

The Decree

OFFICIAL STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF
NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE

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Some minors face major challenges

Academics is a major concern of the students at Wesleyan. Since the fall of 1991 Wesleyan has had three different academic deans. One lasted a year before he left Wesleyan and it is unclear as to what the course of academics at Wesleyan is going to take.

The offering of classes is one of the concerns that bother students at Wesleyan in regards to academics. "Are the courses I need to take going to be offered? Can I graduate in four years?" These are questions that the students are worried about.

The college advertises rather clearly in admissions material that the school offers a minor in journalism. This fact comes as surprise to many students already enrolled, as the minor is "tucked" away within the English department listing in the College catalog.

The requirements for journalism are clearly outlined in the catalog and include three required courses in news-writing and editing, a choice between two courses, and two upper level English composition courses.

The upper level writing courses are easily obtained by the student if the interest is there for the student to take them.

Yet according to information obtained from the Register's Office only two of the other courses have been offered, one last fall and the other this fall, the current semester.

Factor into the equation that

the only professor that teaches the newswriting courses was on a full year sabbatical in 1992-93 so two full semesters were lost. In fact, there is one course that is offered under the journalism minor that has not been offered since the creation of the program in the late 1980's.

The reaction may be that the interest in journalism is not enough to warrant the teaching of these classes. Yet, how can a true finding of the interest be obtained if the courses are not even offered? What if a student wishes to obtain a minor in journalism? What would the school do to accommodate that wish?

The fact is that interest in the school newspaper is growing and, while the courses in newswriting are not directly tied to *The Decree*, interest in journalism and newswriting does exist.

This example can just as easily be one of many such cases at Wesleyan. Over the next few weeks *The Decree* will be exploring the course of academics at Wesleyan.

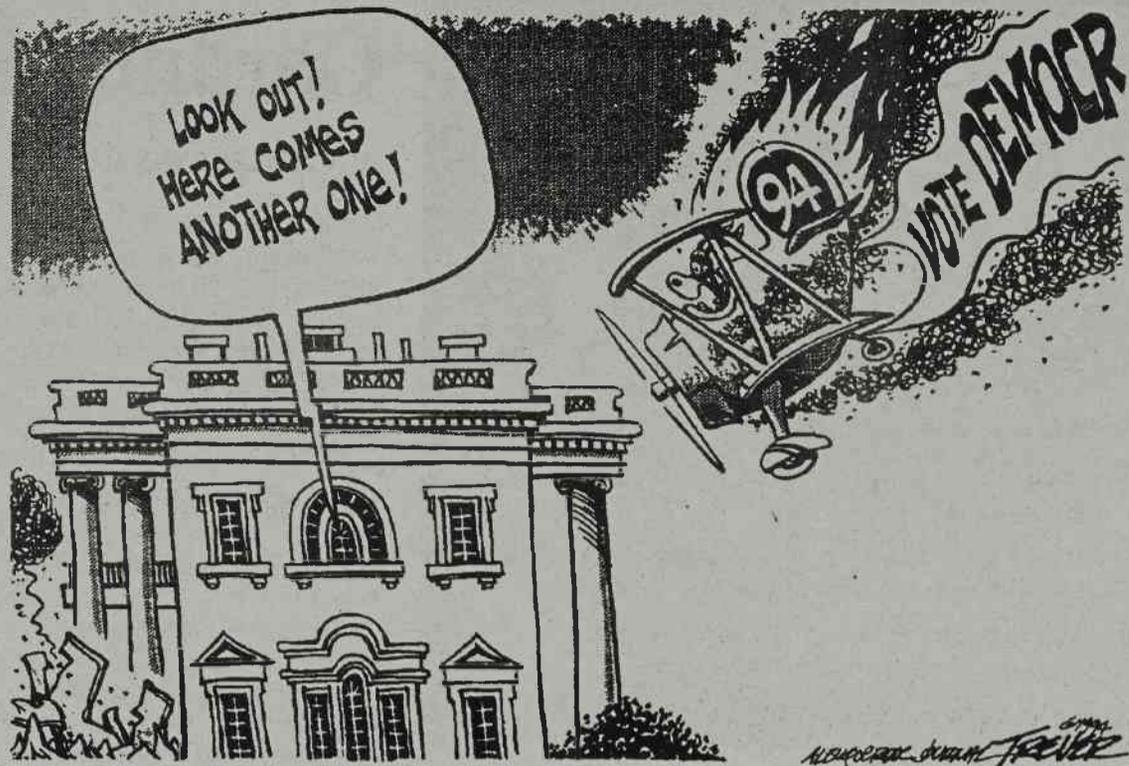
What is the student's perception and concerns with academics?

