UNC schools feeling the cuts; 3,000 workers lose jobs

BY JANE STANCILL - Staff Writer

At N.C. Central University, 350 students weren't able to get into a required math class this semester. At N.C. State, students won't get an answer at the computer help desk after regular business hours. And at UNC-Chapel Hill, the high-rise library is closing at midnight instead of 2 a.m.

The budget cuts across the UNC system are being felt in ways both big and small. On Thursday, a report from UNC system officials tallied the job losses and other impacts from $414 million in state budget reductions this fiscal year.

The UNC system has cut just over 3,000 employees - including 488 full-time and 2,544 part-time workers. Another 1,487 vacant jobs were eliminated. Last year, the system's workforce across North Carolina was 47,000.

"I've dealt with a lot of budgets, but I've never had a challenge quite like this one," said NCCU Chancellor Charlie Nelms.

Most of the part-timers who were let go were contract instructors, known as adjunct professors. That means bigger classes and fewer academic choices for the university system's 220,000 students. For example, UNC Greensboro has cut 975 course sections, or about 40,000 student seats.

The pain played out differently at various campuses, because leaders were given flexibility to decide where to cut. Across the system, the cuts were equivalent to about 15.6 percent of the budget. Reductions ranged from a low of 8.4 percent at the N.C. School of Science and Mathematics in Durham to a high of 17.9 percent at UNC-CH.

Many of the job eliminations were in the Triangle, particularly at NCSU and UNC-CH. But the two large research campuses also had the ability to save about 300 jobs by moving them to a different source of funding, such as federal grants. At the smaller campuses, the loss of positions was unavoidable. Winston-Salem State dropped 8 percent of its faculty positions, while Elizabeth City State lost 14 percent.

Management targeted

Universities were directed by the legislature to reduce middle and senior management positions to avoid hurting the classroom. That has happened,
too. Linda Brady, UNCG chancellor, described how several schools on the campus were merged to save about $1 million a year on administrative costs.

The cuts also show up elsewhere. Students have less access to academic advisers, and they're finding computer labs and libraries closed at times. For example, libraries at Appalachian State and UNC Wilmington no longer are open around the clock on weekdays. ASU's library lost 35 hours of operation a week, while UNCW lost 25 hours.

Perhaps the most noticeable difference is the size of classes. At UNC Asheville, nearly every class is bigger, the report said. At Western Carolina University, the number of classes with more than 50 students has doubled.

At NCCU, the picture is complicated by the fact that the university has raised its admissions standards, leading to a loss of tuition dollars because of a dip in enrollment. Nelms, the chancellor, said he has directed his top lieutenants to prepare plans by the end of the year to save another $2 million in operations and to look at academic programs to see what to drop and what to focus on given the area's job market.

"In the new normal, we have to look at evaluating, consolidating, eliminating and enhancing," Nelms said.

The impact on student graduation rates won't be known for a few years, Nelms said, but taking out thousands of class seats will no doubt result in students having to wait for courses needed for diplomas.

"You can't do it," he said. "Exactly how much you'll add to it, we don't know. But if you have to come back next year and do a similar thing, and a similar thing, it's going to catch up with you."

**What students see**

The impact on the academic experience is not measurable.

Shruthi Rajan, a UNC-CH sophomore from Charlotte, doesn't like having to leave the library at midnight. "I feel inconvenienced," she said. "Usually everyone gets there at 11, and we'd like to stay until 2 (a.m.)," she said.

Another library is open much later, but it's often crowded and noisier, said Rajan, a biomedical engineering major.

She has also found that some basic required classes are harder to get into, but she hasn't had trouble in her major. Has she detected a slide in quality?

"As far as day-to-day life, I have not really noticed much," she said.

jane.stancill@newsobserver.com or 919-829-4559
The East Carolina University School of Dental Medicine represents the most important health care initiative undertaken here in a generation. By complementing the academic regimen with hands-on practice at satellite centers in rural communities, students can provide immediate care to those who need it most.

The success of that ambitious program depends in large measure on the school's leadership, which took a hit last month with the resignation of its first dean. The selection of Dr. Gregory Chadwick to serve in the interim represents a strong choice by Chancellor Steve Ballard, one that should soothe concerns and put focus back on the classroom where it belongs.

