



Contributions from the Upperman African American Cultural Center will help increase the minority presence on campus. Minorities account for just 8 percent of the student body.

UNCW lacking in diversity

Study outlines problems, recommends solutions

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STAFF WRITER

A recent study determined that UNCW does not have a diverse community and outlined steps that need to be taken to correct this.

Based on the findings of a blueribbon panel's recommendations, Chancellor James Leutze has appointed a committee to improve UNCW's lack of diversity.

The panel, consisting of four former chancellors from campuses of the University of North Carolina system, submitted its findings in a 43-page preliminary report.

The basic goals outlined in the

report were recruiting and retaining more minority faculty, attracting and graduating more African-American students and enriching the ethnic diversity climate on campus. Based on the recommendations of the panel, in addition to ongoing surveys and meetings, the Chancellor's Committee will develop specific strategies for improving diversity among students, faculty and staff.

Michelle Howard-Vital, vice chancellor for public service and continuing studies, and Melton McLaurin, associate provost, will co-chair the Chancellor's Committee on campus diversity. The 18-member committee is comprised of faculty from a variety of academic departments, as well as representatives from SGA. There will also be periodic open forums for student feedback.

"This is an opportunity for the entire campus to respond to the report," Howard-Vital said. "We feel we have a very representative

group."

Minority students make up approximately eight percent of the UNCW student body. Of the eight percent, 4.4 percent are black, 1.6 percent are Hispanic, 1.6 percent are Asian, 0.6 percent are Native American and 1 percent are international students. The overwhelming ratio of white students to minorities has caused some students to view the university as culturally deficient and isolated from the rest of the community.

Students say that a more concerted effort is needed in attracting minority high-school students and that far too little is being done to provide social activities, such as concerts, that would appeal to people of different backgrounds.

"We don't send enough black representatives to state and local high schools," said Sherrita

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Registration equals frustration for some

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Spring 2003 pre-registration started Nov 1. But registering for classes can be difficult for those who don't get the classes they need.

UNCW student are given a registration time and can register any time afterward.

Junior Kim Fern said she doesn't like the fact that the registration times can fall during an hour that the student has class.

Seniority plays a big role in who gets into classes that fill up quickly.

Upperclassmen and athletes are allowed to register for classes first. Students enrolled in special programs also have the opportunity of early registration.

"I am in the Honors program so I get to register early," said Cori Cauble, a UNCW sophomore

Underclassmen often find that the popular classes that meet at desirable times are full when it is time for them to register. Freshmen who sign up for classes during summer orientations often have less variety of classes to choose from.

"Especially that sixth group that came in," said Larry Honeycutt, a physical education lecturer, referring to the last orientation group that came late in the summer.

Class availability is a major issue during registration.

More underclassman level

courses are being taught to accommodate for the larger number of students being accepted into UNCW each year. More course sections are also being taught at these levels.

Professors, who in the past may have taught more upperclassman level courses, have to teach more basic courses to balance the ratio of students needing to take these courses. This often leaves less time for professors to teach upperclassmen level courses, which leads to another problem. Many upperclassmen find it hard to get the upper level courses they need to fill the graduation requirements for their degrees.

"Students are having to go an extra semester in order to get the classes that they need to graduate," said Kevin Knight, an English lecturer

The current budget problems at UNCW are contributing to the lack of new professors, which would help alleviate some scheduling problems. With less money to hire new professors to accommodate the needs of a growing student population, compromises have been made by both students and professors.

Attending summer sessions, extending length of college tenure, and delaying retirement are some of the actions being taken by UNCW students and faculty in order to adjust to rising enrollment and professor shortages.

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