

Summer schools lose funds

BY KRISTIN PRATT
STAFF WRITER

N.C. lawmakers took a step toward realizing Alice Cooper's vision of a school-free summer.

Or, at least, a subsidy-free summer.

A provision in the state budget eliminated subsidies for certain system activities that are funded by a combination of university and state revenue — namely summer school.

That leaves some UNC-system summer-school programs searching for funding. And school officials say the costs most likely will be passed along to students.

Because system schools received different levels of funding for the program, some campuses will feel the loss more sharply than others.

"Funds by the state have been insufficient for a long time," said Jeff Davies, vice president for finance for the UNC system.

He said legislators should be supporting summer school rather than cutting funding.

"This kind of reduction took the university system in the wrong direction."

Officials at UNC-Chapel Hill, UNC-Wilmington and Winston-Salem State University said they likely won't have to significantly burden students, because they received a relatively small subsidy anyway.

But UNC-Greensboro and Appalachian State University will see a definite drop in their summer-school budgets, and need more student receipts to offset the loss.

Robert Brown, dean of the division of continual learning at UNC-G, said the summer school program will lose about 18 percent of its funding.

"It will require that we either increase tuition for students,

increase class size, limit section numbers offered or cut back on academic support systems," he said.

Gail Hauser, ASU's associate summer school director, said administrators are not exactly sure how the university will be affected.

The school will lose roughly \$420,000 in subsidies, which is about 10 percent of the overall budget, she said.

She added that an increase of as much as 10 percent in summer tuition is likely.

UNC-CH will be not be as severely affected, because state appropriations only comprise about 2 to 3 percent of funding. The University will lose about \$180,000 in appropriations for summer school in 2006, said Jim Murphy, dean of the summer school.

He said that the program has not relied on the subsidy for the past 10

years, but that having lesser funds will make planning and budgeting more difficult.

"We've essentially lost our buffer," Murphy said.

Although tuition at UNC-CH will not see major increases, they'll only offer classes if demand is high, he said. "We'll offer classes if students will pay to take them."

Patricia Deanes, resource manager for UNC-W's summer school, said the university voluntarily cut back its program in 2003, so the state cuts will have no major impact. The school received less than \$20,000 in funds this summer from the state.

Deanes said that class offerings will not be cut, but that the subsidy loss could lead to a slight increase in fees for out-of-state students.

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



DTH/WHITNEY SHEPTE

Junior Christian Trainor shops at Student Stores on Tuesday afternoon. Like many students, Trainor was shocked by the high prices of textbooks.

TEXTBOOKS

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in Virginia pushed through the Textbook Market Fairness Act, which bars publishers from offering professors kickbacks for assigning a specific textbook. The act also mandates that professors make book lists available before the start of classes.

Zach Wynne, president of the UNC Association of Student Governments, said he hopes the UNC system will find a way to ensure N.C. professors turn in book lists prior to ordering deadlines.

"If they get them in on time, it gives the bookstore an idea of how much they need to order, and (they) buy more books back."

Inflation nation

Soaring tuition and high-priced textbooks nationwide have coupled to create higher education costs that border on unmanageable.

A new study from the U.S. Government Accountability Office shows that during the last two decades, textbook prices increased at twice the rate of inflation, following closely behind the pace of tuition.

John Jones, director of UNC-CH Student Stores, said that while direct competition stems from used book stores in the area, online sites such as Half.com and Amazon.com have recently nabbed more business.

And CALPIRG's report found that an average textbook in the United States costs about 20 percent more than one in another country.

Purchasing Power

In North Carolina, student outcry has drawn the attention of the UNC-system Board of Governors, which created a subcommittee to study the

cost of textbooks. The committee met for the first time in July.

"We'd like to provide some relief to students if at all possible," said committee chairman Peter Hans.

Hans said one avenue to explore is leveraging the purchasing power of the entire UNC system to bring down prices. "There's a difference between what a textbook may cost at UNC-Chapel Hill compared to Elizabeth City State (University)."

With the skyrocketing price of textbooks, some schools have held strong to century-old rental programs.

About 20 colleges and universities run textbook rental services with annual fees ranging from \$130 to \$240, according to CALPIRG.

The UNC system has three such schools: Appalachian State, Elizabeth City State and Western Carolina universities.

At ASU, a \$76 per semester fee covers one textbook per course, and students must purchase any additional course materials.

Wynne, an ASU graduate student, said an informal survey found that all but 4 percent of ASU students approved of the rental program.

But Wynne said he knows not everyone is on board.

