Only materials in their final stage may be quoted. Since this is the edited version of Dr. Gordon's second interview, no quotations may be pulled from this transcript. If you have any questions or need clarification, contact the Archivist, Natalie Navar at nnavar@fullerton.edu.

INTERVIEWEE: MILTON GORDON

INTERVIEWER: Lawrence de Graaf

DATES: April 22, 2005

LD: This is the second interview with Dr. Milton Gordon, occurring on the 22nd of April, 2005 at the president's home in El Dorado Ranch. Milt, I'd like to begin by briefly going over administrative organization, when you came, and some of the significant changes. First of all, you said in your first interview you were the only vice president at Sonoma. When you came here, there was more than one vice president, was there not?

MG: Oh, yes. Cal State Fullerton is much larger than Sonoma State, and the administrative organization here is much more traditional. In other words, you have a vice president for student affairs, you have a vice president for academic affairs, a vice president for administrative affairs. Then the new part of it is, I hired a vice president for advancement, fundraising. I don't know if you know much about the history of fundraising in the CSU, but there really wasn't any in the past.

LD: I think you said last time, actually, you weren't allowed to use any state money for it.

MG: That's exactly right. Then in the early nineties, with the budget deficit, the system then mandated presidents to raise 10 percent of the state fund, and that was the first

movement into more or less mandated advancement operation. We hired a vice president for advancement at the time, and that was the new position that was indeed created at that time.

LD: That was Harry Gianneschi, wasn't it?

MG: Harry Gianneschi, yes.

LD: Had there been any personnel whatsoever in the administration looking into fundraising before that office was set up?

MG: Yes. They had several staff members that were in the area. It wasn't very well organized for a large institution like we are, but there were, I think at the time, two or three staff members that were in the organization. But there was no leadership in the advancement operation.

LD: Was that about '93?

MG: Ninety-two, '93, yes, I somewhere in that time period.

LD: Another change that I noticed was that business and finance were taken out of the vice presidency for administration. What was the reason for that?

MG: Cal State Fullerton, when I came here, was one of the few universities in the system that had the budget officer reporting directly to the president. Now, I think that was actually the right way to go, but Dr. [Jewel] Cobb must have made that change at some point during her tenure here as president. What it did was, it split the budget in odd parts. The budget officer was reporting to the president, certain functions were reporting to the vice president [for administration]. We just made some more changes, where some of the functions are going back to the vice president. We're trying to adjust and have a financial operation for a very large institution. Our

budget now is probably somewhere around two hundred million, or something like that. That doesn't include foundations and other areas of the institution. So yes, that was done. But that split was made prior to me coming here.

LD: And all through your administration that budget officer has been Sherri Newcomb?

MG: Yes. Now, we have made some changes recently. The most recent changes, which have occurred only in the past few months, still have the budget officer for financial planning and strategy, which is Sherri Newcomb, reporting to the president. But what we've done is to shift some of the responsibility back to the vice president for administration for what I would call the daily operations of the budget. In other words, where is the budget on any day of the institution? That's the responsibility of the vice president for administration. What kind of budget planning are we doing for next year and the future years? That's Sherri Necomb. She's very good at that, looking at the big picture, and projecting what's going to happen next year, in two years, or in five years. Vice President [Willie] Hagan is responsible [for things such as, finding out] many dollars we have in academic affairs [right now]. So we've kind of made that kind of a split.

LD: One other change I've noted, Information Technology was taken out of academic affairs and made a separate entity within the administration?

MG: Well, they didn't have very much of information and technology when I came in. I never will forget when I interviewed for the position, I noted the old computers that they had on the campus, and it was not much in terms of technology. What I did was to upgrade, and we had to do this gradually. Cal State Fullerton is still the only university in the system to ever have the state of California pay for a fiber **[optic]**

infrastructure, which is the very base of any technology. I convinced the state that if they paid – I think the cost was like eleven million dollars or something – to put in the fiber infrastructure, what the campus would do is to take the wire from the walls in the offices and buy everything from that point on. In other words, that's the reason why we were the first campus to have a computer rollout for everybody, all faculty and all staff. We did that eight or nine years ago.

We also included staff in that. That was the other thing. I learned from a previous university that there are two things about technology. First of all, it's always changing. The second thing is that when you make a technology rollout, you have to include everyone on the campus so they're all in sync; that is, faculty, staff, and you have to bring students along. Then you have to have the training component because there are always going to be people on the campus who are ahead of everyone else in terms of technology, but the bulk of your faculty, staff, and everyone else, will need assistance and training to keep up with the technology.

My view of technology has always been that it's a tool, it's an instrument that we use to teach and to learn, and as long as it can help in that process, that's really what we want it for. My change was an entire upgrading [and expansion] of all the technology on the campus. The scope of what the original technology officer reporting to the vice president for academic affairs was doing was basically academic affairs.

LD: That was Gene Dipple?

MG: Gene Dipple. I told Gene, I'd like to upgrade the entire campus and bring everyone into it. He was very happy with the change, so we broadened his responsibility to

include technology development for the entire university. That's the reason why I made the change. To have academic affairs ahead of the rest of the campus, would mean that the campus could never develop as a whole. Now, what some campuses have is a technology officer for academic affairs, a technology officer for administrative, a technology officer for student affairs. It's a real hodgepodge, so you have no unified way to bring the entire campus along.

