

The Blue Banner



SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE SINCE 1982

Volume 39 Issue 4

www.unca.edu/banner

February 26, 2004

NEWS BRIEFS

BY JAMES RICHARDS
Staff Reporter

CAMPUS CRIME

Campus Police issued two student citations for underage possession of alcohol and one citation for providing alcohol to an underage person during UNCA's homecoming Feb. 21, according to campus police reports.

Campus Police also issued an underage alcohol possession citation in front of the shuttle stop to the homecoming dance.

In addition, Campus Police cited a Founders Hall resident for possession of drug paraphernalia and misdemeanor possession of marijuana.

ASHEVILLE

The non-profit Asheville Community Resource Center (ACRC) will close its Lexington Avenue doors on March 1.

Clay Property Management, the property supervisor, cited large gatherings and concerts at the center as reasons for eviction, according to the *Asheville Citizen Times*.

Several adjoining businesses complained about large groups of youths gathered outside the center.

Managed by community volunteers, the ACRC provides space for meetings, concerts, art openings and social outreach programs including a reading room, prison book program and the Asheville Free School.

The volunteers plan to raise money for a new downtown location.

WILKESBORO, N.C.

Wilkes Community College is one of a number of N.C. state colleges and universities offering classes geared toward the NASCAR industry.

Wilkes offers an associate degree in race car performance, while some other colleges offer an interdisciplinary degree of motor sports management and automotive engineering.

The programs reflect a growing need in N.C. to maintain connections to the multi-billion dollar NASCAR industry, with many of its top teams located within a 50-mile radius of Charlotte.

Some colleges estimate the placement rate for graduates between 40 percent and 70 percent with starting salaries from \$25,000 to \$40,000, according to the *News and Observer*.

HAITI

Rebels intent on overthrowing President Jean-Bertrand Aristide overran Haiti's second largest city, Cap-Haitien, last week.

Currently, the rebels occupy half the country and plan to attack Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital, according to the *Associated Press*.

The uprising resulted in 70 deaths since it began Feb. 5. In a rebuke of Aristide's leadership, the United States decided not to send troops to restore order.

However, the U.S. plans to send a small Marine force to secure its embassy at Port-au-Prince.



TYLER BREAUX/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Gay couple, Sara House and Chafe Burmstein embrace.

Court approves same sex marriage

BY LAUREN ABE
Staff Reporter

The Massachusetts High Court reaffirmed an original November ruling that allows gay couples to get married. This decision spurred lots of controversy regarding the constitutionality of this decision.

"Banning gay marriage is unconstitutional in general because we're all supposed to be created equal. Our government does not see gay people as equal," said Porscha Yount, a senior environmental studies student and president of Alliance, a group designed to promote unity among students of all sexual orientations. "They don't really see us as humans because they don't see us as full citizens, so they give us this second class status where we don't have all the rights."

Earlier this month, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that gay people will be allowed to get married mid-May, according to CNN.

In November 2003, the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled that a ban on same-sex marriage violates the constitution's guarantee of equality.

"It aggravates me that they are being questioned and may have to recall or change their decision," said Brian Davis, sophomore and co-vice-president of Alliance. "It is a really good step forward, but any step backward could ripple throughout the United States. States that were considering gay marriage may not consider it or put it on the backburner and forget about it."

The Massachusetts High Court found that commonwealth attorneys failed to give an adequate reason why gay couples should not be allowed marriage Nov. 18, 2003. The Massachusetts Legislature opposes the High Court's decision. However, the legislature failed to draft an amendment banning gay marriage by Feb. 12. The Massachusetts Constitutional Convention will meet March 11 to try again, according to CNN.

"I think that anything that is in favor of (gay people) making advancements towards earning that right is good," said Sara House, a jun-

ior mass communication major. "I think the main issue for those who are opposed to it is fear. Generally people are afraid of things they don't understand."

The decision by San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom to issue same-sex marriage licenses Feb. 12 helped spur the debates. The city of San Francisco authorized more than

2,700 gay marriages since the mayor's decision, according to CNN. San Francisco planned to sue the state of California for prohibiting gay marriage Feb. 19.

"To me marriage is just a word, something that mankind wrote down," said Davis. "Men and women in the Renaissance were defined by their personalities not by their genitalia and we are slowly getting back to that."

"This is a real relationship with real people. These are real human beings with real love and real feelings with real needs that can be met by simply calling it a marriage."

Brian Davis
undeclared sophomore

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UNCA re-defines liberal arts education University to change curriculum for fall 2004 students

BY TERRI FISHER
AND ADAM McMULLIN
Staff Reporters

UNCA is set to implement changes to the general education curriculum. This year's incoming freshman will be the first to follow the new plan.

"What is very exciting is that UNCA is again taking a leadership position nationally on curriculum innovation," said Chancellor Jim Mullen. "We helped lead the nation on undergraduate research and on the teaching of the humanities. We have been looked to as a leader in interdisciplinary learning, and now we are taking a leadership position in defining a new model for liberal education."

The new curriculum will surely attract national attention, according to Mullen.

