

Board of Trustees committees address construction, UNC's financial progress

Before heading into their full meeting Wednesday, members of the Board of Trustees met to discuss various matters, including renovations to Carmichael Auditorium and academic advising, in three committee meetings.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

The board's building and grounds committee recommended a \$135 million addition to the School of Dentistry, among other renovation and construction decisions.

The building is slated to be south of the Health Sciences Library.

The committee also approved the site plan for renovations to Carmichael Auditorium and the addition of a sports medicine facility on

the western side of Woollen Gym.

Bruce Runberg, associate vice chancellor for facilities planning and construction, also announced that 38 percent of the University's 180 construction projects are completed. Thirty-four percent are in progress.

The site plan for Carolina Commons, a proposed low-cost faculty and staff housing complex, also was approved. Site plans will be submitted to the town of Carboro by Feb. 1.

AUDIT AND FINANCE

Tuition and student fee talks took up much of the audit and finance committee meeting, but officials also were briefed on the University's annual financial progress and the

Carolina First fundraising campaign.

Richard Mann, vice chancellor for finance and administration, said net revenue is about 8 percent greater than last year at this time.

Officials are estimating that the Carolina First campaign will reach its goal of \$2 billion sometime in February, 10 months ahead of schedule.

Mann also announced that Laurie Charest, associate vice chancellor for human resources, is retiring from her position.

A search committee will be led up by David Perry, associate vice chancellor for finance and administration. Mann said the committee already has been formed, and members hope to make a selection by April.

UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS

During the University affairs committee meeting, Madeline Levine, interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences rolled out a plan for a complete review of UNC's advising system.

The review will begin internally with a 50-page report, followed by an eight-person evaluation team that will consist of internal and external members. The goal is to issue a final report by May.

The state of Greek life on campus and University background checks also were discussed.

COMPILED BY ANDREW DUNN, JORDAN LAWRENCE, STEPHANIE NEWTON AND ERIN ZUREICK

ASSAULT

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Like many at the meeting, alumna Emily Stewart said the president's hesitation in addressing the incident as a hate crime is an impediment to progress.

"If we choose to ignore this to whatever extent in order to preserve our reputation, we are cheating ourselves out of a healing process, which is apparently vital."

Jakbeer said she believes the meeting was successful in communicating the nature of the incident.

"With more forums like this, people will start to understand the meaning of hate," she said. "This is a good first step."

The Associated Press contributed to this article. Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

REVENUE

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at a competitive level. "Our faculty salaries need to be brought up to the average of their peers," Gray-Little said earlier this week.

Though previous tuition dollars have been used to garner new faculty, the proposed amount will go only to current faculty members. That portion of tuition money is divided among academic departments based on enrollment, Gray-Little said.

"A larger amount of money tends to follow the larger amount of students," she said, noting that most money goes toward the College of Arts and Sciences, where many undergraduates are enrolled.

While the increase in faculty salaries might improve UNC's reputation as a faculty-focused university, Joe Templeton, chairman of the faculty, said there's a larger picture.

He said the faculty is more con-

cerned with the actual state of the University, in terms of resources, scholarship and quality of life.

"What matters to faculty is the reality of the environment," he said.

The other big chunk of tuition goes toward need-based student aid, as mandated by the state.

Tabatha Turner, associate director of the Office of Scholarships and Student Aid, said financial aid, which totaled about \$5 million in the 2006-07 school year, is assigned to needy students based on their year in school and their residency.

Out-of-state students and upperclassmen receive more funding because they pay more either from the start or because they've been at the University longer.

"It's specifically set up so that needy students aren't hurt by tuition increases," Turner said.

UNC consistently has set aside at least 35 percent of tuition dollars since the 2000-01 academic year.

Templeton said increases are inevitable to provide students with a quality experience.

"Education's expensive."

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TAHERI-AZAR

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Tuesday that no such offer was on the table.

Since his arrest, Taheri-Azar has sent multiple letters to the media and law enforcement officials.

Woodall said he might subpoena a select group of people who have received letters to testify at trial. He also said all public statements made by Taheri-Azar are admissible as evidence.

Woodall said the defendant's communication with the media is the most unusual aspect of the case.

Taheri-Azar will appear in court next March 27. All pretrial motions must be filed by that date and will be addressed then or shortly thereafter.

Woodall said he couldn't guess how long the trial would be, nor would he comment on his chance of winning.

"The arraignment today will help us move forward," he said. "And we'll move forward in a much more predictable fashion."

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TUITION

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that UNC's tuition not exceed the 25th percentile of its peer institutions when it comes to residents and the 75th percentile when it comes to nonresidents.

"As we reviewed this, we noticed that indeed we are falling further behind our peers," Gray-Little said.

Trustee Paul Fulton said the board needs to move more aggressively to reach these levels. He said marketplace trends point that UNC can levy increases without losing potential students to other schools.

According to information provided by the tuition and fee advisory task force, undergraduate nonresident tuition at UNC increased by 6.9 percent last year — compared with an average of 9 percent increases made by the University's peer schools.

"We haven't seriously made any moves to the 75th percentile," Fulton said. "We need some commitment to at least start closing the gap."

Nelson Schwab, chairman of the board, said he views the issue somewhat differently.

Schwab said increases should be based on the University's needs,

such as better faculty and teaching assistant salaries, rather than just on peer tuition levels. "As long as we have needs, I'm comfortable justifying a tuition increase," he said.

The board's philosophy also rests on the assumption that the 75th percentile is an accurate measure, said John Ellison, a trustee who also served on the tuition task force.

Ellison said he would like to see more research on the effects of moving to this level before next year's rounds of talks.

"It may not be the best guideline for us to use," he said.

Trustees also are working with a new constraint this year. According to guidelines issued by UNC-system President Erskine Bowles this fall, increases for resident students are capped at 6.5 percent, making a \$250 hike the ceiling this year.

Moesser said the cap will work only if the N.C. General Assembly provides enough funding for UNC.

"I think if the legislature fails us, the Board of Governors is going to have to re-examine that," he said. "I think it's a gesture of good faith from the University."

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ASSEMBLY

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rules become permanent and are used for the rest of the session.

Permanent operating procedures likely will be voted on in February.

Stam, along with a few Republican supporters, spoke in favor of revising the operating rules for the House.

Several issues were raised about deadlines and whether legislators have enough time to read and understand each bill before a vote.

Ferrel Guillory, director of the UNC Program on Public Life, said such deadlines give budgetary discipline to the assembly.

"The election of leaders and adoption of rules is a critical starting point for legislative actions."

But, he added, contention over

rules is not an unusual occurrence for a legislative body and does not send a negative political signal in terms of future relations between the two parties.

Stam said he is optimistic that some of his concerns were heard despite the adoption of the bill by an 82-37 vote.


"They usually pass 110 to 10," he said. "The majority always votes for the rules because it lets them get on with business the next day."

Sen. Ellie Kinnaird, D-Orange, said the Senate was the quieter legislative chamber for the day.

She said this is the sixth time she's attended the opening day of the legislature and still finds the event exhilarating. "It doesn't lose its excitement."

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