

The Blue Banner

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Striving for Excellence

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Funds inadequate to complete Graduate Center

By Angela Minor
Staff Writer

Due to an overbid in construction, about 5,000 square feet of the new graduate center and classroom building now in construction will not be completed, according to Jim Efland, facilities planner.

The area encompasses the entire third floor of the building. The result will be the temporary housing of the mass communications department and cancellation of an honors library intended for the third floor.

According to Efland, the project originally came in overbid, and incompleteness of the construction was the only way to stay within the budget.

"We bid that at a time when there were a lot of construction

projects and few contractors," said Efland.

Because of the economic situation, according to Efland, it was not easy to get a good price for the construction. Efland also said that programming needs were exceeded once the construction began.

The plans for the graduate center began with 60,000 square feet and a projected budget of \$5.9 million. Before the planning was over, the building size had grown to 64,000 square feet. In order to complete the construction of the third floor, the university needs an additional \$700,000, said Efland.

The university has requested this money from the North Carolina General Assembly, said Efland.

According to Efland, the office space was allotted in the new building based on the future growth of the mass

communications department. Once that growth comes, the construction will need to be finished.

"We're delighted to be in the building. It's unfortunate we're not in the building in the appropriate way," said Alan Hantz, department director and associate professor of mass communications.

According to Hantz, due to the failure to move into the allotted offices, the department must borrow office space from the Western Carolina University Graduate Services and the economics department housed on the first floor of the building.

In addition, the department will not have the video lab, two classrooms, seminar room and faculty meeting room which were supposed to be in the new office space.

"We're accustomed to being Please see Graduate, page 5



Photo by Sandra Sigmon

Due to overspending, the university will delay completion of the third floor of the new graduate center.

Robinson ceiling collapses

By Jackie Gasperson
Staff Writer

The ceiling of the second-floor chemistry department library in Robinson Hall came tumbling down, with plenty of water behind it, Friday at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Since Robinson Hall is relatively new, the idea of a ceiling caving in caught many people by surprise.

"What precipitated the problem was a storm drain on the roof broke loose inside the building," said Herb Pomfrey, biology lab manager.

"Since it is a flat roof, all the water that had collected on the roof just came down through a two-inch hole, directly on to the ceiling of the seminar room," said Pomfrey.

"I would say that there was about one hundred gallons of water. It was quiet a bit of water."

Although the majority of the ceiling tiles fell on a big conference table in the middle of the room, the unexpected

downpour did not cause any injuries.

The chemistry department may have suffered the loss of numerous reference books, however, in addition to water damage to the table and bookcases.

"The room is completely lined with reference books. That was probably the greatest loss," said Pomfrey.

"The table itself, we will just have to wait and see whether it dries out or not. The carpet will probably have to be replaced," said Pomfrey.

About eight square feet of the ceiling tiles were destroyed. "The tiles came falling down like wet toilet paper," said Pomfrey. "Even if the tiles had fallen on somebody, as light as the tiles are, it probably wouldn't have injured anybody."

"Luckily there were some chemistry students around who jumped in there and did most of the work, pulling the books out and putting them in a temporary location," said Pomfrey.

According to Jim Efland, physical plant director, the blame

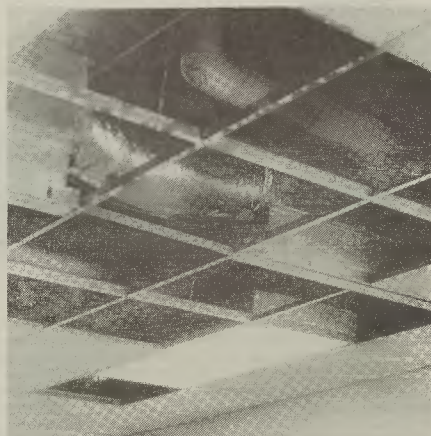


Photo by Sandra Sigmon

Heavy rains damage ceiling in Robinson Hall.

for the incident has not been determined.

"We think that the contractor should have installed the fasteners (to support the drain pipe), but we really don't know. That has not been determined yet," said Efland.

Pomfrey also said "the company that did that work neglected to put a support right underneath the pipe, so the weight of the water just pushed the pipe down."

Time will have to pass before an estimation of damage can be

determined, said Efland.

"We have placed dehumidifiers in the room to try to pull the water out of the room," said Efland. "In order to save putting new carpet down, we have used special carpet agents in order to dry the carpet out."

Once the cause of the incident is determined, officials will decide who will pay for the damages. "It's hard for us to tell where the true responsibility lies," said Efland.