Professors are locked into a specific textbook for three years, and departments must agree on the same book for every course section.

Fayetteville State's faculty senate has done away with rentals, claiming that purchasing textbooks is in students' best interest, said Jeffrey Womble, director of public relations for Fayetteville State.

"They just felt that students needed to start their own academic libraries."

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LOTTERY

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said after the vote. "When you see what's going on in the country and what's going on in the Southeast, we needed to get this behind us."

North Carolina is the last state on the East Coast without a lottery, and supporters have long complained of the ticket revenue lost to neighboring states.

The N.C. House narrowly passed a lottery bill in April, and Democratic Gov. Mike Easley has been a strident supporter of a state lottery to fund public education.

But Senate opposition had kept the bill from clearing the General Assembly, and lawmakers adjourned last week with no expectation of coming back to work.

Senate President Pro Tem Marc Basnight, however, had other plans.

The Dare County Democrat, a strong lottery supporter, said Friday that the Senate would reconvene to consider unfinished business.

"I gave adequate time for any and everybody to be here," Basnight said after the vote. "One thing I wanted to be certain, that if we're going to vote the lottery, everybody had the chance and the opportunity to come and place their vote."

Republicans left fuming

Lottery opponents were quick to assign a more sinister motive to Basnight's decision to reconvene.

"We were told last week that we were going to adjourn and we were not coming back," said Sen. Fred Smith, R-Johnston, speaking Tuesday on the Senate floor.

"In reliance upon that, one member in our caucus went on his honeymoon. Whether he knows that we're doing this today, I don't know. Another member of our caucus lies sick at home."

Smith alleged that the Senate leadership was purposefully taking advantage of the situation.

"I ask my colleagues on the other

side of the aisle, does the end justify the means?"

While all five Democratic opponents of the lottery — including Orange County Sen. Ellie Kinnaird — held to their positions and voted against the bill Tuesday, none chose to speak out against it on the floor.

But some Republicans were vocally livid.

Several called for protest votes against the tactics of the chamber's leadership, but they fell well short of the two-thirds majority necessary to sustain a challenge to the rules.

They also questioned whether Basnight had made a good-faith effort to contact all of his Senate colleagues about the vote.

"I don't know where the notice was sent, I don't know what calls were made," said Sen. Hugh Webster, R-Alamance. "I will tell you, tell everybody, that this senator did not receive a call about this."

Opponents also took the opportunity to rehash many of their arguments against the lottery, calling it an immoral and unfair way to boost state coffers.

"We've got it: gambling fever. That's what this is," said Sen. Phil Berger, R-Rockingham. "There is no more money for education with a lottery. There's more money for government."

'Business as usual'

Despite the protests, Basnight and Rand insisted that the vote had been fair. By sending out a notice on Friday, Basnight said he had provided plenty of notice about Tuesday's session.

"We had 48 people show up, and that's a pretty good count of people," he said.

While Easley already has announced that he will sign the bill as early as today, there is no time table on when the lottery will be up and running.

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BUDGET CUTS

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decreased recently partly because all other sources of revenue — tuition as well as private and government grants — have increased.

Between 1993 and 2004, government contracts and grants awarded to the University have increased from about \$210 million to almost \$500 million, according to a University finance report.

Campus-based tuition increases are becoming a more important source of revenue as well.

Last year's campus-based tuition increases will net the University \$4.68 million in revenue.

Shelton said although he's glad to finally have budget numbers, allocating dollars will be difficult.

"This has been a very complicated budget to figure out this year, I think, because the cut has come on top of five years of budget reduction," he said. "People are down to the bone, but we've got to deliver the curriculum."

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JEOPARDY

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performers to enter the tournament within the next two weeks.

The show will be taped Oct. 1 and Oct. 2 at the RBC Center in Raleigh.

Erbstein said UNC students should not be bitter that N.C. State will serve as host to the event.

"We actually worked really hard with the administration to get the show (at UNC)," she said. "But it came down to logistics."

No student representative from UNC is guaranteed a final spot, but all 900 participants were offered tickets to the taping of the tournament.

The championship will air on ABC 11 from Nov. 7 to Nov. 18.

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The following Carolina students have received awards from the Fulbright U.S. Student Program for the 2005-2006 academic year:

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- Heide Iravani, International Studies, Jordan
- Virginia Lamothe, Music, Italy
- Tina Mangieri, Geography, Kenya
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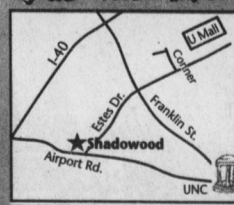
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