Universities' admissions may be cut overbudget
02/13/2008 © Palm Beach Post

Florida's universities may have to reduce enrollment by 17,000 students this fall if dismal state budget projections hold true.

The Board of Governors, which oversees the state's 11 public universities, doesn't want schools admitting more students than legislators pay for - an annual problem because the state budget is finalized after most admissions are made and schools never know exactly how many students will actually show up for classes.

Last week, State University Chancellor Mark Rosenberg sent all university presidents estimates of how many students they can enroll next school year based on $147 million in current year budget cuts and forecasts of cuts for next year.

"If we cannot afford to hire faculty and advisers, we do not have the capacity to enroll students," Rosenberg said. "This is a difficult and regrettable - but necessary - adjustment for the state's public universities."

At Florida Atlantic University, the equivalent of 15,239 full-time students was paid for by the state this year. Rosenberg's estimates drop that to 14,379 full-time equivalent students for the fall.

FAU enrolls about 26,000 actual students, but not all of them attend full time so funding is based on full-time equivalency numbers.

The 17,000 students who could be cut statewide is an actual head count number.
Rosenberg is expected to report the new enrollment numbers at a March meeting of the Board of Governors. But final figures won't be available until the 2008-2009 state budget is negotiated by lawmakers.

The board has frozen statewide freshman enrollment at current levels. More enrollment cuts could also mean accepting fewer transfer students.

A report this month from Enlace Florida, a foundation that studies the state's higher education system, had even more dire predictions than the ones issued by the Board of Governors.

According to the report, between 40,000 and 60,000 students would be barred from attending a Florida public university by 2012 if current budget conditions continue.

"We've reached a point in this state where we can no longer do more with less," the report quotes Board of Governors member Tico Perez saying. "We're starting to get a little beyond cutting to the bone, we're starting to cut off limbs."

Some schools have announced changes to deal with the budget cuts, including Florida State University, which needs to cut $30 million and is expecting faculty and staff layoffs.

FAU is still working on its plan, although President Frank Brogan did announce hiring freezes and travel restrictions last month.

The audit and finance committee of FAU's board of trustees will meet Feb. 20. Although recommendations from a budget task force committee may not be ready, it's likely the group will discuss the potential cuts to enrollment and funding.

As Capt. John H. Miller is dying from his wounds in a dramatic scene from the 1998 movie "Saving Private Ryan," he whispers to the soldier his unit was ordered to rescue, "James, earn this. Earn it."
Pvt. James Ryan had to carry the burden associated with his name. Despite his objections, the top brass ordered that he be pulled out of harm's way after all three of his brothers were killed in action.

Like that movie character, Ronald Holmes, the new superintendent of Florida A&M University's troubled Developmental Research School, must deal with family ties that, in the eyes of some, provided him special treatment.

His brother, the Rev. R.B. Holmes, is a Florida A&M University trustee and influential Tallahassee civic leader. Although R.B. Holmes' recused himself from the Dec. 31 vote, FAMU's trustees, on the recommendation of President James Ammons, hired Ronald Holmes for the top job at FAMU DRS at an annual salary of $110,000.

Cries of cronyism, familiar allegations at Florida A&M, immediately were heard. Besides being the brother of R.B. Holmes, Ronald Holmes, a school administrator in Atlanta, was not the top-ranked candidate by an interview committee. He will be able to undo the perception of favoritism only by earning the trust and respect of students, teachers, parents, alumni and others associated with the school.

Now on the job for just a month, Mr. Holmes appears to have begun that process. Last week, he met with alumni and is urging 100 individuals and businesses to donate $1,000 each for a DRS student-achievement initiative. The idea is to create a financial incentive to reward full-time FAMU DRS employees if students perform well on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test.

It isn't a revolutionary idea. Regular public schools (Florida's four DRS schools are funded through university budgets) that score highly on the FCAT receive financial rewards, to be distributed as the school sees fit. As a result, staff members at some high-performing schools in effect receive FCAT-related bonuses.

A strong, creative leader is needed for the 364-student FAMU lab school. It now has a grade of F, and the DRS community has in the past felt that the university has not been as supportive as it should be.

However many faults one may find with the current FCAT-based school grading system, it's the system Florida uses, and a failing grade is a serious setback for any school. FAMU's commitment in terms of bricks and mortar seems firm, as a new facility is under construction and expected to be completed in September. But until scores improve, the lab school runs the risk of declining enrollment and an uncertain future.
That's a huge challenge, and Mr. Holmes deserves a chance to prove that he's the right person for the job. But, like Pvt. Ryan, he'll have to earn it.

Florida Atlantic University

FAU President Frank Brogan thanks those who helped make presidential candidate debate possible
02/13/2008 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

On behalf of the Florida Atlantic University community, I extend sincere thanks to all who provided comprehensive support for the nationally televised Republican presidential primary debate recently held on FAU's Boca Raton campus. This group includes the generous donors who contributed more than $250,000 to the FAU Foundation to cover costs associated with the event and the volunteers — primarily FAU students, alumni, faculty and staff — who gave their time, energy and talents to make sure that all of the university's needs were covered as our Boca Raton campus took center stage nationally.

I would like to offer special thanks to the Boca Raton Police Department, under the direction of Chief Dan Alexander, which worked in close coordination with the FAU Police Department to make sure that the event went smoothly every step of the way and that all visitors to the Boca Raton campus, from the five presidential candidates to the 1,500-plus audience members and media representatives, were in a safe environment. The university deeply appreciates the expert assistance provided by Capt. Shawn Fagan, Capt. Matthew Duggan and the 58 other members of the Boca Raton Police Department who were on campus throughout the night of the debate.

FAU would not have been able to take advantage of this opportunity without the help of the following sponsors: Office Depot, the Geo Group Inc., JM Family Enterprises Inc., Woolbright Development Inc., the Alan B. Larkin Symposium on the American Presidency, AutoNation, the Caron Foundation, Gunster, Yoakley and Stewart, P.A., the JKG Group and the Pugliese Co. In-kind sponsors included Chartwells, Dell Computers, PAETEC, the Residence Inn of Boca Raton and Toshiba.

Frank T. Brogan

President Florida Atlantic University
How does the Center for Innovation come together? : TCPalm.com
02/13/2008 © Jupiter Courier

ST. LUCIE WEST — How do all the pieces fit together at the Florida Center for Innovation? There's an intricate web, say leaders of life sciences and healthcare organizations.

Here's a look at their operations and how they fit together.

TORREY PINES

Construction is underway on the new 100,000-square-foot headquarters building for the Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies, with completion and move-in expected before the end of this year. The institute's scientists have set up temporary shop on the Fort Pierce campus of Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute.

Houghten expects to have more than 30 people working there within a month and up to 45 when they move to the new building. Torrey Pines has committed to add 189 jobs over 10 years as part of its deal with local governments.

Founded by Houghten in 1989, Torrey Pines is a not-for-profit research center that conducts basic research in fields associated with a wide variety of major medical conditions, including multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, pain, inflammation, AIDS and other infectious diseases, transplant rejection and rheumatoid arthritis.

Synergy with others is key to Torrey Pines' operations. The center's scientists discover and develop chemical compounds that are licensed to institutions and for-profit companies for development into drugs and introduction to the marketplace. Houghten also encourages his researchers to spin off companies and strike out on their own as entrepreneurs.

"It's very important that we get the right people, who are not afraid of risk, who understand that we need to collaborate," Houghten said. "We have collaborations now with Florida Atlantic University, the University of Florida, the University of Central Florida in Orlando, and the Scripps and Burnham institutes."

Houghten also looks for scientists who have government grants to fund their activities. He compares Torrey Pines to a large shopping mall with storeowners. Just like mall stores, individual scientists can come and go without harming Torrey Pines.
The Torrey Pines leader says he remains involved in the science and adds that he wouldn't have come to the Treasure Coast just to be an administrator. He praises researchers who can translate his ideas into tangible compounds.

"Our discovery methods are focused on finding solutions faster and that's what drives me," Houghten said. "Here in Florida, we can develop world-class, drug-discovery methods. When you do something new, it's a rush when the light bulb goes on."

Houghten's crystal ball sees as many as 2,000 biotech workers at Tradition within 10 years, with possibly 10 times that many in ancillary jobs, including those who work in hotels, restaurants and shops.

