

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OCTOBER 25, 2013

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Group letter regarding APSA

Dear Guilford College community members,
We are a group of students that has come together to follow up on the APSA proposal and analyze what this means for our community and the future of our school. We are writing to all of you as a step towards unifying the campus and the different communities that make this school such an academically and educationally challenging, diverse environment. We believe that it is only through solidarity as individuals and as a whole that we can continue to sustain and be stewards of this institution. As students we want to express our gratitude for the dedication and commitment that you all bring to Guilford College. It is because of your effort that Guilford can remain a sustainable and dynamic institution. We also want to acknowledge that there is a lot of work to be done, which is why we are expressing the need for continued collaborative efforts as we move forward. APSA has provided a catalyst for a conversation that is long overdue. How can we as students support faculty, staff and administration as they support us? How can we progress as a cohesive body accountable to each other and ourselves for the continued prosperity of our school? These are the questions that we keep in mind, and hope you do too, as we continue to try to understand the implications of this proposal.

As you may know, the deadline for submitting feedback has been extended until Wednesday, Oct. 23. This provides our community with more time to educate ourselves and others about the proposal, as well as engage in creative and constructive conversations concerning Guilford's identity and its surrounding culture.

We should recognize this moment in our College's history to come together in these sorts of conversations and begin to fundamentally change our culture of communication through a critical lens. This needs to start now in relation to APSA but reach beyond the proposal and move past the hypothetical and into tangible action.

On this last note we would like to emphasize that this letter is taking

a step out of the formal, and into a more organic way of expressing our concerns. At the forum it was mentioned that we must cut the drama, but in no way are we intending to make this into a performance. On the contrary we are holding our genuine emotions and compassions up to the light of transparency and truth seeking. As students we want to be able to understand this process, we want to be able to participate on these discussions and not have the legitimacy of our emotions compromised.

We are a group of students that have united across educational, social, departmental and generational lines around a shared concern for the well-being of our school. It is true that we are not coming to you with any immediate ideas or proposals at this time but rather we are asking for everyone's active involvement in fostering a culture of inclusivity on all possible levels of decision-making. It is imperative to take this out of the hypothetical and begin to create concrete intentional spaces in which free and safe communication can happen on a community-wide level.

Once again we would like to thank all of you for your time and diligence, we are looking forward to continuing conversations about the future of Guilford.

Written by:

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Current Traditional Guilford Students

Just keep the family together

Guilford College's mission statement defines its institutional goal as "to provide a transformative, practical and excellent liberal arts education for every student." This has absolutely been my experience thus far. I joined the Guilford College family in the fall of 2012 as a CCE student. As a Peace and Conflict Studies major, most of my classes are offered during the day where traditional, Early College and CCE students share not only space, but thoughts and ideas — enriching us all.

Beginning on page 33 of the Administrative and Program Services Assessment draft, the committee writes that there are significant differences between the traditional and CCE student population. In some ways, this is a true assessment — outside of the classroom. However, in the classroom there are not a whole lot of differences between the two groups, except most of the traditional students can study way later than I can! The conversations in the classroom are deeply enriched because of the differing viewpoints — and in the classroom we are all equally curious and excited to be a part of "the excellent liberal arts education" being offered to us by Guilford College.

As a Principled Problem Solving Scholar, I see the benefit of evaluating all of the different programs and asking faculty and students alike to help in the process of figuring out what's working and what's not. This is problem solving at its best. However, I think splitting up the Guilford family would do more harm than good.

I urge the committee to rethink its proposal of restructuring the CCE program by splitting Guilford College in two. Personally, I

have learned so much, and my education has been enriched because I am sharing classes with the traditional students. I am quite certain there is a better solution that would both meet the financial needs of the institution while allowing the current structure to stay intact. Guilford College would be remiss if they were to split the college into two separate institutions, depriving both students and faculty of an enriched, diverse learning environment.

Diversity is one of Guilford's core values, and it has made Guilford the beacon of educational institutions not only in the South but across the United States. Like the real world, Guilford reflects diversity, but goes a step further by embracing it and understanding there is much to be learned from differing points of view. The diversity of Guilford is a significant factor to the success of both the traditional and the CCE student programs.

Again, I urge the committee to rethink its proposal of restructuring the CCE program by splitting Guilford into two distinct parts. It would not only be detrimental to both programs, but would also be a disservice to every single student attending Guilford College. I have grown to love my Guilford family, and it breaks my heart to think that the committee is even considering splitting it up for business — in turn, destroying the school I have grown to love. The diversity and excellence of every single student's liberal arts education is at stake!

Gia Henry
CCE Student