



## President proposes \$38 million budget

□ The figure is based upon “conservative enrollment projections.”

CHRISTINA HOLDER  
Editor-in-Chief

Merit-based scholarships are in and an increase in adjunct faculty salaries are out according to the proposed \$38 million budget for 2002-03 which was presented to the faculty at a meeting on Friday by the President of the College.

Dr. Maureen Hartford told faculty that the “priority list is always longer and more robust than [the] monies” in reference to next year’s proposed budget that she will present to the College’s Board

of Trustees in the next week—a budget that has increased \$1.3 million since last year but is still lower than many had expected.

Hartford said that the goal for the new budget is to “continue support for the initiatives from 2001-02.”

Key initiatives that began in 2001 such as increasing financial aid, reducing the teaching load by hiring additional faculty and providing resources for undergraduate research and leadership programs will continue.

The budget also focuses upon initiatives scheduled for the second year of the College’s plan which include continuing to accrue resources for financial aid, increasing faculty salaries and beginning bond payments for the new science and mathematics

building.

Other principal components to the new budget are a sizeable increase in merit-based scholarships and an increase in the salary pool.

Both staff and full-time faculty will receive increases, but only 3% for staff and 6% for full-time faculty. Adjunct faculty will not receive an increase.

Hartford said she understood the need to increase faculty salaries and recognized the disproportional numbers evident when measuring Meredith salaries with those of institutions the College often uses to compare itself.

“We felt the faculty [salaries] were off, but they were not as off as other institutions,” she said.

However, according to the College’s official 2000-01

*Benchmarking Report*, which compares Meredith with similar colleges and universities, the average Meredith faculty salary for all ranks was still lower than nine of the institutions and higher than only six of the 18 institutions that offered salary data in the report.

The average faculty salaries for all ranks at Meredith was an average of \$49,300 in 2000-01. A 6% increase of the average places Meredith at \$52,258. This figure is just above the overall average of Meredith’s peer institutions—\$51,800—according to the report.

“Our goal,” said Hartford, “is to get our faculty to at least the median of our peer institutions.”

A significant addition to the budget also includes an increase in merit-based scholarships.

Hartford said the increase was prompted by knowledge that “talented students who expect scholarships” were “getting them elsewhere.”

The budget includes three Presidential scholarships of \$10,000 each, eight academic scholar awards at \$7,500 and 19 outstanding scholar awards at \$5,000.

The 15 annual Harris scholarships will now uniformly be valued at \$3,000 each and the Emerging Leader’s scholarships will be raised from \$1,500 to \$2,000.

However, the concern of faculty and students weighs heavier on whether there will be an increase in financial aid due to the \$2,000 tuition

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## Graduation Bibles: Gift or Insult?

□ Graduation Bibles are being updated, but are they becoming outdated?

TANESHA WILLIAMS  
Staff Reporter

Everyone acquainted with Meredith College knows that the school is deeply grounded in tradition. From Cornhuskin’ to the daisy chain, it seems obvious that Meredith will never change some things.

But times and traditions do change.

Each year at graduation, each graduate is given a Bible as a gift from the College. For years the College has given out the King James Version.

This spring, according to Senior Class President Christine Kelley, students can

expect a new version, the New International Version.

Kelley believes most of the senior class is in favor of the change.

“I asked the class at the class meeting, and they were overwhelmingly in favor of the New International Version,” said Kelley.

The senior class first discussed changing the version of the gift Bibles last spring. No changes were made until this year.

According to Dr. Rosalind Reichard, vice-president for Academic Affairs, many students wanted something that was more relevant to their needs.

Sam Carothers, campus minister, feels that the New International Version will suit student needs better than the previous King James Version.

“We have given out the King

James Version since the beginning,” he said. “I for one have wondered for years why we didn’t go with a more modern version. The King James Version is a bit dated.”

“A lot of people felt like it was time to move to a more contemporary version [because] contemporary versions are much more readable,” Carothers said. “I’m hopeful that these Bibles are Bibles that students will want to read.”

But what about students who don’t read the Bible? Meredith’s student body is gradually becoming more culturally and religiously diverse.

Reichard said that no student has ever complained about getting the Bible. According to Reichard, the College likes to give out a personalized gift that is connected with Meredith,

not as a profession of a certain faith.

“We look at this particular gift not to signal that anyone should look towards this faith. We look at it as a historical connection. It’s a matter of the College wanting to give a personalized gift that is connected with history and tradition,” said Reichard.

However, Sakenna Abdulraheem, a Muslim student, argues that this is not a personalized gift because she, as a person, cannot use it.

“I probably won’t take one. Or I’ll give it to someone who will actually use it. I don’t think it will help me or hinder me,” says Abdulraheem. She also believes that such a gift is an assumption that everyone at Meredith is Christian.

“I never thought it was still a religious private school,” she said. “I think it’s kind of

insensitive to other students who don’t resort to the Bible. It’s assuming that these students resort to the Bible, and that’s not the case at all.”

“It can be taken as an insult, especially from someone who is educated,” Abdulraheem said.

Abdulraheem feels that the College should change the gift to something that is more unbiased.

“People have to start thinking on an unbiased level. I don’t really see [the Bible] as a gift. I think it’s kind of sad because it shows the ignorance. I’m not the only person who’s annoyed,” she said.



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