Annual Report and Recommendations of the Public Relations Committee, 1960-61

During the current year, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Public Relations Committee has directed its attention to the growing scope of the research and public service activities of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and its faculty. The continued growth of these activities, together with the general growth of this university, results in ever increasing needs in the areas of university communications.

In addition, the Public Relations Committee believes that the progress of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee can be materially advanced through close liaison with community groups of an advisory nature. Examples are: a possible Milwaukee Metropolitan area--University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Coordinating Committee (which frequently has been discussed by this and other faculty committees), the newly organized Friends of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Library, and the forthcoming Union Expansion fund organization.

The administrative staff, specifically the News Service, which is generally understood to be responsible for the coordination and implementation of communications in the above areas, has not been increased in size since the early years of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. At the same time, this staff has assumed additional responsibilities, particularly in establishment of an alumni records office and a photographic laboratory that is used by the entire university. As a result, the scope of services provided to individuals and groups is substantially less than that provided by other major institutions of higher learning in Wisconsin--to the detriment of this university.

Specifically, there is insufficient staff to report as completely as desirable the various activities of the faculty as individuals or groups. There is insufficient staff to channel news items to the home town newspapers of students. Such items would serve to put the name of this university beyond the scope of coverage of metropolitan newspapers.

The Committee feels the quality of editorial services presently offered is excellent, as far as it goes. Yet it seems clear that the increasing numbers of university projects such as the Institute for World Affairs Education, the Urban Research Program, cultural activities, and the growing research program presents demands that cannot be humanly met by the present staff, all things considered.

Presently, there is no established procedure in the area of publications. There is insufficient staff time to provide the editorial assistance, art work and layout advice necessary to present "professional looking" brochures, newsletters, etc. There is inadequate equipment and staff to produce consistently this needed material.

There is not sufficient staff to properly "cover" major conferences, which we feel will be held on this campus with increasing frequency. By "cover" we mean providing liaison with the newspapers, tape-recording of group sessions, etc., as well as helping in conference planning where needed.

The job of keeping contact with this institution's alumni is a joint responsibility of the alumni records office and the news service. Because of limited staff, facilities and financial resources, the news staff effort has been limited to a very modest newsletter which is not considered adequate to contact this important group.

There has not been staff or facilities to provide a University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee version of the faculty "MEMO" on a regular basis, which would have great morale as well as informational value.
In view of the above, the Public Relations Committee recommends that this faculty place itself on record as favoring:

1. Increased staffing of the existent news service to provide more complete servicing of existent activities.

2. Development of a comprehensive plan to assure adequate staff to meet future demands for editorial and production services.

3. Establishment of editorial and production services adequate to service the present and future needs of the University of Wisconsin--Milwaukee, including the production of an effective alumni newsletter, or magazine. This recommendation would include provision for professional design and layout service in Milwaukee.

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE:

H. Ahlgren
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