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Task force seeks better oversight and monitoring student-athletes

University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill Chancellor Holden Thorp updated the UNC Board of Governors Thursday on the school's athletic programs. However, much of the discussion was focused on a list of recommendations to better oversee student athletes.

The UNC Task Force on Athletics and Academics was created in January, Thursday they presented a 16-page report to the UNC Board of Governors. The task force identified inherent risk factors to academic integrity among student athletes across the UNC System.

Based on the findings, the 13-member group believes its time for some changes. Winning at all costs is not the mantra. UNC System leaders say they're focused on playing by the rules - on and off the field.

“It’s easy to cheat, unfortunately, these days,” said chair of the task force Steve Ballard.

Ballard, East Carolina University's chancellor, believes cheating in the classroom is happening more now than ever before and that it is a wide-spread problem among student-athletes.

“The pressure for 5-star athletes is huge,” Ballard said. “Once you’ve got them in, you’re not going to waste the resources that you’ve spent. My gut tells me that rules are bent on a regular basis.”

The report recommends more oversight, better monitoring and tracking. It suggests having coaches pay be based partly on athlete performance - not just on the field, but in the classroom as well. The report also recommends higher standards and expectations for student athletes.

“The pressure to admit unprepared students in many cases appears to be increasing,” Ballard said. “Eligibility is not a sufficient expectation but leads to many of these issues we identified.”
Thorpe is all too familiar with the academic challenges facing college sports. The university faces nine major NCAA violations, some involving student-athlete academic improprieties and fraud.

“These are important issues facing college athletics,” Thorpe said. “College athletics is at a tough point right now and everybody around the country is aware of it.”

Also on Thursday, the NCAA Division I Board of Directors unanimously approved higher academic requirements for member schools in order to compete in postseason competitions. That came one day after top university leaders from across the country, including Thorpe, met in Indianapolis for two days of meetings with NCAA President Mark Emmert.

Reporter: Bruce Mildwurf
Web Editor: Aaron Schoonmaker

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UNC's Holden Thorp stands his ground

BY KEN TYSIAC AND ANNE BLYTHE - Staff Writers

CHAPEL HILL Holden Thorp said Thursday that he has no plans to step down as the UNC-Chapel Hill chancellor and that the UNC system's Board of Governors "has been great" through the NCAA investigation of the university's football program.

"Carolina is a great research university," Thorp told reporters after updating the Board of Governors' Committee on University Governance on the investigation, which has prompted allegations of nine major rules violations related to improper benefits and academic misconduct within the football program. "We're getting a great class next week coming in. We have great students coming back. We'll have the faculty continue to make discoveries. Our research grants continue very, very strong, and fundraising continues very, very strong. This is a great, great public university.

"I feel inspired by the way our faculty has responded to the economic crisis, and I'm proud to be their leader."

Thorp spoke publicly in front of the Board of Governors committee for about 90 seconds before the board moved the meeting into closed session to discuss personnel matters.
Thursday's meeting of the Board of Governors, the group that oversees all of the UNC system schools, was the first since Thorp fired Tar Heels football coach Butch Davis.

Though UNC system board members declined to comment on what was said during the hourlong, closed-door session, Board of Governors Chairwoman Hannah Gage said afterward that Thorp had her support.

"He did the right thing," Gage said. "He made the right decision, and I think it took a lot of courage. He's the first one who said the timing wasn't perfect, but it took a lot of courage."

UNC must respond to the NCAA's Notice of Allegations by Sept. 19. University officials will take the full 90 days allotted to respond to the June 21 delivery of the notice of the alleged rules violations, Thorp said. He and other university officials are scheduled to appear in front of the NCAA's Committee on Infractions on Oct. 28.

When Thorp fired Davis last month, he said he could not stand for the damage sustained by UNC's reputation because of the NCAA investigation. Many Tar Heels fans have since called for Thorp's ouster, saying Davis was not directly responsible for the violations and that nine days before the start of preseason training camp was a bad time to fire a football coach.

Earlier this week, a Public Policy Polling survey of 317 UNC fans in North Carolina found that 36 percent agreed with Davis' firing, while 27 percent disagreed.

Board of Governors member Brad Wilson, while also cautioning that he was not speaking for the entire board, said he supports Thorp.

