

BOARD EDITORIALS

# EXCESSIVE DEMANDS

Certain proposals generated by the UNC Board of Trustees tuition talks place at risk values fundamental to the mission of the University.

**T**uition. It's a dirty but inescapable word, and it's now once again on the tongues of UNC-Chapel Hill trustees.

In the world of higher education, financial need is a beast that must be pacified periodically at almost every college and university.

Increases in the price of a UNC-CH education are necessary evils, as the University works to remain in competition with its academic peers while meeting operational costs.

In examining and discussing various tuition models, the Board of Trustees ultimately is looking out for the well-being of those who teach, study and work at the University.

But one plan under serious consideration, by which out-of-state tuition would be raised by \$6,000 over the course of three years, is far too drastic and should be taken off the table.

The University community once again is witnessing the frustrating seesaw effect involving the academic environment on campus and the finances required to preserve it.

UNC-CH needs money to retain important faculty members who potentially could find higher salaries at other institutions.

However, officials need to be very careful about where any first-time revenue goes. The John Motley Morehead Foundation and the Educational Foundation have been mentioned as possible recipients of new tuition money.

While these two groups are important cogs of the University, they are private entities, and the average student should not be burdened with their upkeep.

The BOT is looking to make a decision soon because money coming from a campus-based tuition increase would remain under UNC-CH's control.

In one of a group of slides presented in conjunction with the trustees' Jan. 7 tuition workshop, UNC-CH officials outlined a "tuition rate philosophy" for both in-state and out-of-state students.

This philosophy holds that the cost of a UNC-CH education should be "affordable and accessible" for residents and "value and market driven" for nonresidents.

The attitude toward in-state students is the right one to take, as tuition must remain within the confines of North Carolinians' budgets.

But officials' philosophy regards nonresidents much as they would be treated at a private university: more a revenue source than a vital part of the student population.

The University of North Carolina's mission statement, contained within the state's General Statutes, holds that it "shall seek an efficient use of available resources to ensure the highest quality in its service to the citizens of the State."

As written, the UNC system's primary duty is to North Carolinians, but an additional, undeniable aspect of UNC-CH's purpose isn't mentioned explicitly in the mission statement.

This institution was the first public university in the United States to open its doors and has remained one of the nation's bastions of higher learning.

UNC-CH officials should be proud of the fact that the University is considered to be a "best buy" in many circles — that is, an outstanding educational experience at a reasonable price.

While the state and its students must continue to top UNC-CH's list of priorities, officials shouldn't underestimate the fact that almost one fifth of the student body comes from outside North Carolina.

Nonresidents are invaluable to the University because they dramatically raise the level of diversity on campus and enhance UNC-CH's academic reputation.

Research has indicated that many out-of-state students eventually choose to make North Carolina their home and enhance the state's intellectual status and economic well-being.

Out-of-state students currently pay \$15,920 in tuition and fees to go here.

The four public schools placed higher than UNC-CH in the latest U.S. News & World Report

rankings — the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor (\$25,647), the University of Virginia (\$22,169), the University of California-Los Angeles (\$19,508) and the University of California-Berkeley (\$19,460) — all charge nonresidents a greater amount of money for their education.

Using a model developed by the National Association of College and University Business Officers, UNC-CH officials recently showed that the UNC-CH's out-of-state undergraduate students pay \$294 more than the actual cost to educate them.

If the BOT does vote to support a \$6,000, three-year tuition increase for nonresidents, it would mark an exorbitant, excessive charge to out-of-state students.

Such a proposal risks sending the rest of the country the unfortunate message that UNC-CH is willing to turn its nonresident student population into a collective cash cow.

What the change would do is damage both the affordability and accessibility of a UNC-CH education.

The University would lose the interest of those prospective nonresidents who can justify spending about \$16,000 per year to be a Tar Heel but would consider other schools more strongly when that price tag begins to read \$22,000.

UNC-CH simply would be pricing itself out of the market for some out-of-state hopefuls — and it remains to be seen how many of those lost applicants would be academically superior to those who could foot the bill.

This kind of alteration in tuition guidelines effectively would be a step away from promotion of academic values and toward a reality in which an education at UNC-CH goes to the highest bidders.

Student Body President Matt Tepper has said it would be "ridiculous" for UNC-CH officials to raise nonresident tuition so much during so short a period of time without further research into possible consequences.

Jerry Lucido, director of undergraduate admissions, said that a study of such a tuition hike's effects on the nonresident applicant pool currently doesn't exist. He said that that it could cost as much as \$500,000 and take as many as six months to arrive at conclusive findings.

As expensive and time-consuming as this line of research might be, it would be worthwhile. The academic principles of the UNC-CH are priceless.

Precious little time remains until the BOT's Jan. 22 meeting. If trustees vote to change existing tuition guidelines, as is expected, the decision will go to the UNC-system Board of Governors before reaching the N.C. General Assembly.

But trustees should not be rushed into making a bad choice.

As James Thurber once wrote, "He who hesitates is sometimes saved." In this case, indecision would not be as dangerous to UNC-CH's values as impetuosity.

The BOT would be wise to take more time even though it is under pressure from both the BOG and state legislators.

UNC-CH officials must take greater pains to explore alternative scenarios before placing the financial burden on nonresidents to such a degree, and they must become fully aware of and comfortable with the consequences of doing so.

The University community must be confident that the trustees, while not ignoring the influence of the almighty dollar, will not be rash in their decision making.

