

INTERVIEWEE: MEREDITH LEE
Former Dean of Undergraduates

Studies

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SM: This is an interview with Professor Meredith Lee, Former Dean of Undergraduates, on Tuesday, July 17, 1990, at 3:30 P.M. in HOB-360. And the first question, Meredith, is: What were the reasons that caused you to accept the Deanship?

ML: I think the reasons for accepting a Deanship are always mixed. I started down the slippery slope into administration by being very active with undergraduate issues in my own department, the German Department; got involved in the evaluation of the Humanities core course when the major evaluation took place about, probably now, eight years ago; was asked, invited to be Associate Dean of Humanities, and had been in that position for almost two years when the Deanship opened of Undergraduate Studies. Then the opportunity to do what I thought would be what I was doing in Humanities in a broader campus-wide context was very intriguing, to learn more about the campus. I certainly enjoyed being Associate Dean. Little did I know that the Dean of Undergraduate Studies is a much different position.

I think, in some sense, I had my arm twisted. In part, the chair of the search committee came after me. Three of my predecessors as [Associate Dean of Humanities].

SM: Was that Cohen?

ML: It was Bob Doedens. Three of my predecessors, as Associate Deans of Humanities, had become Deans of various sorts, including the current Dean of Undergraduate Studies had been in my position previously as Associate Dean of Humanities. Also, my department has had a strong tradition of doing administrative service when asked, and it's very much the ethos of the department. And I think, looking back, that played a role, too.

SM: Yes. Well, that's a very good answer. But did they tell you what your budget would be before you took the job? What I'm driving at is that I have often felt the Dean of Undergraduates isn't well-funded.

ML: What had happened was that the initial position as Dean of Undergraduate Studies, that my predecessor Guy Sircello had, was a much needed office. It was a small operation, he had five or six people in that operation. The campus had made a commitment in the summer of 1983, that would have been, to enlarge that office, to enlarge the role of the Dean, to put more staff positions into it, to transfer Student Support Services under the administration of the Dean. It was clear that it was a growing position.

It was also clear, from my conversations with Bill Lillyman the Executive Vice Chancellor, that it was a position that he wished to see flourish on our campus. He thought it

was very important. And if it hadn't been for that kind of clear support and growth, the position wouldn't have been as attractive. But it was one whose time had come. The campus really needed that new central office to worry about the well-being of undergraduates in the academic setting.

SM: Yes, I well remember all that, and I'm just glad you were able to appoint an Assistant Dean or Associate Dean.

ML: Assistant.

SM: What is his name?

ML: Fawzi Hermes.

SM: That's right.

ML: After I had been Dean for about a year and a half, high on my budget request was a request for an Assistant Dean, which I needed very, very badly. And his arrival was a real godsend into the functioning of the office.

SM: Well, I'm glad. As Coordinator of the Education Abroad [Program], I was delighted that EAP was put under you and it was well-funded. I left, of course, at the end of 1985, and it was well-funded. Now you mentioned the staff. What staffing did you have, besides your Assistant Dean?

ML: As I mentioned before, the office of my predecessor had been five or six people. And as the transition was being made to a new Dean, a number of existing services on campus that had been housed in Student Affairs were being transferred into Academic Affairs. That was happening systemwide.

SM: What's an example of that?

ML: What was then called Special Services, which is the Retention Support Program for under-represented students on campus and economically disadvantaged students.

SM: Under-represented students?

ML: In other words, students whose ethnic identity is under-represented in the university pool, vis a vis the presence in the high school pool. Also, what was to become the program of Academic Support Services had already been put together in general outline, but under that, Learning Skills, the Tutorial Assistance Program, these were now new services within the Dean of Undergraduate Studies Office.

SM: Now, the Tutorial Program, was that Rick Turner?

ML: That was Rick Turner's.

SM: And the person in Education was . . .

ML: In Learning Skills?

SM: In Learning Skills.

ML: Helen Rivera.

SM: Yes, I know her.

ML: We also had Instructional Development Services. Over time, the Education Abroad Program [EAP] was added. The Peer Academic Advisor System, the undergraduate counseling system, found their kind of central housing in their office, including their main training, although most of their service was done out in the units.

SM: They're extremely valuable.

ML: Yes.

SM: I know, in Humanities, they can do almost as well as the faculty, and, in some cases, better.

