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Frank H. Spain (Interviewee)
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DR. FRANK SPAIN

Hewitt: I am interviewing today Dr. Frank Spain, Director of Community College Relations, as part of the USF Silver Anniversary Oral History project. Dr. Spain, let me ask you first of all, what was your first contact with USF and why did you choose to come here?

Spain: In 1956, I think, maybe early '57, I learned that a new state university was going to be started in Tampa and that it would be the first such institution ever begun where the plans were known in advance, and there was no reason that anyone could consider blaming a predecessor for something that went wrong. But it was a very appealing concept. I find that my first official contact with the University was in a July 23rd, 1957 letter to Dr. John Allen who had been appointed president of the University of South Florida. But at that time he was serving in the same capacity at the University of Florida, and so I wrote expressing interest. Maybe I should read to you one of my reasons of interest. "As one who did his graduate work at the University of Florida, I have a deep respect for your State program and great admiration of your climate." Now at that time I was in Owensboro, Kentucky, and we had a fairly rough winter. The differences in climate didn't detract any from the attractiveness of USF. But I think the main reason was that we had an opportunity to do something that had not been done before, and I was eager to be a contributing part of that.

Hewitt: What were your first impressions of USF when you arrived here?

Spain: Well, my first impression was that it was very difficult to get to. USF was down at 349 Plant Avenue, a residence, a large home formerly, that had been re-worked somewhat, but not a great deal. It was not unlike "bees in a
beehive "as additional staff members were added, offices created and support staff begun. So we were in there from September 1 until April of 1960. My office, as it started expanding, additional files, etc., was the second office as I recall to move to the current location of USF. But we were simply... It was a busy place. Everyone was excited, enthusiastic and committed with a tremendous sense of cooperation and harmony. The entire staff, in those days, took a common coffee break and met in the kitchen of what had been a former home. Everyone pretty much knew his/her specific mission and a good bit about the mission of the other offices nearby. After all, we were practically, physically, rubbing elbows. We were that close together.

Hewitt: Now, what was your first position at the University of South Florida?

Spain: I was the combined Charter, Registrar and Admissions Director. So our job was one of designing forms, getting in touch with the students, responding to inquiries, really getting the name of the University and the identification of it before our different publics. Primarily, so far as our students were concerned, with the high school students, but as we'll note later, perhaps in this interview, the transfer students from other institutions had a significant role to play even from the very beginning in USF's enrollment.

Hewitt: Now as Registrar and Director of Admissions, were you involved in formulating the USF mission as well as disseminating...?

Spain: The mission itself in three words, "Accent on Learning," was in place when I joined USF. In fact the charter catalogue has this logo on it and you'd be interested, perhaps, that the catalogue was really written by then, Dean of
Basic Studies, Dr. Sidney French. It was exceptionally well written, very, very clear, and it did not have a lot of excess verbiage in it. I no sooner arrived when I started getting commendations and congratulations from across the nation on a readable college university catalogue! I did turn these right over to Dean French. But the mission, "Accent on Learning," I think, was in place. We knew that we were going to be about the business of teaching, research, and community service. Those are the big three points in most educational institution missions. But as we grew, as we had workshops in advance of the September 1960 opening classes, the mission, I suppose, was fleshed out somewhat, and that is the way it should be. It's still being revised, updated, and that's entirely appropriate.

Hewitt: Now in your original attempt to contact students to make the University of South Florida known to various publics, how did you actually go about trying to identify USF as a new university and convincing people they should attend a new university as opposed to a more established one?

Spain: We started quite early with a high school visitation program called "College Night." This is still a viable program in which our Office of Admissions participates today. In this session, in those days, the University representative would be in a given high school with representatives from the other universities and colleges, primarily from within the state of Florida, but not limited to the state of Florida. So we were given an opportunity, in an opening session, to describe the University we were representing. In a way it was a bit of a challenge, and in another way it was quite rewarding to be able to say, "here we are, brand new, and we would like you to consider us." It never occurred to any of us, any of the employees of the University, that we would do anything other than to succeed. I think maybe some
of this rubbed off on our different publics, like the guidance counselors from the high schools, the students, the parents, that type of thing. We were traveling through the high schools within three weeks of my arrival as the Admissions/Registrar officer. This was a very comprehensive schedule that we were looking at. It picked up on September 21, 1959, with Dean Millikan of the College of Business Administration at that time, who went over to Dillard High School. Two days later, Dean French, who was referenced a moment ago, went to Edgewater in Orlando, and so forth. This ran down through March 4, 1960, when Dean French again went to Merritt High School in Miami. We pretty much covered the State. A very critical point is that it wasn't just one person or two people doing these visits. We had every dean and every director involved in it. President Allen even went on some of these trips. The community and communities were quite cooperative in holding coffee hours where one or more university rep could go and describe what we saw down the road so far as USF was concerned.

