

Is the University slack?

Students voice concerns

Faculty recruitment sparks protest

by Linda Conley
Arts Editor

Fall semester the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill had a black enrollment of 1,927, which is 8.8 percent of the student body, the highest in the University's history.

But the recruitment of black and women faculty was not as successful. Out of a total university faculty of 1,884, black faculty members total 51 and women faculty members total 362.

Chancellor Christopher C. Fordham III was disappointed in the black and women faculty recruitment numbers and expressed his concern to faculty members in a report.

At the same time, a group of concerned students began wondering about the low numbers of women and black faculty on the UNC campus, and they did some investigating. "We did some checking on the statistics of blacks and women faculty," Chuck Hennessee, a concerned senior from Fayetteville said. "But few agreed on a solution to the problem."

Hennessee said that the problem was the faculty members in the departments were not trying hard enough to recruit minorities. Another one of the concerned students is Synthia Scott, a senior from Winston-Salem. She agrees with Hennessee on the problem. "The problem is in the individual departments," Scott said. "They aren't putting together enough effort or looking in the right places for qualified minorities."

And the concerned students started marching to show their disappointment. Marching has not been the only action taken by the group. They have also written some letters to The Daily Tar Heel. Hennessee said the Tar Heel gave him credit for the letter written on Feb. 9. He however, only wrote the letter. "I typed the letter that's all," Hennessee said. "There are others that should get credit for the letter. We have some researchers who helped with the letter."

All of these activities have gotten the students some attention and support. The Black Caucus has given the students verbal and written support, but the Black Caucus members will not participate in the demonstrations. "This is a student operation," Audrey Johnson, leader of the Black Caucus, said. "We have no intention of taking over." The caucus does not have the time to take part in the campus marches. Johnson said that the caucus members have work overloads that prohibit them from participation.

How does the Black Caucus feel about the students form of protest? "They are showing the University that they are affected by the lack of blacks and women present at the campus," Johnson said. "It is important to them. Their protest show sensitivity and responsibility."

Chancellor Fordham also supports the students, but he said that the problem is more than the departments. "You have to solve the problem and be effective," Fordham said. "We need to train graduate students, improve the environment, and get salaries competitive." He said that the University is making some progress, but it does take time. "It is essential to get something done," Fordham said.

Even though the concerned students are getting support, they want more support. Hennessee said that he would like to see faculty and department heads express concern. "We need to get more support and be persistent," he said. "We also need a full show of black, white and women students."

Scott said that students who didn't want to march could still help the cause. "Go to your departments, and see how many people are recruited," she said. "See how many are black and women."

Hennessee and Scott will be graduating in May, but they would like to see some progress for their efforts. "There are approximately 50 faculty positions open," Scott said. "I would like to see at least ten of these positions go to women and blacks." Hennessee would also like to see at least ten of these positions go to minorities.



Dr. Sonja Stone speaks at a recent protest in front of South Building.

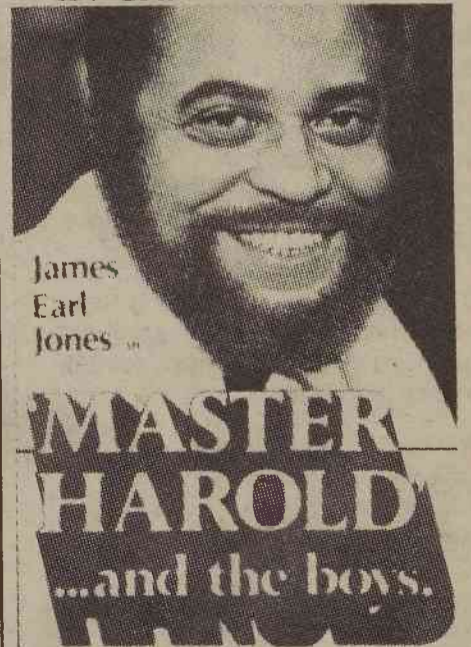
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