

PLAGIARISM

Common problem with no easy answers

By Amanda Fellers
Staff Writer

In a 1990-91 survey of 6,000 students across 31 campuses, 70 percent admitted to cheating at least once in college; 40 percent admitted to cheating on exams.

Within the past year, Methodist College faculty have been concerned about plagiarism. On Jan. 31, Dr. Ronald Speier, dean of students, and Karen Boyd, assistant dean of students, both from East Carolina University, came to Methodist to inform faculty about how to deal with plagiarism. The two spoke briefly at a faculty meeting with a luncheon following to further discuss the problem.

Methodist College's Honor Code prohibits cheating, including plagiarism. The Student Handbook states, "Anything that is written in a paper, book report, or any other assignment must be in the student's own words or must properly and fully indicate the source(s)...students may not submit as their own or copy any part of their papers from another student's paper, a paper they have bought, or anything written by a friend or relative."

One of the major issues concerning plagiarism is intent. Did the student plagiarize due to sloppy documentation or did he/she have the intent to mislead? Teachers agree that it is not an easy distinction to make. The difficulty is determining someone's intent.

Students also recognize intent as an issue. One student said, "I think teachers take it too far; is it plagiarism through ignorance or is it malice [on the student's part]?" Whatever the case may be, students should remember that intent is not required to prove a case of plagiarism.

Although intent is not a concern in regard to proof, it is often a factor when determining the student's

penalty. The issue then becomes whether students should be given the ultimate penalty or be given a chance to redo the work. One teacher said, "An intent to mislead should carry a heavier sanction."

Boyd advised teachers to "be able to defend the action that you take. Did you treat the students fairly and reasonably?"

In an informal poll of 10 Methodist students, only one admitted to having plagiarized. Although most were skeptical when asked whether they thought plagiarism is a problem on campus, all ultimately agreed that it is. Finally, eight out of the 10 students said they know someone else who has plagiarized.

The most common responses were, "I know a lot of people who've done it" and "A lot of people get away with it."

Plagiarism is a concern on our campus. Now that teachers have been informed as to how to discourage and detect plagiarism, it is equally important for students to know how to avoid it.

An academic integrity hand-out printed by the University of California at Davis provides the following guidelines for helping students avoid plagiarism:

< Try to use your own words when writing a paper.

< When using another person's words, use quotation marks and give credit to the source. Even if you make slight variations in the language, make sure you still give credit to the source.

< Even if you don't directly quote the material, document information and ideas whenever they are new to you.

< If you are unsure, add a footnote or citation; it is better to be extra cautious than not to give credit where it is deserved.

Is it plagiarism or not?

Take this quiz to find out. True or false?

- Using someone else's exact words as your own is plagiarism.
- Using someone else's ideas as your own is plagiarism.
- Every school has the same definition of plagiarism.
- If you didn't intend to plagiarize, then you aren't guilty.
- A student can be expelled from college for plagiarism.
- A plagiarism conviction on your record can prevent you from getting in to law school or grad school.
- If you use several passages from another work, you only have to cite it once.
- It is better to turn in a paper late than to plagiarize.
- Plagiarism only exists when you use material from a copyrighted work.
- If you paraphrase the work, it is not plagiarism.

Answers:

1. T, 2. T, 3. F, 4. F, 5. T, 6. T, 7. F, 8. T, 9. F, 10. F

Key point to remember: If in doubt, cite the source. Always ask your professor for help or advice to avoid plagiarism.

Muscling in for two



Senior forward Jason Childers takes it to the hoop in the Monarchs' 71-62 defeat of Newport News Apprentice Feb. 2. Childers scored 21 points and was twice-named DIAC Player of the Week. The Monarchs remain undefeated in conference play heading into the last two weeks of the season. (Photo by Jamec Lynch)

NCSU professor, SGA president provide humor at convocation

By Mike McDermott
Editor

Methodist's Opening Convocation Feb. 7 combined inspiration and humor to kick off the spring semester. Student Government Association president Leon Clark and N.C. State English professor Elliot Engel both drew laughter and applause from the appreciative audience.

Clark gave a speech on how to cope with and overcome adversity, employing a catch phrase used by his grandmother, "You gotta use what you got to get what you want."

Clark spoke of adversity he has faced as a student and an athlete at Methodist College, and how he has overcome hardships to persevere and excel. His speech closed with a reference to the late 1970's movie *Superman*, when he quoted the marquee poster which stated, "I believe that a man can fly!" Clark added, "That man is me," as he loosened his tie and opened his dress shirt to reveal his now-famous *Superman* tee-shirt.

Dr. Anthony DeLapa, vice-president for Academic Affairs, took the stage following Clark to introduce

the guest speaker, Dr. Elliot Engel, a professor of English at North Carolina State University and a leading expert on the English writer Charles Dickens.

Engel began his presentation by stating that Dickens would be "disgusted if he thought that *A Christmas Carol* was his most popular work today." Engel went on to describe how he, the day after the drop/add period, would give his students reading assignments of novels for which no *CliffsNotes* exist.

Throughout his entire humorous oration, Engel divulged little-known facts and anecdotes about Dickens, such as his invention of the paperback novel as well as the "procrastinated suspense" style of writing, which is the forerunner to the soap operas of today. Engel also mentioned that Dickens, although dead for more than 100 years now, is still the highest money-making author whose work is studied by academia. Dickens made \$68 million as a writer.

Engel closed by saying, "I didn't finish my presentation, but if

See ENGEL, page 2

Brother's illness leads to MC football standout's meeting with Michael Jordan (instead of exams)

By Sonya Sparks Murdock
Staff Writer

Sophomore Trayfer Monroe got a call from his mom in November about a possible trip to Chicago. To see the Bulls. To meet Michael Jordan.

