

BOARD EDITORIALS

MAKE THE CHANGE

Campus administrators should agree to add "gender identity" and "gender expression" to the University's nondiscrimination policy.

In recent weeks, some members of the campus community — including those from the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender-Straight Alliance — have begun to state publicly that they don't think UNC's nondiscrimination policy is good enough. They want to add the phrases "gender identity" and "gender expression" to the list.

It's a good idea that will protect marginalized students on campus. But it's also important to pursue any changes carefully.

In case you're wondering, the "gender identity" clause would protect students who self-identify as a gender different from their biological sex. The "gender expression" clause would protect transgender students from being denied services or singled out due to how they choose to present themselves.

No one is sure how many students would receive protection under such clauses. But no student on UNC's campus should be made to feel bad for being different, whether they're black or white, gay or straight, Democrat or Republican. And no campus should allow that to happen on its grounds.

At the same time, the practical ramifications of a new

policy could prove divisive, and the University must be careful to move forward in a way that engenders as little anger and distrust as possible.

One way to do so is to commit to putting at least one unisex restroom in new buildings, which UNC has done, without making the switch to all-unisex rooms. Putting unisex restrooms in existing buildings could be cost-prohibitive, but we would like to see future building renovations take the issue under consideration — provided that a significant number of students come forward to justify the cost.

Another pressing matter lies in housing assignments, as some students say all-male or all-female residence halls are insulting to the transgender community. But many students like them, and their wishes ought to be accommodated, as well. As a compromise, students ought to be asked on their housing application whether they feel comfortable living in such a dormitory.

Other problems might come up during the process, which according to University officials could take a while. But we're a smart school with the people to solve pressing problems — and in this case, doing nothing isn't much of a plan.

IT'S FOR THE KIDS

Asking students for three dimes to help student parents get child care is a reasonable request that could improve classes and aid needy Tar Heels.

Won't somebody please think of the children? That's the noble question that the Chancellor's committee on student fees is asking — and it's come up with a way to get the ball rolling.

The committee on Monday approved a 30-cent fee increase to help student parents pay for child care. Even though it's at an added expense to the student body, and though UNC could rethink its funding model, committee members should be thanked for their efforts to make sure parents have all the resources they need.

The hike will bring the per-student cost of the child care fee to \$2.30, further assisting student parents and expanding the service to four or five more people.

Understandably, some opposed the fee increase on the grounds that it forces students to subsidize a service for a relatively small population on campus.

But those concerns, though valid, do not outweigh the benefits that such subsidies create — particularly for half the cost of a pack of bubble gum. While the undergraduate segment of campus might not be as likely to have children, there are a number of graduate students who are married and/or have children.

Those graduate students are, in some cases, also teaching assistants who suffer from painfully low salaries — and will continue to do so even in the face of a potential raise of the minimum per-course TA stipend to \$7,000. Child care expenses can quickly eat into a meager paycheck; private day care in the town can go as high as \$1,500 per month for just one child.

There is also the issue of access. Just as North Carolina's most poor should be able to drink from the Old Well on the first day of classes each year, having a family to care for should not be a barrier to receiving a quality education at one of the best universities in the nation.

Yes, nobody likes fee hikes. But this small increase will go toward something increasingly provided by tuition: Improving the quality of education at UNC. Better TAs are always a plus, especially when a large number of classes are taught by graduate students. And be honest. Who hasn't thought at one point or another that they wished they had a better TA?

Look at it this way: By giving up one-quarter of that Junior Bacon Cheeseburger, you could get a better classroom experience.

A MISSED MOMENT

Domestic Violence Awareness Month has now arrived and passed with little fanfare — an unfortunate lack of enthusiasm for a crucial issue.

Halloween marked the end of October, but it also tolled the end of something altogether more important: Domestic Violence Awareness Month. National organizations and even corporations made some buzz about the issue, which affects countless men and women nationwide each year.

But on campus, the buzz seemed nonexistent despite some students' best efforts. And that's a shame.

Awareness in and of itself can be useful in enlightening the general public and in making people more sympathetic to issues. But it alone does little to provide justice, stop ongoing abuse or prevent future attacks when it comes to domestic violence.

