

# Undeserved tuition hike hits pockets

Students should receive added benefits in return for high tuition increase.

Something is missing in the financial picture of this university. Yes, our endowment has suffered due to the economic recession. The last two years have seen substantial declines in the market value of our investments. However, these



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losses seem more than offset by the extraordinarily successful capital campaign, even in the wake of that same recession. Projections have been raised and goals set higher.

This current recession has been unique in that inflation has not been a significant factor in exacerbating the problem. In fact, Robert J. Samuelson, a columnist for *Newsweek*, stated in his Sept. 4 column that the possibility of dollar deflation is very high, considering the United States' large trade deficits. Even the highest estimates for inflation do not place the current rate above 2 percent this year.

Yet somehow, the board of trustees cannot find a way to financially operate this university for fiscal year 2003 - 2004 without a 7 percent tuition hike. Combined with last year's 5.1 percent hike, next year's tuition of approximately \$26,482 will be 12.54 percent higher than tuition for fiscal year 2001 - 2002. If inflation at most is a combined 4 percent over that same two-year period, these increases are three times greater than plausible tuition increases.

Though I do not know the specifics of next year's budget, this situation on the surface seems rather fiscally irresponsible. Earlier this year on this same editorial page, I recall a column broaching the idea of a tuition-free school - obviously that can be long forgotten. What makes the increase more baffling is that the university is not catering to a larger student body. The administration has continually stated its commitment to preserving the current undergraduate level of approximately 4,000 students. Where then is this extra 7 percent going?

Inevitably, a tuition increase also signals price increases across the board. The price of a double room increased 7.5 percent (\$300) between 2001-2002 and this current year. Students also noticed the price increases for much of the food served at the Pit, Benson, and Information Systems. Parking

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fees also increased over the same period by 14.3 percent; yet students consistently have no new parking options. Tuition itself even fails to be all-inclusive - individual music study and some exercise science courses incur additional out-of-pocket costs to the students.

Though Wake Forest students come primarily from middle-to upper-class backgrounds, most cannot afford the undergraduate education entirely on their own. Even for a family with a yearly income of \$100,000, which is several deviations from the national median, tuition requires 25 percent allotted to this payment. Raising this figure only places the university further from the reach of those already struggling to make ends meet. It is not surprising then that students turn to loans to finance their education. No wonder many expect high-paying jobs the second they leave this campus: if they don't, incurred debt will only mount. It is perplexing that the mode needed to succeed (a college education) puts its graduates at a fiscal disadvantage.

The tuition increase of 7 percent, approximating 4,000 students next fall, will give \$6.93 million to the budget that was not included this year. This does not even account for one percent of this current year's budget, or even ten percent of the endowment lost. How much difference will this increase make, and where will students see the benefit of it? If I could take the liberty, here are some possible suggestions:

Lowering the cost of parking tickets. If the university cannot provide an adequate number of spots for all members of Reynolda campus under its current policy, do not penalize the students.

Increase the budget for student groups funded by the Student Budget Advisory Council. There always seems to be groups ready to appeal their current amount.

Subsidize student textbooks. Lower summer school tuition. If the divisional requirement system forces business majors who want to study abroad to take summer school, at least give them a discount.

If there is no area that can adequately survive without this 7 percent increase, I believe that the university should reexamine its spending habits. It seems absurd that this university cannot survive without tuition increases three times the rate of inflation. If students are complaining about price and professors about salaries, why is the administration silent?

*Doug Hutton is a sophomore who plans to major in political science.*



# Anti-gay sentiment ails community

Inappropriate terms may seem harmless, but they can be very hurtful.

This is the first time I have ever written anything for the *Old Gold and Black*, but the climate on our campus has pushed me to make my voice heard. It amazes me that on a campus like our own, intolerance and hate could run so

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GUEST COLUMNIST

rampant.

In a liberal arts university such as this, one would expect a bit more openness and dialogue between groups, striving towards an acceptance of diversity rather than bigotry and fanaticism.

This, however, is not the environment that I have come to find on this campus.

The night of Nov. 1, several of the student-decorated jack-o'-lanterns on display outside Huffman Residence Hall were maliciously vandalized. Now, this is pure speculation on my part, but it seems just a bit too ironic that those vandalized were ones created by the Gay-Straight Student Alliance, Women's Initiative for Support and Empowerment, Amnesty International and Students' Environmental Action Coalition.

As anyone who has been at the university for any period of time knows, Huffman is a themed community which values tolerance

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and diversity in an academic setting. Our fellow university students acting in such a cowardly manner, through their defacement of property, is a slap in the face of the Huffman community, and thus, a slap in the face of the ideals of acceptance and tolerance at this university.

This particular act is but one instance which has openly demonstrated the intolerance against "minority" groups on campus. (And yes, I include gays and lesbians, women and peace activists as minorities in addition to racial minorities).

I hear the use of derogatory and offensive language nearly every day, and usually by people who probably don't even realize that they are being offensive.

I think that the most offensive and most common of these epithets is the use of the word "gay" as a generally derogatory adjective. Saying things like "that is so gay" may seem cute or appropriate in one's own little social circles, but by using the term "gay" in this context, it associates being homosexual as a bad thing.

