

CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT

Academic support program reaches out to students

Tom is a freshman having a lot of trouble adjusting to college life. He has never learned how to manage his time very well, and now he really needs help handling a full load of college courses.

Patty has a learning disability. She has always had difficulty reading. Words that are easy for others to read appear mixed up to Patty. She is a highly intelligent student, but her problems with reading make college work a lot harder.

Students like Patty and Tom are the ones who are likely to 'slip through the cracks' at colleges, dropping or failing out, because the extra help they need is not usually available.

But, at Chowan College, with the new Academic Support Program, students like Patty and Tom can be the successful ones if they take advantage of the components this new program has to offer.

Dr. Mary Ruth Coleman, chairperson of the department of academic support, along with the faculty of the college, is developing and implementing a 'one-of-a-kind' program for academic support that is not to be found on other college campuses. It includes several components which have been proven to help students cope with college work, such as tutorials and seminars. The program also focuses on learning disabled students, something that is somewhat unique for a college.

Other colleges are not doing the kind of comprehensive programming that we hope to accomplish," states Dr. Coleman, referring to the programs for learning disabled. "We are unique in that we are offering a tutoring program that is open to all students, and in that

the faculty at Chowan has made academic support a priority. We have campus-wide support for this program. Other colleges may recruit students with learning disabilities, but very few provide the level of support that we are putting into place here."

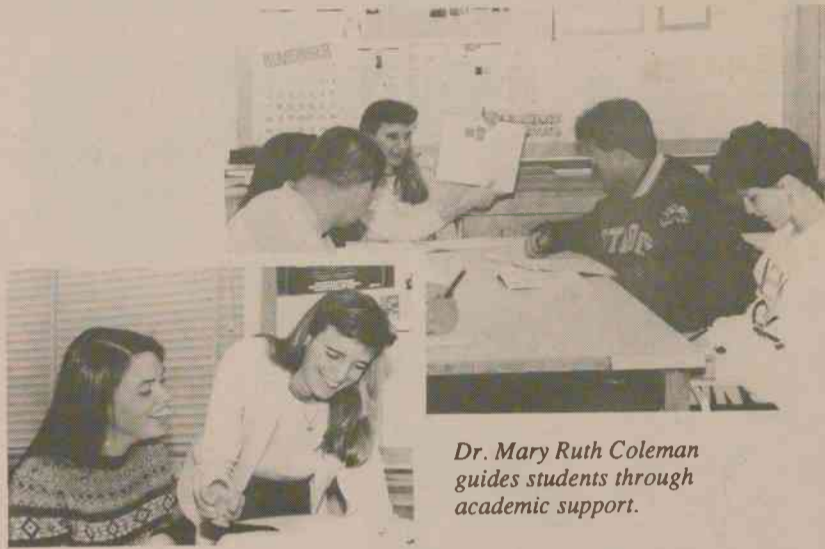
The January workshop for faculty at Chowan will focus on learning disabilities, providing an introductory understanding of LD (learning disabled) and how the special needs of LD students can best be met. Students may need some additional support and modifications in college work, but can be very successful students and contributors to society.

"We are equipped to work with LD students better at Chowan because the college campus is small and students are not overwhelmed or threatened," states Dr. Coleman. "Although we are a small college, we are still large enough to have the resources available for students. I have served on panels with representatives from other colleges and universities in North Carolina, and it appears Chowan has a higher percentage of learning disabled students. So, our need for a solid, comprehensive program is great."

Among the resources that are available to students through the academic support program are:

1. **Non-credit courses** - something Chowan has offered over a period of time to provide fundamental support in the basics of math, writing, reading, and English as a second language. Students have access to these through placement tests and faculty review.

2. **Tutorial program** - designed to be integrated with academic curriculum and to provide direct assistance to the student with coursework and basic



Dr. Mary Ruth Coleman guides students through academic support.

study habits. This is a free service available to any student.

3. **Seminars** - on the transition into college. Topics include surviving college, study skills and habits, test-taking, note-taking and reading a college textbook, and special focus seminars, such as on learning disabilities, and time management. These are open to all students but invitations are extended to students if there is a special need.

4. **Writing and Math Labs** - are in the process of being developed at Chowan. These will be available to all students and also those who may be referred to the centers by faculty.

5. **Counseling/guidance** - to establish an advisor/advisee network for students with special needs. These relationships will build communication and self-advocacy skills so students can learn how to begin getting their own needs met. The goal is for stu-

dents to become their own advocates. This component is open to all students with a focus on students with learning problems and special needs.

"Our goals for the future include computer-assisted labs with a full-time lab coordinator," explains Dr. Coleman. "We also are developing Individual Educational Plans for students who need these, and this is something I've not seen done on other college campuses. We are truly responding to the needs of students through a continuum of services available to them on campus."

"Our program is a support program that does not take away responsibility from the student. Every student is expected to put forth maximum effort and motivation," explains Dr. Coleman. "We are here to ensure that if they put forth that maximum effort and motivation, they can reach their potential."

Dying way of life pictured in exhibit

A dying way of life is presented through photography in a current exhibition in Chowan's Art Gallery in Green Hall.

The saga of the river herring industry over the past twenty years is told through the bright and realistic colors of photographs by Frank Stephenson, Jr., a member of the Chowan faculty.

The exhibition features seventy 11" x 16" color photographs of river fisheries, and the popular herring fishing hole, Vaughan's Creek, just north of Murfreesboro.

The exhibition's gallery opening was held on December 4.

"The exhibit is presented as a tribute to the men and women, past and present, who have fished the rivers and creeks of this region of North Carolina for the river herring," states photographer Frank Stephenson. "For centuries, persons living in this region, whether Indians, colonists, or twenti-

Frank Stephenson at the Tunis Fishery on the Chowan River



eth century residents have used numerous methods and devices from reed baskets to bow nets to river seines to catch these silvery saltwater fish."

For most of the 18th, 19th, and early 20th century, millions and millions of salted herring were caught in these rivers and shipped to other

parts of North America and Europe. Salt herring was a staple of the local diet with herring roe considered to be somewhat of a delicacy.

Pollution and over-zealous trawling by foreign fishing fleets off the North Carolina coast have caused the catches of river herring to dramatically drop in

the past ten years, according to Stephenson. Many of the photographs in the exhibit could not be taken today because the annual catch is not nearly as large, and the seine nets are no longer being used by fisheries.

The three remaining operating river fisheries featured in this exhibit are: Parker's Ferry Fishery, established in 1942; Tunis Fishery, which has operated in Tunis for about thirty years; and Perry-Wynns fishery and herring processing plant, said to be the largest of its kind in the United States.

A self-taught photographer specializing in photography of the rural south, Stephenson has been photographing herring fishermen, and the local fishing industry for over twenty years.

A graduate of Chowan College and North Carolina State University, Stephenson is an educational grants administrator at Chowan.

The photography exhibit is appearing through the month of December.