

Life in the Admissions Department in the eyes of Andy Strickler

By Michael MacVane
STAFF WRITER

Andy Strickler came to Guilford College at the beginning of this school year as the new director of admission.

Strickler is in for a lot of hard work in these upcoming months as he faces new plans and budget cuts. The Guilfordian sat down with the director of admission to talk about his role and how he plans to handle the challenges of his department.

The Guilfordian: As head of admissions, what are some of your expectations?

Andy Strickler: My expectations are that we are going to accurately, effectively and authentically convey the message of what a Guilford education means, what the value of it is.

G: What are your responsibilities in admissions? I know you are head of the admissions, but what are some of your roles within that and other than that?

AS: (Supervising) the counseling staff, (doing) final review on applications, (doing) final review of paragraphs or personalizing a paragraph in admit letters this year, (directing) communication flow (and) strategic communication flow, messaging, providing liaisons within the marketing staff. That is primarily it, but anything that really comes into the recruitment or evaluation of prospective students comes out of my desk.

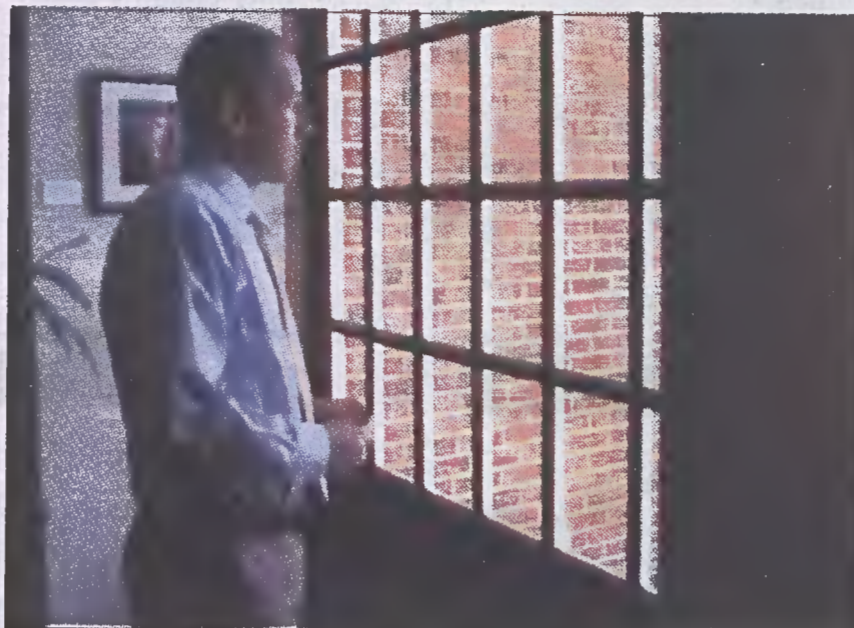
G: What are some of the things you did at other schools that they weren't doing here that you learned and brought over?

AS: Personalizing the letters is one thing for sure. We are spending a little bit of time and energy telling kids why we think they are a good fit for Guilford and identifying in the application something about them that we like or we think is special, whether it is their essay or their experiences.

The second thing is we need a clearer sense of a strategic plan as to how we do the work that we do and that's been part of

the transition. ... (We also need) better communication as well. Our marketing person is new; she has just finished her first year. I arrived in September, so we are spending a lot of time and energy with two offices trying to create a more consistent feedback, messaging, (and) marketing plan.

G: So how is this \$2.2 million budget cut going to affect the



The new head of admissions, **Andy Strickler**, hopes to portray the authentic Guilford experience to prospective students.

Office of Admission?

AS: For us, it is going to impact students from North Carolina who applied for admissions and have been accepted this year. With the state cutting financial aid pretty much across the board, our perspective for them is that their financial package or the financial reality of attending Guilford will be different.

G: Than it would have been?

AS: Than this group of students that arrived this fall and into the recent past.

G: Does it affect North Carolina students that were already here?

AS: I believe so, yes.

G: Last question — sports. Has that helped you in admissions at all? We know you are an avid sports fan and meet with coaches.

AS: I do. I have an athletic background, but my philosophy is that anything a student does outside the classroom can be and should be a "hook," as I like to call it. It's a way in which we can bring in a student in a meaningful and tangible way. The upside of attending a school that has 1,300 traditional students is the opportunity to get involved in co-curricular activities, and that could be athletics, it could be student government, it could be writing for the school paper, it could be theater, it could be music, it could be community service, it could be anything like that.

