

The Daily Tar Heel

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California Nightmare

■ The University of California's decision to eliminate race as a criteria for admissions and hiring. UNC should not follow suit.

The UNC system must ignore the recent decision by the University of California Board of Regents to halt affirmative action policies affecting admissions and hiring.

While some argue that affirmative action merely replaces one injustice with another, we have to question this idea.

First of all, the affirmative action policies in California as well as those at UNC do not set our quotas. Rather, race is considered a determining factor, along with other important factors such as GPA, hometown, class rank and extracurricular activities. Therefore, no one is either granted or denied admission solely because of their race.

In addition, no one has a more legitimate reason for promoting diversity than the leaders of an educational institution. Although it has not always been the case, the ideal purpose of a university should be to bring together a wide variety of people, with myriad interests and backgrounds, in order to learn from one another.

This variety cannot be achieved by looking at grades and standardized scores alone. Other

mitigating factors and differences must also be considered. Diversity among classmates and faculty is not necessary to learn the basic General College perspectives, but the entire university experience involves more than what goes on in lecture halls. The experience entails communicating with others in and out of the classroom who can bring different perspectives, based on their own unique experiences.

There is more to education than diversity among students and faculty. However, the University of California Board of Regents has made a grievous mistake by no longer considering race in admissions decisions. It appears haphazard to give a person greater leeway for his ability to shoot a three-pointer or for the size of his hometown while disregarding entirely the person's race.

Race affects one's view of the world as much as whether one is from Charlotte or Podunk, NC. Obviously, UNC will miss out if no longer attempts to maintain geographic diversity among its students. Similarly, UNC will suffer an even greater loss if no longer ensures racial diversity.

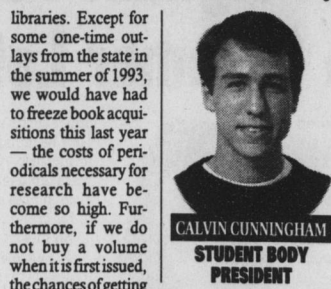
Local Tuition Hike Would Actually Benefit Campus

Students support the recent tuition expansion proposal because students are willing to pay a little more in order to graduate with a more valuable degree. Some of the proposal's facts have been misrepresented.

Two weeks ago the N.C. Senate voted to adopt a proposal that allows our Board of Trustees to raise tuition up to an additional \$500 per year for both in-state and out-of-state students. (The plan calls for a potential \$3,000 increase for out-of-state students in select professional degree programs.) The plan earmarks 35 percent of added revenue for need-based financial aid and directs the balance to the libraries and faculty salaries. This plan is good for many reasons.

First, if fully actualized, the plan generates an additional \$4.3 million for need-based financial aid. For the 7,076 students who received need-based financial aid in 1993-94, this increase is off-set. For others at or near the need-based cut off, the plan means new aid. (This new aid is particularly important as the federal government cuts the interest to aid exemption for federal loans.) The Constitution of North Carolina mandates that the "benefits ... as far as practicable, be extended to the people of the State free of expense." The N.C. Senate proposal expands our current low tuition and our financial aid structure to the new need-based claims of those who really cannot pay. Furthermore, even with the increase the University will remain the cheapest "best-buy" in Money Magazine's annual ranking of schools that provide a high quality education at a bargain price — for in-state and out-of-state students. Our low price is one of our greatest assets. The Senate plan maintains a realistic balance between low cost and our nationally recognized, high-quality degree.

Second, our libraries face a most daunting challenge. We are on the verge of a revolution, brought on by expanded use of information technologies, that puts our already strapped libraries at a competitive disadvantage. Over the next decade, bound volumes and periodicals will be transferred to an electronic medium. In the mean time, we cannot stop purchasing new volumes and periodicals. To meet this crucial change we must focus new resources on the



CALVIN CUNNINGHAM
STUDENT BODY PRESIDENT

libraries. Except for some one-time outlays from the state in the summer of 1993, we would have had to freeze book acquisitions this last year — the costs of periodicals necessary for research have become so high. Furthermore, if we do not buy a volume when it is first issued, the chances of getting the book in subsequent years falls to one in ten. Our libraries have fallen in rankings against our peers — a fact noted in the infamous but widely read US News and World Report's ranking of institutions of higher learning. The poor support of our libraries (and faculty salaries) has contributed to a fall from the "Top 25." Additional support from the tuition plan is badly needed.