"There's a question between 'Do you support the coaching decision and the timing of that?' and 'Do you support his leadership?" Wilson said. "The important question is supporting his leadership. He leads more than athletics. . . . That's the way I made my decision. I fully support Chancellor Thorp."

John Montgomery, executive director of the Rams Club athletics booster group, said 10 people have canceled their memberships since July 28 in protest over the decision to fire Davis.

But 15 new members have joined since July 28. The Rams Club has about 16,000 members.

"People love Carolina athletics. They love Carolina. And they will continue to support us."

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Members of the J.H. Rose football team participate in conditioning drills Friday morning. CNN is following the team this season as part of a concussion prevention documentary. (Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector)

**Editorial: Saving young athletes' lives**
Friday, August 12, 2011

Pitt County public schools will not begin classes until Aug. 25, but high school campuses are already awash with activity as student-athletes participating in football are readying for another season. It is said that the hottest fire forges the strongest steel, which should inspire players spending hours in the brutal conditions of an eastern North Carolina summer.

Heat is but one threat to the health and safety of those playing high school sports and Pitt County is among those communities taking extra precautions to care for these players. That should be the utmost concern of the coaches and trainers as well as the public school system, as it helps to ensure a season that begins with championship dreams does not erode into tragedy.

Nearly three years have passed since J.H. Rose High School junior Jaquan Waller died from second-impact syndrome, caused by sequential concussions over a short period of time. A 16-year-old running back for the Rampants football team, Waller took a hard hit in practice a few days before absorbing another during a game. He collapsed on the sideline and was pronounced dead only hours later.

Waller's death prompted a full examination by Pitt County Schools, which ultimately accepted responsibility for the tragedy. The trainer who examined Waller after the practice and cleared him to play in the game was suspended, but he only served as a first responder rather than a licensed trainer. Pitt County Schools ultimately changed that policy and now has trainers from East Carolina University at every varsity football game.

Waller's death in 2008, along with those of two other high school football players, also prompted action from Raleigh. In June, Gov. Beverly Perdue signed the Gfeller-Waller
Concussion Awareness Act, named for the Rose High athlete and 15-year-old Matthew Gfeller of R.J. Reynolds High School who also died three years ago, that intends to provide better education about the danger of head injuries. It also requires schools to have an emergency action plan in place to protect student-athletes.

The Rose High season is being chronicled by CNN to highlight the dangers of head trauma in high school sports but also to shed light on how to better care for the teens who play. It is terribly sad that Pitt County learned its lesson through tragedy, but the attention that followed may ultimately save lives as a result.
ECU HOF class to be inducted Oct. 1
The Daily Reflector
Friday, August 12, 2011

The East Carolina University Athletics Hall of Fame 2011 class will be introduced and inducted during halftime of the Pirates' Oct. 1 football game against North Carolina at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium.

The 2011 class members are: Michelle Clayton (track and field, 1995-99), Tony Collins (football, 1977-80), Justin England (cross country/track and field, 1996-2000) and Stuart Tripp (football, 1940-41). Tripp is the eighth person to be elected posthumously.

Clayton was the first ECU female athlete to earn All-America honors in the hammer throw as she placed ninth in the event at the 1999 NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships. She also earned Athlete of the Meet honors at the 1999 Colonial Athletic Association Championships, winning the discus, shot put and hammer throw, which was the second individual ECAC championship in school history. She collected multiple All-East Region accolades and was a three-time recipient of the team's Most Outstanding Field Performer Award, as well as the school's Most Outstanding Female Scholar-Athlete in 1997, earning District III second-team Academic All-America honors.

Collins was a four-year letterman for coaches Pat Dye and Ed Emory and was the Pirates' all-purpose yards leader for three consecutive seasons. As a junior in 1979, he led the team in rushing with 1,130 yards, which helped him earn first-team All-South Independent honors. That season, Collins helped the Pirates set team records for rushing, rushing yards per game, total offense, total offense per game and points per game. He currently ranks ninth on the school's single-season, career rushing charts and career points scored lists. His 100-yard kickoff return against Florida State in 1980 still ranks as the longest in school history. The New England Patriots selected Collins in the second round of the 1981 NFL draft.

