

The Banner

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Seniors question validity of GRE

By Johanna Lukcs
Staff Writer

Some UNCA seniors who took the graduate record examination (GRE) on Sept. 13 were dissatisfied with how the exam measured academic achievement, according to students.

"It shouldn't be something that automatically knocks people out of the running (for graduate school)," said Alexis McMillan, a senior creative writing major.

Most seniors who plan on applying to graduate school take the GRE. The GRE is the most common test required by graduate schools, according to Gene McDowell, director of the Asheville Graduate Center.

The GRE is used to measure both a student's academic achievement and aptitude for graduate school.

"Grade point averages and GRE scores are weighed about equally. Letters of recommendation are also very helpful," according to McDowell. "That's where the faculty members who have taught the student in the past can really help (the student) out."

The total raw score does not include the students' analytical score. A lot of schools look at this score because of the importance of analytical thinking in graduate study, but most students do not realize that their total score is derived from the quantitative and verbal sections, according to McDowell.

"I think the major shortfall of any standardized test of this sort is that they don't measure motivation. Motivation is a very important factor in how well students do in any academic program," said McDowell. "There's a wide range of academic levels that can do well in graduate school if they are properly motivated and have a strong work ethic."

Many students have a copy of their scores sent to UNCA, but these scores are not widely used internally at UNCA, according to Archer Gravelly, director of institutional research.

"It's hard to draw too many conclusions from it," said Gravelly. "From 1982 to 1989, only 766 students who took the GRE or another graduate school admission test had their scores sent back to UNCA. Because not every student who takes the GRE has their score mailed to UNCA, institutional research is reluctant to draw conclusions based on the information they have, according to Rebecca Elkin, coordinator of instructional technology.

"We don't use the data because it's usually not complete," said Elkin.

Graduate schools use the GRE score as a "gatekeeping device," in which they establish an informal cut-off score, according to

McDowell. This is due to the general belief of admissions committees that students need to have a certain level of achievement and aptitude in order to do well in graduate school.

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Administration defends policy

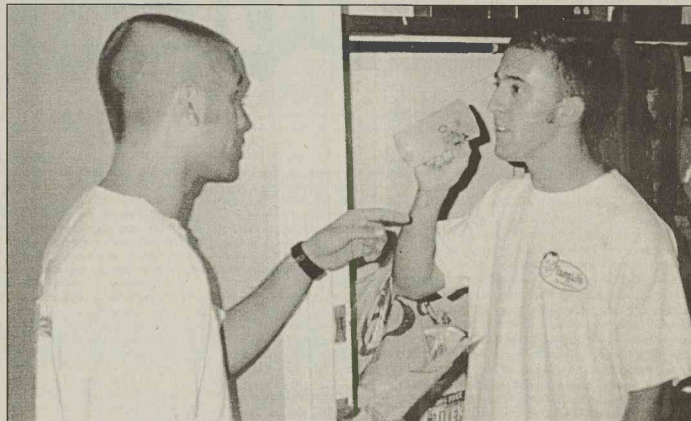


PHOTO BY JASON GRAHAM, MODELS ANJU MOONDIRA AND BRIAN COUZY

The debate over the new zero-tolerance policy adopted by UNCA continues to be an issue of controversy between students and administration. A large number of policy violations occur within the dorms.

By Sarah Wilkins
Staff Writer

The administration has spoken in defense of UNCA's new zero-tolerance policy, a rule that has given rise to much student dissatisfaction and discussion.

In order to prevent underage consumption of alcohol, the university will "do everything we can, from zero-tolerance to talking about (alcohol) issues in classrooms," said Iovacchini.

A UNCA student was admitted to the Memorial Mission Hospital for treatment of alcohol poisoning early Sept. 16. Mass quantities of alcohol consumed with medication led to the emergency.

So far this semester, three students have had alcohol poisoning, according to Eric Iovacchini, vice chancellor for student affairs.

The multiple cases are "why the university worries about alcohol consumption," said Iovacchini.

"Most of us that are educated are really concerned about the volumes of alcohol that are being

consumed," said Iovacchini. "I know that we can't prevent it all, but we've got a responsibility (to the students)."

"I think alcohol at UNCA is probably the most abused drug," said Iovacchini. However, "all of us across the country are struggling with this problem, it's not just UNCA."

