

## BOARD EDITORIALS

## A WEIGHTY FUNCTION

It is hoped that the Tuition Task Force will allow reason be its guide in the creation of a strong recommendation for the Board of Trustees.

Tuition talks recently have tended to leave a bad taste in many people's mouths, but that isn't stopping the members of the University's Tuition Task Force from starting their discussions a month earlier than last year.

Perhaps it was this bad taste that caused last year's task force to meet only once and to iron out a proposal that would increase tuition across the board by \$300 per year during a three-year period.

The proposal was rejected by the Board of Trustees in favor of one-year increases of \$300 and \$1,500 for in-state and out-of-state students, respectively. The UNC-system Board of Governors later lowered the in-state increase to \$250.

None of this is to imply that last year's task force created a shaky proposal, but the fact remains that the recommendation simply did not garner the support of the trustees. This year, the task force's recommendation must be more effective so that trustees don't immediately seek an alternative.

Student Body President Matt Calabria, task force co-chairman, said he is thankful that the board will have more meeting time to come to an educated decision. Because the task force will have more time, it should be able to make a stronger proposal than last year. But even with the head start, it is crucial that the body retain a sense of urgency in this matter.

A good coaching strategy involves telling a team that it should act as if it is down one point even if it is in the lead. This would apply to members of the task force, who should realize that they have a major hurdle to overcome in trying to reach a reasonable conclusion — and that time is a significant factor.

The task force should see the flaws in the market-based philosophy regarding out-of-state student tuition that certain trustees have touted so highly.

For all trustees know, the overall quality of the University's applicant pool will suffer irreparable harm if they continue to raise nonresident tuition so drastically. The BOT essentially is operating on a hunch.

A study was commissioned to determine how the quality of UNC-Chapel Hill applicants of each type — in-state and out-of-state — is affected by tuition hikes. The results have not yet been released.

In any case, neither side can use this empirical evidence as a basis for its proposal. Even if the study shows that raising out-of-state students' tuition is feasible and advisable, officials should not jump to drastically raise tuition for nonresidents. And if the study indicates that more highly qualified nonresidents are turned away with each sharp rise in the cost of education, officials nonetheless should not increase unreasonably the financial burden on in-state students. The University is constitutionally mandated to remain affordable to North Carolina residents.

In the economic climate surrounding the University, another tuition hike seems inevitable. Calabria understands this, and he already is considering how tuition increases can be beneficial. He told The Daily Tar Heel that he supports hikes that improve students' experiences at UNC-CH. If task force members and trustees alike stick to such a plan, students might emerge relatively unscathed from the upcoming round of tuition talks.

Provost Robert Shelton, the task force's other co-chairman, told members that they could draft a philosophy to send to trustees instead of coming up with a specific scenario.

Though it sounds abstract, this would be a worthy tactic to employ. Too much number-crunching and not enough focus on the actual effects of hikes on students can lead officials to neglect the University's basic philosophy, which is to serve the people.

If task force members draft a philosophy that places more emphasis on people and not numbers, they very well could be taking a step in the right direction. Regardless, they must present a sound, practical and well-researched proposal to the BOT so the severity of any increase might be controlled.

## DOING THEIR JOBS

Student Congress is giving funds to conservative groups for big-name speakers because those groups are submitting necessary paperwork.

The old business maxim that any publicity is good publicity doesn't apply to the academic setting — groups seeking to bring high-profile speakers to the University should select speakers of academic value if they are to receive student funds.

That said, academic value can come in many different forms. Student Congress shouldn't grant funds to conservative groups for the sake of balancing an alleged liberal bias at the University, but it should help facilitate well-grounded plans by groups that want to bring people with interesting intellectual perspectives to campus.

Controversy regarding funding for speakers has arisen lately, especially following a Sept. 7 decision by Congress' Finance Committee to allocate \$7,000 to the UNC Federalist Society, a group of conservative law students who believe in judicial restraint.

