



ATTENTION: © Copyright Western Washington University Libraries Special Collections. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. The following materials can be used for educational and other noncommercial purposes without the written permission of Western Washington University Libraries Special Collections. These materials are not to be used for resale or commercial purposes without written authorization from Western Washington University Libraries Special Collections. All materials cited must be attributed to Western Washington University Libraries Special Collections.



This interview was conducted with Dr. Peter Elich, Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus at his office in Miller Hall on April 11, 2003. The interviewer is Steve Inge.

SI: Today is April 11, 2003. We're talking with Dr. Peter Elich, Professor Emeritus...not quite.

PE: Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus.

SI: Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus, congratulations! And former dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Western. The interviewer is Steve Inge. For the record, this is a second effort at this interview, first having been fouled up by operator error. So Pete, thank you for your patience. Could you tell us how it is that you came to be at Western?

PE: I completed my undergraduate work at the University of Washington. I came to Bellingham and began teaching in the public schools, first at Whatcom Junior High School, which is now Whatcom Middle School. I taught a variety of courses. I had no room of my own. I walked around carrying history maps one time and materials for the science lab the next time. I spent two years at Whatcom, then went on to Bellingham High School, where I taught and coached football for a couple of years. During that time I was going to school at Western, working on a masters degree in school psychology and working graveyard shift at the paper mill. I had three kids at that time and a \$3,600 a year teaching salary, so a little extra income was much appreciated!

About the time I completed my master's degree, I was also not doing well as a football coach. Maurice Freehill, who was a professor of mine here at Western at that time, asked me one day if I would be interested in going on to graduate school. I hadn't thought about going on to get a PhD. He suggested I go down and talk to some people he knew at the University of Oregon. He thought they had a good program in the area of educational psychology where you could do most of your work in the department of psychology, since I already had a lot background in education. So my wife and I went down, spent a couple of days, and by the end of that time we were enrolled. That next fall we went down and spent two and a half years at the University of Oregon finishing a PhD. By the time I got out in '61, there were a lot of jobs available. I'd done some research at Oregon, but was primarily interested in going to a school that emphasized undergraduate education and teaching.

A position was available at Western. I made a phone call to Chuck Harwood, who was the chair of the department of psychology, and sent him a letter. I got a call back from him indicating I was hired. I didn't need to come for an interview because people knew me pretty well, since I'd been doing work in the department. I had a lot of family in the area, so I came back to Western, for a starting salary of \$6,000 -- a significant improvement. I taught a variety of courses, almost everything in the department except animal behavior. I was pleased with the opportunity to come to Western (then Western Washington College of Education), because of its strong reputation as a quality undergraduate school.

We had a small lab with four rats, and that was about it, in Old Main. A few years later we added some armadillos. Carol Diers was interested in studying armadillos because they have identical offspring so you can tease out the effect of environment upon learning. She almost burned down the building I recall one time, when she had a heat lamp above the baby armadillos and it caught the straw on fire in the middle of the night!

SI: In Old Main?

PE: Yes, fourth floor of Old Main.

Jim Jarrett had just become president the year before I came. He came from the University of Chicago, Great Books tradition, and started a shift almost immediately from exclusive teacher training emphasis, to a broader, multi-disciplinary, departmentalized approach. There was a lot of difference of opinion on the faculty about this change. There were two groups, one that was going along with Jarrett to emphasize more the liberal arts and sciences focus. Prominent among those were Herb Taylor, Henry Adams, Don Blood. And then there was a group that was trying to hang on to the exclusive teacher training focus because we had a very strong reputation as a teacher training institution, particularly at the elementary level, but also to some extent at the secondary level. We had a national reputation of being one of the better teacher training institutions in the country, and people didn't want to lose that by moving in another direction.

I taught at Western in the department of psychology until about 1971. I worked with Tom Billings in setting up one of the first Upward Bound programs in the country. Billings went on to become the national director of the Upward Bound Program. During the latter years of the '60s, I spent a lot of time traveling around the country – literally, the Pacific Islands, Alaska, and Pacific Northwest, helping set up Upward Bound programs and doing evaluations of those programs.

