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Revolution or resolution?

There finally appeared to be some movement in the black cultural center standoff between students and administrators Tuesday night when Chancellor Paul Hardin announced the formation of a working group to create plans for a BCC.

It seemed Hardin had dedicated himself to a resolution, and that the matter finally could be worked out reasonably. In fact, after recognizing that his philosophical differences with the students would hinder the process, Hardin took himself out of the process and placed Provost Richard McCormick in charge of the group of students and administrators.

Clearly that was a positive step, one that had been suggested both in this space and by students and faculty members. McCormick, who arrived at UNC this year from Rutgers University, could add a fresh perspective and a new face to the negotiations.

Unfortunately, though, the coalition decided Tuesday night to suspend temporarily the honorable fight for a free-standing BCC in favor of a battle over semantics and trivialities.

Coalition members responded to Hardin's plan with a half-page written statement explaining that they would "only respond and meet directly with the Chancellor at this point. We refuse to allow the Chancellor to pass the buck to his underlings." It went on to say: "This is no longer a movement; this is a revolution!"

The students also complained — with some validity — that Hardin's plan was delivered only to local media and not to the coalition.

Nevertheless, the group's response was both nasty and completely ineffective. Coming at a time when

the coalition was gaining widespread support, the group's latest move creates yet another obstacle.

Considering that McCormick's working group will come up with a plan to present to the Board of Trustees — quite possibly for some kind of free-standing BCC — the coalition's resistance only slows the process.

It might be time to ask: Where are the coalition leaders' priorities? Are they not interested in meeting the Nov. 13 deadline set by the Black Awareness Council? Are they more interested in simply destroying Hardin's credibility than in resolving the issue?

It appears Hardin might be aiming toward the November BOT meeting, but the coalition's decision to reject the panel plan could stymie the effort.

As UNC's highest ranking administrator, Hardin has a responsibility to settle disputes on campus either by using his own diplomacy or by delegating authority. So far he has neglected this responsibility. But in this case, he has asked others to create a plan for a new BCC. And it's extremely unlikely Hardin would veto the committee's proposal.

The student coalition has honorable goals for a stand-alone cultural center. Hardin's latest proposal might seem like just another tactic to put the issue on the back burner, but it's up to the students to join the working group and ensure that it generates the correct resolution.

McCormick's panel could indeed be the final step toward finalizing plans for a cultural center. One month from now, the students might wish they had cooperated with the effort instead of letting more time waste away.

Register this: Sign up to vote

In case you didn't know, there's an election coming up.

And some of you aren't even registered to vote. It's hard to believe, but it's true. Others are registered in their hometowns and insist that they'll just get absentee ballots. Right. Between classes, extracurricular activities and drinking beer, you're going to remember to submit a written request for an absentee ballot to your hometown elections board and not miss the deadline. It can be done, but there's an easier way.

Right now, in front of the Student Union, Alpha Phi Alpha, the Student Environmental Action Coalition and the Green Corps are sponsoring voter registration from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. until Oct. 2. It's the perfect chance for you to register not just for national but also for state and county elections. All you need is some form of identification and a letter or bill addressed to you at your present address.

The national election will be close this year, and every vote will count. And as residents of North

Carolina and Orange County (if only for nine months of the year in some cases) students have a definite interest in deciding who will make the decisions that affect their daily lives.

The student body composes half of Chapel Hill's population but rarely lets its voice be heard on election day. The election of UNC student Mark Chilton to the Chapel Hill Town Council gave a glimpse of what student activism can accomplish, but students could do a lot more.

Let's face it, the 18-24 age group suffers from the worst voter apathy of any segment of the population. Sitting around and complaining simply won't cut it anymore.

So take five minutes out of your busy schedules to register. Special Registration Commissioner Erik Ose has issued a standing invitation to his house to watch Ren and Stimpy videos for everyone who registers, so check it out.

Just do it.

Student voices PACKing a punch

Next summer's legislative session finally might be the time that students can "PAC" the legislature and get lawmakers in Raleigh know how they feel about tuition and fee issues.

UNC-Chapel Hill student Kirk Ross recently proposed a political action committee for students from all 16 system schools to do just that. And it's about time. A well-organized, non-student-government-affiliated group lobbying legislators might be just what UNC-system students need to communicate.

Some of the more recent actions by state legislators — the across-the-board student fee freezes, the construction of an unnecessary athletic facility at UNC-Charlotte and, of course, dramatic budget cuts — clearly haven't been in the students' best interest.