When the dental school welcomed its inaugural class of 52 students last month, it should have been cause for celebration. Here were the first young men and women striking out on a course of study that had yet to be traveled. While exciting, it must also have elicited some trepidation and anxiety, hallmarks of the unknown.

Those concerns would only have been heightened with the resignation of Dr. James Hupp, the school's first dean. A state audit identified several questionable financial expenses claimed by Hupp and an apparent conflict of interest involving his work with the dental school at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His departure from that leadership post required a replacement, one made quickly to restore confidence but not so hastily as to compromise the school's mission at its outset.

The announcement this week that Chancellor Ballard had selected Dr. Chadwick to serve as interim dean successfully accomplishes both. Chadwick led the program at its outset, before the appointment of Hupp as dean, and many believed him to be a strong candidate for the post prior to that appointment. He is entirely familiar with the dental school's uncommon mission of regional service and the innovative way it intends to serve communities in need. Ballard should be commended for the selection.

It is reassuring that the new school will be in accomplished hands while East Carolina conducts a search for a permanent dean, but it does not diminish the importance of that task. The dental program holds tremendous promise for remaking the dental care for thousands of state residents and for bringing dental professionals to communities in need. A failure to install a strong, trustworthy leader at its helm could compromise that work, and East Carolina must not allow that to happen.
East Carolina University has a special relationship with Virginia Tech University. ECU was the first team to play VT on national television after the shooting tragedies on that campus. As a consequence of Terry Holland's leadership, the efforts of the athletics staff and our generous fans we showed up with a check for $100,000 to add to the fund for the victims' families.

Even before the announcement of our donation, as we rolled in on game day on the ECU team buses, the VT tailgaters waved and gave us lots of thumbs up. On the field just before the start of the game and after an emotional video remembering the lives lost, the check was presented. Instantly the Hokies cheerleading team led a chant three times from one side of the stadium to the other, “Thank you - Pirates.”

Last year Chancellor Ballard and I again checked in at the ECU team hotel in Roanoke the night before another greatly anticipated game with the Hokies. On that occasion we enjoyed a well-attended Pirate Club event.

The next morning, however, as we prepared to board a team bus to Blacksburg, my husband received a call that one of our students had been involved in an accident there the previous night. That call was followed by a series of calls arranging for a Blacksburg police officer to meet our team buses as we arrived at the stadium. The waiting officer whisked us to the hospital.

At the hospital we were able to talk to a shaken mother who had just arrived from several hours away. Her daughter, an ECU freshman excited to be attending her first game, had stumbled from a sidewalk curb into the path of a car that ran over her. We were not able to visit with the young student who was being monitored for her internal injuries. The mother said, miraculously, her daughter was going to be OK although, not surprisingly, her recovery definitely would prevent her from attending college in the fall semester as planned. After giving the mother contact information, we returned to the stadium with the officer providing our escort.

When VT Athletics Director Jim Weaver visited our guest box, we related the story of our student and commended the local police for their assistance. The AD apparently related the story to Coach Frank Beamer who then shared the story with his wife, Cheryl Beamer.

Back in Greenville, with our student still hospitalized in Blacksburg, we were heartened to learn that Coach Beamer's wife went to the hospital and sat with the student for a long while, an expression of exceptional VT Hokies kindness.
Impressively, ECU Student Life Services, led by Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Virginia Hardy, was able to keep our student's residence hall room, with all of her things in place, undisturbed until her remarkable return to campus one semester later in the spring.

The rivalry on the field is characterized by fierce competition, but off the field the respect, shown in many ways by many others not mentioned, is equally strong.

Go Pirates!

Nancy Ballard, a former public relations professional, is married to ECU Chancellor Steve Ballard. Her column about ECU and community people and events appears monthly in The Daily Reflector.
The Greenville City Council on Thursday voted to pursue seven recommendations made this summer by the Special Task Force on Public Safety after a year of study.

The most controversial was a repeated request for Greenville police to assist in enforcement of Alcohol and Beverage Control laws inside establishments. It passed when Mayor Pat Dunn broke a 3-3 tie. Council members Marion Blackburn, Bryant Kittrell and Calvin Mercer voted in favor; Rose Glover, Max Joyner Jr. and Kandie Smith opposed the request.

The N.C. General Assembly must grant permission for the training and enforcement to occur. It was not granted in a previous attempt. ABC officers also have spoken against allowing involvement by local law enforcement, but Greenville Police Chief William Anderson said it would give his force increased visibility in the clubs and another tool to prevent crime.