In about '68, '69, I was involved in trying to set up a programmed learning workshop during the summer. That was a hot new thing at the time based on the theories of B. F. Skinner. We looked around the country to find where the activity was going on. Xerox was big in program instruction at that time, and they had a person who I wanted to bring but he couldn't come, so they suggested another fellow, Bill Laidlaw. Bill came out and spent that summer and liked it so well here that he took a leave and stayed an entire year. Then he went back to New York and got involved in the New York State Higher Education System. He was hired by the City University of New York to be the dean of developing Hostos Community College, which was in the South Bronx. Because I'd had some involvement in working with American Indian kids, and Hispanic educational issues, he called me and asked me if I was interested in coming back. I went back and spent two and a half years in New York helping to get that program going. I headed up the social and behavioral science area, selecting faculty and developing curriculum. It was a very, very interesting experience.

Bill later came back and became the President of Whatcom Community College, and unfortunately was stricken by cancer a few years into his tenure there. He was a very close friend of mine, and a very great loss, not only to his friends and family, but to the community and to the community college.

Soon after I came back, Meryl Meyer, who was the chairman of the psychology department, took a position at University of Florida, and I was selected as the chair of the department. I served as chair of the department for fifteen years. We had as many as thirty two faculty at one time, principally because we had a very heavy proportion of the teacher education program. We taught measurement, learning and child and adolescent development for all students planning to become teachers.

Then in about '83, the dean's position became open in Arts and Sciences. Jim Davis stepped down, and I was appointed interim dean. I was the successful candidate and became dean of the College, where I served until my retirement at the end of fall quarter, 1999.

One particularly noteworthy experience during the time that I was department chair, Bill McDonald suffered a mild heart attack. He was the dean of men at that time, and I was asked if I would stand in for him until he recovered, which would be a couple of months. So I spent half a day over here chairing the department, and half a day over there at the dean of men's office.

It was during the time there was the Vietnam issue, and things got pretty hot around here. There was a mass demonstration one day on Red Square with the Weathermen here with big dogs and side arms, and it had the potential for getting pretty nasty. Jerry Flora was president at that time. Flora and his inner circle of

people, sometimes they called them “the six pack.” I don’t remember all six, but it was at least Alan Ross and Herb Taylor and I think Jim Hitchman, who was the dean of students at that time. Sam was probably there; Sam Kelly was always part of that group, and whoever else might have been there at that time. The president of the Faculty Senate perhaps, whoever that was. They were up in Flora’s office, and I was sort of the runner between, communicating messages between them and the students. I would go out and hear what the students had to say, and then I’d run upstairs and tell them what the students had to say, and then they’d tell me what I was supposed to tell the students and I would run back down and tell the students. Then I’d hear more from the students, and I’d run back up and tell them. I must have made that trip six or eight times during that day.

During one of these times, I was standing on the edge of the pond there, and the students were getting understandably a little frustrated with not having direct access to the President, but to somebody they didn’t even recognize as having any authority at all, which was true! And somebody hollered out, “Throw the fucker in the pond!” They started moving toward me. Fortunately for me, there was a circle of football players, I later learned, who warded them off and ushered me to a safe entry back up the stairs and told me that I when I came back down they would take care of me. This potentially violent situation was calmed by a group of faculty, organized and led by Professor Mike Mischaikow from the economics department who broke the students into small groups, where faculty would listen to what they had to say and reassure them that they would bring their concerns to the attention of university officials.

Let’s see, what else... Well I think that the transition of the presidents I’ve had the opportunity to work with maybe warrants a comment. I mentioned Jarrett to begin with. I got to know Jarrett reasonable well because I was in the psychology department where some of his closer advisors were, people like Don Blood, Henry Adams and Carol Diers. I socialized somewhat with Jarrett and that group, so I got to know him reasonable well. I had a high regard for his intellectual capability and his direction. I think that period of time probably represents one of the most significant periods in the history of the University, that shift from exclusively teacher education to Western Washington State College and then eventually to Western Washington University.

