

OPINION

Issue In-Focus 1: Growth of the College

In recent years, the NCWC administration has expressed a desire to raise enrollment to 1,000 or more students in the day program. Assuming that the college would expand its facilities to accommodate enrollment growth (i.e., adding residence halls and classroom buildings), would you favor or oppose such a goal?

Katie Beeman

I think that it would be good to raise the number of students at NCWC. It would be good not only for the college but for the city of Rocky Mount. But at the same time I think that the draw of a school like Wesleyan is its small size. One reason I came to Wesleyan is that I knew that I would do better in a smaller setting. With smaller classes, it's a more intimate experience. You have a better relationship with your fellow students and professors. Having a larger population might hurt that aspect of the school. It's a bragging point to say that you have a class with only eight students in it. Most college students will never have that kind of experience. While I think that Wesleyan needs to grow and expand the size of its population as well as its physical buildings, it needs to remain a small and tight-knit community.

Tiffany Brown

I think it would be a good idea. A higher enrollment might bring the campus into the spotlight and draw even more new students. Building new dorms and facilities would be eye candy for the prospective students. NCWC is known for its great academic program, so having more students with a great academics program would only make the college more appealing. For example, if I had to choose between a large, public school with weak or average academics, and a smaller school with strong academics, I'd choose the smaller school. I believe education is important. More students might also be good for the athletics program. Having more players on each of the teams could strengthen NCWC's record and put the school on the map!

Trinity Carter

I think that with a lot of time and new accommodations, it would be a good decision for NCWC administration to set a goal of 1,000 or more students. If the growth is gradual, that would allow a lot of changes to be made beforehand. Our campus is overpopulated at the moment and there is not enough space for our current number of students. The campus needs more dorms, a larger cafeteria (or maybe another place open regularly for eating), and more space for parking. I like the idea of expanding because it may be the perfect direction for the school. I love that the campus is so diverse now and that there's always a new person to see. This idea is great, but we just need more space!

David Robinson

An interesting way to approach this question is to consider the beneficial or detrimental effects of growing the school. The positive aspects include such things as better utilization of space, more efficient use of professors' time, a better competitive position among small colleges, and a reversal of the tendency to stagnate. Similar to the economy of the United States, if NCWC doesn't show at least a 2-percent annual growth, it is in recession. While enrollment history is not available as I write this opinion, I'm guessing that the school has not shown much year-to-year growth; thus it has been stagnating. If done properly, growth would encourage prospective donors to the college, enhance the school as a vibrant member of the Nash-Edgecombe area economy and educational community, and bring prestige to the school. The only negative view is the risk associated with growth. A careful review of risk versus reward would be an essential part of answering this question.

Rebecca Staylor

Such an increase would, without a doubt, benefit the school both economically and socially. Our school is acknowledged for its diverse culture, and if the number of students were to rise, we would be creating an environment unlike any other school. As a transfer student from Virginia Wesleyan, I have attended a school with a thousand-plus students. But while Virginia Wesleyan might have been a social paradise with many students and facilities, NCWC has the potential to offer students a way to interact with others from different cities, states, and, in particular, foreign countries. With the diversity our school already offers, if we were to attract more students both internationally and nationwide, we would provide students an experience of a lifetime. We could be the only school to provide "a trip around the world" within a college campus. Attracting a thousand-plus students would give

Wesleyan financial stability and ensure that we're exposed to different cultures, social settings, and customs; not only would growth allow us to become culturally informed, but it would allow us to add hundreds more fellow Bishops to this phenomenal campus.

Michael Taylor

I favor NCWC administration's proposal to raise enrollment to 1,000 or more students. I think anything that would help NCWC grow as an institution is a good thing. However, the additional students should not be accepted until there are adequate facilities to accommodate them. Also, any new students should not take the focus or existing opportunities away from current students. With this proposal, the biggest problem would probably be the strain on the faculty. Class sizes would swell and the extra courses and class sections required to educate these students would fall on the current faculty, unless new professors are hired.

