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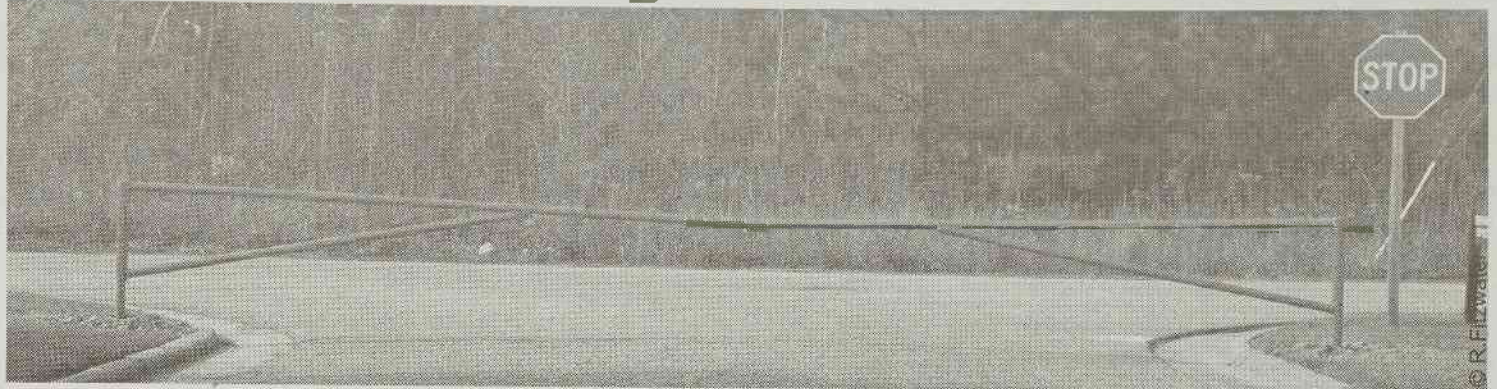
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## Students Search For Answers To Safety Concerns



Security gates have been installed at the back entrances to campus.



By  
Ron Fitzwater

Last semester, in Dr. Jay Stubblefield's ENG 304 (Business Communication) class, the students had to do a short presentation as a warm up for the final presentation of the semester. The presentation was to be 5 minutes about something we would change at Wesleyan. As I sat there listening to the presentations, I realized that most of them centered around two things #1 Campus Security and #2 Parking.

For the most part, students had the same basic three points for the parking issue:

1. There is not enough parking
2. There is not enough lighting in the parking lots
3. Students want the problem fixed, yesterday

As far as security on campus goes, they are concerned about several areas:

1. Outsiders gaining access to campus
2. Petty thefts and robberies of varying degrees
3. Too few officers on duty, primarily on weekends
4. Lack of city police presence on campus

In this the second installment focusing on on-campus crimes, we look at current and future security programs at North Carolina Wesleyan College.

The question as to whether these concerns are widespread

on campus is debatable. Some students have been raising questions about personal safety. Dr. Stubblefield spoke about other students he advises and speaks with regularly. Stubblefield said, "Some students tell me that the transformation the college undergoes on the weekends makes them very uncomfortable. Students report people on campus that they don't know, possibly from the community. That makes them nervous."

But how does he feel about coming on campus during off hours? "I try to avoid coming on campus late at night", he said. "Now that's not because of the security staff. I was on the community standards board and I think the problem (with the perceived increase in campus crime) is there is not sufficient enforcement of student conduct."

Stubblefield feels there is a disconnect between the sanctions issued and the enforcement of those sanctions. "So I think there's been a development of a climate of permissiveness, or 'nothing will really happen to you'", he stated. Not pinpointing anyone as being at fault for the current situation, Stubblefield thinks the "increase in incidents" is because of that disconnect.

Stubblefield thinks that coming down harder on offenders would improve the situation, "I think that when a student engaged in conduct that was inappropriate, if something immediately happened to that student, something significant, word would get around rather quickly. I think that would do more to deter these incidents than anything else would. I think the security staff is doing the best they can do with

what they have."

So, what is the problem on campus this year? Is it the increase in the number of students, or too few security officers? And, who is trying to fix the problem?

Last semester SGA secretary and Chairperson for the newly formed Security Concerns Committee (SCC) Atasha Jackson hosted a discussion in the Powers Recital Hall of the Dunn Center to address student concerns about campus security. The administration was represented by, Dean of Students Peter Phaiah. Head of Campus Security, Jackie Jones, represented Securitas (Wesleyan's Contract Security Company).

Only a few students turned out to voice their opinions about campus safety; however, the points the students in attendance put forward echoed concerns addressed to the Decree over the semester.

The main concern seemed to be that there were not enough Security Officers on campus at the times when they (the students) feel there needs to be.

Addressing the number of officers on duty, Phaiah said, "Securitas is a sub-contractor, and they do what we put together in a job description, and they put enough people here to do what we pay them to do." He also stated that have added another officer this year to some shifts, "but more security," he pointed out, "doesn't mean that things will be better. They have a lot of turnover so they have to constantly train people, which diminishes their ability. We are looking to add another officer."

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