Hewitt: Now, did you try and make contact with community colleges at this point as well as the high schools, or did you concentrate, at first, just on the high school level.

Spain: Something that is sometimes overlooked is that in the charter class of almost 2,000 students, 1,997 students I believe, I think 456 were transfers. They had already gone to some other institution. Sometimes more than one. They were literally waiting for us. When we were making our plans, we hadn't quite foreseen this possibility and we were talking in terms of "pure, full-time, first-time, in-college freshman". The transfers were waiting and they came in with us. This is by way of saying that when we saw this handwriting on the wall, and President Allen with his "vision," we
invited some of the community junior college people to this campus for workshops, receptions, etc., before we ever opened. Now in those days we were dealing primarily with Manatee Junior College, now Manatee Community College in Bradenton, and now with the campus in Venice also. And because they had opened in 1958, we were dealing with Manatee and we were dealing with St. Pete, which is about 25 years older than we are, at least 25 years older. Hillsborough was not in place until 1968 so these were the two whom we dealt primarily with. We invited the community college presidents council to meet here, very early, I believe in 1960 for the first time. So the handwriting on the wall was understood, and that was that we would be working in an inter-institutional mode in accommodating the transfer students. And of course the grand plan in the entire educational system for Florida was beginning to be put in place at that time. The master plan for the community college was approved in 1957 one year after USF was chartered. As we opened in 1960, opened for classes, there were maybe six community junior colleges that had opened in advance of USF. Two or more opened in 1960 with us. During the '60s they expanded and in one year five junior community colleges were opened at one time, from 1966-67. We knew that with this concept, that was labeled the "two plus two" concept, that by design many students could go for the first two years to a community junior college and then transfer to us. We knew that our destiny was totally linked to the destiny of the community college system. So we worked with them from the very beginning.

Hewitt: You mentioned that you traveled around the entire state of Florida as did various deans, and even President Allen at times, to publicize the opening of USF and to recruit students. Was there any sense of competition in that recruitment process with places like the University of Florida and Florida
State University, or was USF seen as so distinct from those two in design that you would be actually recruiting different kinds of students?

Spain: No, I did not sense that there was any competition at all. Quite the contrary. Florida State and Florida were very cooperative, so far as my operations were concerned, in assisting us and we, of course, did appeal to the sometimes termed "place-bound" population and many of our students did commute from home. I think we opened with only 45 beds in the University Center where the infirmary is now. So that certainly wasn't very much by way of housing. A freeze had delayed dormitory construction for one year and so we had our own clientele, but at the same time we had an interesting syndrome developing. People had started at Florida and Florida State from the Tampa Bay area, and for whatever reason they opted to drop out there and to enroll with us. And this is part of that transfer student population that I was mentioning a little earlier. They were so cooperative that I, before even arriving here, was able to get statements from both the Registrar, who was also the Director of Admissions at the University of Florida, and the same type statement from the Registrar at Florida State who held two titles, the Director of Admissions and Registrar. They would not only honor USF credits, this brand new up-start of a university, but they would accept our credits at face value. This is to say that the grades would transfer. You just don't get any stronger endorsement than that. You might be interested to know that there was a law on the books at that time, indicating that any student who enrolled at Florida State on a transit basis, say for the summer session and then went back to the home institution at Florida, would have the grades transfer back at face value. And it would work the opposite way if the student were a FSU student and took work at the University of Florida. Upon learning about that law I attempted and successfully
piggybacked on it and got USF included in that. We had such letters indicating that we were included. The law interestingly was repealed about four years after we opened. Just as I was suggesting to my friend from Florida Atlantic University, which was opening in '64-'65, that he piggyback them to get this law for his purposes, the law was quietly repealed and we did not know just why. But by that time we were well established and had four Southern Association Accreditations, that type thing. The rationale for the law as I understood it was that a football player had gone from one institution to another, from Florida to Florida State, and had made an "A" in summer school, and the home institution would not honor it. So as we are prone to do in this state, we did it by legislation, and that is why the law was passed. We got total cooperation. I also want to say that we got total cooperation from Florida College here in Temple Terrace, a two year institution. When we had our "dollars for dorms" drive every employee at the Florida College made contributions to get these dorms started since we were already a year late because of the freeze. That is the kind of support they gave us. They hosted receptions in Temple Terrace for USF staff members to come over and meet people in that community also.

