

The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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Just a job to do

Helms not at fault for few public appearances

It's obvious to those who have been following the N.C. senatorial race where the candidates have and have not been spending their time. The press, along with voters, have noticed where Republican Sen. Jesse Helms has not been lately, and he has received some serious criticism for scheduling so few public appearances.

Helms appears mostly before groups of supporters and, of course, before financial backers who come to \$150-a-plate functions with President Bush as the guest of honor.

But Helms has not been able to compete with the number of appearances his opponent has been chalking up. Harvey Gantt is averaging two to three appearances per day, including one in the Pit last week which some 3,500 students attended. With Congress still in session and federal budget negotiations keeping House and Senate members in discussion sometimes into the wee hours of the morning, Helms has made few. He defends himself by saying he hasn't had time to campaign the way he would like to — but plans to — when Congress adjourns.

Indeed, during this taxing time (excuse the pun) on U.S. senators and representatives, Helms does not deserve criticism for the number of times he has or has not appeared in public. With all the controversial topics affecting the outcome of this election, the number of public appearances should not be one of them. People should have better issues to scream about: Berate Congress as a whole for its party, non-party and house divisions. Mutter obscenities about incumbents who vote solely to protect themselves against attacks. Gripe about Helms' refusal to give the media agendas of his appearances. Out of all the issues and

weaknesses out there just begging for criticism, failing to appear publicly on a more frequent basis should not be one of them, especially at this time of crisis for the federal government.

It's true that even when Congress has adjourned for a few days, Helms has passed up opportunities for more appearances. Gantt and his supporters have accused the senator of being afraid to face N.C. voters. But it's doubtful that Helms, who has powerful Senate seniority and has been elected by those voters three times, is afraid to face his constituency. Criticize Helms for his negative campaigning, his hard-line stance against abortion, his name calling and intolerance of homosexuality. But criticizing him for failing to appear in public doesn't seem valid or fair — he's doing his job.

Furthermore, he should be able to dictate the direction of his campaign, determining along the way what strategies will serve him best. Helms has campaigned three times already, so it's not as if voters are unfamiliar with their incumbent candidate; they know what they're supporting if they vote for him. Perhaps Helms has decided that fewer appearances are necessary for his re-election.

There are too many social and political issues screaming for debate and attention which are more important than how many fund-raisers and barbecue dinners Jesse Helms attends. Voters should avoid getting caught up in such non-issues of this very important election. Besides, not appearing in public will only hurt *him* in the long run if he does not make personal contact with his electorate to outline his agenda. Who knows, Helms may be in North Carolina for good Nov. 6. — Elizabeth Murray

The numbers are right

Athletic scholarship distribution fair

The Tar Heel football program is blessed with 95 scholarships each year, while men's and women's soccer manages with only 11 each. The wrestling team has 11, but softball has only three.

At first glance, the number of athletic scholarships per varsity sport at UNC includes some glaring disparities. But a closer look shows the situation is as it should be.

Although some programs do not have many scholarships, they are greatly helped by the University's academic reputation. Soccer and field hockey players may not receive money for school, but they gain the benefits of attending an outstanding institution of higher learning. Quality of education is the underlying premise of all athletic recruiting, with or without scholarships. The athletic department can lure students with UNC's academic quality even when it does not have financial resources.

Also, the number of scholarships per sport must be viewed in the larger context of the Atlantic Coast Conference. All ACC schools have football and basketball teams,

but not lacrosse or field hockey. Some coaches do not compete against eight other league schools for recruits. Thus, the athletic department may decide to reduce the number of scholarships available for those teams because such financial resources are needed for sports where recruiting top-notch athletes is more competitive.

The University has shown a strong commitment to diversity in athletics. Although the number of non-revenue scholarships may not be ideal, at least they exist. Many schools, such as Clemson, refuse to support as many varsity sports.

UNC has led the way in introducing new sports to the collegiate scene. It is to be expected that older, more traditional programs with strong ACC followings would have more scholarships. Students, athletes and members of the athletic department should not worry about the number of scholarships each sport has; instead, they should show pride in the absolute quality of UNC's athletic programs. — H. Brock Page



An open letter to my adviser: I'll see you soon.

Letter to my Arts and Sciences Adviser:
 Hello, Sir. I know that you are a "sir" and not a "madam" because I have a very vague memory of having a meeting with you when I first entered the College of Arts and Sciences. I am a little embarrassed to admit that I have not made an appointment to see you since that time, and thus have forgotten who you are.

But please do not think that I'm a lazy, irresponsible slob of a student. Yes, I am a senior, yes, I do hope to graduate on time; and yes, I should have made an appointment at the beginning of the semester to come see you and make sure that my goal of on-time graduation can be realized. But I have not made that appointment for a very important reason. You see, I'm scared.

