

## *A Note on Deliberation*

Deliberative dialogue is a public discussion format in which a group of citizens works through a challenge that faces them. When possible, there is a short, central text that lays out various ways in which people understand the problem, but stops short of adopting a position. Rather than “sounding off” with derision and name-calling or deferring solely to expert opinion, participants discuss together personal experiences with the issue; what they regard as valuable concerning the issue; pros and cons of available options; and the costs and consequences of possible actions. Though it is unrealistic to expect that all participants will agree at the conclusion, the hope is that the deliberation will yield common ground for action and a better understanding of people who hold a different perspective from our own.

As an educational tool, deliberative dialogue is a vehicle to develop and enhance our democratic capacities, including the ability to communicate across difference, view a complex issue from multiple perspectives, and ultimately discover some viable solutions.

At Wake Forest, we have held three campus-wide deliberative dialogues. In 2002, students in the Democracy Fellows program designed and implemented a dialogue on building community at WFU. In 2012, we focused on reimagining campus culture, and in 2013 we discussed diversity and inclusion. Some items that were discussed in the past, and have since been accomplished on campus include:

- New social space, including Campus Grounds, Zick’s, the Barn, and the Campus Kitchen lounge in Kitchin Hall
- Faculty Fellows program that encourages interaction between faculty and students outside of the classroom
- Increased opportunities for campus-wide service and promotion of our of university motto through the new Pro Humanitate Institute and Pro Humanitate Day
- Expanded training and education around issues of identity, including Gatekeepers, Safe Zone, and the social justice retreat
- Changes to orientation and pre-orientation, including Worldwide Wake
- Opportunities for ongoing, sustained dialogue, including Wake Forest’s new membership in the collegiate Sustained Dialogue Campus Network
- More informal physical spaces for unstructured interaction and conversation, especially the outdoor initiative on the quad
- Campus-wide traditions, including Lighting of the Quad, aWake All Night, and Family Weekend

There are always opportunities to go further and deeper in campus climate change. At the end of our dialogue on November 3, 2014, we will collate action steps from each dialogue group and form action teams. We invite all participants to join an action team, which will have a designated leader, and continue the work to improve our campus. Thank you for joining us in this shared endeavor.

***Pro Humanitate: What does it mean to live in community?***  
**Wake Forest University Campus Deliberation**  
**November 3, 2014**

Our university motto, *Pro Humanitate*, has broad implications for all facets of life at Wake Forest. It informs our unique approach to academic inquiry and commitment to the liberal arts, underpins our engagement in the local and global community, and guides personal ways of thinking and being. In 2011, Dr. James Powell shared the following reflection at Founder's Day Convocation: "*Pro Humanitate* calls us to consider what we are as human beings and what constitutes genuine human flourishing." This ethos has shaped our direction as an institution.

In interviews for this issue guide, members of the community defined *Pro Humanitate* as “service to others,” “a sacred duty to act beyond oneself,” “the essence of what it means to be human,” and “the tacit recognition that our world is an interdependent matrix where everyone and everything is necessary.” In this way, *Pro Humanitate* helps us to understand what it means to live in community. One faculty member defined our motto as “a network of mutuality” in which we are inextricably linked. We are not merely a collection of individuals; we are interdependent. Wake Foresters can reach across time and space and point to a shared experience, a shared understanding of what it means to be a Demon Deacon.

Recently, we have struggled to live this ideal. In 2011, when our current seniors were in their first year at Wake Forest, the *Old Gold & Black* featured pictures of racist, misogynistic and homophobic graffiti that had been scrawled across the walls and doors in a fraternity lounge. Again, in 2013, the banner in front of the LGBTQ Center was defaced with homophobic slurs and hate speech. Students, faculty, and staff engaged in an ongoing debate about what message we communicate by housing an on-campus Chick-Fil-A restaurant after its CEO publically supported and financed efforts to block marriage equality. In 2014, *The Princeton Review* ranked Wake Forest one of the “Least LGBTQ-Friendly Colleges” in the country.