I changed Gene's [job] description to include the entire campus. We set up a very broad-based committee that was chaired by Dr. Mike [Michael] Parker, and it had everyone on it—faculty, staff, and students. And that was the committee that designed our first technology rollout.

LD: And a few years later when Dipple retired, Parker moved into that position.

MG: Into that position, right.

LD: Finally, when you came, the president had an executive assistant, and I noticed at some point you changed that position to executive vice president.

MG: Right.

LD: What was the reason for that?

MG: Again expanded responsibilities. The executive assistant position at the time that I came in was a much smaller scope position. I expanded it to include, among other things, college athletics. The recommendation is always that college athletics, in order to guarantee progress towards degree, to make sure you have the right kind of athletes in the program, and that they're representing the university, should be reporting to the president, not first hand but second hand. So one of the big changes I made in the position was to include college athletics reporting to it. That gave me

a second line report and responsibility. Athletics reported directly to that person, and that person reported to me, so I always had immediate athletic information and knowledge about what was going on.

We also created a new area in terms of expanding Public Affairs to include marketing the university and all the community contacts. What I did at that time was to put a lot more responsibility into the office, [renamed University Communication and Marketing].

LD: And in your administration that's always been held by Judy [Judith] Anderson?

MG: It has, but when Judy had a number of new responsibilities, what we did was separate her out of my office. When we looked at all the people now reporting to her, she had a very large staff, so I thought it would be better to move her to a separate location where she was closer to all of her staff and could organize it. What I've done is, because of budget restraints, kept some moneys still in that vacant position so that hopefully some day we can replace it with a position that wouldn't have all the responsibilities that Judy Anderson had.

LD: Just a few words about some of your closest aides and advisors. When you came in, one of your immediate staff was Norma Morris, right? What exactly is her title?

MG: Assistant to the president. Norma Morris, as I'm sure you know, has now been at the university, I believe, for thirty-seven or thirty-eight years, and it's always valuable to have someone – first of all, there isn't a harder worker in the university. Norma works six, seven days a week, she's devoted to Cal State Fullerton, and she's a walking history of the university in many ways. So she has been just absolutely invaluable.

LD: And she is the assistant for just about anything and everything that you may need?

MG: In the president's office, Norma, is always there to help make it work.

LD: How does her position relate to that of Judy Byrnes?

MG: Judy Byrnes is really the receptionist for the office. She handles all the mail when it comes in. She has real responsibility in certain social functions. Anything at the house, Judy is probably monitoring it. Staff events, events on the campus, she's always heavily involved in organizing them and making sure everything is done.

LD: Has she been in that position all through your administration?

MG: Yes.

LD: You've had quite a bit of staff continuity, haven't you?

MG: Only the two of them. Joanne Soho retired seven or eight years ago, and she's been replaced. Owen Holmes [Jr.] has now gotten several degrees. He was almost a student assistant in there, and he now works for Vice President Anderson in a much more responsible position. Everyone else in there has changed. Cassandra Newby we brought in new several years ago. I've added a budget officer. I know it's hard for you to believe that the president's office had no budget officer. Several years ago, I brought in Vernita Jackson, who is our budget officer, and she monitors all the budgets in the office. That has been a great help to me and to everyone in the office.

LD: As far as other advisement goes, is there any cabinet of top administrators, as such, that regularly meets with you as a group?

MG: That would be the President's Advisory Board. That was there when I came in, and that hasn't changed.

LD: How often do you meet?

MG: Probably once a week, when there isn't any other distraction.

LD: The Council of Deans, that meets with the academic vice president, doesn't it?

MG: Yes, it does.

LD: Do you every often meet with them?

MG: Periodically. I try to go by their meeting once or twice a year, but it's really the vice president of academic affairs group.

LD: There's a President's Council. Is that a group of community advisors?

MG: There was a group that was there when I came that would periodically meet with the vice presidents and with the deans. It was be a much larger group. Now, the system has told all the campuses that they must form a University's community group. So we have several other groups, but I don't really meet with that community group. It has members from the community with Vice President [for Student Affairs Robert] Palmer and with Vice President [for Academic Affairs Ephraim] Smith. They talk about enrollment issues and things like that. So there are several other groups.

I think the group that you're referring to was a group that was formed long before I came in. It was this group through which the president would periodically meet with all the deans and other groups on the campus. It was really dysfunctional because it was kind of like haphazard. There was no organization to it. We don't meet that much anymore.

LD: Any other significant advisory bodies that you want to mention?

MG: Oh, absolutely. The Academic Senate and the Executive Committee of the senate. As you know, the Academic Senate meets throughout the years, and I really like the structure that the university determined for the senate. Again, this is prior to my coming in. You'll see our Academic Senate has more than just faculty. It has staff members on it, it has students on it, and I think that is the best structure for a senate. I try to get to most of the meetings throughout the year, and I try to get to the Executive Committee meetings of the senate. That's a smaller subgroup of the senate, and they meet on Tuesdays. We have now about nine collective bargaining units and I try to get to some of their meetings and talk to them about relevant issues.

So there are a lot of groups that I try to touch base with. We have all the department chairs. I try to periodically get to their meetings, if possible. A university is a very democratic process, so I feel, as president, that I should try to get to as many of these organizations as I can. I go to the Associated Students – that's the student organization – probably twice a year and talk to them also. So there are a lot of organizations.