BOG members, lawmakers and in-state students might gnash their teeth at the thought of officials making residents pay hundreds of dollars more for their education.

But despite the University's obligation to North Carolinians, UNC-CH also has an unwritten pledge to nonresidents, who already are paying more than the cost of their education here.

Increasing tuition \$6,000 over three years would be a bad move.

There are alternatives which — though they certainly would be less popular within the state — wouldn't do as much to compromise the University's values.

ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"May education never become as expensive as ignorance."

ANONYMOUS

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Britt Peck, bmpeck@email.unc.edu



COMMENTARY

# UNC must resolve to better serve community in 2004

I decided to skip making my own New Year's resolutions this year and write some for dear old UNC instead.

To that end, I humbly present the ways the University can better itself in 2004.



STEPHANIE HORVATH  
NOT THE BELL OR THE WELL

Deal with staff issues now

With a better job market and a stronger economy on the horizon, UNC likely will lose many employees to higher paying jobs in the new year.

Although employees say they are troubled by low morale and a sense that they are underappreciated, the biggest issue is low salaries.

UNC has made hiring and keeping top faculty a priority in its Carolina First fund-raising campaign, but it has not done the same for employees — the very people who keep UNC running.

In 2004 the University should make it a priority to raise private funds that allow it to keep employee salaries competitive.

Tackle insurance problems

The state's health insurance is too expensive for employees' families. This has forced some employees to seek private insurance policies or, much worse, to leave their families uninsured.

All of UNC's peer institutions have better benefits, making our faculty easy to woo away. While UNC can't fix the state's health insurance program — the N.C. General Assembly must make any changes to it — the University can and should lobby the legislature to improve it in the coming year.

UNC also should investigate the possibility of creating and running a separate insurance program for

increases are needed to keep the University on track.

The UNC Board of Trustees should resolve not to pass any more increases that affect current students. And Shelton's plan should not burden out-of-state students by putting the majority of the increases on them.

A recent study by the National Association of College and University Business Officers found out-of-state students actually are paying more than it costs to educate them. UNC should not sacrifice our attractive price tag to make profits off of these students.

Run clean student elections

Soon election season will be upon us, and students will be bombarded with pleas for their votes. I already have heard sniping between the campaigns.

Candidates, nip this in the bud. Show the student body you are devoted and have a platform to die for. Leave the back-biting to the professional politicians, and make the 2004 campaign season the most issue-based ever.

Get out the vote in 2004

All of the UNC student body president candidates must resolve to have a solid plan for getting out the vote in the 2004 presidential election.

Matt Tepper's administration registered a large number of student voters but did not get them to the polls this year. The successor to Tepper's administration must have a plan to mobilize student voters this year.

Contact Stephanie Horvath, a senior journalism major, at shorvath@email.unc.edu.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions of solely The Daily Tar Heel Editorial Board, and were reached after open debate. The board consists of seven board members, the editorial page associate 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.

The Daily Tar Heel

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READERS' FORUM

Conservative student has never experienced bullying

TO THE EDITOR:

Not once in my nearly four years as a conservative at UNC has anyone approached me and said, "Hey, I'm a Democrat. Give me your lunch money."

As a conservative, I have not felt "bullied," persecuted, or marginalized on this campus. Brentley Tanner's column on Jan. 8 ("Liberal students, professors bully conservative minority") is another example of classic Republican belly aching.

Far too often on this campus, Republicans prefer to spend time crying about how Big Bad Liberals are so mean to them rather than promoting the conservative agenda.

The notion that UNC professors who are registered Democrats push their liberal views on students is completely unfounded. Professors' voter registrations are not indicative of the way that they will teach their classes.

In my experience, more often than not professors have gone out of their way to remain neutral when presenting class material and have not let their personal political views come into play.

Contrary to what Mr. Tanner says, this is even true of graduate students. For example, at the end of a political science course last semester, I commented to the instructor, a graduate student, that she did an outstanding job of presenting the

material in a completely unbiased fashion.

She asked me to guess her political affiliation, and when I guessed a moderate Republican or Democrat, she surprised me by saying she was "leftier than left."

This is proof that instructors make an effort to be "fair and balanced" when teaching.

Mr. Tanner should know this, because he was in the same class.

I challenge Mr. Tanner to use this forum to do more than villainize liberals and whine about how hard Republicans have it at UNC.

Brittany Dunstan  
Senior  
Journalism and Mass  
Communication

University should drop all charges against protesters

I am writing to ask UNC not to prosecute Andrew Pearson for interrupting a UNC basketball game in an anti-war protest in February 2003.

While I understand the University's desire to deter protesters on its courts, the fact that Mr. Pearson and his associates warned the chancellor of the planned action ahead of time, and the fact that they have accepted a two-year ban from the Smith Center, show that Mr. Pearson and the other protesters are sincere people who were simply using their First

Amendment right to express all our desires for peace.

By continuing to prosecute Mr. Pearson, the University is violating its duty to free speech and political debate (as well as creating more media coverage and thereby encouraging further protests at its games).

The primary mission of UNC is not to play basketball. It is to educate citizens, and that mission is never more important than at times when the government and the media are not being truthful, as we now know they were not in the rush to war. In February 2003, Mr. Pearson and his associates were fulfilling the mission of UNC far better than the players on the court.

To jail him for it would send a terrible message to the community about UNC's priorities.

Kate Lovelady  
Carrboro

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