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There are few signs that more readily proclaim the pending end of another summer than the sight of young people and their parents unloading armfuls of essentials on the campus of East Carolina University. The students’ return to Greenville is a certain indication that, in a matter of weeks, the region’s balmy temperatures and humid mugginess will be replaced with the crisp air of autumn.

Today, the fall semester begins for East Carolina’s 103rd class of students and the rest of an estimated 27,300 young men and women seeking degrees here. May they all take full advantage of the challenges and opportunity available to them as they walk the campus, fill the classrooms and instill greater life into this community, at the center of which sits the university.

A drive through the East Carolina campus over the weekend found it bursting with life. There were days set aside for the 5,600 young people to move into the residence halls on campus, forming a river of humanity moving from cars to rooms. Fifth Street, home to several Greek organizations, was bustling with activity as well as those groups readied for a new year. And there was, of course, the nightlife of the first weekend, with all the chaos it brings.

That social aspect of college is not one lost on East Carolina, for years ranked among the top party schools in the country to the chagrin of numerous school officials. A series of administrations has toiled to turn attention toward the university’s impressive academics and have done so with success. Wear an ECU shirt in another town and one is more apt to hear about famous alums like Sandra Bullock, Scott Avett and David Garrard than the annual Halloween madness.

That is with good reason. The university’s performance and reputation continue to improve and now speak for themselves. The Brody School of
Medicine is an institution of widespread acclaim and boasts among its faculty numerous respected doctors. The College of Business consistently receives high marks in national ranking and many other campus programs are highly distinguished.

And now, into that wellspring of opportunity come the class of 2016 and the thousands of their peers for another year. Let them use this time to learn more about their chosen subjects, but also about this community and the wider world that sits at their doorstep. Wish them the best of luck in their pursuits, as they enter this center of education and all that awaits their eager minds.
The Wilmington Star News

Published: August 21, 2012

Editorial

All schools must take action to make student athletes accountable

The scandal rocking the Tar Heels football program is an embarrassment to a university known for academic excellence. But let’s not kid ourselves that the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is the only school in which athletes are allowed to skate by, skirt the rules and leave college no more educated than they were the day they arrived.

An investigation of other schools would likely find the same things. Talented athletes are recruited, play, and often they stay only long enough for a professional franchise to know their name. More and more, pro-bound college athletes drop out after their sophomore or even freshman year. Often during their stay they enroll in less demanding or easy-pass courses, going through the motions.

Finally, after the scope of the football academic scandal has gone beyond a single instructor, the university has enlisted former Gov. Jim Martin and a national consulting group to lead an investigation and to recommend ways to improve accountability and academics. But they should not stop with the football program. Look at all sports, especially those that send their athletes to the pros.

It doesn’t take an “expert,” however, to make a few simple suggestions that could help restore at least some semblance of “student” to the term “student athlete.” But let’s make the change nationally. For starters:

– Transparency. An excellent report by The News & Observer of Raleigh looked at the transcripts of two now-professional athletes and former Tar Heels whose transcripts revealed very little actual education going on. Imagine what we would discover if all the transcripts were opened. Programs should be required to report annually the grade point averages of all athletes. Even if federal privacy rules protect individual student records, there should be a way to list courses, grades and GPAs so that both officials and the public can better monitor athletes’ classroom performance. Otherwise we will continue to see scandals such as the one at Carolina.
– Standards. Any student who cannot meet the minimum GPA should be suspended from play until he or she brings the average up. Period. It is clear that was not happening at UNC. A university’s academic arm should assert full control of the courses in which athletes are enrolled and help steer students toward courses that will be of some use after they leave school. For athletes who likely will go pro, a healthy dose of accounting, finance and business courses would serve them much better than a shadow course you don’t even have to attend to pass.

– Pay it forward. Any athlete who does not stay to graduation should be required to repay the scholarship money they have taken, along with the cost of their room, board and use of university resources and facilities, with the money going back into a merit scholarship fund for low-income students. At today’s salaries this would be a drop in the bucket, but it could mean a lot to a serious student who otherwise might not be able to afford an education.

It is important to note that elite athletics programs are funded largely through private donations or endorsements, and that without question, sports add a lot to a campus and enhance the college experience.

