ECU board considers tuition, fee hikes

By Jackie Drake
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The East Carolina University Board of Trustees will consider tuition and fee increases totaling more than $300 when it meets at Mendenhall Student Center on Friday morning. At a special topic lunch between committee sessions Thursday, the trustees discussed the 2011-12 tuition and fee proposal from university administration.

The proposal would increase undergraduate resident tuition by $204 per year — this on top of a supplemental tuition increase of $263 already approved by the N.C. General Assembly.

“We do know it's going to be bad next year,” Chancellor Steve Ballard said. “It pains me to ask as high an increase as this, but I don't think there's any choice.”

The increased revenue would go toward financial aid and prevent cuts to academic programs. Also proposed is a $100 increase in fees.
If the trustees approve the proposal, it will be recommended to the University of North Carolina system Board of Governors for review and approval before going to the Legislature, which sets final tuition rates.

The state is anticipating a $3 billion shortfall for the 2011-12 budget year.

Total undergraduate resident tuition would go from $4,947 per year to $5,514. The $567 increase includes a $467 tuition increase and a $100 increase in fees — $40 for athletics and $60 for education technology. The $467 tuition increase includes the $204 increase to general campus tuition proposed by the administration and the supplemental increase from the Legislature at $263.

The $204 increase represents a 6.5 percent increase which will yield $6.5 million in revenue.

Undergraduate non-resident tuition and fees would go from $17,021 to $18,093. Graduate resident tuition and fees would go from $5,196 per year to $5,723.

The Brody School of Medicine campus-based tuition would increase 10.5 percent, from $11,563 to $12,703 per year.

The proposal also sets tuition for the new dental school, which will open in the fall of 2011. If the proposal is approved, the first class of 50 students would pay $7,000 per term or $77,000 for the full four-year program (three terms per year for the first three years.
then two terms the fourth year). Dental students would pay $1,670 in fees per term, mostly covering instrument leases, on top of general ECU fees. Contact Jackie Drake at jdrake@reflector.com or (252) 329-9567.
If you know how to do the Lindy Hop or the Pony, you may be interested in swinging over to Farmville for a musical that will take you back to the 1960s. The Farmville Community Arts Council will present “Hairspray” at 8 p.m. today-Saturday and 3 p.m. on Sunday at the Paramount Theater in Farmville.

Set in Baltimore in June 1962, “Hairspray” is about Tracy Turnblad, an overweight high-school student who wants desperately to get on “The Corny Collins Show.” The musical is based on the “Buddy Deane Show,” which aired in the 1960s.

East Carolina University alumna Corina Knott is the director of the local production. The 29-year-old Charlotte native graduated in 2004 with a degree in theater and marketing. Knott has previously worked in theater and volunteers her time for productions in Farmville. She drives from her home near Raleigh to direct nightly rehearsals.

Knott has directed three Farmville productions prior to “Hairspray.” “I directed ‘Scrooge' two years in a row and I also did ‘Moon Over Buffalo,’” she said. “Hairspray” is among plays she has wanted to direct.

“I've always loved the script,” she said. “It's one of those happy, feel-good kind of shows.”

In “Hairspray,” Tracy gets permission from her parents to attend the “Corny Collins” audition but is rejected by the show's producer Velma Von Tussle. “Because of her size, she's told she can't be on the show. The other people who can't be on the show are African Americans,” said Knott. “The people on the show are the popular kids. The rest are the outcasts because of size or color.”
Back at school Tracy is sent to detention for skipping class. There she meets a black student and dancer, Seaweed J. Stubbs, who teaches her several dance moves. Tracy breaks through the show's barrier of who can be accepted because she can sing and dance just as well as the other “popular” students.

The story is light-hearted but does convey a message about race and size discrimination. “The show will get you thinking about issues but leaves you tapping your foot at the end,” Knott said. “It's got a really deep meaning but does it in a fun, quirky way to get it across.”

