

COLUMN



Mark Laichena

Columnist

Senior political science and PWAD major from London, UK.

Email: laichena@email.unc.edu

Honor system lacks clarity

Is anyone else not really sure how UNC's honor system works?

Sure, we're used to signing honor pledges and are told that the system has been student-run for 130 years.

And there's a lengthy "Instrument of Student Judicial Governance" with lots of rights and responsibilities (a constitution of sorts for the honor system) that one can read online.

But what exactly happens to those accused of breaking the rules? What punishment meets which crime? And do accusers and accused generally leave satisfied that justice has been served?

The answers to all of these questions matter: we're talking about a system that allows students to throw other students out of the University, and that imposes judgment for offenses varying from plagiarism to rape.

With less than 200 cases in each of the last few years, the vast majority of students at the University will never go before the Honor Court.

The budding inquirer is understandably excluded from Honor Court proceedings, since the University has a legal duty to each student to protect the privacy of their educational records.

So this leaves the honor system's student leadership with a responsibility to educate and enlighten the campus on a system which takes place behind closed doors. Unfortunately, that doesn't always happen.

As the football debacle developed last fall, Sarah Core and Travis McElveen (then student attorney general and Honor Court chairman, respectively) maintained a stoic silence about all things honor system.

One can understand their reluctance to risk any legal violation by revealing protected details of the then-ongoing football cases, even accidentally.

And, for sure, not all the reporters played entirely fair. Pushing for as much information as legally possible is one thing, but I felt distinctly uneasy when the Daily Tar Heel sent reporters to stake out entrances to the protected Honor Court hearings.

But Core and McElveen missed a stunning opportunity to teach the campus about the honor system, at a time of greatest attention.

What better a time to explain and publicize how the honor system functions, than when the whole community (and even national media) is interested?

Transparency about public process isn't just there to satisfy puerile nosiness — it is fundamental to the respect and authority of public institutions.

And it's ingrained in the fabric of this University, in our motto "Lux libertas": light and liberty.

I am reminded of the words of the British historian Lord Acton, referring to judicial process, that, "nothing is safe that does not show how it can bear discussion and publicity."

We need more openness about our rare student-run judicial system, if we wish it to be strong for another 130 years.

Here's hoping the honor system's new set of student leadership will rise to that challenge.

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Daniela Madriz, madriz@email.unc.edu



EDITORIAL

Don't target teachers

A possible phasing out of Teaching Fellows would hurt N.C.

The version of the state budget proposed by the N.C. Senate calls for the phasing out of a major government scholarship — the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program — by the end of the 2015 school year.

The attempt by the legislature to bring an abrupt end to one of the state's most beneficial initiatives has left many, including the members of this editorial board, scratching their heads.

The budget cuts facing North Carolina present a daunting challenge. The state simply cannot continue spending at the current level if it wishes to avoid major fiscal crisis. But while the trimming of unnecessary government funding is fundamentally necessary to ensure that the state remains financially solvent, these cuts must be thoroughly analyzed before they are put into effect to determine their long-term impact.

Since its inaugural class in 1987, the scholarship has provided North Carolinians

aspiring to be teachers with a further financial incentive to pursue public education as a career: \$26,000 over four years. This program allows teachers-in-training to attend college at a substantially reduced cost.

The individual financial assistance that the scholarship provides to students is, however, perhaps its least significant contribution.

Where the program really stands out from the pack is in its impact in the classrooms of North Carolina elementary, middle and high schools.

The \$26,000 scholarship offers students a simple trade: four years of assistance during college in exchange for four years of teaching service in a North Carolina public school.

The service-oriented nature of the Teaching Fellows program puts some of North Carolina's most promising scholars in a place where they would have likely never considered before: the classroom.

The students selected to become teachers through the scholarship have proven to be no slouches academically. In a 2011 profile of scholarship recipients, the average SAT score was an 1175, a substan-

tial 167 points above the North Carolina average of 1008. Likewise, the average high school GPA of these inductees was a stellar 4.3.

These bright young minds are exactly what North Carolina needs to advance its standard of education among the general public.

In the modern job market, education is the single most important factor to employers. In purely monetary terms, if the estimated 46,675 students of the class of 2009 expected to drop out of N.C. high schools had instead decided to complete school, they would generate over \$12 billion in additional lifetime income, according to the Alliance for Excellent Education.

The more data that is examined, the clearer the bottom line becomes: education is the key to a prosperous future for North Carolina.

The Teaching Fellows program is a crucial component of the effort to improve North Carolina's schools, and efforts toward its elimination are not only shortsighted, but also downright counterproductive to sustained economic success within the state.

EDITORIAL

Ailing Art(ery)

Students and residents ought to advocate art preservation.

In April, the Student Artery, a student-run art gallery, was forced to move from its Rosemary Street location. Last year in August, the Chapel Hill Museum was forced to close. We consider the closing of both organizations to reflect the detrimentally low priority of the arts in the community.

These organizations provided important outlets for art and education in the community. In the wake of budget cuts in the community and University system, the student body needs to take action in order to prevent the atrophy of Chapel Hill's artistic body.

In addition to focusing on displaying student-created art, the Artery sought to promote artistic expression and collaboration of all kinds.

With its opening in 2009, the Artery was primarily funded by grants and a private donation, which helped the Artery transform a donated storefront into an art gallery.