ML: Well, I think a real strong point of the program is something we're very proud of is giving those students, who are very carefully chosen, very fine training the spring before they go into service. A student is appointed each year to be the coordinator of that program. That coordinator works out of the Dean's office and has a special role, both working with the students, being a kind of first warning system about problems on campus that students are encountering in registration, this kind of thing.

The Dean's Office became a place where, on the one hand, we had these various important undergraduate service programs running, where we asked ourselves what new programs need attention, how can we enhance the coordination among these programs, and so forth. On the other hand, we became the office that administered some funds that had to do with curricular development, using a carrot more than a stick to try to get innovation on the campus in curricular areas. My job as Dean, on the one hand, pushed down through a large staff structure, trying to make that structure more and more effective; on the other hand, reached out to the campus,

trying to let the campus know what our services were and to get the campus talking to each other.

SM: Well, that's great. Tell me, though, did you find differences in the different schools in their peer advising? I mean, did our Humanities differ from, say . . . I mean, I know Social Ecology because I know the people who are advising and they're very good. They're just tops.

ML: Yes, the peer advisors are centrally trained and have slightly different functions in the different units. But the units, the advising function on the campus, or the role of the academic advisors, although it varies from unit to unit, is probably not the most distinctive difference among our units. But I think it's important, one of the things I really learned is that our units vary a lot. They have different cultures. The culture in Humanities is different from the culture in Physical Sciences, and that's different from the culture in Engineering and so forth.

And I was always amused at myself and others on campus who would generalize about the campus does this and the campus does that. Usually, what they mean is their department does it or their school does it.

SM: Yes. There are two advisors, the permanent advisors . . .

ML: The academic counselors.

SM: The academic counselors who are not teachers or not academicians, but are, such as, Bob Doedens' wife [Margaret]

does some, I think, Physical Sciences. I've forgotten what her assignment is. Or is it Biology? No, not Biology.

ML: Margaret, I think . . .

SM: Margaret Doedens.

ML: I forget which school she's in right now. I've been away from this for awhile. (chuckling)

SM: Yes, that's right. Well, you find, say, Jeanie Martinez in Social Ecology. Now, they're very good.

ML: Well, the academic counselors are great.

SM: And they then work with the students, too. Do they work in the same offices? How do they do it?

ML: The physical setup varies, but they are the direct supervisors of those students.

SM: Yes, because I'm much impressed with the whole . . . I've always felt very concerned about advising. When I was Dean, we tried to make everybody involved, and they were involved but some were better than others. In fact, I don't know whether they were poor because they just made themselves poor so that they could get out of it, I don't know. (chuckling)

ML: My impression is that the quality of the academic counselors on this campus is very high.

SM: Yes.

ML: Although there's always room, simply because of the physical structure of our campus, for more communication and information to be exchanged among the units, the knowledge of

the people we have in those positions is really impressive.
On the model of the peer . . .

SM: Did you ever have meetings with all of them brought together
in a luncheon or something?

ML: The academic counselors convene themselves regularly as a
group. And I would say at about a third of their meetings .
. . . We had academic counselors in my office also, the Dean's
Office, who had worked with the . . .

SM: And you're talking about the regular ones, not the peer?

ML: I'm talking about the regular academic counselors.

SM: Because the peers turn over every one or two years.

ML: Yes. No, in the Dean's Office, we had two full-time academic
counselors who worked primarily with the unaffiliated
students. In other words, the freshmen and sophomores who
come in and are not certain with which school they want to
affiliate, and so they are given special attention out of my
office, my old office. Those counselors, of course,
participated fully in the regular meetings of the counselors.
But, in addition to that--I would say, in maybe one in three
meetings--I was present with some special issues I wanted to
bring to the counselors or places where I needed their advice,
feedback on things.

SM: Now, tell me something. As far as you know, is this carried
on as well, so that the counseling system is working well?
Do you happen to know?

ML: I don't know firsthand. I would have no reason not to think so. It's been a very stable group, in terms of personnel. There hasn't been a lot of turnover.

SM: Yes, yes, they go on for years. Like Peggy Wood who was at Fine Arts for at least twelve years, she got married.

ML: Yes, something like what Guy Sircello had started, and that I tried to enlarge, was bringing together the Associate Deans, who wear the hat of being chief academic advisor.

SM: Yes, that's right.

