

## Towns Must Keep Buses Convenient

**W**ho says you can't get something for nothing? On Jan. 2, Chapel Hill Transit bus service became fare-free. So no longer will students, faculty and residents be forced to swipe a card, feed in a ticket or drop 75 cents to hop on a bus.

To mark the occasion, local bigwigs, including Chancellor James Moeser, Student Body President Justin Young and Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy, gathered around the Bell Tower on Tuesday for a kickoff ceremony.

Fare-free busing materialized after months of planning and preparation — and it had its fair share of controversy. University officials began advocating for fare-free busing two years ago. However, Carrboro and Chapel Hill officials only became interested after UNC agreed to shoulder more of the costs for the service.

The University will end up paying more than \$4 million each year for fare-free busing. Originally, it was expecting a \$2 million price tag.

The funds are coming from parking permit fees, departmental funds and student fees. Last February, students voted in favor of a referendum that raised student fees by \$8.49 to help pay for the fare-free service.

The remaining costs are divided by population between Carrboro and Chapel Hill.

But considering the costs, will fare-free busing be worth it?

Many local officials, as well as University leaders, seem to think so.

When the student fees hike was being debated last year, detractors warned that fare-free busing would drain Chapel Hill Transit of the operating funds it required, leading to overcrowded buses and reduced routes.

But transportation officials are keeping a close eye on the situation.

"With this new system, we actually think overcrowding of buses should decrease, as with the new routes," Ray Magyar, UNC assistant director of transit, told The Daily Tar Heel.

In fact, instead of reducing services, the introduction of fare-free busing has added new buses, new routes, more drivers and extended operating hours.

These moves are critical if fare-free service is to be a success and alleviate some of the current — and upcoming — transit problems here.

After all, right now parking is a hot-button issue at UNC.

Though parking problems have always been an irritation for students, the loss of spaces for staff and faculty due to construction will force even the most unwilling to use park-and-ride lots or catch the bus to get to campus.

And as UNC expands its student population over the years to come, many will choose to live off campus — increasing the demand for busing even more.

For now, it's best to wait and see before passing judgement.

Numbers have been thrown around about how much ridership will increase with the advent of fare-free service.

Some say a 10 percent hike. Others even go as high as 20 percent.

In the short term (i.e. this semester), I would be surprised to see a large jump in ridership.

Students who have to ride the bus this semester more than likely had to ride the bus last semester.

But at least avoiding a crush of new riders will allow Chapel Hill Transit to adjust the number of buses per route and tweak the system as needed without a great deal of inconvenience.

With the Master Plan, UNC will inevitably take on more faculty, staff and students.

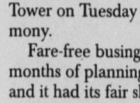
Those extra bodies will need a way to get to campus. The faster and cheaper mass transit is for users, the more likely they will use it — and the less likely they will moan and groan about the lack of parking around campus.

Fare-free busing in and of itself takes care of the cheap part.

You can't get much cheaper than free.

It's up to transit authorities to maintain the efficiency of the bus system to ensure that riders do not get frustrated.

This ride will cost Chapel Hill, Carrboro and UNC a pretty penny. But if the full potential of fare-free service is realized, they all will save themselves from more headaches and problems in the next few years.



**JONATHAN CHANEY**  
CITY COLUMNIST

Columnist Jonathan Chaney can be reached at [jchaney@email.unc.edu](mailto:jchaney@email.unc.edu).

# Local Leaders Welcome Fare-Free Bus System

**By CHRIS BLOW**  
Staff Writer

Local officials braved a chilly Tuesday afternoon on campus to publicly celebrate the beginning of the new fare-free bus system.

"It is a great day in Chapel Hill," said Chancellor James Moeser. "Students and faculty can now board without having to use change, tickets or passes."

The ceremony, which took place near the Bell Tower, was to congratulate the members of the community who helped achieve the new system, which began Jan. 2, and to promote increased ridership.

The fare-free system, which is a collaborative effort between Chapel Hill, Carrboro and UNC, gained 40 percent of its total funding from the University after an overwhelming vote by students last February to increase their student fees.

Moeser gave special credit to the stu-

dents' role in creating a transit system that will serve as a model for how public transportation can and should work.