"We're going to approach general education in a way that focuses on issues and topics and really, I think, takes very important steps in allowing people to learn knowledge in a way that is applicable in the world they're going to move into," said Mullen. "I think that's tremendously exciting."

UNCA's general education program has been under review since 1999, according to Ed Katz, associate professor of literature, assistant vice chancellor of university programs and language and chair of the UNCA general education review task force.

"The revision process started as part of an accreditation review process where we were to put out a report on our present general education program," said Katz. "That segwayed into a review of our curriculum with possibilities to revise it. As a re-

sult of a year and a half of very careful study, we concluded (a revision) was called for."

During the review, virtually every department on campus, as well as students got to weigh in on the existing program and the proposed one. Participants clarified the fact that parts of the current program weren't working as well as they should be, according to Katz.

"At both of those (student forums), juniors and seniors would raise their hands and ask, 'what is general education?' or 'what is liberal arts?'" said Katz. "They were seniors at a liberal arts school. They don't know and that is a huge problem."

The faculty senate approved the new program Jan. 29.

The major differences in the new general education layout and the old one is the absence of Humanities 414, Arts 310 and Library Research. The new education plan introduces all three of these classes as new courses. Humanities 414 is changed to Liberal Studies (LS) Senior Colloquium 479. Humanities 414 isn't gone, but becomes a different type of course for a different purpose, according to Katz.

"Faculty expressed a desire for a senior liberal studies course that would offer students more of an opportunity to do self-directed learning and produce some expression of that in a project of some kind," said Katz.

There will be some core content in the new course that is similar to Humanities 414, according to Katz.

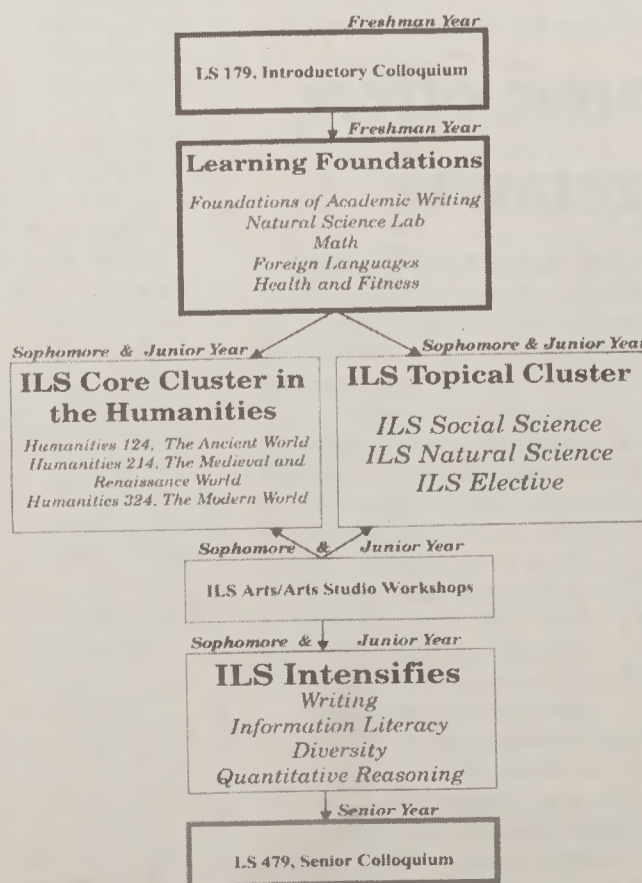
"It will cover contemporary issues since 1945," said Katz. "We think at this point it will have more of a topical orienta-



KATE GUNTORPE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Senior Erin Wood (above) takes notes in the humanities lecture hall. The HLH, home to the current humanities program, will host a new general education plan in the fall. The flow chart (below) illustrates the changes that will apply to new freshmen and transfers.

The Integrative Liberal Studies Program



COURTESY OF ED KATZ

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Activists urge government to protect environment

BY AMANDA EDWARDS
Staff Reporter

More than 60 scientists issued a statement Feb. 18 requesting legislative action to restore scientific integrity in federal policymaking concerning environmental issues.

"Whether the issue is clean air or climate change, it has serious consequences for all Americans," said Kurt Gottfried, chairman of the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), in an open letter to the Bush administration.

The UCS released a statement entitled "Scientific Integrity in Policymaking," that the Bush administration has consistently sought to damage the public's understanding of the scientific theory that the consumption of fossil fuels and other human activities are contributing to global warming.

"I think global warming has the potential to be the single greatest disaster that modern humans will face," said Bert Holmes, a chemistry professor. "At some time in our future, the central portion of the U.S. will become so warm it will no longer be the 'bread basket' of the U.S., but it will be a desert."

However, forecasting the specific outcomes of global warming is not easy, according to Holmes.

"It is difficult to make accurate predictions. All we can be certain of is that folks in the developed countries are running a global experiment and at some time in the future we will learn the consequences of our actions."

Previous studies on the possible causes of 20th century warming have generally concentrated on a pattern of climate change on a global scale, but the Bush administration fails to acknowledge that humans may be the number one contributors, according to the UCS report.

Global warming, the warming of the earth due to the increase of "greenhouse gases," mainly carbon dioxide and methane concentrations in the atmosphere, is also caused by

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