

The Daily Tar Heel

97th year of editorial freedom

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Assist awards process Support student initiative on teaching

In the spring, students at UNC voted on a binding referendum to establish an undergraduate teaching award. The idea behind the award was to give undergraduates a way to recognize their best teachers — whether professors or graduate students — through student funding of the awards and student selection of recipients.

Students voiced approval for this innovative plan by a 4-1 vote in favor of setting up the award. And this fall for the first time undergraduates paid the semester's fee of 75 cents, which will be used to set up four \$5,000 awards. The vision is well underway to becoming reality, and students now have a unique opportunity to set a strong precedent for the future success of the Undergraduate Teaching Awards.

While there are other teaching awards at UNC, the Undergraduate Teaching Awards are unique for three reasons. Students will have control and make the decisions throughout the entire selection procedure. A committee of 10 undergraduates, along with the committee chair and a non-voting faculty adviser, will conduct the process.

Also, graduate students who independently teach courses will be eligible for the award. This is especially important, since the other awards offered at this university are limited to tenure-track professors. Awareness of the importance of graduate teachers on this campus is growing, as evidenced by the graduate student rally earlier this week. The eligibility of graduates for these awards certainly shows

board opinion

undergraduate support for TAs.

Finally, the Undergraduate Teaching Awards will be the only awards at this university to be initiated by and entirely dependent on student fees. UNC students should be proud to know that their payment of 75 cents per semester and 25 cents per summer session makes a direct statement of support and gratitude to UNC educators who excel in the classroom.

The executive branch of student government is now accepting applications from any undergraduate interested in serving on the award selection committee. The committee's chairman, Grant Vinik, points out that students who serve on the committee this year will get to make the rules which will govern the selection procedure. This is a unique opportunity for dedicated students to exhibit innovative leadership and get the teaching award off to a good start.

Even students not interested in committing time and energy to the selection process can help show appreciation for their best teachers by making nominations, which will be due in late January, and by submitting further information if they have taken classes from any of the finalists, who will be announced sometime in February. This is a time when the quality of education in our state is slipping, when the compensation and respect due to our teachers is lacking and when the emphasis for faculty in a university setting is too frequently on performing research rather than communicating in the classroom. We urge students to join together and make a difference.

Years in the making "On my honor" commands respect

By this time most freshmen at UNC will be thoroughly introduced to the University code of student conduct, namely the Honor Code and the Campus Code. Throughout their years at UNC, students will notice these words printed inside blue books and notebooks, in catalogs and schedule booklets, but few will ever take the time to read them. The sad fact is this: most UNC students take the student Honor Code and the rules it upholds for granted; in actuality, they are a rare privilege — one for which the students of this University once fought.

In 1904 a "Student Council" was organized to "dispose of all cases of hazing and violations of the honor system," a system which had before consisted of the self-governing rules of the University literary societies. Six years later the council expelled a student for cheating, but a faculty committee waived the student's decision and reinstated the guilty party. Student protests and Tar Heel editorials demanded that student authority be respected, and as a result, the trustees recognized the council as an official government while creating a faculty council to act as a court of appeals.

Faculty members continued to question student ability to handle large violations of University rules, and disputes continued. In 1927, however, the Student Council suspended 13 students for gambling in Manly Dormitory, a measure taken after thorough investigation and without interference by the faculty. Student and faculty confidence in the council grew over the years until 1936, when student government made one of its greatest achievements.

Students uncovered a system of organized cheating on campus, and with the dismissal of 51 students from the University, eliminated a serious threat to the integrity of the school.

Earlier that decade, a report by the General Education Board credited UNC "for having a system which approached absolute student self-government more nearly than any other college in the nation." The Honor Code was strong, and students alone saw that it was obeyed.

The real responsibility lies with the individual student.

Today the Honor Code is just as strong, but many UNC students don't seem to understand or appreciate the responsibility of governing their own behavior within the University. Both inside and outside the classroom, faculty members place a great deal of trust in students and their Honor Code, concentrating more on teaching and less on being watchdogs. Students should be aware of this trust, because it is essential to academics at Carolina. Learning would seem a lot less democratic with administrators peering over your shoulder, wouldn't it?

But the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance covers more than academics, including student behavior toward other students and, most recently, issues of sexual harassment and assault. The Undergraduate Honor Code and Student Attorney General's staff work hard to maintain awareness of the Honor Code on campus, but the real responsibility lies with the individual student, beginning with freshmen. Understand the guidelines and importance of this system, and live it. But most of all, be proud to have it. — James Burroughs



Ship Deserting Sinking Rats.

