

The Daily Tar Heel

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132 YEARS OF SERVING UNC STUDENTS AND THE UNIVERSITY

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HISTORY

Whitted family traces local legacy

Lineage spans three centuries, thousands of members

By Taylor Motley
Senior Writer

The Whitted family is embedded in Orange County's history — from being the namesake of the Hargraves Community Center to raising the first Black principal in Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools — but few know of these widespread connections.

Members of the family, however, are working to change that through vast preservation efforts.

More than 500 people are members of the Whitted Family Association of North Carolina, an organization dedicated to bringing the family together and preserving their history. Beginning in 1950, the

family organized annual reunions where relatives from across the state would come to see each other and share stories of the past year.

In 1988, the family sat down and wrote out a comprehensive family tree documenting their known relatives, and challenged everyone to research further. Krishna Mayfield, who today serves as the historian for the association, took that challenge and ran with it.

Mayfield began extensively researching her family's history for a high school English project, and has kept up her efforts since.

"I started to actually, truly research the family, and that's how I found out all these stories, because I truly had no idea," Mayfield said.

The Whitted family's history in Orange County began in the early

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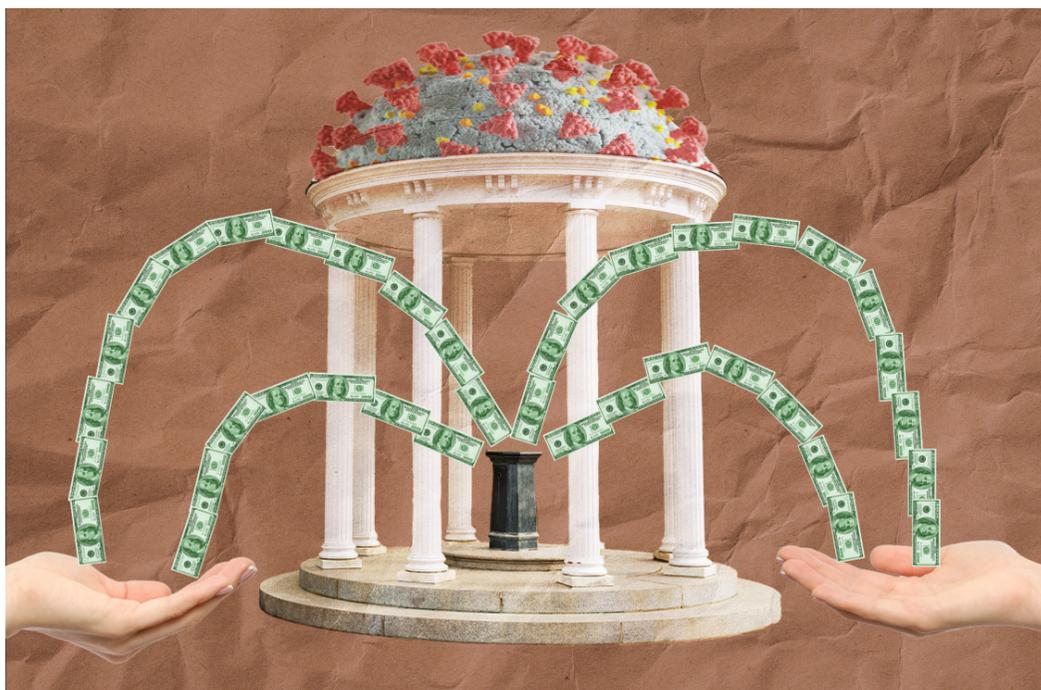


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Photos courtesy of Krishna Mayfield and Adobe Stock.

LEGAL

N.C. Supreme Court greenlights lawsuit seeking refunds from COVID-19 closures



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Photos courtesy of Adobe Stock.

Two students filed case in 2022 for breach of contract

By Alice Scott
Senior Writer

The N.C. Supreme Court unanimously ruled last week that two students can proceed with their breach-of-contract lawsuit against the UNC Board of Governors. The students are seeking refunds for fees they paid to UNC and N.C. State University

during the fall 2020 semester.

The lawsuit stems from August 2020 when plaintiffs Joseph Lannan and Landry Kuehn, who were enrolled at N.C. State and UNC, respectively, were sent home after their campuses closed due to rising COVID-19 cases two weeks into the semester.

For the rest of fall 2020, both universities canceled in-person classes, evicted students from on-campus housing, restricted transportation and closed campus facilities such as libraries, student unions, recreation centers and dining halls.

No other UNC System schools closed their campuses for the fall 2020 semester.

The lawsuit, filed in 2021, alleges that despite sending students home, N.C. State and UNC still charged students with mandatory fees for many of the on-campus services and activities they shut down. These expenses include student health services fees, campus security fees, transportation fees and others that were required to be paid for students to register for fall 2020 classes.

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COLUMN



DTH/VIYADA SOUKTHAVONE

UNC senior center Maria Gakdeng (5) and UNC graduate forward Alyssa Ustby (1) reach for the ball in the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex in Birmingham, Ala., on Friday, March 28.

Despite loss, season represents strides for the program

By Cade Shoemaker
Senior Writer

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — It's easy to turn the page once a season ends. And even if it's simple to move

on, UNC women's basketball's season should serve as a reminder — it's another chapter for a program that's headed in the right direction, but it's just not there, yet. The Tar Heels are still in search of the

defining wins to propel a title run. But there's still been growth. Five years ago, North Carolina sat at the bottom four of the ACC standings

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FUN & GAMES

Space-themed escape room opens

Chapel Thrill Escapes partners with local planetarium

By Mollie Ray
Staff Writer

On Monday, March 24, Chapel Thrill Escapes opened their new escape room, "The Morehead Odyssey," located in Cobb Residence

Hall. The room was available for free last week for all on-campus students, and it officially opened on Monday to the general public.

UNC senior Rohan Kashyap, Chapel Thrill Escapes' chief executive officer, said that this room has taken longer than usual to finalize due to the club's partnership with the Morehead Planetarium and Science Center.

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DTH/SIONA NAIK

The new space-themed Chapel Thrill Escapes escape room is pictured on March 26.



Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'

ROBIN WILLIAMS



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- Contact Print Managing Editor Sarah Monoson at print.editor@dailytarheel.com with issues about this policy.
- Corrections are also noted in the online versions of our stories, which are also edited to reflect the new information.
- In last week's "UNC Sangam revives mock shaadi tradition," the photo caption incorrectly referred to UNC Sangam as UNC Samaa. The Daily Tar Heel apologizes for this error.



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GLOBAL

SCiLL course travels to Israel and Palestine

Documentary crew
filmed class and
trip for series

By Regan Butler
Senior Writer

Over spring break, the UNC course School of Civic Life and Leadership 190: Courageous Conversations: Israel and Palestine on Campus, went on a University-funded trip to Israel and Palestine. The trip was filmed as part of a documentary that will serve as a civic discourse teaching tool.

The course, which launched this spring, aims to teach civic dialogue through discussing different perspectives on the War in Gaza. The Nantucket Project, led by course instructor Tom Scott, was also present to document the entirety of the course.

The course's students, instructors and a film crew departed for the trip on March 8 before returning on March 16.

Travel experience

The School of Civic Life and Leadership 190 curriculum was pioneered by instructor Simon Greer. Greer said the travel component of the course was necessary because he didn't want students to theorize about the conflict without seeing it firsthand.

"I think the best part of it for me was watching their eyes and seeing how their minds were working, and how they were challenging each other," Greer said.

The class visited the West Bank and Palestinian territories for daytime activities, School of Civic Life and Leadership 190 student Cayden Hammonds said, and typically stayed overnight in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

School of Civic Life and Leadership 190 student Wilson Weingast said the group spent time in West Bank areas that were all under the Palestinian Authority, Israeli control and shared control.

The students were constantly interviewing people as they attended different activities, Hammonds said, such as religious observances or town council meetings.

Weingast said that one night, the class had iftar dinner with a Palestinian family, and the next, had Shabbat dinner with a Modern Orthodox Jewish family.



DTH DESIGN/GRACE DAVIDSON

Photos courtesy of Adobe Stock.

"My perspective shifted with every single person we talked to," Weingast said.

The speakers they met on the tour were eager to hear college students' thoughts on the conflict, Weingast said, also saying that many of them thanked the students for being leaders in facilitating conversations back home.

Visiting the places he learned about in class humanized the War in Gaza for him, Hammonds said. He also said it helped depolarize his classmates with differing perspectives.

"I think to say only one country should have it all and the land only belongs to one people — you're saying that from afar," Weingast said. "You're saying that from America and reading these academic papers, rather than talking with people who call that land their own."

A two-person crew filmed all activities of the trip, Hammonds said. He said he consented to being filmed and that all students who opt in retain the legal right to have any clip of them edited out.

Approval, logistics and safety

"The students had on-the-ground support from landing to take off with a majority of the travel located in central Israel," Media Relations wrote in an email to The Daily Tar Heel.

The Study Abroad Office was not involved in offering the Israel and Palestine trip, but provided risk management support after the Provost's Office approved the travel, the office wrote to The DTH.

"The program was developed, administered and overseen by SCiLL," the Study Abroad Office stated.

Media Relations said trust funds from the Provost's Office funded the trip, with funds coming from sources including gifts and endowments, not state funds or tuition.

The UNC Global Affairs website states that international travel outside of the Study Abroad Office's programs will only be approved for countries with a U.S. Department of State Level 1 or 2 travel advisory.

The U.S. Department of State's travel advisory for Israel and the West Bank is a 3, stating to reconsider travel due to "terrorism and civil unrest." For Gaza, it has been a 4, advising to avoid travel due to "armed conflict."

"It is common practice for the University to approve travel to areas with a Level 3 or 4 travel advisory provided the Provost has reviewed and approved a risk mitigation and security plan after consultation with UNC Global Affairs," Media Relations wrote.

Media Relations wrote that risk support to regions with high travel

advisories, including trainings and health insurance, is a service the Study Abroad Office has provided in the past.

Hammonds said the class traveled via bus and were accompanied by a hired security guard. He said he was scared to go to the West Bank, but that this is expected when traveling to a war zone. He otherwise felt safe the entire time, he said.

Greer said he would not have encouraged the trip if he believed it was dangerous and said that the group was fortunate to go during a ceasefire.

The UNC Muslim Students Association was consulted for the creation of School of Civic Life and Leadership 190.

Before the spring break travel experience took place, MSA Development Chair Samee Ghaffar said that the group was shocked by the addition of a trip, describing it as insensitive and dangerous. "Is that a safe environment, not only for you, but is that a trip that you can enjoy and love and learn from?" Ghaffar said. "Or is that something that is potentially traumatic and something that is potentially very problematic in so many ways that will have impacts on you far beyond the class, and it will impact your experience at UNC?"

X: @reganxbutler

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FOOD SECURITY

UNC to launch meal swipe donation program next year

Students can utilize initiative through care referral form

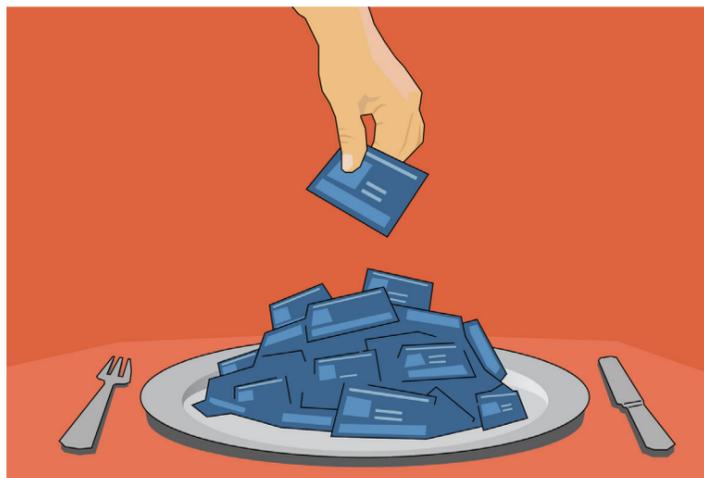
By Sophie Strickland
Staff Writer

With former UNC Student Body President Jaleah Taylor's time at UNC ending this spring, she is leaving her peers with the meal swipe donation program, set to be implemented in the 2025-26 academic year.

The program aims to combat food insecurity on campus through a partnership between Student Government, Carolina Dining Services, the Dean of Students office and the campus community.

