

## **History of ASG:**

The University of North Carolina Association of Student Governments was founded in 1972 under the leadership of University of North Carolina President William Friday. The Association was a spin off from the Council of Student Body Presidents. The organization is composed of representatives from all 16 University of North Carolina Student Government Associations. Four delegates represent each institution, which includes the Student Body President, who also serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Association.

Delegates from across the state elect the Association's President who serves as Chief Executive Officer and as an ex officio, non-voting member of the UNC Board of Governors. Additionally, the President represents the Association in dealing with the North Carolina General Assembly, Governor, UNC Board of Governors and the UNC President.

The General Assembly of the Association is the primary policy making body of the Association and is broken up into several standing committees which include: Academic Affairs, Legislative Affairs and Student Affairs. Other officers within the Association include Senior Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and a number of Vice Presidents.

### **Constituent Institutions:**

Appalachian State University	Elizabeth City State University	East Carolina University	Fayetteville State University
N.C. Agricultural & Technical State University	N.C. School of the Arts	N.C. Central University	N.C. State University
UNC – Asheville	UNC – Chapel Hill	UNC – Charlotte	UNC – Greensboro
UNC – Pembroke	Western Carolina University	UNC – Wilmington	Winston-Salem State University

## **The Mission Statement:**

- Preserve each student's right to a quality education.
- Actively promote affordable, quality higher education within the State of North Carolina.
- Address and act on the collective interests of students enrolled in UNC institutions.
- Involve students in the political process by educating students on the issues affecting them.
- Actively involve students in the area of governmental relations so as to promote the passage or defeat of legislation relevant to the students, their institutions, and higher education in North Carolina.
- Promote unity and cooperative efforts between the sixteen public institutions of The University of North Carolina.

## **The Problem:**

*The General Assembly shall provide that the benefits of The University of North Carolina and other public institutions of higher education, as far as practicable, be extended to the people of the State free of expense.* –North Carolina Constitution, Article IX, Section 9

This portion of the Constitution of the State of North Carolina should be the guiding principle behind tuition and fee policy in North Carolina public higher education. Also as the provision notes, the General Assembly has the primary responsibility for supporting the University of North Carolina, especially as that support relates to North Carolina citizens. However, over the past decades both of these statements have begun to erode. State appropriations to public higher education have steadily declined from 17.4% of the state budget in the mid 1980s to 12% today. Over the past decade tuition and required fees have increased by over 100 percent and UNC system campuses.

## **The Solution:**

**“ K E E P N . C . E D U C A T E D ”**

On February 20, 2001, the University of North Carolina Association of Student Governments began its advocacy campaign to benefit the 170,000+ students of the state’s public universities. The ASG followed that in May with the historic “March on the Capitol,” which brought 5,000 students, faculty, staff and community partners to the steps of the legislature to protest proposed budget cuts. This year, ASG is taking their message even further.

Designed to increase public awareness of the current state of public higher education, the UNC Association of Student Governments has launched “Keep N.C. Educated.” The Association’s goals are twofold—educating citizens about the state’s 16 public universities and ensuring that the doors of the state’s public universities remain open for education for all.

Specifically student leaders from across the state plan to “hit the road” to inform the public about the failure of the North Carolina General Assembly to fulfill its constitutional responsibility by providing the benefits of The University of North Carolina to ALL people. Also students will embark on a “tuition revival”, to reach out to the communities of the State, especially the poorest and inform them of the rising costs of public higher education.

The “Keep N.C. Educated” campaign will kickoff on February 16, 2002 on the campus of Winston-Salem State University, who recently topped a “U.S. News & World Report” of top public southern comprehensive colleges. The “tuition revival” hopes to capture the minds of North Carolina voters and reiterate the resounding support they gave to the Higher Education Bond in 2000.

## **Facts & Talking Points:**

### Constitutional Obligations-

*“The General Assembly shall provide that the benefits of The University of North Carolina and other public institutions of higher education, as far as practicable, be extended to the people of the State free of expense.”*

- Article IX, Section 9 of the North Carolina Constitution

- State appropriations to public higher education have steadily declined from 17.4 percent of the state budget in mid 1980s to 12 percent today.
- Required tuition and fees have increased dramatically. For example, over the past decade, tuition and fees have increased 165 percent at UNC-Chapel Hill, 106 percent at N.C. State, and 101 percent at N.C. Central.
- According to the report of the Task Force on Tuition Policy, tuition and fees compromise only 23 percent of the total cost of education.

