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Darryl G. Paulson : USF 50th (2006) Anniversary Oral History Project: interview by Lucy D. Jones

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Darryl Paulson

Lucy D. Jones

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USF Florida Studies Center
Oral History Program
USF 50th History Anniversary Project

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TRANSCRIPTION

- J: Today is Monday, March 22, 2004. My name is Lucy Jones. I'm a graduate assistant for the Florida Studies Center. Today I'm continuing a series of interviews with USF faculty, students, staff, and alumni, commemorating fifty years of university history. Today I am on the USF St. Petersburg campus in the office of Dr. Darryl Paulson. [He is a] political science professor in the Department of Government and International affairs. Is that the official...
- P: Government and International Affairs, right.
- J: Good afternoon and thank you for meeting with me today. We were talking about wanting to know what sorts of questions and I told you that we'd probably begin with how you came to be at USF St. Petersburg.
- P: Probably like many faculty members, you don't have any anticipation of where you're going to end up once you complete your graduate work and that was pretty much the case with me. I left Florida State in 1974. I actually officially finished my dissertation the following year in 1975. [I] did spend one year at Florida A&M University as a national teaching fellow there, and that was a very interesting experience in the early years of desegregation of that institution. Then

I came down here, and I had applied to a number of different places. In the mid-1970s, the academic marketplace was very difficult to find a position. To be honest, when I got a phone call from USF, I had to think for a moment and remember that I'd even applied to the institution, because like many people you apply to anything in the areas that you were. [I] came down for a job interview here. Ultimately they offered me the position so I have been here since the fall of 1974.

J: They hired you as a tenure track professor?

P: Yes, the first year I did not have the dissertation completed so I actually served as an instructor the first year. By the fall of that first year the dissertation was completed. I went on the tenure-earning track line at that point in time, and I also served as an assistant professor. Ultimately [I served] as an associate. Currently [I serve as] a full professor of government.

J: Who was here at the time that you were hired? [Who was] making that decision?

P: There were not many people here, in all sorts of respects. There were not many faculty members here, there were not many administrators here at that time either. In fact, one of the difficulties, from my perspective, was that I lacked any colleagues within my own discipline for approximately twenty-five years other than one individual. Regis Factor was hired a couple of years before I came here in the early 1970s. He had been here for maybe two or three years prior to my arrival. I was the second political scientist hired on this campus. For the next twenty-five years, basically, we were the only two members of the political science department. It made it difficult in some respects not having additional

colleagues in your area and certainly colleagues that were in the same research area as you were. That was one of the problems, but it's also an opportunity in the sense that you have to find ways to work around that. It ended up in many cases, since I didn't have any colleagues in my discipline, [that] I did try and work with colleagues in Tampa because they were directly involved in tenure and promotion decisions. To be honest, many of them weren't very cooperative and didn't want to work, for whatever reasons. So I ended up working a lot with undergraduate students on the St. Petersburg campus on research projects that I had; not the ideal circumstance, but it was certainly beneficial to those undergraduates. During the first ten to fifteen years I was here, I ended up co-authoring at least a half a dozen articles with undergraduate students in referee publications. [It was] much more to their benefit than to mine because it certainly didn't do any good to have a co-authored publication. It certainly did them a great deal of good. Most of those individuals that I worked with either ended up going to law school or to graduate school of one sort or another. It was really quite beneficial to them. It worked out quite well because I had some extremely good undergraduate students to work with. It's just a little different route than probably most people would take.

J: What sorts of students were your students, the undergraduates?

P: When I initially came here, probably in most of the political science classes, it was not surprising if you had anywhere between six and twelve students in a class. I mean, they were very small classes. Obviously, being only the second political science person on the campus, it was very difficult to develop a major just with two faculty members on this campus. A lot of students who wanted to

major in political science, of course, had to take some other classes in St. Petersburg. Some of them would take courses in Tampa to get a greater variety of courses. We obviously brought in faculty members from Tampa to teach courses as well. We did hire adjuncts to teach certain courses, in particular constitutional law courses. In many respects it was like a small liberal arts college where typical political science majors during the early years might take four or five or six faculty members. They could get their degree between the two end place Tampa faculty members coming over to St. Petersburg and adjuncts that we would employ. I certainly did have a number of undergraduate students who, as some people said, majored in Paulson or majored in Factor. They would take half a dozen or more courses from me. Fortunately, I think for most of them it was by choice rather than by coercion. They enjoy the courses. [It was] probably not the ideal situation, but we all lived through the situation. The classes were quite small at first. I remember some classes where I had as few as three students in a course. The strange thing was, most of the faculty in St. Petersburg at this time were also asked to teach courses off campus. I know for the first five or six years that I was in St. Petersburg, I taught a course on the Tampa campus on a regular basis. In particular, I taught Southern Politics because that was one of the courses in particular that I was hired to teach here at USF. I generally teach one section of that over on the Tampa campus. It was something that I wanted to do just to maintain contact with faculty members on the Tampa campus since they were the ones who were going to be making tenure and promotion decisions. I thought it might be a good idea if they knew who I was. It also gave me a sort of a different

group of students, and immediately I found if you taught a course in Tampa you'd have certainly forty or fifty students in class as opposed to ten or fifteen during those early years in St. Petersburg. I also, like many of the faculty members in the 1970s, taught off campus courses in Sarasota [and] Ft. Myers. When we were teaching down there, it was not uncommon at all to have three, four, five, or six students taking some of those courses as they were trying to initially develop the programs in the campuses down there. They almost felt like an itinerant preacher to some extent. I was on the road.