"There is no cap or limitation on what this might become," Houghten said. "The best thing is that 10 years from now, 25 years from now, there will be many things happening at Tradition that we haven't even thought of yet."

VGTI

Houghten and Torrey Pines have worked with Oregon Health & Science University's Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute, known as VGTI, and its director, Jay Nelson, for more than 20 years.

Established in March 2001, VGTI and its scientists develop vaccines, along with novel immune and gene therapy programs, to fight infectious diseases such as AIDS, chronic viral infection-associated diseases, newly emerging viral diseases and infectious diseases of the elderly.

The university's research chief, Dan Dorsa, says all that remains for VGTI to begin its Tradition plans is a final grant agreement from the state of Florida.

Then, VGTI will plan a 130,000-square-foot building to be constructed over three years near Torrey Pines. In the interim, VGTI will occupy the third floor of the Torrey Pines building.

When completed, the VGTI facility is expected to create 200 high-value jobs over the next 10 years.

VGTI director Jay Nelson will oversee the Florida and Oregon facilities, but is looking for a Florida-based director to head day-to-day operations and work with Nelson on recruitment of scientists.
Dorsa reports that VGTI is already in discussion with several candidates, including several of whom he describes as having international stature.

Dorsa sees a thriving operation at Tradition. He hopes to have recruited all principal investigators — the scientific leaders — within five years. Some will be young investigators who build labs and write grants. Others will be senior people.

"I would hope we would have disclosures of intellectual property from them about discoveries they have made in Florida," Dorsa said.

Like Torrey Pines, VGTI encourages technology transfer, helping its researchers obtain patents, create companies, and get venture capitalists involved. VGTI licenses discoveries to the new company and grants the right to commercialize products, usually taking an equity position in the hope that revenues will flow to both the Florida and Oregon operations. Dorsa expects Florida companies to be created, as they have in the Pacific Northwest.

VGTI is looking forward to working with a proposed Martin Memorial Hospital on the Tradition site.

"We envision our Florida facility to be more clinically oriented with actual human trials," Dorsa said. "It would help us to have clinical labs and patients close by. Martin Memorial is already involved in clinical research, including cancer trials, and they are very interested in collaborating with us."

Dorsa also envisions that VGTI will link to Florida universities for research.

Like Houghten, he sees no reason Tradition can't someday match North Carolina and San Diego, but not in the next five years. He predicts a 10-to-20 year timeline, with an infusion of venture capital.

MANN RESEARCH CENTER

Mann Research Center brings to Tradition the long experience of the Alfred Mann Foundation in research and development of medical devices. The foundation was started in 1985 by Alfred Mann, the biotech entrepreneur and philanthropist whose for-profit companies were largely responsible for the cardiac pacemaker. The foundation's researchers are credited with major advances in insulin pumps for diabetics and cochlear implants for patients with severe hearing loss.
Mann Research Center is a real estate arm of the foundation that plans to build a life sciences complex at Tradition. Late last year, Mann closed on a 22-acre parcel where it intends to build up to six buildings, including 300,000 square feet of research and development facilities, with a small amount of support retail, and 100,000 square feet of medical office space.

John DelRusso, president of Mann Research Center, says he will work for the next three months on a marketing plan, reaching out to various companies and revising the master plan for the site as needed.

Interest in the site is high from potential tenants according to Jim Land, a vice president at Grubb & Ellis, the real estate company that is helping market the Mann site at Tradition. He says companies that need as little as 5,000 square feet and as much as 130,000 square feet are exploring possibilities.

"People want to be a part of anything Al Mann is involved in," Land said.

DelRusso said the pace of development over the next 12 months will depend on the companies that want to build there.

"We're still kicking around whether to build to suit or to build some space 'on spec' to attract smaller companies," DelRusso said. "We hope, with city approval, to break ground late this year or early next year."

DelRusso said he hopes that more than 1,000 jobs will be created at the Mann site within the first five years.

"This effort could be one of the high-job creators Florida has seen," DelRusso added.

Shared access will be a key part of the Mann development, according to DelRusso. Tenants will be able to share labs, science libraries, instruments, equipment, gas, ionized air, clean rooms, information technology services and cafeterias.

"We're hoping to create synergy among all our tenants," Land said "Our aim is innovation from the lab to the marketplace."

DelRusso hopes that several Alfred Mann companies will take space in Tradition.

Mann has the largest amount of square feet at Tradition under a single owner. DelRusso said his goal is to support the proposed Martin Memorial Hospital and other research efforts.
"We hope to also bring some new stuff to the table and get this innovation to flow from the laboratory to the marketplace," DelRusso said.

Both DelRusso and Land predict that other life sciences developments will be built in the area over the next 10 years, and that eventually, the corridor from Orlando to Palm Beach will rival San Diego.

MARTIN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Torrey Pines, VGTI and Mann say they need a hospital as part of the team at Tradition to provide much needed clinical trials. Stuart-based Martin Memorial Hospital wants to join the team.

State health officials have given preliminary approval for an 80-bed facility at Tradition that could be expanded to 300 beds.

The main obstacle is an appeal filed by Hospital Corp. of America, parent company of St. Lucie Medical Center and Lawnwood Regional Medical Center in Fort Pierce, which claims the Tradition hospital is not needed.

A hearing before a state administrative hearing officer is scheduled for November.

Mark Robitaille, senior vice president and chief operating officer of Martin Memorial, is the former chairman of the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County. He was involved from the very beginning in the planning for Tradition.

"We're confident our application will be approved," Robitaille said. "The Florida Agency for Health Care Administration looked at all the data, including the huge increase in population in western St. Lucie County, the need for emergency services out there, and a large increase in obstetrics case volume. Both the fire district and the city council support our application."

Robitaille anticipates more than 400 people will work at a Tradition hospital where average annual wages will exceed $50,000. He says the hospital would be the largest economic development project in that area for many years, pumping more than $100 million into the economy.
PORT ST. LUCIE — The Research Triangle.

San Diego and La Jolla.

Port St. Lucie and Tradition?

The day seems near when the Florida Center for Innovation at Tradition will be mentioned in the same breath with some of the nation's leading research centers for the life sciences.

Government, business and education leaders, along with executives of the first institutions to settle on Tradition as a Florida home, predict thousands of jobs will be created, many of them higher paying scientific and technical positions. Economic development expect millions of dollars to be pumped into the local economy.

"This will be a whole new economy, a huge opportunity," said Paul J. "Pete" Hegener, president of Core Communities, the developers of Tradition. "Within the next four to five years, the entire economy of the Research Coast can change — pharma, medical devices, research and development centers, office centers, manufacturing — all tied to bio-research."

Educators say the new scientists and highly trained workers who move here will demand an improvement in the quality of local schools, both to provide for their own children and to supply more young people trained in mathematics and the sciences.

"The impact goes right to the school systems," Hegener said. "You'll see an expansion of universities here, an expansion of doctoral and post-doctoral programs. The community colleges will produce more technicians."

Already set to open in the fall is the new Florida Atlantic University/St. Lucie County Lab School at Tradition. The K-8 public school will offer teaching methods and research linked to FAU faculty and students.

Based on the number of inquiries from biotech firms and manufacturers of medical products which arrive regularly at the office of Larry Pelton, the movement toward a research cluster at Tradition is ramping up.

"In the next six months, we will have more announcements of new companies coming to Tradition," said Pelton, president of the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County and a lead recruiter of research institutions and
private firms to Tradition. Pelton also lead the effort that brought Scripps Research Institute to Palm Beach County.

"In 10 years, we will be a substantial player in science, medical research and allied technology. In 20 years, this will be a very mature and sophisticated research cluster."

The 1,200 acres along I-95 from Gatlin Boulevard to Becker Road now dedicated to science could expand to 3,600 acres, according to Hegener.

"The entire project will be planned and under construction within 10 years," Hegener predicts. "It will be completed in 20 years. Nothing will stop it."

Pelton says Tradition will grow to the size of La Jolla or the Research Triangle because those centers have more land. Tradition does have is a live-work-play-shop combination that the other research clusters don't. Scientists and allied workers must commute to their California and North Carolina labs.

If they move to Tradition, they can walk or bike to work, or check on a lab experiment at 3 a.m. Hegener predicts that eventually half the Tradition homeowners will also work there.

