

# The Banner

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## UNCA pays price for fiber optics

By Mike Bryant  
Staff Writer

A requirement by a state agency for UNCA to resubmit its fiber optic network project as a capital improvement rather than a "utility" added more than \$260,000 in university construction and equipment costs, according to an August 1998 financing summary prepared by Arthur Foley in UNCA's office of financial affairs.

"UNCA first proceeded with the campus-wide fiber optic project as a 'utility' upon advice of the Office of State Budget and Management," said Arthur Foley, vice chancellor for financial affairs. "Classifying the project as a 'utility' placed it in a category similar to lights and water. This was not about a capital improvement such as funding a classroom building or athletic facility, but rather, a lot of wiring and electronics."

The university did not need the authorization of the UNC Board of Governors and the Legislative Governmental Operations Committee as long as the fiber optic project was classified as a "utility," according to the 1998 financing summary.

The university was prepared to begin accepting construction and equipment bids in 1997-98 for the fiber optics network when advised by the state that the project needed to be re-submitted as a capital improvement rather than a "utility," according to the financial summary.

State authorization for the fiber optics network as a capital improvement project took nearly a year, resulting in a new projected network total cost of approximately \$1,084,113, said Foley.

The original estimates for the project as a "utility" totaled \$815,982, representing an increase of \$268,131 in additional university costs for re-submission as a capital improvement, according to the financial summary.

"To date, the cost of the fiber-optic network is projected to be approximately \$1.4 million, which

is the total amount the state has approved for UNCA to expend on its network infrastructure," said Foley. "About \$900,000 of that amount has already been spent through the course of the project. The sources of those dollars included UNCA capital and auxiliary funds and state appropriations."

"The expense of the project was justified over three years ago when the university enlisted a New Jersey consulting firm to plan for a state-of-the-art fiber optic network for the campus," said Foley. "Initially, UNCA received little positive feedback with regard to any state funding for such a system, and now they see it as a top priority for all 16-UNC member institutions."

"The North Carolina Legislature appropriated \$34,784,000 in the 1998-99 budget for the state-wide university network infrastructure," said Foley. "Of this amount, \$559,498 was allocated for UNCA's fiber optics project. These funds are appropriated for project expenses incurred after July 1, 1998."

The completion of this new network technology has placed UNCA near the top of the campuses within the University of North Carolina system of meeting the new baseline standards of network infrastructure, according to Richard White, manager of systems and communications in the UNCA computer center.

"UNCA has been evaluated to have attained 88 percent of its baseline technology needs, according to an independent study of all the campuses in the University of North Carolina system," said White. "The study ranked UNCA second among all 16 member institutions. The average among the 16 campuses was 67 percent."

The recent completion of the fiber optics system at UNCA has made state-of-the-art information access available to both students and faculty, according to White.

"The new Ethernet system was completed in July 1998," said

See OPTICS page 10

## Founder's computer stolen UNCA Housing unsure how theft occurred

By Dru Martin  
Staff Writer

A computer valued at approximately \$2,000 was recently stolen from the third floor computer lab in Founders Hall, according to UNCA's housing office.

"We're not sure whether the dorm was unlocked or whether someone had a key," said Pete Williams, director of housing and residence life at UNCA. "All of the computers in the lab are normally tied down with security devices, but because there had been some renovations going on, the computers had just recently been put back into the computer lab and they had not been secured yet."

"The information that we got was that the door to that particular computer lab sometimes stays propped open because it was still under construction at the time," said Jerry Adams, investigator for UNCA public safety. "It's supposed to be locked, but the residence director said that he has found it propped open and left unsecured several times, so it actually was not broken into."

"I think it was an on-campus student, as opposed to a commuter," said Thomas Jablonski, a junior undeclared major. "I think they (on-campus students) would have more of an idea when it would be open, when it would be free. I don't think a commuter would hang out at the computer lab."

"A couple of my friends have had things stolen before, and it sucks when it happens," said Shands Senechal, a junior computer science major. "It sucks that you have to look out for your own stuff on top of everything else, and live with the level of awareness that is required to get by today. As if there aren't enough dangers to be looking out for already."