ML: Bringing the Associate Deans together on a regular basis, so that policy questions that arose out of the hands-on experience of the counseling situations could be addressed. And that Council of Chief Academic Advisors, as it was called, was a group that I enjoyed working with a great deal, because it's made up of a lot of old hands on this campus, in terms of undergraduate education.

SM: Would you be inclined to say that this is one of your most important contributions as Dean?

ML: I think the most important contribution I made is one that's going to be not very visible, not very flashy. But in taking over this office that was suddenly enlarged by definition, by transferring in of people, by asking what should be the role of an Office of Dean of Undergraduate Studies on our campus. I'm quite pleased with what we created, and that is an office that became a focal point for discussion across campus of

issues that touched undergraduates, and an office that stimulated discussion of those issues.

In the history of our campus, initially, there was no central place that paid specific attention to undergraduates in an academic setting. Student Affairs played a role in calling attention to problems that were getting overlooked initially, including academic problems, but the decision was made that that wasn't the right place to pursue academic solutions. But our tutoring programs and so forth started out in Student Affairs.

SM: I know that. I remember it. In fact, they had a trailer next to the Education Abroad.

ML: Yes.

SM: Rick Turner had his trailer there.

ML: And it was rightly decided--at least rightly in my judgment--that these are real problems, these are real services that every campus needs to offer; they belong in Academic Affairs; they need to be coordinated with the units; they need to lead us to ask questions about our curriculum, about our student preparation. The academic units themselves tend to pay a lot of attention to undergraduates, in terms of majors, but they don't pay as much attention to undergraduates, in terms of their general education. The question of what should the breadth curriculum look like, how should students move across campus, what does it mean

ultimately to have a B.A. from UCI, those are the questions that I used my office to ask.

SM: That's very impressive, very impressive.

ML: I think one of the discoveries I made with what turned into a very large staff unit, I think I had about fifty-five people in my unit, full-time people, and then lots of students that we worked with.

SM: Fifty-five people!

ML: If you count all the services of all the support services and so forth, by the time I was done.

SM: That's big.

ML: And I was running a major staff unit. But I spent a lot of my time trying to educate that staff, if you will, or have us teach each other about the needs of the campus as a whole, and that meant learning the diverse cultures of the different schools. So we did a lot of in-house workshops on curriculum, on the cultures of the schools, on major programs, trying to anticipate difficulties, trying to track students better as they moved across campus through different courses, and at the same time, trying to reach out and educate the rest of the campus to why a central office like this is necessary. There's a bit of suspicion, from the point of view of the schools, about any kind of central authority.

SM: That's true.

ML: (laughter) And I understand that. I think that having come from one of these schools and then back in it . . . But really setting up this office, beginning to make real cohesion, working together among the people and bringing it to an office [that] I think has a real place on our campus now.

SM: Very good. Question six, what other duties and responsibilities did you hope for, but did not receive the necessary budget? I always assume that there is something else or something further that you would like to have done. You obviously had to absorb this staff. (chuckling)

ML: There was a time when I kept saying, "No, no, no, I don't want anybody else." (laughter)

SM: Don't give me any more! Yes, I think we'd better strike that question.

ML: Well, I think the limits that were set . . . We had terrible space problems.

SM: Did you?

ML: Just awful space problems because there had been this lull in capital building on this campus, and there simply wasn't enough administrative space available. It was important that space be so that students would walk in, have access to services. You remember EAP being in this trailer, tucked way behind?

SM: That's right, yes.

ML: We wanted to move EAP up front on campus and showcase it, that kind of thing. So that is ultimately budget, getting money for space, but it's not direct. I mean, I really did get to the point where I couldn't expand programming, not simply because there wasn't money to hire the people to play the role, but because if we hired them we'd have no place to put them.

SM: Well, therefore, as I notice, Meredith, they're putting an enormous administration building up back of the Alumni House where the parking lot is. Have you seen it?

ML: No, I don't know about that.

SM: All the steel girders have gone up. It's simply back of the Alumni House, and there's a parking lot there, going towards California. And so it goes down to California, the building, and it's very big in square footage. Now I don't know how many stories it goes, but I understand the Chancellor's Office will go there and a number of them will come. But then, those who are over in the University Tower, you know, over in the Town Center, are going to be brought back in. But the question is whether you people, your Undergraduate Deanship will get more space. I think it will have to get it.

