THE DAILY CLIPS

August 13, 2010

News, commentary, and opinion
compiled by the East Carolina University News Bureau from:

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 Bureau
E-mail to durhamj@ecu.edu  Web site at http://www.news.ecu.edu
252-328-6481
Police review shooting 911 call
By Ginger Livingston
The Daily Reflector
Thursday, August 12, 2010

Greenville police said they are continuing to review tapes of a 911 emergency call made in connection with a Monday morning shooting death.
The Daily Reflector is among area news organizations that have asked the Greenville Police Department to release the 911 call made by Phillip Lewis, 20, who was arrested and charged with murder following the shooting death of Tommy Falcone, 22, a New Jersey native and former East Carolina University student.
Police spokesman Lt. R.A. Williams said Thursday that the review of the tapes is not complete and a decision about when to release the tapes has not been made.
Under North Carolina general statute 132-1, tapes of 911 emergency calls are public records and must be made available on request.
The Daily Reflector requested copies of the tape after Lewis’ defense attorney, Mark Owens III, said his client called police prior to the shooting to report that his vehicle had been damaged.
Owens, speaking Tuesday at Lewis’ first appearance, said his client was told to return to the scene of the incident. Lewis said if he returned to the scene he would be attacked, Owens said.
At some point, Lewis said he was threatened with a golf club and someone punched out a window in his truck.
According to the prosecution, Lewis and Falcone were involved in a fight between two groups of people. Prosecutor Chris Johnson said after the dispute Lewis called friends and they obtained two rifles and a shotgun.
Lewis drove to a church driveway on East 10th Street near Falcone’s apartment complex. Lewis said two men, one armed with a golf club, approached him.
Owens and Johnson didn’t offer differing details about what happened, but when police arrived at the scene they found Falcone, who had been shot once in the back, in the parking lot of a nearby apartment complex.
Falcone was transported to the hospital for treatment but he died.
Lewis is out of jail under a $500,000 cash bond.
Falcone’s funeral is being held Saturday morning in his hometown of Red Bank, N.J.

Contact Ginger Livingston at glivingston@reflector.com or (252) 329-9570.
Tommy C. Falcone

(Asbury Park Press)

TOMMY C. FALCONE
AGE: 22 RED BANK

Tommy C. Falcone, 22, died tragically on Monday, Aug. 9, 2010, in Greenville, N.C. He was born in Freehold and lived in Red Bank all of his life. He attended Red Bank Middle School, where he played sports and was a star member of the chess club. He was a graduate of Red Bank Regional High School, where he played basketball and football with his friends. Tommy attended East Carolina University, where he studied as a biology student. He loved working out and enjoyed snow boarding, Play Station and Xbox. His appearance was the most important. He was thoughtful and loving and known for his loyalty and adventurous spirit. Tommy had a tender heart and he respected everyone.

He is survived by his mother, Cherylann Falcone and her companion John Maffettano of Toms River; Rick Mangold, who raised him like a son; Rebecca Thornton, who treated him like a son; maternal grandfather, Edward Liska; maternal grandmother, Mary Ann Albe; paternal great-grandmother, Veronica Liska; and maternal great-grandmother, Jennie Nagy; uncles, Eddie Liska and his wife Tina and Jason Liska; cousin, Kristy Lee Liska; and many friends. He is also survived by his father, Tom Falcone; paternal grandmother, Charlotte Falcone; and many Falcone family members.

Visitation will be from 4 to 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 13 at John E. Day Funeral Home, 85 Riverside Ave., Red Bank. A Mass will be celebrated at 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 14 at St. James R.C. Church, Red Bank. Interment is private. Please visit Tommy C. Falcone’s memorial website available at www.johndayfuneralhome.com and www.sidun.com.

Published in Asbury Park Press on August 12, 2010
Caitlin Moore, left, of J.H. Rose High School and Jasmine Artis of Ayden-Grifton High School, both 15, spent the summer volunteering in the neonatal intensive care unit at Pitt County Memorial Hospital. Both teens hope to have a career in health care.

Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector

One of Jake Francisco’s jobs as a PCMH volunteer is to find unused wheelchairs and return them to patients who need one.

