THE DAILY CLIPS

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Climate adds new variables, ECU researchers say

ECU professors with the Department of Geography presented the seminar.

BY GINGER LIVINGSTON
The Daily Reflector

The science of hurricane prediction continues to evolve as changes in the planet’s climate add new variables, researchers with East Carolina University said Thursday.

Four professors with the department of geography presented the seminar “Wind and Water: The Science of Hurricane Forecasting and Impacts in a Changing Climate.” About 50 people attended the event held in the Bate Building.

The researchers discussed how hurricanes are formed and whether climate change is affecting hurricanes. They also discussed predicting how hurricanes affect environments, as well as flood prediction.

Meteorologists are becoming more skilled in understanding the patterns that lead to hurricanes, said Tom Rickenbach, an assistant professor of atmospheric science.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted this year there would be 18 named storms, 10 hurricanes and three to six major storms, he said. There have been three major storms, he said, five hurricanes and 10 named storms so far. Late September and October are busy

See EVOLVING, A7

Storm off coast heads for N.C.

The Associated Press

WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH — An intense low-pressure system with wind gusts of up to 40 mph kicked up rough surf, caused minor flooding and knocked out power to thousands of homes in Virginia as it lumbered toward the Carolinas on Thursday.

Minor flooding was reported along the coast from South Carolina to Virginia, with the storm stirring a nighttime high tide and dumping as much as 3.6 inches of rain.

In Wrightsville Beach, vacationers Bill and Linda Schweikert from Stow, Ohio, snapped photos of gray, head-high waves in brisk 30-mph winds.

“Lake Erie doesn’t do this very often,” said Linda Schweikert, 62, a retired teacher. “It is pretty.”

The storm was about 30 miles south of Cape Fear at about 8 p.m. National Weather Service meteorologist Ron Steve said the storm should come ashore around midnight near the North Carolina-South Carolina state line.

Winds should diminish after raking the eastern and central parts of North Carolina.

The weather service said there was a high risk of rip currents along the northern South Carolina coast.
Evolving

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months in the tropics.

Rickenbach went on to explain the mechanics of a hurricane.

"Something like 60 percent of the hurricanes that impact the Caribbean, the Gulf and here in North Carolina form off of Africa," Rickenbach said.

Hurricanes form when warm ocean water evaporates in the atmosphere and condenses to create strong thunderstorms. When the storms combine with the earth’s rotation it forms a large rotating storm system.

Despite the damage produced by a hurricane’s winds and storm surge, they are necessary, Rickenbach said.

"Hurricanes play a crucial role," he said. "They bring the energy necessary to drive crucial weather systems."

Rickenbach pointed to Hurricane Ike that hit the Texas coast, moved up to Michigan and joined with a weather system that moved east and eventually produced rain in Europe.

Jennifer Arrigo, assistant professor of atmospheric science, is studying climate changes’ effects on hurricanes, specifically to determine whether warmer atmospheric and water temperatures are creating more and stronger storms.

Focus in that area increased after 2005, she said, a season that produced the largest number of hurricanes in a single season — 14 — including Hurricane Katrina.

Arrigo said a 2007 report produced by the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stated there is a 90 percent certainty that human activities were creating climate change.

When figuring out how that could affect hurricanes, Arrigo said, researchers have to consider two things: warmer water would produce stronger storms, while warmer air temperatures would create stronger winds that would lead to hurricanes.

"We have to understand which of these two are going to win out," Arrigo said.

Turns out, she said, both are winning.

Reviewing hurricane patterns and studying computer simulations showed that while stronger wind patterns will disrupt hurricane formation — meaning fewer will begin — rising water temperatures mean the ones that do will be stronger.

"We need to plan for less hurricanes in the future, but more severe storms," she said.

Tom Allen, associate professor of geographic information science, demonstrated how he and his students are using geographic information system data to produce three-dimensional images to show what path a storm surge will take and what flooding might result. Scott Lecce, associate professor of geomorphology, also discussed the difficulties related to determining the frequency of flooding patterns.
ECU officials ponder limiting growth

The university is raising standards for acceptance for the fall of 2009 in the hopes of capping the number of students accepted.

BY JOSH HUMPHRIES
The Daily Reflector

East Carolina University is growing rapidly — maybe a little too rapidly, some officials say.

The university affairs committee to the ECU Board of Trustees discussed enrollment growth Thursday with Judi Bailey, senior executive director of enrollment management.

