THE DAILY CLIPS

June 18, 2012

News, commentary, and opinion compiled by East Carolina University News Services:

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The Raleigh News & Observer
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The Wall Street Journal
USA Today
The Charlotte Observer
The Fayetteville Observer
The Greensboro News & Record
Newsweek
U.S. News & World Report
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252-328-6481
The children from Camp Hope sit down for a minute to learn about nature and then given the chance to catch fish, insects and frogs at Camp Don Lee a camp for children with cancer and sickle cell on Tuesday, June 12, 2012.

Dr. Beng Fuh holds up a pillbox assigned to one of the children at Camp Hope and Camp Rainbow.

**Camp is good medicine for kids**

By Kim Grizzard

ARAPAHOE — First it was a counselor whose big toe was bitten by a crab. Following closely behind was a girl who had been stung by a bee. In the
next room, a teenager needed to have clotting factor infused into his catheter.

Often when the screen door slams at the health center at Camp Don Lee, it is nothing more than homesickness. But for five days in June, it could be hemophilia.

Or sickle cell disease. Or cancer.

For kids with chronic illnesses, Camp Rainbow and Camp Hope open the door to swimming and sailing, crafts and canoeing — rites of passage that might otherwise have passed them by. Rainbow Services — a program conducted by the Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Section at East Carolina University’s Brody School of Medicine — sent nearly five dozen patients and their siblings to camp last week.

“We have kids here whose immune systems are really compromised; we have kids with bad complications,” said Beng Fuh, a pediatric hematologist and oncologist and an assistant professor at Brody. “There are some children here, which honestly if they were not coming to this camp, I would not sign off on them going to camp.”

Nearly three decades ago, ECU health professionals made the decision not to send cancer patients to camp. They decided to go with them.

They would rework their treatment schedule, pack up their chemotherapy drugs and pain medications, and bring kids 90 minutes away to Camp Don Lee. At this Methodist camp along the Neuse River in Pamlico County, patients and their siblings could kayak and cook outside. They would be free to try archery and go off the high dive.

“(We were) trying to get them to camp to have a normal experience,” said Mary Ernest, a clinical nurse specialist in pediatric hematology and oncology, “like any other kid would have.”

There was a time when hundreds of eastern North Carolina pediatric patients had that experience each year. At its peak, Camp Rainbow hosted 120 cancer or hemophilia patients and their siblings. Camp Hope, launched as a separate camp in 1991, brought in almost 90 campers with sickle cell disease.

But funding shortages the last decade have forced the programs to consolidate and contract. The combined camp enrollment in 2011 was a little more than 80. This year, it was down to 54, the smallest enrollment in the camps’ history.
Supporters like Jennifer Moore, a clinical nurse specialist in pediatric hematology and oncology, resorted to having bake sales and hawking chicken sandwiches at work, just to try to raise the more than $700 per child needed to offer the camp free to families. As late as February, camp organizers were unsure they could raise the $60,000 budget required and wondered if they might be able to have camp at all.

“I would hate to lose this,” Rainbow Services Director Jacquelyn Sauls said Tuesday as she watched campers rehearse for Wednesday night’s talent show. “It would be very sad for me, and I think for a lot of us, to think that this tradition would not be able to continue.”

Volunteer Marcus Frederick cannot imagine such a thing. The Goldsboro native and his siblings were among the first to arrive at Camp Rainbow in the early 1980s, when their baby sister, Myra, was diagnosed with cancer. The disease took a toll on the family of seven. Frederick’s mother often was away from home, traveling with her sister to Greenville for treatment.

“I remember it was a stressful time just because there were a lot of changes,” he said. “There was a lot of instability. It was the one thing I looked forward to every year, going to camp.”

He came back every summer until he was 18. Now a financial analyst in Charlotte, Frederick has been a Camp Rainbow volunteer for seven years. It is the first vacation time he schedules each year.

“I don’t want to miss camp,” said Frederick, who serves as a counselor for teens. “It’s just really important to me. I can’t quite put it into words. Just the atmosphere, the spirit played such a large role in who I am.”

Tonio White has a similar story. From the time he was old enough to attend, the Farmville native and his older brother, who both had sickle cell disease, spent a week each summer at Camp Hope. Now a senior child life major, White hopes to have a career teaching children with an illness like his how to cope.

In the meantime, White, an ECU cheerleader, spends a week each summer encouraging campers like Yasmine Moorelee not to be afraid to take a leap. Yasmine, 11, of Washington, N.C., spent the better part of her group’s swim time Tuesday wavering about whether or not to go off the low dive. White waited patiently in the water just beyond the board.

“My first year, I just remember being terrified of going to the diving board and sailing,” White said. “I used to make up excuses, anything not to go sailing. It took a lot to get me to go out there.”
It sounds absurd that kids who have grown accustomed to the sight of their own blood could be afraid of a little water. But they are. Camp, it seems, forces even the bravest children to confront a new set of fears.

For their parents, the fears may be even harder to overcome. For more than 25 years, Sauls has watched parents cry as they put their children on the bus to go to Camp Rainbow or Camp Hope for the first time.

“As a parent, you can’t protect them from having cancer and sickle cell disease,” she said. “But you try to protect them from all the other things that can happen in their lives.”

It took Melissa Davis awhile to warm up to the idea of sending her daughter, Bella, to Camp Rainbow. Though Bella’s older brother, Storm, attended, Bella, who has Down syndrome, stayed home with her mother.

“Certainly it’s hard letting your typical child go to camp who is healthy,” Davis said. “But when you have a life-threatening diagnosis (like cancer), you worry about every little thing.”

Last year, Davis gave in and let both Storm and Bella go. Although she was nervous, she didn’t call to check up on them.