Rhett Butler/The Daily Reflector
PCMH leads state in teen volunteers
By Kim Grizzard
The Daily Reflector
Thursday, August 12, 2010
Pitt County Memorial Hospital stands to lose hundreds of workers in the next two weeks, but it’s not because anyone is being dismissed.
It’s because school is convening. As area public school students return to classes on Aug. 25, teen volunteers will have to quit their day jobs, costing the hospital 221 of its 832 volunteers.
“Really, that’s a fourth of our (volunteer) population,” said Jennifer Congleton, PCMH’s director of volunteer services. “They will truly be missed when they are not here.”
This summer, PCMH boasts the largest number of teen volunteers of any hospital in the state. Teaching hospitals in Chapel Hill and Winston-Salem reported fewer than half the number of teen volunteers that PCMH has. Duke University Medical Center in Durham and Carolinas Medical Center in Charlotte, both larger than PCMH, had 150 teen volunteers.
“A lot of hospitals don’t do the recruiting,” said Sheila Barnes, assistant director of volunteer services at PCMH. “They do cap them (the number of teen volunteers). Typically we have over 200 every year.”
In an economy in which summer jobs are hard to come by, more teens are turning to volunteer work. A 2009 Harris Interactive survey showed that only 39 percent of teens had a part-time job, but 56 percent volunteered.
Hospitals from Florida to Nebraska report record numbers of students are signing up to become “volunteers,” who may perform clerical work, nursing duties or assist in patient transport. Last summer, volunteers at PCMH contributed more than 11,000 hours of service.
One reason for those numbers is Pitt County Schools’ Health Sciences Academy, a high school curriculum program launched in 2003. Designed for students who plan to pursue health care careers, the academy requires students to complete at least 25 volunteer hours a year.
Thirty-seven percent of PCMH’s teen volunteers are Health Sciences Academy students. Among them is Jake Francisco, 15, who is now in his second summer as a hospital volunteer. Francisco, who hopes to become a radiologist, has put in nearly 250 hours.
“I had to do it for Health Sciences Academy, but then it kind of grew on me and I kept doing it,” said Francisco, a rising sophomore at D.H. Conley High School.
Barnes recruits volunteers from public, private and home schools. About 80 percent of volunteers come from Pitt County, though the hospital does draw teen volunteers from surrounding counties. Some travel from as far as Wake County to don the red and white stripes. PCMH’s volunteers wear the same colors as “candy stripers” first wore in the 1940s, but they are, in many ways, quite different from their predecessors. About 35 percent are male, and not all have an interest in a career in health care. Barnes works to place students in their area of interest so they can get an idea of the kind of duties involved in a potential career.
“We have every profession that any community would have here — physicians, nurses, plumbers, nutritionists ... lawyers,” Congleton said. “You can get just about any kind of job here. I think it offers them a good opportunity to see their chosen career fields or to explore.”

That is what Jessica Griffin of Ayden did when she began volunteering at PCMH in the 1990s. Her mother was nurse, but Griffin, who was 14 at the time, was considering careers in pharmacy or physical therapy.

After volunteering throughout her four years at Ayden-Grifton High School, Griffin went on to get her nursing degree from East Carolina University. She has spent the past nine years at the same hospital where she got her start as a volunteer.

“I just fell in love with it,” Griffin, 32, said. “I’m sure it helped influence my decision to go into health care. It was just a wonderful opportunity for me.”

Congleton said other former volunteers have gone on to become physicians, pharmacists or accountants. Many have remained in Greenville to attend ECU, but others have gone to Princeton, Duke and Howard universities. A number of those have even maintained their ties to PCMH.

“It has been a phenomenal program,” Barnes said. “It has been amazing how many kids graduate from high school, go on to college and still come back and volunteer with us.”

Sixteen-year-old Brian Ennis, now in his second summer as a volunteer, plans to continue volunteering during the school year. He will join about 100 volunteers who report for duty on teacher workdays or other school breaks.

“I really enjoy it because I get a chance to help people,” Ennis said. “It’s a good opportunity for me to see careers in the health care field.”

Ennis who has spent Tuesdays this summer working in pathology, will clock in for an eight-hour day on Aug. 24. The next day, he’ll start his sophomore year at D.H. Conley.

But Ennis’ slot at the hospital won’t remain empty for long. ECU students return to classes Aug. 24.

“We generally don’t have a problem (when high school students go back to school),” Congleton said, “because that’s when our college students come back.”