Moeser also credited the Chapel Hill and Carrboro governments for developing a bus system that has extended hours, 11 additional buses and several new routes to service popular stops.

Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy and Carrboro Board of Aldermen member Alex Zaffron spoke about the benefits of working together with the University to promote public transportation.

"We have a common vision," Foy said.

"Making (the system) fare free is making it an alternative that we can choose in all sorts of situations."

Zaffron agreed, saying that he considers the new bus system a "step towards automobile independence."

Zaffron also said he thinks the system signals a new era in how the towns will work with the University.

Student Body President Justin Young,

who recently staged protests addressing campus parking problems, said he is hopeful that the system will provide a necessary alternative to automobiles.

"Fare free is a step in the right direction to help solve some of the transportation problems on the Chapel Hill campus — including the parking crunch," Young said.

"Increased use of public transportation is important and imperative."

Foy, Moeser, Young and Zaffron symbolically ripped up an enlarged bus pass to celebrate the new fare-free system after they briefly spoke.

Most of the speakers and audience members then boarded a new bus for a tour of the new NU route, which will serve the park-and-ride lot on N.C. 54.

As the bus slowly made its way along the snow-lined Chapel Hill streets, riders spent the trip talking with officials in an informal information session.



Chapel Hill Mayor Kevin Foy, Student Body President Justin Young and Chancellor James Moeser kick off fare-free busing Tuesday afternoon.

See KICKOFF, Page 7

## EN GARDE!



Members of UNC's fencing team work up a sweat Tuesday night in preparation for a yearly tournament the team attends in Chicago. The men and women compete against 10 to 14 other schools at the meet, and last year both had winning records.

## Service-Related Work-Study Low at UNC

**By RACHEL LEONARD**  
Staff Writer

UNC-Chapel Hill might have high rankings in the fields of education and research, but it falls behind in the percentage of federal work-study programs serving the community, according to a recent report.

The study, conducted by the Washington Monthly and Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, examined the percentage of federal work-study funds universities nationwide allocated to community service jobs.

Federal law requires universities to spend a certain percentage of the federal work-study funds — 5 percent during 1999-2000 and 7 percent during 2000-01 — on community service projects.

The study stated that UNC-CH officials spent 5.1 percent of the 1999-2000 federal work-study budget on community service projects. The study's findings don't put UNC-CH below the federal

requirements for 1999-2000 but do place it below the national average. According to Washington Monthly, the most recent nationwide average is about 12 percent.

But UNC-CH officials claim the study was inaccurate.

Ann Trollinger, senior assistant director for the Office of Scholarships and Student Aid, said the figure came from a national database and likely failed to include America Reads, a public service program that attempts to help children learn to read. The program accounts for about half of the University's federal work-study expenditures for public service projects, she said. If America Reads is included, UNC-CH's spending rises to 13 percent for 1999-2000 and 9 percent for 2000-01.

But UNC-CH officials' calculations of 9 percent still fall below the national average. The situation at UNC-CH reflects a national trend in which the country's top-ranking universities, according to the Washington Monthly, perform poorly when it comes to federal work-study com-

munity service programs. For the 1999-2000 school year, about 75 percent of the 2000 U.S. News and World Report's top 20 universities fell below the national average in the percentage of federal work-study funds used for community service.

Other N.C. universities fared better than UNC-CH: UNC-Asheville allocated 22 percent of federal work-study funds to public service, and UNC-Wilmington ranked among the highest nationwide with 37 percent. But N.C. State and Duke universities' numbers were lower, with 5.7 and 7.9 percent, respectively.

About 100 UNC-CH students are employed in federal work-study community service jobs. At the Carolina Center for Public Service, for example, UNC-CH students are helping create a database of the University's public service activities.

Program officer Sandy Alexander said the center might not be able to do the project without the work-study students. "Not only are there a lot of students interested (in public service opportunities), but they

are talented, motivated students," he said.

But Trollinger said the only possible reason for UNC-CH's low numbers of federal work-study community service programs is students themselves — UNC-CH lets students select their own jobs to meet their own personal goals, and many don't choose public service-related jobs.

Further complicating matters, a U.S. Senate bill introduced in December would raise the minimum amount of federal work-study funds required to be set aside for community service to 25 percent.