Campus Life put in place a policy to govern large social events, which disproportionately affects National Panhellenic Council (NPHC) events. Under the new policy, students must have security officers present at events that occur in venues such as the Barn, Reynolds Gym, and other on-campus spaces when more than 200 people are present. Interviewees have noted that while maximum capacity in residence hall lounges is 200 people, often Interfraternity Council (IFC) events seem to exceed this number. Yet, IFC fraternities do not have security officers in the lounges. This difference in social event policy has created a feeling that NPHC events are targeted and scrutinized in a way that is inconsistent with other campus social events.

In spring 2014, students held a town hall meeting during which several individuals shared stories about times that university police officers followed or harassed them. As Vice President Penny Rue points out, “Their stories were poignant and painful, and they underscored what I had already learned: that not all Deacs feel the same sense of inclusion.” This town hall led to a review by independent consultants. Some members of our community question the methodology and findings in their final report.

Finally, this semester, a student organization planned to host a themed party that outraged some members of the community. In response, many students took to Yik Yak, a social media platform in which individuals can post comments anonymously. Some comments were racially charged; others expressed pain and anger. Several individuals questioned why the theme was offensive and asserted their right to hold such events. Still others worry that political correctness is stifling individual freedom of speech. The range of these comments illustrates the spectrum of perspectives in our community.

These incidents affect us all. As Dr. Rue wrote in her e-mail to the student body, "Wake has a quest for excellence, and in that quest we must be fearless in our ability to look honestly and constructively at our community." The first step in addressing these issues is to talk together about our experiences, aspirations, and ideas for change. President Hatch challenged us to engage across difference in dialogue: "I encourage you to learn from each other. Avoid the anonymity of social media ... and talk to someone with a Wake Forest experience different from your own – face to face." That is exactly what we aim to do in this deliberation.

The purpose of this issue guide, and the deliberation scheduled for November 3, 2014, is to offer some ways of thinking about these issues and to identify action steps for change. What does it mean to be a member of a community? What does it mean for all of us when some members of our community feel marginalized? How should we proceed together? The three perspectives that are offered here are based on interviews with a cross-section of students, faculty, and administrators, and a review of various campus documents, surveys, and studies that have been done in recent years. Each proposes a way of thinking about the challenges we face as a campus community and possible approaches to becoming a more inclusive community. These perspectives are not mutually exclusive; you may support elements from all of the proposed ways forward. Somewhere among these three perspectives you should be able to find something that connects to your own experience and aspirations for Wake Forest.

For some, the emphasis must be on becoming more diverse by addressing what some have called "a diversity deficit." They note that while we have made progress, we have significant work to do in attracting and retaining a diverse faculty, administration, and student body. What are we doing to make Wake Forest a realistic and attractive choice for students and faculty from all backgrounds? Can students see people like themselves in positions of authority, whether it is in the classroom or in the boardroom?

For others, the challenges we face are rooted in structural inequity. Members of the community highlight disparities in university policing, code of conduct, access to space, and university priorities that create an environment where students have vastly different experiences. As one staff member said, "There are two Wake Forests;" some students feel at home on campus, while others do not. Are students, faculty, and staff who are recruited to Wake Forest disappointed or surprised by what they find out about the culture once they get here? Are there rules and regulations in place that assure all students are safe and valued?

For others still, the emphasis should be placed on preparing students for global citizenship. Some point to the lack of resources and support for intercultural training, curricular diversity, and opportunities for sustained engagement. How do students communicate when differences arise? How do we prepare students for leadership in diverse environments? We must focus on creating permanent culture change and resourcing that priority appropriately. These approaches are not mutually exclusive; you might see value in each approach. At the same time, it is true that resources are limited and difficult choices must be made about where to focus our efforts.

By taking seriously each of these perspectives, and listening to those with whom we disagree or whose experiences are not like our own, we can learn to be more understanding of those who see the world differently than we do, better understand the complex personal and institutional challenges of being a truly inclusive community, and discover not only what divides us but what we have in common. A better understanding of the issues will help us to discover the common ground for action.

