

The good, bad and counseling at GWU

By Matt Tessnear
Pilot News Editor

If returning students take a moment to look around Boiling Springs, it appears few changes have been made since we left the campus in May.

There's still an empty, new strip mall on the right side of N.C. 150, as you enter Boiling Springs from Shelby. There are still only a handful of eating options in town. That open parcel of land at the intersection of N.C. 150 and Main Street still sits, untouched. And Gardner-Webb University remains its same, predictable self.

Well, the parts about Boiling Springs may be true, but Gardner-Webb may not be as predictable as some upperclassmen have grown to think.

While many of us were slaving over summer jobs and sunbathing at the hottest beach destinations, GWU faculty and staff were often hard at work, attempting to make this school a better place to get an education.

In all fairness, the key word is attempting.

Let's start with some of the "bad" things that happened, or changed this summer.

The alcohol policy seems to be a popular issue on campus, even if popular means "to make fun of." Boiling Springs is a dry town and GWU is a dry campus, but I tend to agree with students who think the new policy is a little bit much. I understand the fines, the community service, the on-line course, and I can even get past the notification of work-study supervisors and academic advisors. But counseling?

Having a beer or a glass of wine with dinner, or even possessing it on campus, means that I need serious help? Roman Catholic and Episcopalian churches serve real wine with communion. Does the new alcohol policy mean that Catholic students come to campus with an immediate need for counseling?

I'd like an explanation behind the reasoning of that part of the rule.

Other "bad" changes on campus seem to be subtle in comparison. There's a rough spot in the road, literally, on Stadium Drive, behind the football complex. Driving over that a few times might lead to a trip to a garage for automobile alignment. Campus or town officials should look into smoothing out that patch of highway as soon as possible. Little problems like that are a big deal to students who don't have a lot of money.



Tessnear

Similarly, what's up with some of the problems in the apartments? When my roommates and I moved in, we had a whole list of things that could've been fixed over the summer. My desk wobbles more than a senior citizen on ice skates. The table in the living room swivels, although it is not a swivel table. I didn't even have a key for my room when I checked in. Several other apartments have non-working appliances and network connection issues.

Students pay enough to live on campus, and while I understand that things break and give trouble as the year goes on, I think all residencies should be mostly trouble-free at the beginning of the year.

If my computer continues to wobble on my desk, I may need some of that counseling to calm my nerves. I can't say that all of the changes around Boiling Springs and GWU are negative. Many good things greeted us when we got back to school this year.

The food in the cafeteria has been alright to this point. Sure, the caf isn't going to always dish up what we're used to eating at home, but the staff has made an effort. It appears there are more choices in the caf, and most of those choices are good. I've seen less repeat meals during the week. Not to cause crowding problems for those who frequent the pizza line, but you should give the pizza a try. It is substantially improved from last year. Maybe the cafeteria staff had some pizza-making counseling over the summer.

While we have problems inside our residencies on campus, how about the job of the landscaping staff? The grass looks greener than I can remember and the mulch around all of the trees and plants looks fresh. Additionally, the flagpole in the center of the quad looks nice, with a plethora of flowers arranged around it.

Finally, what about our athletic department? Whether you like it or not, the athletic department at a university can go a long way towards putting a positive face on the whole school. GWU's athletic department was definitely busy in June and July.

The university announced that it will become a member of the Big South athletic conference, effective July 1, 2008. The school also announced it will add a men's swim team for the 2007-2008 academic year.

With all of this in mind, we can't forget that the current sports season could be the most exciting ever. Appalachian State University, the reigning NCAA Division I-AA football champion, will come to town Sept. 23, and the men's basketball schedule includes dates with N.C. State, Wake Forest and Wisconsin.

Another positive is the addition of Four Star Computers & Multimedia, located on Main Street, near the Bulldog Quick Snack. The staff is friendly, and the shop carries a lot of computer equipment and accessories. It's nice to have at least one multimedia store in Boiling Springs, so a trip to Shelby or Gaffney isn't always necessary.

Maybe we still have issues, but for a private, small-town university, I think our staff and administration are doing a good job of providing a good educational environment. The alcohol policy was designed with student interests in mind. We should thank them by trying to look for the positives they provide – and by staying out of counseling.



NEW ALCOHOL POLICY TOO STRICT?

Revised alcohol code has ramifications that go beyond drinking

By Jacob Conley

I love Gardner-Webb and the Christian values she stands for. And it is because of this love that I am going to point out the dangerous, slippery slope that GWU is on now.

My concern deals with the new alcohol policy.

The cumulative aspect of offenses, fines, online course, visit to the counselor's office and suspension after a third offense are not the portions of the policy that are problematic. The problem is with the ban on alcohol-related posters and other advertising mediums, such as T-shirts.

Now, I'm as conservative as "Amazing Grace," dinner on the grounds, and James Dobson, but this portion of the new policy is ridiculous.

For example, my Panthers poster is now contraband because it has a small Miller Lite logo in the bottom left corner. What about the NASCAR fans on campus? Because of this new policy, students can no longer wear T-shirts with a picture of North Carolina native Dale Earnhardt Jr. on them, because his sponsor is Budweiser.

If the members of the

Alcohol and Other Drugs committee can prohibit T-shirts and posters, what will they ban next – country music with references to alcohol? That pretty much eliminates the entire genre.

Or maybe, in the not-too-distant future, students will no longer be able to watch Sportscenter because of the Budweiser Hotseat segment.

You have to draw the line somewhere. Students need to let their opinion be heard. Because if they don't, GWU could become the Bob Jones University of Boiling Springs.