That's because activists and sympathizers feel safe within the awareness arena; it's the easiest way to pretend to do something. But what victims really need to see is change.

More students and student groups could have paid attention to awareness month and taken a role in raising campus knowledge — including, it should be noted, this page. We, along with everyone else, should have encouraged social change and legal action using the large reserves of manpower available on campus.

What could have been an amazing month of action fell by the wayside.

What's there to do, you ask? Plenty.

For starters, stricter regulations for first-time offenders and harsher punishments for repeat offenders are needed in order to curtail domestic violence.

So is education. We need more help from the N.C. General Assembly, which in 2004 passed a bill making abuser treatment programs mandatory for all convicted batterers placed on probation.

Change is possible and necessary, but not without the work of citizen organizations and the community. It's a shame that with the ample body of concerned citizens at UNC that there was so little promotion about the issues surrounding the month.

Students can take a number of proactive steps in this area. Taking action can be something as simple as publicizing phone numbers for local shelters, battered women treatment programs or promoting volunteer programs at local crisis centers and women's shelters.

Don't let another October pass by without raising your voice about domestic violence.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above editorials are the opinions solely of The Daily Tar Heel editorial board and were reached after open debate. The board consists of four board members, the associate opinion editor, the opinion editor and the DTH editor. The 2005-06 DTH editor decided not to vote on the board and not to write board editorials. Address concerns to Public Editor Elliott Dube at dubee@email.unc.edu.

READERS' FORUM

Student government seeks to fill a crucial position

TO THE EDITOR:

The executive branch of student government is currently accepting applications for the position of student solicitor general.

This is an important position for student self-governance at Carolina.

One of the student solicitor general's most important responsibilities is issuing advisory opinions to students on matters involving the Student Code.

Applications are available on the student government Web site at <http://www.unc.edu/studgov>. They are due next Wednesday at 5 p.m.

Student government sought a student solicitor general in the spring and earlier this semester.

There are two qualities that the student solicitor general must have: (1) A good knowledge of the Student Code and (2) No other involvement in any branch of student government — or a willingness to end these commitments to ensure impartiality.

If you satisfy these criteria and are interested in the position of student solicitor general, please visit our Web site and submit an application.

Adrian Johnston
Student Body Vice President

Don't blame students for lousy ticket distributions

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm tired of seeing people criticize the students for the Carolina Athletic Association's mess of a ticket distribution.

There are more than 1,000 tickets left for Illinois? There were leftover tickets for games last season, too.

So is it the fans who are being fickle? Maybe the reason there are always leftover tickets, in good seasons and bad, is because the CAA can't put together a distribution that meets the needs of most of the students.

If you were within 1,000 of the magic number last Saturday, you might have been waiting in line for more than two hours. I was 1,500 off, and I was barely able to pick up my tickets by 11 a.m. C'mon.

It's about time that the ticket-hoarding, distribution-bungling CAA changed to actually work with the students.

Brian Allen
Junior
Journalism

GLBTSA should re-examine where its priorities are

TO THE EDITOR:

As a history student and a queer person, I wanted to provide some

brief insight into the recent surge of campus debate about sexuality, gender and politics.

The struggle for queer liberation goes back a long way, but its most recent manifestation is usually traced to the Stonewall Riots of New York in 1969. It is also related directly to the militant action of the White Night riots in San Francisco and to groups such as the Lesbian Avengers, ACT-UP, Queer Nation and the Gay Liberation Front.

The reason we have the little security we have today is because of the uncompromising positions of these groups.

There is a historical amnesia being practiced today by liberal groups such as GLBTSA. Drowning in a vacuum of sell-out-ism, they have now funded the Log Cabin Republicans.

Beyond this, the GLBTSA is actually surprised when their speaker is disrupted by those they supposedly "represent."

As a student of history, I can only predict that direct action by queer people, whether targeting gay or straight elites, will continue as long as assimilationist GLBT organizations continue to fund wealthy gay businessmen over the rest of us.

James Robertson
Graduate Student
History

FROM THE DAY'S NEWS

"The way to keep a family together is doing things together."