The money will help pay for a speech by Alan Keyes, a Republican candidate for the U.S. Senate in Illinois.

Although the high price tags associated with conservative groups' speakers might draw the ire of some students, the groups that are bringing the speakers to campus have been doing their home work.

Considering the large amount of money involved, there might seem to be some cause for concern. Congress allocated \$6,747.50 last year to fulfill part of the \$25,000 honorarium for Ann Coulter, a controversial author and constitutional scholar.

Congress also designated \$15,000 for the UNC College Republicans to go toward speaker Lt. Col. Oliver North's \$30,000 honorarium — but North's talk later was cancelled because of cost issues.

The group instead used the speaker fees, which were reduced to \$12,500, to bring to campus Dinesh D'Souza, who was a senior domestic policy analyst during the Reagan administration. An appearance

by David Limbaugh, the brother of radio personality Rush Limbaugh, is also in the works.

Congress has been criticized for earmarking large amounts of students' money for conservative speakers, but this campus hasn't seen a corresponding lack of left-leaning personalities.

UNC Young Democrats' president Justin Guillory noted that his organization has drawn big-name speakers without always having to pay a price.

U.S. Senate candidate Erskine Bowles, U.S. Rep. David Price, D-N.C., and the daughters of U.S. Sens. John Kerry and John Edwards all visited campus without requesting any form of honorarium.

Additionally, Congress granted about \$5,600 in student fee money last semester for a visit from Paul Krugman, an economist and columnist for The New York Times.

Kris Wampler, vice chairman of the committee, told The Daily Tar Heel that Congress appropriations have more to do with a group's level of preparation and the documentation of financial need than a group presents than with ideology.

He said his personal political views, which are conservative, don't factor into the funding process. "I only have a problem with people who don't have their stuff together," he said.

Students voted to increase fees in 2003 to improve the level of social, athletic and intellectual activity on campus. These are precisely the type of high-profile, thought-provoking speakers that the campus needs.

It's debatable whether more student funds are being spent on one end of the political spectrum or the other.

In any case, members of Congress are doing their jobs in granting requests that are made according to the rules and are filed with the right paperwork. They should keep up the good work.

**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 six board members, the editorial page associate editor, the editorial page editor and the DTH editor. The 2004-05 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials.

## READERS' FORUM

## Groups should be able to pass out registration forms

TO THE EDITOR:

Maybe Christopher Payne, director of housing and residential education, had an abusive civics teacher in junior high school.

That is the only justification I can come up with for his foolish application of the facility-use policy to prevent the distribution of voter registration forms in residence halls.

The nonsolicitation policy makes sense in terms of protecting students from sleazy credit-card salesmen or a nonstop flow of propaganda sliding under their doors — aside from low-brow political smut like Carolina Review, which resident assistants already distribute to their residents whether they like it or not.

However, we're not talking about Jimmy John's fliers or the next opportunity for a young lady to disgrace herself at a wet T-shirt contest.

We're talking about a badly needed effort to involve students in a political process, the ramifications of which will have a direct impact on their lives.

Groups like the UNC Young Democrats and VoteCarolina need and deserve the right to distribute voter registration forms without partisan objectives.

They are helping to ensure that as many UNC students as possible lend their political voice to

the historically crucial election in November.

Payne cites the fact that the University already provided voter registration forms in welcome packets as a reason to prevent further "harassment."

I understand that Mr. Payne, while alone in his office, probably smiles at the mental image of students poring over every critical piece of information in their welcome packets before even lofting their beds.

Not so. Those forms probably found their way to the garbage right next to the flyer about ice cream floats in the Ehringhaus Residence Hall Green Room.

Door-to-door registration offers a perfect method for students who fall through the cracks of this obviously foolproof voter registration trap.

After all, Mr. Payne and his agents already look the other way as hordes of marauding campaign workers invade the sovereign dormitories during each and every student body election season.

Step up, Mr. Payne. Prove that you are not anti-voting, and allow this door-to-door voter registration.