ML: Yes, that I don't know. Space was probably my number one problem the whole time I was Dean, and I never myself got to move into the new space but it's now there. I spent all of my time getting it and planning for it.

SM: Getting it, yes.

ML: Student Services II went up and it now houses the various student academic support services, PASS.

SM: Yes.

ML: It also houses the Education Abroad Program. When Housing got its own building, then that space that had been Housing's in the lobby became part of the Dean of Undergraduate Studies Office and that created space for the Honors Program, it created space for other . . . Well, in some sense, it just gave us room to spread out, because we were sitting on top of each other. I seriously called Bill Parker in one day and looked at putting in a second floor in the little space I had, having cubicles, because we were desperate. We had people sharing desks and rotating their hours they could come in.

SM: Sounds like our TAs [Teaching Assistants].

ML: In the summers, we do orientation for new students that are coming to campus. We do this in groups of five students at a time, often with their parents there and so forth. These are for the unaffiliated students that come in.

SM: Very good.

ML: And we had no space left, so that they used the Dean's Office for these, scheduling it in; and, literally, I was not allowed in my own office until one o'clock during the summer days because we had nothing available.

SM: But that's good to do that. That's something new, bringing them in five at a time.

ML: I've even lost track of at what level, at times these different services came on. (laughter)

SM: Yes, right.

ML: Yes, it was a desire to have much more direct contact with students early on and getting them planning their programs.

SM: Well, question seven you've answered. What do you consider your greatest achievement or achievements?

ML: Well, one would be, as I said, creating the unit.

SM: The unit for counseling.

ML: Well, no, not just for counseling. Creating the unit of Undergraduate Studies.

SM: Okay.

ML: And making that into a place on campus that can really do things successfully for undergrads, and for the faculty in planning things for undergrads. I'm also very proud--and it isn't a singular achievement of a single person, by any sense--is the Honors Program. The process of attracting the Ford Foundation money to the campus and . . .

SM: Yes, that was great.

ML: It came at a time when there was nationwide attention to undergraduate education, which was a bonus for me because it helped me focus the conversation. I coordinated the campus efforts to respond to the three national documents, that was

a request out of the President's office that this be done on every campus.

SM: Yes.

ML: But it suited very much what I was already starting to try to do on the campus at this time, and it led to a larger package. And it's not so much the question of any one program, per se, being the result of that, but making sure that undergraduate education is on the agenda.

SM: Very good. Did you have to study Smelser's report, which I thought was very important?

ML: Yes.

SM: He was a very fine director in the Education Abroad Program. He was Director of the United Kingdom for two years, oh, I'd say about ten years ago.

ML: I think his report was very intelligent--that and a report on general education that came out--in terms of addressing the needs of the University of California, was much more relevant than most of the generalizations in these national reports. The President's office created a committee called the President's Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Education in the wake of these reports. I served on that and Neil Smelser was critical in voicing direction on that committee.

SM: Neil Smelser was?

ML: He was on it, yes.

SM: Oh, he was on it?

ML: Yes. And he's very impressive.

SM: Yes, he is impressive. He's a University Professor, you know. He and Murray Krieger, I think, are about the only two. I think they're going to appoint some more now. How about any disappointments? Did you feel that something might have been done a little differently?

ML: The biggest hassle the whole time was space. The office, more than the academic units, I think, is funded out of a collection of different funds that have to flow together and be pulled together by the dean to make a coherent set of . . .

SM: Did you have a budget officer?

ML: Yes. Well, Fawzi Hermes played that role. So the whole funding process was and probably still is very cumbersome for that office. Money comes in different colors, and it meant putting together money from a lot of different sources, and that took up a fair amount of time. I think that what I would like to have done more with--and I'm not sure it can be done easily--is close somewhat that gap that I think still exists between faculty and staff on the campus. I think the faculty don't see clearly enough what talented staff we have in positions to accomplish things for the campus and how dedicated they are to it.

SM: No idea.

ML: I think, on the other side, many staff, with all good will, do not understand what we do as faculty. They don't understand the nature of research. They don't understand what goes on in the dynamic of teaching in the classroom, and there's simply a gap of understanding there. I worked on it but it won't be closed quickly.

SM: That's right. I found that. I didn't have too much difficulty in explaining the faculty to the staff or why they do research and what they do research.

