

**FRATERNITY**

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to sign the agreement."  
Curtis declined to answer questions Friday.  
Ultimately, the University did not accept the addendum and declined to recognize the fraternity because its members refused to sign the nondiscrimination policy.

**FIRE sparks national debate**

Members of the fraternity then enlisted the support of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, a Philadelphia-based civil liberties group.  
"We were losing our ability to be effective," Olagunju said. "We were losing access to public resources."  
FIRE's program officer, Robert L. Shibley, sent a letter to Chancellor James Moeser on July 23, calling for the University to recognize AIO. He also demanded that UNC create a policy that allows all groups with an expressive purpose to restrict membership to students whose beliefs reflect that purpose.  
The response is FIRE's second intervention on behalf of a religious student group at UNC.  
In December 2002, UNC refused to recognize the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship because it required its leaders to be Christian.  
After much media coverage, the University changed its policies and reinstated InterVarsity as an official student organization.  
But Greg Lukianoff, FIRE's director of legal and public advocacy, said the incident with AIO now calls into question the University's sincerity.  
"The whole reason why you allow for expressive groups is so that people can gather together to make their voices more powerful to express their ideas," he said. "If you change the mission and purpose of the group, you are diminishing people's ability to advocate their ideas."

**Fueling the flame**

Moeser issued a response Aug. 12. It explains UNC's role in balancing the right to freedom of association, mandated in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, with protection against discrimination, mandated in the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.  
William Marshall, a UNC law professor and constitutional scholar whom University officials have consulted, said he believes the University has not violated the rights of those in the fraternity.  
Of the University's 595 student organizations, 42 are recognized religious groups.  
Many student ministry leaders, including Jimmy Satterwhite, a leader in the Episcopal Campus Ministry, have supported UNC's decision.  
In his letter, Moeser noted that groups have three ways to increase

the selectivity of their organizations: requiring members to have an interest in the subject matter, asking recruits to pass an objective test and forcing officers to subscribe to the tenets of their group.  
"We believe that our approach to recognition in general and our demonstrated willingness to work with members of Alpha Iota Omega to achieve their goals strikes a proper balance between the interests of nondiscrimination and free association," Moeser stated in his letter.  
Olagunju said he was not aware of these policies when applying for recognition last fall. They are not included in the 2003-04 Official University Recognition Agreement, as displayed on the UNC Web site.

**Striking back**

FIRE President David French sent a response to the University on Aug. 16, claiming that Moeser's letter neglected to address several pivotal issues.  
He stated that UNC's actions were not reasonable and disregard the rights of minority students.  
The letter also details FIRE's viewpoint that UNC does not have a legal obligation to keep a private religious organization from discriminating on the basis of religion.

The same day FIRE issued its response, U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., sent a letter to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, requesting an investigation into the "ongoing problem of censorship of Christian students" at UNC.  
"It is an ideological decision by the University," Jones said Thursday. "That is why we have gotten involved in this second case because whether the University is right or wrong, we need somebody who is impartial to review what is happening."

Stephanie Babyak, a spokeswoman for the Department of Education, said that the situation is under investigation.  
In February, Jones called for an investigation into an incident in which a UNC lecturer chastised one of her students for making anti-homosexual comments.

**The debate escalates**

Moeser said Thursday that UNC was in the process of drafting a response to FIRE's second letter.  
"The point I want to stress is, for me, this is not a political issue. It is our best effort to square those two amendments," he said.  
Moeser said he doesn't foresee the University changing its nondiscrimination policy.  
"This is clearly a gray area legally," he said. "And so ultimately, this probably will be decided by the United States Supreme Court."

Contact the University Editor at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

**Construction disrupts campus**

*Majority of projects running smoothly*

BY CAROLINE KORNEGAY  
STAFF WRITER

Orange cones, mesh fencing and dust clouds are creating a maze for students as they return to campus this fall.

But University officials say the completed buildings and facilities are worth the inconveniences.

From the massive Ramshead Center on South Campus to the Arts Common near Franklin Street, new buildings are being constructed on each corner of campus.

