

BOARD EDITORIALS

SETTING PRIORITIES

As the University continues to grow and expand, it is vital that campus leaders devote adequate resources to retaining and recruiting faculty.

The huge onslaught of construction projects popping up in all corners of the campus says it all: the University is undergoing many physical transformations.

But the appearance of new buildings and the renovating of older ones aren't the only changes that will be occurring in the coming years.

With many faculty members nearing the age of retirement and others being lured away by lucrative packages from competing universities, it is very likely that many of the professors leading classes at the University today will not be roaming the same halls one decade from now.

On top of that, many faculty and staff members have gone years without a pay raise — a situation that looks as if it won't improve unless the state's financial picture magically recovers.

Granted, the number of professors reaching retirement is a factor that likely cannot be overcome easily.

But ensuring that faculty members have access to all the resources they need and are well compensated for their work is something that universities do have some level of control over — yet, it is an issue that often poses many problems for campus leaders.

Perhaps one of the clearest indications that improving faculty resources at the University should be a major concern can be found in this year's U.S. News & World Report ranking of the nation's colleges.

A glaring figure in the report is the University's eight-point drop in the amount of faculty resources found on campus.

The faculty resources ranking tracks salaries, the percentage of full-time faculty members, the percentage of faculty with terminal degrees, the student to faculty ratio and class size.

Truth be told, UNC's drop in faculty rankings is not an anomaly among public universities, many of which also are facing tough budget times.

The University of Virginia, which has frozen its faculty salaries for the past three years, saw its own ranking drop from 35 to 44, and officials there believe it could fall again in the future.

Despite the importance of improving the availability of faculty resources, however, finding a source of funding for the projects is no easy task.

Again, with North Carolina likely facing another multimillion dollar budget shortfall in the coming year, it is unrealistic to rely on state lawmakers to be the sole source for money.

State leaders should not and cannot be relieved

completely of their responsibilities to ensure funding for the UNC system, but university leaders can begin to rethink how to prioritize the use of their campus funds.

Boosting the amount of resources for faculty members is a major goal of the Carolina First campaign.

Campus officials are hoping to raise between \$250 million and \$350 million to pay for endowed professorships and money for travel and research opportunities.

The money raised from the campaign will go a long way in addressing the needs of faculty members, but it will not solve everything. Campus leaders must look for other sources of funding.

Raising faculty salaries was a major concern during debates by the Tuition Task Force last year, and one hopes that finding ways to increase their compensation will once again be a major focus if the committee begins working again later this semester.

Once an appropriate source of funding is identified, attention must then be turned to finding the best way to spend the money.

An ongoing question remains as to whether more attention should be devoted toward bringing in new faculty or working to keep the ones that we currently have on board.

As many campus departments have learned, there is no easy answer to that dilemma.

But if officials must make a choice, perhaps precedence should go toward examining ways to retain current faculty members.

Part of the beauty of this University is the large number of faculty members who have long, storied connections to the campus. Many professors probably can tell you stories about spending the vast majority of their careers in Chapel Hill.

Letting faculty members know that campus leaders are aware of the numerous challenges they face and are attempting to find ways to correct the problems would go a long way in boosting faculty morale. And chances are, their satisfaction will then aid in recruiting new faculty members to the campus.

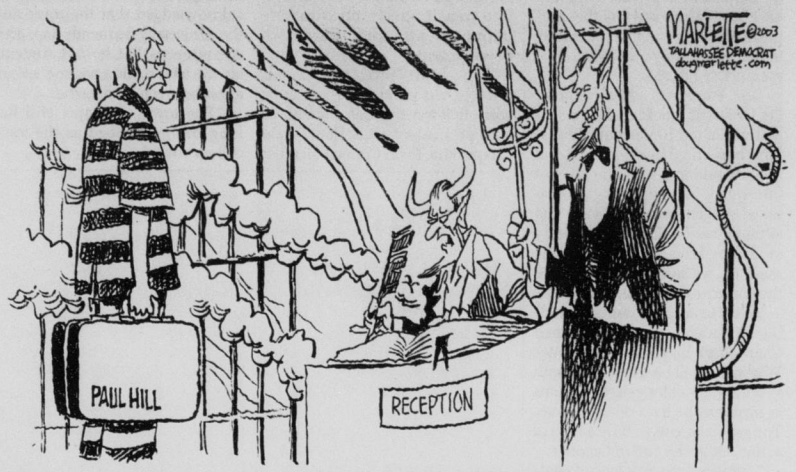
As campus officials are making plans to expand the facilities found at the University, it is important that they also devote the same amount of fervor toward improving campus resources for all members of the campus community, especially its faculty and staff members.

All the construction in the world will mean nothing if the University does not have quality individuals to lead the classrooms.

ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"The schools ain't what they used to be and never was."

WILL ROGERS, ACTOR



"OH, YEAH—THIS IS PARADISE AND WE'RE NAKED, DANCING VIRGINS, AND MOHAMMED ATTA AND THE 9-11 HIJACKERS WERE RELIGIOUS MARTYRS, TOO!"

