

The Daily Tar Heel

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Rise 'N' Plan

UNC has a unique opportunity to implement a plan outlining six clear goals for refocusing on the classroom, but it may require swallowing a little pride.

Wake up, UNC. UNC Faculty Council Chairwoman Jane Brown terms a new plan to improve undergraduate education a "wake-up call" for the 16 UNC-system schools. UNC should answer the call and take advantage of the proposals. Last year's General Assembly told the UNC-system general administration to refocus on undergraduate classrooms. UNC-system Associate Vice President for Planning Gary Barnes responded with a plan working toward six overarching goals. Although the goals seem nebulous — including high-sounding phrases such as "expand the base of knowledge" and "improve... the quality of life for (North Carolina's) citizens" — the plan lays out feasible strategies to reach these goals, including performance indicators. Even better, money has been set aside — \$24 million in incentives — to encourage universities' compliance. Although some argue the declining intellectual climate on UNC's 16 campuses cannot be solved by a quick fix, this plan works on improving one aspect which can be helped — the classroom environment. The plan includes incentives for faculty to teach smaller undergraduate classes, which anyone who has taken a 400-person class can appreciate. The plan also has suggestions to increase the number of students graduating in four years, encourage faculty to spend time with students

outside the classroom and expand access to non-traditional, minority, community college transfer and N.C. high school students. The high-handed nature of the General Assembly's demands could be seen as problematic. They did, however, goad the general administration into accomplishing something which should already have been done by the individual campuses. Others contend that no one can present a cohesive plan for all 16 campuses, as each university's mission and make-up differs. Although specifics may not coincide, each institution strives for academic excellence, which the plan targets. If individual schools created individual blueprints, they could delay the results indefinitely and might not discover new plans anyway. Although it might be insulting to the financial gain to increasing academic interaction — especially to those who do so already for no gain — it is a product of our society. Though the UNC system should not be micromanaged like a corporation, professors cannot live on eloquent words alone. Those professors who perform best deserve the highest recompense. Everyone admits to declining rankings and the need to convince the legislators to fund us. This plan can only help our system. Although we might have to swallow a little pride, it will, in the end, be for the best.

Blue Light Special

Westbound students may have noticed an atypical billboard on I-40 near Greensboro. The message: Boycott K-Mart. Greensboro's Pulpit Forum, a group of black ministers, should be commended for their grassroots efforts to organize against Greensboro K-Mart's apparent racism and low wages, and consumers should take their business elsewhere. K-Mart opened a regional distribution facility in Greensboro in 1992, and pays employees between \$6.75 to \$8.50 an hour. Out of 13 national distribution centers, the Greensboro warehouse pays workers the lowest wages. The Greensboro facility is also the only distribution center employing mostly blacks and other minorities. In 1993, the Greensboro workers formed a union. Since then, organizers have been illegally fired. The Pulpit Forum's message is simple: if K-Mart is not going to pay minority workers the same as white workers in other parts of the country, then K-Mart should not get the business of Greensboro's black community. The ministers organized a massive Christmas boycott of area K-Marts, including setting up tables outside stores to educate consumers on how K-Mart treats its workers. At a time when American leaders preach

"personal responsibility" to people on the lowest rungs of society's ladder, we can only see the community-based action in Greensboro in a positive light. In a free-market society, K-Mart has the right to pay its workers what it deems realistic. But the workers also have the right to organize for better wages as well as to make sure K-Mart follows the law. Anyone with a family working full-time at \$6.75 an hour qualifies for food stamps and sometimes Medicaid. If K-Mart continues to underpay workers, society will pay to bring the workers above the poverty line. K-Mart argues that it pays according to the area's standard of living. But facilities located in Kansas and Georgia, where costs of living are similar or lower than in Greensboro, pay around \$14 an hour. To further undermine K-Mart's argument, the National Labor Relations Board is prosecuting K-Mart for "refusing to bargain in good faith." The case is clear. Until K-Mart shows it takes the lives of its employees seriously, we should support the workers in their struggle. We can find a sensible leadership example by first turning our attention to the pulpit. Boycott K-Mart, and educate others as to why you're doing it.

Be Civilized: Let Snooze Button Start Your Day

There are two kinds of people in this world — those who use the snooze feature on their alarm clocks and those who don't. It's a convenient wedge issue, like political parties, that can divide a given population into approximately equal halves, and you don't see a lot of crossover between camps. I am a member in good standing of the first group. Without some pressing reason to get out of bed, I have no qualms about hitting my snooze button four or five times — my dreams intermingling with the news reports of NPR's "Morning Edition" — until I'm able to stay awake throughout the entire 9-minute snooze interval. It's such a civilized way to begin the day.

Better Sleep Council. Despite this, the human requirement for sleep — about eight hours a night — has not changed. (College students, incidentally, are thought by experts to need about 10 hours of sleep a night; the average student gets six.) The result is that on any given morning, one person in four will get out of bed groggy, grumpy and sleep-deprived.



