

The Davidsonian

A L E N D A L U X U B I O R T A L I B E R T A S

VOLUME LXXXVII

MONDAY, APRIL 15, 1996

NUMBER 23

Minors approved by majority of faculty

By ANN HATFIELD
Staff Writer

In a decision that surprised many, the faculty voted in favor of minors 63-41 on Tuesday April 2. Two faculty members chose to abstain.

By passing the proposal, faculty members agreed that minors might be offered at the discretion of each department.

The Council hopes that some

minors will be in place by academic year '96-'97, but expects that many will not be offered until the following year.

This news comes as a result of the proposal formulated by the Council for Academic Affairs as well as a SGA resolution.

Liz Abernathy, Co-chair of the Council for Academic Affairs, says, "We are naturally very excited about the faculty's approval

of the minors option. Many members approached us to say how impressed they were by the enthusiastic response from students in support of minors. We are grateful to students and faculty for their support and look forward to seeing minors become a part of the academic tradition at Davidson."

Professor of History Russell Snapp says he is "not surprised by the results because of the strong support voiced by many students,"

and adds, "That [support] definitely influenced the faculty."

However, he says, "I think we might have considered the proposal at greater length..." While Snapp says that he believes that "minors probably are a good idea for some students," he voices some concern that students may feel pressured to adopt a minor when greater exploration of the curriculum might be more beneficial.

Professor of Chemistry Mitch

Rhea says, "I've got no quarrel with minors. I think if you are willing to put forth the effort, you deserve recognition.... I think that by and large, this department is in favor of them."

In the wake of this student victory, however, many are left asking "what now?"

The proposal defines minors as a set of five or six courses designated by a participating department.

See **Minors** on page 3

Special section



Photos by Josh Glazer

RELIGION AT DAVIDSON?

**The trustee's challenge:
An in-depth look at the issue**

By ADAM HICKEY
Staff Writer

It is likely that within the week yet another major date will be added into the history of Davidson's religious affiliation.

It is this weekend, April 18-21, that the Trustees will convene on campus for yet another semi-annual meeting. Raised as a significant issue during the trustee retreat in the Spring of 1993, faculty and students alike are waiting to see if any of the bylaws which govern the religious affiliation of the faculty and officers of the college.

Three main questions await the Trustees' answers: Should Religion professors have to give "evidence of strong Christian convictions"? Should all Trustees—even those elected from alumni associations—be "active members of a Christian Church"? And must the President demonstrate a "Christian faith and commitment" through an "affiliation with the Presbyterian Church"?

According to President Kuykendall, the Board

See **Religion** on page 4

**Crossing paths:angry
students fight over symbols**

By NARESH NAGELLA
Assistant News Editor

Easter brought more than religious celebration to campus. It brought a good deal of discussion, debate, and controversy.

Continuing a year old tradition, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Intersity Christian Fellowship, and other Christian faculty and staff set up their Easter display consisting of three 5 and 1/2 feet tall crosses in between dormitory row and Chambers to remind everyone of "the true meaning of Easter."

Last year three students erected another cross covered in Rose's Easter flyers juxtaposed to the crosses set up by the groups, along with a small wooden bunny covered with Bible verses.

However, this year, those opposed to the display were direct in showing their disagreement.

First, three miniature crosses were anonymously put up next to the original display. A sign indicated that if the crosses were real the display would be a "thousand times larger."

See **Crosses** on page 5

Trustees to decide on alcohol policy CCRL recommends ban on kegs, but not purchase of alcohol

By BROOKE BAGWELL
Staff Writer

At their meeting Wednesday, the CCRL voted on their recommendations concerning the alcohol policy. These will go from CCRL-Chair, Dean of Students Tom

who will take them into consideration when he addresses the Trustees, who will vote on the issue.

The CCRL decided to recommend the ban of kegs, but eliminated the part of the clause regarding the purchase of alcohol by each

house.

Should the trustees accept the proposal, the decision whether to purchase alcohol or not is put into each house's hands. BYOB would be an option but not a necessity, and houses purchasing alcohol would not be violating a Davidson

not mandate whether alcohol can be purchased by members of the court, so this is not a major change.