The lab has re-opened since the beginning of the semester, according to Williams. The computers are tied to the floor and to the wall with cables.

It was just a bad timing incident, according to Adams.

"This is the first computer lab in a dorm where we've had a com-

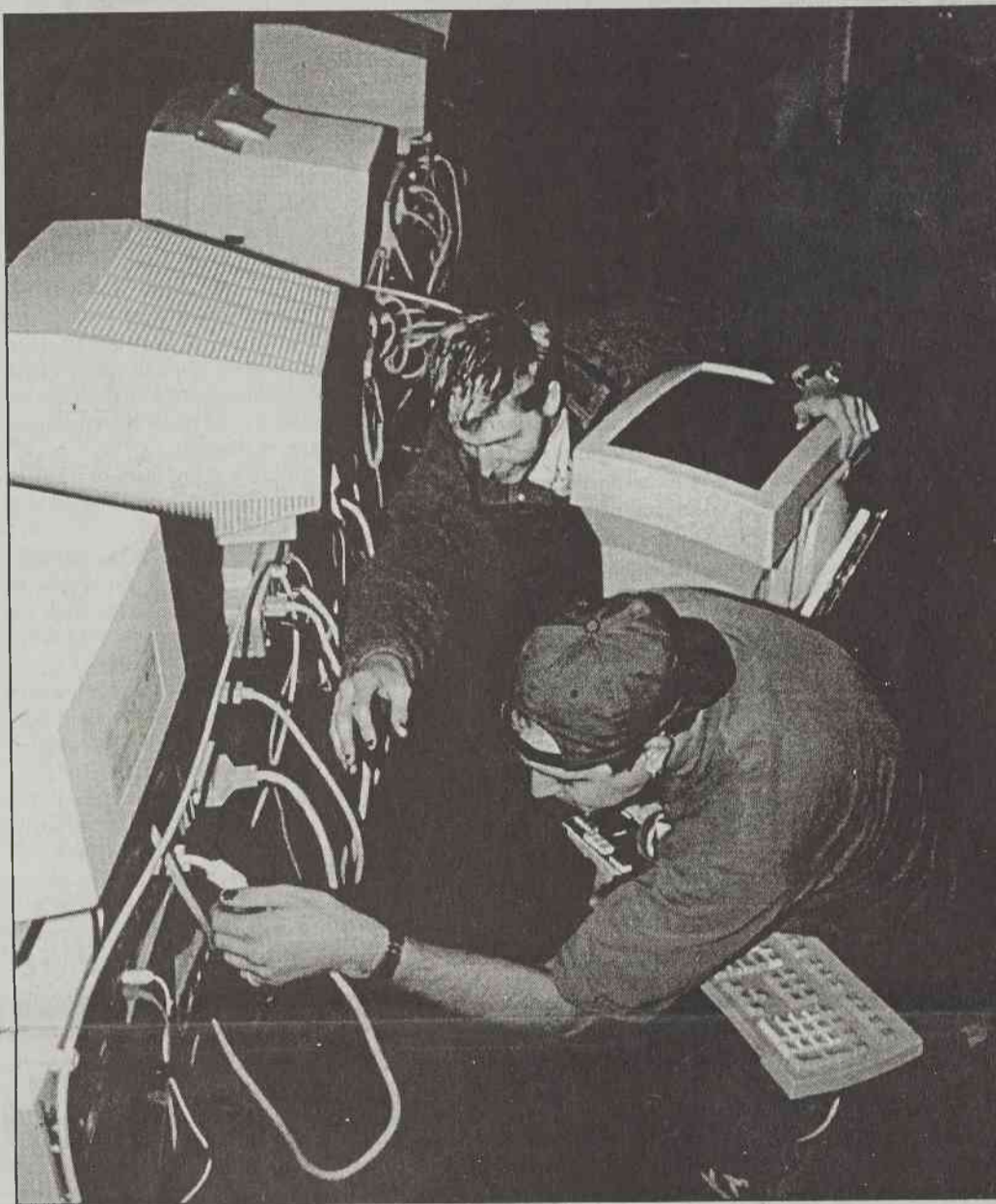


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY TRAVIS BARKER/ MODELS DYLAN YORK AND NICK MCGINEY

Thieves make a clean get away this time, but increased efforts by public safety and housing will make future theft more difficult.

puter stolen, so this could be an isolated occurrence," said Adams.

