

System's bond projects move past early snags

BY ERIN GIBSON
ASSISTANT STATE & NATIONAL EDITOR

After four years of concern from legislators and an outside oversight committee about the UNC system's bond projects, officials say the plans have begun to meet expectations.

In 2000, voters statewide approved a referendum to give \$3.1 billion to institutions of higher education, including \$2.5 billion for the UNC system, to go to capital projects including renovations, new buildings and land purchases.

Dwayne Pinkney, UNC-system associate vice president for finance, said there are 89 projects under design, 158 under construction and 61 completed.

"Overall, 97.5 percent of the projects are (under way)," he said.

At first there was concern among the members of the N.C. General Assembly that the projects might be too costly and time-consuming. The system did fall behind in the projects' early days.

But about four years after the legislature formed an oversight committee for the projects, things seem to have gotten back on track.

Four years ago, any project costing less than \$2 million was put in the hands of each university. Projects amounting to more than \$2 million were awarded to the State Construction Office.

"The idea was to try to have some oversight on the projects," said Sen. Virginia Foxx, R-Watauga.

Speros Fleggas, director of the State Construction Office, said his

group includes universities in discussions but ultimately has authority over expensive projects.

"We have the final review and approve changes," Fleggas said.

Pinkney said that although some projects are behind, others are ahead, so on the whole the bonds project is on schedule.

For example, UNC-CH's Peabody Hall was renovated 18 months ahead of schedule, but work on the Undergraduate Library finished four months behind.

East Carolina University expects to finish half of its projects in September. Two of the four developments completed as of June were done on time, but two others were behind schedule.

All of Appalachian State University's projects finished later than expected, but a pair at N.C. Agriculture & Technical State University finished ahead of time.

Pinkney said that while wet springs and summers impacted progress, most delays have been warranted, such as UNC-TV waiting for an update from the Federal Communications Commission before installing new equipment.

By June 21 of this year, universities had forked over about \$6.4 million of their own money for completed projects.

If progress continues on schedule, officials expect all projects to be complete by summer 2009.

Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

Recruits face difficult path

Recruitment stays steady regardless

BY MARK PUENTE
STAFF WRITER

In recent decades, thousands of college students have collected military-education benefits without the fear of serving in combat — but the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the ongoing conflict in Iraq have made that situation less likely.

For the first time in history during the absence of a draft, an increased number of students have been called to active duty in the Reserves or National Guard, forcing them to put college on hold to serve their country.

UNC sophomore Adam Meyer joined the Marine Corps Reserves after his freshman year.

"I fully expect to see combat at one time or another, and I'm as prepared mentally as I can be," he said.

But the threat of active duty has not kept people from enlisting. Recruiting numbers for the U.S. Army have not declined in the last five years despite wars in the Middle East and Asia.

Julia Bobick, public affairs specialist at the U.S. Army Recruiting Command at Fort Knox, Ky., said the Army is on target to meet its recruiting goals for the year.

"Currently we are meeting our mission and enjoying our fifth year of success," Bobick said. "People

sign up knowing that they could see combat."

But not everyone is pleased with the way recruiters try to attract students.

Entering the service often is viewed as an alternative to college, but some people are concerned that military recruiting on high school campuses attracts too many minorities away from secondary education.

School officials, however, might not have a choice in the matter.

A little-known provision in the federal No Child Left Behind Act requires high schools to provide contact information to military recruiters unless parents or students specifically ask to be removed from the list.

Failing to comply with the provision would cause a school district to lose federal funding.

Some schools expressed concern when the law first was passed, but the threat of losing funding has forced most to abide by the rules.

Bruce Hunter, associate executive director of the American Association of School Administrators, said the federal government should not have the power to decide who can recruit on campuses.

"The federal government only funds about 7 percent of secondary education," he said.

"The decision to allow recruiters should be made at a local level."

But opportunities exist for students to both serve and study.

Enrollments in college military

"I am a Marine first. If my orders come, that is my duty. I could not sit around ... while people I know are getting shot at."

