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Wegner to leave post as law school dean in June 1999

BY KELLI BOUTIN
STAFF WRITER

After a nine-year tenure riddled with success and controversy, School of Law Dean Judith Wegner announced Monday that she would not seek a third term.

Wegner said she would step down when her term runs out in June 1999. "I've done all the things I wanted to do (as dean)," she said.

Wegner said next year would be a good time for her to resign from the position because a new law school building would be dedicated next fall.

She said her biggest accomplishments as dean included effectively recruiting faculty members, students and staff and providing a driving force behind securing \$11 million in state appropriations to construct the new building.

Chancellor Michael Hooker



School of Law Dean JUDITH WEGNER said she planned to pursue research after June 1999.

said he agreed with Wegner's assessment of the strengths of her term as law school dean. "She has really excelled in ... recruiting high-ability young faculty."

But Wegner's term was not without its problems. In 1995, law student Wendell Williamson killed two people in a Franklin Street shooting spree. Last year, the firing of Barry David Nakell, a tenured law school professor, and an incident involving Barry Michael Berman, a law student who smoked marijuana in class, marred public perception of the law school.

The law school's national ranking has taken several downturns in recent years,

prompting alumni to criticize Wegner. University officials said they admired the way Wegner handled the rash of bad publicity. "Judith acted expeditiously, judiciously and thoughtfully in all those instances," said Richard Cole, dean of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Several of Wegner's colleagues cited Wegner's work with other departments as one of her greatest strengths.

Cole said he admired Wegner's work in expanding the Law Library and forming a UNC dean's council.

Wegner's announcement came the same day an external review team

released a report listing some ways the law school could improve. A team of law school deans from the University of Chicago, Washington University and the University of Minnesota visited the law school earlier this month.

Wegner said she suggested the external review to Provost Richard Richardson last year because she knew she planned to retire after her second term.

She said she felt the external review would prove a useful tool in the search for a new dean. "The report confirms

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Construction projects go to lowest bidder

■ If other factors were considered, officials said quality would be better.

BY LESA NAGY
STAFF WRITER

Because the qualifications required of contractors are not very stringent, campus construction projects sometimes fall short of perfection, UNC officials say.

According to a N.C. general statute, the building contracts for projects costing more than \$100,000 automatically go to the contractors who will do the jobs for the least amount of money. Since price, not performance quality, is the main selection criterion, there is no insurance that the contractor chosen will produce the most desired work.

"The state statute prevents us from looking at any other qualification," said Kevin MacNaughton, associate vice president of finance at UNC.

MacNaughton said the formal construction projects — those costing more than \$100,000 — operate on a competitor bidding process. During the process, the University submits design specifications to the State Construction Office.

"All contractors have to have a particular license for that particular area of work," MacNaughton said.

The contractors then submit a bid proposal stating that the lowest price they will accept to complete the job.

"In construction, North Carolina state statute requires that we hire the contractor with the lowest bid," MacNaughton said.

Chancellor Michael Hooker said he did not fully support the bidding process because the contractor with the best track record was not always chosen. He cited delayed construction on the law school as an example of a problem that could occur.

Hooker said he advocated a process that would give UNC more direct involvement in deciding who to hire.

"We might get better quality work done more quickly," Hooker said.

Gordon Rutherford, director of facilities planning and design, said he approved of the bidding process because the money used for construction projects were public funds.



Chancellor MICHAEL HOOKER said he did not fully support the bidding process because it often produced less than qualified work.

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the program's reinstatement.

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SEE BIDDER, PAGE 4

Racial diversity program discontinued by housing

BY CHRISTINE ELLIOTT
STAFF WRITER

The Department of University Housing has discontinued its five-year-old racial diversity program for next year because administrators believe the program has reached its goals.

The program helped diversify North and Mid Campus by giving blacks residing in South Campus priority in choosing housing option four, said Larry Hicks, associate director of administrative services in University housing. Housing option four is the option of moving to another residence hall area.

"We've far exceeded our goals in meeting diversity," Hicks said. "We've got sufficient representation in all three areas to say 'let's pull this back and see what happens.'"

Tamara Bailey, president-elect of the Black Student Movement, said meeting goals was not a valid reason to discontinue the program.

"We are glad that we have accomplished the goals, but that does not equal the long-term goal of creating a diverse living environment," she said.

Hicks said every year since the program's inception, a group of students and staff were supposed to meet in October to discuss the progress of the initiative but that did not happen.

