

OPINION

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

Campus crime calls for retaliation

The campus has witnessed an abominable increase in the rate of crime since the beginning of the school year.

In the past couple weeks three ThinkPads have been stolen from the department of politics and one has been stolen from the department of English. In addition many bikes have been stolen from campus in the last few weeks.

Although some of the offices were locked, others were left unlocked, making the computers more accessible to the thieves.

Police attribute the bike thefts to insufficient bike locks or bikes that were simply left unlocked.

Although it is true that students should invest in foolproof locks, just as professors should ensure that their office doors are locked when they leave, it is perplexing and disturbing that theft should even have to be addressed on this campus.

The difficulty with theft on campus is that it is impossible to determine whether it is a problem from within or a case of visitors taking advantage of what is deemed to be a wealthy univer-

sity population.

The university has taken measures to protect itself from outside crime by installing gates. One would think that a guardhouse and the number of University Police who patrol the campus would prevent crime.

Although burglary decreased this year, larceny did not, which signifies that other measures besides just the gates must be taken.

The honor code is one of the most revered and emphasized institutions at the university.

There is nothing more that the university can do to emphasize that stealing is unacceptable in addition to what the honor code already states about this offense.

Unfortunately the only realistic solution to the problem at hand is for students and faculty to take extra measures to insure that they guard their possessions.

As inconvenient as this might appear and as disillusioning as the occurrence of theft is on a campus protected by both honor code and gatehouse, it appears that it is the only way to stymie theft.

Alarm pranksters are playing with fire

In the past week students have been roused from their dorm rooms at insane hours of the night due to the occurrence of fire alarms.

But not all of these alarms have sounded because of fire or smoke. Some were not even the result of shower steam — a usual culprit in the 3 a.m. fire drill.

Rather, students have been dragged out of bed bleary-eyed because some prankster thought that it would be cute to pull the fire alarm and not just one fire alarm but one in all of the four residence halls on the Quad.

According to a resident adviser in Poteat House, a fire alarm went off earlier this year because a student was grilling something in his room.

That's right — they tell you that you can't have extension cords in your room because they are a fire hazard, but people assume a little indoor dorm grilling is okay.

It seems that these are the lessons that should have been learned in elementary school.

You don't play with matches, and you don't pull fire alarms. It is rather pathetic that 20-year olds who will soon be teaching these lessons to their own

children have not learned them yet. And people wonder why college students need RAs.

When a fire alarm is set off, not only does everyone in the building have to stop what they are doing (which is usually sleeping) to evacuate, but the fire department has to respond to a call unnecessarily.

Suppose that in the event of speeding to the "fire" the firefighters collided with another vehicle injuring innocent travelers.

Or consider the possibility that a fire fighter could be at a real fire helping to save victims when instead he is routinely investigating which college prankster set off the alarm.

Not only do these possible situations exist, but also there is the real cost for the Winston-Salem Fire Department — roughly \$2,000 per call.

Lastly, consider that sleep is valuable in college, and when it is interrupted or shortened by senseless capers, an entire building of students suffers the next day.

It is not a hard lesson to learn, and in the interest of the entire community it better be learned soon.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Computer science students deserve better

As an alumnus of the university and a retired computer professional, I found comments from Richard Carmichael, a professor of mathematics and computer science, in the Sept. 17 article "Computer science department recovers network" interesting. Rather than speculating on the identity of the hacker and appropriate punishments, he could have said the following:

"In June, the university computer network suffered a break-in. We are indebted to the intruder for exposing a weakness in our system. Many computer networks pay good money for experts who look for just such weaknesses in their security system; we received this service for free. The security holes have been identified and plugged."

Or, have they? Considering the importance of computer networks in our society today, I believe the university's computer science students deserve better.

Mike Warren '73
Tobaccoville, NC

Free speech shouldn't protect hate group

When in the course of human events it becomes necessary to hinder the progression of hate organizations in the United States, it is important to remember the ethos upon which our country was founded. Ten score and nine years ago, our forefathers conceded that under the laws of the Constitution, "All men are created equal," Jefferson disclosed that "whatever be their degree... it is no measure of their rights," and still, 200 years later, a group which denies the application of these inalienable rights to gay and lesbian students seeks welcome on our campus.

Two hundred years later, a group that masks its intentions of hate through the euphemistic name of Westboro Baptist Church wants admission to our campus. Two hundred years later, a group that rebukes the university for having an "active pro-gay group" and "pervert Maya Angelou" as a faculty member requests permission slips for our campus.

Two hundred years later, a group with the web site address www.godhatesfags.com confuses university officials about the ethical and right answer to the freedom of speech question. The right answer is, "not now, not here!"

Constituents of the Westboro Baptist Church pose "clear and present danger" to the survival of America. This anti-gay organization will gain admission to our university if they agree to pose a non-confrontational demonstration.

