

# Freshmen orientation introduces students to college life

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Orientation 2004 was an informative process that spanned four days: August 14-17. Each day was packed with activities to introduce the new students to the Meredith College community and college life in general. Students also were provided an avenue to make friends and get to know their peers through student advising groups. Student advising groups provide an informal environment to learn about college life and what to expect. Student advisors trained August 10-13. They learned how to talk to the new students, what to tell them, and who to talk to.

The theme of this year's freshman orientation best describes the freshman and college experience, "Explore, Navigate, Balance". Students were given the opportunity to explore the campus during the four days allotted for orientation. They can later navigate independently on campus and through their classes. A crucial element to freshman year is balance. New students must learn how to balance social and academic life. Freshman orientation began with a day that introduced students and parents to Meredith College and all that it has to offer. The next day focused on academics such as placement and competency tests. The always amusing campus skit balanced the previous

part of the day. The following day focused primarily on student advisor groups. The last day of orientation focused on different types of training such as utilization of laptops and academic expectations. It ended with the honor code ceremony. Needless to say, orientation kept the new students occupied as freshman Jill Palchinsky stated, "There was lots to do. The only thing I wish was that there was more free time." One of the most important experiences in orientation is inclusion in student advisor groups. Palchinsky said, "I really like the SA groups, but they split the honors group up and I only had two other girls in mine." Students meet their faculty advisors that they will have until they declare

their respective majors. Students also are provided with an opportunity to interact with other students and fellow advisees. This provides an elementary social circle. Student advisors serve as intermediaries. They provide perspectives and experiences of veteran students. This information will prove to be of great value in the following semester. Another tradition, the honor code ceremony appropriately took place the day before classes started, August 17, 2004. This creates a framework of academic integrity, which is integral in the Meredith community. The honor code ceremony suggests the type of student that Meredith College expects it accepted into this institu-

tion. It also inserts some formality into the casual atmosphere of the previous days of orientation. Freshman orientation helps the transition from high school to college. For students living on campus, moving away and sharing a relatively small space with someone else for almost a year can be quite intimidating. Student can learn how to deal with that reality and the new surroundings. Freshman Allison Waight felt that "it helped me get to know the campus better and meet new people." Not everyone was a purist about how wonderful orientation was, freshman Beth Podlesnik felt "it was fun meeting people, but it was a lot like camp"



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