

POINT-COUNTERPOINT

CORPORATE MONEY

Allowing permanent corporate sponsorship inside UNC's athletics facilities is a good way to raise money if the signage is done tastefully.

Students going to see a football game are greeted by credit card companies the moment they step through the south gate at Kenan Stadium.

At halftime they buy refreshments served in cups emblazoned with the Hardee's logo, while on the field a lucky fan tries to catch a punt as part of a contest sponsored by Mercedes-Benz.

Corporate sponsorship already plays a vital role in supporting athletic activities.

Until this point the University has been able to make ends meet without having to resort to signage at athletic venues, but times have changed.

The Department of Athletics' booster club was unable to cover the costs of its scholarship needs last year, and projections indicate that the budget deficit will only get worse.

The UNC Board of Trustees voted unanimously Thursday to allow a task force to look into the issue of permanent corporate sponsorship at campus athletic facilities.

Although Director of Athletics Dick Baddour said Friday that officials are not leaning one way or the other on the proposal, they are looking into all possibilities of bringing in more money.

Mike McFarland, director of University communications, also said the formation of the task force is not an official endorsement of the plan by either campus administrators or the BOT.

Still, the merits of corporate sponsorship are worth investigating.

The University has to find some alternative means for making up their past deficit so the problem does not get any worse.

Corporate signage, if handled properly, could be the best solution at this time.

Critics of the plan fear that going this route will make it appear as if the University is "selling out."

They argue that by agreeing to allow corporate signage, the University essentially would be admitting that collegiate athletics is all about money.

POINT - NICO PANDI
EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBER

With the way finances are now, the athletic department could be forced to cut back on expenses within its budget, including the regrettable possibility of reducing the number of scholarships it awards.

Raising money through corporate signage could avoid this possibility and therefore ensure that UNC does not drop from the ranks of elite programs.

However, it's important that the University carefully examine the specifics of any plan that would involve corporate signage.

No one wants giant banners promoting a soft drink hanging in the Smith Center next to Jordan's jersey, or gaudy neon signs in Kenan Stadium reminding students of low monthly fees for cellular phones.

But these kinds of scenarios do not go hand in hand necessarily with corporate signage, as some critics might claim.

If carefully planned and tastefully implemented, the use of signage at athletic venues hardly would be noticeable amid the existing corporate sponsorship found on cups, napkins and the Jumbotron.

And for this relatively minor increase in corporate sponsorship, the University stands to eliminate a sizable portion of the scholarship fund deficit.

While some might not like any kind of increase to the visibility of commercial interests, this plan is better than the alternatives, which could include drawing more money out of merchandise revenue, which has taken a downward slide of its own.

The BOT approved the task force to examine corporate signage last week, so the plan is in very early stages. There is plenty of time to consider how to prevent signage from becoming an eyesore and detracting from the proud tradition of college sports.

ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"The first step toward liberation for any group is to use the power in hand. ... And the power in hand is the vote."

HELEN GAHAGAN DOUGLAS, FORMER U.S. CONGRESSWOMAN

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By David Horsey, Tribune Media Services

Arnold finally joins the debate...



UNIVERSITY

Students have opportunity to influence local elections

Today I am doing something I should have done long ago. I'm switching my voter registration to Orange County.

You should do the same - if you can find a form. Student government ran into a wall in its drive to register students to vote in time for November's local elections.

They couldn't find any registration forms. But until they ran out of forms, student government officials - in cahoots with a number of student groups - had been putting forth an impressive effort to register UNC students.

They don't have any forms because they already have distributed 4,000 voter registration forms to on-campus students in their move-in packets.

That's 4,000 potential voters, most of whom will be in Chapel Hill for the next four years and for three elections of their lives.

The voter drive was stalled temporarily when the Orange County Board of Elections and the state elections board both ran out of forms due to printer problems.

Student Body President Matt Tepper said Sunday that the glitch has been fixed and that despite a continued state shortage in forms, they were able to obtain enough to continue the drive.

The problem cleared up just in time. You must be registered to vote at least 30 days before the election to have your vote counted.

So to vote in the Nov. 4 municipal elections, you need to be registered by Sunday.

Registering in Orange County is extremely important, as it gives UNC students a chance to weigh in on local elections and ensure that the student perspective will be heard in Chapel Hill and Carrboro.



NATHAN DENNY
UNDER THE WELL

dates will notice and listen. And who knows, maybe we could land a UNC student in elected office.

This year a student, senior philosophy major Mike McSwain, is running for Chapel Hill Town Council, which hasn't had a student in its midst since Mark Chilton ran and won in 1991.

While this is by no means an endorsement, UNC students should be aware of the possibility.

College students holding elected office isn't so rare in other college towns. For example, in Ithaca, N.Y., home to Cornell University, students are elected regularly to the city's Common Council.

The council almost always includes at least one student. Part of this has to do with how the council districts are drawn: Cornell takes up most of Ithaca's 4th ward.

UNC students can achieve the same presence in the Chapel Hill and Carrboro governments if we make our presence known. And that only can be done if we vote, and if we do so en masse.

Even if a student doesn't get elected to the Town Council, hefty student turnout undoubtedly will get elected officials' attention.

In 2001, the top four vote-getters in the Town Council election each got roughly 4,000 votes.

And student government enabled 4,000 students to vote.

If a few thousand students show up at the polls Nov. 4, candidates

"If students turn out to vote, candidates will notice and listen."

will notice. And in the 2005 elections, candidates' platforms might reflect the idea that students' voices matter in Chapel Hill.

But you can't vote if you aren't registered. So make the effort to register, and do it this week.

If you've lived in the county for 30 days - a qualification with which most UNC students shouldn't have a problem - all you have to do is invalidate any prior registration and reregister.

