

# Opinions

The Banner

## Editorial

### Invitation only

#### Automatic

As with any institution, UNCA has rules. These rules protect students, faculty and staff from situations that could harm them. Sometimes, these rules protect them from themselves. When the rules are broken, appropriate reprimand and/or punishment is expected. It is a simple and not uncommon way of doing things.

In the case of Justin Donaldson, having a loaded handgun in his dorm room was "a stupid mistake," he admits. Because possession of a handgun on school property is considered a felony, the decision of what his punishment will be goes to the state and not the university. While the state decides what to do, Donaldson is allowed to stay in the dorms.

"If the determination by university officials is that the student or students do not pose a harm to themselves or others, we usually await the decision of the public courts before deciding on university action," Eric Iovacchini, vice chancellor of student affairs, said. So the university waits on the state before it will do anything concerning Donaldson. That is where the problem exists.

Students living on Donaldson's floor have expressed concern about their safety. "I do not think he should be allowed to remain in university housing after having a loaded gun in his room," said Clint Bergin, a former roommate of Donaldson.

Donaldson said that if people get to know him, "they will see I am no threat or problem." This may prove to be true, but students have made it clear that having Donaldson on their floor makes them uncomfortable and afraid. Who else is a better judge of their safety (or lack of it) than the students themselves?

It is possible that the state will decide that Donaldson should leave the dorm. Until then, the best thing for residents who feel their safety is in jeopardy to do is to attend the meeting in South Ridge Residence Hall on March 18.

We hope that some representative of the administration will be there to hear and carefully consider the students' concerns. Perhaps some change or compromise will come out of this that will make everyone feel better. UNCA is always talking about how students come first. Now is the time for the administration to live up to their talk.

#### Make it count

If there is one avenue left for people to make their opinions, values, and ideas count, it has to be voting. Make your vote count, rock the vote, whatever slogan you prefer, the simple truth is that voting is the only way an individual can truly take part in a democracy.

As of Thursday, the chance to vote in this year's election for UNCA's Student Government Association will be history. This means that if you did not vote (whatever your reasons may be), too bad for you. You just missed your chance to speak your mind and have it count for something for once in your school career. Chances are you won't be losing any sleep over this tonight, though.

Voter turnout at SGA elections have been poor for a long time, and it seems everyone and no one is to blame. Perhaps students are just apathetic about SGA. Maybe they just have too much to do, or maybe who is serving in SGA does not interest them. Whatever the reasons, voting is obviously not a top priority for most UNCA students. Trying to find ways to change this behavior takes a lot of time and effort.

Contrary to some people's beliefs, *The Banner* encourages voting, whether it be for SGA or anything that concerns students. We put heavy emphasis of taking full advantage of the freedoms we have at this school and in this country. So, in an attempt to perhaps make voting more attractive to students, we have just one word for SGA: compensation.

Why does every club and organization offer free pizza or some other gimmick at their meetings? Because most students have three priorities: food, beer, and money (not necessarily in that order). Give students one of these three things and they will do what you want, or at least be more open to hearing what you have to say. The pizza thing is a bit overdone, though. Maybe giving voting students soda or even money would increase voter turnout.

Another plan of attack would be to follow the lead of newspapers and magazines across the country and give money to the student who can most accurately pick who will win the election. We are not talking big "Wheel of Fortune" money. Just give the winner \$5 and they'll be happy. Nothing brings out the best in people like competition.

If SGA wants to see more voters, they need to get creative and devise new strategies for drawing students in. Fliers on commuters' cars are a good try, but they are more likely to persuade students to throw them on the ground instead of encouraging them to research the SGA candidates. Unfortunately, students are not going to make voting for SGA representatives number one on their list of things to do. SGA must make it more worthwhile for the students.

By the way, the ideas listed above are not meant to be taken seriously. We would hate to offend or provoke those who feel strongly about SGA and/or voting.

## Thinking through humanities



Liam Bryan  
columnist

Well, the big discussion these days seems to be the humanities program. What the heck, I shall put in my 3 cents (I have a lot of thoughts on the subject, so I have 3 cents instead of 2 cents).

First thought: In the words of Ann Landers, "kwitcheberlyachin."