I'm scared that I will walk into your office, and you will pull out a file indicating that, due to obscure changes made over the summer, I now need 27 more classes in order to graduate. I am also afraid that, due to the budget cuts, these classes will not be available until the spring semester of 2013. And Sir, if I am told this horrible news, I will not be a very pleasant individual. I will scream. I will cry. I will destroy furniture. I may even throw up on your shoes. And I really will not mean to take it out on you. I mean, I know it will not be your fault. You are probably an overworked, underpaid professor with a wife and kids and a desperate need for a vacation. I understand that. But you will probably be the only one in the office I will be able to vent my anger and frustration upon, and I really do not want you to suffer that kind of emotional distress and physical injury (not to mention the cleaning bill for your shoes).

I have other fears as well. I am scared that I will walk into your office, and you will pull out a file indicating that, due to obscure changes made over the summer, many of the required classes for my major have been eliminated. You will tell me that in December I will have completed the requirements for my degree.

Jenn Layton

I Just Work Here

Then, you will hand me my diploma and kick me out the door. And Sir, I am not ready to leave yet. I am still trying to find a job. I still need to find my own place. And there are even more important things than that. I still have not drunk from the Old Well (not that it would do me any good at this point). I still have not witnessed a streak or figured out those automated teller machines by the Pit. I still have not hekked a Pit preacher or planted dynamite under that ugly construction project near Kenan Stadium. Sir, I still have not successfully kept up with any of my syllabuses, or syllabi, or whatever the plural is of those schedule sheets professors hand out.

I am scared that you will look for my file, discover that it is missing, and tell me that all my records from the General College and the admissions office have vanished as well. You will say that there appears to be no evidence of my ever having been admitted to Carolina, and you will not believe me when I say that I have been here for three years. I will try to prove this to you by asking former professors to testify on my behalf, but they will take one look at me and vehemently deny ever seeing me before or teaching me in one of their classes. I will try to get a copy of my housing contract, but the people at Carr Building will have lost that as well. I will run back to Ehringhaus, but the doors will be locked, and I will be unable to find my key. My search for the key will prove fruitless and a complete waste of time since my suitcases will have requested that the suite be re-keyed. When I finally sneak into the building, behind the pizza delivery man, the person at the desk will take one look at me and ask for my ID. Of course, I will not be able to find that, either, and the desk attendant will call the RA on duty to escort me out of the building and

threaten to charge me with trespassing, if I return. Lost, homeless and penniless (as my bank account will also have mysteriously vanished) I will wander along Franklin Street, smoking cheap cigarettes, guzzling something alcoholic out of a paper sack and talking to my imaginary friend Rufus the Rhino.

Do you think I am being ridiculous? Sir, I have noticed a frighteningly large increase in the number of people wandering aimlessly along Franklin Street, talking to non-existent beings. How did they get that way? I do not want to find the answer to that question firsthand.

I am not trying to blow things out of proportion. But Sir, I am afraid that you will tell me that six of my former professors from last year have suddenly realized that they had made a mistake in grading my exams and have decided to change my passing grades to Fs. I am afraid that I will have to sell my soul for a cap and gown. I am afraid that you will laugh in my face when I ask if I will graduate on time. I am afraid that my touch-tone phone will break and I will not be able to pre-register on Caroline. (Even if that doesn't happen, it won't matter because I still do not understand the whole phone registration process. I went looking for Henrik Rodl, thinking that he could explain it to me since his face is on all the advertisements, but he is always off playing basketball.)

I am trying to be brave, Sir. One of these days, I will show up, I promise. Just don't do anything to justify my fears. Lie, if you have to. I love Carolina, but I am as anxious to get out of here as the next senior. Please help me to do just that. Thank you.

Your advisee,
 Jenn Layton

Jenn Layton is a senior English major from Kinston, Ontario. She Loves writing this column every week, especially when she deals with people who like to be playful with the spelling of her name.

READERS' FORUM

UNC needs resources to remain competitive

To the editors:
 Numbers count, but only if we stop to pay attention. The recent U.S. News and World Report rating of the "Best Big Universities" in the United States contains a great deal of telling data, not just summary votes on overall standings of schools. Those of us concerned about the future of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill should consider the following:
 ■ North Carolina spends less per student at its top-flight public university than any state with such a school except Virginia and less also than any top-flight private university. Indeed, UNC-CH spends just under 51 percent of the average spent per student by the top 25 big universities in the country and just under 94 percent of the average spent per student by the top 25 liberal arts colleges in the country. In short, North Carolina is supporting its flagship university below the level of even good undergraduate schools.