The US Constitution does address the right of citizens to a peaceful assembly. However, I question the intent and ability of a hate group to forge non-confrontational peace, for the very nature of hatred, defined as "active malice," precludes positive, constructive discourse and assembly.

Under the founding laws of our country, citizens are afforded the freedom of speech: a measure that was seemingly intended to inspire dialogue. Yet, never in the history of the United States has a pure hate group accepted dialogue with the object of its hatred.

Hate organizations rely upon coercion and fear in order to advance a malicious monologue that attempts to eliminate the hated "other." When we accept discourse about the elimination of gay and lesbian students, we accept discourse about the elimination of their allies. When we accept discourse about the elimination of their allies, we accept discourse about the elimination of our colleagues, associates, students and friends. When we accept discourse about the elimination of our colleagues, associates, students and friends, we accept discourse about the elimination of ourselves.

When we embrace the speech of human elimination, we must accept that the freedom of speech has gone awry.

Some believe that gay and lesbian students are cursed (and therefore deserving of hatred) because of an interpretation of biblical scripture. Similarly, people of African descent are believed to be cursed beings.

However, this idea is not found until after the supposed date of the original documents of the Bible.

The notion of the curse of people of color emerges after the oral traditions were collected in the Babylonian Talmud from the second century to the sixth century A.D. In these accounts, the descendants of Noah's son Ham are cursed for being black.

Historians noted several contradictory legends concerning Ham (e.g., Gossett, 1963). Let he who has no sin decide God's true word concerning cursed people from years of biblical translations.

I have no profound answers for the questions, "What does the university stand for," or "What are the central values of the university?" However, as a citizen of the United States of America, I have learned that we do not tolerate terrorism under the blanket of religion and free speech.

Sherick Hughes
Communications Department

Athletic department upholds academics

For a variety of reasons, I have made it my practice not to respond to articles in the print media. However, two recent articles and a lead editorial in the *Old Gold and Black* necessitate a response.

The Sept 10 article "Student paid to take notes" and the Sept. 17 article "Investigation finds athletic policy illegal" and the Sept. 17 staff editorial "University should take stand on note-taking" allege that the athletic department, through our office of Athletic Academic Services, acted improperly in paying a student to provide copies of her class notes that were then distributed to student athletes.

Yes, it is true that a student was paid to provide copies of her class notes from two classes to Athletic Academic Services, but the articles and editorial neglected the fact that such a service adheres to university and National Collegiate Athletic Association policies.

Note taking by another student was approved in advance by the Learning Assistance Center and is in keeping with the university policy to provide appropriate services to learning disabled students.

In this case, the professors were notified in writing by the Learning Assistance Center director and the

professors selected the student who was to provide copies of the class notes. The notes were then used by the student athlete's tutors to compare against the student athlete's own notes. The purpose was to help improve the student athlete's note-taking skills, and not in any way to substitute for his own efforts. The learning-disabled student athlete is expected to attend class and take notes. The process used is simply to provide the student athlete with a sample of good note-taking so the student athlete can improve his own techniques.

When student athletes miss class due to an off-campus competition, they are expected to do what any other student would do — try to borrow notes from a classmate. Again, the procedure used in this case does not in any way constitute a violation of NCAA or university policy. There is no investigation underway about this matter with either the Honor and Ethics Council or the Office of the Dean of the College.

The lead editorial in the Sept. 17 edition implied that we are more concerned with eligibility than with educating and graduating our student athletes, and, as a result, that we condone unethical means to enhance our student athlete's academic progress.

The Athletic Academic Services office provides tutoring and other services to encourage student athletes to succeed in the classroom and in the community, which is not only permissible, but required by the NCAA. Those services do not emphasize maintaining athletic eligibility, but rather the pursuit of fulfilling one's academic potential.

Our student athlete's academic accomplishments are extremely impressive. In 1995, we were recognized by the College Football Association for the highest graduation rate of football players.

Our four-year graduation rate for all student athletes is 73 percent and this year's graduation rate was 76 percent, both of which far surpass the NCAA national average of 58 percent. Last spring semester, 138 of 335 student athletes (41.2 percent) earned Dean's List honors.

In addition, 105 of our student athletes (31.3 percent) were named to the 1997-98 Athletic Coast Conference Honor Roll, which requires a student athlete to have a 3.0 or better grade point average for the entire academic year. Such achievements would not occur if student athletes, their coaches and administrators were not committed to academic excellence.

The office of Athletic Academic Services has consistently upheld the highest academic principles of the university and the NCAA. The department of athletics is committed to providing as many resources as possible to help student athletes succeed both academically and athletically.

I am proud of the academic accomplishments of our student athletes, and we will continue to act in an ethical manner that meets the needs of individual student athletes.

Ron Wellman
Director of Athletics

Our letters policy

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

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