

THE BLUE BANNER

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Minority statistics do not reflect campus mission

Two VCAA candidates visit UNCA

Elizabeth Moe
News Reporter

Statistics show a decrease in cultural diversity at UNCA from 1995 until 2002.

"I've never seen it this low. I've never seen the students quite this demoralized, really demoralized, just in terms of wanting to transfer away, unhappy, I've never quite seen it like this," said Dwight Mullen, assistant political science professor.

The student enrollment demographic profile from the institutional research 2001 fact book shows that out of 3,211 total undergraduate students, only 86 were black and only 167 represent all other ethnic backgrounds.

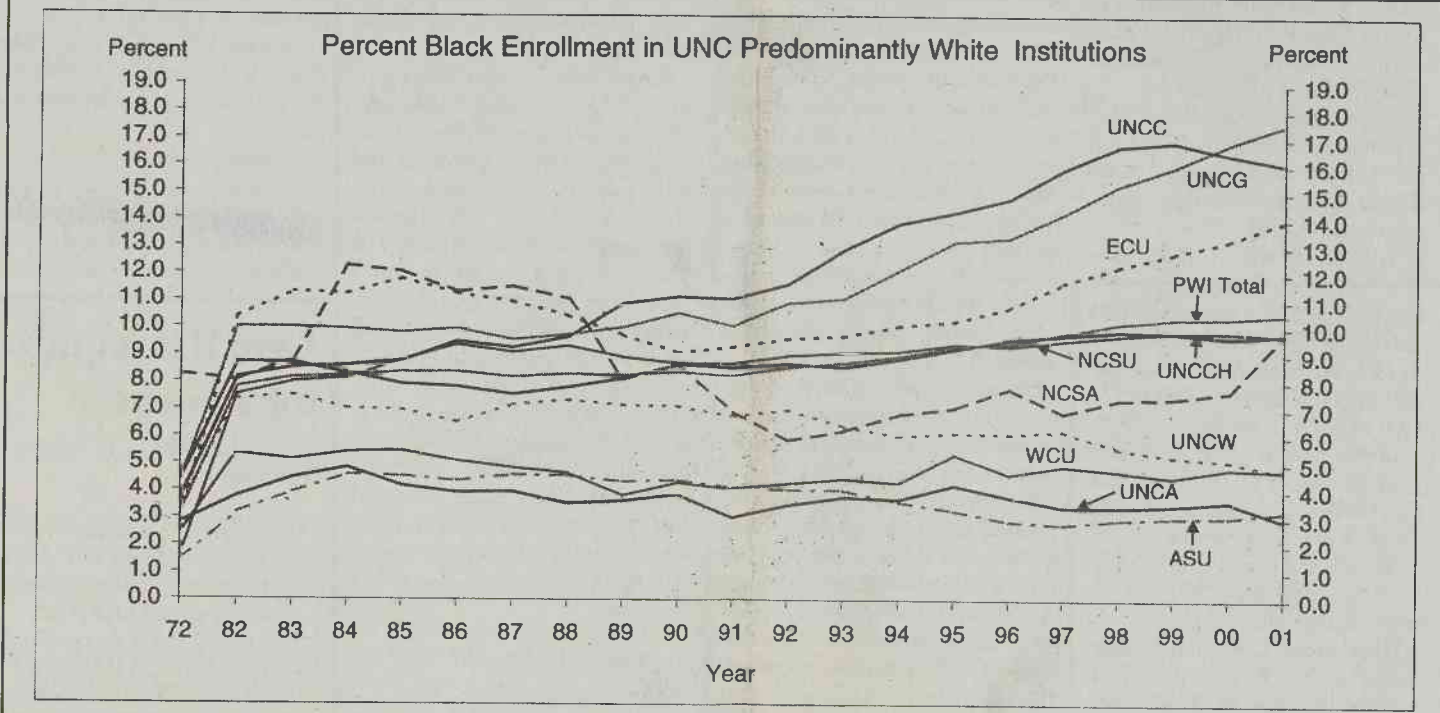
"When you start talking about really what it feels like, maybe the dorms have like around 40 (black) people," said D. Mullen. "That's what I'm talking about. It's hard. People leave. They just say, 'see ya, I didn't know it was like this, see ya.'"

Some students said they were shocked at how few minority students attend UNCA.

"I'm actually very surprised about that. I thought there had been a slight increase since I got here," said Somanna Muthana, a junior engineering management major. "I used to hear stories before now about how we don't have any black students, and then people say there are a few more coming now. I thought I'd noticed they were at least growing, not only blacks but other minorities."

Statistics based on student census reports show that the percentage of black students has been steadily declining for some time. In 1995, 3.9 percent of the student body was comprised of black students. This year, UNCA dropped to 2.8 percent black students.

It is quite possible that UNCA will not have one black freshman for 2003.



Source: UNC Enrollment Report Fall 2001 (<http://www.northcarolina.edu/docs/assessment/Enrollment2001.pdf>)

COURTESY OF UNCA

The graph indicates the declining percentages of black enrollment at UNCA since 1995. Among the other predominantly white institutions, UNCA holds one of the lowest black populations in the UNC system.

"I just got those numbers this morning," said D. Mullen. "There were 52 applications, 13 acceptances and zero have paid security deposits for African American students."

"Well, I'm sure they are looking at the same figures we are seeing, and they look at nearby schools, Chapel Hill, Greensboro, Charlotte, (who have) got bigger, stronger black communities and fraternities," said Muthana.

Some students suggested that UNCA officials try to recruit minorities.

"I'm not saying that we should reduce admission standards or cut people a lot of breaks to get them in," said Matt Witbrodt, a senior political science major. "I'm saying you go out there, you get your name out, and at least try to recruit people."