“I really trust that they’re in good hands,” she said. “With the doctors and the nurses and everybody from the clinic going to this camp, it definitely makes a difference.”

Some parents can’t resist picking up the phone. Social workers and nurses work to reassure them that everyone is fine, and if there is a medical emergency, the staff can handle it.

“We’ve got a M.A.S.H. unit,” Ernest said. “There’s not much we can’t do here.”

If the situation warrants it, members of the camp’s medical team will transport the patient back to Vidant Medical Center in Greenville, but that seldom happens. Doctors and nurses spend much of their time pushing the kids to drink more fluids — even if it means extra laundry from little ones who wet their beds. They remind the sickle cell patients to dry off quickly when they’re done swimming and wear a jacket in the two buildings that are air conditioned because the cold causes them pain.

“I think that’s one of the real benefits of not sending your patients away to a camp but going with them to a camp,” Sauls said. “We know them. We know what complications they’ve had. We know if they are dramatic and embellish things or if they usually never complain. So for a parent to know
that your doctor is going to be there to take care of your child makes things a lot easier.”

It also makes it easier on doctors and nurses, who find that spending time with their patients at camp creates a bond that carries over to the clinic. Seeing their medical staff in T-shirts and shorts instead of scrubs and white coats seems to be just what the doctor ordered.

“I think it helps them to see us having fun,” Fuh said. “We are not just some weird people giving shots and medicines that make them throw up.”

At Camp Rainbow and Camp Hope, patients and caregivers see each other as friends. Never was this more apparent than when Bella, 9, took her counselor by the hand and led her to Fuh’s table during lunch.

“This is Dr. Poo,” Bella said. Fuh smiled warmly, making no attempt to correct his patient’s pronunciation. After making the proper introductions, Bella gave Fuh a hug and headed off for her afternoon nap. But before she left the dining hall, she turned and waved.

“Bye Dr. Poo. I love you,” she called.

Nurses and social workers at Fuh’s table responded with a collective, “Aw!” Fuh just smiled and said, “I love you too, Bella.”

Older campers find less overt ways to demonstrate their affection. Staff members know they have gained acceptance when kids include them in their camp pranks. Sauls remembers one group of campers swiping a doctor’s mattress and suitcase from the health center and leaving it on a floating dock in the middle of the pond.

Doctors and nurses struck back by sending “The Prune Lady,” a Halloween-like figure who visits camp one night each year, scaring kids and offering them candy.

Still, at Camp Rainbow and Camp Hope, there is some sadness among the silliness. Though it is not always on the activity schedule, campers find time to share their feelings.

Sometimes at night, campers like 15-year-old Jimmy Parks of Goldsboro and 17-year-old Josiah Willis of New Bern just sit and talk about what they have been through.

Though Jimmy is a cancer survivor and Josiah has hemophilia, “we kind of feel the same,” Jimmy said. “We kind of give each other support.”
On Thursday night, there was a memorial service to honor former campers who have died. Some children attending Camp Rainbow this year had lost a sibling to cancer.

“It makes me want to bawl my eyes out,” volunteer counselor Amber Montanye of Havelock said. “I don’t know if I’d be that strong. Just as a volunteer, I want to cry.”

Just two years ago, Montanye was a camper. She had lost her hair in treatment before coming to Camp Rainbow in 2010.

“I met a girl who had the exact same kind of cancer that I did,” Montanye said. “I was scared to go out bald without a wig on. She helped me embrace the baldness.

“It took my mind off of things,” she said. “It’s just so good for the kids to get away from things.”

Fuh agrees. He believes that for many patients, camp is the best medicine.

“I think this is a very important aspect of treating children,” he said. “Sometimes people get down to, ‘It’s the chemotherapy, the blood transfusions.’ If we’re to help these children grow up to be productive citizens and self-confident people, things like this are part of treatment.”

For information about Rainbow Services, visit www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/pediatrics/Camp-Rainbow.cfm or call 744-4676. Donations may be made to the Medical Foundation of ECU, 525 Moye Blvd., ECU’s Brody School of Medicine, Greenville, NC 27834.
ECU football player stabbed in fight at party

An East Carolina University football player from Roxboro was stabbed during a fight at a party shortly after midnight Saturday, Greenville police said.

Tre Robertson, 19, told police that he and several friends went uninvited to a party in Apartment 102 in Building 4310 at North Campus Crossings. As he left, Robertson said, someone approached him and tried to fight him. He was then stabbed in the back.

A friend drove Robertson to Vidant Medical Center, where he was treated for non-life-threatening injuries.

Robertson is a rising sophomore and an offensive lineman who attended Person High School in Roxboro.

No arrests have been made. Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call Greenville police at 252-329-4315.

Web Editor: Anne Johnson
Guest Column: Closing Bethel clinic harmful
By Bill Bunting

The new health care models across our nation call on medical practices to eliminate unnecessary health care costs, increase efficiencies and improve quality. For the patient, this means more affordable, higher-quality, patient-centered care. However, the East Carolina University Family Medicine Center continues to lag behind during this period of national change. The recent, unfortunate decision to close the Bethel Family Medicine Clinic only exacerbates this matter.

This closure not only goes against the department’s goal of providing superior care to the region, but leaves a predominately underserved population without easy access to care. To put this in perspective, by ECU leaving the Bethel area, the health of the community is harmed. Studies show that 33 percent of adults spend less time in a hospital, and 19 percent are less likely to die from their conditions or illnesses when they receive care from a readily available primary care physician.

