

UNCG CENTENNIAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Joanne Creighton

INTERVIEWER: William Link

DATE: April 29, 1990

[Begin Side A]

WL: I'd like to begin just by asking you to tell me some first impressions of UNCG [The University of North Carolina at Greensboro] when you arrived in me the year again?

JC: Nineteen eighty-five. The fall of I think it was August of 1985. Some impressions of the College [of Arts & Sciences] and not the university?

WL: Of the college and of the university. I've often found it useful to start that way, to start an interview that way. Often the first impressions are incorrect, sometimes they're the best impressions of—that is, of an outsider looking in.

JC: Yes well one of the things that struck me about it I came from Wayne State University in Detroit, and the difference in the culture of the two institutions was very striking. And one of the first experiences that I had was going to a college, well, really a faculty council meeting. And there was a discussion of curriculum, and I thought that that was really indicative of the difference between the two institutions. Wayne State [University, Detroit, Michigan] was a very contentious place, but I was very struck by the culture of civility of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

And the format was that faculty needed to sign up ahead of time in order to speak on the curriculum, which they did. And they all spoke, I think, in either two or three minutes, which was a timed response. And they made a statement, and then they sat down. And I was struck by the fact that there was no repartee. At Wayne State some of the statements would have immediately provoked a retort or a response and a discussion and so on. Instead there was this kind of calm acceptance of what people had to say, and then we moved on to the next item on the agenda. So that was that struck me as very anomalous to what I had been used to. And it was very indicative really of the kind of polite and deferential structure that I found. I found it very unusual to get used to the kind of deference that was paid to me as dean. I wasn't used to having that kind of attitude.

WL: And that was not the case at Wayne State?

JC: No. [laughs] No there was just much more, you know sort of a more contentious environment and less deference and respect to authority figures as I felt that there was here. And I think there's some aspects of it that I thought were very nice, but one of the

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things that troubled me about it was that it gave me a kind of privileged status that I didn't think was appropriate to a university. So I would say that one of my main agenda items the first couple of years was to try to encourage more faculty participation and faculty governance and less of this kind of deference to what an authority, such as a dean, might say or do.

WL: Why do you think that was so? Why were faculty, why are faculty so deferential to—?

JC: Well I guess it was part of—you know, it certainly struck me that it was probably part of the whole history and tradition of the institution. I thought it was more of a patriarchal institution, where faculty were looked after and were not used to being—they were not considered to be partners the degree to which they were at Wayne State University. I'm overstating this to a certain degree, because I think that I certainly found other meetings that were not like that particular meeting. But still there was, there is, and there still is an attitude of tremendous deference and respect, I think, towards a structure—less questioning and challenging of people in authority than you might find at a Northern institution. And as I said, I think it has its good aspects, but I think that it encourages the kind of passivity and—[pause] I don't know. I don't know what other word I would use other than passivity. It's a sort of—oh, withdrawal. So I was more, I was eager to see a—more of an active engagement. I was eager to see more things coming up from the faculty, as opposed to coming down from the administration.

WL: Tell me a little bit more about your Wayne State experience. You were on the faculty and then toward the end, was it associate dean?

JC: Yeah, I was a professor—well I was an instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, professor of English, and then I went into the dean's office for the last couple of years. I was originally an associate dean in charge essentially of the humanities departments and programs of the college, and then I was a successful writer and project director of a large NEH [National Endowment for the Humanities] grant, so I became what was called special assistant to the provost for the humanities, and I was the director of this three million dollar project. So that's what I did for the last about two and a half years there.

WL: In what way did that experience affect the very different position here, you think?

JC: Well I don't know that it was that different. I think that was the way that I got drawn into administration. I had been sought out by the dean of the College of Liberal Arts there. He had seen me, as a matter of fact, as a child care advocate. That was how I became observed. And I was trying—I was defending the child care facility on our campus, and he said he wanted to have that kind of advocacy in the dean's office and sort of twisted my arm to come into administration, which I agreed to do just for a short period of time. Then when I got the grant I had to stick with the grant, and so it kind of escalated, and I got nominated for a position at Greensboro, so it was just a gradual and unexpected career turn.

But it was experience within, as an associate dean within the College of Liberal Arts there were many experiences that were comparable to being the real dean of the

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College of Arts and Sciences, I mean, so the kind of jurisdictional responsibilities that I had for thirteen programs and departments there was comparable, except, of course, the low level of responsibility is higher as a real dean as opposed to an associate dean.