Readers' Forum

Flag burners' rights are also protected

To the editor:
On Monday you published a cartoon which purported to show the "proper way to display the American flag burner" — prostrate and underfoot. Let me remind your readers that objectionable views, and those who express them, are protected by the highest law of the land. And for good reason.

The flag of the United States is a symbol of the values this country was founded on, values such as social progress and liberty. These values should not be defined for us by our politicians, who in the pursuit of power will typically compromise anything. The Supreme Court upheld the right of an individual to express his view, that the Republican Party was intent on defining for us the values the flag symbolizes, by burning the flag. It is not patriotic to castigate flag-burners. It is the opposite; it is partisan.

Sadder is that a cartoonist would fail to see that First Amendment protection is all that stands between himself and his own prostration, underfoot.

WILLIAM M. BROWN
Graduate
Economics

Orientation jobs were gratifying

To the editor:
I, too, served as an orientation commissioner this past year. I found the job very rewarding. However, just as with any other job, there were frustrations.

It was hard for me to believe the University does not provide an attractive housing package for commissioners. The stipend set for orientation commissioners is well above minimum wage, but due to the amount of money we (commissioners) spent on housing, the stipend seemed incredibly small. For the large amount of service commissioners render to the University

through the C-TOPS program there should be some way commissioners could be housed for 11 weeks without paying a ridiculous amount of money.

And until the University, as a whole, publicly acknowledges the outstanding work coming from the third floor of Carr Building it will be tough recruiting students to be orientation commissioners.

I challenge Gene Davis to take an active role in the orientation program before he graduates. I also challenge him to never write another letter to a University official without representation of the entire staff. We all had complaints to air. Together we could have written or talked with University officials to improve conditions for commissioners. If he had taken the time to talk with others, he would have realized that the satisfactions of each commissioner outweighed the dissatisfactions.

I also challenge freshmen, sophomores and juniors to consider becoming orientation commissioners and/or counselors. The gratitude parents and students express compensates for the time and effort spent on orientation planning. Both positions deserve a large amount of credit and respect. I think the investigation will change the negatives of orientation and provide incentives to the program for future commissioners and counselors. I will take my experiences of orientation with me wherever I go after graduation. I gained a lot from the program.

CHANDA DOUGLAS
Senior
Public Policy Analysis

Residence college retreat necessary

To the editor:
I am writing to readers who were led astray by Mr. David Israel's misconceived opinions in his letter "Morrison officers use trip as perk" (Sept. 19). Mr. Israel was referring to this past

weekend's residence college retreat, which he accused Morrison dorm officers of "unethically" attending. He is wrong to emphasize the officers of Morrison alone because the retreat was campuswide and was supported by the Residence Hall Association. As president of Granville Towers West, I feel it necessary to state that the following remarks belong to me personally and are neither those opinions of the body over which I preside nor the administration alongside whom I work.

The retreat is an annual tradition where the focus is team-building and planning — not vacationing, as implied by Mr. Israel. He has no concept of the effectiveness of a retreat. The retreat environment is designed to completely remove retreaters from everyday distractions. This has continually proven to be the most effective method to obtain optimum results. The subjects discussed during retreats are not easily studied over a week of nightly meetings. They require undivided attention, which is exactly what they receive — even though the retreats are held at the coast. Yes, the retreats do prove to be enjoyable, and time is spent in "the sun and surf." But recreation occurs only after work is completed. There is no question of "ethics" here; there is only the question of necessity.

That Mr. Israel sees things "in terms of 'we' and 'they'" is his own tragedy. Dorm officers are elected and personally committed to serve their residents and to be completely accessible. They find personal satisfaction in the jobs they are doing; that is their only compensation. The implication that the retreat is a "stipend" is ridiculous. I guarantee no officer has ever felt, much less ever stated that he "deserved" an all-expense paid trip. That remark is simply an inference made by a frustrated writer groping for words to support his weak argument. Should Mr. Israel decide to involve himself in dorm government, he would quickly discover that a beach "vacation"

(even if it were) is no where near a compensation for one year's worth of thankless work. My only aspiration is that you, Mr. Israel, will become a part and find out for yourself how valuable a structured retreat is to your dorm government.

And by the way, David, thanks for your concern; the weather was nice.

FRANK M. SUTTON JR.
French/Pre-Medicine
Sophomore

SATs don't reflect lack of intelligence

To the editor:
It seems that as Mr. Humphreys was formulating ideas for his cartoon "North Carolina, Home of," he made a rather unintelligent assumption about the intelligence of the North Carolina high school student. He expressed his opinion elegantly with his drawing of a "typical" student with a finger in his nose labeled "the Dumbass." Apparently Mr. Humphreys feels the low SAT average in North Carolina is due to a high concentration of feeble-minded residents. This is absurd. Having attended high school both in and out of this state, I never perceived a difference in the intelligence of my peers at either school I attended, but I did recognize a significant discrepancy in the curricula taught and the facilities available.

