

UNC-A offers innovative learning to students

A year of innovation. That is the way the 1972-73 academic year will be remembered. Most departments have undergone a restructuring of courses and have implemented new ideas in teaching methods.

One of the most notable innovations in curriculum to be instituted this year was the revised Humanities program. The courses incorporated a combination of courses such as world history, English, and other humanities and Social Sciences topics taught by experts in these subjects. Students entering the program in the fall had a choice of one course from among a wide variety that dealt with the contemporary world during the first term. Succeeding terms in the Humanities sequence featured a study of Western Civilization to the present with emphasis on writing papers and reading various accounts of the periods. Methods in teaching the new Humanities sequence varied but most used a combination of lectures, discussion groups, and speakers.

Another academic area to undergo an innovative change this academic year was the biology course offerings. Single courses that had previously been taught on a term or semester basis were changed to feature the mini-course concept of instruction. Each mini-course dealt in detail with one particular area of biological study over a period of two weeks. At the end of this period of time the student went to a new professor to study another area of biological sciences. This concept has given the student a variety of courses to choose from and exposure to a number of professors while fulfilling his course requirement in biology.

Also in the field of sciences, the Physics department underwent a restructuring that featured three fields from which the physics major could select courses. The new program is highly individualized to take advantage of the small number of students who are physics majors. Areas of studies for physics majors currently include nuclear science, in conjunction with the Chemistry Department, laser studies, and com-

government causes innovation?

with SGA, that even though we have set many goals and objectives, the senate seems to spend a good amount of time and energy in keeping such goals from being recognized.

Yet, I would not waste my time with student government if some good was not achieved. When we care to, SGA has gathered a great deal of momentum from its deep-rooted structure and proven to be a very effective organization.

Therefore, in summary, if structure and organization are utilized, some things can be achieved effectively. But such achievement, may be retarded because of human inconsistency. Yet, without structure no established prediction can be made. The unknown is a definite handicap.

Apparently many answers lie somewhere in the realm of the unanswerable. There is no one way. We all have our own opinions and our own answers. Differences, both strong and weak, are one significant aspect that must be reckoned with in attempting to generate innovation.

Are we fertile enough ground to allow all things to be planted? Are we strong enough to accept whatever happens to grow? In a garden such as this, are we flexible and strong enough to witness and overcome a bad harvest? Gardens have systems - rows and rows. But when planted, all attention and awareness rests with each individual seed.

Yet, when all the dreams, suggestions, and proposals are made, the basic reality, the inevitable still exists. Everything, primarily, is decided in one place. This may not be how it should be, but it is how it is. Because of this fact, it seems imperative that the individual and his rights have top priority. It is imperative that the individual matter, in some capacity. For if not, we are nothing, or at best, a boldly innovative nothing.

puter applications. These areas of study are designed to give the graduate in physics an opportunity to teach, enter graduate studies, or to do industrial work.

The Literature Department recently informed its majors of changes made in the requirements for graduation in the department. The new requirements emphasize a variety of courses designed to acquaint students with a functional overall view of literature. Survey courses, genre studies, and special topics courses are offered by the department. In addition, the Literature Department and the History Department have offered studies in the black culture. One course in Black Literature is now being taught as is a course in Black History. Both departments are currently sampling student opinion to determine what special topics courses should be taught in the future.

One of the most successful innovations offered during this academic year came from the Political Science Department with the INS simulation held during the second term of the fall semester. UNC-A students took part in the project that featured a not so mythical world political situation. UNC-A students instructed students from area high school in political theory. Students were the leaders of countries as well as ambassadors, and military consultants. Area high schools were brought into the program and staged their own simulations on two week ends last semester. Sponsors of the INS Simulation in the Political Science Department were pleased with the results and the response to the simulation and plans are being discussed concerning future simulations with area colleges including UNC-A.

Even though the Psychology Department is currently operating without a chairman, the department implemented this year a series of special topics that featured case studies and field work by UNC-A students. Many potential psychology majors have taken advantage of the opportunity to do field work for credit. Results of these case studies have been termed successful by members of the Psychology Department. Studies using area students have been the topic of many of the cases. Psychology students are given the opportunity to talk with the child they are studying as well as observe them in classroom situations.

Skiing is currently being offered as a course for UNC-A students by the Physical Education Department. Other courses such as square dancing and clogging have been offered during the year. Plans are currently underway to develop new courses in the Physical Education Department to offer students a wide variety of courses from which to choose.