The meal swipe donation plan will enable students to donate a meal swipe to others who are in need of swipes through the homepage of the GET Mobile app. Students who want to request swipes can do so by completing a care referral form, which is sponsored by the DOS office.

During the fall 2024 semester, Student Government launched a survey to indicate students' overall awareness of food insecurity, which received 500 responses. According



DTH DESIGN/NICK LOTZ

to the survey, 32 percent of respondents said they have struggled with food insecurity at UNC.

Ella Howie, executive manager of the Office of the Student Body President, said that the survey contained open-ended questions surrounding food insecurity. She described the issue as not just a lack of access to food, but also not having a diet for a healthy life.

"Freshman year, I definitely found myself food insecure, just

not having access to a car to get off campus and only having dining halls to rely on and the Target on Franklin Street," Howie said. "It's hard to live off of that. So that was kind of my inspiration for joining this."

Howie, alongside Taylor and Sidney Curtis, UNC Policy Action on Food Insecurity Committee chair, presented the initiative to the Board of Trustees on Jan. 22. She said that they received overwhelming

support from the BOT, saying that they didn't realize food security was a big issue on campus.

According to the survey results, 96 percent of survey respondents stated that they supported giving their leftover swipes to the donation program. Eleven percent of respondents indicated they run out of food swipes before the end of the semester.

"Especially toward the end of the semester, when there are finals and people are spending hours and hours and hours in the library studying, it's really important to have access to food," sophomore Malcolm Douglas said.

While Taylor's team brought forth the plan to the BOT, the lineage of food security initiatives at the University is long. In 2014, Carolina Cupboard, a student initiative, established a food pantry in Avery Residence Hall. Food pantries have multiplied on campus to meet the needs of students, including the establishment of CJ's Cupboard located at the Gillings School of Global Public Health.

Edible Campus, which created 11 gardens with crops available for anyone's taking, was created in 2015.

CDS donates funds to each of the food security initiatives and DOS acts as an initial referral point for students and takes the lead on the Carolina Food Pantry Network.

"We just wanted to enhance the work that the University was already doing," Taylor said. "And what better way to do that than to have it be essentially a student-run system where students are recognizing that this is a problem on campus, and they're signing up to donate, and that's just something that I'm proud to have been a part of."

Adolfo Alvarez, the UNC 2025-26 student body president, wrote in a statement to The Daily Tar Heel that he is proud of Taylor's administration for initiating and advocating for the program.

"We are hoping to continue monitoring the implementation of the meal donation swipe program and working to address other food concerns, including the availability of cultural cuisine in dining halls and the support networks for food pantries and mutual aid groups around campus," Alvarez wrote.

X: @dailytarheel

Lawsuit against UNC Board of Governors proceeds

Continued from Page 1

When campuses closed, students were no longer able to access the services covered by the mandatory student fees they already paid. By charging students but limiting access to the corresponding services, the lawsuit alleges that UNC and N.C. State breached their contracts with their student bodies.

The fees Lannan and Kuehn paid totaled \$1,288.80 and \$976.25, respectively. The plaintiffs filed the suit on behalf of themselves and other similarly situated students.

"The universities can't just make decisions willy-nilly that affect folks and then walk away from the consequences," the plaintiffs' attorney David Stradley said.

After the lawsuit was initially filed, the BOG responded with a motion to dismiss on the grounds of sovereign immunity, a doctrine that prohibits the government, and arms of the government such as a public university, from being sued.

"We don't want the government constantly litigating private citizens," UNC School of Law professor Kathleen DeLaney Thomas said while explaining the reason behind the existence of sovereign immunity.

Thomas said there are certain exceptions to sovereign immunity, including when the government enters into a contract. One of Thomas' teaching specialties is contract law.

The N.C. Court of Appeals ruled that Lannan and Kuehn could proceed with their lawsuit in October 2022, finding that N.C. State and UNC waived their rights to sovereign immunity by entering into an implied-in-fact contract with students. This affirmed a June 2021 order by a trial judge.

The N.C. Supreme Court's March 21 ruling modified the Appeals Court's judgment, writing in its opinion that it found the existence of an express contract, not an implied-in-fact contract between the universities and their students.

UNC School of Law professor Kara Bruce said that an express contract is a clear written or verbal agreement, while an implied-in-fact contract is an agreement that can be understood based on the parties' actions.

However, Bruce said, an express contract does not have to be a highly formalized document.

The lawsuit alleges that pages on the UNC and N.C. State websites detailing mandatory fees and written communication from the universities, including the bills that students received, formed the contract between the schools and the students.

Stradley said that with the state Supreme Court's ruling, the lawsuit will proceed to the discovery process, which will involve reviewing documents and taking depositions.

"Despite the fact that it's a fairly old lawsuit, it's really the very beginning stages of things," Stradley said.

In a 2023 legal brief, the BOG wrote that the UNC System could face a "massive liability" that could total as much as tens of millions of dollars if the plaintiffs win their case. UNC System Media Relations wrote in an email to The Daily Tar Heel that it could not comment on an ongoing lawsuit.

The state Supreme Court wrote in its opinion that even though it ruled that the lawsuit can proceed, that doesn't mean the students will win their case. If evidence produced in discovery confirms the BOG's argument that students were not entitled to refunds the students could lose.

With the lawsuit greenlit to proceed, Stradley said he expects a lengthy litigation process.

"This case is probably going to go to the [state] Supreme Court at least once, if not twice, more," he said. "These cases take a long time to churn through the system."

X: @alice_scottt

CONNECTION

Annual powwow celebrates Native American cultures

The Carolina Indian Circle held its 38th showcase of community

By Jordan Andreasen
Staff Writer

Drums banging, people cheering and children dancing: these are some of the sounds one would hear if they attended a powwow, a celebratory event that features music and reconnection with members in the Native American community.

The student-run organization Carolina Indian Circle, also known as the Circle, hosted its 38th annual powwow at Woollen Gym on Saturday. The event showcased Native American culture with members of the campus community, as well as other Native American individuals.

The powwow opened with a prayer, followed by the Grand Entry, requiring everyone to stand as attendees entered a circle of community members. The first to enter carried flags while dancing along to music.

CIC Powwow Chair Dylan Hammonds, a member of the Lumbee tribe of North Carolina, said it was great to be able to plan the event at UNC because it allowed the Native community to showcase their culture with campus and community members.

"It's just really great that you have this sense of home, no matter how far you are from your actual home," he said.

Members of all ages of the Indigenous community were adorned with elaborate and boldly colored clothing and headdresses lined with feathers, bells and spiritual symbols.

Following the Grand Entry was a series of dancing and singing competitions where children could compete in different age categories.

Powwows are a historic and culturally significant tradition that



DTH/CONNOR RUESCH

A member of Carolina Indian Circle performs at the powwow in Woollen Gymnasium on Saturday, March 29.

date back to the 19th century and are meant to bring members of the Native American community together and connect.

UNC mascot Rameses Junior made a guest appearance at the event along with UNC Chancellor Lee Roberts and his wife, journalist Liza Roberts.

UNC junior Hailey Jones, a member of the Lumbee tribe of North Carolina, said that finding community in college was special and important to her.

"It's just always nice to be with people from your culture and see your culture on display and feel at home," she said.

UNC junior and attendee Evie Jacobs, a member of the Lumbee tribe of North Carolina, said that going to a past CIC Powwow before her first year made her think of UNC as home, saying she felt like she would be able to build her identity and continue to learn her traditions at the University.

"It's a big part of reclaiming our space as Indigenous students on this campus and just kind of holding a ceremony where we're able to celebrate our culture and identity and celebrate those traditions that have kept generations here," Jacobs said.

During the event, local businesses were featured selling Indigenous products such as clothing, jewelry and other handmade products.

Duke student and owner of Evergreen Leather and Beadwork, Jada Allen, was present with a table of her handmade beadwork jewelry products.

Allen said that her beadwork, a common practice across Indigenous cultures in North and South America, is meant to incorporate stories.

"You're using materials that are traditional to your homelands, and you're creating a piece that is representative of you and your people," she said.

Allen also said it was important for her to come to the events so she can be with her community.

Alexis Malaguti, administrative support associate for the UNC American Indian Center, said people can find more information about future events by joining the AIC newsletter and following them on social media.

X: @dailytarheel

FERPA

N.C. Senate bill to challenge ruling on release of student disciplinary records

Legislation would not require public disclosure of sexual assault

By Emmy Benton
Senior Writer

A recent proposed piece of legislation introduced in the North Carolina General Assembly seeks to challenge a 2020 North Carolina Supreme Court ruling that established current guidelines for the release of student records at public institutions of higher education statewide.

The Protect Campus Survivors Act was filed by Senators Michael Lee, Amy Galey and Brad Overcash on Feb. 27 and is currently in committee. It aims to reverse the precedent set by DTH Media Corporation v. Folt, which required public colleges and universities in North Carolina to release records of students who have been found responsible for sexual assault.

Senators Lee, Galey and Overcash did not respond after The DTH's requests for comment.

Senators Lee and Overcash have been involved with numerous education bills during their time in the N.C. Senate, recently with Senate Bill 227 entitled "Eliminating 'DEI' in Public Education."

In September 2016, The Daily Tar Heel and other local media organizations requested public records from UNC concerning students who were found responsible for sexual assault. Their request was denied on the basis that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act gave UNC the discretion to withhold the information.

FERPA was signed into law in 1974 and applies to any educational institution — public or private — that receives federal funding.

"I describe FERPA as kind of a good law gone bad," said Mike Hiestand, senior legal counsel for the Student Press Law Center. "The whole purpose behind FERPA is to recognize that there is a legitimate

privacy right in student education records. The problem with FERPA has been that that term 'student education records' has just been wildly abused."

Jay Wester-Lopshire, editor-in-chief of The DTH during the 2016-2017 school year, said that the public records request was prompted by a 2013 Title IX complaint filed against the University. The complaint alleged that UNC did not have appropriate procedures for students coming forward about sexual violence.

After the records were withheld, the media corporations sued UNC for access on the grounds that the N.C. Public Records Act took precedence. The case went to the North Carolina Supreme Court, where it ruled that UNC was required to release the records of those convicted of sexual assault.

The courts emphasized that FERPA allows for the release of disciplinary records when students have been found responsible for sexual assault.

"It really just boils down to, don't other students deserve to know who among them has been found to have committed these serious offenses and punished for it," Hugh Stevens, the lawyer who represented The DTH in the case, said.

Stevens said that throughout the process, UNC's way of handling these serious crimes was put in the spotlight. He said that all of the proceedings happened internally and perpetrators were not subject to criminal consequences, with expulsion being the highest degree of punishment they would face.

By handling cases in an administrative way, Stevens said that victims would not have to publicly testify against their offender in court and their names wouldn't be known. Stevens said that if victims go to the police or the district attorney instead of school officials, criminal proceedings would take place and the records would be public.

"If you plunge it all into secrecy, then it's like it never happened,"



DTH FILE/ANNA CONNORS

The Supreme Court of North Carolina, located in Raleigh, is pictured on Aug. 26, 2022.

Stevens said. "No matter how egregious and serious the offense is, you just sweep it under the rug."

Stevens said that UNC exercising the authority to find students responsible or not for these crimes makes it important that the records are public information so as to have transparency in the process.

The bill currently in the N.C. Senate would effectively overturn this precedent, making it so that public institutions would not have to publish information about students who are punished for sexual assault. It would reword sections of the higher education and public records chapters of the general statutes and exempt these records from being released.

"All the North Carolina lawmakers want to do is put in a very specific exemption to say, anything conducted within a campus court system is off limits," Hiestand said.

Any personally identifiable information and anything related to an investigation of an alleged conduct violation would no longer be public information. The bill specifies the confidentiality of certain records, even if their release would be permitted according to FERPA and the Public Records Act.

"Making these disciplinary actions exempt from disclosure is not going to fix anything," Pate McMichael, the director of the North Carolina Open Government Coalition, said. "It's not going to fix Title IX, it's not going to fix the fact that sexual assault is out of hand on a lot of college campuses and being done with impunity."

In an email statement to The DTH, UNC Media Relations wrote that the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office can help employees and students notify University policy and other law enforcement as requested.

"[B]ecause the University is also required to collect and publish incident data, there are times a portion of certain reports made to EOC are shared with UNC Police to appear on the Daily Crime Log and in the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report," the email said. "This reporting is required under the federal Clery Act depending on the type of behavior and where it occurred."

