

First-years: seek depth in your relationship with Guilford



By Alex Minkin
STAFF WRITER

On the first day of classes, I was walking down one of Guilford's long brick paths when I noticed some first-year students walking along in a large group, lanyards intact. I felt nervous for them because I knew they were all walking to their first college classes. This brought me back to my first day and then everything that ensued after that. I shook my head and remembered how some days really sucked.

The redundancy of fact learning and long nights of studying have never really suited me. I was unhappy at Guilford at first because I was not interested in anything. I also let little things really bother me: the neighbor that kept me up with his 14" subwoofer when I had to get up early and the girlfriend from home that for some reason, I was still with. I finally had to take charge of my life. Things improved when I finally started connecting with people.

My advice comes from lost opportunities and the many lessons I have learned while in school.

Be open to the new ideas and new people you are about to encounter. It took me a couple years to realize that I was being passive in my time at Guilford, both academically and social-

ly. Then I found something I really love to do — photography. Now I am more passionate about learning and I have become more open to other people.

To be content at a place like Guilford it is best to become part of the community. The Guilford geese are fine to talk to but they don't respond and sometimes they try to bite you. People can hurt you too, but that reward is usually worth the risk.

Shaking your professor's hand on the first day of class or calling them "Teach" will not get you a passing grade. In fact, if I were a professor, I would fail you for something like that. Guilford's professors are open to forming deeper relationships with their students. They may be able to help you in other areas of life as well. Use them.

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Unless you want to end up like those guys in "Bio-Dome," make sure that you spend some time outside the bubble. There are events, great restaurants, and wonderful parks all waiting for you in Greensboro. You can also contact Guilford's Bonner Scholars Program for exciting volunteer opportunities. Never forget that there is a world outside of Guilford.

In a recent conversation, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

Aaron Fetrow said, "In order to have a fulfilling college experience you have to make develop connections. There are more ways for students to experience college social life besides drinking to get hammered four nights a week."

It is important to be conscious of how you are spending your leisure time. Take it from me, making too many mistakes now can and probably will affect you later in life. Fetrow encourages students to visit Campus Life if they have problems or just to talk.

It is much more effective to create yourself rather than try to find yourself.

"Try something new ... a new club, a new class, or an entirely new gang of friends," said Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Eric Mortensen. "You can choose who you want to be in this

world."

First-years, this can be a big transition for all of you, but it is just one step in your promising young lives. Enjoy yourselves. Striving for perfection is never worth it if you are miserable in the process. And remember that you are never alone. Everyone in this community — student, faculty, and staff — is trying to make their next move. Ask them about their plans and you just might be able to help each other out.

Guilford smoking policy smells like change



By Angie Johnson
STAFF WRITER

Smoking bans have been around since the 16th century, shortly after tobacco first gained popularity in Europe. Since then, smokers have been banned from smoking on international airplanes, lighting up at local bars, and now, from puffing on most of the Guilford campus. The reasons for these bans have been widely cited: from health issues, to non-smokers' rights and rebellion against "Big Tobacco."

According to Aaron Fetrow, vice president for student affairs and dean of students, the enforcement of the smoking policy at Guilford has changed because this is "largely a second-hand smoke issue, especially with entrances to academic buildings on the quad. You literally had to walk through clouds of smoke to get in or out of buildings during class change times."

As a CCE student and former smoker, I was somewhat surprised that Guilford's previous smoking policy was so liberal. Because smoking in restaurants and bars is now banned in Greensboro, it becomes second nature to seek a safe place to smoke or to expect a smoke-free public place.

The American Heart Association estimates that only approximately 20 percent of Americans smoke regularly, so it should not be a big deal. After all, smokers are provided with five designated smoking areas on campus. Okay, so the areas

are spread pretty far apart and can be considered somewhat close quarters for our smoking peers. Is it realistic to think that student will trek across the campus for a quick cigarette between classes?

To a casual observer, many students can be seen puffing covertly as they walk to and from classes instead of milling around entrances. I am not as opposed to the walking smoker as I am to the clusters of folks hovering under the shelter of building entrances. Frankly, I do not want my clothing and body to smell of second-hand smoke. For others, smoking-induced allergies are all too real and result in full-blown asthma attacks.

Fetrow reveals that the plan is to add shelters on the periphery of the campus.

"We are discussing with Senate the precise locations and I am open to adding another location or two if they remain on the periphery of campus," Fetrow said. "We are currently working with our maintenance staff to design and build covered benches for the locations."

While smokers do have rights, so do the non-smokers. This is not a matter of changing the rules to suit the majority — it is more about changing to respect the community we live in. We are respecting the rights of our entire community by providing everyone with places to smoke or not smoke based on their preference. By limiting the locations that smokers can use, non-smokers are protected from health concerns and odors of second-hand smoke.

"And then there was the litter on a campus that places a high value on sustainability and that is in the midst of a theme year based on sustainability," said Fetrow.

We are also controlling the amount of litter and our impact to the environment, since cigarette butts do not biodegrade. We are mirroring the world we live in and rising to the challenge of our core value of stewardship.

Staff Editorial

Ch-ch-ch-changes: the Guilford way of life

Change is afoot at Guilford, and there is nothing we can do to stop it.

From the pizza parlor to the smoking policy to the solar-heated water in dorm showers, students arriving for fall semester have discovered a whole slew of new places and things to puzzle over, fight about and celebrate.

For the wide-eyed first-years, these all seem like intrinsic parts of the Guilford College they know and might come to love. For the grizzled veterans (super seniors included), the Guilford we see every day is startlingly different from the one we first laid eyes on two, three, or maybe even five years ago. For staff and faculty who measure their time here in decades, the campus might hardly resemble the one they knew as youngsters.

This is inevitable. Just as generations of students have celebrated and lamented changes in the alcohol policy, larger first-year classes, the loss of Keiser House, the shifting demographics, the construction of the south apartments, and any real or perceived threat to the stability of the way of life at Guilford, we too will confront changes.

We often react to change with apprehension or outright anger: murmurs of discomfort when a favorite gazebo goes missing, cries of foul play when a professor doesn't get tenure, gasps of panic when a pile of gravel appears near the entrance to the woods trail.

It doesn't take much to set off the alarms that warn us of impending "change" or a "different" Guilford. It's the blurry semantic line between change and progress that keeps some people tiptoeing around campus as if the Quaker values themselves were about to be ripped off the quad's light posts.

The good news is that Quakers (who for the most part still pay the bills around here) love to make change a group activity. Between the SLRP and Diversity Plan, Community Senate and student organizations, compassionate faculty and dedicated staff, there are plenty of avenues through which we, the student body, and we, the individuals, can nudge that rolling ball of change in the right direction.

If what we define as progress is different from what we see around us as change, then there are an awful lot of reasons to be a part of the process rather than resist it. Time and the face of Guilford itself have shown that change is inevitable. As we sit on the horizon of a new year, it should be our goal to ensure that each person works toward what they see as not just change, but progress.

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