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Academic standards, diversity increase with freshman class

Matt Belanger

Assistant News Editor

Dean of Admissions Susan Klopman only needed one word to describe this year's freshmen: diverse.

More than 10 percent of the students in this year's incoming class are minorities. From places as distant as Nigeria and Botswana, the 1,220 students hail from 35 different states and 11 foreign countries. Additionally, the incoming class, on average, has a GPA of 3.5 and an SAT score of 1160. Fifty-seven percent graduated in the top quarter of their high school classes.

The admissions office received 7,052 applications for admission, which is an 8 percent increase over last year. Klopman said this is a sign of Elon's growing popularity.

"Elon is becoming more selective," she said. "This is not something we are making up in the corner office."

Klopman explained that as the university receives more applications but keeps the incoming class size the same, the university's yield, or the percentage of students who accept the school's offer of admission, moves up. This year, the goal was to keep the incoming class around 1,200 students. As a result, Elon's yield rate increased to 38.8 percent, up from 37 percent last year.

"It really is the students themselves who are driving up the selectivity of the school," Klopman said.

However, this year's increase in minority students marks an achievement for admissions. Because Elon does not have a preset quota for the ethnicity of incoming students, admissions has been working for years to increase the number of minority students enrolled at Elon. This year, the percentage of African-

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State schools feel economic crunch

Steve Earley

News Editor

Private schools such as Elon may have an advantage over their public university rivals in weathering the nation's economic storm, as not being at the mercy of the state legislature allows decision making to be more flexible, said Gerald Whittington, vice president of business, finance and technology.

North Carolina was forced to balance this year's budget amidst a state-wide \$2 billion shortfall. As a result, public services such as the states universities face budget cuts.

The 16-campus University of North Carolina System has experienced \$438 million in budget reductions over the past three years, said Jeff Davies, vice president for finance and chief financial officer for the state system.

Individual institutions such as North Carolina A&T State University, where 80 percent the operating budget is state appropriated, in turn are forced to make cuts of their own as a result of the budget problems.

Ava Brown, assistant vice chairperson for budget and planning at North Carolina A&T, echoed the approach of schools

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UNC common reader fuels arguments of liberal bias

Lindsay Porter

Managing Editor

Some schools have all the fun. For the second consecutive academic year, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill faces criticism from opponents of their freshman reading selection, "Nickel and Dime: On (Not) Getting By in America" by

Barbara Ehrenreich. The book explores American poverty and welfare through Ehrenreich's struggles as she tries to support herself with minimum wage jobs.

Several North Carolina legislators have accused UNC-CH of maintaining a liberal bias by selecting "Nickel and Dime."

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Matt Belanger / Photographer

Orientation staff gears up for freshmen

Orientation leaders Stephanie Sparko, Shelby Peterson and Ashley Holmes put blindfolds on before one of the staff's many team-building and training activities. For details, see page 9. For a quick reference guide to this weekend's orientation schedule, see page 16.

P10: Nine student standouts raise the bar for a talented and accomplished incoming freshman class

P17: Seagraves, Phoenix look forward to opening 2003 campaign in the Southern Conference