And then following Jarrett I think we have Harvey Bunke, who didn’t stay long, but I thought Bunke was a very good president. He actually encouraged me to look into academic administration. He called me over one day and asked me if I was interested in going to an administrative workshop at the University of Minnesota. So I went to that for three or four days and learned about how you shuffle paper and that kind stuff. But he was encouraging.

And then I think we had Flora following that, yes. And Jerry was a very popular president at the beginning of his tenure because he was a very well-known faculty member, an outstanding faculty member, an excellent teacher and campus leader and well-liked by people. I had the opportunity to work closely with Jerry Flora as well. It was during that time (1969) we had enabling legislation from the legislature to grant a PhD. They didn’t give us any money, but they gave us the enabling legislation. I wrote a proposal for a PhD program in school psychology with some people in education and we had the appropriate visitations from people who could evaluate the program and so on and it came out pretty well. So Flora and Alan Ross, who was dean of the graduate school at that time, and I traveled around to visit each of the members of the council, I think it was the Council of Post-Secondary Education, the group that was essentially responsible for making recommendations to the legislature and to the governor regarding higher education issues. And we visited each of them in their own communities, took the person to dinner, and lobbied them on behalf of our proposal. Flora meanwhile had been lobbying the presidents of the other four year institutions. When we went to the meeting where the vote was to be taken, it appeared as though we had a narrow majority voting in favor of us. Just after the debate and just before the vote, the President of the University of Washington, called for a brief recess, and called the presidents of Central and Eastern over and when the vote came, the presidents of Central and Eastern voted against us. And Flora was quite sure that they would vote in favor. As I recall, they said that they were informed by the President of the University of Washington that their chances of ever being named a university would be markedly reduced if they supported our effort to have a PhD program. They were, as we, interested in becoming a university at that time. That was another issue before us. So we lost the opportunity. We could have gone ahead with the program, but we lost the opportunity for any funding. In retrospect, I think it is a good thing that we did not pursue a doctorate program because of our undergraduate program. We are principally an undergraduate institution, that’s our main strength. When you have a doctorate program, you tend to put a lot of your main resources, your strongest resources, into that program.

SI: At that time, the institution was some what of an even balance still between teacher education and arts and sciences, and many of the other colleges had yet to emerge, so it was a logical position at that time.

PE: Right, right, yes, that's right. I think it was about in that time when the cluster college concept began? I think Paul Woodring was one of the people who was influential in that movement; the idea that we would develop a variety of small cluster colleges with different kinds of emphases. They would be relatively small, and some faculty would live in with students, so that you would have kind of the Oxford environment. By the time the first of those was developed, Fairhaven, the glamour of that approach sort of wore off and nobody wanted to live in! Students didn't even want to live there! But Fairhaven was developed and endures today. I think it offers an excellent educational opportunity for some students who need the more flexible environment that they have in Fairhaven.

Huxley was also developed following that same concept and endures today as one of the relatively few remaining environmental studies programs. A lot of them were developed, and a lot of them fell by the wayside.

Also the College of Ethnic Studies was developed. I think the recommendation by the dean of the College of Ethnic Studies, Jesse Hiroaka, to close the College of Ethnic Studies, was probably as unique among deans' actions in the history of higher education. But Jesse had the foresight to see that isolating minority students was not what you were trying to accomplish. What you wanted to do is to have broad cultural integration in the campus, rather than to isolate the minority students from the majority population, so Ethnic Studies was closed.

PE: Paul Olscamp followed Flora. I was on the search committee for Olscamp as well. He provided strong academic leadership. I think that that combination of Olscamp and Talbot, in terms of the internal management of the university, was one of the strongest periods in our history. Talbot, in my judgement, was an excellent provost. He was strongly supported by Jim Albers, who was this person that you interacted with on financial matters. I remember going frequently to Albers' office, where you had to go for additional sections of this, that, and the other thing. It was like going to a loan shark without any collateral. But you usually got what you needed, but not always what you wanted. Olscamp pretty well let Talbot run the show inside. I'm sure they conferred about directions and things of that sort. I took the proposal for the PhD program to Olscamp a few months after he was here and reviewed it for him briefly. What he already knew, I'm sure, was that we had the enabling legislation. The Counsel on Post-Secondary Education voted against our doing it, so we had no resources coming, but I asked him if he wanted to do anything further with it and he, decided that we should not pursue that at this time.