ML: Well, you may have gotten your message through better than I.
(laughter)

SM: Well, I don't know. Maybe I didn't. (chuckling)

ML: It's this, "Going to have the whole summer off?" kind of question. (laughter)

SM: Now your office was located next to Student Affairs, right?

ML: Yes.

SM: Did that help you or what?

ML: It is a right location because the office needs to be like Student Affairs, an office that's on that second floor with high traffic, where it's a walk-in for students for a lot of the services. We're trying to attract the students to take advantage of opportunities that the campus has. It's very frustrating to have wonderful programs like EAP available and students don't walk in and take advantage of them.

SM: Yes, right.

ML: So, in that sense, absolutely yes. Absolutely no, in the sense that between us was some space that we were both eying. (laughter) This was a problem. We had some struggle over space. It's not unique, but because they were next door to us this became ongoing conversation. Bill Lillyman, or at least I use his name to speak for Academic Affairs' more general vision at the time, I think, saw Dennis Galligani who was the . . . I think at that time Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, my office and Vice Chancellor Horace Mitchell's office in Student Affairs as the three offices who would do the primary coordination of concern about general undergraduate welfare on the campus. The notion being that there were certain things that belong for their decision making and administrative affairs rather than student, so that was one split.

The other split was that Dennis, in the offices he supervised, would handle the questions of the student from the moment of interest in application to the campus up to the moment of arrival. So Dennis had the Admissions Office, the Outreach Offices, this kind of thing, and overlapped a little bit until we get them settled, and he had Registrar. My office started with the students on placement testing, which is something that we built out greatly during those years, and then was concerned with their lives as undergraduate students on this campus, in terms of academic questions.

SM: Now, placement testing, Meredith, are you saying that you gave these tests to undergraduate students?

ML: Two things were happening. One is we had some scattered tests going on on the campus already to assure proper placement for students in things like Chemistry. And at the same time, there was a growing movement to do a better job systemwide on things like writing testing before students came. The desire we had was not to have students then constantly coming over to campus at various times to take various tests they had to take, but coordinate this into a single process, and turn it into a positive advising process in the long run, so that students would have the experience of starting out their college education in the courses for which they were prepared.

SM: Are we talking about math placement, English placement, language placement?

ML: They were writing tests.

SM: Writing, yes.

ML: Chemistry, mathematics, ESL [English as a Second Language] tests for the students for whom that was appropriate, foreign language less. The Foreign Language departments still have preferred to do their individual interviewing of students, and have found that the kind of mostly written exams available weren't as successful. This will probably be changing now with the new requirements we've put in, but at that time. But the desire was for us to gather more information about our

students. It's surprising how much we don't know about our students sometimes.

SM: Well, I realize that.

ML: And to get that information in a timely manner, to evaluate it and get it back out to the academic units so they could use it in putting students into their first classes, and we could also use it in planning what courses would be available.

SM: Well, that's very interesting. I think placement tests are very important. I think these students who flop around, you know, say, a language that they can't cope with, say, the second level and they've got to be in the first . . . Math is really fundamental.

ML: Yes. An example of the kind of task my office undertook that was very time-consuming, important for the campus, for the students, and will never be perfectly solved, involved students who had ESL difficulties. We had the right statements on the books. The Academic Senate had created the right policies, but a way to implement those policies didn't exist easily. And there were students, we were finding, who had managed to get all the way up to their senior year and hadn't done their basic English courses because there was no way to . . . no one was doing the basic coordination to make sure that we systematically reviewed transcripts and found those students who hadn't taken the courses they needed and so forth. So we took over the coordination of these things.

And on anything this enormous, as you can imagine, it's a vast task that cuts all the way across campus.

SM: It's a big problem. When I was Dean I can recall students putting these requirements off, and they would always claim there wasn't room. And, in some cases, they were right, they couldn't get their . . . whatever it is, their German when they wanted it.

ML: Yes. One of the tasks that was assigned to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies was to worry about breadth on this campus, general education, both in terms of its curriculum--although that's a Senate responsibility--but to be the administrative person who is looking at it . . .

SM: Now, as a line officer, administrator, were you directly responsible to Bill Lillyman?

ML: Yes, yes.

SM: And that's very important. Did he have meetings with those who were reporting to him?