WL: I guess what I meant was, what the differences you just described in terms of faculty and being a dean at UNCG, a dean of arts and sciences at UNCG, would imply some different things, as you've just described, than being even associate dean or a dean. I suppose at Wayne State?

JC: What do you mean? In terms of—?

WL: Well the different kinds of faculty that you're dealing with. You're dealing with a structure that's more traditional.

JC: Right. Right. I certainly didn't know what, exactly what, kind of culture I would be entering. I had always spent my life within a Northern culture. I guess I didn't realize that there would be a styling difference between Northern and Southern culture, and that was one of the surprises—not only of the university but also of Greensboro—that was a significantly different regional culture than I had experienced before.

WL: What condition did you find the faculty in? What were some of your initial impressions of the faculty and of the College of Arts and Sciences as a, as an entity that's actually, as you well know, new here, dating from the early seventies? What sorts of—to what degree did the college exist in effect and to what degree did it not exist?

JC: Yes. It seemed to me that it didn't exist very much as an entity, and so I saw that as my agenda—to make it matter as a unit and to develop some sense of collegeness [sic] as a structure that functioned and that had reality and that had allegiance to it.

It seemed to me that the faculty were, as a group, pretty well—pretty much fractured off into separate departments and programs, that a lot of them were demoralized and sort of felt acted upon, rather than engaged within the university. Not true of all of them. There was a group of faculty that were active, actively involved in matters, but a large group of the faculty did not seem to be. Certainly the allegiance was primarily to the department rather than to the college.

The college was a bureaucratic structure, an administrative structure it seems to me, rather than an ideological or educational structure. So I really saw, though, that within the institution and within the college—what I could see all around me—was that people shared a lot of the same values and aspirations, but didn't realize it, it seemed to me.

You know, so that one of—that's another thing that was different about Wayne State and UNCG was that there seemed to me here to be a passionate commitment to liberal arts education and liberal arts values in a traditional sense, whereas Wayne State was a more, was a more of a professional schools, graduate school program as so on. So there was more sort of a diversity of goals. Whereas here, one of the things that appealed to me the most about the ad for the job for dean that was shown to me was the centrality of liberal arts education as the number one goal of the institution. I found that that was

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true in the sense that it was shared rhetorically by a whole lot of people, that they cared about that. So I saw that. At the same time though it seemed to me that that was rhetorical to a large extent, so it seemed a great opportunity to try to turn what was the rhetoric of the institution into a reality by having—trying to build up a sense of the college as a structure around that goal in particular—and trying to make the college adhere as a unit.

It seemed to me also that the college was faring well in its sense of itself in relationship to the professional schools, that there was a feeling, justified or not, that the college was not getting its fair share of resources, that the professional schools were getting more, and that they had more coherent agendas, and that the college, because it was so fractured, was fighting against itself. Yet no one seemed to know what to do about that or to think that anything should be done about that, rather it was the departments going up for resources and for their agendas against the professional schools as opposed to the college existing in any way as a reality in itself. So, I saw very early on that that was something that seemed to evoke the most sentiment and possibility of drawing people together, was to try to emphasize that mission and to give that mission some substance, some goals within it.

WL: What—you mentioned that the status of the college vis-à-vis the professional schools—?

JC: Right.

WL: And maybe what you—I was a little confused—maybe what you described as a bit of rhetoric and some of it not reality—in other words, I guess, what I'm wondering is, to what extent was the college undervalued or less powerful than the administration officials would—?

JC: I think the college—it seemed to me as if the college was not very powerful as a unit at all, that it had powerful units within it—some departments that were strong, but that, why it was ineffective within the university structure, and I think it was, was that it didn't have a collective sense, and that the professional schools did. And so, because their agenda were coherent and their goals were articulated and so on, it seemed easy for the administration to support them. And it was a period of growth before I got here of the development of programs within the professional schools and so on. So it seems as if they were making great strides whereas the college, except for a few isolated components of the college that were more entrepreneurial, was kind of being taken for granted—undervalued, and so on. So it was a matter of, it seemed to me, of putting together what was there, which continued to be a significant strength of the institution—that any kind of way that you would look at the resources of the institution would see that most of the publishing faculty, many of the grant generators, a lot of the excellent teaching and so on, did reside in the college, but that it was not put together in a manner that would have you perceive it in that fashion.