The Farmville cast includes 33 people, many of whom are ECU students. “They are supposed to be high school students, so college students work just as well. The lead is played by ECU senior Kimberly Genna,” Knott said.

Choreographer Christie Wainwright had many of her students from Dance Unlimited in Farmville also try out. “We do have four or five adults, but for the most part it's college students. There are no children in the cast,” Knott said.

The musical's original Broadway production opened on Aug. 15, 2002, and won eight Tony Awards out of 13 nominations and ran for more than 2,500 performances before closing on Jan. 4, 2009. Hairspray has also had U.S. national tours, a London West End production and numerous foreign productions and was adapted for a 2007 musical film.

The London production was nominated for a record-setting 11 Laurence Olivier Awards, winning for Best New Musical and in three other categories.

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Laura Beth Lee, left and Katherine Bland, right, interns from East Carolina's theater department, are working with the Smiles and Frowns Playhouse's production of "Sleeping Beauty" at the Ayden Arts and Recreation Center. (Aileen Devlin/The Daily Reflector)

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'The Spell of Sleeping Beauty' presented in Ayden
By Kim Grizzard
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When Molly Deans takes the stage this weekend at East Carolina University as Fiona McLarean in "Brigadoon," her best friend and roommate won't be in the audience. That's because Kimberly Genna will be starring as Tracy Turnblad in Farmville Community Arts Council's "Hairspray."

Friend and fellow theater student Laura Beth Lee hopes someone can hold a seat for her at that musical comedy while she finishes her job as stage manager and assistant director of Smiles and Frowns Playhouse's "Sleeping Beauty." That production is being directed by ECU's Katherine Bland, who may have to miss some of her classmates' stage performances this weekend in New Bern.

“We're all over the place,” said Patricia Clark, as associate professor in ECU's School of Theatre and Dance. “Everybody's working; everybody's doing something. I'm amazed when I see how many of our students are either out in the community or working here.” Playwright William Shakespeare saw the whole world as a stage. Clark, coordinator for theatre education and theatre for youth, sees every stage as a classroom.

“We can teach only so much in the classroom,” she said. “I think that all of our training goes way beyond the four walls, which is what it's really all about — expanding the walls of the classroom and the studio out into the real world.”

So valued are those outside experiences that, for the first time, ECU has begun pairing youth theater students with Smiles and Frowns for internships. Both Bland and Lee are receiving course credit for their work with the 25-year-old community-theater program
for children and youth. The two have spent months working with a cast of more than 40 children and teens.

“In theater there's not a lot of sitting down and studying,” Lee said. “You have to learn by doing. Because of that you have a lot of internships, a lot of community outreach.”

To meet those requirements, theater-education students do everything from performing on stage to working with summer drama camps. Bland spent last summer in Manteo working backstage with children's theater at Roanoke Island Festival Park.

“You don't have to go to New York,” she said. “There's such an educational experience here.”

For Genna, taking on a stage role in Farmville was all about experience. The Raleigh native is taking a full load of courses as she works to complete her final semester at ECU. She receives no course credit for her work in “Hairspray.”

“They do encourage us to work outside the school,” she said. “They want us to get experience. School's always first but they would not want you to turn down an opportunity. They send out e-mails all the time for different auditions.”

That's how Genna ended up in one performance while her roommate is starring in another. With the shows being performed on the same dates, Deans won't see Genna in what is a dream role for her.

“I'm so upset about it,” Deans said. “She's my best friend. We're both going for our first lead. I want to be there to support her. I'm so excited for her.”

Genna understands. The two have shared details of their productions at home or on their way to class.

“That's just life when you're in theater,” she said. “You're always going to be performing. You're always going to be busy.”

Clark said having theater students performing in various venues at the same time is evidence that the school is achieving its goals of training professionals in all areas of theater.

“There's always something for everybody (to do),” Clark said. “That's really great training ... getting yourself out there to be available to work.

“It doesn't come to you. You have to go to it.”