Monroe remembers saying, "I hope it's not during exams."

The trip materialized. And Monroe was faced with the dilemma: to take his exams on schedule or meet Michael Jordan. He made the obvious choice.

On Dec. 6, Monroe and his family met Michael Jordan and dined at Jordan's Chicago restaurant.

How did this encounter come about? Monroe has a younger brother: 17-year-old Travis. One year ago this month, Travis underwent heart-transplant surgery after an initial attempt to repair his own heart failed. Travis waited five months for a heart that matched his rare blood type. Before his surgery, Travis had made one wish: to meet his idol Michael Jordan. The Make-A-Wish Foundation granted that wish by sending his entire family to Chicago for five days.

So Trayfer, Travis, and their family of seven, as well as nine other families, were flown to Chicago by the Foundation. They were treated to dinner at Jordan's restaurant and a special appearance by Jordan himself, who posed for photographs, shared jokes, and signed autographs.

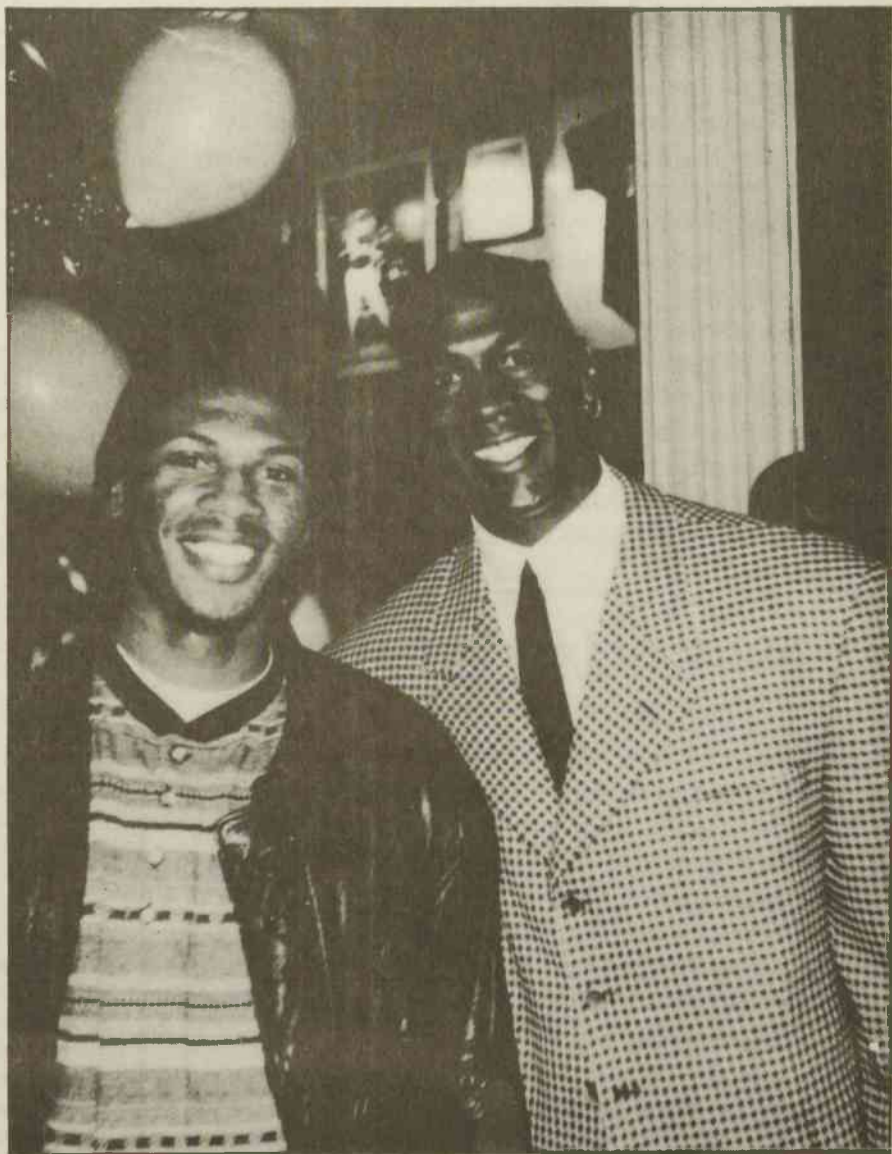
Afterward, the Make-A-Wish Foundation sponsored a party for the families. The Chicago Bears quarterback Eric Kramer and Chicago Bulls' mascot "Benny the Bull" showed up as well.

The next night, Monroe's family saw the Bulls play the Miami Heat. Unfortunately, the Bulls lost. But that didn't seem to matter to Travis. The highlight of the trip was meeting Michael Jordan. "That was [Travis'] happy day," Monroe said, smiling.

"Michael stayed at our table [during the dinner] the longest," Monroe said. "He was picking at my sister because she couldn't get the camera to work. He kept saying, 'She doesn't know what she's doing.' She didn't have film in the camera!"

Jordan also joked with the crowd, asking them if they were going to pull for the Bulls in the game against the Heat. Monroe described Jordan as "silly" but also a "down-to-earth guy." Overwhelmed and in awe of "His Airness," Monroe said,

See JORDAN, page 2



MC sophomore Trayfer Monroe met Michael Jordan in December while on a Make-A-Wish Foundation trip for his brother Travis. The Monroe family dined at Jordan's restaurant and took in a Bulls game. (Photo courtesy of Trayfer Monroe)

INSIDE

- New show choir holding auditions.....page 2
- Sports highlights.....page 3
- Internet not always suitable for children.....page 4
- Fayetteville needs to be cleaned up and improved.....page 4
- "It always comes back to football".....page 4