There is a problem in North Carolina schools. Mr. Humphreys has, however, incorrectly identified the cause. North Carolina high school students have as much potential as any students. Unfortunately, the curriculum and facilities here are generally inferior to those in the rest of the nation. This is the cause of lower scores. Mr. Humphreys ignored this in his cartoon. He could learn something from the student in his illustration — in the future he should dig more deeply into the issues at hand.

PHILIP DISCLAFANI
Senior
Chemistry

Fight crime rather than restricting guns

To the editor:
I am writing this letter in response to an editorial printed in the DTH entitled "Batling a Ban: Bush's Stance on Rifles is Dangerous" (Sept. 19). I believe the editorial presents a misconception of firearms and firearm owners.

Demonstrated over time, laws do not stop nor hinder criminals from obtaining weapons. Criminals are criminals because they operate outside legal limitations. Therefore, another law will not impede their illegal behavior. Focusing attention on criminals instead of law-abiding citizens is the only way to inhibit violent crime involving firearms.

Many times I have heard opponents say they want to keep drug dealers, mentally incompetent people, convicted felons and minors from obtaining firearms. What they fail to understand is that it is already illegal for these people to purchase firearms. Obviously, present laws have been unsuccessful in stopping these people from obtaining firearms. So, why do firearms opponents believe another bill will magically solve all the problems if the present laws have failed?

In regards to the importation of foreign made "assault rifles," placing an import ban on these firearms will not retard crime. The criminals and not the firearms are the cause of crime. Tons of drugs are imported into our country everyday. With each boat or plane load of illegal drugs, fully automatic firearms are also brought into the country. These firearms, which have been illegal for years, continue to enter our country on a regular basis. Do the opponents supporting these importation bans believe drug dealers will not transport their illegal firearms into the country

when they make their next delivery?

Maybe the anti-gun politicians believe the drug dealers will surrender their firearms on the Senate or House floor following their next shipment. If the drug cartel can regularly import tons of illegal drugs into this country undetected, then tons of firearms can be imported just as easily. Exactly as these criminals violate our drug laws, they do and will violate our firearms laws. Confirmation of these facts is apparent in the number of fully automatic weapons available illegally everywhere on the streets.

Furthermore, anti-gun supporters argue that "assault weapons" have no sporting purpose in our society. I emphatically disagree. How do the anti-gun supporters define the term "sporting?" Many firearms listed in proposed legislation are used by hunters, sportsmen and competitors alike. Such rifles include the H&K model 91 and the Colt AR-15. Furthermore, many rifles are used in legal, NRA sanctioned high-power matches for competition. Are these not sporting purposes? Law-abiding citizens should have the choice to purchase whatever style firearm they desire. When government dictates the firearms that may be purchased, "Big Brother" government will be in power.

A similar example of freedom of choice involves traffic laws and the types of automobiles available to the general public. At most, the speed limit is 65 on interstate highways and 55 on state highways. Many automobiles today speed. Some are even able to travel up to 200 miles per hour. Why do safe, law-abiding drivers need automobiles capable of such speeds when they can only drive 65 miles per hour at best anyway? I fail to see any justification for purchasing such powerful auto-

mobiles. Drivers would be enraged if someone denied sale of such automobiles even though nowhere in the Constitution of the United States or the Bill of Rights does it state that such sales are guaranteed. I am positive these drivers would think their rights and freedom of choice had been violated.

Just as these drivers feel they lost their rights, gun owners believe their guaranteed rights have been similarly violated. The fact of our country is free means that we can do whatever we want as long as it does not violate the rights of others and is within the legal limits of the law. Therefore, as long as owners of "assault weapons" use the firearms legally for sport, recreation, competition in high power matches sanctioned by the NRA or self-defense, gun owners should have that choice without the government stating anything contradictory.

Sen. James McClure of Idaho declared, "It is deceptive to tell the American public that we are getting tough on criminals by restricting gun owners' rights." Instead of making it tougher for the law-abiding citizens to purchase firearms if they so desire, the government should concentrate its efforts on imprisoning criminals and ensuring they are prohibited from repeating their crime. The philosophy that all criminals can and should be rehabilitated is misleading. Some criminals can be successfully rehabilitated and should be given the opportunity. Many others fail and go on to become repeat offenders. If these criminals had been incarcerated to begin with, our nation would be safer and law-abiding citizens could keep their firearms.

HAMLIN T. RANEY III
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The Daily Tar Heel

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