

Mandate beats out the market

System stresses in-state pledge

BY ELIZABETH DOUGHERTY
STAFF WRITER

The pressures of market-driven education are taking a toll on the nation's colleges and universities, a recent report states, but UNC-system administrators say they are holding fast to their constitutional obligation to state residents.

The report, issued by the Futures Project at Brown University, states that a balance must be struck between increasingly aggressive market forces and the need to preserve public universities' commitment to their constituents.

Titled "Correcting Course: How We Can Restore the Ideals of Public Higher Education in a Market-Driven Era," it cites recent requests by Virginia universities for increased autonomy from the state. Those requests have drawn attention at UNC-Chapel Hill, where students and administrators say the University is following a similar path by following a market-based tuition philosophy.

Lara Couturier, author of the Futures Project report, said market forces can be frustrating but are unavoidable. Lawmakers and higher education officials, she said, must create legislation designed to make higher education more efficient and accessible to all.

"I think it is unrealistic to try and reverse market trends because market forces are so very powerful, but there are ways to work to navigate market forces to make sure the public mission of universities and colleges is not lost," she said.

At the Virginia schools, that traditional mission has come into question. Three schools — the University of Virginia, the College of William and Mary and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University — asked the state for less funding in return for greater autonomy.

Edward Irish, director of the

office of financial aid at the College of William and Mary, said more predictable tuition increases will be a major benefit of the changes in Virginia, which the state's General Assembly seems likely to approve.

"UVA. has copied the Carolina Covenant and gone one better than that," he said, referring to UNC-Chapel Hill's program to provide sufficient financial aid to allow any qualified student to attend the university.

"That has set a high standard for the schools in the state."

But one problem with a market-based system is that it focuses too much on short-term economic concerns instead of "what makes the most sense for the longer term public interest," Couturier said.

Jeff Davies, vice president for finance for UNC system, is keeping that public interest in mind. He said the 16 universities are not moving toward a market-based system, but instead will continue to operate under Article IX, Section 9 of the N.C. Constitution.

That section of the constitution says university students should receive a free education "as far as practicable."

It gets with the Futures Project report, which contends that increased tuition costs have left education inaccessible to needy students.

"We work very hard with the General Assembly to meet that mandate," Davies said.

The report also states that a move away from state funding will lead many state institutions to become tied to private groups.

But Davies said North Carolina is a special case.

"It goes back to our forefathers that created a system of public higher education," he said.

"Throughout history, we have honored their goal of having it be as free of expense as practical for North Carolina residents."

Contact the State & National Editor at stntdesk@unc.edu.

Panelists look to cross divide

BY STACEY CARLESS
STAFF WRITER

A group of four Palestinians and four Israelis sailed to Antarctica in January 2004 to conquer an insurmountable mountain as a symbol of peace.

The expedition, "Breaking the Ice," provided participants the opportunity to come together when they all reached the top of the peak. They named it "The Mountain of Israeli-Palestinian Friendship."

"We wanted to go for an expedition that we could only finish together," said expedition leader Doron Erel, an Israel-born professional mountain climber. "We are not two teams playing against each other. We are one team playing together."

Four members of the expedition spoke about the experience to an audience of about 50 people

Monday afternoon in Peabody Hall.

UNC's School of Education, in partnership with the N.C. Outward Bound School, hosted the Palestinian-Israeli Peace Program to encourage the sharing of new ideas about peace and reconciliation, said Linda Baucom, communication specialist in the education school.

After showing a video about the expedition, participants in "Breaking the Ice" explained to students, faculty, staff and community members how the journey symbolized the two countries' joining together to achieve peace.

"The idea at the end of the day was to create a symbol," said Heskell Nathaniel, an Israeli who initiated the expedition.

Ziad Darwish, an Israel-born Palestinian journalist and expedi-

tion member, said he participated in the trip to fight against the conflict between his country and Israel.

"As a Palestinian, I know what suffering is," Darwish said.

"This bloodshed is continuing over five decades, and I said to myself, 'Someone has to (make a) move.'"

The "Breaking the Ice" program now is looking to establish programs for high school students, who they say can influence change in the world.

The program is working with the Outward Bound School to send 10 Palestinian and Israeli teenagers between the ages of 15 and 17 on an expedition to the North Carolina mountains next August.

Olfat Haider, a member of the "Breaking the Ice" expedition and counselor in the new program, said she is excited to be a part of

the group.

Nathaniel said teenagers usually tend to separate themselves into cliques instead of building relationships and experiencing diversity.

"By that, they limit their possibilities to get to know each other," Nathaniel said.

"(Students should go) on an adventure to go and get to know other people."

Nathaniel said the experience will allow students the opportunity to go outside their comfort zones.

The panel told the audience that everyone should to do their part to achieve world peace.

"It's up to the government to sign an agreement," Nathaniel said, "and up to the people to make peace."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

Dearmin prepares to select Cabinet

BY MARTA OSTROWSKI
STAFF WRITER

Student officials are on the lookout for dedicated and passionate students who display a desire to create change at the University.

With student body elections now complete, students soon will get a chance to apply for various positions in student government or the honor system.

Student Body President-elect Seth Dearmin said he hopes to have applications available by the end of this week for students interested in applying for Cabinet positions in student government.

A key item on Dearmin's platform included expanding and improving student government.

He now is working to create new positions for freshman, sophomore and junior class officers.

"I am looking to restructure student government," Dearmin said. "I want to be proactive and go to different student groups in order to encourage students to apply."

Applications will be available to students on the student government Web Site and at its office. Dearmin also said he plans to send out e-mails to encourage students to participate in student government.

"We are really looking for passionate and excited students to fill these positions," Dearmin said. "There is really no exact mold."

Anyone who will be a full-time student during the 2005-06 academic school year can apply, Dearmin added.

Applications now are available in the office of the Honor Court

for students interested in becoming members.

Erin Scharling, vice chairwoman of Honor Court, said the application process is a monthlong procedure. Students first must submit an application along with a resume and go through several rounds of interviews before they are picked to serve on the Honor Court.

Students applying for membership are not required to have a certain grade point average or a specific major.

"A lot of students have such a misconception of Honor Court members," Scharling said.

"This year, we want to cross-section the entire campus and have a broader array of student representation."

Scharling also said that offi-

cials in Honor Court are trying to encourage more minority groups to apply for membership.

Although members of Student Congress already have been elected, representatives will have a chance to run for leadership positions. Representatives can be nominated for positions such as Congress speaker and speaker pro tem and committee chairmanships, including finance committee chairman.

Speaker Charlie Anderson encourages students to put ideas on paper and submit them to representatives in order to create good leadership among the members.

"It puts pressure on the elected officials," Anderson said, "But it's a good kind of pressure."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.



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