Joyner took a stand against two other proposals Thursday. The first is an ordinance establishing a procedure to refuse a local license for the sale of beer and wine if any act was committed that would be grounds for suspension of an ABC permit. He asked why bar owners, who would be affected, haven't been notified of these proposals.

“I think we've missed a step in the process,” Joyner said.

Blackburn countered that the council is only moving forward with “ideas and general directions.” Nothing will be implemented yet.

Joyner also opposed consideration of “responsible bar owner” guidelines and certification to be managed by Uptown Greenville with input from city, East Carolina University and police. He does not want the nonprofit managing any program overseeing bar owners. It passed 3-1 with Blackburn, Mercer and Smith supporting the proposal. Glover and Kittrell were not in the room during the vote.

Four suggestions will be pursued with unanimous backing:

Legislation will be sought for the authority to levy a tax or fee on the sale of alcohol beverages for all or a class of establishments with ABC permits.
Alliances will be formed with other cities and universities to convince the Legislature to modify and enact laws to help “solve our problems.”

A goal to reduce the number of juveniles entering the justice system — primarily by utilizing community partnerships and developing a five-year plan — will be adopted.

The city will encourage ECU to establish a non-alcohol entertainment venue and mandatory safety training for students.

An eighth proposal came from Joyner, who suggested the city consider a zoning ordinance for tobacco shops. Glover asked that convenience stores not selling gas also be examined, and the motion to get a staff report passed unanimously. Both council members expressed concern that the recommendations from the task force didn't do enough to address crime across the city.

Blackburn attempted to get reports on enacting zoning to amortize nonconforming clubs so they must obtain special-use permits; on requiring club fronts include a certain percentage of opaque material, and to consider a “chronic nuisance” ordinance to combat repeated complaints against bars and clubs with three calls for service in 30 days. All three died without a vote.

Only 10 of the suggestions required council direction, City Manager Wayne Bowers said. Others already are under way within the Greenville Police Department.

The council altered the city's future land-use plan map at the intersection of 14th Street and Greenville Boulevard by a 4-2 vote. Local developer Jim Ward, who has owned property at the southeast corner of that intersection for four years, requested a 3.96-acre area be recommended for commercial zoning.

Glover, Joyner, Kittrell and Smith supported Ward's request. Blackburn and Mercer voted against.

Ward and one Greenville resident spoke for the commercial recommendation during a public hearing, as did the president of the adjacent Eastwood neighborhood. In explaining his dissent, Mercer said residents of other nearby neighborhoods did not view it favorably.

“It's not just the immediate neighborhood,” Blackburn said. “It's the big picture. We need to look at that big picture and what this scale of commercial development would mean.”

Commercial zoning exists on each of the other three corners at that intersection. Consideration of the 500-foot distance required between clubs and neighborhoods, and also clubs and other clubs, was dropped from Thursday's agenda. Joyner moved to make no changes to the spacing regulations at this time and received unanimous support.

Contact Kathryn Kennedy at kkennedy@reflector.com or 252-329-9566.
East Carolina University football fans don't really need help bolstering their Pirate pride. Nonetheless, Uptown Greenville has a great way to celebrate the football season.

Freeboot Fridays are alive-after-five events in downtown Greenville that offer food, fun and entertainment before the first six ECU home football games. Uptown Greenville, a nonprofit organization focused on revitalizing the downtown area, started the annual tradition in 1999.

Held at Five Points Plaza, at the corner of Evans and Fifth streets, Freeboot Fridays will be held today, Sept. 23, Sept. 30, Oct. 28, Nov. 4 and Nov. 18.

“This year, with the new Five Points Plaza, we will be orienting the stage under the main shelter at the corner of Fifth and Evans with sponsors under the side shelters,” Uptown Executive Director Denise Walsh said.

Walsh added that the inflatable pirate ship, moon walk, Purple the Clown and children's activities will be on the opposite side of the lot, closest to Sheppard Memorial Library. The family-friendly event has downtown restaurants providing food samples and there's wine and beer from R.A. Jeffreys Distributing as well as locally brewed beer.
Law enforcement will direct traffic on routes from Dowdy-Ficklen stadium after the game. Police advise non-game traffic to avoid the area.

