

Panel debates benefits, detriments of Greek life

By Praneetha Akula
Old Gold and Black Reporter

With its fraternity parties, Greek Week and formal, much of campus social life is centered around Greek life. Such observations led the leaders of Alliance for Racial and Cultural Harmony to hold a forum on Greek and independent life at the university, which took place Nov. 12 in Shorty's.

The forum was led by a panel of students representing both sides. Independent sophomore Aileen Socrates; junior Todd Bennett, of the Sigma Nu fraternity; junior Kelly Loudenslager, of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority; independent sophomore Karen Courvino; senior John Lanuti, of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity; senior Marcus Ingram, of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity; independent sophomore John Leurini; junior Shafi Mustafa, of the Kappa Alpha Psi Inc. fraternity, Inc.; independent senior Omaar Hena; independent sophomore Neha Patel and senior Mallika Roman, of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

The forum sought to break down stereotypes about Greek life and at the same time, find ways to enhance the life of independents in this Greek majority campus.

Junior Cher Wright, an executive board member of ARCH and moderator for the evening, asked the panelists to introduce themselves.

Bennett said he joined Sigma Nu both for social purposes and because most successful entrepreneurs were members of greek organizations during college. Other Greeks said they joined based on the principles of their particular group.

Mustafa took pride in Kappa Alpha Psi's, a historically black fraternity, principle of achievement in life. Roman took pride in



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(From left) Junior Kelly Loudenslager, sophomore Aileen Socrates, senior Omaar Hena and moderator junior Cher Wright discuss Greek and independent life on campus at a forum sponsored by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.

Delta Sigma Theta's (historically black sorority) principles: service and scholarship.

When asked if Greek organizations are more than just social cliques, Ingram said of his historically black fraternity, "It allows more intimate contact than is allowed in class."

Bennett and Mustafa's endeavors are meant to point out their organizations' altruistic efforts (raising money for Brian Piccolo Cancer Fund, social events that raise money for charity, etc.), were coun-

teracted by Courvino's claim that interest groups such as Student Environmental Action Coalition provide volunteer efforts as well. "I know Greek organizations create beautiful fellowships, but you can still build such networks within other interest groups," Socrates said.

"I have met a diverse sort of people within and through Theta," Loudenslager said, giving the department of women's studies as an example.

Alcoholism and partying are both part of "Greekdom," a term used by Hena to de-

fine the general conception of stereotypical Greek life, while acknowledging that university's black Greek organizations did not belong to this realm.

He presented a three-fold critique of the socioeconomic class system involved in Greek life. His central complaints were that the social class system in Greek life segregates who is considered cool or uncool, that Greeks must pay to be a member and that they look for a certain "type," alienating based on appearance or personality. Bennett agreed with these negative claims but

pointed out that neither he, nor any one Greek member can be held accountable for these actions since they are individuals.

Wright's next question about the segregation of Greek groups led to a discussion of the pledge process. Black Greek pledging processes are held in secret, and Socrates pointed out the more salient climate of the majority-white pledging processes. Junior Kyana Scott, a member of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority said, "Black Greek groups differ in that they are lifetime commitments instead of a mere four-year term like that of other Greek organizations."

Loudenslager said that women's Rush did have some negative aspects such as not providing enough time to get to know others and overall a rather shallow process.

Ingram informed the audience of the application process taken by Alpha Phi Alpha candidates to see who would be able to live up to its principle of scholarship.

Lanuti said Lambda Chi uses a semester-long rush in order to get a full understanding of their candidates.

The conversation shifted to the issue of race. Socrates and Patel, both Asian-American, wondered where they had a place in this characteristically black-white system. "It's up to you," Loudenslager said. "It depends on what you're looking for."

Mustafa, who said that he was also of Asian descent, said he was proof of the possibility of finding one's place in Greek life.

Patel also pointed out the struggle which she has faced in trying to integrate independent and Greek life. "Organizations such as the Asian Student Interest Association constantly try to appeal to efforts from Greek organizations for their activities and almost never receive any response," she said.

Salaries

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At a university where it is outlined in employee rules and regulations that disclosing one's salary is a terminable offense, such inquiries were a first.

"In the bylaws of the university there's a call for dismissal of any individual who discloses their salary. This is not a new thing by any means, indeed the university reluctantly disclosed salaries and they didn't it kicking and screaming," Kennedy said.

The committee found that out of *US News and World Report's* "Fifty Best National Universities," the salaries for this university ranked an extremely low — 45 out of 49.

Also out of the *US News & World Report's* listing of "Best Liberal Arts Colleges" faculty salaries on this campus were again very low compared comparable colleges as the 38th highest paying college out of a list of 42 institutions.

"Comparisons like that speak for themselves. It is a real concern about the image of the university," Kennedy said.

Not only is it a real concern for the university, it is a special concern for the students.

