

# System considers satellite medical campuses

Response to N.C. health care shortage

BY ERIC PAINTER  
STAFF WRITER

A statewide health care professionals shortage has prompted the UNC-system Board of Governors to fund the construction of satellite campuses of the UNC-Chapel Hill and East Carolina University medical schools.

Medical students enrolled at the UNC-CH School of Medicine or ECU's Brody School of Medicine will be given the choice of remaining at their home campus or transferring to a satellite campus for their third and fourth years.

"It is going to take all of us working together, both our school and East Carolina University, to solve the shortage of health care professionals in the state," said UNC-CH School of Medicine spokesman Lynn Wooten.

The BOG has selected UNC-

Charlotte and UNC-Asheville as the first two satellite locations, pending approval from the N.C. General Assembly. Neither school has its own medical program. Local hospitals will help provide practical training for medical school students.

"We are excited and feel that there is a strong need for us to make sure there are enough doctors in the state," Wooten said.

With the satellite campuses, the BOG aims to increase overall enrollment in North Carolina's public medical schools and partially relieve the medical personnel shortage in hospitals by making available medical students who can provide low-level medical services, said BOG member Charles Hayes.

UNC's medical school enrolled 160 first-year students in the 2007-08 academic year. It aims to gradually increase that number to 230,

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GARY BOWERS, WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA HEALTH NETWORK EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

beginning in 2009. ECU currently enrolls 73 first-year students in its medical school and aims to gradually expand to 120, beginning in fall 2008.

Both schools hope that many incoming students will choose to study at the satellite campuses where they can simultaneously learn and help ease the medical personnel shortages.

UNC and ECU expect more than 75 percent of their medical school graduates to practice in the state in 2009, said Western North Carolina Health Network Executive Director

Gary Bowers.

"We would like to send our third- and fourth-year medical students into communities and be able to provide quality health care," said Virginia Hardy, ECU senior associate dean of academic affairs.

The BOG also hopes that by exposing medical students studying at the satellite campuses to rural medicine practice, they will be more inclined to practice in those areas after graduation. Rural areas have been experiencing some of the most severe health care professional shortages in the state.

"There are studies that show an education in rural areas and residency in rural areas means medical school students are more likely to practice there," Bowers said.

ECU's presence in eastern North Carolina has helped temper the medical personnel shortage in that region, he said, adding that the western part of the state lacks its own medical school and has suf-

fered a more severe shortage.

"East Carolina doctors have a record of providing health care in non-urban areas," Bowers said. "We need to target areas in the eastern and western part of the state."

The hospitals are feeling the crunch and are welcoming the relief that satellite campuses might

be able to provide.

"I am excited that the collaboration is going to take place," Bowers said.

"We need more nurses, and we must act to give our health care system the attention it needs."

Contact the State & National Editor at [stntdesk@unc.edu](mailto:stntdesk@unc.edu).

# Seniors gear down for year's end

No class address or concert in works

BY CHRISTIAN WISSEH  
STAFF WRITER

Because of mixed responses in past years, this year's senior class officers have decided not to hold a senior class address or concert.

The Senior Class Speaker — which morphed into a Senior Class Concert — was short-lived, beginning in 2005 when students were not happy with the Commencement speaker process. And since then, the costly events have not been as successful as hoped.

"We don't have the biggest budget," said Veronica Mora, senior class vice president. "It costs a lot of money to bring an act here."

The first address featured Mo Rocca, a former correspondent on "The Daily Show." The event, resulting from a three-month collaborative effort, cost the senior class and the University \$19,500.

In 2006, actress Jasmine Guy, well-known for her role as Whitley Gilbert on the sitcom "A Different World," spoke to seniors. A lot of the reaction was negative, and it cost

\$10,000 to bring Guy to campus.

Because of the lack of interest in the speaker idea, last year's senior class went in a different direction and brought in two bands: Chairmen of the Board and The Embers.

Taking into account the technical costs, stage preparations and the cost of the bands, the event totalled at least \$12,000 — but attendance was low, with about 400 students attending the bigger concert, Chairmen of the Board.

"It wouldn't be wise to use a lot of money to bring an act that only a small group of seniors would want to see," Mora said.

Many seniors, such as Josh Phelps, were unaware of the senior class address and did not view it as important or as a tradition.

"If it was a real capstone event that everyone was looking forward to, it would mean more that this is happening," Phelps said. "I think SpringFest is a capstone event, and senior perks will make it more memorable."

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VERONICA MORA, SENIOR CLASS VICE PRESIDENT

The number of events during the end of the year affects student turnout, so it would require a large event to draw their attention, Senior Class President Ashley Shores said.

"At the end of the year, every group on campus is trying to hold an event," she said. "But not all are able to afford a huge venue."

So this year, the senior class collaborated with other student groups to bring Boyz II Men to campus as part of SpringFest.

Seniors can get priority tickets beginning today if they have contributed at least \$1 to the class campaign.

Seniors will have other perks during SpringFest, Mora said, mentioning a possible class cookout. She also said Roy Williams and Butch Davis could appear at the cookout.

Some seniors said they are glad

that the senior perks are a part of SpringFest.

"A lot of seniors might have friends that are younger and want to spend their last days with them," senior Rupa Pandya said.

Others said they enjoy the variety of events that SpringFest has to offer.

"I would rather have priority to multiple things than have one exclusive event," senior Marissa Hall said.

But for those seniors who want a class-specific event, Shores said officers have organized Senior Week. Some of those events include the Bell Tower Climb, a Senior Service Day and the last senior bar night. The week begins April 21 and ends with SpringFest on April 26.

Contact the University Editor at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

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