LD: Incidentally, was that blending of faculty and administration, not the case in Sonoma, in the Academic Senate?

MG: I think it was. As I say, I think that is the proper way to go. Some senates on campuses are composed only of faculty. I think this way you get a broader set of conversations.

LD: We made that decision the very first year. When [William] Langsdorf set up the Faculty Council, it was composed of both faculty and administrators. We've never

changed it. Students were added somewhat later. I think during [L. Donald] Shields' administration.

MG: It's the right way to go.

LD: Is there anything else you wanted to say about the administrative structure?

MG: Well, because we've grown so – we now have thirty-three thousand students; that's almost a 40 to 50 percent change, [from when I came, and we're now a very large university – we have had to add components. The whole technology division is much larger now. It's its own component, along with [University] Advancement, which is new. Sometimes when you look at the administrative structure and you see more positions, you say why? Because we've had to really create new divisions. And we have community boards also. We have an advancement board that we work with. We have other community boards for divisions within the university. I always say administration is always in flux in the sense that it's never static. There are always going to be changes made in it. That's always going to be happening.

LD: Now I'd like to go to long-term plans and priorities, because it seems to me this may have had quite a bit to do with the whole general direction the campus was taking during your administration. First I'd like to know, did you come with some specific goals and priorities in mind for Cal State Fullerton?

MG: Certainly anyone has ideas about a public urban university, but I said in my interview that I would spend the first year learning Cal State Fullerton. And that's exactly what I did. I think that was one of the best things that I did early on. I wanted to learn its culture. As one of the earliest faculty here, you know that the earlier faculty, with the administration, set a certain course, and I wanted to make

sure I knew what that course was. We had to now march forward, and I didn't want to lose the past while moving into the future.

LD: A year after your came, in the fall of '91, you gave a convocation speech in which you seemed to suggest some of the priorities you had. One point you raised then, and you have repeatedly raised since, is the recognition and promotion of the cultural diversity of the campus. Many people look at that and immediately think strictly in terms of ethnic diversity. Did you have a broader definition in mind?

MG: Much broader, much broader indeed. I know that the more narrow interpretation could be made because I happen to belong to one of the cultures. So someone could say, well, that's the way he's defining it, but that's not the way, in my mind, it was ever intended. I meant, number one, in terms of a gender distribution, and you now see that the majority of our students are females; 60 or 61 percent are female. And I meant a really nice blend of students of all economic incomes. I included international and U.S. citizen students.

One of the real pleasures for me, coming in as president of Cal State Fullerton, was to find the strong international bent that the university had. That was one of the things I discovered in that first year. I'm not sure how many are aware of it, but we have one of the oldest ties now to a university in mainland China, and that was Fudan [University]. Fudan recently sent me an invitation to join them at their one hundredth anniversary this September. That tie, the international ties, were established in previous generations. We have international ties all over the world. Now, that was something I had to discover for myself.

In ethnic diversity, big change has occurred, but that's basically because of our physical location. If you look at the Orange County school system, 50 percent of the students currently in there are Hispanic; 10 to 12 percent are Asian. We're now a university with over seven thousand Hispanic students, over seven thousand Asian students, and are 60 percent female. That was going to occur in a very natural way.

But anyway, to answer your question, I meant diversity in a much broader sense.

LD: You also talked about, in your '91 convocation speech, a "caring campus of a Cal State Fullerton family."

MG: Absolutely. That's always been a hallmark of any position I've ever held in my life, and that's because I believe so much in it. I believe the university should indeed function like a caring family. Decisions always have to be made, and as president, I know I have to make final decisions. But I always want a campus where we talk out the issues and we have a diversity of opinion, but we care for each other. Sometimes that's hard to show, but I think it has come through. So many visitors come to our campus and they tell me what a wonderful feeling our campus has as a university. It's not cold and impersonal. Once again you may know this better than I, it may have existed before I came in, but I certainly know we now have it.

LD: You were said that you felt that your views of ethnicity and race were shaped by your childhood. In what way?

MG: I've always considered myself black in a sense, but blessed, because in the neighborhood that I grew up in, we were all poor. They had all ethnic groups in that

neighborhood. We were all poor together, and we all lived together. So I have never been race conscious, in a sense, or gender conscious in that sense. I had friends as a child that were of all races, all ethnic groups. My parents certainly always stressed that. I have almost a unique characteristic that I never categorize people by race. I certainly have encountered over my lifetime this race consciousness that others have. To me, it's a meaningless concept, skin color. Certainly I've learned during my lifetime that certain cultures have certain attributes attached to them. I can say I had to learn about races as an adult. I've never had those stereotypes in me as I grew up and that's been a real advantage to me.

LD: Okay, going on to long-range planning. Obviously, when you came, the Master Plan for Higher Education was still very much in place. Did you feel, as you served as president, that there were any issues or conditions that the Master Plan had not foreseen that you felt maybe should be worked into it, or the Master Plan should be revised to take account of?

MG: Absolutely. I was in Sacramento last week because the California State University system is trying to get legislation through – and I've always believed in this – to be able to grant Educational Doctorates [Ed.D.]. As you know, the Master Plan has prohibited the California State University from giving doctoral degrees. California has a much smaller use of the Ed.D. than other parts of the country. That, I think, is because, number one, the University of California system is not interested in Ed.D., they never have been. So who gives them? Very expensive private schools: USC, Claremont. And these schools that have these degrees charge a lot of money.

