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University Officials Disagree With Research Triangle Study

How Good Is UNCC's Remedial Program?

By Les Bowen

Despite a Research Triangle Institute study which reflected negatively on the commitment to "remedial" work at UNCC, university officials say the school has a good learning assistance program that is getting better.

The study, commissioned by the UNC Board of Governors, grouped UNCC with UNC-Chapel Hill and UNC-Greensboro as schools without a strong commitment to remedial work. The sections of the report dealing with UNCC place heavy emphasis on the fact that there is no program for academic credit in remedial work here; students must seek help from the Learning Assistance Lab, a part of the Counseling Center, voluntarily.

But people involved with the program say the existence of academic credit is a questionable criterion for evaluation, and they also take issue with other aspects of the report's conclusions.

Lab Coordinator Dr. Evelyn Davis just came to UNCC in July, so she wasn't here when the researchers visited last winter. She was reluctant to talk about the state of the program last year, but did say she felt there were inaccuracies in the report and noted that the report didn't mention that the lab was operating without a full-time director last year. (The director quit suddenly at the beginning of the 1976-77 school year and two part-time directors, Carolyn Johnson and Sharon Williamson took charge until Dr. Davis was hired.)

Ms. Johnson is Lab Instructor this year. She said the researchers "...had a rigid set of criteria and evaluated our program on the basis of how well it fit that criteria, when we were trying to do something else entirely."

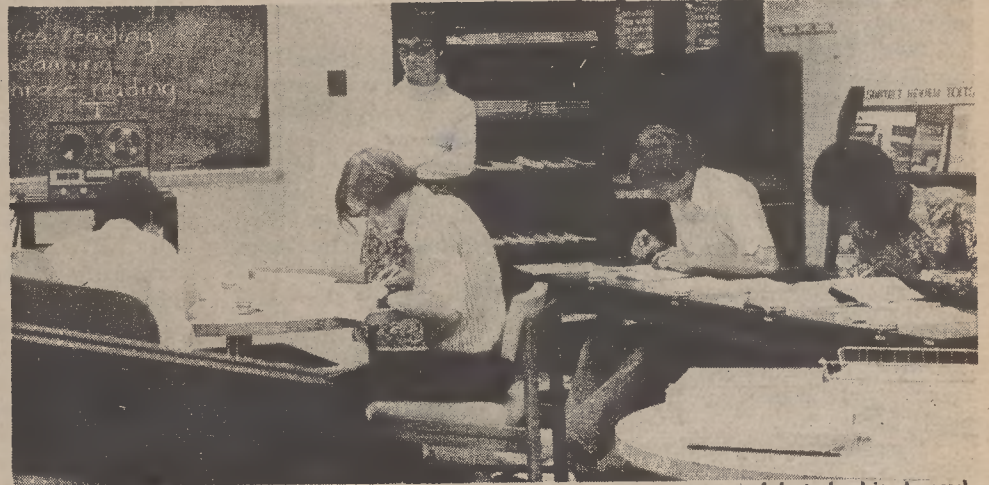
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Dr. Douglas M. Orr, Jr., said, "I agree with Carolyn on that. Basically, what they said was that we don't have a strong commitment to remedial work...The criterion they had a previous mind-set on was the availability of academic credit for remedial type courses. The issue of academic credit hasn't been fully resolved here yet, but it seems to me that the important thing is whether or not good programs are available."

"Presently we have seven sections of the communications skills series, containing about 80 students," Orr said. "These courses don't entail credit, yet people are learning skills."

Orr mentioned several reasons other than academic credit that he felt contributed to the unfavorable evaluation.

"First, each of the 16 campuses (of the UNC system) is in a different geographic setting. Our setting is such that there are two fine community

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Speed reading class taught by Carolyn Johnson.

(photo by Lisa Laney)

Lab Has Changed A Bit

By Les Bowen

Even the sleepest UNCC student stumbling into the Learning Assistance Lab during the new "early bird hours" from 7:30-9:00 a.m. would realize right away that things look different down under the library tower from the way they looked last year when he took speed reading or math tutoring or any of the various other services offered there.

On the left as you enter the room is the paperback exchange operated on a "bring two, take one" system. Approximately 300 books are available, from classics to thrillers.

Near the entrance and to the right is the Writing Resource Center, which formerly operated in the back of the lab but now has its own room. Students who work there get academic credit for helping other students with essays and themes. Because of increased participation in the

tutoring class the Center has been able to expand its hours; it is now open 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. weekdays and also operates 6:30-10:00 Tuesday evenings in the basement of Sanford Dorm.

The middle of the front part of the lab has been rearranged to better facilitate group instruction, a concept which points out a big change in the Lab's operating procedure from last year.

"We're trying to do more and more group instructional things" said Lab Coordinator Dr. Evelyn Davis. "We think we can reach more people more effectively that way." Speed reading Effective Listening and Notetaking, and/or Briefhand, taught separately last year, are now part of the "Communications Skills Series," which is run like a class over an entire semester and is offered seven different times during the week.