As part of the plan for the class of 2000, the university vowed to hire 40 new faculty members.

With below average salaries, the university is unable to attract the high caliber professors needed to continue the school's academic growth.

"I'm sure we're losing people that we'd really like to have and I know of people who have left here for other higher paying universities," said Mark Leary, a professor of psychology and a AAUP member.

Not only are university faculty paid less than the faculties of comparable universities and colleges,

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Mark Leary
Professor of psychology

but this universities professors lack the same level of fringe benefits given to faculty members at other schools.

"We are very low on the totem pole and its getting worse. We're not only fairing poorly in terms of salary, but also in fringe benefits," Leary said.

These fringe benefits include everything from money for retirement plans to medical coverage.

Out of all these discrepancies between the salaries the university and its peers, this year will mark an increase of 3.5 percent in the faculty's salary according to Sandra Boyette, the vice president for university advancement.

"This year they've announced the lowest increase in the last several years. Certainly this is not going to help the situation," Leary said.

Between tuition increases and the high pay of the university administration, faculty members are left wondering why none of the proceeds trickle down to their level.

Hearn's \$448,000 salary in 1995-96 earned him a spot among the five highest paid university or college presidents in the nation in last year's rankings.

This year Hearn's salary as reported by the *Chronicle of Higher Education* is \$424,000.

That's a \$24,000 salary cut — a cut placing Hearn out of the top five highest paid officials.

Although this new lowered salary took Hearn out of the top five lime light, the discrepancy between the how much the university pays

the president and faculty salaries is astounding.

"Wake Forest University has the distinction of having the highest 'index of inequality' with respect to salary of any private university or private college in the United States," states the 1998 report.

Hearn's salary is 7.44 times that of an average faculty member at the university.

Although this discrepancy upsets many faculty members, Leary is certain that cutting Hearn's salary is not the solution.

"Even if president Hearn took a gigantic pay cut, the problem wouldn't be solved. In some ways (discussion of Hearn's salary) almost sidetracks the issue, but it does prove one thing — there's not a shortage of money," Leary said.

According to the 1998 report, the reasoning for the lower salaries on campus was because of a lower cost of living in Winston-Salem compared to the rest of the nation; however, after investigation even this reasoning did not hold true.

"The cost-of-living adjustments show that, in terms of real buying power, Wake Forest faculty fare even worse than their actual salaries suggest," the 1998 report states.

Also if cost-of-living is the reasoning for the faculty's lower salaries, Leary wonders why the administration's pay is not affected by this phenomenon.

"If that's the case then everybody should be earning less," Leary said.

Overall, the faculty does not wish the administration or Hearn's salary to be cut to compensate for the large gap between their incomes. However, an answer for the discrepancy is needed.

"The faculty is not made up of people who worry about money. Just pay me and let me come and do my job, but there's a matter of injustice going on. The faculty would just like to have some explanation why faculty salaries are such a low priority," Leary said.

WORLD WIDE

Microsoft to remove programming language from Windows 98

SAN JOSE, Calif. — In a huge legal blow, Microsoft Corp. has been told to stop selling Windows 98 until it removes an altered version of the programming language Java that is incompatible with software made by its rivals.

The order was given Nov. 17 by U.S. District Judge Ronald Whyte also forces the Redmond, Wash. based software giant to change Internet Explorer 4.0 and other Java-incorporating software, or stop shipping the products within 90 days. Whyte also ruled that the lawsuit filed by Sun Microsystems, Inc., the original designers of Java, has merit and should be tried in court.

Sun said that Microsoft failed to adhere to terms of a 1995 licensing agreement between the two companies which allowed Microsoft in 1997 to begin including Java in programs such as Windows 98 and Internet Explorer. In doing so, it tinkered with its language, effectively creating a Windows-only form of Java that will not work on competitor's operating systems. Conversely, the standard form of Java will not work on Microsoft's systems and software.

The lawsuit filed by Sun in October, seeking the changes and \$35 million in damages, will now head into court, although no court date has been set.

New study indicates that college cigarette smoking is on the rise

WASHINGTON — Cigarette smoking is on the rise among college students jumping 28 percent in four years and causing health advocates to warn the nation may face more tobacco-caused disease. The findings come from a study performed by Henry Wechsler of Harvard University that appears currently in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Although the findings of this report are alarming, they are not surprising as teen smoking has already risen 32 percent in the 1990s. As these teens reached college, the college rates would increase as well.

Up until recently, anti-tobacco programs have largely ignored college students. Historically, they have been far less likely to smoke than less educated Americans, plus most smokers begin before they reach age 18. Health workers had focused more on persuading children never to try cigarettes and helping older smokers quit, according to Dr. Donald Sharp of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Wechsler's survey showed that in 1997, 28.5 percent of college students were smokers, up from 22.3 percent in 1993. The vast majority started smoking in high school with 11 percent of students having their first cigarette before age 18. But 28 percent moved from occasionally trying cigarettes in high school to becoming regular smokers in college. Some 3,000 teenagers begin smoking every day.

