

# System Needs Technology to Fulfill Mission

There is not a single community in North Carolina in which people's lives have not been touched and improved in some way by the revolution in information technology (IT). Indeed, computers and the Internet are changing the whole world.

While IT provides us with unprecedented avenues for progress, it also has imposed a whole new set of requirements.

To be successful today – and to remain competitive into the future – almost every company and institution has to make an ongoing investment in network infrastructure, computer equipment and software, user training and technical support. Investment in IT has become a touchstone of organizational strength and competitiveness.

Those who have the foresight to plan and the means to budget for their future IT needs will thrive, while those who fall behind in their IT investments risk falling behind in everything else.

Eventually, they will suffer diminished quality, effectiveness and respect.

## DIANA OBLINGER POINT OF VIEW

This is true for small businesses, large corporations, public schools and, yes, the 16 campuses of the UNC system.

Long-term investment in IT is a key to UNC's ability to fulfill its mission, which is to serve the entire state by

- 1) providing access to education,
- 2) developing human capital,
- 3) supporting the public schools,
- 4) promoting lifelong learning and economic vitality and
- 5) expanding the frontiers of knowledge.

Information technology has become an essential part of campus teaching, research, student services and administrative systems. It also enables UNC to better serve agriculture and industry and to meet the everyday needs of citizens across the state.

Here is an example: Farmers in all 100 counties can now take faster action against threats to their crops

because of investments in IT by the N.C. Cooperative Extension Service at N.C. State University.

Using video cameras and digital cameras mounted on microscopes, county extension agents can take pictures of unhealthy plant samples and then electronically transmit the images to the Plant Disease and Insect Clinic at N.C. State.

Once the clinic's plant specialists make a diagnosis, they can instantly e-mail their findings and recommendations to the county agent and, in some cases, directly to the grower. They also can refer the grower to specific Web sites for additional information on the disease or insect in question.

Another example: East Carolina University's TeleHealth project uses interactive teleconferencing and data-link to deliver health information to ninth graders at Plymouth High School in Washington County and Manteo High School in Dare County. ECU physicians, nurses and other health professionals "meet" with students via the Internet to discuss topics they are studying in their health education classes. TeleHealth also

brings continuing education programs to teachers and school nurses.

And in the northwest part of the state: Appalachian State University and nine community colleges have formed the Appalachian Learning Alliance to improve access to higher education.

Starting this year, the learning alliance is offering degree completion programs on the community college campuses with courses taught by ASU faculty.

In addition to traditional on-site teaching, classes will make extensive use of online instruction, Web-based information and the two-way audio-video services of the N.C. Information Highway. These programs will provide degree opportunities to students who, because of family or job responsibilities, cannot leave their home communities to take classes at ASU.

The UNC-system wants to ensure that its campuses will continue to have the up-to-date IT resources to meet the needs – and the expectations – of the people of North Carolina in the future.

Last fall, the UNC-system chancel-

lors adopted an Information Technology Strategy to serve as a road map for the further development of IT-related facilities and services on the 16 campuses.

The goal of this strategy is to make sure that every UNC campus has the network infrastructure and equipment, as well as the training and support resources, to maintain high levels of excellence in such vital areas as teaching, services to students and community outreach.

To ensure that the UNC system remains a strong, positive force in North Carolina, public support is needed for both the goals of the Information Technology Strategy and the investment needed to achieve those goals.

Only by using IT fully and creatively can the UNC system continue to provide the highest level of service to the state's people, industries and institutions.

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# Springtime Sheds Light On Senior's UNC Days

## CHRIS GRAHAM POINT OF VIEW

This time of year always brings back memories for me, and being a senior it brings back even more thoughts and experiences. I thought I'd share what I really learned in my four years at Carolina.

Hopefully, some of this information will help you live the rest of your college career to the fullest or at least make you chuckle a bit to yourself when you're reading this in class.

We all know that books and classes are the smallest part of growing up and learning how to live. We all learned how to do our own laundry and pay bills, but here's the really important stuff I've learned:

1. Chick-Fil-A is the greatest food ever. We all ate it every day our freshman year, and for some of us the trend continues today. I took two years off from it, but I've rediscovered it this year and it still is confusingly excellent food.

When I walk toward the Pit and smell the aroma of waffle fries (and for you non-french fry aficionados, there is a distinctive difference between waffle fry smell and regular fry smell), my digestive juices begin to flow and a craving emerges like no other. As Mike Myers would say, they must put "some addictive chemical in it that makes you crave it fortnightly."