"There were students in the building who hadn't left yet or who were staying throughout the break for other purposes," said Williams.

"We don't have any suspects yet," said Adams. "We have the serial numbers and everything, but right now we don't have any leads. We can't just go around searching rooms without probable cause. The housing office can do safety inspections and look for those sorts of things. As far as the public safety office is concerned, we can't just go room to room and search for stolen

items. That violates their rights. We must have probable cause."

"I don't think it's necessarily a public safety issue," said Gina Voci, a senior environmental studies major. "The thing I don't understand is why a student would take it since they have access to it all the time."

"There are usually three or four computers in the labs," said Chad Pry, an undeclared sophomore. "The only thing they're good for is word processing. That's pretty much it. You can't do any research, or anything else. I don't know why anyone would want

to steal it."

"Somebody probably took it home during the break and left it at their house," said Adams. "They're probably just using it for their own purposes."

"I don't think you could pawn it," said Jablonski. "If they are pawing it, they're really stupid because I'm sure there's probably serial numbers and stamps all over it."

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See STOLEN page 9

## Humanities criticized for western perspective

By Meghan Cummings  
Staff Writer

The director of the humanities program and the course coordinators will meet with a group of students this week to discuss possible ways to make the curriculum more inclusive of non-western cultures. The

meeting was initiated in response to concerns expressed by both students and faculty about the lack of sufficient study of non-western history and culture in the humanities program.

"I think humanities needs to be reformulated," said Dwight Mullen, chair and associate professor in the political science department and a humanities instructor. "It needs to be redone so that it is inclusive."

According to Alphonso Donaldson, president of SGA, many students agree that the humanities program needs to be re-examined. The meeting will allow students and faculty to get together and discuss issues about humanities that they are both concerned about.

"I think a lot of students have had this on their minds," said Donaldson. "It will help just to get the students into the conversa-

tion. We've got two conversations going on in two different circles. We just need to bring those two circles together."

The issue of a humanities program that is inclusive of non-western cultures has been discussed in the department for several years, according to Peg Downes, director of the humanities program.

"Humanities changes every semester," said Downes. "When you look at the syllabi and

how they have changed over the years, you see more and more non-western material."

Including studies of non-western cultures into the humanities program is essential for the program to fulfill its mission, according to Elmoize Abunura, coordinator of the African studies program and lecturer in political science.

See HUMANITIES page 10

## Additional funds made available for Highsmith

By Krystel Lucas  
Staff Writer

Additional funds of \$2.5 million are expected to be diverted from the Blue Ridge Regional Destination Center, an economic development project for the Blue Ridge

Parkway, to UNCA's proposed Highsmith University Center renovations, according to the administration.

"The \$2.5 million has been appropriated," said Tom Byers, special assistant to the chancellor. "We expect it to be transferred to UNCA in the near future."

The House and Senate allocated \$1 million of the \$12.4 million requested for the

center last year, according to Arthur Foley, vice chancellor for financial affairs. They are expected to divert an additional \$2.5 million from funds originally designated to the Blue Ridge Regional Destination Center, said Foley.

UNCA is pleased to receive the funds, however, construction cannot begin until the university receives the full appropria-

tions, according to Foley.

"We've investigated and have found that it is just not practical to start this project until we have all of the funding," said Byers. "It is best to do all of the construction at one time."

"A project of this magnitude will take probably between two or three years of construction," said Foley. "Freshmen stu-

dents on campus may graduate before the building is completed."

The total renovation costs of \$12.4 million will add on an additional 46,229 square feet to the existing 37,785 square feet of the Highsmith Center. This will allow for a

See HIGHSMITH page 9