The bill would also prohibit the releasing of records to people whom the public institution believes knows the identity of the student involved in the records.

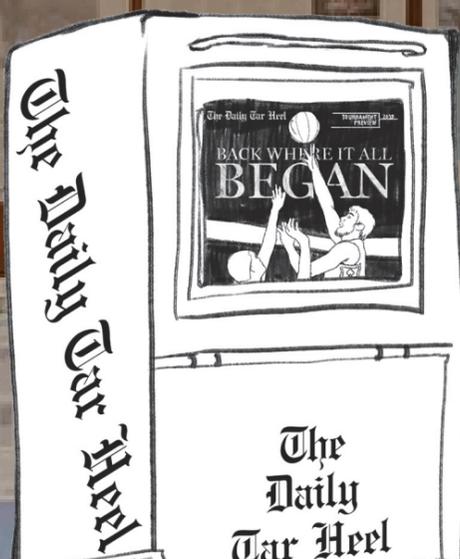
The legislation would apply to requests submitted on or after the date of enactment, affecting public institutions of higher education including UNC and its 15 constituent public institutions, community colleges and the Community Colleges System Office.

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RESEARCH

Decreases in doctoral program admissions across nation leave students uncertain

UNC Biological & Biomedical Sciences Program reduces seats

By Michael Singleton
Staff Writer

Amid changes in Ph.D. admissions across the country, faculty and prospective students are left wondering what current and future developments might mean for UNC.

Last month, the UNC Biological & Biomedical Sciences Program announced a preemptive decrease in admissions for their incoming class. While the program has historically admitted around 100 students, they now plan to allow for only 75.

Elizabeth Mayer-Davis, dean of The Graduate School at UNC, said the decrease in admissions to BBSP was a decision made at the program level, rather than by University administration.

“There’s not a University-wide declaration about what should be done with regard to admission numbers,” Mayer-Davis said. “So it really is up to individual schools and programs as they understand the dynamics of the kinds of funding that support their doctoral students.”

At the time of publication, BBSP is the only graduate or Ph.D. program at UNC to have announced a reduction in admissions. However, continued cuts to funding across the country at institutions such as Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania have left students feeling uncertain around future education opportunities at UNC.

SPark, a current Transatlantic Masters Program student of political science, said that their program receives funding from international organizations, which they fear could be rescinded.



DTH/ANTHONY GUERRA FLORES

SPark, a student in the TransAtlantic Masters Program at UNC, poses for a portrait on Thursday, March 27.

“There’s also concern about the targeting of these sort of partnership programs as our country really pulls back from international collaboration, so it’s just a very worrying thing,” SPark said.

Hoping to pursue a doctorate in political science, SPark is now focusing her search on universities outside of the United States, a shift she said is due to uncertainty around admissions and the current political climate.

While some programs in The Graduate School plan on maintaining current admissions numbers, others are considering making admissions cuts similar to BBSP, Mayer-Davis

“[Graduate schooling] is where we’re going to have leaders trained in their fields to innovate, to solve major problems and to then implement those innovations.”

Elizabeth Mayer-Davis
Dean of The Graduate School at UNC

said. In the most recent application cycle, Mayer-Davis said that UNC Graduate School received a record number of applications.

Even though BBSP made the decision to reduce their admissions on their own accord, Andy Johns, senior associate vice chancellor for research, said the reduction of admissions

in the program will have wide-reaching impacts.

“If we accept fewer people to programs like that, we’re producing a lot less talent,”

Johns said. “That’s going to impact the talent that emerges from programs like that, that might stay in the state of North Carolina, to benefit North

Carolinians. It’s not a good situation, but it’s also understandable that if a department or program feels that they’re going to be at risk of not being able to financially support its students in a program, I can understand how they might come to that conclusion.”

Cameron Ulmer, a doctoral candidate at the UNC School of Nursing, said in the face of uncertainty, she and her peers are maintaining a general sense of optimism and hope.

Ulmer said the UNC School of Nursing has not announced any changes to its Ph.D. program. She also said that despite a current lack of changes to her graduate studies at UNC, she feels for people across the country who have seen changes in their studies or research.

“I know how much time, effort, research, compassion and care goes into this type of research, and to see it just disappear and to see your work disintegrate, I can’t imagine how heartbreaking that must be,” Ulmer said. “I hope I don’t face that, but I also recognize that it’s just really hard to know what’s coming down the road.”

When speaking about potential changes to graduate admissions on the horizon, Mayer-Davis said although she is still uncertain of the magnitude or specific impact of changes, UNC is preparing for a reduction in certain grants, specifically from the National Institutes of Health.

According to data from December 2024, faculty researchers at UNC receive close to \$600 million in NIH funding annually.

“[Graduate schooling] is where we’re going to have leaders trained in their fields to innovate, to solve major problems and to then implement those innovations,” Mayer-Davis said. “It’s critical that graduate education stay strong.”

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Whitted Family Association works to preserve history

Continued from Page 1

18th century when William Whitted, whose last name has also been documented as Whitehead in some instances, moved to the region from Newcastle, Delaware, Mayfield said.

William Whitted had several children, who then had numerous children of their own, creating a far-stretching family tree with legacies cemented across Orange, Durham and Alamance counties, especially in regards to education.

London Whitted was the first Black principal in Orange County, serving at the Quaker Freedmen's School, which was founded in the late 19th century.

"That history is pretty foundational to the school system in Chapel Hill," Molly Luby, the community history coordinator at the Chapel Hill Public Library, said. "The Quaker [Freedmen's] School was really the first free public education center for Black children in Chapel Hill."

Frances Hargraves, a descendant of the Whitted family, was the first Black teacher to teach in white schools prior to the integration of Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, and was the first teacher in the

school system to be certified as a special education instructor.

The Hargraves Community Center, originally founded in the 1940s as the Negro Community Center, is named after William Hargraves Jr., Frances Hargraves' son. He served as a member of Chapel Hill's Parks and Recreation Commission and worked to implement several programs to support the community at the center.

James Shephard, the founder of North Carolina Central University, James Whitted, the first Black principal in Durham and Louisa Burton, an educator for whom Burton Elementary School is named, were all descendants of the Whitted family.

"It's just nice to know that we flourished and we prospered, and particularly through education," Tonya Gerald-Goins, a descendant of the Whitted family and associate professor at NCCU, said.

Although local governments and organizations have done some work to recognize the legacies of individual descendants of the Whitted family, there is scarce writing about how these figures are all connected through their Whitted lineage, Mayfield said.

"It's frustrating to us because we know these stories and everything,

but trying to get it out and share is really difficult," Mayfield said.

The preservation of the Whitted family's contributions to the greater Chapel Hill area is important in order to understand the larger history of Black families' contributions to the area, Luby said.

When Mayfield first began researching her family's history in high school, she relied on the existing family tree, oral histories from her relatives and physical government documents. In the early 1990s, Mayfield began using Ancestry to explore her family's genealogy.

"You literally can never stop, because you're always finding something new," Mayfield said.

Today, the Whitted Family Association of North Carolina's family tree comprises nearly 30,000 relatives, ranging in professions from educators and doctors to bricklayers and musicians.

"It's wonderful to see the contribution in the past that my family has made, and made to not just Orange County, but the state and the nation," Gerald-Goins said.

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COMMEMORATION

Local groups receive funding to honor American Revolution's 250th anniversary

Three Orange County organizations were given grants

By James O'Hara
Staff Writer

On March 25, the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources distributed grant funding through America 250 NC, a commemoration for the signing of the Declaration of Independence's 250th anniversary in 2026.

Three Orange County organizations received grants, including the Orange County Historical Museum, Alliance for Historic Hillsborough and the Music Industry Center, a nonprofit offering music education and professional training.

The Orange County Historical Museum received over \$24,000, Alliance for Historic Hillsborough received over \$8,000 and the Music Industry Center received \$30,000 in funding.

America 250 NC Project Coordinator Dan Brosz said his team immediately knew they wanted America 250 to be a grassroots effort throughout the state. Nonprofits and local governments know their areas more than the committee does, so it gives them resources to commemorate the anniversary in a way the groups feel would be most useful to their constituents, Brosz said.

Brosz said grants were given to organizational events that aligned with the three themes for America 250 NC: gathering of voices, visions of freedom and common ground.

With the grant, the Orange County Historical Museum will hold an event to celebrate the anniversary of the third Provincial Congress of North Carolina, Exhibit and Programs Coordinator Courtney Smith said. The provincial congresses were legislative bodies that helped transition from colonial rule to independent state legislatures established in 10 of the 13 colonies.



DTH/MICHAEL PEARSON

The Orange County History Museum in Hillsborough is pictured on Sunday, March 30.

"Nobody's really talked about this, celebrated this in a long time, and it's a really big occasion for Hillsborough and for North Carolina in general," Orange County Historical Museum Site Manager Catie Atkinson said. "So going with all the America 250 stuff that's happening starting this year and into next year for the real 250th anniversary of American independence, we thought it would be appropriate to intertwine that all together."

Smith also said the museum is partnering with other organizations, including the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Alliance for Historic Hillsborough.

The event will consist of three parts, including a series of speakers in the Orange County Public Library, a colonial market selling objects from the time period at the Historic Courthouse in Hillsborough and an interpretation of the third provincial congress, Atkinson said.

Smith said it is important to commemorate independence because

it works toward greater freedom, liberty and recognizes democratic ideals — aspects that the community strives for and makes them proud to be American.

"One of the important components of our celebration is to make sure that we look at all demographics and make sure that we are talking about Native Americans and African Americans and women, and different socioeconomic statuses — how did all of these people look at ideas of freedom and what did independence [and] liberty mean to them," she said.

Brosz said through funding organizational events, the America 250 NC committee wants there to be a conversation about what it means to be an American, how the country got where it is and where it needs to go. Like the Founding Fathers stated, he said, there will always be the pursuit to form a more perfect union.

"So we want to see fireworks — we want to see people have a good time and celebrate, but also to reflect on the fact that not all Americans had the rights that were granted on July 4, 1776," he said.

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EDUCATION



PHOTO COURTESY OF LAUREN OLIVER

Lauren Oliver is an eighth grade English teacher at Culbreth Middle School. Oliver has joined 26 other teachers across the state as finalists.

CHCCS teacher named finalist for statewide award

English educator recognized for dedication, innovation

By Freya McNeill
Staff Writer

Lauren Oliver said most of her teachers growing up would be shocked if they found out she's a teacher now.

Oliver, an eighth grade English teacher at Culbreth Middle School, said she struggled with social anxiety all throughout elementary school — causing her parents to drive 40 minutes to sit with her at lunch once a week.

Now, at 25 years old, Oliver was a finalist for the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching 2025 Burroughs Wellcome Fund NC Beginning Teacher of the Year Award. She joined 26 other state-wide finalists who were recognized for their dedication, innovation and ability to inspire students to

every Saturday to finish grading and other work. Eighth grade CMS ELA teacher Matt Hayes said Oliver is always looking for ways to make language arts experiential. Oliver has hosted a Jane Austen tea party for students and decorated her classroom with foliage and candles when students were learning Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Lauren Oliver
English teacher and award finalist

"Secretly, I always wanted to be a teacher. When I was at home I would play school, but no one would ever know."

Oliver said her high school English teachers inspired her to pursue a career in education.

Oliver studied Toni Morrison's novel "Home" her junior year of high school. She said reading the book, whose protagonist is an African American veteran in the Korean War, caused her to question her privilege as a white woman for the first time.

"Reading that book and having that teacher at that time really inspired me to want to go into education and share other people's perspectives, specifically through English classes and through literature," Oliver said.

Now in her second year teaching at CMS, Oliver focuses

on community projects connecting the middle school with different cultures. In conjunction with the immigration focus in the students' social studies class, Oliver organized a panel of recent U.S. immigrants from Carrboro High School to share their experiences.

CMS Principal Luke Paulsen said what sets Oliver apart from other beginning teachers is that she is willing to take risks.

"She does such a phenomenal job of building relationships with kids," Paulsen said.

Every Thursday during lunch break, Oliver runs a creative writing club. The club has more than 30 eighth graders now and was founded last year. She said she hopes to host a creative writing showcase this spring, where community members could see the students' work.

Oliver also coaches varsity women's lacrosse and field hockey at East Chapel Hill High School. She said that last year, she went into the school nearly

every Saturday to finish grading and other work.

