

# OPINION

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

## Senior Fifth crackdown not effective enough

The university administration deserves to be commended for recognizing that the Senior Fifth tradition among students is not only disgusting and reflects poorly on the university, but is also a very dangerous form of alcoholism. The advertising campaign around campus to dissuade seniors from participating in this activity shows that President Nathan O. Hatch is taking care to keep the best interests of both the students and the university's image in his mind. These advertisements are an admirable attempt at raising awareness of the dangers of senior fifth day. However, we do not know how much of an effect these advertisements will have on the students that are adamant about carrying this tradition. By using several different mediums the administration is doing well to keep students aware of the dangers of intoxication but we feel that not enough students are going to let the warnings and advertisement determine how they spend their Saturday. Hopefully this initiative is as well-organized as it needs to be in order for the students to change their mind on their fifth.

The university has also made it known that law enforcement at the football game will be stepped up with both police officers and Alcohol Law Enforcement agents. If putting an end to mass public intoxication at football games is going to be a goal of this administration, then they need to make sure that they

are fighting alcohol abuse across the board, rather than singling out one day where all seniors happen to be drinking. Students get drunk and act foolishly at every home football game, and if the final home game of the year is the only time when the administration is going to clamp down on public intoxication, then it is creating a double-standard saying that students are allowed to do one thing all year, until it becomes a tradition and suddenly it is unacceptable.

The administration needs to use this football game coming up Nov. 12 to let students know that they are going to be consistent in the way they approach drinking during tailgates from this point on, and that they've established a solid policy that the students can always be prepared to face. Students deserve fair warning if they are going to lose the opportunity to bend the rules that they've been allowed to bend before—or else the university will give the impression that they are out to get the students in trouble, rather than honestly changing things for the better.

The Senior Fifth tradition will not go easily—there will always be students who participate on the last home football game of the year. It may be futile to end alcoholism on campus, but Hatch and the administration are proving that they care about improving the university's reputation and protecting the best interests of the students—as long as they maintain their policies going in to next year.

## Student appreciation needed for *Howler*

The *Howler* staff should be commended for the release of the 2004-2005 yearbook. Though the book was released much later in the semester than in previous years, the wait was well worth it. The extra time that went into the production of the *Howler* is evident in the finished product. The staff was also conscientious about keeping the student body informed of the delay and deserves credit for their honesty.

Students can show their appreciation by taking the time to pick up a copy of the yearbook in the lounge of any upperclassman dorm. Boxes of the books are still piled up in dorm lounges, most untouched. What motivation is there for the *Howler* staff to

devote their time and energy to the production of the yearbook if students do not show interest in the finished product?

Also, the number of student photos in the book is discouraging. A very small portion of the student body is represented in the book because students refuse to take the initiative to have their photo taken. Only 188 freshmen in last year's class had their pictures taken for this edition. Last year's senior class had only slightly less than one half of the class turned out.

This year, do the staff of the *Howler* a favor and have your yearbook picture taken. It will only take a few minutes and maybe you'll be more excited about the *Howler's* release, as you know you'll be in it.

# Faculty pay not behind tuition hike

University needs to give legitimate reasons for increase.

Ally Diljohn's otherwise excellent article in the Nov. 3 *Old Gold & Black* (Tuition hike needed, school says") regarding the anticipated 6.4 percent tuition hike for 2006-

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2007 needs to be contextualized. The article is mainly based on the comments of Kevin Cox, the university director of media relations who is self-described as speaking for the administration. Cox suggested three "explanations" (perhaps "excuses"?) for the tuition hike: 1) despite the hike Wake Forest remains a bargain; 2) moreover, much of the anticipated increase will be used to pay for increasing financial aid to students; and 3) that the hike is needed to meet faculty salary and benefit increases. There is some truth in all of these assertions, but not much.