SGA President Warren Buford emphasizes this. "If approved, our

See **CCRL** on page 3

Reviving the legend Two freshmen want to bring the tour guide tale to life with debate

By BRAD D. CHASE
Staff Writer

The balconies of Eumenean and Philanthropic Halls have been silent for years.

While the common tour guide lore about the debating traditions sticks in many students' minds, no one seems to care about why this tradition has ceased at Davidson

Almost no one, that is.

Two Davidson Freshmen, Austin Rios and Scott Geier, have started an effort to revive the tradition of debates from Eu and Phi Halls.

"Austin and I were walking out of the library one evening when we noticed Eu and Phi Hall's depicted on the opposing sides of the entrance. We thought it would be neat to revive that tradition," says Geier.

I think that the students are generally apathetic and this would

be one way to increase involvement."

Sara Beasley, Visiting Instructor in English and advisor to the proposed debate group, says, "I really would love to see it happen. I think that it is not only intellectually exciting, but it is also a tradition to revive."

"Imagine one person debating another in front of the student body," says Geier, "no one is going to want to lose, it would be like losing face."

While there is a Phi Society in existence now, they do not stage debates in the traditional format.

The group, which meets Sunday evenings, discusses current events, books, and other issues.

According to Geier, "we have some research to do before this happens. We want to possibly have a preliminary debate and see how the students react. I think that it will really catch on."

THIS WEEK

First Class Mail
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Co-ed Eating house

tries to get off the ground.

NEWS

5

Davidson rallies for little Jack.

OPINIONS

7

Sex.

ARTS & LIVING

11

Turkey

for you, turkey for me.

SPORTS

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The Davidsonian has published 12 other articles on the subject of religion at Davidson since 1969, and the balance of views on the issue seems constantly in flux. The college has changed a great deal since 1846, when the second college catalogue published stated "The denial of the being of a God ... by any Student, shall subject him to expulsion from the college."

In what direction the college will go in the coming years is anyone's guess. This week it rests in the hands of the Trustees to interpret one of the passages from the Statement of Purpose which attempts to merge all views into one college: "Faith and reason must work together in mutual respect if Davidson is to realize and maintain its particular vision of academic excellence."

Religion

from page 1

agreed in February "to maintain confidential status" on the issues until after this meeting, and so it is unclear how the Board is leaning on the issues and even how its members plan to approach them.

While the Trustees' thoughts remain a secret, students and faculty continue to voice a diversity of opinions.

Davidson's Affiliation

Regardless of their decision on any of the issues this week, the Trustees show no sign of a desire to leave the church's side. In a resolution passed in February, the Trustees "reaffirm[ed] our commitment to an active and vital relationship between Davidson College and the Presbyterian Church."

That most Davidson students support the affiliation, at least in part, seems sure. In a study published in the summer 1995 issue of the *Davidson Journal*, 67.4% of the 300 students surveyed said they agreed with the statement "Davidson should remain affiliated with the Presbyterian Church."

Many of those who favor changing at least some of the rules would disagree that the motive behind the change is an anti-Christian one.

Freshman Chad Wellmon says he "values tradition." But he states that we are "forcing ourselves into an absurd belief and hope that we can accomplish what we're trying to." The goal of Davidson, as he perceives it, is to move "from a regional to a national liberal arts college," a goal he sees unattainable without some reform.

Sophomore Eric Sapp considers affiliation essential. "That's what the Honor Code's based on," he says. "The diversity in the affiliation makes for a better education and a better world."

Some oppose the affiliation entirely. In the discussion on the

issue in the SGA on October 3, Senior Senator Rick Onkey called the affiliation "close minded," and "an insult to non-Christians." He is joined by 7.9% of those surveyed by the *Davidson Journal* who disagree with the affiliation.

Letitia Campbell, a senior who came to Davidson in large part because of its affiliation, disagrees. "Having colleges which are affiliated ... brings an important diversity to higher education," she states.

There are also tangible, fiscal benefits to Davidson's affiliation, though they may be hard to see at first. Robert Norfleet, Vice President for Business and Finance, says abandoning our affiliation could be "financially disastrous." He estimates 80% of our donations come from "Presbyterian sources" — "individuals who are active members of Presbyterian congregations who give to the college."