Oliver has hosted a Jane Austen tea party for students and decorated her classroom with foliage and candles when students were learning Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream."

Matt Cone, a CMS teacher and Oliver's former mentor, said that Oliver wants to provide a calm space for her students to help them learn about themselves and the world through their writing.

Oliver said that she has eyes for the shy students, sharing her own school experiences to encourage them to participate in group projects. One student emailed the teacher with a novel that they had written.

"In a non-cheesy, non-Hollywood way, she's straight up changing some students' lives," Cone said.

X: @dthcitystate

BUDGET

How Department of Education cuts would affect Chapel Hill

CHCCS received millions of dollars in funding last year

By Defne Önal
Senior Writer

“Basically, if you want to continue teaching Latin or French, you’ll need to find another job. But if you’re willing to teach a different subject, they’ll reassign you elsewhere,” Arwen Helms, a Carrboro High School graduate and UNC student, said.

Helms spoke at a Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools board meeting on March 20 — where community members and students spoke out against potential budget cuts that are threatening eliminations to language programs across the district.

On March 11, the U.S. Department of Education announced plans to half its staff. Then, on March 20, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to dismantle the department.

Chief Communications Officer at Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools Andy Jenks said in an email that the district received \$11,725,893 in federal assistance for the 2024 fiscal year.

“If there were reductions or eliminations in federal funding, we would have to look at reallocating local dollars to make sure all students continue to receive the support they need,” Jenks said.

Of the total federal assistance, \$5.05 million came directly from the Education Department to support Title I, Individuals with

Disabilities Education Act and Career and Technical Education — funding that has been recurring.

Marisa Kathart, a parent of a special needs student at Carrboro High School, said that enforcing IDEA across all districts in the country would be at risk because it is managed at the federal level by the Department of Education. She said another concern is funding for a major advocacy group in the state: the Exceptional Children’s Assistance Center.

“They are directly funded by the Department of Education federally,” Kathart said. “That would be a real concern because they provide immediate telephonic consultative services and provide informative webinars, both online as well as coming to our district community meetings and doing presentations about how to write effective IEPs [Individualized Education Programs]. Those are real, tangible programs that benefit mostly students and families and also staff — I’m concerned about that.”

Kathart said she believes most of the funding for the CHCCS Exceptional Children’s Program is federal rather than state and local funding.

“That would be concerning if the funding at the federal level was cut,” Kathart said. “That would have a huge impact.”

A parent of a student at Carrboro High School, who wanted to stay anonymous due to concern about repercussions in their career, said that the CHCCS school district is grossly understaffed.

“Language programs are being shifted, cut, moved, juggled... we



DTH DESIGN/NICK LOTZ

Photos courtesy of Gillian Faski and Adobe Stock.

have not been given any specific direction about what’s happening with certain language programs, but we’re already operating at a major deficit without any of these proposed cuts, and that is causing chaos and confusion for families, also for students who had a certain path in mind,” they said.

They said their child was planning to take Latin next year at school, and they have received conflicting information from the principal and the teacher about the fate of that course.

“[CHCCS Superintendent] Nyah Hamlett, I believe she said

something along the lines of ‘we have to be fiscally conservative now, because we expect federal budget cuts in the future,’” Helms said. “I don’t know if they had seen the budget cuts at that point or not, but part of their decision-making did seem to be driven by the federal budget cuts.”

The anonymous source said that the situation is further complicated by Newcomer Programs, which support newly arrived immigrants — regardless of legal status — in developing language skills at Northside Elementary School,

Culbreth Middle School and Carrboro High School.

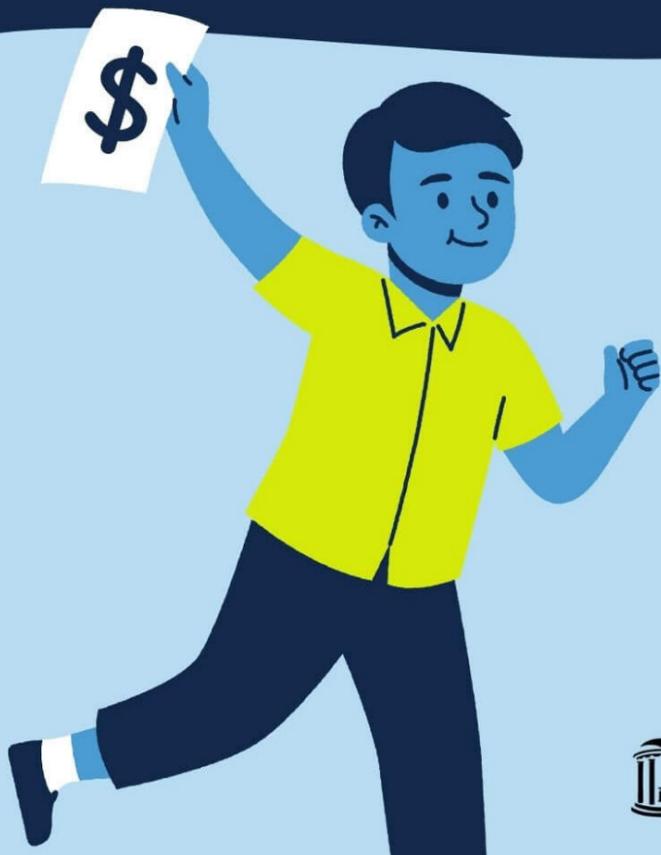
“The idea of losing funds in any capacity to serve those students, or the general population of students — there’s no more corners to cut,” they said. “We’re in a circle now — the square is gone — Yeah, I don’t know what the sacrifice would be.”

Editor’s note: Arwen Helms is a former City & State writer.

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WELLNESS

Organization launches children's holistic mental health program

KidSCOpe connects kids, caregivers and the community

By Aiden Hall
Staff Writer

A local childhood development organization is launching a new, free program aimed at taking a holistic approach to mental health for kids and their caregivers.

KidSCOpe is a program within the larger, Durham-based Families, Communities, and Rising Child Health Care Support Organization. It began in 1988, providing classroom consultations for at-risk children and evidence-based parenting education.

Healing Roots, KidSCOpe's new program, provides therapy for children up to eight-years-old and their caregivers, according to the program flyer. The program provides parenting classes to caregivers and hosts joint mindfulness and nature-based activities with families. These services are available in-person in Orange and Chatham counties and virtually across the state.

Sara Garrison, the KidSCOpe family services manager, said the program also serves an important role in screening young children for developmental disabilities to provide them with therapy before they enter school systems.

KidSCOpe Director Shanti Vyom said the organization received a three-year grant of \$597,000 from The Duke Endowment to support the Healing Roots Initiative, which has allowed KidSCOpe to provide their services for free.

Vyom said she created the initiative last year with inspiration from her Indian culture.

"One of the things I saw from my personal experience growing up to this day is a really big emphasis on mindfulness and community connection, being in community, and I noticed how supportive that can be for young children as well



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHANTI VYOM

Tiny Trees, an outdoor yoga class for young children, is facilitated by Titus Tard at KidSCOpe's annual family wellness gathering.

as the parents, as well as the family unit," Vyom said.

She said the COVID-19 pandemic removed most of that community support structure.

"COVID isolated all of us," Vyom said. "Children weren't around other kids, parents don't have that community support, whether it's family or whether it's friends in the community."

Vyom said outside of parenting classes and therapy sessions, the program will teach kids and parents breathing techniques, walking meditation and the importance of sunlight and fresh air. Vyom said the program focuses on these skills in particular because they can be molded and used in many contexts across cultures.

Candace King, KidSCOpe family and child therapist, said she was drawn to KidSCOpe by the nature-based therapy aspect of the Healing Roots Initiative.

"I think in general our culture is pretty divorced from the natural world sadly, and our food, and traditional agricultural practices, and we're getting further and

further away from these things," King said. "But at the same time there is awareness of that that's growing, and the importance of reconnecting with nature, and more than ever there's evidence to support these things."

Sandra Wartski, a psychologist at Silber Psychological Services who has been practicing for 23 years, said she started using breathing and mindfulness techniques while working with kids when she was in school.

Wartski said there was not as much research around these techniques back then and she organically used them as a way to get kids to step back and take a breath. She said continuing education in recent years has focused more on meditation and relaxing the nervous system.

"I think we're putting different words around it, but it has been around, and I'm glad it's now getting more the attention it deserves," Wartski said.

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POLITICS

Locals discuss change at Carrboro Town Hall

Community members shared concerns about equity, immigration

By Ani Hunanyan
Staff Writer

On Saturday, community leaders and members gathered at the Drakeford Library Complex for a Carrboro Town Hall meeting to discuss the potential impacts of state legislation on the Town's initiatives. Topics included racial equity, affordable housing, climate resilience and local responses to federal immigration policies.

Carrboro's Chief Race and Equity Officer Anita Jones-McNair opened the meeting with an overview of the Town's race equity work, outlining initiatives over the past six years related to accessibility, inclusion and community engagement.

"We've spent more time listening, more time engaging and more time educating our community about services and resources," Jones-McNair said.

Jones-McNair also spoke about recent Town initiatives like the Criminal Justice Debt Program to help cover court fees, expanded sidewalk accessibility and the launch of Boost Carrboro to support small businesses.

The floor was opened to community members, allowing them to share concerns and ask questions.

Community members raised around N.C. House Bill 244, which limits the flags that can be displayed on property owned or leased by the state or a political subdivision of the state. They also brainstormed ways to resist legislation that could undermine equity initiatives. Some attendees suggested creating petitions and other ways to increase community engagement.

Betty Curry, another community member and vice-chair of Carrboro's affordable housing advisory commission, said she is concerned about the lack of reparations for Black residents. Curry, who is also a representative on the Town's Racial

Equity Commission, said that the history of Black residents in the Town is at risk of being disregarded.

"The Blacks in this community have always been victims of a struggle, and now it's possible that their history is disregarded, which is very disturbing to me, because my ancestors built this community that everybody's prospering off," Curry said.

Curry said that while the Black population in Carrboro is small, those who have lived in the community for generations should be acknowledged.

Community member Isaac Woolsey, a disability rights and public transit activist, said that he noticed that most disabled or mentally ill residents are either experiencing homelessness or renting an apartment with poor conditions.

"They don't own their own housing," he said. "I think that is wrong and inexcusable. If we want to be equitable, we need to work on having everyone have their own house and property."

Community members also called for proactive measures to protect the Town's immigrant community from potential deportations.

Kodi Maier spoke about the Town's response to federal immigration enforcement. They said they would like more clarity on how local officials would act in specific situations.

"[The sheriff] said he's disgusted," Maier said. "That's great. Can I call him if ICE has come for my partner? Can I ask him to intervene?"

After the meeting, Maier said that social media often shows what's happening in Washington, D.C., and that it can be easy to forget about local action.

"I think being able to actually see proof of that — of the physical, material community — rather than just having it online or kind of in the ether, right?" Maier said. "Knowing that there are other people out there that care about you and that they are trying to do something."

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APRIL stay in the know about local government

- 7

Orange County Schools board meeting
Whitted Building and livestream
7 p.m.
- 8

Orange County BOCC work session
Southern Human Services Center and livestream
7 p.m.
- 8

Carrboro Town Council work session
Carrboro Town Hall and livestream
6 p.m.
- 9

Chapel Hill Town Council meeting
Chapel Hill Town Hall
6 p.m.
- 10

CHCCS board work session
Lincoln Center and livestream
7 p.m.
- 15

Carrboro Town Council meeting
Carrboro Town Hall and livestream
6 p.m.
- 15

Orange County BOCC work session
Southern Human Services Center and livestream
7 p.m.
- 16

Chapel Hill Town Council work session
Chapel Hill Public Library
6 p.m.
- 17

CHCCS board meeting
Lincoln Center and livestream
7 p.m.
- 22

Orange County budget work session
Whitted Building and livestream
7 p.m.
- 23

Chapel Hill Town Council meeting
Chapel Hill Town Hall
6 p.m.
- 29

Orange County BOCC meeting with school boards
Whitted Building and livestream
7 p.m.

Escape room debuts on UNC campus

Continued from Page 1

"This shows that we're not just a club on campus doing something small, we are actually doing something pretty major, pretty significant," Kashyap said. "The fact that an organization as massive as Morehead Planetarium was willing to partner with us to help us make this happen is proof of that."

Club members learned about the history of the planetarium while using it as inspiration for the new space-themed room.