My philosophy has always been that it is a major selling point that a small college has over a large university. So I believe in facilitating a conversation with prospective students and admitted students on co-curricular activities so that they can better envision what their life could be like. Sports happens to be the one people tend to focus on because at my previous institution, about 30 percent of the students were varsity athletes. Three out of every 10 kids at the institution were varsity athletes, and that is a huge chunk of the student body.

G: Do you know what it is here?

AS: I don't know off the top of my head, but look at it from an athletic perspective. Every student has the opportunity to go to class, get an education and have a vibrant and co-curricular life, and engaging them in conversations that will allow them to see that and envision that and, as a result, want that for their college experience, and that is what we do.

Community Senate Update

Stuff we did

Learned a lot and gave valuable input to Andy from Admissions and Camilla from Marketing Communications.

Representing students at the Founders

Renovations meetings (if you're interested there's one Wednesday @ 8:15 in the Gilmer room).

Stuff we're doing

Stuff we're gonna do

Talk about getting a consistent alcohol policy on campus.

Silly rabbit, ideas should be sent to Senate! Contact: senate@guilford.edu.

Full Senate meets at 7 p.m. in Boren Lounge in Founders every Wednesday.

Stuff you wanna see done

By Yahya Alazrak
COMMUNITY SENATE PRESIDENT/CLERK

Survey seeks student feedback on diversity at Guilford

By Aaron Hall
STAFF WRITER

Students at Guilford may have noticed recent announcements about a survey being collected by the Diversity Action Committee—the Community Climate Survey. But what is the Community Climate Survey exactly, and what does it mean for Guilford students?

According to David Hammond, professor of theatre studies and co-chair of the Diversity Action Committee, the Community Climate Survey is "a broad-ranging survey that seeks information on the campus experience of all members of the Guilford community."

The results of the survey will provide background information in assessing how well Guilford College does in making everyone feel welcome.

Hammond said that the idea of the Community Climate Survey evolved from an earlier survey aimed at a specific campus group.

It occurred to the committee that the results of the survey of one particular group should be placed in context in relationship to the entire campus, faculty and staff included.

The Diversity Action Committee was the result of Guilford's implementation of its first Strategic Long-Range Plan. This plan, which was endorsed by the college community, included the creation of the Diversity Plan.

The Diversity Plan, according to junior and Community Senate

Diversity Action Chair Tim Leisman, was "designed to help guide Guilford College to keep up with the diverse national environment we live in, and to keep up with the standard of an effective academic institution which ensures students are educated in a diverse environment."

The committee includes faculty, staff and student representatives, and meets every other week to ensure that steps are being made toward implementing that goal in a timely manner.

The committee also consists of six subcommittees that meet on weeks that the large committee does not and focuses on specific areas.

While many students may not give the survey a second thought, members of the Diversity Action Committee want them to know that it is important.

"We need to get feedback about how we can better serve students, faculty and staff," said Leisman. "We need to know what we are doing well and where we can improve."

The goals of the committee, according to Leisman are not "a one-way relationship."

"We need students to be a part of it," said Leisman. "Getting diversity on campus has to be an everyday thing, not just on Martin Luther King Day."

Director of Residence Life Susanna Westberg sits on the committee and also sees the importance of student feedback.

"Because this pertains to the entire Guilford community, we need responses from as many perspectives as possible, and the student perspective is crucial," Westberg said. "This survey will hopefully guide us in improving the overall student experience and in ways to better carry out the Diversity Action Plan and achieve equality and diversity at our institution."

Hammond agrees.

"We want to know how each individual perceives the Guilford experience," said Hammond. "The survey is not cumbersome. It has many questions that can be answered by checking a box, but it also has open-ended questions. I like very much that it asks respondents how they identify themselves rather than requiring them to 'pick a category.'"

Hammond said that the survey is an opportunity to be heard as an individual voice in the community.

"It's a chance to tell Guilford who you are, how you see yourself, what you think is here for you, how you 'fit in' or would like to 'fit in,' what you like about your experience and what you think can be improved," said Hammond. "Doing the survey will also give you a lot of information about our community and the diversity of its membership."

"One way to start being more involved in Guilford is through participation in this really important project," said Hammond. "Don't sit on the sidelines. Join in. Participate."