The fall of 2008 saw the largest freshman class in the history of the university at more than 4,500 students, more than 1,000 students over the university’s target.

“We cannot continue that,” Bailey said. “We do not have enough faculty to give the breadth and depth of academics to support that. Our students are not being served by a very expansive admission policy.”

Last year there were more than 15,000 applications for the freshman class, of which the more than 4,500 were accepted and chose to attend ECU.

This year is already on pace to surpass that record number of applications for next year, Bailey said.

The university is raising standards for acceptance for the fall of 2009 in the hopes of capping the number of students accepted next year at 4,000.

See ECU, B3
Bailey also updated the committee on the strategic enrollment management task force, a group formed by the university to develop a plan for long-term growth at the university.

The task force is developing a plan that will ultimately be presented to the Board of Trustees addressing issues such as improving retention and graduation rates, determining an effective number of graduate and undergraduate students and making sure there are enough resources for the university to grow.

The task force will present a final report to the board later this year after it is vetted by more faculty members and students is forums that will be held next month. The final reports should be ready for the trustees by the time they meet next in November, Bailey said.

The executive committee to the board discussed a plan for expanding the Mendenhall Student Center and building a structure for the Ledonia Wright Cultural Center on campus.

The resources and facilities committee to the board put a hold on the original plan to renovate Mendenhall after cost estimates lead to downsizing that board members thought would be counterproductive. Those changes included a smaller ballroom, less space for support operations and fewer meeting spaces.

The facilities committee will come up with a new plan for Mendenhall that could lead to a much larger building with more features attractive to students, such as a bank, dining, state-of-the-art technology and meeting spaces.

Members of the board also visited the ECU Police station for an update on security and campus safety measures from Police Chief Scott Shelton.

Shelton told board members about the various programs the police department conducts to increase safety, including self-defense training for students, student patrols and officers giving rides to students who are seen walking alone at night.
Holland confirms position on State, UNC games

The Daily Reflector

East Carolina director of athletics Terry Holland reaffirmed his position Thursday about ECU's desire to continue playing both N.C. State and North Carolina in football.

Holland released a letter dated June 18 addressed to N.C. State AD Lee Fowler and North Carolina AD Dick Baddour, and an accompanying statement reiterating ECU's position. The letter spelled out six agreed dates between ECU and the two ACC schools, including games against the Tar Heels in 2009, 12 and 15, and games against the Wolfpack in 2010, 13 and 16.

In the interest of not wanting to create scheduling problems for future ADs and coaches, Holland also expressed the desire to "skip the 2017 season and begin a 20-year alternating home-and-home series of games." That would mean the Pirates would alternate back and forth each season between N.C. State and UNC beginning in 2018. An apparent conflict between Fowler and Holland was unearthed on a Raleigh sports talk radio show that suggested ECU wanted to dial back the number of times it played the Wolfpack.

Holland issued a statement Wednesday saying he and coach Skip Holtz wanted to play both in-state rivals "as often as possible." Holland also said ECU would do whatever it could to make the home-and-home series with both schools materialize in the future.

In Thursday's statement, Holland said the letter and the new scheduling format was "an effort to first recognize how important and successful the previous games had been, particularly the 2007 games played in Greenville during the ECU Centennial. Some type of new approach seemed appropriate as we were having difficulty finding agreement on future playing dates."

Holland said the letter was the re-

See HOLLAND, C3
HOLLAND
Continued from C1

result of numerous phone conversations, and the idea was based on balancing the home and away dates for all three schools. Those conversations are continuing, he said.

"It has always been my view that this recommendation was a three-way proposal requiring a commitment from all three institutions," Holland said. "ECU has never wavered in expressing the desire to play both North Carolina and N.C. State, but we also feel it is time to put this issue to bed so that all three institutions can move on to the important task of establishing our scheduling priorities for the future."
ECU event draws writers who celebrate eastern North Carolina

BY JOSH HUMPHRIES
The Daily Reflector

Some of North Carolina's most acclaimed writers with Down East ties will converge on Greenville for East Carolina University's Literary Homecoming this weekend.

The event, now in its fifth year, brings writers who are from eastern North Carolina or who write about the area to ECU's Joyner Library for a series of panel discussions and writing workshops.

This year, 10 award-winning writers rooted in the history, literature and culture of eastern North Carolina will share their work and their experiences with homecoming participants.

