

Dental school applications decline

By LISA WYNNE
Staff Writer

Applications to the nation's dental schools have dropped by almost 66 percent over the past 10 years, but UNC's school has not followed the trend, the director of dental school admissions said Monday.

Since 1975 the number of dental school applicants has decreased from 15,734 to 5,724 nationwide, which affects acceptance standards, said Eric Solomon, assistant executive director for the American Association of Dental Schools' application service and resource studies department.

But Ken May, director of admissions and student affairs for UNC's School of Dentistry, said although out-of-state applications have

decreased slightly, in-state applications have increased by about 8 percent to 10 percent since 1985.

From 1978 to 1980, May said, the number of applicants dropped sharply. It continued to dwindle until an increase two years ago, he said.

Solomon said rising costs of dental school, competition from other fields, a decrease in the number of potential applicants and unsupportive, negative attitudes from many practicing dentists contribute to declining admissions.

Recruitment efforts, UNC's national reputation and the school's comparatively low cost may account for the dental school's larger applicant pool, May said.

In response to the national decline

in applicants, the American Association of Dental Schools and the American Dental Association have initiated Project Select, a recruitment program aimed at increasing awareness of dentistry among high school and college students, May said.

Solomon said the national application decrease has led schools to accept students with lower grades and dental admissions test scores than in previous years.

But May said the quality of UNC's applicant pool has improved over the past couple of years. He said this year's applicants had better qualifications than any group since 1954, except for applicants from 1974 to 1978. Between 1974 and 1978, applicants were at an all-time high, he said.

Despite the qualitative rise of

applicants, the graduate failure rate on the state licensing examination has increased slightly in the last year, said Chris Lockwood, executive secretary of the N.C. Board of Dental Examiners. But she said the general public should not become concerned about the quality of their dentists.

She said the failure rate runs about 25 percent. Before 1982, it was about 10 or 12 percent, she said.

Changes in the exam and what students are taught influence scores, she said.

The failure rate among non-North Carolinians, students from other schools, and practicing dentists from other states is higher than among UNC graduates taking the exam, she said.

Defense secretary Weinberger may announce resignation

From Associated Press reports

WASHINGTON — Defense secretary Caspar Weinberger had no comment Monday on broadcast reports that he would resign soon and be replaced by National Security Adviser Frank Carlucci.

NBC Nightly News, quoting top administration and congressional sources, said Weinberger was expected to announce, possibly this week, that he is resigning for personal reasons. Weinberger's wife, Jane, is known to be seriously ill, the network said.

ABC News, quoting unidentified White House officials, said the White House did not dispute the broadcast report.

CBS News reported that Carlucci's assistant, Lt. Gen. Colin Powell, was expected to succeed Carlucci in the White House post. CBS said Carlucci emerged as a leading candidate for the defense secretary post over former Sen. John Tower, R-Texas.

Asked at a NATO planning meeting in Monterey, Calif., about the broadcast reports, Weinberger replied, "No comment."

Weinberger has denied recent news reports that he planned to resign.

Gorbachev defends reforms

MOSCOW — Mikhail Gorbachev accused his Kremlin critics Monday of being either too timid or too impatient about the pace of reform, and advised "revolutionary self-restraint" in the drive to modernize the Soviet Union.

The Soviet leader said Josef Stalin committed "enormous and unforgivable" crimes and announced resumption of a campaign to rehabilitate the dictator's victims. He also praised the communist state's second leader, however, for collectivizing agriculture and industrializing the country.

Gorbachev's nationally televised speech, which lasted 2 hours and 41 minutes, was part of the

News in Brief

70th anniversary observance of the 1917 revolution that brought the communists to power.

It was his first address since the disclosure last week of a top-level fight over the pace of "perestroika," Gorbachev's program aimed at improving the quality of life by streamlining bureaucracy, encouraging individual initiative and boosting production of consumer goods.

In a mention of his visit to Washington next month for his third summit with President Reagan, Gorbachev pledged to seek a "palpable breakthrough" leading to reductions in long-range nuclear weapons and a ban on weapons in space.

Senate to investigate Ginsburg

WASHINGTON — President Reagan stood by his Supreme Court nominee Monday as Senate Democrats said they would investigate Douglas Ginsburg's having held stock in a cable TV company while supervising a government effort to win First Amendment protection for cable television operators.

Meanwhile, conservative groups said they were not concerned about reports that Ginsburg's wife, Dr. Hallee Morgan, performed two abortions and assisted in a third as a medical resident in Boston in 1979-80. One conservative spokesman said she should be commended for making a personal decision to stop participating in such procedures.

Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which will conduct hearings on Ginsburg's nomination, cautioned senators not to jump to conclusions about a possible conflict of interest in the cable television matter. But they also made clear they believe the issue should be investigated.

State law cracks down on DWI offenders

By LAURIE DUNCAN
Assistant State and National Editor

As of Jan. 1, about 55 percent more alcoholics and drug addicts will be getting treatment at the Orange-Person-Chatham Mental Health Center, said Lewis Carter, spokesman for the center.

A new state law for DWI offenses will be implemented in 1988, he said. The law will require DWI offenders with a breathalyzer count of .15 or higher to spend an hour evaluating

their addiction problems with a mental health professional.

Under the previous law, the Safe Roads Act of 1983, a driver with a breathalyzer count of .20 or greater would be evaluated for substance abuse.

Offenders pay \$25 for the evaluation and also must attend the Alcohol and Drug Education Traffic School, mandated by the Safe Roads Act. ADETS entails 10 hours of classes

within 90 days after a person is arrested for driving while impaired, said Carter, who teaches the classes.

Carter said the 1983 law treats DWI offenders as social drinkers.

"Social drinkers are so embarrassed by getting a DWI that they'll never do it again," he said. "An addicted person does not follow that kind of logic."

More than 70 percent of the people who attend ADETS classes are

alcohol and drug addicts, but only 22 percent are evaluated by a mental health professional, he said.

"You cannot educate the addict (with ADETS classes) until you get them off what they're addicted to," Carter said.

But not everyone agrees that most DWI offenders have substance-abuse problems.

"That's a myth that has taken root recently," said John Lacey, manager of the Alcohol Studies program at UNC's Highway Safety Research Center. He attributed the notion to increased media attention to the drinking-and-driving issue, and to high DWI arrest rates in North Carolina, which indicate the effectiveness of the state's enforcement program.

But drug and alcohol addiction is apparent at the ADETS classes, Carter said. Of about 20 addicted people who attend the classes each month, only one person is convinced to seek psychological treatment, he said.

"Many alcoholics just sweep it under the rug and keep on going," he said. "I'm glad they changed the law. It will be much more effective at helping people."

Peace Corps

the top-ranking applicants are actually invited to a specific program in a specific country.

"The ideal Peace Corps volunteer should have a skill in a specific program that we need," he said. "They should have the motivation and commitment to serve to the best of their ability. They should be flexible, adaptable and have a good

sense of humor, and they should bring no preconceptions to the program."

After the application process, training begins. All applicants meet in one place where they undergo a week-long evaluation. Then applicants go to their assigned countries for three months of technical, language and cross-cultural training. After this final step, the applicant is

sworn in as a Peace Corps volunteer. Then, Titus said, the adventure begins.

"The Peace Corps is like a mirror," he said. "If you come to it with the right mindset, when you look into the mirror it will never lie to you. It will show you your limitations, but it will also show you how to transcend them."

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