UNC senior Mateo Alvarez is the executive director at Chapel Thrill Escapes. Alvarez oversees the building team, which is responsible for creating the puzzles and making the room come to life.

While creating this new room, the building team began by brainstorming themes and storylines. The team is then divided into subgroups of different areas of focus, such as room decorations, technological aspects and more.

Alvarez said that the team tries to work out the details and connect the puzzles to each other.

Before a new escape room is open to the public, it must go through what sophomore Tanvi Sathish calls "beta testing." Sathish is the co-chief operating officer for Chapel Thrill Escapes and works more on the operation side of the escape rooms, as opposed to the building side.

Beta testing, which occurred before the week-long trial period for on-campus students, consisted of multiple test trials of the escape room. The operations team observed how the players interact, how quickly the different puzzles are solved and if everything runs smoothly.

"For example, there's one puzzle in the new room that people were able to solve without actually going through the lock and going through all of the steps just based on a physical loophole," Sathish said. "So it's kind of funny to see all of that."

After beta testing, the process returns to the build team, who works on fine-tuning the escape room based on the operations team's observations.

Teamwork is important for Chapel Thrill Escape members when it comes to creating a new escape room. Alvarez said that he has learned a lot from the people he's met through the club, for example, woodworking, electronics and design.

"It's really cool to meet a lot of people from different contexts and with different interests," Alvarez said.

Chapel Thrill Escapes is also an entirely student-run business. Sathish said she has learned skills in areas such as business, law and management.

When she became a club officer, Sathish said she was thrust into the day-to-day operations. Although this was overwhelming at first, she said it was easy to adapt thanks to the help of mentors and club collaboration.

"We're the only student-run escape room in the nation," Sathish said. "You can't really get this experience anywhere else."

Club members all bring different skills to Chapel Thrill Escapes, but they all have one common trait: coming together to bring entertainment to fellow UNC students.

"They're all very passionate about the things that they do and that bleeds through when you talk to them and when you work with them," Kashyap said.

X: @dthlifestyle

THEATER

Students star in 'Bonnie & Clyde'

UNC Pauper Players, Company Carolina put on musical

By Adele Harris
Staff Writer

On March 28-30, Company Carolina and the UNC Pauper Players performed their spring musical collaboration, "Bonnie & Clyde" at the Center Theater Company in Carrboro.

Katie Stevens, who played Bonnie, said the story in the musical is fascinating. True to its title, the musical follows Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, guiding the audience through their separate Texas childhoods, their initial meeting and eventually, their inevitable rise to murder-duo fame.

"I was so excited when the show was announced," Stevens said. "I've known about the show for a long time. I think the music is just so catchy and the story has captivated the attention of so many people for so many years."

Stevens is a senior communications and dramatic art double-major at UNC, and she said while preparing to play Bonnie she made playlists with music from the time period of the musical — the Great Depression — to get her more in character.

Buck Thornton, a sophomore dramatic art and journalism double-major who played Clyde, said he researched his character through the real-life Clyde Barrow's diary notes. He



PHOTO COURTESY OF COMPANY CAROLINA AND PAUPER PLAYERS

Katie Stevens and Buck Thornton portray "Bonnie & Clyde," the infamous crime duo, on stage on Sunday, March 30.

said it helped him discover more of what Clyde's ambitions were and his experience in and out of jail.

"Clyde is this, he's a very charismatic character, but he's also a very angry character as well," he said. "He's really sporadic and all over the place."

Thornton said that all of the people who have worked on this production make it special, and he also thinks watching the transformation of Bonnie and Clyde throughout the show with the big climax at the end adds to the enjoyment.

"You go through this whole story of watching these characters transition from the small 'American Dream' that they have that turns into a whole

world of crime, but you still end up rooting for them," Thornton said.

As for Stevens, she said the story of Bonnie and Clyde resonates now with the glamorization of true crime in the media. The grittiness of their story shows the reality of stories like theirs and strips away the media sensationalism, she said. "Bonnie & Clyde" shows the real consequences that come from decisions made in desperate circumstances.

Stevens also said that musical theater is capable of communicating emotions that can be difficult to express. She loves that in the art form, you start singing and dancing when the words just aren't enough,

which resonates with the characters in "Bonnie & Clyde."

"I think that they're just such extreme emotional heights that these people went through, and I think that the music does a really wonderful job of communicating that, especially for these characters that I think have some trouble communicating and trouble being honest," she said.

Addisen Barbour, a sophomore environmental science major, saw the show on Saturday night. She said it was a very emotional performance and the audience was completely caught up in the story. Her favorite part of the musical was all of the harmonies featured in the songs.

Barbour did not know anything about Bonnie and Clyde coming into the show besides the fact that they were criminals, and she said she learned a lot watching it.

"I think it was a very complicated story because there were certain times I was rooting for Bonnie and Clyde, but then Clyde would be painted more of a darker [way in] other parts," she said. "So, it made a very, in my opinion, morally gray character."

Stevens said that she wanted the audience to leave the performance with conflicting feelings, and that the cast could bring some sympathy and complexity to the characters and the dark reality of their lives.

Besides that, she hoped people would have a great time, laugh and feel connected to one another.

X: @dthlifestyle

FLORA

Spring has sprung at the Coker Arboretum

Curation of beloved nature space dates back to 1903

By Shreya Senthilkumar
Staff Writer

At the intersection of East Cameron Avenue and Raleigh Street lies the Coker Arboretum, a lush green escape from the rest of UNC's bustling campus. Now that spring is in full bloom, tall trees reach toward the sky, their sprawling branches casting shadows over the patches of daffodils and hyacinths below. Under the trees, students study on benches or chat with one another on picnic blankets.

This five-acre patch of land is maintained by the North Carolina Botanical Garden. The garden features a variety of plants native to regions such as the United States, Europe, China and Japan.



DTH/JULIAN MICHAEL SWART

Flowers bloom at Coker Arboretum on Friday, March 28.

Geoffrey Neal is the arboretum's current curator. He helps decide what to plant and maintains it through weed-picking and mulching.

"We're called curators because, much like the Ackland down the street, we are a museum," he said. "Whereas the things in Ackland — the art — is housed, cased, hung on walls, displayed and interpreted in that way, our specimens are living things."

According to Neal, the arboretum is very colorful this time of year, which draws visitors to the space. He noted that the daffodils, Asian magnolias, quinces and spring flowering shrubs were particularly delightful this year.

UNC senior Iris Chang came to the arboretum on Friday afternoon with her camera in hand, photographing the different flowers in bloom. She said the arboretum is a place she visits often.

"I live on North campus, so it's a really convenient place to decompress, and I just like seeing what the different seasons have to bring," she said.

Faith Duggins, a sophomore English and comparative literature major, said she visits the arboretum nearly every day. On Friday, she sat on a bench near the East Cameron Avenue end of the arboretum.

"If anyone wants some recommendation or anything, [the arboretum] is the place you should go to," she said. "It's so quiet, you always hear the sounds of nature. It's a good place to find some peace."

The arboretum contains a mix of old and young plants. Some are over one hundred years old, like the looming overcup oak tree in the arboretum's central field.

Many of the arboretum's larger trees were planted by William



DTH/JULIAN MICHAEL SWART

English Primrose blooms at Coker Arboretum on Friday, March 28.

Chambers Coker, a UNC botany professor in the early twentieth century. Coker founded the arboretum in 1903 after university president Francis Venable suggested he transform the boggy pasture. Before it became the arboretum, professors used this pasture to keep their mules while they taught their classes. The mules munched on the overgrown grasses while they waited.

Coker focused on collecting plants native to the southeastern United States, wanting each addition to have a story behind it. He worked toward this goal until he retired in 1945. UNC Grounds Services cared for the arboretum until the NC Botanical Garden took over in 1982.

Today, the arboretum focuses on collecting plants that are found in southern gardens, such as azaleas and quinces. They also focus on growing sets of closely-related plant species. These "sister" species were

once the same, but evolved differently due to geographic separation — a phenomenon called vicariance.

The arboretum is also undergoing renovations to the arbor on its East Cameron Avenue end, replacing the deteriorating wood and creating a walkway that is more accessible. Most of the construction is expected to be done by August 2025.

When planning what to add to the arboretum, Neal not only thinks about the arboretum in the current moment, but also what it may look like over the next several decades.

This, he said, is one of the best parts of his job.

"I think it's a really delightful thing to think about the lives that I interact with outliving the buildings around them, and I have every confidence that the bald cypresses in here will outlive the dormitories next to them," he said.

X: @dthlifestyle

APRIL don't miss these arts & culture events

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <p>3 Coulture Magazine: Threads of the Mind
The Junction
6:30 p.m.</p> | <p>4 UNC Clef Hangers - Spring Concert
Memorial Hall
7 p.m.</p> | <p>4-6 Black Queer Studies Conference
Hyde Hall, Swain Hall & Love House</p> |
| <p>5 18th Century Beauty Salon
Orange County Historical Museum
5 p.m.</p> | <p>5 Cat's Cradle Study Hall (UNC Bands Performance)
Cat's Cradle Back Room
5 p.m.</p> | <p>6 The Beautiful People Club
ArtsCenter
4 p.m.</p> |
| <p>9-10
The Center Will Not Hold
Memorial Hall</p> | <p>9-27
Playmaker's Little Shop of Horrors
Playmaker's Repertory Company</p> | <p>10-14
Kenan Theatre's Into the Woods
Kenan Theatre @ Playmaker's Repertory Company</p> |
| <p>12 1843 Pleyel Piano Concert
Person Hall
1 p.m.</p> | <p>12 Loreleis Spring Concert 2025
Memorial Hall
5 p.m.</p> | <p>12 UNC Walk-Ons Spring Concert 2025
Genome 200
7:30 p.m.</p> |
| <p>23 This is America IV
CURRENT ArtSpace + Studio
7:30 p.m.</p> | <p>24 This is America V
CURRENT ArtSpace + Studio
7:30 p.m.</p> | <p>26 Little Royals Tea Time
Speakeasy Carrboro
1 - 4 p.m.</p> |

Check organizer websites for more information before attending.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram account serves as digital scrapbook

Uncquirks captures and shares unique on-campus moments

By Sophia Graci
Staff Writer

UNC is full of personality — possums in trash cans, unicycles made from Jordans and Squidward-shaped snowmen in the winter time. Throughout campus, these quirks can be found just about anywhere — all it takes is a careful eye to notice.

Uncquirks is an Instagram account that posts these oddities found on campus, whether it's weird, disgusting, funny or inspiring. It purports to carry on the centuries-long legacy of quirkiness on campus, mentioning that the University has been "quirky since 1789" in the page's Instagram bio. If a quirk is found by someone on campus, it can be submitted to the account and posted for others to see.

The uncquirks creator has only revealed small details about her identity thus far; a sliver of her face in the account's profile picture, her major and occasional fun facts about herself — until now. Her name is Katherine Verm, a UNC senior double majoring in economics and English.

The account first began in 2022, when Verm was a first-year, with a little procrastination. She was putting off studying for a chemistry exam when she began showing pictures of funky moments that happened on campus to her friends. It inspired her to make a digital scrapbook of sorts as an inside joke with her friends.

After a couple of months, Verm decided to try to grow the page so she could repost quirks others had found on campus. She compares the practice of looking for quirks to a gratitude journal — it is a fun way for her to stay engaged with



DTH/MASON MILLER

Katherine Verm, creator of uncquirks, stands on Polk Place on Friday, March 28, 2025.

the community but also remain appreciative of the everyday unusual things on UNC's campus.

"It really kind of transformed the way that I view UNC, and made me really, really excited whenever I saw those little, for lack of a better word, 'quirks' around campus," Verm said.

Although most of the posts are her own observations, Verm accepts submissions from anyone.

Once the photos are posted, credit can be given to the photographer, or they can remain anonymous.

The posts are mostly about

unicyclist who was riding a custom unicycle wheel made out of Jordan shoes on campus.

"Hello?!!" Verm wrote in

the caption.

"Coolest Jordans I've

ever seen! @tysontee23

is here from Nike

headquarters

and riding a

custom wheel

made by @wendelldadulla !!

People are the coolest!"

Like a group chat with friends,

social media accounts like

"It really kind of transformed the way that I view UNC, and made me really, really excited whenever I saw those little, for lack of a better word, 'quirks.'"

Katherine Verm

Uncquirks account owner

physical content but sometimes feature people on campus too.