"It's remarkable to have all this in one location," according to Pelton.

First as Florida's lieutenant governor and now as president of Florida Atlantic University, Frank Brogan says he has seen many Florida developers who just build houses and move on.

"It's easy to be a gypsy in development. (You) put up houses and then bolt like a rabbit," Brogan said. "Pete Hegener is not like that."

"He and Core are building a total quality of life. They're totally wired into the bigger community."

How did a potentially major research cluster grow so quickly next to I-95 in Port St. Lucie? Hegener says the effort to recruit the Scripps Research Institute was the biggest driver.

"We tried to lure them here, but even though we failed to get Scripps and also the Burnham Institute for Medical Research, we learned a lot," Hegener said. "We became knowledgeable on biotech and it became obvious to us that the state was behind it."
The first success, the recruitment of La Jolla-based Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies in late 2006, came after its founder and president, Dr. Richard Houghten, was snubbed by Palm Beach County commissioners when he tried to locate in their county.

Houghten has become as important a recruiter for the Tradition research cluster as any Floridian. He and his wife, Pam, moved to the Treasure Coast with their daughter and made Tradition the headquarters of Torrey Pines. Houghten then started working the phones to tell his biotech contacts of the welcome reception he had found here.

Houghten's enthusiasm was a major factor in the recruitment of the Oregon Health & Science University's Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute, known as VGTI, and then the agreement by the Mann Research Center to build a 400,000-square-foot life sciences complex on a 22-acre parcel at Tradition.

"We saw a vision to create a cluster around Torrey Pines," Hegener said. "Now, we're sorting out others, finding out who wants to be here."

Collaboration instead of competition is a key concept among biotech scientists, and they say they have found that same spirit here. Top officials of institutions recruited give praise to local government, business and educational leaders.

"I'm stunned how it came together so fast," Torrey Pines' Houghton said. "The city, county and developer work out any differences in a professional manner. They said they would do it and they did it."

Mann Research Center President John DelRusso calls Tradition "one of the most exciting locations we've seen anywhere in the country," thanks to the commitment that the local community and the state of Florida have already shown to the life sciences sector.

Daniel M. Dorsa, vice president for research at Oregon Health & Science University, concurred.

"I'm totally impressed with the energy of the community here," Dorsa said. "It looked to us like a lot of people rowing in the same direction."

THE FIRMS

Torrey Pines Institute for Molecular Studies

Richard Houghten, president
• Conducts basic research in fields associated with a wide variety of major medical conditions, including multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, types 1 and 2 diabetes, pain, inflammation, AIDS and other infectious diseases, transplant rejection and rheumatoid arthritis.

• Founded in 1989 by Houghten in San Diego as nonprofit research center.

• Provides molecular compounds for use by other companies.

• Encourages spin-off companies.

• Plans a fall move-in to new 100,000-square-foot headquarters at Tradition.

• Plans to employ 189 people over 10 years.

• Playing key role in recruiting other institutions and companies to Tradition.

Oregon Health & Science University's Vaccine and Gene Therapy Institute

Daniel M. Dorsa, vice president for research at Oregon Hospital State University

Jay Nelson, director

• Established 2001 in Portland, Ore.

• Plans to build 130,000-square-foot building at Tradition in next three years.

• Will occupy third floor of Torrey Pines building in the interim.

• Could create 200 jobs over 10 years.

Mann Research Center

John DelRusso, president

• Formed as real estate arm of Mann Foundation, which was started by biotech and medical device entrepreneur Alfred Mann

• Began operations in 1985 in Santa Clarita, Calif.
• Plans to build 400,000 square feet of laboratories and related space in up to six buildings for tenants at Tradition, including 100,000 square feet of medical offices at Tradition.

• Will be largest single owner of space at Tradition.

• Hopes for more than 1,000 jobs on its site over the next five years.

Core Communities

Paul J. "Pete" Hegener, president

• Developing Tradition, a master-planned, mixed-use development with 18,000 new residences and 8 million square feet of commercial space.

• Planning Florida Center for Innovation, which is currently 1,200 acres along I-95 from Gatlin Boulevard to Becker Road and could be expanded to 3,600 acres.

• Expects to develop more than 8,000 acres along a 5-mile employment corridor along I-95 at Tradition Parkway/Gatlin Boulevard exit.

• Employs 45 at Florida Tradition and 20 at a new Tradition development in South Carolina.

Martin Memorial Health Systems

Richard M. Harmon, president and chief executive officer

Mark E. Robitaille, senior vice president and chief operating officer

• Based in Stuart as a not-for-profit, community-based health care organization.

• Offers preventative, primary and acute hospital care, as well as cancer care, wellness and rehabilitation services.

Florida Gulf Coast University

FGCU students cheerful and tearful while donating hair
02/13/2008 © Naples Daily News
Ellena Rodriguez walked into Florida Gulf Coast University’s student union Tuesday with more than 30 inches of flowing brown hair.

By the time she left, the senior majoring in biology had given away 16 inches of her locks.

Rodriguez, along with 26 other students, mostly women, donated their hair Tuesday during a Locks of Love charity event as FGCU’s fraternities and sororities celebrated their Greek Week.

“It will grow back ... and it is for a great cause,” said Rodriguez, who took more than four years to grow her hair. “There’s a lot of people here, which is a great thing.”

Locks of Love is a national charity that takes hair from donors and makes wigs for underprivileged children who have lost their hair for medical reasons.

“Children don’t want to be picked on because of illness, so this will help them out,” said Katrina Young, who donated 10 inches of her hair that took six months to grow.

Young, a junior majoring in hospitality management, had several family members diagnosed with cancer who lost their hair as a result. Tuesday was her second time donating to Locks of Love.

“I was going to donate it in two weeks anyway, but when I found out about this event, I figured ‘Free Haircut,’” Young said.

Tuesday was the third Locks of Love event for Cozmo, a beauty school in Bonita Springs, but the first time it coincided with Greek Week at FGCU. For an event that is usually lucky to get a half dozen donors, this was a smashing success.

“This is way more than we expected,” Cozmo instructor Sally Black said. “Hopefully, we can do this every year.”

Tying the event to Greek Week created a competition between different fraternities and sororities on campus. Groups competed to see who could donate the most hair, so loud cheers accompanied each hair cut.

Tears also accompanied the festivities as a few donors had difficulty parting with their hair.
“It can be kind of traumatic. Sometimes, they have to hold their friends’ hands,” Black said.

The Greek organization collected cash donations for Locks of Love as well.

“I’m really surprised by all the people that came out,” said Casey Smith, vice-president of the Panhellenic Association and a sophomore majoring in resort and hospitality management. “That shocks me, actually. That is really good.”

Greek Week at FGCU will continue with a voter registration drive, a skit competition and Greek Games, which is the college version of the Olympics.

**Florida International University**

No Articles Today

**Florida State University**

**Question arises on adviser's review**
02/13/2008 © Orlando Sentinel

The department that Florida State President T.K. Wetherell harshly criticized for not knowing about the academic fraud in its midst gave one of the key figures in the school’s ongoing cheating scandal just one written performance review in her 61/2-year tenure at the school, the Orlando Sentinel has learned.

Brenda Monk, the former assistant director of Florida State’s Athletic Academic Support Services group and the woman accused by FSU of telling one athlete to cheat for another, was given an overall rating of "excellent."

"Brenda Monk has been a remarkable addition to our staff," wrote former AASS Director Mark Meleney in the lone review dated Feb. 8, 2002, and obtained by the Sentinel through a public-records request.

AASS has come under fire from Wetherell for Monk’s suspected actions and for actions of a tutor Wetherell said "started hollering" answers during an online exam for the course MUH 2051: Music of World Cultures. Approximately 50 student athletes from multiple sports implicated in the cheating have been suspended for 30 percent of their seasons.

The NCAA likely will investigate after FSU submits its final report in the coming weeks.
University spokesman Rob Wilson said he didn't know why Monk received only one evaluation, but he added that supervisors at FSU have the option of not submitting annual reviews for their employees. In such cases, the university considers the employees to have the same performance level as in their last review.

Wetherell criticized AASS in a Jan. 24 interview with the Sentinel, saying its leaders "should have known" of problems. The lack of reviews for Monk begs the question: Did the university fail to exercise appropriate institutional control over its athletic academic advising program?

