The Salemite

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Time Of Questions: Why.. Why.. Why?

After four years of wondering and puzzlement over little things, we think it's time to ask questions. We are certainly not the first to ask the questions, and perhaps they have even been answered, but all we have heard are the same questions over and over . . . Why . . . why . . . why?

Why can't students remember enough of the Salem spring to keep their heavy feet off the winter grass? It's been proven by a senior IRS member that it takes no more than two seconds longer to walk on the walkways. And gee whiz, Salem's pretty in the spring.

Why senior fever hits us with such a bang and, to paraphrase Mr. T. S. Eliot poorly, make us willing to end our last semester with a whimper?

Why is it necessary to ask a maid to walk half the length of the refectory to pass us a coffee cup one table away? We realize that we need to behave as young ladies, particularly at mealtimes, but is this small reach to another table such unladylike behavior? We often think the rule superfluous.

Why do we complain about the difficulties of learning a foreign language when we are exposed to such fluency in men like Dr. Gokhale or the recent assembly speaker, the Brazilian newspaperman. It almost gives us a guilt complex.

Why do the clothes of every other girl at Salem seem prettier and more suitable than our own? Most of us managed to be satisfied with our own wardrobes at home—what will we do next year when our only roommate is three sizes smaller. And can you imagine us in hubby's shirts?

Why, when we all possess relatively immaculate mothers—witness the many times we've been told to clean up our rooms—do we allow our dorms to look so dirty? None of us particularly wants to live in a pig pen, yet most of us think a table top a more logical place to deposit an empty cup than a near-by wastebasket. And 75 empty cups and cigarette ashes are not pictures to inspire the artist in us.

Why is it difficult to turn off lights when we're the last ones out of the study room? But then the dark is pretty scary—there may be Carolina boys lurking there!

Yes, after four years we do wonder why.

Salemites View Various Scenes In Passing

By Karen Kelley and Ethel Perry

Scene in passing . . . Salem dressed up in Camelot style for the Freshman Parents' Day . . . a new diamond on the hand of Jane Hedgpeth . . . Virginia Anderson, Sara di Stefano, Suzanne Harrell, Jan Norman, Janet Wales, and Floride Williams all carrying enormous suitcases on their way to Junior Prom Weekend at Princeton . . . freshmen who have dated every weekend this year staying here with Mom and Dad on Saturday night . . . circles under the eyes of Carolyn Bridgers and Nancy Griffin, who managed to hit UVA and Annapolis in the same weekend . . . Babsie McRae returning from her weekend at Yale without her suitcase. It seems that both her pocketbook and suitcase were stolen on the way up and she hasn't seen them since . . . two boys running around in Babcock at 2 a.m. Saturday morning . . . Louise Price and Diane Morton in the Nation's Capitol last weekend . . . phenomenal sight in the refectory Thursday night—Salemites dressed up for the IRS Birthday Dinner . . . bets being placed on the ACC Tournament . . . buckets of snow falling on the Salem campus . . . Page Day trying to get the chorus together in **Electra** . . . many hopeful Salemites at the Thalhimer's Lingerie Show on Monday night . . . sophomores and juniors winning the basketball tournament hands down . . . exciting plans for spring holidays . . . the VPI band . . . many campaigners with unusually big smiles.

Letters Continue Voice Of Opinion

Defense By White

Dear Editor:

As a "vacillating faculty" member, I would like to reply to some of the implications that were attached to the words "academic probation" in last week's **Salemite.** The editorial and letters of outraged students indicate some misconceptions and have led to confusion on the part of other students. If the new regulation meant all that was implied in last week's paper, I would be against it, too.

In discussing this matter with some students in an attempt to understand the basis for the attitudes expressed, I learned that the students were somewhat piqued that no explanation for the regulations had been given that might help students understand and accept them. It is true that the previous issue of **The Salemite** contained only the regulations, but amplifying information was given to the reporter covering the story as to the study that was made by the Committee on Academic Standards and the reasons why a system of academic probation was considered and adopted by the faculty.

To deal with an easy matter first, probation and classification are two separate and distinct matters, and a student does not go on probation for failure to make her classification, as one letter stated.

Next perhaps the concept of probation needs to be clarified, since the term provoked a horrified response but little mature consideration of its meaning. There is a natural tendency to regard it as a punitive measure because we associate the term with violators of laws. However, the intent of probation is to give a person an opportunity to prove herself under certain conditions over a given period of time. Probation is awarded in lieu of punishment when there is hope for and faith in the individual. Its aim is the rehabilitation of the individual as a worthwhile member of society.

When a student is admitted to Salem, it is done with the belief that she can progress satisfactorily toward graduation in four years. Under the new regulation, if she fails to live up to this expectation in any semester and is placed on academic probation, she is being given an opportunity to show that she can do the work expected of her under the conditions of regular class attendance.

The class attendance requirement seems to be the chief bone of contention. Some students who expressed concern about the rights of those on probation to make their own decisions about class attendance indicated a lack of concern about what ultimately happened to the students. Are the rights of individuals then more important than the individuals themselves? I suppose in our concern for the future of the students who are having difficulty, we are guilty of attempting salvation without student representation, as implied in one letter.

