

July 13, 2010

Setting the Record Straight

By the Citizens Association of Georgetown

In Response to Georgetown University's Misleading "Point-by-Point" Responses to Community Input on its Campus Plan.

GU's Campus Plan reflects a University decision to ignore the views of the community adjoining its campus. It has failed to work with the community and the city to provide affordable, convenient housing for its students on campus, and instead has tolerated poorly maintained, substandard housing conditions, trash and rats, and disorderly behavior by its students living off campus in University and privately owned housing. This has created an unjustified burden on the surrounding communities, on city services, and on GU's own students that the current Campus Plan does nothing to alleviate. It therefore violates DC zoning law that requires a Campus Plan to avoid causing such adverse impacts on adjoining communities.

GU's Claims	Facts
1. Georgetown University has not exceeded the enrollment requirements imposed by the DC Board of Zoning Adjustment in its' 2000-2010 plan.	The number of off-campus GU students has increased dramatically over what was projected by GU in the 2000-2010 campus plan. For example, GU has exceeded its own projected "maximum growth" for graduate student enrollment in 2010 by 2,402 students or 162%.
2. The enrollment cap imposed by the BZA related to full-time traditional undergraduates has been strictly adhered to.	GU may be technically in compliance with the BZA cap as it uses an <i>average</i> "traditional" undergraduate enrollment formula. This method is inadequate as it fails to take into consideration that GU exceeds its enrollment cap by several hundred students each Fall without providing any additional student housing on campus. It has also increased "nontraditional" undergraduate enrollment by 301. GU may have also exceeded the "traditional" undergraduate enrollment cap last year. GU recently reduced the enrollment numbers it previously reported for 2009, without explanation, to stay under the cap.

3. GU can house 84% of its undergraduate students on campus, which is the highest proportion of on-campus undergraduate housing of any university in the city other than Gallaudet.

According to GU's official data, and basic arithmetic, **GU houses about 76% of its "traditional undergraduates" on campus, none of its "nontraditional undergraduates" and only around 50% of its juniors and seniors. Most of those students are forced to seek housing elsewhere, in the surrounding small residential communities adjoining GU. This policy has caused serious adverse impacts in our communities.**

4. GU has one of the most extensive programs for monitoring and responding to off-campus student conduct issues of any university in the city.

GU's program is ineffective because of the large number of unsupervised students living off-campus in our communities, and it will remain ineffective until that situation changes. The failure of the program is demonstrated by the hundreds of resident complaints and 911 calls related to student off-campus conduct, occurring every single year.

5. Over the 10-year period of the plan, GU proposes to increase enrollment at the School of Continuing Studies (SCS) by 1,370, and to increase other graduate school enrollment by 1,095.

GU has increased its graduate enrollment from 3,560 students in 2000 to 6,275 in 2010 vs. its 2000 projection of 3,873. Its current projection of 8,750 students by 2020, an increase of 5,160 graduate students since 2000 could also be wide off the mark. Unchecked and without a graduate cap, GU has unfortunately accelerated the process of increasing its graduate enrollment in the last few years. GU currently provides no graduate housing.

6. The average age of GU graduate students is 28 and many are married or live alone. Based on GU's hotline data, students in this age group historically have not adversely impacted the quality of life in the neighborhoods in which they live.

Experience within the community shows that adverse-impact issues can be as severe with graduate students as with undergraduates. The "hotline" is widely considered a failure, unreliable and only receives a fraction of resident's complaints. According to official data from DC agencies (MPD and DPW), on average, **areas with high concentration of students (undergraduates and graduates) can cause 100 times more quality of life issue than those faced by other residential areas.**

7. The number of graduate students living in West Georgetown went from 75 in 2000 to 58 in 2009; in East Georgetown, from 49 in 2000 to 52 in 2009; in Burleith from 102 in 2000 to 105 in 2009.

According to GU's own data, the total number of graduate students in 2009 in Georgetown and Burleith is 374. In ZIP 20007 it's 1,132. Based on our own observations and surveys, **we believe those numbers, while substantial, fail to account for all the graduate students living in our communities.**

8. The increase proposed for the graduate schools is less than the actual increase that occurred between 2000-2010 and yet the number of graduate students living in zip code 20007 remained constant during that time.

Based on our own observations and surveys, GU's numbers do not appear to be accurate. Furthermore, the issue is not only the increase in enrollment but also where the students seek to live. **We now have close to 300 student rental houses.** A staggering 666% difference from GU's own 2000 Campus Plan projections

9. The proposal does not call for demolishing any townhouses in the 1789 block. One of the conceptual plans for this project calls for the demolition of one townhouse on N Street built in 1980 to facilitate access to the project.

The adverse impact of housing students in immediate proximity to a neighborhood residential area is not addressed by GU's plan for the 1789 block. That impact is the principal reason for the community's strong concern. **As for demolition, the drawings GU shared with the community show the demolition of several historic townhouses.** We do not have the "conceptual plans" GU is referring to now.

10. GU's heating and cooling plant emits only a fraction of the emissions allowable under its EPA Title V Permit.

Title V Permits are granted to the heaviest polluters. A taller smokestack will push pollutants to the community, especially to the north, as is shown in GU's own study.

11. The purpose of this project is to improve the air quality on campus and will not add to the capacity of GU's heating and cooling plant.

GU refuses to commit to not increasing production and emissions. Given past experience it is reasonable to be concerned that GU may use the proposed eighty-three foot tall industrial smokestack to increase production and consequently increase emissions. Such emissions may then fall into the surrounding residential communities.

12. The University's purpose in providing these 700 additional parking spaces is to encourage parking on campus rather than on neighborhood streets.

GU's own projections and data show that their new **campus plan calls for over 5,700 cars driving to and from GU every day (in addition to the hospital and undergraduate students) of which 4,000 will park in the neighborhood.**

13. Construction traffic will be handled through the normal second stage review and approval process.

We understand MedStar would like to build a new state-of-the-art hospital on the GU campus south of the current hospital, which could benefit the community greatly. GU has not agreed to this, however. Therefore MedStar had no choice but to propose a ten-year plan of constant construction on its current buildings – which is not beneficial to MedStar or to the community. GU currently has no plan to address a decade of piecemeal construction traffic in an already highly congested area.