Don't equate a free ticket to participate in the greatest democratic experiment in human history with a special on Pokey sticks.

David Siegel  
Senior  
Journalist

## Ban should have been renewed for safety reasons

TO THE EDITOR:

It is absolutely outrageous that the U.S. Congress has allowed the Assault Weapons Ban to expire.

What is equally surprising to me is that it does not appear that most people have invested anything beyond an idle opinion in the matter. How could a responsible citizenship have ever allowed such a thing to happen?

There is no defending the action or lack thereof. The National Rifle Association says the ban was cosmetic, because grenade launchers and bayonet mounts only make guns prettier, not deadlier.

I support the ban, and I admit that it was not as effective as it could have been, mainly because gun makers found ways to skirt the classifications of "assault weapons" to put weapons with assault capabilities in the hands of gun enthusiasts — oh, and criminals.

Despite its shortcomings, the ban is a place to start on the road to safe and responsible gun ownership in the United States. Guess what? Over two-thirds of Americans agree.

Why would any U.S. civilian ever need an AK-47? Making them legal makes people less safe, and banning them does nothing to weaken the Second Amendment.

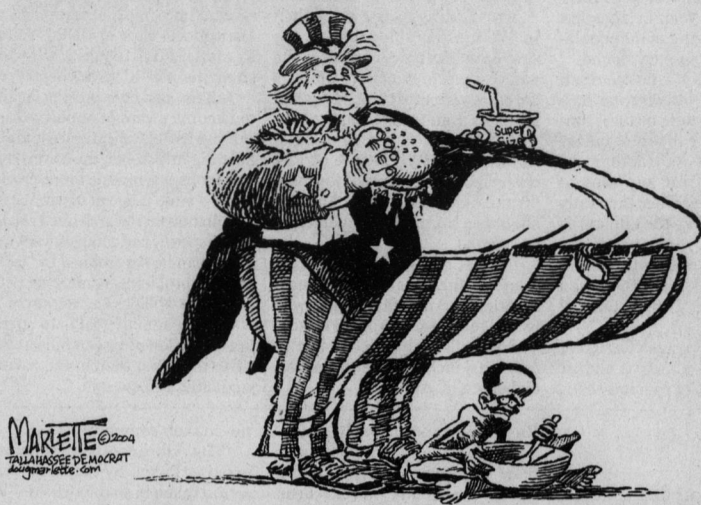
If we're in a mood to apply all constitutional rights absolutely and without exception, then I'm going

## ON THE DAY'S NEWS

"Sometimes something worth doing is worth overdoing."

DAVID LETTERMAN, TALK SHOW HOST

## EDITORIAL CARTOON



"I SEE NO EVIDENCE OF PROBLEMS FROM OVER-POPULATION!..."

## COMMENTARY

## UVa. is losing right to claim support for Virginia's citizens

The only good thing I got from watching the football game Saturday was the chance to see the new commercial that the University of Virginia is using to sell itself to potential students, donors and supporters.

It's a good piece of theater. A camera cuts to different shots of world leaders visiting the Charlottesville campus, and an announcer reads something along the lines of: "The leaders of today are attracted to this place."

The camera then cuts to shots of classrooms, labs and the beautiful outdoor campus, filled with students, and we hear: "So are the leaders of tomorrow." The last image we see is a wide-angle shot of the campus. Imposed on this image are the words, "The University of Virginia ... Leading Public University."

My memory of the ad isn't perfect — but I remember those words "Leading Public University" because I reacted to them like I'd been slapped across the face.

They have no right to make that claim.

You see, UVa. made big news during the weekend for reasons other than its football prowess. Together with Virginia Tech and the College of William & Mary, UVa. revealed a plan to weaken its ties to the Commonwealth of Virginia even further than it already has.

The presidents of these three institutions are asking the state to make them charter schools. Essentially, they will forgo receiving some funding from Virginia legislators in exchange for greater autonomy in their ability to raise or cap tuition and to increase the size of the student body.