I do not know who started this trend of beating on the humanities system, but I can assure you that it was not by anyone who was breezing through the course. This complaint of not being "globally inclusive" is something started by a kid who was not mature enough to do their work, so he or she decided to complain about it instead.

Let us suppose that the subscribers to these thoughts have a genuine complaint. For a moment, let us say that they truly believe that the courses need to include more of the eastern cultures. This is a valid viewpoint; I myself share it. But, instead of complaining about it, I decided to go and study these cultures on my own. If you naysayers out there truly are grumbling just about the fact that you want to study more cultures, get off your duffs and do it yourself.

Of course, why would anyone com-

plain about something like this? Hey, it is something to complain about, which is reason enough for most. I sincerely doubt that, if the humanities program were to include more of these cultures, that these students that are now complaining would end their berating. Do you think they would enjoy studying even more information? Having to do more work?

The only reason these students complain about this exclusion of eastern cultures is because they are trying to overhaul the humanities program.

Second thought: Many students are calling for an overhaul of the humanities program. Listen here, wimps. This is a l-i-b-e-r-a-l-a-r-t-s school. That means culture. That means that you are going to have to learn where ideas, morals, and inspirations come from. This is not some technical school that will teach you how to operate a deep fryer, this is an institution that teaches you how to be a human being.

How many of you have read ideas of the truly great minds of the world? Confucius? Socrates? Descartes? Machiavelli? Now, how

many of your friends at Western, A-B Tech, or Appalachian can say that they read and understood those thinkers? This is a school for inspiration. You should be reading these works for an understanding of different cultures and ideas, not to do a book report.

Sixteen hours of humanities. Is that so bad? It is just one semester's worth. Would you rather end up taking six to nine hours each of history, literature, philosophy, anthropology, classics, and sociology? If you would rather take two years' worth of these classes, be my guest.

Third thought: I do not like humanities. No, that is not entirely accurate. I do not like my humanities class. There is a major danger (or flaw, depending on your viewpoint) of our humanities program. Every department has a representative that teaches humanities. Even the mathematics department (scary thought). As a result, you get people who have their own agenda and their own pace. This leads to a large number of students who do not get the same coverage of important areas, and, in some cases, complete ignorance of some subjects.

I enjoy the humanities lectures, not to catch up on sleep, but because I hear differing viewpoints. Humanities is essentially a class on ethics, philosophy, and history. Those three things are probably the most debatable topics in human society. You cannot learn ethics from a single source.

The lectures are the most important part of humanities. The only way that I could see to improve them is to change them to more of a debate forum; we could have two speakers debating a topic. Impractical and costly, yes. But, think of the intellectual results of this. Like it or not, our humanities program is still

somewhat one-sided. This forum style of lecturing would introduce viewpoints that could not be found in a single lecturer.

Do I personally think that students should take a semester's worth of courses to find out where their culture came from? Sadly, yes. Have any of you out there ever tried to learn something in public schools? It is downright near impossible.

As anyone who has had to spend a year or longer in public schools can attest to, public education does more harm than good. Here are some genuine examples, taken straight from my physics, chemistry, and history classes from high school: "Penguins at the south pole. I thought it got warmer the farther you went south."

"You mean the sun doesn't go out at night?"

"Socrates? Oh, yeah, he was in that movie, um, Bill and Ted! That movie was cool! It had Keanu Reeves in it!" Behold the enlightened masses.

Well, advocates of anti-humanities, would you prefer this existence of ignorance? Granted, most of the students in my humanities class are already at this state, but that is no reason for you to be there.

You cannot get around the humanities program at UNCA. The program is a part of this school. When some of you finally graduate and become semi-productive members of society, you will need to know why people react the way that they do. You will need to know how to read through the lines of literature. You will need to be cultured in order to fit into a culture.

Now, for sake of humanity (nyuk nyuk), go and finish the reading you have been assigned. Maybe you will finally find out why this world works the way it does.