PE: Following Olscamp we had Bob Ross. I was rather fond of Bob Ross, as a personal friend as well as a president. He was a marked contrast to Olscamp. Olscamp was much more of a strong academician in orientation. I think much more of – I don't want to call him "elitist" – but much more focused upon *quality* undergraduate education, focusing upon relatively few programs. Don't expand too far, but make sure you have very good study in-depth, and attract the very strongest students you possibly can to those programs.

Ross was very much of a populist. His approach was that we should offer a wide variety of programs appropriate for a regional comprehensive university. If a student came to Western for a quarter that would probably enrich their lives, even if they didn't go on to school beyond that point. We went through the frequent drill of developing a strategic plan during that time. I remember we developed a variety of objectives. We'd have list of a dozen or so and people said, "Well what about this?" and Ross said "We'll add that!" We added it, and we ended up with, I don't know, forty, fifty objectives, which gave him license to do anything he wanted to. He could make this decision, and say, "Well this fits items six, seven, eight, nine, ten..." whatever.

Backing up, somewhere during that period of time, and I don't recall exactly the year, we went through a serious budget reduction. It was prior to Ross. It may have been during either Olscamp or maybe even Flora's tenure. We had a big Reduction in Force at the University. We had the Mischaikow Committee, and I was a member of the Mischaikow Committee. I think we met all summer long and we had to reduce by a hundred and twenty some positions in the University, which we were able to do largely by attrition. Some departments even took reduced salaries for a period of time to save some people. We came out of that. But that represents, I think, a very important period in the University's history. Comparing Central and Western which were very similar prior to that, more similar than they are now, Western took the position that we're going to retain essentially the structure that we have. Trying to maintain strong academic departments, and we'll take the cuts and not change the structure. Central took

the position that we're going to try to save everybody, and we're going to do this by farming out programs in the Seattle area, in the Yakima area, doing a lot of extended education, taking a lot of people offline, and let them work on the money that can be generated from offline courses. So they sort of diluted their programs to some extent by spreading out and doing a lot of things at a lot of different places; adding a lot of programs. Western retained our basic structure. I think that was a very important decision on the part of Western, which enabled us to retain that strong academic focus and not try to be everything to everybody, but to focus upon the basic liberal arts and a few selected professional applied colleges and programs, that depended upon the philosophy and the content, and methodology of liberal arts and sciences as a basis. We had Education, and Business and Economics, and Huxley, and Fairhaven, and Fine and Performing Arts, which spun off from that but are all closely tied to the liberal arts and sciences, whereas Central became much more diffused.

Going back to Ross now which is a later period, Ross's presidency was, I think, marked by, in addition to his approach to developing programs and the populist kind of approach; he was also a very strong representative of the University to the community and to the legislature. I've been told by people from other institutions that he became one of the principal spokespersons for higher education before the legislature and legislative groups. He was very effective in representing higher education; very effective in representing the University to the community. He could talk to almost any kind of group, from the farmers out in the county, to fishermen on the docks, to the business people and education people as well, and I think provided in his own way, strong leadership, although many faculty did not like the more populist approach that he took.

He unfortunately, as everybody knows, was killed along with Jeanene DeLille, Don Cole and the pilot of the plane in that tragic accident. I might have been on that plane, I had been with them on the same plane a couple of days earlier at another meeting, and I might have been on that plane as well except that Jeanene DeLille had found a fundraising training activity for deans in Washington D.C. All the deans were in Washington D.C. on the day the plane went down. We hustled back as soon as we learned they were missing. But we found out en route, as we could call each time we had to stop, that they had found the plane and there were no survivors. A great loss of three people who provided strong leadership to the university.