The Presidency

To many, the affiliation of the school is inextricably linked with that of the president, simply because, as Sapp states, he is the "figurehead of the college."

Religion Professor Alexander McKelway sees it that way: "I cannot see practically how the presidency could be filled by someone who didn't participate actively in the Presbyterian church."

Psychology Professor Ruth Ault, one of Davidson's few non-Christian faculty members, concurs somewhat. "It may be practically necessary," she says.

But that it does exclude some who may be well qualified concerns her. "I think there are people who in good faith could [work well]," she continues, finally concluding, "I'm both for it and against it."

The *Davidson Journal's* survey seems to indicate a slight margin in favor of change. Just over half (54%) of those responding disagreed that "the president of Davidson should be a Presbyterian."

Yet the SGA decided in Octo-

ber by a vote of 18 to 12 that the president should remain tied to the church, indicating diverse opinions on the issue.

Some question exactly what the requirement in the Constitution mandates. David Kaylor, Chair of the Religion Department, who sat on the presidential search committee which selected Kuykendall in 1984, indicates there was some degree of leniency in choosing the president. "We could have hired a non-Presbyterian with the understanding that he or she would join DCPC," he states, agreeing that the past denominational affiliation of the president was not especially relevant.

The current search committee also sees some subjectivity in the bylaws. Christine Young, part of the Academic Search Consultation Service the college has retained to narrow the field of applicants, stated in an open forum in February that the Constitution is "open to some interpretation"; yet, she does concede that "it's going to exclude some people."

The Trustees

Currently the bylaws affect the Trustees' affiliation in two ways. One bylaw states they "shall be active members of a Christian Church." But even without this section, a large majority would be anyway, for 24 are elected in direct connection with the Presbyterian church.

What is ultimately in question is whether or not those elected by alumni must be Christian.

Ault thinks not. "I certainly think that the alumni representation should not be restricted," she states, denying that it puts the college on a "slippery slope down to secularism."

Sapp disagrees. "They are the decision making people," he says.

Junior Macon Stokes, president of IVCF, does not feel their affiliation is all that significant. "I would personally like them to be Christian," he says, "[but] that's my personal bias."

In October, the SGA almost

unanimously disagreed with this viewpoint — it voted 30 to 2 to remove the restriction. And the *Davidson Journal* indicates 60% of Davidson students disagree that "Trustees at Davidson should be Christian."

The Religion Department

What seems to draw far more consensus than any other issue is the affiliation of the professors in the Religion department.

The Senate and the *Davidson Journal* both indicated overwhelming support from students for the dropping of the requirement, and faculty seem to have indicated agreement with such an idea for over two decades.

Kaylor states, "I do oppose the requirement ... It is no longer serving the institution well." He calls removing it "a recognition of decisions already made," one of those decisions being to get the best professors in non-Christian fields.

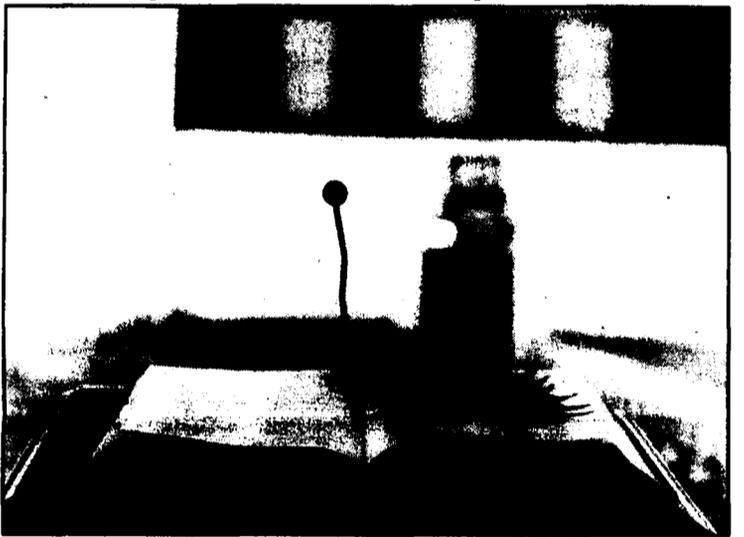
"There are those who think we could retain the reality of a confessional community and still be as well respected in academia,

ought to be an expression of our Christian faith," he continues, though he declines to offer his perception of what the Trustees' motives are.

