

# Should I assume UNCC is already dead?

(The following statement was read to the general faculty on Wednesday February 2 at 12:25 p.m. by the Editor.)

I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you today and I assure you I shall be as brief as I can about such a serious matter.

Some of you may have read the Journal this week and are familiar with my comments concerning our "dead" student body. For the most part, the situation of the students is quiet, passive, and unresponsive to matters which should rightly concern them.

There are, however, exceptions. There are matters which unite the students, which incense them to action, which make them ready to fight for what they believe.

The matter of Dr. Leonard Jordan, one of your colleagues, is such a case. The students are angry over the non-renewal of his contract and believe that many questions remain crying for answers. This case should concern you, all of you, for it is indicative of many of the problems of UNCC and one area where your action can be decisive.

Briefly, the relationship between students and faculty is the primary one of this institution. The students are organizing actions, circulating a petition, seeking publicity from the local media - in fact, doing all they can to protect one of your fellow faculty members. I am here today to ask you to join us in this struggle for preserving your academic freedom, your individual rights to think and act and teach as you see fit.

When we see one of you forced to leave UNCC because of your individual life-style and political beliefs, we are angry. So should you be.

When we see a faculty member removed from your ranks because he refuses to rigidly conform to a one-way department or a single-idea philosophy, we are angry. So should you be.

When we see the Administration of this institution ignore the teaching ability of one of your fellows, the vivid knowledge comes to light that ability to relate to the students and to communicate with them as human beings is not valued here. We both should be angry at such policies.

Today, it is not you who are suffering for your views and personal stance. Tomorrow you cannot be sure that you will not become subject to this same purge.

For this matter involves every one of you and as those most responsible for our education, I urge you to question the action by the Administration in this matter. I urge you to seek the truth behind Dr. Jordan's removal and to act on that knowledge as you are able to see that justice and freedom are re-discovered on UNCC.

Is it your right to differ from the Administration on its policies and actions, and to publicly state that opposition?

We believe it is your inherent right and are willing to defend you for such independence. We must have voice at UNCC of all positions, all opinions - in class and out. We cannot allow the removal of the strongest individuals among us; even though we may differ with their view, we must protect their right to hold it. This is a fundamental principal of human freedom.

Is it your right to hang posters in your office, to dress differently from the masses, to act and speak according to your conscience? It is not only your right but your duty to be free - and at UNCC that includes being free to differ and oppose what you feel is wrong about the institution.

Dr. Jordan is not the only one of you under fire. The evidence is beginning to reach us that most of the instructors not re-hired were subject to discrimination and oppression because of their views and life-styles; the question of their academic scholarship and teaching effectiveness was not of major concern: their willingness to become subservient to dictates and policies with which they disagree was a factor in their non-renewals. This type of oppression is the worst type of dictatorship and we - students and faculty - must stand united to prevent such blatant personal infringement of freedom.

I urge you to support any action by the AAUP on these cases. I urge you to speak out - to your fellow faculty members, your chairmen and deans, to the Administration. If you give a damn about freedom, don't just let this pass you by without letting it be known that you disagree. It is your duty and your right to denounce what is morally and humanly wrong.

If we stand together on this, perhaps we can demonstrate that the students and faculty on this campus will not be dictated to. If we are willing to fight for freedom, put your personal status on the line, just maybe we can win back our self-respect as free and responsible citizens of this potentially great University.

I know many of you personally. I know many of you disagree with me on many matters. I accept that and respect it. We co-exist and our efforts reflect our individual views.

What many of you may not be able to tell is that I love this school - every part of it. I am willing to do whatever is necessary to insure that it is a great and free University in a society that desperately needs freedom and greatness.

If any of you love this institution, you will do something to preserve and protect its most sacred freedoms. If you don't, you and I and all of us will perish under the steamroller oppression we allowed to get started.

A wall - of students, of faculty, united - is very, very hard to break down. Today, we can lay the first brick - together

Thank you.

It will not come now except through the one-way street that begins and ends in the private towers of the Reese Building.

The Administration of a University should be the servants and technicians of the primary parts of that institution: students and faculty. We are the ones engaged in the pursuit of truth, knowledge, new and better ideas. They are only the administrative arm which should follow our desires.

