

# THE DECREE

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NORTH CAROLINA WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA 27804

## Some Students Bemoan Gender Imbalance, Others Fine with Status Quo

Many Bishops expressed dissatisfaction with the current gender imbalance among Wesleyan's student body while others seemed surprised at numbers that showed a total enrollment in the traditional-day program skewed toward males.

The male-female ratio is a 60.4 to 39.6 percent in favor of males, according to information provided by the provost's office in late October. Among freshmen, males make up even more of the student body—63.9 percent. Back in September, the college reported a record total enrollment of 900 students.

Wesleyan's gender ratio bucks national trends for four-year colleges and universities. Nationwide, on average, women hold a decided advantage at about 57 percent, according to data from the Department of Education and stories reported in the national media.

NCWC students Grace Lee, Holly Long and Erin Shaw all said that the imbalance has not been an issue for them. "I'll be honest, I haven't really noticed," Long said, though she did a recall one large class where she was one of only three women.

Cable Beck, a commuter student, said he was not concerned by the imbalance on the Wesleyan campus either. "It doesn't really affect me one way or the other," he said.

Rafael Bella agreed—to a point. "It doesn't concern me too much, since I'm enrolled to learn and get an education," he said. But he added, "The campus would look a lot better with more women, no doubt, at least from my point of view. Plus, women take better care of almost anything while men try to break stuff."

Like Bella, Ayla Brewer and Slade Dale stressed the effects males have had on the appearance and cleanliness of campus, in particular the residence halls. Brewer, an honors student and

## Students Excited About College's Recent Growth

By Carolyn Davern  
Decree Staff Writer

NC Wesleyan's recent growth has been apparent to everyone on campus: there are plenty of new, smiling faces in classrooms, as well as a significant lack of parking spaces.

School administrators aim to increase the traditional-day student population by 100 students every year until a cap of approximately 2,000 is reached. Their intention is to expand facilities and resources as enrollment increases, and to maintain an attractive faculty-to-student ratio. Equipped with this information, students and faculty shared their ideas on the positive and negative effects of the increased number of students on campus.

Several interviewees expressed the opinion that having more students will increase diversity. "An influx of new students would make it easier to mingle and hang out with different kinds of people," mused sophomore Jacob Evans. He also hopes that the increased diversity would help to achieve more of a balance between athletes and non-athletes. With a high percentage of student-athletes currently enrolled, he noted that it sometimes makes non-athletes feel out of place.

Senior Dillon Becker thinks that the diversity of a larger population would make it "easier to make friends and find connections," whether one is part of a sports team or not. Rex Sauls, a member of the biggest freshman class yet, feels that this effect has already become evident in the student body this fall. "The vast array of people that we've gotten with the freshman class this year is very good," he said.

A big part of the expected diversity would be the enrollment of even more international students. Sauls commented on how he likes the exposure to different cultures and ideologies that comes with meeting people from different countries. Dr. Pamela Patterson, Associate Professor of Chemistry, also appreciates having international students in her classes.

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a setter on the volleyball team, said she dislikes the current situation and believes campus life suffers as a result of the imbalance. "The women's standard of living has dropped," she said. "The men are disgusting."

Dale, a transfer student and a first-year member of the football and baseball teams, concurred with Brewer. Though he said the imbalance was not a major concern for him, he noted that men "tend to be less sanitary than women. The campus and dorms may be cleaner if there were more females."

Alexis Rodriguez would like to see the college emphasize the recruitment of women. "We should like the fact that there are so many guys at this school," she said. "But it's way too much."

Many students put the blame for the gender imbalance on the football program, which was introduced in 2004. Its roster totaled 128 athletes at the end of the season. That does not include players who have left the team since August training camp.

(For comparison's sake, rival Greensboro College had 89 players on its mid-November roster, while Methodist brought about 250 to summer training camp—one of the highest totals in the country—according to Sports Information Director Nate Jervey, who said that his school enrolled 1,750 students in its day program).

Michael Smith, TJ Wilkie, Karen Wood, Brittany Miller, and Lee were among the students who attributed the imbalance to the high percentage of football players on campus. Lee and Wood pointed out that many new football players quit in their first year and, in some cases, leave the college. Smith, a member of his high school football team, said Wesleyan should lower the number of football recruits, while Wilkie, a pitcher on the Bishops baseball team, called for Wesleyan to replace cross country with "more popular" women's sports.