The Artery has been forced to move before, but Kate St. John, the summer curator and next year's co-director, explained that they have effectively been forced to squat wherever they can find space.

Although the Artery's closing was not a direct casualty of budget cuts, its difficulties staying open represent the frightening lack of demand for the arts in Chapel Hill.

The Chapel Hill Museum, a privately-owned organization, received funding from the town and contained a number of historical exhibits.

The museum collected memorabilia that recounted the history of Chapel Hill and the University. It operated for 17 years and held educational safety programs that taught more than 75,000 children.

The museum was forced to close when the town had to cut its already miniscule funding to less than one percent of the town's operating budget. The museum was forced to sell its exhibits, including the first car ever sold on Franklin Street, to cover its debts.

This trend is not new, and

former student body president Hogan Medlin attempted to revitalize the artistic community with his Arts Innovation Plan. The current student body president, Mary Cooper, lacks specific direction with regards to the Arts Innovation Plan.

Cooper plans to maintain a less hands-on approach to carrying out Medlin's legacy. By relinquishing a possible leadership role in overseeing Arts Innovation, we feel this is a responsibility that she needs to appropriately delegate.

Students of the University and residents of Chapel Hill also ought to take action in order to reverse this trend. Rather than mere reliance on the Arts Innovation Plan, we ought to support and demand local art and educational programs.

When the community fails to support the arts, the responsibility falls to individuals. Private donations provide the bulk of these organizations' funds and must also be supported by community attendance. Movies will come out on DVD if you don't see them — museums and galleries will close down.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"We got elected to come down here and try to make a difference for the state. What's the use of giving you an education if the state is broke?"

Sen. Jim Davis, R-Cherokee, addressing concerns about education cuts

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Blood donors need to donate this summer

TO THE EDITOR:

This year, start the summer by giving the gift of life to someone in need in our area.

Faculty, staff, students and members of the community are all invited to the 23rd annual Carolina Blood Drive with the American Red Cross, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. June 7 in the Dean Smith Center in Chapel Hill, N.C. Donors will have access to free parking by the Dean Dome. The drive goal is 1,000 units.

The summer is a tough time for hospitals and patients. Many of us are extremely busy, and blood donations typically decrease. But the demand for blood at health facilities in our region does not.

Walk-ins will be welcome, but appointments are recommended. To make an appointment for the drive or for more information, visit www.unc.edu/blood or call 96BLOOD (962-5663).

Besides the warm feeling of a good deed done, you'll get free food donated by generous local merchants afterwards, a free T-shirt and a chance to win door prizes. Holden and I hope you will join us for this important event.

Prashanth Kamalakanthan
Durham

How can we improve ConnectCarolina?

TO THE EDITOR:

Course registration... Cashier and payments... GPA calculator... Course tracking systems...

We're all still getting adjusted to the new ConnectCarolina system.

The Student Center is meant to serve as our portal on the site, providing us with quick and efficient resources. As we continue to update and modify the online interface, we want your input.

The executive branch of student government is teaming up with University administrators to organize a roundtable discussion on Wednesday, June 8 from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Food will be provided!

Please consider registering for this conversation that will serve as an interactive brainstorming and feedback session. Together we can bring about changes to the new online interface to maximize our positive interactions with the software.

Please email student body secretary Adam Jutha at ajutha@live.unc.edu for more details and to RSVP.

Adam Jutha
Student Body Secretary

Kvetching board™

kvetch:

v.1 (Yiddish) to complain

UNC Office of Student Aid: Where customer service goes to die.

To the suck up in the front row of my chem class constantly talking about her research, have you yet to study the effects of having your head that far up the teacher's butt?

Does "no dumping" still apply during a biblical flood?

To UNC during the summer: where are all the babes?

Send your one-to-two sentence entries to opinion@dailytarheel.com, subject line "kvetch."

SPEAK OUT

WRITING GUIDELINES

- Please type: Handwritten letters will not be accepted.
- Sign and date: No more than two people should sign letters.
- Students: Include your year, major and phone number.
- Faculty/staff: Include your department and phone number.
- Edit: The DTH edits for space, clarity, accuracy and vulgarity. Limit letters to 250 words.

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- Drop-off: at our office at 151 E. Rosemary Street.
- Email: opinion@dailytarheel.com

The Daily Tar Heel

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Columns, cartoons and letters do not necessarily represent the opinions of The Daily Tar Heel or its staff. Editorials reflect the opinions of The Daily Tar Heel editorial board, which is made up of board members, the opinion editor and the summer editor.

Weekly QuickHits

American Idol

Garner's own Scotty McCreery won American Idol last week. Wherever he is, Anoop Desai is probably shaking in a jealous rage. Don't worry about it, Anoop, you'll always have the Clef Hangers.

Cellphones

Recent studies have prompted the World Health Organization to categorize the radiation in cell phones as "possibly carcinogenic." Too bad an estimated 5 billion people in the world use cell phones.

John Edwards

Federal prosecutors are considering indicting former presidential candidate John Edwards for political malfeasance. Our former hometown hero can't seem to escape the dreaded spotlight of negativity.

Jim Tressel

The Ohio St. football coach resigned this week amid allegations of NCAA violations. It's never good when any school gets caught cheating. What's the old saying? Misery loves company.