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College prices up again this year; student borrowing rises to keep up

By Justin Pope
The Associated Press

The price of college again rose faster than the inflation rate this year, climbing 6.6 percent at four-year public schools and outstripping increases in the financial aid that lowers what most students actually pay.

The latest increases, reported Monday by the College Board, bring the average list price of four-year public universities to $6,185 this year, up $381 from 2006-2007. At four-year private colleges, tuition and fees rose 6.3 percent to $23,712.

Public two-year colleges — which educate about half of American college students — again got the best marks for keeping a lid on price increases. Their average price rose 4.2 percent to $2,361. Accounting for aid, their average net cost is only $320 per year.

"For too long, parents have grimaced and borne the high price of college because they presumed that a higher education is key to their child's success in today's economy," said James Boyle, president of the group College Parents of America, in a statement on the report. "Surely, the day will come — soon — when parents say enough is enough."

College costs, borrowing up again

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<th>College costs, borrowing up again</th>
<th>Average tuition at four-year public colleges rose 6.6 percent this year. The increase was much lower at two-year colleges.</th>
<th>Higher education aid in billions of 2006 dollars.</th>
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<td>Average published tuition and fees in thousands of 2007 dollars</td>
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The published price is not the real price for many students, thanks to financial aid, but the net price is rising too. On average, accounting for grants and tax breaks, the net price for full-time students at four-year public universities this year is $2,580. That's about $160 more than last year.

At private colleges, net cost this year averages $14,400 — up $638 from a year ago.

To make up the difference, students typically borrow as much as allowed from the federal government, but then turn to private student loans. A decade ago, nonfederal loans accounted for about 6 percent of student aid, but last year they were 24 percent.

The rate of growth in private borrowing slowed last year. But that was at least partly because of new rules allowing graduates students to take out PLUS loans from the federal government, reducing their need for private loans. For undergraduates, private borrowing still rose 12 percent to $14.5 billion.

Including room and board for students living on campus, charges for public four-year colleges were $13,869, or 5.9 percent higher than last year.

At private four-year schools, average total charges come to $22,307.

However, the percentage of college-goers who pay such large sums is fairly small. Fewer than 10 percent of students even attend colleges with tuition and fees higher than $30,000, according to the College Board, and many of those students receive financial aid.

About 56 percent of students at four-year colleges attend schools listing a price under $10,000, and about one-third attend schools charging under $6,000.

The College Board's report does not try to explain why prices keep going up, though Sandy Baum, an economist with the group and at Skidmore College, points out that because of rising demand for higher education, more state appropriations have not translated into more money spent on each student.

The report comes as Congress is in the early stages of considering a proposal that could require some colleges with large endowments to spend more of their savings to keep tuition down. Colleges call the idea misguided and say it wouldn't solve the underlying economic issues explaining the price increases.
Campus safety worries more than 80 percent of East Carolina University students, according to survey results released Monday.

Nearly 4,000 of ECU's 26,000 students completed the survey, administered from late April to early May. Michelle Lieberman, director of student safety, said she was thrilled with the response rate, which she partially attributed to heightened attention to safety after April 16 shootings left 32 people dead at Virginia Tech.

More than 150 ECU students and employees packed a room at Mendenhall Student Center to hear the survey results Monday afternoon. Lieberman, also director of off-campus and community services, urged them not to see building a safe campus as a police issue.

"Safety is everyone's issue," she said. "It's students, it's faculty, it's staff, it's parents. It's all of us that make a difference to make our campus community safe."

The survey results offered a case in point. Campus administrators may soon replace dorm keys with key cards, Lieberman said. Safety advantages from such a move disappear when students let strangers without keys into dorms, she said, something a fifth of survey respondents said they do. Virginia Tech shooter Seung-Hui Cho fired his first shots after being let into a dorm, she said.

"We can get all of the locking mechanisms that you could possibly want, but if students allow others who they don't know to come in behind them — or hold the doors open for them — none of these locking mechanisms will help."

The survey revealed some other unsafe student practices. Forty-four percent said they walk alone on campus at night; 28 percent do so off-campus.

Survey results also illuminated student opinions about campus security services. Eighty percent of students said

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they’re aware of escort services offered on campus, but only two in five said they’ve ever used it.