The system has come to the opinion, [that the Ed.D. should be more widely offered], several times. A few years ago, it tried to get legislation to approve the CSU in giving what are called applied doctorates. I spent last week in Sacramento explaining to some of the legislators the difference between an applied doctorate and a Ph.D., a research doctorate. They see no distinction, and I was trying to say to them, you know, there are a lot of applied degrees that would also be an access issue because outside California in the Midwest or the East Coast, your community college teachers have an Ed.D.; your superintendents, your principals have an Ed.D.; teachers who want to move up in the system have an Ed.D. It's a much more popularly used degree than it is in California.

I've always believed, and now the system also believes, that the reason [California offers few Ed.Ds] is because the California State University has not been allowed to give those degrees, quality degrees, at an accessible, affordable price. I think that the Master Plan when written was a fine document, but it was also a document controlled by the UC system. Clark Kerr [President of University of California] and that group did an absolutely wonderful document, but it was very clear, if you read that document, who was in control of fashioning and shaping that whole document.

I believe that there are certain applied terminal degrees the CSU could be giving. The UC system really has almost abandoned degrees like audiology. All of these degrees, I think, I hope, the CSU will someday be able to offer because we will be able to offer them at affordable prices, so you'll get a much greater diversity in terms of the students that will get the degrees. I had to explain this to some of the

legislators. A person that's going to get a Ph.D. pretty much starts in his or her baccalaureate program, gets a master's degree and gets a Ph.D. The kind of person that gets, for instance, an Ed.D. is frequently a person that gets their teaching credentials, they've been teaching for years, and then says, I want to move up in the profession. They go back to school and get an Ed.D. That's the difference. I think I told some of the legislators, "I think you could change the face of educational leadership in California if the CSU could give Ed.D.s"

That was one of the real shortcomings. There are others. As you know, the UC has much greater autonomy and independence than the CSU. The CSU is a creation of the legislature, and the Master Plan fashioned it in that way. Financially, we're much more tied to the legislature. There's been a Master Plan revision. Our friend Lee Kerschner worked on that for a while. I think people have always seen the shortcomings, but they've never been able to make the kind of changes that were necessary. As you know, the CSU got its first research scholarship dollars in the late eighties, and even then it was for *applied* research, *applied* scholarship. So there are certainly shortcomings in the Master Plan.

LD: Another piece of long-range planning that comes up chronologically is a 1987 Mission and Goals Report for Cal State Fullerton done under President Cobb. It has some interesting similarities to the report that came out under your administration in '95. First of all, it was set up by a comprehensive campus-wide committee called first the Committee to Plan and then the Long-Range Planning Steering Committee. They have the same mission and goals. Now, one possible difference was that Jewel Cobb, in her preface to this report, referred to it in glowing terms as a

"lighthouse to the future" and a "bible" that we might consult. I got the impression reading it after all these years that the mission was really a big emphasis there.

My first question to you is, why did you feel this 1987 Mission and Goals needed to be redone, in effect? Why not simply make some revisions to the 1987 report and leave it at that?

MG: That's a great question, and I answer that question all the time. I'm a firm believer in having goals. When I came in, the first thing I asked for was a copy of the Mission and Goals statement. I read it with great detail. It was one of the prettiest documents, a beautiful document. No one used it. It was filed in people's drawers, but there was no plan to attain the goals and the missions in that statement. I mean, there was no organized university-wide plan to do that.

The first thing we did was to do a scope study of what the goals of the university should be. It was then that we set up a group –

LD: Excuse me. You say "we." Who was this "we"?

MG: The groups of individuals in the university at that time. It was then that I went to the senate, and I said I'd like to set up a committee to help the university plan. The university would do the planning, but there would be a group that would help the university put together what they want to do and what they see necessary to do. The senate was very agreeable. It took us about a year or a year and a half to actually work out the committee members. Because the other thing that I sometimes find interesting is that groups feel they can control their direction [of the committee] by having certain numbers on a group. Like if the group is going to be size thirty, well, I want sixteen members, something like that. So we spent about a year and a half

going through that. I was really pleased with the final group that was set up. That group is still functioning.

Then we brought in some national experts on planning, and we said, "We just want you to help us create our own plan for Cal State Fullerton." We wanted to create a plan that everyone would use in a daily way. We didn't want to create a plan that's going to be filed in a drawer and taken out to look at. We wanted a plan that if you ask for a budget for something you could tie it to the goals in that plan. Here's the universities' mission and goals. And we wanted it used on a daily basis for whatever anyone in the university wanted to do.

It took us about a year and a half to get used to working together and having very open discussions. I had some of the strongest leaders in the faculty, the staff and the students in that room, and community members. We brought in a superintendent and we brought in community supporters. It was a great group. I look back on that with such fond memories because I feel that when everything is said and done, it may be one of the best [achievements of my presidency].

LD: This was formed around 1994?

MG: Somewhere in that time period. I don't know exactly. One of the things we really stressed was that when we ended this we wanted it used. So we had various groups on here – first we did what's called kind of a scope of our strengths and our weaknesses, as a university, because you've got to know those before you can make a plan.

LD: That's what's called SWOT [Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities].

MG: Right.

LD: Was that a term unique to this?