A group of UNC-A students and representatives from other colleges will travel to UNC-A Oxford for study abroad this summer. This program is not new but continues to offer a change in the educational environment by allowing students to relate to experiences of different cultures. Students are given the opportunity to study at Oxford University for a period of time during the summer for academic credit. Courses such as philosophy, literature, and European history will be offered this summer. The UNC-A Oxford program has been termed "highly successful" by many students and faculty members who participated last summer. Students may contact Dr. James Stewart in the Philosophy Department and Dr. Ellis Shorb in the Literature Department for information.

The trend toward offering experimental and innovative courses seems to be progressing rapidly. Several departments are currently formulating plans for new courses to be taught in the future. Various department chairmen and professors have pointed out that student interest is the key to new courses. There seems to be no doubt that students have reaped the benefits of these innovations and will continue to do so.

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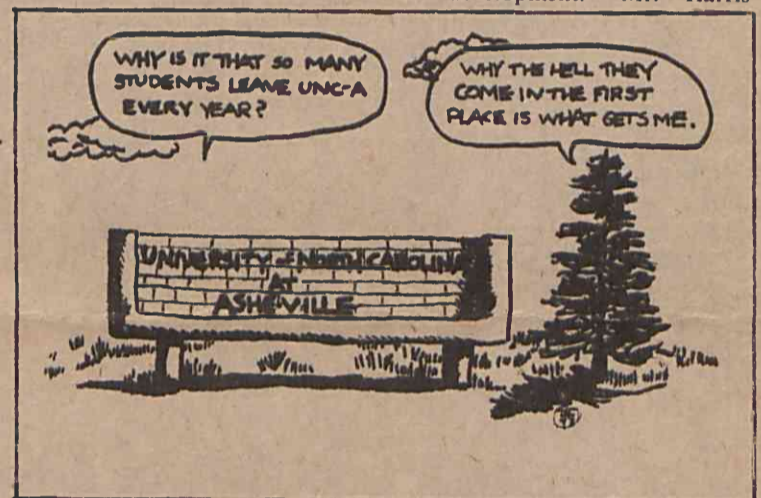
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Why do students leave?

Every year students leave UNC-A for a variety of reasons. Dr. George Kramer, Head of Institutional Research, was able to provide the RIDGERUNNER with some percentages through a survey. A questionnaire was submitted to 600 students who for various reasons have left UNC-A. Over a two year period (1970-1972) 53% of the freshmen left after an average of one year and 63% of the transfers left after two terms. The students which leave generally transfer to other institutions, such as technical schools and other colleges. About 36% of

that there is too much emphasis on preparation for graduate school. Mr. Harris also said that so far the survey has shown a variety of reasons to cause students to leave. Among those not previously mentioned are a dislike for certain professors or dorm life, a feeling of not being a part of the campus, and being tired of school.

To alleviate the problem of students' leaving the UNC-A campus life, Mr. Harris gave some suggestions. Mr. Harris said, "I think there needs to be a greater concern for the student's total development." Mr. Harris



those students go to in-state schools and an additional 12% transfer out of state.

The reasons for leaving are varied. Mrs. Alice Wutschel, Associate Dean of Students, believes the primary reason is that a student's main field of interest is not offered as a major here, such as architecture, music, or forestry. Other reasons include economics, or a lack of finances, and interest in a technical career, and some minor reasons as a lack of activities outside of class. One of the most common complaints, according to Mr. Ed Harris, of the Office of Testing and Counseling, is

expressed his concern for the lack of extra-curricular activities to keep students involved. Mr. Harris had another recommendation to "continually evaluate our programs, improving and possibly expanding them, to meet the students' needs." This he feels is being done.

Both Mr. Harris and Dr. Kramer feel that the survey will greatly aid in determining the main things that cause students to leave. They hope that some patterns will develop to predict the major reasons, so that they can be corrected. Both are optimistic about the outcome of the survey, and the eventual solution of this problem.

Applications for Editor, Managing Editor and Business Manager of the RIDGERUNNER for next year will be accepted until March 23, 1973. Please submit a resume of previous experience in Journalism and reasons for applying to Dr. Robert Trullinger in the History Department. The Editor receives a \$300 scholarship and 10% of ad revenues, the Managing Editor receives a \$200 scholarship and the Business Manager receives 20% of ad revenues.

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