

# Future student-leaders get lesson in cross-cultural awareness

By Peter Sigal  
Staff Writer

"What is cross-cultural communication?" Sibby Anderson-Thompkins, UNC assistant dean of students, challenged future student leaders Monday night to overcome their own social misconceptions to establish better cross-cultural communication for their organizations. Anderson-Thompkins presented a skills training workshop, titled "Cross-Cultural Leadership: An Essential Understanding" to about 35 sophomores in the Emerging Leaders program Monday in 101 Greenlaw.

The program, sponsored by the Leadership Development Office, prepares students to be leaders of University organizations through seminars and presentations, said Carol Binzer, assistant director.

At the beginning of the workshop, Anderson-Thompkins told the group that multiculturalism was a "process of recognizing, understanding, accepting and appreciating cultures other than our own." Multiculturalism celebrates both differences and similarities among people, she said.

Anderson-Thompkins asked the students when they first had been aware of cultural differences between themselves

and others their age.

Crystal Holland, an English education major from Arcadia, said she first noticed different cultures in elementary school in Boston. Another student said she noticed black and white students segregating themselves in the fourth or fifth grade.

Students said they often felt afraid of being different. Anderson-Thompkins explained that these feelings resulted from socialization — how people learn to "fit in" in society.

To explore the effects of socialization on cross-cultural communication, she asked students to write down their initial reactions to words such as "doc-

tor," "white male," "African-American" and "sanitation worker."

Their answers often reflected stereotypical images. For example, students thought of sanitation workers as blacks and doctors as "white men in white coats."

"These stereotypes and value judgments we make impact the way we interact with people and our ability to cross cultural boundaries," Anderson-Thompkins said.

As an example, she cited a fear of black men as a barrier to communication with student groups such as the Black Student Movement. Other barriers she noted were ignorance of other

cultures and apathy toward other student groups who might have different concerns.

Student leaders must be able to work beyond these stereotypes to be effective, she said.

"Often times, instead of focusing on the issues, we spend more time addressing barriers that exist," she said.

Leaders can expect many benefits from being "culturally skilled," Anderson-Thompkins said. Their organizations will run more smoothly, and they can work with other groups with similar goals, she said.

Leaders must take risks and stretch themselves to understand and accept

other cultures, she said.

"If you don't go beyond yourself, you'll never be exposed to things that will make you a better leader," she told the group.

Holland said she thought the workshop was outstanding. "I loved the way everyone got involved," she said. "It definitely got me thinking about other people's situations before I judge them."

Mike Woodward, a speech education major from Charlotte, said he thought cross-cultural communication needed more discussion on campus.

"A lot of people don't have the courage and drive to understand other cultures,"

## Ferguson's students enjoy mentor's teaching style

By Stephanie Beck  
Staff Writer

Electric. Dynamic. Supportive. Approachable.

These are only a few of the words used by students to describe speech communication Assistant Professor Paul Ferguson.

Ferguson, who is in his seventh year of teaching at UNC, has received one Undergraduate Teaching Award and two Senior Class Favorite Teacher Awards. Despite the accolades he has received for teaching, Ferguson was denied tenure in September.

But he is in the process of appealing the decision, and his students have rallied behind him by presenting a petition of 3,757 signatures to Chancellor Paul Hardin and the Board of Trustees.

Ferguson received a doctorate in speech communication from the University of Texas at Austin. Before coming to the University, he taught at the

University of Hawaii and Lake City College in Florida.

"I came (to UNC) for the chance to work with students, my colleagues, and for the chance to develop artistically and intellectually," Ferguson said.

A love of his subject was one reason he decided to specialize in speech communication and why he stays with it, he said. "I have a passion for my subject. I am completely committed to staying current in my area and trying to inspire (in my students) what I find in myself."

Ferguson's passion for speech communication seems to show in the classroom. "He's full of dynamism, energy and spirit," said Pam Hartley, a senior speech communication and anthropology major from Andrews. "At the same time, students respect him because he knows his stuff. It is no use having a professor who is fun to watch but is teaching you nothing."

Lisa Shaw, a senior political science major from Minneapolis, said she en-

joyed Ferguson's Speech 41 class when she took it as a sophomore.

"He made the class interesting and presented the material in a manner that was understandable," she said. "He teaches in a way that makes you actually learn and remember it all and not just memorize it for the exam."

Sarah Ruccio, a senior speech communication major from Wilson, said Ferguson had had a great influence on her life. "I consider him a mentor, and I feel he has influenced me more than any other professor or teacher in my life. I know many others feel the way I do."

Ferguson relates directly to the students, Hartley said. "He's everywhere in every level of the department and outside of it as well. People hear his name, and they say 'Oh, yeah, that's speech guy. I hear he's pretty good.' That's part of why he is such a great instructor."

