

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Adopted by the Guilford College Faculty and Board of Trustees, 1985

Guilford College is an educational community which strives to integrate personal, intellectual, physical and spiritual growth through participation in several rich traditions. These traditions include liberal arts education which values academic excellence and stresses the need in a free society for mature, broadly educated men and women; career development and community service, which provide students, whatever their age or place in life, with knowledge and skills applicable to their chosen vocations; and Quakerism, which places special emphasis on helping individuals to examine and strengthen their values. We believe that the wise and humane use of knowledge requires commitment to society as well as to self.

The Quaker heritage stresses spiritual receptivity, candor, integrity, compassion, tolerance, simplicity, equality, and strong concern for social justice and world peace. Growing out of this heritage the College emphasizes educational values which are embodied in a strong and lasting tradition of coeducation, a curriculum with intercultural and international dimensions, close individual relationships between students and faculty in the pursuit of knowledge, governance by consensus, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Guilford expects each student to develop a broad understanding of our intellectual and social heritage, and at the same time to develop a special competence in one or more disciplines. Flexibility in the curriculum encourages each student to pursue a program of studies suited to personal needs, skills and aspirations.

While accepting many traditional educational goals and methods, the College also promotes innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Both students and faculty are encouraged to pursue high levels of scholarly research and creativity in all academic disciplines. Guilford particularly seeks to explore interdisciplinary and intercultural perspectives and to develop a capacity to reason effectively, to look beneath the surface of issues, to understand the presuppositions and implications of ideas, and to draw conclusions incisively, critically and with fairness to other points of view.

The College desires to have a "community of seekers," individuals dedicated to shared and corporate search as an important part of their lives. Such a community can come about only when there is diversity throughout the institution – a diversity of older and younger perspectives, a diversity of racial and cultural backgrounds, a diversity of beliefs and value orientations. Through experiencing such differing points of view, we seek to free ourselves from bias.

As a community, Guilford strives to address questions of moral responsibility, to explore issues which are deeply felt but difficult to articulate, and to support modes of personal fulfillment. The College seeks to cultivate respect for all individuals in an environment where considered convictions, purposes and aspirations can be carried forward.