

What makes Guilford College special?

BY ORREN FALK

GUEST WRITER, PART-TIME FACULTY MEMBER

Some time ago, when I met Kent Chabotar, I commented I thought Guilford was very special. He asked me why. I do not remember what I said, but I knew at the time it didn't capture what I thought. It has bothered me ever since, so I decided to conduct an informal survey.

I spoke with approximately 170 students over a period of one year. I walked up to random students and asked if they would speak with me about their thoughts on Guilford. Everyone agreed to speak with me with the exception of seven students (two were going to class and one was late for a meeting). Students were open, friendly, candid and sincere when answering my questions. No one was critical or skeptical (to me) about my motives. This epitomized the sense of community almost every student spoke about.

The other issue students most often mentioned was the excellence of the teachers and learning environment. The personal story of the first student I spoke with singularly demonstrated this strength. The student said she had a difficult relationship with her parents when she started at Guilford. She further explained that her parents were artists and she felt so distant from them that when she started out in college, she was a forensic accounting major. However, the Art Department helped her look at art differently, and she was graduating as an art major.

The rhyme and syncopation of my favorite quote from this process compelled me to ask the student his major. The answer was accounting, which was somehow both hilarious and perfectly fitting: "This is not a school of rote memorization. Guilford's a tight knit community of learning actualization."

I was most surprised and impressed that students mentioned Guilford's core values. It is rare to actualize a set of core values. Many

institutions strive to "walk the talk," and it was remarkable that Guilford was able to realize this goal.

All of the students, with the exception of two, responded that Guilford was special (and not terrible). This is not to say there weren't negative comments; there were complaints, and they are included below. Community and teachers/class size were overwhelmingly (about 85-90 percent) the areas students mentioned when answering why Guilford is special.

COMMUNITY

Generally, this was expressed in two main ways:

Acceptance of Individuality

- o No one is judged, and you are free to be who you are, regardless of what that may be.
- o Guilford is a haven for students who take pride in their individuality.
- o There is no pressure to conform; you aren't attacked for who you are.
- o There is mutual respect.
- o I always heard you can't judge a book by its cover, but here you really learn it.
- o I spoke with two disabled students, and each said the administration was especially supportive and the students were also helpful.

Friendly

- o Guilford feels very comfortable, and everyone is really nice.
- o There are always going to be cliques, but here you are accepted by everyone, even if it's not your group of friends.
- o Unique — everyone is treated like they are special.
- o You can be alone if you want, but there is always a place for you.
- o Everyone supports each other.
- o Being a small school creates a strong sense of community, a tight-knit community.

- o First-years, in particular, were struck by the fact everyone was friendly and supportive.

Negative Comments about Community

- o Athletes overwhelmingly feel separate from other students and not a part of the community. They are very positive about the athletic programs, but feel the students don't support the teams.
- o Some non-athletes feel athletes are closed off from everyone else.
- o It seems like the administration is trying to make Guilford more conformist.
- o There is some skepticism about the new projects and how money is being spent.
- o The two students that thought Guilford was not special had taken a leave of absence and just returned. They felt the students had changed and were too cliquey.

BRING BACK THE BONFIRE!

The topic of the bonfire is last, although it was mentioned many times. I have highlighted it because after community and teachers, students seemed most passionate about bringing back the bonfire.

Seniors and juniors vigorously argued that the bonfire tradition should return. The primary point was that it was the singular campus event that included everyone on an equal plane. It was different from sports or a play because they have their own constituencies.

Safety concerns were acknowledged, but it was pointed out other schools still have bonfires.

Many people said it was one of their highlights at Guilford.

See the full article
online at
WWW.GUILFORDIAN.COM

Letter to the editor: Smart partying 101

CLARIFICATION OF WHAT SMART PARTYING MEANS FROM ISSUE 4

BY ZACHARY KRONISCH

STAFF WRITER

1. Know the rules: First and foremost, know what can get you into trouble and what cannot. The student handbook is easily and conveniently available online.

