

Editorial

January Term: Time Out?

The past several weeks at Salem have been filled with activity. Founder's Day, Organizational club meetings, preparations for mid-terms and January registration have all been time consuming, but save for one, all have gone well. The January Program has been a source of displeasure and disappointment.

Registration for January seemed at its best haphazard and at its worst ridiculous. The order of classes for registration, the number of opening in each course per class, and the appropriateness of certain internships for underclassmen are serious matters which were not precisely delineated or properly arranged. Though it is understandable to want to keep freshmen on campus over January and so acquaint them with school, it should not be done at the expense of the other classes. The problems with registration, however, are only symptomatic of the true ills of the January program: the quality of courses and the attitudes of students and faculty.

I seriously wonder what other colleges think when they receive Salem's January course offerings. It comes as no small surprise to me that we receive as few January transfers as we do. The selection of offerings for this January give Salem the appearance of a finishing school at recess for a month. The problem of keeping students on campus for the month would be much simpler if the quality of the course offerings were improved. Students are often more interested in practical courses like auto mechanics, sewing, cooking, furniture refinishing, finances for the single women and real-estate than in courses disguised under an esoteric academic title which turn out to be nothing more than the ultimate "slide".

We are a liberal arts college with the intention (according to Websters) of "...providing the student with a broad cultural background". January should then be a time to expand and explore. Certainly there should be specialized and intensive courses for majors, but a good January program could also be a time to get away from requirements and to experiment and grow. The lax student and faculty attitudes toward January can be strengthened only through re-evaluating our present program and reinstating the original intentions of the program. The January term we boast of in catalogs has been misplaced somewhere in all the paperwork and a "Let's make it easier on ourselves" mentality. One of Salem's biggest assets is that as a small institution it can provide through a strong student-faculty-administration rapport programs unique in their motivation and enlightenment. We have all the right ingredients for an ultra-successful January program; if only we could get the right recipe.

Laura Castellanos del Valle
Associate Editor

The Salemite would like to encourage responses to this editorial from students, faculty and administration.

Leg. Board is planning a series of hall meetings on campus to get student thoughts and reactions on the January program and its future. They are structuring the discussions along four guidelines: the purpose and definition of January, problems with registration, the quality of independent studies versus on-campus studies and the selection and quality of course offerings.

What Student Center?

The purpose of the SAC (Student Activities Council) is to provide varied social activities that will benefit and please the upmost number of people from our Salem Community.

Traditional activities sponsored by SAC include the Freshman Room Contest, the Christmas Tree Lighting, movies and mixers. The movies SAC has selected for this year are: Wait Until Dark, Mame, Pajama Game, Beach Blanket Bingo and A Night to Remember. Other activities the SAC is interested in sponsoring this year include a Halloween Carnival, backgammon and hearts or spades tournaments and afternoon tape and bluegrass shows.

The main objective of the SAC this year is the revival of the Student Center. For the majority of other colleges the student center represents a gathering place for everyone on campus. At Salem it could mean that and much more. The Salem Student Center has the potential to provide all of us with a relaxed and pleasant atmosphere where we could go in between classes, meet with friends and have parties. It could be a central site on campus; a part of our daily lives.

The facility is in the process of being renovated. Along with the booths, card tables and chairs located there are pinball and foosball machines, billiard tables and a juke box. More game facilities are on the way and eventually the Student Center could expand to include a snack bar and beer license.

The "ifs", "coulds" and "woulds" of all future plans for the Student Center can be changed into the here and now only through student involvement. It could be an invaluable part of life at Salem if enough student enthusiasm and participation is demonstrated this year. Instead of burying the Student Center it would be much better to give it the special kind of life only Salem can give a place.

SAC

Letters...

To the Editor of The Salemite;

There is a problem here at Salem that has been bothering me for quite a while: Students do not like to walk on the sidewalks. The sidewalks are not always the most direct route to buildings on campus thus they are an inconvenience for practical students. Knowing how the Trustees and administrators at Salem try to cater to student's needs, I thought that if we made some suggestions as to how to alleviate our problem, we could possibly move school officials to action. After many hours of contemplation by the lily pond, I have these suggestions to offer;

1. Brick all areas of grass on the campus in order to transform the campus into one huge brick yard. Leave the trees and shrubs, but cover all grassy areas. This change would eliminate grass mowing. Also, students would not have to walk on the sidewalks.

OR

2. Cover all grassy areas with astro turf. This change would eliminate lawn mowing, keep the squirrels happy, keep the "grass look," and make sure that students would not have to walk on the sidewalks.

OR

3. Cover all grassy areas with asphalt. This would alleviate parking problems as well as eliminate lawn mowing and make sure students would not have to walk on the sidewalks.

OR

4. Kill all the grass. Biology students could watch the process of "natural succession" with this change. Also, the lawn would not have to be mown and students would not have to walk on the sidewalks.

Any of these suggestions, if actually carried out, might prove costly. Before we go to the Trustees to ask for whichever change we want, we must decide which would be best in the long run. Certainly we can point out that each of these merits in the fact that lawn mowing expenses will be eliminated and that generations of Salem students will not suffer the inconvenience of having to walk on the sidewalks. There is one problem left: What do we say to the Trustees when they ask, "What is so terrible about a little inconvenience in order to preserve a beautiful campus?"

Robin Maxey

SAC Representatives

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Fran Fields

Jr.-Elizabeth Whitehurst
Sarah Nightlinger

Soph.-Donna Smith
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Fr.- to be chosen

Chairman: Jean Fleming

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