One of Verm's most recent posts was about Tyson Bendzak, a

social media accounts like

social media accounts like

uncquirks are one big inside joke between the UNC community, Verm said. It acts as another way to share campus culture and find a sense of community within a school as large as UNC.

UNC graduate Isabel Inman has been a friend of Verm for 11 years and was with her when one of the first posts on uncquirks was made. The pair grew mold in a petri dish after reporting an unresolved mold issue to their dorm. The page is a lighthearted way to poke fun at the things students take seriously on campus, Inman said, and a fun way for students to relate.

"Even though it's a small thing — an Instagram page — I thought, especially for Katherine, it was something fun that she felt filled her community a little bit," Inman said.

UNC senior and double major in economics and music Tim Yardley has frequently submitted content since his first year at UNC. He discovered the account through the "mutuals" section on his Instagram and became friends with Verm thereafter. Because there's always "weird stuff" going on on campus, Yardley said, the account is a good way to share experiences with other students.

"It certainly is going to be a memorable part of college for Katherine, most definitely, and for me as well," Yardley said. "It was a fun way to document the craziness of the college experience."

The account's future is currently undecided. Uncquirks is something personal to Verm, and whether or not she should pass down the account to a friend or stranger remains a question. But until then, Verm will continue to share the strange and unparalleled UNC experience with other students.

X: @dthlifestyle

LEGACY

More than a month: Honoring UNC's historic women

Campus libraries boast resources for learning women's history

By Caroline King
Senior Writer

Women's History Month is over, but learning about historic women does not have to end in March. There are countless on and off campus resources for further research into the women that built the world we know today, including some former Tar Heels.

"I think it's important to keep in mind how women have contributed to our society overall because women are part of an underrepresented and historically excluded group," Brittany Hutchinson, a PhD student studying Black Feminist Theory, said.

Hutchinson is also a graduate research assistant at the Stone Center Library and she pointed to the wealth of knowledge held not only within the books in the on-campus libraries, but also in the people that work in them.

"I can't talk enough about librarians and how great they are," she said.

Off-campus options for Women's History reading include local bookstores like Epilogue Books Chocolate Brews. Catherine Pabalate, a bookseller at Epilogue, said that the shop has a lot of books that highlight the intersection between women's history and other identities, including women of color, disabled women and women in science.

"I think just having books about women with various identities for women to read and sort of connect with," Pabalate said.

The following is a list of a few historic UNC women who have made local and global impacts.

Karen Parker

In 1963, Parker became the first Black undergraduate woman to enroll at UNC. While at the school, she studied journalism and in 2012, she was inducted into the North Carolina Journalism Hall of Fame.

During her time at UNC, Parker kept a diary detailing her experiences on campus, including when she was arrested for participating in Civil Rights demonstrations. Parker donated the diary to the Southern Historical Collection of UNC Libraries in 2006 and in 2021, a class on Feminist Geographies digitized it and published the collection of entries and photographs online, titled Mapping Karen Parker's Journal.

Anne Queen

Queen, the namesake of the Anne Queen Lounge in the Campus Y building, served as the director of the YWCA-YMCA for nearly two decades from 1956-1975. Sarah Smith, the current assistant director of the Campus Y, recently worked on a historical research project and produced zines showing the Campus Y's history through the decades.

In this project, she learned more about Queen, who she said was one of the most impactful Campus Y directors because of her long-lasting legacy.

"I already admired her, but I think I'm at a new level now because of just having seen what she was able to accomplish during her time



DTH DESIGN/SARAH FENWICK

here and her level of advocacy for the students," Smith said.

As a part of the Campus Y's oral history project, the Southern Oral History Program published a 1976 interview with Queen about her life and experiences as the Y's director during the time of racial integration, the Vietnam War and other key moments in history.

Karen Stevenson

In 1975, Stevenson became the first Black Morehead-Cain recipient. In 1979, she received the Rhodes Scholarship, making her the first

woman from UNC and the first Black woman in the nation to do so.

After Carolina, she went to Stanford for her law degree, and in 2015, she was sworn in as the first Black woman to serve as a federal magistrate judge in the Central District of California and became the chief magistrate judge for the district in 2023. Some of her articles she's written on legal topics are accessible online through the UNC Library system.

Sallie Walker Stockard

In 1898, Stockard graduated from UNC as the school's first

alumna. She was a double Tar Heel, earning both an undergraduate and a master's degree at UNC.

Stockard was a historian and authored two works about North Carolina history, the first on Alamance County, which she wrote as her master's thesis, and the second on Guilford County. These two books can be accessed online through UNC's Libraries, and the original print versions from the early 1900s are available for in-library use only.

X: @dthlifestyle

Opinion

The Daily Tar Heel

COLUMN

Academia is nonpartisan — it needs defending against fascism

By Nakai Moore
Columnist

Across the country, academia is under siege. Universities are no longer merely caught in the crossfire of partisan culture wars — they are the targets of a coordinated political campaign to silence dissent and reshape public discourse.

Entire academic departments are under fire for presenting perspectives that diverge from the current administration's agenda, with some now facing demands of academic receivership. The federal government has begun withholding funds from universities that refuse to fall in line for a range of issues: \$175 million from the University of Pennsylvania over its support of transgender athletes; \$400 million from Columbia University in retaliation for the campus protests in response to the war in Gaza. The hold in grants from these universities has been coupled with general spending slashes from sweeping executive orders and proposed budget cuts from the Department of Government Efficiency.

This is not politics as usual. It is an attempt to undermine the very foundations of higher education, and it follows a historical pattern that should alarm us all. Fascist regimes have always gone after



Photos courtesy of Adobe Stock.

DTH DESIGN/CARRIE-ANNE ROGERS

the intellectual class first. From Franco's Spain to Pinochet's Chile, universities were viewed as breeding grounds for subversion, and the response was swift: professors purged, students imprisoned, critical thought crushed. While we are not yet facing firing squads, the signs are disturbingly familiar — vilify the intelligentsia, criminalize dissent and use state power to enforce ideological conformity.

We are already seeing this unfold on U.S. campuses. International

students attending Columbia, Georgetown, Cornell and Tufts have been detained and faced with deportation for their pro-Palestinian activism. This is a clear violation of free speech principles, justified only by the premise that noncitizens are entitled to fewer First Amendment protections than their domestically born counterparts.

These students are accused of posing foreign policy risks, sometimes under dubious pretenses. In one case, Yunseo Chung, a lawful permanent

resident and Columbia student, faces the threat of ICE detention after participating in a campus protest and posting flyers accusing the university of complicity in genocide — actions that federal authorities claimed threatened national interests.

Faculty who question U.S. foreign policy or teach racial justice are harassed, doxxed and publicly branded as radicals. Even UNC's Middle Eastern Studies Department was pressured by the first Trump administration to revise its curriculum following allegations that it failed to present certain religious groups in a sufficiently positive light. The classroom — intended to be a space for dialogue and critical engagement — has become a battleground in the administration's broader effort to control culture through coercion.

This escalating climate of intimidation has instilled a pervasive culture of fear within academia, where scholars and students are increasingly cautious about engaging in controversial discourse. This atmosphere leads to self-censorship and a reluctance to explore contentious topics, undermining the structural principles of academic freedom.

Fortunately amid this escalating assault on academia, resistance is growing. Faculty and students

across the country are mounting legal challenges against the Trump administration's actions. In Manhattan, the Faculty Members' Union has filed a lawsuit protesting the withdrawal of \$400 million in federal grants, arguing that they ignored legally mandated procedures for cutting institutional funding. Yunseo Chung's attorneys filed a lawsuit last Monday attempting to halt the detention and the "pattern and practice of targeting individuals associated with protests for Palestinian rights for immigration enforcement."

More lawsuits are expected to come, and they may represent one of the most potent tools of resistance available. What we are witnessing is not only a political crisis, but a constitutional one. In the face of erosion of our academic freedom and institutional independence we must form a united front — students, faculty, scholars and university leadership — against the further politicization of education. That means joint lawsuits, and when necessary, refusing to comply with directives that violate our ethical and constitutional obligations. If we don't draw the line now, we risk forfeiting intellectual freedom and further descending into fascism.

X: @dthopinion

COLUMN

The transfer portal is ruining college basketball fan culture

By Jaden Miller
Columnist

Since the news that Elliot Cadeau and Jalen Washington will be entering the transfer portal, the University's student body has been full of opinions on the matter. Only the modern portal could turn a player like Cadeau — a sophomore who made the most of his minutes and cheered from the bench for every made basket — feel as if it's time to find a new home.

The modern transfer portal opens up for about 30 days in March for basketball and has periods in the fall and spring for football, both equaling up to 35 days for players. With the recent changes in NIL agreements, they can make more money by moving to programs with greater funds for their athletic department.

It has not always been about money; even now money is only a small factor in how the transfer portal has been tearing away at college sports for the last few years. Initially, the portal served to help collegiate athletes move from schools they did not feel a connection with, sitting out a year in exchange. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the NCAA eliminated this rule, allowing first-time transfers to become immediately eligible. And in 2024, it ratified a rule that would allow players to transfer as many times as they want with no limits. These new rules were attempts to make the game better for the players at the expense of the sport.

Being allowed to move freely and make the most of their "peak" athletic years can be beneficial for student-athletes. While this may be true in some cases, the portal leaves many athletes without a home. In 2023, only 45 percent of transfers found a new school, leaving thousands of players' educational and sporting futures at risk.

Whatever opinion you may have on some of our players leaving

during this window, they were still Tar Heels, once playing their hearts out for our beloved university. So many fanbases hold their breath when that clock strikes twelve, hoping their favorite players don't open their phones to announce that they will be looking to play elsewhere, and honestly — who can blame them? The portal encourages this: the drama, the suspense and ultimately the demise of passion.

What good does it do to get a superstar who cares not at all for the school, but for the money and the chance of reaching the pros? I struggle to sit and watch these superhuman athletes play when I know they are incentivized to care less and less for the name on their shirt.

I like to think back to the golden age of passionate athletes, the Marcus Paiges and the Tyler Hansbroughs who fought with all they had for the North Carolina across their chest. There was something special about those types of athletes, who turned down better deals and situations to have another chance at bringing their school glory.

What made this golden age so special? The simple fact that these guys were fighting for something more than themselves, a team, a university and a loyal fanbase. You can say what you want about the current state of our teams and even others dealing with the ripples of the modern transfer portal, but you can tell when someone wants to be where they are — that's where the real passion for sport lies.

As long as players can benefit from the system, the portal will continue to fail fanbases. I do see a future where NIL and the transfer portal work for the game, but how this will come about I am unsure. All we can do is sit and hope that our athletes stay to inspire that hope in our fanbases.

X: @dthopinion

EDITORIAL

UNC Libraries boasts a wealth of resources. We should use them.

By The Editorial Board

Ironically enough, there is a sign in Sloane Art Library that reads "You can check out these books! YES!"

It seems obvious, but even though libraries are among the most frequented buildings on campus, students and faculty largely overlook their services.

More information than you could ever absorb is housed inside the 12 libraries comprising the UNC Library system. This trove of knowledge is constituted by 7.8 million print volumes, 2.2 million e-books, 144,000 print journals, 147,000 digital journals and thousands of audiovisual media items. In addition to academic resources, UNC Libraries also provides access to multimedia services like the Library MakerSpace and Library Data Services, enabling students to creatively apply knowledge gained from traditional research in the forms of data visualization, 3D printing and even sewing. From the medieval medical illustrations contained in the Wilson Special Collections Library to Davis Library's ArcGIS Software Guide, the sheer wealth of resources available is astonishing.

Despite all of these resources, if you asked a UNC student when the last time they checked a physical book out from Davis, it's highly likely that they'd say never. Of course, this isn't the case for everyone, but the vast majority of us rarely utilize the libraries to their fullest extent.

There are some reasonable justifications for why students use alternatives. An e-book may be more appealing than lugging around a cumbersome economics textbook, but physical media has been proven to make learning more effective. Although e-books may be easier to access, comprehension significantly decreases while reading digitally. They may offer more convenience in accessibility and returns, but



DTH/EMMA GREEN

Wilson Library is pictured on Saturday, March 29. It offers resources like the Wilson Special Collections Library for UNC students.

students and faculty should not overlook the importance of paper books nor their great availability to us here.