ML: Yes, he did, but I wasn't in on them. It's an interesting background question. I reported to Bill Lillyman, as all Deans do. Bill had his staff and his staff met regularly with him, worked very closely with him. The Dean of Undergraduate Studies is not a member of Bill Lillyman's staff. That had the disadvantage that information flowed more slowly to my office, particularly at the beginning when it hadn't yet been established in its roles fully on campus. It, at times, was

a real problem because there would be a tendency for the interesting pieces of information not to make it down to me, and the unattractive tasks to be sent down. (chuckling) There wasn't a lot of that, but you can understand how that would happen.

SM: Yes.

ML: Over time that can be corrected, and I did correct it because you make very strong ties with people throughout campus to accomplish things, and our office got known as a place where things could be handled. The current Dean of Undergraduate Studies, however, based on my conversations with Bill as I was stepping down and other campus reviews, now sits on Bill Lillyman's staff meetings, although he's not a member of the staff. That's a compromise. I thought it was . . . I should have completed before, the down side was not in this information loop, this information flow. When I'm talking about this, I remember I had to send out memos sometimes reminding people I hadn't been told things and so forth, or phone calls. But the up side was a desire to have the Dean of Undergraduate Studies function not as one more person from Bill's staff *in* [^] on Academic Affairs, but play a role in conversation with the Deans across campus and with their Associate Deans in shaping the direction of undergraduate studies, and that I would have some distance and leverage, vis a vis Bill's office. And there were times that was valuable.

I didn't have to agree with the Academic Affairs policy upstairs.

SM: That's very interesting.

ML: And that was deliberate.

SM: Well, that's an up side.

ML: That's an up side. (laughter)

SM: Any comments on the achievements of the present Dean, as of July 1990? That's question ten.

ML: Yes. I think it was a terrific choice, Mike Butler, as my successor.

SM: Yes, he's good.

ML: Mike had served as Associate Dean for many years in Social Sciences. He's extremely thoughtful and knowledgeable.

SM: Yes, he is.

ML: I was delighted to see what he's been able to do, to build out even further something that had been one of my commitments, and that's the commitment to undergraduate education in the international area. So that not only has he continued the expansion of EAP, that we started. The first year EAP was put into our office, I was able to put some special resources behind it because it's near to my heart.

SM: Jan Scherfig, was he the . . .

ML: Coordinator that year? No, it wasn't. I don't remember who it was. At one point, it was Bob Montgomery subbing for [Franco Tonelli] and . . .

SM: Oh, I know. It might have been what's his name, in Italian.

ML: Franco Tonelli.

SM: Tonelli.

ML: Franco had taken the position and then went up to UCLA for a year, so things were kind of in . . . And Bob Montgomery stepped in and so forth. But we were able to double the number of applicants in one year.

SM: Yes, that's marvelous.

ML: And that was really exciting.

SM: Great.

ML: In part, that was a situation of resources. I mean, I was able, given a pot of money, as Dean, I was able to put more money behind the projects that I thought were most meaningful to the campus at any one point.

SM: Yes.

ML: When you were heading EAP, you just got your single piece of money and you were set.

SM: It wasn't very much.

ML: It wasn't very much, yes. So I was able to put another staff person on.

SM: But I think you came in just as I was leaving, and I was very anxious to get some money--I've forgotten what to do--and you were able to find it.

ML: Yes.

SM: In my memory.

ML: I learned to juggle money around. (laughter)

SM: That's my memory, but I think I'm right.

ML: And Mike has been able to build that out even further on the campus. That and not only the Education Abroad Program, but other kinds of international opportunities, and he plans to continue that. I think it's not only desirable, I think we would be shortchanging our students if we didn't promote the international dimension of education and let them know what opportunities are there for them to take hold of.

SM: Well, I'm glad. That's really near and dear to my heart. And having been out as a director, you know, out in the field as it were, and having seen what our students can do. They're good and it's good for them to be in these universities and it's good for the universities to have them. And then I had to work terribly hard to interview Aussie students to come to the University of California. And it was really annoying to me to find that when I found a person whom I thought was good, there would be problems with the admissions office of, say, UCLA or Berkeley or wherever it was. They're in all of our campuses except for San Francisco, which is graduate medical. So, anyhow, it was really disappointing, and I have to point out that what was called a B level or a B-plus in Australia, those people were entirely suitable to come and they were good students. And, incidently, they mostly got As, when I was leaving after the second year, some of the students I had got

into the first year at the University of California. Because the excitement of having exchange and of having their students come--and the same would be for Germans or French or English. The numbers, I think, are fairly high for the English speaking universities in exchanging students.

