

Student leaders frustrated by lack of input

By SHARON KEBSCHULL
Editor

Student leaders expressed surprise and disappointment this week at the change for Teague Residence Hall from an all-male dormitory to coed and at the manner in which that decision was made.

Residence Hall Association President Jimmy Randolph and Student Body President Kevin Martin said they were unable to offer input into the initial decision to move the residents and the final decision to go coed, since they were uninformed of any changes until last Wednesday.

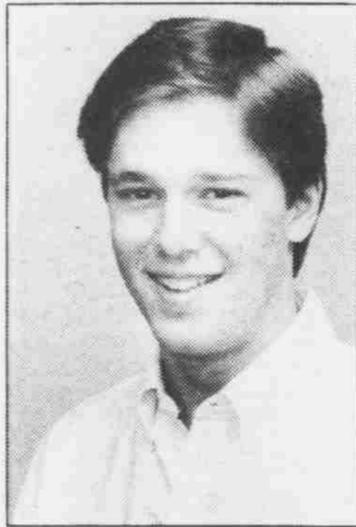
The decisions came after problems with Teague throughout the past few years culminated in racial incidents following an end-of-the-semester party April 21, said housing director Wayne Kuncel.

At that party, students clashed with two women driving by the residence hall and with Area Director Iris Hunt. Hunt was later harassed racially and sexually by men who are thought to have been Teague residents.

Although housing officials met with dormitory leaders immediately after the incidents, they did not contact Randolph until May 16.

Kuncel said he had not met with Randolph earlier because the incident was an area problem. "Once we reached the point that we might take action, we contacted Kevin (Martin) and Jimmy (Randolph)," he said.

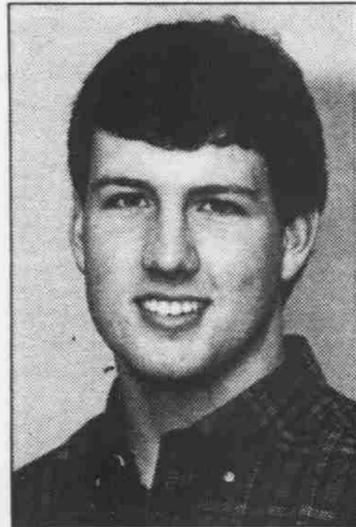
"The problem with this whole



Kevin Martin

incident is that student leaders who should've been involved early weren't," Martin said. "Specifically, Jimmy should've been brought in when the whole problem arose in the residence hall, and he wasn't."

Foster Blair, representative of the Black Greek Council, and Allan Younger, representative of the minority concerns committee of the Student Government, met with Kuncel and Hunt last Wednesday. At this meeting, also attended by Randolph and Martin, they agreed to the relocation of the 72 men who were to return



Jimmy Randolph

to Teague this fall. But Randolph and Martin expressed concerns over the wording of a draft of the notification letter sent to the 72 men, which they described as "punitive." Randolph said he and Martin suggested a softening of the original language.

A passage referring to Teague changes was removed as well because the decision to go coed was not final then, he said.

Kuncel and Martin met on Friday,

and Kuncel told Martin he was leaving his options open on future changes. Martin said he thought the matter was still under consideration, and he had planned on discussing it with Kuncel later in the week.

Kuncel announced the change to coed Monday, and Martin and Randolph first heard of it from media.

"Once again, you have a major policy action that's going to be taken, and students can merely react, rather than being active in the process," Randolph said. "We were not involved in the formulation of the letter or the relocation."

"Reassignment was the only practical solution, but I would've liked to have been involved from the beginning and arrived at that conclusion with them."

"If there is any way to eliminate the problems within Teague, an environment and conditions that we all agree are deplorable and cannot be tolerated at this University, without automatically jumping to the conclusion that we have to make it coed, then we need to keep this an all-male dorm," Randolph said.

Younger said that while he could not see enough reason to keep Teague all-male, he was upset with Kuncel's lack of communication with student leaders.

"The housing department, rather than feeling an obligation to involve us in the decision-making process, too often feels an obligation to inform us of decisions after they've been made," Randolph said, stressing that he and Martin have not encountered this in other University departments. "It could be construed as a total disregard for student opinion, but hopefully, in light of this controversy, they will place more of an importance on student opinion in the future."

"I'm sure (the decision) could affect the relationship next year between housing and government," said Area Governor Brian Sipe, who met with Kuncel about the problems repeatedly at the end of the end of the semester. "We worked very hard to solidify relations between the two . . . We're making an effort to have a student voice in the decision-making process — that's a goal we consciously set."

"(Kuncel) recognizes the governments as there. I'm not sure he seriously considers the advice and perspective they deliver."

The ultimate decision was his, Kuncel said.

"I didn't ask (Martin and Randolph) to vote whether they agreed or disagreed," he said. "They didn't have a role in the final decision because I don't have to ask them about administrative problems."

For the Record

The May 19 article, "On-campus parking available, transportation department says," incorrectly reported that students with parking fines would not receive grade reports. Rather, students would receive grades and can be awarded degrees without

receiving the diploma. Students with overdue accounts cannot receive official transcripts and cannot receive the diploma itself until accounts are cleared.

The Tar Heel regrets the error.

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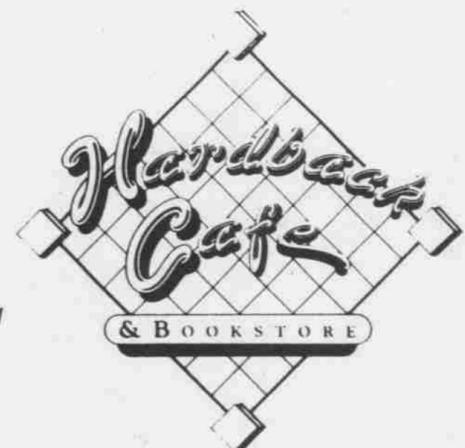
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