

RESPONDING TO CLASS AUDIT

BCC Reclassifying Some Courses, Monitoring Others More Closely

BY SUSAN USHER

Several continuing education classes are being reclassified by Brunswick Community College and its budget cut slightly as a result of a class reporting and records audit conducted by the State Department of Community Colleges.

Auditor J. Todd Parker noted two audit exceptions and three areas of concern, noting mainly classes he thought had not been classified correctly based on enrollment and excessive repeating of classes offered for occupational training rather than pursuit of a hobby.

He looked at classes offered between spring quarter 1991 through fall quarter 1992.

Though the college has formally disagreed, though unsuccessfully, with one of the audit findings, President Michael Reaves said last week BCC plans to set aside those concerns and follow through on all auditors' recommendations.

Parker questioned the offering of an off-campus automotive mechanics course as an occupational extension course, noting that "the class has basically been attended by the same group of 9-10 students who enroll in the class each quarter. Based on visits to the class in recent years, the primary focus of the class appears to be the repair of vehicles owned by the students."

Of the nine students enrolled spring quarter a year ago, seven had taken the class 12 or four times and four had taken it more than 40 times. The group's average number of repeats was 27 times.

Parker recommended rewriting the college's policy regarding class repeats, reclassifying the class as community service "and perhaps later as self-supporting" and making necessary adjustments in the college budget and reports. While agreeing that the policy is "vague," Reaves contended that the repeat enrollments were consistent with BCC's policy on repeating a class, which allows repeats the student considers "...as necessary to accomplish their individual educational/training goal(s)..." and that no state policy or guidelines address the issue.

In responding to the audit report, Reaves wrote he thought the repeats should have been cited as a concern as was the case at other campuses, not an exception, and the college given an opportunity to correct the situation. However, the state concluded the exception was warranted because of the high number of repeats.

Reaves noted that the college has only two years of class records on computer, making it difficult to monitor data for longer periods. However, the state said that didn't eliminate BCC's responsibility to monitor course offerings.

Parker took exception also to the incorrect reporting of membership hours for a hazardous materials and incident command class offered at the fire department at Sunny Point Military Ocean Terminal. The college concurred and a budget adjustment will be made and steps taken to make sure the most appropriate reporting method is used for similar classes in the future.

The college concurred with three concerns Parker called to its attention and his recommendations, as follows:

- Need to review classification of net making and mending, upholstery, woodworking and cabinetmaking, gasoline engine repair and welding as occupational extension courses. If offered again, they should be reclassified as practical skills classes no later than the spring quarter 1993.

In regard to those classes, Parker noted low enrollment and irregular attendance, focus on personal projects, excessive hours of scheduling, predominance of senior citizen enrollment, suggesting avocational not occupational intent, and excessive repeats.

"When courses are repeated five or more times, questions may be raised as to whether such courses are correctly classified as occupational or if they would more appropriately be classified as practical skills," he wrote. "Additional questions are raised as to the appropriateness of a state financed class after a number of student course repeats, e.g., is the 'class' actually a class or an activity?"

The college concurred also with two other concerns noted by Parker and recommendations for change:

- Community service class participants and instructors at senior citizen sites participating in county-sponsored activities and field trips unrelated to the classes during time set aside for instruction, not social or recreational activities. During one site visit, the group had gone to a fish fry. Classes should be rescheduled or instructors' salaries adjusted when conflicts occur, and an effort made to avoid scheduling conflicts.

- Students in BCC's Spanish classes are not just those seeking teacher recertification, as was given as justification for the course. Academic related courses for occupational training are to be offered only to business and industry employees at the request of business or industry. In future, Parker recommended the college have a written request on file for all future Spanish I or Spanish II or similar courses if they are offered as occupational extension, and that they be advertised and limited to students in the requesting agency or business.

Reaves expects the college's budget for the current year to be cut by between \$11,000 and \$12,000, rather than the \$14,000 Parker noted in his report. "We know we are going to get credit for at least one FTE (full-time equivalency), and maybe more," he said, because of mistakes by the auditor.

The cut will represent only about three-tenths of 1 percent of BCC's total budget, he said.

Reaves said that the courses questioned by Parker would be offered in the future as practical skills classes, not occupational, as long as they are made up as they are now, adding, "We may have to make them self-sustaining at some point in the future, as the report indicated."

Parents Can Help Reduce Risk Of Child Using Drugs, Alcohol

Rita Hatcher, wellness coordinator for the Brunswick County Schools, is convinced parents can make a difference in preventing drug use among young people.

"Being a parent in today's world can really be a test of courage," she said in a recent news release. "Although you may feel powerless at times, keep in mind that you can make a difference."

In recognition of Drug Awareness Week, March 7-10, she has compiled a list of tips that may help parents and others, help young people deal with the pressures to use alcohol and drugs and to reduce such risk factors.

- Show that you value your freedom to think and act independently, that you don't have to do something because "everyone is doing it." This helps young people see that negative peer pressure can be resisted.
- Respect your child's privacy. Knock before you enter his or her room. This will improve his or her trust in parents, and he may be more willing to share his problems with parents.
- Show respect for your child's concerns by being a

good listener.

