

## From the Editor

Dear Readers,

As you can see THE LANCE has undergone a few changes. We are experimenting with color as well as the type of paper we are printing on. New columns include "Did You Know?" and "Innovations" as well as a forthcoming column, "Windows of the World", by Dr. Bob Martin. In our next issue we will break new ground with a "Personals Column." If you would like to wish someone a Happy Birthday or relay a special message in a unique way then here it is!

I am personally excited about the changes in THE LANCE, but the success of these changes can only be measured by the way in which they are received by the student body. As editor, I would like to receive feed-

back that will influence future decisions. At this time I have two very special projects planned for THE LANCE which will be presented in the April and May issues.

Finally, I encourage everyone to consider contributing to THE LANCE at some time. This is your newspaper, and THE LANCE can only be representative of the total student body if it is supported by more than a handful of students.

Sincerely,



Heidi Jernigan  
Editor  
Box 79/Ext. 487

### The Lance

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Special Thanks to Bob Martin, Pam Coble, Stephanie Smith, the Communications and Publications Office, Henry Ogden, Patsy Webb, Dianne Dyches and Juri Kirs.

The opinions expressed on these pages are not necessarily those of THE LANCE, the college, or the student body, but are of the signed individuals. THE LANCE welcomes and encourages responses to the material in this publication, but reserves the right of editorial freedom as governed by responsible journalism.

# Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

The mandatory seat belt law for all front seat motor vehicle passengers became effective on October 31, 1985, in the state of North Carolina. There is no troubling exception to the restriction that remains unaddressed. The law includes no provisions for the safety of children on school buses.

If indeed, we care for our children, then our laws concerning seat belts laws should reflect that concern. The law as it is written, requires that only one of possibly sixty or more passengers on a school bus buckle his seat belt, the driver. In the case of an accident, the fifty-nine other children are still at risk of injury or death because they were unprotected. Seat belts cannot guarantee that victims of accidents will be unharmed, yet they do offer a protection that greatly decreases the severity of injuries.

Seat belts on school buses, as well as being a precautionary measure, can also improve the discipline of children on buses by restricting movement. Requiring all school bus passengers to wear seat belts will create more favorable conditions for the driver. Instead of worrying about the behavior of the children, the drivers will be more able to direct their attention to controlling the bus, not the passengers. Since the driver assumes responsibility for all his passengers, this restriction would lessen the weight of his responsibility.

Since the state of North Carolina will not only benefit from the seat belt law by the lower percentage of deaths and injuries, but also by saving an estimated 5.2 billion dollars on emergency medical services, this savings should be invested in the installation of seat belts in school buses. Furthermore, new buses should be equipped with these safety devices, not as an option, but as a requirement. A mandatory seat belt law should not exclude the school children in the state of North Carolina.

Sincerely,  
Denise M. Peck  
Freshman

Dear Editor,

The President's FY 1987 budget reaffirms the Administration's lack of support for students across the country. The President's State of the Union presented a theme of "Back to the Future" with the solution for improving education as vouchers, prayers, and back to basics. USSA, representing students attending postsecondary institutions across the country thinks the basic ingredient for ensuring access, choice, and opportunity for millions of current and future students is a commitment to prioritize and fund education programs.

The budget calls for a \$3.2 billion cut from the FY 1986 approved Appropriation's bill—a combination of Gramm-Rudman sequesters, shortfalls, program cuts, new guidelines, and projections. The cuts are justified by the Department of Education as "minimal" since federal funds "only provide 7 percent of the total expenditures for education." It is that 7 percent that has represented the federal commitment to providing the opportunity for millions of students to

benefit from a postsecondary education.

USSA asks why the investment in future generations of students is not a priority of this Administration. Under the guise of "balancing the budget," the FY 1987 budget appears very out of balance with massive increases in the defense budget and devastating cuts in the education budget. Students and the funding for domestic programs has not caused this massive deficit, yet student aid programs are being disproportionately hit through both the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings FY 1986 sequester and the FY 1987 budget proposals.

Beneath the rhetoric of "shared risk" and "new initiatives" are proposals which drastically reduce the opportunities for millions of current and future students. The deficit reduction process is further increasing the debt of every potential Guaranteed Student Loan borrower by a combination of measures that will have a major impact on future decisions of every student. Secretary

Bennett is concerned about the teacher shortage yet proposes a budget that will force the students to forego certain professions, majors, and careers to re-pay their loan commitments.

The budget proposal has the potential to totally disrupt decisions of millions of current and future students—those students filling out student aid applications and admissions applications this month. The confusion, chaos, and real cuts under consideration send a clear message to students across the country that their future is not a top national priority. Cutting 290,000 students out of the Pell Grant program though a 10% cut for academic year 1986-87 and altering the definition for independent students to 23 or over unless an orphan or ward of the court effective in July 1986 is just the tip of the iceberg.

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