MG: No. It's used nationally, to do these SWOT scopes. So we did that. It took us a long time. We held a lot of open forums. We wanted everyone in the university and everyone in the community to come out and talk about these things with us. People got tired of seeing us with all these open groups. These were necessary to make sure that when we finished, no one could come to me and say, well, I wasn't involved. We really wanted to cut that off at the pass. We wanted to make sure *everyone* had an opportunity to be involved – students, faculty, staff, community members, anyone almost who wanted to come out and express an opinion. [Executive Vice President], Judy Anderson had so many open forums that people were wondering whether she was ever in her office. I hired her because of her planning background. Part of her background was that she was a national planner, very involved in the national planning group, and she brought in several national experts to help us do this.

Some faculty members said, when we finish this, we want to be able to put this in a small document that people could carry in their pocket every day. So we did that. Then we went to open senate discussions. I don't know how many senate meetings we spent walking through the resulting mission and goals that we had there. As a result of those discussions, we added one or two goals, and if you look at them, they really reflect something we were talking about earlier, this collective thinking, this family approach when you look at the whole result.

Now, something someone wanted me to do when we were finishing this that I said, "No, I don't think that would be the right thing to do," was that they wanted

to prioritize them, to say one goal was more important than another goal. I said, "No, you don't want to do that. If you have a set of goals and you prioritize them, someone will say, well, this one is more important than that one." I said, "All of these are important. They're equally important."

I've been very pleased. As a result of that, when we send out proposals, when we request financial recommendations and when people request budgets, they tie their request to one or more of the goals there, and that's what we really wanted. We wanted people carrying these and by using them, to build them into the culture. To this day, if people send requests to my office, they will say, this is going to be to the benefit of goal number three on the university goals, or goal number four and five. That's using it in a very practical daily way.

LD: If I recall correctly, and I may be wrong here, didn't the 1987 report have a follow-up of Mission and Goals projects?

MG: I think it did. But the one thing I really found about that whole statement was that I had to ask people for them, and they found it, but no one was using it on this constant basis. We finished the Mission and Goals that we did in the early nineties, ten or eleven years ago, and people are still using it. The university initiatives are all tied to it. What I'm saying is that it's no good to say you believe in something if you don't use it.

LD: Besides the desire to have a more usable mission and goals, were there any external conditions in the early 1990s that influenced you and others to feel that this sort of a mission and goals project should be set up? Were the fiscal conditions, for instance, any incentive?

MG: No. It was just the fact that they weren't used. They weren't built into the culture of the university.

LD: The final report from the SWOT team that came out in March or so of 1994 was considerably stronger on self-criticism than on strengths. There were about fourteen different weaknesses it mentioned versus nine strengths, and strengths was only about half of the length of problems and vulnerability and constraints. This seemed ironic because just a couple of years earlier the Western Association of Schools and Colleges [WASC] had issued a report on Cal State Fullerton which was quite glowing. It found Cal State Fullerton had more strengths, it seemed, than weaknesses. So my question is, was there a feeling at the time that the University Planning Committee was set up and functioning that Cal State Fullerton really needed to take a stern look at itself, that there were problems within the campus?

MG: Yeah. Even that report that you referred to, the WASC report, that came out in my first year here, clearly indicates several weaknesses. I think that because the commission knew that I was in my first year, they made the report okay and we passed everything, but in conversations with me they stressed that there were certain weaknesses that had to be corrected before they came back.

What I wanted to say was, on your comment about strengths, weaknesses, and criticism, those statements didn't reflect necessarily the committee's impressions. They came from real people. We categorized them as a group, but those were comments made by faculty, made by staff, made by students, and what we attempted to do was to organize them and then to set up goals to move the university forward. They came from all those open forums that we had. Because if

you'll note, one of the first things we did was to create a planning newsletter that went out across the university and encouraged people to respond to us. I'll tell you, we were buried in responses. Then the committee tried to organize the responses to see what was said positively, to see what were criticisms and to see what came through pretty much neutral.

Again you may know better than I, but I didn't have the impression from reading all of those that that kind of advice was sought on a large university-wide scale much before, because we got *so* many responses.

LD: Maybe the closest thing was that Shields had something like this in the later years of his presidency. I believe it was called Guidelines for the Future, and as I recall, it had a fairly wide influence. But you're right, as a historian, I'm finding the report particularly that the UPC put out, valuable, because it sort of gives you a step-by-step look at how this whole thinking got worked out.

MG: That was our goal, or one of our goals. We wanted historians to look back on this process and to see it step by step. One of the first things we did was to create this newsletter. We flooded the university and the community with what was going on, and "Please give us your feedback." We were all, as a committee, so impressed with what we considered the honest candid feedback.

LD: Was any of this honest candid feedback a surprise to you?

MG: Oh, absolutely. There were so many surprises. If you remember, I had been here at that time only a couple of years, so I was still learning about the university and the community. There were a lot of surprises. I don't know if you want me to mention–

LD: Well, just a few outstanding ones.

MG: Well, one of them was – I've always been a big encourager of people going to the senate meetings and to join in open discussions. You probably have heard me say this from convocations and from public speaking, because I believe that our meetings – I'll use the senate – should be an open dialog on issues that impact the university. I had people that felt they weren't welcome at those meetings. I said, "Oh, absolutely not. You come out to them, join in the discussions." Especially that was true for certain units on the campus. You will notice it was not until this process was finished that the first Athletics staff members were elected to the senate. They felt they weren't welcome along with other divisions in the university. Now, I'm only talking about the senate because you asked me surprises that came out of it.