KeCharna White

Change is always a beneficial idea for colleges. I support an expansion of NCWC and bringing more students to our campus. If the college expands, that means more money for our school. It also means that people would know more about our school and that would enhance the value of a Wesleyan degree, which would help students in terms of looking for jobs and finding a career. Expanding NCWC also would mean more programs, and growth within existing offerings. Our sports teams will grow as well as our student organizations. As a member of Visions of B.e.a.u.t.y Modeling Team, I would like to see more student participation at student organization events. So far this year, you can see the school spirit rising with the large freshman class on campus. There has always been a gender imbalance here at NCWC. If we increase enrollment, that might help to attract more female students. Growth would mean nothing but great things for NCWC in the future.

Issue In-Focus 2: Residence Hall Visitation Rules

What do you think of the college's visitation policy in the residence halls? What changes, if any, would you make?

KeCharna White

The visitation policy is not fair. Although the policy may have changed because of an unfortunate event that occurred last semester, all residential students shouldn't be punished for it. In my opinion, freshman dorms should always have a strict visitation policy because the residents are young and new to the college experience. Speaking from a senior's point of view, I think upperclassmen should not have a strict visitation policy. We should have 24-hour visitation, as it was last year.* Although there are some freshmen living in upperclassmen dorms, there should be some consideration given to the upperclassmen. In previous years, freshmen dorms remained under a strict visitation policy while Boddie and Centura, for example, had 24-hour visitation. I disagree with the way administrators went about the visitation policy this school year. Upperclassmen are used to having leniency with the visitation policy; as a result, we weren't expecting the college to be so strict this year. In addition to having student desk assistants and the new cameras installed, I think that upperclassmen would be able to handle 24-hour visitation.

Michael Taylor

I think the college's visitation policy should be enforced as it is written in the student handbook. Each rule has been placed there for the benefit of the students and should be enforced and should apply to all students. I see no reason why any guest should be able to stay more than two consecutive nights. Also, having overnight guests only on Friday and Saturday nights ensures that students aren't distracted from their classes. Any overnight guest should be approved by the roommate. One rule I question is not allowing students to have more than two guests in their room at a time. Many students have large families that may visit at the same time. Also, most students have more than two friends on campus who do not stay in the same residence hall. This could hurt students' academics as some students may want to complete class work, including group projects, in their dorm, where it is more private than the library.

Rebecca Staylor

The visitation policy seems to be one of the most debated topics on our campus. While the administration feels that the policy is "Methodist-like" and necessary to ensure students' safety, the policy raises many issues. First, the policy states there may be no overnight visitation by members of the opposite sex. It's fair to assume

that the reasoning for this is that the administration would like to make sure no negative consequences occur such as a sexual assault or pregnancy. However, how can the college ban visitation based on gender preferences? It cannot regulate homosexual couples from overnight stays, so how is it fair that they discriminate against heterosexual couples? The issue is not about one's preference in gender; but if administration can't regulate both, they shouldn't regulate either. Secondly, I believe if we're going to experience adult consequences for our actions, then we should have adult privileges. That means if we can legally be responsible for student loans and be given adult-like punishments for other problems, then we should be able to make decisions like adults. In my opinion, students are going to do what they want to do and will find a way around the policy; even staff has admitted they cannot control or monitor visitation twenty-four, seven.

David Robinson

Of course, this question is being posed to an old-timer who grew up knowing that nothing good happens after 10 p.m. on week days, and especially after midnight on weekends. That's even more true today (and it was how my children were raised). But I do understand that not everyone has those same thoughts. Indeed, today's youth seems hell-bent on screwing up their lives almost everywhere I look. The notion that people are free to choose their course of action rings so loudly that it drowns out the corollary: They are not free to choose the consequences. So what I see are young people—and old ones too—making choices that have a long-term impact on their future, both in terms of their professions and their future families. As is clear from the forgoing, I'm in favor of enforcing rules that might curb immature and risky behavior. What else would a Battling Bishop do?

