

## **General**

UNC-CH has 17 colleges and schools offering programs in more than 100 fields leading to 71 bachelor's, 107 master's and 74 doctoral degrees, plus professional degrees in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, law and library science.

Students at UNC come from every one of North Carolina's 100 counties, all of the other 49 states and more than 100 countries worldwide.

More than 250,000 living UNC alumni reside in all 50 states and 129 foreign countries.

All University academic and medical buildings encompass about 11-million sq.ft. of floor space. This is equivalent to one and two-thirds the size of the Pentagon in Washington, DC, which is the largest office building in the world.

UNC has awarded more endowed professorships to black faculty members than any other U.S. university.

The University Athletics Program has a permanent staff of more than 200 coaches, trainers, equipment managers and others coordinating nearly 30 teams of about 750 student athletes, who play about 550 games each year. In 2002, its budget of \$38-million was the second largest in the Athletic Coast Conference (after Florida State University).

University sports teams play under the proud, if unconventional, name of the "Tar Heels". The term derives from the early Colonial production of pine tar, pitch and turpentine in eastern North Carolina. During the Civil War, General Robert E. Lee is said to have referred to North Carolina soldiers as "the tar heel boys" because of their work in the tar industry and their ability to "stick" to their military posts, even during particularly hard combat. (Tar Heel, by the way, is always written as two words.)

The graves of four University presidents are in the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery on campus: **Francis Preston Venable**, eighth president from 1900 to 1914; **Edward Kidder Graham**, ninth president from 1914 to 1918; his successor, **Marvin H. Stacy**, acting president who (like Graham) died in the influenza epidemic during World War I; and **Frank Porter Graham**, chancellor of the Chapel Hill campus, then president of the consolidated University.

## **History**

The establishment of a state university was called for in the state's first constitution of **1776**. The Reverend Samuel Eusebius McCorkle (after whom McCorkle Place is named) wrote the original bill in **1784** to request a charter from the North Carolina General Assembly. The General Assembly chartered the University with a 40-member board of trustees on December 11, **1789**.

Ten days later, on December 21, **1789**, the University's first piece of scientific equipment—a compass—was acquired.

The cornerstone for Old East—the oldest state university building in the nation—was laid on October 12, **1793**. The Rev. McCorkle was main speaker at the historic occasion.

The University officially opened its doors on January 15, **1795**, and the first student to enroll on February 12 was Hinton James, of New Hanover County (Wilmington). According to legend, he had walked to Chapel Hill. For two weeks, he was the entire student body, but by the end of the term, there were 41 students and two professors.

When the University opened, its library consisted of two shelves of books on the second floor of President Caldwell's home. In **1796**, University trustee Richard Bennehan (1747-1825) gave 32 volumes to the library. (In 1900, the University had about 40,000 volumes; by 1940, it had one million. The one-millionth book acquired by the University was John Gower's *Confessio Amatis*, printed by William Caxton in 1483. The acquisition was made by James G. Hanes, chairman of Hanes Hosiery Corporation.

University enrollment reached 100 in **1797**.

The first University commencement ceremony was held in Person Hall on July 4, **1798**, at which seven young men received diplomas.

UNC was the only public university in the U.S. to award degrees to students in the **18th Century**.

Although its cornerstone was laid in **1798**, South Building wasn't completed until **1814**, because funds ran out. So, the trustees held two lotteries (legal at the time), raising \$7,295, and President Caldwell canvassed the state to

raise the other \$8,220. Just before the building was completed, the University found a substantial quantity of corn whiskey under a woodpile in the basement, which its licensed woodcutter had been selling.

Old East was renovated in **1824** after William Richardson Davie, the "Father of the University," said that the building was "infamously done by a mechanic of Chatham County".

In **1831**, the University constructed an observatory, the first at any college in America, after Caldwell (now a professor) traveled to Europe in **1824** to obtain astronomical instruments, and UNC scientists in **1827** began making the first systematic astronomical observations.

The University Alumni Association was established on May 31, **1831**.

In **1838**, UNC President David Lowry Swain and science professor Elisha Mitchell initiated the building of stone fences to keep village livestock off the campus.

The Greek-revival Playmakers Theatre (called Smith Hall) was built in **1851** and named a National Historic Landmark in 1974. During the Civil War, the Union army briefly stabled horses there. Originally built as a library, bathhouse and ballroom, it was converted to a theatre in 1925, the first state university building dedicated to the creation of native American folk dramatic art.

