

# Cashwell gleans nation for cream of student crop

In 1959, Richard Cashwell was a senior, a Morehead Scholar, a fraternity member, and due to the seven-men-to-one-woman ratio at UNC at the time, he often called girls a month in advance for a weekend date. Today, he is the director of undergraduate admissions, a post he has held for almost 20 years.

"The atmosphere and personality of the school is much the same, but the social situation is a whole lot better," he says. "There are a lot more girls."

Although most students forget the admissions office as soon as they receive their acceptance letters, the office is open all year, catering to about 26,000 visitors each year. Members of the staff visit high schools, attend PTA meetings and, of course, review applications.

Cashwell has been in the admissions office reading applications since 1964. Although frantic applicants might believe that admissions decisions are in the hands of a giant machine that looks only at SAT scores and extracurricular activities, Cashwell explains that the admissions procedure is a little more complicated.

"The admissions office is responsible for evaluating and admitting all undergraduate degree candidates by the rules established by the Board of Trustees, with the advice of the Faculty Committee on Undergraduate Admissions," he says. "The board sets minimum criteria, the council gives advice on the philosophy of the admissions process, and then we, the professional staff, make the decisions."

Cashwell admits that most students believe SAT scores are the only important admissions criteria. "The classic question I receive is 'What do my SAT scores have to be to get in?' Youngsters don't understand that it's their high school grades and the difficulty of their courses that are important."

Cashwell also asserts that there are no "political admissions;" all applicants go through the exact same process.

"What I mean by political admissions is that there isn't a list floating around that gives the development office so many slots, or the president (C.D. Spangler) so many slots," he says. "Mr. (Mebane) Pritchett over at the Morehead Foundation can't

## Annie Towe Profiles

commit an admission; neither can Coach (Dick) Crum."

Cashwell says he is proud of the integrity of the admissions office and the good relationship it has with the outside agencies that recruit applicants, like the athletic department and the Morehead Foundation. But, he adds that there is always room for change.

"We need to develop a system of additional contacts with groups of (high school) students. I'd like to see more minority kids, more very good students, and more math and science students who reject Carolina, because we don't have an engineering department."

According to Cashwell, many minority students decide at the junior high level that they can't afford to go to college and thus don't exert any effort in high school toward creating a good application package. "The crux for any student is the right courses and the level of performance. We have financial aid, but we need more (pro-college) education at the junior high school level."

Cashwell also says he believes that many math- and science-oriented high school students don't have the proper education about engineering. "Many don't understand the difference between being a chem researcher and an engineer," he says. "They blindly follow the logic that 'if I'm good in math and science, they should be an engineer and thus don't apply to UNC.'"

To help bring about the changes

Cashwell wants, the admissions office has commissioned the making of a video about the University. Cashwell says he feels this video has been needed for some time. "We hope that the video will provide students who can't come to campus or who are just beginning their college search as much information about Carolina as you can put into 20 minutes. . . . We want to show prospective students what the University is all about."

Cashwell cites other important advertisers. "The basketball team helps get our name around. UNC is known nationally and internationally because of basketball, and, if that helps attract good students, that's great."

However, Cashwell said in his opinion, the best admissions representatives are students. "How you talk about Carolina at home over vacation, or once you're an alumnus, effects the interest of prospective students in applying."

But with effective advertising comes popularity and, in admissions terms, more applications. The office, located on the ground floor of the Monogram Club building on Country Club Road, is full of admissions files and their readers. Cashwell says he expects another record-beating year in applications, but he says, "That's why we're here."

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