POP CULTURE

MTV awards take the cake, others left with the crumbs

Madonna slinks onto the gaudy stage, off-key, finally looking a generation out of place. She creepily kisses Britney Spears and the newly grotesque Christina Aguilera.

In the end, it's all that last week's MTV Video Music Awards will be remembered for.

But that would be missing the subtle beauty of the VMAs, where pseudo-artists, deserving and otherwise, receive tiny astronaut statues and nobody really cares.

See Beyoncé Knowles dangled by her feet high above the stage. See Good Charlotte actually win a People's Choice Award — thanks for that, 14-year-old girls everywhere. It's a hideous, glorious sideshow, and it's easily the best awards show on TV. (Don't worry if you missed it; it's on MTV right now, I swear.)

That's right: The VMAs no longer are the guilty pleasure they once were. In today's world of compromised awards shows, they are now perhaps the lone genuine pleasure, emphasis on the genuine.

It's because they don't pretend to be anything they're not. Bizarre freak show? You bet. Brazen popularity contest? Every category. But a classy, merit-based artistic flag-ship? By no means, and it's fine with that, unlike the Emmys, the Academy Awards or the Grammys.

It's tough for me to admit. I live for the Oscars, dedicated to forecasting next year's winners mere hours after the show's over ("Return of the King," clearly). But the Oscars are a profound disappointment. An offense, really.

My trust was betrayed when "Titanic" beat "L.A. Confidential" for 1997's Best Picture, basically for its record \$600 million box office run. Insult turned to injury when "Gladiator" blandly bested



BRIAN MILLIKIN
SO HOT RIGHT NOW

graceful "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" in 2000. "A Beautiful Mind" over every 2001 nominee: pure vitriol. How I hate you, Russell Crowe.

I've come to learn that Oscar's a slut. There's the money, with Miramax ushering in a deformed, bloated, advertisement-driven campaign season that begins sometime next week (in an attempt to curtail the mess, the Academy bumped next year's show up a month to February).

And then there's the popularity, as fewer and fewer films that didn't break through have any sort of shot at all. Actors now receive awards based on career recognition (Denzel Washington) and It List capital (Gwyneth Paltrow, a victor for "Shakespeare in Love" while unknown Joseph Fiennes, so great as the titular Shakespeare, went un-nominated).

Late September's Emmys aren't much better, ignoring shows such as "Homicide," "Alias" and "The Larry Sanders Show" time after time in favor of an umpteenth nod for "Frasier" and obligatory award for "Everybody Loves Raymond." They frequently overcorrect their mistakes and jump on the wrong fads, rewarding "The Shield." It makes me cry softly at night.

The Grammys? I like to pretend they don't exist. It's safer that way. The shows just don't have awarding quality, innovation or effort in mind. It's sad, but every-

"That's why I love the VMAs, an unlikely beacon in a backward pop world."

one seems resigned to the situation. Maybe if voters weren't diversity-blind dinosaurs or we stopped caring, things could change.

If everyone saw the awards for what they really are — inflated promotions for the industry given out by the industry — we'd be off to a good start. Less stock in the so-called awards, more bawdy and awkward stunts on stage.

That's why I love the VMAs, an unlikely beacon in a backward pop world. They don't put up any false fronts or don't purport to be anything other than what they are: a great chance to watch us all sink lower and lower into MTV's flashy, neon pocket.

Most of the nominated material escapes my personal collection. I kind of like Justin Timberlake's stuff, partly for Timbaland and partly for the fantastic punch lines it provides. I'm sad that the White Stripes or the Roots didn't win, and I'm glad I was asleep by the time Metallica came on.

But none of that matters at the VMAs. Quality's not a factor; taste rightly doesn't register. 50 Cent grins a million dollars over his many trophies and Madonna kisses young pop starlets. It's lewd. It's so wrong it's right.

You won't see that on the Oscars, where right is wrong, and I, for one, wish we did.

Contact Brian Millikin
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FOLLOW THE RULES

With some Student Congress members' residency still unconfirmed, it is imperative that Congress members improve their accountability.

After the debacle last spring regarding Student Congress members not living in their appropriate districts, student leaders promised that they would eliminate residency concerns. But the problems have returned this year.

Five of the 26 members of Congress have yet to provide proof of residency in their respective districts. Ethics Chairwoman Margaret Thomas said Wednesday.

Thomas said she has given those members until Tuesday, Congress' first meeting of the year, to provide the proper paperwork. Any members who don't meet that deadline will be asked to resign.

It is troublesome that it even has to come to that point.

Part of the initial responsibility of being a member of Student Congress is establishing residency, and the guidelines outlined in the Student Code are pretty simple.

Congressional members have one month after they are sworn into office to let leaders know where they will be living during the upcoming school year. With inauguration occurring on April 1, proof of district forms should have been turned in May 1.

At the very least, members should turn in their

forms by the beginning of the year.

The congressional system is designed with students' interests in mind. Student Congress deals with many issues that have an impact on student's lives — from election codes to student fees. Only by living in their districts can members represent accurately their constituents' views in Congress.

