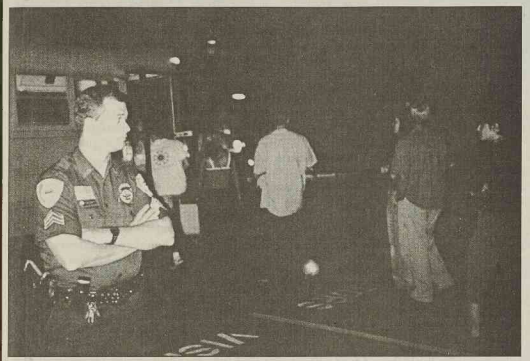


New policy cracks down



Sergeant Randy Martin, a UNCA public safety officer, oversees students as they board a shuttle to the Theta Chi fraternity party.

PHOTO BY JASON GRAHAM

By Amanda Osteen
Staff Writer

Students are going to have a harder time getting away with underage drinking this year due to stronger efforts by the campus police to curb consumption, according to a UNCA public safety investigator.

"We've come up with a zero-tolerance policy concerning alcohol violations," said Jerry Adams, an investigator with public safety. "Not all students are happy about the stricter policies, according to some students."

"The campus police have been cracking down to the point of harassment," said Celso Fernandez, a senior history major and resident of Mills Hall.

Fernandez, who is in his second semester of living in Mills, said things have changed in the dorms recently.

"You saw the campus police around only when there was trouble," said Fernandez. "Now it's different."

"There's a lot of reasons why this year we've had to step up enforcement, especially with alcohol," said Adams. "A lot of college campuses are having problems with binge drinking, and it's a big safety issue now."

The rise in binge-related incidents has prompted the campus police to take underage drinking more seriously.

The university and our department have wanted to try a new

approach to handle it, (due to all the negative press coverage about students dying and getting sick because they've been drinking too much," said Adams.

"Anybody that we come into contact with who is underage or who is violating a campus regulation is either going to get cited for it or sent to student conduct for it," said Adams. "This is really the first time we've really had a zero-tolerance approach."

There are reasons behind the zero-tolerance policy, according to Adams.

"It is a safety issue. It is to not only protect the people we cite, but to protect other people as well," said Adams. "When someone is drunk to the point when they want to cause a problem with somebody, then they are not only a danger to themselves, but to the people they are around."

Students aren't as educated as they could be about drinking, according to Amy Carpenter, the residence life coordinator for Mills Hall.

"It is about not knowing how to drink responsibly if you are going to drink at all," said Carpenter.

"It's not so much that they are curbing drinking, they are just making people be more responsible," said Fernandez.

This should be a learning experience for students, not just a punishment, according to Adams. Although the rules and consequences may be more severe this year, he isn't trying to

ruin anyone's good time.

"We understand that a lot of people are away from home for the first time, and they want to get a little wild and have some fun," said Adams.

There is a hostility toward public safety that was not there before, according to Fernandez.

"Everyone just scatters because they don't want to be seen by the campus police for any reason," said Fernandez. "It kills the spirit of student life."

Dealing with problems that arise in the dorms has been the concern of the housing office but campus police will try to help deal with the ones concerning alcohol.

According to Fernandez, the campus police are approaching the underage drinking dilemma in the wrong way.

"They are showing up outside (the dorms) with breathalyzers," said Fernandez. "That's no way to go about it."

Carpenter said she doesn't believe the new policies are infringing on students.

"I don't think it really surprises anybody that sometimes underage drinking gets out of hand, and that it's a major health issue," said Carpenter. "When students have a better appreciation for their community and respect for each other, they have a much more positive college experience," said Carpenter. "When we find that alcohol has such a negative effect on that, we want to curb the negative thing and build up the community."

There are many crimes that are never reported, according to Mar

Assaultant banned

By Greg Sessoms
Staff Writer

A UNCA student was verbally and physically assaulted in the Belk Theatre parking lot on Aug. 23 at 10:50 a.m. in an incident that was classified as a hate/bias crime by public safety.

The victim, who asked to remain anonymous, is a minority student.