To serve as a volunteer, students must be at least 14 and have completed the eighth grade. Deadline for fall volunteer applications is Sept. 15; summer deadline is April 15. Call 847-4491 or e-mail volunteer@pcmh.com for an application.

Contact Kim Grizzard at kgrizzard@reflector.com or (252) 329-9578.
By Eric Ferreri - Staff Writer

Tags: local | news

CHAPEL HILL -- Public university students enrolled in a new UNC system health insurance plan can opt out of abortion coverage.

Though the plan covers the procedure, UNC system officials said Thursday that it can be removed from student plans on request. The decision followed complaints from followers of a national anti-abortion organization that didn't want students forced to fund them.

"No student will be required to have this coverage as part of their health care plan, nor will they be paying for anybody else," UNC President Erskine Bowles said Thursday.

Students who choose not to have the abortion coverage won't save any money. The coverage wasn't a factor in the cost of the health care premiums, which are about $350 to $375 per semester, depending on the campus.

"It has no effect on the cost whatsoever," Bowles said. "It didn't before; it won't now."

Bowles' decision came after he and members of the UNC system's Board of Governors received e-mail pleas that were prompted by Students for Life of America, a national organization with affiliates at UNC-Chapel Hill, N.C. State, UNC Charlotte and other universities across the state.

"I think the opt-out [option] is a step in the right direction, but it's not a solution," said Kristan Hawkins, the national organization's executive director. "I don't want anyone to have abortion coverage. Abortion is not quality health care."

Students at UNC system schools are not required to buy health insurance from the system, but, as of this fall, they must have insurance. Before, 11 of 16 campuses required students to have health insurance.

About 90,000 of more than 200,000 eligible students have thus far opted out of the university's health plan by proving they have other insurance, said Joni Worthington, a UNC system spokeswoman. That means that more than half of eligible students are on the UNC plan.

Under the UNC system plan, students would pay up to about $750 a year for at least $100,000 of coverage with a deductible no higher than $300. That means insurance costs would increase a bit for students at many campuses, but premiums would drop for students at UNC-CH, NCSU and five others. And, the overall benefits package would improve, officials say.

For example, until this year, students at Elizabeth City State University were required to pay $456 a year for health insurance, with a $6,000 maximum benefit. Under the UNC system plan, an ECSU student's premium would rise about $250 a year, and the maximum benefit would rise to $100,000.

Until now, NCSU didn't require students to have insurance but offered it annually for $1,161, with a $100,000 maximum benefit. So NCSU students who buy the coverage now save about $400 a year through the UNC system plan.

All students will be notified soon via e-mail that they can opt out of the abortion coverage. Sarah Hardin, president of NCSU Students for Life, dislikes that students must go out of their way to get out of the coverage.

"If there's a pro-life student who misses that e-mail, they'll pay in to an abortion pool?" said Hardin, a senior from Cary. "That's just raising a
Blond hair, blue collar
By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector
Thursday, August 12, 2010

If books were judged by their covers, the Andrew Bodenheimer story would be a summer beach story, possibly adapted to film and shot through the lenses of MTV cameras. But the reality of his show is that Bodenheimer is a blue collar man built underneath strands of flowing blond hair. His story is more “Rocky” than “The Endless Summer,” but the no-nonsense wide receiver from Clemmons is bent on having his day in the sun nonetheless.

The sophomore battled his way from walk-on to one of former coach Skip Holtz’s favorite prodigies. Now, with a scholarship to show for his efforts, Bodenheimer is set to fill an even bigger role under new head coach Ruffin McNeill.

“With a new staff, it was wide open, it was anybody’s for the taking,” said the 6-foot-3, 195-pound Bodenheimer, who mostly has played the Z receiver position in the new ECU offense.

“Coming in (as a freshman), there was already a program built with people slotted into positions. When a new staff comes in, it’s a clean slate, and you get a chance to prove yourself and take a starting role.”

Bodenheimer scrawled a few exclamation points onto the end of a big spring with the Pirates, hauling in a pair of touchdown passes from quarterbacks Brad Wornick and Rio Johnson during the Purple-Gold scrimmage.

Not long after, the former West Forsyth star found himself on a depth chart for the first time in his collegiate career, and he seems to know what got him there.