J: What role did you play in developing the department on the St. Petersburg campus?

P: I was responsible for everything that would happen on the campus. Once again, for the first twenty-five years, we only had two members so there wasn't any real opportunity to fully develop a political science program as much as certainly I wanted to. About the only way that you could really influence the program at that time was to make sure that the people that you brought over from Tampa were the people that you respected, not only to teach the courses that we needed to have taught for our students over here, but were what I thought were some of the better faculty members on the Tampa campus to come over and teach courses. [It was the] same thing with adjuncts. You had to be careful in selecting who the adjuncts were. It really hasn't been until the last four or five years that we've gone from that situation of having two faculty members for the first twenty-five years to the point today where we, in essence, have five faculty members. We hired a person in public administration about ten years ago. That certainly is part of government

and international affairs. The public administration program is incorporated within that. He, in many respects, became the third member of the department early on, Ambe Njoh, and taught a lot of public administration courses on the Tampa campus as well as in St. Petersburg. Then within the past three years, of course, we've hired three additional faculty members. [One was] Thomas Smith, who replaced Regis Factor when Professor Factor passed way about a half a dozen years ago, teaching international relations and political theory courses. Then, in the past year, hiring two new faculty members: Judith McLauchlan, who teaches common law courses in particular, but also a variety of American government courses. [Also] Nichole Johnson who came to us from Howard University in Washington D.C. She also teaches a wide variety of American government courses. In particular, [she teaches] urban politics, political behavior, and black politics courses. We are in a much better position within the last couple of years, certainly, than we've ever been as a discipline. With five members we are larger, in fact, than many liberal arts programs in terms of the size of their faculty. We still utilize, to a more limited basis, Tampa faculty members to come over and teach courses. We also still utilize some adjuncts. There are a lot of retired faculty in this area who are very competent to teach courses in a number of areas. Students now have a choice between probably, in a typical semester, seven, eight, [or] nine different faculty members in political science.

J: I'm in your Florida politics class this semester, and I remember at the beginning of the semester you mentioned that you hadn't taught for quite some time. You

mentioned that you were involved in a more administrative role that was taken away from the teaching.

P: Right. When I came here, of course, I was strictly a faculty position, and I remained in the faculty line for approximately fifteen years or so. It was 1989 or thereabouts, [and] I became what, at that time, was called a coordinator of the College of Arts and Sciences. [I was] somewhat akin to a chair of a program. Back at that time, 1989, we probably had in the neighborhood of thirty or so faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences. As the coordinator, [I was] primarily in charge of basic administrative duties. [The duties were] everything ranging from scheduling courses to assign duties to some extent to also annual evaluation and tenure and promotion decisions for faculty members. Over the years as the relationship between the St. Petersburg and Tampa campus changed, that administrative position evolved as well. For the first twenty-five years of this campus it was each of the colleges - Business, Arts and Science, and Education - had a coordinator. Then, for some unknown reason, they decided that it was not spiffy enough so it became the director of the College of Arts and Sciences. Ultimately, of course, within the past year they moved away from that to establishing full time deans for each one of the colleges. From 1989 I think I served ten or eleven years as either coordinator or director of the College of Arts and Sciences. I still taught courses. In fact, I generally taught my regular class assignment as well as the administrative work. I did that for about ten years or so, and then I got out of the position for about two and a half years on a voluntary basis. I just laughed. I'd done it for ten years. It was time somebody else to do it.

Besides that, they weren't paying me enough to do it. I just decided it was time to do something different. Then, after about two years [the person who replaced me] suddenly quit. They asked me to come back as director of the College of Arts and Sciences. I agreed to do so, and I did serve in that position for another year and a half or so. During the period where, certainly there was more change in the entire history of this campus, and [more change than there] probably will be in the entire history of this campus. It was during that second period of time where we hired approximately, in a two year cycle, at least thirty-five to forty new faculty members in the College of Arts and Sciences. [We] completely transformed the college. It was also during that period of time, of course, that we completely restructured the relationships between the St. Petersburg and Tampa campus. [We] completely hired a new administrative team for USF St. Petersburg. It was just an enormous change taking place in a very short period of time. Probably, in all honesty, not the way you'd want to do it if you had to plan this in a logical progression over a period of time [or] institute such massive changes in a short period of time.

J: You were no longer the director of the College of Arts and Sciences?

P: No. When they decided to hire new deans positions, they of course hired Mark Durand from University of New York Albany to be the dean in the College of Arts and Sciences. At that point I stayed on for another semester to sort of transition [and] to help him, and in particular [I] worked on the scheduling for the College of Arts and Sciences. It was a major task to make sure that you both have the courses the students need and [that] you've got those courses spread out over