JEFF GARIGLIANO
IRONIC DETACHMENT

prosthesis — can thump down on the clock and arrest that annoying, minor-key beeping. But if today's snooze buttons are good, tomorrow's will be better. The design process marches forward. This past Christmas a new, astrologically enhanced alarm clock hit the market. You program in your birth date and each morning, when the snooze button is activated, the clock tells you your horoscope for that day. I suppose this helps you make the decision of not only when to get out of bed but whether you should even bother getting out of bed at all. Gillette's Braun subsidiary has put itself on the forefront of snooze technology with its newest alarm clock, due in stores in March. When the alarm goes off, people who feel they aren't yet ready to take on the day can simply wave a hand or foot or pillow in the path of an infrared beam, thus stopping the alarm for eight more minutes. The best alarm clock, especially for people who have a hard time waking up each morning, uses light instead of sound. Exposure to bright light in the morning resets the body's 24-hour circadian rhythm, which in turn makes people less groggy when they wake and less tired all day. Unfortunately, the device costs about \$750, which means it will be a long time before I pick up such an item to replace the \$8 Westclox I bought at the drugstore. Researchers in the field have advice for people who don't get enough sleep: always go to bed and wake up at the same time each day, take only short naps in the afternoon and don't try to catch up by sleeping in on weekends. All of this sounds good on paper, but it's much harder to put into practice, especially for students, whose schedules vary widely from day to day. Instead, my advice is this: sleep as much as you can, and when the alarm goes off, hit snooze and sleep for another nine minutes. Jeff Garigliano is a graduate student in journalism from Bayport, N.Y.

Devotees of the snooze button often find it baffling that some people would rather not indulge in such a harmless luxury and instead prefer to rise automatically, like Dracula climbing from his coffin, at the first rude tones of the alarm. To me, non-snoozers are the same ascetic, joyless wretches who tell you the best way to get into cold water is just to jump right in. And after you take their advice and plunge in, and your heart seizes up, they say something trite like, "It's not too bad once you get used to it." Of course, the early risers look upon those preferring to sleep in as slothful and sluggish, as shiftless laggards who waste the best part of the day. But I disagree. The best part of my day is that brief period of time when the alarm is telling me to get up and I refuse, dropping my hand down onto the clock and silencing it for a few more blissful minutes. The second best part of my day is when I do it again. The snooze button, and more broadly, the alarm clock itself, are necessities of life in the modern world, since most people rarely get sufficient sleep these days. The average American now sleeps 20 percent less than a century ago, according to a research group called the



Petty Lawsuit May Stem From Shameless Motives

TO THE EDITOR: Me like debate. Debate good. Problem: I can go home and have an "advisory meeting" with friends to debate how we fix our broken washing machine. You, Chancellor Hooker, soon may not be able to do this without a microphone in your face. It seems Good-Citizen Jane has determined that your decision not to open your advisory meetings to the press can only be a stepping stone to outright Nazi fascism, which you will surely implement post-haste after crushing "the people" out of your devilish meetings. I refer to the recent lawsuit, originated by the Greensboro News and Record and picked up by the North Carolina Press Association, for "violating the N.C. Open Meetings Law." We, as citizens and students, must be leery of their motives: do they really want "power to the people," or just increased revenue from sales of Hooker's latest cuss-word plastered across their headlines? Ya know, "cash moves everything around me" (Wu-Tang Clan). Situation: harmless little meeting. Press rushes in, in full force. Everyone in room gets "public" and puts on a show, knowing they will be quoted the next day and realizing this will influence the very issues they are discussing before even a partial conclusion can be reached. As Patricia Sullivan, Chancellor of UNC-Greensboro said, "I want open, honest and creative dialogue, which would be stifled if people were concerned about outside interpretation." Basically, she wants to be able to let down her hair and say, "Shit, you guys! I'm having a bad week. So-and-so is on my case, and the alums with the money want this, but the students cry for change... Help me out here!" instead of, "The multitude of issues confronting me leaves me to seek your opinions as a recourse." The life of a Chancellor is public enough. If Hooker invites a few friends over for dinner and begs advice about the crap he cleans up for us day in and day out, do we need spotlights in the dining room for the camera crew and mikes set up around the bouillabaisse so democracy isn't trampled by his dinner conversation? To the press for their shameless abuse of the justice system, I turn to the eloquent words of Calvin, the dearly-departed tiger sidekick: "BLEECH!" Let's urge the court to spit out this petty lawsuit like a bad batch of Chocolate-Frosted-Sugar-Bombs.

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.

Article Mistakes Asian and Asian-American Studies

TO THE EDITOR: We are writing this letter in response to Maggie Schleich's article, "Students Want Asian Curriculum," which appeared in the Feb. 23 edition of The Daily Tar Heel. Let us begin by saying we are happy the DTH has finally taken an interest in the activities of the Asian Students Association. While we're sure Ms. Schleich had only the best of intentions when she wrote the article, her misunderstanding of ASA's initiatives and the curriculum already provided by the school exemplified the University's ignorance. Fact one: UNC already has an Asian Studies curriculum. Fact two: ASA is circulating a petition to create an Asian American Studies curriculum, not "... requesting the creation of an Asian Studies program."

It is sad we even have to write this letter, considering she quoted the petition in her second paragraph, by writing, "The petition calls for 'the creation of studies specifically devoted to the Asian American experience.'" The fact that the DTH is unable to make the distinction between Asian Studies and Asian American Studies is disappointing, to say the least. The fact of the matter is that Asian Americans have a 400-year-old history in America, and they have played an integral role in the shaping of modern American society. In this age of multiculturalism it is important for people to learn about all the different ethnic groups that have come together to create American society and culture. Last semester, the first-ever Asian American class (not "one of the first in UNC's curriculum") in the entire UNC system, was offered and it was hugely successful, with enrollment by students of all cultures and backgrounds. It is only with continued administrative, faculty and student support that Asian American classes continue to be taught at UNC. We hope in the future the DTH and the entire University community will support the drive for an Asian American curriculum so critical mistakes like this will not happen again.

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