*“The General Assembly may enact laws necessary and expedient for the maintenance and management of The University of North Carolina and the other public institutions of higher education.”*

- Article IX, Section 8 of the North Carolina Constitution

- Budget cuts by the General Assembly on the University of North Carolina have made it difficult for the maintenance and management of the state's public universities.

### Application of Current Tuition Policy:

- The chairman of the Board of Governors, Benjamin Ruffin, asked the chair of the Committee on Budget and Finance to reexamine the policy on campus-initiated tuition increases on March 7, 2001.

Since then, there has been no substantial review of the policy governing campus-initiated tuition increases. Additionally, the Board of Governors has failed to follow the report's policy of setting tuition rates in October, which does not give families time to adequately prepare for an increase.

### Financial Aid:

- The General Assembly has not fulfilled a request from the Board of Governors to create a statewide financial aid program.
- The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education reports that in North Carolina only twenty-six percent (26%) of state grant aid is targeted to low income families (Measuring Up 2000).
- The current framework for funding of need-based financial aid does not represent the "broad base of revenues" suggested by the report of the Task Force on Tuition Policy.
- Over 56% of resident UNC undergraduates apply for need-based financial aid.

- In 1997-98, there were over 33,000 full-time students enrolled with unmet need after grant aid averaging \$4,264.
- North Carolina ranks 28<sup>th</sup> in the nation in providing need-based aid for full-time undergraduates.
- North Carolina ranks 36<sup>th</sup> in the percentage of full-time undergraduates receiving need-based grants.
- UNC students who borrow are borrowing close to 43% more than their counterparts.
- There is almost no need-based aid for master's level graduate students.
- Graduate student debt levels are growing at a disturbing rate.
- A national report by the Lumina Foundation stated that all but three UNC system campuses were unaffordable to low-income students without loans.

#### Private Colleges and Universities:

- The State of North Carolina maintains two programs (the State Contract Program and Legislative Tuition Grant Program) of general financial aid to private institutions of higher education at a current annual cost of \$78,901,002. The University of North Carolina only receives \$15.3 million.
- Legislative Tuition Grants are given to students irrespective of their financial need.

#### The General Assembly:

- State appropriations to public higher education have steadily declined from 17.4 percent of the state budget in 1986 to 12.1 percent today.
- The General Assembly did not fully fund enrollment growth at the state's public universities (7,000 students).

#### State Statistics:

- Only 1 in 4 North Carolinians currently have a college degree (Measuring Up 2000)
- Voters in all of North Carolina's 100 counties approved the Higher Education Bond.
- Only 34 percent of the state's high school freshmen enroll in college within four years, compared to 54 percent in top states.
- Only 32 percent of the state's 18 to 24-year-olds are enrolling in college, compared to 42 percent in top states.
- Less than one-fourth of the state's population, aged 25 to 65, has bachelor's degree or higher.
- North Carolina continues to trail in the nation in bachelor's degree attainment.

#### Economic Benefits:

- The state is in the midst of a recession with a budget shortfall of more than \$900 million. Unemployment in the state has eclipsed 6.2 percent.
- Four-year college degree holders now earn roughly twice as much over a lifetime as workers with a high school diploma.

- Advanced degree holders earn three to four times as much as workers with a high school diploma.
- Twenty percent of the total population of North Carolina receives an earned income tax credit.
- North Carolina has a reported poverty level of 13.2 percent.

Student Profile:

- Almost 25% of students work 1-19 hours per week.
- Fifty-one percent of students work more than 20 hours a week.
- In 1991, 34.4 percent of freshmen indicated they planned to work, and in 2000, 44.4 percent of freshmen planned to work during college.
- The percent of 1992 graduates indicating they had worked approximately 20 or more hours per week during their undergraduate years was 29.9 percent. The percent of 1998 graduates indicating they had worked approximately 20 or more hours per week during their undergraduate years was 51.6 percent.
- As tuition increases, so to does the average indebtedness of college graduates. At N.C. State University, for example, students had \$13,920 in loan debt in 1998. Three years later in 2001, indebtedness had increased to \$15,999, an increase of 13 percent.