

OPINION

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

Faculty salaries should take priority

President Thomas K. Hearn Jr. presently holds the second-highest presidential salary in the doctoral college bracket. A year ago he held the third-highest salary in the nation.

What caused this change in Hearn's salary ranking?

Somehow, somewhere between the 1996-97 and 1997-98 school years Hearn's salary experienced a \$24,000 cut, a cut that moved him out of the top five highest-paid university and college presidents.

However, Hearn's overall earnings have not changed; between the perks and the benefits, all of Hearn's original \$440,000 are basically still there.

Although someone in the administration was willing to take the time to play with the numbers of Hearn's salary benefits and perks in order to circumvent the honor of yet another year near the top of the highest-paid list, no one has taken the time to devise a budget that would adequately compensate our university's professors for their wealth of knowledge, experience and daily efforts.

At a university dedicated to the education of its students, the priorities of this university seem to be amiss.

Recently, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on construction of buildings on campus from dorm rooms to classrooms, and tuition has been raised more times lately than students wish to count.

None of this money has gone to the source of this university's education process — the professors.

Although the university seems to be greatly concerned with the outward image of our campus as they rush to erect shiny new buildings and to protect the image of our leader, the faculty which provides the real education on this campus is being neglected.

The university claimed it would hire 40 new professors by the year 2000; however, our ability to attract the most qualified professors is in question because our university is not willing to offer professors a competitive rate of pay compared with similar institutions.

Much more important than new buildings or spacious dorm rooms, the university needs to put its faculty forward as its first priority.

By paying the faculty well, the university will attract a more experienced and knowledgeable staff that can only improve the educational quality of this university.

Players deserve 'A' for effort

Armchair critics miss the big picture.

This letter does not reflect my opinion of the true fans on campus. The rest of the football/athletic family and I appreciate your support and salute you for it. Thank you. The Nov. 12 sports

Matthew Burdick

GUEST COLUMNIST

column titled "Div. I-AA might be a better fit" hit a few good points. You are correct that the team, alumni and university all deserve better. We do. We deserve better than people/students/"fans" like you.

Your drawn-out introduction would hold a little bit of weight if you were an upperclassman, but this is only your third semester here. I could possibly understand your frustration if you were here during the 1-10 seasons, but you weren't. We went 5-6 last year with four losses coming after we lead at half-time. This year has obviously been tough. We have lost a lot of games, and are only capable of matching our record from last year. The people who are most disappointed about this fact aren't you, the alumni or university, but the coaches and players.

What you so-quick-to-point-the-finger-and-mock people don't see are the hours we spend in the weight room and on the practice field. Throw in the class work, and we have a schedule that you couldn't imagine handling even in the off-season. Do you think we go out there and hope that we just might possibly lose?

I find it odd that when we are 2-1 and are playing at home after an impressive win at Clemson that we can't even have our home side filled at Groves Stadium. Where are you then when the game is kicking off or when it is on the line in the third and fourth quarters?

The crowds (minus many students) cheer only when we are behind. Their main concern is looking good for their peers, and many of them probably can't even name three of our starters. I think the decibel level was higher at our spring game when the cheerleaders were throwing out free T-shirts. Even my roommate, a non-athlete at this school, doesn't show up until mid-second quarter and leaves early.

At schools like North Carolina State University and Clemson they don't have this problem because their students love football (through thick and thin). Their stands are filled with students. I almost enjoy playing there more than at home because they love football, know what's going on and are loyal to their team (as it should be).

We do have some true fans on this campus, but percentage-wise compared to other schools we are at the bottom. Sometimes they actually travel to our away games! I have heard from countless students how they have made it to every tailgate and never stepped inside the stadium. I also hear many times "What game?" or on a Saturday "Where have you been all day?"

We had more students at the basketball exhibition game (myself included) than at any of our home football games. Those types of fans need to show up at the football games. We may have, unfortunately, not provided you with many wins this season at home, but we have given anybody who enjoys football something to get hooked on. We fight every battle that we face with an extreme amount of pride.

I must say it is ridiculous to think that we should throw up our hands, quit and demote ourselves to I-AA, as you suggest. I am sorry if you feel that the UNC-Chapel Hill, the University of Virginia, N.C. State, Duke University and Appalachian State games weren't competitive. You must have been watching a different team than we fielded. This team is full of pride and full of inner strength (I guess we have to thank fans like you for giving us this motivation), and we don't quit.

