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Student Association Pre-School Conference Meeting Minutes, 09-07-1963

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Pre-School Conference  
September 7, 1963

MINUTES

3:00 Meeting:

Devotional:


JOEL: Report on the SA officer-faculty committee meeting about orientation of new students.

Asked for report on the progress of those making posters.

METHHEL: Signs are completed for the watermelon feed, the registration line refreshments, and the information booth. Others are still to be made.

(Joel then dismissed the council until 9:00 so that he could arrange for Mike Waters, President of the Mohicans, to assume the responsibility of picking up students at the bus and train stations.

Dr. Gilliam explained brainstorming then led a session on improvement of study conditions. (See brainstorming file.)

9:00 Meeting:

Joe Hacker was asked to come and discuss with us the problems of the religious emphasis on campus. He asked that we allow J. L. Dykes part of his allotted time so that Brother Dykes, elder, could discuss the role of the college church in the life of the student and plans for this year. Bob Brewer was sent to ask Brother Dykes to come.

JOE HACKER: The SA and the Bible Department share a mutual interest in the religious affairs and the spiritual atmosphere on the campus. We need to work together to make these things what they ought to be. Besides the Bible classes, the religious functions on campus include chapel, Monday night meetings, devotionals around the lily pond, lectureship,
and seminars. Dr. Benson has given the Bible Department the responsibility of preparing the devotionals for chapel this year. Problems are numerous in the preparation of effective programs, such as a shortage of time, the need for variety, and so forth. How can chapel devotionals be improved?

METHEL: The devotionals lose their effectiveness because they are all alike.

JIMMY A: They become too perfunctory.

TOM: It is too obvious when the devotional is cut short for programs; this is almost never justified.

JOE HACKER: But we would like to show some films which would necessitate the shortening of devotional.

DR. GILLIAM: Do we have to have a devotional every day?

BOB: The chapel services at ACC had no set pattern; ours becomes almost a ritualistic ceremony. A more informal type of service would help in keeping interest up.

JOEL: It is also good to have as much student participation as possible.

DR. GILLIAM: A stereotype makes any deviation obvious. We wouldn't know devotional was being cut short if it wasn't the same every day.

JOE HACKER: We would appreciate having the names of the students who would be willing to participate.

JOEL: We have always provided these in the past and would be glad to do so again this year.

JOE HACKER: We would appreciate it. It isn't very feasible to have spontaneous singing as students enter the auditorium because of the great number, but we could have it during the devotional.

TOM: The first few weeks of school are always very hectic, but we should make an effort to make these first services especially inspirational.
DR. GILLIAM: This year there will probably be more orientation in chapel than ever before.

TOM: Just make sure that the devotionals aren't too stilted.

JOEL: He doesn't necessarily mean that the chapel periods should be devoted entirely to devotionals; just that the quality of the devotionals should be especially good.

JOE HACKER: Ira North is coming for a seminar during the ninth week. In December O. C. Lambert is coming; he is a recognized scholar on Catholicism. In February Jim Bill McIntre is to conduct a seminar on journalism. His talks in chapel will be of his own choosing, as is customary. E. W. McMillan is holding the spring meeting in March. A. R. Holten will hold a seminar on missions in April. Each member of the Bible faculty is supposed to give a chapel speech as well as other members of the faculty. And the lectureship also relates to chapel. Clifton Rogers and Clarence Daly will both speak in chapel that week, one on stewardship and the other on something else. There will be classes on specialized subjects. Are there any comments about lectureship?

JOEL: Is there anything we can do to help?

JOE HACKER: Help last year was given by social clubs. And we could use help with typing. Dr. Benson is anxious to have as much student participation as possible. How can we get students to attend better?

JIMMY A: Class conflicts make attendance difficult in many cases.

JOEL: There is also difficulty in selecting a theme which would appeal to both students and incoming visitors. It is probably not a very easily solved problem.

JOE HACKER: Indeed, it is the most difficult one of the whole lectureship.

BOB: One thing about the program this year is that the speakers are
ones which will be more familiar to the students than speakers of the past have been.

JOE HACKER: We have changed policy this year and are using more preachers who are qualified instead of having swapouts with other schools. Lectureship is to edify and inspire—we can use workshops for scholarly work.

JOEL: Have heard very favorable comments about the workshop.

JOE HACKER: Any suggestions on a theme for the '64 lectureship would be greatly appreciated.

JIM WILSON: What is this year's theme?

