

# THE DECREE

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NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA 27804

## What Happened to Wesleyan's SGA?

By James Randolph  
Decree Staff Writer

Students have speculated for months as to the reasoning for Wesleyan not maintaining a student government association.

New Dean of Students Bob Perkins said that SGA "was not disbanded" but that a lack of students willing to run for office last April is the "real reason" the student government is now inactive.

"I inherited an SGA that didn't exist," Dean Perkins said.

Only Courtney Brown, last year's secretary, had declared her intention to run for office, according to Tina Sirois, the 2006-07 president.

Upon his arrival in July, Dean Perkins hired employees for a number of positions, including new resident directors and an intramural sports coordinator. Additionally he was charged with revamping the student government organization.

"We should be planning and careful

and not rushing," the dean said. He said that forcing fall elections or trying to install a temporary SGA may present unforeseen troubles and said he prefers to wait for the next scheduled elections in March.

Jennifer Evans, the new coordinator of Student Activities, and Dean Perkins have both expressed concerns with last year's SGA, which, they said, concentrated on student activities and fundraising.

In separate interviews, both Evans and Dean Perkins said that last year's SGA had been taking on the responsibilities of the Campus Activities Board (CAB) instead of being a representative voice of the students.

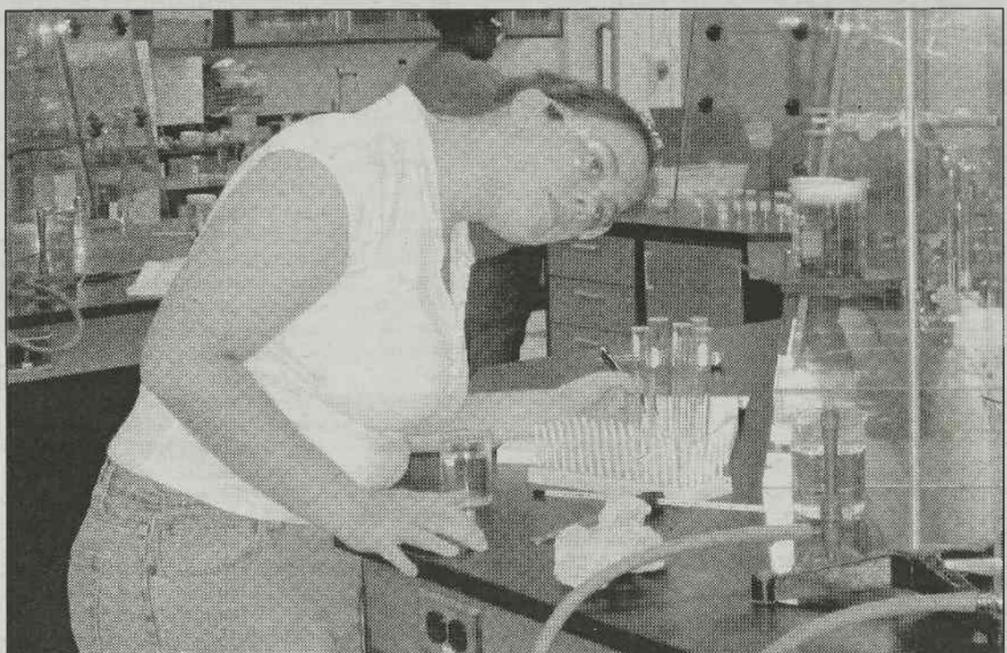
Dean Perkins said that he wanted "to see a healthy and vibrant student body and student government. [I want to see] students having a voice through the student government and I want all students to have a voice... a voice that speaks for all equally."

Evans said that budget proposals for student organizations will be submitted through CAB and that she and Dean Perkins would oversee the allocation of funds. "The money is not just floating free somewhere," Evans said.

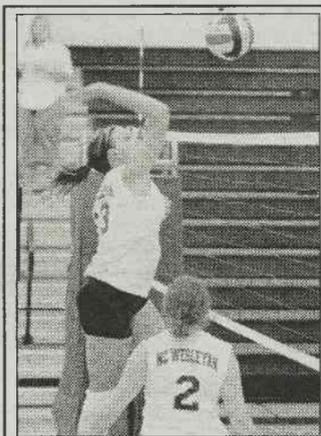
She stated that students who are seeking resolution for problems concerning student affairs should "get involved with CAB. Start writing down ideas. Don't be discouraged."