■ UNC-CH spends less on its "faculty resources" than any university ranked higher.

■ Money alone does not make a top-ranked university; 23 comparable schools with relatively more financial resources rank lower than UNC-CH, which stands 41st among national universities in the amount of financial resources it commands.

■ UNC-CH students average 169 points (13 percent) lower on their SATs than the average students of the other 24 top big universities in the U.S. In fact, UNC-CH has students with a lower average SAT score than any other top 25 big university, presumably because North Carolina students do not do as well on the SAT tests than do students of any other state with a top-ranked big university. Reinforcing this conclusion are two facts: only 13 of the top-ranked big universities draw more of their

students from the top 10 percent of their high school classes; only 14 admit a smaller percentage of applicants.

■ UNC-CH has declined two places (11 percent) in its ranking since last year, presumably not only because of reductions in its support, but also because of the success of other schools' programs.

■ Top-ranked big universities can decline precipitously over time. The University of Illinois at Urbana, the University of Wisconsin at Madison and Indiana University at Bloomington, all traditionally among the best public universities in the country, now are ranked below the top 25 major universities, so could be characterized as second-flight schools. The University of Texas at Austin has fallen further, now ranking in the second quartile.

In short, higher education is a competitive business. UNC-CH has accomplished more with less than almost any other top-ranked big university in the country. At the same time, however, the University is apparently declining in its ability to compete, and this will likely result in its continued decline in the ratings.

If one agrees that the reputation, and services, of its flagship university are part of what has given North Carolina a competitive advantage in the attracting of businesses and investments, then this potential decline is a matter of concern to the state. It is also a matter of concern to the alumni, who count on the reputation of the University to enhance the value of their degrees.

Because the University has a tradition of getting more bang for the buck than its competitors, it needs less to remain competitive than other big universities. That makes it a better investment than almost any major university in the country. If the investments are not forthcoming, however, that relative advantage will be lost.

Because the University's average student does not do as well on the SAT than the average students

of all other top-ranked big universities, UNC-CH needs to do everything in its power to improve education in North Carolina.

Numbers count. I hope we take note.
 DAVID MOLTKE-HANSEN
 Director,
 Southern Historical Collection
 Curator,
 Manuscripts Department
 Wilson Library

Library bond deserves support from students

To the editors:
 I am extremely gratified that so many Carolina students have registered to vote in the November election. No doubt most students are especially interested in the race for the U.S. Senate and possibly for the House of Representatives. These are, of course, extremely important races. But another important vote pertains to the proposed bond issue to build an adequate library for Chapel Hill. We here at the University count among our most valued blessings the splendid libraries to which we have access. I hope that students' appreciation of the importance of a good library will be reflected in their vote favoring a bond issue for the library on the November ballot.

EVERETT EMERSON
 Professor of English

Letters to newspapers not fixing budget cuts

To the editors:
 Oh no, it's Armageddon. Dogs and cats are living in harmony, the sea has turned to blood and Jesse Helms has actually addressed an important issue. Now that I have everyone on their knees begging for mercy I guess I can tell the truth. None of the three events have actually occurred — not yet anyway. This is just a typical apocalyptic image rising over the "Budget Crisis." I say we tattoo "Death to All Budget Cutters"

across our forehead, take over the government and live in a state of anarchy. Yes, that has to be the answer (OK, it's not the answer, but it would be a lot of fun) — or we could play it safe. That is, write the paper telling about our grievances. I mean, there are only 10 articles a day submitted to the paper about the budget cuts. Isn't this a little redundant? Write something new — talk about how the sweat

glistens off your teachers legs or if you think Donnie Osmond will make a comeback or not. Save the formal dribble for the Congressmen. I am all for activists who want to do something about the cuts; I just don't know whether writing the paper about it is going to help. Do something daring — phone in a bomb threat or hold a representative's son for ransom. Come on, use that imagination. If you think a huge orgy including all 24,000 students would help, write it and explain. Personally I think that the majority of the students would pay more attention to his type of article than one saying, "My name is Wilbur and I don't like the cuts." Identify your audience. If you want to write straightforward and state the problems, save it for those who can do something about it — our Congressmen.

CHRISTOPHER D. HELMS
 Freshman
 Political Science

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The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. We attempt to print as many letters to the editors as space permits. When writing letters, please follow these guidelines:

- All letters must be dated and signed by the author(s), with a limit of two signatures per letter.
- All letters must be typed and double-spaced.
- Please include relevant titles.
- Place letters in the box marked "Letters to the Editor" outside the DTH office in the Student Union annex.

The Daily Tar Heel

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