Students split evenly on how effectively ECU police deal with crime, although a fifth of respondents offered no opinion.

Attitudes on administrators’ handling of crime divided along similar lines.

Lieberman and others detailed new safety measures planned.

Officials aim to install 191 new security cameras over the next two years, she said, adding that there are 254 “high-powered” cameras in place now.

“Some you see; some you don’t,” she said.

Dean of Students Lynn Roeder described a proposal that would give officials more power to act when a troubled student shows signs of endangering others.

Roeder is pushing to allow counselors and administrators to take potentially threatening students out of school, regardless of what the student

wants.

Academics aside, officials can remove students under two circumstances now, Roeder said: after certain violations of the Student Code of Conduct; and in cases where illness or emotional trauma affects a student’s performance. In the latter case, the students must consent to withdrawing.

Roeder’s proposal would allow involuntary withdraw-

als when officials conclude a student poses a threat to others. The policy’s intent would be encourage treatment for mental illness, not to punish expelled students, she said.

The student and faculty senate must approve the policy, Roeder said.

Jimmy Ryals can be contacted at jryals@coxnc.com and 329-9568.

The Pitt County Sheriff’s Department responded to a pair of assaults recently.

■ No injuries were reported by a 35-year-old Greenville woman who said her boyfriend assaulted her in the 3200 block of Chaplain Street Sunday at 11:38 p.m.

■ A 27-year-old Ayden woman said her boyfriend assaulted her in the 2800 block of N.C. Highway 102 Sunday at 7:55 p.m. No injuries were reported.
Public Forum

Uptown Umbrella Market helps artists

I am a local artist just beginning my new career at the fun age of 65. I have recently become a regular vendor at the Uptown Umbrella Market and have been so pleased with my experience there. For those of you who don’t know, the Uptown Umbrella Market is a pleasant and colorful twice monthly street fair put on by Katherine Wetherington, Dulcinea and other merchants in the Uptown Area.

For $25, I get an eight-foot table with a beautiful market umbrella positioned along the sidewalks in Uptown. This setup service provided by Wetherington and her family is particularly helpful for us seniors and also handicapped vendors (of which we have several). I love the wonderful atmosphere at the market; there is even live music.

How wonderfully exciting that I finally have a low-cost way to promote and sell my artwork. I look forward to every market date and am only saddened that they ended on Oct. 20. My 12-year-old granddaughter also is a vendor and is learning all about making and selling, presentation and how to speak with new people.

We can’t wait for the Uptown Umbrella market to return to the sidewalks again next year. Thanks to Katherine Wetherington and the Uptown community for giving local artists and businesses a wonderful place to be on a Saturday.

B.J. HELLER
Stokes

ECU honors 100 female graduates

The ECU Women’s Roundtable sponsored a wonderful celebration. It honored 100 incredible graduates of ECU and also Kay Chalk.

As an ECU faculty member since 1982, I have had the privilege to be inspired by some of these women, taught others and, more importantly, partnered with many in their efforts to ensure opportunities for excellent education, health care and opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity for North Carolina’s children and adults. Congratulations to all.

KATHY KOLASA KELLY
Greenville
Crash temporarily halts ECU sales

The Daily Reflector

The East Carolina ticket office was affected Monday when Ticketmaster, the company that handles its ticketing, had a widespread crash of its system.

According to ECU Assistant Director for Ticketing and Marketing Scott Wetherbee, the school's ticket office was unable to sell tickets for Saturday's ECU-UAB football game for a three-hour span Monday before the server was back online at about 2:30 p.m.
OUR VIEWS

Safe on campus

Making sure the state's public universities are safe, and that any troubled students get help, rightly is a priority.

No one will accuse the University of North Carolina system of failing to take seriously the issue of campus safety. The system seems headed in the right direction in the wake of the Virginia Tech tragedy. After that catastrophe in which 33 students died (student Seung-Hui Cho, a clearly troubled youth, killed 32 others and then himself), universities around the country started examining ways to protect their charges.

The public university system took its own look at what's needed, coming up with a good set of recommendations. State Attorney General Roy Cooper has his own group that will shortly report to the people.

A productive theme of the UNC group's findings is awareness. At Virginia Tech, there had been warning signs about Cho, who had received recommendations for mental health treatment. But there seemed to be a lack of a path to respond to his troubles.