JOE HACKER: "Christ The Way." The first two speakers are Raymond Kelsey from the viewpoint of metaphysics and Alonzo Welsh on ethics and epistemology. Cleon Lyles will speak on unity among those of the Way, and George Stevenson will be another speaker. There will be a special panel composed of Buddy Meyer, Bill Sherrill, and Paul McGee on "Youth in the Way."

BOB: Are you having many panel discussions.

JOE HACKER: No, what you are speaking of is a "forum," and lectureship is too big for these.

TOM: Who is speaking on Thursday night?

JOE HACKER: Cleon Lyles and George Stevenson at the two different places.

LINDA: Are there to be any classes for the girls?

JOE HACKER: Yes, Mrs. Lyles is to conduct a class on teaching women.

BOB: What would be the value of using some students with several of the men who are coming to hold a question and answer period?

JOE HACKER: We haven't planned anything along that line; but if you can think of a suitable subject, it isn't too late to put it on the program.
Would students come?

JOEL: Again, it would be a matter of promotion.

TOM: Students don't feel that the lectureship is for them.

JOE HACKER: Well, originally it was for students only.

TOM: There should be something planned especially for students.

JOEL: Student speakers in chapel the week before lectureship might be of value.

JOE HACKER: Good idea; we would have to see Dr. Benson. We could also use Clarence Daly and Clifton Rogers for conferences with students. If you will suggest a topic that will be of interest to students, we will do it.

How about Monday night meeting? This year they will be in the old tradition of the college. They will not be required as they used to be, but they need to be used to help with the spiritual atmosphere of the campus. Students seem to have come to think that the Monday night meetings are only for those who are interested in doing mission work and preaching. And there has been some conflict between P. E. and Timothy Club; some felt they could not afford to go to both. We could schedule a Monday night meeting for all students who want to attend and reserve time at the end of the meeting for announcements of special group meetings for those who are interested. There would be very little conflict with the intramural program, and we are trying to make it a meeting which would be meaningful enough to get students to want to attend. We thought we might set up a committee composed of Joe Hacker as chairman, Conard Hays, Archie Isom, Andy Ritchie (when he returns), Dr. Gilliams, Bob Brown, two representatives from the SA (probably Joel and Mary Ethel) and a subcommittee of students to work together to plan programs to meet the special needs of students. We could have a strong devotional program at
at 6:30 for an hour and then have special meetings later.

JIM WILSON: What was the old tradition?
JOE HACKER: It was a devotional conducted by Brother Armstrong.

The Monday night meeting has become narrowed too much. What do you all think?

BOB: It has very good possibilities.
JOE HACKER: But we need your help. Another thing is that people don't know what is going on. We could have printed cards given to students.
MARY ELLEN: And we could put posters on campus.
JOEL: Yes, we would be glad to help advertise.

J. L. Dykes had arrived by this time, and he was given opportunity to say what he wanted to.

J. L. DYKES: We want to make the best possible program for the college church this year. For several years we have met with a student committee to ask how the program could be improved. Several good projects have come from this. This year such committees have become an official part of the leadership organization; and three of them have been designed: high school, college, and married students. John Lee Dykes, R. T. Clark, and Jack Ryan will comprise a committee designed to study how to meet the needs of college students. We expect to add student members to this committee and would like help from this group in selecting students to serve on the committee. We have been asking teachers to recommend students who are faithful in attending their classes because we feel that a student who doesn't attend would know little about our program. Would like Roger Johnson to serve as a student chairman. Upperclassmen would be better choices, and location in the dorms should be considered so that each section of the student body would be adequately represented. Several worthwhile projects came from this committee last year such as the weekly bulletins and the
clothing collection. We would like your help in selecting this committee.

JOEL: How good have the teachers' choices been?

J. L. DYKES: Fairly good, but the time element and meeting attendance have presented difficulties. Could you assume the responsibility for selecting students to serve?

JOEL: Yes, we could do this, or we could make recommendations from the teachers' lists.

J. L. DYKES: Well, the committee needs to meet as soon as possible, and it takes some time for the teachers to learn the names of their students.

JOEL: Suppose we could do it then--by observing class attendance for ourselves.

J. L. DYKES: The classes for this year are planned as follows: Jack Ryan and Ken Davis will be teaching a class for new students. R. T. Clark and Clark Stevens will teach a more advanced class. We need to encourage new students to attend the proper class. Mrs. Puckett will conduct a class on teaching children. Dr. Ulrey will conduct a Bible textual study, and Ed Sewell will teach a class on marriage and the home. Bob Clauch, Bob Knight, and M. E. Berryhill will collaborate on the subject of youth in the church.

