

# THE CAMPUS ECHO

## EXCELLENCE WITHOUT EXCUSE

Issue 29

NORTH CAROLINA CENTRAL UNIVERSITY

Nov. 12, 1993

### 'Chambers Looks Towards Future'

## New SAT Standards May Improve NCCU's Image

By TERRI BOYKIN

Raising the average SAT score of incoming freshmen to 900 by 1994 will be a major step toward NCCU having the best, most capable graduates in the country, Chambers said in an interview Tuesday.

Chambers emphasized that the new standard is simply an average, not a minimum. For example, the average SAT for this year's freshmen is 780, with a low of 480 and a high of 1340. Several other factors are considered for admissions including high school GPA and recommendations.

Chambers believes that raising the SAT is necessary for a number of reasons, both to better NCCU and because of changing state standards.

The school has a commitment to turning out a student who will be the best in the country, so that the reputation of the school will not be a barrier to future jobs or academic advancement.

Chambers stated that "we cannot continue to perpetuate a system that fails to do this. We owe it to the students, faculty, staff, and parents." He is committed to creating the leading undergraduate institution in the country.

NCCU doesn't have the best reputation in the state, said Chambers. This has a great effect on the school and its graduates. By raising the SAT, NCCU shows that it is attracting the best quality students, and will better its reputation among both employers and graduate schools.

Chambers said he has known students from NCCU who graduated with a GPA of 3.5 and couldn't get into graduate school because of NCCU's reputation. The same problem occurs with employment opportunities.

School	Average SAT (1993)
NCCU	780
Shaw	not available
FSU	810
NCA&T	821
UNC-Elizabeth	789
UNC-WS	743
UNC-CH	1122
NCSU	980-1150*
Duke	1260-1440*

\* = middle 50%

Chambers said he wants to develop a student body of the best capable students, and feels that recruiting the best capable high school students is a major step in achieving this goal.

There are new state requirements that are also going to affect NCCU. The University of North Carolina System will soon require graduation in four years. Those who are still in school beyond the four years will be charged one and a half times the regular tuition. This means students will have to take 15 or more hours a semester, and also means that state support for remedial programs will be drying up.

Last year, NCCU had 71 percent of its freshmen in

either remedial math or English courses. The time limit and resulting drop in funds for remedial courses is another incentive to accepting better prepared students.

When asked about the difference in SAT scores among blacks and other groups, and how that will affect the make-up of NCCU, Chambers said he believes that blacks can do as well as any other group in the SATs. He cited that test-taking skills, rather than ability, are one of several factors for that score. Average scores for blacks across the nation are nearly 200 points below whites for 1991.

Chambers said that this attitude that black students won't be able to meet the new standard "assumes that black people can't compete. I don't accept that assumption."

He said that he wants to see NCCU become the best school possible and doesn't feel that this means losing its culture.

Chambers acknowledged that the SAT averages at Hillside (713) and Durham High School (663) are below the average he wants for NCCU. Yet he said his commitment to these schools as well as the entire state is to provide an impetus to students to do their best while still in high school. He repeated that this average does not mean that NCCU is closing its doors to those with a SAT below 900; this is simply an average.

Students who are here now can expect some changes as well. There will be a higher expectation for academic achievement in current students. Chambers would like to see more meaningful work experience by students through internships and summer jobs. He is also bringing more opportunities for

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