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The Daily Tar Heel

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BOARD EDITORIALS

Healthy Changes

Even though the Student Health Advisory Board made some important changes last year, including introducing better insurance policies and hiring an obstetrician, there are still some important needs that Student Health Service is not meeting.

The three main issues the board should address this year are convenience, the system for making appointments and publicity.

First of all, Student Health should be more accessible. Although UNC students have hectic schedules, Student Health's business hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. These hours are not convenient for students, and if a student visits after hours, the student must pay an extra \$40.

With the current hours of operation, many injured or ill students would rather wait to visit Student Health than pay the extra fees.

This might not be the wisest of decisions, but with the lean pockets of most college students, it is often the most logical (and always the most economically feasible) choice.

Hand-in-hand with the issue of convenience comes the task of scheduling an appointment with Student Health.

The current system allows students to

make appointments by phone, but an even better solution would be to have an online appointment book. By entering his or her personal identification number, a student could schedule an appointment at Student Health from any computer at any time.

It could easily be that simple.

And even if it makes no changes to the current system, Student Health officials need to do a better job of letting students know just how it works. They should try utilizing e-mail, making appearances in the Pit, posting fliers in residence halls and scheduling times to meet with an array of student groups.

Many students on this campus are ignorant of the logistical process of getting medical treatment at Student Health.

Ignorance can be very intimidating, and it can cause students to forego treatment. This might not only cause Student Health to lose business, but it is much more inconvenient for a student to go to a private physician.

Student Health, the requests are simple and would help serve the students more effectively. Give the students more hours, let them make appointments online and, most importantly, tell them what you're all about.

Voting Via Satellite

If anything, low voter turnout in last week's local elections proved that students need a simplified on-campus voting process.

Currently, students have to go to one of five different sites on campus to vote, depending on where they live.

The multiple-district system has caused confusion in the past, because students often did not know at which particular polling site they were to vote. Most students simply chose not to vote rather than try to figure out where to do it.

Student leaders have been working unsuccessfully for years to find a way to consolidate the on-campus districts, but the N.C. General Assembly passed a bill last July that presents a feasible way to make voting easier for students.

The bill allows counties to establish satellite polling districts on even-numbered years with permission from the state Board of Elections. Such a satellite on campus would allow students to vote in one central location over a period of several days, after which the Orange County Board of Elections would approve the ballots and submit them.

A satellite would be a winning solution for both students and elections board members.

The benefits to students are obvious. A longer voting period would not only increase the chance that students would be able to take time out of their busy schedules to vote, but because anyone can vote at the site during that time, it would also eliminate the hassle of obtaining absentee ballots.

Plus, having one satellite site would solve the problem of students not voting because they do not know where to go.

Elections board members would benefit because setting up a satellite site is simple and inexpensive, and turnout is likely to increase if the procedure is simplified.

The satellite site already has the support of the Orange County Board of Elections, which plans to submit a request to the state board by early next year.

Now it is up to the student leaders who have been working to simplify on-campus voting to keep tabs on the county board and make sure it follows through with its plan.

After all, a satellite polling site is a great solution to a long-standing problem.

Blow Off Steam — Every Week

The Daily Tar Heel is looking for columnists, editorial board members and cartoonists to join the spring 2000 editorial page. If you apply and are selected, your work will appear on the page everybody simultaneously loves and hates to read. Applications are available in the front office of the DTH, in Suite 104 of the Student Union. Questions? Call 962-0245 and ask for Editorial Page Editor Scott Hicks or Assistant Editorial Page Editor Kelli Boutin.

READERS' FORUM

Scheduling of UNC Vs. N.C. State Game Punishes Students

TO THE EDITOR:

It is no secret that a rivalry exists between UNC-Chapel Hill and N.C. State University. Our fight song even contains the words "Go to hell, State."

But during my final year at UNC, I will once again be unable to watch in person the game between these two opponents.

I don't remember who decided to move this game to Ericsson Stadium in Charlotte. But I do remember why. Because of the rivalry, it was decided to switch to a neutral stadium that could seat more fans.

Like myself, I know many students were disappointed when last year the game was scheduled for Thanksgiving weekend. Many had family obligations in another city or state. We had to settle for watching the game on television. I looked forward to this year when I would be able to see the game in person.

Imagine my shock and disappointment when I discovered that the game has been scheduled for a Thursday.

Now, most universities I know have a five-day school week. What are the reasons here? An effort to claim a prime-time TV slot? More money? This does not compare to a team having their school cheering them on.

I know what many people are saying. Just skip class on Friday. A viable option, but one that should not have to be made. Students should not have to miss class

because they want to cheer their team on.

And don't give me that die-hard fan crap. I know there are many students who simply cannot or will not miss class. Plus, many have jobs that require them to work on Thursdays or Fridays.

What's the alternative? Driving three hours (hope nobody has an afternoon class) on Thursday, staying for the game and driving back late at night to school.

Good idea. Let's put a bunch of tired and probably many drunken students on the road for a couple of hours.