When exiting the stadium area:

**From Ficklen Drive and VIP lot**: All traffic will be directed on Charles Boulevard toward 14th Street. Left turn lane will be allowed to turn left onto 14th Street. Through traffic will be directed to 10th Street. No right turns onto 14th Street.

**From stadium area lots**: All traffic will turn left onto Berkley Road and be directed toward 14th Street. All traffic will turn right onto 14th Street toward Elm Street. At Elm Street, the far left lane (nearest Eppes School) will turn left onto Elm toward 10th Street; center lane will be directed straight toward Greenville Boulevard; right lane (nearest Elmhurst School) will turn right onto Elm Street to Greenville Boulevard.

**From Clark-LeClair/Softball/Allied Health Lots**: All traffic will be directed toward Greenville Boulevard.

After the football game, there will be no traffic at any intersection allowed to proceed toward the Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium area until the football traffic has subsided.
ECU game traffic to be heavy
The Daily Reflector
Friday, September 9, 2011

Traffic is expected to be heavy Saturday before and after East Carolina's home football opener against Virginia Tech, officials said Thursday.

Kickoff is at 3:30 p.m. A section of 14th Street will close at 11:30 a.m. from West Rock Springs Road to Elm Street and remain closed for 90 minutes after the game.

University parking lots are scheduled to open six hours prior to kickoff. Most lots are for permitted vehicles only. Click here for ECUs parking map. Click here for more information from the university.

This year's traffic plan will mirror last year's, Greenville police Chief William Anderson said at his weekly news briefing.

One change Saturday is that the department will not block on-street parking in residential sections behind the stadium, Anderson said.

“We're going to let the neighborhoods police themselves, and if issues arise, we'll address them,” he said. “We'll look for line-of-sight safety issues, like blockage of fire hydrants, and we'll have our traffic and code enforcement officers out there dealing with those issues.”
In addition to the food and drinks, the Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge and the Greenville Museum of Art will have children's crafts.

As always, live music is an important part of setting the Freebooting atmosphere.

Here's a roundup of this year's entertainment.

**Sept. 9: Reel Deep** — Reel Deep is a Raleigh-based funk, soul, dance and R&B band that performs music from the '70s, '80s, '90s and today. Their playlist includes Etta James, Aretha Franklin, Prince and Earth, Wind, and Fire, music to make people dance. Opening for Reel Deep is local band High & Risin.

**Sept. 23: Lipbone Redding** — Lawrence “Lipbone” Redding is a New York-based musician with a variety of talents. The name “Lipbone” is a contraction of “Lip Trombone,” as Redding can imitate brass instruments with his mouth and incorporates that into his show. He also sings. Rebekah Todd will open.

**Sept. 30: Emily Minor** — A North Carolina native, Emily Minor is a fresh new face on the country music scene. She got her start right here in Greenville playing at local bars and events.

In August 2007, Minor auditioned for “American Idol” judges Simon Cowell, Paula Abdul and Randy Jackson in Charleston, S.C. She received a “golden ticket” and was sent to Hollywood, moving on to be a Top 50 finalist before being cut from the show. Now living in Nashville, Tenn., Minor is writing her own songs, recording and making appearances along the East Coast with her band. The Charming Youngsters will open.

**Homecoming Oct. 28: Jupiter Jones** — Jupiter Jones is a party band based in Greenville. In 2009, mixer readers voted Jupiter Jones “Best Band.” The five-piece band features fiddle and both male and female vocals singing complex harmonies and playing a variety of styles. Old Man Whickutt will open.

**Nov. 4: Donovan Carless & The Posse** — Singer Donovan Carless, who headed the legendary Soul Syndicate Band, has more than 30 years of reggae experience. Soul Syndicate made its first trip to the U.S. in 1974, touring for three months on the West Coast.

Carless moved to Raleigh in 1978 with his family and is recognized as Red Stripe's key music promoter for the North Carolina region and was the production director for the “Reggae On The Lake” festival in Greenville. Lightnin' Wells will open.

**Nov. 18: Parmalee** — Southern rock band Parmalee formed in 2001 and consists of lead singer and guitarist Matt Thomas, drummer Scott Thomas (Matt's brother), bassist and vocalist Barry Knox (Matt and Scott Thomas' cousin) and lead guitarist and vocalist Josh McSwain.
In 2002, they released their first EP called “Daylight” and had regional success with the song “Broken Records.” “Inside,” a full-length CD, was released in 2004 after receiving an invitation from David Bendeth of RCA. The band spent two years promoting the album through the southeastern United States.

