

Black Ink

The essence of freedom is understanding

Black Student Movement Official Newspaper
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Vol. XV, No. 9

March 28, 1985



- FC378 / 496
- Sophiscated Ladies Reviewed page 6
 - Black J-School Professor Likes UNC page 5
 - Luther Vandross Album Reviewed page 7

Black Studies Curriculum Confronts Changing Realities

by Angela Ross
Staff Writer

Five years ago the health of the African and Afro-American Studies Curriculum was not good, according to Dr. Colin A. Palmer, chairman of the Curriculum. Since then, it has improved.

"But, it must be constantly nourished. We must take its temperature regularly and it must receive constant medication."

Palmer, an agile medium-sized, graying man with a soft voice, recently reflected on his five-year chairmanship of the Curriculum in a colloquium and interview. He noted that the Curriculum had improved over the past five years.

"To maintain" the Curriculum, he said, "we must keep a fine staff and continue to be respectful of and concerned about our students." One of his first concerns when he became chairman was to restructure the undergraduate curriculum to reach a larger number of students.

But he wants to do more. Thus, Palmer will not step down this spring -- other Curriculum heads, in the past, have stepped down after five years. He said he wanted to see certain projects completed, especially in the research dimension.

As for the undergraduate Curriculum today, it may be one of the largest in the country. An informal survey by the Curriculum indicated that the University has the largest enrollment of any African and Afro-American Studies program at 2,000 students this year with about 15 people majoring in the program. That's up from 251 students in 1980.

Although 60 percent of the Black students at the University take courses in the Curriculum, a lot of white students also participate.

Palmer said white students found the courses interesting in addition to the fact that the courses filled General College requirements.

However, students don't come to the Curriculum looking for easy grades.

"We are too tough," Palmer said about the Curriculum's grading system. He explained, "We are at the point where we don't need to prove anything anymore -- we have established ourselves."

Only "48 percent of the students (taking courses in the Curriculum) get 'As' and 'Bs'," Palmer said. He said other University academic programs gave As and Bs to sixty percent of the students.

"Challenging courses and assignments make the Curriculum competitive," he said. "The competitiveness of the Curriculum is due to the overall commitment of the faculty to excellence in teaching."

"The Curriculum has also grown physically with more adequate office space and more technical equipment," he said.

Although the Curriculum has been successful in accomplishing many of its goals, it still faces some problems.

"One of the most debilitating aspects is the constant struggle against intellectual racism," Palmer said.

Intellectual racism is "the perception that African and Afro-American Studies has different professional standards from other academic units," he said.

Palmer maintains that he confronts this problem whenever he discusses issues regarding the appointment of other department's professors to positions in the Curriculum. "I would long for the day when the initiative for an...appointment would come from another academic department."

Another problem facing the Curriculum is an inadequate number of instructors. "Faculty size has not increased tremendously," he said. "We have failed to attract as much faculty as we'd like. Most potential applicants opt for positions with other curricula."

Approximately 10 instructors teach courses regularly in the Curriculum, he said.
(continued on page 8)



Photo by Ralph Ward

They Won!

Black Student Movement elections were held March 19 in the Carolina Student Union. Next years officers are (from the left) Tonya Smith, vice-president; Sibby Anderson, president; and Janet Roach, secretary. Not pictured is Craig Goodson, treasurer. Judging from the picture, maybe the BSM should become the BWSM -- Black Women's Student Movement.

BSM Elects New Officers ; Anderson is president

by Denise Moultrie
Staff Writer

The Black Student Movement elected new central committee members Tuesday. Sibby Anderson is president-elect. She won 109-34 against Tony Martin, who was a late entry in the race.

Anderson said she was surprised to win because she was not able to campaign as extensively as she wanted. She said, "I'm really enthusiastic about the job." She plans to maintain the status of the BSM as Sherrod Banks has done.

In the vice president's race, Tonya Smith defeated Todd Mason, Chairman for Student Affairs in the Campus Governing Council, 103-40. Smith was endorsed by Anderson in the BSM candidate's forum.

Smith said, "I am very glad that the people with the most experience and dedication to the BSM won the elections. I don't think anyone can come into an of-

fice in the BSM without having been intensely involved before."

In the race for secretary, Janet Roach, also endorsed by Anderson, was re-elected with 102 votes to Adriann Howard's 41. Roach said experience with the BSM prepared her for another term.

Craig Goodson was elected treasurer, 95-45, over Sallie Davis.

The mandatory meal plan, constitutional funding for the BSM and minority recruitment should head the list for the BSM for the next year, Smith said.

Sherrod Banks, BSM president, said he expects Anderson to do an outstanding job. "Having been president of People Against Racism (PAR), she already has experience as a leader," he said.

"The job of BSM president is extremely difficult," he said, "and every BSM member should be patient and supportive of her as she grows into her new position."