the day so that you're not scheduling courses on top of one another, which has always been a problem on this campus. [I was] just assisting in that sort of transition. Effectively the end of December of 2003 ended my administrative tenure here at the University of South Florida. [It was] about twelve years overall as an administrator on the campus. In January of 2004 I went back to a full-time teaching position. I've taught a wide variety of courses like most of our faculty has. One of the things I think that will give you a real sense of a basic difference between the St. Petersburg and Tampa campuses is to look at the number of different courses that the faculty members have taught on this campus as opposed to Tampa. [This can be] both an advantage and a disadvantage. Probably most of our faculty members who have been here for twenty years or longer have taught, I would just guess, anywhere between probably fifteen to twenty-five different courses during their tenure here. On the Tampa campus, most of the faculty members in departments over there are teaching two, perhaps three, courses a semester, and often times they're teaching the same course in the same semester, or [they're] certainly teaching the same course in the fall and spring semester. I don't think there's ever been an academic year where I've taught the same course twice in the academic year, let alone in the same semester. That can be a disadvantage because if you're teaching two or three preparations a year, as you might have in Tampa, you can really more readily develop expertise in that area and focus your research much more than you can in that area. Whereas on the St. Petersburg campus it's been more of a liberal arts model, more of a generalist, which can be very good. It's also good if you get tired of teaching the same

courses over and over again. I've taught some courses only once just because once was enough and the time was right. For example, during the Clinton impeachment process I developed a course on impeachment and taught a course that was a combined graduate and undergraduate course on impeachment. It worked out very well, but it was just not the kind of thing that was necessarily suitable next year or the year after. I taught it once, and that was it. In the aftermath of the election in Florida in 2000 I also developed a course on the 2000 presidential election and looked at all of the issues that happened, in particular in Florida. It turned out to be a very interesting course once again, but that was another one-time course. I've looked at it more as an advantage than a disadvantage. I don't think all faculty members look at it that way, that you have to teach this variety of courses. I think I probably would get tired if I had to teach the same course over and over and over again. By and large, like everybody else, you have specialties. I focused in on Florida politics, and, as I said, I was originally hired specifically to teach a southern politics course which a lot of universities had. The southern politics course developed a Florida politics course. I also was hired to teach urban politics classes. I taught those for thirty years here on campus. Out of urban politics I developed a course on St. Petersburg politics that I teach on a regular basis. I also teach a course in political parties and interest groups. Out of that sort of developed a course in political campaigning as well. There are probably half a dozen different courses which I consider to be my regular courses, and beyond that I just stick in courses as I think they're needed.

[I] stick in a lot of courses because it's something that I'm interested in, and it will attract a fair number of students to the classes.

J: You've mentioned developing expertise, but you were often called upon to provide expertise outside of the classroom as well and paralleling a lot of the courses you teach.

P: Sure. I think that's one of the things that's oftentimes expected, in particular of people in the political science area. Although, the media obviously focus in on some more than others. If you have an expertise in political parties and elections, you're far more likely to be asked to comment by the media because there's always an election going on some place at some point in time. I've done a lot of this in all sorts of different areas. You lose count over a while. I just know I've done well over 4000 of these media interviews. It initially just started, as you might imagine, with local papers primarily: the St. Petersburg Times and the Tampa Tribune. It eventually expands beyond that and you start getting newspapers all throughout the state of Florida in particular. Reporters talk to one another and pass on suggestions to their colleagues and other places. I've done every newspaper in the state of Florida. I've done a fair number of newspapers well beyond Florida. I do the *Washington Post* on a regular basis. I do *USA Today* on a regular basis. I've done Gannett Newspapers, which is a hundred plus newspapers. On a regular basis their political reporter calls me quite often. When they do a story, I should list it a hundred different times because it's a hundred different newspapers. I've done a lot of those big national chains. I've done the *New York Times* and the *New York Post*. I've done international newspapers

especially after the 2000 campaign. I used to do a lot of interviews but never to the extent that I experienced the day after the election in November of 2000 when Florida's electoral votes were in play. The day after that election I did twenty-some interviews. I lost track. Literally I'd hang up the phone and somebody else would call. Probably half of those were international interviews. I know I did at least eight with Canadian radio stations covering everywhere from Newfoundland to British Columbia. It just sort of went from east coast to west coast. As soon as I'd hang up, five minutes later, I'd be talking to Saskatchewan or some place doing five-minute interviews with them. I've done a lot of that. I've also done a lot of both print and broadcast media. If you're generally good at one you're probably good at another. A lot of the local TV stations started to call me. I did a lot of TV interviews for all of the networks. In the late 1980s I signed a contract with the ABC affiliate, Channel 10, which is now CBS, and worked with them for about five years as their political analyst. That's very nice for a couple of reasons. One is you get paid for it. Secondly is that you no longer then have to do interviews with the other TV stations. One of my conditions with signing the contract with Channel 10 was that I didn't have to do interviews with the other stations. That immediately cut out three or four network stations that kept calling me for interviews. I worked with Channel 10 for about five years, and then they got a new news director, and he just wasn't used to paying people to do interviews. I wasn't used to doing it for free so I haven't done anything for Channel 10 since 1992. Then eventually I hooked up with Channel 13, the Fox affiliate, and worked with them during the 2000 campaign which was certainly

