

Merger possibility draws criticism

From staff reports

A plan to merge several academic departments has mystified faculty in those departments and outraged some students, who question the benefits of the possible mergers.

At a Feb. 10 meeting of College of Arts and Sciences faculty, Dean Bernice Johnson surprised the gathering by announcing that she might propose a merger of the English and Foreign Language departments and a merger of the Art, Music and Theatre departments. The latter combination possibly would be named the Department of Fine Arts or the Department of Visual and Performing Arts.

Many faculty, including several chairpersons of the affected departments, privately expressed confusion and concerns about the announcement. Some students, including members of the band and choir who wore protest signs during their performance at the April 7 Honors Convocation, have publicly stated their opposition to the idea of merger.

In an April 5 letter to Dean Johnson, Dr. Arlene Clift-Pellow, chair of the English department, expressed surprise at the announcement and concerns that she had not been informed of the rationale for such a move.

In an interview with the *Campus Echo*, Dr. Johnny Alston, chairman of the Theatre Department, said merger was one of many suggestions that were discussed at a meeting of the faculty of the theatre, art and music departments. He said several departments are in danger because they have been designated "low productivity" according to state higher-education policy. A "low productivity" department, Alston explained, is one that does not graduate at least 10 students per year or that does not have at least 25 juniors and seniors who are majors in that department.

Alston said he had many questions about the possibility of a merger. He said there is no way of knowing whether staff would be increased or decreased, nor is it possible to say whether merger would be cost-efficient. In any case, Alston said, saving money "is not what drives programs. I am driven by my will to work with students in our programs."

Dr. Melvin Carver, chairman of the Art Department, told the *Echo* he opposes merger, saying it would "water down" the art, music and theatre degrees, resulting in a loss of quality.

"Degree-granting programs would become concentrations," Carver said. "Essentially what would have been a Bachelor of Music would become a degree in Visual and Performing Arts with a concentration in music."

"On a positive note," he continued, "we could partner with organizations, companies, etc., to build resources, develop courses and recruit students. We can create interdisciplinary curricula that would be attractive to students studying the humanities."

"We also can link curricula with high school students who qualify. These students can get an early start taking college courses in their senior

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NCCU looks ahead to 2015

More students, buildings expected, but funding remains problem



RAY HUFF ARCHITECT, SASAKI ASSOCIATION, MOFFATT & NICHOL, ANTHONY BLACKETT

MASTER PLAN
This is the architectural plan for NCCU's campus in the year 2015.

Legend

1. Biomedical Research Building
2. School of Education
3. Student Union addition
4. George Street pedestrian corridor
5. Nelson Street parking garage
6. Student residences
7. Campus Police
8. Physical Plant relocation
9. Business school / LIS
10. Campus Drive improvements
11. Convocation Center
12. Football / track stadium
13. Law school
14. Recreation fields
15. PE Building
16. PE fields
17. Lawson Avenue surface parking
18. Utility relocation
19. Student residences
20. Shepherd House renovation
21. Brant Street improvements
22. Lawson Street parking garage
23. Music Building
24. Library expansion
25. Dining expansion
26. Lincoln Quadrangle
27. George Quadrangle
28. PE Building expansion
29. Research Building
30. Physical Plant expansion

Emphasis on grad study, sciences envisioned

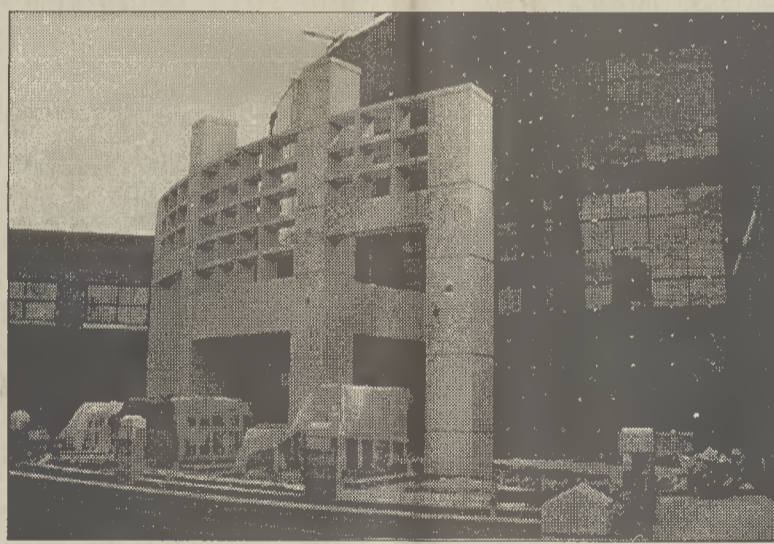
by IBI LEWIS
The Campus Echo

When North Carolina Central University graduates of the Class of 1999 return to campus for their 10th reunion, they will see a lot of familiar things—but they may be startled at some of the differences.

Not only will NCCU have more students—at least 50 percent more—but the percentage of African-American students is likely to decrease, and more students are expected to be seeking graduate degrees. Several new buildings and parking decks will probably be finished, and the Eagles athletic teams will be competing at the NCAA Division I-AA level.

In all, NCCU officials hope, the university will be greatly improved. But the anticipated changes also mean it will be far removed from the vision of the university that Dr. James E. Shepard had when he founded the National Religious Training School and Chautauqua as a school for African-American teachers in 1910.

