

Baddour Wants Ideas to Honor Pacts, Fix Seating

We all want the Smith Center to be a wonderful place to watch and support our Carolina men's basketball team. I support all positive efforts to create an atmosphere that continues to make the arena a difficult one for opposing teams to be successful.

Nationally, the Smith Center is considered a model among collegiate venues, and that is a result of the efforts of many people. It also is an arena where the Tar Heels have won more than 87 percent of their games, almost identical to the 89 percent success rate at Carmichael Auditorium.

I support efforts to increase more student involvement in the lower level as well as closer to the playing surface; however, I cannot support that at the expense of destroying trust and confidence from the people who provided the resources to create the facility in the first place.

The University entered into a well-defined relationship with those individuals during the course of the capital campaign to raise more than \$33 million.

That agreement simply stated the donor is entitled to keep identified seats in the Smith Center as long as he/she maintains a certain

DICK BADDOUR POINT OF VIEW

level of giving on an annual basis.

There were no public funds used to build the Smith Center; no student funds were used; and no state, county or city funds were used. It all came from private donations. For the last 14 years these individuals have driven from all parts of the state to support the Tar Heels.

Nothing has changed for them. These are the same people who completely fund our scholarship program, supporting more than 750 student-athletes, on an annual basis. These are the same people who donated to build new soccer, field hockey, tennis, lacrosse, track, football, softball and golf facilities that allow us to maintain a competitive level within the Atlantic Coast Conference and nationally.

More importantly, these are the same people who give even more generously to the academic and cultural interests of the University. In 1995, the University completed a \$440 million Bicentennial Campaign. Development records

show that the Educational Foundation itself and foundation members donated more money to the Bicentennial than to any athletic interest.

When the Smith Center was being constructed, a committee of University and campaign officials spent countless hours working on the arena's seating arrangement.

All constituents had input and agreed on the sections devoted to each group. Student seating went from about 2,800 seats in Carmichael to 6,000. Arrangements were made in the seating plan to accommodate student leaders' requests for a continuous seating area in the lower level.

It is important to note there was discussion about increasing student fees to contribute toward construction of the Smith Center, but that was decided against by student leadership.

By comparison, the new arena in Raleigh, which includes public funding, allows for only 3,500 student seats, compared to 6,000 in the Smith Center, though N.C. State University has about 3,000 more students enrolled than UNC. In fact, the Smith Center has more student seats than any other facility in the ACC.

In 1988, the Carolina Athletic Association asked the Department of Athletics to look into

possible ways to increase student seating in the lower level.

The department increased the allotment by removing seats and replacing them with narrower ones that allow for more total seats in the lower level. The seats are now at the legal code limit and cannot be any smaller.

I am concerned that the seating issue will detract from our effort to support the team. I am concerned that our alumni and supporters will receive a message that says we do not value their past and continuing support and that we will not honor commitments we made.

I am even more concerned that some will use this issue as "us against them" or that somehow the belief is that the decision made in the mid-1980s excluded student participation or ignored their interests.

It is much easier to say now that donations should not matter or the University should have assigned seats in a different way. But commitments were made that built this great building. And the money raised on an annual basis from those donors continues to support our 28 varsity programs.

There are many ideas and proposals being

discussed and I pledge to you that the department will analyze all of them. I recently met with the undergraduate and graduate student body and CAA leaders and assured them we are willing to hear any new and credible ideas.

I believe they have a good understanding behind the history of the issue and the limitations we have. In turn, your student leaders have done a fine job in being advocates for your concerns, and they will continue to be involved in the assessment of new ideas.

However, given the facts as to how this building was funded and how the commitments were made, it is important that expectations be realistic.

Every constituency (faculty, staff, students, Educational Foundation) would like more downstairs seating. We will honor our commitments to every group.

I hope there is no disagreement on one major point. UNC needs to continue to support the coaches and student-athletes in the great tradition that UNC has known for many years. I am confident that will continue to flourish.

Dick Baddour is director of athletics.

Proposal to Up Tuition Hurts Medical Students

The medical students enrolled at the UNC School of Medicine have a message for all you pre-meds out there ... your dream of

obtaining an affordable education at one of the finest state medical schools in the country is fading fast, and if you don't act now, will disappear before you ever get a chance to take the MCAT.

Following major tuition increase proposals at the schools of business, law and journalism and mass communication, it appears that the next domino is wobbling.