WL: So this made it more difficult to deal with administration or your position was—the college's position was relatively more tenuous compared to the other schools?

JC: Yeah. I think that the previous dean—Bob Miller's position about the college—the

college was carved out of—well it was created, as you know, after the departments. The departments existed first, then the college existed later. I think that he may have seen the college—I don't know, I don't want to judge what his motivation was—more as a bureaucratic unit and felt that the best administration—this is a direct quote—"The best administration is the least administration to get the job done," and so really chose to minimize as much as possible his role and the college's role and to keep the departments strong and thriving. Whereas I completely reversed that strategy. And not completely, but in the sense of really stressing the collectivity of the college and what, the way that people could come together, how that they would better themselves individually as well as collectively by identifying with the college as a structure. And I think that was new and different.

WL: What did you find in the way of department heads? Department heads have traditionally been—when I say traditionally I mean in the last thirty or forty years—have been strong and as you say, the department head and the—well really, the department head preceded the dean.

JC: Yes.

WL: The department head was the department.

JC: Yes. It used to be in fact that the department heads dealt directly with the vice chancellor in the same way that the deans of the professional schools dealt with the vice chancellor, you know, so they—

WL: Right. They had direct access.

JC: Right.

WL: What did you find in terms of headships? Did you find—what kinds of prospects did you find?

JC: Well, it's very complicated and very different among nineteen—I had nineteen departments originally. Some of them really looked back longingly towards the old days when they had direct access, and so those that had been in the job a long time are kind of skeptical about trying to build up a college. It's just another structure between them and the upper administration. Yet they were being eroded already. Their power was being eroded in various ways. For example, the chancellor's 1981 statement regarding the nature of department headships, the terminal nature of the appointments—some of them had been in the job many decades, or a couple of decades. So it was kind of a mixed group in terms of what their attitudes would be towards this particular strategy. I think they ranged tremendously in effectiveness, as viewed from the dean, as to how they were administering their units. Over the period of time that I've been here, gradually all of the older department heads, on the old system that were belatedly affected by this change in policy, have rotated out, you know. So that there were, you know, there was one that was in sixteen years, and there was one that was fourteen years and so on, and their terms all

expired during the term of my deanship.

WL: You encouraged new deans, new

JC: Department heads.

WL: New heads and a new club, kind of [unclear]

JC: Right. And I feel that the policy is a good policy, that the rotation of the headship is good. I think that the term is good; the eight-year term is good. It's long enough to do something substantial. It's not too short, but it's not too long, as well.

I think it's a very important position, department headship, and I see how important it is. I think that the college is blessed right now with having very good department heads, a number of very good department heads. And the best kind of department head in my view is one that has both a college hat and a departmental hat, and I certainly encourage that to a tremendous degree, much more so I think than existed before.

I'm trying to develop—I've tried to develop with the administrative council a sense of identity as a group in that that group was a governing group of the college in relationship to the college council, that these were two very important governing bodies of the college and that they would have both their departmental interests and the college interests

WL: You, could you be a little bit more specific about what you think makes a successful department head? You suggested that some are better than others. I'm just wondering what makes some better than others.

JC: Well, I guess, what I find a successful—when a department head is successful is that he or she has a sense of directiveness [sic], focus, about accomplishing something, not just merely maintaining the status quo, but having, being able to generate with colleagues a sense of what is the aspiration of the department. And to define that and to work towards it in a, in a deliberate fashion. And certainly that—the difference between sort of maintaining the status quo and the departments that have agendas to fulfill are striking in the college. And of course the ability to work with colleagues is important, to be able to generate a consensus and agreed upon directions. Having a sense of the college, a role in the college as well as, and in the university as well as the department's own interests as well. So I like to see that—that sort of broader university perspective on the part of the department heads.

But I think such people make an enormous difference. I mean that's what I learned about administration. That's what I came to value about administration. I used to believe that the best kind of faculty governance was a sort of rising up from the grass roots of ideas. And I still think that's true to a certain degree, but if you don't have people to facilitate those ideas and to carry through and follow through and so on, you simply do not have anything. And I see that in department heads, deans, vice chancellors, chancellors and so on the ability to pick up on the ideas and carry them to some directed action is really essential. Then of course there's a large bureaucratic function, but I think

that the leadership function is really the important one. We have a whole lot of bureaucrats, but we only have some that are good leaders. And leaders seem to be those people who are able to sort of like keep their ear to what is generating up out of the ranks essentially, but then to be able to pick— to work with faculty with the good ideas and follow through on them. And I think the difference is enormous between a good department head and a weak department head.