Their next release was a live acoustic album called “Parmalee Unplugged” in 2005, followed by an EP titled “Complicated in 2008” which included hit songs like “Complicated,” “Carolina,” and “San Diego.” Those Meddlin’ Kids will open.
The S. Rudolph Alexander Performing Arts Series will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year.

A number of additional one-night performances have been added to the roster, beginning with gospel singer Donald Lawrence at 7:30 p.m. today.

The concert will be held in ECU’s Wright Auditorium. The ECU Gospel Singers and the Salvation and Deliverance Church of Tarboro will perform before Lawrence takes the stage. The Tarboro choir is competing in “How Sweet the Sound,” a national gospel choir competition co-hosted by Lawrence and CeCe Winans and judged by Marvin Sapp, who will be in concert at the Greenville Convention Center Sept. 16.

The Koinonia Christian Center Choir will provide backup during Lawrence's performance. Tara Worrell is the choir director for the upcoming concert.

“We'll be singing six songs with Donald Lawrence,” Worrells said.


In addition to directing the Koinonia choir, Worrells directed the choir that accompanied the S. Rudolph Alexander Performing Arts Series' event by the Dayton Dance Ensemble in March.

Close to 40 members of Koinonia Christian Center have been rehearsing for about six weeks.

Lawrence is a North Carolina native, raised in Gastonia. He taught himself how to play the piano by the time he was 15 years old and put himself through the Cincinnati
Conservatory of Music in Ohio, as a musical-theater major. Lawrence partnered with his professor Worth Gardner to write the 1986 musical revue “Sing Hallelujah!” that played across the country, including an off-Broadway stint at the Village Gate Theater in New York City.

Lawrence returned to North Carolina as a member of the music staff for Jim and Tammy Baker's PTL Club television program. His musical talents led him to be recruited as a vocal coach for En Vogue and music director for Stephanie Mills.

Mills' manager signed Lawrence's urban inspirational group, Company, to Giant Records and released “Devotion” in 1993. Coinciding with this success, Lawrence was writing songs for the Tri-City Singers — a choir of vocalists from Charlotte, Gastonia and Spartanburg — through his friend Richard Odom, who was a member of both groups.

The Tri-City Singers eventually asked Lawrence to lead them and released their debut CD, “A Songwriter's Point of View,” in 1993. The recording peaked at No. 2 on Billboard's Top Gospel Album chart.

As a successful producer, Lawrence was asked to work with artists such as Mary J. Blige; jazz pianist Ramsey Lewis; Hezekiah Walk and the Love Fellowship Choir; and the legendary Clark Sisters for their Grammy-Award-winning comeback CD “Live: One Last Time.”

Despite his busy schedule as a producer, writer and director, Lawrence made time for his solo career. His 2004 solo CD debut “I Speak Life” included radio hits “You Covered Me” and “Healed.”

He has released 11 CDs and won numerous Stellar Awards and a Grammy in 2007 for the Best Traditional Gospel Album for “Live: One Last Time,” which he produced.
ECU's Lewis limiting trash talk
By Nathan Summers
The Daily Reflector
Friday, September 9, 2011

Lance Lewis provides the kind of action that speaks much louder than words, but he nonetheless is trying to limit his words in his final college football season at East Carolina.

The senior outside wide receiver spent much of last Saturday night either ducking inside, running past or simply leaping overtop of the attempted coverage of South Carolina's defensive backs. Despite a lopsided 56-37 loss to the Gamecocks, Lewis turned in his usual big game — a team-best 13 catches for 108 yards and two touchdowns.

But he was mindful, even as he torched top defenders like SC corner Stephon Gilmore, to keep his mouth shut and his eyes on the football, and he hopes his teammates will follow his lead.

“We did that a lot last year, and you saw what happened to us, so coach (Ruffin McNeill) told us to focus more on playing than talking,” Lewis said of the on-the-field chatter by he and his teammates, who kick off at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday against No. 11 Virginia Tech inside Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium. “Talking gets you nowhere, playing gets you results.”
In the eyes of Lewis, who last season set an ECU single-season record with his 14 touchdowns, battling with players like Gilmore is why the Concord native joined the Pirates in the first place.

His memorable 1,116-yard campaign was spent as the Pirates’ No. 2 receiver behind Dwayne Harris. Now that he's the lead target in the ECU pass attack, he relishes taking on every team's best defenders.