If that happens, UNC-CH Director of Scholarships and Student Aid Shirley Ort said in a statement that situation could limit a student's work-study opportunities. "It could result in students taking a particular job simply because they had to earn their federal work-study money, rather than choosing to do so because of their ethic of public service."

The State & National Editor can be reached at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

## UNC-W May Raise Tuition

**UNC-W Chancellor James Leutze says the increase is necessary unless the UNC system raises tuition.**

**By MIKE GORMAN**  
Staff Writer

Administrators at UNC-Wilmington are developing a proposal for a campus-initiated tuition increase in anticipation of the school's Board of Trustees meeting next week.

Recent discussion of a tuition increase at UNC-W follows Chancellor James Leutze's vocal support for a substantial tuition increase at a campus BOT meeting in November.

Leutze said administrators need to increase tuition at UNC-W unless the UNC-system Board of Governors follows through with a plan to significantly raise tuition across the board. The BOG plans to vote on an inflationary 4.8 percent system-wide tuition increase in the spring.

UNC-W is among the first universities to take advantage of the BOG's new tuition policy, which the N.C. General Assembly changed in September to allow individual campuses to request tuition increases without demonstrating emergency need.

Mark Lanier, special assistant to the chancellor at UNC-W, said the possibility of a tuition increase is most immediately related to the dwindling amount of state-appropriated funds the campus receives.

The portion of the campus' \$142 million budget covered by state funds has dropped to 39.6 percent, down from 58.4 percent in 1980, according to a presentation UNC-W administrators made to the BOT in November. "The state has not kept up with the needs of state universities," Lanier said. "Schools are unable to offer the services and programs students expect and demand."

Lanier said UNC-W can no longer rely on state appropriations to fund university programs. He added that the tuition increase would be used to supplement a variety of campus programs, including safety, maintenance and fac-

## Council: Discuss Athletics Commercialization



Former UNC-system President Bill Friday is co-chairman of the Knight Foundation Commission.

**By NIKKI WERKING**  
Staff Writer

University faculty hope a resolution passed last month will lead to discussion on the commercialization of athletics at ACC schools, Faculty Council Chairwoman Sue Estroff said Tuesday.

The resolution, passed by the Faculty Council, urges presidents and chancellors of ACC universities to start discussions "aimed at moderating the exponential growth and commercialization of athletics programs in the ACC."

The resolution also calls for ACC schools to make the implementation of changes recommended by the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics a top priority.

In 1991, the Knight Commission released a report about increasing commercialization of intercollegiate sports, and, in its updated June 2001 report, the commission found little has changed in the last decade.

The new resolution was passed in response to the commission's latest findings. "The resolution is part of a broader effort on campus for conversations on athletics in Chapel Hill," Estroff said. "Athletics should be part of the University, not the overpowering force. ... College teams have become major league farm teams for the NFL and NBA."

Estroff said the timing of the N.C. state high school football championships at Kenan Stadium and the timing of the men's soccer championship indicated the uneven balance between athletics and academics.

"The state football championships were held

during exams, which created a lot of noise while students were moving out and taking tests," Estroff said. "The men's soccer team also had their championships during finals week. It's not fair to them."

Former UNC-system President Bill Friday, who is co-chairman of the Knight Commission, said the council's resolution is a positive move. "It's good to see the University asserting itself," he said. "It's important to let people know we care about what's happening."

Friday said he hopes to see UNC take a role of leadership in implementing changes in the ACC.

Despite criticisms of UNC and the ACC, Steve Kirschner, UNC sports information director, said there are benefits to commercialization in collegiate sports. "We have 28 varsity sports teams and over 700 student athletes at UNC," Kirschner said. "A program that size requires a great deal of resources."

Kirschner said in order to keep a proper balance, UNC administration participates in the negotiations when the University enters a major corporate partnership. "It's a fact of life that when you have 28 sports teams, you must pay for it," Kirschner said. "A lot, if not all, colleges turn to corporate involvement to do that."

But Estroff emphasizes that the new resolution — divided into two parts — is not intended to demean collegiate sports, but to correct the balance of athletics and academics. "The resolutions aren't anti-sports," she said. "They're pro-University."

The University Editor can be reached at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

See UNC-W, Page 7