But the term “student athlete” should mean something. Otherwise, let’s just call our elite athletic programs what they are: farm teams for the pros.
N.C. State students cross Dan Allen Drive at the crosswalk, near the Dan Allen Parking Deck, which leads to Valentine Commons, a new student housing community, on Monday, August 20, 2012. In October the university will install a gate near the middle of the road to block through traffic (except buses) on weekdays when class is in session, in order to promote bus and foot travel.

**Road Worrier: NCSU will curb cut-through traffic on Dan Allen Drive**

By Bruce Siceloff - bsiceloff@newsobserver.com

RALEIGH Just when you thought you’d figured out how to drive around N.C. State University after the city rectified its redesign of Hillsborough Street, we bring you a new plan from NCSU to close a busy campus road – but only for some traffic, and only sometimes.

Dan Allen Drive carries as many as 19,000 vehicles a day north and south through the main campus. Most of this traffic involves students, faculty and NCSU employees bound for campus destinations along Dan Allen’s side streets. But one car out of every five makes the trip from end to end, between Hillsborough and Western Boulevard.

This through traffic will be affected in a big way starting in late October, when NCSU installs access gates to restrict travel on Dan Allen Drive. The gates will close only between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays when NCSU classes are in session. Through traffic will not be impeded at other times.
The barriers will open automatically for emergency responders, campus service vehicles and buses on Dan Allen – and that’s one reason they’re there. NCSU’s crowded Wolfline buses make their rounds on schedule just 60 percent of the time these days, and campus officials put part of the blame on the daily Dan Allen traffic jam.

“The object of this is to try to get the buses running on time,” said Tom Kendig, the NCSU transportation director.

The other reason for restricting cars is to make Dan Allen safe for growing throngs of pedestrians and cyclists. The opening this summer of the Valentine Commons high-rise student apartments, just west of Dan Allen, added 900 pairs of feet pounding the crosswalks each day.

Wolfline buses carry 14,000 riders a day, almost as many as the city’s Capital Area Transit system. The big red Wolfline buses shuttle riders between remote parking lots and campus offices, and between the old campus and Centennial Campus south of Western Boulevard.

The university wants students and staff to park their cars and ride the buses even more than they do now. So it has to make its buses more reliable.

“We want to relieve folks from thinking they have to drive their cars to get around on campus,” Kendig said.

A busy stretch

On a weekday morning it can take 10 minutes or longer to drive the half mile of Dan Allen, with cars sometimes clogging the Hillsborough and Western intersections at either end. The Dan Allen parking deck just north of the tracks serves 1,200 campus employees, and their workday schedule is one reason NCSU will keep the gates open from 9 to 5.

The gates won’t be at the entrances to Dan Allen. They’ll be near the middle, at the railroad overpass. So the big parking deck and Yarbrough Drive, just north of the tracks, will be accessible only from Hillsborough Street when the gates are down.

To reach destinations on the south side of the railroad – including Thurman Drive, Cates Avenue, various athletic facilities, student health and the Witherspoon Center – you’ll have to enter Dan Allen from Western Boulevard.

And if you’re just a Raleigh civilian looking for a path between Hillsborough and Western, you’ll have to look elsewhere: to Gorman Street or Pullen Road, each more than a half-mile away.
Dan Allen is a university street, so the City of Raleigh and the state Department of Transportation have no jurisdiction over it.

City officials worry that NCSU’s plan will just shift Dan Allen’s traffic congestion to other streets in the neighborhood.

“I agree it makes a lot of sense for them to look at solutions that keep students moving efficiently,” said Russ Stephenson, a Raleigh City Council member who lives a few blocks from the campus. “The downside is if we start restricting vehicle traffic through there, it’s going to add to congestion elsewhere.”

Getting the word out

Electronic message boards on Hillsborough and Western will alert drivers to the change in October, Kendig said. If drivers turn onto Dan Allen anyway, between the witching hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., they’ll be able to drive back out of the campus using loop roads on either side of the tracks.

Similar concern for buses and pedestrians helped shape Raleigh’s $9.9 million makeover in 2010 for eight blocks of Hillsborough Street. Scores of crashes were blamed on a baffling, two-ring roundabout at Pullen Road – prompting city officials last month to give it a simpler, one-ring design.

Stephenson hopes NCSU never decides to close the Dan Allen gates around the clock because Raleigh drivers make good use of it as a through street.

But the new plan could prove vexing in its own way as drivers on Hillsborough and Western wonder what time it is, and whether this is a class day on campus – in other words, whether it’s OK to drive down Dan Allen.

“Hopefully it won’t be as confusing as a two-lane roundabout,” Stephenson said.

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Who was Dan Allen?

"Dan Allen, who lived from 1875-1929, was one of Raleigh’s earliest developers and real estate agents. He accumulated considerable wealth, which he was constantly contributing to various causes and individuals. He was an alumnus in agriculture (Class of 1896), and a lifelong bachelor. His wide benevolence was for local girl’s schools, churches, and individuals, both black and white. Because of his high community regard, he was an influential supporter in politics and civic endeavors."

Excerpted from “Place Names on the Campus of North Carolina State University,” by Hardy D. Berry
Rand on campus

Colleges and universities never seem to have enough money to do all the things they need or want to do. They’re always trying to cultivate deep-pocketed donors.

But when donors want to finance specific courses of study, the conclusion has to be drawn that they’re aiming to shape the curriculum to suit their own purposes. That puts the institution on thin ice in risking that scholarship will be skewed by politics.

On thin ice is where several North Carolina institutions find themselves, having accepted grants in recent years to fund instruction featuring the works of Ayn Rand, novelist and conservative political theorist. Rand has lately been in the news because she has been championed by the Republican candidate for vice president, Paul Ryan.

The grants have come from the charitable foundation of BB&T, whose now-retired chairman, John Allison, was a Rand enthusiast. As of 2008, the bank’s 37 grants to support instruction about capitalism and free markets had totaled $38 million; the bank declined to provide an updated total in response to a query from The N&O. Recipients have included a number of North Carolina’s public and private colleges and universities.

N.C. State University, which won a grant totaling $2 million over 10 years, established the BB&T Center for the Study of Free Markets and Institutions. Its aim has been to infuse economics study with a liberal arts perspective and to expose students to a broad range of ideas. Well and good – but the line between instruction and indoctrination can be a fine one.

A healthier example was set by Meredith College, which in 2005 turned down a BB&T grant out of concern that academic independence would be compromised.

Whether the push comes from the right or left, offers from ideologically motivated donors should elicit the same response: If the money comes with no strings attached, it can be gratefully accepted. If there are strings, better not to become entangled.
Peppers donates $250K to UNC scholarship fund

By Andrew Carter - acarter@newsobserver.com

CHAPEL HILL–Julius Peppers donated $250,000 to a University of North Carolina scholarship fund that supports African-American students, the school announced Monday.

The donation came almost one week after the posting of his transcript on a UNC website became a national story. The transcript showed that Peppers, who played football at North Carolina from 1999 through 2001, was barely academically eligible throughout his time there.

In a statement he released Saturday, Peppers described the past week as “upsetting and challenging” and said “I’m terribly disappointed” that his academic record became public. He said he was “thinking of ways that I can use my experience and resources to help” students.

His $250,000 donation will go into the Light on the Hill Society Scholarship fund, which supports African-American students at North Carolina. He made a $100,000 donation to the same fund in 2009.

“After considering the ways that I might be able to help young college students, I decided to continue my support of the Light on the Hill scholarship,” Peppers said in a statement the university released Monday. “I would like to endorse this particular fund and encourage other former UNC students who have found success to reach back and assist the efforts of current and future Tar Heels.”

Peppers, an African and Afro-American Studies major, left school after the 2001 football season. He never graduated, and his transcript revealed that his grades in AFAM courses helped him retain eligibility to play football. He also played two seasons on the basketball team, and helped the Tar Heels to the 2000 Final Four.

Richard Williams, the chair of the Light on the Hill Society board, praised Peppers.

“This gift is indicative of the kind of man Julius Peppers has become,” Williams said in a statement. “I am very proud that he credits his experiences at Chapel Hill for helping to shape him. He has really thought deeply about his life, opportunities taken, opportunities lost, his legacy.

“With this generous gift he wants to help young people make good decisions during their college years.”
Registration cancellations rising at UNCG, A&T

By Jonnelle Davis, Staff Writer

GREENSBORO — UNCG about two weeks ago canceled the registrations of about 1,300 students because they had yet to pay their tuition bills — the highest number of cancellations since fall 2009, university officials said.