But, when an Administration dictates its policies - some personal "causes," some a desire to "please" the public or Trustees or funding supporters, some a misguided or antiquated sense of educational modes in the modern world - the students and faculty are left out of the decisions, and those decisions are emplaced directly on students and faculty.

We are getting more aware of our repeatedly blockaded "system" for input into the Administration's decisions. We are tiring of the attempts to construct this school by some unspoken and unseen master plan - which apparently includes and condones extortion, intimidation, threats, deceit, withholding information, hypocrisy, nepotism, and stagnation.

As we are indeed the victims, it is up to us to change our situation and reverse the flow of power at UNCC. The status quo must be touchable by our collective efforts - on and off-campus.

The type of actions - like Jordan's case, threats, repressive actions - which are a part of the daily routine at UNCC are not worthy of high officials of a public institution of higher learning. Such manipulations and administrative "pressure" is contrary to the principals which UNCC supposedly exists to protect and foster in society.

We are in fact dealing with an arm of the Establishment in vivid living yellow color. Who can expect us to respect and learn from two-faced leaders? Who can look up to and admire Administrators who threaten and intimidate faculty members to serve their own singular purposes?

The actions of the Administration of this University are no longer sacred. There is a growing feeling among the students and faculty that the matter will require intervention by higher authority. We agree with this position.

If it takes action by President Friday, the Board of Trustees, or the new Board of Governors to correct the dishonorable and disrespectful leadership at UNCC, then we should seek their decisive action.

Mounting evidence cannot be ignored, by students and faculty or, importantly, by the public - who deserve to know what is really happening beneath the tables at UNCC. The taxpayers and supporters of this institution do not deserve to be misled about the type of institutional governance UNCC is under.

The following specific actions are recommended and, with your help, we can see them through to reality:

1) We recommend that students and faculty meet and discuss their ineffectual role in University decisions and prepare to report evidence to higher authority of examples of actions by the Administration that cannot be and are not supported.

2) We recommend that all faculty members who engage in talks with the Administration in the future refuse to discuss any situation(s) in private. Take a witness along to protect yourself from intimidation or pressure.

3) Effective immediately, the Journal shall attempt to serve as clearinghouse for statements and evidence concerning the actions taken by the Administration, especially in their dealings with faculty members. The information will be held in total secrecy until it is assembled in a report for the higher authorities outside UNCC. We believe the Journal has earned your credibility and trust and shall endeavor to keep it sacred and uncompromised. We are willing to meet with faculty members on or off-campus at any time to discuss the abuses and inadequacies perpetrated by the Administration.

4) Anyone willing to work with the Journal staff and interested parties on the final report are welcomed. The research staff especially will need volunteers and workers.

5) We recommend that student groups and faculty work together to organize and implement activities designed to fully publicize the situation at UNCC at present. These may include letter-writing campaigns to government officials, local media, and other types of joint student-faculty efforts which will publicly demonstrate our convictions on this state of affairs.



Ben Shan

There is a certain amount of unfavorable publicity which will be associated with any revelation of the gross mismanagement of Administrative authority at UNCC. We feel it is undeniable that a number of supporters of UNCC and the public in general will lose confidence in UNCC and perhaps withdraw some support of our University. This is inevitable but absolutely necessary. It is regrettable but mandatory for the immediate future of UNCC.

If the public becomes a party to our quest for honor and dignity in UNCC's leadership, then we shall have a strong force which can help our struggle to implement meaningful change at UNCC. For it is only through outside pressure and public support for our efforts that UNCC can change. The internal mechanisms are too strongly in the rigid grip of Administration opposition. We cannot make these changes without public support and cries of outrage.

The University deserves no support for the kinds of activities it has undertaken to date. The University deserves no respect or honor as long as its leadership does nothing to create that respect and honor. The University as a whole - students, faculty, staff members - must suffer some at present in order to provide for changes that will make UNCC proud and honorable - internally and externally.

We must be willing to make the sacrifices needed to alter the downhill course UNCC is riding. It will not be easy nor will the Administration grant the long-due freedoms and decision-making authority and begin to change its way of acting without a fight.

We are preparing for such a fight - whether it be in the courts, in meetings or the Boards which govern UNCC, or in the streets on this campus. We must be prepared for some setbacks, some serious struggle; but, now is the time to act together. For we have the resources and abilities to make this University become responsive, and with your united support and commitment to justice, honor, and finding our lost respectability, we cannot lose. We cannot lose.

michael mcculley