How much difference would it have made to have the game on a Saturday like all the rest? I'd like an explanation.

I remember football games used to be about winning and showing support for your team. Now it seems that the students are getting punished so a network's ratings will be a little higher.

I probably won't be able to go to the game. So, good luck, guys. I'm sorry I won't be there to cheer you on.

Emily Lacklen
Senior
Communications and Psychology

University Officials Not Honest About Tuition Increase, ATMs

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing to express my utter disgust at this University's recent half-truths regarding the issues of raising tuition and the removal of the automated teller machines.

First, raising tuition may or may not be a realistic necessity, but claiming that this increase in tuition would go directly to increasing professors' salaries was a bit misleading, to say the least. The legislature has not promised that a tuition increase would go to faculty salaries, so why present it that way to students and faculty? As you saw yourself, most people didn't buy it, and all it really did was divide faculty and students. That is incredibly harmful to the cherished intellectual climate.

Second, the administration was less than up-front about why exactly the ATMs would be moved. At first we were told it was because of the renovations to the Student Union. Then, the real reason was revealed — that UNC had sold the rights to a Pit monopoly to Wachovia.

Is this the kind of legacy we want to leave behind? All I ask is that our University's administration at least be up-front with its faculty, staff and students. All this funny business does nothing more than anger people and divide our campus.

Gabriele Pelli
Research Assistant
Psychology

Essay Writer Could Be Potential Killer, His Punishment a Precaution

TO THE EDITOR:

The editorial "First-Degree Essay," whose writer has obviously not kept up with the current events of our nation,

appalled me.

The truth is that there is a virus plaguing our youth, which has gone unchecked for too long by the schools. The authorities in Texas should be commended for their recognition of a potential killer. A 14-year-old boy writing about bringing a gun to school is just not normal and should be treated as such. Perhaps his night in prison scared him enough so that his fantasies of murder will be eliminated.

The writer of the editorial claims that America has overreacted to the Columbine incident and that the boy in question was treated harshly. I believe exactly the opposite. We as a nation have under-reacted.

Following every senseless murder, the media asks the question, "How could no one see this coming?" The truth is disturbing, and history speaks for itself. Out of fear of "overreaction," no one was warned and no action was taken despite the clues provided.

Here are three examples in the past two years of warning signs that went unheeded and their devastating results.

Luke Woodham, only 16, killed his mother and two students. He wrote a poem beforehand, which glorified the killing of a young girl for no reason. Not surprisingly, Luke's object of unrequited love, Christina, was the first to die in the halls of Pearl High School.

In Paducah, Ky., Michael Carneal wrote a shockingly morbid story about a boy named "Michael" who is picked on by the "preps," but is rescued by a brother with a gun. The story concludes with "Michael" taking the corpses to his mother as a gift. In

1997 Michael opened fire in his school, killing three students and wounding five, two of which are now partially paralyzed.

Most shocking is the story of Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, the gunmen at Columbine High School. Eric Harris's Web site contained hate-filled messages, which said, among other things, "I don't care if I live or die in the shootout, all I want to do is kill and injure as many of (expletive) as I can."

The Web site was reported to both America Online and the local police, neither of which took action. In class, they created a video that depicted the boys and other members of the "trench coat mafia" terrorizing the halls of Columbine High School, seeking out the "preps."

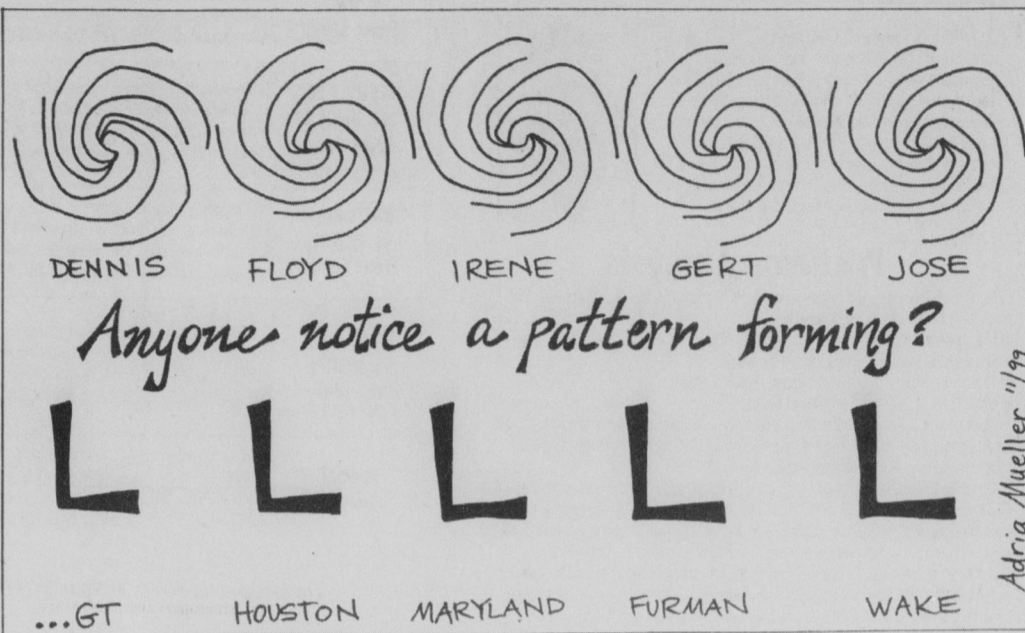
These previous events only further prove that the actions taken by the authorities in Texas were justified and admirable. These three boys alone killed 20 students and wounded 35. Had the authorities in their area recognized the problems those boys had, they might still be alive.