The University class of **1854** produced a little book of charcoal sketches of students, considered a forerunner of the yearbook. (Autograph books were popular in the 1850s and 1860s.) The *Hellenian*, an annual publication of the Greek-letter fraternities, first appeared in 1890. The nearest thing to a yearbook, it ceased publication in 1900, a year before the introduction of *Yackety Yack*, which represented all segments of the University.

Enrollment at the University reached 456 in **1858**, the peak prior to the Civil War. (The only higher enrollment was at Yale University.)

The YMCA was organized on campus in **1860**.

In **1863**, UNC enrollment dwindled to 63 because of Civil War hostilities. At the commencement of **1865**, 15

graduates were to receive their diplomas, but only four were present. Although fighting had ceased two months earlier, 35 Federal soldiers stood guard at the exercises.

In **1865**, angry Carolina students hanged Eleanor Swain and Union Gen. Smith B. Atkins in effigy. The two were married in August, after Atkins met her earlier that year while visiting her father, University Pres. David L. Swain.

At the commencement of **1869**, a bachelor's degree was conferred on only one student, and he was from Chapel Hill. Commencement exercises were held in **1870**, but no degrees were granted. At a meeting in November 1870, the trustees decreed that all faculty salaries should cease on February 1, 1871. When that date arrived, only two students remained on campus, so the board of trustees ordered it closed. On a blackboard in one of the classrooms, someone wrote: "February 1, 1871. This old University has busted and gone to hell to-day."

Because of low enrollment, the Board of Trustees closed the University in **1871**, and didn't reopen it until **1875**.

Sometime **after the Civil War**, the cornerstone of Old East was vandalized, and the commemorative plate was stolen. Lost until **1916**, it was spotted in a pile of scrap brass destined for melting at a foundry in Tennessee. The foundry's owner, a UNC alumnus, recognized the Davie name and had the plate cleaned and returned. Today, it can be seen in the North Carolina Collection Gallery.

Women enrolled at the University for the first time in **1877** for teacher training during summer school. This was the first such program at any college or university in the U.S.

The University established its medical school on February 12, **1879**, under Dr. Thomas W. Harris, an eminent physician who resigned in 1885 to practice privately in the town. MD degrees were awarded for the first time to four students on May 7, **1903**.

In **1879**, Charles Force Deems established a scholarship fund in memory of his son, the first such program at UNC.

Francis P. Venable became the first PhD to join the University faculty in **1880**. Ten years later, he was named president of the University.

The first master's degree was awarded in **1883** to Henry Horace Williams (1858-1940). The first doctoral degree was awarded in 1883 to William Battle Phillips (1857-1918), who had become a professor of chemistry in 1879.

Carolina's first intercollegiate football game was played on October 18, **1888**, against Wake Forest. (UNC lost, 6-4.)

Carolina's first endowed professorship was the Alumni Chair in History, established by donations from students, faculty and alumni and presented at commencement exercises in June **1891**.

*The Daily Tar Heel* campus newspaper was first issued on February 23, **1893**, as a four-page weekly with 250 subscribers. Today, it has a circulation of more than 36,000. (The *White & Blue* newspaper was published in 1894-95 by non-fraternity men who objected to excessive coverage of sports in *The Tar Heel* to the exclusion of other campus news. When *The Tar Heel* agreed to broader coverage, *White & Blue* ceased publication.)

The Old Well was the primary source of campus water for more than a century. In **1897**, Pres. Edwin A. Alderman had the ramshackle shelter over the well rebuilt in Greek Revival style, and it became the unofficial symbol of the University.

Sallie Walker Stockard was the first woman to receive a degree from the University in **1898**.

The first separate school within the University, the School of Liberal Arts, was established in **1901**.

Coker Arboretum, a five-acre garden created on the old campus in **1903**, contains more than 400 species of plants and a 200-ft. wisteria arbor. It's now part of the 600-acre North Carolina Botanical Garden, largest in the Southeast.

"Silent Sam," a monument located in McCorkle Place, was erected in **1913** to honor the 321 alumni who died, and the 1062 alumni who fought, in the Civil War.

The first president's house on East Cameron Avenue was raised in **1913** for the construction of Swain Hall cafeteria.