MAMA DIP, RESTAURANTEUR

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Evann Strathern, evann@email.unc.edu



COMMENTARY

It's high time that workers get company at the polls

Early voting is open until Saturday, and Election Day is Nov. 8.

And the lines are short, let me tell you.

I went in to vote Thursday, and I got a kind of sad feeling when I entered the voting room. Besides the voting administrators, I was the only one there.

I was pretty surprised. I've voted on two on other occasions. I voted in the Orange County on the day of primary elections in the summer of 2004 and then switched my registration over to Wake County and voted early that November.

There were at least a few other voters present at both of those polling sites.

The different types of elections are incomparable, of course.

Election Day voting draws out the procrastinators and those who are still making up their minds. And November 2004 coincided with a hotly contested presidential race. I stood in line for a few hours for that one.

The structure of Chapel Hill elections — on off years from congressional and presidential elections — ensures that only the people who really care about local politics turn out to vote.

The system keeps local elections from being diluted with voters who cast ballots for candidates that they know nothing about.

And I can't say I blame that system.

But the system requires an extra effort from students in order to make themselves heard — something that hasn't happened in recent years. The last municipal election saw participation from 329 student-aged voters, and my limited anecdotal experience would indicate that we're not doing much better this year.

But who knows. Maybe there will be a pretty substantial voter



JEFF KIM
NO LONGER A VILLAGE

turnout on Election Day.

That would be great, too. If you're a student voters who's intending to show up at the polls that day, I applaud you.

Just make sure you know where your polling place is. The campus is divided into six different voting precincts, most of which have off-campus voting locations.

You can avoid that trouble altogether with a quick stroll up north, between Cameron Avenue and Franklin Street.

In other words, you can cast a ballot at the Morehead Planetarium and Science Center. You've probably passed that location countless times in your regular life routines. It's very easy.

And I can guarantee you that going to vote early will not take any more than 20 minutes out of your day.

I don't think it even took me five. Don't tell me you can't find five minutes.

And getting a grasp of who to vote for shouldn't take an excessive amount of work either.

Reading articles from the city desk of The Daily Tar Heel is the best option to get a handle on town affairs, but there is also the quicker alternative to going back and reading through years of Daily Tar Heel archives.

The endorsements from The DTH are very well researched. The board discusses and writes about town issues regularly and has a grasp of the issues at hand.

The board also met with each

of the candidates before making its endorsements.

You can find this year's DTH endorsements by keyworing "editorial board endorsements" on the DTH Web site — dailytarheel.com.

In Chapel Hill, I personally recommend Mark Kleinschmidt, Laurin Easthom and Ed Harrison. It's hard for me to write ringing endorsements for any of these candidates because all of them have expressed more skepticism than I am comfortable with on the development of Carolina North, UNC's proposed research campus. Nevertheless, I believe they will be good participants in a negotiation about the campus's development.

You can find my endorsement column, which ran Oct. 26, by searching for "Jeff Kim" on the DTH Web site.

There are also a number of good publications outside of the DTH that can aid in a quick understanding.

The Independent Weekly, a progressive weekly newspaper, has in-depth and thoughtful explanations for its endorsements: Mark Kleinschmidt, Laurin Easthom, Bill Thorpe and Will Raymond (incidentally, the same people the DTH endorsed).

And unlike many of the other newspapers in the area, the Indy also keeps its archives available for free online: <http://indyweek.com/durham/2005-10-26/cover3.html>.

So do your best to find the right candidates and vote.

All of the necessary resources are right at your fingertips — and if you live on campus, the polling place is literally within walking distance.

Contact Jeff Kim,
a senior economics major,
at jongdae@email.unc.edu.

Speak Out

We welcome letters to the editor and aim to publish as many as possible. In writing, please follow these simple guidelines: Keep letters under 300 words. Type them. Date them. Sign them; make sure they're signed by no more than two people. If you're a student, include your year, major and phone number. Faculty and staff: Give us your department and phone number. The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Bring letters to our office at Suite 2409 in the Student Union, e-mail them to editdesk@unc.edu, or send them to P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27515. All letters also will appear in our blogs section.

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