Stewart to 22 alleged improper benefits, valued at $7,216.20, provided to Austin, Little and UNC defensive back Charles Brown. Austin is alleged to have received $5,509.70 of the total, according to the notice, with $1,652 attributed to Little and $54.50 to Brown.

The bulk of the expenses cited by the NCAA, Stewart said, were for paying for Austin and Little to travel to Miami.

Stewart denies that he covered those travel costs.

Stewart was interviewed by the NCAA's Chance Miller (noted in the NOA as occurring Aug. 19), and told him that he has lent his car to Austin and has let him stay at his house in Landover, Md., but that he didn't pay for any of the players' trips cited by the NCAA as improper benefits.

"I didn't pay no seven thousand dollars for no body to do nothing," Stewart said last week. "That's ridiculous."

Austin, an All-ACC defensive tackle in 2009, was suspended by UNC before the 2010 season and kicked off the team in October for his role in the NCAA investigation, which included accepting more than $13,000 in improper benefits.
Little, the team's leading receiver in 2009, was ruled permanently ineligible by the NCAA in October for accepting more than $5,000 in benefits and for lying to NCAA investigators. Both Austin and Little were second-round picks in the NFL draft in April. Neither played a down in the 2010 college season.

Brown, a cornerback, redshirted the 2010 season because of his role in the academic fraud portion of the investigation and has been suspended the first game of the 2011 season for receiving improper benefits from Stewart.

**Washington ties**

Stewart, 32, said his friendship with Austin goes back almost 10 years, before Austin was a high school football star in Washington.

"He's had Thanksgiving dinner at my house," Stewart said. "He's the godfather of my oldest son."

Stewart comes from a football family. His father, Willie Stewart, is an icon in Washington high school football, producing major college and NFL players at Anacostia High School for almost 30 years.

Todd Stewart played football for his father at Anacostia and then played safety, and mainly on special teams, at the University of Maryland. According to Maryland's records, he lettered in 1997. Stewart's younger brother, Tyrone, also played football at Maryland, from 1998 to 2002.

Todd Stewart counts Vernon Davis, a former Maryland tight end who played high school football at Dunbar in Washington, as one of his friends. Davis was the San Francisco 49ers' first-round pick in 2006 and is entering his sixth NFL season.

Davis' younger brother Vontae Davis, also a first-round NFL pick, also went to Dunbar and starred at Illinois before going to the Miami Dolphins in 2009. Vontae Davis and Austin, who grew up in Washington, are friends.

Austin, who was a Parade All-America player at Washington's Ballou High School, could not be reached for comment.

**Trip under scrutiny**

The birthday party for Vontae Davis was a focal point of his interview with the NCAA, Stewart said.

The Miami trip spawned the post on Austin's Twitter account - "I live in Club Liv" - which Austin has subsequently explained was a nod to a song lyric referencing a Miami Beach nightclub, not to where he was at the time.

UNC's failure to monitor "social networking activity" was cited among the nine major violations outlined by the NCAA in the Notice of Allegations.
In a March interview, Austin said he made three trips to Miami in 2010 to see Vontae Davis. One trip, made during Memorial Day weekend, was for Davis' birthday party, which was hosted by NFL running back Frank Gore.

Stewart said he went to the party with Austin, Little and former Alabama defensive tackle Marcell Dareus (who subsequently received a two-game suspension from the NCAA for accepting improper benefits). Stewart said he did not pay for their travel expenses.

Stewart said the NCAA asked him about NFL agents Todd France (Davis' agent) and Drew Rosenhaus (Gore's agent) during the interview.

"They thought I was working for Todd France or Drew Rosenhaus," Stewart said. "If anything went wrong at that party, one of those agents would have pointed the finger at the other."

Stewart said: "It was never about agents; it was about going to see a friend."

Efforts to reach France and Rosenhaus for comment were unsuccessful. Neither has been disciplined by the NFL Players Association for any role in the UNC investigation (Michael Katz, a Rosenhaus employee, is identified by the NCAA as having provided $398 in improper benefits to Little and former UNC defensive end Robert Quinn).

The NFLPA suspended NFL agent Gary Wichard in December for his financial connections to Austin and former UNC assistant coach John Blake. Wichard died in March.

Stewart said he had no connection to Wichard or with Blake.

NCAA spokeswoman Stacey Osburn said the NCAA cannot comment on a current investigation. UNC has 90 days to respond to the NCAA's NOA and is scheduled to meet with the NCAA in Indianapolis on Oct. 28.

**Tie denied**

The most puzzling part of the NCAA notice, Stewart said, is how he was connected to Pro Sports Financial.

Vernon Davis once invested money with Jeff Rubin of Pro Sports Financial, Stewart said, and that's the extent of his relationship to the group. Stewart makes his living as a Washington-based disc jockey, he said.