The University established a publishing division in **1920**, the first in the south, and issued its first book in **1923**.

East Cameron Avenue wasn't paved until **1927**. Before that, it was a narrow, dusty path called College Avenue, which ended at a field along the Pittsboro-Hillsborough Road, beyond which were woods. The paved avenue was named in honor of Paul C. Cameron (1809-1891), a University student in 1824-25, chairman of the building and executive committees, and a trustee from 1858-1868 and 1875-1891. Cameron had lent the trustees \$8,000 for the construction of the first Memorial Hall, completed in 1885. It was named in memory of University Pres. David L. Swain and students in classes from 1821 to 1864 who had lost their lives fighting for the Confederacy.

During the course of campus construction in the **1920s**, the railroad line into Carrboro was extended (with a trestle over Columbia Street), so that building materials could be delivered on site. Passenger trains also came directly onto campus, stopping just west of Memorial Hall to shuttle students and sports teams to and from other cities.

The 12-bell carillon of the Morehead-Patterson Bell Tower first rang in November **1931**. Designed by McKim, Mead & White, the tower is 167 feet high but, since it is set on a knoll, is actually 200 feet high. Visible for several miles, it occasionally can be heard as far as Durham. The tower was the gift of John Motley Morehead III (class of 1891) and his cousin Rufus Lenoir Patterson (class of 1893), honoring 27 family members who had been associated with the University—16 Moreheads and 11 Pattersons. The bell tower calls students to classes, provides twilight music and serenades fans in Kenan Memorial Stadium below.

UNC-Chapel Hill became one of three units of the new consolidated state university system when it was created in **1932**. (Today, there are 16 units.)

The Institute of Government became a university agency in **1942**. Today, it's the largest government training and research organization in the nation.

The Morehead Planetarium and Science Center, which opened in **1950**, was a NASA training facility from 1960 to 1975. It has a Zeiss Model VI projector—the first to be installed on a college campus and one of only six in the country—which can project up to 8,900 stars on its 68-ft. dome ceiling. The planetarium's 35-ft., walk-in Copernican

Orrery—one of only two in the world—demonstrates how the planets and their moons revolve around the sun.

UNC Hospitals were established in **1952**. Today, they have 665 beds, employ 980 physicians and serve as a teaching center for 450 resident physicians, 640 medical students, 275 nursing students and 290 allied health students.

In **1961**, basketball coach Frank McGuire was replaced by Dean Smith, a little-known assistant then.

In **1971**, when University enrollment was 19,160, 25% of the students rode bicycles to their classes.

In **1979**, for the first time in its history, the UNC-CH was enrolling more women than men.

The Walter Royal Davis Library, which opened on February 7, **1984**, is the largest educational building in the state and can house 1.8-million volumes. The UNC Library System, which celebrated its 200th anniversary in **1995**, has more than five million volumes in five main libraries and 11 departmental collections. In Wilson Library are the North Carolina Collection, which tracks 400 years of Tar Heel life and is the largest such state holding in the nation, and the Southern Historical Collection, which has 14-million manuscripts from the 1700s on every state in the south.

In **1992**, *Sports Illustrated* called Chapel Hill the best college town in America.

Since **1995**, student enrollment of the University of North Carolina has been more than 24,000, of which 64% are undergraduate students, 29% are graduate students and 7% are in professional programs. About 8,000 students attend its summer sessions.

UNC ranks among the top public universities in research support and creation of new ventures. In fiscal **2005**, it attracted a total of \$580-million in federal and state government, and agency and private research grants.

You may obtain more information about the history of the University and its academic programs at the UNC Visitors' Center in the Morehead Planetarium West Lobby. Located at 250 East Franklin Street, it is open daily from 10am to 5pm. The phone number is (919) 962-1630.

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# Fun Facts About the University of North Carolina

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Compiled from various sources.  
Updates and corrections welcomed.

CHAPEL HILL

HILLSBOROUGH & CARRBORO

501 West Franklin Street  
Chapel Hill, NC (USA) 27516

Phone (919) 245-4320 • Fax (919) 968-2062

Toll-free (888) 968-2060

Email [info@visit Chapel Hill.org](mailto:info@visit Chapel Hill.org)  
Website [www.visit Chapel Hill.org](http://www.visit Chapel Hill.org)