The right rear area of the room contains vocabulary development materials. To the left of this area, toward the middle of the rear part of the lab, are test preparation materials and a reference card file for various "professional" tests, such as the LSAT. The card file contains the sample test questions so that students will have a general idea of how to study for the tests.

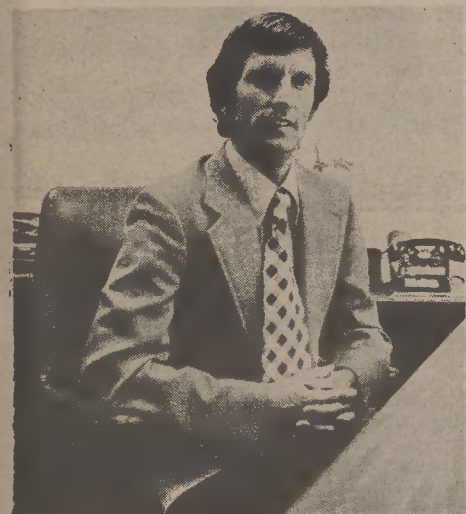
The left rear section is devoted to speed reading. Study skills and subject review texts occupy a rack in the upper left part of the room.

"We've got review texts in lots of different subjects," Dr. Davis explained. "This is something not many students know about but the materials can be very helpful."

In the middle of the lab and toward the front is a table of reading improvement materials dealing with specific groups, such as blacks and women. Davis said these materials were an indication that "...we're making a definite effort to meet whatever individual needs students have."

Dr. Davis came to UNCC in July from Memphis State University, where she was Director of the Adult Education Center and Coordinator of the masters program. She is a native of Seneca, South Carolina and got her B.A. at Furman University, her M.A. at Converse College, and her doctorate at Auburn. Prior to coming to Memphis State she was a secondary school teacher and a department chairman in a community college. She is currently teaching a course in the HDL department made up of students "...who are either running facilities like this (the Learning Assistance

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Vice Chancellor Doug Orr.

(photo by Lisa Laney)

Dr. Arrington Combines Two Tasks: Professor By Day, Candidate By Night

By Nancy Davis

Dr. Ted Arrington will probably never want to hear another "knock knock" joke after November 8, the day the City Council elections are held. Arrington, an UNCC Political Science professor and Republican City Council candidate, has been carrying on a door to door campaign in his district.

"People are very nice...I've never gotten a bad reception," Arrington said. He doesn't enjoy all of it, but feels that it, needs to be done. "Most people are just not concerned, but those who are, seem to appreciate it," continued Arrington. The lack of opposition in the primary doesn't keep Arrington from campaigning. He feels the district is a "swing district" and could go either way. There are four Democratic candidates running in District Four, but Arrington feels Laura Frech will win the primary.

Because the election will be close, Arrington finds it more interesting. He is very aware of the needs of the people in his district. "Many are concerned with taxes...property taxes. They are too high, but we can prevent them from going up."

He also sees a need for neighborhood parks and more public safety. "The county and city need to cooperate in some of their services," Arrington said.

He feels there is a problem with rival ambulance and police services that could be solved with more cooperation.

Arrington does favor consolidation even though the merger wouldn't directly affect his district. He terms his proposed method of consolidation as "functionally consolidating" which he explains as "gradually putting departments together. Some people's fear of consolidating would be overcome."

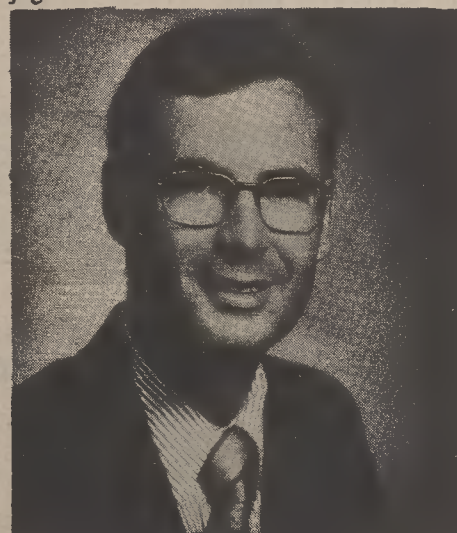
Working with the Party Recruitment Committee helped Arrington make his decision to run. The committee couldn't find anyone in District Four capable of running. Arrington has done a lot of work with the party and in his district, so he decided to enter the race this summer.

He hasn't found his job and campaign conflicting at all. "I can feed the learning into my teaching. It fits in for me...it's one and the same thing. It's also helped me understand what causes people to vote the way they do."

The UNCC community has been quite supportive in Arrington's campaign. "Even radical and liberal students have been positive. That makes me feel good." Some of his Democratic colleagues have informed him that he may be the only

Republican they ever voted for.

With his experience in the classroom, Arrington obviously enjoys the speaking part of the campaign. He enjoys talking to groups and debating with other candidates. But public speaking probably isn't all the experience he's getting. Arrington's also getting in shape by his neighborhood walks which may turn into jogs as November 8 nears.



Ted Arrington

(photo provided by Dr. Arrington)