"I never worked for them ... ever," Stewart said.

Neither Pro Sports Financial nor Rubin, the company's president, returned messages left over a six-day period.

Stewart who has done only one other media interview, in October, said he has been reluctant to clear his name because of the possible effect on Austin's future.
He said he was more concerned about what happened to Austin and Little, missing out on their senior season, than about his own reputation.

"I'm not going to say I didn't do good things for Marvin, but to put a dollar amount on it is untrue," Stewart said. "Whatever I do for Marvin, I've known him since he was 13, it has never been about what I can get from Marvin."

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What’s the Most Expensive College? The Least?

Education Dept. Puts It All Online

By TAMAR LEWIN

Students and families can compare colleges’ tuitions, the pace at which they are rising and the net cost of attending each college on a new Web site the Department of Education made public on Thursday, fulfilling a legislative mandate.

The new lists, required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, show the institutions with the highest and lowest tuitions, the highest and lowest percentage tuition increases over the last two years, and the highest and lowest net price — that is, the actual price full-time students pay, including room and board, after financial aid like grants and scholarships are taken into account.

In each of several categories — public and private, for-profit and nonprofit, four-year and two-year — the most expensive institutions and those whose costs are rising most rapidly will be required to report to the Education Department why their costs are so high and what they plan to do about it.

“This allows students and families to see the highs and lows of the distributions and highlights those good-performing institutions,” said David Bergeron, a department official.

Information about colleges that are not among the highest 5 percent or lowest 10 percent in their category, he said, can be found on the department’s College Navigator site.

A separate report to be released Thursday shows that community colleges — long seen as the affordable route to higher education — are increasingly unaffordable for American families. From 1999 to 2009, tuition at public two-year colleges increased 71 percent, while the median family income declined 4.9 percent, adjusted for inflation, according to a study by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

“We’ve gotten pretty jaded about this issue, with people saying, ‘Look how cheap community colleges are, compared with four-year colleges,’ ” said Patrick M. Callan, president of the center. “But actually, community colleges, which are supposed to be our safety net institutions, were losing ground even before the economic downturn, with huge tuition increases at a time when family income was declining.”

The Education Department data cover a smaller time period, reporting tuition from the academic year that began in the fall of 2009, but calculating increases from 2006 to 2008.
According to the lists, the average 2009-10 tuition at a four-year nonprofit college was $21,324. But the highest-priced institutions were far more costly: Bates College in Maine had the highest tuition last year ($51,300); Wells College, in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, the largest percentage increase in the two years before that (67 percent); and the Art Center College of Design in California the highest net cost for those receiving aid ($29,672).

A spokesman for Bates took issue with the department’s methods, noting that its price — and that of the other four most expensive schools listed — includes room and board, making for an apples-and-oranges comparison with colleges where tuition is listed separately.

“Bates’s average net price, taking into account financial aid, is below that of more than 400 other institutions,” noted the spokesman, Roland Adams. “Bates’ percentage increase in tuition and fees over the last three academic years is lower than that of more than 800 other institutions.”

Indeed, the data are uneven in other respects as well. The net cost numbers, for example, include only full-time, first-time students who received financial aid, a group that at many colleges is not very large.

But the Web site offers much more comprehensive data than had previously been readily available, and presents it in a user-friendly way, providing a useful window on college costs.

The average tuition at public four-year colleges was $10,747. Pennsylvania State had the highest tuition ($14,416), Northern New Mexico College the largest percentage increase (51 percent) and the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio the highest net price ($24,192).

Among public two-year colleges, the average tuition was $2,527, the University of Pittsburgh, and Titusville charged nearly five times that ($10,430), making it the most expensive in the group. And Sanford-Brown College had the highest tuition ($45,628) among four-year for-profit schools, where the average was $15,661.

In another effort to expand consumer information about higher education, the government will require career and vocational colleges’ promotional materials to show their tuition and fees, and their students’ median debt load, along with rates of graduation and job placement.
Universities turn to outsourced instructors
By Didi Tang, USA TODAY
June 29, 2011

This fall, when students of Missouri State University in Springfield, Mo., take an introductory journalism class, they'll have some of the most qualified teachers in the field.

But the teachers won't be on the university payroll.

They work for St. Petersburg-based Poynter Institute, a non-profit journalism training group, which has agreed to supply the university with instructors for the class via the Internet.

"We are leveraging our e-learning platform to help journalism educators to have more time with their students," said Howard Finberg, interactive learning director for Poynter.

"We can do some of the teaching for them."

Virtually unheard of a decade ago, instructional outsourcing is sprouting on university campuses around the country.