It can seem daunting, no doubt. With an overwhelming amount of resources and a societal lack in practice locating books, the process of checking out even one of thousands upon thousands of books can seem daunting without a proper introduction. It's also natural for a sense of imposter syndrome to kick in — the University has a vast and often rare collection, but these resources are for students to take advantage of. As undergraduates, access to such abundance of knowledge is limited to our college careers, we shouldn't waste that out of fear.

For example, Wilson's Rare Book Collection offers students the opportunity to work with unique materials that are difficult to access anywhere else. Using this resource should be on every UNC student's bucket list. The chance to interact directly with real Renaissance manuscripts or early Shakespeare prints at no cost is one of the great privileges of attending this institution. Getting to see such historic pieces in person, rather than on a digital scan, completely deepens the experience

and adds a level of excitement and pleasure to your research.

As term papers pile up and major deadlines come around the bend, now is a better time than ever to visit the library for more than its study spaces. Engaging with physical media challenges students to take fewer shortcuts finding information, but it results in an opportunity for higher quality research and more intentional engagement in the content.

Utilizing our libraries' ample resources also sends an important message regarding their worth to academic research and leisure. With a hyper-focus on efficiency, libraries that do not demonstrate community engagement may be targeted. To engage with the wealth of information on library shelves is to reinforce that this knowledge is not obsolete. It is to acknowledge that today's students are willing and able to undertake an arduous, but ultimately far more rewarding, path of learning.

Though it is tempting as burnt-out, overworked students to blunder through the rat race in isolation, it serves our mental health and acumen to participate in physical learning.

X: @dthopinion

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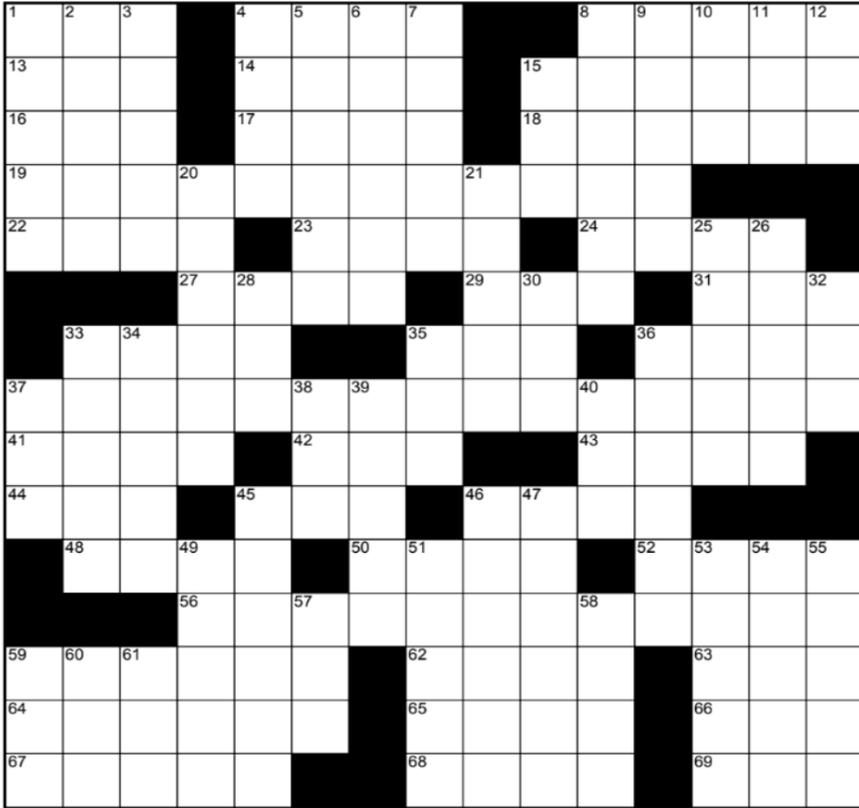
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Horoscopes

ARIES (MARCH 21 - APRIL 19)
 Today is an 8 — Words may not come out as planned. Take time to edit and reconsider how you want to express your views. Beautify your final presentation.

LEO (JULY 23 - AUG. 22)
 Today is a 9 — Together you can move mountains. A community project can prove especially fruitful. Postpone travel and shipping. Somebody else's idea works. Collaborate in teamwork.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22 - DEC. 21)
 Today is a 9 — Your partner has clever and valuable ideas. One of them could prove especially profitable. Put your plans into motion. Talk it over later.

TAURUS (APRIL 20 - MAY 20)
 Today is a 7 — Cash flow could increase. Keep spending on track. Follow a profitable hunch. Prepare invoices and financial papers for later delivery. Wait for traffic to clear.

VIRGO (AUG. 23 - SEPT. 22)
 Today is a 9 — Your work is getting profitable. Take charge without ruffling any feathers. Don't wipe out your savings on a romantic whim. Track spending carefully.

GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUNE 20)
 Today is a 9 — Take time for yourself. Upgrade your look or hairstyle. A little pampering goes a long way. Focus on personal matters privately. Breathe deeply.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23 - OCT. 22)
 Today is a 7 — Discover beauty where least expected. Your studies and investigation are proving valuable. Delays or miscommunications could arise. Explore your subject through another's perspective.

CANCER (JUNE 21 - JULY 22)
 Today is a 7 — Avoid arguments or misunderstandings and focus on maintaining private productivity. Quietly organize your plans and set them in motion. Conserve resources in coordination.

SCORPIO (OCT. 23 - NOV. 21)
 Today is an 8 — Find ways to work smarter. New efficiencies can save money. Weigh costs and benefits with your partner.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22 - JAN. 19)
 Today is a 9 — Physical action can produce positive results. Words don't go as far. Don't wait for someone who's all talk. Stay in action to win.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20 - FEB. 18)
 Today is a 7 — Relax and take it easy. Enjoy beautiful scenery, art or music. There's no need to go far. Engage in a passion project with someone interesting.

PISCES (FEB. 19 - MARCH 20)
 Today is an 8 — Today favors interior decoration projects and domestic arts. Communications could get crossed. Allow extra time for deliveries. Get creative with color, pattern and function.

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“Queens of Clubs”

This week's crossword was created by debut cruciverbalist Rachel Clark.

Across

- 1 Not new
- 4 Go down with the ship?
- 8 Argentine partner dance
- 13 Golf standard
- 14 Aware of the joke
- 15 Salad descriptor
- 16 Federal agency est. 1970
- 17 Adhesive
- 18 Readily available
- 19 Queen of the Mean Girls
- 22 As well
- 23 Stinging flying insect
- 24 CCCP
- 27 Avian incubator
- 29 Pumpernickel, for one
- 31 Previously possessed
- 33 “_____ Crazy” ('80s comedy)
- 35 Roadside assistance co.
- 36 04/02/25, for example
- 37 Massachusetts's first female senator
- 41 Entree addition
- 42 Singular
- 43 Tears

- 44 E.g., kissing in public
- 45 Lovey-dovey nickname
- 46 Prayer's final word, often
- 48 “What _____ is new?”
- 50 Leonardo's Lisa
- 52 Punt the football, say
- 56 “Travels in West Africa” author
- 59 Like little French ladies
- 62 Arab ruler
- 63 Under the weather
- 64 Neighborhood of 1930s cultural renaissance
- 65 Harvard rival
- 66 “The Greatest” professional boxer
- 67 Washer's counterpart
- 68 “Kill it, queen!”
- 69 Recently dismantled gov. agency

Down

- 1 “The Marriage of Figaro,” for one
- 2 Suit jacket's collar
- 3 Pulls forcefully

- 4 Instructor to yield to?
- 5 Relatives through marriage
- 6 Milky Way filling
- 7 “Knocked” body part
- 8 “Tied” body part
- 9 Cremation product
- 10 Cryptology gov. org.
- 11 X, Z, or Alpha
- 12 Strange
- 15 NHL team without a Stanley Cup since 1967
- 20 Add or remove electrons
- 21 Billionaire talk show host
- 25 With 8-down, a bitter characteristic
- 26 Scores 1-10
- 28 Failed 1972 Equality Amendment, abbr.
- 30 Twisting of a ship
- 32 Animal's lair
- 33 Playground staple
- 34 Fiona Apple's debut album
- 35 Devoured
- 36 Celebrates a 21st birthday, often
- 37 Psychic intuition
- 38 Snake or fuzzy scarf
- 39 Nemesis
- 40 “_____ you listening?”
- 45 Dilapidated car
- 46 Descartes' automaton
- 47 Capital of the Philippines
- 49 Goldfish cracker action
- 51 Approvals
- 53 Trojan War epic
- 54 Violin's cousin
- 55 Jenner currently dating
- 57 “Losing My Religion” band
- 58 Color of Fifty Shades?
- 59 Higher Ed. degree
- 60 Lobed listener
- 61 Attempt

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Sports

The Daily Tar Heel

INCONSISTENCY

UNC baseball's offense sputters, prevents series sweep against Miami

The Tar Heels are No. 14 of 16 ACC teams in batting average

By Harry Crowther
Senior Writer

Head coach Scott Forbes walked into the Boshamer Stadium press box wearing a gray Lululemon workout shirt and blue jeans.

He normally wears his uniform during press conferences. But after a 4-2 loss to Miami on Sunday — an opportunity for North Carolina's first ACC series sweep gone by the wayside — Forbes took some extra time and decided to shower before heading upstairs.

Half an hour after the last pitch, Forbes started his remarks.

"I'm just thankful we won the series," he said. "Because I'm not sure if we hit over .200."

The Tar Heels did not. UNC hit .179 over three games against the Hurricanes, scoring eight runs on 17 hits. But Forbes' team found a way to win the series on the back of its pitching. UNC held Miami to six runs for the three games. Forbes



DTH/SIONA NAIK

UNC graduate right-handed pitcher Jake Knapp (42) pitches during the baseball game against Miami on Friday, March 28 at Boshamer Stadium.

needed just four arms on Friday and Saturday to take the first two.

"It doesn't always work out like it did the last two days," he said after Saturday's 4-2 win. "But that was exactly how we wanted it to work out."

Graduate right-hander Jake Knapp got the ball on Friday night and served up a gem. He tossed seven

scoreless innings on 115 pitches and struck out a career-high 10 batters.

Knapp has cemented himself as the Friday-night ace. He earned the win in each of his last five starts, posting a 1.10 ERA with 38 punch outs to five walks.

"It was just one of those nights where a lot of things were working,"

Knapp said following a 2-0 victory. "Made some big pitches."

First-year right-hander Walker McDuffie came on in relief and picked up a six-out save, striking out four. Between Knapp and McDuffie, there were 14 strikeouts — the most in a game without a walk for the Tar Heels since 2021.

Sophomore right-hander Jason DeCaro started game two, and turned in five and a third innings, allowing two runs. DeCaro struggled at the beginning of ACC play, but the three hits allowed and six strikeouts are his best marks since his first start of the season.

DeCaro said his fastball had been inconsistent because his back side was flying open early. He worked on his mechanics with the coaching staff and saw results on Saturday.

Exactly according to Forbes' plan, another first-year righty, Ryan Lynch, came on after DeCaro and pitched three-and-two-thirds scoreless innings to earn his first save of the year.

"I talked to both [McDuffie and Lynch] before the season started," DeCaro said. "I told them no matter what the situation is, your job is just to throw that pitch. You have to

break it down pitch-by-pitch, and if you do that, you'll be fine."

Even with the great pitching, the Tar Heels weren't hitting. The arms had little to no margin for error.

The top two in the batting order, junior center fielder Kane Kepley and sophomore catcher Luke Stevenson, recorded one hit between them for the weekend. The Tar Heels were 0-7 with runners in scoring position on Sunday. They did not hit a homer over the weekend.

UNC's 3.38 team ERA is the best in the ACC this season. But at .269, the Tar Heels slot 14th out of 16 teams in batting average.

The lack of offense was glaring on Sunday. UNC's runs came on an RBI groundout in the first and a bloop triple to no-man's land in the ninth.

"I still don't think we're playing close to what we're capable of playing top to bottom," Forbes said. "Obviously everybody's going to talk about the offense, and they're not wrong."

What is the biggest key for his guys to break out at the plate?

Forbes sighed.

"If I had the answer to that..."

X: @dthsports

Women's basketball reaches Sweet 16

Continued from Page 1

and had no chance of making the NCAA tournament. This year, UNC went 29-8, earning its best on-the-road record since 2006.

