

# Paine College students protest financial aid problems, condition of dorms

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About 30 Paine College students protested outside the school's administration building Wednesday, asking officials to fix alleged financial and operational problems on campus.



ZACH BOYDEN-HOLMES/STAFF

**Paine College students protest outside Haygood-Holsey Hall. This month, more than 50 financial aid checks bounced when students attempted to cash them, according to student Lindsey Scoggins, who organized the demonstration.**

The protest, students said, was a last resort after several attempts to reach administrators in person and through letters went unanswered.

"Students feel like they're oppressed and no one listens to their concerns," said Lindsey Scoggins, a Paine history major who organized the demonstration. "Basically when we try to talk to them and ask questions, they give us the runaround."

The administration has not responded to dormitories in need of repair and financial aid checks that have bounced or not been delivered, Scoggins said. This month, more than 50 financial aid checks bounced when students attempted to cash them, she said. More were never awarded the checks.

Students said dorms are filled with mold and leaks and cafeteria food is subpar. During the protest, in which some stated concerns about how their tuition is spent, students dressed in black and held signs asserting that grilled cheese does not count as dinner and that dorm conditions must change.

Brandon Brown, Paine's vice president of institutional advancement, said there was "an error in the formatting of the checks" that caused students to not receive money but that the

situation has been rectified.

"It was not financial, but an error with processing," Brown said.

Scoggins, however, said many students have still not received financial aid for this semester.

On Feb. 6, Paine administrators fired three managers in the school's business office. Former controller Kelly Kindell said he and the other employees were given no reason for their terminations.

Kindell said he believes students did not receive financial aid because there were no managers left to administer the money after the terminations.

"When Dr. Bradley fired us, all the knowledge went with us," Kindell said. "There was nobody there to monitor the situation to know how the funds should be moved around."

Kindell said the school receives funds from the U.S. Department of Education for Pell Grants and loans and the Georgia Department of Education for HOPE Scholarship money.

Once the funds are approved and sent to the business office, the school processes the money and puts it in proper accounts to send students their reimbursements.

"I think what happened in this case is since nobody knows how to do that, it got messed up that way," Kindell said.

Students said they hope the administration addresses their concerns now that they have spoken out. Several students said they would not speak on the record to a reporter for fear of retaliation from administrators.

"People are scared to protest because they feel they'll get kicked out," Scoggins said. "People have been kicked out for protesting in the past."