

The Daily Tar Heel

Jeanne Fugate EDITOR
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Budging the Legislature

University leaders have fought concertedly against unfriendly budget allocations from Raleigh. But at what expense of academic integrity?

In the tragic air surrounding UNC, one tragedy has been almost — but not quite — overlooked.

The N.C. House budget scrapped Gov. Jim Hunt's University-friendly budget. Instead, they emptied UNC's pockets for \$6 million in academic affairs throughout the UNC system and \$20 million from UNC Hospitals.

Despite the shock of losing Hunt's favorable, \$100 million increase, UNC leaders are coming together productively.

They will hopefully make headway against the legislature's stubborn refusal to spend a cache of almost \$400 million.

Student government has done an admirable job, despite lack of preparation for the battle.

Although Student Body President Aaron Nelson had not planned on spending two weeks mustering forces, he and other members of student government have worked to organize and to educate students on this campus and on others.

The administration also has worked hard on different fronts to make the cuts sting less.

In Chancellor Michael Hooker's fight for a seven percent increase in staff salaries — rather than the three percent approved by the House — he has not forgotten a second, integral set of constituents.

Hooker has said that the second item on his agenda is seeing that any money leftover after faculty raises will go toward graduate student

health insurance. Graduate student health insurance, a necessary lure for UNC to attract and keep the best and brightest graduate students, was also slashed in the House budget.

Hooker's backing provides a symbolic support that all students should appreciate, even though there probably will not be enough leftover discretionary funds to cover full health insurance.

What comes first — as it should — is the quality of education, augmented by supporting our educators.

Hooker has also lead the charge in politicizing a normally quiescent campus.

UNC administrators, professors and students have met in closed door sessions with University allies in the N.C. Senate to plan strategies in a campaign for a more favorable budget.

UNC has jumped out of the ivory tower and into the morass of political intrigue.

This leap could help the University's cause, but it could also tie the University's interests a little too closely with those of politicians.

As always, the more distance that an institution of higher learning — not of higher sycophancy — can keep from tawdry political games, the better.

Tough times call for tough measures. But let's hope the means justify the ends once the N.C. Senate draws up their budget allocations.

And there is a lot of justification in \$100 million for better education.

At the Helm

You can lead a longtime Republican senator to a television camera, but you can't make him debate.

Many North Carolinians marvel at how Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C. has remained in office so long. But even long-time Helms supporters must be wary of Helms' decision not to debate his opponent, former Charlotte Mayor Harvey Gantt, and reluctance to participate in the "Your Voice, Your Vote" coverage by a large group of North Carolina newspapers and television stations.

How can people cast an educated vote for Helms if he refuses to stand up to his competition, much less the press?

The 1990 senate election — with the same opponents going head to head — was marked by bitter advertisements and acrimonious relations between Helms and Gantt.

Controversy swelled on election day when it was discovered that post cards containing erroneous information were sent to residents in predominantly black voting districts. Many construed this event as an effort to keep minority voters at home.

The rematch between Helms and Gantt should not evolve into the name-calling and finger-pointing of the last campaign.

Nobody wins when an election is tainted by such antics.

A sure way to avoid past embarrassments is to

encourage open discussion. Helms, however, is not cooperating.

In response to the suggestions of a televised debate with Gantt, Helms replied, "I think they (the public) resent having their programs preempted."

Such a comment is in insult to all North Carolinians. Helms' Capitol Hill experience has not allowed him to be so in touch with citizens of the Old North State as to know whether they prefer summer reruns of "ER" to a highly charged political debate for one of the state's highest offices.

There is even less of an excuse for Helms' refusal to participate in the "Your Voice, Your Vote" coverage.

During primaries, Helms cited senate business and the lack of a primary opponent.

Now Helms has decided he will not participate because none of the media participating asked for his input when originally planning the coverage.

Instead he has invited the local press to travel to Washington, D.C. to cover his platform. Helms' 24 years in the Senate does not make him a resident of Washington, D.C.

He is a representative of the people of North Carolina and ought to act like it.

Pulling a prima donna act with his competition and hometown media will not win him many friends, nor should it win him votes.



Wedding Bells Won't Be Ringing If New Bills Pass

Imagine that the big day is finally here. It's your wedding day. You stand with the person you love. The person that you have decided that you want to spend the rest of your life with. You feel so deeply for this person that you're willing to make this tremendous commitment.