"We didn't effectively communicate as a group," he said. "How we're gonna deal with that is we're going to formalize the review process (in October)."

Hicks said if diversity suffered on North and Mid Campus without the program in place, University housing would consider reinstating it.

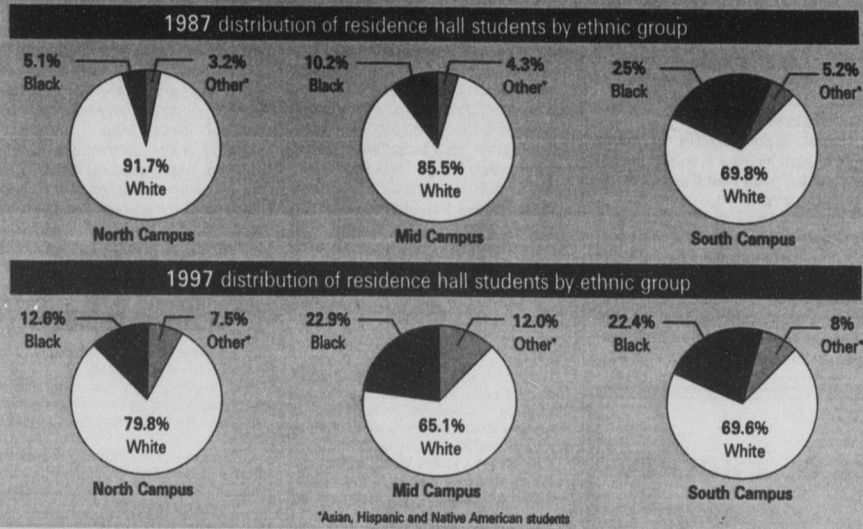
Bailey said, "Meetings might not have been happening in the past, but if they were going to discontinue the program, they should have followed the guidelines that were set and convened the review board," she said.

Brian Elliott, treasurer-elect of the BSM, said he was stunned when he discovered the program had been discontinued. "I feel that a lot of students were not informed of the discontinuance of this program," he said.

David Jernigan, president of the Residence Hall Association, said he was frustrated when he found out. "I don't feel I'm being a very good voice of the

The changing face of North and Mid Campus

The Department of University Housing implemented a racial diversity program in 1992 to increase minority populations in residence halls on North and Mid Campus. Housing officials discontinued the program for 1998 because they thought the goals had been reached.



SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY HOUSING

DTH/JAKE ZARNBARGER AND ELISSA ROMANSKY

residents when a program is abolished undercover," he said. "This isn't going to go down without my protest."

India Williams, current president of the BSM, said the campus could become

segregated again without the program. It would be very hard for black freshmen to move up to North and Mid Campus without the priority.

Bailey said the BSM would fight for

the program's reinstatement.

"We are in present communication with (the Office of) Student Affairs and housing in the hopes of a positive result."

The future of identification

Biometric technology is becoming increasingly popular to identify everyone from students to gun owners. These methods use fingerprints, hand geometry and facial features to identify individuals and eliminate the possibility of forgery.

Retinal scan

Introduced to many by the movie "Mission: Impossible," retinal scanning is a 99.8 percent accurate identification method.

Once a retinal picture is on file, users must stare into an infrared light for a fraction of a second to be identified.



National I.D. card

Currently under debate is the application of a national identification card. If made available, it could hold such information as social security number, citizenship data and emergency health information.

Fingerprint identification

This method is based on the application of fingerprint image capture, digitization, storage and data transfer. Fingerprint images are captured at the point of transaction and cross-referenced for positive identification in seconds.

By adding this identification capability to existing security systems — barcoding and personal identification numbers (PINs) — authorization for every transaction is granted only to the person whose fingerprint is on file.

Biometrics

A biometric identification system has the capability of storing biological data on a personal identification card.

Information such as fingerprints, face recognition, signature and vein structure can be stored and verified using a biometric card. The technology is currently being tested for industrial and governmental use.



DTH/JAKE ZARNBARGER

Supreme Court fails to consider extension

BY TRISHA DABB
ASSISTANT FEATURES EDITOR

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday denied a request for a stay on the federal court ruling that declared North Carolina's 12th Congressional District unconstitutional.

In an attempt to avoid delaying the May 5 primaries, N.C. Attorney General Mike Easley had asked Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist to stay the three-judge panel's order to redraw the district. The court declared the district, which hugs Interstate 85 between Charlotte and Greensboro, unconstitutional because race was the main factor for its shape.