### **Perspective #1: Recruit and retain diverse students, faculty, staff, and administration**

It is important to acknowledge the significant, if incomplete, progress that we have made in recruiting a more diverse student body. In 2007 President Hatch appointed a Strategic Planning Committee, which produced the Strategic Plan to Foster Diversity and Inclusion at Wake Forest. Since that time, the Office of Admissions has launched aggressive initiatives to attract underrepresented populations, primarily first-generation college students, international students, and racial, religious, socio-economic, and geographic minorities on campus. Current students can see this shift; one interviewee commented, “Wake has shown that it is already bringing in a vastly different type of student than it did when I was a freshman.”

In 2009, Wake Forest took the bold move of becoming “test-optional,” which means that students are not required to submit scores from entrance examinations, such as the SAT and ACT, for admission. Given the widespread criticism that standardized tests are inherently discriminatory, this was a courageous, democratic turn for admissions. Naysayers, however, argued that the decision would lower academic standards and taint Wake Forest’s national reputation; an admissions officer refuted that criticism by reporting that since the test-optional change, we have managed to recruit a student body that is increasingly more racially and socio-economically diverse “without sacrificing quality in high school records, in first year GPA’s, or in attrition levels.”

Financial aid packages have steadily increased over the last five years as well, with over 42% of the student body receiving some sort of institutional grant. While roughly 45% of Wake students are “full pay,” meaning that they do not receive any aid and pay the cost of attendance per year at Wake Forest (\$62,538), many students do not have that financial capacity. The Joseph G. Gordon fund provides seven scholarships to outstanding students who come from historically underrepresented constituencies, and the Magnolia Scholars program specifically targets first-generation students with grants and scholarships and the academic and social support they need from their first steps on campus to graduation. However, we must be careful not to conflate race and socioeconomic status; a large percentage of first generation college students are white, and not all first generation students are from

lower socioeconomic backgrounds. As one staff member noted, white students who come from low income families often go unnoticed as an “invisible minority.”

Racial minorities comprise roughly 24% of the undergraduate student body; that number drops to 18% when we remove international students, who comprise 5.3% of undergraduates at Wake Forest. Roughly 7.5% of first year students are first generation college students. The institution does not have clear numbers for students who identify as LGBTQ or gender non-conforming, although multifold increase in usage of the LGBTQ Center over the past two years suggest the importance of this space for our LGBTQ community and allies. While such progress is important, it is not complete. Students, faculty, and staff uniformly identified room for growth in the diversity of our student population. One interviewee asked, “How can you leverage diverse perspectives if you do not have diverse people in the room?”

In addition, interviewees point to a lack of diversity in our faculty and staff as a serious issue. One interviewee identified a “pitifully” non-diverse faculty as a cause for concern. In 2013, less than one third of full professors in the College of Arts and Sciences were female, but almost two-thirds of lecturers were female. Roughly 20.7% of full-time faculty are racially diverse (.4% American Indian, 11.1% Asian, 4.4% Black, 3.4% Hispanic), including faculty in the professional schools. Upper administration is even less diverse; of the 18 senior administrators currently in position, only 4 are female and 1 is a racial minority. Some question the lack of a cabinet-level Chief Diversity Officer, and identify a lack of diversity on the University Board of Trustees. As one interviewee stated, “The Trustees don’t look like the students and staff on the website.”

## **Perspective #2: Address and make significant changes in structural inequity**

Proponents of this perspective argue that we must focus our efforts and resources on building an infrastructure that allows all students, faculty, and staff to be included, valued members of the community. Wake Forest has made considerable progress in a short period of time to become more inclusive. Within four years, we established the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the LGBTQ Center, and the Women’s Center. We created positions for an Associate Chaplain of Muslim Life and a Director of Jewish Life within the Chaplain’s Office. In 2014, we more than tripled the number of international students who are new to the campus community; we established a process to report biased incidents on campus and respond in a timely fashion; and we introduced the President’s Commission on LGBTQ Affairs. Despite these strides, we must address the lingering inequity in access to physical space, allocation of resources, and policies that govern campus life.