"Meeting with and learning from writers serves as inspiration for the creative spirit," said Maury York, assistant director for ECU's Special Collections.

"We hope by adding workshops to this year's events that the literary homecoming will nourish and revitalize this spirit."

The event begins tonight when Doris Betts, author of short stories and novels, will be presented with the Roberts Award for Literary Inspiration at Joyner Library.

Author Randall Kenan, Betts' former student, will lead the readings and tributes of Betts' work today. There will also be a musical performance by Bland Simpson, author and piano player for the Red Clay Ramblers.

Clyde Edgerton, humorist and author of "Walking Across Egypt," "Raney" and his latest book "The Bible Salesman" will give the keynote address at the event Saturday.

But before Edgerton gives his address, there will be workshops and panel discussions all day Saturday at Joyner with plenty of time to meet and talk with the writers, said Blythe Tennent, director of Joyner Library project development.

"I think it is a great opportunity to meet with renowned authors who write about and live in eastern North Carolina," said Tennent. "There will be plenty of time for interaction with the authors and other people who are interested in writing."

The theme for this year's homecoming is "Raising Awareness: Expression for Social Change," and many of the workshops will focus on how writers use their work and pick genres to make social expressions, according to Tennet.

The event is planned each year by a committee of representatives from both ECU and the community.

The committee picks a theme and works around the theme to find writers, with ties to the area, to present on the theme, Tennent said.

"We always look at people that have been published and have some renown and will work within the theme," Tennent said.

There will be a luncheon on Saturday with live music performances that require registration and a fee. The workshops are free.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. Saturday at Joyner Library.

Josh Humphries can be contacted at jhumphries@coxnc.com and 329-9565.

IF YOU GO

Today

7 p.m. at Joyner Library — North Carolina authors Randall Kenan and Bland Simpson will read and perform their work. Author Doris Betts will be presented with the Roberts Award for Literary Inspiration.

Saturday

9-10:30 a.m. at Joyner Library — Panel discussion: Inspiring Social Awareness for Younger Readers, by authors Eloise Greenfield and Sheila P. Moses.

Workshop: Playing with the Facts: Expressing the Message through Genre Choice, by authors Jim Grimsley and Randall Kenan

11:15-12:30 p.m. at Joyner Library — Panel Discussion: Locating Self: Exploring Social Issues through Poetry, Fiction, and Drama, by Minnie Bruce Pratt.

Workshop: A Red Clay Rambler has "Lunch at the Piccadilly," by Clyde Edgerton and Bland Simpson.

12:30-1:45 p.m. at Mendenhall Student Center: Lunch break including a reading by Margaret Maron, advanced ticket purchase for the event is required.

2-3:15 p.m. at Joyner Library — Panel Discussion: Whodunit? Environmental Concerns in Mystery Novels, by Margaret Maron and Wanda Canada.


4 p.m. at Joyner Library: Keynote address by Clyde Edgerton.
The season’s first Freeboot Friday set under Whickutt and Clumsy Lovers.

Old Man Whickutt is made up of Marcus Hall (guitar, banjo, gong, vocals) and Rob Hall (guitar, mandolin, harmonica, gong, vocals).

Clumsy Lovers is the happy-go-lucky Vancouver, British Columbia, quintet made up of banjo, bass guitar, fiddle, harmonica, guitar, percussion and vocals. The group plays music that walks the tightrope between tradition-minded roots music and modern pop. Freeboots are an official launch for a weekend of meeting and greeting, tailgating and football frenzy. ECU hits the gridiron in a non-conference matchup against Houston at 3:30 p.m. Saturday at Dowdy-Ficklen stadium.

In case of inclement weather, Freeboots will now have an indoor location at Ham’s Restaurant and Brewhouse, 701 Evans St.

Other Freeboots

Oct. 17: Blount Harvey and See You Tuesday

- Fronted by two vocalists, MC Rudolph Lyrics and singer Lady Bri, Blount Harvey is a 10-member band that plays a mixture of old-school hip-hop, Southern soul music, and funk. Their sound is rooted in early ’90s hip-hop with melodicious samples and positive lyricism. Blount Harvey includes a three-piece horn section and percussionist.
- Erica Plouffe (vocals) and Luke Whisnant (vocals, guitar) have turned their diverse range of musical interests into the band See You Tuesday. This Greenville-based duo aims to surprise audiences with songs from artists as diverse as Prince and Van Halen, to Nanci Griffith and Neil Young. They describe their music as American rock with a folk twist.