The three-judge panel initially gave state legislators until April 8, only five days after the decision, to submit a schedule for redrawing the district. In an order issued Friday, the judges extended the deadline by a week but said that if legislators fail to produce a timeline, the court would redraw the district for them.

And state legislators say the burden to make a decision, and make it quickly, now falls on them.

"The (N.C. General Assembly) has got to do something soon, or just let the courts do it ... I am very frustrated by the whole thing."

After eight years of using the district, Kerr said it was too late to attempt such drastic changes that could easily be handled in the future.

"The courts should just have waited until after the (2000) census and told us what to do next time," he said.

A revised plan would take cooperation between Democrats and Republicans in the General Assembly. The parties split the state's 12 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

N.C. Rep. Cynthia Watson, R-Duplin, was disappointed with the decision, but said she was determined to generate an acceptable plan. "I sincerely hoped we would not have to face this,"

"The (General Assembly) has got to do something soon, or just let the courts do it ... I am very frustrated by the whole thing."

JOHN KERR
Democratic Senator from Wayne County

Watson said. "But that's just one more challenge we have to face. I think we can compromise. I have seen good things come out of this body in my two years."

Watson said she liked the idea of districts based on county lines.

"I like the idea of not dividing counties and making districts more compact," Watson said.

"The current plan is not allowing us to do all that we could for (our constituents)."

The problem with redrawing the 12th District, however, lays in the ambiguity of the federal court decision.

"It will be very difficult to come up with a proposal because the judges' initial order didn't expressly say what the problem is," said Julia White, spokeswoman for N.C. Senate President Pro Tem Marc Basnight.

The three federal judges said in the order that they would release an explanation of their ruling next week, and legislators hope that will aid in the redrawing.

"I don't know what's right, but I want it to be right," Watson said. "It's very controversial."

Later in the week, a federal court is also expected rule on the constitutionality of North Carolina's state legislative districts.

UNC law student and conservative activist Jack Daly filed a suit that contended that the districts for the state House and Senate were also unconstitutional on the grounds of their racial compositions.

Use of biometric technology spreads

BY MATT DEES
STAFF WRITER

Students at the University of Georgia have the world at their fingertips — literally.

The system at UGa. gives students access to dining halls, residence halls and workout facilities when they place their hands on a scanner that automatically verifies their identities.

"We are the longest-running and largest biometric application in the world and the only university in the United States to use this technology," said Mike Floyd, food service chief at UGa.

Biometric identifiers, such as fingerprints, hand geometry and facial fea-

tures, are becoming increasingly common methods to identify everyone from bankcard holders to gun owners.

Floyd said UGa. began using biometrics in 1972 to make sure students did not abuse the school's unique meal system, which gives students unlimited meals during the week.

"Our system has a camera that takes a three-dimensional picture of your hand and compares that information to a hand image on file," Floyd said.

Biometric technology is also showing up more and more in ATMs and government buildings.

Oxford Micro Devices, a Connecticut-based biometrics corporation, is developing a handgun with a built-in fingerprint scanner.

"If a fingerprint sensor were embedded in the handle of a gun, only the user of the gun could fire it," said Steve Morton, president and chief executive officer of the corporation.

"We expect to be demonstrating it in a couple of months."

Visionics, a New Jersey-based biometrics firm, specializes in face-recognition technology.

Visionics provides law enforcement officials, banks and government agencies with the technology, which identifies people by facial features such as the crinkles around their eyes.

"Because the face is dynamic, we use a dynamic system," said Julia Webb, marketing manager for the firm.

"We have figured out what all the different facial features are and which ones are necessary to identify a person."

Webb said the process was the easiest form of biometric technology to use.

"With a face scan, you don't have to do anything," Webb said.

"Not only is it convenient for the user, but it's also convenient for the

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INSIDE Tuesday

Get in step
UNC Sport Clubs and the Orange County Rape Crisis Center are sponsoring a 5K race Saturday. Proceeds benefit both groups. Page 5

Paint me a picture
The artist painting a mural on the Carolina Coffee Shop plans to portray the diversity of Chapel Hill. Page 2

Today's weather
Thunderstorms likely; Low 70s
Wednesday: Partly cloudy; low 80s

Time's awastin'
Today is the last day to get your applications in to be a desk editor for next year's The Daily Tar Heel. We know, next year is so far off, but if you've got ideas and a passion for journalism, apply! Questions? Call editor-select Sharif Durhams at 962-0245.

Get your facts first, and then you can distort 'em as much as you please.

Mark Twain