2. Don't be a biology major. So many of us came in thinking biology was the way to go. I wish I were one of the "smart" ones who got out early. Here's some advice for you freshman biology majors: Stop trying. The "bio dorks" are always going to ruin the curve for you.

Have some fun at college and be a psychology or political science major, and you'll be so much happier.

3. Girls and guys can't be friends. We all learned this from "When Harry Met Sally," but some of us didn't believe it. Girls, wise up. All your friends that are guys are just waiting for you to dump your boyfriend or perhaps, even more likely, get really drunk.

Guys, don't be that chucky who comes in waving the friendship flag and really wants more. We all hate that guy. Don't be that guy.

4. When it's over, it's over. Since we all learned from Point 3 that girls and guys can't be friends, then don't try. Once the relationship is over, don't talk, don't e-mail and don't see each other. Definitely don't have sex with her after you've broken up and definitely, definitely don't have sex with her after she's begun seeing someone else. Believe me, it's for your own good.

5. A spring day in Chapel Hill is heaven. We've all seen the bumper stickers and heard the sayings, but they're still so very true. There's nothing better than skipping class and sitting in the quad for a couple of hours. Well, maybe a nice night at He's Not Here with a couple of blue cups already downed. Hell, make a day out of it and do both.

6. Dook sucks. It's the common thread that unites every Tar Heel together, the knowledge that those fools over in Durham are wasting their parents' money (not that most don't have enough to throw away on a worthless education) and are downright losers.

On our diverse campus and through all the political correctness that surrounds it, Dook sucking is the one thing we all know to be true.

7. Here's to alcohol. The cause and solution to all of life's problems. A quote by Homer Simpson: "What else could be called liquid confidence?" And if it doesn't boost your confidence to go talk to the hot girl sitting at the end of the bar, the beer goggle effect will take care of the rest. The only thing you have to worry about is tomorrow morning and how you can convince your roommates that you made her sleep on the floor.

8. Your friends are the most important people on the planet. We have an expression in my fraternity that every pledge must learn and adhere to, "Don't dick your pledge brothers." (Insert stereotypical, homoerotic frat boy joke here.) The world would be a better place if this were extended to all. Don't sell your friends out because they'll be around a lot longer than she will.

If you've lost your friends, hopefully they'll take you back because I don't know what I'd do without mine. I've laughed, cried and been through some really tough times with those guys, and I can't think of one thing that I'd trade for that friendship.

Of course, this is only a brief sample of what I've learned, and it is due to length constraints that I am unable to leave you with more of my immense knowledge. If you'd like to discuss these issues more, look for me up town most any night. I'll be the blond-haired, blue-eyed guy, drinking a Newcastle, smiling because he's figured it all out.

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# S.C. Natives Warn About Criticizing State for Racism

## LARISSA THOMAS AND KATE WORLEY POINT OF VIEW

Ops. We have a confession: We're going to break the Student Congress resolution to follow the NAACP boycott on South Carolina. Maybe this makes us Rebel-flag-loving Confederate racists. Or even worse, maybe we live there!

Yes, we were born and raised in grand old South Carolina, and no, we don't talk like rednecks or like Nick Nolte in "The Prince of Tides." We're not even Republicans! And we, like more than 50 percent of the population of South Carolina, do not support the flying of the Confederate battle flag over the State House.