It may seem "drastic" to some to punish a boy because he exhibits the same characteristics of the killers who came before him, but it truthfully is not.

If you want to fully understand the definition of drastic go to a source that knows better than anyone. Ask Rachel Scott about drastic. Ask Christina Menefee. Ask Cassie Bernal. They have the answer.

Ashlee Smith
Freshman
Undecided

The length rule on letters was waived.



'Thin Horizon' of a Student's Plan

What are you going to do with THAT?

I just love the oh-so-encouraging response to my choice to be an English major.

What kind of question is that, anyway?

What am I going to do with an English major? Well, I'm probably (I hope) going to graduate knowing a lot about English literature. After all, that's about all a major determines, right?

Not so. According to the reactions of my friends and classmates lately, a major determines so much more. As a sophomore, I am part of a massive future-identity crisis.

As our undecided status inches closer and closer to its expiration date, a lot of us are getting really uptight. The stress of choosing a major dominates the minds of many. No matter what anyone says, it seems like a major is going to determine the rest of your future.

But the key word here is "seems." After all, the future is unpredictable, and a lot of factors and decisions influence it. Just like choosing a college, choosing a major is important, but not life-determining.

Of course, it doesn't feel so simple when you're in the hot seat.

Oh, advisers and upperclassmen reassuringly tell you during orientation that you don't have to declare a major until your sophomore year.

But no one tells you how unlikely it is that you'll feel any more prepared to do this by the time you're a sophomore than you will as a pre-freshman.

And frankly, most of us probably felt more confident about our intended academic focus before we actually started college. The effect of "weeder" courses significantly lessens the number of people considering many undergraduate majors.

There are so many confusions associated with the choice of a major. What if you just don't know what you want to do with your



LUCY MELVIN
FOOL, SAID MY MUSE

life?

Don't be fooled by my comfortable situation as "one-who-has-declared." Frankly, that game plan is just getting me through the next couple of years. After that, I'm clueless.

And what about graduate school? So many of us little undergraduates are perfectly aware that in order to be qualified to do anything besides work as a desk gopher in some corporate rat race, we're going to have to get some sort of graduate-level education.

So what's the point? Life could become pretty overwhelming if we didn't start to make decisions at some point. You have to start doing something sometime. Life necessitates choices.

Yes, it sucks. Or at least it sucks so long as you think of every decision as the final and all-consuming determinant in your life. So, you just have to try to be positive.

Just learn as much as you can about as many things as possible. And try new things, 'cause maybe you'll like them. And it'll work itself out in the end.

Or I hope so, otherwise I'm doomed. This — followed by a laugh and a smile — illuminates the attitude of someone who basically has the right idea.

I don't feel like I can predict the rest of my life. And I think if I try too hard, I might just set myself up for frustration. After all, I can't even make a daily to-do list without getting

somewhat overwhelmed and frustrated with myself.

I am capable of finding only 24 hours in my day in which to accomplish it all. Where am I possibly wasting all those extra hours? (Oh yeah, there are only 24 hours in a day, darn it!)

Trying to map out the entire future is simply ridiculous.

My attitude may sound somewhat fatalistic. But that depends on how you approach it.

This attitude doesn't have to be negative. Its actually comforting to think that each of us is part of a bigger world, a bigger plan. No matter what I do with my life, I can rest assured that I am somehow contributing to the workings of some bigger picture.

And answers don't come overnight. All I can do is try to make decisions that point me in the right direction, and maybe things will fall into place.

Thus far, my desire is to contribute to the plan in a positive way and help others. But that's about as far as I've gotten in determining the particular direction.

Well, that and I've figured out a lot of things that I don't want to do with my life. Thus, through the process of elimination, my decisions about the future are slowly becoming more concrete.

The Indigo Girls say it best: "The thin horizon of a plan is almost clear. My friends and I have had a tough time."

It's tough to figure things out sometimes. But that's all we can hope for — a thin horizon that hints at the larger picture of the future. With a little initiative and a little time, what's important and what's meant to be will come into focus.

Lucy Melvin is a sophomore English major from Eden. Reach her with questions, comments and advice for the future at lmelvin@email.unc.edu.



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 space, clarity and vulgarity. Publication is not guaranteed. Bring letters to the DTH office at Suite 104, Carolina Union, mail the to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail forum to: editdesk@unc.edu.