

## Letter to the Editor: faculty salary system needs attention

When, almost exactly six years ago, I took a 12-hour flight to interview at Guilford College, I realized very quickly that this could be the place where my traumatic experiences with an unjust academic institution and its administration in Jordan could begin to heal. And when I accepted the job, said goodbye to all I held dear, crossed the Atlantic Ocean and relocated my family nearly 6,000 miles, it was because I believed in the ideal and promise of Guilford College.

And I still do. Thus, the issue of compensation at the College matters to me beyond the material. It matters to me because it is a stark representation of how we are failing to live up to our core values, the very heart of what makes Guilford special and worth fighting for.

When our faculty salaries are in the bottom percentiles compared to administrative salaries, which are in the middle and sometimes near the top, and when, in a supposed salary freeze, promoted faculty do not receive raises while promoted administrators do, we are failing to live up to our core values of Equality and Integrity.

When many associate professors are compensated less than the Guilford average for assistant professors of \$50,000 and when an associate professor can be compensated less than an assistant professor in the same division or department, we

are failing to live up to our core value of Justice.

When such compensation practices result in problems in recruiting and retaining excellent faculty who can maintain and sustain the rigor of the institution, we are failing to live up to our core value of Excellence and hence Stewardship of the College.

When colleagues are financially hurting because they are struggling to make ends meet — I can speak for myself as an associate professor who makes less than the above-mentioned College average for assistant professors and is the sole wage-earner and financial caretaker of a family of four — then we are failing to take care of our own and hence failing to live up to our core value of Community.

Let me be clear that the ideal and promise of Guilford are still alive and vibrant to me. I experience them every day when I enter a classroom, speak with my colleagues, walk the beautiful grounds and engage with my students. My love for and commitment to Guilford are unflagging.

I am not special in this; so many at Guilford are like me. Such dedication and devotion should not be exploited.

*Diya Abdo, chair and associate professor of English*

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## This Week's

## STAFF EDITORIAL

### Guilford spoke, Chabotar heard, APSA's finalized

If you thought hearing the word "APSA" buzz across campus was a thing of the past, think again. It is only the beginning.

With forums, multiple drafts and revisions behind us, President and Professor of Political Science Kent Chabotar's decisions on the Administrative Program and Services Assessment recommendations were finally made public on Jan. 31.

The response from us at The Guilfordian? Pleasant surprise.

We feel lucky to attend a school where the APSA committee and the president listened to the community's suggestions and concerns and made decisions keeping in mind where our hearts lie.

After all, it reflects the beautiful core values our Quaker institution strives to uphold.

We wish this reflection of core values had been a little more consistent, however.

When the president stated in his memorandum that "(s)ome of the discussion does not bode as well for our future," it ruffled our feathers.

It just did not align with all that we know and love to be true about Guilford College — a place where transparency in administrative processes should be the norm, a place where open, honest dialogue should not only be tolerated, but encouraged, a place where we should value all voices equally.

With words like "too much panic" and "drama," it felt like the community's reactions were belittled in the memorandum. Given that APSA does not just deal with numbers and statistics — that these are, in fact, people's jobs; that these are, in fact, resources that directly affect the quality of education and life here on our beloved campus — it seems reasonable that the community just wanted to be included in the process. Emotional responses to something you deeply care about should not be labeled as dramatic.

We at The Guilfordian appreciate all of the hard work, dedication and time spent in constructing such a difficult report. We are so grateful we were eventually given the chance to make our voices truly heard. We understand that there is no magical band-aid that will easily and painlessly fix the complex, daunting budget issues in higher education today.

We, along with many other community members, were glad to see that our voices were heard, and that the changes in this final draft held us in the light. We hope that all of this will lead to more open, transparent dialogue amongst administrators, faculty, staff and students in the future.

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

## Too much technology for children?

Many of us know at least something about the movie "The Matrix," right? You know, the one where machines control our lives, but we aren't aware of just how strong a grip they have on us.

There's also the small detail that they submerged us in tanks and we live our lives in a simulation. Nuance.

Though we aren't held captive in a computer program, the fact remains that technology

has become more prevalent in our lives. The effects of this increase seem to hit the youngest generation harder than the others.

The question isn't who is being affected, but if those effects are positive. Unfortunately, the answer isn't a simple yes or no.

"Technology for children and teens can be very good, providing new avenues for socialization and education," said Kirsten Li-Barber, assistant professor of psychology at High Point University. "But I also think that it opens up new risks for them and, in some cases, can limit their ability to interact with a person one on one."

Let's look at toddlers and elementary schoolers. Some argue that too much screen time can affect a child's educational success. Now, that might not be true.

"Evidence suggests that exposing children to technology, especially television, at a young age doesn't really do much in terms of intellectual and language development," said Li-Barber.

Technology in education has been controversial for a while. On one side, you



New technological devices, such as tablets, may have positive and negative effects on youth.

have those who say it detracts from the classroom experience. On the other side, you have those who believe technology reveals new opportunities.

"Technology is a broad opening of perspective," said Rob Whitnell, professor of chemistry and former IT&S head. "It helps (students) realize what they can do."

So, within reason, technology helps with education. What about outside the curriculum?

"Students want to know that they can use technology effectively in their education," said Whitnell. "But I think they can use a safe space where their technology doesn't connect back to coursework."

These "safe spaces," such as Twitter and Facebook, are only safe in one sense of the word. Technology provides opportunities for harassment that can affect the development and behavior of people of all ages.

Despite the dangers, it can be an important part of a teen's life.

"When children are older, reliance on social media like Twitter and Facebook can provide them with different opportunities to establish and maintain contacts with other people," said Li-Barber.

With so many conflicting views, it's no wonder there are so many different answers to the question, "How much is too much?"

"I think it is very important to set limits," said Stacy Lipowski, assistant professor of psychology at High Point University in an email interview. "Children may get used to a sedentary lifestyle if they get in a pattern of spending too much time with electronics."

With technology, the effects are ever changing. We're not living in a Matrix yet — not by a long shot. If we aren't careful, though, it's hard to say what could change in the future.

"We can't make a sweeping judgment on whether technology is good or bad," said Li-Barber. "It's just inescapable."



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