England was the first athlete in school history to qualify for the NCAA Cross Country Championships with a fourth-place finish at the Southeast Regional Championships in 2000. A two-time All-CAA cross country performer, England captured the conference track title in the 10,000-meter run in 1999. He set school cross country records in the 5K and 10K, while also establishing track and field marks in the indoor 5K and outdoor 10K. England was named ECU's Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year for the 1998-99 academic year, following a season in which he earned cross country all-district honors, won the individual title at the state championship cross country meet and was named to the NCAA Division I All-Academic Cross Country Team.
Tripp played two years of varsity football at East Carolina Teachers College in 1940 and '41 for coach John Christenbury, helping his team to a 12-3 record during that span. Tripp was a member of the only undefeated team in school history as the Pirates posted a 7-0 record in 1941. Tripp, who played center, wasn't afforded the opportunity to compete beyond 1941 due to the onset of World War II, which caused ECTC to drop its football program for four years. Tripp graduated from ECTC in 1944 and was elected to the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame in 2004 after a distinguished coaching career at Ayden High School that included two state basketball championships.

—ECU Media Relations
Brooks, Allison to anchor Pirate 'D'
By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector
Friday, August 12, 2011

East Carolina head football coach Ruffin McNeill calls the nose guard the most important position in his team's new 3-4 defense, and he's not about to let just anyone man that post this season.

Instead, the Pirates will have at least two regulars serving as the centerpiece to a new front seven, and as many as four others ready to fill in if needed.

As the Pirates came to the end of the first full week of August camp, junior Michael Brooks was still the leading man to anchor the defensive line, but senior Antonio Allison can expect to be one of the most active top reserves on the team this season.

For both, the switch to a 3-4 setup has meant accepting the fact that now opposing defenses will seemingly come at them from every direction. It's a good thing both Brooks and Allison approach the ferocity of football with a sense of calm and calculation.

“The thing we lacked last year was the mental toughness, and we had a lot of problems trying to finish games,” said Allison, who earned his first three career starts last season playing in the traditional 4-3. “Those are the things we're trying to work on right now, trying to target those little things and trying to stay in top shape.”

Getting to this point has meant enduring some growing pains and some traditional pains. The Pirates' ups and downs in their 6-7 finish to the 2010 season were highlighted by a run of five losses in their last six games. In that span ECU coughed up an average of 50.8 points per game.
While the retooled defense might not be able to solve those problems immediately, especially opening the season Sept. 3 against No. 12 South Carolina, progress is being made.

“I think the 3-4 is going to work out really well,” said Allison, a Statesville native who never played in a 3-4 until now. “We can send blitzes from anywhere. The things we're trying to work on against the heavy run teams like South Carolina is trying to make sure we maintain our techniques so we can shut guys like (sophomore 1,000-yard rusher Marcus) Lattimore down.”

The Pirates were faced with serious physical limitations last year, as Brooks — a major contributor as a freshman in 2009 — was lost for the year with a knee injury and end-turned-linebackers Justin Dixon and Marke Powell were also lost to injury. According to Brooks, an extended rehabilitation and the change in schemes has renewed the ECU defense.

“In this scheme, it's more reading your opponent whereas in the 4-3 we were just flying up field,” said Brooks, who said he has been pain-free since his return for August drills.

“It's a transition, but we're getting used to it and the defense is looking pretty good. It's tough but football is a tough game, and I know if I have a double team or a triple team those guys behind me are coming to make plays.”

As opposed to working in tandem with a second interior lineman and exploding out of a traditional stance like in the 4-3, the nose guard in a 3-4 must learn to read and react to everything an opposing offensive line shows him.

According to Allison, it's been a matter of scrapping much of what he learned even back at West Iredell High School.

“You're basically trying to read and mirror that offensive lineman that you're taking on,” the 6-foot-4, 284-pound Allison said. “You still want to stay low and you still want to engage your hands on the inside, and you use your hip to box out that incoming interior lineman that's coming at you.

“If you don't you'll get washed out of the play and it'll make a big gap.”

Also vying for playing time at nose guard are sophomore Jimmy Booth, juniors Robert Jones and Kemory Mann, redshirts Chrishon Rose and Terry Williams and freshman Terrell Stanley. Newcomer Leroy Vick (knee) is out for the season.

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.
Coples not NCAA's problem

BY ROBBI PICKERAL - Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL North Carolina interim football coach Everett Withers declined to say Thursday whether Tar Heels defensive lineman Quinton Coples would be punished by the team for a sign-out policy mistake that eventually led to the All-ACC player being interviewed by the NCAA.