**Hewitt:** When you went out to recruit students, how did you characterize the early curriculum at USF? What did you tell them the benefit would be in coming here in terms of a particular curriculum or a particular educational model that USF had to offer?

**Spain:** Well, one thing that we pushed was that it had a very sound, general education program. The Basic Studies Program, as it was known in those days, had seven courses and from the seven, the student was required to take six. It was in different configurations after that. Natural Sciences was split out
into Biological and into Physical Sciences and there was some other refinements. But we assured them that they would have a good, solid, liberal education foundation. One of the selling points was that we didn't have any graduate students. So they would be taught in their very first classes and from then on up by regular full-time faculty members. We, I guess, tried to learn from what some of the other institutions have run into as specific problems. And in those days it was a problem, and it was perceived as such. Generally by the public, the knowing public, that frequently freshmen are taught only by graduate students. And some graduate students are excellent instructors, I don't mean to indicate that they're not, but that was a point that we used here, that it would be a full-time faculty member. We had other concepts also. Team learning and team teaching was where more than one instructor would teach the student the same course or one instructor, say in the sciences, would do a cross walk and give lectures in freshmen English. The Science people and the English people would cooperate in term paper topics, that type of thing. There was a tremendous cross-utilization, cross-fertilization of ideas, and kind of an interdisciplinary approach in that regard. One question we always got was "when are you going to have football?" We made no bones about the fact that we didn't expect to ever have football, that we were going to put the hard come-by appropriate dollars into academic buildings, into resources, and into the library. The librarian, by-the-way, was the very first person hired by President Allen, which I think tells us quite a bit about the commitment there. But anyway, the point had to be made that we would be different, and we would not ever be a school where every student attending could be housed. We expected to serve the population surrounding us and that is, of course, one of the reasons we are located here.
Hewitt: What do you think were the forces that helped shape that early curriculum in such an innovative manner? Was it something that Dr. Allen himself brought to the University or was it more a collaborative effort to try and be an interdisciplinary, liberal arts, non-sports oriented university?

Spain: There is no question in my mind that President Allen, Dean French, and some of the others in the early days were certainly the fuse that would get this process going. They were smart enough to invite experts in the year or so before we opened to get the best of their offering and the very best of their thinking. Remember, Dr. Harris Dean only made the interview in later. He was down as a consultant. At that time he was still at Florida State University. We were sitting around telling ourselves and others that our university was going to be different. And I remember so clearly the little challenge that he posed to us in that workshop. This was in '59. He said, "you are going to build a different university. Let me suggest to you that as you design this university you contemplate the difficulty in designing a brand new animal, unlike any animal you've ever seen, but give it legs, give it a tail, give it a head, give it a set of horns, that type of thing." And that is the kind of challenge that we were working with. But I think the vision with the early leadership, especially with President Allen ... He and French had known each other in other institutions. He invited Dean French over from Rollins, and he was here quite a while before I arrived. They set the tone, they set the pace or the flavor if you will, they interviewed accordingly and they staffed accordingly. We had people who were very eager to join USF, and they brought with them a wealth of expertise.
Hewitt: Are there any other activities that occurred before USF officially opened that might help someone, thinking back on the first twenty-five years, have a better sense of how the University developed?