This injustice has also brought with it further insult as the Family Medicine Center is asking a demographic set, predominantly indigent care patients, to travel to Greenville instead to receive their medical care. Even with the suggested use of the Pitt Area Transit System, this goes against almost every being of the elements that comprise a patient-centered medical home. But furthermore, having to travel creates neither easily accessible nor timely access to care for patients in Bethel and its surrounding communities, costing time and money.

To the Family Medicine Center’s defense, however, it has noted that efforts were made in recent years to lower operational costs at the Bethel clinic. But cutting operating hours, which has led to less face-to-face patient care, has
served no one — not ECU financially nor the residents of Bethel. And now, as a result, both parties lose.

Instead, these cost cutting measures should have been looked at in a different light; cost of care itself. The American Medical Association reports that the average salary for family physicians is $198,000 annually. By contrast, compare this to the salary of a physician assistant which the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports having an approximate median salary of $86,000 annually.

This difference in salary alone can make up the $100,000 per year operational loss the clinic has reported, even with the difference in reimbursement rates between provider types, (The university misappropriates more than this annually paying professors who don’t even show up for work.)

Mid-level care providers, physician assistants and nurse practitioners, provide care similar to that of primary care physicians, such as managing most of the care for chronic and acute illnesses; providing general examinations, diagnosis and treatment; and providing preventative care.

So the question arises: Has this care delivery alternative been explored as a means of not just keeping the Bethel clinic open, but making it profitable? There are, after all, mid-level providers who rotate working in this clinic and who provide care at other Family Medicine Center locations.

A solution could be using experienced mid-level care providers with distant supervision to support rural clinics with a more autonomous approach. Considering that less than 2 percent of medical students nationwide are choosing to go into the primary care field, it’s certainly time to explore utilizing mid-levels to their fullest capacity.

Regardless, ECU is a service university, and providing care to underserved areas remains the mission of the medical school. This alternative should make it more cost effective to continue providing care to our region.

*Bill Bunting is a strategy and operations consultant for large health care systems and hospitals throughout North America and a resident of Winterville.*
Camp targets young writers

By Jackie Drake

Whether it is a professional email or even a friendly text message, writing is an integral part of daily life, local teachers and professors said.

To give students an opportunity to experience all kinds of writing beyond school, East Carolina University is hosting Young Writer’s Camps this summer.

The camps are an initiative of ECU’s Tar River Writing Project, an assembly of university professors and public school teachers who come together to connect writing across all levels of education.

“We’re really excited about having the students here — they seem to be having a really good time,” said Will Banks, ECU English professor and co-director of the project.

“It’s really fun,” said Megan Pruett, a rising ninth grader heading to D.H. Conley High School. “And it’s very educational. There’s more writing here than in school. This is definitely better than school.”

This is the camp’s second year. About 25 students are enrolled so far. While the first high school installment is under way, openings remain in elementary and middle school level camps. The camps are held on ECU’s campus and are open to all writers of any ability or experience level.

Fees range $150 to $350 without a grant to sustain the program, but Banks hopes individuals and businesses will be able to donate or sponsor students.

“The most important part of the camps is to give young people a chance to enjoy writing,” Banks said. “In school it’s all about being tested and proving you know facts in science or history.

“In camp they will absolutely develop skills and abilities but we mostly want them to enjoy writing.”

Students often have the idea that reading and writing is only about old novels, Banks said, but magazines and emails and online forums count, too.

“We all have to write every day, and it’s not just about being grammatically correct,” he said. “It’s about how to express yourself clearly and
communicate effectively. The idea is to show them how much writing exists all around them.”

At this week’s high school camp, students wrote poems and fiction stories but also discussed different types of writing. Sharing their work also allowed them to experience feedback and collaboration in an open and respectful forum.

“At the heart of it all is communication,” said Alicia Datz, a teacher at Ayden-Grifton High School who is one of the teacher consultants at the Tar River Writing Project.

“They can learn how to communicate in different genres,” colleague Karen Harker said. “And sharing builds their confidence and allows them to look at things from a different perspective.”

Students can look everywhere for inspiration, Datz said.

“It’s a fun thing to go through the creative process,” she said. “I hope this happens every year.”

For more information, visit www.trwp.org or call Banks at 328-6674.

Contact Jackie Drake at 252-329-9567 or jdrake@reflector.com.
A demolition crew member guides a truck placing a dumpster on site during the demolition of Stratford Arms apartments in Greenville on Thursday.

**Apartment demolition progresses**

“It’s going right along. We should be done by mid-July.”

Rick Niswander  
ECU vice chancellor for finance

East Carolina University’s demolition of Stratford Arms Apartments is under way.

“It’s going right along,” Vice Chancellor for Finance Rick Niswander said. “We should be done by mid-July.”

The university purchased the property on Charles Boulevard last year for more than $3 million in non-state funds. The 13 buildings housed 146 apartments which were emptied last summer.

The final long-term purpose of the 12-acre property has not yet been decided, Niswander said. For now it will be used as additional athletic parking for Dowdy-Ficklen and Clark-LeClair stadiums. The university will leave the apartment’s existing parking spaces intact but will not be re-paving the lot or adding more spaces.

Most of the approximately 140 trees on the property will be left standing, Niswander said. Fewer than 10 will be taken down due to disease or structural instability.
ECU alumna Rachelle Friedman Chapman, who suffered a paralyzing injury during her bachelorette party, shared her story during a presentation in May titled “The Glass is Half Full.”

Orientation assistants finish an obstacle course – with each team member keeping one finger on the ball – during training exercises earlier this month. The students will lead groups of incoming freshmen this summer during orientation, which continues Monday.

**ECU Notes: Injured bride shares lessons**

Rachelle Friedman Chapman’s wheelchair is a reminder not to take any day for granted, the alumnist told East Carolina University students and staff during a visit to campus this month.