The Director of Institutional Research,

Archer Gravely said he does not want to recruit minorities just to get UNCA's minorities percentages up.

"From 1981 to 1985, black students never had an average GPA of 2.0," said Gravely. "We were bringing students, who could not perform, just to get the numbers. You don't want to do that."

The total percentage of other minorities has been slowly increasing. The term "other minorities" includes Asians, Hispanics, Native Americans and any other ethnic group that might check "other" on a survey. In 1995, 3.7 percent of the students here fell into this category. In 2001, the number increased to 5.7 percent.

Recruiting minorities has been difficult for the admissions office, according to Gravely.

"We don't have a football team, and we don't have a marching

band," said Gravely. "We don't have diverse community here anyway. It's just a hard thing to sell."

When compared with other UNC predominantly white institutions in 2001, UNCA was dead last for percentage of black enrollment. UNCA has been in the bottom three of this list at least since 1972, according to the UNC enrollment report compiled by the UNCA office of Institutional Research.

"We've been at the bottom three then and now. With the exception of three schools, there hasn't been much movement at all," said Gravely. "We're doing pretty crappy, but nobody else has really changed their profile."

D. Mullen said it is difficult to find exactly what the university proactively does to support diversity on campus.

"Really, when you think about it, when you control for the student

clubs, you have a hard time seeing anything else that is going on," said D. Mullen. "You have the Asian student club and the African-American student club and a couple of other groups. But if you don't do that, you have a hard time seeing that it is going on."

For now, the push for cultural diversity seems to be at a standstill. "We're kind of in a transition right now," said Gravely. "We're getting whacked with budget cuts, so it's kind of a tough time."

Some of the plans to increase cultural diversity are simply more long term than what UNCA can see for the present.

"Short term I'm really not sure, like today, I'm not really sure what is going on," said D. Mullen.

"This capital campaign that just ended will not really bear fruit for

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Whitney Setser
News Reporter

The UNCA Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs search committee held on-campus interviews for two of the four finalists in the running for the position March 7-8 and March 18-19.

"We had a very large number of very solid, qualified candidates for this position," said Tracy Brown, professor of psychology and chair of the VCAA search committee. "(We) are very pleased with the final four candidates."

The two finalists are Susan Coultrap-McQuin, dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Minnesota State University-Mankato, and Rosemary Keefe, dean of faculties at the University of Wisconsin-Superior.

"I am most impressed by the high quality of our finalists," said Chancellor Jim Mullen in an e-mail. "The search committee has done an outstanding job."

The other candidates who will be visiting UNCA for on-campus interviews in following weeks are William Frawley, faculty director of academic programs and planning for undergraduate education at the University of Delaware, and Mark Padilla from Bucknell University, according to Brown in an e-mail.

"These four people embody the specific combination of leadership ability, administrative experience and scholarly background that UNCA seeks," said Brown.

Padilla is taking the place of J. David Arnold, who served at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, N.Y. as provost and dean of faculty. Arnold withdrew from the running after accepting a position as a chief academic advisor at another university, according to Brown.

McQuin, who visited UNCA March 7-8, has served Mankato as dean for six years. She is the author of many scholarly articles and three books, two on 19th century women writers and one on feminist ethics, according to the VCAA search Web site.

"I am very interested in (the VCAA position) because of the high quality undergraduate experience offered to students," said McQuin in an e-mail. "I am very impressed with this university's many other successes and its aspirations for the future."

Her book, "Doing Literary Business," won two national awards. She has taught at the University of Minnesota at Duluth, said Tracy Brown in an e-mail.

"I have a strong belief in the value of a liberal arts education and would like to have the chance to work in a liberal arts university," said McQuin

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Board of Governors approves tuition increase

Kristen Willett
News Reporter

The UNC Board of Governors approved a system-wide tuition increase of 8 percent for in-state students and 12 percent for out-of-state students for the 2002-2003 school year.

For full-time UNCA students, this increase will amount to \$47.84 per semester for in-state students and \$519.48 per semester for out-of-state students.

"What is unusual this year is that the Board of Governors is stepping outside of the normal recommendation of the committee," said Wayne McDevitt, vice chancellor

of Financial Affairs.

A committee, which consists of representatives from each of the 16 campuses in the UNC system, makes a yearly recommendation to the UNC Board of Governors regarding tuition increases for the upcoming school year, according to Eric Iovacchini, vice chancellor of Student Affairs.

The Board of Governors reviews the recommendation and makes a proposal to the N.C. General Assembly. The recommendation is not adopted until the General Assembly approves it when they convene in May.

Tuition increases can be expected regularly due to an increase in student enrollment, especially during a tough year for the state budget,

according to McDevitt.

This year, the committee recommended a 4.8 percent tuition increase, and the Board of Governors raised the amount to an 8 percent and a 12 percent increase, according to McDevitt.

"It's not a finished process until the General Assembly convenes at the end of May," said Iovacchini. "The legislature can change it, up, down or sideways. They can do anything to it."

A year ago, the committee and the Board of Governors recommended a 4 percent increase, and the General Assembly adopted a 9 percent increase, according to Iovacchini.

"We don't know what they're going to do," said McDevitt. "Institutionally, we hope they don't go

beyond what is being recommended to them."

"A tuition increase isn't always a bad thing. It's inevitable," said Jonathan Lamb, a junior atmospheric science major. "If there's anything that could be done to prevent it, UNCA would have done something."

This year, the UNC schools received 1,700 more student enrollments than expected, and therefore did not receive money from the state to cover these students, according to *The Greensboro News & Record*.

Next year, the system is expecting 5,761 new students to enroll. The \$40 million generated by the tuition increase will go toward funding both groups of students.

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