

## Letters to the Editor

touches on the roof of a newly built home. What an amazingly powerful experience.

I was also fortunate enough to participate on a trip to the Open Door Community in Atlanta, Georgia two years ago. This community is dedicated to the fight for justice of the homeless community in Atlanta. We helped serve meals, provide laundry services, and set up a shelter (among other odds and ends) throughout the week. Living in this environment for a week was an incredibly powerful experience, and I again got to spend quality time with other wonderful Guilford students.

Spring Break is rapidly approaching, and trips like these are filling up fast. The three options for this spring break thus far are a Friends Disaster Service trip to Hyde County, NC for hurricane relief, and two trips to work with organic farming communities. Stop by the hut and talk to Max Carter if you have an interest in going, or you can email him at [mcarter@guilford.edu](mailto:mcarter@guilford.edu). I would HIGHLY recommend it!

Matthew McGuire/junior

To Community Senate:

Thank you for providing your "Position Statement on Tuition and Fee Increases" to the Budget Committee. Jason Terry, the Treasurer of Community Senate and the traditional student representative on Budget Committee, delivered the document to Budget Committee on Thursday, Jan. 29. The purpose of this reply is to provide the Budget Committee's response to some of your issues and concerns.

You are correct that the tuition and fees increase for FY 05 was tentatively set at 4.2%. The budget process at Guilford involves recommending a budget to the President for the next fiscal year and, if possible, for the two outlying years. That keeps the college on a rolling three-year budget process and prevents each year from being viewed without considering the implications for the two future years. For FY 04 (the year we are in now) Budget Committee did not start the budget

process until November 2002 and finished its work in April 2003. We were not able, because of time constraints, to discuss in any detail what we thought would happen in the two outlying years. So the 4.2% figure was a preliminary amount – we knew last year it would probably end up being higher. We have yet to project what the increases will be for FY 06 and 07. Whatever they are, it will be based on data comparing average tuition/fees increases for similar colleges as well as Guilford's own specific situation in conjunction with our new strategic plan. As mentioned in the last community budget meeting, we base our decisions on data and not on anecdotal information.

Budget Committee has sent a recommended budget to the President. Kent will present the recommended budget to the Board of Trustees on Feb. 21. In the recommended budget, there is an 8.2% increase in institutional financial aid (that does not include any federal and state financial aid). As you mentioned, the proposed tuition and fees increase for FY 05 is 6.5%. So, it looks like the proposed increase in financial aid will increase proportionately at a greater rate than the increase in tuition and fees. We did not know the specifics on financial aid at the time of the community meeting, so our original estimate has been revised.

Like many small private colleges, Guilford is struggling to achieve a balanced budget. As shown at both open community meetings (in Oct. 2003 and Jan. 2004), we faced large operating deficits and draws on the endowment over the past several years. We cannot keep that up and stay fiscally viable. Something had to be done. The Budget Committee decided that no one group should bear the burden of bringing the budget closer to a balance. Much of the budget is indexed to competitor colleges. Guilford College must be market sensitive. Given a target of having student fees around the middle of the competition, we had more room to increase traditional student fees since we were toward the

bottom in price compared to CCE where we were already in the middle. Secondly, the per student difference is not huge, or a bit less than \$400 when the extra 1.5% is factored into tuition, room, and board. CCE students will also incur an increase, but because they were already in the middle of the market, the increase was less (5%). We have also asked employees to take a lower wage increase than originally planned (3.5% vs. 4%), and have asked that departmental budgets be reduced. Thus, everyone was asked to help with the budget problem.

Guilford College must and will do a better job explaining what students get in exchange for increased tuition and fees. However, it is very difficult to give specifics when 50-60% of the college's budget goes to personnel, mainly for employee salaries and benefits. So one of the major benefits the students will receive for higher fees will be (hopefully) an excellent, highly skilled and motivated faculty, administration, and supporting staff. There will be some specific projects undertaken with college funds: renovating Duke, upgrading residence halls, completing regular repairs and maintenance, but still the majority of the funds will go toward "people" resources.

The faculty determines the number of faculty members on Budget Committee. There are three faculty representatives on Budget Committee with one serving as chair to show the primacy of academics in the budget process. The President determines other memberships including student representation on the committee. Any proposed changes in committee representation, other than faculty, should, therefore, be discussed with the President. Kent has said that two student members from each student government—one member and one "alternate" who could sit in on all meetings and fill in when needed—is a definite possibility but not three members from each government.

Budget Committee does understand the importance of your request for more student input into the budget

process. A new class schedule is currently being discussed. If

implemented, there should be more free time for students, faculty and administrators to have more opportunities for conversation with each other. After spring break, all vice-presidents and deans will hold "open" office hours on Mondays from 4-5 pm where anyone with concerns or questions may meet with them (on budget or other issues). The President currently has open office hours every Wednesday from 10-11:30 a.m. in Boren Lounge. If a student has classes during that time, I am sure you could call his office for another appointment time. If students want to see an administrator or dean, we do not want anything to stand in their way. We urge all students to take full advantage of opportunities for input into how the college is run and how decisions are made.

Finally, Budget Committee would love to have more student input into the budget preparation process. We encourage Community Senate, *The Guilfordian*, or other student organizations to administer surveys and other instruments and bring those results to the Budget Committee meetings, probably through the student representatives on Budget Committee. Let us know what capital projects the students consider to be the most important. Let us know how students feel about tuition increases. I encourage all students to take advantage of these opportunities. Budget Committee will take student views into consideration when discussing the budget.

Raymond Johnson  
Chair, Budget Committee

To the Editor:

On September 20, 2003, a "Pimp n' Ho" party was held in Bryan Hall. The party was planned by the Bryan and Milner RA staff and paid for with Residence Hall Council funds dispersed by Community Senate. Following the party, many faculty, staff and students raised concerns about the appropriateness of the event, stating that the party glorified prostitution, objectified men and women and rein-

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