

Salem Weathers Admissions Storm

By: Linda Surlis

In a February interview, Admissions Dean Paige French discussed the pros and cons of admission trends for women's colleges. Some surprising figures were produced concerning the direction of college admissions.

Ten to fifteen years ago, approximately 8% of all high school seniors attended women's institutions. Today only 110 colleges for women remain in existence. 1985 figures show that

out of 11,000,000 college students, only 125,000 choose colleges exclusively for women.

Dean French noted that present trends "are running against Salem." She cited several reasons why more students prefer co-educational institutions:

- The tremendous attraction of co-education is a highly visible asset to most young people.

- The higher cost attached to private women's colleges turns many students away from these institutions.

- All well-known women's colleges are liberal arts institutions. This fact contrasts with most students' desire to enter directly into training for a specific field. Unfortunately, "the student who received intensive training in only one field will, in all likelihood, be

totally unprepared for a career opportunity outside his area of study."

A liberal arts education, which Dean French named as one of Salem's greatest assets, often becomes a "liability" to prospective students.

Because of the downward swing in admissions, Dean French believes that "some colleges will have to close, probably 20 or 30 out of the 110. Only a handful will weather the storm. Tremendous pressures make the future of women's colleges extremely uncertain."

Despite the negative forces at work against institutions like Salem, there is hope for the continued existence of women's colleges.

Dean French commented that "Salem is the oldest institution of its kind, and its viability has made it successful. A distinct sense of history, purpose, and commit-

ment, coupled with the benefit of small size, helps students feel more comfortable in the college community."

During visits to high schools and prospective students' homes, Dean French has noticed that people are usually impressed to see "an articulate woman" discuss the reasons for attending a women's college. Many people associate graduates of women's colleges with the "tea and cookie" set, so, she added, Salem's admissions staff must work diligently to dispel this attitude.

The admissions process itself remains "as personal as possible. High quality contact with prospective applicants lets students know that Salem is a place of quality in every respect." And "in order to attract more students," Dean French concluded, "we must present Salem in a well-defined manner. We must make ourselves as distinctive as possible in the way our admissions program is presented."

Great Books Grad Seminars

By: Izumi Sekikawa


President Litzenburg has initiated the Great Graduate Text Seminar for public school teachers. Beginning this summer, the seminar will be offered by four local educational institutions: Salem College, Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem State University and the North Carolina School of the Arts.

There will be a total of four seminars (two in June and July and two in the fall) each consisting of fifteen sessions. The seminars will be based on the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural

sciences using the "great texts".

In choosing the seminar participants, a committee will nominate ten to twelve teachers who teach in 7th to 12th grade for each seminar, and each will be awarded a fellowship. Later, the committee will pick a professor from each of the four colleges within the senior faculty to be a professor.


Dr. Litzenburg comments that the main purposes of the Graduate Seminar are to recall the importance of public school education and also to reaffirm the further pursuit of advanced studies.



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