the most interesting experience. It was a shorter experience since I'd worked with Channel 10 for about five years, and I worked with Fox for about a year as a paid political analyst. It was a time like no other. Literally in the 2000 campaign, especially in the aftermath of the election, it was quite common for me to do as many as five different pieces a day with Channel 13. I'd often times go to their studio and tape at least one or two segments for the morning program or do live interviews for the morning program. Then I'd come back at 12:30 and do Kathy Fountain's noontime program talking about the election and what was happening in the Florida Supreme Court and what was happening in the United States Supreme Court. Then they would oftentimes come out with a crew and tape me live at home or on campus and put something on the six o'clock news or the ten o'clock news. I was literally doing four or five pieces a day for much of November and December until the election was ultimately decided. It was certainly a very interesting period of time. Now I still do a lot of the print media. I've really cut back on the broadcast media except for those that I can do in my office. I've gotten to the position where when you do 4,000 interviews, you don't care if you do 4,001. I've also gotten to the position where since I've been paid for five years to do broadcast interviews, if they don't way to pay me, that's fine, but I don't want to do them either. I refuse to do them. The only ones I do are for either groups that I respect or enjoy doing and have sufficient time. The two broadcast interviews that I continue to do on a regular basis are *Your Turn* on Channel 13 with Kathy Fountain, which is a half-hour program. I do that because of a sense of obligation. She was the one who originally went to the news director

at Channel 13 and told the news director that they better hire me for the 2000 campaign. I've always been in her debt for that. Secondly, I've enjoyed doing her program. It's a half an hour and she's prepared and she does a good job in covering a wide variety of issues, both political and nonpolitical. Even though I'm no longer a political analyst for Channel 13, I continue to do that program on a fairly regular basis. I know I've done it any more than any other guest that they've had in the history of that program. [It's] probably somewhere in the neighborhood of 200 times that I've done that half hour program. The other one that I do is for WEDU, the public TV station in the Tampa Bay area, the Tampa Bay Weekend Review which is a panel kind of format. We generally have four or five different elected officials, political consultants, or newspaper types talking about the political issues in the Tampa Bay area. I've done that one quite often on a regular basis.

J: What is the opinion or position of the university of the faculty having this degree of contact with the media?

P: I think obviously the university's position generally is, and should be, that they ought to be thrilled that their faculty are doing this as a public service to begin with, and secondly that their faculty have the expertise that the media wants to call on them in the first place. The media is not going to hire or utilize somebody to do these interviews unless they do a good job. Media folks will oftentimes call on professors, and sometimes they do a good job, and sometimes they don't. Sometimes the media calls back and oftentimes they don't. There are some faculty members, of course, that don't want to do media because they don't like

working with media. They constantly think they're misquoted in the media. To be honest, I haven't had that problem. I think you have to understand how the media operates. You have to understand basically what they're going to be asking you in these media interviews so that you can be prepared to answer the question. I seldom go into these things blind. I want some general indication of what they're going to be talking about so that I'm not caught like a deer in headlines so to speak. I can think about some things I want to discuss as part of the interview process. I think it's certainly to the credit of the university when you see somebody from USF mentioned in print or broadcast media by St. Petersburg and *The Tampa Tribune*. Especially when you see them starting to be interviewed in *Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and *New York Times* – national newspapers that certainly have a great distribution across the country. Also [when you see them mentioned] on broadcast media. Any time the university can gain that recognition I think it's generally a plus. I've done a lot of local TV interviews, but I've also done spots with CNN. I've done spots with CSPAN. I do a lot of work with National Public Radio and Florida Public Radio. I get interviewed by them on a regular basis. I can't imagine that the university would be other than happy to see their name be distributed about the country in that fashion.

J: Even beyond the media you've been called to testify or to give expert opinion to the state in some matters.

P: Right. I think a lot of professors do that in political science and other disciplines as well. Hopefully you will, based on your research, develop some expertise in a particular area, and someone will want to know what your views are on those

issues. I've been involved in a number of cases probably in two or three areas in particular. One is the question of reinforcement in the state of Florida, the redrawing of legislative districts. I've been involved in that process several different times in recent political history of the state of Florida. I've been a direct participant. I've been hired by parties to the reapportionment question to represent their views, both before the legislature and in federal district court, in particular when these questions have been unresolved by the legislature and have gone to the federal district court for final resolution. That's been an interesting experience to testify. I've been hired by the NAACP several times to represent their viewpoints with respect to voter discrimination and the history of voter discrimination in the state of Florida and how that relates to the creation of minority districts in the states. I do think that my testimony has had a great deal of impact in how legislative district lines have been drawn in the state of Florida. I like to think that I'm at least partially responsible for the fact that in 1992, Florida elected three African Americans for the first time in 120 years because of the African NAACP and because of, in part, my testimony before the federal district courts when those districts were created. So that's a nice opportunity to say that you influenced public policy to some degree. A second area has been issues of voting rights in the state of Florida. In particular it's related to the reapportionment question to some degree. This is in the aftermath of the 2000 presidential election when the United States commission on civil rights held hearings in Tallahassee to discuss what they considered to be allegations of Election Day irregularities. I was one of only a few academics who was asked to

