

# OPINION

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

## SBAC must make difficult decisions

The Student Budget Advisory Committee announced next year's budget allocations for all student organizations this week, leaving most groups hoping for more.

When all was said and done, however, SBAC did an admirable job given the set of circumstances it was handed.

Although the same amount of money was put at SBAC's disposal as last year, the number of student groups requesting funds increased, leaving the committee with the difficult task of providing everyone with a fair portion of the total resources.

With its hands tied to this extent, SBAC could not please everyone.

The fact that the university did not increase the allotment of funds given to student organizations is unfortunate, but not entirely surprising.

In a difficult economy, everyone is strapped for cash, and the money may simply not be available to accommodate all of the student groups seeking funds.

Ironically, however, the SBAC allocations came on the heels of an announcement that the university will increase tuition next year by 6.5 percent and establish a \$100 per-year student activity fee.

Although tuition money and the new student activities fee are not directly related to student organization funding, it doesn't make for good PR.

The student activities fee will fund campus-wide events independent of individual student organizations.

If students will pay more money to attend the university next year, should they not expect that their extracurricular activities will also be funded at an increased level? Perhaps some of that extra tuition should be directed to SBAC, and subsequently allotted to various campus organizations.

The quality of student life is a major factor in the decision to pay increased tuition and attend the university. Let's make sure its funding keeps up with the rest of university growth.

## Fraternity probations invite problems

The university Greek system received a shock this week with the administration's decision to place six campus fraternities on social probation until November 11.

The disciplinary action was prompted by allegations of alcohol violations by those fraternities, and related specifically to the BYOB policy and prevalence of "collective buying"—the method whereby brothers pool their resources to purchase large amounts of alcohol for mass distribution.

Although no new policies have been implemented regulating the use of alcohol by Greek organizations, the university's decision amounts to an explicit statement that existing rules will be strictly enforced in the future.

Alcohol regulations common to the university and the fraternities' national organizations have existed for many years, and their enforcement is understandably reasonable.

When fraternities are forbidden from hosting parties on campus, they are only slightly inconvenienced. In order to sidestep the problem, frats simply move their parties to off-campus locations and continue with the festivities.

This is precisely the type of action that the university should attempt to minimize, as it opens the door to a host of problems that on-campus parties simply do not face.

For starters, off-campus parties encourage drunken driving. Because most students at the university live on-campus, they can simply walk to and from parties held in a fraternity's lounge. When the destination is a private house outside of the Reynolda gates, however, most patrons drive.

Mixing this transportation dilemma with alcohol can lead to calamitous results.

Furthermore, although many at the university speak of the need for students to become more involved in the Winston-Salem community, off-campus parties are probably not the way in which we want to leave our mark.

These events can lead to noise violations and arrests, which are embarrassing to the university at best and dangerous at worst.

Social probation is a sanction intended to punish fraternity members for violating particular rules and to encourage future compliance. In reality, the penalties may ultimately extend much further.

When school officials forfeit control over various Greek activities, they can expect more problems to be reported from the community. Not only might the good name of the university within Winston-Salem be placed at risk, but, more importantly, the very safety of its students is potentially jeopardized.

# Editor responds to criticism

Last week Amanda Reynolds, a senior and Student Government speaker of the house, questioned the ethics and veracity of the *Old Gold and Black*—charges that necessitate a response.

Elizabeth Bland

EDITOR IN CHIEF

In her editorial ("Columnist critiques newspaper," Oct. 16), Reynolds says that the newspaper printed "untruths ... unsubstantiated allegations and ... accusations against several students' characters."

Unfortunately, Reynolds does not specifically say what she thinks was factually incorrect about the Oct. 9 ("Homecoming procedure in doubt") news article. Instead she questions the *OGB's* editorial opinion ("Homecoming elections questioned").

I understand Reynold's frustration. It must be disheartening to see the mistakes of your organization pointed out in bold type on the front page.

But, as Reynold's herself writes, the newspaper is obligated to report the "news of the day." The news that day was substantial—the results of the preliminary homecoming election were thrown out because of election irregularities.

As editor in chief of the newspaper and author of the article, I made every effort to determine its accuracy.

To get the basic facts I spoke with three reliable sources: junior Francesca Winkler, SG secretary, Harold Holmes, an associate vice president

I understand that Reynolds' may consider the *OGB's* articles on some SG decisions or actions unflattering, but it is our duty to print the truth—even if those facts reflect negatively on a certain organization. Sometimes it may seem like the newspaper is too harsh on SG, but that is only because we are charged with protecting and defending student's interests.

and dean of student services and senior Amanda Davis, the witness who notified SG of election irregularities.

Unfortunately, the facts painted a bleak picture.

The following, among other findings, was established through interviews: senior Maeve Goff, SG president and a homecoming nominee, extended voting past the deadline and that Goff and senior Gary Wheeler, also a homecoming nominee, manned the election table when ballots were cast.

Reynolds suggests that the *OGB* tarnished student's reputations by printing "unsubstantiated allegations," however the article only reported what Davis' suggested were improper actions and Dean Holmes verified as one of the reasons behind the decision to throw out the ballots.

As a matter of standard journalistic practice, the *OGB* does not print what we think happened, but rather what our sources establish as fact.

Though Reynolds and SG may not like those claims, three different people in three separate interviews all gave the same account.

After the article was printed, I asked Dean Holmes to verify its accuracy and to make sure no correction was needed.

Holmes concurred and neither Reynolds nor any member of SG offered a different version of the facts.