Third, faculty salaries have been and continue to be one of the greatest weaknesses of our institution. Unlike other schools in the UNC-system, UNC-CH competes nationally for top quality faculty. Additionally, higher faculty salaries help bring down more matching federal funds that are applied to pay teaching and research assistant stipends. Fifteen years ago, the University's average faculty salaries ranked in the top quintile against our peer Research I institutions (this includes Michigan, Berkeley, Virginia, Yale, etc.). Since, our salaries have fallen to the third and fourth quintiles in the categories of professor and assistant professor. The result: a brain drain that has resulted in the loss of faculty and the inability to hire top-notch new faculty. Students have long supported the faculty in their drive for competitive pay. As faculty salaries have fallen out of the top quintile versus our peer Research I institutions, students have rallied to the challenge. In 1988, we created the undergraduate teaching awards to reward outstanding undergraduate instruction through student fees. The next year the Senior Class gift campaign set as its goal a \$500,000 endowed

"star" professorship. Last summer, I helped the faculty successfully lobby for a "competitive" faculty salary increase for the system's two research universities above the increase given for all other state employees. The move generated some resentment that the University and State get special attention and the General Assembly is not likely to repeat. The new tuition plan recognizes our competitive needs as a premier research institution by arming us with the tools necessary to meet these needs and keeps all of the money on our campus — not transferring it to the North Carolina general fund as is current practice.

The arguments for the senate's tuition plan are many and I could elaborate if column space permitted. The plan has support among much of the N.C. House's new leadership — though not all. Some are concerned (as is the Raleigh News & Observer) that tuition should not be linked to faculty salary increases. What then, I ask, is necessary to convince the General Assembly that the University faculty must have higher salaries in order to compete? The plan arms our institution to make that determination for itself. If we want to have nationally competitive degrees, are we willing to pay for them? Student supported tuition fee increases to fund strapped public institutions are not uncommon. In 1992, Trenton State College students (New Jersey) voted themselves a \$500 increase to student fees to help fund the school for the next year. Further, a 1993 student government Front Line poll showed that three out of four students here support raising fees to pay for more financial aid and for library support; more than half support higher fees for better faculty salaries. The senate's new tuition plan represents an idea whose time has come and we should support it. Increases under the plan will not be affected for this year. We will not hang ourselves with a last minute tuition increase. Instead, we must face the increases in over time so that students can budget for the change and so that we can realize the full benefits of the plan.

Calvin Cunningham is a senior political science and philosophy major from Lexington.

Time to Heal Old Wounds

Everybody's heard about Keith Edwards, the embattled University Police officer. About how she has fought the University in court for eight years, winning at almost every turn, and then facing another appeal. The University, with a new face in the chancellor's office and perhaps new perspective in the legal department, can settle this blight on the University's record once and for all this week.

Edwards' case is set to go to trial in Orange County Superior Court, yet again, July 31.

The 21-year veteran of the University Police force was passed up for promotion in 1987. She alleges that she was discriminated against because she is black.

Enough courts have agreed with her that we see now as the time for the state to stop reaching into its deep pockets to continue fighting her for eternity.