Another part of the program is the Sunday evening meeting for young people. Classes such as this are designed to be small with regular attendance--to meet special needs. These will meet during the last part of the first services. Are there any questions?

ROB: What is going to be done to promote the second service?

J. L. DYKES: We don't know. Some stay for both services. The classes will help. Another problem is going to be encountered in finding seating for Wednesday night services.

JOE HACKER: We thought about having a class during Wednesday night services on a high level which would probably attract more faculty members
than students, but students could come if they wished. We would have
different teachers who are qualified to teach in different fields. Then
we could also have a series of classes on practical areas. This would
meet the needs of a greater number of people.

J. L. Dykes: We will hand out cards tomorrow in order to find out who
plans to worship with us. Some students feel hesitant to place membership.
We try to make sure that every boy who wants to is used in services sometime
during the year.

Bob: Something needs to be done so that students could meet the elders
and other personnel of the college church in order to feel closer to them.

J. L. Dykes: The elders and deacons will be introduced tomorrow.

Joe Hacker: We wrote a handbook this summer that is available to
people who want to know about the college church leadership. There aren't
enough copies for everyone to have one, but they are available to those
who are interested.

Dr. Gilliam conducted a brainstorming session on solving the line
cutting problem. (See brainstorming file.)

1:00 Meeting:

Joel: Let's discuss what we can do about linecutting.

Rob: Eliminate having to sit in order.

Janie: The seating arrangement in the dining hall is necessary because
of the problem of space.

Jimmy A: The tables are so small that people could sit together only
in limited numbers anyway.

Joel: At summer school we ate in small cliques which we couldn't get
out of even when we wanted to. The present system is better because it
causes one to get acquainted with more people than he would be eating
with the same group every day.

JIMMY A: We need to begin with suggestions rather than punitive measures. The use of pledges might be effective.

TOM: The problem is letting students know that they don't have to stand for linecutting.

JOEL: But 60% of the student body practice it, though partly in self-defense.

JIMMY A: A speech early in the year would perhaps be effective. Students need to realize that the ultimate responsibility lies with themselves.

JOEL: Such a speech would have to be very carefully composed in order to assure the right effect.

BOB: The idea of having two speeches, pro and con, is a good one.

JIMMY A: Yes, have someone point up the weaknesses of pro arguments after he has made a speech advocating linecutting.

METHYL: We need to make people feel so self-conscious when they cut line that they would hesitate to do it.

JIM W: Freshmen probably wouldn't cut line anyway if they didn't see the upperclassmen doing it.

TOM: Yes, they do it because everyone else does it.

METHYL: We could pick out the worst offenders and have a brainstorming session about linecutting with them.

JIM A: We could put a box on campus where witnesses could put the names of offenders. They would have to sign their names, but the signatures would be used only when necessary. Then have chronic offenders come and discuss the problem with us.

JOEL: Yes, this is the principle of making the worst roughnecks to be monitors and getting them on the right side.

JIM A: We need to start a program right away--have a sign on the
bulletin board and a speech.

JOEL: And a slogan would be good.

JIM A: And we should put something on the meal tickets for next nine weeks.

JOEL: Yes, we can do that.

JIM W: An editorial in the BISON for this week would help some.

ROB: We could start a tradition of hissing or singing "Happy Line Cut."

LINDA: I don't think that would go over too well.

JANIE: Let's appoint a committee to think of a name or slogan for linecutters.

JIM A: And it needs to be done with utmost dispatch.

JOEL: Yes.

Social Clubs:

JOEL: First of all, what is the basic problem of social clubs at Harding?

TOM: Lack of purpose.

METHEL: Lack of leadership.

JIM W: Our system of democracy.

METHEL: Club leadership is untrained. A workshop for officers of clubs would be especially useful.

JOEL: We had one brainstorming session on club problems this summer, and the workshop idea came out of it. List all the areas in which clubs are weak and the officers are the ones to solve the problems. If the officers are doing an effective job, in general these problems will be taken care of. A lack of experience in things such as leading discussions and appointing effective committees will seriously hamper any officer. A workshop would probably be useful here, but let's discuss some other things.
First, what is the purpose of social clubs?

**METH**E: Association.

**TOM**: An outside interest besides schoolwork—to balance academic life.

**JOEL**: They do serve a purpose in the social area. Could they do so in the academic area?

**TOM**: If they could, they don't now.

**LINDA**: In some clubs the officers must have a certain grade point.

**JIM A**: They could have study halls and encourage attendance.

**JOEL**: And old members could help new ones in areas of trouble. How about the realm of athletics?

**TOM**: Athletics has become the prime motivation of men's social clubs.

**ROB**: Yes, and it is regarded from two standpoints by the individual clubs—either enthusiastically or as an unpleasant duty. It is at the point now that about 50% of the club's work is in intramural sports.