N.C. A&T is also seeing an increase in the number of students facing cancellation. The schools’ officials attribute their numbers to a variety of factors, including tuition increases and cuts and other changes in state and federal financial aid programs.

“Every lost soul is unacceptable to me, and it really hurts when we have to cancel that many registrations,” said Steve Roberson, UNCG dean of undergraduate studies.

By Friday, UNCG had managed to whittle that number to just 500, according to preliminary data.

But administrators are concerned about the large number of students who are having trouble paying this year.

UNCG Vice Provost Alan Boyette said recently that some students ran into problems because they did not apply for financial aid on time, or their financial aid had not yet been packaged. So, he expected that initial number would be reduced.

He said enrollment this year is “really unpredictable.” The university is gauging payments and registration on a near daily basis to get a feel for what the final number will be, he said.

“We think the timing is clearly related to the current economy,” Boyette said of the number of students paying late.

Sarah Carrigan, UNCG director of institutional research, said Friday that UNCG canceled 1,300 student registrations between July 31 and Aug. 8.

That’s an increase of about 500 over last year at that same time, she said.

As of Friday, about 800 of those students had paid to register again, Carrigan said.
A&T has also had a slight increase in the number of students who risk having their registrations canceled, said Akua Matherson, the university interim associate vice chancellor for enrollment management.

As of late Friday afternoon, the university was scheduled to cancel the registrations of 541 students, Matherson said.

That’s a 2.5 percent increase from last year, she said.

Those students had until the close of business Friday to make some kind of arrangement to keep their registration.

Staff from both universities spent much of the summer reaching out to students who were eligible to return to school but had not registered to find out what their problems are and to offer solutions.

More than 80 percent of A&T students qualify for need-based aid. Staff members have talked to families whose financial situations have changed, such as one parent losing a job.

“Some of our students are looking at some real challenges,” Matherson said.

Deborah Tollefson, UNCG financial aid director, has heard similar stories of parents’ stretched incomes.

She said that counselors steer students away from private loans.

Instead, they inform them of such options as federal loans, part-time campus employment and tuition payment plans if they are having trouble paying.

Tollefson said that UNCG has received a lot of late financial aid applications this year. Students who didn’t have to take out loans two or three years ago are now having to but are unfamiliar with the process, she said.

A&T had 10,590 students enrolled as of Wednesday, the first day of classes. UNCG’s latest enrollment figures showed an enrollment of 17,800. Students there start classes today.

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Controversial cancer researcher working in ND

The Associated Press

GRAND FORKS, N.D.—A cancer researcher who resigned from Duke University in North Carolina two years ago and left a South Carolina clinic earlier this year following a CBS "60 Minutes" report about his research is now working in North Dakota.

Anil Potti is a medical oncologist at the Cancer Center of North Dakota in Grand Forks, the Grand Forks Herald reported (http://bit.ly/SclPZf).

William Noyes, who founded the center, said Potti has worked with him since May.

Potti came under scrutiny in 2010 after questions arose about his claim to be a Rhodes Scholar and about the integrity of his research. He resigned late that year. The North Carolina Medical Board concluded that Potti acted unprofessionally - a finding he did not challenge.

Noyes said Potti was unfairly accused, and that his work at Duke that was questioned involved research and not patient care. The Grand Forks center works with patients and does not conduct clinical trials.

"There's never been an issue of patient care," Noyes said. "Most, if not all, his patients have loved him."

A telephone listing in Grand Forks for Potti could not be found. Noyes told the Herald that Potti is away from the clinic until Aug. 28.

Potti, 40, a native of India, has ties to the Grand Forks region. He did his residency in a University of North Dakota program from 1996 to 2000, and taught at the UND medical school from 2000 to 2003.

"If a guy can't get a second chance here in North Dakota, where he trained, man, you can't get a second chance anywhere," Noyes said.

There is no mention of Potti on the Cancer Center's website but that is due to design problems, Noyes said.

North Dakota's State Board of Medical Examiners on July 27 voted unanimously to grant Potti a license to practice medicine, said Duane Houdek, the board's executive director. Potti had been working under a provisional license since May.
The board looked at Potti's public reprimand in North Carolina as well as the Duke scandal. The public reprimand issued by the North Carolina board is a light discipline that didn't restrict Potti's practice of medicine, Houdek said.