WL: Do you think the civility that you described earlier, the deference, has that changed at all? [Creighton chuckles] Are we still deferential?

JC: More so than in Northern culture, dramatically so, yeah. I think so, but I think it's less, as I suggested, I think it's less pronounced than it seemed to me at that particular meeting that I went to. So no, I guess I think that—you know I've certainly heard some good debates, yes, and some less than respectful. [laughs] I've experienced some less than respectful exchanges, but for the most part, though, I have to say that I have been treated remarkably well collegially. You know that there is such an atmosphere of respect and collegial relations that it's very pleasant I think, that aspect, but at the same time that it might be a bit inhibiting in the sense that people do not come out and say exactly what they think all the time.

WL: It may not be a Northern versus Southern thing; it may be a, well, as you said already, it's the institutional history. There are Southern institutions that have really strong traditions of raising active and vocal faculty participation and control, perhaps too strong control.

JC: Yes.

WL: Tell me a little bit about the—your relations and perceptions about the administration higher than your own. You did—well start at the top. I guess you had very little dealings with Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill administrations [University of North Carolina General Administration].

JC: Right. Very little.

WL: Your dealings are pretty much exclusively with?

JC: Pretty much exclusively with the vice chancellor for academic affairs—even have remarkably little interaction with the chancellor, although there's been more in the last year and a half, of course, than there used to be. There's been more of an attempt to have the vice chancellors and the deans function as a body, just within the last year or so than there was before that. But pretty much there is a strong respect at this institution for the hierarchy, and so department heads talk to deans, deans talk to the vice chancellor and the vice chancellor talks to the chancellor.

WL: Chain of command, right?

JC: Right.

Elizabeth was realized. [laughs]

WL: Yeah.

JC: I certainly have found it more collegial working with Don than working with Elizabeth. I think there was a strong tendency on the part of Elizabeth to want to micromanage the institution, so the exact—she was working exactly the opposite from the way I was working. I was trying to encourage bottom up, and she had a strong tendency to work top down, although she didn't perceive it that way. But I think that in fact she simply loved to be involved in all of the details of what was going on, and so, it was hard, she found it very hard to delegate. And so it was somewhat frustrating to have one's responsibilities and decisions and so on always have to be superimposed by another judgment, whereas I think there's much more a tendency on the part of DeRosa to delegate areas of responsibility. Although I think there's a certain wish also to observe and to—I think that maybe once he is officially in the job he may want to take tighter control than he did. I think that he respects me as a dean and therefore is willing to let me run my show. At the same time, I think that there is a wish to control things to a significant degree as well. So I think that Elizabeth was much more of a micromanager, though, than Don is fundamentally.

WL: Do you think the—do you think this is built into the office, what you've just described? [laughs] That you have two people with fundamentally different temperaments perhaps? Or two different people, very different people? It strikes me from afar [unclear].

JC: I'm not so sure that they're all that different. I mean, that will be interesting to see. I mean I think they are very different personally, but whether their administrative style is dramatically different—I don't know, I guess it is.

I think that one of the real, the virtues of DeRosa is that he came up through the ranks as a department head for many years and then as graduate dean and then as vice chancellor, so he has the perspective of viewing the institution as it would be perceived by a faculty member or department head, and so on, and so has the kind of similar academic instincts. I've found that I agree with him a great deal because we, it seems that, to me, we both came out of the same orientation and have the same response to situations.

Whereas Elizabeth came out of a non-academic environment, more of a management environment, so had a different kind of view of the institution. And one of the things that happened during Elizabeth's administration was that, the attempt to create the academic plan, the Quo Vadimus plan, which was so sort of out of sync, it seemed to me, with what an academic institution is or should be. And so it was an attempt to impose a whole different world view on an institution. That doesn't happen at all with DeRosa, so I think that there's just a, you know, a dyed-in-the-wool academic thinker and that that is really, really gives him a real basis to understand what is going on in the units under him. But I think that there is a tendency nonetheless to want to control what's happening, to focus. He's a very focused person, so he wants to focus the institution in a very sure way, and in that sense they're similar.