Such a finding by the NCAA could expose FSU to harsh sanctions.

Mark Jones, a former director of enforcement for the NCAA, told the Sentinel that the NCAA likely would not levy that charge against FSU simply because Monk received just one review.

"Standing alone, that's not going to be a huge red flag if other elements of control and monitoring are in place," said Jones, who now works as the co-chair of the Collegiate Sports Practice at Ice Miller, an Indianapolis-based law firm that helps universities with NCAA compliance issues.

"I don't think that the absence of a performance evaluation itself is going to lead directly to 'A-ha, I got ya!' I think it's going to be broader than that. If they [FSU officials] can show they had reasonable standards, then they're going to be in good shape."

Monk's personnel file shows she was placed on paid administrative leave on April 3, 2007, and later resigned from her $56,000-a-year position, effective July 5, 2007.

In September, without mentioning Monk by name, FSU's Office of Audit Services issued a report that said the assistant director (who also worked as a learning specialist) had "provided answers for an online quiz to a student athlete and asked that student athlete to submit the answers on behalf of another student athlete."

According to past AASS staff lists and organizational charts obtained by the Sentinel through the state public-records laws, Monk was the only AASS employee who was an "assistant director."
The Office of Audit Services report stated that Monk "acknowledged typing papers for students but also indicated that the papers were the students' own words," a violation of department rules. According to the report, staff members had told Meleney that Monk had been typing for athletes, and Meleney "cautioned" Monk "on several occasions."

The tutor who was implicated also resigned from his position, according to the Office of Audit Services report.

Meleney's contract as director of AASS was not renewed, and when contacted by the Sentinel last week, he declined to comment about Monk or on the case as a whole.

Monk, 58, did not return repeated phone calls to her home, and she wasn't home on Monday or Tuesday when the Sentinel attempted to contact her face-to-face.

FSU's initial report last September concluded that both Monk and the tutor were not pressured by anyone else and "only felt the personal pressure they brought on themselves of wanting the university's program to succeed."

Monk holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Mississippi State University and a master's degree in special education from Jackson State University. She served as principal at three public schools in Mississippi and as assistant high-school principal in Mississippi before she was hired at FSU as AASS's assistant director and learning specialist on Jan. 19, 2001.

"Not many people in the country have the training, experience and credentials that Dr. Brenda Monk has," Meleney wrote to FSU's personnel services office in requesting an initial annual salary of $53,000 for Monk. "We advertised the position for over two months and came up with only three viable candidates. Dr. Monk's expertise will elevate our program as one of the top programs in the country."

References praised her.

"She was very professional, very good and very skilled at what she did," Matthew Evans, assistant superintendent for the Rankin County School District in Mississippi, told the Sentinel. "Of course, she worked with middle school students and she showed all of the love and the concern you have to show with middle school students. Quite honestly, I'm surprised she was implicated in any kind of academic misconduct [at FSU]. She's a solid citizen, and she was a great employee for us."
After Monk resigned from FSU, she was hired by Gadsden County Schools as principal of Chattahoochee Elementary in Chattahoochee, a town 45 miles northwest of Tallahassee. The job paid $72,000 a year, according to public records from the school system.

In her application, when asked whether she'd been asked to resign from a position, she answered, "Yes."

"I decided to resign my position at Florida State University because I am no longer able to work in the current environment," Monk wrote. "I am one individual working with 60 students with learning disabilities. I currently work 70+ hours without support. My current position is impossible for me to manage. My supervisor and I agreed that continued employment was not possible because the conditions would not change."

Monk resigned from that job after 62 days, said Gadsden County's assistant superintendent, Sonja Bridges.

Bridges said she believed Monk resigned for personal reasons and that allegations of Monk's involvement in FSU's academic fraud case never were discussed.

Author examines black leadership
02/13/2008 © Tallahassee Democrat

Growing up in pre-Civil Rights Era Leon County, James Ford rarely heard about the accomplishments of the black politicians who gained power for a short time after the Civil War.

Ford's mother did share with him the story of his great-grandfather, William Henry Ford, who served in the Florida Assembly in 1877-79. But the school textbooks that white and black students used were silent about the five Leon County blacks elected to the Florida Legislature in 1868, or the three black city councilmen elected in Tallahassee in 1871 — exactly 100 years before James Ford broke another racial barrier by becoming the first black elected city commissioner in the 20th century.

"Civics and history books didn't talk about black participation in anything," Ford said. "There was no history that was taught in black schools, and a lot of that is lost. That's part of the reason why they have Black History Month."

Now, a retired social studies teacher is trying to unearth that history.

She said her interest in the subject was sparked by her years teaching at Rickards High School from 1970 to 1978, during the early years of desegregation in Leon County. It was a time of racially charged politics when civil rights activists and even Black Panther activists were among her students.

"My Rickards years are what prompted me to begin this," she said. "Things happening in the community would spill over into the classroom."

But she really got into it last February, and she started spending hours a day at the State Library on South Bronough Street looking through old clippings of the Weekly Floridian and other sources.

This isn't the self-described "professional amateur's" first opus.

She has self-published two books, "Vernon: The Heart of Old Washington County, Fl." and "The Steadfast Line: The Story of the 27th Bombardment Group (Light) in World War II."

For her latest book, which doesn't have a title yet, May became well versed in the cultural and demographic realities of post-Civil war Leon County, when blacks made up three-quarters of the population of 12,000 and many white ex-Confederates had temporarily lost their right to vote. She got to know such men as Robert Livingston, Robert Cox, Noah Graham and Richard Wells, Leon County blacks elected to the Florida Assembly in 1868; Charles Pearce, elected to the state Senate that year; and Jonathan Gibbs, Jonas Toer and Everett Jones, elected to the Tallahassee city council in 1871.

"I didn't know their names," May said, "and now I feel like they're my family."

But Reconstruction didn't last, and by 1890 no blacks from Leon County were serving at the state or local level.

"They broke the racial barrier and then they lost it," May said. "And then it was 100 years before they broke it again."

Ford said May's research is particularly timely now that another black man, Sen. Barack Obama, is breaking another racial barrier by making a viable run for the U.S. presidency.
"I think she should be complimented on the research she has done," Ford said. "I think this could be inspirational to the youth to see it's possible to come from nothing to something."

**FSU police dress up to prevent robberies**
02/13/2008 © Tallahassee Democrat

A young woman wearing tight jeans and knee-high boots standing outside DeGraff Hall late Friday night looked like a typical college student, but she was actually an undercover police officer.

It was the third decoy operation the Florida State University Police Department has conducted this year in response to a growing number of robberies.

"We are taking very proactive measures to prevent these crimes from happening," said Maj. Jim Russell of the FSU Police Department. Usually, the campus averages one robbery a month, he said. But January broke from the trend with four reported robberies.

"There seems to be a spike, and we don't know if this indicates a long-term trend or an anomaly," he said.

On Friday, the woman feigned looking distractedly at her cell phone. Several officers watched her through binoculars and listened to audio from a microphone she wore. They wore plainclothes and waited in unmarked cars for about five hours.

Although none of the operations baited a robber, police said they considered them successful because they were able to increase the officers' presence in the area in case something did happen.

"Our overall goal is to make FSU the worst place to decide to rob someone in Tallahassee," Russell said. "Unfortunately, we can't read the bad guys' minds and know where they're going to pick next."

Most of the robberies occurred late at night on the edge of campus or just outside it. Russell said nearly all the suspects arrested on robbery charges were not affiliated with FSU. Many were teenagers. He suspects some were involved in gangs.
Kourtney Shaffer, 21, an FSU junior majoring in recreation and leisure sciences, said she thinks too many of her peers party hard and don't think about their safety.

"People aren't taking the precautions they need to be taking," she said. "They'll leave their bag around when they go to the bathroom."

**Progress Energy operations get a little greener**
02/13/2008 © Tampa Bay Business Journal

The Florida Public Service Commission approved a contract between Progress Energy Florida and Biomass Gas and Electric Florida that provides 75 megawatts of energy to Progress Energy from June 1, 2011, to May 31, 2031.

BG&E is expected to produce enough electricity to power 46,000 homes, according to a release from the public service commission. The energy provided by BG&E would avoid the burning of 5 million tons of coal during the next 20 years, the release said.

