

The Decree
 OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
 NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE
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Academics taking a downward path

In the past three years at Wesleyan there have been a number of changes. None has changed more dramatically than the academic arena of the school.

There have been three academic deans. One dean came in and attempted to change the academic plans so dramatically that he left the school the following summer. The future path of academics is uncertain at Wesleyan.

The school prides itself on individual attention. The very slogan, "Where the student comes first," is a primary example. The small size of the school is one of its primary advantages. There are so many more opportunities for students to get involved here than at other larger schools.

Yet in the recent years the school seems to have changed this approach to academics, at least. The number of courses offered has grown smaller each semester. Even the size of the classes has changed dramatically.

A first-year student three

years ago had some classes with 30 people, and that was a bit on the big scale. Now, as a junior, a majority of that student's classes contain 20 to 30 people. One student this past week had to sit on the floor for a class because the number of students enrolled filled the room and spilled into the hall.

The students are wondering what all of this means. If classes are being canceled does that mean some majors no longer exist? Is it possible to graduate in four years? Will the classes that students need be offered so they can graduate "on time"? Faculty members can be overheard talking about the larger classes also.

All of this is hurting the school in the long run. The students are not sure where the school is going to go in regards to academics. The larger classes ruin the personal atmosphere that makes the school what it is, friendly. What is the long range plan for the school and what does that mean to the students? That's what students need to know.

Letters to the editor policy

The Decree accepts only signed letters to the editors. Unsigned letters will not be printed. Letters need to be placed in the campus post office and marked "Decree" or placed in the *Decree* office in the Hardees building. Letters must be received by Friday of the week prior to the next issue in order to be printed in that issue. *The Decree* reserves the right to edit or reject letters for grammar, libel, or good taste.



Look for cause of crimes first

Jails not solution to violence

By DR. STEVE FEREBEE

Gov. Jim Hunt recently called for life without parole for first-degree murderers and rapists; life without parole for a third violent offense; felony status for any cocaine possession; additional time for crimes committed with guns.

He wants tens of millions of dollars for more prisons. Almost incidentally, he asks for a little money to run after-school programs for at-risk children (mostly staffed by volunteers).

Revenge and retribution may feel good, and they may even solve some localized, short-term problems; but without prevention (such as those after-school programs), we will not stop new crimes and criminals.

Finger pointing is a waste of time and a diversion. Television violence does not help, but it does not create the social or psychological conditions that nurture criminals. "Gangsta rap" is often

Dr. Steve Muses

anti-social and seems to advocate violence and crime, but it does not create the urban youthful offenders. Movies like *Wall Street* appear to idealize another kind of criminal, but they do not create the upper-class, white-collar computer S&L Bush-boys mentality.

The insane proliferation of weapons and their Wal-Mart availability certainly create opportunities for armed robbery, murder, and terrorism, but they do not create the need in so many people's minds to kill for revenge or just to pass the time. The single-parent family and unsupervised children probably do sometimes lead to warped decision-making by children, but they do not in themselves create the gangs

and violence that children find themselves watching and experiencing and participating in.

Treating criminals like human beings and citizens with legal rights does not tell them we approve of what they do. And, finally, the 1960s did not single-handedly create an amoral atmosphere of relativism and tolerance that somehow inspires criminals. We must stop believing that solutions are simple and that someone else will implement them.

Criminals steal and murder because they do not think they are doing anything wrong, or because they think that they have no alternative way to feed or protect themselves and their families. Locking up each new perpetrator does not convince anyone that crime is wrong; nor does it teach someone a way to feed the kids or solve an argument.

Life without parole at hard la-

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'Dissenter' needs help, not critics

Dear Editor:

I was delighted to read the *Decree's* recent article about the *Dissenter* and I'd like to add just a few points to the coverage already given to this topic.

I have been advisor for the yearbook for six years and can testify to one indisputable fact: the major problem has not changed. What is the major problem? Simply that we have a plethora of critics and a dearth of helpers.

Letters to the Editor

Consistently, the yearbook has lacked student support in every area. We cannot encourage students to come to our meetings and help work on layout; we cannot rely on students to cover events by taking pictures and writ-

ing a short passage to describe the activities; we cannot persuade the various clubs and organizations on campus to submit photographs and a summary of their goals, objectives etc. to us in the timely fashion, and it is frequently such hard work to encourage students to come for their (free) photograph session that we despair.

However, this same reluctant, unwilling folks are the ones who

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