

The Daily Tar Heel

98th year of editorial freedom

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How not to steal \$75,000

The \$75,000 question of the week: How could the campus yearbook have \$75,896.65 embezzled from its accounts without anybody discovering it for two years?

That question has tormented Yackey Yack and Student Activities Fund Office officials ever since police charged former Yack Business Manager Tracy Keene with 21 counts of embezzlement. By using sophisticated techniques such as false letterhead, forgery and phony checks, police claim Keene managed to dodge all forms of checks and balances on student financial accounts. Considering the magnitude of the theft — more than \$75,000 stolen over two years — something must be done to prevent such an expensive blunder from happening in the future.

Yack Editor Shea Tisdale and SAFO Director Howard Brubaker both have proposed ways to tighten the process of approving payments from campus groups to vendors. The following suggestions should be seriously considered by administrators and Student Congress to avoid further embarrassing mistakes.

■ Instead of the student group handling the invoices, SAFO could deal directly with the vendors. SAFO handles all financial transactions between student groups and vendors. Recommended by Brubaker, this proposal would eliminate the chance of a student group making phony invoices.

■ Already SAFO handles about 230 accounts with only a handful of employees. Brubaker would like to see two more staffers added to the office in order to verify the orders that come in from student groups. Because of its great volume of work, SAFO must treat its student clients with trust. SAFO assumes these organizations put

honest folks in charge of the money, but sometimes this trust fails. Adding two more watchdogs would help catch some of the slip-ups.

■ Presently the Yack has no governing body that would scrutinize all financial transactions. Tisdale is working on creating a board of directors, modeled after The Daily Tar Heel's, that would serve such a purpose. Having an outside group of people concentrating on the Yack's finances would ensure objectivity and legality. The media board was created as a similar sort of governing party, but it proved totally worthless. The Yack needs its own financial checks and balances, and the University should help the Yack move quickly in installing such a board.

■ Tisdale also recommended that the job of business manager be divided. One of the managers could handle incoming payments, while the other would control outgoing payments. Thus, two people would oversee the financial transactions.

■ Under the present treasury laws and SAFO regulations, the president of a student group only approves requisitions, not invoices. If this leader could also sign checks, then that would be a final approval before the vendor receives the invoice. Thus, if the business manager has pulled any funny business between the requisition and invoice stages, the president would catch it.

SAFO already is making adjustments by becoming stricter with student groups by examining all documents more closely. The precautions and lessons learned from this \$75,000 mistake have been quite expensive. By taking some of the suggestions made above, UNC may avoid such costly casualties in the future.

Casting a vote for fairness

Attention students!
 Elections for student body officers are on the way. Consider this fair warning.

Let's face it. Over the past few years, elections have become — well — ugly. Those who have paid attention have seen the election process drawn out and complicated by election board high jinks, defacement of candidate's campaign materials and increasing student apathy. We can hope that this year will be different.

To begin with, Student Congress needs to straighten out the elections board. We can't have elections without it. The appointments to the board need to be approved with Chris Bracey as its chairman. That's step one.

Once the board is approved, it should do what it can to avoid stretching out the election process. The longer the campaigning and the voting go on, the less the students are going to care and, thus, vote.

Aggravate the students any more than necessary, and write-ins such as Batman and Bullwinkle will appear on ballots.

Candidates have it a little rougher this year, as they have less time to get the number of petition signatures they need to get on the ballot. This may concern some candidates more than others, but, if congress considers this to be a problem, reducing the number of signatures required of each candidate is a better course of action

than allotting them extra time to gather the needed John Hancock.

As for the candidates themselves, the operative words here are "Keep It Clean." The elections board should make it abundantly clear what are and what are not acceptable campaign tactics. And in turn, the candidates should make sure that their campaign workers, for whom they are responsible, understand the rules as well.

In the past, there have been incidents of campaign materials purchased by candidates disappearing or being defaced or destroyed.

Put simply, messing with other people's stuff is against the rules. Most 4-year-olds know that. To be safe, if you see something having anything to do with elections, keep your hands off. Don't write on it. Don't pour things on it. Don't say mean things to it. Don't even give it a dirty look. Leave it alone. It doesn't get any clearer than that.

As for Student Congress, do what you can to smooth the times ahead and try not to let politics interfere. The student body cringes at the mention of elections as it is. Let's try to reverse the trends of the past few years and make elections a quick, clean process.