Ken Mortimer was next. Mortimer had some clear ideas about what the university should be. He wanted to strengthen the basic liberal arts and sciences orientation, offer a very high quality education. I remember his saying on many occasions that he thought Western was already, and should be further recognized and further developed as, a quality liberal arts and science based institution as an alternative to the more expensive private institutions in the state; the Whitmans, and the PLUs and places of that sort. And he saw us in that light, and that was consistent, I think, with the faculty notion of what the University should be as well. And he supported increasing diversity of the student body. He also tried to strengthen the bonds with the community, and really got the Foundation moving, although the Foundation really began with Olscamp, and Ross moved it along a bit, it really took a significant step forward with Mortimer. I remember Mortimer calling the deans in one day and saying "We have to put a couple, three, four hundred thousand dollars into the Foundation if we want to make it go...if we really wanted to move. He outlined for us what he saw the advantages might be. But informing us that that was money that might otherwise go to us, we were in a reasonably good budget period at that time and after some discussion we unanimously supported putting that money into the Foundation, which enabled him to hire a new director and staff. The Foundation really moved from that point on. He put a lot of energy behind it, and the payoff in the long haul is going to be very strong as a result of that.

Then of course the most recent president is Karen Morse, who has continued to work very hard to develop the Foundation, and had done an excellent job in continuing to raise resources for the University, from private, corporate and philanthropic donors as well as from the legislature. I think she has served the University well in her representation to the legislature and worked very hard in providing leadership to the University. I haven't agreed with some of her decisions, but that's to be expected, you're not going to agree with everything that other people do. I can't fault her for hard work and her sincere effort. She's an extremely nice person and I've been fond of both her and her husband Joe, who unfortunately suffered a tragic stroke a few years ago.

SI: I have a couple of people that I would like you to comment on, some of whom we have talked about...

PE: Oh yes.

SI: Chuck Harwood, who hired you to come in here, and then Chuck goes on to be the first Dean of Fairhaven, and dies tragically later. Could you talk a little bit about Chuck? His notions about education and what he was doing in Fairhaven? Even in psychology?

PE: Chuck, I think, provided very strong leadership for the department of psychology. It grew rather significantly during the time that he was here. Not only in numbers of students and faculty, but also in terms of the quality of the program, the kind of people he hired. We had some excellent faculty that came on at that time. He was an extremely nice person to work with. He was a very friendly guy, and an excellent scholar and excellent teacher in his own right. I had some classes with him while I was doing a master's program here. I was actually a bit surprised when he took the Fairhaven job, but I think he provided the kind of leadership they needed there as well. His ability to work with any variety of people, and Fairhaven certainly had its variety of folks. My wife and I and family became close friends -- they had children about the same age as ours. We were in New York at the time that he was overcome by carbon monoxide on his boat. His wife Vonda survived, but was ill. Anyway, I thought Chuck was a very important person in the history of the University, and certainly a valued colleague and valued friend of mine.

Another person who fits into that category, who I actually knew for a much longer period of time, was Sam Kelly. Sam and I began teaching, let's see now, he was at Bellingham High when I came to Bellingham High in 1956, and we taught there and got to know each other quite well. We were working on master's degrees at the same time at Western. He went to the University of Chicago and got a degree in higher education. I went to the University of Oregon. Then we both returned to Western. Sam was in education for a while then went over to Old Main, I never could quite figure out what his job was, but he did a lot of things. He had a few titles; one was director of the Center for Higher Education. He was also then the graduate dean, and I think for a while he was also the dean of research as well. But I think most importantly, he was a very valued advisor to the senior administration. He was a wise man, a very quick wit, and a very intelligent person -- he provided very effective council to the presidents and provosts and to me.

I didn't mention this before, but I think it was between Bob Ross and Karen Morse; we had Al Froderberg as interim president of the University for a while. He was serving as the interim provost at the time of the tragedy and so he was moved into the presidency. And then later Larry DeLorme served as the interim president following Mortimer and during the search that resulted in hiring President Morse.

Talbot left the provost position in 1983[?], he didn't work too well with Ross; they were of different styles, put it that way. Ross, the "good old boy" from the south, and his style was the "good old boy" approach. And Talbot with the Australian background, and had been working with Olscamp, and had a little different style. So they parted company. But I had high regard for Talbot and I relied upon Talbot and on Sam Kelly for council throughout my tenure as dean.

