When Does a Student Graduate?

By Dr. Paul L. Vogt, Dean of Extension

The final day in June when the long line of students passes before the president on the platform and receives the sheepskin evidence of completion of work gives the impression that educational contacts between the university and its students are ended. So far the university has helped the students. Henceforth the communications received from the university will have less and less the idea of service and more of the appeal to alumni to assist in making the university more efficient in its service to coming generations of students on the campus.

More recently, the question has been raised as to whether commencement should so markedly sever educational contacts between university and student. The thought has been growing that in reality students never cease to be students unless they become dead or atrophied mentally. The university has still a responsibility to those who have gone out into active life and should continue to render educational service to its graduates of a type adapted to their particular practical needs. The “alumni university” is coming to have serious consideration by leaders of university life. “The state is our campus” has a special significance to those who have studied at the university and know something of its ideals.

Through the extension division of the university much is already being made available to those who have received diplomas. Correspondence study and extension classes enable graduates to take courses they find essential in the practical development of their work or in furtherance of some particular personal interest. The department of public information has available material that by return mail can be brought to the busy man’s desk or to the one who has to prepare a talk for some public meeting or club. Assistance is rendered in helping organize club programs for the year and in finding speakers for programs.

Short courses in medicine, dentistry, young people’s work, education, community organization and leadership, business, government and other fields are offered, thus enabling the graduate to keep up with the latest developments in his field. Service is rendered by keeping graduates in touch with opportunities for personal advancement in education and other ways. Co-operation is rendered in assisting school administrators in more effectively organizing their school systems.

The university welcomes suggestions as to educational needs of the alumni that the university can render them through the extension service. If there are special interests in continued study of some subject through the department of extension classes or through correspondence the information can be secured. Programs of interest to alumni can be arranged to be given over WNAD, the university radio station. Courses of lectures or community institutes can be provided at a minimum of expense. If there are other services that the alumni would appreciate having, please write to the secretary of the University of Oklahoma Association or to Dr. Paul L. Vogt, dean of extension, Norman. All letters will receive prompt attention.

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