In many interviews, students expressed a desire to revisit policies that govern social space on campus, including the Barn and lounges in residence halls. In order to be eligible for a lounge, student organizations must apply for a space and be approved by the Student Life Committee. Lounge space in our residential halls ranges from 500 sq. ft. to 1800 sq. ft. The cost of leasing lounge space is currently \$2.30 per square foot per semester, which costs organizations between \$1,150 - \$5,710 per year. This cost does not include furnishing the space, making renovations, or paying for the cleaning costs that are associated with lounge rentals. This cost is prohibitive for smaller organizations and has created a strong

Greek presence in the residence halls; of the 29 lounges on campus, 17 are leased to fraternities and sororities. In the absence of centralized, shared space on campus, students see the lounges as symbols of exclusion that favor well-resourced organizations on campus. Furthermore, some students questioned the blocks of housing for members of fraternities and sororities. One student mentioned the lack of a true student union as a gathering place for all students, and identified this as a serious threat to student well-being. As one staff member observed, “Space communicates value; who occupies the prime real estate on campus?” Furthermore, one interviewee remarked at the high number of international students living in one residence hall and urged deliberate effort to create diverse spaces, including first-year residence halls. “Dorms need to be representative of the student body,” the interviewee said, “and we need to be more intentional in how we shape those environments.”

In addition, students, faculty, and staff identified inequitable policies that disproportionately affect certain populations on campus. In 2014, students addressed university police at a town hall meeting in which they shared stories about unfair policing practices that led underrepresented students on campus to feel targeted by police. When one student asked, “What does the data say about the demographics of those who are asked for ID on campus?” Chief Lawson broke down ID checks by demographics as follows: “37% white male, 29% black male, 7% white female, and 25% black female.” Black students comprise roughly 7% of students on campus. As one student stated, “Some people need the system to be behind them for the first time ever so that they don’t have to worry about being arrested while walking to class.” Following the town hall meeting, the university hired consultants to conduct an independent review of policing practices. Despite the fact that students continue to maintain that they were discriminated against, the report found that “none of the allegations of racial bias rose to the level of actual bias.” Students, faculty, and staff have called for greater transparency in policy review, repeatedly asking for the complete raw data from university police.

Some interviewees called for a change to the admissions policy. In 2010, the university moved from a need-blind process to need-aware. In this move, admissions officers can consider the financial need of students when they make admissions decisions. One interviewee noted, “The decision to move from need-blind to capacity-to-pay in admissions was essential for the economic model at the time, but it produced a set of students who represent one of the biggest inequalities [socioeconomic].” As a result, we have shifted the demographic of students enrolled at Wake Forest. One student commented, “I think it really comes down to admissions. We have a very false slice of the American demographic on this campus.” Without greater socioeconomic diversity, some question how successful we will be at changing campus culture. Faculty and staff particularly lament the loss of a middle-class identity.

With a capital campaign for the future of Wake Forest well under way, several of these items, including increased funding for student financial aid and increased faculty positions, are at the center of our fundraising plans. Still, some in the community question our priorities, especially considering that enhanced efforts around intercultural engagement are not at the forefront of Wake Will. Faculty are especially keen on reducing “administrative bloat,” and question the number of new administrative positions on campus. At the same time, some staff members highlighted a lack of support and high burnout, especially among those working directly with students, signaling the need for additional

staffing. Many of these programs are staffed in small numbers and lack administrative support. While we know that resources are limited, we must make strategic decisions about how best to prioritize funding in order to affect climate change.

### **Perspective #3: Strengthen preparation for global citizenship**

At Wake Forest, we have the strategic goal of preparing students to become effective global citizens by increasing their international understanding and intercultural competency. We do this through a combined focus on integrating intercultural diversity into the curriculum and co-curriculum; strengthening intercultural competency programs; and offering opportunities on and off campus for students to engage in meaningful cross-cultural exchanges. For example, with “over 50% of our students pursuing academic credit abroad, for the past five years we have been annually ranked in the top 15% (and as high as third) among the top 40 doctorate institutions in terms of undergraduate participation in study abroad” (Quality Enhancement Plan). In addition, Global Programs and Services has grown in the last few years to include new positions, increased international student services and transition programs, and a focus on campus global engagement.

