

Letters...

To the Editor:

I spent an interesting Fall Break visiting friends at their small college campus in North Chicago. I had a great time, but I sure am glad to be back home again. I am very anxious for these friends to visit me at Salem -- I'd like to show them a thing or two. These friends were very proud of their campus and were quick to show me around. They thought the old place was just beautiful. I agree it was o.k. - but I honestly had to search hard to discover that!

Now that I'm back I see Salem in a different way. I always knew Salem was pretty, but perhaps I'd taken it for granted. How lucky we are to have such a beautiful environment in which to spend four years! Now I don't mean to judge -- I'm not conducting a college campus beauty contest. I just wonder how many other students have been too busy to notice how attractive Salem is. I also made another observation. People here certainly are a lot friendlier! I think that friendliness has somehow become a big part of the beauty of Salem. I'm not trying to do a sell-job to anyone. If you are here you must already be sold on Salem -- I just hope you are thankful.

Liz Boyd

Dear Editor,

It's good that the Salemite is interested in our Phi Beta Kappa prospects, and I'm happy to let you know where I think we stand. The "think" needs to be underlined, for one can never be sure.

Salem applied first, I gather, back in the 'forties, but was not admitted to their three-year process of examination. (Their Committee on Qualifications behaves not unlike an accrediting agency, in some respects.) More recently we re-applied twice and got form letters of rejection. The latest was the fall of 1976,

when I had just arrived, and I was quite unhappy that Phi Beta Kappa gave no reason for failing to put Salem on the list to be examined in the triennium.

Since I've been related to this kind of business elsewhere, I made so bold as to push for an explanation. In the intervening months I've had correspondence and conferences with both the Executive Secretary of Phi Beta Kappa and the Chairman of the Qualifications Committee. The latter conference was last week in Atlanta, with Dr. Catherine Sims; she was formerly professor at Agnes Scott, and dean at Sweet Briar, and thus she might be expected to know something about Salem.

You don't want a blow-by-blow account, I'm sure. Suffice it to say that: they don't like to be challenged; they had a couple of defensible reasons and eight or ten that weren't; and they know more about Salem now than they've known before. I've learned the names of three colleges currently being examined, and no one of them is as strong as Salem.

The next time we can submit an application is the fall of 1979, and thus the earliest we could get a chapter would be the fall of 1982. (But a new chapter may elect graduates from prior years.) I know that Dean Helmick, who was not present and thus not responsible for our application in 1976, intends that our application next fall be absolutely first-rate. One or two folks have been heard to mutter that we don't want Phi Beta Kappa, but this is nonsense. Salem belongs in the top company, and I have confidence we will make it.

With appreciation for your and other students' interest.

Very sincerely,
Merrimon Cuninggim

Editorial

Time for a Security Overhaul

The problem of security is becoming increasingly more serious on Salem's campus. Several recent incidents concerning security - or lack of it - are causing many of us to wonder just how safe we are. There are many reasons to consider some drastic changes in Salem's security.

The mugging of a housemother in front of Babcock dorm has forced us to consider more critical criminal problems on campus. This incident was handled by the two guards on duty as capably as could be expected under the present conditions of security.

At present there are three guards on duty from 6 p.m. to 12 a.m. on weekdays and from 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. on weekends. The third guard was recently added after pressures brought about by campus reaction to recent frightening events.

The guard system on campus is inadequate. The addition of the third guard is a step in the direction of improvement. Even though Salem's campus is small the landscape provides many places for unwelcome visitors to hide. Extra guards would be able to patrol the grounds more thoroughly.

In addition to patrol duty, the guards are responsible for checking the dorms and escorting students after closing. Many students have complained that guards have been late in performing the former duty and have often refused to execute the latter.

Students not only need to be aware of the guards' responsibilities but need to be assured that their assistance is quickly guaranteed. Frequently, guards have been hard to reach due to their lax attitudes regarding campus security. Since post-midnight security on campus actually boils down to the student buddy system it might be more profitable to consider a more professional guard service. A professional guard would be strictly trained to deal with security violations and would be capable of offering proficient security standards. This type of service would ensure tighter campus security by extending on duty hours past midnight and enabling the guards to fire weapons if needed.

Additional lighting around campus is another factor to be considered. Particular areas which need increased facilities include the FAC to refectory, behind South, Sisters and Clewell dorms, and between the infirmary and Gramley. Money for the extra lighting could be appropriated from student car registration fees. Since security is one of the most inefficient services on Salem's campus, extra money could also be taken from contributions and the general fund to be used for upgrading its quality.

So far, the incidents that have occurred on campus have yielded no serious consequences. However, preventive measures need to be taken now. Security must be upgraded in order to secure a more protective environment. Let's not wait for a rape on campus to jolt us into action.

Amanda Vannoy
Laura Castellanos

Honors Seminars Approved

The final proposal for the Honors Seminars was approved a few days ago. The green light is on to start the seminars this spring. But what exactly are the Honors Seminars?

The Honor Seminars are a series of interdisciplinary programs to be offered (at least one per term) with the objective of providing stimulation outside of the normal curriculum. Another

objective of the seminars is to provide an atmosphere in which interdisciplinary thought would be exemplary and inspiring to both students and faculty.

Topics for the seminars are to be suggested by students and faculty to the Curriculum Committee. The committee will approve each seminar subject after polling interested and eligible students.

Current ideas for seminar topics include Consciousness in the Modern Human, Socio-Biology in the Twentieth Century and Contemporary Myths.

Each Honor Seminar carries a one half course credit and is limited to twelve students. The seminars will meet for one two-hour session each week at a time to be agreed upon by participants.

Any students with a 3.5 average for the preceding semester or a 3.5 cumulative average is eligible for the seminars. The seminars are purely voluntary for faculty;

any member may choose to participate according to his interest in the scheduled topics.

Dean Helmick has been the force behind the Honors Seminars which will buttress any future Phi Beta Kappa Chapters. As Academic Dean she will co-ordinate the seminars.

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