Nov. 7: Last November and Barefoot Wade

- Barefoot Wade combines elements of country, rock, reggae, funk, comedy, and blues in his original songs. While on stage, Wade employs the use of acoustic and electric guitars, bass guitars, steel drum, various percussion, keyboards, and a kazoo. Barefoot Wade has traveled from Virginia to Key West, Fla., doing lively shows and entertaining diverse crowds.
- Last November is made up of Luke Pilgrim (guitar, vocals), Tyler Ayers (bass), Chris Jones (guitar, keys), and Taylor Woodruff (drums). A diverse brew of original and memorable pop rock accompanied by thought-provoking lyrics. Word-of-mouth from devoted fans is pushing this young Atlanta band to true heights.
Worry over disclosure halts study of alternative heart treatment

BY MARILYNN MARCHIONE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The largest alternative medicine study the government has ever launched has stopped enrolling people while officials investigate whether participants were fully informed of the risks and are being adequately protected.

More than 1,500 heart attack survivors are involved in the research, which tests a controversial treatment called chelation. It is mainly used to treat lead poisoning. More than two people have died, although the Miami doctor leading the study said the deaths were not a direct result of the treatments. He said he doesn't know exactly how many deaths have occurred.

He also acknowledged that some doctors who had been involved in the study have been disciplined by state boards or have criminal records and have been asked to drop out. "We think we have a safe and ethical trial, and we're protecting our patients," said the leader, Dr. Gervasio Lamas of the University of Miami.

Federal officials confirmed their probe of the $30 million study Thursday. Those directing the research, conducted at 100 sites across the United States and Canada, voluntarily stopped enrolling patients earlier this month.

The research was designed to test very high doses of vitamin and mineral supplements and chelation, which has not been proved effective for heart disease. Chelation (pronounced kee-LAY-shun) involves intravenous doses of a drug, in this case disodium EDTA, that proponents claim will bind to calcium built up on artery walls and help flush it from the body.
Public health school renaming draws flak

Critics claim donors buy sway at UNC

BY ERIC FERRERI
STAFF WRITER

CHAPEL HILL — When UNC-Chapel Hill’s School of Public Health is renamed today to acknowledge a $50 million private gift, not all will applaud.

Some at the school worry that the gift from Dennis and Joan Gillings represents a selling out of academic integrity. Dennis Gillings is chief executive officer of Quintiles Transnational, a Durham clinical research firm. The Gillingses have already delivered half the cash; the school will be renamed the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Dustin Petersen, a master’s student, is among at least a small group of students and faculty members concerned that Gillings and his company have bought access and control over curriculum and financial decisions. The Gillingses and other Quintiles staffers serve on advisory boards related to the school.

“To see two individuals come in and plop down a large sum of money and purchase the naming rights of a school owned by the taxpayers of North Carolina is just disgusting,” Petersen said.

The Gillings gift is the largest UNC-CH has ever received from an individual or family. It put the university’s Carolina First campaign over the $2 billion mark.

It is not unusual for a public university building or professional school to carry a major donor’s name. Two others at UNC-CH are the Kenan-Flagler Business School and the UNC Eshelman School of Pharmacy.

Petersen says the Gillingses have essentially created a training program to send workers to Quintiles. He points to a new clinical trials initiative, one of 10 new projects the Gillings money will create at the school. “It is clearly advancing the agenda of his company,” Petersen said. “That’s what they do: clinical trials.”

But Barbara Rimer, the school’s dean, says the clinical trials center and nine other such “innovation labs” were selected in a competitive process. Research proposals were vetted by more than 100 public health experts in and outside the school.

Rimer said the Gillingses played no role in the selection process. “We’ve put in place a lot of checks and balances to make sure the money is spent in a responsible way,” she said. “We’re not being manipulated or managed by the Gillingses.”

Jan Boxill, who directs UNC-CH’s Parr Center for Ethics, said that the issues Petersen and others have raised are healthy but that she isn’t concerned about the Gillings gift.

“I think we’ve vetted it thoroughly,” Boxill said. “That doesn’t mean people shouldn’t ask questions about it.”

Rimer defends the presence of the Gillingses and other Quintiles officials on school advisory boards. The school has a close relationship with Quintiles; Dennis Gillings started the firm in 1982 while on the UNC-CH faculty. Quintiles is now the world’s largest pharmaceutical services company.

