

Fee audit committee lays out approach for the year

Aims to examine fee-funded groups

BY DANIELLE ADAMS
STAFF WRITER

The student fee audit committee plans to look into the finances of campus groups receiving student fees, committee members said Thursday.

The committee outlined what it hoped to accomplish this year at its first meeting Thursday.

Financial inquiries play a big role in one of its main goals, a return to the committee's original intent.

The committee formed in 1996 to audit the use of specific fees. Since that time it has taken on an advisory role, making recommendations to the chancellor's student fee advisory subcommittee.

"UNC students have got the SFAC because it allows them to have some control as to what they are paying and what money goes where," said Student Congress Speaker Tim Nichols.

"It's a great way to take an in-depth look as to whether student money is used wisely and efficiently."

The committee, headed by Student Body Treasurer Pedro Carreño, used Thursday's meeting to discuss proposed fee increases in undergraduate student activities, education and technology and health services fees.

If approved, Carreño said, the proposals will raise total fees by about 5 percent.

"It will take a lot of research and time on our end. ... I think this group is willing to put in the time to do what is necessary."

PEDRO CARREÑO, STUDENT BODY TREASURER

Proposed fee increases and looking into financial records will be two large components of the SFAC this year, Carreño said.

Last year's committee focused on assessing all of the fee increases that went through, as opposed to conducting audits that were meant to begin in the spring.

"We began to look at a few fees, especially in student government," said former Student Body Treasurer and SFAC chairman Jordan Myers.

"But that sort of got placed under the radar. I'm sure that the committee this year will focus a lot on that."

He added that how in-depth an audit can be varies from group to group.

"When I think of an audit, I don't think of an IRS audit," Myers said. "It's just going through the organization and seeing what's going on and how they have developed. That could include something as meticulous as going through receipts or as simple as asking questions."

Carreño said that before the group can begin auditing, they must handle proposals.

"Being the first meeting of the year for this committee, we wanted

to focus on setting schedules and timelines for upcoming proposals," Carreño said. "The first step in the process is to get student fees approved."

This year, undergraduate students will pay \$1,691 in fees. Graduate students pay \$1,679.

These fees pay for services including the Rams Head Recreation Center, Student Health Services and UNC athletics.

The auditing process includes the SFAC going over fee proposals and then passing it to the student fee advisory subcommittee to the chancellor.

If they approve the fee increase, it is then sent to the tuition and fee advisory task force then the Board of Trustees for approval.

Carreño said the biggest challenge SFAC faces in looking into financial records will be the amount of research needed to be successful.

"It will take a lot of time on our end," Carreño said. "But we have an active committee made of a great group of students. I think this group is willing to put in the effort to do what is necessary."

Contact the University Editor
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ENTERTAINMENT

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McGurk said that after the series is finished, the town will evaluate the results of the event and decide whether or not to do it again next summer.

Live performances will begin along West Franklin Street tonight at 6 p.m. An open-air market and children's activities will start at 7 p.m. at the Wallace Plaza at 150 E. Rosemary St.

Dorozenski said the concept of Locally Grown is good because only local businesses are promoted, unlike Apple Chill, which brought in outside vendors.

But Dorozenski said that some of the logistics of the event, such as the location, could be worked

out better.

He said that because the plaza is located on a different street than the majority of downtown businesses, people have difficulty finding it.

"It's not really clear where the deck is and how to get back and forth from it," he said, suggesting that large banners be placed downtown. "People don't know where to park or where the event is."

"You almost have to overdo it to direct people to these things."

The town will be looking to have more events at the plaza going forward, Tilghman said.

"The plaza is a park facility that we want to utilize more," he said.

Contact the City Editor
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MILLION MEALS

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All of the food packed at the UNC site will be sent to the Kibera slum of Nairobi, Kenya, a violence-ravaged area where 35 percent to 45 percent of the population is estimated to be unemployed.

"It's like living in a garbage dump, basically," said Tierza Watts, associate director of the Center for Student Leadership Ethics & Public Service, who is in charge of the N.C. State site.

The event will also feature guest speakers to help motivate and inspire the volunteers.

Contact the Features Editor
at features@unc.edu.

National and World News

FROM THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL

McCain attacked over his wealth

Washington, D.C. (MCT) — Democrats Thursday ridiculed presumptive Republican presidential nominee John McCain for saying he couldn't recall how many homes he and his wife own. Presumptive Democratic nominee Barack Obama's campaign launched an ad calling McCain out of touch.

Four years ago, it was the Democratic candidate with a wealthy wife who owned a lot of houses and the Republicans ridiculing him as an out-of-touch elitist.

Lieberman will be speaking at RNC

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MCT) — Sen. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., will be a speaker opening night at the Republican National Convention, capping an extraordinary political journey for a man who could have been this year's Democratic nominee for president had history taken a different turn.

Lieberman is a supporter of presumptive Republican presidential candidate John McCain. He is often mentioned as a possible vice presidential running mate for McCain.

Rice negotiates troop withdrawals with Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki

BAGHDAD (MCT) — U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice met Thursday with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al Maliki in an effort to bring to a close long, contentious negotiations with Iraq over an agreement that would govern the presence of U.S. forces here after the end of this year.

American and Iraqi negotiators have been saying for weeks that they are close to an agreement, but that Maliki has held up the process over his concern that the agreement doesn't give Iraq enough authority over U.S. troop conduct.

The agreement foresees U.S. combat troops leaving Iraq by 2011, Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari has said. Other Iraqi officials have told McClatchy that the agreement also calls for U.S. forces to pull out of Iraqi cities by June 30, 2009.

"I think it's a chance for me to sit with the prime minister and really get a sense of what, if there is anything else, that we need to do from Washington to get to closure on the agreement," Rice said to reporters traveling with her in Baghdad on Thursday.

Sandanista marks revolution event

MANAGUA (MCT) — "You need to be more revolutionary," Eden Pastora, 71, told an audience of high-school students as part of a week-long commemoration of the assault on the National Palace.

Pastora is Comandante Cero who took the entire legislature hostage and then forced dictator Anastasio Somoza to agree to a prisoner swap for jailed Sandinista rebels on Aug. 22, 1978.

On Friday, he will be among several surviving commandos from that operation who will be decorated in a medal ceremony at the palace.

Russia prompts U.S. policy shift

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MCT) — The Russian move into Georgia raises troubling questions for U.S. military thinkers, many of whom had hoped that tensions with Russia were a thing of the distant past. The decision to sign a missile-defense treaty with Poland is one aspect of this new thinking.

The deal, signed Wednesday in Warsaw by U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, calls for 10 U.S. interceptor missiles 115 miles from Russia's western frontier, along with a military base for support of short-range missiles.



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