"Given the significant reduction in state support for public education, compounded by the fact institutions need to maintain quality programs, we are going to see additional innovative attempts at partnerships that will address both issues of being able to provide cost-efficient programs that are high quality," says Daniel Hurley, director of state relations and policy analysis for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Proponents see the practice as another innovative way to cut costs, access bigger markets and add expertise to classrooms.

But opponents worry that outsourcing instruction will threaten faculty jobs, diminish interaction between students and professors, or even turn colleges into diploma mills.

The jury is out, says Alene Russell, a senior state policy consultant for the AASCU. "We don't know where it goes," says Russell, who explored the issue in a July 2010 brief for the association. "Everyone is watching."

In her brief, Russell noted several models of instructional outsourcing in recent years.
• In 2007, Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas, partnered with Higher Ed Holdings, a private company that provides technology and recruiting support for universities, to develop online graduate education programs.

The partnership with HEH, now Academic Partnerships, has been a success, as the programs have had consistent enrollments and high graduation rates, says Larry Acker, spokesman for Lamar.

"Financially, it's been very good for Lamar," Acker says.

Enrollment into two master's in education programs reached a peak of 4,100, higher than the university's total enrollment, says Anne Doris, chief operating officer for Academic Partnerships.

"It made Lamar University the fastest-growing state university in Texas and moved Lamar's Graduate College of Education from 211th in the U.S. to seventh in just 18 months," Doris says.

• StraighterLine, a private company founded in 2008 to provide inexpensive online college courses, has direct agreements with 23 institutions, including Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kan., Charter Oak State College in New Britain, Conn., and the online Western Governors University, says Burke Smith, CEO and founder of StraighterLine.

Smith argues the arrangement shouldn't be considered instructional outsourcing but as articulation agreements, when one school acknowledges credits earned at another.

• Colleges are also turning to for-profit companies to provide online tutoring and academic support. Smarthinking, for example, provides such services to about 500 colleges and universities, says Susan Aspey, spokeswoman for the online tutoring provider.

A teacher for each component
At Missouri State, university officials recently abandoned efforts to seek an outside firm to market its courses, doubting the economic model would work. It forged ahead with partnership with Poynter, which will do the teaching for one introductory journalism course.

Under the Missouri State-Poynter arrangement, the university provides the curriculum, but Poynter supplies teachers for different components of the course — a new model for instructional outsourcing, Russell says.

Poynter began exploring teaching Journalism 101 to American college students last fall after it received a $50,000 grant from Carnegie Corporation of New York. So far, it has signed up both Missouri State and Florida Atlantic University, which has campuses in several Florida cities.
Susan Reilly, director of Florida Atlantic's School of Communication and Multimedia Studies, has told Inside Higher Ed, a higher education online publication, that Poynter would provide consistency, as Florida Atlantic students are entering into journalism courses with different knowledge and skill sets after taking the introductory course from different adjuncts.

At Missouri State, the decision to work with Poynter came after faculty reshuffling due to retirements and promotions. Mark Biggs, head of Missouri State's media, journalism and film department, says Poynter's educators are likely to have superior credentials than would a per-course instructor hired from the local pool of professionals.

The contract costs more than to hire an adjunct, but Missouri State expects to come out ahead financially after charging students more for the Poynter class.

Missouri State University will pay the Poynter Institute $6,500 to teach one class, higher than the $2,400 it would pay to a per-course instructor. But students will pay the $275 per-credit-hour rate for online courses to take the Poynter class. Students in a traditional class are charged $194 per credit hour.

Smith, of StraighterLine, says universities typically charge the same or more for classes offered through partnerships with private companies. Because of lower instructional costs, such partnerships typically translate into bigger profit margins for universities and their private partners.

An uneasy perspective
While Biggs sees Poynter essentially as an adjunct, only better, the partnership with the outside entity has worried the university's faculty senate. Arguing that the change was too drastic on the course, the senate demanded similar agreements be brought to it for review and approval.

Some professors say they're skeptical the university can adequately ensure the content and quality of the class by turning the instruction over to an out-of-town entity. "How do they know it's just as good?" asks Richard Johnson, a computer information systems professor. "They just assume it would be just as good."

Hurley of university association AASCU says he expects pushback to the emergence of instructional outsourcing but says he supports and encourages institutions to look beyond their traditional boundaries for innovations that may maintain high quality programs and reduce costs, even if such attempts involve external partners.

"We have to start by trying," Hurley says.

Finberg, of Poynter, says the experiment at least is worth a try.
"We don't know the future until we actually do this," Finberg says. "We want to learn how we can help journalism students." He says Poynter and its partner schools are in uncharted waters.

"That's why Carnegie asks us to swim those waters, to try to figure out what we need to think about," he said. "This is a learning opportunity for everybody."

Tang also reports for the Springfield (Mo.) News-Leader.