## Fighting against a chip mill threat



Candice Carr  
columnist

On Tuesday, we have a chance to make a positive difference for our whole region. The 19 high-capacity chip mills constructed in Western North Carolina over the past decade pose the number one threat to our forests and communities. Chip mills are highly mechanized, unregulated facilities that grind whole logs into quarter-sized chips for paper, particleboard and other products. The average chipmill in North Carolina chips 10,000 acres of forest every year and employs four people per eight-hour shift. Since 1985, over 100 chipmills have been constructed in the Southeast as the timber industry has shifted from the over-cut forests of the Pacific Northwest. Local family-owned sawmills lose raw materials and labor, and the many-faceted life of forest ecosystems suffers tremendously from the acceleration of industrial-scale clearcutting. When they clearcut for chipmills, they take anything and everything chippable, leaving barren, ripped up and road-scarred dirt to dry in the sun. An estimated 1.2 million acres of forests are cut every year to feed the 150 chipmills currently operating in the Southeast, and

that's just the chipmills. When you add in the pulp mills and the oriented strand board plants use, it amounts to a staggering 5 million acres a year. That is outrageously unsustainable. This region is the largest pulp producer in the world, with 106 pulp mills producing about 25 percent of the world's paper and paperboard. Should this be the fate of the forests of Southern Appalachia? Because these mountains were not frozen in the last ice age, it boasts the world's most biodiverse temperate forest. Have you seen the clearcuts in Pisgah? Around Shining Rock? Western North Carolina is home to more species of salamanders than any other place in the world. They don't do well in clearcuts.

Last year, the stink raised by sawmillers and environmentalists reached the nose of Governor Jim Hunt, who ordered a long-awaited and unprecedented "assessment of the environmental and economic impacts of chipmills." Hundreds of concerned people packed meeting halls across the state to voice their concerns, with high hopes for a study with results that would protect our state's natural heri-

tage. Now, fervor has dwindled and the study is becoming a pathetic excuse for research in order to protect the interests of the industry because they fund the university conducting most of the study, the N.C. State University School of Forestry (NCSU SoF). The research was supposed to be divided evenly between Duke and N.C. State, but only two of the 10 scientists are from Duke, while N.C. State holds the other eight positions.

The study lacks evaluations of the impact of clearcuts on forests, water quality, plant diversity or aquatic species. "The wildlife impact analysis relies exclusively on computer modeling at the expense of site-specific field research!" said Danna Smith, the executive director of the Dogwood Alliance, a network of more than 50 grassroots organizations defending our watersheds, wildlife habitats, and quality of life. There is already documented evidence of the significant cumulative impacts of clearcutting to feed chipmills in the Tennessee Valley in the Tennessee Valley Authority Environmental Impact Statement, but this is not being emphasized.

"Dr. Fred Cabbage, lead researcher for the study and dept. head for the NCSU SoF, is a vocal advocate of increased intensive forest management of both pines and hardwoods, leading many to wonder if questions relating to the potential negative impacts of intensive forest management will be dealt with objectively," said Smith. Cabbage's crew is conducting most of the ecological impact studies as well as economic studies! If he publishes a report that suggests there should be less wood-chipping in the southeast, his department would most likely suffer economically, and his superiors would be dismayed. The industry has its claws around the

institutions, but it doesn't have to be that way! With enough public support, we can change things.

Of the 11 sub-parts of the study, only ONE will use actual field research as a source for data! (A Duke soils expert, Dan Richter). The others are using outdated information from past research texts and crunching industry-approved numbers. George Hess, the wildlife biologist, readily admits that for \$15,000, "Using existing data and models, we can make general statements about the ability of the state's forests to support particular wildlife species or guilds." General statements don't do a whole lot for migratory songbirds looking for their tree in a clearcut that was forest last spring.

This is our only chance for regulations that matter. If this study continues in the direction it is headed, and the industry is able to conceal the greater parts of the damage that the chipmills have caused and could cause to southeastern forest ecosystems, we could witness the explosion of these forest-clearing facilities on our state, and will be too late too do anything about it. Just look at what the industry has done to the forest economies, wildlife and water quality of Maine, Oregon, and Washington. It's up to us to change that. It may be our last chance. Let's certainly not do it.

"The public doesn't care about this!" said a member of the N.C. chip study advisory committee when asked if meetings could be recorded. Let's prove that guess wrong on Tuesday by attending the public forum for the study at 5 p.m. at MacDowell East Junior High, 700 State St., Marion. (ext. #86 from Interstate 40, in the direction of the ASHE bulletin in the Environmental Science connecting hall)