I know I am sick of hearing it, but it is true: "Take away a play here and a

play there and we are 8-1, instead of 3-6." So when you consider quitting and dropping down, that only reflects your willingness to submit when feeling the heat. I know I wouldn't want you blocking for me or working on a project with you when a deadline approaches.

It makes me feel good to know that I could toast a coward like you in the classroom. Why would anybody want to take pride in a team that resigned to lesser competition? I guess those people are the ones you associate with and consult with before writing articles. Good luck in the business world. I am glad to know that you aren't going to be supporting my family.

We could easily blame the losses to our injuries, but I guess losing starters such as Kelvin Moses (LB), Dustin Lynman (LB), Kelvin Shackelford (DT), DeVaughn Mellerson (DT), Marlon Curtis (C), James Lik (TE), John Mannon (LB) and Desmond Clark (WR) would be easy for some teams. We have had people to step it up and play extremely well in their absences, but those men are irreplaceable to say the least.

No team around the country could play as well as we have losing players in these critical positions! Try to name one team that has been as strong as we are with their three linebackers weighing 212, 195 and 195.

We play for our parents, our coaches, our friends and our true fans (no matter how few). So when you write your next column, or when you students talk about how bad the football team is here, work on thinking about this: Who's more worthy of supporting, someone who gives all they have, takes a few unlucky falls and still persists, or someone who quits?

Look at our schedule, look at the scores and read between the lines. Look at the pride we have and look at the complications we have dealt with.

Come over and watch some game film if it will make you feel better. I would support the fighter no matter what the circumstances. I certainly hope I see you pointing the finger at yourself when you are an upperclassman and when this team is taking off without your support.

Wake Forest Baptists should be commended

The steps of Wait Chapel have been graced by the feet of many newly wedded couples over the decades. Students today occasionally catch a glimpse of these rice-strewn, white taffeta, Kodak moments emerging from the chapel on sunny Sunday afternoons.

However students shouldn't be surprised if they see a new sight gliding down those worn white steps, a new sign that times are changing and that the Wake Forest Baptist Church is growing.

At last week's Baptist Convention, the Wake Forest Baptist Church made it known it will condone and perform same-sex marriages. This decision was hardly accepted by the church's counterparts at the Convention and will cause all ties to be cut between the Convention and our campus's Baptist church.

With the hateful epithets of the Westboro Baptist Church still hanging in the recesses of most students'

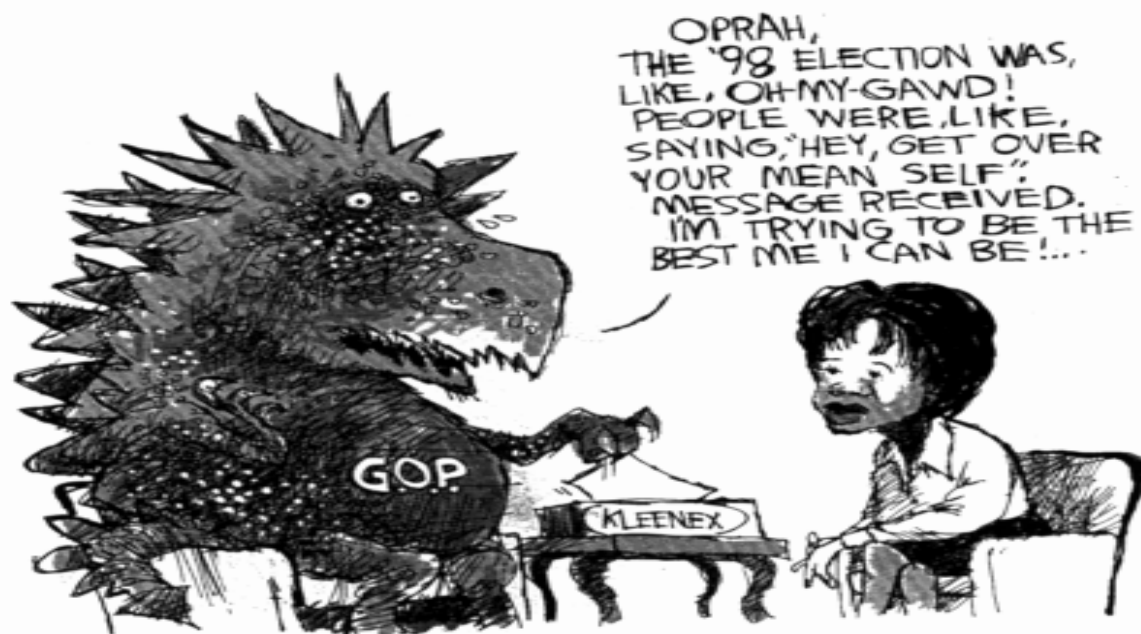
memories, this move by the Church, especially at the risk of losing its long held affiliation with the national convention, dispels the effects of their misguided Baptist brethren.