"The sign-out sheet policy is an internal policy that we have, so anything that happens will be an internal issue in how we handle it," Withers said. "Quinton was cleared by the NCAA, so that issue goes away. What we do is handle anything internally in the family."

Coples said he filed a sign-out sheet in May when he left campus - a policy instituted during the spring semester to track football players' whereabouts whenever they leave campus for 24 hours or more. The team instituted the policy after UNC lost Marvin Austin, Robert Quinn and Greg Little for the entire 2010 season after it was determined they had accepted trips and improper, agent-related benefits.

Coples said Thursday that he failed, when signing out, to inform the team that he would be attending Austin's NFL draft party in Washington, D.C.
NCAA investigators returned to Chapel Hill to interview Coples after a Washington magazine posted pictures from the party on its website. "I signed out, but it was an adjustment that I had to make that I didn't make, which was to inform them that I was going to the party outside the place I was actually going," Coples said. "... I told them where I was going, which I did go to, but when I made that adjustment to go to the party, I just didn't let anyone know. And that's when the whole situation came up."

The NCAA eventually told UNC that Coples did not commit any violations. "I didn't think anything was going to happen," Coples said. "I was just going to celebrate with my former teammates that had just gotten drafted. I felt like some people saw something different and tried to make the situation bigger than what it was. At the end of the day, I was cleared, and I thank God for that and we're moving on."

"That was definitely a learning experience for me."

Williams Speaks: UNC basketball coach Roy Williams addressed the football team earlier this week, and it had an impact.

"I have so much respect for him, and I believe a lot of the things he believes in - in this university and this state," Withers said. "And I felt like his message would be pertinent to our team. He told them about [how] this university is a proud university, and it's a great university to represent, and we need to represent it with class and with pride."

Briefly: Freshman Brandon Ellerbe has been cleared to practice and play by the NCAA Clearinghouse. ... Safety Jonathan Smith confirmed that the reason he was suspended last season was related to academics; he has impressed coaches during training camp. ... Former UNC running back Hunter Furr was expected to be added to ECU's roster, a Pirates spokesman said. As per NCAA transfer rules, Furr must sit out a season before he can play.

Staff writer Luke DeCock contributed to this report.

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Delight and Unease Over Law on Student Vaccinations

By REEVE HAMILTON

Among the things 22-year old Jamie Schanbaum could not have anticipated three years ago was standing two inches taller, winning a national Paralympic gold medal in cycling and reveling in the Texas Legislature’s passage of two bills in her honor. Those gains, however, came after significant losses — most noticeably of both legs below the knee and much of each finger, the result of a bout with meningococcal septicemia in her sophomore year at the University of Texas.

Commonly known as bacterial meningitis, meningococcal disease is a potentially fatal bacterial infection that saddles about one-fifth of its survivors with lifelong effects. Texas had 336 cases in 2009, according to the Department of State Health Services, 34 of them in people ages 15 to 29.

Ms. Schanbaum underwent numerous operations during months in the hospital, where the onset of a flesh-eating bacteria ultimately necessitated the amputations.
“It could have been worse,” Ms. Schanbaum said. “I could have been blind. I could have been deaf. I could have had brain damage. I could have died. I wouldn’t say I feel unlucky at all. I would say I consider this significant.”

So does Texas, which — after Gov. Rick Perry signed the second bill named for Ms. Schanbaum into law in May — became the first state to require every college student to be vaccinated against bacterial meningitis. (The Jamie Schanbaum Act of 2009 already required students living in campus dorms to be vaccinated.)

The new law, which will take effect at the start of 2012, expands that provision to apply to any new student under 30 taking on-campus classes even if they live off campus. While the tweak sounds deceptively simple, it has colleges and universities scrambling to raise awareness of such a broad policy and to figure out how to put it into effect.

Some critics, like Representative David Simpson, Republican of Longview, argue that the new laws amount to government intrusion, though students can opt out for medical or religious reasons.

The most recent bill, introduced in the Senate by Wendy Davis, Democrat of Fort Worth, was also named for Nicolis Williams, a Texas A&M University student who died in February after contracting bacterial meningitis. Mr. Williams, 20, lived off campus.

