

Perspectives

Why Will UNCA be constructing environmentally?



Candice Carr
columnist

"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never comes and it never will. Find out just what people will submit to and you have found the exact amount of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them; and these will continue until they are resisted with either words or blows, or with both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress." — Frederick Douglass, letter to an abolitionist associate, 1849

What is even more important than what our university can tell us? It is what they can show us. Actions speak louder than words. If UNCA wants to turn out students who have a positive impact on the world, a good start would be creating a positive impact on the world here at UNCA.

"We want students to graduate more environmentally literate, equipped to understand these issues and their implications in their everyday lives and how to live in a more environmentally aware manner," said Dr. Maas, professor

and director of environmental studies.

How will we rise to the occasion? We should first lift our proverbial foot and look at the print left there. Our energy use is rising with our bills, and our paper consumption is huge. There are sensitive, cost-effective solutions to these unsustainable facts.

Last week, we all received an email from Chancellor Mullen about the three new dorms and new road entrance to be built on campus. The designs are not completed, but it was said in an article in the *Asheville Citizen-Times* that the plans are to build three buildings similar to the newest dorms on campus. The chancellor also mentioned that "student input will be an important priority as the design process

moves forward." Let's input! Wouldn't it be incredible if South Ridge had southfacing windows, which brought in so much luscious sunlight that the heat didn't kick on until midnight? What if it had a simple evaporative air cooler instead of air conditioning, which uses more energy than heat? These technologies are not simple, but save money.

It may take more initial investment to put in something like photovoltaic solar energy panels, but the beauty of sustainable energy sources is that the invested money is made back in just a few years. The expensive alternative is retrofitting all of the buildings in a few years and wishing we'd done it right the first time. For numbers and projections, I suggest talking to Maas, whose "Energy and Society" course has sent many of us to the store for compact fluorescent lightbulbs and insulation.

In his email, Mullen also mentioned a new entrance to be built, and a new parking deck as well. That new entrance better have a bike path next to it!

The new Highsmith Center has been designed, but the design is not final. Is this something we care about as students? How much sunlight does it get? Ask the architect. Go look at the plans in the Housing office. My friend Elizabeth did. She wondered why they don't just turn the whole building plan to face south.

Down the road, we are going to be building a new math and science building. Will we look at what Oberlin, Southampton and other colleges have done, and use the superior technologies, like phytoremediation (plants clean the water) that make money instead of spending money? Has this research been

done for other buildings on our campus, either existing or planned?

There are resources right in our own library on how to design buildings for cheaper heating, cooling and lighting, reducing energy use by 90 percent. Not half an hour away, at Warren Wilson College, they are in the process of building an ecodorm.

There are other things we can do to make our campus a better place. To briefly name a few, all departments have the option of ordering bright white, printer- and copier-friendly 100 percent post-consumer content. It's in the warehouse. Please order it!

There are other post-consumer products we could support, too. Wouldn't it be great if UNCA's buying habits matched their recycling capabilities? What do we do with all of the #6 recycled paper fill. What if we didn't have

walk through clouds of leaf blower fumes on the way to class? (Whatever happened to brooms anyway? Those leaf blowers are loud.) What if the quad was not sprayed with poison that we sit in, lie on and to which we expose our animals? There are alternatives that are cheaper and less harmful for all of us.

Already, UNCA has taken the initiative on some awesome projects like composting the salads in the cafeteria, and having trash audit days to show us what is and is not recyclable and that people do care about your trash. These great programs are thanks to our fabulous recycling coordinator, Zig, who deserves to be the head of a whole crew of recycling folks.

The initiative to get green is just getting underway, and there is much room for involvement in all areas of our campus community.

Letters to the Editor

Repeated defacing

Dear Editor,

What do you think when you see images of people that have been slashed, or whose eyes have been gouged out with a pencil or similar instrument? What do you feel when it happens twice?

Approximately two weeks ago, we discovered that a poster displayed on the Spanish bulletin board on

the second floor of Carmichael had been badly defaced.

The poster was one promoting participation in the Census. Sponsored by the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, it featured Hispanics of various ages and appearances, and had a caption in both Spanish ("Hagase contor") and English ("Make Yourself Count"). We removed the poster and put up an identical one. Last week, we found the second one

defaced even more violently.

Property and educational materials should never be defaced. Such action is more disgusting and unacceptable when the agents of destruction attack symbols of a minority group. Both on and off this campus, many people are actively and passionately involved in helping members of various diverse groups become accepted, contributing citizens of our community. Cowardly and anonymous actions

like the poster defacement undercut such efforts, and make UNCA a less safe place for everyone. In this case, such an action undermines the urgent and necessary publicity for Census participation. Please join me in opposing such racist or classist actions prompted by ignorance and fear of that which is perceived as different.

Alice Weldon
Assistant professor of Spanish

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Letters should be typed, single-spaced, and should not exceed 300 words. Letters for publication should also contain the author's signature, classification, major or other relationship with UNCA. The deadline for letters is noon on Tuesday. If you have a submission, you can send it to *The Banner*, 208A Carmichael Hall, One University Heights, Asheville NC 28804.

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