

## DEBATE

From Page 1

In the third portion, mediators chose a question at random and gave the candidates 30 seconds to answer, a test to see how quickly candidates could think on their feet. Candidates were asked to create a Home Shopping Network ad for student government, a task that several candidates tackled with much gusto.

After launching into an Australian-accented tirade on the benefits of student government, Trakas concluded,

"But that's not all! Act now and you'll receive beer! Lots and lots of beer!"

The final portion of the evening consisted of a Q-and-A session by members of the various media organizations present. A reporter from the Carolina Review asked each candidate for ideas on reforming the Honor Court. Candidate Caleb Ritter said, "I'd like to see some faculty members at least advise the Honor Court before they make a decision which could significantly alter a student's life."

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## STUDENT COURT

From Page 1

of the Honor Court by having members of the attorney general's office visit all English 11, and 12 and Communications 9 classes, which would allow every freshman to be informed about Honor Court procedures.

Among the concerns raised on the Honor Court are that it is almost entirely student-run with no faculty involvement, a format that candidate Caleb Ritter said puts too much power in the hands of only a few students.

"It would be nice to have an overseeing judge on the Honor Court from the UNC faculty," he said. "If he sees that the students have gone too far, he can offer his input before a decision is made."

Candidate Corey Campbell said he would take outside influence on the Honor Court a step further by having professional lawyers train members of the attorney general's office.

"We say we want to govern ourselves, but when you're actually tried, you want someone that really knows what they're doing - that's been there and understands the process," he said. "These verdicts could destroy students' lives."

But candidate Eric Johnson said he would like to keep the Honor Court strictly in the hands of the students. "We have a long tradition of self-governance," he said. "Despite some glitches, it has served us well."

Johnson said he would advocate separating the prosecution and defense, which are currently drawn from mem-

bers of the attorney general's office.

A new student service organization, the Independent Defense Council, confronts this issue by providing alternative representation for students being tried before the Honor Court.

Several candidates said they strongly support the new organization. "I'll do whatever it takes to get IDC off the ground, whether that means publicity, networking, funding or communication with students," said candidate Annie Peirce.

Candidate Warren Watts also said he supports the IDC and believes they deserve the same amount of legal education as members of the attorney general's office. "I would make sure that IDC members get the same training as those on the Honor Court to level the playing field."

Watts and Peirce both said they endorse the creation of a faculty advisory committee to assist members of the attorney general's office, an idea candidate Justin Young said he would implement through the revival of the Judicial Program Officers, which offered the attorney general's office faculty advice.

"A faculty adviser would make the office more efficient instead of putting all the burden on the students," he said.

But Young also said he was confident that the Honor Court would uphold student justice without major reform. "I have faith in the student judicial system," he said. "The members of the attorney general's office are not acting in any way maliciously. They're trying to do the best they can."

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## EASLEY

From Page 1

fidence that he has maintained through the impending crisis.

"I want to make it clear that we have a predictable fund to balance the state budget," he said. "I want North Carolina and the nation to know that."

On Thursday, Easley also announced the creation of a group composed of deputy secretaries in his Cabinet that will examine agency procedures for possible short-term savings.

But Easley wasn't the only one who addressed the budget shortfall, as legislators from both houses of the General Assembly gathered for a budget briefing on Thursday morning.

Senate President Pro Tem Marc Basnight once again urged his colleagues to think out of the box to remedy the shortfall.

"All of you understand our condition - you see it," Basnight said. "I would encourage all of you to dream a little bit to find solutions to this problem."

Michael McKnight contributed to this story.

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## CAA

From Page 1

want to sit down (to address problems), not in an open forum in Cabinet where people accuse each other of different things. I don't think that's constructive."

CAA president candidate Reid Chaney said he has tried to distance himself from the issue. "I'm an outsider looking in," he said. "I hope that that can be something separate from me."

Kerry Slatkoff, director of ticket distribution, said she fears that no matter who wins, the race's politics could keep a valuable member - Songer or Hart - out of next year's Cabinet. "For the future of the organization, I'm worried about what this is going to cause."

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## HONOR COURT

From Page 1

before his hearing. Defendants are supposed to know their charges at least 96 hours before the hearing.

But Student Attorney General Taylor Lea defends the October proceedings. "Our office handled the cases in the most appropriate manner that was possible, and nobody's rights were violated without that person's consent," she said.

Because of the large number of defendants in the case, Lea said the 50 Honor Court members could only handle them one of three ways: to try some defendants with Honor Court members who already had heard one of their classmate's cases, try the defendants in groups or wait for new Honor Court members to be chosen and trained this spring.

"This is the way our system can handle these cases, and most students chose to go in pairs," Lea said.

Some other students who received guilty verdicts last semester are now seeking appeals. Lea could not say how many cases were up for appeal, but she did say she expected all appeals to be finished by the end of this semester.

Junior Brianne Roth, who was tried with Trinh, completed her appeal Feb. 1. She said her case also was dismissed on one of the charges she appealed but declined to say which one. "I felt the appeals process went very well."

Coggins said he has only been notified of one case dismissal and was disappointed by the results. "The students I am concerned about are those who worked hard and earned their grade fairly," Coggins said. "Every instance of cheating is a slap in the face to those students. The system has let them down."

Another defendant, who wishes to remain anonymous, said her appeal resulted in a dismissal because her basic rights had been violated.