UNCA attracts more applicants

By Cindy Dotson
Staff Writer

While other North Carolina universities have seen a decline in the total number of applications for admission, UNCA has had an increase. This has occurred despite the declining number of high school graduates in the state.

Why hasn't UNCA felt the effects of this decrease? What draws these students to UNCA?

For those applicants who live out of state, it may be because UNCA has "been in so many national publications within the last six months," said Dr. Larry Wilson, vice chancellor for academic affairs.

For those living in state, "the word of mouth [promoting] UNCA as a quality institution" seems to be the most effective way of attracting applicants, said Wilson.

UNCA has seen an overall 5 percent increase in applications over this time last year. The total number of applications from out of state, the group most affecting the increase, has jumped roughly 18 percent over this time last year.

Institutional Research bases these figures on the applications

that come into the admissions office and compares them with the ones received in the same week of the previous year. The figures change from week to week.

Despite the rise in applications, UNCA will not have a significant increase in student enrollment, said Wilson. "We will accept about the same amount of students. [The class size] might be slightly larger."

"We are trying to hold the enrollment down," said Wilson. "We don't want to lose this small college flavor."

For the current school year, UNCA "accepted about three-fourths of the applicants. Of those accepted, about 43 percent actually enrolled," said Wilson.

The percentage of accepted applicants which actually enrolls is called the yield. UNCA's yield of 43 percent "is much like fairly exclusive schools would have, public and private," said Wilson. If a school has a higher yield than this, it usually means the school is the student's "first choice" or the student has "no alternatives," said Wilson.

At UNCA, students "can have their own personal identity, get to know their teachers and get a good education for the money,"

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Fraternity sponsors homeless drive

By Miranda Wyatt
Staff Writer

Alpha Phi Omega, a national fraternity focusing on community service, sponsored a drive for the homeless Feb. 13-15 to raise money and awareness towards the plight of the homeless in Asheville.

The APO homeless drive, a biannual event occurring once during the fall and once in the spring, helps supply money for APO to provide meals for the homeless, according to Rob Young, president of APO.

"We really want to raise funds for the homeless, and we also want to raise awareness in students that the problem continues all year-round. You can't take a vacation from being homeless," said Young.

"The drive was very successful. We had a lot of student participation, especially on Thursday. It was a much welcome thing."

In only three days, APO raised \$75 which they will use to help out Asheville's homeless. With the

collections from the drive, APO buys food and then prepares meals at least twice a month for the Hospitality House.

The Hospitality House, one of four rescue shelters located in Asheville, is a private shelter that raises its money almost completely from contributions of volunteers and church support. For this reason, APO chooses to support them exclusively.

"It is very hard sometimes for the Hospitality House to make ends meet," said Young.

Some of the meals APO has cooked for the homeless at the Hospitality House have included breakfast, chicken dishes and pizza. After preparing the meals, APO members eat with the homeless people.

"We feed from 12 to 15 people at a meal. It is difficult to buy and make meals for that number for people. We have to get very creative with the food," said Young.

Amy Hendricks, in charge of finance for APO, arranged last week's homeless drive along with the APO's finance committee.

Tina Shumaker coordinated the volunteers for the drive.

APO members all work together to promote the idea that people can contribute something that will make a difference in society, an idea that is not widely believed, especially by college students, said Young.

"College students feel they cannot be a part of society and make a viable contribution to society. Through APO, we want to show students that everybody has something, some talent, to contribute to others," said Young.

The organization has grown steadily since its first meeting in October 1988. The addition of an APO chapter on campus supplied a need for a community service group that UNCA had been trying to fill. The idea of forming an on-campus APO chapter came from a conference presented by COOL (Campus Outreach Opportunity League) which Young attended.

APO presently has about 20 members, both male and female, and comprises itself of biology, philosophy, art, management and other majors. APO members come

from varied backgrounds and interests, yet they all come together to answer a need that will always be there in the community.

"In APO, we try to integrate people and develop leadership by showing our members how to take control. We help members learn to speak in public and to be very involved in the organization. Everyone in APO is important in one aspect or another. It is a very egalitarian arrangement," said Young.

The main idea behind APO lies in its mission to get students involved in helping the community, which will bring Asheville closer to campus.

"There is a lot of potential here. We are students and we cannot ignore the outside world. There is

so much we can do to help," said Young.

APO is planning a joint mission trip to Chicago over spring break with the Baptist Student Union. APO also sponsors other fundraisers, such as doughnut sales and penny drives to help the homeless.