

The Banner

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WCU may owe UNCA over \$1.4 million for use of university facilities

By Amelia Morrison
Staff Writer

Western Carolina University (WCU), who uses UNCA facilities to offer graduate programs in Asheville, may owe UNCA over \$1.4 million after consistently paying only half of an annual lease agreement established in the 1981-82 school year.

In 1981-82, University of North Carolina President William Friday sent a memo to the chancellors at WCU and UNCA titled the "cooperative financial agreement," which set the compensation arrangements for WCU's use of UNCA's facilities.

"I think it would be in the interest of both institutions in the system for this issue to be revisited," said Shirley Browning, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs. "I think it would help clear up a legacy of -- maybe disappointment is the mildest word I could use -- over the many, many years in which we have shared facilities with one of our sister institutions, and whether or not that sharing has also been characterized by appropriate compensation for cost born by this institution."

WCU has received funding from the General Administration for every Full Time Equivalent (FTE), or every 12 credit hours worth of students, for students enrolled in WCU's graduate programs through the Asheville Graduate Center.

Because WCU has received funding and collected fees from students using UNCA's facilities and resources, UNCA needed to be compensated for staff and equipment use.

"The projected payment from WCU back then was to be \$30,500, but they only paid half of that, \$65,250," said Browning. "It is my understanding they never got off that one half. In that sense, the agreement was never honored in future years."

WCU was allowed to pay half the calculated amount the first year because the 1981-82 budget had already been submitted, and WCU did not have time to adjust its request with the new payment to UNCA.

The interim resolution was as-

suming full implementation in 82-83," said Browning, who was part of the former Joint Planning Committee. "The Joint Planning Committee was composed of representatives from WCU and UNCA."

The committee, which met during the late 70s and early 80s, tried to define what WCU's role would be on UNCA's campus.

"Back in the 70s, WCU moved (some of) its undergraduate instructional programs onto this campus, resulting in them teaching courses often times we were teaching," said Browning.

The final decision designated that UNCA would teach mostly undergraduate programs, while WCU would teach mostly graduate programs. "The decision was that Western would offer the graduate programs here," said Browning. "They might offer, upon occasion, undergraduate courses in fields

A temporary agreement was put into place, and has not been changed since 1981.

"The lease has not been adjusted since then," said Arthur Foley, vice chancellor for Financial Affairs. "The chancellors at WCU and UNCA could not reach any agreement for renegotiating."

"It was supposed to be renegotiated, but obviously never worked out," said Browning.

WCU currently pays UNCA half of \$290 per FTE plus a health service fee, student activities fee, and makes other contributions in the area of resources. WCU paid UNCA approximately \$76,500 in the last year, said Gene McDowell, director of the Asheville Graduate Center.

Though WCU pays UNCA an amount based on \$290 per FTE as outlined in the 1981 agreement, the North Carolina system wide average in 1998 that the General Administration pays universities per FTE is \$6,977, according to the bills that students receive.

WCU's half payment based on \$290 does not include instructional costs because WCU pays for its instructors.

According to the UNCA Fact Book, instruction accounts for about 40 percent of the cost per FTE at UNCA, adjusting the \$6,977 to about \$4,186 that the General Administration funds each university, per FTE, on average, excluding instructional costs.

This year, WCU had about 375.5 FTEs at UNCA, and thus paid UNCA about \$54,447 for the FTE part of the equation, said McDowell. For 375.5 FTEs, a university would receive approximately \$1.5 million for one year, excluding instructional costs, based on the average amount per FTE funded by the General Administration, and UNCA's percent of instructional costs.

"They don't pay us all the money they get per FTE," said Foley.

The fairness of WCU's payment has continued to be an issue in debate, especially since WCU has not yet paid the full amount outlined in the initial agreement.

"The amount and the adequacy is what is in debate," said McDowell. "To suddenly say that 50 percent

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Righteous babe returns



PHOTO BY PRESTON GANNAWAY

UNCA students attended the Ani DiFranco (pictured above) concert at the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium on April 22. DiFranco's played many songs from her new album, *Little Plastic Castles*. See a review of the concert on page 4.

WCU has priority over UNCA in evening teleconferencing

By Amelia Morrison
Staff Writer

The University of North Carolina General Administration is currently considering increasing funding for distance learning.

Distance learning is the offering of courses or programs at another site or multiple sites, through teleconferencing centers and the Internet.

At UNCA, the Asheville Graduate Center has scheduling priority to UNCA teleconferencing rooms in the evening.

"The graduate center gets prior-

ity in the teleconferencing rooms after 5 p.m.," said Gene McDowell, director of the Asheville Graduate Center.

"It will always be a scheduling problem," said Chancellor Patsy Reed.

The graduate center has priority in the evenings because that is when it offers most of its programs, and the teleconferencing center was built, in part, to meet the needs of the graduate center, said McDowell.

As part of the graduate center, WCU programs are able to use UNCA's teleconferencing rooms. WCU does not pay additional money other than the sum paid as a result of the 1981-82 agreement,

which WCU has continued to pay at a rate of 50 percent.

Other graduate-level distance-learning programs at UNCA are given priority over WCU when allocating time in the teleconferencing centers on the UNCA campus. However, WCU courses are given priority to teleconferencing resources over UNCA programs.

"We give first priority to courses that serve programs further away," said McDowell. "All non-Western programs get first priority. If we have any nights left over, we let WCU schedule courses."

Next semester, WCU is going to

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New registration system falters on first try



PHOTO BY TRAVIS BARKER

Some students had trouble accessing the new Internet-based registration system during pre-registration last week, while others were allowed to register before their appointed times.

By Gene Zaleski
Staff Writer

The new World Wide Web-based registration system at UNCA partially malfunctioned during the pre-registration period last week, preventing some students from registering at their appointed times, and allowing others to register earlier than they were supposed to.

UNCA Registrar Rebecca Sensabaugh said that the Registrar's Office became aware of problems with the new system on the morning of April 21, the second day of the pre-registration period.

"The first thing that happened was that students who were supposed to register at 9 a.m. were having difficulty logging into the system," said Sensabaugh. "There was a simple error in setting up the flags in the

system. As soon as we realized the problem we had it fixed within 15 minutes.

"The students were told what was wrong, and were very understanding about it," said Sensabaugh.

Students also notified the Registrar's Office that the new system was allowing them to register for classes earlier than the designated registration time on their appointment card, said Sensabaugh.

"When we found out there was an issue with the appointment blocks of time we began to investigate," said Sensabaugh. "We realized that the labels which were pulled for the appointment cards themselves were from one particular element in the Student Information System (SIS) which counted only graded hours."

Sensabaugh said that the appointment times on the cards were assigned according to hours earned through the 1997 fall semester, while the data used by the computer system for prioritizing registration

included the number of hours the students are currently taking along with the hours earned through the fall 1997 semester.

Sensabaugh said that no students registered more than one appointment block ahead of their appointed time.

"Some students have said that they have registered a day earlier," said Sensabaugh. "These students probably received an appointment card which stated the appointment time to be on the 9 a.m.-11 a.m. block the next day."

"In this situation, any student who tried to register the previous day during the 3-5 p.m. appointment time would probably be able to do so," said Sensabaugh. "This would make it seem like a day earlier, but it was really only one appointment block earlier."

However, some students said that they were able to register more than one ap-

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