Despite No. 3 seed North Carolina's, 47-38, loss to No. 2 seed Duke in the Sweet 16, North Carolina is inching closer to the program it wants to become. UNC hosted the NCAA tournament for the first time in 10 years and won multiple ACC tournament games for the first time in 11 years.

"You can't go to a national championship from never going to the Final Four, [or] from never going to the Sweet 16," head coach Courtney Banghart said. "So going to two Sweet 16s in four years, there is a culture now. There is an expectation."

Banghart led UNC to its best season with her at the helm, since taking over in 2019.

The Tar Heels won 12 of their 13 non-conference games, with the only defeat at the hands of powerhouse UConn early in the season. UNC then won 12 of its first 15 ACC games before falling in its final two conference matchups with an injured starting lineup.

North Carolina won its first two games in the ACC tournament before falling to top-seeded N.C. State. The Tar Heels dominated their first two NCAA tournament opponents, before posting a season-low point total against Duke.

Although it marked bests for the first time in decades, the results didn't lead to any banners. UNC hasn't gotten over the hump, yet.

The Tar Heels were knocked out of the ACC tournament with their worst shooting performance of the season at 27.9 percent. North Carolina shot below 30 percent once again against Duke on Friday — a team UNC had beaten in overtime in January, then lost to in February — to end its season.

North Carolina reached the Sweet 16 in 2022 for the first time since 2015. But that year, fifth-seeded UNC fell, 69-61, to top-seeded South Carolina. Poor shooting dug

the Tar Heels into an 11-point hole they were ultimately unable to crawl out of, even with a comeback that brought the score within four points in the final four minutes.

A similar story played out on Friday. "I'm feeling gratitude for time well spent with that senior group, all five of them, but I'm also having to navigate that wasn't quite enough," Banghart said. "And that's the hard thing."

The program plans on continuing the momentum to inch closer to becoming a contender in March.

"[This season] was very successful in a lot of different ways," first-year guard Lanie Grant said. "The next step for us is learning from these losses and these tournaments and continuing to pursue farther runs and Elite Eights, Final Fours. The good thing is we know what it takes to get here and we know what it feels like."

Experience is only useful if North Carolina can learn from it. The responsibility to continue UNC's recent uptick in wins will fall on the shoulders of returning leadership.

And with three Tar Heel starters graduating — Lexi Donarski, Alyssa Ustby and Maria Gakdeng — junior Indya Nivar will have to lead the new cohort.

"[I'll] try to exemplify what they've done this year," Nivar said, speaking about her leadership next season. "But also twist it in my own ways so that it caters to the team because it's going to be totally different."

Sure, the sting of posting a 15-of-53 shooting performance in the Sweet 16 will hurt, but it won't outlast the momentum UNC has built recently. Carmichael Arena has reported its highest fan attendance the last two seasons in nearly a decade.

And that excitement will only grow with North Carolina inking its best recruiting class next year under Banghart and the fourth-best in the nation per ESPN.

Every team in college basketball has to turn the page eventually. But folding the corner on this one might help the Tar Heels discover something special a few chapters later.

X: @cadeshoemaker23

COMEBACK

Diego Jarry's voice propels men's tennis past No. 25 Miami

The senior clinched the 4-3 win for the Tar Heels in a third set

By Brian D'Aguanno
Staff Writer

It's hard to miss the sounds of senior Diego Jarry leading chants and hyping up teammates during UNC tennis matches.

"Tar," he shouts down court, imploring his team to keep fighting. He does it any time he notices a UNC player win a point or feel a momentum shift.

"Heels," his teammates always yell back. The crowd joins in, too.

Jarry's loud with his encouragement. It echos through the Chewning Tennis Center.

After transferring from Saint Mary's in California, Jarry has become a vocal leader in his first season with a young North Carolina men's tennis team. But on Friday night, almost four hours after UNC's match against Miami began, it was his teammates' turn to hype him up. The match was tied 3-3. It came down to the third set.

Late-game heroics and leadership from Jarry helped UNC secure a 4-3 win over No. 25 Miami at the Chewning Tennis Center. The Tar Heels extended their winning streak to three behind Jarry's performance.

"Best match we've played this year," head coach Sam Paul said.

Jarry spent the first three years of his career at Saint Mary's. The transfer process to UNC wasn't easy.

"It was tough," Jarry said. "I left behind a lot of family over there, so I was taking a big step to something different, something unknown."

He turned to his coaches for support, who have made it easy for the senior to call Chapel Hill home.

Despite the transition, Jarry has become a leader on the team. He communicates and gives



DTH/SIONA NAIK

UNC senior Diego Jarry hits the ball during the match against FSU at Chewning Tennis Center on Sunday, March 30.

advice during doubles matches. He is the first one to start cheers from the sideline.

"I like to take the initiative," Jarry said. "And I've always been a loud person."

This outspoken nature doesn't end with Jarry motivating his teammates though. He talks to himself in between points during matches.

"I try to use it not to think," Jarry said. "The more I think, the more I miss. So whenever I keep screaming at me, or pushing me up and saying 'come on,' 'vamos,' like it's just a way of keeping my mind just blank — no thoughts."

He talked to himself during Friday's singles match, encouraging himself to keep pushing. After dominating the first set, 6-1, Jarry lost, 7-6, in a hard-fought tiebreaker game in the second.

"I was just trying to conserve my energy because after the second set I was just exhausted," Jarry said.

Despite being tired, he fought back in the third, using his signature backhand and powerful serve.

Jarry went up 6-5 after battling back from a 5-3 deficit. The UNC bench started the same call-and-response Tar Heel chants that Jarry so often initiates.

"I was just trying to stay calm, stay focused," Jarry said. "It's hard having everybody watching."

Match point. Jarry tracked Miami's Leonardo Dal Boni's final return down the sideline. The ball hit the edge of the court — out of bounds. Finally.

Jarry collapsed, falling backward with his hands out in celebration. He didn't yell, but his teammates did for him, screaming in elation as they jumped on top of him.

When he got off the ground and escaped the hugs, he ran to the closest camera, clenched his fists and shouted.

"Vamos!"

X: @dthsports

Special Projects *The Daily Tar Heel*

FINANCES

Undergraduate Senate passes appropriations bill

Stipends increased for eight Student Government positions

By Jessica Baugh
Special Projects Writer

UNC-Chapel Hill's 106th Undergraduate Senate met for the last time on March 18, passing a bill that increased stipends for incoming Student Government leaders. There are eight stipended positions, including student body president, vice president and treasurer, with some receiving up to a \$1,800 increase in their annual stipends.

During the meeting, a senator moved to suspend the rules and adopt the bill without formal debate. The motion passed 23-6, but several senators said they felt it was used to suppress opposing viewpoints.

Callan Baruch, chair of the ethics committee, said there is typically a lot of debate surrounding stipend bills.

"There are a lot of things the senate does that is kind of whimsical, fake Student Government interplay," Baruch said. "Finances is one of the only things we do that is very, very real, and I don't think we've ever passed something through that's so important without having a discussion."

Stipends

After the University replaced the student-led Honor Court with a model guided by University staff, many of the usual stipended positions were eliminated. Last year, there were over 22 student positions with stipends, but only eight were in this year's stipend bill.

This year, the student body president was paid \$6,840; next year, their stipend will increase to \$7,700. The vice president, treasurer, speaker and finance committee chair stipends increased from around \$4,000 to around \$5,800. The three members of the Board of Elections received a total of \$3,000 this year and will receive \$5,250 next year.

Katherine Fiore, chair of the finance and appropriations committee, delegated authorship of the bill to her vice chair, Nayan Bala, to avoid any conflicts of interest.

Bala said she referenced last year's stipend bill to see how much money each position received. She also said the allocation would look different this year due to the removal of honor court-related positions.

The senate allocated \$36,110 for stipends for Fiscal Year 2026.



DTH FILE/MASON MILLER

The sun shines on the UNC crest during sunset outside of South Building on Jan. 9.

This amount was determined at the beginning of the semester in the Spring 2025 Appropriations Budget. This budget determined that 10 percent of the spring budget for the undergraduate senate would be used for stipends, the same percentage as last year.

Bala said that although she sees value in stipends, keeping the percentage of the budget the same as last year is "quite frankly, ridiculous."

"I think they should have done more thinking when they unanimously passed that 10 percent funding rate," Bala said. "Why are we funding at that same 10 percent rate that we've always been using when there's so many fewer positions?"

Bala also said she received guidance from the undergraduate treasurer, Andrew Forbes. Forbes said he had two recommendations for Bala: either keep the stipend amounts the same as last year or break down the full amount proportionally to each role.

Since the 10 percent amount had been previously voted on, Bala said she allocated the full amount to each position in what she believed was an equal way.

Forbes was recently elected to serve another term as the undergraduate treasurer, which is a stipended position. Forbes said he was unaware he would hold a stipended position when he gave his initial recommendations.

After Bala wrote the stipend bill, it was seen in the finance

committee. Bala said the committee recommended it favorably and put it onto the consent calendar. However, someone objected to this decision before the meeting, so it was moved to the General Orders, meaning it would be heard on the senate floor.

March 18 meeting

During the meeting, Sen. Christopher McClanahan moved to suspend the rules and adopt the bill by unanimous consent, meaning there would be no debate.

When the motion was called, six senators voted against it. One of the senators who voted against the motion said they were surprised by the numbers on the stipend bill and wanted to hear the reasoning behind it.

This senator, who requested to remain anonymous out of concern for their future relationship with senate leadership, said the majority of the senate do not have a legislative background and some members were unsure of what unanimous consent meant.

"We passed this remarkable increase in money without even asking people like the speaker of the senate during the meeting whether he thought that was a worthy salary," the senator said.

Later in the meeting, multiple senate leaders gave speeches about the lack of discussion on the stipend bill.

There was a motion to revote, but McClanahan pointed out the loss of

quorum, meaning less than half of the senators were present, so no voting could be made on legislation.

"While it is 100 percent true that we lost quorum at that time, and we should not be conducting business without quorum, it really frustrated me that the person who called that and who noticed that and who's keeping track of that was also the person that called for suspension of the rules at the beginning," the senator said.

Fiore said she thought there were two main reasons for the confusion regarding the stipend bill. The first reason was that people hadn't read the bill and assumed that individual stipends were decreasing. The second was the motion to adopt the bill by unanimous consent.

"In my experience, you don't make a motion to adopt by unanimous consent for something that's super controversial," said Fiore. "So when people heard that, they're like, 'Oh, this must have overwhelming support. We'll go ahead and approve this.'"

Fiore said no concerns were brought up when the finance committee raised the stipend bill.

"I was honestly curious to see if the bill was going to be controversial, and because nobody showed up to the meeting even though they were notified of it and they had the legislation weeks in advance, I just kind of assumed that the bill wasn't very controversial," Fiore said.

Impacts of the changes

Fiore said if these positions weren't stipended, there would be a risk of shutting out low-income students from these roles.

"It's really difficult to volunteer that much of your time and be able to have a full class schedule and then also pay for your college tuition," Fiore said.

McClanahan also made a motion at the beginning of the meeting to reorder the agenda so that the reports of senate officers were not given at the beginning but at the end. McClanahan said this had nothing to do with the stipend bill.

However, Speaker Matthew Tweden said this also eliminated the senators' ability to speak broadly on issues beforehand. Instead, the first thing that occurred at the meeting was the vote on the stipend bill.

McClanahan said if the speeches had been at the beginning of the meeting, there still likely would have been speakers against it, although he did not believe this would have prevented the bill from passing.

"The primary reason for a lack of a floor debate on the item was simply anticipation of shenanigans," McClanahan said. "There are ways in senate that people can screw around with things even if they're very much not a majority, see the filibuster like the real Senate, and if that is expected, it can be preempted."

McClanahan said if the bill had not been passed during that senate meeting, the positions listed on the bill wouldn't receive stipends the next year because the stipends cannot be altered by the new incoming senate.

He also said a senate leader made a comment before the meeting about not having quorum when it was time to vote on the stipend bill. This would have prevented the stipend bill from passing.

"If you want to abolish stipends, the way you do it is not by failing the stipends bill by causing a loss of quorum," McClanahan said. "That is the most underhanded political thing I can think of. The way you do it is by passing a bill that says we're not going to do this anymore."

The new 107th Undergraduate Senate will meet for the first time on April 2, and the incoming speaker will be elected. Baruch said that McClanahan is the most likely candidate for this stipended position.

X: @jessicalbaugh

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