“We're two great playmakers,” he said of the one-on-one showdown with Gilmore.

“Whoever sees the ball first goes up and makes plays, and that's what happened. I saw the ball first and went up and made a play. I give him credit because he's a good corner, and he's got a lot of hype behind him. But he gave me a great look so I can focus on the rest of what I have to do this season, the teams and the corners I've got to face this year.”

Lewis lends a good deal of credit for his success to ECU outside wide receivers coach Dennis Simmons, who he said challenges his players to embrace their weekly assignments and to study closely on film all of the tendencies of the players they will face in a given matchup.

Without question, Lewis is his own biggest critic.

Despite his usual gaudy numbers last Saturday night, he was one of four Pirates who fumbled against the Gamecocks. After making a reception, Lewis lost the handle on the ball on his way to the ground and South Carolina pounced on it.

Perhaps serving as proof of just how rare such miscues are for the former transfer from East Mississippi Community College, Lewis said the fumble and a few other mistakes forced him to look at his opening game of the season as much more a failure than a success.

“As a whole unit, we did some great things,” Lewis said. “But I did some things that I shouldn't have been doing and that I can do better. Putting the ball on the ground, fumbling, that's just not me. I also let people get into my chest too much (in coverage) and I didn't really stay on blocks as much as I'm supposed to.”

Contact Nathan Summers at nsummers@reflector.com or 252-329-9595.
Tuition hikes fail to stop cutbacks in higher ed

By KRISTEN WYATT - Associated Press

FORT COLLINS, Colo. America's public colleges and universities have burned through nearly $10 billion in government stimulus money and are still facing more tuition hikes, fewer course offerings and larger class sizes.

Many college students are already bearing the brunt of the cuts in their wallets as they prepare for their future careers.

"This next academic year is going to be the hardest one on record" for cash-strapped colleges, said Dan Hurley, director of state relations for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Cuts affect academics

Hurley said the higher education system has entered a phase in which cuts will begin to affect academics.
Public university systems used the stimulus to prevent deeper layoffs, maintain degree programs and keep campuses open and are now bracing for the end of the federal program.

The effects will be greater in some states than others.

Since 2009, Colorado has used more than $600 million in stimulus money for higher education, accounting for more than a quarter of the higher education budget over that period.

Stimulus money covered 35 percent of South Carolina's higher education budget in 2009 but less than 2 percent last year, according to a report by the New America Foundation.

California used $1.4 billion in stimulus money to pay nearly 30 percent of its higher education tab two years ago, but stimulus accounted for less than 1 percent in 2010.

Like most states, Nevada's stimulus infusion only softened a steep spending slide. The higher education budget fell about $210 million, almost 30 percent, over the last three years, even with the stimulus.

‘Name it, we’ve cut it’

"We have frozen pay in the system. We have closed programs. We have cut back everything we could. You name it, we've cut it," said Dan Klaich, chancellor for Nevada's higher education system.

Without the stimulus boost, at least 35 states have been forced to make further cuts in higher education spending for the 2011-12 school year, with double-digit decreases in 13 states. That means tuition hikes, which for years had exceeded the rate of inflation, are even greater.

At Colorado State University in Fort Collins, students are paying about 20 percent more this year, up to about $8,000 for in-state and $24,000 for out-of-state tuition. For many, that means extra roommates, second jobs or giving up dreams of studying abroad.

The rising costs were the reason junior Ryan Thistlethwaite to join the Air Force ROTC program.

The human development and family services major pays out-of-state tuition with student loans and said he made the decision after figuring he would owe about $125,000 after four years at Colorado State.
He will not receive an ROTC scholarship, but he will be guaranteed a job after finishing school to help pay off his loans. "The money, I'd say that's 60 percent of it, why I'm joining ROTC," he said.

The cost shift from states to students has been going on for years, according to State Higher Education Executive Officers, a group that tracks college funding.

Adjusted for inflation, public colleges and universities in 1985 received about $7,479 per student from their states, with about $2,274 per student coming from tuition. The group says the amount coming from state budgets dropped to an average of $6,451 in 2010, while the tuition portion rose to $4,321.

Mike McNeil, who was helping his freshman daughter move into her dorm at Colorado State, shook his head at the tuition hike and the bind it places on middle-class families.