ML: I should speak to another kind of excitement about the campus and its growth, and that is simply the greater cultural diversity on the campus and the campus I came to in 1974, which was so boring, if you will, in terms of the cultural diversity of its students, as compared with now. And the role that can be played in making the campus accessible and a rich experience for everyone.

SM: That's right. And you and I have a commitment and the university has a commitment. I was interviewing someone a couple of weeks ago who felt, you know, we don't always live up to that commitment. And it's very important because we've seen all the changes. This is the first freshman class, incoming, that has less than 50 percent Caucasian.

ML: But that has been coming clearly for at least four or five years.

SM: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, I could see it.

ML: And the one place we saw this was the greater need for attention to the question of ESL, for example.

SM: Yes.

ML: The question of outreach to students.

SM: Yes.

ML: Do we have programs in place that can serve as bridge programs for students who come from schools where on this campus they'll be a minority, but in that school they were a majority, to make that bridge into the higher education experience so they can have the experience of success on this campus. Retention was one of the topics on my desk.

SM: Oh, it was Pat O'Brien who I was interviewing. Pat O'Brien is now in the Graduate Dean's Office.

ML: Yes.

SM: But she feels very strongly about that commitment.

ML: Yes.

SM: We've made it and we really ought to . . . And it makes it exciting. She was saying that students in her class are more interested. I know in my class they're more interested.

ML: Yes.

SM: I teach only one course, though. She teaches the full load of five. But, anyhow, I think it's important. I'm glad you've done what you've done. Any further comments on your work as Dean?

ML: (long pause) I'm glad I did it.

SM: (laughter) Good on yer.

ML: I learned a lot. You don't know how much what you think of as UCI as a faculty member is really the culture of your department or school. And it's very exciting. It sounds like

a cliché, but it's very exciting to meet the people across campus that are working very hard for this university at various levels. That was one of the wonderful parts of the job.

One of the negative parts of the job is that it can never be done. I didn't find any way to combine it with my other career commitments, such as my research. I envy those people who can, who can combine full-time administration with getting some writing done, but it was a sixty-plus-hour a week job that was absorbing.

SM: I'll bet your husband was glad when you got out of it.
(laughter)

ML: I could see he wasn't sad.

SM: (inaudible)

ML: So that I found it very exciting to be working with the growth of the campus at a time of so much change.

SM: Yes, good.

ML: I think no one should underestimate the enormous leap that it is: moving from a unit into the central administration. The transition from being an undergraduate faculty advisor, or whatever I did administratively in my department, to being Associate Dean was very small, in some ways. But that jump into the central administration was enormous. Faculty members aren't used to delegating.

SM: Don't I know it.

ML: They're not used to it, all right.

SM: That's why it was such wonderful fun, Meredith, starting here with 110 faculty and 1589 students, and you knew everybody.

ML: Yes.

SM: You knew all the faculty and you knew all the students, most of the students, and it was a fair time. I left the Deanship in 1970 and, at that time, it was beginning to get big and I had about eight departments that I was handling then or maybe nine and it changed. But then I went back into History. And, as you say, that's a smaller world. How about any advice for me as I write my history?

ML: (laughter) Good luck.

SM: Well, probably about six months down the line I'll probably commit suicide and you'll have a ceremony. "Historian trying to write the history of UCI." (chuckling) I hope I can get it written in about nine months, something like that.

ML: I think that in some cases . . . I was trying to look through some materials that I could bring in today that would help for you, and I'll still get those for you.

SM: Good. Well, send it on to me.

ML: Such as the job description, just to show the responsibilities and some of those things.

SM: Yes, I'd like that. I want that.

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ML: I couldn't locate them easily. I probably filed them away in some very safe place, but, if not, I can get them from the President's office.

SM: Sounds like me. (chuckling) Well, that's good. I want those. People I've interviewed have sent me memos and things that they have stashed away. Fred Reines keeps sending me things out of his desk and files.

ML: Yes.

SM: He's been moving from his Physical Science I. He's over in II. He's up in the third floor of the new building. It's great. But he's been sending me stuff each day, practically. (chuckling) Well, thank you very much, Meredith.

ML: You're welcome, Sam.

SM: This has been lots of fun, and thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW