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Letter from the Human Relation Commission 1972

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THE COLLEGE OF WOOSTER

Wooster, Ohio 44691

June 7, 1972

Dear Friends of the Commission:

The first nine months of the Commission's life have been completed. Because of this, we would like to give you in capsule form the highlights of our activities. This report has been prepared by our Executive Secretary, Dr. John Chittum, and is attached. As we, the members, look back over the past nine months two major areas of activity stand out.

In the first place, along with some 100 or more members of the campus community, we set in motion a process of looking at where the College of Wooster is presently in the area of Human Relations and recommending future directions. This Statement of Human Relations Goals and Recommendations was issued to the community by the Campus Council in late May. We want to thank the Council for its endorsement of this statement and for circulating it.

Secondly, much of our funding has gone for the support of pilot projects in the area of human relations sponsored by various campus organizations. A listing of these projects is included in this report.

Additionally, Campus Council approved the increase of the number of members on the Commission from seven to fourteen. We welcome these additions and look forward to a full year of activity in 1972-73.

Nine months are a short time for a new idea to fully take hold. However, we feel that the discussions of recent weeks have helped all of us to have a clearer idea of what the Commission's role and functions should be. With your continued support we shall try to fill that role and those functions.

Sincerely,

The Commission

Russell M. Jones, Chairman
Richard Reimer
Jay Smeltz
Howard Strauch
Mrs. Rufus Thompson
William Whitmore

THE HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
as of June 7, 1972

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION

Meetings:

The Commission met seventeen (17) times during the academic year. Minutes of those meetings are on file. In addition at least two joint meetings were held with members of the Campus Council. Additional sessions were held with representatives of campus agencies as indicated later.

Homecoming Boycott:

In the fall of 1971, at Homecoming time, there was a boycott of the festivities held that weekend. Racial tensions and disagreements constituted the background; athletics especially were the focus of the protest. The HRC was concerned with that situation, but felt that proper jurisdiction for investigation lay with the Faculty Athletic Committee. That body agreed and governed itself accordingly. Their members spent long hours in investigating the racial situation as it applied to athletic relations. The Committee made its report to HRC which, in turn, released the Committee's recommendations for general information--along with several recommendations of its own. Copy of that summary is available. Copy of the entire report of the Athletic Committee is on file in Galpin Hall.

The Campus Situation:

The record of Campus Council of September 28th, 1971, indicates the role of the Commission in five paragraphs. The Commission felt that the role which was most urgent and potentially of most long-range value was described in the first four paragraphs, especially their No. 4, which stated that HRC has the responsibility to "utilize all available College structures for the promotion of mediation and reconciliation." The earlier paragraphs stressed the importance of determining those "issues, conditions or situations which ... require attention" and of seeking to meet the needs "through programming and other educational efforts...."

Beginning on November 11, 1971, the Commission sought the assistance of all parts of the campus family in analyzing the current racial situation and in seeking the formulation of tangible and attainable goals, consistent with the purpose indicated above. A series of meetings was held with the total attendance ranging from about 60 to over a hundred. The participating representatives were asked to group themselves according to interest, and seven such groups were formed. Preliminary reports and drafts were prepared, distributed, reviewed and revised. Ultimately the Commission prepared its own final draft as the outgrowth of as broad a participation from the campus community as it had been able to obtain. The draft and its contents were the responsibility of the Commission, but its formulation was the result of a very broad spectrum of ideas and opinions. The Commission looks on it as a statement of consensus about needs, hopes, aspirations and goals--with suggested assignment of probable responsibility and target dates. This latter was included to give focus to the suggestions, and to pave the way for requesting a response from those to which assignments were made. The final statement constituted the Commission's major "report" of its activity.

The Commission was formed at the suggestion of, and financed by, Campus Council. From the outset, however, the Commission has been quite autonomous. Communication has been sought by exchange of minutes between Campus Council and HRC. Mindful of its autonomy and of its method of operating, the Commission sent its report first to the President of the College and subsequently to Campus Council. On April 14th, the above final statement of goals and suggested action, together with a covering note by the chairman, was sent to the President. His reply was received under date of April 28. In subsequent meetings the entire matter was discussed in joint meetings with Campus Council. The Commission is aware that some of the suggestions it made are already being pressed actively, but they were offered, not as new ideas but as important parts of a total analysis, so that evaluation might be clearer. It is hoped that the report will provide helpful and constructive suggestions which will stimulate further constructive measures on campus in the coming months.

Program Funding:

Part of the efforts of the Commission were directed toward evaluating requests for financial support of programs which were designed to meet the responsibilities outlined by Campus Council, and indicated earlier in this report. Upon approval of the requests, funds were released as indicated in the financial part of this report.

PERSONAL ANALYSIS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Secretary is not a member of the Commission. He has taken part in the discussions and has performed assigned duties, but has not voted on action before the Commission. In making this report, however, he would include his own personal analysis of developments, and report of other factors as he sees them. The statement is of his own judgment and does not attempt to reflect ideas of any of the Commission members.