Accordingly, the UNC group wants a trained group set up on campuses to identify and talk about options in dealing with students who are identified as having exhibited threatening behavior. Students, faculty and staff also would be better educated about the warning signs of violence or suicide. Emergency drills would be held.

One issue the UNC system and its counterparts are facing is privacy. Federal laws need revision to make it possible for parents to review grades and the like, which they cannot now do without a signed permission form from their students or through tax records demonstrating the student is a dependent. That also would allow parents generally to get more information about how their children are doing, their behavior and so forth, information that's now in a sort of gray area for colleges and universities.

Privacy laws that include student records may be well-intentioned, but there is too much confusion about what universities can do and cannot do, and schools have a fear of lawsuits. State legislatures and Congress may have to look at ways to protect schools.

The UNC system needs to make sure counseling centers can deal with potential problems, but also that students can have access to community mental health centers. Local law enforcement officials have to be brought into the mix as well.

This issue is about life and death, and indications are, for example, that Cho's parents had not been made aware of some mental problems that were obvious to others who knew him on campus. Students also need help in understanding when and how to act if they suspect a classmate or dorm mate is in trouble.

UNC officials are due credit for recognizing the need to act. Perhaps Cooper's group will have additional ideas that can become part of that plan. Everyone is taking this seriously. Everyone should.
By day, Bryan Zupon is a Duke University senior studying history and economics. By night, he's an avant garde chef who prepares poached duck for his friends and infuses fruit with carbon dioxide to give it some fizz.

For the past year, Zupon, 21, has hosted weekly dinner parties at his cramped campus apartment, bowling over friends and the occasional chef and food writer with his ultramodern cuisine.

Word of this venture, which he calls Z Kitchen, has spread more widely and rapidly than he'd like. He insists that Z Kitchen isn't a restaurant, but Durham County health officials aren't convinced.

If Z Kitchen did qualify as a restaurant, it would be illegal because it lacks proper permits. The health department scolded Zupon last year over some language on his Web site — www.zkitchen.net — that suggested Zupon was running a restaurant. Now, authorities want to be sure Zupon is truly cooking for friends and not running an eatery out of his apartment.

"We are looking into him very carefully right now," said Robert Brown, the county's environmental health director. "It sure looks like he's running a restaurant. He's getting reviews up and down the East Coast."

It isn't clear that Zupon, a 21-year-old from Basking Ridge, N.J., is doing anything wrong. While reluctant to discuss the county's investigation in depth, Brown did say a key issue surrounding Zupon's venture is whether he charges or accepts donations for his meals. He has, at least, at times. Dean McCord, a Raleigh lawyer who runs a

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food Web site, www.varmintbites.com, dined at Z Kitchen last year. In a review of the
dinner he posted to another Web site, McCord said he and fellow dinner
guests paid $40 each.
“We covered the food costs,” McCord
recalled in an interview. “It was certainly
much, much less than you would have paid at a restaurant.”
A New York Times Magazine piece last
month did not say whether Zupon charges
or accepts money for his meals, and sto-
ries in other publications either didn’t
address it or hinted at it being a secret.
Zupon says he doesn’t accept money.
He chooses guests and the menu and
considers Z Kitchen nothing more than a
vehicle that allows him to cook, eat
and talk with like-minded foodies.
“I make no claims of being a chef or
even a cook,” said Zupon, who has never
worked in a restaurant kitchen. “I’m just
an individual who really likes cooking
and hosting dinner parties serving mod-
ern food.”

A really nice stove

Zupon became interested in food as a
youngster. His parents encouraged his
culinary curiosity by taking him to some
of New York City’s finest restaurants.
When the family remodeled its kitchen,
Zupon lobbied for — and received — an
elaborate stove.
At Duke, he’s wholly immersed in the
local food culture. He is the food writer
for the student newspaper. He is co-chair-
man of a student advisory group that
examines food offerings on campus. He fre-
quently visits the area’s top restaurants, meets
their chefs and chats with other food nuts
on Internet message boards.
When he moved from his first dorm to
a campus apartment, he leaned on his
parents to subsidize his hobby. The result
is a kitchen jammed with high-end cook-
ing tools such as water baths and a vac-
umm food sealer, the latter a tool he uses
to cook in the “sous vide” style. Trans-
lated literally as “under vacuum,” sous
vide is a cooking technique in which food
is sealed and cooked very slowly at a
constant temperature to maximize flar-
or tenderness.

His are gourmet menus with modern,
unpredictable twists. One recent dinner
featured poached duck breast in a foie
gras butter. He often uses a CO2 car-
tridge to carbonate fruit.

McCord, the Raleigh lawyer and food
blogger, came away from his Z Kitchen
experience impressed with both the food
and Zupon’s ambition.
Recalling an effervescent grape he
tasted, McCord called Zupon’s spread
“whimsically intellectual.”
“He’s the type of person who, if I was in
the business world, I’d hire in an instant,”
McCord said. “He’s a doer, not a talker.”

From apron to business suit

In some ways, Zupon is a study in
contradiction. His love of cooking and
encyclopedic grasp of the food subcul-
ture’s language and terminology sug-
gests a culinary artiste with a future as
a restaurateur.

In reality, he has varied interests. As a
teenager he spent as much time playing
hockey as he did tinkering in his par-
ents’ kitchen. When he graduates, Zupon
will forgo the apron for a business suit;
he already has a job lined up with a
Chicago management consulting firm.
And when it comes to all the attention
he’s received for his Z Kitchen venture,
Zupon is also of two minds. He ac-
knowledges, with some discomfort, that
the more publicity he gets, the less he is
an underground sensation, and perhaps
the more likely authorities are to impose
some sort of restriction on him. On the
other hand, he’s a college kid who has al-
ready received some fawning press and
is still juggling interview requests.
“It has gotten a little bit away from
me,” he said. “I couldn’t really turn down
The New York Times. I figured if I go
out, I go out with a bang.”

A sample menu

Here’s the six-course dinner served at Z Kitchen this past weekend.

- Shrimp, Nueske bacon, avocado mosaic, tomato-cumin chutney, mustard, Sichuan
  peppercorn, Old Bay
- Red snapper, braised fennel, candied olive, raisins, passion fruit, vinegar
- Sam Mason’s Pork belly, miso-butterscotch, snow peas
- Duck breast poached in foie gras butter, crispy skin, mushroom ragout, sage, black
  truffle-lemongrass emulsion, grains of paradise
- Beet, chevre, pistachio, green peanuts, orange blossom honey, ginger-pear, Manni
  olive oil, Maldon salt, grated chocolate
- Homeland Creamery blackberry ice cream, sesame chocolate, roasted-pickled
  apples, roasted pineapple

SOURCE: BRYAN ZUPON
College costs speed upward

Rate of increase outpaces inflation

BY JONATHAN D. GLATER
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Tuition and fees at public and private colleges and universities rose at more than double the rate of inflation, the College Board said in reports released Monday. The increases, in the cost of higher education continue to drive up the amount that students and families borrow, with the greatest increase coming in private loans, according to a separate College Board report also released Monday.

Tuition and other costs, not including room and board, rose to an average of $6,185 at public four-year colleges this year, up 6.6 percent from last year, while average tuition at private colleges hit $23,712, an increase of 6.3 percent. At public two-year institutions, average tuition and fees rose 4.2 percent to $2,361.

Last year, tuition and fees at public institutions rose by 5.7 percent, at private ones by 6.3 percent and at public two-year institutions by 3.6 percent.

"The average price of college is continuing to rise more rapidly than the consumer price index, more rapidly than prices in the economy," Sandy Baum, a co-author of the report who is a senior policy analyst for the College Board and a professor at Skidmore College, told reporters at a news conference. She added that the prices "are probably higher than most of us want them to be."

The price hikes reflect increases in the sticker price that colleges advertise, although, Baum said, the average student does not pay the full amount. At public universities, the average student gets about $3,600 in grants and tax benefits, lowering the actual cost to around $2,600. At private institutions, aid totals about $9,300, bringing the average cost to $14,400.

But even the net price, after taking into account grants and other forms of aid, is rising more quickly than prices of other goods and than family incomes. In recent years, consumer prices have risen by less than 3 percent a year, while net tuition has risen by 6.6 percent at public colleges and by 4.6 percent at private ones.

