Woodward seeks role for colleges

By DARRELL HANCOCK
Thresher Reporter

“I see no reason to ignore the idea that Baker . . . can hire some of its own staff,” suggested Dr. Val Woodward addressing the formal Convocation of Baker College Tuesday night.

Jeff Winningham, former president of the college, Kent Morrison, the present executive, and Professor C. R. Wischmeyer, the college master, made shorter speeches to the members and associates of Baker.

Dr. Woodward included his proposal in an address generally concerned with the role of the college in the lives of its members. He pointed out the college should “provide an atmosphere where . . . we may become men,” and that the college should not attempt to protect its members from embarrassment.

‘Make Honest Mistakes’

He quoted a statement by Tufts University on academic freedom to illustrate his point. “Freedom . . . must include not only the freedom to choose, but also the freedom to make honest mistakes when conviction is at stake.”

He suggested to the college members that knowledge and courage of action are possible to people who do not look at the world “in black and white” and to people who can admit, “I don’t know.” He referred to this as the “parting of the way between people who will be just people and people who become men.”

Suggests Tutorials

Woodward made his more concrete suggestions near the end of his speech. “One of the things you can do is organize some sort of seminar tutorial system. Possibly one day you can afford to have fellows of the college that are here for that purpose.

“I see no reason to ignore the idea that Baker . . . can hire some of its own staff. These people would not be a part of Rice . . .”

Jeff Winningham urged the college to further clarify its goals, “. . . how do we judge what we’re doing if we haven’t our purpose clearly in mind?”

Needs Sharpness

Winningham stated that the early lack of definition may have been healthy in allowing for growth, but that sharper definition is now necessary. This would make the colleges more vital in a university that had not originally planned a place for them.

Current president Morrison outlined a “creativity series” of speakers, an expansion of the college physical facilities, development of a library, and revision of college regulations as activities for the year.

“I am un-cautiously optimistic,” he reported.

Dr. Woodward’s speech was followed by a half minute standing ovation after he concluded, “It is with the proper use of knowledge that you can make Baker the focal point, the high point of your education.”