There were a number of things that surprised all of us, including people who were on [the committee]. Because you know we had very senior people on that committee, if you go back and look at it. We would always sit around and talk about how surprised we were about some widely-held beliefs. Initially, we tried to say, well, we don't know if this is true or not. Let's test it and see. But we finally came to the conclusion that we had to work to make sure that we could dispel [some of those misunderstandings] and to get this collective organization functioning and working together.

LD: One aside here. The SWOT document notes that Cal State Fullerton was "legally vulnerable, exposed to lawsuits." Does this reflect anything that was happening at that time?

MG: No. It reflects universities. This is a great question. Universities in general, in our society, have had kind of a past on large lawsuits. The system has become very cognizant of this. People always felt universities were not going to be sued. But you have seen, in the last ten or eleven years, many lawsuits against all universities, which were spared this for most of their history.

There are arguments about the tenure process. When AAUP [American Association of University Professors] and all of those groups created the tenure process, it was necessary. Now, legally, any employee at the university, because of the lawsuit possibility, has much greater stability in their job than even the tenure process [grants]. So that comment about that had nothing to do with Cal State Fullerton but more to do with the legal process and its changes and employees in the university becoming much more conscious. They were acting like they did in private corporations all of a sudden. I'll sue you. The comment, "I'll sue you" is frequently made to me. And they do. As president, I'm always named in the suit, whether it has anything to do with me or not. They'll just name the president, they'll name the Board of Trustees, and they'll name everyone else.

LD: Has this led to an increase in the legal counsel on this campus?

MG: Absolutely. Not only on the campus, but also in the system. The legal staff in the chancellor's office has expanded. We now have many of the campuses with their own legal counsel, the way we do, especially the large campuses. They're there not simply to handle lawsuits but to help the university function so we don't need the lawsuits. In other words, I consider them teachers in that sense. Talk to us about

what we should be doing, what we shouldn't be doing, how can we do this better. They're as valuable for that as anything.

LD: The Mission and Goals Report, when it came out, was supposed to be "a reflection of what we wish to become." Let me pull out a few items here and ask you to comment. The first one is probably the most often repeated line from the Mission and Goals, right in the beginning, "Learning is preeminent at Cal State Fullerton." Were you the author of that? Because I think I found a 1992 convocation speech in which you had made that statement.

MG: As a teacher, I think the big change in that was to change the focus from the teaching process to the learning process.

LD: If I may interrupt. It's a 1987 report, and it said that teaching is the predominant component of the university's mission, and now in '95 you're saying learning is preeminent. That's more than a semantic change.

MG: It is. I wanted to focus on the learning process because we all learn. We all learn on a daily basis. When it focuses on the teacher, the student takes a lesser position in the process. I've taught at every university I have worked at with the exception of Cal State Fullerton because I think it's too large a job for me, as president, to teach the way I've always done it. I've always tried to get the students in my classes into a learning process where they felt they were a really valuable part of the process. In other words, I'm not there just to sit at the desk and lecture to them. They're a part of a process with me. I have certain knowledge that they don't have at the time, but we're going to do this thing together. I mean, we're all engaged in a learning process.

I think that is a very valuable change. I know people said to me at the time, well, people won't understand it, they don't know what preeminent is, and it sounds too erudite, or something like that. I said, "All I'm trying to do is to emphasize the learning process for all of us on a daily basis." I sincerely hope there isn't a day I go through where I don't learn something.

LD: Was this shift from the emphasis on teaching to learning in any way also motivated by the idea that if learning was preeminent, there was a more logical transition into accountability and assessment?

MG: I don't know. Some people have tried to tie it that way, but my original interest was actually in the total learning process. Once you're focused on the entire learning process then there are other side benefits to it. You had mentioned WASC earlier. The big shift in the way WASC does their evaluations came about so that they now focus on the learning process. But the shift to the learning atmosphere, as apposed to unequal, separate teaching-student environment kinds of approaches, was already going on in other groups before we started discussing it here. I think in almost every class I've had I always started off by saying that I hope this is going to be a learning process for all of us. I wanted to get them all involved in a process for us together. I said, "I have certain things I know. You probably have things you know. But if we function as a group, we're all going to end up benefiting."

So it was a shift, clearly, but I found a lot of those on the Planning Committee and a lot of the faculty and administrators really liked the shift when we started talking about it, because it came out of this group. We started talking about,

is teaching synonymous with learning? The end was, this is the way we want to go. It was not just me, but it came out of the group.

LD: Were the goals of student-centered learning and collaborative learning logical spin-offs from this?

MG: They all went together, absolutely. I hope every university is student-centered because we're all there for the students. So certainly that would be a natural result of this whole learning process. Yes, some of the goals did come out of that thinking.

LD: One criticism that I know was made by the Academic Senate of the final draft of Mission and Goals was that they thought it put an excessive emphasis on what faculty had to do, and maybe not enough of an emphasis on the students' role in the whole thing.

MG: I've heard the comment from some. It was never intended to exclude students' responsibilities. As a matter of fact, when you were asking me to explain what I meant by it, I constantly said students were a part of the process. It didn't mean to in any way shift [responsibility]. But in any statement you make, someone can focus their own meaning into it. I want to say clearly that in general, the senate totally supported this concept. Some joked about it, and they did other things, but they supported this. It wouldn't have gone forward without that support.