Perhaps more than anything



The new \$22 million home of the School of Education is expected to be ready for occupancy in the fall.
STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL PHIPPS

else, the new Biomedical Biotechnology Research Institute, the new School of Education building and the new dormitory symbolize the emerging picture of NCCU's expansion. However, not everyone is happy with the direction the university seems to be taking. Critics are wondering whether state funding formulas and private-funding preferences

are forcing NCCU to place greater emphasis on graduate studies as the school enters the new millennium.

Now that the \$12 million BBRI has opened, for example, the university hopes to join its UNC sister institutions, UNC-Chapel Hill, and N.C. State, on the cutting edge of

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Master plan making progress

By MARI McNEIL
The Campus Echo

A major part of Chancellor Julius Chambers' legacy to North Carolina Central University is the building program that he instituted in 1995. When Chambers took over in 1993, no buildings had been constructed on campus for nine years, repairs and maintenance were lacking and the master plan for the university had not been updated since 1972.

Now several large classroom and dormitory buildings are open or near completion, long-overdue repairs have begun, and the university is acquiring property to expand beyond its present 150-acre campus. By the year 2015, when the current master plan has been fully implemented, NCCU

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Student injured in brawl

By CRYSTAL FOREMAN
The Campus Echo

An NCCU freshman is in fair condition at Duke University Medical Center with head injuries suffered in a fight outside of a downtown Durham nightclub in March.

Police have made no arrests in connection with the brawl that injured Chris Mitchell. It occurred in the parking lot outside the Power Company nightclub. Police told *The News & Observer* that as many as 25 people participated in the fight.

Mitchell's parents and brother Kurt, a student at N.C. State University, have remained at the hospital since the incident. Mitchell underwent two surgeries on the brain to relieve swelling, although his skull was not fractured in the fight.

Mitchell, an 18 year old from Winston Salem, reportedly was injured when he tried to break up the fight. It is not clear how the fight started. But *The News & Observer* reported: "Tensions had escalated most of the evening between NCCU students and young men who live in Durham. A Durhamite insulted a girl from NCCU and jumped in to defend her, some said. Others said the Durhamites were jealous of the Central students."

In recent months the Durham City Council had received numerous complaints about noise and violence in the vicinity of the Power Company. On Dec. 27, two men were shot to death in the city-owned parking deck next to the club.

The City Council held a public meeting April 19 to discuss plans related to crowd control at the Power Company, including talks of a fee system for downtown parking lots that would raise money to pay for off-duty police patrols.

NCCU issues crime alert

By IBI LEWIS
The Campus Echo

A series of armed robberies took place between March 27 and March 29 at approximately 8:35 p.m., according to a report published by Carmelita Spicer, Director of Public Relations at North Carolina Central University.

One suspect was reported as having a pistol grip shotgun. Just over 24 hours later, at approximately 7:30p.m., another armed robbery took place at the football stadium at the north end under the visitors seats on the east side of the stadium.

The three suspects are described as black males approximately 17-19 years of age. Suspect one was described as having a medium build, wearing a dark ski mask and dark clothing, and carrying a pistol grip shotgun. Suspects one and two are described as being about 5'9 in height, slender build and wearing dark clothing.

The next armed robbery took place later on March 28, 1999 at approximately 9:40p.m., in the north corner of the Walker Complex building. The suspects are described as being approximately 16-18 years of age, wearing black jeans and jackets.

The two men have short hair cuts and weigh approximately 140 pounds., according to police reports.

According to Spicer it is NCCU's mission to keep the campus safe and crime-free. "It is the university's mission to maintain a safe place conducive to learning for its students, faculty and staff," Spicer said. "Luckily, no one was harmed in these incidents."

"We at NCCU are working with the neighborhood and the city police to put criminals on notice that we are aware of their activities and are taking charge of our safety."

Housekeeping concerns dominate Speak Out

by CHANDRA MOSS
The Campus Echo

Saying they are tired of their voices not being heard, North Carolina Central University students joined with housekeepers and local news media in the Library Bowl on March 31 to voice their concerns about the university in the form of a Speak Out.

This Speak Out was arranged by Shariff Dunlap, a sophomore biology major from Brooklyn, N.Y., and the president of the North Carolina Rural Health Coalition (NCRHC). The major topic was the fate of housekeepers and groundskeepers at NCCU. To speak against the possibility these services will be "outsourced," several housekeepers were present.

Marion Corley, a housekeeper here at NCCU, complained that he

has to pay for cleaning supplies out of his own pockets. "People in private housekeeping won't do that," he said.

He said that when students complain about inadequate cleaning by housekeeping, they do not realize that housekeeping is poorly staffed. He said that he is responsible for five buildings by himself.

Sylvester Keech, another housekeeper, agreed with Corley, saying the staff is "underpaid and overworked."

"Because no one knows what we have to do, everyone complains," he said.

He said that this problem starts at the top with Chancellor Julius Chambers and works itself down to the students.

"I haven't seen the chancellor since I've been here (since March

1998)" Keech said. He contended that the chancellor does not know what is going on because he is inaccessible. He said that decisions are being made without people knowing everything that is going on and that that is not fair.

Ralph Davis, a graduating senior and housekeeper here at NCCU, sees things from both sides. He said he feels that the main problem here at NCCU is that people are not involved enough to know what is going on at this university. He said that the destruction that is happening in housekeeping will eventually happen in administration and it will hurt the student body directly if the students do not stand up for themselves.

Student Troy Merritt, a junior,

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Senior therapeutic recreation major Carlos Taylor expresses himself at the NCCU "Speak Out."

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