ADAM MEYER, UNC SOPHOMORE AND MARINE RESERVIST

programs, such as UNC's Army ROTC, don't seem to have suffered despite the delay students might experience if they are sent into service.

"We have not felt a bit of it at Carolina," said Lt. Col. Steve Morris, professor of military science.

"I don't see it here at all." Meyer said his program allows him to stay at the University. But if his unit is called up, he would have to leave school to complete two more phases of training before being deployed.

"I am a Marine first, he said. "If my orders come, then that is my duty. I could not sit around in my air-conditioned dorm complaining about professors while people I know are getting shot at."

Meyer spent 13 weeks of his summer break battling bugs and the tropical conditions in Parris Island, S.C., during Marine Corps basic training.

Still, he said, he didn't mind the environment, referring to it as a "transition" as opposed to something difficult.

"I wouldn't say it was hard," Meyer said.

Meyer added that he shipped out a few weeks after spring

classes ended understanding the full weight of the commitment he made.

He said his platoon included 10 other college students. He also trained alongside a Baptist minister and former model. But the diversity of the group never created any conflicts.


"You are put in a position to rely on these people for 13 weeks. You have to figure out a way to get past any differences real quick," he said.

Meyer added that his training will help him become a better, more disciplined student while at UNC and in his future role as a small-arms repair technician. He is trying to enroll in an officer-training program after graduation and spend his life in the Marine Corps.

Meyer also said that his recruiter fulfilled the promises that he made and that he is happy to be serving his country in his limited role as a student Marine.

"I did not do it for the money, because it is an extra benefit," said Meyer, who receives a monthly allowance of \$178. "I did it for the love of it."

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UNC to search for 2 deans

Year's end to see Stamm, Cole leave

BY JOE SAUNDERS
STAFF WRITER

With all of the vice chancellor positions at UNC filled for first time in years, University administrators now face another challenge — two long-serving deans have decided to relinquish their posts.

John Stamm, dean of the School of Dentistry, and Richard Cole, dean of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, will both step down from their positions by the end of this school year.

Both administrators are taking a one-year sabbatical from their work at the University before returning to teach at UNC in 2006.

After serving in his position for 15 years, Stamm will step down Dec. 31.

He said he will use his time off to catch up on the latest developments in the field of dentistry before returning to the classroom.

Stamm said the next dean of the dentistry school will face the challenge of increasing the resources at the school and, in turn, the number of graduates.

The N.C. General Assembly and the UNC-system Board of Governors recently charged the

Journalism school Dean Richard Cole plans to step down at the end of the year after 26 years.

school with increasing enrollment.

Educating more students will increase the size of the dental workforce in the state.

North Carolina now is ranked 47th on the list of states with the lowest dentist-to-population ratio.

The search for a new dean began in January, said Kerry Kilpatrick, chairman of the search committee and associate dean for academic affairs in the School of Public Health.

The committee has invited four candidates to Chapel Hill for interviews during the next few weeks. But more candidates might be invited to the University as more applications are reviewed, he added.

Committee members are looking to recommend two or three names to Provost Robert Shelton by the end of October, he said.

Shelton is expected to make a final decision by the end of November.

Kilpatrick said the committee is looking for candidates who have served in leadership roles in the field and are committed to the clinical and educational aspects of dentistry.

The journalism school is undergoing a similar search process, as Cole steps down June 30 from a position he has held for the last 26 years.

Cole said Shelton asked him to sign on for another five-year term as dean, but he declined.

"I said no because that is just too long," Cole said.

Instead, he agreed to a one-year extension on his contract to oversee several fund-raising projects for the school and hire new faculty members.

Cole added that he might use his time off to travel. He said he has been invited to visit universities in Mexico City and China.

The search committee to find Cole's replacement will hold its first meeting Sept. 7.

Cole said he did not know what qualifications the search committee has in mind for his position.

But, he added, he was proud to be stepping aside from his role at the journalism school during the height of its national prominence.

"I don't believe in picking your own successors," Cole said. "But I will say this — I bet the next dean doesn't stay for 26 years."

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