Texting, driving brings fines |Online classes face budget cuts

BY MADELINE WILL STAFF WRITEF

While UNC freshman Danielle Gillyard doesn't text and drive, she has many friends who do.

And she said she doesn't think older people would be able to text well enough to do it while driving.

"I guess it's a teenage thing," she said. That was the public perception

when the law against texting while driving passed in North Carolina in Dec. 2009, but recent reports show that the majority of citations from the new law have come from an older demographic.

Since the law went in effect, 1,200 have been cited, said Brendan Byrnes, spokesman for the American Automobile Association.

More than half of those cited were 26 or older, with an average age of 28, he said.

"This study shows that this problem is much broader than just with teens," Byrnes said.

"People of all ages are texting and driving."

texting and driving, Byrnes said.

In Chapel Hill, there have been 10 citations since the law passed spokesperson for Chapel Hill police.

The ages ranged from 19 to 52, and all but two violators were under thirty, he said.

Though the state issues a higher number of citations to older demographics, it does not mean fewer teenagers are texting and driving, Byrnes said.

"It is simply that there are many more older drivers," he said.

Out of the 6.7 million drivers in the state, less than 10 percent are less than 23 years old, he said. Media attention given to teens

texting and driving stems from added risks given their age, Byrns said.

"The problem with teens texting and driving is just that teens are so inexperienced," he said.

Arthur Goodwin, senior research associate at the UNC Highway Safety Research Center, said in Editor at state@dailytarheel.com.

If caught, the fine is \$100 for self-report surveys that the 18 to 24 age group tends to report the most texting and driving.

But all ages are increasingly last year, said Lt. Kevin Gunter, relying on cell phones, making texting and driving a serious issue, he said.

> "Older drivers have done it too, it's not uncommon," Goodwin said.

"It's not a young driver or teen driver problem."

The problem is growing with all demographics. From 2008 to 2010, the percentage of North Carolinians who admitted to texting and driving increased from 29 to 39 percent, Byrnes said.

Goodwin said the results of the law have been undeterminable thus far.

"Something like half the states have texting laws in place but we don't know the effect they have - if anything," he said. "We don't know at this point if the laws are working at all."

Contact the State & National

BY LINDSAY POPE STAFF WRITER

About 700 area high school students take online classes, but without the state's financial help these courses could face major cuts.

After a 200 percent increase in online course enrollment since the 2007-08 school year, Mia Burroughs, vice chairwoman of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Board of Education, said the board will consider online course restrictions at its meeting Thursday before voting on the measure March 3.

Burroughs said these restrictions could include limiting the number of classes and the number of students allowed to enroll in North Carolina Virtual Public School.

Initially online classes were free for public schools, said district spokeswoman Stephanie Knott. But last year the state Board of Education began charging districts to access online services.

Kelly Batten, principal of Carrboro High School, said he doesn't know how the district will account for increased demand ATTEND THE MEETING Time: 7 p.m. today Location: Chapel Hill Town Hall, 405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Info:www.chccs.k12.nc.us

while suffering funding shortages, especially when the state does not allow the district to charge students for classes or textbooks.

"We have a responsibility as a public school to be economically frugal and fiscally responsible," he said.

Last year, online classes cost the district \$252,000 - about \$355 per student enrolled in the program. While the district pays for the actual class, individual schools are required to buy textbooks and other materials needed for the classes.

But Cathy Davis, a guidance counselor at Carrboro High, said online classes offer students the opportunity to take specialty classes they couldn't take otherwise, like digital photography and Mandarin Chinese.

"Kids that are signing up for online classes - they are committed," she said. "They are the

kids you can trust to work on their assignments independently."

Julia Houser, a sophomore at Carrboro High, said she chose to take online classes to fit in higherlevel classes before graduation.

"I like to take classes online if I don't have room for them in my schedule," she said.

Carrboro High senior Dianna Samples transferred to the school this year. Taking online classes is the only way she can graduate on time.

Yet both Houser and Samples agreed that there are perks to taking classes in the traditional setting versus online. Samples said she liked the teacher interaction of a traditional classroom.

While Davis said she doesn't compare the two settings, she emphasized the importance of both student and teacher input.

"It's dependent upon the instructor and how much quality time they're willing to put into the lesson plans and the course itself," she said.

> Contact the City Editor at city@dailytarheel.com.



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MATH AND SCIENCE TUTOR needed immediately. Tutor with many hours available, weekends good also, to fill in for a tutor. Also advanced math and science skills, superb spoken English, car, outstanding references and character. Must be available through 1st week of June. Please send days and hours available to jlocts@aol.com. Reading and literacy tutors also needed.

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HOROSCOPES

If February 3rd is Your Birthday... You can handle anything this year. Make sure to keep challenging yourself, creatively and socially. Gather your resources and your expertise, and, with a little help from your friends, go for it. Be an artist

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

Aries (March 21-April 19) Today is an 8 - Today (and for the next

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22) Today is a 7 - Continue your trip into self-discovery. Don't be afraid to be childlike. Paint with your fingers, maybe. Don't miss a chance to play in the snow. Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Today is a 6 - Learn from the challenges

earlier in the day. Find your way home,

eventually, to a comfortable chair for

some serious lounging, complete with

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

other people into your projects. Thank Taurus (April 20-May 20)

three weeks) communication comes

easily. Take advantage of this to bring

Today is a 9 - The days ahead look promising. Your ambition and desire for perfection can take you far. Write down career goals and take action to realize them.

Gemini (May 21-June 21) Today is a 9 - If you dream of mov-ing to another continent, now it's the

Today is a 6 - Not everybody likes what you say, and that's okay. You can be respectful and still speak out. Don't be afraid to go public for what you right time to do it. It will take courage, patience and thoroughness, but you care about. Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) Today is an 8 - Put your energy to work

favorite treats.

can do it. Cancer (June 22-July 22)

Today is a 7 - Change keeps showing up today. Although you feel more conservagenerating money. Rethink financial options, and be open to new income possibilities. Go for what you want, but tive, you jump into action. Invest in your don't step on anyone to get it. own ideas, and you'll be pleased. Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22) Today is an 8 - It's a perfect day to recreate partnerships. Banish old wounds and invent something new with a business or sentimental partner. Why waste precious time? Play together.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Today is a 7 - Focus your energy on completing projects, especially those that require focused skill. You're on fire and you want to get things done. Take your time.

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Today is a 9 - You have everything going for you today. Don't fall asleep on your

laurels and keep exploring creatively. Reward yourself by watching a good

Today is a 6 - Find a guiet place to sit and

down your thoughts. Concentrate intently. Enjoy the quiet time before the full speed coming ahead.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)



