

The Dean's List

It now takes a quality point of 2.5 to qualify a student for the dean's list. Last year the standard was 2.0, but the dean announced to the faculty that two hundred and forty one on a dean's list was much too high a number. Supporting faculty members pointed out that the honor would mean more if a quarter of the students didn't receive it.

We have no objection to this change. In fact, we don't really place that much importance on a list that is only tacked onto a bulletin board in Archdale Hall or published in some small hometown newspaper. And most of the faculty didn't worry that much about the matter. After all, they have more important things to worry about.

One of the important things faculty have to worry about is giving grades. And those grades need to be an evaluation of the college as well as the individual student. The faculty must realize that. Why else wouldn't they be concerned about a dean's list that includes a fourth of the campus?

But no matter where you draw the line for dean's list, it is still a fact that twenty-five percent of the students at Guilford have better than a "B" average. That says one of two things about the college. Either Guilford has exceptional students or Guilford has exceptionally low grading standards.

It seems ironic that the one group on campus who is most vocally concerned about improving the academic atmosphere of the campus is also the one group who has more power to work for this change than any other input into the college system simply because it is their collective judgment which determines who shall remain a member of the college community and who shall not.

A fair raising of the grading standards can only be achieved if all faculty members are willing to raise their standards cooperatively. An upgrading of the grading system can not be accomplished as painlessly as a switch in the dean's list cut off point. Possibly, that's why the faculty can concern themselves with dean's list standards and still not admit that they are contributing to the devaluation of our academic atmosphere.

There are those who question the legitimacy of giving grades at all. We readily admit that it would be ideal to have a community in which there is such a degree of academic dependability that a higher standard than grades is used to measure the difference between expectations and achievements. We hope that the faculty will seriously reconsider the grading habits of the faculty as a whole so that Guilford might be able to command such a degree of trust in the standards of the institution.

"Self-discipline isn't staying up all night to finish a term paper; that's slave work. Self discipline is revising one paragraph fanatically for weeks—for no other reason than that you yourself aren't happy with it . . . Self discipline is nothing more than a certain way of pleasing yourself, and it is the last thing anyone is likely to learn for a grade."

— Jerry Farber

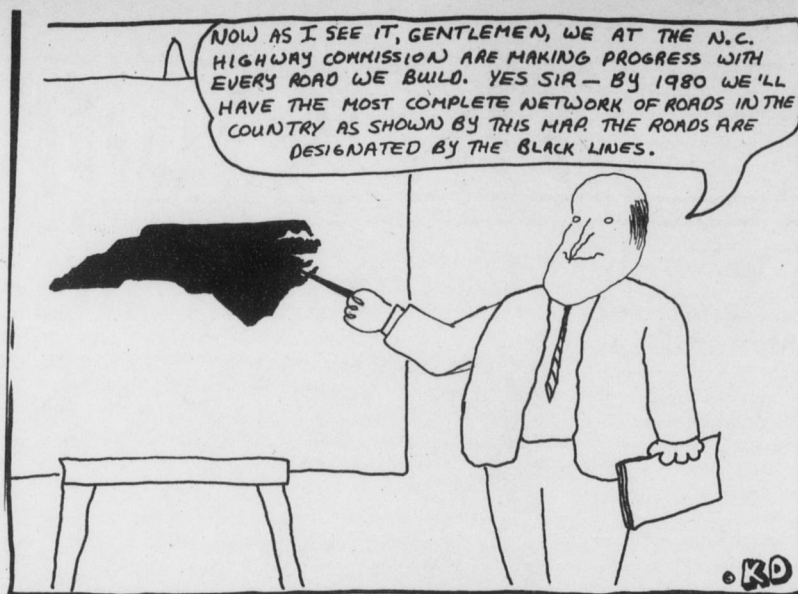
The Guilfordian

Printed by the students of Guilford College weekly except for examination periods and vacations.

The office is Cox Old North. Telephone 292-8709. Address Guilford College, Greensboro, N.C. 27410. Subscription Rates \$4.00 per year; \$2.50 per semester.

