

The Banner

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New multimedia major receives funding

By Gene Zaleski
Staff Writer

The University of North Carolina General Administration provided final approval and funding for the establishment of a new multimedia arts and sciences major at UNCA on April 9. Multimedia classes will be offered as early as next semester. Courses must first be approved by the faculty senate and the academic policy committee, but students can officially begin to take

classes towards the multimedia major in the fall semester," said Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Tom Cochran.

The new multimedia program is designed to prepare students for careers in computer-based image, sound, and text manipulation in fields such as banking, entertainment, manufacturing, marketing and public education.

"The student will be marketable to any employer looking for more of a multimedia approach to business," said Cochran.

The UNC General Administra-

tion provided the multimedia program with a guaranteed annual funding level of \$126,000.

An additional \$204,756 was allocated to the program for the 1997-98 year to cover initial start-up costs, such as the purchase of new equipment.

"The money must be spent by

June 15, because the purchase orders have to be in and the bills have to be paid by June 30," said Cochran.

In future years, approximately \$40,000 will be spent annually on equipment upgrades.

"We know that two years from now different needs will come up in the program," said Cochran. "We would like to be able to address those needs when they come up."

According to Mark West, associate professor of mass communications and director of the new multimedia arts and sciences major,

UNCA will hire a full-time faculty member and part time secretary to staff the new multimedia department.

"We want to hire a good teacher interested in the humanities, with a great deal of skill, both technical and artistic," said West.

Cochran said that over half of the annual multimedia budget will be used to cover personnel costs.

"Approximately \$60,000 will be for personnel, which will include 20 percent fringe benefits, so the on going total for personnel will be about \$72,000 or \$75,000," said

Cochran. "Next fall a search will be initiated for a faculty position and we will hire them as soon as we can."

According to a report on the UNCA multimedia program issued by the UNC General Administration, 18 students are projected to enroll in the major in the first year. Enrollment in the program is expected to rise to 56 students by 2002, and level out at 70 students by 2006.

The requirements for the multi-

See MAJOR on page 8



Tom Cochran

Clinton inhales



George Clinton and the P-Funk All-Stars performed at the Asheville Civic Center on April 17. Clinton and other members of the band smoked what appeared to be cigarettes and encouraged audience participation during the three-hour show.

PHOTO BY PRESTON GANNAWAY

Graduates limited to four guests at rain location

2,300 seat Thomas Wolfe Auditorium will be used as the alternate site

By Nicole Miller
Staff Writer

The UNCA administration reserved the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium at the Asheville Civic Center as the rain location for the May 16 commencement ceremony.

If rain causes the ceremony to move to the Civic Center site, each graduate will be permitted to bring four guests.

Students graduating in May have expressed dissatisfaction with these arrangements.

Graduating senior psychology major Miranda Carpenter said, "I think that the university would have learned to plan in advance. They should make sure that all graduating students can invite everyone they love."

Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Tom Cochran said that the administration originally tried to reserve the main hall at the Civic Center, which seats over 7,000 people. He said that the university ultimately ended up reserving the smaller Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, which seats 2,300 people, due to a miscommunication between UNCA and Civic Center employees.

Cochran said that he accepts responsibility for the miscommunication.

"I can't blame anyone but myself. It is my responsibility to see that the

arrangements are cared for, and this year it didn't get done," Cochran said.

After each year's commencement, administrators contact the Civic Center to reserve a space for the following year. Last year, UNCA requested use of the main hall and

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-- Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Tom Cochran

thought that everything was okay, said Cochran.

"I honestly thought we had been successful in getting the main hall as our site for this year," Cochran said.

The main hall was free for this year's commencement at the time the university called to reserve it. "The thing that is so distressing is that the facility was available, it was free," said Cochran.

The Civic Center staff ultimately booked the main hall for a health fair, which will run the entire length of the weekend.

Civic Center officials could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Cochran said that several factors may have contributed to the miscommunication. At the time that UNCA requested the main hall, the commencement date was not definite.

He said that the university also changed its calendar, and everything was moved back one week.