In 2010, Chapman suffered a paralyzing injury during her bachelorette party after she was playfully pushed into a pool and hit her head on the bottom.
On June 5, the ECU alumna shared her story — and the lessons that she’s taken from it — during a presentation titled “The Glass is Half Full.”

It is the same story that she shared on the “Today Show” and “Inside Edition,” a story that has Chapman considering a book and possibly a movie deal.

Chapman said she looks back on the day of her accident and feels grateful that she was doing certain things she could enjoy while she still could do them.

“I’m very, very lucky that I had all these happy things about my day that I can look back on,” she said.

On the night of the accident, Chapman had spent the day visiting family, trying on her wedding dress and looking for a new pair of shoes. Later that evening, she and her friends decided to go for a swim in the pool.

“I seriously think if I had been one foot the other way, it might have gone differently,” she said.

She spent two-and-a-half months in the hospital and went through rehabilitation. She’s been through various difficulties since then, such as struggling with not being able to do things independently and getting around in public. It takes much longer to get dressed, and Chapman had to teach her mom how to style her hair for her.

“Not one thing in my life was ever going to be the same, and it’s something that you kind of have to realize very, very quickly,” Chapman said.

Making the change easier were equipment and donations, such as a van that otherwise would have cost $80,000. Chapman uses a hand cycle so she can join her husband, Chris, when he wants to ride his bike. She also got an adaptive surfboard and plays wheelchair rugby.

Questions from the audience included whether or not she can still have children — she is able and is hoping to do so in the near future — and whether she has forgiven the friend who had pushed her into the pool during that fateful bachelorette party. (They still are friends, and she was a part of Chapman’s wedding in July 2011.)

Chapman said she has learned to take time to slow down; not to complain about small things that will not matter in a couple of days; to set personal goals; to be grateful; and not to wait to make important changes.

“Something tragic shouldn’t happen to make you realize that you need to make a change or that you need to start going toward goals faster, that you
need to start appreciating life, or that you need to do start doing whatever,” she said. “Something bad shouldn’t have to happen for you to learn a lesson.”

**Physician assistant student on board**

Melissa Ricker, an East Carolina University graduate student, has been elected to the 2012-13 board of directors of the Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants.

Ricker, of Goldsboro, is the first student from ECU and North Carolina to represent the Southeast region and its 38 schools.

Ten students are elected annually as the governing body for physician assistant students enrolled at more than 160 colleges and universities nationwide. Those students, along with three appointed members and two graduate advisors, help make administrative decisions, suggest ways for schools to improve their physician assistant student societies, and encourage participation in local and national events.

“I want to use my creativity and passion for getting students involved,” Ricker said. “Professional development for us as students is really important to complement the education we get in the classroom and brings about greater appreciation for the profession.”

Ricker will focus on increasing student membership in the organization and awareness about events and issues. She will participate by email, quarterly conference calls, and at a regional meeting in Washington, D.C., this fall.

“It’s a huge honor and I feel very privileged to have gotten elected this year,” she said. “It’s exciting to bring some recognition to ECU.”

ECU offers the only state-supported physician assistant studies program in North Carolina. The program began in 1996. Ricker’s class has 32 students, and enrollment varies from 30-35 students each year, making it one of the smallest member schools in the AAPA.

“A lot of people don’t know what PAs are. I think our energy and effort should be put toward expanding the profession as a whole,” she said.

Physician assistants work in all areas from emergency medicine to pediatrics to geriatrics. They often are the first point of contact for many patients, particularly in rural areas. They are academically and clinically prepared to diagnose and treat disease, assist in surgery, and prescribe medications with the direction of a supervising physician.
Ricker is the external affairs chair for her class, and helped plan a successful physician assistant awareness week last fall and a cornhole fundraising tournament this spring. Students also will be volunteering at Survivor’s Day at the Leo Jenkins Cancer Center later this month, and will help with new student orientation in August.

“From her first day on campus, Melissa has shown her willingness and commitment to the PA profession,” said Jane Trapp, ECU clinical associate professor of physician assistant studies.

“Her drive and determination has not stopped since then, as she has embraced her profession with the goal for continual improvement and to lend a helping hand wherever it is needed. Melissa has demonstrated true qualities of what it is to be a professional, and her passion for caring and advancing the profession will undoubtedly continue beyond her tenure at ECU.”

Ricker, who received a bachelor’s degree in biology from N.C. State University, will begin her clinical education in Wilmington in January. She expects to graduate in December 2013, and hopes to work in family medicine.
Letter: ECU track facilities lack seating

Congratulations to East Carolina’s track and field athletes and to The Daily Reflector’s ample coverage. Wouldn’t it be great if we were able to attend their meets at the beautiful — and, need I say, very expensive — new track and field facility on Charles Street? However, we will not see or enjoy meets there.

Why? Because it is a practice-only facility with no design consideration for spectator seating.

I can understand the emerging practice facilities for men’s and women’s basketball since there is a space conflict, but they do play for the fans in Minges Coliseum. Will someone please explain in detail how this could have happened?

CHARLES W. MOORE
Greenville
Peter D. Hans, UNC Board of Governors, Vice Chairman, is all smiles after he is elected as the new chairman Friday June 15, 2012 in Chapel Hill, N.C. Hans replaces current Chairman Hannah Gage on July 1, 2012.

**UNC Board of Governors elects new chairman**

By Katelyn Ferral - kferral@newsobserver.com

CHAPEL HILL The UNC system’s Board of Governors will soon be led by three Triangle Republicans.

Peter D. Hans of Raleigh will become the new chairman of the board July 1, taking over from current Chairwoman Hannah Gage after serving two 2-year terms as vice chairman.