“In talking to coaches and watching film, I felt like I was consistent,” said Bodenheimer, who is joined by a slew of receivers all looking to fill major roles, including senior Dwayne Harris, juniors Michael Bowman, Darryl Freeney and Joe Womack and sophomore Dayon Arrington.

“I’m not the fastest guy on the field, not the biggest, but I was consistent with my play, and that’s what the coaches are looking for.”

But even when he was making his big splash with the new coaches, Bodenheimer was not a newcomer to the action.

He earned appearances in all 14 games as a redshirt last season, mostly in a special teams role but also including starts at receiver against Houston in the Conference USA championship game and Arkansas at the Liberty Bowl.

Knowing there is speed and playmaking ability throughout the receiving corps, Bodenheimer sees a perfect role for himself as a sure set of hands on the outside lane.
“I’m that possession receiver, and usually I’m going to make the play,” Bodenheimer said. “I might not break a tackle, but I’m consistent catching the ball. We’ve got our playmakers, and the ball can go to any of our receivers, and I’m here to play whatever role they need.” According to McNeill, Bodenheimer’s straightforward approach and reliability have continued to make him noticeable in August camp.

“He has an ability to focus, he’s a very hard worker, and he is consistent in catching the football and moving the chains for us,” McNeill said following Thursday’s workout. “In this offense, there is a spot for that. He’s found that role.”

**The next play**

McNeill said he still wants his team to be sharper in carrying out offensive plays and to always be thinking about the next play, but acknowledged it was showing signs of progress in that regard. In the spread offense of first-year coordinator Lincoln Riley, the next play is never far from the last one.

“The next phase is trying to make sure we play the next play, whether it’s a good play or a bad play, play the next play, and I thought we did a good job of that today,” McNeill said.

**Dixon’s switch**

Linebacker Justin Dixon, a former North Carolina signee who is up and running with the Pirates after sitting out last season to meet eligibility requirements, is already making a move. The versatile Dixon has shifted forward to defensive end, where McNeill said he feels the player’s versatility and athleticism will be better utilized.

“Justin is a powerful individual,” McNeill said. “He’s such a great athlete, we’ve got to find a place where he can help us right now. A team player like Justin is, he was happy to do it to help the football team.”

**Schultz gone**

Sophomore safety Jack Schultz decided to part company with the ECU football program on Wednesday after completing the full morning segment of the Pirates’ two-a-day workout. The former walk-on appeared poised to see a greater role on the team. He played in nine games in 2009.

Contact Nathan Summers at nssummers@reflector.com or (252)329-9595.
N.C. native, former wrestling CEO McMahon wins U.S. Senate primary

Associated Press
2010-08-12 00:44:35

HARTFORD, Conn. — North Carolina native Linda E. McMahon, an extraordinarily wealthy political rookie who just one year ago was largely unknown outside of her industry, won Tuesday's three-way Republican primary for one of Connecticut's U.S. Senate seats.

McMahon, the former World Wrestling Entertainment CEO, captured 49 percent of the vote, defeating Rob Simmons and Peter Schiff. She now faces Democrat Richard Blumenthal in a November battle to fill the U.S. Senate seat long held by Christopher Dodd.

McMahon was born and raised in New Bern. According to her website, linda2010.com, she "was a high school honor society student who was also fond of basketball and tennis. She graduated from East Carolina University in Greenville with a Bachelor of Science in French and certified to teach. She and her husband, Vince, were married in 1966.

"The McMahons have resided in Greenwich, Conn., for more than 30 years."

"I pledge to you today that I will be the voice for change," McMahon told cheering supporters, who enjoyed food and an open bar at the Crowne Plaza in Cromwell while waiting for the results. "Our campaign starts tonight, and it starts with all of you. For the first time in decades, we are going to send a Republican senator to Washington."

Survivor's "Eye of the Tiger" blared over the sound system as McMahon took the stage. She thanked Simmons and Schiff for a good race and urged them to help her get elected. "Families don't always get along and don't always agree, but in the end, they do stand together," she said.

Simmons — the one-time front-runner who dropped out of the race after coming up short at the Republican convention in May, only to halfheartedly reignite his campaign in late July — conceded at 9:45 p.m.

"The numbers that have come in show that we continue to be very competitive against Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, but those numbers don't count unless you win the primary," he said, standing with his wife, Heidi, outside his Stonington home.

