

Commutes grow more costly

Employees ask UNC for solutions

BY MARY KATHERINE AYERS
STAFF WRITER

University employees have been feeling the pressure of increasing gas prices and are asking the UNC administration to do more.

The UNC Employee Forum has passed a resolution to address the difficulties that employees have paying for gas to commute to work. It will send the resolution to Chancellor James Moeser after verifying its information.

Ernie Patterson, chairman of the Employee Forum when the resolution was passed, said the gas price situation has become a crisis for employees.

"I have never heard as many people as afraid of their future and as worried about being able to get to their jobs and feed their families as I've heard now," he said.

Patterson said he would like UNC to focus on innovative ways to conserve gas such as carpools, alternate work schedules and a four-day work week.

Moeser has asked Brenda Malone, associate vice chancellor for human resources, to lead a taskforce dedicated to the matter.

Malone said her office already has been communicating with the deans, directors and department

heads about balancing the needs of employees with those of the departments.

She plans to send a letter out to employees this week about flexible work arrangements and hopes to arrange a question-and-answer session about the issue.

Dick Mann, vice chancellor for finance and administration, said he thinks the resolution was intended to provoke and embarrass members of the administration.

The resolution lists several administrators' salaries and commutes, comparing them to the average UNC staff member's salary and average drive, which also is listed.

Mann said some proposed options are infeasible. Though the University urges its supervisors and managers to be as flexible as possible, he said it can be difficult to arrange schedules to accommodate everyone else's needs.

Mann said a research university such as UNC could not function properly on a four-day work week schedule.

"It is a serious issue," Mann said. "We want to be supportive, but we also want to be able to run the University."

UNC also already has programs in place to assist employees in their



DTH/MARY KATHERINE AYERS

Increases in gas prices are making it more difficult for UNC employees to get to work; they hope their efforts will sway UNC to ease the cost.

commutes to work.

Carolyn Elland, the associate vice chancellor of campus services, said UNC subsidizes its workers' costs for alternative forms of transportation, such as Chapel Hill Transit and the Triangle Transit Authority system.

Employees also are compensated for van pools conducted through Triangle Transit and the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation.

Patterson also said that though the resolution focuses on the employees' situations, he hopes that the task force will open a wide-ranging discussion about the effects of gas prices on the whole University.

"It's not just an employee problem," he said. "This is a University problem, and we all need to work together."

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

Freshman class boasts top-notch academic record

Test scores, GPAs increase from past

BY JOHANNA YUEH
STAFF WRITER

If statistics on potential members of the class of 2012 are any indication, next year's freshman class on average will boast better academic credentials than those of their predecessors at UNC.

While the incoming freshman class has not been finalized, the average SAT score of admitted students so far is 1344, up from 1302 last year, according to preliminary data released by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

Their average ACT score is 30 — the scores of the middle 50 percent of last year's class ranged from 26 to 31. And their average GPA is 4.6, about a 4 percent increase from the class of 2011's average of 4.42.

While these numbers reflect admitted students, they are considered incomplete because they include students who might not enroll.

They also include students who were waitlisted but have since been admitted. Ashley Memory, assistant director of admissions, said the University has offered admission to just more than 400 of the approximately 1,300 waitlisted students.

Stephen Farmer, director of undergraduate admissions, said the University is getting close to its target enrollment of 3,900 students and doesn't expect many more offers to be made. But the new enrollments should not have much effect on the overall class averages.

"I don't think it will make much difference in the end, one way or the other," Farmer said.

He stressed that while waitlisted students might be "marginally less appealing" than students who received the original offers, they are still solid academically.

And Farmer believes test scores and academic performance are not perfect indicators of how well a student will do at UNC.

"We can't explain why some fly higher or sink lower," he said. "People are a lot more complicated than we give them credit for."

Tentative class of 2012 characteristics

Among admitted students who submitted scores or reported GPAs:

- Avg. SAT score (verbal plus math): 1344
- Avg. ACT score: 30
- Avg. high school GPA (weighted 4.0 scale): 4.6

SOURCE: UNC Admissions Office

"There are fewer students who don't get the work done on time, who are sloppy."

GEORGE RABINOWITZ, PROFESSOR

Preliminary data on the newest enrolling class show that 80 percent of the students were in the top 10 percent of their high school classes, up from 76.4 percent of last year's incoming class. Forty-four percent ranked in the top 10, and 13.9 percent graduated first or second.

Higher academic credentials might translate to an increase in the quality of first-year students. UNC political science professor George Rabinowitz, who has taught many freshmen, said students are getting a little better each year.

"There are fewer students who don't get the work done on time, who are sloppy in their preparation," Rabinowitz said.

Students also seem to be more racially diverse than in previous years.

Preliminary data also show that 30 percent of the enrolled are black, Asian, Native American or Latino, an increase of almost 18 percent from the previous year's entering class.

The students so far come from 42 states and the District of Columbia and 22 countries.

Contact the University Editor at udesk@unc.edu.

HOSPITAL

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tals.

"You would find within some counties where there are multiple hospitals previously, the state looked at the needs across the county," he said. "Now it is done on an individual hospital basis, which is more responsive to their individual needs."

UNC has asked the state to fund \$325.5 million of the proposed \$732 million tower project. The hospital would finance the rest of the project by borrowing and using financial reserves.

"Overall, I think it is a good problem to have," Hughes said.

"We have no shortage of patients who want to come here for treatment, now the challenge is for us to meet this demand," he said.

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FAIR

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to be indoors, UNC alumna Carol West still decided to turn on a fan, set up some shade and display her restored 1911 grist mill along with \$5 bags of "old-fashioned, stone-ground grits."

West's husband spent about a year on restoration, and West said theirs is one of the only mills from this time period still in operation.

"They're definitely not instant grits," she said.

The presence of N.C. culture and history that the festival fostered was almost as intense as the heat.

Though Long said decisions about another festival will only be made after careful review of this year's event, one thing is for certain:

"The people who did come out and brave the heat had a good time."

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

ELECTIONS

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summer and fall, there will certainly be a lot more public activity," he said.

McCrorry's recent rash of appearances has come in the midst of a shake-up of his staff.

Recently overhauled campaign positions include the press secretary, finance manager, scheduler and campaign manager.

Hawke said now that the primary is over, the campaign faces

increasing challenges.

"We just decided when the primary was over, we were going into a major battle," he said.

Kochman said Perdue's team will remain in tact for the most part.

"In a very competitive and expensive environment, we ran a very strong campaign. And we've got strong leadership," he said.

"Our campaign has worked together and worked together well."

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OVERTIME

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losing money by working on the weekend, Holman said.

"They are the lowest paid employees on campus, and many have second jobs," said David Brannigan, chairman of the staff relations and management committee for the Employee Forum.

"Many have to make care arrangements," he said. "Many have commitments in their church

or community, and this is a massive imposition on them."

Holman, who has worked in housekeeping for four years, originally brought the issue to the attention of the Employee Forum and spearheaded a petition against it.

More than 60 housekeeping employees have signed the petition in the hopes that their concerns will be addressed by their managers.

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FUNDING

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paign barriers for the non-wealthy and the increased visibility of the source of campaign funds.

"The only thing it does is make the process more transparent and open the door for many others," council member Mark Kleinschmidt said.

Czajkowski suggested to the council that it resolve the issue by making it a referendum on November's ballot.

"If we believe this is a good thing,

then turn it over to the people of Chapel Hill," he said.

But in the end, the council passed the resolution itself.

A related resolution passed at the meeting will provide for twice-a-year information sessions about the program for prospective candidates.

The council also unanimously passed the 2008-09 budget, which included \$25,000 to begin the Voter Owned Elections Fund.

Contact the City Editor at citydesk@unc.edu.

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