Hans was elected over Paul Fulton, a Winston-Salem businessman, 20-11. Frank Grainger was elected vice chair over Jim Deal, a Boone attorney, 17-13. Ann Goodnight was unanimously elected secretary.

Hans is a senior policy advisor for the law firm of Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough in Raleigh. Grainger is a Cary businessman, and Goodnight is a Cary community volunteer and businesswoman.

This is the first time the board has elected new officers since Republicans gained a majority of seats on the non-partisan board.

Becoming chairman is “an enormous responsibility,” said Hans, who has also served on the State Board of Community Colleges.
The chairmanship’s shift to the right will not change the way to board operates, Hans said. He said he will remain focused on managing the system’s resources effectively amid tough economic times and controlling the rate of tuition costs.

“I always operated in a bipartisan manner on both boards, and I think that it’s important for education to remain out of the political fray,” Hans said. “The university of North Carolina should be above and beyond partisan politics. That has been our tradition, and it will continue to be so.”

**Farewell to Gage**

Gage received the state’s highest civilian honor Friday, The Order of the Long Leaf Pine, at Friday’s meeting. In her last report as chairwoman, she emphasized the importance of working across the aisle with lawmakers and businesses throughout the state to develop more bipartisan support for the UNC system.

There was a time when the business community fully supported the Board of Governors, she said.

“We no longer enjoy this same support we once had,” she said.

Gage also asked the board to focus on reining in tuition costs.

“If the citizens of this state are standing outside the campuses because they can’t afford to come in, we’ve failed,” she said.

Also Friday, Hans said he supports the move to set up a board panel to review the investigation by UNC-Chapel Hill into academic fraud in its African and Afro-American Studies Department.

“I think the panel that they have constituted to review the actions that have been taken up to this point is a good move,” he said. “We need to review what’s been done and see if anything needs to be done going forward.”

Hans avoided questions about whether the university’s response to the fraud has been transparent enough.

“There are a number of opinions on that, however I feel confident that going forward we will be,” he said. “It’s very important to us that the academic reputation of the university be held intact.”

**SBI a ‘third party’**

UNC President Tom Ross said Friday that the UNC system and UNC-CH have been transparent in disclosing the details of academic fraud.
He defended the decision to create the four-person board committee to oversee the university’s investigation instead of bringing in an outside group. An outside group isn’t needed since the State Bureau of Investigation is doing its own criminal investigation, Ross said.

“We have brought in a third party called the SBI, and they’re doing an independent investigation right now, and their practice is such that we don’t want to interfere,” he said. “I don’t think they want another investigation going on.”

The board committee will meet next week to review its charge and will begin work soon, Ross said. He said he didn’t know when the committee’s report might be released.

“[They’re] going to look at everything that’s been done to assure our board and assure the public that everything that needs to be done has been done.”

Ferral: 919-932-8746
Questions linger in academic fraud case

By Dan Kane - dkane@newsobserver.com

The UNC-Chapel Hill academic fraud case started with a suspicious Swahili paper made public nearly a year ago. Since then it’s been one surprising development after another, usually with each new release of information. This week, the UNC Board of Governors, which oversees the 16 public universities, tasked a four-member panel to review the UNC-CH internal investigation.

Some board members have said they felt left in the dark as each new development has unfolded. Here are some key questions in the case that highlight some of the issues, and point to what remains unanswered:

Is it about athletics?

UNC-CH officials have consistently said that the academic fraud was not intended to solely help athletes because non-athletes benefited as well. University data show that 42 percent of the enrollments in classes under investigation were non-athletes.

That, presumably, would keep it out of the NCAA’s purview, because it only probes cases in which the intent is to provide improper academic assistance solely to athletes.

But there’s little other evidence to back the claim up. Julius Nyang’oro, the former department chairman of African and Afro-American Studies, has talked to university officials but little has been made public. He is directly connected to all but nine of 54 suspect classes in which little or no instruction was provided.

What have the students, both athletes and nonathletes, told university officials? What about athletic advisers and others who would have been in the information chain? So far, UNC-CH officials have produced very limited, and in some ways contradictory information.

What contradictory information?

On Thursday, Chancellor Holden Thorp acknowledged that he and others were troubled to learn in August that a summer class taught by Nyang’oro in the second summer semester of 2011 was filled with football players. The university notified the NCAA of that on Sept. 1, the same day it announced
that Nyang’oro had stepped down as department chairman. But that same day, UNC-CH officials said publicly that the evidence did not show particular benefit to student athletes.

University officials never made mention that certain classes had nothing but student athletes enrolled in them. Records released last week show four of them did – five if you count the former football player in the summer class.

Speaking of the former football player, the university is defining him as a nonathlete because he could no longer play. University officials have made the argument that such individuals should not be considered athletes because they have exhausted their eligibility.

But there’s reason to steer former players into bogus classes. One of the ways to remain in good standing with the NCAA is to show strong graduation rates.

The University of Connecticut’s basketball team has to sit out next year’s NCAA tournament, for example, because of poor academic performance.

**Is this about basketball?**

UNC-CH men’s basketball coach Roy Williams said Thursday that the academic fraud case is not a basketball issue. “I’m worried about it from a university issue, but not from a basketball issue,” he said.

Some have cited the low percentage of basketball players enrolling in the 54 classes that university officials say showed little or no instruction. Three percent, or 23 enrollments, does seem small. But it doesn’t take many athletes to field a basketball team – five on the floor plus several backups. If Williams fielded a new team each of the four years of the period under review, 23 enrollments could equal one in three players taking a suspect class.

Furthermore, the records show that in two cases a basketball player was the sole enrollee in a class. In another, a basketball player was one of two enrollees. Two of those three classes were Swahili language courses, and are among nine classes in which officials can’t identify who created them and provided some kind of assignment.