I understand that Reynolds' may consider the *OGB's* articles on some SG decisions or actions unflattering, but it is our duty to print the truth—even if those facts reflect negatively on a certain organization.

In our editorial opinion, we offer suggestions, critique procedures and compliment what we consider a job well done. Sometimes it may seem like the newspaper is too harsh on SG, but that is only because we are charged with protecting and defending student's interests.

Staff members of both the *OGB* and SG dedicate hours every day to make the campus better for students.

Every week I wish I had more time to spend on a certain article or the space to tell every story that needs to be told. Every week I wish I could do more.

I know that SG is no different. No sane person would spend as much time in the office as our respective staff members do unless he or she really wanted to make a difference—that's the truth.

It's unfortunate that sometimes the newspaper must point out mistakes, but we only do so to encourage critical thought and hope things are better next time.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Hearn writes letter of thanks to Deacs

Dear Wake Forest Family:  
Laura and I have been overwhelmed by the community response to the announcement of my illness and impending treatment. The online guest book, emails, notes, posters and cards from individuals and groups have been more numerous than I have yet been able to read. However, I plan to read each one as I am strengthened by your prayers, good wishes, and your own personal stories. I wish that I could reply to each of you.  
In times like these, we learn anew the gathered strength of family, friends and community. I am blessed to live in the midst of the Wake Forest family, and your support will uphold us in the days and weeks ahead.

Thomas K. Hearn, Jr.  
President

it completely unnecessary to support your claims. After all, why would comedians need evidence?

I do somewhat regret that I've blown your cover. Reading your columns under the premise that this is really how you see the world makes them all the more hilarious. And don't be angry at the people who respond to your articles having taken your words to heart. They just haven't figured you out yet. But keep writing. They will. And they too will laugh as I do.

And you and your articles will remain a laughing matter until you are (if ever) in a position of power or influence, at which point I will stop laughing and begin worrying. Please continue to entertain us with your hilarious takes on reality.

P.S. I've been meaning to ask you, when and where did get you your Ph.D?

Courtney Barksdale  
Senior

### Reader critiques Lyles' choice of tone

Dearest Mr. Lyles,  
I would like to take this opportunity to commend you on your contributions to the *OGB* this year—especially your most recent piece of satirical brilliance, ("Society Should Favor Rich," Oct. 16). While reading your article I had an epiphany. Many people, including myself have taken you WAY too seriously! It dawned on me that you couldn't possibly be as ignorant as your words suggest. Thus, I have concluded that you simply aim to humor your readers.

Then I re-read the article and laughed uncontrollably at every other sentence.

This alternate reality in which "the wealthy are the most creative, hardworking, productive and virtuous individuals in society" does not exist apart from your own ludicrous perspective. I would argue that it has never existed.

You assert that "People are rewarded with income in proportion to their production." Never mind the overwhelmingly persuasive history of the wealthy exploiting the proletariat (i.e. institutional slavery, child labor, the people around the world who work endless hours for meager pay making the Nikes we wear on our feet, the cars we drive, packaging the chicken we eat etc.).

But alas, I will not bore you with evidence since apparently you find

### Committee members defend Agora

We wish to thank Professor Hank Kennedy for pointing out in his *OGB* letter to the editor of Oct. 16 ("Agora: Greek for 'administration's delusions'") that, besides the Agora, the Theme Year events have been very well attended. There is one correction that needs to be made with respect to his letter. Kennedy called the Wake Forest Agora a "thinly disguised public relations non-event designed to provide photo-ops for the administration." Since Kennedy is unaware of how this event was planned and organized, we will share the specific details.

First and foremost, the Agora was a student-generated idea. The administration played no role in its planning. The students on the Theme Year Committee developed the program in its entirety in order to provide an opportunity for additional contact with the administration as part of the theme year. They, together with Professor Keith Bonin of the Physics Department, drafted letters requesting that President Tom Hearn, Provost Bill Gordon, Vice President for University Advancement Sandra Boyette and Dean of the College Paul Escott participate.

The administrators graciously agreed to participate with the students' program with one caveat: they didn't want to spend the night in the student dorms (we really can't blame them for this). The administrators agreed,

however, to spend a day with students on Wednesday, Sept. 17 and then answer questions from any member of our community at the Thursday Agora.

Second, the questions posed to the administration at the Agora came from the audience. The administrators were not given the questions in advance. Several of the questions posed to the administration had the potential to be embarrassing. If the administration was only concerned about a photo-op they would not have agreed to participate in this unscripted event.

These four individuals put themselves on the firing line for the purpose of opening up new lines of communication within our community.

These members of our administration spent the better part of two days with students. They responded to the participants' questions in a direct manner. Criticizing these individuals for participating in a student-organized event is a good example of the old adage, "No good deed goes unpunished."

Dr. Claire Hammond  
Dr. Ed Allen  
Co-chairs, 2003-2004 Theme Year Committee

### Professor suggests new headline for OGB

I was pleased to see that my brief letter to the editor ran in the Oct. 16 *Old Gold and Black*. ("Agora: Greek for 'administration's delusions'"). However, I really think my title "What if you give an Agora and no one shows up?" is more appropriate than your title "Agora: Greek for Administration's Delusions." After all the senior administration is not "delusional." It knew what it was doing. My title is also funnier. Please issue a correction.

Dr. Hank Kennedy  
Professor of Political Science

### 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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Photography: Jennifer Holland, editor. Danielle Fisher and Lisa Katerman, assistant editors.

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