LD: The component of Mission and Goals that said a degree should be attainable in four years and impediments to that should be removed, did that come out of extensive criticism or responses to SWOT that this was a problem for students or parents?

MG: It's part of the Master Plan, and we all realize this. The students who come to CSU generally work large numbers of hours, were basically part-time, and we knew that. But what we were stating was a vision, in which we would like to have the students focus on their education. We set up a program at that time – it's called the four-year guarantee – that if a student came, took the [required] number of hours every semester, we were going to make a guarantee that they could graduate in four years. Not a lot of students took us up on that, but at least we had a plan to accomplish that.

Again, and you'll keep hearing me say that, it's clear who was controlling the Master Plan when it was established. The full-time students were going to go to UC. They were not going to have anything but full-time students. The Master Plan says that. The CSU are going to have the working students. There's a study that comes out of UCLA every year by [Alexander] Astin, and it always shows the biggest impediment to a four-year graduation is work. The students are working. It was always interesting to me the myth of how graduating in four years. On any large scale that is basically not true. I know I worked going through school. I finished in four and a half years, but I went all summers, too. Maybe the students at Princeton or Harvard finish in four years, but I don't think the average student going through a college undergraduate program finishes in four years. The results now show that it's more like six years.

LD: Finally on the Mission and Goals components, one thing that was stressed quite a bit was the sense of community within the campus. Was this a subject of a lot of

critical comments? Was this seen by the committee, from the responses it got, as a weakness on campus, that it didn't have enough of a sense of community?

MG: I think it comes from a desire, because that came through in all of the discussions. The same thing you said earlier, when the university started, it was a community. People wanted to hold on to that community, so it was a strong desire and it kept coming through. One of the things we haven't talked about yet is a faculty club. I have heard more comments and more requests, and we've looked at more possibilities on the campus to create a faculty club. I was told in the early years faculty would get together frequently.

LD: Were you told where?

MG: No, not necessarily. Anyway, people always have said we used to meet, we used to get together. When you're small, as you said, you can do this, but once you become a thousand faculty, it's much more challenging. We had a faculty-staff restaurant on the second floor of the Bookstore. I don't know if you remember that. It was seldom used. You could go in there on any given day, and I don't think you'd find more than ten people in there. We kept it there, I kept it there for several years. It was [finally closed because] it was a big money loser. I have discussed trying to create a faculty club every year for fourteen years. We've looked at more spots on the campus to create one.

I think I finally have gotten through to those people who still talk to me about it, that financially, wherever clubs exist, you're going to have to have some kind of annual dues that people pay into them. I think most people are saying okay, that's fine, we'll do this, but what we have to do is to get the funds and the location.

We've looked at a number of spots for several years. We looked at the library. Under the library **[referring to 1st floor of PLS?]** is space of ten to twelve feet, and we were going to enclose that in glass, but there are no utilities there and it would be awkward. The other thing is people want this in the center of the campus. The center's only so large, and it's hard to create. We looked at the restaurant over in the student association, but all that is theirs. That's all their property, and that's their operation, so we've got to be careful there. Every year I continue to try to look for some way to create this faculty club.

So this community goal came out of what people wanted, actually, more than anything else. I think it was a lot of the faculty, especially the senior faculty, who said the same thing you did, in the early days, we were always getting together, we were always doing things as a group. I created a faculty club on another campus that I worked at, and it's hard to make one of these things go, or to function. The smaller you make the subset – for instance, if it's faculty only, that's a much harder thing to create. So I created faculty-staff on another campus, and it, too, was seldom used, because people are so busy during the course of the day. The other thing is, if you want to serve alcohol, we're a state campus, so you've got to be very careful there. There are a lot of problems with a club, but the community goal came out of that.

LD: Now the follow-up on the Mission and Goals. The '95 report had a project component, did it not? You've mentioned university initiatives.

MG: Right.

LD: What was the funding for these?

MG: The basic funding, and it hasn't changed over the years, came from closing some programs in various components of the university. And we said, okay, let's take those dollars and create this initiative out of this to have people encouraged to go through the Mission and Goals. It's always been the same, six hundred thousand dollars, and it's one-time money because we create it every year and it goes away. It has brought some of the greatest proposals that the campus has seen, things that people wouldn't have been able to do. It provides seed money for all kinds of things. Oral history has gotten money from it. I remember one of our faculty wanted to do a summer program for orchestra leaders. It's the only time this ever happened, because of this Mission and Goals statement. Faculty get the majority of the money, but it does go to student affairs, administrative affairs, and all kinds of other activities.

Two weeks ago, the senate voted seventeen to fifteen to three for me to stop using these funds and to use them to increase faculty salaries. I haven't gotten the official recommendation yet, and I don't know what I'm going to do with that recommendation. As you can see, it was a very close vote. I told them at the time, during the debate, I think that's shortsighted. I said, "It's not that the issue isn't serious and we haven't considered it, but we need permanent money to do that, and this money really has been set up for the purposes I've just mentioned, and it would stop all of these other programs."

LD: Then you gave initiatives for one-time things. Have many of them resulted in lasting programs?

MG: There are so many things that resulted from it that are permanent. Judy Anderson could name a lot of them that ended up being permanent. The very nice publications that you get now from Public Affairs [now University Communications and Marketing], the funds came out of this.

LD: *Titan*, for instance?

MG: I don't know the exact – but that very nice magazine, that glossy one, whatever it is.