A word or two about Froderberg; Froderberg was an outstanding department chair in the department of mathematics. I worked closely with him in my early years as dean and valued his contribution greatly. Ross was trying to select somebody to represent the university at the legislature. He called Sam and me in one day and he had a person in mind. He said he was inclined to hire this faculty member and both of us said "Oh God, no!" This person would not be the person you'd want to send. "Well all right, who in the hell are we gonna select?" So I suggested that he talk to Al, even though I was reluctant to have Al assume that position. But I thought Al and he would get along well. Their personal styles, kind of casual in their approach, if you will, a sort of down home kind of approach. I thought Al had a respect for the faculty and would represent the faculty position strongly. He'd been the President of the Senate and so on. So they struck it off right away. He put Al in that position, and Al represented us in the legislature for a number of years. A great loss to the academic side of the house, but a great plus I think to the University in general in terms of his representation at the legislature.

Another person I should mention is Larry DeLorme, who was chair of the department of history, with whom I worked closely. I think probably among all the chairs the two that stood out in those early years especially, were Froderberg and DeLorme; very strong, and helped to shape some of the policies for the college which then really influenced some of the policies for the University as well. Then Larry went on to become the Provost, and I worked closely with him obviously in my role as dean. Then, unfortunately, he had a long period of illness and strong

medication, and his overall performance declined, not as a function of any lack of ability or intent on his part, but I think just as a function of the illness and the medication that he was taking during that time. I think he had all the potential to continue to be a very strong academic leader for the University. Unfortunately he was not able to carry out his career as I'm sure he was capable of doing.

SI: During your time as dean was Joe Hashisaki still chair in mathematics, or had he passed away?

PE: No, I think Hashisaki had left the chair before that.

SI: Well Joe later dies.

PE: Yes, Joe did. But I think first Al was chair at the time I became dean, I'm quite sure.

SI: Because Hashisaki had been hired by Jarrett to initially build that math department.

PE: And he did a fine job. That was a very strong department. He did an excellent job, just as Don Easterbrook did a fine job in building an extremely strong department of geology. I think that approach that Jarrett used of going out and trying to bring in some of the top people he could possibly bring in as chairs, then give them some leeway to make decisions in hiring faculty and things of that sort. It was a very good approach. I had the opportunity to be involved in hiring some of the excellent chairs from outside; Rick Emerson for one, Ken Hoover, Jay Teachman. They're people who provide very strong leadership for their departments, and I'm sure there are others who I am overlooking at this point that are equally strong.

SI: One program that emerged in that time and sort of got lost was the nursing program.

PE: Yes.

SI: Did that begin during your time and then subsequently end during your time as well?

PE: It was in the initial stages when I became dean. It was a program that was designed for people who already had RNs to get the baccalaureate degree part of their program if they had their RNs from the community colleges. For a variety of reasons it just didn't work very well. We could not maintain the enrollment in the program. I think it may be partly leadership, partly because the program was maybe a bit too rigorous or not flexible enough for people who were working as nurses. At any rate, it was a program that I was later instrumental in phasing out. Similarly the apparel design/fashion marketing program, that was a Seattle-based program, we developed that when Rosalie King came to head up the department. She was hired by Jim Davis just before I became dean. She headed the home economics program and she was instrumental in adding the apparel design/fashion marketing program in Seattle. Actually not doing too badly for its purpose, but not a good program for Western; not to have a program stuck out there like that. The students really didn't have any attachment to the University.

SI: Is this a bit of an expression of the Bob Ross populist approach?

PE: I think it is. I think that's a good illustration. And I think some of the students who had AA degrees from community colleges came there and took their upper division program in Seattle and many of them never set foot on Western's campus.

There is actually another person who I didn't mention, Les Karlovitz, who was the provost for a brief time. Les was ill when he came here and didn't last very long. He died of cancer. I thought he had the potential to be a very strong provost. Sharp mind, brilliant guy, but he was agonized from the time he came. He'd have those Saturday meetings with the deans, and God, he'd come up, and he couldn't even wear regular clothes, he'd come up in a sweat suit. He'd walk around in pain from conducting a meeting, tenure promotion cases and things of that sort. I felt so sorry for him.