In the future, student leaders need to do a better job of stressing the importance of turning their forms in on time.

In addition, ensuring that congressional members live in their proper districts should be a top priority for leaders within Student Congress this year. Allowing the problems to go unresolved this far into the school year is unacceptable.

Every year, student leaders do their best to earn the respect and admiration of their peers and other members of the University community, and the members of Student Congress are no different.

But the surest way to put a dent in those efforts is to not follow through with the requirements of office.

Members of Congress must follow the rules that they have set for themselves, be it their general code of conduct or living in their correct districts.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions of solely The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board, which were reached after open debate. The board consists of eight board members, the assistant editorial page editor, the editorial page editor and the DTH editor. The 2003-04 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials.

READERS' FORUM

Job relocation a result of economics, not government

TO THE EDITOR:

In response to Murray Pender's letter Wednesday, it is obvious that Pender has never taken an economic course.

As anyone who has taken Economics 10 can tell you, companies strive to be as profitable as they can be. You cannot expect them to do otherwise.

That would go against our capitalist system and our country's most basic notion of personal freedom.

While it is unfortunate that companies such as Pillowtex are relocating or closing, we have to move on.

Textiles and similar products simply can be made cheaper and/or better in other nations where labor is less costly. There is very little to be done about it unless Pender would advocate lowering the minimum wage, which would be a step backward in almost anyone's book.

As for the executives, I highly doubt that those in charge of Pillowtex make \$23 million a year. While I could be wrong, that is no reason to blame them. If executives and other personnel couldn't get paid as much as they do, they would simply stop being executives or whatnot.

That means fewer qualified people to run companies. That means

fewer successful companies.

Finally, as a Republican, I resent Pender's accusations of corruption in our government and my party.

To set things straight, corruption is not a government policy, much less advocated by the Republican Party.

And in response to Pender's question, I support the Republican Party (and my nation's government, no matter who's in charge) because we push for allowing businesses to flourish in the United States, employing more people in the United States and North Carolina. If Pender doesn't like that, he can settle it at election time.

Chris Cameron
Sophomore
Economics and Business
Administration

Republicans not only ones to blame for big business

TO THE EDITOR:

This is in response to the letter to the editor by Murray Pender. He seems to be perpetuating the Democratic myth that big business owners are always Republicans.

There are many, many Democratic big business owners associated with government. Bill Gates, the Microsoft billionaire, is a Democrat. Bill Clinton always supported big business and allowed overinflated stock values to promote a false positive econo-

my.

The result was a large crash in prices, huge losses for many Americans and layoffs when corrections were made.

Corporate crime also flourished and then "crashed" (ie. Enron), resulting in more losses for employees and investors.

Major oil companies (BP, Enron, Chevron and Exxon-Mobil) all were contributors to the Gore presidential campaign.

Donors associated with AT&T and MCI have favored the Democratic Party and only contributed to the Republicans when there was a complaint.

Marianne Tioran
Technician
Dental Research

Union to work to represent graduate student interests

TO THE EDITOR:

In the Friday issue of The Daily Tar Heel, Graduate Student and Professional Federation President Dan Herman stated that recent budget cuts have been largely "invisible" to UNC graduate student employees.

We beg to differ.

It has become increasingly common for graduate students to take on teaching two or even three courses a semester to make ends meet.

Class sizes are becoming

unmanageable as increased undergraduate enrollment has not been met with the hiring of more teaching assistants.

Many teaching assistants are paying for their own supplies and photocopying. Some graduate students even have dropped out due to budget-related funding cuts.

These issues are a lot more serious than Herman's lament about lost travel funds. If that's his top priority as GPSF president, then the serious issues of graduate student employees are not being addressed.

Fortunately, there is an alternative for graduate students seeking a voice on campus. UE 150a, the Graduate Student Employee Union, has been fighting to organize teaching and research assistants to speak out about academic work at UNC.

This union is a chapter of the same union fighting for better working conditions for other UNC employees, such as groundskeepers and housekeepers.

Graduate student unionizing is nothing radical; our peer public universities have union-negotiated contracts with their graduate employees.

The University of California's campuses at Los Angeles and Berkeley and the Universities of Michigan and Wisconsin all have far better pay rates (after cost of living adjustments), reasonable workload limits and superior

health care and child care, thanks to strong student-led unions.

UE 150a is independent of the GPSF. Where possible, we have worked with its leadership. However, our stance is fundamentally different.

We believe UNC works because graduate TAs and RAs do. We advocate for a recognition of our contribution to the University as employees and will continue to try to bring UNC policies up to the par of our peer schools in this regard.

Interested students can join us at our opening meeting of the semester, Sept. 22.

Please check our Web site, <http://www.ue150a.org>, for details. Thank you.

Lisa K. Bates
Graduate Student
City and Regional Planning

Jonathan D. Lepofsky
Graduate Student
Geography

TO SUBMIT A LETTER: The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments. Letters to the editor should be no longer than 300 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 them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu.

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