Yet, many students believe that alcohol is not that big of a problem.

"As long as you do it in moderation, I don't see any problem with it," said Julie Garling, a sopho-

more music major.

With public safety officers at shuffles that are going to fraternities parties, some students are considering driving in order to avoid getting a citation.

"If public safety is going to keep being the way they are, they don't leave people many alternatives to find other ways to get around them," said Wesley Hall, a senior accounting major.

The university would "rather put somebody who's been drinking in

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UNCA ranked in Princeton Review

By Phoebe Hicks
Staff Writer

UNCA's fall enrollment of full-time students is up, and the university is ranked as one of the best 331 colleges in the Princeton Review's 2000 edition, but UNCA still has some areas in which to improve.

"We don't have enough scholarships to offer students. Now, when students are looking for colleges to

go to, and when they have a good high school record, they are looking for some scholarship dollars," said Phillip West, assistant vice chancellor of enrollment services.

"Our school needs more scholarship money if we are going to stay competitive," said West.

Archer Gravelly, director of institutional research, stated in a press release that we have gained approximately 20 additional full-time students compared to last year's numbers. Although we have gained more

full-time students, our incoming freshman class is smaller when compared to last fall's.

"Last year's new freshman class was UNCA's largest ever. The slight decline this year is probably due to a drop in out-of-state enrollment, which we think results from the new statewide scholarship programs in neighboring states," said Gravelly in a press release.

An example of such a program is the HOPE scholarship program in Georgia. This program is funded

by money from Georgia's lottery and provides free tuition to any Georgia resident with at least a "B" average to attend college in state, according to Gravelly's release.

"Unfortunately, sometimes they are making decisions (about which school to attend) based on economic reasons rather than just the environment of the institution. More scholarship dollars will make us more competitive for top-notch

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Professor selected for women's leadership program

By Holly Beveridge
Staff Writer

Pam Laughton, associate professor of psychology, recently became UNCA's first faculty member ever selected to join the highly competitive BRIDGES Academic Leadership for Women program at UNC-Chapel Hill, according to Jim Pitts, vice chancellor of academic affairs.

On Sept. 22, Laughton joined 35 women from other four-year colleges and universities in the UNC system for the beginning of the seventh BRIDGES class in Chapel Hill. According to Laughton, UNCA funded her enrollment in the 12-week program, which provides extensive leadership training for women considering careers in higher education.

"I think I'll either really like this or I'll spend 11 weeks thinking about it, or I'll decide that I just want to be a teacher," said Laughton. "I'm torn. I love teaching. I really do."

Laughton said she first heard about BRIDGES last spring through Pitts, who recommended her for the program. As part of the application process, approximately 15 of her colleagues and other university staff members filled out lengthy questionnaires about Laughton's work and leadership abilities, and sent them to BRIDGES. "I'm up for the feedback," said Laughton. "I don't know if I'm suited for this. I think I am, but this will be my taste of it."

According to Pitts, professional development programs like BRIDGES offer new learning experiences and new information that allow participants

to "serve the university in a higher level of responsibility."

"She'll do wonderfully," said Pitts. "She's a lively person that always learns and she'll flourish."

Laughton said both Pitts and Chancellor Jim Mullen have offered to meet with her on a monthly basis to talk with her about how they make decisions.

"They've agreed to mentor me through the whole thing, which is really great of them," said Laughton.

To attend the program, Laughton said she will travel to Chapel Hill each Wednesday and on occasional weekends for the remainder of the fall semester.

"I'm the only participant from west of Greensboro," said Laughton, who will travel back each Thursday in time to teach a 10:50 a.m. class.

If she does decide to pursue a course in higher education administration, the next step would be to apply for an American Council on Edu-

cation (ACE) fellowship, according to Laughton. In the ACE program, participants work directly under or with an administrator in another four-year institution.

Pursuing the administrative route, however, would mean eventually leaving Asheville, according to Laughton.

"I don't know if I want to do that or not," said Laughton, who came to UNCA 10 years ago. "There are a lot of people here I would miss horribly."

According to Pitts, future possibilities for Laughton to put her BRIDGES experience to use at UNCA remain open.

"I'm not certain of what her future will be, but we'll all benefit by encouraging her learning," said Pitts.



PHOTO BY WALTER FLYLER

Pam Laughton is UNCA's first professor to be selected for the BRIDGES program.