

# McCrory wrongfully condemns liberal arts degrees

On Feb. 12, North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory bashed the inclusion of liberal arts majors at public universities. McCrory believes that liberal arts majors



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"have no chance of getting people jobs" and should be taught in private colleges.

McCrory is mistaken.

And Vice President for Student Affairs Aaron Fetrow believes it is up to Guilford to prove McCrory wrong.

"I think it is critical for those of us leading liberal arts colleges to make the opposite case made by the governor," said Fetrow in an email interview. "We need to remind our business leaders of the thousands of successful business people who came to business with degrees in the liberal arts. We must make a strong argument for the analytical and life skills learned at places like Guilford."

"I don't want to subsidize (liberal arts majors) if that's not going to get someone a job," said McCrory in a national radio interview with Bill Bennett.

McCrory's belief that a liberal arts degree will not get one a job is incorrect. Recent grads with a degree in architecture have a 13.9 percent unemployment rate, while English Literature majors had a 9.2 percent rate according to a study by

Georgetown's Center on Education and the Workplace.

The study also found that mechanical engineers and computer science majors had a higher unemployment rate than communication majors. A liberal arts degree is worth just as much as a trade degree.

Professor of Psychology Richie Zweigenhaft believes that a liberal arts degree is not just about learning a trade.

"It's really a degree that's designed to teach people to read effectively, to write effectively, to

think both critically and creatively," said Zweigenhaft. "People will say, 'What can you do with a philosophy degree?' and the answer is you can do all kinds of things with a philosophy degree."

A liberal arts degree is valuable because it helps mold independent critical thinkers who have the ability to question the world that they live in. A liberal arts degree develops creative, innovative thinkers.

Students should be able to study things like Race, Class and Gender, Shakespeare in Film or the History of Rock because these classes allow

students to think critically and not just about money.

College is not just about finding a skill that one can turn into an occupation. It is about finding one's passion.

I am undecided, like many first-year students, and love that I have the ability to choose from an array of liberal arts majors.

"If you want to take a gender studies, that's fine," said McCrory. "Go to a private school and take it."

But if public universities did not offer liberal arts majors, private colleges would be at an advantage.



CARTOON BY CJ GREEN

Public universities would be a place for learning a skill while private universities would have students who think critically.

This is problematic. Kids who go to private schools usually have more money than kids who must go to state schools. Why only offer creativity and critical thinking skills to families with money?

This would upset the balance between private and public universities and allow students with money to gain yet another advantage over the students who attend public universities.

Zweigenhaft believes that training for a trade is not wrong, but taking liberal arts out of public education is dangerous.

"Many public universities do have tracks for pre-professional training," said Zweigenhaft. "I'm not against that. But to take the liberal arts out of public education, what that says to me is, 'We're no longer going to emphasize the big questions or critical thinking but prepare people to be workers in a corporate world.'"

Does McCrory want to create a generation incapable of critical thinking, destined for mindless careers?

Before McCrory writes off liberal arts majors as useless, look at what allowed him to become successful: he went to Catawba College, a liberal arts college in North Carolina.

A world in which everyone is trained for a job does not sound like America. It sounds like "1984."

# The Quakeria fish tank: beautiful adornment or perplexing waste of money?

The smell of pizza and fried foods, the roar of hungry college students, the newly infamous "Harlem Quake" location and a tank full of fish. What?



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The recently installed fish tank that now occupies prime space in the Quakeria has become a topic of discussion this past semester.

Now the question at hand: Is this tank awesome or just completely unnecessary? It does create a work-study job: cleaning the tank and keeping the fish happy and healthy. However, the tank and the critters living inside cost money that could have been used in other departments or places on campus that really need the funding.

"While I approved the fish tank as part of the renovation of the Grill and Quakeria space and helped to design it, I cannot claim credit for the original

idea," said Kent Chabotar, president and professor of political science. "I can tell you that we checked with many students about the concept, and the near unanimous reaction was positive. It was intended as a focal point and divider between the Grill and Quakeria (and) as part of the overall space design."

The fish tank is a 390-gallon saltwater reef tank. It also has a 75-gallon sump underneath that has filters and extra live rock and macro-algae that help break down nitrates into nitrogen.

There are over 17 different species of fish, shrimp, coral,

sponge and other saltwater creatures living peacefully in the tank.

"The fish were chosen by consulting with saltwater reef experts to find a nice blend of fish that will coexist and not stress each other," said Rex Harrell, support services manager and "Fish Tank Guru," as tagged by Aaron Fetrow, vice president for student affairs and dean of students.

Personally, I think the tank itself is really beautiful and is extremely well put together.

It creates a nice visual for people walking by and provides entertainment while chowing down on some pizza and Grill food.

"I think it is ostentatiously awesome," said senior Caroline Loftus. "I think it goes against the Quaker value of Simplicity, but it's pretty."

The Quaker value of Simplicity was definitely forgotten during the construction of this 390-gallon tank.

"I think it's pretty awesome," said senior Mellissa Beeh. "But what's the point besides that? I kinda feel like it may have been a waste of money."

While we do not know how much money was spent on the fish tank project itself, we can say that this money may have been better used.

"I think it's cool, and I love that it's there, but a lot more departments and things could have used the money," said sophomore James O'Neill.

It seems as if the overall opinion of the tank itself is that is it fun to look at but really was a waste of money. It was installed to make our school more aesthetically pleasing.



KACEY MINNICK/GUILFORDIAN

The fish tank resides in the Quakeria, where it was built in the summer of 2012 during the Founders' renovations.

The tank is obviously here to stay, and we cannot change that fact or that it cost money that could have been distributed to other departments on campus.

If Guilford continues to spend money on such things as fish tanks, where will our school be in five years? What will our financial situation be?