SI: But not opposed to working you on Saturday!

PE: But not opposed to working Saturday, yes. He was a hard driver, yes. He was a hard driver. I'm not sure if I would have lasted as dean if he'd stayed on as provost. His staying on and my leaving as dean might have been good for the University, I don't know! I probably stayed on two or three years longer than I should have.

Well anyway, what I'm doing now is, I had a post-retirement agreement when I left, essentially the same agreement that I had negotiated with forty or fifty faculty when I was dean, for people who had been here for a long time. Teach one quarter a year, you give up your tenure of course, and you don't have any benefits, but you teach one quarter a year for three years. And I had that arrangement. Then I had the opportunity to teach a fourth year at a markedly reduced salary, which I did this last year. Just got my teaching evaluations back and they're quite good, I'm very proud of them. A little better than they were last year. I've told the chair that if he needs somebody next winter, I'd be available again, but don't take that as a request to teach, merely an indication of my availability. And if you've got other people who want to teach and need to teach more than I do, hire them first.

SI: One other person, Herb Taylor.

PE: Herb Taylor, yes. Herb Taylor's a real legend at the University as one of the original "wiz kids," you know, high IQ, Mensa, charismatic personality, dynamic lecturer. I used to occasionally sit in on his lectures just for the entertainment quality. Also I think he was extremely well-read and well-informed and knew a lot about his subject of anthropology. And was a strong leader in the University. As I mentioned earlier, he was one of the people who quickly supported Jarrett's efforts to change the nature of the University. He went on to become the dean for research, and did a lot to develop the research activity. Under Taylor's direction, that's probably when the emphasis upon research at the University really began to blossom. Not to make us a research institution, but to encourage faculty research. And I worked with him and had one of the first grants, actually the largest grant the university had ever gotten for research - \$45,000 - back in the '60s.

Taylor was inclined also to call you at odd hours. I remember he called me Thanksgiving morning and said, "I'm in my office, I've been going your proposal for the grant," or something, "and there are some significant changes that need to be made. I want you up here right now." And I said, "I'm preparing dinner for my family!" "Well get up here, it won't take too long." It was Thanksgiving morning. He wanted to talk really, mainly, and chatted a bit. He said, "I think you should maybe change this paragraph a little bit, put this part first and that part second." A few things of that sort, nothing of any significance, you know. I think he wanted to let you know he was on top of things. I think if anybody had classes from him, they remember Herb Taylor. As well as people like Keith Murray. We have had many great teachers at Western.

SI: Maybe if you would editorialize just slightly, but in the Ross period and then his death, and the death of Don Cole, and Jeanene DeLille, was in certain respects a watershed just because of the loss...I don't know if you could comment upon what that may have done, if anything, to the institution, but it might be an interesting insight?

PE: Don Cole, whose loss I think, to the University, was much greater than most people realized. Cole worked very quietly in his role as vice president for business affairs; but did an extremely effective job in managing the financial resources of the University, with principle focus upon supporting the academic programs. It seemed as though Don could always find at the end of the biennium, a few dollars for the president to have to support this, that, and the other academic program. I think he probably represents one of the stronger people in that position in the University's experience. I came to value him very greatly.

I think one of the things that happened following the tragic accident was that...we had a period of time, we've talked about the Kelly/Froderberg/DeLorme people involved in ... sort of the, I wouldn't call it confusion, but there wasn't much happening at that time -- people were sort of holding the fort until we got more permanent administration in place. I don't see that that had any really strongly negative effect upon the University in the long run because we had strong leadership following that when Mortimer came. But it was a period of time when we were just sort of treading water, I think. Not to in any way discredit the people who were in those positions, they did a good job of doing what they were doing, but they weren't there to provide leadership at that time. They were there to keep things running smoothly until we could get new leadership on board of a more permanent nature.

SI: At that time, at least I have heard, I have no idea if it's true; Ross had, for example, a notion of a College of Engineering Technology, which did not fully develop because he was gone. But that was kind of a Bob Ross project that he kind of liked to move along in its own subtle ways.