**JOEL**: Yes, when we suggested to the student-faculty committee last night that pledging start after semester, it was said that this would mess up intramural sports.

**ROB**: But club sports aren't such a big part in the intramural program.

**JIM W**: Sports play a big part in choosing new club members and in choosing clubs, too.

**JIM A**: Other than the speech arts tournament, what area of rivalry between clubs is there besides sports? And rivalry is very important in building club spirit. Is there not any other area in which rivalry can be utilized?

**METH**E: If pledge week were put off, clubs would make a greater effort to put on good chapel programs.

**JIM A**: Some kind of Sing Song would be another area of competition.

**JOEL**: How about the spiritual area?
TOM: That usually depends on the club itself.

JIM W: Spiritual development is the purpose of some clubs.

JOEL: Where are we most lacking in the spiritual area? Why isn't there more spiritual value in social clubs?

JIMMY A: Well, that isn't the primary function of social clubs.

ROB: When a club has a great spiritual influence on its members, it is usually because of other members, not a planned program of the club organization.

JOEL: Can you think of any other area in which clubs could serve?

ROB: One year we had a club Help Day, but it wasn't very well publicized.

JIMMY A: The men's clubs have helped with parking during lectureship, and the women's clubs helped with posters.

ROB: The last club Help Day was in the spring when we planted flowers and shrubs on campus.

LINDA: Clubs help meet a definite emotional need, especially in allowing girls to get to know their sponsor.

JIMMY A: But the boy's social clubs are too big for this. And the social club award for scholarship isn't the factor it could be.

ROB: The award is a good idea, but it is more important to smaller clubs. It is hard for large clubs to maintain any kind of a good overall average.

ROB: But some of the smaller clubs are close to the bottom as far as scholastic averages go.

JIMMY A: This could be helped by club study halls with grade point requirements for activity.

JOEL: One of the areas in which clubs could do more is in the area of service. To what extent are the clubs fulfilling these purposes?
Rob: Again, it depends on the club.

Joel: The good organization of our sports program could be why some clubs are more developed in that area; perhaps they don't have sufficient impetus to develop in other areas.

Rob: It is an unhealthy situation when big clubs are pressured into playing in a program in which they are not interested. They are still expected to compete.

Methel: In the girls' clubs the athletic program helps build club spirit, whether we are good athletes or not.

Tom: Don't know; have seen some awfully onesided games among the girls which didn't do much for the losing team's spirit.

Joel: Let's continue the discussion of club contributions to the spiritual area.

Jimmy A: Why not let social clubs be in charge of chapel or services at church?

Joel: What negative effect do social clubs have?

Jimmy A: They promote clannishness.

Janie: Theybys are worse about this than the girls are, though.

Jimmy A: However, have seen some girls to whom getting in the "right" social club was awfully important.

Joel: What other ways?

Mary Ellen: Bad feelings from pledge week--from pledges to pledgemasters.

Bob: There are also some bad feelings from pledgemasters toward pledges.

Jim A: And some clubs can have an adverse effect on new students because of the bad influence of some of the members.

Rob: A person often limits the scope of his friends if he associates only with members of his club, especially if they are all of the same type.

Joel: Yes, it is deplorable that some clubs are stereotyped.
JANIE: This is still more a problem of the boys.

JOEL: What are the adverse effects on academic work other than the demands of pledge week?

JIM W: There isn't much except for last minute preparation for social events, and not much there.

JOEL: How about athletics?

ROB: Good sportsmanship is lost sometimes; we can't play for fun but to win.

JIMMY A: Yes, trophies are a help in drawing new members.

MARY ELLEN: Again, the girls aren't so bad about this.

JOEL: How about the spiritual area?

ROB: That still depends on the people in the club itself.

MARY ELLEN: Hurt feelings during pledge week sometimes can cause an adverse attitude or reaction.

JANIE: But sometimes feelings of rejection or disappointments can aid in growth of character, too.

**Pledge Week**

JOEL: There was committee study of pledge week last year.

BOB: In the past few years week has been more constructive.

Dr. Benson has advocated this every year, and it seems that every year a few more clubs heed his suggestion. Some schools have a help week instead.

JIMMY A: Some nonsense is in order.

JANIE: What is the specific purpose of pledge week? In our club it is to allow old and new members to get to know each other. We try to avoid any feelings as much as possible.