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UNC-CH raising tuition 6.5%

BY ERIC FERRERI - Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL There was no uprising Thursday when UNC-Chapel Hill trustees raised tuition. No gaggle of sign-toting protesters complaining about a more costly education. No audible groans or rolling of eyes.

Just Student Body President Hogan Medlin's lone "no" vote on a plan that will raise tuition 6.5 percent next year.

Medlin was pushing an alternate plan to raise tuition $40 less per year than the $313 ultimately approved. But he didn't quibble too much with the board's decision. "I think students on this campus understand the budget situation," Medlin said.

The increase, coupled with a 2.5 percent increase to fees, means in-state students will pay $7,025 in tuition and fees in 2011-2012. That doesn't include room, board, books and incidentals, which taken together more than double the total cost.

Trustees said their decision was a reluctant one, forced by the state's continuing economic woes. As the state grapples with a $3.5 billion budget hole, state universities have been ordered to prepare budget-cut scenarios of up to 10 percent. One of the few ways to make back some of that lost revenue is by raising tuition.

"You have to be realistic about the environment we're in," said Chancellor Holden Thorp. "Tuition revenue is one of the only sources of funding to deal with the challenges we face."

Medlin pushed the slightly smaller tuition increase out of fear that recent history will repeat itself. This past summer, legislators trying to close a budget gap enacted a $750 tuition increase for public university students.
With separate tuition increases having already been approved earlier in the year by UNC system leaders, students at UNC-CH ended up paying $950 more.

"There could be another tuition increase from the legislature," Medlin argued. "So we were thinking it made sense to be a little more conservative now."

But Thorp pushed the larger tuition increase of 6.5 percent - the most allowable under UNC system policy. Trustees agreed.

"It's going to be a very difficult session in the legislature," said Bob Winston, the board's chairman. "It's our responsibility as trustees to keep the University of North Carolina, and its diploma, at the highest level."

**Other campuses**

UNC-CH is not alone in discussing tuition this week. Trustees at N.C. Central University did so earlier, and the topic is being reviewed this week at N.C. State University.

In recent years, legislative sessions have been stressful for UNC system and campus leaders pleading their cases for their share of scarce public funding.

There will be a new layer of uncertainty when the legislature reconvenes early next year. An Election Day shift in power means the university will have new power brokers to lobby in both the Senate and House.

At UNC-CH, the tuition increases approved Thursday - if OK'd by the UNC system's governing board - would produce more than $15 million in revenue for the campus, if the campus is allowed to keep it. University officials have, in recent years, had to persuade legislators to let campuses keep that revenue rather than divert it to the state's General Fund.

**Keeping the 'fee'**

State Sen. Phil Berger, whom Republicans nominated Thursday as Senate president pro tem, told The News & Observer this week that campuses should keep the revenue.

Thom Tillis, a Mecklenburg Republican in the running to become House speaker, agreed.
"It would seem appropriate you would put them back into the very service they're providing," Tillis said Thursday. "It's a fee, not a tax. Things that should go into the General Fund are revenue from taxes. It would just seem to be the fair thing to let it go back to the institution."

Paul "Skip" Stam, a Wake County Republican who also is seeking to become House speaker, said tuition revenue can't simply be viewed in a vacuum. Because the university receives an annual state appropriation, legislators need to consider the broader funding picture and not just a portion coming from tuition.

If universities do get to keep tuition revenue, UNC-CH leaders want to use nearly half - 45 percent - on need-based financial aid. The UNC system mandates that at least 25 percent of tuition-increase revenue be used for faculty pay increases, but because such raises are frozen this year, revenue would be used for other academic initiatives aimed at improving graduation and retention rates.

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A group of patients exposed to hydraulic fluid on surgical instruments at two Duke University hospitals contends in legal filings that the university used flawed studies to claim the 2004 incident caused no extra harm.

And even though some patients were eventually ruled out as having been operated on with the tainted surgical tools, the court filings state, the university did not notify them they were clear until earlier this year - five years after the situation came to light.