WL: Let's go back to your earlier description of some policy changes that you want to effect

here and examine some of those courses with the—well maybe you can tell me what, in terms of building a better community with the college and a better intellectual, creating a real intellectual community as opposed to a bureaucratic structure.

JC: Right.

WL: What would you say were the most important features, most important examples of concrete policy that sought to do this?

JC: Well the first thing that I worked on was governance itself, trying to encourage more activist faculty governance. So one of the first things was a look at the bylaws, I don't know if it was called, I guess they were called bylaws of the College of Arts and Sciences, so creating a whole new instrument of governance, essentially looking at the instrument of governance, and then trying to figure out what would work the best, and articulating with a faculty group a better statement of that, and a more effective governing structure. So that was, starting with governance, I would say, would be the most, the first most important thing, and at the same time, all of the rhetoric around that, of the importance of it, so not only trying to articulate it in a better codified form but also trying to promote it. So that was one of the first things.

Then the rallying cry for the college is the liberal arts curriculum, and so the fact that there had been a, an ongoing study. In fact, when I arrived, that, was something that I saw as an opportunity to pull the college together, especially because it was anomalously being run outside of the college. And this is one of the strangest features of the UNCG system, as it evolved, is that the, because the institution—this is as I understand it—because the institution was once a liberal arts college, it never quite relinquished its liberal arts mission to the College of Arts and Sciences, but was shared by the whole institution, and therefore, it seemed to me that the college lacked its mission, that everyone had the college's mission. The college did not have its own mission, so one of the rally points that I tried to emphasize was that that was the heart of the college, the liberal arts curriculum, and that the college should have a central role in that, and that this was a very important matter that was going on, and tried to rally the college around that particular activity. And I just see it as a major achievement that the college got, more or less, the right to have that role. The college has now been reinstituted at the center of that process, and that was a significant matter I think. So I stressed that.

It also seemed to me that there were a number of programs and activities—it seemed to me that there was a wonderful incipient intellectual community within the college—that it wasn't, that people didn't even realize how valuable it was because they hadn't experienced something different. And I had come from a much larger university, very departmentalized, and so the fact there was western civilization and that there were women's Studies and that there were reading groups that cut across the university and so on—that people as a matter of course, talked to people in other disciplines, that seemed to me a great opportunity to build intellectual community to a greater extent than had been done. So I really was very keen to see ways of supporting activities that encouraged discourse in curricular cooperation across the disciplines. And all of that concern eventually culminated in the proposal to create a center for critical inquiry in the liberal arts, which is designed to promote that cross-disciplinary community and to encourage

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curricular experimentation, and at the same time to house some of these programs that had been spawned out of the enthusiasm of faculty. It seemed to me that what happened was that people would get together, would get excited about some ideas, would develop a program, and it kind of languished, or was on the periphery of what the college was, so it seemed to me important to center the college on its mission and to bring its cooperative ventures symbolically and structurally into the center of the college, so that's why the housing of the women's studies, black studies, international studies and some of these cooperative programs, it seemed to me important to give them the support of the college, and at the same time to encourage experimentation that is going on now with the NEH grant and the NSF, [National Science Foundation] grant and so forth.

WL: Returning again to the first area that you raised—governance—the objective of changing the instrument of governance was to increase faculty participation, is that correct?

JC: Right.

WL: Tell me more specifically how was this going to happen.

JC: [laughing] Says the skeptic! Yeah, well it did initially. [laughs more] By encouraging faculty first of all to think about what kind of governing structures would make more sense, would be more meaningful to them, would actually connect up with them in some fashion. How can the administrative council, for example, be a real lively community of people as opposed to a clearinghouse of information, which is more or less what it was? How can the college council be more receptive to its constituencies? What kinds of other committees do there need to be in order to tap into the various dimensions of the college? All that was thought out very thoroughly and talked through both in a small committee that was studying this as well as played out with larger groups as to what they thought, you know, departments and so on, as to what were their ideas about what kind of governance would work. So that was the intent, and I think that it works to a certain degree. I think there's a tendency for things to become more atrophied over time, and I don't know if that's happened or not.

WL: Let's take the example of college council. How did, what sort of changes did you think were necessary over time in the council? I'm speaking out of ignorance.