How the department sees itself seems to be the crux of the matter. The bylaws and McKelway agree — the department of religion is (in McKelway's words) "not exactly like that of other departments." According to him, it is to "make sure the Christian faith and the Christian religion are given particular attention ... [It's] not just a matter of academic interest."

A statement issued by the Department of Religion to the Trustees says just the opposite: "The Department of Religion does not believe that special requirements should be placed upon its members, for such requirements suggest that it is something other than an academic department."

Kaylor agrees. "The point is not to teach as propagandizing, but to teach what we're expert in," he states. "We engage in serious academic study of religion ... we are not a department which seeks to



Trustees will debate the momentous issue of religion this weekend.

but I don't think that's possible," he says.

But he disagrees that it is ideally necessary to have non-Christians teach other religions. Kaylor, who once taught Hinduism at Davidson, states, "Academically speaking, there's no reason why I have to teach what I believe in."

McKelway has taught in the department since 1965 and has favored removing the requirements on the faculty conditionally. To him, it comes down to motive.

"If [the changes are made] for the purpose of diminishing the college's commitment to the Christian faith or Christian Church ... then I would not be in favor of them," he states. "These changes

indoctrinate."

To what extent all professors, even the non-tenured in the department, must give "strong evidence of Christian convictions," before hiring is in question.

Kaylor, who is himself a Presbyterian, does not remember being asked verbally about his affiliation in 1964 when he joined the department. And Professor Mark Csikszentmihalyi, who joined the faculty on a two-year contract in 1994, states "I was not asked any questions about my religious affiliation."

When asked about the affiliation of the members in his department, Kaylor responds, "I haven't asked them, and I don't know that anyone has."

Timeline

1957 - The vow which permanent faculty were required to take is changed by the Trustees. The traditional vow, which once even mirrored the one used to ordain Presbyterian ministers, is replaced with a more general Christian one.

1965 - The vow is abolished entirely. Faculty members recommended for tenure must now "certify to the Trustees" (in writing) that they are "committed to the Christian faith," are "member[s] of a Christian church," "comprehend the *Statement of Purpose* of Davidson College, and intend to promote this purpose."

1965 - Religious Life Committee to the Faculty recommends the "compulsory vesper services cease," be replaced with a larger diversity of religious activities.

1969 - "Report of the President's Study Commission on Davidson College's Church Relation" made available. It recommends "that the formal religious requirements for members of the faculty and administration contained in the By-laws ... be deleted," and that the Board of Trustees reflect a greater Christian diversity.

1971 - Many of the religious requirements are changed in the new by-laws passed by the Trustees, but several remain. Tenured faculty must be "active members of a Christian church," and all professors of Religion and Philosophy must be "of strong Christian convictions and character."

1975 - The Board of Trustees amends by-laws; Now, "the Trustees may in special circumstances grant tenure to a person who respects the Christian tradition without commitment to all its tenets, but only if he or she fully supports the purpose of the college ..." though "such cases will necessarily be rare." All Religion and Philosophy professors must "give evidence of strong Christian convictions and character."

1977 - An offer of employment to Dr. Ronald Linden, a Jewish candidate for a professorship in the Political Science Department, is rescinded after Linden, in accepting the position offered, promises to oppose those by-laws (which he termed "morally repugnant") which informally limit the religious affiliation of tenured professors. After a storm of controversial publicity, the Trustees alter the bylaws later that year to read as follows: "The President is also authorized to recommend for appointment as officers and Faculty members non-Christian persons who can work with respect for the Christian tradition even if they cannot conscientiously join it."

1993 - The SGA raises the question of the affiliation of the Trustees and the President. This discussion continues through 1995, when it passes the most recent of its resolutions on the subject. The Senate decides that the requirements for Trustees and Religion professors should be dropped, but that the President should remain Presbyterian.

February 1996 - The Trustees pass a resolution to "reaffirm our commitment to an active and vital relationship between Davidson College and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)"

Source: The College archives and Mary D. Beaty's *A History of Davidson College*