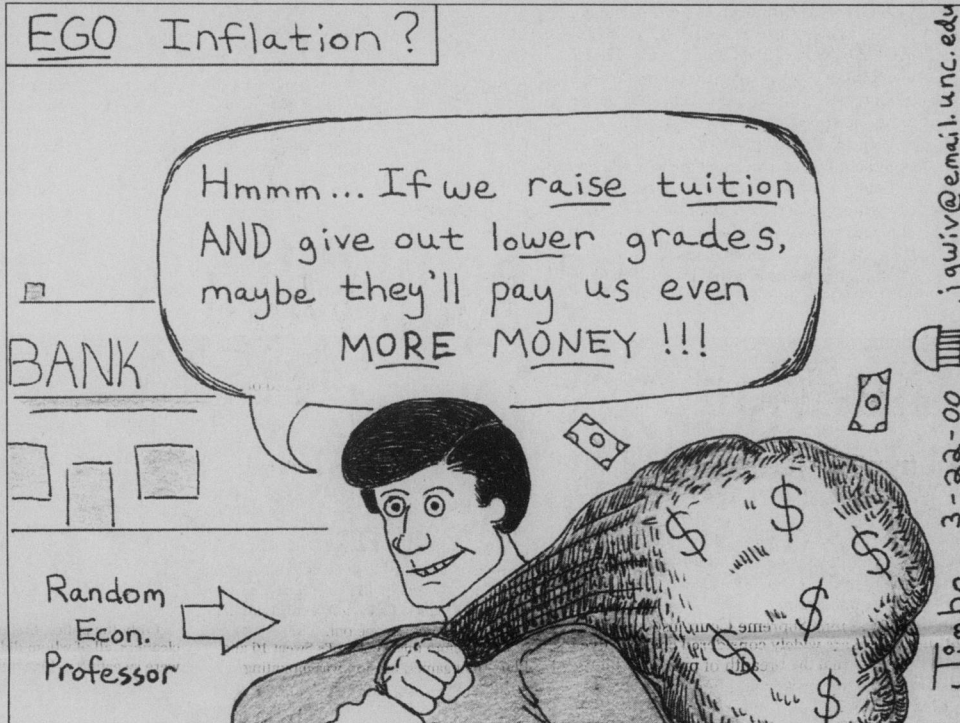
But yes, being from such a backward state, perhaps we should be grateful to be able to come to the bastion of liberalism that is North Carolina. Otherwise, who knows where we'd be – probably campaigning for Strom Thurmond as we cruise the Grand Strand in Myrtle Beach (where, incidentally, we as South Carolinians don't go, because we know it sucks!).

Back to the bigger issue: the idea that South Carolina should be blown up because it is so backward, as Amol Naik suggested in a recent column. We in no way, shape or form support the flag. It never should have gone up; it has no place there now; it should come down.

Our problem is with the holier-than-thou finger-pointing that has accompanied this whole debate. It's easy to condemn the actions of people who have no connection to you. However, South Carolina should not be a scapegoat for the national problem of racism.

Few people mention the fact that Georgia and Mississippi actually have the stars and bars incorporated into their state flags; the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and Student Congress aren't trying to boycott those states. And as Student Congress eagerly follows in Duke's footsteps by making a moral judgment that has no direct effect on anyone at UNC, it ignores many of the problems with race relations on our own campus.

The fact of the matter is that symbols apparently speak louder than words, and as a symbol, the battle flag is incendiary. But in terms of improving the economic and social problems of prejudice and racism, removal of the flag is going to accomplish very little. Furthermore, removal of the flag is not as easy as it seems. If the decision were put to referendum, polls indicate that South Carolinians would vote for its removal, but unfortunately, the



decision lies with the state government, so change is less likely to be forthcoming. Truly, the boycott is hurting tourism, South Carolina's No. 1 industry.

According to CBS, Charleston alone has already lost several million dollars due to the canceling of many business conventions as a result of the controversy. The irony is that the boycott is not hurting the pockets of the legislators – it is harming the people who don't care about the flag. As The (Charleston) Post & Courier reported, the reaches of the boycott include black-owned businesses such as Gullah Tours, a tour company in Charleston that gives an African-American perspective on sights of the low country.

Again, we are not justifying the flag or even encouraging the NAACP to end the boycott; we are just suggesting that people think about what it will really accomplish to denounce the entire state of South Carolina based on a small (though admittedly powerful) segment of the population.

A lot of aspects about South Carolina could be attacked. Come on, we're the state that started the Civil War. And yes, South Carolina has gained infamy for having (coincidentally?) the lowest SAT scores and the highest rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea infection in the nation. We won't argue that Strom Thurmond, Shannon Faulkner and even the flag aren't sources of embarrassment for our state, and we definitely do have our fair share of good ol' boys.

However, in case you haven't noticed, North Carolina isn't as progressive as everyone in Chapel Hill would like to pretend. But do all of you North Carolinians appreciate the condemnation of North Carolina based on the fact that it is Jesse Helms' home state? Maybe all foreign tourists should boycott North Carolina until Jesse Helms is removed as head of the Foreign Relations Committee. Yes, of course that is ridiculous, but so is the one-dimensional criticism of South Carolina.

