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First-year students change the face of Guilford

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News Editor

Guilford welcomes 507 new traditional-aged students this year, including 448 first-year and 59 transfer students. That's 153 more new students than last fall. This deliberate increase in enrollment has radically altered the make-up of the students living on campus.

Like any new demographic, this shift will result in new policies, positions, and places for the college.

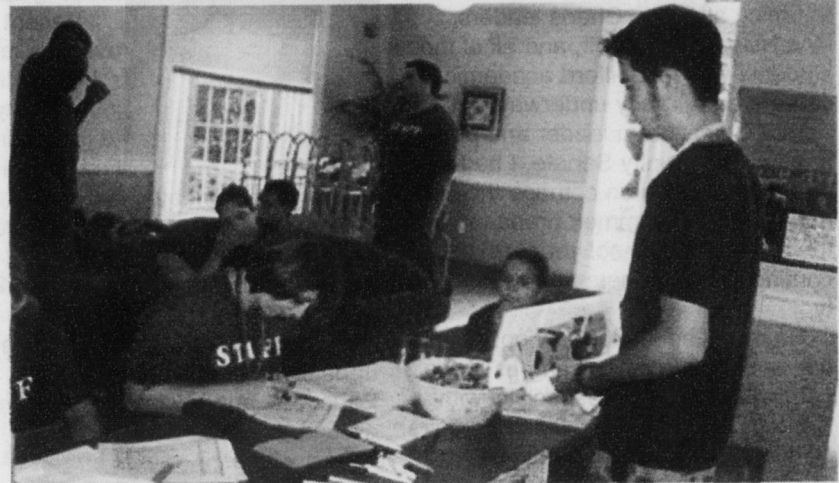
"The Guilford economic and community plan aims to have 1,446 traditional students by 2009," said Randy Doss, Vice President for Enrollment and

Campus Life. "It was very deliberate strategic long range planning to bring in more students this year."

Guilford did not accept a much larger percentage of applicants than last year: 71 percent instead of 69. However, 2,645 students applied to start Guilford this year; last year only 1,843 applied.

The increase in the number of students not only came from admitting more students, but more students applying. With 2,645 students applying as either first-years or transfer students, this year witnessed over 800 more applications than last year.

The increase is part of a national trend. Colleges all over the country received a record number of applica-



A first-year checks in at Milner Hall

tions last year, according to collegeadmissioninfo.com.

The recruitment drive has changed the make-up of the student body living on campus. In order to house the first-

year's, the office for campus life released a letter during the summer offering juniors and seniors "a limited number of off-campus petitions to individuals who previously may not have

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State of the college: A letter from Guilford's president

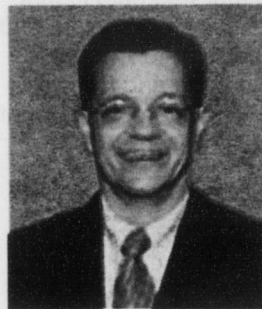
Dear Students:

Welcome back to Guilford College, where anticipation about the 2004-05 academic year has reached a peak with your arrival on campus. These are exciting times, and here's a snapshot:

- Guilford is North Carolina's fastest growing college in the past four years, and we expect a record 2,400 students this fall. More students each year are choosing Guilford for the strength of its academic programs and other unique qualities.

- Our first year class of 450 students is the largest ever, with about one fifth ranking in the top 10% of their high school graduating classes.

- We have a new strategic, long-range plan under consideration. This will be our roadmap for the years 2005-10, and the plan is the result of two years of widely participatory development in which students, employees,



alumni, trustees and others challenged the college to pursue excellence across the board.

- About \$3.75 million in campus construction and renovation projects are in progress or finished. We're especially proud of renovations to the residence halls and Founders Hall. The first phase of the Founders project, including the terraces and gazebo, should be complete by the end of September.

- The Bryan Series will welcome four major speakers on the topic "Challenges Facing Democracy" this year, including political analyst Cokie Roberts Oct. 1 and former Soviet Union President Mikhail Gorbachev Oct. 6.

For those who are new to Guilford, and even for some of the "old-timers," I want to say a few words about the openness of our community and the opportunities for participation in decision-making that are yours to choose, or not.

Guilford ranks among the most open colleges in the U.S. in terms of public information, and I speak for my colleagues in administration in welcoming feedback from students - both positive and negative. Our openness is exemplified by the use of the Web site and e-mail (daily Buzz, weekly Beacon) for campus events and announcements; publication of digests of all meetings of the Board of Trustees and president's cabinet; publication of the annual budget and independent consulting reports on dining services, the bookstore, information technology and other services; weekly open office hours for the president, vice presidents and deans; community forums on finances, planning, construction projects, and student concerns; and very helpful Web-based publications entitled Where

to Go? Whom to Call? Who Gets to Decide? and Myths and Facts. There is almost never a legitimate excuse for guessing about the facts, or taking inappropriate action based on rumor or misunderstanding.

During this year you will probably hear things and witness events that merit clarification:

(a) First, some may suggest that "student opinion does not matter" or "I was not heard." Students who choose to participate by running for office, attending community meetings and sitting down with administrators and faculty to discuss issues do matter in decision-making. Students who would rather sit on the sidelines and complain do not. That the college may act differently than you would like does not mean you were not heard. Sometimes we will simply disagree. I know. I was the president of the student body at my undergraduate college for two terms.

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