Jones focuses on individuals

By CHRIS KELLER
Jones College President, 1964-65

What does “the College System” mean? Freshman Year I asked that question of myself and of others over and over again. The answers I heard were far from satisfactory, and I set myself the task of discovering an answer which would be satisfactory to me.

Three years later, having participated actively in my own college government, first on the Residence Committee, then as College Treasurer, and finally as College President, I am still searching.

My experience in Jones College has guided my thinking along certain lines, however, and I think the overall goal of Jones incorporates the most complete college system ideology which has developed on the Rice campus in the eight years of the Colleges’ existence.

Centers On Individual
This goal centers on concern for the individual college member—concern not only for her intellectual, cultural and social growth, but also for her personal development and adjustment to the world she must face. Idealistic? Perhaps. A waste of time, or a meaningless experience? Never!

Speaker programs, seminars, study groups, a chorus, a college library, social affairs, all these activities and many more are important aspects of college life. But none of these activities, fulfill her potential.

A concerted effort on the part of those girls directly involved in college government and the freshman guidance program to listen, advise, gently prod or just provide a shoulder to cry on can help these individuals.

In the past few years, Jones College has tried increasingly to help its members in this way. Last spring the officers and Senior Advisers met three times with Dr. Fraser, a psychiatrist available to Rice students for consultation, in order to better understand the myriad problems and pressures to which the student is exposed.

Better Equipped
With this preparation, we felt better equipped to cope with these problems when they arose. The greatest contribution that I feel we have made to the college this year has been through our growing awareness and efforts to help in these areas.

Similarly, I feel the greatest of themselves, can aid the confused, bewildered student, freshman or senior, struggling to find her place in society and to contribution that Jones College can make to the University as a whole, particularly the other colleges, is to disseminate this attitude to them. All the programs, speakers, and social activities in the world are worthless, if the individual feels she cannot cope with the problems of her personal world.

Moreover, no experience can equal the satisfaction one feels having contributed ever so little to the personal development of another.

Finally, after four years of experience, it seems to me that the essence of the college system is providing an opportunity and the understanding which enable the individual to know himself. Jones has not fully realized this goal, but the steps that we have taken have enabled us to move further along toward fulfillment, in my estimation, than have the other colleges.