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Reward your favorite professors with \$5,000 gifts

Editor's note: the writer is vice chairwoman for the Student's Undergraduate Teaching Award Selection Committee.

GIVE YOUR FAVORITE PROFESSOR \$5,000! By now, you've seen the Pit sign. Soon, fliers proclaiming this same message will cover the walls of your classrooms and dorms.

Sound a little absurd? Certainly, no one expects you to delve into your personal bank account and offer a professor every penny you've ever made. As a student body, we've already raised the money; in fact, we have \$20,000 — enough for three \$5,000 awards for professors and five \$1,000 awards for teaching assistants.

Through our student activity fees, we each give the equivalent of one drink — 75 cents — a semester to fund what is called the Students' Undergraduate Teaching Award. It is our only opportunity as students to thank our outstanding teachers with a substantial reward. And it is our only opportunity to affirm the importance of undergraduate teaching at a university where research is the primary criteria for hiring, promoting and firing our professors.

"GIVE YOUR FAVORITE INSTRUCTOR \$5,000," the publicity signs read. Last year's

Jennifer Lloyd
 Guest Writer

recipients argue that it's not just the money that counts. Michael Follo, a geology professor in his sixth year at Carolina and a past winner of the award, pointed out that "even if no money were involved, the fact that there were students out there who took the time to recommend me was tremendous affirmation." Follo said that "there is no one better qualified to evaluate teaching than students," and he also stressed that professors improve their performance after receiving the award.

"The award challenges me and demands that I maintain a high level of quality teaching," Follo said. "I feel that my students' expectations are higher, and I work to meet those expectations."

Suggestion #368 in "Life's Little Instruction Book" by Jackson Brown, Jr. reads: "Remember, no one makes it alone. Have a grateful heart and be quick to acknowledge those who help you."

It would be impossible to graduate from

Carolina without encountering a professor deserving of recognition for his or her excellence in teaching. Take the time to fill out a nomination form for those instructors who excel in the classroom. It is the most appropriate way "to acknowledge" their efforts.

In honor of the Bicentennial fund-raising campaign for the College of Arts and Sciences, Doris Betts, the alumni distinguished professor of English, has written a very convincing argument titled "In Defense of Teaching and Learning."

At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, we profess "teaching and learning" to be our priorities. Yet, it is unusual for a student to find an instructor who can honestly state that his priority and his greatest strengths can be found in the classroom.

We need you to find these professors for us. Applications are available everywhere — from the Student Union to the libraries to the cafeterias — and are due by Jan. 31. Don't miss this unique opportunity ... and thanks in advance for your help.

Jennifer Lloyd is a sophomore political science and psychology major from Burlington.

READERS' FORUM

Creationism merits no place in science class

To the editor:
 As a biologist and as a biology teacher, I feel compelled to comment on Eric Lusk's Jan. 10 article ("Schools debate merits of teaching creationism"). There is more to the omission of "creationism" and "scientific creationism" from science classrooms and textbooks than the legally required separation of church and state.

Science in general represents a way of looking at the world; it is not necessarily any more valid than any given religious view of the world, only distinctly different. To present science and religion together, in the same context, is intellectually false. Science and scientific ideas are repeatedly subjected to intense scrutiny and reevaluation. If a scientific hypothesis does not withstand this scrutiny completely intact, it is modified or rejected. I would argue that, by definition, religious tenets are not tested in this manner.

Creationism does not fall within the realm of science for a multitude of reasons, the primary ones being that it is untestable and unsupported by direct physical evidence. (Creationists do have a list of "evidences" they claim support their

beliefs; however, they are similar in quality to the "seashell on a mountaintop" cited in Lusk's article. If you are uncertain as to why the seashells are there, take Geology 11). Since creationism is, by virtually everyone's assertion except the creationists', a religious belief and not a scientific one, there is no legal or intellectual reason to present it as a science in a classroom.

Al Isaak is quoted as equating creationism and evolution in terms of their lack of proof, ostensibly because "we weren't there when it happened." If it is not possible to infer the existence of phenomena and the natural rules that govern their behavior based on evidence, then science as an intellectual pursuit is bankrupt. In other words, if the only evidence that is admissible is direct human observation, as Isaak claims, then science is completely worthless (as are many other academic fields, including religion and philosophy).