At a university whose conservative nature is rooted in its Baptist history, it is a pleasure to see a more liberal outlook exuding from the Wake Forest Baptist Church.

As the Baptist Convention attempts to write its own set of "Thou shalt nots" (as in "Thou shall not drink beer at Shorty's," "Thou shall not have female preachers" and "Thou shall not wed same-sex couples"), the Wake Forest Baptist Church is taking commendable steps to provide a more accepting and considerate community for all people.

The Wake Forest Baptist Church is one of the few area Baptist churches willing to face opposition in order to meet the religious needs of the waiting gay and lesbian public. By standing up for the religious rights of gays and lesbians, the university Baptist church has truly welcomed all to its doors.

MIKE LUCKOVICH RELAXER CONSTITUTIONAL



Leave football in Division I-A

An alumnus requests students' patience.

As an alumnus (class of '84) I agree that the university deserves better than it sometimes gets on the football field, but sometimes better isn't measured in terms of wins and losses.

Vic Evaro

GUEST COLUMNIST

As an alumnus I also get tired of explaining that this university has the worst overall record of all 112 Division I-A football teams. Three things come to mind here. First, although it is tiresome to explain continually that this is the first or second smallest Division I football school in the nation (it depends on annual enrollment at Rice), it is also very satisfying when they beat UNC Chapel Hill, N.C. State, the University of Maryland or even Clemson University in a down year. Then, I proudly tout (instead of using it as an excuse) how we did that with the first or second-smallest enrollment.

Second, take a close look at those teams ahead of this university. How many Central Michigans, Ball States, and San Jose States are in front of them? Do you really think the team

would be number 112 if it spent its entire football history playing in the Mid-American Conference, Western Athletic Conference, West Coast Conference, (or even the Big East or Conference USA for that matter) instead of the Atlantic Coast Conference?

Third, remember Kansas State was number 112 until about three years after Coach Bill Snyder arrived. Don't take that to mean I believe this university can necessarily turn the program around so dramatically, but I do believe the team can become a consistent 5-6 to 7-4 team with an occasional 8-3 season and a bowl game. They just have to start winning and believe in themselves.

I believe Coach Jim Caldwell had them heading in the right direction until the inexplicable fall this season.

Remember, there is much fiercer recruiting competition on the east coast than in the Midwest so that turnaround is much more difficult to achieve. Kansas State only has to compete with Kansas to keep kids in the same state. This university has to compete with UNC-CH, NCSU, East Carolina University, Duke University and numerous Division I-AA schools.

That means it is much more difficult to build consistency but not impossible. ECU does it. Remember also that even if you don't believe admission standards make it tougher for a football recruit to get in at this university, once there, the curriculum makes it much tougher to stay. Also, from a recruiting standpoint, it's much easier to get seven good

basketball or soccer players to be competitive in the ACC than it is to get a deep team of 44 football players.

This university in I-AA? Then we lose the exposure and lure of competing in the ACC and the I-AA record begins to drop. (By the way, that lost exposure also affects basketball and other sport recruiting.) Before you know it, fair-weather fans are calling for them to drop to Division II, and so on until we are begging to drop the program altogether.

I think we can get there and are doing many of the things necessary to do so. Redshirting the freshman and dropping an Appalachian State team that sees us as the game that makes or breaks their season are steps in the right direction. Win and it's "So what, it was only a I-AA team." Lose, and it's the end of the world. I would much rather lose a tough 31-20 game to I-A Kentucky than to win 20-17 over ASU. Give me a consistent middle-of-the-pack Deacon football squad and throw in a bowl game every five to 10 years.

I would hate to get as arrogant as the UNC-CH or Florida State fans who think that is their birthright to go to a bowl every year anyway.

In the long run, is I-AA what we really want, or do we just want a total commitment to turning our program into a consistent winner in I-A? I believe it's the latter, and for that to happen, that means commitment and support from the fans, alumni and current students as well as the school and athletic department.

OLD GOLD AND BLACK

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY SINCE 1916

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The *Old Gold and Black* is published each Thursday during the school year, except during examinations, summer and holiday periods, by Piedmont Publishing Co. of Winston-Salem, N.C. Questions or comments should be sent via e-mail to comments@ogb.wfu.edu or via mail to P.O. Box 7569, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27109. © 1998 WFU Publications Board. All rights reserved.

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