

COLLEGE COMMUNICATIONS

February 20, 1943

NOTICE OF FACULTY MEETING

The College Faculty will meet at 4:30 on Tuesday, February 23, in Fraser Theater. There will be some discussion of the status of the liberal arts college in America during the war period. A large attendance is desired, as it is highly important that we thoughtfully face both the problems and the opportunities of these days.

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CLASS CARDS

Class cards are past due in this office. If you have not already done so, will you please return them at once so we can make the class rolls.

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A DIFFICULT SEMESTER

We can face our difficulties this semester feeling sorry for ourselves, excusing ourselves and our students for second-rate endeavor and in general with a spirit of listlessness, or discouragement, which will inevitably result in our doing a mediocre quality of work.

If we permit such a spirit to dominate us, we are not worthy descendants of our fathers, who in every generation faced their own difficulties and mastered them. And certainly our own morale will not be high if we do not do our work with enthusiasm and with all the energy and devotion of which we are capable.

The things that war has done to colleges are done. We can view them, if we wish, as a series of unmitigated misfortunes, and sit down to bewail them. In this direction lie gloom, inertness, and unmanliness. God pity the colleges of America if this be our general feeling.

On the other hand, these days may be among the most interesting and the most beneficial to our colleges if we accept their challenge and look upon them as giving us the opportunity to make a valuable contribution to the winning of the war, and to develop a better and more worthwhile system of education.

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MID-SEMESTERS

Mid-semester grades are due Friday, March 12. In order to do the necessary office work with these reports on that weekend, every class report should be in if possible before the twelfth, and certainly not later than that date. Your cooperation is earnestly requested, and we ask that you plan your quizzes so that you will have plenty of time to grade them and make your report very promptly.

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I think it can be stated as almost an historical truism that the greatest civilizations of history have been the best educated civilizations. And when I speak of education in this sense, I do not have in mind what so many today claim as education, namely, special training to do particular jobs. Clearly in a technological age like ours, a great deal of training is necessary. Some of us must learn how to be mechanics, some how to be architects, or chemists. Some will have a special aptitude for medicine. And a great many will have--or think they have--a mysterious talent which induces them to undertake the practice of law.

But none of these specialties constitutes true education. They are training for skills by which men live. I am thinking, rather, of what we call the liberal arts. I am speaking of education for its own sake: to know for the sheer joy of understanding; to speculate, to analyze, to compare, and to imagine.

Look back across the panorama of history. Is it not true that the pinnacles of civilization have been achieved by the cities and states most proficient in the liberal arts and occupations? In their contributions to the enrichment of human life, the Greeks, I believe, tower above us all. Yet this is not because the Greeks were good navigators, which they were; nor because they were great architects, which indeed they were. It was rather because almost all their leaders--and many of their citizens whose names we do not know--enjoyed knowledge and revered the arts. The Greek cities conquered the eastern Mediterranean with the sword. But they conquered posterity with their minds.

--From a talk by Wendell L. Willkie delivered at Duke University