But the school didn’t just create programs to serve Gillings’ interests, Rimer said. The $50 million will help explore areas of public health — obesity, global health, clean and accessible water, and so forth — that the school had already targeted.

“It is totally consistent with the priorities of the school,” she said.

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FIND OUT MORE

The school renaming will be held at 11 a.m. today at the school’s Michael Hooker Research Center on Dauer Drive, which is off Pittsboro Street.

Dustin Peterson’s blog on the school renaming issue can be found at http://carolinasavethename.blogspot.com/

More information on the school and the Gillings gift can be found at www.sph.unc.edu/accelerate
RTI toots its own horn
to keep growth on track

BY SABINE VOLLMER
STAFF WRITER

RTI International is pulling out the stops to sustain the steam-busting growth the Research Triangle Park think tank has undergone in the past decade.

Buoyed by several large, federally funded research projects, RTI has added more than 900 jobs. Revenue more than tripled and is projected to exceed $700 million in the fiscal year that ends Tuesday.

But keeping up the pace could be challenging, especially as Congress focuses on an ailing economy and a new president sets priorities.

So RTI is using its 50th anniversary to embark on a $500,000, one-year marketing campaign largely aimed at pharmaceutical clients in addition to international and federal government agencies in the New York and Washington areas.


RTI has never done anything like this before, said Chief Financial Officer Jim Gibson. "We've always kept a low profile."

But to sustain annual double-digit revenue growth, RTI must attract new government and corporate clients and contracts, he said.

Under the leadership of Victoria Franchetti-Haynes, who became chief executive in 1999, RTI has become the second largest nonprofit think tank in the United States, behind Battelle in Columbus, Ohio.

Established by Triangle academic, government and business leaders to anchor the area's new research park, RTI operates 15 offices and subsidiaries worldwide, and its employees work in about 40 countries.

Since 2000, three computer technology companies have spun out of RTI — Zetronix, Nexxtreme Thermal Solutions and SiXis — and three companies became part of RTI. Palmer d'Angelo Consulting, a Canadian firm with expertise in health care pricing and reimbursement, was RTI's most recent acquisition last year.

On RTI's 180-acre campus in RTP, a face-lift projected to cost as much as $100 million is under way. Three of the oldest buildings are tagged for demolition. The

SEE THINK TANK, PAGE 108
first of two five-story office build-
ings is expected to be completed
by the end of the year.
"The [funding] outlook is very
positive for RTI," Gibson said.
But anticipation of a new admin-
istration in the White House and
a $700 billion bailout for Wall
Street are raising concerns.
"There might be some funding
delays," he said.
Most of the work that RTI's
Triangle employees do serves
federal government agencies.
Funding from the U.S. Agency
for International Development
and the U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
makes up about two-thirds of an-
nual revenue, according to RTI's
2007 annual report.
RTI researchers supported
NASA's space program, discovered
a widely used cancer drug, tested
the air in homes over the Love
Canal dump site for chemical con-
tamination, reduced the number
of aviation accidents caused by
wind shear and helped the South
African government overhaul its
apartheid-era education system.
They have also been on the ground
in Iraq to help establish democrati-
cally elected local governments.
In the past year, RTI has
team ed with Duke University,
UNC-Chapel Hill and N.C. State
University to establish an en-
ergy research consortium whose
issues include biofuels and cli-
mate change. The think tank
also expanded its HIV/AIDS re-
search with the addition of six
scientists it attracted from the
University of California at San
Francisco.
Most of the work at RTI goes
on without the Triangle noticing
it. But not all.
Wendee Wechsberg — an RTI
scientist who studies behavior that
increases the risk of HIV infection
in women and teens — has de-
developed intervention programs by
working with African-American
women in North Carolina who are
substance abusers. Since 2001,
Wechsberg has adapted what she
learned to at-risk women in South
Africa and Russia. About half of
the year, she travels to set up study
sites. She is now finishing a re-
port on South African teens, many
of whom were raped as children,
dropped out of school at 14 and
became mothers and substance
abusers by 17.
But her work in the Triangle
continues. She is starting a study
of local at-risk teens.
The ad campaign in the Tri-
gle aims to tell local readers and
listeners about the breadth and
reach of its research and employ-
ees like Wechsberg.
People who are attracted to
RTI's Web site through the ad
campaign can find out about
Wechsberg and her work.