"Paul gives the same amount of instruction and support to a General College student just fulfilling a perspective as he does to a major," she said. "Even if you are a freshman chemistry major who walks into his office, he will treat you with the same care as he would one of his own graduate students."

Ferguson convinced Hartley to come back to school this year, she said. Coming from a small town, Hartley had felt like she was just a number at the University and had considered not returning to school this fall.

"He is the one who helped me with the vision and dedication to come back to school, so I want to help him stay here because he helped me," said Hartley, who is involved with the petition drive.

"(Ferguson) involves us in his life because his research (adapting and directing students plays) involves students," she said. "He gives (students) a chance to prove themselves in his research projects, and it makes students

feel a part of the University and not just a number floating through the system."

Valerie Halman, a senior speech communication major from Montreal and a coordinator of the petition drive, criticized the University's tenure policy. "We believe strongly in Dr. Ferguson as a teacher and a researcher. I think that the students have come together — both those that know him and have taken his classes as well as those who haven't and are just frustrated with a tenure program that is allowing outstanding instructors to slip through the cracks of an inadequate policy."

Shaw agreed that the University had been focusing too much on research. "Not keeping such valuable professors such as Paul Ferguson shows we are devaluing teaching at the college level."

Ruccio said people needed to realize that the kind of research Ferguson did was a valid form of research. "Just because creative research is not conventional, people don't understand it and think it is unimportant."

Ferguson said he found it gratifying to know that his student supporters had made such convincing arguments for him, both as a researcher and as an educator. "It is tremendously affirming to know that their feelings are so strong toward me and to know they have made strong and sound arguments," he said. "It is a hard time and having the support of so many students is what is helping me to get through it."

Ferguson said he was unsure about his future plans if he were denied tenure. He hopes the issue will be resolved, so he will be able to stay at UNC. He has given the issue some thought and will give it more thought should the need arise, he said.

But he does know one thing for certain. "The day I no longer have passion for my subject is the day I won't go in the classroom anymore."

## Debate

Meese disagreed, saying the court really had returned a balance by not giving special privileges to a chosen few.

Drug-related crimes frequently were used as examples by both Meese and Strossen in their efforts to point out what is right and wrong with the nation's judiciary.

Strossen said money spent keeping non-violent drug offenders in prison should be used in education. Putting drug users in prison does little to help them, she said. "Are they getting drug

treatment in prison? No," Strossen said. "Are they getting drugs? Yes."

But Meese said that some treatment programs worked in prisons and that only a few people were in prison for only non-violent drug crimes.

Strossen and Meese have debated each other a number of times before, and both make regular appearances in debates.

The debate was moderated by Chuck Stone, a professor in the UNC School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

## Moreheads

Morehead Scholar from Trowbridge, England, said she also was unhappy with the decision and hoped to find an alternative to discontinuing the program.

"Students are looking at ways to present an alternative to the trustees so that the British program is not any more expensive than the out-of-state program," she said.

The student alternative could include solicitation of money from Morehead Scholar alumni and British corporations, Phillips said.

But Lovelace said he did not think such an alternative was possible. "If we felt there was a way to continue the program, we would not have made the decision we made," he said.

Lovelace also defended the decision-making process of the Morehead Foundation.

"It was a financial decision," he said. "I'm sorry to say that there wasn't a way to involve (students) for that reason."

A Canadian Morehead Scholar program that began in 1985 will continue because it is less costly than the British program, Lovelace said.

The discontinuation of the British program will be a significant loss for the University, Lovelace said. "The British Moreheads bring a distinct character to the program that international students bring in general," he said. "That will be distinctly missed."

Bicknell said he thought the decision was based in part on the faulty logic that fewer British Morehead Scholars would mean more American Morehead Scholars, which would be a greater benefit to the University.

"I don't think one British Morehead is equal to one American Morehead," he said. "There is so much to be learned from a cross-cultural point of view."

The foundation might have been giving in to pressure from the University community and society in general to provide more for American students instead of foreign students, Bicknell said. "I know that the (foundation) has found it increasingly difficult to justify having the British program," he said.

The foundation does not want to seem like it is "subsidizing students who will disappear after graduation."

## Campus Calendar

**TUESDAY**  
NOON: The Black Faculty/Staff Caucus will hold a "Community Forum" with members of the ROT to discuss issues of concern to the African-American Community in the Dey Toy Lounge.  
4 p.m. Study Abroad Office will have a Germany information session in 12 Caldwell.  
5 p.m. UNC Juggling Club will meet in Carmichael Ballroom. The good weather location is the flagpole between South Building and Wilson Library.  
7 p.m. CHINGA: nos juntaremos a las siete en cuarto 209 del Union.  
8 p.m. The Glee Clubs will give a free concert in Hill Hall Auditorium.

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