I would ask the campus community to be more conscious of your word choices; because chances are that you have seriously offended someone and don't even know it.

Other outward expressions of this intolerance, especially toward members of the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender community, include the defacement of flyers and the vandalism of vehicles. In the past, gay and lesbian students at this university have been targeted for hate crimes, which have included the vandalism of several students' cars that displayed pride stickers.

On Oct. 11, the GSSA celebrated National Coming Out Day by sitting on the Quad to make our presence known on campus, talking with individuals who dropped by and handing out candy and free coffee.

I was impressed by the amount of support that there seemed to be that day; however, there were still those who gave demeaning looks as they passed by and made derogatory comments as they conversed with their friends outside the post office. If you thought you weren't heard, you were. In addition, a number of the flyers placed around campus in commemoration of Coming Out Day were either torn down or defaced.

The university's administration is making progress toward providing a safe environment for all students to learn and grow. It may be slow, but I am confident that it is being made, as demonstrated by various studies and focus groups on campus climate which have been conducted over the past couple of years. However, I still believe that the student body has a long way to go before we reach an acceptable level of tolerance.

There is too much prejudice at this school, and it needs to stop.

*Dylan Morris is a junior communication major.*

# Wake should do more to bring in international students

The university would benefit greatly from much needed cultural diversity.

The university is infamous for being homogeneous and there are reasons behind it. One of the main reasons is that Wake Forest is really expensive for international students, especially when international students' home currency exchange rate to U.S. dollars is

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GUEST COLUMNIST

bad. Because of that reason, it costs way more for international students' parents to send their kids here. Moreover, Wake Forest does not offer any kind of financial assistance toward international students. Hence, it is understandable why this institution does not seem very desirable for students from other countries and you do not see much cultural diversity on campus.

As an international student at Wake Forest, I feel that I should bring out this issue and thus, I write this proposal.

Here are a few reasons why the university should offer International Students financial aid: First, not providing international students with financial aid undermines their accessibility to higher education and contradicts the need-blind admission policy of the university. Some other colleges that have need-blind admission

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policies offer international students need-based financial aid, such as Carleton College in Minn., Middlebury College in Vt., Davidson College in N.C., etc.

Tuition has increased dramatically over the past 10 years (It has increased 104 percent from 1991 to 2000), and it is hard for international students' parents to adapt to the tuition changes without any kind of financial assistance.

A recent column ("Trustees vote to raise tuition by 7 percent in 2003-2004," Oct. 31) may leave many international students' parents dismayed at the news of this hike in tuition.

In order to gain an international reputation, the university needs to actively recruit international students. To do that, we should help international students who can pay a substantial amount of the total cost, but just need some minor financial aid to help them to make up the difference between the cost of attendance and their own resources.

Globalization is inevitable and it is essential for every university to obtain a good international reputation!

In order to gain an international reputation and recognition, almost all higher education institutions around the world are trying to

provide various scholarships and financial aid for international students in order to recruit more of them.

The Education Department of the Japanese government even set up a 10-year plan to increase the international student populations in Japanese Universities.

The homogenous student body is a cultural weakness that this university must overcome. As Jessica Murray says on her Web site, "Wake Forest has a wealth of opportunities for its students. It is a top institution of higher learning. But, I also believe that the liberal arts theory of education has its foundation in extending the classroom into our daily lives. Because of increasing globalization, we can no longer rely on staying in our comfort zones if we want to be major players in industry and business. Our neighbors are increasingly diversified."

"We will no longer be able to hide in our bubble, and the members of the homogeneous community like myself must learn to interact, understand, and embrace the differences in us all. It is a responsibility of Wake Forest University to provide a learning environment that is conducive to this changing environment. Not only to be more capable in the business world, but because understanding others ultimately gives us a better understanding of ourselves" ("I am a White American," Jessica C. Murray <http://www.wc.wfu.edu/contents/Jessica-racerel.html>).

Additionally, different college guides note the university's lack of diversity, and that sends a message to prospective students who are interested in different cultures that we cannot offer.

For instance, Princetonreview.com says, "Normalcy reigns supreme on this 'very homogenous' campus ... everyone looks like they

walked out of an episode of Dawson's Creek." One student observed that "race relations on campus are poor," and there is a "definite lack of interracial interaction among various ethnic and racial groups."

International students have a lot to offer to this university in all perspectives. For instance, by recruiting international students, Wake Forest provides its student body an active multicultural learning environment, which is a market of various ideas that inspire students to have a different outlook of things.

One of the best parts of college life is meeting people from different cultural and social backgrounds. Since everyone is so distinctively different, each person has much to give to one another. College students often find new aspects of their true selves by exposing themselves to different ideas from their peers. Hence, international students who come from different cultural backgrounds are delightful additions to the campus community.

International students enrich the student body with different cultures and inspirational thoughts. They make this institution a more diverse community, where students can learn to show consideration for each other despite the differences of ethnicity, religion, lifestyle, or perceptions of the world.

My life is itself an example of international relations. By coming to America and immersing myself in a foreign culture, I have seen how international relationships build on a personal level in my life. I have learned to respect the differences among various cultures and to share my own culture with delight.

*Han Hsiang Hsiao is a freshman and an international student from Taiwan.*