The supposed assailant, Scott Hamilton Phillips, an undeclared sophomore, was charged with simple assault and communicating threats. His use of racial slurs resulted in the hate/bias crime classification.

The incident began shortly after the victim and his friend, Emma Katzeelson, a student at Columbia University in New York, parked their car in the lot.

"All of a sudden, we heard someone screaming. We could not hear what they were saying, but they were yelling very loudly. We returned around and the man was grabbing his crotch and screaming," said Katzeelson.

Katzeelson claims that at that point Phillips began to approach them while continuing to yell obscenities.

"He just started saying things like 'F--- you, you darke. F--- you, you half-breed,'" said Katzeelson.

When Phillips reached the couple, he reportedly physically assaulted Katzeelson's friend.

"He stood in front of us and said 'F--- you.' Then he took my friend's hat off his head and slapped him across the face with it, quite hard. As he did that, he said 'F--- you half-breed.' After he hit him, he threw the hat back at him and just started to walk away," said Katzeelson.

The victim and Katzeelson took down Phillips' license plate number and reported the incident to

public safety. The incident was unprovoked, according to Katzeelson.

"We were not even looking at him. We were completely going another direction, and all of a sudden, he just started screaming. I have absolutely no idea what led him to do this," said Katzeelson.

Phillips declined to comment on the incident.

According to public safety's case statement included with the arrest report, Phillips was contacted by telephone the following day and asked to report to the public safety office so that two warrants, simple assault and communicating threats, could be served to him.

Phillips complied and was escorted by Vicki Harris, the victim/witness advocate officer with UNCA public safety, to the Buncombe County Magistrate's office where the warrants were served.

Dennis Gregory, director of public safety, declined to comment on behalf of the public safety department.

An unsecured bond of \$600 was set, and Phillips was released and taken to campus. If Phillips is convicted of the charges, he could be sentenced up to 60 days in jail for each offense and could be fined an amount to be decided by the judge.

In addition to the charges, Phillips was suspended from classes and banned from campus pending a hearing before the Student Conduct Board scheduled for Aug. 27. Phillips withdrew from classes prior to the hearing and was banned from campus by the vice chancellor for student affairs, Eric Iovachini.

"It was a simple decision" to ban Phillips from campus, said Iovachini.

"The allegations were serious enough that I took them seriously and acted accordingly," said Iovachini.

This was not the first time Phillips had been charged with simple assault and communicating threats.

According to Phillips' arrest record, he was charged with injury to personal property and simple assault in 1995. He was also charged with simple assault, injury to personal property and communicating threats earlier this year. All of these charges were dismissed by the district attorney.

Despite having witnessed the assault, Katzeelson does not believe it is indicative of a significant problem with race relations on campus.

"I believe this was an isolated incident, a very unfortunate one. I do not believe this is all of a sudden going to become rampant on campus," said Katzeelson.

Katzeelson said she also feels that Public Safety performed well after the incident occurred.

"I think Vicki Harris is excellent. As far as I could see, she really was very supportive and really listened," said Katzeelson. "Everything seemed to be expedited very quickly."

Although Katzeelson speculated as to how a person with an extensive arrest record could be permitted to attend a university, she feels neither the administration nor Public Safety could have prevented the assault.

"I do not know if it is fair to say that a person with a rap sheet should not be allowed in a university. I do not know if the school really has a responsibility to look out for that student necessarily, but I cannot think of something else the school could have done differently to prevent the incident," said Katzeelson.

Currently, applicants to UNCA are asked on the application if they have been convicted of any crimes. Criminal background checks are not conducted by UNCA on student applicants, although they are conducted on faculty and staff according to Iovachini. An applicant with a record "may be reviewed by the admission board," said Iovachini.

"The information in this article was verified by the victim."

Mullen stresses involvement

UNCA to become more active in the community

By Holly Beveridge
Staff Writer

Chancellor James Mullen plans to make community partnership and involvement a central focus of his administration.

"I think sometimes higher education gets separated from its community. We start to think we're a community unto ourselves and that we don't have responsibilities to the community," said Mullen. "I believe that's completely wrong."

