

Opening Of Radio Station Not An Easy Task

By Von Corbett

The administration, faculty and students have been anticipating the opening of its new radio station for more than a year. Finally, the long wait is just about over.

The new radio station will be opening sometime this semester but no specific date has been set yet. According to Mr. Clarence Thomas, mass communications instructor, the station will be programmed on a low powered frequency of 100 watts on the FM dial, strong enough to be received throughout the Winston-Salem city limits. The radio station will broadcast

between 5-10:30 p.m. six days a week. The days will be designated later.

But just what is taking so long for WSSU to get its own radio station? Mr. Thomas says getting a radio station is not an overnight process. Much hard work and patience are involved in its development. First, the university had to decide whether it even wanted a radio station. After a positive decision was made, the next step was the building of the new communications building. Next, an experienced person in the field of communications was hired that person being Mr. Thomas, who, along with Dr. Hazel Harvey, chairperson of the Communication Arts Department, coordinated the

plans for the new station.

Plans for financial and operational matters were made and bids for the proper communications equipment were submitted. The entire process grew considerably lengthy and expensive, taking until this past summer to complete. Meanwhile, an application from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and a construction permit had to be completed. The FCC does not grant all applications; there are many people applying for these licenses. In order for the form to be completed properly, a team of people consisting of an attorney and an engineering staff was gathered for tests and surveys and to fill out the license.

Next, the university had to submit a financial statement and more plans for organization, operations, and programming were drawn.

Then came the waiting. The FCC takes the forms on a first come, first serve basis. It then holds them for thirty days without even looking at the forms. When the FCC finally looks at the forms, it really looks at them. The FCC not only views the financial portion of an applicant's position, it also regards the engineering portion, making sure there is enough space on a radio dial of if the new radio station will interfere with other already functioning radio stations or how the placement of the antennae will affect the output of the station. All of these matters are considered by the FCC before it gives its approval or rejection. The FCC may then request more evidence in the form of a hearing from the applicant to regard its financial and engineering stability before making its final decision. The delay in the opening of the station lay not in the hands of the University, but in the hands of the FCC.

What does the applicant do while it waits for this approval? According to Mr. Thomas, the campus' part ran smoothly for while it awaited the approval of the FCC, plans for the station's operations and training of competent students to operate the station were developed. Training for the students included new courses in mass communications, one of the newest to be Techniques of Radio, the first course to train students on campus designed for specific feed to the station.

As yet no word has come from the FCC. Nevertheless, Mr. Thomas is confident of the radio station's opening this semester since the FCC has not requested more evidence.

The radio station will be supervised by Mr. Thomas along with Mr. Bob McConnell, another instructor in mass communications, and run primarily by the students. The radio station will not only be open to mass communications minors, but it will also be open to any students interested in learning to

operate a radio station. To accommodate this, the Radio Club, an organization of on and off campus students interested in working with the radio stations, will be formed.

The date of its first meeting will be announced.

Campus Plans Events

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union. The topic will be Chronicle of Black Struggle: Past, Present, Future." Community leaders are the sponsors.

Throughout the month, Black History information and music will be provided in the student union.

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