

## Campus Apartments Will Bring Changes to Meredith

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The Meredith College Board of Trustees approved plans to construct on-campus apartments for junior and senior residents during its fall meeting, writes Melyssa Allen in an article appearing in the November issue of *In a Nutshell*, the college's newsletter for faculty and staff members.

The apartments, which will likely be located on the campus's southwest corridor, adjacent to Hillsborough Street, represent the goal of Meredith's Vision 2010 campaign to have a resident population of 1,500 students, states Allen in her article, *Apartment-Style Housing Approved*. She adds that the college's current residence halls can accommodate approximately 1,000 students.

The apartment proposal approved by the Board of Trustees on October 26<sup>th</sup> includes plans for a three-story building that is approximately 105,000 square feet and can accommodate as many as 252 students, says Allen.

The Meredith apartment-style housing website, <http://www.meredith.edu/apartments> states that construction of the \$22 million facility will likely begin in the spring of 2008. The apartments are slated for a fall 2009 opening.

There will be 48 four-bedroom, two-bathroom units offered, as well as 30 two-bedroom, two-bathroom units, writes Allen. The bedrooms are designed for single occupancy.

All apartments will come furnished with

"a living/dining area, a kitchen with full-sized appliances, and a full-sized washer and dryer," according to the Meredith website.

The same website mentions that apartment residents should also be on the lookout for a coffee or snack shop, a mail room, meeting and lounge spaces, an outdoor patio, and a reception lobby.

Along with the new apartment building come new policies specifically designed for its residents. The Board of Trustees approved 24-hour visitation by males and females as well as alcohol consumption by residents who are 21 and older, states Allen. She adds that these measures affect only apartment residents. Existing residence halls will continue to be alcohol-free and follow scheduled visitation hours.

The Meredith website also stresses that rules could be enforced as to the location of alcohol consumption and visitation limits within a given time period for apartment residents and their guests.

Although it has been said that alcohol and 24-hour visitation policies will be confined to the apartment residences, some members of the Meredith community are worried about how these changes in policy will affect the rest of the campus.

"There is no way they are going to be able to contain men and alcohol in the apartments," says sophomore Meghan Kent. "That policy change will spread through the campus."

"I'm excited about having apartments,"

says sophomore Sara Roberson. "As small as Meredith College is, however, you cannot fragment the campus. I'm concerned about the alcohol policy; male visitation doesn't bother me, but the alcohol policy bothers me because I don't know what kind of people will be attracted by the alcohol."

Student Government Association President Britney Brown is not worried about possible breaches in the new policies. "I am even more comfortable with these policies by knowing that rules will be enforced upon these policies," says Brown. "I believe that if Meredith College promotes its students to be strong women, they should know that its students will be responsible individuals while living in these apartments."

The apartments will likely have "one professional who lives in the building and who holds office hours there," states the Meredith website. It goes on to say that "The apartments will be run as apartments – not as a residence hall."

The above measures will be put into place to fulfill the college's goal of attracting more upperclassmen to living on campus. Allen writes that such policies will offer students "increased options along with increased responsibility."

Brown also thinks that the apartments will be an incentive for upperclassmen to stay on campus. Brown says, "I think students will see the apartments as a more convenient way to stay involved in the Meredith community."

A study conducted by Brailsford and Dunlavey

in the spring of 2006 concluded that "students move off campus because they desire more privacy, more space and increased freedom." As of this fall, "[O]nly 24% of upperclassmen lived on campus," states the college's apartment information website.

Junior Joy Strickland believes that the apartments will draw in students considering Meredith College. She says, "I think the on-campus apartments will appeal to a wide range of prospective students because they provide on-campus convenience with an off-campus feel."

Brown also believes that by building apartments, Meredith will become a more attractive choice for possible applicants. "I think this change will be an aspect about Meredith that will appeal to prospective students," says Brown. "Our research for the on-campus apartments shows that 17 of our peer institutions have some type of apartment style housing for its students. Personally, I think the building of these apartments is Meredith's way of saying that it trusts its students to be independent and confident young women."

In response to the Board of Trustees' decision to approve the building of on-campus apartments, Vice President for College Programs Jean Jackson, class of 1975, said in the November issue of *The Lux* that "From their matriculation, Meredith College students are encouraged to become scholars, leaders and socially responsible adults. Offering them developmental oppor-

tunities in on-campus living will support this growth."

Juniors and seniors can continue living in the residence halls if they desire, says the apartment housing website.

Apartment rent "will be higher than the cost of living in a residence hall, though financial aid will apply as for any on-campus housing," states the website.

The college is seeking LEED certification for the apartments as well. Allen writes in her article that "The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings."

The Meredith website adds, "The exterior of the building will incorporate brick and other finishes consistent with other campus buildings, particularly Jones Chapel and the original core campus buildings." In other words, the apartment building's architecture will blend in with the rest of the campus architecture.

The website concludes that "Meredith has thrived because of its ability to grow and change and serve the needs of its students for 116 years. We are encouraging women, whom we expect to learn, lead and achieve as adults in class and in organizations, to make more mature decisions as individuals." Overall, the Meredith College staff, faculty, and students are generally accepting of and enthusiastic about the new apartments.