Spain: In addition to the community outreach and the Outreach Program with the high schools and the community colleges, everyone who joined in the early days, attended his/her professional counterpart meeting if you will. They went to state meetings, they went to the regional meetings, they went to the national and the international if appropriate. So the thinking was that the better prepared the people are the better job they will do. That certainly was going on all between Dr. Allen's arrival and the September 1960 opening. I've referenced earlier the fact that consultants were brought in. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was invited to send a team here. They were re-invited each year in the early years until we were accredited in 1963, which was a milestone within itself because at that time not only did they issue an accreditation for the institution, but they rolled it back to the day we opened, which was an unheard of thing. But they did it because of this tight linkage between USF and the Southern Association. We were seeking guidance from them, and we were seeking guidance from the professional associations within given disciplines, that type of approach. You, I think, would be very interested to know that before we opened in September, 1960, we gave two classes here over in the Chemistry building called "New Trends in Teaching Reading." The title wave of rapid reading, comprehension, and a better improved comprehension was coming and Dean Battle was aware of this. The lady from California . . . Evelyn Woods? Yes. Had worked with a man at the University of Florida, and so we had 76 public school teachers to go through these two classes. In the summer of sixty, before we opened, September 26, 1960,
I thought everyone wanted at least one transcript sent to the State Department of Education. Understandably so because it meant recertification and in some cases it meant improved pay. So, we had a challenge. How do you do a transcript when you don't have the forms ready yet? But we did have the grade report ready, and we put the official seal and the signature on each grade report and batched them and sent them into the Bureau of Teachers Certification in Tallahassee with a cover letter explaining the work had been completed, the grades were good, and it was good solid work. We hadn't opened yet and asked if they would please honor these grades. They did. We had no trouble at all. Life was somewhat simpler then.

Hewitt: When USF officially opened in September of 1960, how did your responsibilities and the work of your office change once there were actually students on campus and classes going on?

Spain: Well, we were extremely busy. I came here wondering what I would do for twelve months before the University opened. We didn't have nearly enough time. We were very, very busy. The first application arrived in October, early October of 1959. They would have come earlier but we didn't have the forms completed by that time. The point I want to make is that we were extremely vulnerable. My staff and I were over in Administration Building 264. We totaled all of eleven at that time in admissions/registrar combined. There was a long counter fully opened to the public view, and students would come in. It didn't matter if someone were busy typing a clearance letter to send to some other student. The people would almost reach over the counter and tap the person on the shoulder and say, "Hey, I need help, can you do this." And there were times when there was no way to shield the employees from this type of inquiry, this type of visitor with
And we were working overtime. We were working night and on weekends and that type of thing. So I'm saying it took quite awhile after the September opening to catch up with what we had by way of lag. Then we started the high school and junior college visitation programs again. You see, it was always running twelve months or so in advance of the prospective students' arrival here. So we had that cycle to start over. By that time the permanent record forms, the drop/adds, the withdrawal, the VA certification, social security, railroad retirement and on and on and on. So we shifted. We didn't shift, we continued in high gear with the admissions function, but we started giving birth to the records/registrar function at that time. But it was a single office and at times of registration, the admissions clerks would be right in helping with registration. They had to be. And there were times when the records/registrar people would float back in and have to help with admissions. But mostly it was a matter of coping with the growth. We had another factor which played a significant role. Many of the early students were first generation college-going-students. They had nothing to relate to when we used ( ) with them. They had no one at home who could explain or who had prior exposure. And this was a bit more difficult than in dealing with the student who had had some familiarity with the educational scene. But it was different from anything ever experienced at Gainesville or Tallahassee. Even today I stake my reputation on this. But we have so many drop-ins who do not get appointments in advance, and the same thing happens with the telephone, the volume of telephone calls. And I used to ask people, "How did you find us?" This was before we opened. "Well, I was over on the ramp, the raised ramp at Bush Gardens, walking across, and I looked down and I saw something and I thought it looked interesting so I
came over." But it was sometimes just to that extent that we had these visitors.

Hewitt: I have heard that the actual first day of registration, there was a hurricane on campus. Do you recall the first day of registration?

Spain: Yes. We brought in the charter class. We invited them in groups, small groups, 50 or 100 or so. They were advised, they went through the whole registration process and that type thing, and we had a hurricane somewhere in there; I'm not real clear on just where it was. We were having so many internal hurricanes by that time, but there certainly was one.

Hewitt: Do you remember much about what the campus looked like at that time? It sounds like you spent most of your time inside the office.

Spain: Well, it consisted of three buildings: the Administration Building, Chemistry, and the University Center. It looked promising, it looked terribly raw, and unattractive in some ways. As this building, the Student Services building was constructed, they ran into all sorts of problems with soil stabilization. They were hitting mud at 90 feet deep. The theory was that the Hillsborough River meandered its way through here at one time. But they finally, I think, put the building on an 8 foot blanket of steel reinforced concrete. But the point I am making is that anytime my secretary came around, for some reason, between the administration building and this building, and I guess they were remodeling the exit road, her automobile would sink right down to the hub caps west of where we're seated at this moment. So you've heard, I am sure, about the sand spurs, the blowing sand, and that type thing. None of what you see now by way of the shrubbery and the trees, none of that was here. The physical plant people did a
magnificent job of moving, I think with war surplus drag lines and such, quite a few of these beautiful oak trees that you see here now. From the north side of the campus, over at the undeveloped side and over here, they gradually filled it in, and with the coming of the grass and that type of thing, it has become a very beautiful campus. But it was not that way when we opened.

