

OPINION

This column represents the views of the *Old Gold and Black* Editorial Board.

New judicial system proposal needs some work

Last fall, in light of the Harriger Report recommending judicial reform, the Judicial Council created a subcommittee to help reorganize the university's judicial system. This committee's proposals will go to the Judicial Council which will ultimately restructure the current system. The current proposals of the committee, still tentative, contain both commendable plans and ideas that should be reworked.

One of the major complaints of the old judicial system is that it consists of two separate bodies: the Judicial Board and the Honor Council. While the Honor Council deals mainly with academic violations and the Judicial Board hears violations of the student code of conduct, the lines between the duties of the two bodies are often sketchy. Because of this problem, many have advocated a reconstruction of the system that would fuse the two bodies into one.

The newly-created proposals of the Judicial Council's subcommittee calls for just that — a single body called the Honor and Ethics Board. This board would consist of students, faculty members and an administrator. For each hearing, four students from a pool of twelve, two faculty from a pool of twelve, and one administrator would make up the board.

While it is a positive change that the new system would consist of one board, the way the HEB is chosen should be reconsidered. As is proposed now, the pool of students would be appointed by the Student Government elections committee — not elected by the student body as Honor Council and Judicial Board members are now.

The HEB should not be set up by SG, a legislative body. It is important that students choose the members of a body that has the power to affect their futures. Ideally, an informed student body should vote for its own judicial representatives.

To help students form opinions on the qualifications of the candidates, those running for the body should hold a formal debate so that the student body

could effectively choose the best representatives.

The fact that faculty and administration make up part of the HEB is another negative aspect of the new proposal. The university has always prided itself on the fact that it has one of the only student-run judicial systems in the country. But implementation of this new proposal would change that, with faculty and administration invading what should be a student system.

Faculty and administrative representation on the board is fine. They should help guide students in the judicial process, but only students should actually vote in the hearings. Students involved in the system should be trusted with enough responsibility to handle the decision-making process by themselves.

Also proposed is the creation of a Board of Investigators and Advisers. In the current system, the investigator in a case is taken from the Judicial Board or Honor Council and the adviser is a faculty member. If the proposal were implemented, both the adviser and the investigator would make up a part of the judicial system separate from the HEB, thus avoiding any bias in the investigation and advising of the case.

The members of the BIA, however, would be appointed by SG. To ensure a better distribution of power at the university, the members should instead be appointed by an objective party other than SG.

Another potential problem with the proposal is the issue of how the four students, two faculty and one administrator would be chosen from the pools for each case. Who chooses from the pools? And how is the choice determined? Potential exists here for setting up a biased board for a particular hearing. Those who choose from the pool must be careful that they create a fair, randomized board.

The simple fact that the current system is being reevaluated is a move in a positive direction. Some of these new ideas, however, need some reconsideration.