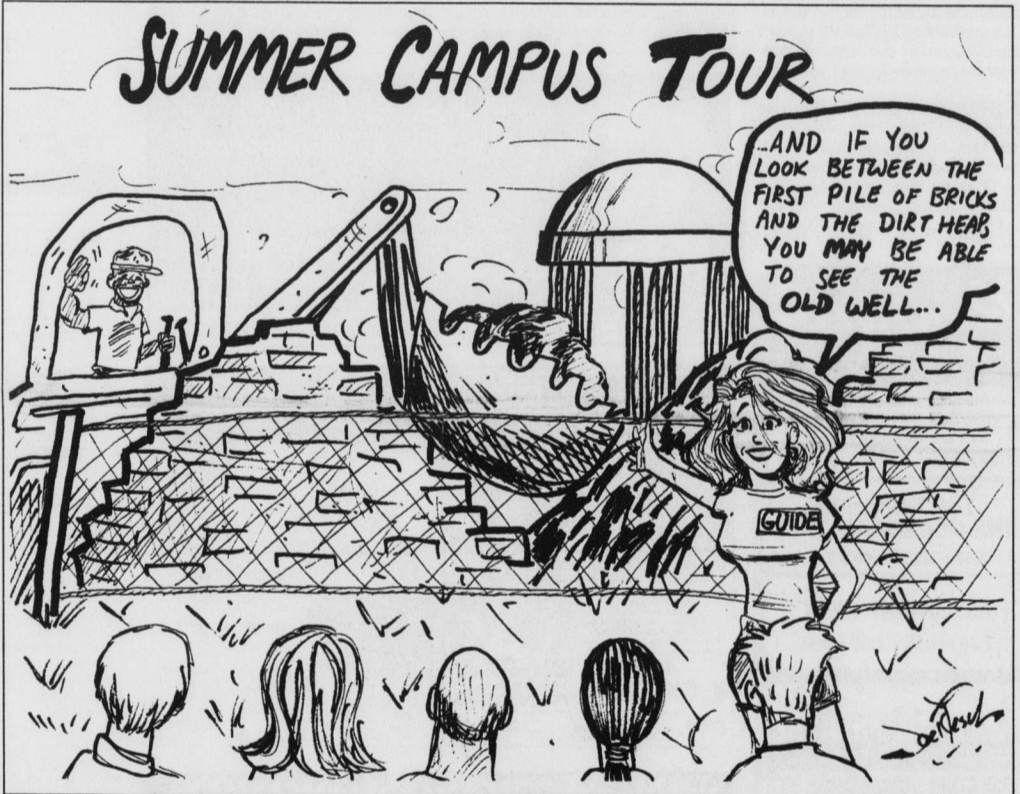
Under former Chancellor Paul Hardin, the University offered Edwards settlements — UNC would pay up if Edwards would leave and shut up.

Bravely, Edwards said no dice. Since she began her suit, she has worked for three different chiefs. The chancellor who refused to settle her suit when it began is now gone.

Chancellor Michael Hooker doesn't carry the same old pride and baggage into the Edwards case that Hardin did. And he could carry a better reputation out of it. Hooker can simply order Edwards promoted, and give her back pay and attorney's fees. The cost is negligible when compared to the legal fees the University continues to amass in their futile attempt to beat Edwards.

The new chancellor can do the right thing, quickly and simply.

Chancellor Michael Hooker doesn't carry the same old pride and baggage into the Edwards case.



Former GPSF President: Transition Misunderstood

Editor's Note: The author was president of the Graduate and Professional Student Federation until last month.

TO THE EDITOR:

No, I am not the President of the Graduate and Professional Student Federation and I'm not trying to regain that title. If anyone has ever fully deciphered any student government document, the Student Code or even the GPSF Constitution, I applaud you. Even my five years in GPSF and Student Congress leave it quite ambiguous. I simply thought that I was supposed to remain President until the Fall semester when our senate met, or until our Constitution decided our succession — my hopes being to shore up any programs we had started and provide a smooth transition. Whether pouring through N.C. General Assembly budgets or providing a GPSF perspective on campus issues, I thought I was doing my job. I was not forced from anything, I graduated, what a terrible thing huh?

To try to resolve the current "controversies": 1) The GPSF has had two vice presidents for four years. Our Constitution was only properly changed last year to deal with different duties and succession. Conflicting Constitutions are mainly a result of no provisions for GPSF legislation to go immediately to student affairs or the archives, as congress' legislation must. I hope that someone remedies that in the future. Therefore, the proper people are in their rightful place or will be when the GPSF senate approves new people at the first fall meeting. For the five years that I have been a senator, vice president or president, the GPSF officers have always operated as a cooperative executive board sharing most duties. We are usually happy to have people involved and willing to forgo some time for committees or other appointments; 2) the alternative health insurance plan was NEVER designed to be a competitive plan in opposition to the current University plan. As far as health insurance goes, the Graduate School and Student Health Services have always been open and cooperative to the concerns of GPSF, as has Blue Cross and Blue Shield's underwriter, Hill and Chesson Associates. Regardless, too many students choose to forgo health insurance because they simply cannot afford it. This plan, even with its limited benefits, addresses many graduate concerns and is better than choosing to



READERS' FORUM

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticism. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 400 words and must be typed, double-spaced, dated and signed by no more than two people. Students should include their year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff should include their title, department and phone number. The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for length, clarity and vulgarity. Bring letters to the DTH office at Suite 104, Carolina Union, mail them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail forum to dth@unc.edu.

risk no insurance. However, future meetings and cooperative efforts by all parties will be taking place to ensure the best for all students.