McNeil attended the university when the government picked up more of the tab. He now relies on money inherited from his parents and loans to help his two children pay for college.

"Back then, I worked at Arby's, had a summer job to pay for school," said McNeil, a manager from the Denver suburbs. "A kid working today, no way they could work enough to raise the kind of money you'd need."

However painful the rising tuition has been on students and families, it has not done enough to balance the effects of state budget cuts at many colleges and universities.

The seven-campus University of Maine system, for example, has cut about 20 programs, including Latin, and reduced employment by 7 percent since the recession began. Those cuts came even as Maine used some $29 million in stimulus money on higher education between 2009 and 2011.

In California, the state's 112 community colleges will offer 5 percent fewer classes this fall. At Bakersfield College, some 150 classes have been cut and thousands of students have been wait-listed.

College president Greg Chamberlain said community colleges are turning students away despite surging demand from the unemployed who are looking for new skills.

"We should be opening our doors further, not closing them," Chamberlain said.
At the same time, students seeking financial aid - especially those from middle-income families - also will have fewer ways to cope with rising tuition.

In Georgia, a lottery-funded merit scholarship that paid full tuition for in-state students with a B average has been scaled back this fall. Ohio cut need-based grants by two-thirds.

Awards from Minnesota's U Promise Scholarship, which guarantees need-based aid to resident undergraduates from families making up to $100,000 per year, have been reduced for students this fall.

The federal government has stepped in to help students from the lowest-income families, adding $17 billion to the Pell grant program in 2009 and 2010.

This academic year, more than 9 million students at public and private schools are expected to receive more than $40 billion in total Pell spending, or about $4,400 each.

The number of students receiving Pell grants this school year is up about 50 percent from 2008, reflecting a rise in student enrollment and the number of low-income students.

Budget cuts and tuition hikes at state colleges and universities are not just problems for current students and staff, said Paul Lingenfelter, president of the State Higher Education Executive Officers group.

Lingenfelter said higher education is trending away from the middle class, forcing students to choose between a lifetime of debt or diminished career prospects.

"The issue the country really ought to be worried about is all the people who aren't in college but should be," Lingenfelter said.
Report urges revamp at UNC

BY KEN TYSIAC - Staff Writer

The University of North Carolina's academic support program for student-athletes needs to increase its staff, hire a full-time tutor coordinator and have continued involvement in the admissions process, according to a university report released Thursday to reporters.

North Carolina's committee to study the academic support program began meeting after the actions of a student tutor and mentor led to NCAA allegations of major violations in an investigation of impermissible benefits and academic fraud in the Tar Heels football program.

Many recommendations in the report have been discussed previously by North Carolina officials. The report suggested the school hire a full-time tutor coordinator to oversee hiring, training, supervising and evaluating tutors.

Athletic director Dick Baddour said the school has the funds for a tutor coordinator position and for a learning specialist position.

"When we were putting the budget together in the spring ... we budgeted a couple positions so we would have the resources to do that," Baddour said.

In addition, the report said academic mentors, who assist athletes with the development of study and time management skills, should be graduate students, part-time staff members, or others such as retired faculty members.

The current program relies primarily on undergraduate students studying education as a major.

The report also suggested tutors should be people with relevant experience, such as graduate students, retired university faculty and public school teachers, who would undergo consistent professional development.

"The committee thought that as we move forward, investing in part-time people who are experienced, further along in their real experience in teaching, would be helpful," said senior associate athletic director John Blanchard, who co-chaired the committee with College of Arts and Sciences senior associate dean Bobbi Owen.
North Carolina's academic support program came under scrutiny after an NCAA investigation into impermissible benefits from agents also uncovered improper academic assistance provided by Jennifer Wiley.

She was an undergraduate student who also worked for former Tar Heels football coach Butch Davis as a tutor for his son.

The committee's report calls upon the academic support program to:
Collaborate with other units providing academic support at North Carolina.
Revitalize the faculty advisory committee.
Conduct annual assessments of the program.
Develop a vision shared by staff, coaches, administrators and athletes.

The report also calls for the academic support program to continue providing advice about the ability of prospective recruits to succeed academically at North Carolina.

Baddour said he welcomed the report.
"I was one who said we have to get better at everything," Baddour said. "I think this report is terrific, and we're already well under way to meeting the recommendations."

ktysi@charlotteobserver.com or 919-829-8942