The Commission seemed to take a little time to determine its own course. This is the first year of such a body and the guidelines needed to be examined, despite the listing of responsibilities by Campus Council. There were several times when the schedule the HRC set for itself was delayed, sometimes by the very nature of the College calendar. It is trite but true to say that "time flies." One believes that some of the participants in the general development of needs and goals became tired of the process--not to say impatient. As one who usually wants results quickly, the Executive Secretary appreciates this problem. However, in retrospect, this writer does believe that much has been accomplished. If those suggestions developed by the campus family, through the offices of the Commission, can be lifted up and can receive the commitment of the College, then future years will enable the school to look back on this year with a realization that much of real significance has been done. If such a Commission is continued, as it now appears will be the case, one would assume that some attention would be given toward keeping such an analysis and statement of goals pertinent and up-to-date.

Early in the history of the Commission there was the hope that some kind of "grievance panel" might be formed. It was such a role that was stated in the last paragraph of the Campus Council memorandum of September 28, 1971. This writer would offer the following comments about that function.

To begin with, throughout the year, no formal complaint was ever presented to the HRC. The HRC was thought to have a concern with the Homecoming boycott, which it did have. In that case, there was an existing agency (Faculty Athletic Committee) which did have jurisdiction, and which was ready, willing and able to proceed with its own investigation. This it did with the entire agreement and approval from HRC. Furthermore, the Committee did make its report to the HRC (and to the Administration) as mentioned earlier in this report. In releasing the recommendations of the Athletic Committee, together with its own recommendations, the HRC seemed to feel that it had taken the important steps in that case.

One other "incident" was discussed thoroughly in the meetings of the HRC. That case was the one involving an intramural basketball game. At one time the HRC members met in joint session with selected members of the Administration. Since the case already had become legally involved, it was understood that the HRC would make no moves at that time. It was further stated that the College's security staff was taking depositions and that the investigative measures then possible were being taken. It was understood that the results of the compilation of depositions would be made available to HRC after they had been authenticated by the deponents. Although repeated inquiries about progress were made, those depositions never came before the view of the Commission.

After the closing legal aspects of the case, it was understood informally that the Judicial Board would proceed, but no report was ever made to HRC about the results of any such consideration.

Thus it seems evident that the "grievance panel" role described by Campus Council in its September 28th memorandum needs to be reviewed very carefully. It is understood by this writer that such redefinition of that kind of role is planned. If the Commission is to carry out a kind of "review" role after all other existing and appropriate means for relief of grievances have been exhausted, then such review role may become quite feasible. This does need much clarification at the earliest convenient moment.

The Executive Secretary is greatly impressed by the evidently great concern which many persons have shown--concern that race relations in the community and on campus be greatly improved. This concern has been found on all sides--among students, faculty, administration and those townspeople who have had a chance to be involved. It is demonstrated by the dedicated and creative patience which so many persons have brought to the issues. One looks forward to seeing distinctive progress in the coming months.

Respectfully submitted

John W. Chittum
Executive Secretary

Financial Report to Human Relations Commission - as of June 7, 1972

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Paid</u>	<u>Unpaid</u>
Program	\$2700.00	1742.15	957.85
Stipend	1000.00	625.00	375.00
Operating Expenses . .	300.00	365.84	-65.84
Totals	\$ 4000.00	2732.99	1267.01
Bank Balance			\$ 1267.01

Program Analysis:

\$300.00 Lewis Jones - Afro-American Studies Curriculum*

400.00 Kenneth Hoover - Black Forum

200.00 Glen Bucher/Campus Council - Detroit Industrialization Mission

300.00 John Browder - First Section Lecture/Film

138.55 Stanley Perdue - Howard University Choir (Meals)

120.00 Bruce Fahlander & Dennis Gibson - Kate House Sensitivity Sessions

33.60 Little Theatre - Black Theatre Group trip to Columbus

100.00 Nat. Assoc. of Black, Ethnic and Urban Directors (Institutional Membership)

150.00 Penelope Washbourn - Religion Dept. Faculty/Student Seminar

\$1742.15 Paid out on programs (\$200 more had been tentatively approved)

* Including contact made at the meeting of the National Association of Black, Ethnic and Urban Directors in Atlanta, Georgia

<u>Operating Expense Analysis:</u>	<u>Supplies & Equipment</u>	<u>Meeting Expense</u>	<u>Misc. and Office Services</u>
10/30/71 College Statement . . .	\$ 2.08	\$ --	\$ 3.19
11/22/71 Colliers	4.00	--	--
11/26/71 Bank Charges	2.34	--	--
11/30/71 College Statement . . .	10.89	29.80	16.63
12/31/71 College Statement . . .	--	8.60	8.39
1/31/72 College Statement . . .	65.78	--	68.86
2/ 8/72 R.M.J. Trips	--	40.00	--
2/29/72 College Statement . . .	4.28	69.30	7.23
3/31/72 College Statement . . .	--	--	3.10
4/30/72 College Statement . . .	--	18.35	3.02
Subtotals	89.37	166.05	110.42
GRAND TOTAL . .	\$365.84		

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Respectfully submitted,
John W. Chittum
Executive Secretary