

Communications department prepares for big move next fall

Amy Medders
Contributing Reporter

To meet its growing needs, Elon's communications department will get a 'new to them' facility in January 2000. McEwen Library's makeover into a premiere communications department will take time, but plans are being tentatively made.

"This building will be very high tech, obviously," said Chris Fulkerson, associate director of the library.

Some problems are occurring, though, due to the several design flaws. The columns currently in the library, placed every 22 feet, cannot be removed.

"It is an interlocked grid. If you take one out, then something

collapses," said Gerald Gibson, professor of communications. "It has become a very complicated issue."

Other design problems deal with traffic flow, edit bays, lighting, long hallways and isolated offices.

An additional unforeseen complication is the government bond money reserved for this project.

"The bond money cannot be added to by the college. Any cost overrun on Duke renovations impacts our building negatively," said Gibson.

"The bond money allotted to this project will only pay for the renovations to the basement and main floor. Plans to renovate the second (or top) floor are not being

discussed at this time due to this lack of funds. The upstairs area will likely be divided into offices and classrooms once the official project is completed.

In its new facility, the communications department will house editing bays, two computer labs, classrooms, offices and two full size television studios.

The studios provide space for a class to learn and watch films together. The editing labs will be user-friendly to classes aimed at teaching students how to use this equipment. There will be two large editing labs, in addition to nine individual stations.

There are several new additions to the building that will be added on to the current facility.

The television studios will be built onto the current building on the side of Williamson and Lebanon Avenues. An elevator will also be added to make the building handicap-accessible.

A film viewing room will also be a new feature to the department. It will double as a large-lecture classroom to accommodate large classes.

"It will be in a theater style and will be set up so that you can do reel film or video projection. It will be a multimedia room of sorts," said Fulkerson.

This room's idea developed over many talks with the architects and Elon representatives. The film viewing room was originally planned as a small classroom that would have film equipment.

It has become a multimedia, 70-plus seating classroom that will be available to many users.

"The idea was simply to have some place where we could show student projects, have film festivals, show independent movies, invite graduates back and let them show their work," explains Gibson.

"It will be more like Yeager Hall than Carlton."

The new communications building promises to be a state of the art facility that will give the department room to grow.

"The plans still are in flux," said Gibson. "It's probably in the next couple of weeks that this stuff will solidify and go 'OK, this is the way it is going to be.'"

Chapel Hill studio head discusses film at Fletcher series

Giselle Pole
The Pendulum

Robert Landau, a film editor who is the head of New Century Films, showed the film "Paradise Lost" at the annual Fletcher Film Festival Tuesday evening. After the film's showing, he spoke with The Pendulum about his experiences in the film industry.

Q: How exactly did you get your start in the film industry?

A: Well, I kind of had a little advantage. I grew up in a family with my cousins and an uncle who are producers. My father ran a show-biz hotel, I got the bug and kind of hung around it. It wasn't something that was so unusual to me.

Q: Where are you from originally?

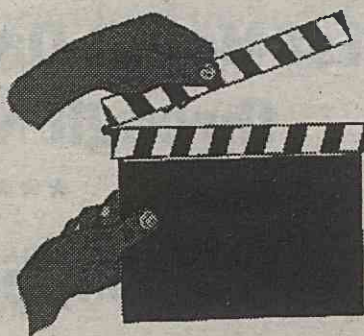
A: New York City.
Q: What made you decide to move to North Carolina?

A: At the first college I went to, my roommate's father taught at UNC. He'd tell me what a great place it was. I came down and checked the place out, and fell in love with it.

Q: So do you think that North Carolina is a hot spot for the film industry?

A: Yeah, it's been amazing. I came here in '73 originally, and worked here professionally from

'77 and returned in '84. In just that time, it grew. When Screen Gems (Studio) was built in Wilmington, it



really changed things. It brought in a lot of people who gained a lot of skills from working there. That and the studio in High Point. Part of it is because North Carolina is a pleasant

place. It's got a lot of great locations, and now it's got a great base of crew people who are highly skilled.

Q: How long have you been editing?

A: Since I was in third grade, to be honest. Professionally, since '78.

Q: Where are some of the places you've worked?

A: I've been in Nashville, New York City and Los Angeles to name a few, and when I decided I'd get married and settle down, I chose Chapel Hill.

Q: What are some of the things you've done?

A: Recently I edited a documentary for the Discovery Channel called "Immortality on Ice." I've worked with National Geographic a bunch, associate produced and edited a series for Fox called "Urban Anxiety."

Q: What is the biggest advantage for working in independent film industry?

A: It's always the money. Raising it, finding the people who want to invest in the film, and making the money back. Everything else is here.

There's not a lab in North Carolina, but that's a small throw-back. But there are a couple of small studios.

Q: Do you have any advice for future filmmakers?

A: Get as many skills and get as much experience as you can. Try to figure out what you like to do.

Q: What's the next project for your business?

A: Right now we're working on a film called "Trulove's Kitchen." We're in the process of raising money for that now. We hope to shoot it in the spring and I'll be directing it.

The Fletcher Film series concludes tonight with two movies—"Chesterfield" at 2 p.m. in Yeager Hall, and "Insignificant Others" at 7 p.m. in Whitley Auditorium.



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