He ruled out an independent bid and pledged to help McMahon. Their rivalry was marked by acrimony, but on a personal level, the relationship was cordial, Simmons insisted. "I have congratulated her and her team for their great victory and I have pledged my support for them in the coming months," he said.

Schiff, a broker and financial pundit who drew support among the tea party movement, drew a small but enthusiastic band of followers from across the nation, but his message about the coming collapse of the U.S. economy failed to find broad support in Connecticut. "At this point, Linda is our only shot at beating Blumenthal, so I guess we have to support her," he said, a prospect that brought groans from his supporters.
UNC cap on tuition is shaky

BY ERIC FERRERI - STAFF WRITER
Tags: local | news

CHAPEL HILL -- UNC system officials hope to decide by the end of the year whether a 6.5 percent cap on annual tuition increases still makes sense.

A group of tuition and financial aid experts from across the UNC system is recommending that the four-year-old cap be loosened so tuition can go higher if state money lags. The group suggests that the cap could rise if the state provides less money to the university in a given year than the 6 percent increase it has averaged over time.

If the state subsequently provided more than a 6 percent increase, the tuition cap would be lowered again.

The 6.5 percent cap was put in place in 2006 at the behest of UNC President Erskine Bowles, who took office that year trumpeting the need for more predictable tuition growth.

The cap did help keep tuition increases under control - for a while. Tuition rose about 3 percent a year from 2007 until last year, a notable achievement compared to double-digit increases in other cash-strapped states.

"Every university system would have loved to hold tuition to those levels," Bowles said Thursday during a meeting of the UNC system's Board of Governors.

But faced with a huge budget shortfall this year, the legislature allowed supplemental tuition increases of up to $750 for public universities, causing tuition bills to leap more than 23 percent.

Student leaders have long pushed for consistency in tuition planning.

Many have pleaded for predictability, while acknowledging that tuition inevitable rises.

"It's a very sensible approach," N.C. Central University Chancellor Charlie Nelms said of the 6.5 percent cap. "No matter how much money you get or how little you get, it's the student who is impacted. You get some sense of where you're going two, three, four years down the road."

Tuition at N.C. State University and UNC-Chapel Hill for the coming year tops $4,800 for in-state undergraduates. At NCCU, in-state undergrads will pay about $2,800.

Those rates don't include fees, room, board, books and other expenses.

eric.ferreri@newsobserver.com or 919-932-2008

Get the biggest news in your email or telephone as it's happening. Sign up for breaking news alerts.
For holy days, N.C. bends a bit

On days when faith and school collide, Sana Khan of Raleigh has learned to compromise.

Though the UNC-Chapel Hill senior would prefer no distractions on Eid al-Fitr, a Muslim holy day marking the end of Ramadan, a lecture or exam may beckon.

"You have to weigh the pros and cons of missing class," said Khan, president of the campus Muslim Students Association. "We'll go to prayer in the morning and back to class in the afternoon."

A new state law may ease Khan's predicament. It requires all school systems, community colleges and public universities to allow students at least two excused absences each academic year for religious observances. The law standardizes an informal practice. But some administrators hope it won't create exam-week havoc.

The law attempts to ease the minds of parents who want to take their children out of class to observe holidays not recognized by school systems, said state Rep. Rick Glazier, a Cumberland County Democrat who co-sponsored the bill. Generally, parents and school leaders are able to work around religious obligations, but parents sometimes grow frustrated when educators are unwilling to accommodate them, said Glazier, a former Cumberland County school board member.

"There's no reason for any parent or child to worry about these absences," Glazier said. "It's an easy fix."

The law sends a supportive message to families, said Sheri Strickland, president of the N.C. Association of Educators.

"I don't know it will change the number of times a child is out," Strickland said. "But it will let the child and the family know it is a very reasonable excuse for missing school."

In the Triangle, many school systems and public colleges and universities have policies excusing absences for religious observances. But they don't specify how many or say which holidays make the cut. The new law sets two observances as a minimum, but school systems and colleges can allow more, Glazier said. The law doesn't specify the observances to which it applies, and Glazier said common sense should prevail. Parents or students should notify campus officials in advance of the observance.

"It has to be a bona fide holiday; you don't get to just take the day off because you want to pray at home," Glazier said. "But we didn't try to define it."

That might be problematic, warns Ron Strauss, executive associate provost at UNC-Chapel Hill, where a committee will figure out how to put the law into practice.

