

## Administrative removal policy requires clarification

Laurel Nesbitt  
Editorials Editor

The Guilford College administration (or, more specifically, the dean of students) has the power to directly withdraw a student from the college. This is a little known and somewhat misunderstood administrative policy.

Administrative withdrawal at Guilford has always been used only in the most extreme cases of psychological illness, when a student is either a threat to him/herself or to others, or is unable to continue student life because of the problem. The Counseling Center (Ernest McCoy and Jane Caris) or outside sources of counseling determine to what degree a person's psychological problem is threat-

ening (e.g. suicidal or homicidal tendencies) or hindering the regular life's activities of the individual or of the community.

From this examination comes a written assessment of the student's condition and behavior, which is passed on to Dean of Students Nancy Cable-Wells. On the basis of the counselor's recommendation and the psychological assessment, the dean decides whether or not the student should remain at Guilford. Cable-Wells says that the student's right to due process is recognized by the administrative withdrawal policy, as the student is allowed to seek another opinion and assessment of his or her case from counselors outside Guilford, and is allowed to speak to the dean in defense of his or her ability to remain safely and functionally in the college. What is somewhat troubling is the fact

that this appeal is made only to the dean, although Nancy Cable-Wells did say that in a recent case, an objective third party was brought in to hear the student's defense.

Any objection to the truth behind the administration's claim of due process is complicated by the fact that indeed, these aren't simple cases of policy violation that can be taken care of by Judicial Board hearings. In fact, isolated incidents of violation are very rarely associated with cases of administrative withdrawal, except possibly in situations of drug or alcohol abuse. Much more common are cases that are related exclusively to the student's general condition, apart from concrete violations of any kind. What is being dealt with is potential danger to the individual or to the community.

Fortunately, only two or three students in the past 16 years have been withdrawn by this process against their will. In fact, according to Caris, nine times out of 10 the student initiates the withdrawal procedure or is in favor of the withdrawal from the very beginning. Problems which have arisen in which students have objected to

the decision of the administration have been due to the fact that the student is still in a stage of denial (denial of the extent of their problem). Once the student comes to terms with the problem, he or she is normally quite welcoming of the decision to be withdrawn from the college.

It is important to mention that a person being withdrawn through this procedure is welcomed back into the college when he or she has completed treatment and/or is capable again of functioning within the college environment. As Caris said, the purpose of the withdrawal is really less to get the student out of Guilford than it is to get him or her into treatment. Students simply must be withdrawn if their condition is life-threatening or is a major impediment to his or her life's activities, or to the life's activities of the people directly affected (the friends who stay up three or four nights a week trying to exercise the compassion that they are capable of giving, and the professional counseling skills that they are not.) It is, according to Ernest McCoy, as much a community issue as it is an individual one, and the administrative withdrawal policy is intended to take care of both.

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## Librarian reflects on 1989 book move

Karen Behm  
Guest Writer

The Guilford College Community moved more than books, shelves, and bookends on November 1 and 2, 1989. It moved people to tears as they witnessed pride, dedication, inspiration, love and genuine community cooperation.

As I helped to coordinate the activities those days, I observed many remarkable efforts by hundreds of individuals. The success of the efforts exceeded all expectations the planners of the move had ever envisioned. All of you who participated did move mountains and swelled hearts with your spirit!

Many wonderful words and scenes will remain in my memory. I remember... the anxiety on the supervisors' faces as they waited to see if anyone would show up to

work after the opening breakfast; the sighs of relief and smiles on these same faces as people poured into the Carnegie Room; the nervous attempts to get the move started and to follow the directions of the professional movers and supervisors; the "well-oiled" machine that soon emerged as we all found our niche in the process and quickly came to understand how it was all set up to work; the first load of trucks rolling out of the dark, dirty old stacks into our beautiful new building; people forming teams and setting goals for themselves, while they fueled their energies with song, dance, laughter, cheers and hugs; the press conference with media and important people, while THE important people worked getting the job done.

I will remember... Bill and Bev Rogers cheering us on, getting dusty with the rest of us, and seeing their faith in us realized;

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