testify before the Civil Rights Commission in Tallahassee. I did, and I talked about a number of problems, some of which I thought were major problems, such as the felon bill issue and some of which I thought were not some major problems. That hearing itself was picked up by the national media. It carried live by CSPAN. There were probably a hundred different newspaper reporters there so it was interviewed. My testimony was certainly included in everywhere from the *New York Times* to the *Boston Post* to newspapers all across the United States. The strange thing to me was that I probably got cited in eighty to a hundred newspapers because of my testimony before the Civil Rights Commission. The two newspapers that didn't include anything were the *Tampa Tribune* and the *St. Petersburg Times*. The third area where I've done some consulting work has been with local governments because of my expertise. As I mentioned, I do teach a course in urban politics. I specifically teach a course in St. Petersburg politics. I've followed St. Petersburg politics very closely over the years, all sorts of different issues. The last time the St. Petersburg City Council was in the process of charter revisions, I was hired as a consultant for the St. Petersburg City Council to assist them in the process of looking at different aspects of the city charter that needed to be revised. I think I had a good deal of influence there because they ended up proposing probably about ten different items. Half of those were things I had specifically proposed to the City Council to change as part of the charter. They ultimately had to go to the voters for their approval. Most of those charter changes were approved by the voters. There's a lot of opportunity to impact public policy in that way as a political consultant. I've also, in prior years,

although I haven't done it now for over fifteen years, but, when I first came here because I wanted to develop a course in political campaigning, I also was involved in political campaigns to a far greater extent and worked on a number of campaigns and managed a number of campaigns. That in itself was a very interesting experience. One of the reasons I don't do it any more is because you quickly find out that there are certain candidates that are easy to work with and certain candidates that are not. For the amount of money involved, it wasn't worth my time and effort. I'd rather be doing political consulting on TV than managing campaigns. It's a great opportunity. One of the things I tell students in my campaigning course is that there's a tremendous opportunity out there, both in terms of running for political office as well as serving as a political consultant. There are over half a million elected political offices in the United States. There's a lack of political consultants, to be honest. There are very few people in this Tampa Bay region who know what they're talking about when they're serving as political consultants. There's a real opportunity out there in terms of jobs. In fact, just this past weekend, I spoke at the African American Voter Education Research Project at the Enoch Davis Center, which was designed to recruit minority candidates. I tried to spend about an hour with them talking about the do's and don'ts of campaigning, trying to both recruit minority candidates for political office as well as to give them some sense of what to expect when they do run for political office.

J: Do you see examples like your consulting with the City Council as a classic way for the university and the city to interact, and do you think there should be more interaction between the city and the university?

P: Well I've always tried to encourage my students to involve themselves in the community, and I was doing this a long time before this whole notion of internships and civic participation came up. In the early years that I was here, I tried to involve my students in the St. Petersburg politics course where we go down and watch the City Council in action and meet with some members of the City Council or meet with the mayor, which we do on a regular basis when I teach that course. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, I was involved with the Guardian Ad Litem program here. Guardian Ad Litem Program operates in the state of Florida and across the country to represent children who have been physically or sexually abused and taken out of their homes and are in temporary placements until the parents or the custodial parents have applied with a court ordered case plan. A lot of times it relates to alcoholism, drug use, or anger management programs that the parents have to complete before the children will be returned to them. I became interested in that program, in part, because oftentimes I'd see in the newspaper horrendous cases of abuse and see the reference to Guardian Ad Litem as being appointed. I actually brought that program to the campus for about five years. They taught their training program on the USF St. Petersburg campus for about five years, both in the fall and the spring semesters. Generally they would teach one section here in St. Petersburg, and the next semester they would teach the course up at Palm Harbor University High

School where we offered programs on a regular basis for a good period of time. [During that five year period] we probably put through 250 or 300 people who became Guardian Ad Litem and would represent these children in court. I made this available to USF students both political science and students from any discipline who wanted to go through this program. It was a great training program. They got an understanding of the court system, the juvenile justice system. [They got] a great understanding of the problems of abuse, and they got to hear from the psychologists who talked about some of the horrendous situations that these children were in. It was a really good indication of how the state tries to deal with this public policy issue. At the same time, they could go through this for credit, but part of it was that they had to stay on and become a volunteer. For at least six months [they had to] work with the Guardian Ad Litem program. During that five year period of time, we probably had sixty or seventy-five USF students who completed the program and served as volunteers. I think that's the kind of thing that students should do. I've had a lot of students going through internships in one capacity or another working for city council candidates. Working for legislative candidates, that's great experience. The campaigning course that I teach teaches the students how to go about managing a political campaign, but one of the requirements is they have to work eight hours a week for a candidate of their choice. They really get the hands-on experiences as well. I do think it's very good, as much as possible, to try and involve the students in the local community. There are so many opportunities out there for students to be involved in the community. The problem is not finding places to place students; the problem is

finding students to place. I think the more that we can do to encourage students to get that hands-on experience, the better off the community is [and] the better off the students will be.

J: Does the location of the St. Petersburg campus or the size of the St. Petersburg campus contribute to the success of programs like the Guardian Ad Litem program that you were discussing?

P: To some degree. That's always in issue in terms of where this campus is going to be in five years or ten years down the road and whether you can do things the same in the future as you did in the past. When you have relatively small classes and you have students who have had limited opportunities in terms of the diversity of instructors, one of the things that that means is you get to know the students quite well, too. You have them three or four times in different classes. I've never taken the approach that any student anything can do it. I've been somewhat selective in both the terms of requiring students to have some background, whether it's a certain number of courses that they have to take before they can do this, but I'd never place someone in the Guardian Ad Litem program who I felt didn't possess the maturity to do it. It's a very difficult job to do. You're dealing with some very terrible cases of child abuse. Students need to know what they're getting themselves involved with to some degree. I think there are all sorts of opportunities out there, especially in the political realm. One of the things that I've talked to some of our new faculty about is reconstituting a legislative internship program here on campus. I've tried to do this about fifteen years ago. I wrote to the members of the Pinellas County delegation asking them