"If you look at an interfaith calendar, there's hardly a day in the year that isn't a faith day for someone," Strauss said.

While the university supports the new law, Strauss said he hoped it wouldn't prompt too many absences during final exams, a weeklong
Numbering the days

At UNC-CH, fall semester finals run from Dec. 10 to Dec. 17. That means Catholic students who observe the Our Lady of Guadalupe feast day, Dec. 12, have a conflict. In the spring, the April 29 to May 6 exam period runs up against the Jewish holiday Yom HaSho'ah and the Baha'i holiday known as the Twelfth Day of Ridvan. Those holidays may not cause much conflict, but key Jewish holidays may, said Ari Gauss, executive director of N.C. Hillel, which serves Jewish college students. Passover and Sukkot each stretch about a week, while Rosh Hashana runs for multiple days as well, Gauss said.

"Two days may not be enough, actually," Gauss said. "But in reality, there are not a lot of real traditional students here, so they don't observe them all. And usually, professors are very accommodating."

At N.C. State University, students generally work out their holiday needs with professors case by case, registrar Louis Hunt said. Athletes and musicians tend to require more excused absences than students with religious obligations, and the university has little trouble accommodating them, Hunt added.

Public school systems have occasional holiday dust-ups when creating or changing academic calendars. In 2003, Wake County school officials considered holding classes on Good Friday but opted not to after Christian parents complained. Jewish parents also complained when the school board scheduled school on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish year, in order to make up a day lost to Hurricane Isabel.

Melissa Segal, mother of three Chapel Hill schoolchildren, welcomes the new law. Although she hasn't run into trouble taking her youngsters out of class for the occasional Jewish holiday, she thinks the law will make life easier for families.

Still, the missed days are a sacrifice. As children get older, the makeup work grows more arduous.

"It's always hard to miss a day, whether it's for being sick or for a religious holiday," said Segal, whose children are 8, 11 and 13 years old. "As kids get older, it does get a little bit harder because there's more work."

eric.ferreri@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4563
Two new ways to get the latest sports updates: On Twitter, and on Facebook

Pack drafts policy

BY KEN TYSIAC - STAFF WRITER

RALEIGH -- N.C. State moved forward with plans to begin a new policy to make sure "at-risk" athletes are attending class and to discipline them when they don’t.

Members of the university athletic council's academic committee agreed on Thursday morning to send a draft of a temporary plan for the fall semester to school administrators for approval and immediate implementation.

During the fall, the council will work on a permanent policy to begin in the spring semester. The temporary policy could become permanent if administrators believe it is effective. Previously, individual coaches were allowed to create their own policies for athletes who missed class.

The new plan will identify athletes who are "at risk" academically according to three criteria:

• Those who have a cumulative grade-point average below 2.2.

• New students who were accepted into school as "special admittance" exceptions.

• Others who are placed in the group because of excessive absences or academic underperformance.

Carrie Leger, who directs N.C. State's academic support program for athletes, estimates that about 80 of the school's 550 athletes will fall into one of the three categories.

State athletic director Debbie Yow has approved $22,000 to pay a graduate assistant to oversee the daily attendance reports, as well as monitors who will meet with at-risk athletes outside their classrooms before each class to confirm their attendance.

After the first unexcused absence, an e-mail will be sent to the athletes, their coaches and parents, reminding them of the policy. A second unexcused absence would result in a warning that the next time they miss class without an excuse, they will be suspended for their team's next scheduled competition.

A third unexcused absence would result in the one-game suspension. Athletes who miss class unexcused for a fourth time will be suspended from 10 percent of their playing season. The staff will "round up" when calculating the 10 percent; for example, a football player missing 10 percent of a 12-game season will miss two games.

The policy grew out of a concern over N.C. State's low percentage of athletes who are graduating. The school's athletes' four-class average federal graduation rate of 54 percent in 2009 ranked 12th in the ACC. The student body's overall four-class graduation rate of 70 percent also ranked 12th, and N.C. State chancellor Randy Woodson and others at the school are eager to improve both numbers.

Some other schools, including East Carolina, have implemented similar department-wide policies.

In 2007, the Southeastern Conference passed a rule requiring each of its member schools to establish an attendance policy. Duke and North Carolina do not have department-wide attendance policies.
Yow said the policy was so successful in getting athletes to take class seriously that no athlete in six years was forced to miss even a single competition because of unexcused absences.