LD: *Titan*.

MG: That and other things came out of it. Administrative affairs has used these funds to do things on a one-year basis. So anyway, that's how the whole thing came about. Now, what many of the deans and some of the other vice presidents did, if they got so much money from this planning initiative, was add other money to finish programs. I thought it was a very creative idea. I still think it is.

LD: Have there been some later SWOT analyses since the '94 one?

MG: Yes.

LD: I think there was one around 2001 or something?

MG: The University Planning Committee has done a later SWOT. I don't know exactly what year it was.

LD: I think it was in 2001. I was wondering if there are any others.

MG: I'm not sure. The person you would have to ask is Dr. Anderson. She would be able to tell you exactly. But you're supposed to periodically do those SWOT analyses to see if things have changed, improved, et cetera.

LD: Where does the Academic Senate Planning, Resource, and Budget Committee fit into all of this long-range planning?

MG: Right. When I came into the university as president, there were two committees. There was a Planning Committee and there was a Budget Committee. It was the Planning Committee that referred only to academic planning, and the Budget Committee was very limited in who was on the committee. As a matter of fact, I remember in an early year, my first year or second year here, I asked did I have a vote on the committee, and they weren't sure. It was very limited in terms of membership. It had I don't think any other administrators were on it. It was all faculty, except for me and maybe the vice president for academic affairs. But they weren't certain about if either one of us had a vote.

The two committees were dysfunctional in the sense that to do budget *there* and planning *here* makes no sense. You have to do budget and planning together. One of the earlier disruptions in the university came about because of these two separate committees. I don't know if you remember it, but early in my tenure as president, the Planning Committee, which at that time was basically academic planning, came forward with a recommendation for the university to discontinue Engineering. It caused great disruption in the community, because the way the process went, was that before that decision was made public, before it ever came to my office – in other words, I had no chance to make a decision. It was only in that planning process when it was made public. It caused a decrease in Engineering students because they were saying, why go to a school where the Engineering program is going to be discontinued? It caused me to have all kinds of meetings in

the community with corporations where I said, "We're not going to discontinue Engineering. That was a planning recommendation that came to me." A similar thing you may want to talk about is football and the way that decision was made.

LD: Yes, I want to get into that later.

MG: I spent a year trying to assure students, corporations, community members that eliminating Engineering was a recommendation from this small planning group in academic affairs, and that we weren't going to do it. You've been around universities a long time. You know that academic programs are very cyclic. Business is popular now and two years from now it's on the bottom.

LD: [This recommendation] came when aerospace had been shutting down.

MG: Absolutely. I recommended to the senate a couple of things. First, you should bring these committees together, and you should have a planning-budget committee. Second, you should expand the committee to include other administrators and staff. As you and I commented, they had this very nice senate with all the components, but here they didn't. So the senate made a planning-budget committee, they expanded those on the committee, and that's now the PRBC, Planning, Resource, Budget Committee. From the time we come back in September, when the committee is formed, they discuss all of the universities' budgets throughout the year, and then in the spring they make a recommendation to me on the budget for the university for the following year. That's a much more logical process to use.

LD: That's a good clarification. One term appears in the Mission and Goals, that will also appear in Cornerstones, that I'd like you to clarify. Cal State Fullerton was a

"comprehensive regional university." When did that term first appear, to your knowledge, and what exactly does it mean?

MG: Well, the comprehensive is a national term used for universities.

LD: But for all universities?

MG: It's used for those universities that have a full array of academic programs. It's not a liberal arts college. It's not a business school. It's not an arts college. It's a comprehensive. It has all of those programs. So that's a national term. That's not a local term and that's not our term. It's not a specialty school, in other words; that's really what it means.

The regional concept means that we have large numbers of our students not from a locality but from an entire region, a much larger region than Fullerton, for instance. As I'm sure you know, there's always been controversy over the name California State University Fullerton, like it's limiting the university to the city of Fullerton. Well, we're the whole Southern California region. So that's what the terms actually reflect.

LD: But generally speaking, it was taken as an improvement over Orange County State College or the brief Orange State College.

MG: As I'm sure you know, we're going to have in stone on those pedestals out in front [of Langsdorf Hall] all of the university's names because one of the things people constantly tell me is, "well, I've got my diploma in my office, and no one knows who in the world Orange State College is, or is it still here?" You went through about three or four names. So we're going to list all the names and the years they were used, out there.

LD: The reason I ask is that, before 1998, I found someplace, we were ranked – and I can only imagine this was a *U.S. News & World Report* ranking – as the nineteenth best, comprehensive university in the United States. In '98 in your convocation address, you raised the challenge of making Cal State Fullerton the *best* comprehensive university.

MG: That's right. And that's still our goal.

LD: Did you really feel that was a realistic goal?

MG: Yes. I feel, with the faculty and the staff that we have, that we could be the finest. The other limiting factor is master's comprehensive. It's usually "master's comprehensive institution", because that's the highest degree we can give. One of the things about being the best is that, you have to feel you can be the best. So after that statement was made, we have certain divisions in the university that now will end their statement with "the finest comprehensive university." I don't want people feeling an inferiority complex. In other words, I want to go the other way. I want them to feel good about the university and to feel we can *be* the best. I actually believe that could be obtainable, and we strive for it every day. One thing is certain, if you don't strive to be the best, [you won't be the best].

[end of session]