JC: Right. I thought, I thought that it needed to—both it and the administrative council needed to take the college as their responsibility. And if you look back at the instrument of governance that we devised it was, you know, to think about the goals of the college, to articulate an agenda, to be addressing needs of the college that might come up, instead of being—what the college council was when I came in was, it doubled as a promotion and tenure committee, and as a more or less the curriculum committee. And so it would start on something and would spend a huge part of its time going over tenure and promotion materials and then it would review course proposals. And that was pretty much it. It didn't think about the welfare of the college. It didn't seem to me. It didn't initiate actions. It didn't articulate goals. It didn't have any, any initiatory dimension to it. I don't know if it does now, I mean, one of the things that—, that's why the

experimentation that is going on is interesting because one of the things that we certainly discussed was to what degree the dean can be removed from a central role in all this.

I have felt throughout my stay here that I have been sort of like a spinning top. I am the person generating things. And so that it was always my goal to get some of those centers of energy spinning without me—I mean, not having to be the head of each group, and certainly have, could consider not being the chair of the college council, but that was not something that was popular at the time that the instrument of governance was put together.

WL: So the idea, in the case of college council, the idea was to divest of these other time-consuming activities so that the college council could become a forum for

JC: That's right.

WL: expression of faculty opinion in consideration of college-wide issues.

JC: That's right.

WL: One of the things you hear a lot of, on the part of faculty nowadays, from my point of view, is the tug of war between teaching and research, and to a certain extent, service. All of the things that you've described so far say nothing about research. Maybe they do, I don't know. Most of the emphasis really is on service and on teaching.

JC: Well I think that's, that may be true of our conversation, but that's not true of my emphasis as dean.

WL: Yes. How do, do you find any problems with that? I mean the, it may be griping, but what you hear from faculty nowadays is that they're being pulled in all these different directions.

JC: Yes. Well I think it's a hard job. Being a faculty member is a hard job, a very demanding job, and that those tensions are there and will always be there. But I am a very strong supporter of [pause in tape] research faculty, so that I'm, I would not want to have it perceived that I was not, and held very high standards in promotion and tenure review and so on

WL: Yes.

JC: or that. I think that it is a, it is often a conflict. It can be synergistic and complimentary, these roles, but it also can be very draining on the individual. Yet I think that our best faculty do them all, and that we need to demand it of them, for the most part. I mean I think there are some exceptions of people who do not do all three things, and they are, they can be tolerated for that different pattern. But for the most part I think that we do want people to do all of those things, to be good researchers, good teachers, and also to participate in the community that they're a part of. I wouldn't minimize how difficult it is, but the best people can do it. [chuckles]

WL: Was your position on tenure plan and promotion—did your posture toward that change at all while you were here? In other words what did you find in terms of the way tenure and promotion were handled, operated generally. In a really specific case, did you see things that needed changing?

JC: Yes. I felt that the college's committee—which was one of the changes that I made, was that I sat in on the college committee during their deliberations. Eventually committees felt that this was not an appropriate role for me to play, but the first committees liked it and I liked it. And it gave me a real insight into the review. I was impressed with the quality of the review that was done by the faculty that were on the committee at that time. I have myself always taken this responsibility very seriously and do a very careful job of it.

I feel—I've felt and still feel that the dean's and dean review should carry more weight than it does. It does now by maybe built-in respect, but my first year here, for example, I had negatives overturned, and they became positives, which I found intolerable, that a dean would be overturned, and say your standards are too rigorous for this institution or for this place, for this chancellor, perhaps, so the possibility of that happening disturbs me. And so I'm interested in the reconsideration of promotion/tenure regulations that are going on right now and building in the dean's role, because one of the things that happened, I think, was that the regulations never accounted for the fact that the schools were and college were created and so still have a kind of structure that was built on a single-structured institution as opposed to multi-dimensional institution.

WL: Based on the assumption that it was going from the head to the—

JC: To the vice chancellor. Right, there was no other level when the first regulations were drawn up, and so therefore that level has never really been appropriately written into the regulations.

WL: Did you find over time that this sort of thing didn't happen as much, that they—?

JC: It hasn't happened in the last couple of years, and I don't know how to explain that, except that as I say I think that credibility builds up over a while.

WL: Would you get feedback?