In 2004, Maryland’s four-class average federal graduation rate was 66 percent for athletes. That increased to 70 percent by 2009.

"It's made a significant impact," Yow said.

Yow was asked why she recommended the policy just for at-risk athletes and not for all of them.

She said cost was one factor and said there's little need to monitor attendance among students who already are succeeding in the classroom.

Sam Pardue, a professor of poultry science who is N.C. State's faculty athletic representative, said the policy is good because it puts at-risk student-athletes on notice the minute they miss one class. He said the disciplinary measures also could be severe when a student has three unexcused absences.

"It could be postseason," he said. "It could be a bowl game. It could be a tournament game."

kyeiac@charlotteobserver.com or 919-829-8942
Inquiry on Harvard Lab Threatens Ripple Effect

By NICHOLAS WADE

Harvard’s slow-motion inquiry about the laboratory of Marc Hauser, one of its star academics, has cast a shadow over the several different fields in which Dr. Hauser and his students published papers.

So far only one of Dr. Hauser’s articles has been retracted, for unspecified reasons, and two have been amended. Harvard has given no reason for the retraction, leaving researchers to wonder whether that article alone was flawed or whether all of Dr. Hauser’s results are suspect. He and his students have published widely in fields ranging from animal communication to the nature of morality.

“Most universities in these situations try to be open because that is usually the best policy,” said Michael Tomasello, a leading psychologist at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany. “We have no statement from anyone, just one withdrawn paper. The scientific community needs to know if this was a quirk or a pattern.”

Jeff Neal, a public affairs officer at Harvard, suggested in an e-mail that it was up to the federal government, which financed some of the research, to publish any report on the case. Harvard reports any findings about research misconduct to the government, he said, and “in cases where the government concludes scientific misconduct occurred, the federal agency makes those findings publicly available.”

The Office of Research Integrity, a federal agency, investigates cases of academic misconduct. Jennifer Bushnick, a spokeswoman, said she could not confirm or deny there was a case pending into the Hauser matter. In any case, she said, no report is imminent.

Mr. Neal also said Harvard had taken steps to see that the scientific record was corrected because the university had directed Dr. Hauser, and in one instance his colleague, “to explain the issues with these articles to the academic journals that published those papers.”

The journal Cognition is about to retract an article published by Dr. Hauser and others in
2002 that suggested cotton-top tamarin monkeys could learn algebraic rules. The retraction says an internal examination at Harvard “found that the data do not support the reported findings,” adding that Dr. Hauser “accepts responsibility for the error.”

In the case of two other articles, one published in Science in 2007 and the other in The Proceedings of the Royal Society, also in 2007, the Harvard panel found that records of part of the data did not exist or were incomplete. Dr. Hauser and his co-author, Justin Wood of the University of Southern California, have said they then returned to the island of Cayo Santiago, in Puerto Rico, where they study free-ranging rhesus monkeys, and redid the experiments reported in the two journals, obtaining the same results as published.

The Proceedings has published an “addendum” stating this fact. Science magazine has received a letter to the same effect from Dr. Wood and is deciding whether to publish a retraction.

Dr. Wood declined to discuss how the original data came to be missing, saying in an e-mail Thursday that “the details of the investigation are confidential, so I have no further information to provide.”

Though Harvard has corrected the record on these three articles, the university’s action has raised the larger problem of how far the many other articles from Dr. Hauser’s prolific pen can be trusted. Since the committee has made no charges public, the nature of Dr. Hauser’s errors is unknown and could fall anywhere within a wide range, from minor sins like sloppiness and bad record-keeping to self-deception to outright fabrication of data.

“We don’t know what he’s been accused of and what his particular role in all of this was,” said Robert Seyfarth, a leading student of animal behavior at the University of Pennsylvania. “Science is cumulative, and there are many scientists in many related fields who would like to build on Marc’s work, and they have no way of judging what’s besmirched and what’s not.”

Much of Dr. Hauser’s work is written with other researchers, including his students, putting all those who published with him under a possible cloud until Harvard makes clear what happened. These co-authors “run the risk of being tarred with the same brush,” Dr. Seyfarth said. “Something must be done to say what was done by whom and when, so that the role of the students, or hopefully the lack of it, can be clarified.”