So yes, we are going home to South Carolina. Along Interstate 95, we will pass many eyesores, including South of the Border and the glorified speed trap of Lumberton, but we will not feel guilty about being from South Carolina. Just as all of you from North Carolina often have little control over your legislators (but somehow keep re-electing Jesse), your neighbors to the South, backward as we may be, do not always support our lawmakers. Stereotyping any group of people is dangerous. But we know as well as you do that criticizing other people is often a way of making yourself look better.

By casting the stigma of backward-thinking onto someone else, you might be ignoring a serious lack of progressive thinking in your own backyard.

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# Spirituality Focused on Hollywood, Not Faith

"The force runs strong in your family, Luke. ... Close your eyes and be guided by the force, Luke." – Obi Wan Kenobi  
"Neo, you must not only know the path, but you must walk the path." – Morpheus

"Simba, you must take your place in the circle of life." – Mufasa

Who could have predicted the path of spirituality in America? Fortunately or unfortunately, much of our spirituality today is derived from (or is reflected in) Hollywood quips and Disney storylines. Perhaps a consequence of America's melting pot and the blending of so many different faiths, the spiritual pulse of America as a whole is on

## NADIA SIDDIQUI POINT OF VIEW

the one hand generic and noncommittal. However, in a very real sense, there is that deep-down feeling that there is something very simple and very pure about our American spirituality.

I know it's difficult to generalize about all of America's spirituality: There are large groups who have a very detailed sense of spirituality.

What I am referring to is that general sense of spirituality that pervades the American public and is reflected on screen and carried in our lunchboxes.

When it comes down to it, we know deep down that Yoda is speaking the truth. We know Morpheus is doing right in telling Neo the truth behind the Matrix. We know Mufasa is showing his son the true way, and we root for Simba as he fights Scar and the hyenas.

But what happens once the credits begin to roll, the lights begin to brighten and we've made our way to the bottom kernels of the Reddenbacher's?

It's back to work, it's back to cam-

pus, it's back to whatever.

But for that time, for that hour and 39 minutes, we were plugged into good old American spirituality.

Most Americans believe in a God. Most Americans believe in an after-life.

And many Americans have now subscribed to a secular humanism – a sense that our endpoint is to just "be good" and at times in the absence of the higher power.

Many of the messages that we get on screen are general principles derived from secular humanism posited into a particular context: intergalactic space and the clone wars, the Matrix, Simba's Prideland.

The word for God is substituted by "the Force" and "the Elders."

While there is some good to be derived from this, there is also something very unsettling. The term religion comes from "et religio," which means "to bind." We as Americans are not bound; we are without framework. This breeds a sense of spiritual anarchy. Religion and spirituality become a matter of convenience, something that we can turn off or on just like a movie. "When they embark on a boat, they call on God making their devotion sincerely, but

when they reach dry land (they forget God and) give credit to others," according to Qur'an 29:65.

That is perhaps why many religions push the concept of sacrifice. Christianity speaks of the sacrifice of Christ.

Judaism speaks, for instance, of the importance of the passover and the blood of sacrifice placed on the doors of the Hebrews.

Muslims just spent last week celebrating "Eid ul Adha" – the holiday of sacrifice. The biggest holiday of the year, Muslims commemorate what they believe to be the largest sacrifice in all of humanity's history – Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son.

In Muslim belief, the sincerity of Abraham's absolute love for the Creator above his undeniable love for his son is an act whose spirit should echo in all human actions.

Further, it is stated that the blood of the sacrifice never reaches God nor is it required, but it is the love and sincerity of the act that does.

What is lacking in American spirituality is the concept of sacrifice. Religion has been "Burger King-ed" – "Have it your way."

While religion should respect indi-

viduality, it should not be marked by total anarchy.

Religion is now typified by the remote control. We turn up the volume when we want to, press mute when we feel like and change the channel when the program really bites.

Our spirituality lacks consistency, lacks sacrifice. Everyday spirituality doesn't exist. God is a fleeting thought, something we can put on and off like a pull-over shirt. We remember God when crisis hits and then put him in a Duffel bag on Friday night when euphoria hits Franklin Street.

Our spirituality, if it is really genuine, should be both consistent and constant. And if we are not content with the vocabulary that currently describes our spirituality, then we should look for a vocabulary that does.

Movies and such can only carry us for so long.

The essence of our spirituality must be embraced in a framework, and verbalized in a vocabulary that best verbalizes our inner spirit.

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## OPEN TO ALL

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader submissions. Their opinions do not necessarily represent the opinions or views of the DTH or its editors.