Having said that, I am in no way advocating that students should line up outside of Dr. Bonner's door demanding school-sponsored keg stands. What I am saying is that the people who made the alcohol policy are rational human beings. If legitimate concerns are brought to their attention – and the T-shirt and poster issue certainly fits in that category – then they are more likely to make policy adjustments.

I just hope that students will voice their opinions and the committee will listen so that GWU does not continue on the slippery slope.

Jake and Jack Debate the Issues

SAT necessary to serve as means to equalize student opportunities

Jacob Conley

In the movie "The Perfect Score," a group of high school seniors attempts to steal the SAT answers because they felt the test is flawed and discriminatory along racial boundaries.

Unfortunately, this argument is accepted by far more people than the motley crew of teenagers in the movie. Some well-respected schools have decreased the emphasis on the SAT, while others have scrapped it all together in favor of considering only GPA and class rank.

The reasoning behind this shift is noble, but it is as flawed as some claim the SAT to be. Without the SAT, the hope is that more students will get into a college and be successful. That is a nice sentiment.

The idea might be plausible if we lived in a utopian society, but we don't. This may sound harsh, but not everyone in America should go to college. I hate to sound like a scholastic Nazi, but because of an influx of students who would not have been admitted to college as recently as 20 years ago, the college degree has become diluted.

I have heard that a college degree now means about as much to a potential employer as a high school

degree did 30 years ago. Discarding the SAT will only serve to remove another obstacle to the groundswell of unqualified students entering college campuses, and as a result, the integrity of the degree will continue to be cheapened.

Another argument for why the SAT should no longer be considered is that it puts too much pressure on students.

Give me a break. If you think the SAT is pressure, try moving to a country like France. There, if you don't pass its version of the SAT, not only won't you not go to college, you won't even finish high school.

Maybe if our education system incorporated a more stringent SAT, instead of abolishing it, then the U.S. system would not be ranked the 18th in the world out of 24 industrialized countries, as it was in a 2002 United Nations Children's Fund study.

Another argument for the abolishment of the SAT is that it discriminates against minorities and the poor. The gap between scores of wealthy and underprivileged students is about 140 points. In a 2001 interview with Time magazine, members of the College Board claim that this is due to the fact that "poor kids are getting a lousy education, not because of a flaw in the test."

Is this fair? No, and neither is life. But some have

tried to make it fair by disregarding the SAT -- with disastrous results.

For example, the University of Texas system bases its admissions on class rank. Therefore, if a student is in the top 10 percent of their graduating class, they are guaranteed a spot in the system.

A recent "60 Minutes" investigation compared two students, one from an affluent high school, and one from a less privileged

school. The latter student had a GPA barely above a 3.0 and was granted a spot at the University of Texas. The other had a GPA above a 5.0, but since this student did not finish in the top 10 percent of the class, she was not admitted.

Is this fair? Of course it's not. The SAT is the great equalizer. The test is the same for the rich and the poor, regardless of race. The SAT is not perfect, but it is a necessity.

SAT a dinosaur without validity to really show a student's potential

Jack Naish
Pilot staff writer

It's 7:32 a.m. on the day you are taking the SATs, and your forehead is glistening with sweat. Your stomach is churning and the moo shoo pork dinner last night doesn't seem to have been a very good idea.

As you rifle through bathroom drawers searching for stomach medicine, you think, "In less than 30 minutes, I'm going to take a three-hour test that will forever dictate the path of my life. Oh lordy Where's the Imodium?"

Most of us at Gardner-Webb have shared this experience, and we weren't alone. Every year, high school students across the nation study and stress themselves senseless because of the SAT, knowing it stands between them and their college of choice.

But should it? I believe the emphasis on standardized, pre-college testing should be a thing of

the past. We live in a time where many students have learning and testing disabilities that have only recently been recognized. Some students struggle to perform to their potential on the SAT, leaving many deserving college applicants in unfortunate situations.

There are other ways to determine a student's worth. Many universities, Gardner-Webb University included, look at a student's humanitarian efforts.

When standardized test scores prove to be a student's most lofty concern, communal responsibilities fade into the haze of math, critical reading and writing. Why then do schools diminish the importance of social involvement by setting a minimum SAT score?

High school students need not be placed under such stressful situations.

No standardized test should carry so much weight so early in one's life. College admissions should be based on a student's ability to succeed in their previous academic and civic endeavors, not their ability to bubble dots on a Saturday morning.



Conley



Naish



Lilly

By Ciara Lilly
Pilot staff writer

The new Gardner-Webb University alcohol policy came as no surprise to me. We do attend a private university with strong Christian values, so alcohol and

drug abuse prevention serve a major role in developing a strong foundation for our university.

I understand the efforts that are being made to ensure that the students of GWU get the opportunity to engage in an alcohol- and drug-free school zone. Alcohol and drug usage should not be legal at any university. I am not aware of a university that welcomes student drinking or student drug usage, so why is the new policy a surprise to GWU students?

Some students believe Gardner-Webb is becoming a prison. In my opinion, Gardner-Webb molds itself into a finer university by establishing stricter policies

for issues that are so serious to college students.

The dangers associated with alcohol are crucial for us to learn. If Gardner-Webb decided to remain lax about whether students were drinking or doing drugs on campus, in essence it was putting our lives at risk. Students will drink on campus, believing that because they are in their rooms nothing bad could happen.

Yet, campus fatalities can result from this belief. With this new policy, students are forced to think twice about having alcohol or drugs on campus. At every university there should be a high standard for students to exemplify.

Here at Gardner-Webb, we follow an Honor Code that serves to keep the university and students well balanced.

It makes no sense to jeopardize your education for alcohol. The new alcohol policy isn't going away, so there is no need to fret and complain. We are all here to obtain a quality education. Let that, above all things, be your main goal.