

News Briefs

Compiled by Trevor Metcalfe

Traces of radiation found leaking in NC

Several N.C. power plants have detected traces of radiation from the leaking reactors in Japan. According to state officials, the radiation poses no threat to public health. Three Duke nuclear power plants, including one located in Charlotte, discovered traces of iodine 131 in the air while conducting routine tests for contaminants. The levels are similar to the amount found after the Chernobyl plant disaster in 1986.

Social Services director placed on leave

The Swain County Department of Social Services recently placed its director on leave after investigations began on the death of a toddler under the care of the agency. The toddler, 15-month-old Aubrey Littlejohn, died Jan. 10 after 12 hours in a car and being given little food or drink. A social worker who visited the child's home five months before her death had already been suspended from the department.

D.O.T to delay funding for I-26 connector

The N.C. Department of Transportation has proposed to delay funding for the I-26 connector until at least 2020, which would effectively shut down the project for the near future. The project, which would have expanded I-240 to four lanes near West Asheville, had already spent \$14.2 million in planning stages. The project aimed to ease up traffic and congestion problems along I-240.

Health and wellness department loses activity classes, faculty

Jeremiah Reed

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More studying and less sweating.

That's the future of UNC Asheville's health and wellness department as budget cuts result in the elimination of faculty as well as activity classes that have been staples of the department.

"Currently, our projections include the elimination of all but one activity class and the elimination of nearly all adjunct faculty within the department," said **Keith Ray**, **associate professor and chair of the health and wellness department**.

According to Ray, university officials asked several departments on campus to compose a proposal detailing how they planned to adapt to the future with limited funding.



Keith Ray

"When we first realized the budget cuts would be a reality, the provost requested that we present a schedule for the next academic year demonstrating how we planned to adapt moving forward with depleting resources," Ray said.

The health and wellness strategy is two-pronged. The first aspect involved the elimination of nearly all faculty not labeled as full-time or tenured lecturers.

"The emphasis is on using full-time or tenured lecturers to deliver the curriculum with minimal use of adjunct faculty," Ray said. "That isn't to say we won't have any adjuncts in the department, but there certainly won't be the same numbers we've seen in the past."

As a result, Ray said he expects class sizes within the department to grow roughly 40 percent, from an average of 25 students per class to an

estimated 35-40 students per class.

"Obviously a top priority for us is making sure students majoring in health and wellness are able to complete all the requirements and graduate with their degree," Ray said. "So, the number of core classes won't decrease, but the number of students per class will certainly increase."

Stephanie Novak, a **health and wellness lecturer**, is one of those faculty members being let go after nine years of teaching at UNCA. She said she is disappointed students would no longer receive the direct instruction that typically accompanies smaller class sizes.

"It will be a challenge for instructors to adapt to larger classes. I believe students will still be able to get the same educational value out of classes, but it's just unfortunate that individual one-on-one time with instructors will be limited because of class size," Novak said.

Novak said, along with herself, she was aware of at least four other adjunct faculty positions being cut within the department. Along with faculty, health and wellness classes, often referred to as activity courses, will no longer be offered in the future.

"Given our limited faculty resources, we had to eliminate activity courses simply because we wouldn't be able to deliver them," Ray said. "We don't have any activity courses on the schedule for next year."

There are roughly a dozen different activity courses offered per semester, according to Ray. They range from swimming to kickboxing, weight training to yoga. Novak said she felt these cuts would negatively impact students seeking a well-rounded health and wellness education.

"It's unfortunate there has been cuts to physical activity classes," Novak said. "I think for students in the health and wellness field it will limit the experience they are able to

gain because they won't be exposed to the disciplines they otherwise would have been exposed to."

In an attempt to fill the void left by the elimination of activity classes, campus recreation tentatively plans to offer several courses for students to take in lieu of traditional classes.

"We're currently planning to offer five classes this fall ensure students still have the same fitness opportunities as before," said **Jill Moffitt**, **director of campus recreation**. "These classes won't be as comprehensive as normal classes, but we really just want to give students opportunities."

According to Moffitt, these classes will not be available for credit, but will only cost students roughly \$25 if they choose to enroll. A proposed schedule was unavailable as Moffitt and Ray continue to formulate ideas for classes moving forward.

"We definitely recognize that a lot of activity classes on campus will be going away and we know that we can, and certainly want to, step in to fill the gap to continue to provide students those same opportunities, even if it is on a lesser scale," Moffitt said.

Ray said despite department cuts, he was optimistic the move into the new Sherrill Center would provide an incentive to devise new ways to serve the physical wellness of students.

"We're really excited about our new facility and, even though the budget cuts have certainly burdened us, they have also challenged us to come up with creative ways to continue to serve our students with limited resources," Ray said.

"Health and wellness department loses activity classes, faculty" is one article in a series the Blue Banner will be exploring this semester on how the statewide budget cuts will affect academic departments at UNCA.

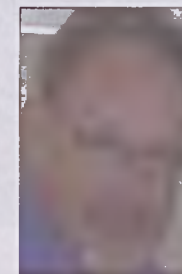
Coca-Cola disappears from campus

Kathy Woodard

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In the past few weeks, Coca-Cola-loyal students and faculty have had to find other means of quenching their thirst on campus.

"Coca-Cola has a delightful taste sensation that I used to enjoy every day, and now I am forced to drink Pepsi products that are, in my opinion, mediocre in comparison," said **Travis McBride**, **sophomore and biology student**.



Bill Haggard

Bill Haggard, **vice chancellor of student affairs** and the person in charge of handling Chartwell's on-campus catering contract, said the change is one planned long in UNC Asheville's past.

"The new contract that was negotiated almost two years ago asked for a two-year period in which we would phase out Coca-Cola products," Haggard said.

Janet Cone, **athletics director** and head of the committee who negotiated the Pepsi contract, said scholarships given to UNCA by Pepsi were a factor in the decision to be an exclusively Pepsi campus.

"Pepsi gives a lot of scholarships to students all over campus and funds a lot of student events and athletics," Cone said.

With the end of the scholastic year approaching, Haggard and Cone say students will be more occupied with their studies than with soft drinks. **Flannery Pearson-Clarke**, **sophomore and environmental science student**, disagrees.

"Without choices like whether to pick Pepsi or Coca-Cola, we are all shuffled along into the same banal existence. It's just another case of the man getting us down," Pearson-Clarke said.