Forms can be found at any number of places. There's usually a stack of them inside Davis Library.

Student government will be in Polk Place and Lenoir Dining Hall every day this week registering voters and will visit Chase Hall several days this week as well.

If you can't find any, go to the N.C. Board of Elections Web site, http://www.app.sboe.state.nc.us, and click on "Voter Registration."

If all else fails, e-mail me, and I personally will try to track down a registration form for you.

UNC students have the chance to make a real impact on the face of Chapel Hill and Carrboro politics, if we show up Nov. 4.

So register to vote for the first time or switch your registration to Orange County. My registration won't have much of an impact unless several thousand of my classmates vote too.

Contact Nathan Denny at ndenny@email.unc.edu.

Corporate signage in the campus' athletics facilities is a poor way to raise money and could taint the University's perception to outsiders.

The UNC Board of Trustees should vote not to adopt permanent corporate advertisements to fill budget shortfalls in many areas, most importantly the funding of student-athlete scholarships.

Facing a shortfall in the Department of Athletics' booster club, the BOT approved a task force to explore the impact of corporate signage in terms of funding and effect on campus.

Opening on-campus sports facilities to commercial interests runs the risk of compromising the independence of UNC athletics and threatens to blur the line between the University's national sports audience and the campus life of UNC students.

Director of Athletics Dick Baddour said Friday that the athletic department has no set agenda in investigating corporate signage possibilities.

However, officials might be acting with their backs against the wall.

The athletic department, facing a slowing trend in donations for their booster program, is having difficulty affording their scholarship program.

These athletic scholarships make UNC one of the most powerful and potent programs in the country. Athletics officials have said they can handle the shortfall this year, but the trend poses a problem for the future.

But the University should not expand private-sector influence because adopting a permanent corporate sponsorship policy would change significantly the nature of UNC athletics for the worse.

While it already has some ties to corporations, UNC is known for being an independent university in both an academic and athletic sense, and a corporate sponsorship deal would alter that reputation.

Currently, the campus is free of large billboards emblazoned with jingles and slogans in an effort to get members of the student body to buy more of a

COUNTERPOINT - JEFF KIM & COLIN SUTKER
EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS

product.

If the BOT approves corporate sponsorship, there will be a large visual impact on campus.

Corporate sponsorship does exist to some extent in the campus' sports facilities but in the form of temporary signs, which are removed after athletic events are over.

Having permanent corporate signs would change much of the atmosphere and energy prevalent in UNC sports.

Fans would be subjected to advertisements both during and after the games, which could set the tone that UNC is yet another advertising zone for corporate sponsors.

Having permanent signs from sponsors also could give the impression that the University is more interested in raising money than protecting its image.

Students would be subject to corporate advertising, which they should not be on the University campus.

While soft signage is a guarantee at games, it's important to prevent advertisements from being permanent fixtures in UNC's "holy" places such as the Smith Center.

The athletic department is faced with pressing needs, but while money answers some of them, corporate signage only would create more complex issues with which the program must deal.

There are other ways to raise funding, and Baddour has said the athletic department will look into alternatives and will remain open to a wide variety of options.

The future might hold many issues to deal with, but corporate sponsorship is a lot of ground to give considering the well-defined boundaries that are an integral part of UNC's sports tradition.

EDITORS' NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions solely of the editorial writers and do not reflect the opinion of the entire Editorial Board of The Daily Tar Heel. The editorial board consists of seven board members, 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

Campus awards allow UNC community to recognize teachers and mentors

TO THE EDITOR:

No doubt each of you reading this letter has known a teacher at UNC who has made a difference in your life. He or she sparked your curiosity about a subject, helped you through a period of personal confusion, inspired you to travel abroad or guided you to your career choice.

It's time for you to say "thank you" by nominating this person for a teaching award. Go to http://www.unc.edu/teachawards.

You will be linked to a list of several types of awards. Choose the appropriate category and let our committee know how your teacher or mentor made a difference in your life. Anecdotes and specific examples will help us understand your choice. Please send your nomination before 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 1.

Peter Filene
Chairman
University Teaching Awards Committee

Workers' voices missing in DTH news coverage of employee-led teach-in

TO THE EDITOR:

We would like to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of The Daily Tar Heel coverage of the recent "nickel and dimed" teach-in.

The strengths included an excellent front page picture of Marsha Tinnen and other members of the N.C. Public Service Workers Union. The picture reflects the enthusiasm the workers brought to their teach-in, which was inspiring and an important part of the story. Also, the editorial on Sept. 23 rightly criticized the University for declining invitations from the workers to participate in the teach-in.

The news coverage of the rally, however, ignored the workers and eliminated their voices. For the workers who organized the teach-in, this was the whole point - to be heard after being so long ignored. What was unusual and significant in this teach-in was the leadership and eloquent testimony of the workers themselves.

Stating that their requests to participate in the University sponsored discussions of the summer reading selection had been rejected by Cynthia Wolf Johnson, associate vice chancellor for student learning, workers presented themselves as the real "experts" on low-wage work. They detailed the impact of their low wages, arbitrary schedules and unreasonable workloads on their health and their ability to support their children.

The DTH ignored the workers' voices, while privileging that of educated expert Barbara Ehrenreich. This represents not a conservative or a liberal bias on the part of the DTH, but an elite bias. Such a viewpoint should not be promoted, and we suggest that you make amends with a follow-up that features workers' voices and examines the impact of low-wage work on their lives.

By failing to quote any of the workers' testimony, the DTH deprived the campus community of a unique and invaluable learning opportunity.

Yonni Chapman
and Kerry Taylor
Graduate students in History
Members of UE Local 150

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.

The Daily Tar Heel

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