“I think it brings meaning to Nicolis’s death,” Ms. Davis said of her bill. “From this day forward, we’ll never know, of course, whose life was saved as a consequence, but no doubt there will be people whose lives are saved.”

Nevertheless, Mr. Simpson and 17 other House members opposed the bill. “I’m for freedom,” he said. “I’m not for the government dictating to us what we must do with our bodies.”

Mr. Simpson said it was comparable to what he considers invasive actions by federal airport security officers, which he has publicly challenged, and to a proposed ban on texting while driving that Mr. Perry vetoed — in Mr. Simpson’s view, correctly — for allowing government too much say in the personal lives of drivers.

Mr. Simpson also noted with particular frustration a February ruling in which the Supreme Court ruled that vaccine makers are protected from lawsuits by parents who believe shots harmed their children.

Mr. Williams’s father, Greg, an administrator at Texas Southern University who championed the bill, said, “I knew at the time of his death that there
was probably a bigger plan in place in than I even thought of, because too
many things happened that, in my mind, were more than a coincidence.”

Among those things was an empathetic state representative, Charlie F.
Howard, Republican of Sugar Land, who had also lost a son. Mr. Howard
sponsored the bill in the House.

Most important, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices at the
federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention had just updated its
recommendations for the bacterial meningitis vaccine to include all college
students. The update came after it was found that the vaccination given to
preteenagers was wearing off, leaving all young adults ages 17 to 21
vulnerable, not just those living in crowded dorms.

“There was more distress than I’ve ever seen during my tenure about making
that recommendation solely on the basis of cost,” said Dr. Carol Baker, a
professor at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and the chairwoman of
the advisory committee.

The dispute centered on whether it was worth doubling the price tag of the
vaccination program for such a rare disease. The new recommendation
passed by a single vote.

Though Dr. Baker said potential side effects of the vaccine were unlikely to
be anything more than a sore arm, other people are not convinced.

Dawn Richardson, president of Parents Requesting Open Vaccine
Education, opposed the Davis bill because of fear of more serious side
effects and of what she sees as a false sense of security the inoculation
brings. Ultimately, Ms. Richardson said, she was satisfied by a requirement
that universities give students detailed information about the vaccine and the
ability to opt out of it. “I consider that a big win,” she said.

Preparing informational materials is one of many tasks facing universities as
a result of the law. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, which
oversees the carrying out of new legislation, plans to invite public comments
to address, among other questions, what to do about continuing-education
students who might be on campus for only one or two classes.

There is also the issue of cost. The bill was not expected to create any costs
for the state since the vaccine, which can exceed $100 a dose, is to be paid
for by students or be covered by insurance. But Wanda Mercer, associate
vice chancellor for student affairs for the University of Texas System, sees
complications ahead.
“The administrative record-keeping and follow-up by people that is going to be required for those students who don’t comply — and there will be students who don’t comply — is very expensive,” Ms. Mercer said.

Scott McDonald, assistant vice president for academic services at Texas A&M, said he and his colleagues had yet to determine exactly how to prevent students from attending class if they had not been vaccinated or submitted the necessary forms to opt out.

And what about the woman who started it all? Ms. Schanbaum plans to finish her degree at U.T. and hopes for an invitation to compete with the American cycling team at the 2012 Paralympic Games in London. She and her family also promise to continue advocating for the meningitis vaccine and promoting similar laws in other states.

“We have a good friend in Florida whose son died of the disease,” said Ms. Schanbaum’s mother, Patsy. “So we think we’ll go there next.”

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Law Schools Push Recruiters
AUGUST 12, 2011
By VANESSA O'CONNELL

Thousands of interviews for jobs at law firms are taking place now as top law schools, under mounting pressure to help indebted students snag jobs, increasingly push major law firms to recruit in August, months earlier than in previous years.

Only about one-quarter of last year's graduating law-school classes, down from 33% in 2009, landed positions with big law firms, according to the National Association for Law Placement, an organization that collects employment data. Graduates from the top 25 law schools likely fared better, although NALP doesn't provide data specifically for that group.

Law firms follow an unusual tradition of recruiting the lawyers they eventually plan to hire two years in advance. For example, they are interviewing second-year law students now for summer associate positions that start in May or June 2012. At the end of the 2012 summer, the firms expect, they will then invite almost all the summer hires to work full-time as junior lawyers, likely starting in September 2013.