Trinity Carter

I feel the visitation policy is unfair. College is supposed to be every student's first taste of freedom and they should be able to have whomever they please in the comfort of their own room. If there's a student with a significant other, he or she should be able to sleep next to that person without it being a problem for anyone else. However, if the host has a roommate, the roommate should be notified and comfortable with that decision. That's just dorm room etiquette. I would change the overnight visitation rule, and just make

sure that the visitor has a visiting pass for the allotted time that he/she is present. I feel that students who live on Wesleyan's campus should be allowed to go into and out of the dorms, with the accompaniment of a resident from that particular hall. College is supposed to be our first "adult" experience and the rules are a little too strict, and the kids rebel. Lighten up on the rules and treat the students as adults and not children.

Tiffany Brown

Last year, at NCWC, I had 24-hour visitation in my dorm. This was good because when my friends or family came to visit, they could stay the night with me, instead of having to drive all the way back home. This year the college does not allow 24-hour visitation anywhere. I'm not in favor of this because I think it displays the lack of trust the administration has for students. NCWC students are mature enough to have responsibilities for their guests. Centura and Boddie (my residence hall) require that students pay an extra amount of money. These are single rooms. If I'm paying extra money to

live there, then I should be permitted to have a guest stay the night. The policy states that in order to get a guest to stay the night with you, a student must fill out a form and get the administration's approval 24 hours in advance. This is not a realistic policy. If I could, I would change the policy to give all students—except for freshmen—the privilege to have 24-hour visitation.

Katie Beeman

As a whole, I think that the visitation policy is pretty fair, though as someone who lives off campus it is not an issue that I face on a regular basis. During the week I think that the current rules are fair. But there does need to be some extra privileges for upper-classmen (juniors and seniors). Now in their twenties, they should be able to have a friend of the opposite sex stay with them overnight on the weekends, as long as they follow the same rules of having to give notice in advance, check in, and get the permission of the roommate. I realize that a main concern is the safety of the other students in the residence halls.

*Jessie Langley, associate dean for campus life, provided the following clarification regarding the policy: "The policies have not been changed from what was written last year aside from the slight addition that I've highlighted below (overnight guests not being allowed to stay here more than 10 total nights per semester). What is changing, however, is the strict enforcement of these policies. Residence Life staff will be enforcing these guidelines as written. The rules are the same no matter where students live on campus or their class year. This includes the Rocky Mount Inn."

Visitation and Guests

Visitation is allowed in residence hall rooms within established hours. Roommates must agree to have visitors present in their room. Residents of the same gender who live in the same building may visit each other after visitation hours. Each student is allowed to have no more than two guests in their room at a time. Visitors are not allowed to occupy the room of his/her host when the host is not in the room. Students may entertain guests of the opposite sex in their rooms during the hours listed below:

Sunday through Thursday
9:00 am - 12:00 midnight

Friday and Saturday
9:00 am - 2:00 am

All visitors must sign in and out at the registration book of each residence hall lobby. Identification must be shown of all visitors from 8:00 p.m. to midnight, Sunday through Thursday, and 8:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., Friday and Saturday. During these times visiting residents must show their Wesleyan ID cards to the RA/student worker on duty. Off-campus visitors must leave an identification card/driver's license with the RA/student worker during these evening hours. The identification cards will be returned upon check-out. Visitors will not be permitted into a residence hall without identification.

Overnight Guests

A guest is defined as a person that does not live in that specific hall. This includes NCWC students that do not live in the building they would like to visit as well as non-students who may enjoy visiting the residence halls. The following policies/procedures apply:

- Students intending to host a guest overnight must first obtain their roommate's approval and then complete the appropriate paperwork with their Area Director no less than 24 hours in advance of the guest's anticipated arrival. Requests must be made during the Area Director's office hours, Monday-Friday. Note that this process will also require students to have their roommate's agreement with this request.
- Only guests of the same gender as the host and age 16 or older will be approved.
- Guests will not be approved to stay for more than 2 consecutive night per visit **or 10 total nights for the entire semester.**
- Overnight guests will be approved for Friday and Saturday nights only.

(NCWC Student Handbook information furnished by Student Affairs Department)

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