BG&E is in the early stages of building a plant and power station that will provide electricity and natural gas through a low emission process that converts waste wood products such as yard trimmings and wood knots from paper mills from public and private sources. In October 2006, Gov. Jeb Bush approved a measure that gave Florida State University the permission to lease 21 acres of land to BG&E for the plant, which is slated for completion in 2010, a report in the Tallahassee Democrat said. BG&E also plans to build a 35-megawatt power station.

The company has already contracted with Tallahassee to provide $16.5 million in electricity to the city in the first year of a 30-year contract, and between $2.1 million and $5.5 million in gas. BG&E has also committed to give money to a hydrogen research facility at FSU for students and researchers.

Progress Energy Florida, based in St. Petersburg, provides electric power to St. Petersburg, Clearwater and Orlando. Its parent company is Progress Energy (NYSE: PGN), based in Raleigh, N.C.

**FSU Professors examine methods for boosting teacher quality**
Tallahassee Democrat
What factors enable someone to become an effective teacher? Armed with nearly $1.2 million in research grants, two Florida State University faculty members are seeking answers to that question -- and are compiling their findings into a Web site that will help school administrators and other policymakers nationwide create the conditions necessary for students to excel in the classroom.

Tim R. Sass, a professor of economics at FSU, is the co-leader of two research projects designed to provide statistical evidence on the characteristics and education of effective teachers. One of the projects is funded through a four-year, $960,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences; the other, which recently concluded, was funded through a one-year, $208,000 grant provided by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

“The thing that matters most in terms of children’s education is the quality of their teachers,” Sass said of the projects. “We’re trying to come up with objective standards to measure teacher performance and also determine what factors affect that performance.”

Working with Sass is Stacey Rutledge, an assistant professor of educational leadership and policy studies at FSU. Rutledge has conducted extensive interviews with school principals in order to learn more about the mix of personal and professional attributes that the principals are looking for when they interview prospective teachers. Understanding why principals hire certain job candidates and not others is an important step in developing objective standards for measuring teacher effectiveness, she explains.

“We have a federal policy -- the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 -- that says all teachers need to be highly qualified, but sets narrow criteria for what constitutes effectiveness: a bachelor’s degree, certification, and having passed a content knowledge assessment,” Rutledge said. “So this really is an attempt to identify a broader set of criteria for defining effectiveness.”

New College of Florida

Group reviews Florida sunshine laws
02/13/2008 © Bradenton Herald

MANATEE --Local newspaper publishers, lobbyists and attorneys were among the speakers who testified Tuesday before the state’s Commission on Open Government Reform at New College.
The nine-member group was created by Gov. Charlie Crist last summer to review and evaluate Florida's sunshine laws.

Among some of the recommendations were putting more government records online for residents to access, requiring open-records and open-meetings education sessions for local officials and evaluating areas exempt from open-records laws.

Sam Morley, general counsel for the Florida Press Association, said he fields anywhere between two and 12 calls a day from reporters and editors dealing with open-records issues.

His main concern was the growing number of exemptions that curtail public access to public records.

"There's a thousand of them enacted each and every session," he said. "For a state claiming to be one of sunshine, it's amazing how many exemptions we have."

Before the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Morley said reporters could get the dimensions of stadiums or even Shamu's tank.

"Now, all of that's closed," Morley said.

Sen. Paula Dockery, R-Lakeland, said aside from re-evaluating open-records laws, it's important for government officials to offer access to records.

"People pay for government to do certain things and you're responsible to the people who pay," she said. "I think we've lost sight of that."

Many newspapers drop records requests due to the tremendous costs of lawsuits.

Barbara Petersen, president of the First Amendment Foundation and a member of the committee, said in one case the Miami Herald had pay an estimated $360,000 for its portion of a lawsuit against the Metro Dade Airport.

For average citizens who want to access information, it can be even more daunting.

"What does a citizen do?" Petersen said. "It's a huge barrier."

If you go
The second part of the governor's Commission on Open Government Reform is scheduled to meet from 9 a.m. until noon and from 1 to 4 p.m. today at New College of Florida, Sudakoff Center, off General Spaatz Boulevard. Representatives of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Department of Health and Attorney General's office are expected to attend.

University of Central Florida

Nursing the shortage
02/13/2008 © Jacksonville Business Journal

Valerie Steward began to notice troubling differences in the new wave of nurses that came onto the hospital floor. Many lacked critical thinking and empathy for patients.

"I see nursing as a gift," said Steward, who worked as a registered nurse at various Jacksonville hospitals. "I want them to know what I know and love it like I do."

So she began teaching in Florida Community College at Jacksonville's nursing program as an adjunct professor in 2003 and secured a full-time post in 2006 in order to pass along her passion for nursing.

But Steward is one of the few. Higher education nursing programs are challenged to find people to train the next generation of nurses, mainly because of the salary disparity between those who teach and those who practice. That generation of nurses needs to be even larger as Northeast Florida, like most of the nation, faces a nursing shortage.

"Graduates are very likely to go out and get paid more than the faculty who just taught them," said Mary Lou Brunnell, the Florida Center of Nursing's executive director.

Depending on an individual's experience and training level, practicing nurses can make $25,000 to 30,000 a year more than their teaching counterparts, said Dr. Li Loriz, director of University of North Florida's School of Nursing. The average annual salary for a registered nurse in Jacksonville is about $53,400, according to U.S. Department of Labor statistics.
The resulting shortage of instructors forced nursing programs to turn away 10,000 qualified applicants in the 2006-2007 academic year, according to a recent Florida Board of Nursing and Florida Center for Nursing study. Of every student accepted into its nursing school in 2007, the University of North Florida in Jacksonville turned away roughly three students, Loriz said.

Nursing schools face a lack of funding for the training of an oft-misunderstood and underappreciated profession.

Brunnell said nursing schools and programs should ask faculty what they can do to make their teaching experiences more satisfying.

Until recently, the industry has failed to promote itself and instead allowed many to view the profession as it was decades ago, FCCJ's director of nursing Alice Nied said. "We sit around Thanksgiving time and complain about nursing, instead of building it up."

State-funded schools don't expect to receive much direct help, if any, from Tallahassee when it comes to hiring new nursing instructors, especially with the current tight budget climate.

There are grant opportunities for nurses looking to earn a master's or Ph.D. in order to teach. Local hospital and corporations have been generous, but it's not clear how many more they can assist, said Dr. Pam Chally, dean of the Brooks College of Health at University of North Florida.

Back-to-school help
The area's higher education schools -- UNF, FCCJ, Jacksonville University and St. Johns River Community College -- could all use more full-time staff, adjuncts or both.

Public and private grants help ease the financial hurdle many current or would-be faculty face when deciding whether to teach.

Steward's pursuit of a master's degree in nursing from the University of Central Florida is paid in full through the state of Florida Nursing Education Scholarship. Upon completion of her degree in 2009, she is required to teach in the state for three years.

Because Jacksonville University's nursing school requires 25 percent of its faculty to have a Ph.D., Cheryl Bergman will make it possible for the school to hire another instructor when she earns her doctorate. The ratio of faculty with a Ph.D.
is required because the school is a member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The school's full-time faculty roster of 17 is filled, but it could use the three to four more adjunct faculty instructors Bergman's doctorate would allow, said Dr. Leigh Hart, dean of nursing.

Officials at St. Johns River Community College, where the nursing department has a moderate faculty shortage, have been seeking an instructor with a master of science in nursing to fill a spot for a year. The school has not had to turn away potential students because of the faculty gap. Nevertheless, college administrators recognize the need elsewhere for more instructors.

"We have found that many MSNs do not enter into the teaching profession because they can make more money in a hospital environment," said Ginny McColm, the school's dean of nursing.

Bergman, an undergraduate director and assistant clinical professor, gets her Barry University tuition costs paid through SUCCEED, a Florida grant program. The grant is partially funded by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Inc.'s Generation RN initiative, which is a public/private partnership aimed at helping meet the state's nursing need.

Blue Cross has invested $5.9 million in developing Northeast Florida's nursing work force since 2002. The contributions have had $10.9 million impact after being combined with matching state funds.

With two children in college combined with time commitment, Bergman wouldn't have pursued her doctoral degree if not for the grant. Bergman, who is writing her dissertation and hopes to finish in spring 2009, attended the university's satellite facility in Orlando.