Ashley Wooley agreed that there's too much emphasis on men's sports such as football and baseball. Like many, she suggested adding more sports for women.

Other students focused on the academic programs offered at Wesleyan. Many, such as Beck and Long, recommended that the college establish a nursing major. Beck cited Barton's success with its nursing program.

Provost Michael Brown said the college is taking steps to address the current situation. "We're looking at new majors and campus activities that may be more appealing to women," he said.

Among the new programs under consideration are a communication major and a concentration in web development within the CIS major, he said.

Dr. Brown noted the one step has already been taken: The college has hired a full-time coach to oversee the cheerleaders and new dance team. "That's already increased the college's recruiting in those areas," he said.

Responding to a Decree inquiry, the Admissions Department issued the following statement: "Our counselors focus heavily on recruiting females, and we promote the female programs that we have on campus such as cheer, dance, and sororities. We have also added more photos with females in our recruiting materials. In the future we will do more female targeting in our outreach to prospective students."

Unlike many of her classmates, Sharon Cofield saw Wesleyan's gender breakdown as a positive sign. An education major, she argued that the situation on Wesleyan's campus dispels the notion that many young men are indifferent students. "This is great news from an educator's point of view," she said. "I think this breaks the stereotype that young men do not take their education serious. This data lets people know that our young men are taking education serious and that they want to better themselves."



Freshman Adrian Minondo emerged as NCWC's featured running back with a strong homecoming game and then rushed for more than 200 yards in each of the team's final three games, all wins. See football coverage and other sports on page 3.

SI photo

## Former RM Police Commander Sears Named to Security Post

Wayne Sears has joined the Wesleyan staff as Director of Security, as the college continues to grow and schools nationwide put increased emphasis on safety.

Sears, 56, comes to Wesleyan with more than 30 years of experience in law enforcement, most of it with the Rocky Mount Police Department, where he retired as commander of the Staff Services Division in 2010. From 2008-10, he headed the FBI's 7th Judicial District Violent Gang Task Force. In his most recent post, he spent five years as National Director of Security at MBM, a food distribution company based in Rocky Mount. He holds a BS in law enforcement from Mount Olive College.



Wayne Sears

G. Wallace photo

A Rocky Mount native, Sears and his wife, Audrey, have three sons, Payton, Josh and Nick, and belong to First United Methodist Church. In their free time, Sears and his wife like to fish in area waters for flounder, drum, and trout. He's an avid duck hunter and skeet shooter, who holds six state titles.

The Decree conducted an email interview with Sears about his new position, his background and goals.

**Q.** What attracted you to this job?

**A.** I spent the last five years in corporate security for an international company overseeing a \$4 million security operation within a \$9 billion company. The job was great, but the travel was killer—not in a good way—we had eight facilities in California alone. Some Wesleyan administrators inquired whether I'd consider coming to the college in this position and since I had expertise in emergency preparedness and security, a law enforcement background, and years of policy and procedure implementation, I thought it'd be a good opportunity for all involved.

**Q.** What has occupied your time since you began in September?

**A.** My overall focus has been on the vulnerability study I've been doing for the entire NCWC campus. Next we've managed to get the emergency notification system up to a 99-percent successful delivery rate. We're getting ready to launch our first education video on active shooter preparedness. The college's Emergency Operations Plan is a good one, but we're looking to improve it by using Department of Homeland Security guidelines that focus on prevention and mediation as well as incident management.

I've been working on grants for security equipment. First we're seeking 9-1-1 towers (the ones with the blue light on top), which will allow members of the Wesleyan community to push a button and connect to a 9-1-1 operator. It activates a strobe light to help emergency services find you. Then I've been involved in typical college issues and investigations, disorderly conduct, a few minor drug issues, and a few situations where somebody took something that did not belong to them. These incidents have led us to send out monthly press releases on safety and crime prevention tips through various campus media.