Both Evans and Dean Perkins expressed a willingness to hear from students and asked that students with questions or ideas feel free to come and speak with them. Evans said that she and Dean Perkins will soon decide on a vehicle, such as a public forum, for soliciting input from students as they seek to improve SGA.

Dean Perkins compared the revamping of SGA to planting a garden. "One, you have to make sure the soil is right; that there is careful planning watering, etc., to make sure that the garden is healthy."



Kala Childress watches her iodine solid change to a gaseous state and then crystallize on the bottom of an evaporating dish. The college completed significant upgrades to the chemistry lab, one year after a similar modernization project was finished in a biology lab. Decree Photo by Kathleen Penrod



Brittany Insley leads a young Bishop's volleyball team. See Sports in page 3. Sports Information Photo

## Students Decry Lack of Voice

By Chris Ochoa  
Decree Staff Writer

Where is SGA?

Around campus, students are not surprised to hear that the Student Government Association is not in session. SGA will be revamped in the spring, and several students feel there should be some drastic changes in order for the organization to be successful.

Upon hearing SGA won't be back until next semester, Tina Sirois, last year's SGA president, said, "It's disturbing that there is no voice for the students on campus."

Junior Samantha Iams had a similar reaction. "I completely disagree with the fact that we don't have an SGA," she said. "SGA is where a large portion of the students' concerns about the college are voiced."

Agreeing, William Boyd, last year's SGA treasurer, said, "I feel not having an SGA is wrong because the students are supposed to have some way to talk with the college's administration."

Kelvin Clark, SGA president during

2005-2006, is not surprised by SGA's current position and puts responsibility on the students. "The lack of an SGA is a blatant example of the lack of leadership among the student body," he said. "I believe it highlights the lack of initiative. As students, we often complain, but when it comes to leading, we are speechless, which is evident by the absence in this office."

Wesleyan's administration has noted that a lack of student interest led to the suspension of SGA this semester. Only one student, Courtney Brown, declared her candidacy for office—secretary. Nobody else decided to run for other positions.

After last year's revision to the SGA constitution, the executive board consists of five members. There is the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and social chair. The social chair is reserved for the CAB (Campus Activities Board) president.

Iams said that the SGA rules prevent most students from running for office. "I wanted to run, but I didn't meet the requirements," she said. "The SGA constitution requires that students must have previously been involved with SGA in some way in order to run for office."

Last year, SGA went through two advisors, and now the new dean of students, Bob Perkins, oversees the organization in conjunction with Jennifer Evans, the new student activities coordinator. Gabe Raynor was the advisor for SGA at the beginning of last year before his resignation. Sarah Ashworth succeeded Raynor, but she lasted less than six months on the job. Then Peter Phaiah, the previous dean of students, oversaw SGA until his departure in May.

Sirois, finding fault with the high turnover in student life said, "SGA has no successful structure or power. The advisor for SGA has been changed over four times in the last few years."

Agreeing with administration, several Wesleyan students also believe the lack of participation was the main reason SGA is not in session this semester. Richard Tibbs, treasurer during the Clark administration, said the low level of participation is a result from "[SGA's] ineffectiveness over the years."

Students are frustrated with the college administration's lack of support for the student government. According to a few former SGA executive board members, the administration's lack of support is the cause of decreasing student involvement.

"One reason why I would not be a part of SGA [in the future]," Boyd said, "is because, no matter what the issue is, the administration does not seem to understand."

Clark believes that SGA "fell apart" because "the administration was not supportive. Last year, SGA had no advisor for most of the year and the dean could not provide the executive board members

enough attention."

As a result of the lack of attention from administration, former student leaders said, an enormous strain was put on the SGA executive board. "It is entirely too time consuming and exhausting for only a few individuals," Sirois said.

Several students feel that SGA will continue to suffer if the administration does not increase its support. "The school needs to listen better to what the students are saying," Boyd said. "Students are supposed to have some true way to talk with the college's administration."

Sirois feels students have not been able to find SGA as an outlet to voice their concerns to the administration. She said, "Students don't feel their voice matters, and over the years they have given up."