After a year of deliberations, the administration at the medical school will announce Tuesday a proposal to increase the average tuition and fee level to \$9,900! That represents a nearly 270 percent increase over the current cost of tuition and fees. Let me restate that in case you missed it ... *It may soon cost almost \$10,000 to get a medical education at this University ... in-state.*

So why would the administration want to alter tuition at the medical school so drastically?

Primarily, they see many financial needs at the school that will require piles of money to implement. Much of the 900,000 square feet in research space needed by the University system will ultimately reside in the hospital complex on this campus. Berryhill Hall, our primary classroom space, was built to accommodate half the number of students it currently serves. It also has no windows, and its lounge is small, dark and furnished only with a few old couches and a broken piano.

Many of the department heads for the hospital and medical school have their offices in trailers, making it extremely difficult to recruit new faculty and physicians to the school.

Also, our upperclass students have no clinical space in which to practice for their clinical boards, a critical piece of their application to residency programs. Etc., etc., etc.

They also see that tuition here is far-and-away lower than every other school in the country except the East Carolina University's medical school.

They figure that the money gained by raising tuition to nearly \$10,000 (which would still place us in the bottom 20 percent of all U.S. medical schools when ranked according to cost) would far outweigh any deleterious consequences caused by the increase.

Our first concern with their reasoning, however, is that the needs that have been laid out so far are all capital needs. The UNC-system Board of Governors and President Molly Brod recently withdrew their campuswide proposal to increase tuition for capital improvements.

They realized what students have been emphatically declaring for years: It is entirely inappropriate for students to pay for buildings that are owned by the state.

PATRICK LINK POINT OF VIEW

In addition to our concerns about how the money is to be spent, we are very worried about what such an increase would do to future med-

ical students.

High tuition has been shown to adversely affect the access of underrepresented minority students to medical school. Underrepresented minorities constitute only 11.6 percent of my class, but constitute more than 25 percent of our state.

Raising tuition would only exacerbate this problem. The proposed increase would also remove one of our greatest recruiting tools.

Why would our best in-state students come here if they could go to Duke or Harvard universities for just a few thousand dollars more, after accounting for the grants available at the private schools due to their large endowments?

In addition, the increased debt burden would weigh heavily on future medical students and could cause them to practice higher-paying medical specialties in higher-paying suburban areas, thus disadvantaging our medically underserved rural and inner-city citizens.

Lastly, our reasonable tuition sends a clear message to all North Carolinians that this is an accessible medical school. Raising tuition so drastically sends exactly the opposite message.

The administration has promised that one-third of all money raised by the tuition increase would be given back to needy students as scholarship money. This would help address some of the access problems, but must be matched by dramatically increased efforts to recruit disadvantaged students.

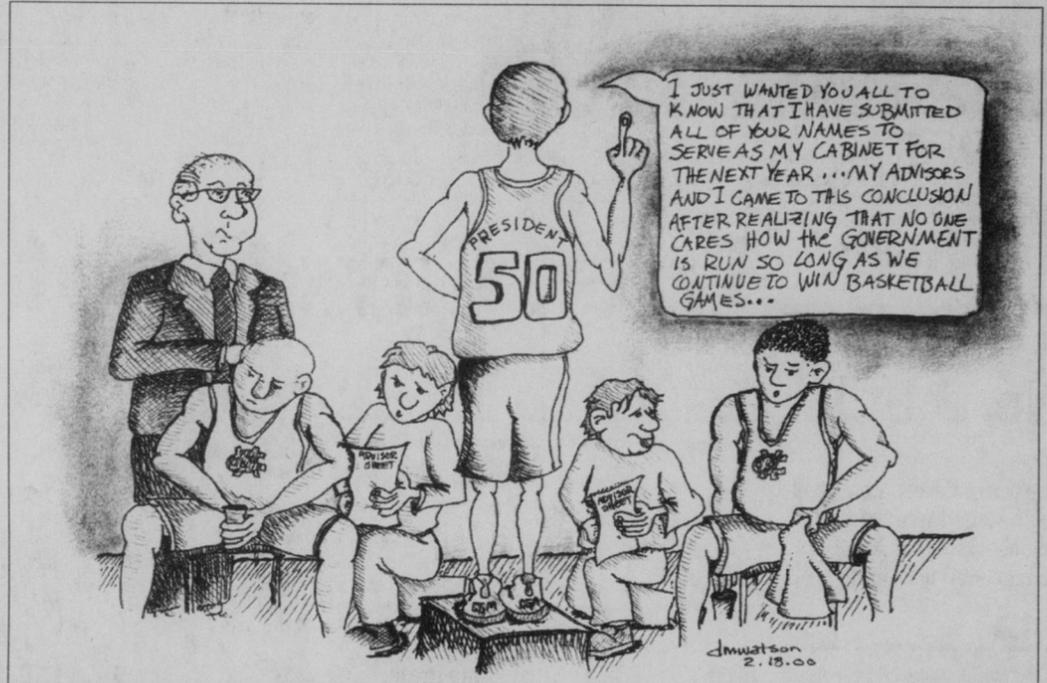
In addition, there has been no mention of making this tuition proposal part of a larger capital campaign. The \$2.8 million per year this proposal would raise is no where near the amount of money needed to make any real improvements at the school.

