

## The frustrations of completing the housing process, on or off campus



By Natalie Sutton  
STAFF WRITER

Cries of outrage across campus, frantic and melodramatic Facebook status updates, blood, sweat, tears.

It can only mean one thing: it's time for the housing selection process.

While there are those who leave the process jumping up and down with excitement because they got into the exact room they wanted with the exact roommates they wanted, it seems that, this semester more than ever, students were unsatisfied with where they ended up.

Sophomore Will Landis is one of these students.

"Guilford housing should allow all (rising) juniors and seniors to have first choice with housing," said Landis. "I was unable to get into the new apartments because they all were full of undeserving rising sophomores. If I had the chance to live off campus, I would gladly take it. It would save money for both my parents and myself."

After not renewing the lease with Hodgins Retreat Apartments, there are now fewer living options on campus that offer single rooms and a kitchen area. While the South Apartments and North Apartments on campus are nice spaces, many students can't afford the ridiculously high price of either of them, and students either want to get off campus or feel forced to live in a space without the freedom and privacy that single-roomed spaces offer.

As a first-year, I was expecting to share a room with someone and live in a typical college dorm room, but now that I've had that experience, I want to feel like an adult and not be babysat by an RA while sharing a small room with another person.

It seems outrageous to pay about \$1,000 a month to live in an apartment where I can't have incense or candles, I have to be quiet during certain times,

and I'm not even allowed to stay during breaks.

Rishona Hines, a rising senior, has enjoyed having the opportunity to live off campus.

"The biggest reason for me living off campus is because of the over-priced student living options and being forced to have a meal plan," Hines said. "The price of living in North Carolina does not coincide with what they're making us pay here. I pay one third of what people pay to live on campus per semester. Even with spending money on gas to get to and from school, I still end up saving tons of money."

Junior Adelaide Ayres looks forward to the experiences that living off campus will bring her next year.

"Living off campus will allow me to make connections outside of Guilford and develop a sense of responsibility," said Ayres. "It will be a helpful transition into life after college, and it will be nice to have more freedom and not have to worry about Campus Life and Public Safety invading my privacy."

This all makes me want to live off campus, where I would be saving money while enjoying more freedom and privacy at the same time.

Of course, this option isn't available to me as a rising junior, so I am forced to either continue to pay an extreme amount of money for something that I don't even really want or save money, but live in an environment where I would be unhappy because of a lack of privacy.

So, it's a lose-lose situation.

As I was looking into the option of living off campus, I realized that my academic scholarship was contingent on me living on campus.

This is ridiculous. My personal living preferences should not pose a threat to my scholarship.

My academic standing has nothing to do with where I live, unless, ironically, I'm forced to live in a room with someone else on campus, where it could probably hinder my academic performance.

Kris Gray, residential living coordinator, values the aspect of community that on-campus living provides.

"As a residential liberal arts college, we seek to have the highest percentage of students on campus," said Gray.

While I can respect and understand this sentiment, it still doesn't seem fair or realistic to force students to stay on campus in order to achieve a strong sense of community.

In addition to complaints about the expenses of living on campus, I have heard many students express their frustration with how often the housing selection process is being changed.

Gray explains that these changes are necessary because our community is constantly changing.

"What may be true today may change next year based on the facilities, student feedback and what we feel is the most fair to everybody, even though some students may not feel that way," said Gray. "Our office more than extended every effort to insure that students were aware of the process, the deadlines and the procedures. If students failed to read any of the information they were sent, then that is their personal responsibility."

Junior Taylor Shaw did not feel like the new process was made clear enough for students.

"There was poor communication in reaching students," said Shaw. "If they did such a great job communicating a new housing process, why are so many students not living where they want to live? Why are there so many students on waiting lists? This will be my senior year and I wanted to live with my friends in an environment that would be compatible with my lifestyle."

First-year Allison Hewitt thinks that a new housing process is necessary.

"I just don't think it's fair with the lottery because it's literally a 50/50 chance that you'll get what you want or you'll end up completely screwed," said Hewitt. "They need a newer, better system for picking housing because the one they have is ridiculous."

While both the Residence Life department and the students have reasonable concerns on both sides, it seems that further discussion about creating the best possible living situation would benefit everybody.

### Staff Editorial

## Let them speak! Our renewed commitment to community journalism

"2011: The Year of Global Indignation," read a retrospective article published in the Financial Times. Similar headlines broke across a wide range of publications as the year came to a close. If the media is any indication, it would seem that 2011 entered the popular vernacular as "the year of revolutions."

Here at Guilford, we were also thinking about change. As an institution we define ourselves by our social engagement. But how often do we live up to those expectations, and where do we fall short?

The Guilfordian has sought new avenues to deepen our commitment to social justice in the 2011-12 school year. Our outlet has been GuilCo SoJo, the social justice journalism blog that we introduced last December.

When we first began GuilCo SoJo, the intentions of the blog came under scrutiny. People asked how social justice journalism could be objective. People asked why we needed a separate site to address social justice articles. "Isn't every story a social justice story, especially at Guilford?" it was asked. We took these questions to heart. We in turn scrutinized our intentions.

In response to these questions we developed an expanded mission for the blog. Rather than setting up the blog as another platform to post articles (albeit articles related to social justice) we attempted something much more ambitious: to create a news site that also develops and deepens community.

On the surface, GuilCo SoJo is a blog that deals with social justice stories, but it is much more. The blog is a forum to explore how we can redefine our sense of community by changing the way we tell stories. It is a space to share ideas and open dialogue. From readers voting on the banner to posting information about upcoming events, GuilCo SoJo is meant to be a place for you: the reader.

Now the year is coming to a close, and though we are proud of our progress, we are equally aware of how much more work needs to be done. We hope that next year will see an increase in community participation as we continue to work towards making GuilCo SoJo as reflective of our readers as possible. We hope you will join us in making GuilCo SoJo a place that reflects the needs and passions of our community.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE GUILFORDIAN CONSISTS OF FIVE SECTION EDITORS, A PHOTO EDITOR, LAYOUT EDITOR, WEB EDITOR, DIVERSITY COORDINATOR, ADVERTISING MANAGER, VIDEO EDITOR, EXECUTIVE PRINT COPY EDITOR, EXECUTIVE WEB COPY EDITOR, SOCIAL JUSTICE EDITOR, MANAGING EDITOR, AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

REFLECTING GUILFORD COLLEGE'S CORE QUAKER VALUES, THE TOPICS AND CONTENT OF STAFF EDITORIALS ARE CHOSEN THROUGH CONSENSUS OF ALL 16 EDITORS.

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Taylor Shaw, junior