Downtown Miami arena catches fire; officials unsure of cause

MIAMI, Fla. — Fire swept through a portion of the \$165 million arena under construction for the Miami Heat, casting smoke across the downtown skyline and snarling rush-hour traffic for several hours on the afternoon of Nov. 13.

The blaze consumed wooden scaffolding along the upper levels of the American Airlines Arena, the future home of Miami's National Basketball Association team.

Firefighters shot water upward and the department was eventually able to use a helicopter to scoop water out of Biscayne Bay and help douse the fire.

Damage was limited to scaffolding on top of the arena, and the main structure was not harmed, said Jay Cross, president of business operations for the basketball team.

Fire officials did not immediately know the cause of the blaze, although it could have been caused by a welder.

Nobody was injured in the fire and the blaze was not expected to delay the arena's scheduled opening in December 1999.

Compiled from news services

POLICE BEAT

Police arrest driver in student's stolen car

University Police assisted the Winston-Salem Police Department in a case involving a student's stolen car Nov. 7.

At approximately 4 a.m., a Winston-Salem police officer stopped a driver on Rosedale Circle for speeding.

The officer then learned the car was stolen and belonged to a student.

In addition to the theft, the driver was charged with three other violations, including speeding, driving while intoxicated and failing to stop for an officer.

Theft

A student reported a missing check card to University Police Nov. 13. An unidentified person had used the card to make purchases between 4 p.m. Oct. 27 and 11 p.m. Nov. 12.

University Police handled several incidents at Spry Soccer Stadium during the recent Atlantic Coast Conference soccer tournament.

In one incident, a banner belonging to the ACC was stolen from a fence at the soccer stadium between 11:45 p.m. Nov. 11 and 6:30 a.m. Nov. 12. The banner was worth \$2,500.

At 1:22 a.m. Nov. 14, a University Police officer saw a student

from another university steal a banner from a food vendor parked on Wingate Road. The banner was recovered and the incident was forwarded to the student's university.

In another incident, about 36 candy bars were taken from a food vendor's trailer parked on Wingate Road between 3 a.m. and 3:28 a.m. Nov. 14.

The candy bars were found scattered on the ground around the trailer.

A student's mountain bicycle was taken from a picnic table at Student Apartments between 7 p.m. Nov. 14 and 3 a.m. Nov. 15.

The bicycle, worth \$120, was secured to the table with a lock when the incident occurred.

A student's \$700 mountain bicycle, which was secured to a bike rack at North Residence Hall, was stolen between 6 p.m. Nov. 14 and 2:50 p.m. Nov. 15.

Another student's \$600 mountain bicycle was stolen from a bike

rack at Kitchin House between 12 p.m. Nov. 12 and 10 p.m. Nov. 15. The bicycle was secured to the rack with a lock when the incident occurred.

A student's credit card was stolen between 5 p.m. Nov. 3 and 6 p.m. Nov. 6. The card was used to make purchases totaling \$2,000.

The student had left her wallet in a Reynolds Gymnasium office. After returning for the wallet, the student realized the credit card was missing.

The door to a student's Luter Residence Hall room was damaged between 3 p.m. Nov. 6 and 2:30 p.m. Nov. 8.

The door's lock was damaged, too.

The driver's side of a student's car was damaged between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. Nov. 12.

The car was parked in Lot Q, next to Scales Fine Arts Center.

The driver's side door and window of a student's car was damaged between 5:30 p.m. Nov. 14 and 12 p.m. Nov. 15. The car was parked in Lot Q.

Miscellaneous

Another driver damaged a student's car and then left the scene without notifying anyone between 10:30 a.m. Nov. 14 and 11 p.m. Nov. 15.

The car was parked along Jasper Memory Lane.

Another student's car was hit and damaged between 8 a.m. Nov. 7 and 5:28 p.m. Nov. 13. The car was parked in Lot Q.

A student living in Collins Residence Hall received a threatening voice mail message between 9:57 p.m. Nov. 12 and 4 a.m. Nov. 13.

A student reported he found a

pipe used for smoking marijuana in another student's Collins Residence Hall room around 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 10.

The incident was forwarded to Harold Holmes, an associate vice president and the dean of student services.

Two students were caught loaning their university identification cards to non-students so the individuals could enter Groves Stadium through the student around 5 p.m. gate Nov. 14.

Both incidents were forwarded to the dean's office.

Two male students were arrested for urinating in a public area and underage consumption of alcohol at 6 p.m. Nov. 14 at Groves Stadium. The incident was forwarded to the dean's office.

University Police handled 54 calls from Nov. 9 to Nov. 15 including 15 incidents and investigations and 34 requests for service.