

# Killing the messenger

In refusing to release the number of students voting in the April election, ECSU's Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs has accused *The Compass* of discouraging students to vote by publishing stories that put down students and failing to "profile candidates campaigning for campus offices". We should not have to defend ourselves against these allegations because we are not to blame for the lack of student participation in campus elections. (*The Compass* has not blamed apathetic student journalists on the defensive, and uncooperative attitudes of certain administrators.)

Last year, *The Compass* published the names of SGA officers elected in the spring elections, along with the percentages of votes students won and the total number of students who voted. In that election only 524 out of 1764 students voted.

This information was published not in an attempt to discredit the students, as Dr. White seems to feel, but because the information is public record, and because the students deserve to be informed about the number of students actually voting in an election.

Because of space limitations we only profile the winning candidates for SGA President and Miss ECSU.

This year, Dr. White has withheld the number of students who voted under the pretext that *The*

*Compass* will use the information to write "negative" news stories about the students.

Our question is: What is he so afraid of?

In a letter accompanying the refusal to release this information—to which students are legally entitled—White wrote, "Campus elections are the business of all students and student organizations." If this is true, why withhold the number of students who voted? Are administrators afraid that publicizing a low voter turn-out will reflect on them?

*The Compass* does not feel this information will discredit students. Rather, making students aware of the low number who actually participate in elections should help students realize that their vote would have made a difference.

At any rate, as a campus news organization, it is our job to print the truth and keep students informed about what is going on on campus. If the facts create a negative picture, it's not our fault, and to blame us is to adopt the "kill the messenger" attitude.

In the future, we will continue to report campus events and support our students. This is our job and our responsibility. We will not sweep incidents, or embarrassing statistics, under the rug in order to make the jobs of our officials easier.

## LETTERS

# ESCU's gay students shouldn't be ashamed

To The Editor:

This is a message for all ECSU students who feel that you are different because you are not attracted to the opposite sex or either attracted to both sexes.

In this strange and crazy world, people get caught up in the stereotypes of life that can somehow affect another person. Although being a homosexual is considered to be morally wrong, no one can judge that but the man above. Yes, you can and will be talked about, cursed at, teased and may even lose friends. All of that was done to Jesus, so what makes you think it won't be done to you?

The world is full of individuals who enjoy different ways of living. I, used to always worry about what others thought of me, then I began to see that the only thing others see are the bad things you do, not the good. This is when I realized that these people do not care about me anyway, if the things I do cause them to question me and my personality. I was a victim of all kinds of rumors; you name it, they called it. But, growing up and maturing I learned that you have to make yourself happy first and if being with a member of the same sex makes you happy and you feel loved, then you shouldn't feel as though you are an outcast, or different. Everyone needs love and it should only

matter when you know that it is sincere.

A lot of ECSU students, male and female are bisexuals or homosexuals but they mind their business and keep to themselves. You should not feel ashamed to be who you are; too many people are trying to be something that they're not. If everyone could learn to accept life with its ups and downs and know that it is not up to the human race to judge other people, life would be so much simpler.

I am not saying to wear a sign saying you're gay or bi; just remember those who love you should know and understand you, and you should be able to explain the way you really feel to them.

This is a very delicate subject and should be handled with care. I hope this letter gives those who fit into this category a chance to search yourself and help you find out what is really important to you in life, and I hope it is to be happy. This is what I decided and it really works. The whole world is not going to love and accept you gay or straight. Just make sure you-know-who does.

Be yourself! And make sure you are happy with yourself first. God will always forgive you for your sins and that is all that matters.

Pablita Batiste

## Student is "sick and tired" of laziness, indifference

To The Editor:

Why are you in college? I know why I'm in college. I'm in college to get a better education and to get a degree so that I can get a good job. To be able to graduate from college you need to do your work and go to your classes. I'm not saying I'm perfect and that I attend all of my classes and do all of my work but 95% of the time I do.

I've been in college for three and a half years. In that time I have not abused the amount of absences allowed or assumed the teacher would "give" me a grade. I work hard for my grades and realize that whatever grade I get, is the result of my attendance, homework, participation, and knowledge. You can't blame a teacher for what grade you receive in a class. Saying a teacher "hates" you doesn't give you an excuse for failing a class. I'm sick and tired of seeing students not coming to class, not doing their homework, not participating and then wondering why they fail or make a bad grade. I'm the student who is there almost all the time, who does homework, who participates, who makes a good grade. I'm the student who you call a "brown-noser" because I do all

these things.

Well let me tell you, I'm not going to stop doing what I know is right and what I know will help me in the end because of you. What you don't realize is that your lack of participation in classes is making me look better than I might be. I'm not a genius but I'm a good student. Yes, I do moan and groan over certain classes and assignments but I do them. Yes, I do turn my assignments in on time and I get angry when you always have a "good excuse" for not turning it in on time. I may not do my assignment early and may wait until the last minute but I turn it in on time.

It is not fair to me, the student who does turn in work on time, or the teacher, who is under pressure from all of his or her classes, to listen to your excuse and grant you an extra day to turn it in. I'm tired of putting up with people who always makes excuses and from now on I'm not going to do it. I'm going to continue to be a good student and try my hardest to make the grade. In the end we'll see who comes out on top.

(ECSU student's name withheld by request)

Elizabeth City State University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate degrees.

Twenty-two hundred copies of this publication were printed at 45 cents per copy.

### THE COMPASS

#### Editors:

Lavenia Dameron ..... News  
Steve Cooke ..... Photography  
Tim Smith ..... Copy  
Jody Riddick ..... Sports  
Tarsha White ..... Entertainment

Advertising Manager ..... Pam Tolson

Graphics Consultant ..... Diane Patterson

Photographers: Steve Cooke, Lavenia Dameron, Alec Harding, Jody Riddick, Tarsha White

Staff writers: Steve Cooke, Bruce Campbell, Ayanna Dorsey, Kysha Gary, Melanie Harrington, Anna Herring, Xanthe Ivey, Evonne Martyn, Jody Riddick, Yolande Silver, Tarik Scott, Rodney Stallings, Pamela Tolson, Reginald Worlds.

THE COMPASS is published by Elizabeth City State University under the direction of the Department of Language, Literature and Communication, Dr. Linda Florence Callahan, chair, and Mr. Stephen March, faculty advisor.

THE COMPASS welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be sent to ECSU Box 815, Elizabeth City, NC 27909. All letters must be signed and include the writer's address and telephone number. They may be edited for length, clarity, and taste, as well as accuracy and grammar. Because of limited space, not all letters can be published.