

OPINION

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

SG too hasty in freezing of student funds

The recent review of student organizations conducted by the Committee on Appropriations and Charter, and subsequent decision to freeze part or all of the funding for 20 student organizations and sports clubs needs to be revisited by Student Government. Under the current evaluation process, SG sets guidelines to delineate “delinquent” organizations and, depending upon how strict these standards are, determines how much money will flow into SG’s budget.

The main issue is the process by which SG reviewed active organizations. Organization heads were contacted via e-mail, but in the case of the *Howler*, for example, the e-mails were sent to the wrong person. Organizations whose leadership did not respond to the survey had their Student Budget Allocation Committee funding frozen for the remainder of the fiscal year and, if left unappealed, next year as well. Organizations with frozen funding included Anthony Aston Players, WAKE Radio, Habitat for Humanity and nine club sports.

Evaluation forms received by the *Old Gold and Black* indicated that upon review, “the SBAC will use the reports from the spring semester during the following fall budget hearings.” In a follow-up e-mail, SG indicated that the evaluations would be used by SBAC to “determine the appropriate allocations for the 2004-05 academic year.”

Students receive a large number of e-mails at Wake Forest, especially if they are a member of any listserv. It’s not surprising then, that busy student leaders ignored a seemingly innocuous e-mail evaluation form, the consequences of which were misleading.

Of two e-mails and three forms received by the *OGB*, only one e-mail indicated that “allotted SBAC funding to your organization becomes endangered (sic) of being rescinded.”

Although SG claims that it is the responsibility of current organization heads to send updated leadership information to Student Development, how many student organizations proactively submit this information? Also, as students go abroad or graduate mid-year, leadership can change often.

SG cannot deny all responsibility in the failure of some organizations to receive the organization evaluation documents. Communication to organization heads should be in both e-mail and letter form in order to ensure the correct dissemination of information and a response.

Before SG started to rescind funding from inactive organizations, SG should have ensured that the method of evaluation was explicit to organizations as well as foolproof.

Furthermore, SG’s confiscation of funds could also be employed as a form of student censorship. In the case of WAKE Radio, the student-run station might have to stop broadcasting

because of the loss of funding. Are there checks against SG’s power to protect media organizations and specific special interest groups, whose voices can so easily be silenced?

The purpose of SBAC funding is to promote student participation in organizations, the freezing of funds is counter to that goal. The loss of funds can ring the death knell for an organization.

Does SG have the authority to take actions that will ultimately spell the end of viable student organizations with active members?

Student organizations that spend none of their allotted funding do not deserve it. However, the fiscal year ends in June, giving organizations at least two more months in which to spend their funding. For example, some organizations, the *Old Gold and Black* among them, must wait until the end of the year to pay for supplies and production costs. It would be incorrect to assume that if an organization hasn’t spent their money by March that they aren’t going to.

For the organizations that do not spend any or all of their allotted funding, the remainder of their budget is returned to the university’s general fund. However, all student organizations are lumped together in the eyes of Financial and Accounting Services. Taken together, organizations who overspend and underspend balance each other out, thus preventing organizations from carrying debts into the new fiscal year. This is the first year this policy has changed.

The Student Life Committee also shares part of the blame as they are part of the process.

A mandate from the board of trustees to implement innovative new student life improvements should not serve as an excuse to eliminate safeguards that result in the termination active student organizations participation on campus due to lack of funding.

But implementing new student life improvements should not take precedence over existing organizations. Students want the coffeehouse to succeed, but not at the expense of individual organizations.

The \$34,000 confiscated from active student organizations as the funds will help provide full coffee service in the coffeehouse is now being provided through funds confiscated from current organizations.

While the coffeehouse is important, is it that much more important than the missions of these chartered student organizations?

If SG needed additionally funds for the proposed coffeehouse, perhaps they should have used their way to rally support among the student body to pressure the administration to commit more funding.

Where will the funding go in the future. Who will be there to safeguard that SG won’t misallocate future funds?

Is a nickname too much to ask?

Seniors, you are most remembered for the names you were called.

