

## INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

TO Mr. A. Bright, Chairman  
Academic Events Committee

FROM R. W. Jones, Chairman  
Executive Committee

DATE April 7, 1975

## SUBJECT

In response to your two memos dated 17 March requesting information concerning the Academic Events Committee, I have attached a copy of the charge to that committee.

In my opinion it is the responsibility of the Academic Events Committee to review existing policies concerning academic events and decide if there should be changes in those policies. The committee could also consider establishing new academic events and formulate policies for those events. The committee can only recommend changes in existing policies or establishing new events, as the final decision on any change rests in the Senate.

I have not given the matter a great deal of thought, but it seems to me that the types of questions for the committee to consider are: does YSU need three commencements, should a prayer be given at commencement, who selects the speaker at commencement (the administration or the faculty), should individual names be read at commencement, is honors day necessary, etc. Of the above questions the one concerning the commencement speaker and the related question of awarding honorary degrees is a sensitive issue. Dr. Coffelt is of the opinion that these two matters are clearly his responsibilities (awarding of degrees is a responsibility of the Board of Trustees, but who selects the individuals to receive the honorary degrees is not so obvious). I do know that there are faculty who are concerned about these matters, and are of the opinion that there should be faculty input into the selection of commencement speakers and recipients of honorary degrees.

The Academic Events Committee is new and did not exist under the former Senate constitution. To my knowledge there has never existed a faculty committee which had policy making responsibilities concerning academic events. Two former committee, Public Ceremonial Affairs (C-12) and Honors Day (C-14), had the responsibilities of administering, arranging, planning and "conducting" academic events. That is, these committees established seating arrangements, ordered flowers, arranged for a minister, arranged for music, etc. Both the Executive Committee and Charter and By-Laws Committee members agreed unanimously that these functions are not faculty responsibilities, and in our opinion should be the responsibility of one staff person rather than the responsibility of a committee. We would object to a faculty member being assigned to these functions.

The most recent chairmen of committees C-12 and C-14 were Dr. S. Gardner and Mr. D. Byo respectively.

I hope this memo answers your questions. If it does not, please call me.

  
R. W. Jones

RJW/dc