Obviously, this is a difficult issue that needs many more months of deliberation before any action is taken. More importantly, *much more student input is needed.* The administration has agreed to hold a forum at 6 p.m. Tuesday in 103 Berryhill Hall to discuss the proposal with students, but this should only be the first step in the process as far as students are concerned.

If you are concerned, please e-mail me at Patrick_Link@med.unc.edu and please attend the forum.

We need your help in order to guarantee that the right decision is made here, and that the School of Medicine achieves the highest levels of both quality and accessibility possible!

Patrick Link is a second-year medical student and represents District 9 in Student Congress. Reach him at Patrick_Link@med.unc.edu.



Kicking Off 'Stick Campaign 2000

For the past few days, write-in candidate Brian Bersticker's impressive showing at the polls has been the topic of conversation among students.

Many believe the hoopla initiated by Daily Tar Heel columnist Brian Frederick made a complete mockery of UNC student government and the entire elections process. Others, however, are of the opinion that Bersticker's third-place finish was the essence of representative government and American democracy.

Well, I know what I think. The bottom line is, Brian Bersticker should be student body president. Here are the reasons why:

He's better-looking than Brad Matthews or Erica Smiley.

No offense to Matthews or Smiley, but neither one of them will be gracing the cover of any magazine in the near or distant future.

Matthews has got that ridiculous pseudo-goatee thing on his chin that really needs to go. Smiley, on the other hand, often dresses like she's auditioning for "That '70s Show."

UNC cannot have a leader without a sense of style. That just wouldn't be cool. Now Bersticker isn't perfect. Admittedly, Stick is in dire need of some protein shakes and a few hours in the weight room. All in all, however, he's a good-looking kid, especially in comparison to the other two candidates. He's got the blond hair, the blue eyes and the million-dollar smile. Let's not forget those cool sideburns. Chicks dig the burns.

Most importantly, Double B's mug would

look great in the DTH. This is critical, since posing for pictures is the only thing the student body president accomplishes anyway.

He's old school.

Bersticker is unquestionably a throwback, a vestige of what used to be. In an age when many college athletes are incapable of formulating a coherent sentence (or spelling their names), Bersticker stands out as an articulate, well-spoken kid. He goes to class, even on days when no test is scheduled. He's clean-cut and clean-shaven. He even tucks in his shirt. On the court, the kid's an old-fashioned hustler. He boxes out, plays mad defense and runs a textbook pick and roll. You get the feeling that if he had his way, he'd bring back short shorts and knee socks. Well, maybe.

He's smooth.

Although teammate Joseph Forte is quickly closing the gap, Bersticker is still, without question, the smoothest guy on campus.

He's got style. He's an unconditionally cool dude. Hell, he hangs out with gorgeous cheerleaders. The kid is oozing with confidence. He doesn't need anyone to tell him he's The Man, because, well ... He already knows it. If he can work the Board of Governors like he does the female population, UNC will be in damn good shape by the end of his term.

JOE MONACO EDITORIAL WRITER

He's got connections.

Networking is absolutely key to the success of any administration, and it is essential that the student body president have influential contacts. Bersticker probably isn't all that tight with the Board of Governors or the Board of Trustees. However, he's got some other powerful individuals in his corner. For example, let's assume President Bersticker wants a particular bill to be passed. Student Congressman Jones opposes the bill. President Bersticker sends an associate named Julius Peppers to Congressman Jones' front door, and WHAM! Congressman Jones has a mysterious change of heart and is suddenly the leading advocate of President Bersticker's legislation.

Who's going to say no to Julius? It's quite apparent that Bersticker would have made a fine student body president, and it's a shame he couldn't pull off the upset.

For those of us who have seen the light, we need to join forces and start preparing for next year. Let's get an early start on Campaign 2001. The brilliant Brian Frederick will be commander in chief of this noble undertaking. I'll print the fliers and blow up the balloons. Hey, we can even get bumperstickers.