Although he said he doesn't think students should be mandated to serve, Mullen said he wants every UNCA student to feel a responsibility toward the community.

Many colleges and universities ignore their responsibility to their communities, according to Mullen, who believes American higher education has been guilty of some "extraordinary irresponsibilities."

As part of this responsibility, Mullen plans to create mentoring programs for children in the community, partnerships with local schools and mentoring opportunities for UNCA students with area corporate and non-profit businesses.

Mullen, who helped raise over \$200 million as director of Project 2002 (a revitalization program for the community surrounding Hartford, Connecticut's Trinity College), promised in a recent meeting to "go to any foundation in the country and seek support" on be-

half of UNCA and its community.

"There's very little we can do alone," said Mullen, "but if we're partnering in the community and partnering with other academic institutions, partnering with schools, partnering across the board, there's nothing we can't do."

Eric Iovachini, vice chancellor for student affairs, said he shares Mullen's view of UNCA's role.

"As a public institution, we need to have a relationship with the community," said Iovachini. He pointed to UNCA's cultural and special events, the Center for Creative Retirement and humanities lectures as just a few elements that help bring the outside community onto campus.

"I think that's a part of the chancellor's vision," said Iovachini, "making the campus available and making it available outside the campus."

Iovachini cited limited resources, both human and financial, as the primary obstacle to greater community involvement on campus. Although UNCA offers students a great education, other schools like Wofford, Davidson or Washington State receive more endowments and larger gifts from alumni, according to Iovachini.

Despite these limitations, Iovachini thinks Mullen will meet the challenge.

"I think this chancellor wants to move us up," said Iovachini. "He's going to charge us up a little."

Mullen spoke of the need for new and more numerous internship pro-

grams, allowing UNCA students invaluable hands-on experience while giving area companies access to "North Carolina's best young talent." According to Mullen, both the business and non-profit communities expressed overwhelming support for partnerships with UNCA.

Mullen's vision seems to be gaining support among students as well.

"He's making a huge step to bring UNCA closer to the community of Asheville, and that's going to be a huge inlet for fundraising. I think," said SGA president Wiley Cash, a senior creative writing major who attended the corporate luncheon. Cash, who met Mullen earlier this year, said he initially felt excited, but at the same time "a little skeptical of such a huge promise that (Mullen) was making." Since then, Cash said Mullen has "fulfilled promises that he made initially to me."

Mullen has already contacted each of the major student organizations on campus, speaking to many of the groups in person, according to Cash.

Senior senator Holly Spencer, a political science major, attended three student organization meetings where Mullen spoke. At all of the meetings, Mullen initially asked students what he could do to help them, said Spencer. Taking pride in UNCA was another issue Mullen

Theft increase expected

By Sarah Wilkins
Staff Writer

UNCA's crime rate is expected to rise slightly this year, according to an investigator with public safety.

"There has been a slow, but steady, increase every year," said Jerry Adams, investigator with public safety.

"There was a big increase (last year), because during that year we had a lot of construction going on," said Adams.

This year's crime rate may increase a little bit," said Dennis Gregory, director of public safety.

However, public safety has changed the way that they report some crimes, which contributes to the increasing rates of theft. For example, breaking

into a vehicle now counts as breaking and entering.

"The way we are reporting it has made the difference," said Gregory.

The number of thefts increased from five in 1997 to 54 in 1998. The construction occurring around campus was the main reason behind the increase, according to Adams.

The construction companies were responsible for their own security and the companies were being slack, according to Adams.

A lot of buildings were being left open that shouldn't have been," said Adams.

The companies "were not doing what they were supposed to do so, therefore, it resulted in a lot of stuff being taken," said Adams.

The number of cases solved is very small, according to Adams.

"Basically, the only incident we were able to recover money back from" was a series of five thefts, said Adams.

These thefts were connected to a person that worked for one of the construction companies, Carolina Fiber Optics paid over \$6,000 in damages. Their employee, Robert Yeazel, had been stealing from both the company and the students. Computers and drills were among the items stolen, according to Adams.

There are many crimes that are never reported, according to Mar