In the intervening years, some patients sued. Ronald Buchanan's lawsuit was dismissed earlier this year when Duke provided evidence he wasn't exposed, and now Duke is suing him to recover legal expenses.

Buchanan is fighting that battle on grounds that Duke led him to believe he had been exposed to the fluid for five years and "now seeks to punish him further by taxing him with the defense costs in this litigation," according to the documents.

Buchanan's claim and the charges about the faulty studies were made in two court filings in Durham County Superior Court. Each is slated to be heard Monday.

Duke spokesman Doug Stokke said he could not comment on active litigation. The lawyer for the patients in both actions, G. Henry Temple Jr. of Raleigh, also declined to comment.

Temple represents 14 patients who were among more than 3,600 originally identified as having been potentially exposed to the hydraulic fluid in November and December 2004 at Durham Regional and Duke Raleigh, which are owned by Duke University Health System.
The exposure resulted when repair crews at Duke Raleigh drained elevator fluid into discarded detergent barrels. The barrels were inadvertently picked up by the detergent supplier and mistakenly returned to the hospitals as washing fluid for the machines that clean surgical instruments.

For more than a month, doctors and nurses at the hospitals complained about greasy instruments.

After the mistake was discovered, Duke commissioned a study to determine how toxic the instruments were and another study to track whether patients had extra complications as a result of their exposures.

The studies found little harm. The toxicology report indicated that only tiny amounts of hydraulic fluid remained on the instruments, and the patient study reported that people suffered no problems beyond what would normally be expected after surgeries.

The group of 14 patients is challenging those results.

They contend some of the instruments provided by Duke for toxicology tests were clean, including some dated a month before the industrial fluid was delivered, so results were skewed to show smaller amounts of the grease.

Similarly, the legal filing contends, at least 1,000 patients studied as part of the analysis of harm had not been exposed to the fluid, possibly diminishing the rate of complications that occurred.

The patient study, the plaintiffs allege in their court filing, was used "to support and promote an untenable conclusion: that patients exposed to hydraulic fluid actually had fewer adverse outcomes, in every category, than patients who had not been exposed - a virtual statistical impossibility."

The lawsuit involving this group of 14 patients is one of several that resulted from the incident. Previous cases settled without trials, and the participants agreed to keep the details secret.

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UNC football coach Butch Davis, left, addresses the board of trustees regarding recent investigations into his team, while Chancellor Holden Thorp, center, and athletic director Dick Baddour listen.

**UNC Chancellor Thorp backs Davis, Baddour**

By Ken Tysiac  -  Staff Writer

CHAPEL HILL University of North Carolina Chancellor Holden Thorp offered his most resounding vote of support yet for football coach Butch Davis and athletic director Dick Baddour on Thursday, telling the school's board of trustees the pair will retain their positions for next year.

Thorp praised Davis and Baddour for their handling of the NCAA investigation into the university's football program, later telling reporters that the university had no plans to impose self-sanctions as it awaits word from college athletics' governing body.

Thorp's comments went beyond what he expressed before members of the UNC system's board of governors just two weeks earlier, when he said Davis did not appear to play a role in the violations under investigation. While saying at the time that Davis was not in danger of losing his job, he still questioned why Davis was not more aware of his players' actions.

Thursday, Thorp left no doubt that Davis and Baddour will retain their posts.
"They're going to be here next year," Thorp said of Davis and Baddour, "and we're excited about Carolina football. We feel like we've done everything we needed to do on this investigation."

Thorp and Baddour told the trustees the NCAA and the school are close to wrapping up the investigative phase of the probe. NCAA investigators will turn over their findings to the enforcement staff, beginning the NCAA's process of determining what sanctions - if any - UNC will receive.

Baddour acknowledged that he doesn't know how the NCAA will respond. "I don't know what to tell you on that," Baddour said. "That is out of our control."