Benson Center invaded by administrative offices

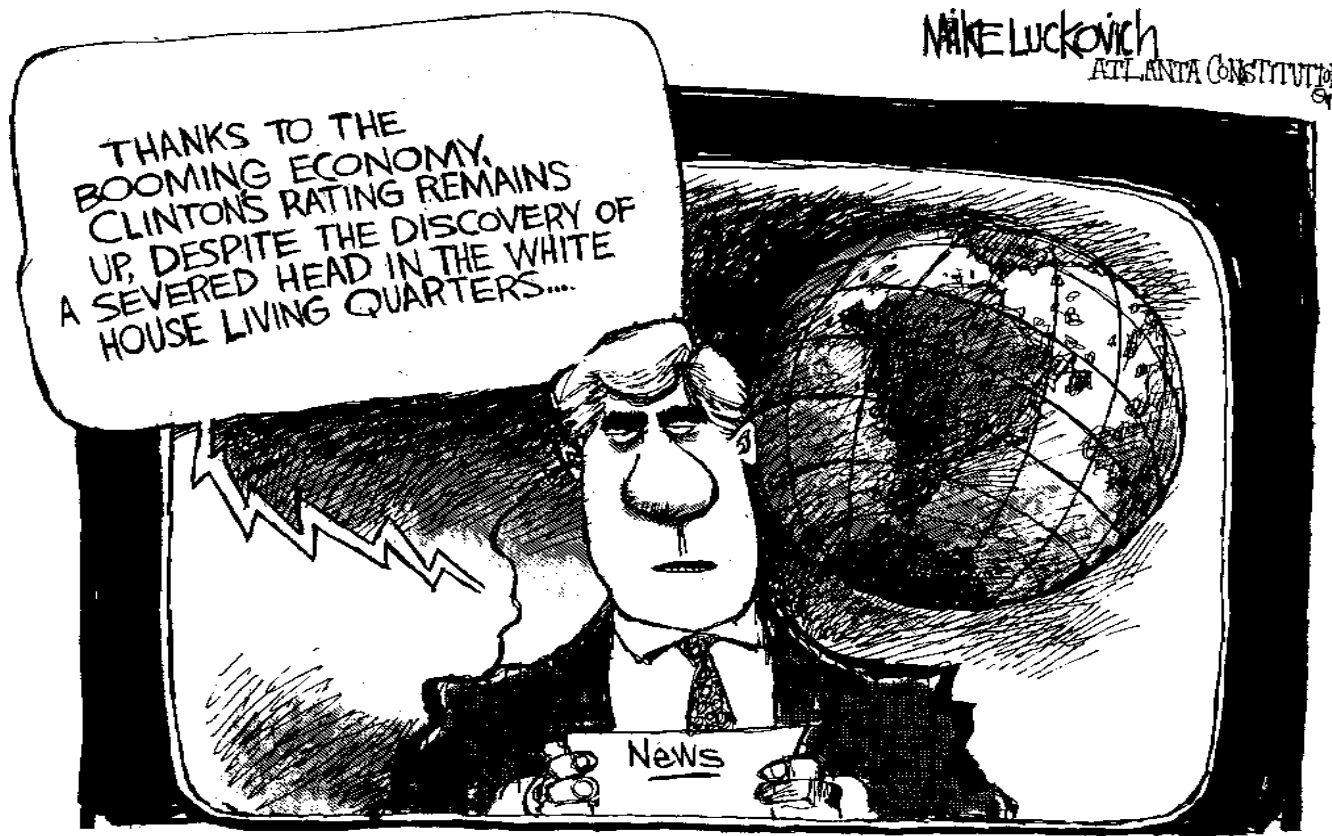
If you've wandered around the Benson University Center lately, you may have noticed the reorganization of office space there. What was originally a building for students is now becoming a receptacle for administrative overflow.

Residence Life and Housing now has expansive office space on both the second and third floors. Volunteer Service Corps, an organization in which a large percentage of the student body is involved, was recently kicked out of its large office and forced to move to a smaller one in order to make room for the Office of Student Development,

while many student organizations, like the Philomathesian Society and *Three to Four Ounces*, have little or no office space.

The administration is in effect debilitating student organizations by denying them the office space they need in a building that was supposed to be for them.

If the administration is growing so rapidly that it cannot house itself, it should expand Reynolda Hall, construct a new building or move some offices to the Corporate Center on Reynolds Boulevard, rather than invading a center built for students.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Take comfort in positive effects of tragedy

As the beginning of school is drawing near, my memory returns to the tragedy that shattered this campus last Sept. 4, 1996. The lives of two beautiful women, sophomores Maia Witzl and Julie Hansen, were taken from us by the careless acts of a drunk driver.

Last fall began as any other fall semester. There were hugs, laughter and many reunions as students filed back to the university to continue their college careers; however, the hugs turned from joyous to supportive and the laughter turned to tears as many of us tried to cope with what happened. Although many lives will never be the same after the tragic automobile accident that affected so many of us, we can now look ahead with hope.

On Aug. 7, 1997, less than a year after the accident, I went to the North Carolina State Capitol along with other university students to proudly watch Governor Jim Hunt sign the DWI legislation into law. The new law is, in part, a result of the tireless hours of commitment and hard work by this university community. Despite the tragic accident last year, action to promote changes in the North Carolina DWI law began almost immediately on our campus. Forums were held with Governor Hunt, Lieutenant Governor Dennis Wicker and President Thomas K. Hearn Jr. Many other legislators also came to the university to show their support and assistance. Junior Fiona Penney and senior Catherine Mitchell helped direct the plans from the beginning through these forums, contacting North Carolina delegates, and through the Rally in Raleigh. The Rally in Raleigh was planned, organized and implemented by Mitchell. This rally turned out to be instrumental in seeing this legislation

passed. Many students spent the day lobbying legislators in hopes of seeing positive action taken. SADD was yet another program started immediately on campus to curb drunk driving.