However, the class attendance requirement does not, as is implied in the editorial and one of the letters, affect the attendance regulations of all students and does not contradict last year's supposed recognition of their maturity and ability to accept responsibility. Last year's action by the faculty did not give to students other than freshmen complete freedom of responsibility with respect to class attendance; it gave to the faculty members the freedom to establish their own attendance regulations, strict or liberal. The class attendance requirement that accompanies probation will affect only those on probation and will establish a uniform policy for those who might benefit by regular class attendance.

None of the faculty believes that class attendance is the complete answer to every student's academic problems. But it is the one way that academic probation can be given some meaning for the good of the student. The fact that a student does poorly enough to get on probation indicates that her studies are not receiving the attention they should. By requiring class attendance from the girl, we are taking a step that may help restore the attention to her work that she needs. What happens then is up to the student and the teacher. Gilbert Highet has pointed out that education involves a continuing battle for the students' attention by the teacher. We at least have a fighting chance to do our job on behalf of the student if she is in class. I realize that some students will not benefit by being made to attend classes, but I believe others will benefit. If only a few academic careers are salvaged by this program, it will have been worthwhile for those and will have done the others no harm.

Contrary to the blanket implications of the headline "Our Vacillating Faculty Ignores Student Maturity," we recognize it in those who show it, but at the same time reserve the right to challenge it in those whose marks suggest otherwise. Academic probation is this challenge.

Sincerely,
William B. White

A Plea . . .

Dear Editor,

The League of Women Voters may be a worthwhile organization, but I think its representative to assembly (Feb. 21, 1963) was a pitful speaker.

If we MUST have assemblies, can't they be improved?

Sue Smith

Salem Democracy

Dear Editor,

Familiar things—whether people, beliefs or institutions—tend to be accepted without question and often without thorough understanding. Student Government has been an accepted part of Salem College for a long time. Now the selection of students to carry it into another year makes particularly pertinent the question "What exactly is Student Government?"

Its very name, Student Government, implies the organization so fundamental for any group, be it composed of physiological cells or governmental units. The formal structure of Salem's Student Government is its constitution, its three boards, and a democratic procedure with members to these boards elected by all students. The Finance Board assures taxation with representation because the Student Budget is set by those elected by the taxed group.

Student Government, too, has an informal organization. This is found in the ground rules for our campus group, lovingly referred to as "rules and regulations." Students could not play the game of "Who's going where?", "What time do I come in?", and "How can I be expected to study in this din?" without known and respected rules for the game of group living.

Student Government rests on the ideal of self-government. The effectiveness of the officers now being selected is dependent on a self-directive, responsible student body who will follow the ground rules because they accept the reasons for them, who can interpret and apply to themselves the policies agreed upon by their representatives. Effectiveness of Student Government depends upon individual students using their right of constructive criticism, of petition, of participation in both making and carrying out the "ground rules" as well as merely electing others to do so.

At this time when so much energy is being used to point out evidences of student maturity, it is good to realize that Salem College students have a proving ground in their own area of student government to demonstrate their possession of this quality.

Amy R. Heidbreder

Let's Cut Chapel

Dear Editor,

We find it strange that more upperclassmen have not taken a stand with **The Salemite** on the issue of assemblies. Perhaps with the passing of months and years they have become accustomed to the monotonous chore of attending assemblies twice a week; we find it difficult to understand, however, that when a change is proposed seniors, juniors, and sophomores do not readily back it.

Some assemblies are necessary. Perhaps in the past, two per week were necessary. It seems now, however, that one would easily suffice. Some colleges, in fact, have no assemblies at all and do not appear to be in a state of collapse because of it. We can see that in a school the size of Salem, where assemblies of all students are easily arranged, the practice is beneficial. However, we cannot see that two assemblies per week are doubly beneficial; rather we feel that they destroy the merits of the idea by driving it into the ground. Though some assemblies are absorbingly interesting, at least half are scarcely worth an hour of 400 students' time.

This is our opinion; it is, we think, the opinion of many others. Being freshmen and having only one-half vote in student elections we have learned that we are not the most influential members of the student body. We would like to see **The Salemite** win its fight for one assembly a week, but seldom are freshmen able to evoke any major change in any area of our college life. But why upperclassmen are silent on the issue is inexplicable to us.

Brenda Bethel
Sue Elliott
Dottie Girling
Peggy Kilgore

5 Sticks - - Crash!

Dear Editor,

I would like to know how a class is expected to concentrate on the message an outside speaker is giving when five sticks of wood in the guise of a platform rostrum are swaying profusely and threatening "with vigor" to fall apart any minute. This cheap imitation is especially apparent in such classes as criminology, when a 200 pound representatives of the law desperately try to revert back to 90 pound weaklings so as not to go crashing to the floor—perhaps to be lost forever through the inch-and-a-half spaces between the "original" floorboards.

It seems to me that when salesmen are generous enough to give up their time for these informal lectures, Salem College should at least provide them with a substantial podium on which they could lean, should they so desire.

Sincerely,
Elise Vitale