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June 20, 1961

To: Dean McCartney
From: Jean Stouffer

You asked some time ago for my suggestions for baccalaureate and commencement. I'm sorry to have been so slow but the following are my thoughts:

1. Have the band in uniform.
2. Have faculty marshalls lead the group across the field, then drop off at appropriate places rather than standing on the field by themselves. Have two marshalls continue with the graduates rather than having junior students.
3. Have a faculty chairman on the platform to emcee the baccalaureate. This is a college function and I feel a college person should introduce the members and the speaker.
4. Have an outside speaker for baccalaureate but have commencement a family affair with the President as the only speaker - along with the Board of Regents representative.
5. Eliminate the reading of individual names at commencement and let graduates get their own diploma when they turn in their caps and gowns.
6. When the graduates return from the platform, have them sit down. Have them stand up only a row at a time as they march down to platform. The graduates stood 35 minutes during which time many parents behind them could not see the platform activities.
7. Have the choir march in with the graduates. They would make a colorful addition to the procession.
8. The band director should face the audience when leading the hymn or alma mater. It was difficult for the audience to follow.
9. Have more potted trees on the stage. It looked particularly bare for baccalaureate.
10. Have a faculty committee to handle baccalaureate and commencement arrangements.
11. Reconsider the timing of commencement activities. Having to give senior finals the week prior to final week means that in many classes the final for the entire group is given then. This makes a real hardship on many students I would suggest having commencement following the final week as they do in most other colleges. If the choir and band were told they had to come back for commencement or they would not receive their grades, they would. We could house them in the dorm if necessary.
12. I'm sure I am in the minority but I would expect the faculty to march at bacc. too. It adds that extra bit of color and pageantry which is impressive, I feel.

(over)

It sounds from the above comments as if I am very critical. I really am not. I just feel that we made a great step in taking the ceremonies outdoors, that ~~we~~ they can be most inspiring and colorful, and that with a few minor changes it could be even better. This is a compilation of my thoughts and the ideas of other faculty members with whom I have talked. Nos. 3 and 5 above have been expressed by many faculty members. In every respect this was the finest commencement we have had since I have been here.

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/s/ Jean

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