The key element to Ross' proposal is that representatives from all 16 system schools would take part. Students from the various campuses frequently have ventured to the state's capital to put pressure on legislators. Those from UNC-CH certainly have held their share of protests and marches.

Students from UNC-CH — traditionally seen in the General Assembly as especially radical — seem

to have the hardest time getting legislators to take them seriously. But a statewide effort to educate lawmakers about issues that affect most or all of the schools just might get a little more attention.

Some of the universal problems Ross would like to see addressed are the fee freeze, the housekeepers' movement, certain on-campus environmental efforts, graduate student pay and benefit policies, and the constant threat of additional tuition increases.

With adequate communication between the PAC and students, this group has the potential to be quite powerful. After all, more than 150,000 voters in agreement on an issue easily could have great influence on elections.

Granted, the UNC system officially does have a lobbyist, Jay Robinson, UNC-system vice president for public affairs, represents both students and the administration in Raleigh. But he is an administrator who occasionally is forced to make compromises between the needs of students and the administration. Some things, though, can't be compromised.

Students across the system should join Ross in his effort to let students finally represent students.



Shut up and do something: Help stop rape

The place where I live puts restrictions on my freedom. It subjects me to the possibility of senseless acts of violence, such as rape. It limits my mobility, forcing me to stay inside after dark unless I have an escort.

The place where I live is inside a woman's body, and I have returned to Chapel Hill this semester to find that I am living under siege.

I am an adult. At 22 years of age, I should not need a babysitter to walk me to my car when I leave work each night. But after 28 actual or attempted rapes and sexual assaults reported in Chapel Hill this year, I find myself reduced to the status of a child, afraid to be alone in the dark.

But even stronger than my fear is a sense of rage, a feeling of being highly pissed off.

What right does some man have to control and limit my life that way? What was women's liberation all about, if I have to worry about being asked in court if I don't think I was really asking for it, walking by myself at 1 a.m.?

Have all of my sisters been lying to me when they tell me I am strong enough to stand on my own two feet and control my own life?

Thursday night someone in Union Station asked what all the chanting earlier was about. When I told him, he wanted to know what the Take Back the Night March was. I felt kind of stupid answering "a protest against rape." I felt like I was saying we were protesting cancer or death. I briefly thought, "It's just there, something you don't have a whole lot of control over."

You can't appeal to cancer for understanding. Death just shows up on your doorstep, and there's not a whole lot

you can do about it.

But rape is not an accident of fate or a stroke of bad luck. It is controllable. Men (and women) can choose not to rape. But until we let them know that we're not going to take it anymore, they will continue to rape. It has become a cliché, but in this case it is true: *If you aren't part of the solution, you are part of the problem.*

To the men and women who smirked at us as we marched through campus Thursday, I ask you: What are your beliefs about rape?

And will you feel the same way when your brother or sister, your boyfriend or girlfriend or even you feel the violation, the guilt and the condemnation from others that rape brings?

(Or do you believe, quite mistakenly I assure you, that it could never happen to you? The world is full of rape survivors who thought "it" could never happen to them.)

To the men and women who applauded us, whether silently or out loud, I ask you: Why did you not join us, rather than acting out the same passive role that has made women victims for thousands of years?

And will you join us next time or continue to allow others to do your fighting for you?

And to the men and women who did not know or understand what was going on, I urge you: Educate yourselves.



Alisa DeMao
Life Under Siege

Educate your friends and family. If we all understand the motives and power dynamics behind rape, women (and men) learn how to defend themselves against rape, and until all recognize the sanctity of each other's bodies, rape will continue to pen.

Rape is the ultimate loss of control over your own body. It is not about a "woman's problem." A year-old man reported to the police he was kidnapped and sexually assaulted early Tuesday morning, an unnecessary harsh and brutal example of the fact that rape is really about power. You should not feel their gender problem. In the eyes of the rapist, you reduced to an available orifice, something he can exercise control over.

We are all living under siege. You must show identification to get into your own home because it is under hour lockup, there is a problem. I misunderstand me, I support the institution of a 24-hour lockup — it is an important step in ensuring the safety of all women and men living on campus. But the fact that it is necessary indicates me. I am tired of living in a zone.

If you also are tired of flashing ID every time you come home, do just *everything* about it. Do something constructive to make your campus and community a safer place to live.

We are all tired of hearing about and sexual assault.

But we are even more tired of living with the threat of it.

Alisa DeMao is a senior journalism and political science major from New York. And she's pissed.

READERS' FORUM

Students form group for a multicultural center

To the editor:

The arguments for a free-standing black cultural center demonstrate the need for a cultural center here on campus. The small office now used by the BCC is inadequate to host the various programs that help inform the entire UNC community about African-American culture. Therefore, it is obvious that a larger BCC is highly appropriate.