The day would be perfect except for the fact that the person that you feel so deeply for just happens to be the same sex as you, and you've been told that you aren't allowed to be legally married.

This is the very situation that gays and lesbians face today.

You might argue that marriage — as performed in a church — would naturally have to fall under the power of years of religious zealotry.

But this is not a matter of religion. Homosexuals are currently not allowed a legal marriage — even in the office of the justice of the peace — with all of the rights that come with it. That means that the very laws that are supposed to protect us equally discriminate against people for loving someone with the "wrong" genitalia.

However, this in no way diminishes the commitment that gay and lesbian couples feel. Many couples have lived together as partners for years, and now they deserve the benefits, such as health insurance, pension plans and inheritance rights, that married couples enjoy.

This issue has only recently been fully thrust into the national spotlight due to a court case in Hawaii. In 1993, the Hawaiian supreme court ruled that the state could deny marriage licenses to homosexual couples. The case then went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which sent it back to the trial court and ordered it to show that the state has a compelling interest in having the ban.

It is unlikely that the court will be able to find such an interest, and the ban on homosexual marriages will almost certainly be lifted in Hawaii. Under the U.S. Constitution, any marriages performed in Hawaii will have to be recognized in all 50 states.

The possibility of this outcome has sent the national government, along with many states, scrambling. More than two thirds of the states

considered passing legislation banning same-sex marriage. Eleven states actually passed such legislation, while 17 were actually forward thinking enough to refuse to do so.

Meanwhile, in Washington, the abhorrently named "Defense of Marriage Act" is winding its way through Congress. This bill would allow states to pass legislation refusing to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states. The same people that have been claiming for years that homosexuals are too promiscuous now want to ban gays and lesbians from getting married. It's called hypocrisy folks, get a dictionary and look it up.

Not surprisingly, the N.C. Senate is trying to pass just such a bill. And worse yet, they're forcing it through in Short Session so they can get it passed with as little protest as possible.

The whole furor over same-sex marriage has made me do a lot of thinking lately, especially about my own homosexuality. I feel like it's time to speak out and get people to open their minds.

Most people that I know, with the exception of the few people that I've told, don't know that I'm gay. I've never altered my personality in any way to make anyone think that I'm not, but I don't really exhibit what most people consider stereotypically "gay" behavior.

Last year, one of the people I did tell conducted an impromptu poll among some of the guys living in and around the suite that I lived in. After asking them to rate, using this strange percentage system, their degree of certainty whether I was gay or not, one of them gave a higher percentage based on "the music I listen to and the way I talk," whatever that means.

While I was growing up, my parents were fairly neutral as far as gays and lesbians went. However, it was everything else: movies, TV and



MICHAEL KANAREK
GUEST COLUMNIST

society in general, that told me what I am is wrong. The only gay and lesbian images available were stereotypes and caricatures.

"The Celluloid Closet," a documentary on how gays and lesbians have been portrayed in the cinema, gave many great examples. From the "sissy," the very effeminate man, who usually ended up dead by the end of the movie, to homosexuals (especially lesbian vampires — don't ask) as predators.

It has only been recently that positive, more realistic gay and lesbian characters have been seen in popular entertainment, from movies like "Philadelphia" and "Jeffrey" to television shows like "Roseanne" and "Kids in the Hall."

For me, growing to accept my sexuality was a long, difficult process. I've known for a very long time, but it took a lot before I could be honest with others, and, most importantly, honest with myself. I tried to deny it for a long time. In high school, I even tried to convince myself that I liked one of my female friends. Luckily, it didn't go anywhere, and we're still friends. Ironically, she was the first person that I told that I am gay.

As far as same-sex marriage is concerned, I can understand the perspective of those opposed to it. For some people, religion is very important, and same-sex marriage is against their personal religious beliefs. But, those beliefs are their own. No matter how strongly they are opposed to same-sex marriages, it is not within their rights to force their beliefs on others.

I would like to think that one day I will find the right person, the person that I'd like to spend the rest of my life with. While I would not need, or even really want, a religious wedding ceremony, I would want a legal marriage to afford my partner the benefits that married couples enjoy.

In fact, this whole controversy reminds me of another issue that had plagued the American legal system. It used to be illegal for a person to marry a person of the "wrong" race (i.e., one other than their own). Kind of puts it all into perspective, doesn't it?

Michael Kanarek is sophomore journalism and German major from Jacksonville.



A MARRIAGE OF IDENTICALS THAT'S A REAL THREAT TO NORTH CAROLINA.

