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The Blue

BANNER

"An unconditional right to say what one
pleases about public affairs is what I
consider to be the minimum guarantee of
the First Amendment"--Hugo Black

WEATHER: Partly to mostly
cloudy this weekend with a
chance of showers on Saturday.
Highs around 50,
Lows in the 30s

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STUDENTS SAY INEFFICIENCY AND RUDENESS ARE PROBLEMS IN FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

Greg Deal
Staff Writer

While UNCA operates under the motto "student-centered university," some students have voiced complaints about the financial aid office and have said that their dealings with that department have been less than pleasing.

In a December interview with The Blue Banner, Chancellor Patsy B. Reed said that administration will be looking for ways that UNCA can be "a more customer-friendly campus," as the new master plan is developed in 1995.

Ben Green, UNCA junior, said he feels the financial aid office has some work to do in reaching that goal. "I'm a service person, and the businesses I've always been involved in have always been people businesses," said Green. "Any business in this day and time, you better be nice because there's some competition down the road."

In a survey from the UNC system of 1992

UNCA graduates who were "very or moderately satisfied with academic and service functions," UNCA ranked lower than the university system average on satisfaction of financial aid services. One of the problems that Green feels hurts the image of the financial aid office is unfriendliness and lack of concern for students.

"My first initial contact, I almost had to milk the answers out of these people," said Green. He said that one person, in particular, seemed to create roadblocks for him. "This person seemed very reluctant to be helpful. This front, first person needs to be the one that's helpful."

Green said that this lack of concern could probably have an effect on prospective students' decision to enroll at UNCA. "It seems to me that it would be in the best interest of, not only the students, but the university as well, if they had somebody that was a little more helpful," he said.

Carolyn McElrath, director of financial aid, said that she she does not want any students cut short

with any answers. "I would expect anyone in the office to go to the fullest extent that they can go," said McElrath.

Green said that he is tired of getting the run-around when he asks about the status of his loan. "It's not my position to know if everything in my file is right," he said. "It should be their job. It seems like their job, to me, in a financial aid office, is to do everything possible within their power to make sure that these students get it."

Green said that the attitude that he got from the person at financial aid was that it "it didn't matter to her."

"Every other department I've been to has been great," said Green. He said that the one person in financial aid, however, has created problems for him. "It's like I have to pull the next step from her," he said. "If I've got to know the answer to the question, then I don't need [financial aid's assistance]."

Chuck Fogarty, UNCA junior, said that he has

experienced some of the same problems as Green. "A lot of times they don't explain things very well," he said. "But I've never had any problems with rudeness."

"Basically, I had to go in there and drag it out of them as to what I actually had to do."

Green said that the people in the financial aid office need to be people persons. "From what I've seen with the university as a whole, they have the technologies, the resources, and the caring about students, in general, to be able to get the job done," said Green. "But I think they need the right people in the right places."

McElrath said that it might be the work-load issue that has an effect on the students' perceptions of the friendliness of the person in financial aid. "This person is handling a dual job," she said. She said that many of her duties include receptionist, data entry, file folder maintenance, and answering

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Dancers Entertain Local Students



Flamenco dancers entertained area school students in Lipinsky Auditorium this week.

Photo by Lai Ray

Planning Begins For Highsmith Renovation

Andrea Lawson
Staff Writer

Several student groups are benefiting from the decisions made by an advisory committee established this semester for planning the renovations of the Highsmith Center.

"This committee will meet with various groups and come up with recommendations for priority use of the space and the priority use of new space," said Sharyn McDonald, chair of the Highsmith Center Renovation Advisory Committee.

The committee was created to help plan for the temporary renovations of the old cafeteria, as well as future plans for permanent changes in the Highsmith Center.

The committee members consist of students and faculty members. The members were chosen on the basis of their activity in various campus groups and their interest in the functions of the University. A list of seven students was recommended by McDonald last semester, including five commuter students and three non-traditionally aged students. The list was expanded by Chancellor Reed to 15 members.

"We recommended a list of students to the chancellor and faculty and staff," McDonald said. "The students repre-

sent resident students and commuters and non-traditionally-aged students. Also, students that are involved in clubs or organizations."