PE: That's right. That was certainly something which I think he was pushing forward. I recall one particular incident. I didn't mention Paul Ford, who was a Provost for a while under Ross, as well. We had a lot of provosts, and some of those I've even forgot. I recall one day the Deans were in a meeting in Paul Ford's office. Paul announced that Bob Ross was advertising, (we had a position open for the chair of that department) for a director of the Division of Engineering Technology.

And I said, "We don't have a Division of Engineering Technology, we have a department, and we don't need a director, we need a chair. And if you're going to create a division like that, that's normally something which would go through at least the faculty, Academic Coordinating Commission, Planning Council, things of that sort."

"Well," he said, "here, take this," he again showed me the announcement. "He's down in his office."

Well I got up, took this down to his [President Ross's] office, and asked if I could see him, and went in and shut the door. Ross was a guy you could argue with in private, but you never took it outside the room. You could cuss at him, and he'd cuss at you, and sometimes you gained a point and sometimes you lost. So anyway, I said "God dammit, you can't do this."

[Ross], "What do you mean I can't do this?"

[Elich], "You can't just go creating divisions and hiring directors. This is a department in the college I'm administering."

"Well, what do you want me to do?" he said.

[Elich], "What I want you to do is change that to what it's supposed to be, to a chair of a department."

[Ross] "Give me that piece of paper!" And he reached out and got a pencil and wetted it his tongue. And he crossed out "director", and he wrote in "chair," and he crossed out "division" and wrote in "department." He says, "There, does that make you happy?"

I said, "You're not going to change anything, are you?"

"No, I'm not."

He was encouraging us, during a period when the budget was reasonably good, for the Deans to squirrel away some money for a rainy day. So we were in a pretty good budget situation at that time. That was another function of Sam Kelly. Sam Kelly somehow, could take end of biennium money and hide it somewhere for two or three days then give it back to you. I think he usually took ten percent off the top or something too. So we had \$250,000-\$300,000 that we were saving as a reserve, that's what we called it. One day we got a notice that all these reserves were being recaptured centrally. I went over to see Ross and I said, "What are you doing? You told us to reserve this money, and now you just take it away!"

And he said, "Well I need it."

I said, "Well we need it too! That's my money!"

He says, "Listen, it's *all my* money!" That's his style.

SI: He didn't hide it! Now he's being the good guy, bringing it back!

PE: That was just his approach. "Hey, listen now, it's *all my* money."

I was very happy to have stayed at Western during nearly all of my career. I thoroughly enjoyed teaching and had the great pleasure and honor of being selected as Western's, "Outstanding Teacher Award" for '65-'66, by the Associated Students of Western Washington State College. I treasure that, as well as the recognition from the Faculty Senate upon my retiring as dean, and being named Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus. But I thoroughly enjoyed teaching and I thoroughly enjoyed my contact with my colleagues, thoroughly enjoyed the position as dean, particularly the opportunity to work with department chairs and individual faculty to help them build stronger departments and hire stronger faculty.

I think I was greatly influenced by an early workshop I went to for the National Council of the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, a dean's workshop; Bernard Kelly was retiring as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of North Dakota, where he'd been the dean for twenty years or so, and he announced that he could really sum this up very easily. He said, "You want to select the very best department chairman you possibly can. And then provide them all the support that you possibly can in hiring and developing the strongest faculty that you can. And your job is to facilitate the chair's job in building a strong department, in hiring strong faculty and supporting those faculty. Providing them the things they need in order to exercise their capabilities and talents." And I always remembered that, and that's the way I tried to manage my affairs as dean, as a facilitator rather than a director. When big issues came up, I would call the department chairs together to get their collective wisdom because it was certainly stronger and much more effective than my individual position. I think that my greatest satisfaction came in working with the department chairs and faculty to help them develop as teacher-scholars, and help develop strong departments. I gained a lot of satisfaction in seeing departments develop and faculty and staff develop. I couldn't always do everything they wanted, but I always kept the role of the faculty central. The relationship between the faculty and the student is the principle area of focus for the university.

END OF TAPE