

UNC won't outgrow quality

BY NIKKI WERKING
ASSISTANT UNIVERSITY EDITOR

When Jerry Lucido entered the first meeting of the Enrollment Policy Advisory Committee last year, growth was the furthest thing from his mind.

But as director of undergraduate admissions and chairman of the committee, Lucido knew stagnating enrollment wasn't an option.

"When I walked into our first meeting, no one wanted (UNC-Chapel Hill) to grow," he said. "But the reality of it is we have to grow as part of our mission to the state."

And as part of that mission, Chancellor James Moeser said Thursday, the University plans to increase enrollment steadily from 3,500 students to 4,000 during the next five years.

According to the academic plan, which was released in July and calls for the five-year period of growth, the University is under pressure to expand as the number of high school graduates in the state continues to increase.

Moeser said that by adding 500 students gradually, UNC-CH will help meet the state's demands for higher education while staying true to its character.

"Our secret is that we're a great research university but one that has maintained an undergraduate culture," he said. "(Our size) is a critical ingredient to who we are as a university."

Ultimately, the N.C. General Assembly determines the amount of growth at each of the UNC-system's 16 universities, but legislators consider recommendations from the UNC-system Board of Governors.

Provost Robert Shelton said he thinks the BOG will go along with the plan because the University's expansion has been consistent with its enrollment growth projections.

"I think the BOG understands that each university in the system has a distinct mission and a distinct set of responsibilities," he said. "If we grow to 30,000 (students) we would not be providing the Carolina experience that is our obligation to the students."

The sheer number of students at the University is not the only contentious issue.

Last year, the state's struggling economy forced the BOG to hike system tuition in order to fund enrollment growth — a practice UNC-CH brought into question.

Enrollment growth money is pooled for the entire system, and when tuition dollars were redistributed to campuses based on growth, dollars were drained from UNC's budget.

Tuition this year will fund \$7.3 million of the \$10.6 million the University will receive from the state for enrollment growth.

In addition to funding concerns, University officials also must consider how enrollment growth will affect the academic climate on campus.

Faculty Council Chairwoman Judith Wegner said professors will "bend over backward" to maintain the quality of their classes.

Shelton added that as long as UNC-CH continues to offer First Year Seminars and increase the number of honors sections and introductory classes offered, the University will be able to hold on to its spot as a top public university.

"Adding students will maintain and even improve the quality of our student body," Shelton said. "We'll still be drawing off the top of the applicant pool."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

CCI's 4th year fills campus with laptops

BY NIKKI WERKING
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On a busy afternoon at Caribou Coffee, Steve Jarrell couldn't find a single empty seat to sit and enjoy his cup of coffee.

But as UNC's interim vice chancellor for information technology looked around the shop crowded with studying students, he was pleased with what he saw.

"Almost everyone in the coffee shop had a (Carolina Computing Initiative) computer," he said. "That is really what CCI is all about."

As CCI enters its fourth year, nearly all undergraduates on campus now have bought their own laptops as part of the program. John Oberlin, executive director of Academic Technology & Networks, said he expects this milestone to change the academic climate of the University.

"CCI is a multifaceted program that focuses on teaching and learning through technology," he said. "Faculty and students are pushing the boundaries and finding new ways to improve education."

Before CCI kicked off in August 2000, about 57 percent of incoming freshmen brought a computer to school. Computer labs often were crowded, and students without their own computers were

forced to wait in line to do simple tasks such as checking e-mail.

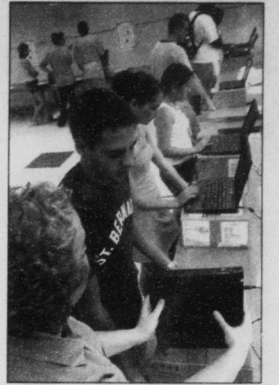
Jarrell said the primary goal of CCI is to give all students equal access to technology by requiring them to own laptops and by offering aid to students with financial need.

The computer grants and loans offered by the University are key to the success of the program, Jarrell said. "There was a huge disparity between the students that had a computer and those that didn't. ... It's an important tool and helps us level the playing field."

One of the most visible changes at UNC created by CCI is the use of technology in the classroom. Although faculty members are not obligated to integrate new forms of technology into their lesson plans, many professors have been coming forward to learn more about the options available.

Kathy Thomas, manager of ATN's Center for Instructional Technology, said the center offers about five workshops per month on the use of Blackboard — a Web site where instructors can post information for their classes — and helps about 200 professors per month through one-on-one consultations.

She expects those numbers to increase this year. "It's too soon to tell how much it will grow, but it



DTH/GARRETT HALL
Freshmen receive their new IBM laptop computers at the end of C-TOPS. The pickup occurred in Hanes Hall on Friday morning.

has grown consistently every semester," she said.

In the future, Jarrell said, he hopes CCI will help bring the latest innovations to UNC. "What's exciting is not knowing what could come next."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

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