Why is it that upper-class students complain that Wesleyan is offering more courses for the first-year student than the upper-class student?

What direction is the school's academic future heading in?

Are there other majors and minors that the school offers but are unattainable?

"The truth is out there."



Politicians no gardeners

Some things don't change

By DR. STEVE FEREBEE

I spent the weekend in the garden, so I have had time to think about change.

Digging out a wild verbena which threatened to strangle every other nearby plant gives me a sense of perspective — both because I shouldn't have let the plant take over in the first place; and because during the digging I slowly realized that it has rooted itself so vigorously that every spring for the rest of my life with this garden I will be reminded of the backache I have right now.

Being a gardener, I have learned about patience because in the garden you can't really hurry change. Suddenly one day you notice that the lilac bush you planted years ago is finally screening that ugly part of the deck — just as you thought it would when you planted it.

I have also learned about hope. Gardeners are always hoping that next year will be better for the phlox or that next year that aster will again be as beautiful as it is now.

I thought about change, patience, and hope the other day when I saw the Republican candidates for Congress gathered together on the Capitol steps declaring that they had a contract with America to change government.

I found myself utterly unmoved and unconvinced. These are not gardeners, I thought; these are developers. Politicians like to develop plans, but what if they implemented them and government started running well? Let's admit it, they know we wouldn't need them then. They want to be

Dr. Steve Muses

elected (or re-elected), but they don't want to help me dig out my verbena.

I don't think politicians are going to change our lives very much. They are either like my verbena and have taken root so deeply in the business that they wouldn't recognize a new way of running government if it strangled them. Or they want to begin to take root so that they can make government work the way they want it to.

I've seen too many political seasons come and go to believe that politicians will substantively change either the system they work in or the holds it has on my life. Reagan's revolution, whatever it might have been, may have changed the dishes in the White House, but it didn't fulfill any of his campaign rhetoric. Clinton was elected in a ground swell of change, but Haiti looks a lot like Grenada or Kuwait to me.

I listen to my students rake Clinton (and, especially, his wife) over the coals. I see them wanting to elect someone else who will change the system. I just don't believe it any more, and I am worried that I don't believe it any more.

In the overall scheme of the cosmos, neither my garden nor my vote makes any discernible difference. But politicians should be aware of someone such as I who has always paid attention and voted and worked in campaigns

and cared fervently about what politicians did.

I feel myself giving up to cynicism. I don't believe a word any of them say. With some exceptions (Virginia: say no to Ollie North!), I don't think it much matters which one we elect. I don't think all politicians are crooks or bad people, but I don't think they want to solve any of the problems. They want to wound their opponent, be re-elected, live comfortably, have federally-funded health care, and argue.

As I say, I know my paying attention to politics doesn't really matter to anyone but me. But at the same time I've learned to nurture my garden and plan for the next season with patience and hope, I've turned from government in disgust. What does matter is that I am probably not alone.

Somehow we and politicians need to come to a new agreement about being held accountable to promises and treating each other with civility. If we lose patience and hope, the garden may be doomed.

Editorial unfair

Dear Editor:

An editorial in the most recent issue of the *Decree* contained a gratuitous derogatory comment directed at the Assistant to the President.

I know Cindy Hope, I've worked with Cindy Hope, and the anonymous editorial writer is no Cindy Hope.

Ms. Hope is competent and intelligent, and I am delighted that she is a member of the NC Wesleyan community.

Chris Carstens