if they wanted USF students to serve as interns. A day a week, eight hours a week serving as interns. The problem that I had then was the problem I just talked about. I had a lot more legislators who wanted these interns than I had students who were willing to serve as interns. I think now with the growth of this campus and the growth of the number of students that we have in political science and across the university as a whole, I think we're probably now in a position where we can go back and see if we can't reestablish that kind of thing. I think it would be a great experience for students. The only thing we have to be very careful about in politics, of course, and I think some institutions have been less careful than others, is steering students towards certain candidates, which I will not do and I think some universities have done – either knowingly or unknowingly. It's always a case of letting students select who they want to work with rather than me assigning students to a particular candidate. That's where you get yourself into potential problems. I've never told a student they have to work with somebody or they can't work with somebody, but sometimes you end up with circumstances in the campaigning course where I've got three or four students who want to work with the same candidate and nobody who wants to work with some of the other candidates out there. In part, that reflects something that that candidate has done to establish some connection with those students or develop some name recognition that the students want to associate with that person rather than with one of the other candidates. So long as it's self-selection on the part of the students, I don't have any problems with it.

J: You're working in programs like this, and especially like fifteen years ago you had the smaller department. Have you found it useful working with people in other departments as well?

P: I'm glad you asked that question. To be honest, that's one of the disappointments that I've had on this campus. I think it's one of the things that's talked about a great extent, but I found my own experience to be over exaggerated in the terms that the liberal college environment that we have had, but I don't think we've always taken advantage of. If I only have two colleagues or one colleague in political science for much of my work experience on campus, then it seems very logical in a liberal arts kind of environment that I should go out there and see if I can't work with somebody else in a related discipline. I've tried. I've done that to some degree. I did that in my early days. In fact, when I did find many takers. There was one person in the political science department who worked with me on a regular basis on some articles, but other than that I had difficulty finding anybody that was willing to serve in a mentor capacity to me as a new faculty member. So I turned to colleagues in a related discipline here on the St. Petersburg campus in history in particular. The faculty member is no longer here, but Steven Lawson was here at the time that I was hired and is now at Rutgers University. He used to teach a course on southern history. We became good friends and colleagues. We developed a course that we team-taught. He teaches southern history and I would teach my southern politics. Students would get to look at a related issue through two venues, so to speak. We not only did that team-teaching routine for a couple of years, but we also collaborated on a number of

research projects because southern politics directly involves black politics, and his southern history was focused in on the modern civil rights movement. We collaborated on a number of research projects involving blacks in the Tampa Bay area, in particular. After about three or four years, Professor Lawson moved to the Tampa campus on a regular basis, and then after that moved on to another institution completely. It was very difficult to find somebody else on this campus who was willing to collaborate on some interdisciplinary projects. Probably the greatest interdisciplinary collaboration was in our spring lecture series courses that we put on. Every year for about ten years, we put on these spring lecture series courses that would be open to the public as well as to students. We would try and come up with broad themes to focus in on and then bring in experts from history, political science, economics, and geography to talk about those issues. The first one that we did was on the birth and rebirth of cities. We'd bring in some urban historians, some political scientists that were experts in urban politics. We brought in one of the best-known urban geographers in the nation. We brought in a very famous writer who had won a Pulitzer Prize for her writing on urban history in the United States. Generally, all these lecture series programs had about ten to twelve speakers from a variety of disciplines. Usually, the in the course we would have somewhere in the neighborhood of a hundred students who would sign up for academic credit for these courses. We would have a liberal arts perspective there and an interdisciplinary perspective there because generally we would have two or three faculty members who would be in charge of that course with a hundred students. You would get that good interdisciplinary mix. We did

that for about ten years and had a wide variety of courses. Almost all of them, though, were taught by arts and science faculty members. There was very limited participation by education faculty and very limited participation by business faculty as well. There's also very limited enrollment by education or business students. It was interdisciplinary within the college, not interdisciplinary within the university, to the extent that I thought that we should have achieved, I guess. I think that was really the greatest interdisciplinary venture that we had. It did run for about ten years, but difficulties you might imagine is finding funding for that because you're bringing in ten or twelve people to speak, and you have to provide transportation, hotel expenses, as well as honorariums to do many of these individuals. Most of the programs we put on on the cheap, to be honest. We were able to entice these people to come down. We were smart enough to put it in the spring. We knew we could get them coming from New York in the middle of January to St. Petersburg, Florida. It probably cost us 15,000 to 20,000 dollars for most of these programs for a modest stipend, transportation, and lodging. We had some outstanding speakers who participated in that series. It was very difficult since the burden always fell to the arts and sciences faculty to put this on. It always fell, unfortunately, to the same arts and science faculty who put it on. I mean of the ten programs we did, I was directly involved with probably five or six of those programs, both as one of the co-instructors. I know I wrote grants that funded it at least five of those programs. Fortunately, Florida Humanities Council in particular was always a very generous sponsor of these programs. Without their assistance and cooperation, we couldn't have done this. It's very difficult to