Some people call me a space cowboy. Some call me the gangster of love. Some people call me Maurice, that, or the idiot writing for the paper. This year’s been a long, strange trip, but now sadly, it has to end. A lot of things transpired over the course of nine months. Um



John Harman

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... very interesting things. Uh ... events so spectacular and remarkable it makes me remember how lucky I am to wake up each day. Hmm, let’s not talk about those things right now. My own journey began late in the first semester, as a few minor “problems” on campus provoked me to purge the world of its evils and embark on a journey; in other words, I started sending my rants to the *OGB*. Time progressed – days turned into weeks, weeks into more weeks, and months into things I can no longer remember. The writing, or the percocet, gave me a euphoric feeling like no other and I solemnly pledged to ramble incoherently each and every week as long as the school continued to accept my bribes. I changed my major, my hair and that ridiculous WIN picture of me WITHOUT my clown nose. So, it’s the end of April and I’d like to think I’ve established myself full-time on the staff. If all things work out well,

Who could ever forget “Fat-face,” “Jughead,” or the always loveable, “Mr. Got Really Drunk at Prom and Backed Over Mom’s Rose Garden Right Before Crashing Through the Garage Door.”

I’ll end up like Krys Mroczkowski, attacking anyone and everything right up to the point I graduate, then praying that I never see those poor saps again. Yet it seems as though my time will pass without one of the distinctions my colleague received over the last few years: a nickname.

Nicknames have always been a way to give significance to a vital attribute or event in a person’s life. Who could ever forget “Fat-face,” “Jughead,” or the always lovable, “Mr. Got Really Drunk at Prom and Backed Over Mom’s Rose Garden Right Before Crashing Through the Garage Door.” Timeless, I’m sure. These alternative monikers help us as human beings better recognize and remember certain characteristics, and I hope to one day gain that type of notoriety. Growing up, I enjoyed playing with fire like many other kids my age, so maybe “flamer” would work well? My roommate gave me a very peculiar look when I brought that up. I don’t get it. I guess I could call myself “Chi-O” because I’m constantly being used, unfortunately there’s a group that picked up on that well before I did. Oh well. Look, I know it’s pompous of me to try and create a nickname for myself (and for everyone I meet), but someone needs to take Mroczkowski’s spot.

He was the Horse, and he got to dress up like Jesus. Me? I’ve never worn anything that could cause someone to confuse me with the Lord, although I have, on occasion, been

known to run around proclaiming to be Him. To each man his own, right?

We’ll all miss those graduating from the *OGB*, as well as the other seniors on campus. They’ve given us lots of memories, created friendships that will last a lifetime, and set a foundation of tradition and admiration that will live on long after they have left. Yet, the stage lights are fading for them and a new era must dawn (between the muggings and shootings) in our peaceful city of Winston-Salem. Though it will be a sad day for many of them as they move from this humble abode, leaving countless friends behind, there will be joyful moments as well.

After a long and thorough conversation with a good friend of mine concerning her feelings about her upcoming graduation, she very articulately and eloquently pronounced, “Wake sucks ass.” What she meant to say, at least according to Wake Forest lawyers, was that although her four years at this school have been some of the most meaningful and most enjoyable years of her life, graduation will be the beginning of something much greater.

My friend and every other graduating senior receiving a diploma this summer deserves our respect, appreciation, a dreadful pop ballad by an ascorbic acid and a new nickname to refer to me by when I make that inevitable call asking for bail money. Sadly though, I can think of very little to identify myself with, so I’ll end on a more serious note. To all the seniors: thank you for everything and we wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors. Now, if you’ll excuse me, I’m off to my vacation at Lake Titicaca. Let’s see you make a joke out of that.

John Harman is a junior majoring in political science.

Professor disputes endowment portrayal

Information from administration ignores facts for pleasant fiction.

In the April 17 issue of the *Old Gold and Black*, the Vice President for Investments and Treasurer took issue with my findings regarding the performance of Wake Forest’s endowment, terming my letter (“Endowment statements

Charles Kennedy

GUEST COLUMNIST

ambiguous, misleading” April 10), “misleading.” I stand behind the findings of my letter, and I welcome this opportunity to expand upon my findings.

