

New dorms needed to combat overcrowding

Considering the increase in the amount of incoming and returning students this semester, the university should build a new residence hall.

"This year we have more students than we have enough room for," said Vollie Barnwell, UNC Asheville's director of housing operations.

Barnwell, and many other faculty from housing, attempted to place all incoming freshmen on campus this semester, but found it difficult.

According to university statistics, Founders and Mills residence halls house the most students on campus with 300 beds per building.

"We were able to fit 100 more students in both Mills and Founders," he said. "Overall we had a very unique situation on our hands, but it was a good one."

University research shows nearly a third of all UNCA students stay on campus, while the majority commute.

Research also shows an increase in the amount of continuing and transfer student requests to live on campus this year.

Therefore, the university should make adjustments to house so many students at one time.

"We had a large amount of freshmen that we needed to house, and a lot of returning and transfer students wanting to live on campus this year," Barnwell said.

The first solution to housing so many students without enough rooms resulted in a series of e-mails sent from Residential Education to returning students.

"The first e-mail offered a waiver for late housing registration to any returning student willing to give up their room and move off campus," Barnwell said.

Sophomore Jackson Stahl ac-



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cepted the offers Housing Operations provided and moved off campus.

"I know a lot of upperclassmen that are moving off campus this year," Stahl said.

According to university policy, all incoming freshmen are required to live in a residence hall their first year.

Reconsidering this policy could resolve the problem of limited space in the residence halls.

"I stayed on campus my freshman year and thought it was crowded then, but I can only imagine how freshmen feel now," Stahl said.

One of many freshmen placed in temporary housing is Casey Harrell from Winston-Salem.

"I did not expect to have five other roommates my first year of college," Harrell said. "I have to say, it's been a pretty interesting experience."

Harrell lives in a six-person communal room, previously used as a study lounge on the second floor of Founders Hall.

Study lounges, which freshmen now lose, provided a quiet area for studying in proximity to campus.

"We have three bunk beds and two bathrooms," he said. "The three bunk beds are separated into sections so that if someone is sleeping, we just turn off the light in their section."

University records show Harrell and his roommates live in one of the largest transitional spaces on campus.

Research shows an increase in the amount of continuing and transfer student requests to live on campus this year.

"It's also kind of cool because we can meet more people at one time, but it would be nice to have more space," he said.

Kathryn Willis, another freshman, lives in a similar situation. Willis stays on the first floor of Founders with two other roommates.

"My roommates and I actually chose to be in this room together, even though our RA said it was temporary," she said.

Officials in the Housing Operations office said temporary housing can last anywhere from days to weeks to months.

Temporary housing doesn't allow stable studying conditions for a proper education.

"So far, I think my roommates and I have been getting along just fine," Willis said. "What we like most about living here is that on Wednesdays the housing staff cleans our bathrooms."

Housing Operations lowers the price of room and board and provides new study areas in the Highsmith Union to freshmen who live with three or more roommates.

Although a discount on room and board would excite anyone, what is more important: money or an education?

"We haven't had a lot of com-

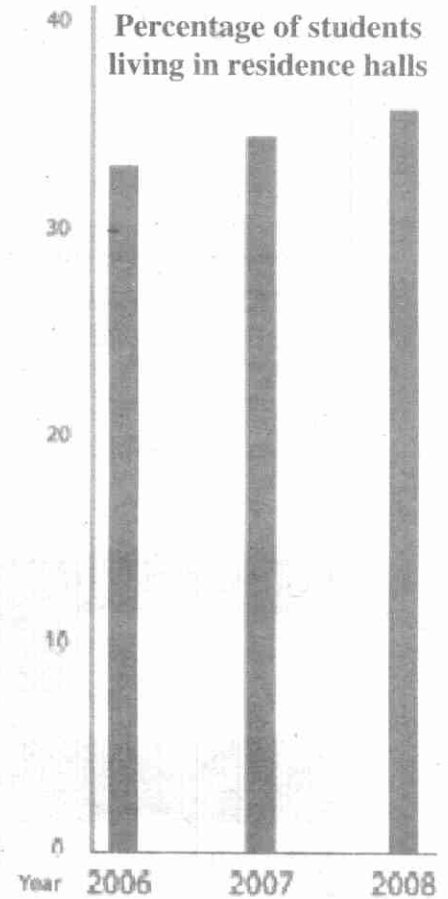
plaints from our students, but mostly questions," Barnwell said.

Many staff members in Housing Operations said they want more students to live on campus.

"I think students miss out on so much when they move off campus. We call it the on-campus advantage," he said.

Barnwell and many other members of the Residence Hall Construction Team said they plan to see a new residence hall.

"In the near future, my goal is that anyone who wants to live in the residence halls on campus is allowed to do so," he said.



Fall semester	Total Enrollment	Commuter	Res Hall	Percent Res Hall
2006	3,239	2,180	1,059	32.
2007	3,278	2,165	1,113	34.
2008	3,173	2,047	1,126	35.