maintain that year in and year out because, even with the Humanities Council and their support, they've got policies that they're not going to support you every year. They'll support you over two years, but after two years, you have to go out and find somebody else to fund you. It was easy to find somebody who was willing to give you 15,000 or 20,000 dollars to put on this kind of program. That program, unfortunately, has sort of fallen by the wayside, but I really think it was one of the highlights of what this campus has done over the years. There were thousands of people who showed up for those programs, and they were put on specifically for the purpose of bridging town and gown in campus and community. All of the lectures would be opened up to the community. Although the average attendance probably was in the neighborhood of 250 to 300 people, we had several speakers who simply filled the campus activities center: probably in the range of 800 to 900 people. I think that was as full as the fire marshal would allow us to get, let's put it that way. I think that was probably the greatest venture. I think that the disappointment for me, to some extent, has been with the more limited faculty-to-faculty interaction across disciplines. I think we hear a lot more talk about that on the campus than actually exists. That may change. We've gotten a lot more faculty within the last two years. There's certainly a lot of buzz about this interdisciplinary cooperation. We've established some of these programs and distinction, which are designed to be interdisciplinary in nature, including the Florida Studies program and the ESP&G program, and the mass communications program. Three of the four programs of distinction that were funded were funded within the College of Arts and Sciences. I think that says

something about the college itself and the proposals that were received by faculty members from the college. It's a great opportunity, and I hope we take advantage of that opportunity and truly make those programs interdisciplinary.

J: In leading into my next question, how do you see the campus changing over the next few years now that there's so many new faculty and the campus is growing? The question everybody asks is, 'Where will it go?'

P: It really is unusual; you have to have a sense of history, which I think this campus has not done a terribly good job of. To be quite frank, I was disappointed that when we selected a new administrative team to this campus that there was not one hold over from the old crew, so to speak. It almost appeared to me that it was out with the old and in with the new. That may have been their policy, but I think it's not a good policy. I think [with] out with the old, you lose all of that institutional history and knowledge. I think to a great extent, the new administrative team, however competent they are, simply doesn't have that history, [that] sense of what's transpired in the past. That is so important to making decisions. That's a big deficiency in the current structure at this point in time. I don't think they've taken advantage and provided a blend really of the old and the new. At the same time, everyone recognizes things can't remain the same, and as I've said, I've been here now since 1974 so this is my thirty-first year I've had of teaching between one year at FAMU [Florida A&M University] and thirty- plus years here at USF. It's obviously a tremendous opportunity for this campus. For twenty-eight of those thirty-one years, this campus was stagnant, to be honest. We had, in most of the disciplines in arts and sciences, two, three, or probably at most four

member faculties in most programs and couldn't grow for reason or another. [They] didn't get funding to hire new faculty members. For twenty-five years I was one of two political scientists. I certainly didn't want that on a permanent basis. I think the fact that we've got now five political science members is a tremendous change for this campus and a tremendous opportunity. It's like for twenty-eight years, we were almost frozen in time, not because of our doing, because of just problems in getting any kind of fair funding for this campus. It's only been because of political changes in the last few years that all of this funding opportunity for this campus has occurred, along with the tremendous pressures of the state to provide additional outlets for undergraduate education in the state of Florida, that we've been able to get the funding to both expand existing programs like political science as well as to add new programs to this campus. When you're frozen in time for twenty-five years, you can't expect to grow much within disciplines. You can't expect to grow much with respect to the number of students who are going to be attracted to this campus. All of these new hires that we've made, all of the money, which is coming to this campus, all the changes which are going into this campus, certainly are going to completely transform this campus from what it's been to what it will be. We hope that's in a very positive direction. The assumption is that that's what it's going to be. It's just such a night and day kind of situation for people who have been here for a while to be in this environment for twenty-eight years, where you can't do anything, can't get any change, couldn't get a nickel, and all of the sudden have all of these resources to double the size of your faculty within a couple of years. It's just a chance of

tremendous opportunity. I wish they would have done a better job of blending both new administrators with some people who have a sense of institutional history. I think that it has been a problem. I can't imagine that it won't continue to be a problem in the future with dealing with some of the issues that this campus is going to have to deal with.

J: Looking back on the thirty years or so at USF, who are some of the people that you remember the most? Either just for general quirkiness or because they did something...

P: Interesting question. For me, of course, I mentioned Steve Lawson who was here. I worked very closely with him. He's a very well known historian and has published at least probably half a dozen different books dealing with blacks in the South or the modern civil rights movement. I guess the point I would make is this campus has produced a lot of faculty members as well as a lot of students who have gone on to great things. Some of them haven't gone on. I think some of them are still here. Ray Arsenault is certainly a well-known southern historian in his field. He certainly had a major coup by bringing Gary Mormino over from the Tampa campus and bringing over his expertise in Florida history to this campus. So we've really had, I think, some high-quality people. We did have problems in the past because of lack of financial support and the stagnant nature of this campus. Oftentimes when we got some very good people, we had trouble keeping them, not only because they had better financial offers elsewhere but because this campus wasn't growing. In the same light, there wasn't a great opportunity so people like Lawson left. We had a lot of problems with people moving to the

Tampa campus as well. Steve Turner, who originally started out as a resident sociologist on this campus and certainly is very well known nationally for his writings, today is the chairman of the philosophy department in Tampa. [He] was until recently chairman of the philosophy department in Tampa. We've lost individuals like him. Danny Jorgenson was the chair of religious studies. He started out over here as a member of the sociology department. For some reason we had two sociologists at one point in time that are now chairs of different departments in Tampa. I don't know what that says about sociology or this campus in general. Both of them have left to go to the Tampa campus and have become chairs of their departments. Certainly [there are] some very good faculty members on this campus. We also, like every campus, had a few episodes of folks that didn't stay around for one reason or another. One would expect that to be the case. They either were not tenured or promoted or they probably did not create a positive image for the campus so they were encouraged to move on, I guess one might say.