Clark said that a stable SGA advisor proved to work to the advantage of the SGA executive board during the 2005-2006 school year. "During my tenure as SGA President," he said, "we ran rather smoothly. By no means were we flawless, but we had an overwhelming amount of student activity."

With a revamping in mind, Sirois believes SGA should make changes to the way it is operated. "SGA should not deal with the funding of programs," she said. "It should be a way to initiate change on campus, and should have an effective impact on the administration."

Tibbs wants the ability to voice student concerns that will initiate change. He said, "SGA should be focused on answering the concerns of the students." He mentioned the college's hat policy and problems with the Hartness Center parking lot, among other issues, as instances when students have attempted but failed to bring about changes.

Iams believes SGA should be operated the same way it has been in previous years. She said, "SGA should be exactly what it is—an association that is run by the students for the students."



2007 Homecoming Queen and King: Shelly King and Kevin Murphy. For more on Homecoming see page 3 for sports, and 4 for activities. Decree Staff Photo

## Drought, Lower Enrollment Lead To NCWC Carlton House Closing

By Joyce Collins  
Decree Staff Writer

Many students are wondering: What happened to the Carlton House? The main reason the off-campus residence closed is because of the drought.

Dean of Students Bob Perkins said that the city of Rocky Mount asked Wesleyan to cut down on water usage by 10 percent. According to the Rocky Mount News Topix, "Area communities are implementing different methods to deal with shrinking water supplies amid a drought."

Dean Perkins noted that it was an easy decision to shut down the Carlton House. "With enrollment being down and there being enough room on campus to accommodate all the students, it was a no-brainer. By closing the Carlton House, we cut a little more than 10 percent of water usage. It was either close the CH or cut off the sinks in the dorm rooms. People have no idea how severe this drought is."

Former Carlton House Resident Assistant Richard Tibbs said that it was clear that students would like to continue to live in the Carlton House. "There are Facebook groups and other things that support students' interest in the CH," he said.

According to Dean Perkins, there is a good chance of the Carlton House reopening, just not for the spring semester. As of right now, the Carlton House is undergoing electrical and plumbing renovations; also the roof is being repaired.

Dean Perkins said the occupancy rate on campus is 91 percent right now. "It will take a very big enrollment for the CH to open next semester," he said. "The (chances) for it being open next semester are slim. Hopefully, it'll be open next year."

The Carlton House was donated to North Carolina Wesleyan College by Boddie-Noell Enterprises, which used the facility as a motel and restaurant for 43 years. It's located at 215 North Church Street, in downtown Rocky Mount. The housing complex is near the Braswell Memorial Library, the Imperial Centre, along with a slew of churches, banks, shopping centers and gas stations. It is about 10 minutes from campus.

Tibbs said that living in the Carlton House allowed Wesleyan students to interact with the community. "It would have been a great idea for the community," he said, noting that the only interaction he recalled was the time that water from the residence "ran over into the neighboring yards."

Former residents enjoyed the concept of being away from the college. "I liked that it was off campus," said senior Cas Hooks. "You didn't see the same thing every day. And it forced you to be responsible because you had to get up on your own to go to class."

The Carlton House opened fall 2005. The facility has about 55 spaces used for housing. It has a full kitchen equipped with a refrigerator, stove and

oven, and microwave. A laundry room, computer lab and swimming pool are also available to students living there. One special feature that attracts a lot of attention is that residents only share a bathroom with their roommate. There is a bathroom with a tub and shower in each room. If students have a single room, then they have their own restroom. "I miss my own bathroom," said junior Alecia Butler. "I didn't have to wear shower shoes, nor did I have to walk down a hallway full of people. And it stayed clean."

Unlike the main campus, the Carlton House has a security fence with gated access around the property, which allows residents to enter by passing their ID cards over an electromagnetic strip. Former residents favored the more secure atmosphere. "It was safe over there because it was a gated community," Sureka Barnes, a senior, said. "I didn't have to worry about my car being vandalized."

The college expects to hire a new resident director and resident advisors when the CH reopens.

According to Dean Perkins, "When the CH reopens, it will mainly be seniors and a few juniors with high grade-point averages because staying at the CH is a privilege."

He added, "I would like to increase enrollment and retention, and if that happens then hopefully we can reopen the CH and have it remain open."