First, Cox cites the annual *Barron's Report* which indicates that the university's tuition is among the lowest of the nation's "most competitive" private institutions. This is true, but what Cox does

not inform us is that university's tuition of \$30,110 in 2005-2006 was only \$1,300 less than the mean of these fifty-odd institutions, and that the highest tuition charged by any of these institutions (Vassar College) was only \$3,700 more than this university's. (*Chronicle of Higher Education* Oct. 28, 2005) That is, the university's tuition is 96 percent of the mean of the most expensive private institutions in the United States; and our tuition is 90 percent of the most expensive single institution in the relevant category. We're not much of a bargain.

By the way it is pertinent to note that in 2004-2005 university faculty compensation ranked dead last in comparison with relevant private universities in the aforementioned *Barron's* group lagging far behind the mean at all ranks in total compensation. University professors receive 72 percent; associate professors 85 percent; and assistant professors 70 percent of the means of the respective ranks. (AAUP Salary Report, 2005).

Second, it is the case that more than one-half of the students at the university receive financial aid. But the lion's share of such financial aid does not come from the university but from federal and state programs. The *WFU Fact Book, 2004-05* discloses that financial aid to university students cost \$56.9 million in 2003-2004; but only \$21.9 million of this (not including athletic scholarships) is contributed by the university as

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"institutional aid." Expected tuition revenue in 2003-2004 was \$122.9 million (tuition that year was \$28,310).

Therefore, financial aid from university sources accounted for a little less than 18 percent of anticipated tuition revenue in 2003-2004. The 18 percent figure seems to be the benchmark in recent years; there is no reason to assume that the percentage of tuition revenue devoted to financial aid will increase it in 2006-2007. That is, tuition drives financial aid; not the other way around.

Third, and most disturbing to this underpaid observer, is the continuing claim that hefty tuition increases are significantly associated with faculty salary and benefit increases (I wish they were).

Unfortunately, they are not. The cost of salaries and benefits (total compensation) for college and Calloway faculty in 2001-2002 was approximately \$28.8 million;

in 2005-2006 the cost had risen to \$31.2 million—that is, an increase of 8.3 percent in the last four years. Tuition in 2001-2002 was \$23,530; and during 2005-2006 \$30,110, which translates into an increase of 28 percent during the same time span. This latter figure underestimates the actual increase in tuition revenue as the number of students at the university has increased by a little over three hundred during the four-year period.

Taking this into account tuition revenue actually rose by around 36 percent during the four-year period. Even more disheartening is the calculation that only 6.1 percent of the additional monies raised by increasing undergraduate tuition since 2001-2006 actually went to faculty salary compensation!

Therefore, one must sadly conclude that: 1) this university, although a little less expensive than Harvard and Yale, is still a pretty expensive place to go to school; 2) increases in the costs of financial aid do not drive the decisions of administrators to raise tuition, rather the amount of financial aid is a function of the respective raises in tuition; and 3) that the administration should stop blaming the insistent demands of the faculty for fair and reasonable salary increases as a significant cause for the hefty annual tuition hikes. With all due respect, find another excuse.

Hank Kennedy is a professor of political science.

# University needs to embrace faculty

Professors should be allowed to pursue their own innovative research options.

Recently there has been a lot of chatter about resolving the faculty salary crisis and revamping funds allocation at the university. While these are exciting strides in the right direction, a few fundamental ideological problems must not be overlooked when

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we take advantage of this transition period to set the course for intellectual growth and community.

As I review some equally vital concerns, it is important to remember that the university's name as an institution that produces tomorrow's leading scientists, humanitarians and scholars hinges on both excellent faculty and talented students.

In the wake of President Nathan O. Hatch's inauguration, perhaps we can begin to transcend some philosophical traditions that have deterred many junior faculty members from finding a home here.

These faculty have left the university for more progressive campuses where their cutting-edge research interests are not considered "radical" by this institution's old-fashioned standards. Instead of allowing for "self-replication" of faculty and expired ideas, we must face the reality of prevailing contemporary issues in history, social sciences, literature and art, which young professors are exploring all over the nation.

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Our anxiety about compromising the university's ideological integrity and outdated traditions must be abandoned if we are to retain promising faculty members who could share their wealth of knowledge and diverse points of view with the community. This institution should nurture both students and faculty and inspire them to develop new ideas that can propel the university towards innovation.