The initiative also helped University of Florida pay for software that makes it easier to schedule nursing students into clinical facilities. The maximization of technology use is one of the suggestions made by Florida Center of Nursing on how schools can stretch their available faculty.

University of Florida

Bright Futures changes worry some
02/13/2008 © Gainesville Sun
A bill proposed by a state senator that would base Florida Bright Futures scholarships on each student's major has University of Florida students talking.

In fact, UF student Will Anderson started a group on Facebook, a popular social networking Web site, called "Protect Your Bright Futures," in which students are encouraged to contact their legislators and push them not to pass the bill. As of Friday, more than 16,298 people had joined the group.

State Sen. Jeremy Ring's proposal would cut Bright Futures scholarship funding from any student not majoring in education, engineering, mathematics, nursing, pre-health, science or technology.

Students majoring in those fields would receive 110 percent of tuition plus $660 for supplies each year.

Students not majoring in those subjects would collect 80 percent of tuition and $475 for other expenses, a 20 percent cut from the original 100 percent tuition scholarship obtained by meeting the required GPA and SAT or ACT scores.

As of last week, UF President Bernie Machen was aware of and studying the bill, but had not yet come to any conclusions, according to UF spokesman Steve Orlando.

UF biology freshman Amber McVey said she thinks the proposed bill is unfair to non-science majors.

She said that Florida college students' educations should not be hindered financially because their passions don't lie in one of the above-mentioned areas.

"You shouldn't have to be a nuclear physicist to get your scholarships," she said. "I don't understand the purpose of it."

McVey said with the current state of the U.S. economy, making it more difficult to fund a college education makes no sense.

UF accounting sophomore Lauren Wilkins said she feels the same way.

"It's unfair for people who don't have the mind to do engineering, but one to analyze 18th century literature instead," she said. "Why should they be punished for that?"
Wilkins said that if the bill took effect immediately, it would affect almost all of her friends, and that even people she knows who would receive 110 percent under the proposal think the bill is unreasonable.

She said that the students who would have scholarship funding reduced to 80 percent of tuition because of the bill should fight it's passing.

"They had the GPA and the test scores too - they earned it."

In a phone interview, Sen. Ring said students need to recognize that this bill is not going to affect them right now, and if the bill is passed it will most likely take effect within a five year program.

He said that he thinks aside from education, universities have an obligation to develop the economy and have fallen short of it. He proposed this bill to compel the universities to be more in line with economic development.

The state is in a budget crunch, so he proposed this bill as a revenue-neutral arrangement to emphasize technology, which he said will drive entrepreneurship and eventually strengthen the economy.

Ring mentioned that even if the scholarship covers 80 percent of tuition rather than 100 percent, it's still the best deal in the U.S.

"I support Bright Futures," he said. "We're not about to take that away."

Editorial: On the brink
02/13/2008 © Gainesville Sun

When President John F. Kennedy announced that America intended to put a man on the moon, Florida leaders realized the state was ill-prepared for either the challenges or the opportunities the space race would bring.

For one thing, as the 1960s began, Florida only had three state universities with a fourth about to open its doors.

"By far the most critical need that we face in this coming biennium is the need to make sufficient provisions for the higher education of the young people in Florida," Gov. Ferris Bryant challenged the Legislature in 1963.
The result of his challenge was a major expansion of the State University System, and perhaps the beginning of Florida's emergence as a modern state. Without that commitment to expansion, Bryant insisted years later, "There was no way they could handle the mass of people that was coming up. It was like a tidal wave."

It would be absurd to argue that higher education is any less important to the state's economic destiny today than it was nearly half a century ago. But history is repeating itself. Today, as in Bryant's day, higher education capacity arguably remains "the most critical need we face." And the "tidal wave" Bryant anticipated has arrived with a vengeance.

As drafters of the ENLACE Florida report warned this week, as many as 40,000 qualified students stand to be denied admission over the next four years if the state university system freezes its enrollment at 300,000. And faced with budget cuts of $147 million this year and $171 million next year, university officials have no option but to do exactly that.

For the past decade, the policy has simply been to continually expand enrollments at the 11 universities in the face of shrinking per-student funding. That's a prescription for educational mediocrity that is no longer sustainable.

With the University of Florida looking at the prospects of another $47 million in budget cuts this year, officials will have no choice but to accept fewer students. Of 28,000 applications received this year, only 6,600 were admitted.

Ferris Bryant was a leader of vision and resolve who looked into the future and anticipated the epic changes that were coming. We would be hard pressed to identify anyone possessed of similar vision in high office in Florida today.

His successor, Gov. Charlie Crist, seems to believe Florida's future can be secured on low taxes, even lower tuition, more gambling revenues and not much else. If he has given any thought at all to the long-term implications of an increasingly overcrowded, underfunded higher education system, he has shown no outward sign of concern.

"In no area have we done so badly" as in the area of access to quality higher education, Bryant said in 1963. Sadly, that assessment is just as true today as it was then.

Paul Dosal, executive director of ENLACE Florida, told the St. Petersburg Times this week:
"The problems in higher education here are so complicated that they're not likely to be solved in a regular legislative session. So we felt like the best recommendation was to say, 'Listen, guys, sit down and figure this out.' We just feel like we're either in crisis or on the brink of a serious one, and something needs to be done."

The time for leadership is now, Gov. Crist. Will you rise to the challenge, as Ferris Bryant did before you?

Plans for IFAS fuel farm fears
02/13/2008 © Gainesville Sun

A report that the University of Florida president insulted the agriculture industry has rallied farmers to the defense of farm programs at the university and throughout the state.

An online edition of an agriculture newspaper reported UF President Bernie Machen said "agriculture is a dying industry in the state of Florida" and "not worthy of the investments being made by the Legislature" in the university's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. He has denied making the statements.

But the report has raised questions about whether IFAS, and specifically its extension programs, will be cut disproportionately as UF slashes its overall budget. It has also given farmers an opportunity to vent long-standing concerns about Machen's management style and perceived lack of support for UF's land-grant mission.

State representatives Debbie Boyd, D-Newberry, and Bryan Nelson, R-Apopka, met Friday with Machen about the comments. Nelson said Machen denied making the statements but left open the possibility that IFAS will face a larger proportion of budget cuts than other parts of the university.

"Make no mistake - he avoided that question." Nelson said. "He didn't say they were or weren't. He never committed either way."

Farm & Ranch News, a monthly newspaper based in Tampa, first reported the comments Feb. 5 on its Web site. The story also said Machen planned to cut IFAS faculty positions, extension offices and research centers.

Publisher George Parker said he stands by the report, which included a call to contact Machen and university trustees. UF officials report receiving more than
30 letters, including one from the son of citrus magnate and stadium namesake Ben Hill Griffin.

Machen issued a statement in which he denied the comments and said he was "appalled" that they weren't retracted. But he wrote that the university faces a difficult financial situation and must make $50 million in cuts by July 1.

"I am committed to making targeted reductions in programs instead of across-the-board cuts," he wrote. "All parts of the university, including IFAS, will be impacted."

Members of the agriculture industry said the controversy has elevated longstanding concerns about Machen.

Pat Cockrell, executive director of the Florida Farm Bureau, said the report confirmed suspicions among some farmers that Machen does not appreciate the industry.

"It's always been a little bit of perception in everyone's minds that maybe he doesn't understand agriculture or maybe he doesn't understand land-grant institutions because he's never been in one," he said.

In the 1800s, the U.S. government granted federally controlled land to educational institutions such as UF. These land-grant universities were required to include agriculture in their missions, which was later expanded to include agricultural research stations and extension offices.

Machen has previously worked for universities - including the University of Michigan and University of Utah - that are not land-grant institutions and instead have missions based in research.

Machen declined comment for this story. He said in a letter to Boyd and Nelson that the university "is committed to making programmatic cuts that minimize the impact on education and research."

To some in the farming community, such a statement suggests that the extension service could feel the brunt of cuts. IFAS' structure is sometimes called a "three-legged stool" that includes the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, research efforts and the extension offices.

"If you cut out extension, you've cut out one leg from the three-legged stool," said Gainesville rancher Roger West.
The UF/IFAS Extension is a partnership between state, federal and county governments to provide scientific expertise to the public. Each of Florida's 67 counties has an extension office, which includes the 4-H and Master Gardener programs.