For Charlottesville, that probably means raising tuition by about 10 percent every year for the next



MATT COMPTON  
POTENTIAL CROSSWORD SPACE ... WASTED

five years.

For in-state students, tuition at UVa. exceeds \$5,100 each year. If the Virginia administrators get their charter status, the tuition of these students could easily double the \$3,205 amount that in-state students pay to attend UNC-Chapel Hill.

On some level, this makes sense. During the past few years, the Virginia schools haven't been receiving the money they've needed from the state government to operate in the manner to which they have become accustomed. It's an "if the state won't support us, we won't support it" attitude.

Things could have been different. The schools could have made cuts. They could have mobilized public support for the cause of education. They could have fought the trend of public institutions of higher education trying to gain more independence.

Instead, they decided to change the way they do business — and in doing so, they have stepped away from the obligation that they were created to fulfill. And now Virginia citizens are reaping the harvest their legislature decided to sow.

The new mind-set means that higher tuition is OK so long as there is financial aid for those who need it — the middle class can fend for itself.

The new mind-set translates into more students on campus

and more time spent on research.

The new mind-set means that the future of the University of Virginia matters more than the future of Virginia's citizens.

These three schools aren't the first to embrace this trend. The University of Michigan-Ann Arbor and the University of California-Berkeley both have similar autonomy from their respective state governments.

Last week, a fellow named Joshua Davis wrote a letter to the editor of The Daily Tar Heel in which he disagreed with my Sept. 8 column. His point can be summed up in one sentence: "Increasing tuition might make UNC end up like those other schools ranked ahead of us." For him, that was a good thing.

Berkeley, Michigan and Virginia all rank above us in national polls, but here is my point: At this point in their existences, those schools aren't our peers.

They aren't even public in the way we define it here in Chapel Hill.

Being students at a school like Carolina means that we aren't just studying for ourselves. It means that we are working for a better future for our state. It means that we are serving the millions of North Carolinians who get up and go to work every day so we can be here.

That service is a privilege, and I wouldn't trade it for a stack of degrees from every other school that ranks above us according to U.S. News & World Report.

And it's a privilege that gives us alone the right to claim the title "Leading Public University," without debate from the likes of UVa.

Contact Matt Compton  
at mattcomp@gmail.com.

to exercise my rights and start yelling "fire" in crowded places.

Jonathan Benson  
Junior  
Political science

## Committee will hold series of code revision hearings

TO THE EDITOR:

In response to growing student interest in revisions to the Student Code, the Rules and Judiciary Committee of Student Congress will hold a series of public hearings as the revision proposals are submitted to the committee for consideration.

Generally, hearings will deal with a particular section of the code such as elections law, financial affairs or the Carolina Athletic Association. The hearings will be a wonderful way for concerned students to participate directly in our legislative process.

At the hearings, students and student organizations will have the ear of Student Congress — and by offering their opinions, they can have a lasting impact on the code revisions.

We in Congress are truly interested in the everyday impact of these revisions on students and look to our constituents to help us make the right decisions.

The Daily Tar Heel published July 15 an editorial regarding the code revisions that stated, "... Student government officials

should encourage public discourse and allow it to run its course."

Student Congress agrees, and we look forward to fostering an open debate through public hearings.

Luke Farley  
Chairman, Rules and  
Judiciary Committee  
Student Congress

## CORRECTION

An editing error in Faculty Council Chairwoman Sue Estroff's column on Tuesday's Viewpoints page led to a misrepresentation of her opinion. The column, "Students and faculty share the ceremony," was originally submitted with a sentence stating that the "student body president and vice president exemplified this demeanor in their work" — but the column mistakenly was changed to compliment the senior class officers. The Daily Tar Heel regrets the error.

**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 2409, Carolina Union, mail them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 or e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu.

Established 1893

111 years of editorial freedom

The Daily Tar Heel

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