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Likewise, in the sciences, a grim situation arises when we fail to support the research agendas of young faculty, discouraging them from seeking large research grants, out of fear that they may "outgrow" the university's capacity for scientific research.

Rather than severely stifling our most precious resource in this way, we should honor these faculty and encourage them to establish the university's reputation on international fronts through their research and publications.

We should take special care to engage new faculty and give them the confidence of a bright future at the university not only financially, but ideologically, supporting their unique ideas and research ambitions.

Faculty satisfaction must be increased through competitive funding and sympathetic administrative policies like daycare, regular leaves and spousal hiring.

Furthermore, our institution's paramount goal is to inspire students to learn. Revising the mandatory divisionals system would be helpful, but more remains to be tackled.

First, the enforced grade deflation in some departments prevents faculty from motivating students' interest in their subject by rewarding good efforts.

The prestige of a university grade point average should reflect how willingly a student has accepted the challenge and honor of learning from our wonderful professors, not how exclusive one should feel about getting an "A."

Second, the dearth of students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds contributes greatly to the proverbial university "bubble." Instead of letting affluent students make the name for the university, the administration should look into improving the quality of students admitted, which involves actively scouting all walks of society for intelligent young minds. Consequently, the community could benefit substantially from a wider array of life experiences voiced in class discussions.

Third, prospective students will inevitably notice how much the university's administration cares for their students just as they can recognize how current the faculty is in their thinking and pedagogy. If we expect the university to stand out nationally, we must emphasize both community and cutting-edge scholarship to attract the next generation of graduates.

My final criticism aims at the administration's obsession with national rank and expectations of leaping to the top instantly. Hasty investments in the university's publicity convey this notion, whether they are in our athletic programs or in the campus beautification projects. Granted these are reasonable expenses, but the lasting impression of the university ultimately comes through our emphasis on the liberal arts and the talent of the dedicated faculty. After all, this institution's solid reputation was not built on winning basketball seasons and best landscape awards.

Therefore, the administration's main focus should be re-centered on nurturing the students' educational goals by providing the most opportunities for intellectual development. Who knows, maybe then the pollsters will finally rank us ahead of the University of North Carolina in *US News and World Report*.

Andy Lobashevsky is a senior chemistry major from Birmingham, Ala.

# OLD GOLD & BLACK

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY SINCE 1916

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The *Old Gold & Black* is published Thursdays during the school year, except during examinations, summer and holiday periods, by WW Printing & Graphics of High Point. Send e-mail to [ogb@wfu.edu](mailto:ogb@wfu.edu) or mail to P.O. Box 7569, Winston-Salem, NC 27109. © 2005 WFU Publications Board. All rights reserved.

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Cultural diversity needed for campus

Senior Scott Hurff stated a few weeks ago that "diversity does not necessarily mean that if one has a different skin color one thinks differently" ("Intellectual diversity needed," Oct. 13). He rebuked the idea that multiculturalism would "increase the intellectual diversity amongst students."

I must reply that it does. I was appalled by his blanket rejection of cultural diversity. For one thing, he interchangeably uses the terms race and culture, which, while they are connected, do not

always coincide. An example of this are Hispanics, many of whom are very light skinned, can easily be mistaken for American, but their ethnic background would state otherwise.

For the purposes of this short response, I will concentrate only on culture as it relates intellectual diversity and not with the issue of race.

An observance of culture is more than just throwing a party on your nation's independence day.

It turns a spotlight on the achievements of one's culture, such as their music, their dance, their art, their great leaders, their history, their literature, their science. Even within friends, people

from different ethnic traditions foster dialogue.

For instance, being a Latina, I am very aware of the overly sexualized image that Americans have of Hispanics. This topic came up one day while talking with my suitemates about "Phantom of the Opera," in which the most seductive song has a Hispanic setting. We were able to discuss the different stereotypes that each culture has of one another and how this influences their relationships with one another.

Without a diversity of cultural backgrounds, this conversation would not have been possible.

The "quality of dialogue" will be enriched and enlarged when

the university learns to broaden its cultural base and recognizes the importance of different ethnic traditions in the journey towards intellectual diversity.

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