IFAS received about $159 million in state money in 2006-07, 22 percent of which went to the extension program, according to figures provided by IFAS. Institute officials say the university provides $8 million to the county extension offices while those offices receive another $45 million from county governments and federal grants.

Rep. Boyd said those offices could face a double dose of cuts because state budget constraints are also forcing counties to cut back. She cited statistics showing about 8.6 million state residents have used services provided by extension offices, or about half the state population.

"They may not be cutting the education of students but they are affecting all of our citizens," she said.

The controversy has allowed farmers to vent other concerns about Machen.

The Farm Bureau's Cockrell said some in the agriculture industry say Machen relegates their concerns to Jimmy Cheek, a senior vice president who heads IFAS.

"The industry felt like the president should have been a little more accessible," he said.

Ocala agriculture attorney and rancher Marty Smith said farmers have had better relationships with some previous university presidents. He said the reported comments led farmers to rally to defend their industry.

"Whenever something happens that looks like IFAS is being put to the test ... it gets folks up in arms," he said.

Nelson, who graduated from UF with a degree in ornamental horticulture, said he's gathering signatures from lawmakers concerned about IFAS cuts. He's collected 60 so far.

He said he left his meeting with Machen feeling "better than when I went into the meeting but not as good as I hoped."

He said he was encouraged by Machen's comment that his wife, Chris, is a member of the 4-H foundation board.
"He said if I cut the 4-H program, I'd probably come home to a cold meal'," Nelson said.

4-H livestock programs could be busted by state budget cutbacks :
TCPalm.com
02/13/2008 © Jupiter Courier

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. — This could be the last year students in the state's 4-H program show their livestock at county fairs.

The University of Florida, which funds the extension offices that oversee the 4-H programs, is looking to tighten next year's budget because it is facing a $50 million shortfall with the passing of the state property tax reform amendment last month.

"It's a distinct possibility. But what would happen, I really have no clue," said Christine Kelly-Begazo, Indian River County Extension office director.

The amendment doubles the homeowners' homestead exemption and reduces the amount governments receive from property taxes.

"We have $50 million in budget cuts to make before July 1, and we anticipate that many departments will be impacted," said Janine Sikes, University of Florida spokeswoman.

In Martin County, South Fork High School senior Jessi Randell, one of 600 students on the Treasure Coast who participate in showing their animals at county fairs, is worried local officials no longer see the program as a priority.

"The program teaches students a lot about responsibility," said Randell, 18, who has participated in the fair since she was 10. "Students have to know how much money they are spending on food for their animals."

And by doing away with the program, fair attendance could decrease.

"When people go to the fair, they want to see the livestock," said Sam Adams, chairman of Indian River County's Extension office advisory committee and who helps coordinate livestock showing at the Indian River County Firefighters Fair. "It's all part of the fair experience."
The counties' extension offices received about 60 percent of their money from the university and 40 percent from counties and municipalities. Local governments are also faced with serious budget cuts, which means less money that could go to extension offices.

Martin County Commissioner Doug Smith said the county would receive about $20 million less per year because of the budget amendment than previous years, he told WPTV News.

If the counties' extension offices are closed, students won't be allowed to participate in fairs — even in other counties that have an extension office.

"The students would need to have a 4-H connection, and if they don't have an agent there, then there may be a problem," said Anita Neal, St. Lucie County extension director and interim director of Martin County.

The extension offices were created in 1914 when the federal government asked states to set aside land for universities, and provide water management information to local governments and agriculture assistance to local farmers.

Students in the program said officials should consider the program's benefits before making a move.

"I was extremely shy as a kid and this program taught me about leadership," said Barry Spinweber, a South Fork High School student.

He is ranked third in the nation for youth reined cow/horse competition and next week will be competing in a championship event in Texas.

Kylie Shoe, 11, said participating in the program has helped her find her life's calling of equestrian medicine.

"I'd be very devastated if they do away with the program," said Kylie, a Hidden Oaks Middle School student in Stuart. "My entire family — mom, dad, uncles and cousin — participated in the program. And I've waited so many years to show my animals."

UF's custodial staff goes green
02/13/2008 © Northwest Florida Daily News

GAINESVILLE — The University of Florida’s Building Services Department of the Physical Plant Division announced its commitment last month to green
cleaning practices throughout the 900-plus buildings maintained by the department.

In a new training program, UF Building Services has implemented “greener” training programs for custodial supervisors and staff. These initiatives will reduce the amount of volatile organic compounds used in cleaning while also eliminating many of the indoor airborne particulates, which are known to create mild to severe respiratory issues and other health problems.

“The University of Florida is a staunch proponent of sustainable practices,” said Derrick Bacon, Assistant Director of the Physical Plant Division at the University of Florida. “In the Building Services Department, we recognize that it’s not only important to avoid using products that might negatively affect the environment, but to also educate our employees about the concept of sustainability. By understanding the larger picture, they can discuss and promote the program with our customers.”

In order to educate staff and customers about sustainable practices, Bacon has worked with his local JohnsonDiversey sales representative and others to incorporate green cleaning and environmentally friendly initiatives in their training. The new training includes discussion on minimizing energy consumption, recycling, waste reduction, ergonomics, the importance of proper maintenance of entryway matting and other sustainable practices.

The program provides employees with sustainable practices they can use at work and in their personal lives. “Sustainability isn’t something that just happens at work,” Bacon said.

The transition to green has been gradual, involving employee training, a green purchasing policy, testing of green products and equipment and developing an effective communications pro gram to get the word out about green.

By working with the Office of Sustainability, the Building Services Department will continue to roll out additional initiatives to reduce the department’s impact on the health of building inhabitants and the environment. They are currently in the initial phases of deploying a new recycling program on campus.
The Helios Education Foundation will make a $2 million gift to the University of South Florida, creating the Helios Education Foundation Endowed Scholarship Fund.

The $2 million gift is eligible for a dollar-for-dollar state match, yielding $4 million for USF’s scholarship programs for under-represented populations. The scholarships will go to students with a GPA of 3.0 and higher with strong consideration given to undergraduate students from low-income families and diverse ethnic backgrounds, a release said.

The goal of the gift is to increase the number of students entering and completing college.

Once the funds have been matched, the university plans to fund new scholarships and provide incentives to encourage additional private support for scholarships. USF will use the funds to benefit students of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, including Latino and African-American students, economically disadvantaged students and those majoring in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Rooting in
Since establishing its office in downtown Tampa last September, Helios has been active and engaged in Tampa Bay. The gift helps it continue to root its presence here, said Paul Luna, president and chief executive officer. The gift is structured around a spirit of community partnership, he said.

"A program that is leveraged and matches dollars in other ways is a concept of how we want to do business in everything we do," he said. Part of the money will go to USF's Latino Scholars Program that has a long history and is "well-respected," Luna said.

Helios provides its dollars and encourages other companies and individuals as well as an existing donor base to ratchet up its giving.

"As they increase gifts, we match their gifts with our dollars and scholarship dollars are doubled -- but it's still in [their] name," Luna said.
There's a national need for trained scientists, engineers and technicians as well as the need to encourage enrollment and success in college for students from diverse backgrounds, a release said. Helios executives have seen data that shows students from underserved schools with the lowest socio-economic backgrounds, including first generation college students, aren't as prevalent in science, math and technology arenas as they are in other disciplines.

That's a focal point for the foundation, Luna said.

"It's not that we are trying to tell them where to study, but to create incentives for them." By exposing the option that there are incentives for choosing a technical path, the foundation believes more students will consider it, he said. The foundation's mission is to help students go to college and graduate, and ultimately to help them better their lives so they can make a contribution back to the community in establishing the type of workforce in demand ahead.

"The students will need to be prepared for the types of jobs that we need and want in the future, and knowledge-based jobs are what we want and what the business community aspires to achieve," Luna said.

The gift announced Tuesday isn't the foundation's first in Florida.

In 2006, it distributed two endowments amounting to $10 million to the Foundation for Florida Community Colleges and the Florida Board of Governors Foundation to provide scholarship funding for first generation students. The two foundations disperse money from the endowments to Florida universities and colleges.

About $110,000 went to USF, and most of it was used to fund Latino scholarships.