Put another way, here are two language classes in which students would be expected to develop their speaking skills that never met. And they had no more than two students enrolled. How were they expected to practice speaking the language?

**Why just past four years?**
Thorps acknowledged this question, because some wonder whether the academic fraud goes back even farther. His response is the university doesn’t know whether the academic fraud was going on before summer 2007, but it would be very hard to find out.

The internal review started there because that’s when former football player Marvin Austin took AFAM 428, the upper-level class that he received a B-plus in, despite having yet to take remedial writing as part of his first full semester on campus.

That time frame also represents the Butch Davis era on campus, which reinforces the notion pushed by some that he brought all this misfortune to UNC-CH.

His lawyer has said he had no knowledge of the suspect classes and had never heard of Nyang’oro.

Thorps said trying to dig deeper into the past would be difficult because some records no longer exist, some faculty and staff are no longer on campus, and those who remain may not have accurate memories.

Little evidence has surfaced so far to peg the problem beyond the reviewed period.

**What’s not released?**

The university has not made available the grades given to all of the students enrolled in these suspect classes, or said how many passed or failed. It has not released any of the work students performed.

So far, only one assignment has surfaced, the Swahili paper that former football player Michael McAdoo wrote, which turned out to have numerous plagiarized passages. McAdoo made that public in a legal effort to get back on the team.

**What is the SBI studying?**

Some on the UNC Board of Governors have suggested the SBI investigation now under way eliminates the need for a board investigation. But the SBI investigation is looking only at potential criminal conduct, Orange County District Attorney Jim Woodall said.

What prompted it is the question of whether Nyang’oro lied or misled officials to get paid for a class that the university says he did not teach.

It’s questionable that athletes being steered to bogus classes would constitute a crime, which means that particular aspect of the academic fraud case may
not be probed by investigators. And even if they uncovered such evidence, it may not become public. SBI investigations aren’t public record.

Woodall would have the authority to release the final report, but generally, district attorneys choose to keep them secret.

Kane: 919-829-4861
N.C. education requires investment

By Brad Wilson

My mom and dad always told me that after I died, anyone who read my checkbook register would know the priorities in my life.

CEOs who think about moving their companies and jobs to North Carolina will look at our checkbook register – and they will know our priorities. What will they learn about us?

Think of all the companies that have moved to our state in the past 25 years. They didn’t come here just because of the temperate climate or the short drive from the mountains to the coast.

These companies didn’t come here for cheap labor, either. They came here for smart labor. They came for the creative and innovative environment that arises from proximity to some of the greatest universities on the planet. We are growing today because our educational institutions, at every level, have led the way.

So today, as the General Assembly contemplates next year’s budget – as 100 counties contemplate budgets to supplement their local school districts – we are at a turning point.

I know. Everyone always says we’re at a turning point. But tell me it isn’t true when:

• The state university system has lost more than $1.2 billion in budget cuts and tax reversions since the 2008 financial meltdown.

• Appropriations per student at our community colleges are down 12 percent.

• Since 2008, our public schools have dropped from 25th to 45th in average teacher pay, and from 42nd to 46th in per-pupil expenditures.

Am I in favor of more government spending? I’m in favor of smart government spending. I believe most North Carolina CEOs feel the same way.
Several years ago, we were recruiting a senior executive to Blue Cross. His home was in the Northeast. He had school-age children. He was considering accepting our offer, but first he wanted to be sure North Carolina public schools would be good for his kids.

That’s a very real issue. If you run a company here, you may have had similar experiences. There’s a constructive cycle that keeps spinning when good education begets good talent, which, in this knowledge economy, begets growing businesses and a growing tax base.

Our education system is the fulcrum. North Carolina’s quality of life pivots up or down from that central point. Businesses will choose North Carolina – or not – because of the quality of our workforce and the institutions that train it.

When I joined Blue Cross nearly 16 years ago, the company was making the transition from a claims processing outfit to a fully integrated health care management organization. We knew that if we kept operating our company the way we had in the 1980s, we wouldn’t stay in business. It was imperative that we change. And you can see it today in the commitments we’ve made – in other words, in our checkbook register.

The same is true with early childhood programs, K-12 schools, community colleges and our university system. They are not broken. They are not failing. But they need to change. And business leaders must encourage that change.

This is my call to every CEO who loves North Carolina. Whether you spend most of your time traveling in an airplane visiting customers, standing in front of investors on Wall Street or walking the factory floor – you have a stake in what happens in every aspect of our public education system from early childhood to the universities.

Recently, 50 business leaders from across the state came together to discuss how they might best engage in issues of public education. And this conversation was just the beginning. Those of us who lead North Carolina businesses have a voice. Some may assume they can automatically count CEOs as knee-jerk votes against any increase in the state budget. The truth is more complicated. The CEOs I know always weigh costs against benefits. They’re on the lookout for an investment that will profit the organization – or the state of North Carolina.

To paraphrase Martin Luther King Jr., a time comes when silence is betrayal – when silence becomes the ally of apathy and the status quo. Today is the
day the business leaders of North Carolina must break the silence and advocate for our system of public education. We have no more important work.

J. Bradley Wilson is president and CEO of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina. He is a former chairman of the UNC Board of Governors.
Former U-Va. president John Casteen urges board to meet in public

By Daniel de Vise and Anita Kumar

Former University of Virginia president John T. Casteen III, immediate predecessor of the ousted Teresa Sullivan, challenged the school’s Board of Visitors to meet in public Monday to redress criticism about its past secrecy.

