



Robin Hadley (L) and Jennifer Ayre

Photo by Nancy London

UNC Sororities: A balanced Lifestyle

by Roy Greene

Many women at UNC find that they can balance academic work with membership in a sorority and participation in extracurricular activities.

Robyn Hadley, Jennifer Ayer and Jane Gordon are three examples of young women who have chosen to do so. They say they are the better for it.

In December, Hadley became the first black woman to be awarded the Rhodes Scholarship, and this fall she will begin study at Oxford University in England. A member of Delta Sigma Theta sorority, Hadley has participated in the UNC Fellows Program, Women's Forum, and on several departmental committees.

She said she had always put academics first but would not trade her sorority experience for anything. "I think a big part of the sorority is sisterhood," said Hadley, a senior Public Policy Analysis major from Graham. "I don't have any sisters in my family, so the sorority has been an extension of a real family."

While participating in the Fellows Program, Hadley said she had come in contact with members from other chapters of Delta Sigma Theta. "There's something very special about being able to go to any part of the country and find people who share the common bond of the sorority," she said.

Hadley said she believed the sorority has helped her gain a broad perspective on life at UNC. "Chapel Hill is a large place, and I don't think my experience here would have been complete had I not joined the sorority. It has been a very positive influence."

She said the sorority was geared toward public service, but the social aspect of the organization is appealing. She said she will miss it next year when she goes abroad.

Jennifer Ayer, a member of Delta Delta Delta sorority, worked approximately 10-20 hours a week last year as Campus Y co-President. "I've learned a lot from the Campus Y, just from dealing with the pressures of the job."

She is also involved in the Women's Forum, and has participated in Sorority Women Against Minority Prejudice (SWAMP). "At times, I have found it very tough to balance my schedule, but the sorority has been very understanding," said Ayer.

She said she had been able to balance her commitments and that the sorority had served an important purpose since she pledged during her freshman year. "My freshman year, I met a tremendous amount of people through the sorority," she said. "For an out-of-state student who knew nothing about the Greek system here, the sorority provided me with an interesting insight into the Southern lifestyle."

Jane Gordon, a member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, serves as coordinator of the Student Academic Advising Committee, a committee created last year by student government. She oversees the work of student advisers, one for every 50 students, in five dormitories and in the sororities. Soon, she will begin work with State

Affairs, a student government group that investigates state government's effect on the University.

Gordon, an Economics and Speech Communications major from Morehead City, said it was sometimes hard to balance her commitments. In order to be successful in her work, she states: "I pretty much try to prioritize my activities, almost on a day-to-day basis."

There are times, such as during sorority rush, when she knows the time commitment for the week will be almost 100 percent with the sorority she said. During the average week, she said, she spends about 70 percent of her outside commitment time with the sorority, and the other 30 percent with student government.

Gordon said she not only believed it was possible to be an active member of a sorority and take on major outside commitments, but that she believed it was the only way.