Houdek said the issue with the Duke clinical trials "is disturbing," but that "we did not see anything in his history that had to do with competency of direct patient care or anything like that. That was the basis for our issuing him a license."

Houdek said Potti has settled about a dozen malpractice lawsuits filed by patients but that they all appear to be related to the clinical trials at Duke.

More Hispanics Are in College, Report Finds

By RICHARD PÉREZ-Peña

College enrollment has soared for Hispanic young adults in the last few years, by some measures reaching levels similar to those among young blacks, according to a study released Monday.

Among Americans ages 18 to 24 with a high school diploma or equivalent, 46 percent of Hispanics were enrolled in college last year, up from 37 percent in 2008, according to the report by the Pew Hispanic Center. The report was based on data from the Census Bureau and the Department of Education.

Black enrollment last year in the same age group stood at 45 percent, the first time the nation’s two largest minority groups were roughly even on that score in the decades that the information has been collected. Among whites, 51 percent of 18- to 24-year-old high school graduates were in college; 67 percent of Asians in that group were in college.

The number of young Hispanics enrolled in college, which surpassed black enrollment for the first time in 2010, jumped to almost 2.1 million last year, from about 1.3 million in 2008. That is partly a product of a swelling Hispanic population, as well as the increased rate of college attendance.

But it also reflects a fast-rising high school graduation rate. In the 1990s, fewer than 60 percent of Hispanics 18 to 24 had a high school diploma, but that figure hit 70 percent for the first time in 2009, and 76 percent last year.

That high school completion rate, however, still remains below the national rate of 85 percent (81 percent for blacks), limiting the number of Hispanics who are eligible for college.

In addition, Hispanic students, compared with other groups, are far more likely to attend community colleges and less likely to go to four-year colleges, according to the study.
For this year's crop of college freshmen, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis and Kurt Cobain have always been dead, women have always piloted warplanes and space shuttles, and M&Ms have never been tan.

The class of 2016 grew up in cyberspace, a factor that has increasingly influenced how today's undergraduates approach the world, authors of two recent works say.

These cultural touchstones are part of a 100-item "Mindset List," released Tuesday by Beloit College, that describes what "normal" looks like for students born in 1994. Produced annually since 1998 as a cheat sheet to help faculty avoid making outdated references, the Mindset Lists have evolved into a catalog of generational change.

In a companion guide published for the first time this year, list creators Ron Nief and Tom McBride say members of the fall 2012 entering class are addicted to all things electronic and "think nothing of texting a friend whom they know is only a block away."

Nief and McBride stress that they're drawing a portrait of the incoming class, not judging it. Still, many of their observations parallel those in a book, to be published in September, that takes a starker view.

In Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today's College Student, authors Arthur Levine and Diane Dean conclude that today's undergraduates are electronically far more sophisticated than their parents or teachers, yet woefully unprepared for the real world. The authors characterize them as coddled, entitled and dependent.

"This is a generation with an average of 241 social media friends, but they have trouble communicating in person," says Levine, president of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation and author of two previous books about college students.

The book and this year's Mindset List note the impact of the worldwide recession. Today's freshmen have "entered college with questions about jobs, whether the college degree has value," Nief says. "Their attitude
toward life in America and the future is different from those of just a few years before."

The Mindset List has drawn the attention not only of educators but of police departments, military services and employers. At NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, this year's Mindset Lists will be featured in a leadership conference open to employees who span four generations.

"We want everybody to increase their awareness and understanding of what makes generations unique and different, so that we can better work together," says Gail Williams, who is coordinating the program.

More from the Mindset List
Other items on the Mindset List for the Class of 2016:

- Exposed bra straps have always been a fashion statement, not a wardrobe malfunction.
- Gene therapy has always been an available treatment.
- Bill Clinton is a senior statesman of whose presidency they have little knowledge.
- They have lived in an era of instant stardom and self-proclaimed celebrities, famous for being famous.
- They watch television everywhere, but on a television.
- Their folks have never gazed with pride on a new set of bound encyclopedias on the bookshelf.

*Source: Mindset List, Beloit College*