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Boycott

Christmas

Dear Friends,

We see as hypocrisy the extravagant celebration of Christmas when there is no peace on earth. So our group feels it is time for a Christmas boycott. We are not going to buy presents this year, nor are we going to receive them. We will do without decorations, and may be fasting on Christmas day instead of feasting.

Instead of spending, we will work for peace on earth by giving our money to help make amends for the suffering we have caused—such as by financially adopting a Vietnamese child, and by giving our time to stop the war. We are calling for people to put peace back in Christmas—what better way to observe the birth of Christ than to bring an end to the war this year?

We are counting on college groups to do most of the local work. Here are some possible approaches for organizing the boycott:

1. Contact local clergy—many should be receptive to taking commercialism out of Christmas and putting peace back in.

2. Organize picket lines at department stores and shopping centers.

3. Do guerilla theater on the sidewalk in front of large stores. Dramatize the horrors of war or the contradictions in the thinking of the military.

4. Leaflet at high schools, train stations, churches and shopping centers.

5. Urge fellow students not to go home for vacation unless their parents agree to participate in the boycott.

We would welcome any criticisms and suggestions readers might have of this proposal.

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Politics of the Private College

by Jeanette Ebel

The discrepancy between the "conditions of society and the scholarly world" and the parochial pressures exerted on a private college constitutes a danger to the future of the private college, according to W. Max Wise, author of *The Politics of the Private College: An Inquiry Into the Processes of Collegiate Government*.

In this short brief report of a study of six small colleges, Wise asserts that the conservative nature imposed upon colleges by their dependency on community financial support prohibits them from taking a realistic world view. Members of the college community do not understand the reality of the colleges' situation because presidents' reports are designed to assist in fund raising and seldom reflect the true nature of the college.

The lines of authority in college governance from students to faculty to administrators are such that the power of veto is stronger than the power of change. And since presidents are generally more concerned with maintaining public image than with directing the innovation that naturally occurs in a scholastic setting, the administration of a college falls into a haphazard pattern of image creating and maintaining

functions while the needs of faculty and students are often given secondary importance.

Wise reported that often the faculty members involved in his study said they felt as if they should protect scholarship from the administration's other interests. Because the faculty has so little information on the institutions condition, the only power the faculty has in governance is that of veto. They can strongly object to some administrative action although they may not have as much information concerning the matter as does the administration.

The only thing that can break the collegiate "cycle of distrust" is, according to Wise, a revision of the role of the college president. A president must be responsible not only to the board of trustees but also to the members of the college community. Although he is employed by the board, a president cannot administer a college where he is unknown or distrusted.

Wise suggests that rather than be the pivot point for the break between financial and scholastic interests, the president can use the powers of his office to influence in two directions. He can emphasize the value of the

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The Human Condition

by Douglas Scott

"Two point five is only point five larger than two point zero?"

There's no tool like numbers to confuse people. Think of registration. Remember? Do you perhaps, recall that feeling that appears when you're about three quarters done? That invigorating, refreshing sensation that rolled over you when it looks like you'll get exactly the courses and sections you want in less than six hours in line? And how quickly it all disappeared when someone in authority, at once, asked for your social security, student ID and drivers license numbers? Ah numbers! At least they affect me that way.

Now if you want to mystify people, really confuse people, or even lie to them, then the process that you're using is called statistics. There are entire scholarly works on the topic (*How to Lie with Statistics*) and every school has a statistics course or eleven.

We have just been taught a course in statistics by our faculty. Students, you've been BAD!! Fully one quarter of you made Dean's List last semester, the list being compiled of you who had a 2.0 average. And that's too many. If so many of you hadn't worked so hard we wouldn't have this particular problem. But since you did, we're demoting most of you back to being dumbheads. A 2.5 is what you need from now on. That's right, Honours List level work.

Nothing like inflation in the academic world. Our dollar, the grading system, has been devaluated by teachers throwing grades around, and we, like President Nixon's good taxpayer, have to pay for it. Is that really a reasonable academic improvement people? Faculty, what do you think?