At the same time, extensive renovations are under way at Memorial Hall and in many residence halls.

"There are significant positives," said Bruce Runberg, associate vice chancellor for planning and construction.

"At the same time, we under-

stand there are inconveniences."

Runberg said that although the construction can be a nuisance, the end result of more spacious and modern facilities will benefit the University in the long run.

"The projects are of high quality," he said, listing the renovation of the Undergraduate Library, which reopened for the 2002 fall semester, as an example.

The ambitious physical Master Plan for UNC has a price tag of approximately \$1.3 billion, and the current phase of construction is scheduled for completion in 2008.

The plan, which began in 2001, includes almost 150 projects.

A number of those tasks already have been built or renovated.

About half of the funds for the projects are coming from the

higher education bond referendum passed in 2000 by the North Carolina electorate, which gave the university system more than \$3 billion for capital projects.

The University also is partially funding the construction, and outside funds from the \$1.8 billion Carolina First campaign make up the difference.

Spending on the construction has reached a rate of \$1 million per work day and totals about \$20 million per month.

Runberg said many of the sites in need of renovation are being updated as part of the project.

"About one-third of the \$510 million is in renovations," he said.

Despite some setbacks, Runberg is optimistic that all the programs will be completed without many more delays or additional costs.

"We feel we're in good shape to finish up within budget and on

schedule," he said.

One project that has been problematic is the \$15 million addition to the School of Nursing.

The site has been under construction since November 2002 and was set for completion this November.

After crews ran into subsurface problems, more work still must be completed before finalization.

Despite setbacks, the project is about 65 percent complete, with the building scheduled to reopen in early 2005.

Once opened, new spaces in the building will host programs for both students and members of off-campus groups, Runberg said.

"A lot of these projects will provide better facilities to not only students but (also) to the community."

Contact the University Editor at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

**Director appointment could unify arts**

BY PHILIP MCFEE  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

The seemingly listless University arts community, fragmented since the dissolution of the umbrella organization Arts Carolina more than a year ago, soon might appoint a figurehead.

The ongoing search for someone to fill the new post of executive director for the arts is nearing completion, with an appointment likely by the spring semester.

"(It's) a remarkable group of applicants," said Executive Associate Provost Steve Allred.

"We're now working with a group of approximately 14. ... (We're) looking to further narrow that list and bring candidates to campus starting in late September."

Anticipation is heightened by the impending construction of Phase I of the Arts Common, a large-scale overhaul of the North Campus area that centers on Hanes Art Center.

The new director will arrive at a crucial point. The first phase of the "50-year project," as the Arts Common has been called, begins in 2006, with completion projected in 2009. Talks also are under way to secure the director a freshly revamped work space in the fall semester of the year in which construction will begin.

Virginia Carson, director of the Campus Y, said the third floor of the then-renovated historic building could host the offices of the executive director.

"(We are) very excited about this," she said. "Having the arts director there would be a good thing."

This excitement has been augmented by speculation about a future financial windfall.

Allred said that if the University receives adequate state funds from a large-scale bond referendum similar to the one passed in 2000, the Arts Common could be com-

pleted during a 20-year span.

He added that updated figures place the project's total cost at \$177 million, down from prior estimates of \$200 million.

"That's their estimate, taking into account their best understanding of inflation," he said.

One of the areas most affected by all phases of construction is the Department of Communication Studies, set to inherit a newly constructed building upon the Arts Common's completion. Department Chairman William Balthrop expressed excitement about the project's potential but acknowledged the efforts involved.

"There's general enthusiasm about it, but we all recognize it'll be several years away," he said.

Balthrop also was a member of a committee formed to discuss

the Arts Common's future, which included both town and University representatives.

"I think there was a remarkable degree of agreement about the kinds of things that people saw as what the possibilities could be, the kinds of ways in which this space could be of incredible benefit," he said.

The program represents a monumental undertaking, from its inception in committee to its completion. The appointment of an executive director from the 172-member field is another step toward the realization of the Arts Common.

"On the timeline, the chancellor has called it a '50 year plan,'" Allred said. "But I hope we can do it in less than that."

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