They have been and will continue to be good people with proven records that are currently involved with GPSF and who, bottom-line, care about students. I hope many others will get involved. Disputes and misunderstandings are part of the deal, but I am sure that those in the future will find the administration, especially our sponsors in the Graduate School, eager for interaction and listening to graduate and professional concerns. I personally thank those of you who have supported many of my efforts, and I encourage all to use the GPSF for the service, information and guidance we all have worked for it to provide.

Steven C. Hoffmann
CARRBORO

Guns Don't Stop Violence, Contrary to American Belief

TO THE EDITOR:

There is a growing fervor in the United States, both among citizens and policy-makers, to attempt to combat the increase in violence by distributing more weapons. Examples of this in our own backyard are the bills currently before the North Carolina legislature that would annul any existing local gun control measures and

would allow any "sane" citizen not convicted of a felony to carry a concealed weapon. While the measure appears to make sense (e.g., take the guns out of criminals' hands and put them into law-abiding citizens' purses) the facts show that it promises only more innocent deaths without a significant decrease in crime. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently reported that in one year (1992) there were 38,000 gunshot-related deaths in the United States. It estimated that 99,025 people were treated for firearm-related injuries from June 1, 1992 to May 31, 1993. The more guns out there the higher those numbers will rise.

Americans still fervently cling to a frontier mentality. The truth is that violent incidents happen so suddenly that the average person with a handgun, untrained in combat tactics, would not be able to react quickly enough to be effective. Were we a society that valued personal expertise, that trained students from day one in firearm safety, marksmanship, and mechanics, and then required every citizen to serve two years in the armed forces, concealed weapons would threaten criminals. Then we could walk safely in our streets, knowing that we could react with efficient and deadly force at a moment's notice.

But the training requirements suggested by our legislators are not sufficient. I have received more firearm training than what the bills before the legislature deem adequate, yet I know a holstered handgun does not provide adequate protection against crime.

My family owns several pistols. We keep them all locked up and stored separate from their ammunition, just like you're supposed to. Yet, despite these efforts, we have had one stolen. Now, this perfectly legal and registered nine-shot revolver belongs to someone who slipped into our house and sneaked it out or to someone to whom it was sold on the black market. We can never be sure of who among us are the criminals and who are the "good guys." The only surefire way to decrease the numbers of violent offenders is to increase spending on programs designed to help the impoverished help themselves. Criminals are made when crime becomes the most lucrative form of income distribution. If we as a society can endow all of our children with enough knowledge, self-esteem, and respect for others, then and only then will crime decrease. We have to make the future a priority; it's the only way.

Culley Holderfield
SENIOR
COMPARATIVE LITERATURE AND HISTORY

Shady Dealings in Grad School?

■ The timing of official sanctions against a graduate group raises questions about whether the University wants students to have health insurance options.

Political wrangling — and perhaps impropriety — shouldn't eliminate the chance for graduate students to have access to more and better health insurance plans.

Steve Hoffmann ended his tenure as president of the Graduate and Professional Student Federation amidst argument over his student status and his legitimacy as the organization's head. University officials flexed their muscle to boot Hoffmann at a curious time. Hoffmann received his diploma May 15. Officials in the graduate school knew that Hoffmann had graduated, but they continued to let him act as GPSF president until June 28.

Suddenly, just as the GPSF was finalizing a health insurance plan that would have provided an alternative to the plan available through Student Health Services, UNC officials wielded their axe and issued an ultimatum: Hoffmann must go, or the GPSF loses its student group status.

Hoffmann surely made a mistake when he decided to stay on as GPSF president after graduating without first checking to see if he was acting within the rules. But what is at question now is not Hoffmann's conduct, which seems, at the very worst, well-intentioned however misguided.

The University officials who precipitated Hoffmann's quick fall from grace also put a quick stop to the health insurance plan GPSF members had been pushing for more than two years.

Former GPSF President Ramesh Krishnaraj began planning for a cheaper health insurance alternative for graduate students in 1993. The alternative the graduate students found had some drawbacks that the officially sponsored plan did not. But the new plan would have had one major benefit: it was much cheaper.

While the plan was not perfect, some graduate students who cannot presently afford health insurance would have been able to obtain some type of coverage.

University officials invalidated the new plan by essentially invalidating Hoffmann's last two months in office.

The Graduate School has two basic options before it. Officials can oppose any alternative health insurance plan, and it will forever seem that they booted Hoffmann because he almost infringed on a SHS monopoly.

Or they can support alternative health insurance plans, including those proposed by students, and prove that their actions regarding Hoffmann had no ulterior motives.