McDonald said that the committee also includes faculty members who are active in extracurricular activities and student interests outside of the classroom. Additional students or faculty members may be involved in the activities of the committee as the semester progresses, according to a memorandum from Chancellor Reed.

"We have to give [the Chancellor] a report by the end of the semester, and develop recommendations for how the space should be used," said McDonald.

The permanent renovations will include an addition to the Highsmith Center, according to McDonald. The committee will be involved in selecting architects and will aid in planning the construction with the needs of the campus community as a whole in mind, McDonald said.

"Architects will be interviewed probably within the next couple of weeks," McDonald said.

The temporary renovations currently underway will include several offices, according to McDonald. Among these will be space for the International Student Association and the Volunteer Coordinator and Student Activities In-

tern. These offices are currently being built in the old dining area. The African American Student Association and Underdog Productions will be given additional space from existing offices.

ENCORE, the commuter student organization, has also been awarded space. The group's new office will be the old University Dining Services office. This award of space came after the old commuter lounge was converted to office space last semester.

Dr. Carol Schramm, ENCORE's faculty advisor, said that the office will provide a gathering spot for students who previously had no space available to them.

"ENCORE is delighted to have such visible space where we can post our meeting times and dates and provide a network for non-traditional and commuter students," Schramm said.

McDonald said that she is unsure about how long the renovations will take place. After an architect is chosen, the committee will probably plan for a year, according to McDonald. McDonald also said that she thinks the actual renovations will take 16 months to two years. Vice Chancellor for Financial Affairs Arthur Foley said that the renovations will not begin prior to spring of 1996. According to Foley, the cost of the construction will be about four mil-

Enrollment Shortfalls May Cost UNCA Nearly \$300,000 In Funding

Christin Hall
Staff Writer

UNCA could lose as much as \$285,000 in funding this year for failing to meet its targeted enrollment number of full-time students, according to university administrators. At a Faculty Senate meeting last Friday, Chancellor Patsy B. Reed and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Larry Wilson said they are worried about the possibility of such a loss.

"There is always the potential that any university below their targeted enrollment could have money taken back," said Wilson. "We don't know that that will happen, but it's always a concern."

UNCA's target for enrollment this year is 2,620 full-time equivalents (FTE), students carrying 12 or more semester hours, according to Wilson. This semester UNCA has a total enrollment of 3,060, including both full-time and part-time students, Reed said. This number reflects a one-half percent increase over last year, she said.

The number of FTE, however, is only 2,443, Reed said. UNCA's average for the year is going to be about 50 FTE below the window of where it should be to guarantee no loss of funding. At an estimated loss of \$5,700 per FTE below the target, this translates to a potential loss of \$285,000, said Reed.

Reed said that in the past, UNCA has rarely had to give back funds for not meeting enrollment targets.

"Ordinarily, we have not had to give back monies based on not hitting our projections or the two percent window on our projections," said Reed.

In fact, according to Wilson, the last time the General Assembly took money back because of enrollment was back in 1979. The general assembly is the governing body that appoints members to the UNCA's Board of Governors. It is also the General Assembly that allocates money to each of the 16 universities in the UNC system, said Wilson.

Wilson and Reed both said that part of the reason UNCA's administration is worried about losing

money this year is that the legislature consists of primarily new members, whose actions are not predictable.

"We are nervous about [losing funding] this year, because it's sort of a new ballgame with the legislature," said Reed.

"If the whole [UNC] system turns out to be below the two percent window, then there is a

will lose money.

"We believe that if the whole 16-university system is close to its stated target the General Assembly will not take any money back," he said.

The problem, said Wilson, is that last year the UNC system, as a whole, was below its target for the first time in 20 years. If the same thing happens a second consecutive year, he said, it might in-

crease the likelihood of a loss for all 16 universities.

Further complicating matters, Wilson said, is that if the General

Assembly elects to take money away at this point in the academic year, the loss will be especially tough since the money's essentially already spent.

"There is always the potential that any university below their targeted enrollment could have money taken back. We don't know that that will happen, but it's always a concern."-- Larry Wilson, vice chancellor for academic affairs

chance that the legislature would look to the system and say, "Well, you got new monies to support new students. Those new students aren't there. We want the monies back," Reed said.

Contrarily, Wilson said, if the entire system is near its target, with some schools under and some over, there is a good chance none of the universities

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