BOB: It seems that every club is doing more about that each year.

METHYL: We could have a work project on campus to be done during pledge
week.

JANIE: Pleading rules aren't strictly enough enforced, especially in the men's clubs.

JIMMY A: Each pledge is supposed to have a special pledgemaster in our club who looks out for him and to whom he can report unjust treatment. It works rather well.

DR. GILLIAM: Officers of clubs should know about abuses. And penalties should be incurred upon the guilty members.

JIM W: Pledgemasters usually don't overload a pledge on purpose.

JIMMY A: Can a club reject a pledge?

JOEL: Yes.

DR. GILLIAM: If pledging is on a high enough plane, then perhaps some basis could be for refusing to admit someone. But he has merely not submitted well to a bunch of tomfoolery, then rejection would hardly be justified.

JIMMY A: Still, you can get to know someone during pledge week, and know that he would not be a good club member.

DR. GILLIAM: The purpose of pledging is supposed to let the pledge see whether or not he really wants to be in the club he is pledging.

MARY ELLEN: What about the girls' clubs? Don't we have to take in the pledge we pick at the beginning of the week?

DR. GILLIAM: Of course, the rejectee would have to have some means of recourse; perhaps he would fit well into another group.

Induction other than pledge week:

JOEL: What are your feelings on putting numerical limitations on membership?
JANIE: Having a limited membership makes a more effective club in most cases.

JIMMY A: It should be the choice of the club as to the size.

JOEL: But do some members of large clubs become inactive because of large numbers?

BOB: It can be the choice of the individual as to whether he wants a big or a small club.

JOEL: But do people generally choose a club because of this factor? Isn't it usually more because of the people in the clubs?

BOB: At one time there was talk of limiting the boys' clubs.

JOEL: That would be hard to do. The problem is that the big clubs attract more of the good boys. The big get bigger; the small, smaller.

DR. GILLIAM: This also has an influence on athletics.

... Some big clubs don't attract athletes.

DR. GILLIAM: No regulations have been put in the handbook.

BOB: How about the Interclub Council? It seems to be rather static. The girls seem to have a better system than the boys do.

METHYL: It's not much better.

JOEL: The workshop was to take care of this problem; it would give the Interclub Council a shot in the arm.

JIMMY A: Yes, it would be the logical group to continue the workshop work.

Dr. Gilliam told us that he had taken the liberty to ask Dr. Benson to come to our meeting but would not tell us what he wanted to talk to us about. When Dr. Benson came, he made several statements, the general gist of which follows: For years the administration has planned to eventually integrate the Harding student body but wanted to be sure that everyone (students, faculty and parents) would be as prepared as possible. This past spring
three boys graduated from the White County Training School as valedictorian and co-salutatorians. Dr. Benson had several conferences with these boys and decided to bring them to the Harding campus Monday to take their places with the freshman class. He also talked with a girl who is also a member of the Pleasure Street congregation in Searcy and who attended Southwestern College in Terrell, Texas; but this girl was so impertinent to him that he decided she would not be suitable. Mr. Lawson and Mr. Verkler agreed with his impression. He has guaranteed the boys, who are able to pay only $100 per semester, the rest of their expenses; but he isn't sure yet where it will come from.

He added that last year there were four Negro students in the Harding Graduate School at Memphis and one in the Little Rock extension service. He wants to accomplish this step with as little fanfare and publicity as possible. He wants the students to come to the defense of the Negro boys in case of any unkind remarks or harassment, even they are prepared for a bit of this sort of thing. Dr. Gilliam is to be their personal counselor, and it is hoped that they will do satisfactory work and complete their four years here at Harding.

He concluded by asking us to be quiet about his announcement until the boys were introduced Monday morning and then asked if we had any questions. There were no questions. Joel then expressed for the council happiness and full support for Dr. Benson's announcement, and Tom Kirk expressed fears that there would be some adverse publicity. Then Dr. Benson left.

DR. GILLIAM: Frankly, I was so disappointed that our reaction was so calm.
JOEL: We were stunned and wondered about propriety of a display of feelings. But we can write a resolution of commendation from the council and send it to Dr. Benson.

BOB: A personal letter from each of us would be good too.

DR. GILLIAM: These boys are good student potential. But be sure not to violate Dr. Benson's confidence.

JIMMY A: Thought there would a suitable display of approval when the three boys are presented to the student body.

TOM: There will be a lot of people coming around asking questions.

DR. GILLIAM: Say as little as possible to these people.

BOB: It might be good to warn students of this, too.

Adjourned for the afternoon to work on assignments.

Closing session.