JC: No, there has been very little feedback. I certainly was absolutely startled and enraged by the action my first year and thought that I was being given a sign of no respect, or sort of, almost a vote of no confidence—that that my recommendations could carry so little weight. The chancellor came to see me and was very concerned about how I felt and was really startled, because I think that he hadn't paid that much attention to dean's review before. It had been more a—

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JC: — more elaborate. That's another thing that I attempted to do along with the college council that first year was to try to improve the material that came out by having guidelines of various sorts for people to follow. But I think that they've often, the files are often prepared very well but very elaborately. I mean it is a tradition of the institution to prepare very elaborate files.

WL: I remember when I first came here that I was told that, for example, getting outside letters was not done. This was something that wasn't always a good idea to do.

JC: Yes. It certainly has changed.

WL: That's changed. That's become standard?

JC: Pretty much standard, yeah.

WL: What do you think the greatest problems are at the college, since you're leaving? I mean, you—you might actually, I think you would have an excellent vantage point, perspective, on what needs to be done to the college to make it better. What things perhaps can't be solved or would be very difficult to solve?

JC: Yes. Well, as is predictable, many of the college's problems, as well as the university's problems, center around money—having the sufficient resources to handle its mission. The institution, as you know, I think, is in the process of trying to have an adjustment to General Administration regarding its operating budget, which seems to be essential. So there is ever higher aspirations, I think, for the college. I think the college has a wonderful faculty for the most part. And so it makes sense to have high aspirations for them. At the same time there's not the resource base to support the kind of aspirations that they might have.

And the institution has this mission of being a doctoral-granting university and wanting to emphasize its graduate programs, and I support that in the sense that, you know, I think that is an important thing to do, but very expensive. So we really don't have adequate resources to support the doctoral and master's programs that we have to the degree to which they could be funded—they should be funded. And we are in the process as an institution of thinking of others that we need to have in order to cement our mission in that area. We have too few to make us strong. We need to have more, and they need to be strategically planned and in such a fashion so that they're secured. But in order to do that is a tremendous investment.

And as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, I worry tremendously about the undergraduate program and the kind of gutting of the undergraduate program that may result in trying to achieve that—the other mission. So I think that one of the things that I would emphasize is the tension between the graduate mission and the undergraduate mission is something that needs to be dealt with. It's a problem that is there and won't go away.

I think that it's very hard for the college to make the case of its need for resources

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to do well. It's to offer the finest undergraduate liberal arts education in the state. I think that many institutions shortchange that mission. And they do it on the cheap—that we've tried not to—but that we are, as enrollment increases and as we think of additional program enhancements like writing across the curriculum, like this, like that—it's expensive, and so the frustration of trying to handle the aspiration that is there and can be there within the resources that are there is always a big problem. And I think it's a growing problem because I have not personally been supportive of the growth of the university that's envisioned. The chancellor may tell you that fifteen thousand seems a nice number of students to have in the next you know five or seven years or so, and I think that it's too many students—that we're already experiencing the inadequacy of the facilities and the inadequacy of the faculty. We have gone tremendously in the, increased dramatically in our reliance on part-time instruction, and so I see the resource question as a serious one.

And the college, being I guess—all along I have tried to make it matter that the college has as its central mission undergraduate liberal arts education, to make that continue to matter. These other things are more glamorous—graduate programs and professional programs are more glamorous, and so it seems that it's hard to say we need to have money for more writing intensive sessions, sections, or we need to reduce the size of western civilization so we can do a better job in that course, and so on. It's hard to get money for those kinds of things, when you're competing against more glamorous things like a new PhD program in—or a new professional program in—or something like that.

WL: Do you think the university as a whole—you think the university as a whole is underfunded?

JC: Yes.

WL: What—how do you explain this?

JC: [laughs]

WL: Maybe this is out of your area of expertise.

JC: Well, you know the standard explanation is that it was never properly funded for its change of mission from a women's college to a comprehensive, more comprehensive, doctoral-granting institution, and so that it needs to have an adjustment made to that. Another thing that might be observed is that it has an awful lot of things going on, you know, so the money gets fragmented across a lot of ways—six professional schools and the College of Arts and Sciences. I suppose that's not a tremendous array of programs, but it is a lot of mouths at the trough. And so I think one of the problems is that the money, there's not enough money—and the other problem is that the money's being divided up among a lot of competing interests.

[End of Interview]

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