**Q.** How will your extensive experience at the RM Police Department help you in the new post?

**A.** I've had command experience in emergency preparedness and actual emergency operations. This includes mass casualty events and multiple-victim shootings. The prevention side is where we're concentrating our efforts, but when, and if, an event unfolds, you can never have planned for it exactly; therefore, experience is the guiding force. The planning process will be invaluable here, but the experience is something you can't buy or acquire by reading.

**Q.** What will be most challenging in your new job?

**A.** In this interview, I'm trying not to focus on the law enforcement side of my career. I've arrested hundreds of dangerous criminals. During my time in charge of the FBI Safe Streets Violent Crime Task Force, we dealt with some of the worst in society. I've been involved with or supervised over 120 murder investigations. I've been involved with seven police officer shootings, and many others where officers shot a suspect. What I want to do at Wesleyan is not be the icon of a police officer to our students. I want to be seen as a person to help keep them safe and assist them in making good decisions. I want the police officers and security officers here to have the same mentality.

**Q.** Explain the working relationship between you and Tameka Locke, the on-campus police liaison, and the private security firm now employed by the college.

**A.** My job is to assist them in ensuring that they know their role here and that they have the tools to do that job and the support to do it successfully. To achieve that, we must have mutual respect for each other's roles. I know Officer Locke from when I was a commander of the police department and she and I get along great. I have the upmost respect for her. I'm getting acquainted with the individual security officers and their abilities. What I see as the most important part of their job is that they know how to interact with our students.

**Q.** Within the past year, the college has enlisted the aid of RM police, whose officers patrol campus during the evening and weekends. Will the patrols continue? Describe their role in our security.

**A.** The patrols will continue. The police are a valuable part of keeping the campus and our students and faculty/staff safe. And as the college grows, their role and presence will likewise grow.

**Q.** What do you see as the immediate needs for beefing up security on campus?

**A.** Outside of preparedness and planning and the 9-1-1 towers, I think we need to focus on cameras. Cameras are recorders of history.

When someone goes in your room and takes your TV, we want to know what the cameras show. If someone backs into your car, what do the cameras show? If we have a fight, who started it? I don't like the intrusive side of cameras, and we only review them if there has been an incident. I do like that the cameras don't lie or are not mistaken in what they record. What they see is a tangible fact. If you don't do things that will get you in trouble, you won't have to worry about cameras.

**Q.** Can't cameras sometimes mislead a viewer by not providing adequate context? In other words, the viewer may not see what happened just before and just after the incident that's been recorded?

**A.** Your analogy is correct, but they're not mistaken on what they do see. That view is better than an "eye witness," as there are no mistaken, filtered, or biased views on a camera. Seldom does what happens, out of the camera's view, affect the total understanding of a situation. We resolve issues every day based on evidence without cameras; they're just an additional tool.

**Q.** It was reported that a recent burglary arrest on campus occurred after a video camera captured a student entering the victim's dorm room. Do you foresee a time when camera use might be expanded to include classroom buildings, recreational facilities, and outdoor venues?

**A.** Yes, our long-range plan is expansion to areas subject to abuse. The short-range plan is to improve the system in the residence halls.

**Q.** What are some of your other long-term goals?

**A.** We need technology that helps us keep our Wesleyan family safe, including the cameras and towers we've already discussed; a robust active-shooter plan including yearly drills; regular drills on natural disasters, such as a tornado; an increased officer presence on campus; and greater student involvement in campus safety and security. We'd also like to acquire computer-automated design software that shows every room, building, road, electric line, gas line, water valve on campus. Having that type of data is very important in not only the maintenance of our facilities, but for emergency preparedness as well. I would like to see license plate-recognition cameras at the main entrance so we know who's on our campus; and I think we need key fobs or card swipes for entry to all residence halls.

**Q.** How do you feel about the college's current weapons ban?

**A.** The current weapons ban is the correct decision for several reasons:

1. Young persons can be very reactive in their emotions when they're confronted by stressful and challenging situations. That emotion and a gun can be deadly. Young people tend to react on raw emotions before they process the consequences of such actions. I've seen it many times. Our responsibility is to the safety of the entire campus community, not just a few who feel they should have the ability to carry a weapon.

2. Even if you possess a permit to carry a concealed weapon, you wouldn't normally be trained in how to react in a highly populated environment, such as a classroom or hallway. With most states, the training focus is on lawfully

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