The Vice President states: “for the fiscal year ended [sic] June 30, 2002, the Wake Forest endowment experienced a negative return of 5.22 percent placing 223rd among 660 reporting institutions or in the upper third of the group.” The actual data departs significantly from these claims. (Parenthetically, it is important to note that we are using the same data set – the NACUBO data as reported by the *Chronicle of Higher Education*). During fiscal year 2001-2 the Wake Forest endowment fell from \$812.389 million to \$732.57 million, a loss of 9.83 percent *not* 5.22 percent.

Focusing only on 2001-2002 can also give one the wrong impression as Wake Forest’s losses were even greater in 2000-2001.

Similarly, Wake Forest’s performance ranks 453rd of the 654 institutions that reported data in 2002; Wake Forest *did not* rank, therefore, in the upper third of the group *but rather* in the bottom third.

Focusing only on 2001-2002 can also give one the wrong impression as Wake Forest’s losses were even greater in 2000-2001. During that fiscal year Wake Forest’s endowment lost 16.2 percent of its value (a loss of \$158 million). Indeed, during 2000-2001 Wake Forest’s performance was 579th of the 610 institutions reporting, that is, in the bottom 10 percent.

The Vice President also claims that during 2001-2002 that the mean loss of comparable school’s endowment to Wake Forest (the so-called Treasurer’s comparison group) was 4.83 percent. I have no way of confirming this figure as the twenty schools included in the group were not listed in the letter. But, assuming this calculation is correct, Wake Forest is patently not only “approximately one-third of one percent lower” than the comparison group *but rather* 5 percent lower than this comparison group.

The Vice President has accurately stated that the university’s endowment grew by \$311 million since 1995 (from \$422 million to \$733 million)

– an increase of 74 percent. But, reporting this increase in the absence of comparative data gives a false impression. Since 1995 there has been an extraordinary growth of the U.S. economy and an attendant boom in the value of university and college endowments – the past seven years have not been as the Vice President claims “one of the worst bear markets in history.” Indeed, when compared with the nine cross-admit institutions (the institutions with which Wake Forest is normally compared), Wake Forest’s “impressive” performance fades. From 1995-2002 the percentage increase in the value of respective endowments has been in order: (1) UNC-CH 304 percent; (2) Duke 274 percent; (3) William and Mary 155 percent; (4) Richmond 125 percent; (5) Vanderbilt 117 percent; (6) Emory 104 percent; (7) Virginia 104 percent; (8) Davidson 96 percent; (9) Wake Forest 74 percent; and (10) Washington and Lee 16 percent. The mean increase of the cross-admit institutions 1995-2002 therefore is 144 percent. Therefore, I ask the reader, who is being misleading? The fact is that Wake Forest’s endowment has underperformed the endowments of virtually every institution with which we are typically compared. It is time that we acknowledge that fact and try to remedy it.

Charles H. Kennedy is a professor of political science.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Students who stay not served by ARAMARK

Over Easter weekend, I, along with the majority of my hall mates, stayed on campus. Since we only had one day off from class, and many people had chosen to stay on campus, I assumed that those of us who stayed would have full access to most of the usual campus services. I was disappointed to find, then, that almost nothing on campus was open on April 18 and April 19.

The library, Benson Food Court, and the Miller Center were closed for the entire weekend, while Sundry and the Pit were only open for a few hours each day.

In addition, neither the on-campus branch of Wachovia nor the post office was open, save for a few hours Saturday morning. The same services were shut down over fall break. For those students who only buy food with Deacon Dollars, or those who do their studying in the library, this shutdown presents a major inconvenience.

The administration and ARAMARK must learn that a day without classes does not constitute a “break.” For the 70 percent of students at Wake Forest who call a state other than North Carolina home, a three-day weekend is not enough time to go home, especially with papers, tests and projects due the following week. Those students that choose to stay on campus rather than make the long trip home, then, should not be punished

for doing so, and all services should remain in operation with normal hours over short weekends like Easter and fall break.

John Engel
Junior

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. No anonymous letters will be printed.

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