The changes in tuition at public institutions closely track changes in financing they receive from state governments and other public sources, the report found.

Private loans, those not guaranteed by the federal government, continued to be the fastest growing form of borrowing, totaling more than $17 billion in the 2006-07 academic year. In the same period, students and their families borrowed $59.6 billion in federally guaranteed loans.
Voice of Duke during lacrosse case to retire

VP Burness has served 17 years

BY JANE STANCIL
STAFF WRITER

DURHAM – Duke Senior Vice President John F. Burness, the university’s public spokesman during the lacrosse case, will retire in June after a 17-year tenure.

Burness, senior vice president for public affairs and government relations since 1991, reported to three Duke presidents – Keith Brodie, Nan Keohane and Richard Brodhead. He is well-known in higher education circles and helped create a widely praised Duke-Durham neighborhood partnership that increased the university’s outreach to Durham.

But the past 18 months put Burness on the defensive as he faced an international media storm surrounding the lacrosse case, in which three Duke players were accused of raping an escort service dancer at a party. The former players were eventually exonerated by the state attorney general, and Durham District Attorney Mike Nifong was disbarred for mishandling the case.

During months of intense media coverage, Burness was often the face and voice of Duke. More recently, he has fielded questions about a new lawsuit from former lacrosse coach Mike Pressler and about Duke’s undisclosed financial settlement with the players. Brodhead made a public apology last month for the university’s lack of full support for the former players.

In a news release Monday, Brodhead said Burness, 62, told him two years ago that the current year would be Burness’ last at Duke. Brodhead said Burness projected Duke’s image to the larger world and ushered in better relations with its home city.

Keohane said Burness addressed tough issues “with clarity of insight, wit and wisdom.”

Burness could not be reached for comment Monday. He said in the news release that he would write about issues affecting higher education.

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Pressler has hurdle to clear

Former lacrosse coach must show a judge that Duke reneged on an agreement.

BY ANNE BLYTHE
STAFF WRITER

DURHAM — Mike Pressler, the former Duke lacrosse coach, could go back to square one, legal experts say, if a judge rescinds his settlement agreement with his former employer.

But first Pressler and his attorney, Jay Trehy of Raleigh, must convince a Durham County judge that Duke reneged on its confidential agreement.

"Typically, when a plaintiff wants to rescind a settlement, that is so they can seek further relief and further damages," said Timothy Davis, a contracts and sports law expert at the Wake Forest University law school in Winston-Salem. "In lay terms, that means they want more money."

Davis said he was speaking in general terms and did not know details of Pressler's case.

In a complaint filed Oct. 11 in Durham County Superior Court, Pressler alleged that John Burness, Duke's retiring senior vice president of public affairs and government relations, made disparaging remarks about him to the media. According to the complaint, an April 9 article in the New York newspaper Newsday quoted Burness as saying the difference between Pressler and current lacrosse coach John Danowski was "night and day."

The second comment came in June, when Burness reportedly told The Associated Press, "It was essential for the team to have a change of leadership in order to move forward."

Pressler hopes to get a jury trial if the settlement is rescinded.

He is the only Duke official to lose a job over the Duke lacrosse case. He was fired in April 2006, at the height of public condemnation after an escort service dancer alleged that three of his players had gang-raped her at a team party.

The players were vindicated nearly a year later as victims of a rogue prosecutor and declared innocent of all charges by the state attorney general.

Pressler spent 16 seasons at Duke, building a powerhouse team that won three Atlantic Coast Conference championships, got 10 NCAA tournament berths and made an appearance in the 2005 NCAA Division I championship game.

Since losing his job in April 2006, Pressler has spent much time crisscrossing the country promoting his book, "It's Not About the Truth: The Untold Story of the Duke Lacrosse Case and the Lives It Shattered."

The book contains Pressler's first extensive comments about the case.

Pressler is beginning his second year coaching the men's lacrosse team at Bryant University in Rhode Island. Reached Monday at the school, the coach said he could not answer any questions about the case.

"I can't say anything," Pressler said. "I just have to, regrettably, decline any comments regarding that."

Trehy, his attorney, did not return phone calls seeking comment.

In a terse statement from its chief legal counsel, Duke vowed to fight Pressler's claims that the settlement had been broken.