There are many students and faculty members both behind the scenes and vocal who have given us the chance to see this hopeful legislation become a reality. For them, I would like to say from the bottom of my heart — thank you. But it is Hearn that I would like to single out for being a strong and constant voice for the students. Hearn was there for the students when he was



needed. He attended both funerals and made all possible accommodations for the students who also wanted to attend. He encouraged the forums and was an enormous assistance in enabling us to get Hunt to come to campus. Hearn's initial letter to Hunt expressing his concerns with drunk driving paved the way for the students. Thank you, Dr. Hearn, for your beliefs, your assistance and your support in seeing the DWI legislation signed into law.

Again, to everyone who attended the forums, joined SADD, rallied in

Raleigh and just listened to a friend when he or she needed it — I thank you. As Sept. 4, 1997, comes and goes tears will be shed. Do let your memories remember these two incredible women who touched our lives. But ease your heavy hearts by knowing that in less than a year, students were able to come together with a common goal and help initiate unprecedented DWI laws.

Laura Acton
President of Chi Omega

President commends DWI activists

I want to thank the staff and the students who went to Raleigh in April to support strengthened laws against habitual drunk drivers. I am proud of your commitment, especially the work of the Safe Roads group. Your efforts will make a difference.

While we cannot redeem the loss these deaths we mourn represent, our failure to act to change the law might have compounded the tragedy.

You have acted in the spirit of *Pro Humanitate*. All of North Carolina is in your debt.

Thomas K. Hearn Jr.
President

For more letters, see next page.

Our letters policy

We welcome letters. Send yours via e-mail to letters@ogb.wfu.edu or by campus mail to P.O. Box 7569, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109, or deliver it to Benson 518. Please submit your letter on a floppy disk. We reserve the right to edit all letters for length and clarity.

Other cultures deserve exploration

Study abroad opened my eyes to Americans' ethnocentrism

Before coming to this university, I never even knew that I had an accent.

Those who know me might find that funny, since I have been told, "You have the strongest accent here at Wake." This I feel could be an exaggeration, but I am from Long Island

Joe Parkhill

GUEST COLUMNIST

(enough said). Even so, I could never hear that New York accent people always spoke about. I thought that everyone spoke as I did, in movies, on the radio, etc.

It finally set in when I came to school and people made fun of me every single day of freshman year because of the way I would say dwag (dog), twak (talk), uwafice (office), etc. I soon started to pick up on my accent. And when I returned home for Thanksgiving I was horrified by the accents I had heard. Even my friends and family had that "strong island accent."

But that was me as a freshman, and since then I have changed. I no longer argue with people over the pronunciation of words.

I am willing to accept that people speak differently in other geographical

locations. And so this leads me Europe.

I spent the semester in London last spring and did my fair share of traveling. Everywhere I went I at least tried to learn how to say "yes," "no," "thank you" and "Do you speak English?" in the local language.

Most Americans were not that gracious. They pranced around Europe speaking English to everyone no matter what. They were loud and obnoxious, and I was not proud to be from the same country as these people.

I often heard that French people were very rude to Americans, and I was a little worried about going there and spoiling my image of such a beautiful country. But I took my mother and sister there for a weekend and the simple words "parlez-vous anglais?" made the French smile and answer whatever type of question I had. We had no problems whatsoever, because we did not come across as typical, rude Americans.

At the end of my trip I traveled a little bit by myself, and along the way I came across many different types of people. The only ones I ended up making friends with were from Australia, Canada, Germany, Uruguay, Argentina and Chile. The reason I liked these people was that they were modest and friendly people.

Americans seemed to stay only with their friends, and they made no effort to meet others, even natives, or to learn about the culture.

They were more intrigued with the

structural beauty of the country.

Now you could think that I am just a bitter American, but this really is a problem. It is so bad that Canadians are taught to wear a Canadian flag to make sure people do not mistake them as Americans. This flag is just for initial meetings, because once you talk to them you would realize they are not from the United States.

Don't get me wrong — there were times that I was proud to be American, like when I was talking to a German man on the train and he gave the United States credit for rebuilding his nation's economy. And when I met a college student in Bologna that was so excited to meet Americans, and seemed to know more things about our country and our TV than I did. Or finally when I went in a little pizza place in Italy and the man behind the counter wanted to talk to me so badly but did not speak English. So he came up with the only English word he could think of: "California." These were all times that I was glad to be an American, but then again, I was not with a bunch of obnoxious Americans who probably would have prevented my having these experiences.

So my advice is that when you are away from your own domain, try to be a little more open minded and courteous. Try to respect the culture, language and people of those areas, whether it is in the United States, the north or south, European countries or anywhere else in the world.

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