

# the Seahawk

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## Thomas M. Ruyle

"View From the Dodo's Nest"

### Equality = Equality. Nothing more, nothing less.

On August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, and spoke words immortalized in our nation's history and conscience:

"I have a Dream...we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children - black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics - will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: 'Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!'"

It has been over 36 years since Dr. King spoke those words. A lot has changed for the better in America since then...yet the more things change, the more they stay the same.

I received an email recently from an assistant editor of a newspaper in the Midwest; the gentleman was asking the *Seahawk* to place an announcement for an upcoming journalism internship opportunity in this week's issue. While the *Seahawk* is more than happy to let the UNCW community know of such opportunities, there was one problem: the internship was open to *minority* students only.

Minorities only? You've got to be kidding me! As the editor of a newspaper that is aimed at all UNCW students, faculty, staff and the surrounding com-

munity, I could not allow this announcement to be published.

The *Seahawk* supports diversity, both on the UNCW campus and throughout the nation. In keeping with the progress that has been made since the days of Dr. King's speech, not supporting diversity - of race, religion, handicap, gender, sexual orientation, etc. - would be foolhardy indeed.

But along with the idea of diversity goes the ideal of *equality* - an ideal that is slipping by the wayside in the name of vague "political correctness" that pervades our society and day-to-day individual thought. Equality, it seems, applies more for some than it does for others these days.

Could anyone imagine a job opportunity advertised as open to 'whites only'? Of course not, and such a thing certainly would not run in the *Seahawk*, for the exact same reason as the 'minorities only' advertisement, or a similar 'gays only' or 'Jewish only' or any other announcement aimed at a specific/vague sector of American culture. It just does not add up to equal opportunity, period.

Equality means that the opportunities are open to ALL people in America, regardless of their history, individuality or unique circumstances.

## Editorial Viewpoint...

### Are we the future sheep?

This is it...the UNCW Board of Trustees (BOT) and the UNC Board of Governors (BOG) are meeting this week to decide the future of our tuition rates. The *Seahawk* will be watching very closely - both to cover the event and to see how many students make an appearance at the meetings.

Basically, the BOT has decided that in-state students need to pay \$235 more in tuition per year; out-of-state students will pay \$400 more per year. The next step in this process is seeking approval of the hikes from the BOG and UNC General Administration, then on to final approval from the North Carolina General Assembly.

Sure, the extra income (about \$2.3 million per year) for the University will go far in retaining the best possible faculty. Needless to say, anyone who values his/her education wants it to be delivered by the best available scholars.

And if the increase does pass, Financial Aid availability will increase accordingly - no one will be financially "shut out" of UNCW. Administrators say that some of the extra funds generated will actually enable more disadvantaged southeastern North Carolina students to attend UNCW. Very noble, indeed - everyone deserves a shot at a college education.

Similar increases in tuition have been

passed at several other N.C. schools, most notably Chapel Hill, where many students protested the increase loudly and fervently. In other words, they stood up and made their voices heard.

We have yet to see that here. It seems as if the idea of speaking up or speaking out against an administrative idea is taboo here, even in the name of getting the facts and stimulating dialogue between the students and administration. Chancellor James Leutze confirmed that he has not heard one bit of feedback from any students with regard to the tuition issue.

Is that how we want to be remembered at UNCW? As the 'quiet' student body? If we are the 'quiet' students now, we'll wind up being the sheep of the future...the ones who get walked on.

Keep in mind that nothing is certain. This being a major election year, not too many politicians want to be known for raising tuition. Even Leutze has told the *Seahawk* that he is not optimistic the tuition increase will pass.

But a matter such as this requires the students to speak out and make their opinions known. Most of the meetings, including the main BOT meeting at 2:30 p.m. tomorrow at the Madeline Suite, are open to the public.

So exercise your right to be there - and let your voice be heard.