J: Knowing that I was going to be coming and doing this interview, were there any things that you had wanted to bring up that I didn't ask you about?

P: I think one of the issues that can't be avoided for anybody who has been here for twenty or more years is the relationship between this campus and the Tampa campus. The different attitudes that exist have been quite striking. Many of the faculty who have been here for a long time oftentimes do think that we are viewed as a sort of stepchild of the larger Tampa campus and looked down upon. That has been a source of concern for a lot of members, both because we don't think it's

true and because, in many respects, a lot of us have our own ego needs, I guess, and think we're just as good, if, perhaps, not even better than some of our colleagues over on the Tampa campus. So this is just almost imperial air has clouded relationships for a long period of time. It's also been an issue in terms of faculty members and their tenure and promotion and how that whole process worked. When I was hired here in 1974, by the spring of 1975, I received a letter of termination. That was quite an interesting experience in my career. Obviously it didn't work too well for the person that gave me that letter of termination. Obviously shown you they were wrong. It highlighted really the biggest problem that new faculty members had on the same campus. That was tenure and promotion decisions were very muddled. We knew that the Tampa departments were going to have a major say on whether or not you got tenure and promotion, but the whole process was just crazy. When I came here in 1974, I was required to do two separate annual evaluations. Everyone has to do an annual evaluation, and that's expected, but I had to do one for St. Petersburg campus and I had to do one for the political science department in Tampa. I didn't think that was terribly wise or terribly fair to me. I pointed that out, and I wrote a letter which one administrator described as, the best damn two-page memo I've ever seen, which was, of course, the same memo that resulted in the Tampa administrator sending me this letter of termination. It's quite interesting how these different administrators looked at this best damn two-page memo. What I raised in this memo was that it's unfair to me, it's unfair to other faculty members on the St. Petersburg campus, to have to do two evaluations. I called it double jeopardy.

[They were] two different evaluations that ask different questions, so they weren't the same evaluations. They didn't cover the same time period. One was an academic calendar year evaluation from the fall to the spring. Another one was a January through December evaluation. My point was that I didn't oppose being evaluated by the Tampa campus. My problem was I was opposed to being evaluated twice, once in Tampa and once in St. Petersburg. I wrote this memo and essentially said, decide which one I'm supposed to do, and if you want me to do the St. Petersburg evaluation, that's fine. If you want me to do the Tampa one, that's fine, but I'm not going to do both. That resulted in this initial letter of termination. It also resulted in the university reviewing this whole process of evaluation and ultimately going to one standardized evaluation, which would be done by the department. That's been one of the biggest changes, of course, because until the last two or three years, every faculty member that was hired on this campus had to undergo tenure and promotion through the Tampa campuses. It's a very difficult process because there's certainly not any uniformity in terms of the assignment of duties. Our faculty members have generally had heavier teaching loads, both in terms of numbers of courses, and certainly in terms of the variety of courses they've had to teach. With heavier teaching loads, [there is] less time for research, et cetera. I don't think a lot of those differences have always been taken into consideration fairly in terms of faculty members on this campus. Obviously now with the movement towards autonomy for this campus, we are in complete control of that tenure and promotion process over here. I think that's one of the things to look at in three to five years and see where this campus is and how

it has handled tenure and promotion processes. It will say something about the maturity and growth of this campus. Just as I've been critical of Tampa and some of their negative attitudes towards the St. Petersburg campus and what goes on here, I must say that there are a lot of faculty on the St. Petersburg campus who have looked to the Tampa campus as a scapegoat to some extent, especially in the tenure and promotion decisions. If there were problems [they would] place the blame on the Tampa departments or the Tampa colleges with respect to tenure and promotion decisions. Now that this is completely in our control, we no longer have Tampa to blame. I think the real issue will be how this relatively new and young faculty with a limited number of senior faculty, in a lot of areas, handles this issue. We will be judged not so much on who we grant tenure and promotion to but who we don't grant tenure and promotion to. In what has been a rather small family kind of environment over here, to see whether or not faculty members are willing to make the tough decisions and turn down somebody who you may like a great deal because they haven't met the standards for tenure and promotion. That will be the real test of this campus in terms of its need to grow. It's going to happen at some point in time, but I think a lot of folks haven't really thought about that and the increased obligations and burdens that autonomy will bring to this campus. I think it's a good thing. I'm not arguing against it. I think it's a good thing, but I think it's going to be a very tough thing for a lot of faculty to deal with. [It will be difficult] to vote against colleagues. In the past they could always vote for marginal candidates on this campus and sort of leave the burden to the Tampa campus. They can no longer do that. It would just be very

interesting for the fifty [or] sixty faculty members who have been hired in the past two or three years who will be coming up for promotion and tenure. In the next three or four years we're going to have a huge group of faculty coming up for tenure and promotion. To see how this campus handles those individuals and how their records compare with colleagues in similar departments on the Tampa campus [will be interesting]. I really can't think of anything else that would add beyond this.

J: Well, thank you for agreeing to the interview.

P: Sure. No problem.

End of Interview