Statement of UNC President Tom Ross on the Senate budget recommended for FY 2011-13

June 2, 2011

UNC President Tom Ross today issued the following statement on the Senate budget recommended for FY 2011-13:

“We are grateful that the cuts applied to the University of North Carolina in the 2011-13 state budget passed today by the Senate are significantly less than those found in some earlier versions of the budget. The Senate budget assigns net cuts to the University of $407 million. Throughout this economic crisis, the University has committed to work in partnership with our state’s leaders and to do our fair share to help North Carolina weather the long recession. We have honored that commitment.

It is important to recognize, however, that with these latest reductions, the University will have received more than $1 billion in budget cuts over a five-year period. That will make it all the more difficult to absorb cuts of the magnitude in this budget while continuing to provide an affordable, world-class University education to our citizens. While the Board of Governors, our chancellors, and I will do all we can to manage through this situation in a way that minimizes any negative consequences for our students, our campus operations will be directly impacted. Students will contend with circumstances that include fewer faculty teaching fewer classes, as well as fewer staff providing needed support services. Although tuition rates continue to rise and 60% of our in-state undergraduates depend on need-based financial aid, state funding for our Need-based Financial Aid Program will decline next year. That is a huge concern. All of our institutions are struggling to do more with less, but to help lead North Carolina out of this recession, we must continue to prepare our students for the jobs of the future, to conduct critical research, and to engage with businesses and communities to improve lives. Going forward, all of us associated with the University will continue to be strong partners with our Governor and the General Assembly to invest again in the future of our young people while leveraging and building upon the state’s past commitments to our public University, which remains the economic engine of the state.”