2. Be aware of your surroundings: There is a time and a place for tomfoolery. Dancing naked with a bottle of jack in front of Public Safety is not one of them.

3. Know your limits: As cool as it sounds and as low as your inhibitions can drop, chugging full bottles of liquor is both dangerous and expensive, let alone will almost always result in vomiting. Save your money, drink a fair amount, wait an hour- if you still feel the need to have another drink afterwards you can treat yourself because you waited a responsible amount of time.

4. Do not take risks: Find out about a last-minute party off campus after pregaming? Find a sober driver. "But it's just down the street, what's the worst that could happen?" Put your keys down ... it ain't worth it.

5. Respect your hosts: If people are so kind enough as to host a gathering for you and your intoxicated friends, abide by

their rules. It isn't just a walk in the park for them; there is rule-enforcement to be monitored, guests to take care of, property to maintain and trash to clean up. Do them the favor and respect in return for providing a party location by obeying theirs and Guilford's rules; keep your friends in check, don't break items, and if you bring something there, dispose of it yourself.

6. Respect your environment: If you drink a six-pack, you should leave with six containers and dispose of them in the proper receptacle, not drop them around a lawn or strategically place them around a living room.

7. Respect your community: Guilford College is a family. Treat each other with the upmost respect. We all have each other's backs. Remember to ask for consent; it is respectful, safe and easy to do.

8. Respect yourselves: Take care of your health and your body. Make good decisions. Be responsible.

9. Buddy system: If you didn't mean to get as drunk as you did or even if you planned on it, have a friend help you home as needed. If you ask someone for help and they say no then I would second-guess calling them a friend.

10. Abide by the system: Encompass all of these guidelines into your partying routine. We all want to have a good time on the weekends but it just takes a few people to disregard these things to ruin a good time for many. As a community let's help one another to follow these 10 rules and let's see what kind of fun we can muster up!

This Week's

STAFF EDITORIAL

Celebrating the 50th year of integration

Two years before the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and three years after a Guilford talent show depicted a comedian in blackface, James McCorkle '66 became the first African American to enroll at Guilford College.

Searching through the rows of white faces in the 1963 Quaker, the Guilford yearbook, we read: Richard Lippincott, Arthur Long, John McCauley, James McCorkle ... wait, James McCorkle.

The only brown face in the entire yearbook and nowhere does it say we did something revolutionary. This is not an accident. This man, James McCorkle is brave, he is an anomaly; he is the first black man enrolled at Guilford in an era where blacks and whites may not wash their hands together, where black men get lynched for whistling at white woman.

In '67, the year before Martin Luther King was shot, Guilford students picketed the local, segregated Imperial Barber Shop. Two years later African American students demonstrated against the short hair requirement for athletes, stating that, "afro hairstyles were a critical part of black identity" (The Guilfordian, Oct. 10, 1969). As a result President Grimsley Hobbs, overturned the short-hair mandate.

The '79 Quaker shows a photograph of a black man and a white woman embracing in the Serendipity spread the same year that five members of the Communist Worker's Party were shot to death by Klansman and Nazis — who were tried and acquitted by all white juries. Integration is not a state of being but a process.

Now in 2012 there would be many brown faces in the Guilford yearbook, if we had one. Jada Drew '07, the Africana Community Coordinator, and BUS (Black Unifying Society) honor those who have struggled for civil rights and help to keep our community aware of the continual struggle for equality.

"... (A) loving Father does not distinguish between his children and neither should the children distinguish between themselves" (Charles Baker, The Guilfordian, 1961).

REFLECTING GUILFORD COLLEGE'S CORE QUAKER VALUES, THE TOPICS AND CONTENT OF STAFF EDITORIALS ARE CHOSEN THROUGH CONSENSUS OF ALL 15 EDITORS.