The university’s governing board is scheduled to meet Monday afternoon and expected to name an interim president to replace Sullivan, who was forced to resign just over a week ago. Only a portion of the meeting would be open to the public; crucial discussions are expected to take place privately, in closed session. The panel is also planning to hear from Sullivan herself for the first time since the resignation was announced, also in private. She was removed without a full board meeting or vote.

Casteen, a 20-year U-Va. president who retired in 2010, urged the board to open the session to the public, following a week of relentless criticism for a perceived lack of transparency in the ouster.

“In my view, the remedy for excessive secrecy is not more secrecy,” Casteen said Sunday evening. “I think it’s time for the board to give up the privilege of discussing the public’s business in private.”

In his first extensive public comments about Sullivan, Casteen said the board “should be talking about reconciling this thing,” although he conceded that he did not know whether Sullivan still wants the job of president.

The board is also scheduled to meet privately with faculty leaders Monday morning. The faculty hope for a more thorough explanation of why board leaders sought Sullivan’s exit after less than two years as president. She was widely popular and generally thought to be doing a good job.

Sullivan’s ouster has triggered an outpouring of no-confidence votes in the board and letters from campus constituencies opposing the move, some urging the board to rehire Sullivan. Board Rector Helen E. Dragas has cited a fundamental philosophical difference with the president. A university source said she has hired Hill+Knowlton, a public relations firm, to help the board handle the backlash.
The board is naming an interim leader weeks ahead of schedule, partly to quell campus unrest. Dragas had lined up a candidate, Edward Miller, an ex-officio board member and former chief executive of Johns Hopkins Medicine, before Sullivan’s departure was announced, according to several officials with knowledge of the situation but not authorized to speak. But now the board appears to be reconsidering, in an effort to review possible internal candidates. Potential names include Carl P. Zeithaml, dean of the McIntire School of Commerce, and former Democratic governor Gerald Baliles, who runs U-Va.’s Miller Center, which focuses on public policy.

Dragas has asked for 15 minutes to speak at the start of the afternoon meeting and has told school officials she will offer a statement to try to calm the campus.

Sullivan, who has made no public comment since her ouster, asked to address the board. As of Sunday night, the board had agreed only to hear her comments in closed session. Sullivan will be waiting at her office at nearby Madison House. At the appointed time Monday afternoon, she is scheduled to walk over to the board offices in the historic Rotunda, along with her husband, tenured law professor Douglas Laycock, and at least one other administrator, possibly Provost John Simon, who made critical comments about the Board of Visitors on Sunday.

Dragas is a Virginia Beach developer, appointed to the board in 2008 by then-Gov. Timothy M. Kaine (D) and promoted to rector last summer. She is eligible for reappointment to a second term next month. Whether she wants another term, or would get one if she does, is unknown. Gov. Robert F. McDonnell (R) has not made a public statement on the matter.

Dragas and McDonnell aides did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

U-Va.’s board, with 16 voting members, is split equally between members appointed by McDonnell and Kaine (D), who is a candidate for U.S. Senate. But that will soon change. McDonnell will appoint at least two new board members at the end of this month because of expiring terms. He has the option of reappointing two more, including Dragas.

Two legislators who represent the Charlottesville area — Sen. R. Creigh Deeds (D-Bath) and House Minority Leader David Toscano (D-Charlottesville) — met with Dragas and other members of the board last week.
Deeds said he was not satisfied with the explanations, which, he said, were much like the public statements given by Dragas last week.

“I’m not satisfied. I’m not happy,’’ Deeds said. “They did what they thought was right. I just don’t see the problem or urgency.”
U-Va. Faculty Senate to meet in emergency session Sunday over Teresa Sullivan’s ouster

By Daniel de Vise and Anita Kumar

The University of Virginia Faculty Senate will meet Sunday in emergency session in advance of a Monday meeting with the school’s Board of Visitors over the removal of President Teresa Sullivan, senate leaders announced.

The 5 p.m. meeting of the senate’s executive council is open to the public and will be held in the Darden Abbot Auditorium of the university’s business school, according to an announcement on the senate’s Web site.

Leaders of the university’s governing board ousted Sullivan last week largely because of her unwillingness to consider dramatic program cuts in the face of dwindling resources and for her perceived reluctance to approach the school with the bottom-line mentality of a corporate chief executive.

Sullivan’s resignation after less than two years has prompted an unprecedented backlash on the historic Grounds: a flurry of no-confidence votes and protest letters from groups of faculty, administrators and students; a 2,000-signature petition; and a Facebook protest page with more than 3,000 members. Many want the enormously popular president reinstated.
Nearly everyone at the Charlottesville campus thought Sullivan was off to a promising start. She spent her first year in office installing an estimable team of top administrators and her second year strengthening the university’s academic model, just as she had been tasked by the board that hired her.

But at least one key player did not agree: Helen Dragas, a savvy, fiscally conservative developer from Virginia Beach appointed to the board in 2008 by then-Gov. Timothy M. Kaine (D) and promoted to rector of the 16-person board last summer. Her misgivings about Sullivan would pit the university’s first female rector against its first female president.

The following account is based on conversations with more than a dozen current and former board members, state and university officials, faculty and others with direct knowledge of the events. Some spoke on the record; others did not, saying they were not authorized to speak. Board members referred inquiries to Dragas, who said she cannot discuss personnel matters.

Dragas had reservations about Sullivan from the start, the sources said. By the time she took the reins as rector, Dragas was becoming convinced that Sullivan would not make the hard spending decisions necessary to keep U-Va. competitive in a volatile higher education marketplace. In conversations before and since the ouster, Dragas has portrayed Sullivan as an adequate day-to-day caretaker but someone incapable of long-term vision.