Greek Affairs to Organize Groups for Safety Fact-Finding

TO THE EDITOR:

In the aftermath of the Phi Gamma Delta fire, the Office of Greek Affairs and the Chancellor's Committee on Greek Affairs are forming advisory subcommittees on topics related to fire safety in chapter houses. Faculty, staff and students are invited to serve on these short-term committees. It is not necessary to be in a fraternity or sorority. The subcommittees are as follows: Education will develop education programs about safety. Compartmentalization will discuss structural modifications that can help contain fires. Detection/Warning will study what kinds of sprinklers and fire, smoke and heat detectors would best suit the needs of the chapter houses. Protection/Fund-Raising will deal with the ever-important issue of how to pay for suggested changes. Enforcement will consider new policies that may be needed to prevent future fires, i.e., whether no-smoking rules should be implemented in chapter houses. Interior Finishes will investigate upgrading the fire resistance of finishes, wall coverings and furniture.

Committees will meet once or twice before August 11, when they will make recommendations to the Chancellor's Committee and to house corporation officers (owners of houses).

We are very interested in having input from all of the UNC community as we consider how to improve our members' safety. If you have further questions, or if you would like to volunteer for one or more committees, please call the Office of Greek Affairs at 966-4041.

Ron Binder
DIRECTOR
OFFICE OF GREEK AFFAIRS

N.C. House Minority Leader: Education Must Come First

TO THE EDITOR:

A report recently released by the National Association for Educators announced that the average public school teacher's salary in North Carolina has fallen from 40th to 42nd in the nation. Even in the face of such alarming news, the N.C. House Republicans have refused to listen to the taxpayers' mandate for better education and continue to take a negative attitude towards education in this state. Their irresponsibility and negligence in the preparation of the



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.

House Republican Budget allowed for less than half of Gov. Jim Hunt's recommended salary increases for teachers in the public schools and professors, instructors and researchers in the state-supported university and community college systems.

Along with the drop in the rankings of the public schools, faculty salaries in the North Carolina University System are 40 to 60 percent below similar institutions in the United States. Faculty salaries in our community college system — the very people who will educate and train the work force of the 21st century — ranked last among the 15 southern states!

Good pay is vital to recruiting and retaining the best educators. The best investment North Carolina can make is to invest wisely in the education of its people with the resources we now have available — approximately \$396 million remains unused by the House Republicans in their budget. Education must come first.

Jim Black (D)
MECKLENBURG COUNTY
MINORITY LEADER OF THE N.C. HOUSE

King's Death to Be 'Deeper Loss' Than UNC Could Know

TO THE EDITOR:

As a recent alumna of UNC, I find that reading The Daily Tar Heel on-line reminds me what

a special place UNC is and how much I enjoyed myself during my years there. I did not have that reaction today.

I was shocked and saddened to read about Brad King's death. Brad was a student in the first section of Chemistry 11L that I taught as an undergraduate. For a teaching assistant, faces are easy to remember, but I can remember the full names of only the most remarkable students. For those that knew Brad, it is probably not a shock that I remember him well and followed his many campus involvements through the DTH. Brad was very bright, energetic and outgoing. I was never surprised to see his name in the paper in connection with his many activities. Of course, I was very surprised to see it today.

Brad was one of those people that you simply know will go places, do things, be somebody. His death saddens me not only because I remember him well, but because he had so much potential. Until today, I believed that he would realize his full potential and eventually I would be seeing his name in more newspapers. His shortened life is a far deeper loss than we will ever know.

Katherine Campbell Glasgow
CLASS OF 1995
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

Money, Not Negligence, at Heart of OIT Traffic Jam

TO THE EDITOR:

N. Gregory DeWitt's letter to the editor ("Students in Traffic Jam on Road to Information Highway," May 30) spoke to a problem obvious to all who try to access the information highway. I choose to check my e-mail by 8 a.m. daily because not long after that I encounter gridlock.

I agree that OIT's current e-mail system is not meeting the needs of UNC students. However, I do not believe the problem lies with any form of mismanagement. The problem, which doesn't take outside experts to identify, is money.

DeWitt doesn't identify the former OIT employee whom he says stated that top management refuses to call in outside experts. Could it be that the former employee is "former" because he saw there just wasn't enough money to do the job that needed to be done? Considering the explosion in demand for services and the inadequate funding, OIT has done a fantastic job from top management to the lowest staff position.

Jim McCulloch
CLASS OF 1961

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