Hiring by major law firms peaked in 2007 before the onset of the financial crisis. Recruiting has since dropped significantly, due to the recession as well as more lasting changes to the industry, including new technologies that enable law firm partners to do more work with less help from junior lawyers.

By forcing the big firms to recruit in August, rather than as late as the end of October, as in previous years, law schools are hoping to give their students an edge in the competition. "There was a race to the front of the line by law schools," said Keith Wetmore, whose title is chair of Morrison & Foerster LLP, which is sending partners to 28 campuses this month to recruit students for its 2012 summer associate class.

In 2000, for instance, seven law schools held their interviewing weeks in August. By 2009, the number had increased to more than 70, and this year, the figure will top 100, according to Mark Weber, assistant dean for career services at Harvard Law School.

During the market crash of 2008, both Harvard and Yale law schools "went essentially last" in the recruiting season, with their interview weeks in September and October.

"Their students did get hurt, and got fewer offers," said James G. Leipold, executive director of NALP. "Our students still had great jobs, but you do even better when you're at the beginning of the [recruiting] process than the end," Harvard's Mr. Weber said. A spokeswoman for Yale Law School said she couldn't comment.
There are a few signs of improvement in the legal jobs market. But the outlook could change suddenly amid market turmoil of recent weeks.

Several major law firms said they are planning to increase the size of their 2012 summer associate classes, including Bingham McCutchen LLP, which plans to hire almost 29% more students than it did than last year, according to Ari Katz, director of legal recruiting.

"It's going to be a little crazy in the next couple of weeks," said Carol Sprague, director of associate and alumni relations and attorney recruiting at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, which has 2,000 lawyers globally. The firm intends to increase its 2012 summer associate class by more than 66% to at least 150. But that's still half the number in its 2007 summer associate class.

—Nathan Koppel contributed to this article.

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Law Grads Sue Over Tuition
Plaintiffs Claim Alma Maters Misled Students on Job Prospects; Millions Sought

August 11, 2011
By PATRICK G. LEE

Two lawsuits seeking class action status were filed in Michigan and New York on Wednesday against Thomas M. Cooley Law School and New York Law School.

The plaintiffs, who are graduates of the defendant schools, seek $250 million from Cooley and $200 million from NYLS in tuition refunds as well as other damages and reformed methods of reporting their graduates' employment numbers.

The plaintiffs—three against NYLS and four against Cooley—seek "to remedy a systemic, ongoing fraud that is ubiquitous in the legal education industry and threatens to leave a generation of law students in dire financial straits," according to both suits. The NYLS case was filed in the Supreme Court of New York County; Cooley was filed in Western District of Michigan.

The lawsuits allege that the schools have distorted their post-graduate employment information by advertising the percentage of those who secure any kind of job within nine months of graduation, even ones that don't have anything to do with the legal industry. They also allege that the reported amount for graduates' average salaries is inflated since it is derived from the narrow, self-selected pool of people who actually provide that information to the schools.

Jim Thelen, Cooley's general counsel, said that if any of the plaintiffs or their attorneys has issue with how law schools report employment numbers, then they ought to take it up with the American Bar Association, which helps set criteria for collecting data, or even the Department of Education—but not with individual law schools.

"These are nothing other than attempts to bring public attention to this issue," Mr. Thelen said, "and it certainly doesn't seem like the right way to go about it."

New York Law School Dean Richard Matasar said in a statement that the alleged claims "are without merit and we will vigorously defend against them in court."

Plaintiffs' attorney David Anziska said his firm, Kurzon Strauss LLP, decided to sue these two particular law schools in large part because of their large class sizes, with Cooley—at about 1,000 students in each year—the biggest in the country.
In the first stage of what now seems to be turning into a legal showdown, Cooley filed a lawsuit in Michigan state last month against Kurzon Strauss for propagating purportedly defamatory ads on the websites Craigslist and Facebook about the school. The postings were part of the law firm's investigation into how law schools report employment statistics, according to firm partner Jesse Strauss. Mr. Thelan said Kurzon Strauss has not yet responded to the suit from Cooley.

Kurzon Strauss attorneys have until Thursday under Michigan state guidelines to respond to Cooley's lawsuit, Mr. Thelen said.