Dragas laid the groundwork for Sullivan’s removal over several months, working in secret with a small team of collaborators. They included vice rector Mark Kington, a venture capitalist from Alexandria and former business partner to Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-Va.), and Peter Kiernan, a New York investor who led the foundation of the university’s business school.

On Friday, Michael Strine, U-Va.’s chief operating officer and one of Sullivan’s top deputies, read a statement at a staff meeting to quell rumors that he, too, was involved in her removal. He acknowledged meeting with members of the governing board and said they posed critical questions about Sullivan. He said he told the board members to take their concerns to Sullivan, according to two people who were there.

Strine declined an interview request Saturday but provided this statement: “It is my role to work on behalf of both the President and the Board of Visitors. It is also my role to regularly meet with members of the Board of Visitors at their request on a variety of issues. I was made aware of the Board’s dissatisfaction with the President’s progress on certain goals in group meetings that included the President and others and I worked very
hard and consistently on her behalf to close that gap. We all want what is best for the students, patients and others this great University serves.”

The campaign to remove Sullivan began around October, the sources said. The Dragas group coalesced around a consensus that Sullivan was moving too slowly. Besides broad philosophical differences, they had at least one specific quibble: They felt Sullivan lacked the mettle to trim or shut down programs that couldn’t sustain themselves financially, such as obscure academic departments in classics and German.

Sullivan’s position was clear. In a cordial Q and A posted to a U-Va. news site in March, Sullivan was asked whether there was “room to reduce spending.” Her reply: “[I]n terms of big areas where there are obvious cost savings, I don’t think we have those. . . .” The university was already “pretty lean,” she said. “I worry about getting very much leaner.”

Supporters say Sullivan was a consummate public university president who understood finance as well as anyone on campus.

“Terry is the farthest thing from a fuzzy-headed academic,” said Austin Ligon, a former U-Va. board member. “She mastered the way public higher education finance worked, and that was one of the strengths that led us to hire her.”

Sullivan enacted a plan last year to give academic deans both more control and more accountability for budget decisions. She strengthened the top academic position of provost.

And in a frank 12-page strategic memo last month, Sullivan laid out the university’s fundamental academic weakness. U-Va. has a peerless reputation for undergraduate study, she wrote, but its graduate programs and research endeavors suffer from a “reputation gap.” Some vaunted doctoral programs don’t actually rank very high, and others are buoyed by a few star faculty.

Last month, the board adopted an operating budget that included substantial language culled from Sullivan’s strategy document, although most did not know it came from her memo. Yet, after Sullivan’s ouster, Dragas chided the president for lacking a “credible statement of strategic direction.”

Dragas, Kington and a third board member gave Sullivan a performance evaluation in November. They said her performance was good, but not great. They asked for improvement. They put nothing in writing, according to a source who was briefed on the meeting.
The Washington Post made more than six calls and e-mails to Dragas last week seeking comment. She responded to only a few questions, including one about Sullivan’s evaluation.

“I refer you to board meeting minutes from the fall of last year when the board adopted procedures for presidential review, which were followed,” she wrote. “There were ongoing discussions between the Vice Rector, the President, and myself, as often as bi-weekly, on areas of presidential responsibility. At no time did I conduct a personnel review of the President with no other members present.”

Behind the scenes, Dragas and Kington quietly built support for removing Sullivan, polling board members individually to attain the necessary 11 votes, a supermajority.

Publicly, all seemed well. At a May 21 meeting, board member Alan Diamonstein, a former Democratic state delegate, praised Sullivan for her recent performance, drawing applause from the full board.

Days later, Sullivan embarked on her first overseas trip for the university. She returned to welcome alumni to campus for a busy reunions weekend.

On June 8, Dragas and Kington walked into Sullivan’s office at Madison Hall. Sullivan had just returned from a day-long retreat with her senior staff. She was surprised the two were on campus but welcomed them in for a chat.

The conversation was brief: They told Sullivan they had 15 votes, more than enough to remove her. They told her they weren’t satisfied with her vision, and that she was moving too slowly. Sullivan was “a good president,” they said, “but not a great president.” Sullivan was speechless.

In publicly announcing Sullivan’s resignation June 10, Dragas voiced deep respect for the president. Privately, she told Sullivan and husband Douglas Laycock, a tenured law professor, to leave the presidential home at the end of July, two weeks before her official Aug. 15 departure.

Sullivan has hired Raymond Cotton, a prominent higher-education attorney. Cotton declined to comment for this story.

Sullivan’s ouster has fueled fears of an exodus. David Leblang, chairman of the U-Va. politics department, said Saturday that he has heard from multiple department heads that they are losing faculty. There are concerns, too, about a backlash among donors.

Many have urged Gov. Robert F. McDonnell (R) to step in. But McDonnell, on a trade mission in Europe, has resisted, saying he doesn’t want to
“meddle.’’ Meanwhile, Dragas has spent the week calling public relations specialists seeking advice about how to handle growing concern across the state and country.

The action against Sullivan is unusual in that it unfolded without a vote of the full board, without participation of several campus constituencies and without public evidence of blatant wrongdoing.

But governing boards are authorized to remove university presidents on their own authority. Anne Neal, president of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, traced the Charlottesville protests to “an academic culture that isn’t accustomed to seeing boards doing anything other than rubber-stamp.”

The board has called a special meeting Monday to name an interim president, weeks ahead of the original schedule, in a bid to calm the campus. Dragas had lined up a candidate, Edward Miller, an ex-officio board member and former chief executive of Johns Hopkins Medicine, before Sullivan’s departure was announced. But now the board is reconsidering that choice.

Sullivan, who has made no public comment since her ouster, has asked to address the board. The board has agreed to hear her comments, provided the meeting happens behind closed doors.