She was represented at her appeal by junior Bill Hashemi, founder of the Independent Defense Council, a student group that offers an alternative to representation by the student attorney general's office. Lea said that while any undergraduate student can act as defense counsel in an Honor Court case, her office usually recommends its own representatives.

"In most cases, the average Joe Blow individual isn't adequately trained," Lea said. "We usually recommend taking someone from our office because of their training."

But the defendant said she chose

Hashemi because she found the defense counsel appointed by the Honor Court to be unacceptable. "I don't think my defense counsel put the time in, and I think she did a very poor job," she said. "Anyone could have done the job my other counsel did."

She also thought it was inappropriate that her defense counsel was an investigator in another Computer Science 120 case, putting her on both sides of the issue. "Of course we didn't know this," the defendant said. "It was all behind the scene."

Lea said this is not conflict of interest. "We have a nonadversarial system," Lea said. "The purpose is to uncover the truth. The defense isn't there to get the defendant off but to uncover the truth and act in the defendant's best interest."

But in the past eight months, that system has been under scrutiny, becoming one of the major issues in the platforms of student body president candidates. Trinh said the Honor Court needs to select students at random to serve as jurors and separate the prosecution from the defense. "If it's good enough for the U.S. justice system, it's good enough for us," he said.

Hashemi said his formation of the IDC was spurred by the complaints he had heard about the Computer Science 120 cases.

"The attorney general's office is an organization on campus dedicated to convicting students," Hashemi said. "Defending students is secondary. I created IDC so there'd be an organization for the sole purpose of defending student rights."

The IDC is not currently defending students because its members have not yet undergone training.

Lea said the court was open to reform, especially in the area of resources. She said the court is still seeking a full-time judicial programs officer, who would act as an adviser. She also said the court acts as an arm of the administration and that its members put in long hours with no pay.

But Lea said she did not see the need for separate councils.

"I'm not opposed to it, but I don't think it's necessary," Lea said. "I've never seen it to be a problem. No one's ever screwed over a defendant."

"People within my staff are very responsible and take this very seriously. I think it would just be incredible amounts of work for everyone."

For the students whose guilty verdicts have been overturned, the only remaining issue is their grade in Computer

Science 120.

Hashemi's client, whose appeal was completed three weeks ago, has yet to receive her grade.

"I would have loved if it was over," Hashemi's client said. "Thank God everything was dropped. (Coggins) wants to give us more headaches. I guess he feels since the Honor Court didn't do something he's got to take it into his own hands."

Roth, who also has yet to receive her grade, said she thinks Coggins could either hold the grade or give her a lower grade than the one she would have first received.

"None of us wants to upset Coggins right now," Roth said. "We could go through grade appeal, but no one wants to do that."

Lea said that grades are generally received two weeks after the hearing, and that any delays are probably due to the Registrar's Office.

Junior Kevin Berry has been waiting months for his Computer Science 120 grade. His Honor Court hearing was completed in early October, when he was found not guilty. Berry said the Registrar's Office has informed him that it is the responsibility of the teacher to turn in the grade.

"Maybe he's just waiting for all the trials to be over," Berry said. "Or he's just not happy about the outcomes and doesn't want to give them out."

Coggins said he will determine the grades based on instructions from the dean of students and the students' performances in the class.

"I will turn them in when I'm required to turn them in," Coggins said. "I have always done my duty to these students, and I will continue to do my duty, but not until I'm required to."

Coggins said he is uncertain of what he will be doing at the end of the semester, adding that leaving is always a possibility because computer science professionals are in high demand.

"The fact that UNC students would cheat this way so blatantly has shaken my confidence in UNC undergraduates," he said.

But Coggins said the eight months of hearings and appeals would not alone give him reason to leave.

"It's not my fault they cheated," he said. "It is a disappointment that they did, but it doesn't affect my willingness to be employed at this University."

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## For the Record

The Daily Tar Heel reported Thursday in "Large Deficit May Force Easley to Divert State Allocations" that Jim Hunt invoked emergency privilege to reduce North Carolina's state deficit in 1991.

The story should have stated that Jim Martin invoked emergency privilege in 1991.

The Daily Tar Heel regrets the error. The Daily Tar Heel reported Thursday in "SBP to Play Key Role in Revising UNC Curriculum" that Dustyn Baker and Annie Peirce are currently affiliated with Student Body President Brad Matthews' Cabinet.

Baker and Peirce resigned their student government posts in November to run for student body president.

The Daily Tar Heel regrets the error. The Daily Tar Heel named the woman pictured in Thursday's photograph titled "But I Can't Draw With Those" as the grandmother of Liam Ludington.

The woman, Debbie Simmons-Cahan, is not actually related to Ludington. The Daily Tar Heel regrets the error.

## Campus Calendar

Today

7 p.m. - The Medieval Studies Committee presents "Excalibur," directed by John Boorman, as the second feature of the Spring 2001 Medieval Film Festival. The film will be shown in the Commons Room of Graham Memorial Hall.

Saturday

8 p.m. - The Tar Heel Voices, UNC's oldest coed a cappella group, will hold its annual Request Concert in 111 Carroll Hall. Get your tickets in the Pit or call 962-THV1. Tickets are \$3 in advance, \$4 at the door. Come out and hear your favorites!

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