Cochran also said that the Civic Center has undergone several changes in personnel over the past year, and that may have resulted in some confusion or miscommunication.

According to Cochran, the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium was last year's rain location for the graduation ceremony, and the Civic Center personnel may have assumed that UNCA wanted the same space this year.

"I was as irate as any of the students probably are that we don't have (the larger space)," said Cochran. "I didn't have any choice. I didn't have any other options. There is literally no other facility in the community that I am aware of that is enclosed and holds 3,000 people."

"I feel that it was poor planning by the university," Carpenter said. "I

See RAIN on page 8

Legislators pledge support for Highsmith

By Amelia Morrison
Staff Writer

The North Carolina Legislature will decide whether or not to fund the proposed \$2.4 million renovation and expansion of the Highsmith University Center at its 1998 legislative session, which begins on May 11.

Legislators from the Asheville area said that they are backing the project, and expect that it will be approved and funded by the legislature.

"I do support the Highsmith Center funding completely. I think it has an excellent chance of being approved," said state Sen. L. Clark of Weaverville. "UNCA has been somewhat shortchanged in having projects funded over the last few years. The legislators have not been focused on getting funding."

"It actually should have been done before this," said state Sen. Bob Carpenter of Franklin.

"UNCA has not gotten its fair share of building funds in the last few years," said state Sen. Jesse Ledbetter of Asheville. "It's the first priority I have for the university system as far as building projects."

The current Highsmith Center was constructed in 1982, and designed to accommodate a residential population of 400. The residential population of UNCA will rise to over 1,100 in 1999.

If fully funded, the Highsmith renovation project would include an expanded bookstore, art gallery, computer lab, indoor child play area, university post office, additional office space, and meeting rooms.

"We prioritize the most critical needs, and the Highsmith Center is a critical need," said Carpenter. "This Highsmith Center is on the top of the list."

Representative Bill Ives agreed that the

project is of importance to the legislators this year.

"I think it's a high priority," said Ives. "I think it has a good chance at it this year."

Carpenter said that there is bipartisan support for the Highsmith project.

"There is not any dissension or flies in the ointment," said Carpenter.

Local legislators said that they will lobby other senators and representatives for support.

"All of us will have some influence, we hope," said Ledbetter.

Clark said that he has "talked with other legislators already," and Ives said that there has been considerable talk about the project.

"Those of us from the mountains have talked about it at great length," said Ives.

Clark attributes the local legislator's support for the Highsmith project to Chancellor Patsy Reed's efforts to educate local

See HIGHSMITH on page 8

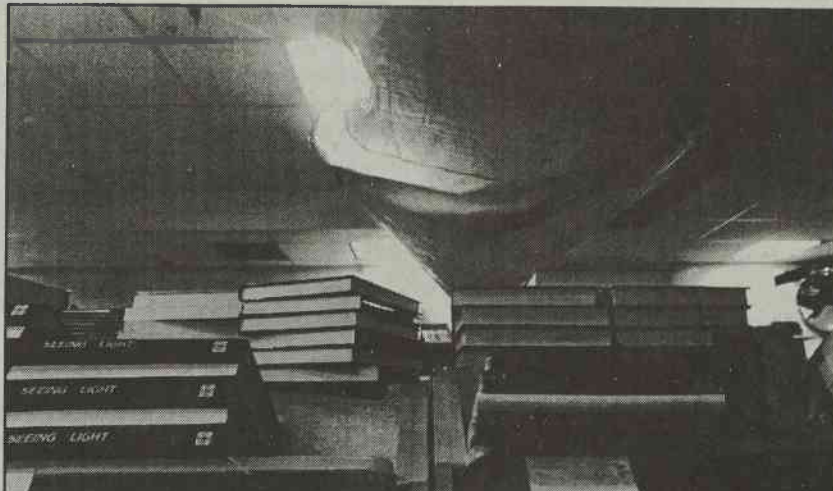


PHOTO BY PRESTON GANNAWAY

Funding is being sought for the renovation and expansion of the Highsmith Center. The roof over the bookstore currently leaks after it rains, and a temporary tarp has been installed to protect the books.