The nonprofit told the Tampa Bay Business Journal in January that it plans to spend nearly $30 million on education improvement initiatives in Florida and Arizona this year. How much funding each state would receive hadn't been determined, but Tuesday's announcement is clearly part of that plan.

Uncharted territory
Helios is one of the largest nonprofit organizations serving Florida and Arizona focused solely on education. The Foundation has an endowment approaching $600 million. It is dedicated to enriching the lives of individuals in both states by creating opportunities for success in postsecondary education, a release said. The Foundation's community investments are made across three impact areas: early childhood education, the transition years of grades 5 to 12 and postsecondary
education. Since inception in 2004, the Foundation has invested nearly $42 million into education-related programs and initiatives in both states.

USF offers 219 degree programs at the undergraduate, graduate, specialist and doctoral levels, including the doctor of medicine. It has a $1.8 billion annual budget and an annual economic impact of $3.2 billion, and serves more than 45,000 students on campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee and Lakeland.

The gift recognizes USF's tougher entrance standards and high achievement of its students, said USF President Judy Genshaft in a release.

"Our most talented students who happen to need support are going to get it and we know this investment will be good for Florida and for Tampa Bay," said Genshaft in a prepared statement.

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**University of West Florida**

**No Articles Today**

**State Higher Education Issues**

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**National Higher Education Issues**

**Facing Ouster, William and Mary's President Makes Dramatic Exit** - [Chronicle.com](http://Chronicle.com)
The Chronicle

Gene R. Nichol ended his controversial stint as president of the College of William and Mary by announcing his immediate resignation on Tuesday. He did not go quietly.

In a remarkably blunt letter sent campuswide and to alumni, Mr. Nichol said he was forced out for decisions made in defense of free speech and diversity.

He cited several such actions during his two-and-a-half years at the public college in Williamsburg, Va., including his decision in 2006 to remove a cross from permanent display in the college's chapel and, more recently, to allow an art show featuring sex workers to visit the campus.
In the letter, Mr. Nichol, who is 56, said a "committed, relentless, frequently untruthful, and vicious campaign" had been waged against him and his family. He said state lawmakers had threatened appointees to the college's Board of Visitors and demanded that he be fired.

"That campaign has now been rendered successful," said Mr. Nichol, who was a law professor and dean at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before coming to William and Mary in 2005.

He also wrote that the board had offered him "substantial economic incentives" if he would agree to not blame his ouster on ideological grounds.

Mr. Nichol, who declined further comment through a university spokesman, said the severance package he was offered would have required board approval for any statement he made about his departure.

The board had a different take on Mr. Nichol's resignation, which came two days after it informed him that his contract would not be renewed. (The three-year contract was set to expire in June.)

In a written statement, the board said that the decision not to renew Mr. Nichol's contract "was not in any way based on ideology or any single public controversy."

The board's top official, Michael K. Powell, said in an interview with The Chronicle that the contract was not renewed because of concerns about Mr. Nichol's "executive management and leadership."

Mr. Powell also said Mr. Nichol's characterization of the severance discussion was "flatly wrong." He said the board had sought to work with Mr. Nichol to come up with a "mutually agreeable public explanation" for his resignation, an effort he said was intended to protect both the college and Mr. Nichol's reputation.

"There is no animosity toward this man" among board members, said Mr. Powell, who is a former chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. He said Mr. Nichol never responded to the board's severance-agreement offer.

"He chose never to have that conversation," Mr. Powell said.

**Colleges Woo Adults Who Have Some Credits but No Degree - Chronicle.com**
The Chronicle

There are 11,000 or so people in Kentucky who came within a course or two of earning a college degree, but never did. Almost half a million more took a few college courses but then dropped out.

Now educators are trying to lure back those erstwhile students to finish what they started.

Over the next 12 years, Kentucky wants to double the number of adults in its work force who hold college degrees. Officials say that goal is impossible unless they can persuade thousands of adults with some college credits to re-enroll at one of the state's public four-year institutions.

And so the state is making a huge push to bring adults back to college. This month educators and state officials met in Lexington to kick off the Kentucky Adult Learner Initiative and discuss how to make the state's higher-education system friendlier to older students.

It is the beginning of a multiyear effort that will focus on financial aid, professional development for faculty members who teach adults, and student-support services, among other areas.

The immediate goal is to bring back those 11,000 adults who completed 90 or more credit hours. If that program, called Project Graduate, succeeds, officials say they will ask the State Legislature in 2010 for permanent changes in higher-education policy. Later the scope could broaden to include the thousands more Kentuckians who have varying amounts of course work under their belts.

The challenge of persuading busy adults to make time for college will be twofold, says Bradford L. Cowgill, interim director of the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. "First, to make them believe that the value of pursuing the end goal is worth the effort," he says, "and secondly, to be as accommodating as possible to their lifestyles."

The reaction has been overwhelming among those adults who have caught wind of the plan through news reports and word of mouth, Mr. Cowgill says.

"We've absolutely tweaked a nerve," he says. "We had no idea how positive the response would be."
Terrorism Security and Planning May Be Inadequate for Campus Reactors, Study Says
The Chronicle

Terrorists attack a nuclear reactor on a college campus. Alarms sound. Campus security officers respond—completely unarmed.

That's one disturbing scenario contained in a report released on Tuesday by the watchdog arm of Congress. The Government Accountability Office, which interviewed government security experts, concluded that 27 campus reactors, which colleges operate for research and education, were vulnerable to terrorist attacks that could damage the reactors and spread radiation in the surrounding areas. Planning for such emergencies, the GAO concluded, appeared to be inadequate.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission complained in a firmly worded rebuttal that the report misrepresented the experts' findings. The commission also insisted that it has directed the reactor operators to strengthen security in recent years to levels it now deems adequate. And the agency said it stood by a judgment, made in 2006, that a terrorist attack threatened the public with "minimal" radiation.

The GAO report, "Nuclear Security: Action May Be Needed to Reassess the Security of NRC-Licensed Research Reactors," which was released on Tuesday, provides new fuel for a controversy that has smoldered for several years over the research-reactors' security. In 2005, ABC News aired a report featuring undercover reporters who said they found lax security at the campus facilities (The Chronicle, October 14, 2005).

For security reasons, the GAO's report does not spell out in much detail the vulnerabilities that the office recommends to be improved. The accountability office said it had to omit those details because the report was an unclassified version of a classified one that it gave Congress in October.

But the report alludes to risks that terrorists would try to blow up a reactor or steal its uranium.

Research reactors produce less than 1 percent the energy of commercial nuclear-power reactors and do not contain pressurized coolant. Ten of the campus reactors are nevertheless a ripe target because they contain weapons-grade uranium. The Department of Energy has sponsored a project to switch all of them to low-grade uranium (The Chronicle, December 8, 2006). But that goal has
been delayed, the GAO says, because five of them are not designed to operate on the low-grade fuel now available. (A research effort is under way to develop a substitute.)

University Official Is Accused of Pocketing Federal Research Grants - Chronicle.com
The Chronicle

An assistant provost at North Carolina Central University has been accused by the state auditor of embezzling more than $36,000 from the university and a federal grant program, as well as falsifying financial documents.

The state auditor for North Carolina released a report today outlining an investigation into the assistant provost, who was not named. The inquiry was opened after an anonymous caller to the auditor’s hotline alleged misconduct in the office of the university’s assistant provost and associate vice chancellor for academic affairs.

The state auditor, Leslie W. Merritt Jr., accused the assistant provost of authorizing the issuance of checks to students from a university account for minority biomedical research grants financed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. According to Mr. Merritt, the assistant provost then told those students to cash the checks, keep a portion, and return the rest to him. Students cashed more than $15,000 in such checks, according to the report.

In addition, the report said that the assistant provost had forged the signatures of two students who were not qualified for but received graduate assistantships at the official’s behest.

The report didn’t name the official, but according to the university’s Web site, the only administrator with that title is Franklin B. Carver, who was appointed to the post in July 2005.

In a written statement responding to the report, the university said the official had been dismissed as an administrator but remained as a faculty member.

Mr. Merritt has exposed financial mismanagement at another university in the state. Last August he released a report outlining the misuse of more than $400,000 by an official at North Carolina A&T State University. —JJ Hermes