Bersticker, we'll take care of the dirty work for you. You just keep on being The Man.

Reach Joe Monaco, a sophomore journalism and mass communication major from Long Island, N.Y., at jmonaco@email.unc.edu.

Better Sure Than Sorry: State Needs Execution Moratorium

"Oh Allah, condemn and lay a curse upon the killers of Dawud Abdullah Muhammad. Cursed be the people who did this injustice to me, and cursed be the people who heard this and were pleased with it ..."

— final statement of Dawud Abdullah Muhammad

I will never be able to forget the night of Nov. 19, 1999. That was the night that I stood with hundreds of others outside Raleigh's Central Prison, fearful that our state had just taken the life of an innocent man.

For 19 years on death row, Dawud Abdullah Muhammad pleaded his innocence. Though convicted of the 1980 murder of a woman and her daughter, new evidence had cast doubt upon his guilt.

Muhammad was a black man convicted by an all-white jury. The prosecution barred the defense from examining the crime scene, conduct unprecedented in North Carolina.

They also hid the testimony of two eyewitnesses who heard screams and sounds of a struggle in the victims' apartment. The witnesses then saw a white man with long blond hair jump from a nearby balcony. A long blonde hair found at the scene of the crime was later "lost" by the state.

Another hidden witness would have testified that he saw the victims at a convenience store around the time the prosecution theorized the murders occurred. Yet another said he saw the victims' car being moved around the time they were seen at the store.

Whether Muhammad was guilty or innocent will never be known for certain. What is undeniable, however, is that many innocent people have been sentenced to death ... and executed. Since 1972, 85 people have been released from death row because of

JOHN JOHNSON POINT OF VIEW

23 innocent people have been put to death in the past 100 years.

DNA testing has exonerated several of these men, and some death penalty supporters claim that this new technology eradicates the possibility of executing innocent people.

However, many prosecutors now go to great lengths to withhold or destroy DNA evidence, fearing that their convictions will be overturned. Sometimes, no DNA samples are available for testing, and therefore cannot help a claim of innocence.

Increased fear of executing innocent people has prompted calls for execution moratoriums in many states. On Jan. 31, Illinois became the first state to halt executions.

Illinois Gov. George Ryan, a death

penalty supporter, explained the moratorium rationale: "Until I can be sure with moral certainty that no innocent man or woman is facing a lethal injection, no one will meet that fate."

Since Illinois re-imposed the death penalty in 1976, it literally had more exonerations (13) than executions (12).

While wrongful convictions in Illinois received wide coverage, similar cases in our own state passed by unnoticed. Take a look at some N.C. death row happenings in the past year:

■ In May 1999, a Superior Court judge threw out the conviction of Charles Munsey, an unquestionably innocent man. As evidence of gross misconduct was being discovered, Munsey's prosecutor committed suicide. Sadly, Munsey also died in prison (from pneumonia) before he could be officially cleared of the charges.

■ On Nov. 19, Dawud Muhammad was executed.

■ Four days later, Alfred Rivera was acquitted in Forsyth County in a

retrial. The N.C. Supreme Court ruled that the trial judge had wrongly excluded defense testimony. Rivera had spent two years on death row.

■ Ten days before Christmas, Gov. Jim Hunt commuted the death sentence of Wendell Flowers. Hunt had doubts as to the level of Flowers' involvement in the murder of a fellow inmate. It seems that Flowers was merely the lookout. Three others who stabbed the inmate had received life sentences, while Flowers got death.

■ Finally, on Jan. 7, a Superior Court judge ordered a new trial for Steven Bishop. The prosecution had illegally withheld evidence that would have supported Bishop's alibi.

There are dozens of other problems with the application of the death penalty. I do not have the space to discuss them here.

However, I hope that evidence of innocent people on death row will convince people that an execution moratorium in North Carolina is a reasonable

measure.

I also hope that more people will recognize that human systems are fallible, that the possibility of error should not be tolerated when lives are in the balance.

No matter how many safeguards are put in place, we can never "be sure with moral certainty that no innocent man or woman is facing lethal injection."

I have no doubt that the death penalty will be abolished in my lifetime. One hundred years from now, our ancestors will look back on capital punishment with the same shame that we now associate with slavery.

The question is: On which side of history do you want to be?

John Johnson is a sophomore history major from Winston-Salem. He is also a member of the Campaign to End the Death Penalty. For information, e-mail Johnson at jhj@email.unc.edu or visit www.unc.edu/~jhj/no_death_penalty.