- Be aware of how your own use of alcohol can influence your child. Avoid using excuses for drinking, such as having had a rough day. The drinking behavior of parents tends to become the behavior of a child when he or she becomes an adult.

- Discuss instead of preaching the ills of indulging in alcohol or drug abuse.

- Spend quality time with your child.

- Request your child's opinion about family problems and decisions.

- Become educated and prepared to explain how various drugs affect the body and why people take them.

- Keep up to date on the latest drug crazes.

- Point out the drug messages on TV and in the movies. Help your child see how advertisers and program characters associate alcohol use with beauty, success, fun, etc.

- Be aware of the attitudes and values of your children's friends, and always encourage your children to be very selective in choosing their friends.

- Encourage healthy activities.

- Encourage healthy nutrition.

BCSD Recovers Nearly \$30,000 In Stolen Property

An estimated \$29,723 worth of stolen property was recovered by the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department during January, according to a monthly officers' activity report released by Sheriff John Davis.

Deputies and detectives made 114 arrests as prosecuting witness last month.

A total of 1,666 calls were answered, including 240 domestic

calls, and 464 investigations were made. Deputies found three doors or windows open while on patrol the report said.

Deputies served 540 civil papers and summoned 202 witnesses. Six mental and inebriate papers and two juvenile petitions were served, along with 458 local warrants and 61 foreign warrants.

More than 115,925 miles were logged, including 30 trips out of the county.

The department used a total of 8,820 gallons of gasoline.

Sheriff's personnel spent three off-duty hours in court and 67 on-duty hours. There were 36 crime prevention meetings.

Brunswick Democrats Set Precinct Meetings

Brunswick County Democrats have scheduled their annual precinct meetings to be held at the regular polling place on March 4 at 7 p.m., with the exceptions of Grissetown and Mosquito Branch.

The Grissetown precinct meeting will be held on Thursday, March 4, at 8 p.m. at the Grissetown/Longwood firehouse. The meeting had originally been scheduled for the Sea Trail buildings at Seaside; however, those buildings are to be moved later this week.

The Mosquito Branch precinct meeting will be held Friday, March 5, at 7 p.m. in the Sunset Harbor/Zion Hill firehouse.

County Democratic Chairman Bill Stanley encourages all registered Democrats to attend. "We want all party activists as well as new campaign volunteers to get involved with the party," he said. "The

precinct meetings are the place to start."

Precinct meetings represent the first step in the organizational process for the 1993-95 election cycle. At the precinct meetings, Democrats will elect delegates to the April 17 county convention and elect officers for the precinct.

Mandi Hewett Wins Speaking Contest

Mandi Hewett, an eighth grade student at Shallotte Middle School, will represent the school in the annual Brunswick Soil and Water Conservation District public speaking contest Feb. 26.

She won the school contest Feb. 19, receiving a \$10 prize.

Entries in this year's contest were 4- to 6-minute speeches on the topic, "Everyone has a role in soil and water conservation." Judging was based 70 percent on content and 30 percent on speaking skills. Com-

The meetings also give Democrats a chance to pass resolutions on party policy, as well as having meaningful discussion with regard to the state of the Democratic party at the local, state and national levels.

For more information, call Stanley at 754-6376 between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.

petition was open to all seventh and eighth grade students.

Other contestants at Shallotte Middle were eighth graders Sam Chevalier, Ashley Grissett, Jocelyn Hewett, Mandi Hewett, Kerry Loomis and Maria Schilz, all students of Darrell Cheers.

The county contest winner receives another \$10 and advances to area competition. Area winners compete in state competition, where the top prize is \$100 cash.

Anderson Wins Geography Bee At Waccamaw School

Kevin Anderson of Ash won the Waccamaw Elementary School level of the National Geography Bee.

The son of Howard and Sonya Anderson, Kevin is a seventh grade student of social studies teacher Mary Katherine Griffith.



ANDERSON

As winner of the school bee, he received a certificate, a copy of the National Geographic Society game "On Assignment," and the opportunity to qualify for state-level competition.

He is awaiting results from a written test to find out if he will advance. Up to 100 of the top scorers in the state will be eligible to compete in the state bee on April 2. For the past three years Waccamaw's

bee winner has advanced to state competition, said Ms. Griffith.

Winner of that bee will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to compete in the National Geography Bee May 25 and 26 in Washington D.C. The finals will air as a prime-time special

on PBS at 8 p.m. May 26.

The National Geographic Society developed the bee five years ago in response to a growing concern about the lack of geographic knowledge among young people in the United States.

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Calabash Squad Makes 48 Calls During January

The Calabash Volunteer Emergency Medical Service made 48 calls during January, Chief Mark Christy reported to the organization's board of directors Feb. 18.

Squad members worked 136 man hours and traveled 1,698 miles.

Twenty-nine calls were in Calabash, six in Sunset Beach and 13 elsewhere. Five were mutual aid responses.

The chief reported on federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirements governing contact with infectious body fluids and said squad members must be provided disposable scrub suits and that hazardous materials bags will be available.

The Animal League will use the EMS facility on the last Wednesday of each month, he reported.

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