Finally, Lusk falls into the same trap that most creationists and many scientists fall into: Evolution and religion are mutually exclusive belief systems. This just simply is not the case. Most scientists and theologians I know and whose works I have read have little difficulty reconciling their religious beliefs with their scientific

beliefs. Only narrowmindedness can prevent one belief from coexisting with the other. I have no objection to students being exposed to conflicting ideas on our origins, as long as it is in the appropriate forum. Creationism does not belong in a science classroom.

JOHN BUIE
 1988 BS Biology
 1989 MAT Science Education

"Helmsian" Moore denies students choice

To the editor:
 I could not help laughing at the ridiculous nature of Tim Moore's argument ("Student Government Code must be followed," Dec. 6). It simply reaffirmed my belief that Mr. Moore himself is "posturing and grandstanding" for personal glory.

Mr. Moore states that defeat of the SELF bill "is indicative of what a fiscally responsible congress should do to protect students." What is our Helmsian speaker protecting us from? The right to decide issues for ourselves? Strong libraries? Mr. Moore goes on to say that "a fee increase is especially improper." Isn't that a decision for students to make?

If students do not want a whopping \$2.50 increase to support our

libraries, which benefit every student, then that is something for us to decide. Mr. Moore, who didn't even bother to sit in on the debate of the SELF proposal, does not have the right to speak for the entire student body.

GEORGE STILES
 Junior
 Public Policy Analysis

Letters policy

The Daily Tar Heel welcomes reader comments and criticisms. We attempt to print as many letters to the editor as space permits. When writing letters, please follow these guidelines:

- Letters should be limited to 400 words, although longer letters are accepted. However, the shorter the letter, the better chance it has of running.
- If you want your letter published, sign and date it. No more than two signatures.
- All letters must be typed and double spaced.
- Include your year in school, major, phone number and hometown.
- If you have a title that is relevant to your letter's subject, please include it.
- The DTH reserves the right to edit letters for space, clarity and vulgarity.

Futuristic industrial facility good for state, nation

Less than a year ago, we began studying the possibility of building a unique, futuristic industrial park in North Carolina that would revolutionize the way business is conducted in the global economy of the 21st century.

This project — known as the Global TransPark — clusters an industrial park facility around an intermodal transportation network that includes an airport capable of handling international cargo flights. That network would integrate the production and distribution demands of our U.S. industrial base — and that of a worldwide market — with the latest improvements in air, sea and land transportation.

The Global TransPark would combine the most up-to-date equipment in aviation and cargo handling, industrial production and telecommunications to improve our access to worldwide markets. The three main qualities of this state-of-the-art distribution system would be speed, access and reliability.

History has taught us a very clear lesson: Transportation plays an extremely important role in commercial development. For North Carolina, the Global TransPark and its promise of a state-of-the-art intermodal transportation system makes sense, especially since our state is already blessed with a very good network of highways, airports, rails and seaports.

Aviation is a rapidly expanding method of

Jim Martin
 Guest Writer

distribution for industrial goods, leading to the rise of what many refer to as "just-in-time" (JIT) production.

What just-in-time production, an order is received and processing begins the same day. The product can then be delivered to any point on the globe in a matter of hours. The access, speed and reliability offered by the Global TransPark's transportation infrastructure of highways, rails, seaports and other airports would immediately answer the needs of growing JIT businesses — American and foreign alike — as well as a wide array of manufacturers who rely on less immediate delivery.

If we are to compete in international markets, the United States must develop a better understanding of how government and the private sector can work together to improve U.S. commerce. The success of joint efforts between private enterprise and government in European and Pacific Rim countries show that we must continue our efforts to develop similar partnerships.

Global TransPark is a good example of how

we can work together to bring vast opportunities to the American economy and transform American business enterprise.

We face many challenges in building this facility in North Carolina. For example, about 2,000 bilateral agreements currently determine what routes are flown by international carriers. The framework for these bilateral agreements was laid in 1945 and needs to be drastically modified.

These bilateral agreements severely hinder the ability of American business to compete in a global economy.

Yet the Global TransPark concept with its many facets holds great promise. For North Carolina alone, early projections show that this facility could create almost 55,000 new jobs and bring \$2.8 billion into the state economy each year.

The Global TransPark is also symbolic. It marks a new turn that American government and business can take toward renewed prosperity and competitiveness in a global market. Our plan for the Global TransPark sets a new agenda that integrates a highly expensive, and highly fragmented, intermodal transportation system to strengthen the economic future of both our state and nation.

Jim Martin is governor of North Carolina.

The Daily Tar Heel

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