

The BLUE BANNER

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University looks at more than test scores

By Tim Meinch
GUEST WRITER

When reviewing freshmen applicants, UNC Asheville admissions officials look beyond numbers and statistics to see students for who they are and how they will fit into the institution.

"We really do look at the whole person. What's the package they're presenting, what are they bringing, and based on past experience, does it fit with the students that have come here and are successful?" said Scot Schaeffer, director of admissions and financial aid.

Apart from the minimum course requirements set by the state, UNC Asheville does not set any minimum test scores or required attributions over applicants, admissions counselors said.

The university now has a Chancellor's Acceptance, which allows the chancellor to grant acceptance to a student not meeting the minimum course requirements in extraordinary cases, according to Melinda Bullen, assistant director of admissions.

"We don't have set things because we really do take into account the whole person. There are kids that will get in here with 1000 SATs and there are people we'll deny with 1400 SATs," Schaeffer said.

The whole admissions staff at UNC Asheville discusses each individual freshman applicant to decide who is a good fit for the institution, according to Schaeffer.

"It's not an exact science," he said. "It would be if you just picked numbers: This GPA, this test score, this rank in class and you're in. But then it really takes out the personal side of students."

The admissions director of five years said the institution sees more and more students with special talents, which the admissions counselors take into consideration in the applications.

"Art students are starting to send in portfolios and music students are starting to send in CDs," Schaeffer said. "We're seeing much more additional information being sent in, so we're getting a full picture of the student."

The Admissions Office offers applicants an optional one-hour interview with a counselor, which often significantly helps students in the gray area, according to admissions staff.

"The personal interview is the most important thing the student can do," Bullen said.

Every year counselors push for the acceptance of five or six specific students who lack the impressive numbers, but possess something that the counselor saw in the interview, according to Bullen.

"We want to make sure we're choosing the right people, that they understand what UNC Asheville is, what the requirements are and that they're going to come here, stay here and graduate," Schaeffer said. "Who you enter and who you bring in automatically helps with retention, if you're making a good fit and a good match."

Nearly 60 percent of freshmen who enrolled between 1996 and 2003 stayed through their senior year.

"We've got more students that want to come here than we have room for," Schaeffer said. "When you have that, you can just be more selective in the decision making process."

— Students stand together —



Students, faculty, staff and administration gather around the flag pole on the Quad Tuesday to commemorate the victims of the shooting at Virginia Tech the day before. Corie Schreiber, freshman student, prays in front of the flower arrangement by the flag pole and seal. A bagpiper plays on the Phillips Hall balcony before the ceremony begins. Student Body President John Noor stands beside administration members during a moment of silence. A student chalks the message, "Today we're all Hokies" on the sidewalk in front of the seal.

UNC Asheville mourns Virginia Tech deaths

Days after what the press is calling the "Massacre at Virginia Tech," UNC Asheville joined the world in mourning the victims of the United States' worst school shooting, topping both Columbine in 1999 and the shootings at the University of Texas in 1966.

While a bagpiper played nearby, students, staff, faculty and administration members cir-

cled around the flag pole on the Quad Tuesday to offer their words and prayers to the 32 victims of Cho Seung-Hui, a 23-year-old English major at VT.

As more and more reports surface about the mental instability and motives of Cho, VT administrators work to restore the university, where over 25,000 students are currently enrolled, and people all over the world con-



ALL PHOTOS: PENNIE LEAS - PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR

The News in Brief

SGA to hold new elections next week

After the Student Government Association's second round of elections, they have yet to release results and will hold new polling next Monday and Tuesday, due to irrefutable evidence of voter fraud, according to Student Body President John Noor.

Noor said he hopes to have Buncombe County Board of Elections provide congressional voting machines instead of relying on campus computers. The machines will ensure the voting process will be legitimate, according to Noor.

The machines will be located on the Quad all day Monday and Tuesday, or paper ballots will be available. For further information, contact Noor at jdnor@unca.edu or call the SGA office: 828-251-6587.

NC rated second in releasing pollutants

A study conducted by the federal Toxic Release Inventory stated North Carolina as the state releasing the second largest amount of air releases of toxic pollution.

These toxic pollutants are suspected causes of respiratory illness, according to the study. The largest source of the toxins came from the Duke Energy Belews Creek Steam Station in Stokes County, which reportedly released more than 13 million pounds of respiratory toxins into the air.

North Carolina also ranked fifth in the country for releasing emissions containing toxic chemicals known to cause developmental problems.

The federal Toxic Release Inventory is a public right-to-know program that requires industrial facilities to disclose their toxic releases to the public.

Pet food with rice protein recalled

The Food and Drug Administration expanded a nationwide pet food recall this week which includes products containing rice protein laced with melamine.

Menu Foods recalled more than 60 million cans and pouches of wet dog and cat food last month. The toxin in melamine can cause kidney failure in pets.

The FDA said they encourage any pet owner who might have purchased any Menu Food product to go online and check the list to make sure they are not feeding their pets contaminated food.

Universities participates in air quality research

By Annabelle Hardy
STAFF WRITER

UNC Asheville and UNC Charlotte joined forces to create a supercomputer grid that will simulate the effects of development on air quality in the Asheville-Charlotte region, according to John Stevens, director of the National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center at UNC Asheville.

"This is what you call a grand

challenge problem. It needs extraordinary resources and new tools and technology to solve. That's what we're putting together. We're developing new techniques and then applying them," said Bill Ribarsky, head of the visual grid project at UNC Charlotte.

With \$500,000 in funding from the Environmental Protection Agency, the project is in the pilot phase of creating a visualization grid that will compile and visually

represent over 100 interacting fields of information related to air quality in the region, according to Stevens.

"The visual grid is not just about bringing together the hardware and connecting these computers, it is also about bringing people together," Stevens said.

Early planning for the project began in 2005 and the funding from the EPA came in early 2006. More than a year later, the first

phase is nearly completed and scientists are beginning to undertake more complex simulations and analysis, according to Stevens.

Other modeling programs exist nationwide, but few of them contain as much data as this one, according to Stevens. Most models use data points located every 12 miles of a given region, which means that data collected in the mountains is often not useful.

"Here in the mountains a lot

happens every 12 miles, so those models don't do a good job predicting what may go on. We are trying to get our project down to a data point every kilometer. You need that kind of resolution to be able to understand what's happening in the mountains," Stevens said.

Once the visualization grid is fully operational, it can become a

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