Following up on Thorp's comments, Baddour later said that while UNC has no immediate plans to impose self-sanctions, that could change if the NCAA sends UNC a notice of allegations, which is a letter the NCAA sends schools informing them of major rules violations that have taken place.

It's common for schools charged with major rules violations to impose sanctions on themselves in hopes of softening the blow from the NCAA. Such sanctions can include reducing the number of scholarships, withdrawing from postseason play and disciplining staff members involved in violations.

According to documents and interviews, UNC's problems stem from: the impermissible gifts and benefits provided to players by agents and others; the money that former associate head coach John Blake received from sports agent Gary Wichard; and improper academic help provided by tutor Jennifer Wiley.

Earlier this week, Florida lawyer Michael Buckner, who counsels schools on NCAA investigations but who is not involved with UNC, said the school can expect stiff sanctions. He said the case is unique because of the number of athletes who were involved and who were stripped of their eligibility.

Fourteen players have missed at least one game, with seven of them out for the entire season. Four of those players have been banned as permanently ineligible by the NCAA.
Thorp said UNC has found no information that Davis was involved in any of the problems that have surfaced. Appearing before the trustees for the first time in his four years at UNC, Davis addressed the NCAA investigation that began in July.

**Davis 'embarrassed'**

Davis said he was "embarrassed and saddened and disappointed" about the negative light that has been cast on the football program. The probe has uncovered academic fraud and more than $21,000 in impermissible benefits to players, according to documents released by the NCAA and the school.

Davis said that nothing is more important to him as the head football coach than the integrity of the university.

"I will do absolutely everything in my power to make sure that these things don't happen again," Davis said.

In a telephone interview Thursday night, board of trustees Chairman Bob Winston said he supported Thorp's decision to retain Davis.

"Taking into account all aspects and all the evidence and Coach Davis and what kind of coach we thought he was and what kind of person he was, we believe that it was in the best interest of the program, the university and the student-athletes to continue to have him as coach," said Winston, a key figure in UNC's hiring of Davis.

Thorp said the NCAA has visited UNC's campus seven times and has conducted more than 60 interviews. Those have included interviews with Davis and every member of the football coaching staff.

The N.C. Secretary of State's office, which is investigating possible violations of the state's Uniform Athlete Agent Act, has been on campus twice, Thorp said, and has interviewed Davis. State investigators are trying to determine whether agents broke laws prohibiting them from operating in the state without a license or unlawfully providing benefits to players.

The timetable for the probe remains a mystery to UNC, because it's in the hands of the NCAA. Thorp said last month that it could take a year to resolve.
Thursday, he said the NCAA's options are:
• Charging no one with violations.
• Charging individuals but not UNC.
• Charging UNC (and possibly individuals) with violations.

"The more of that they do, the longer it will take," Thorp said.

As Baddour stood before the university's board of trustees, he turned from the lecturn toward Davis, who was seated at his side.

"You have handled the most difficult times in a dignified and professional manner," Baddour told him. "I believed you were the right fit when we hired you. I continue to believe that. In fact, I believe it even more strongly now."

Baddour explained new procedures UNC will implement to prevent future violations. These include:
• Prospective and current staff members will be required to disclose their relationships with sports agents, updating on a yearly basis for current employees.
• Hiring an additional employee in the school's NCAA compliance department. This will allow assistant athletic director for compliance Amy Herman to pay more attention to rules education and extra benefit and agent issues.
• Changes in the academic support program. A committee has yet to recommend those, but Thorp predicted stronger oversight from the College of Arts and Sciences will be included.

Baddour also issued a public thanks to the UNC football players who have persevered through the dismissals of their teammates, winning six of 10 games heading into Saturday's noon meeting with N.C. State in Chapel Hill.

"I am proud of this team," Baddour said. "I'm especially proud of the seniors and the leaders on this team."

When the trustees called for a recess, Thorp met Davis in the hallway as Davis was leaving the meeting at the Carolina Inn. They shook hands and smiled.
"See you Saturday," Davis said as they parted.
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