In 2009, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) launched Gatekeepers, a program designed to engage faculty and staff in meaningful conversation about cultural sensitivity and develop skills for intercultural communication. Since that time, approximately 2,749 faculty, staff, and students have completed a Gatekeepers training. In fall 2014 alone, the Manager of Diversity Education has received twenty-four requests for customized training, which is a 500% increase from last fall. In addition, in 2011, the LGBTQ Center created a Safe Zone program, and staff members have trained 806 members of our community. While the number of faculty, staff, and students who have participated in Gatekeepers and Safe Zone training has increased over the past few years, ODI and LGBTQ Center cannot reach additional people without increased funding and staff support.

Data from student surveys also give us pause about whether our campus is adequately developing the cultural competencies that prepare our students to live in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. Interestingly, when they entered Wake Forest in 2009, 91% of the class of 2013 reported that they believed “helping to promote racial understanding” was important. However, when the class graduated in 2013, only 59% reported that they had “socialized with someone of another race or ethnic group” at Wake Forest. It is worth noting that this number has increased significantly since the last senior survey was administered five years before, but still from the 2013 class, only 38% of graduating seniors said that they were satisfied with the diversity on campus, nearly 10% lower than college seniors report at peer institutions. This data suggests that our students enter Wake Forest with the belief that racial understanding is important, but leave having had limited interactions with others who are different from themselves.

One way to increase intercultural understanding is through a robust, diverse curriculum. One faculty member pointed to a “gaping, embarrassing hole in our curriculum” that does not require students of all majors to wrestle with issues of identity. She went on to lament, “We are not producing meaningful

scholarship on questions of race, gender, and sexual orientation that are influencing the intellectual fields, and we are not offering sufficient number of courses or majors [that address these areas].” Another faculty member called for increased academic courses that require students to engage in dialogue about racism, sexism, and classism on campus. Students have suggested creating a required course that teaches skills for dialogue and encourages a complex understanding of intersecting identities, perhaps as part of the First Year Seminar curriculum or required HES 100/101 sequence. One other way to address these issues might be to re-examine the Cultural Diversity requirement, which many argue has been diluted. Several interviewees pointed to a lack of support for faculty to develop their own facilitation and dialogue skills. One student said, “Faculty are not willing to lend an appropriate amount of time to the discussion of these issues. Professors are consistently striving for a level of ‘comfort’ in the room, perhaps inappropriately so.”

In addition to creating a more diverse curriculum, proponents of this perspective argue that students must have sustained, ongoing opportunities to develop cultural fluency on and off campus. Some students do not feel prepared to engage in conversations about identity, and they need a safe space to ask questions without offending others. The Pro Humanitate Institute has been working to establish sustained dialogue groups in partnership with the Sustained Dialogue Campus Network. In addition, Resident Assistants and Faculty Fellows have committed to hosting difficult dialogues in the residence halls; one RA hosted a conversation about Yik Yak in the fall semester. Student organizations, such as the Arch Society, Wake Forest Debate, and fraternity and sorority life, must also take the lead on providing these campus forums for discussion. One student shared, “Wake needs to encourage people to work through discomfort. I feel discomfort every day.”

### **Where do we go from here?**

First, who is accountable to remedy these issues? Among the perspectives articulated here, there are ways in which faculty, administrators, and students can work toward creating a more inclusive, vibrant campus culture. Since the last deliberations, we have created new social space, established campus-wide traditions, enhanced faculty and student interaction in residence halls, and developed new opportunities for civic engagement. Progress toward other recommendations from previous deliberations, such as seriously reevaluating the Cultural Diversity requirement, increasing the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty, staff, and administration, and tackling the thorny problem of space equity on campus, remain incomplete.

Moving forward, we must all commit to working within our own spheres of influence to affect change. Faculty can reshape the Cultural Diversity requirement so that all students are challenged to grapple with these issues; enhance their own skills for dialogue and comfort with difficult conversations; and assist in the recruitment and retention of a more diverse faculty. Administrators can prioritize funding and allocate resources to champion diversity and inclusion; review and change policies that are inequitable; address the issue of space and create shared spaces for all students; and increase diversity across our campus –from bottom to top. Students can lead by increasing the diversity within their organizations; engaging across difference with students from other groups; and pushing through



discomfort to ask difficult questions and learn from each other. What will you do? How will you commit to creating a more inclusive Wake Forest?