However, there are many other minority groups on campus. Although not always as publicly visible, these groups do contribute to the cultural diversity of UNC. A center that would include all these groups, as well as the BCC, would more fully represent the community and would give us all a chance to educate ourselves about every minority group instead of only one. Thus, a multicultural center would give a more complete cultural understanding to all students.

Furthermore, by bringing together the diverse ethnic backgrounds of so many more students, better race relations would be achieved. In this all-inclusive atmosphere, we would not be separating one minority group from the rest of the community.

We believe that a multicultural center would be much more effective in uniting students, faculty and staff so that together we can overcome the ethnic stereotypes and misunderstandings that divide us.

Let's all get together: Support a multicultural center. Come to the general interest meetings at 8:15 p.m. Thursday in the Frank Porter Graham Lounge of the Student Union and at 8 p.m. Tuesday in 209 Union.

ELLIOT POGER
Sophomore
Applied Sciences

ELIZABETH DILLEY
Sophomore
English

Electoral College got you stumped? Ask Rufus

To the editor:

Many citizens have called my office to ask questions about the Electoral College process. I would appreciate an opportunity briefly to review it here for the benefit of registered voters.

In North Carolina, any certified presidential candidate or party may elect 14 candidates for elector, one for each of the 12 congressional districts and two at-large positions, which represent our U.S. senators. These candidates' names, in accordance with N.C. General Statute 163-96, are then filed with my office.

These candidates are then "elected" in November when their presidential candidate wins the popular vote. Indeed, this is often one of the most confusing issues surrounding the Electoral College.

When a citizen casts their vote for a presidential and vice presidential candidate on Nov. 3, they are in fact electing those candidate's electors.

The winning party or candidate's electors then will be notified by the governor to meet in Raleigh in the State Capitol on Dec. 14. According to N.C.G.S. 163-211, each elector receives \$44 per day and 17 cents per mile travel reimbursement.

Once in Raleigh, the electors each cast their vote for president and vice president. It is a penalty, punishable by removal from office and a \$500 fine, for a N.C. elector to cast a vote which is inconsistent with the popular vote.

The certificate of votes created by the electors is then sent to Washington, D.C., to be kept in the safe of the secretary of the Senate until Jan. 6, when the president of the U.S. State Senate (the vice president), along with two members of the House and two members of the Senate, open and record each state's certificate of vote before a joint session of Congress.

If a candidate garners 270 votes (the number constituting a majority), the winner is declared. The winner is then inaugurated as president Jan. 20.

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss this venerable institution. I strongly urge all of our citizens to engage themselves in the democratic process this fall.

RUFUS L. EDMISTEN
N.C. Secretary of State

Protect yourself: A real-life lesson about AIDS

Editor's note: The following comments were submitted by Professor Richard Richardson after his American government class Monday.

To the editor:
Before I dismiss you, permit me to

preach to you for a moment. I never done it before and do not expect to do it again.

This week my wife and I have been sitting in the hospital with a young man who is dying of AIDS. This is difficult because we love his mother and father and remember him when he was a little boy growing up.

All of you are aware that AIDS is a killer. What we sometimes forget is it is a killer of the young. It is also a vicious and brutal killer. When the immune system fails, the body can be invaded by a score of terrible diseases.

For 30 years I have had sex with a woman. From our relationship I have four children, a son and three daughters, and a growing stream of wonderful grandchildren.

I would wish for each of you a kind of sex life — married, monogamous, richly satisfying and safe.

But I know that some of you choose other ways to express your sexuality. When you choose, please do so safely.

Anal sex, oral sex and vaginal sex need protection. I hope that you never become too drunk, or too stoned, or too much in love, or too indifferent to protect yourself and your partner.

When I was a teenager in a small Missouri town on the Mississippi River, guys found buying condoms a clandestine and embarrassing undertaking.

They would often go to drug stores or filling stations in nearby towns to avoid detection. I was a clerk in a drug store all during high school.

One day a young guy came in asked to buy a package of condoms. Because they came in packages of 3, 12, I asked him, "What size do you want?"

"Size?" he asked bewildered. He replied, "Oh, about average size."

Whether you are "below average size," or "average," or as most of claim, "above average size," use a condom.

Even on those nights in which you don't love yourself very much, protect yourself for all of those who do love you — mothers and dads, little brothers and older sisters, uncles and grannies, neighbors. And even a college teacher or two.

RICHARD RICHARDSON
Professor
Political Science

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