Hewitt: You mentioned when things got very busy at the registrar/admissions desk, that everyone sort of helped out when someone came along to ask questions, and also the fact the campus was relatively small and it was apparently difficult to navigate one's way around it without getting caught in sand or muck or something. How do you think that affected the relations between faculty, staff, students and administrators? Was there a sense that you were all pulling together, or did people try and develop the sense of hierarchy to give the students a sense of tradition?

Spain: No. Definitely a feeling, and it was visibly projected, we were all pulling together. I think the key word is pioneers. We were all pioneers together. We had set out to do a great thing. We had the "All University Book" which students would be reading, career service, all employees reading, and then, if possible, we had the author down for a coffee reception and a general discussion. I remember Dean Milliken went on to become president at Florida Tech. It is called the University of Central Florida now. Dean Milliken was chairman of the traffic committee, and can you believe we had parking problems with 1734 acres of land? But we had traffic problems from the very beginning. One of the offenders had been brought up before the traffic committee, and he had on a neckbrace. And so he had parked in the wrong space, or something like that, and his plea was that he had do get close to
the building because he was in such pain from the neck injury. So one of
the other members asked if he would please excuse himself. When the student
left this man, who was the physical plant director, said "you know, I was
playing volley ball just yesterday and this man gave me fits, the student,
because he was out on the line and he was spiking the ball." He didn't look
to be in pain then. So he was called back in and he lost his keys, had to
park up at Fowler for something like a week and then walk in, which is a
fairly long walk as you know. The point I want to make is that students
were involved with the faculty and staff in classroom endeavors like the
"All University Book," the free hour, and that type of thing. And in quite
a few cases in sheer fun, just sports such as volley ball.

**Hewitt:** I'd like to ask you a couple more questions about the quality of life at USF
in those early years, especially since you were involved in student recruit-
ment. Was there an effort initially to recruit minority students, to
recruit students over traditional age, to recruit a mix of students given
that you were in some ways limited as a commuter campus to the immediate
area?

**Spain:** I think taking the second population first, that the non-traditional age
student, the older student, found us. Of course, we responded. But they
found us. These were people who had gone to college, sometimes 25 years
prior, and had dropped out. Two good examples are Mrs. King and Mrs.
O’Neill. These were the first two first students to qualify for
full-fledged graduation from USF. They had been to at least one, and in one
case, two institutions before coming here. They established the prestigious
King-O'Neill Award which is given as you know to the graduating senior or
seniors, in case of a tie, with the highest GPA on all work ever attempted
in any place. So they found us. They found us during the summer preceding
the opening of classes, in fact, during that entire year, and we responded.
We tried to make it attractive. We were committed from the beginning to
serving the part-time student, to serving the commuter, and to serving the
evening students. In the area of outreach for minority students, the
commitment was there. It was not as expressed or articulated as often as it
is today. The commitment was definitely there. In fact I'm very proud of
the fact that Ernest Boger enrolled here and finished here. At the time
that he joined us he was the only black student in any of the state univer-
sities except Florida A & M. And we're proud of that. We were very, very
concerned that we not do any students a disservice of issuing admissions
when the likelihood of success did not seem to be strong. And so we were
kind of walking that tight rope, but efforts were extended early on to serve
all of the populations.

Hewitt: In attempting either to recruit minority students or students over tradi-
tional age, or to respond when they arrived on campus, was there involvement
with community groups that might not necessarily be parents of traditional
age students but community groups, churches, or other organizations that
might help to get out word about USF?

Spain: Yes, very definitely. We were eager to do that. We had, I guess, kind of
an informal speakers bureau, but the word was released that it was almost
"have speech will travel," will be delighted to go to a coffee club meeting,
women's club meeting, civic club meeting, chamber of commerce and on and on.
We were very active in that endeavor.
Hewitt: Were people in the Tampa community and the immediate area eager to care about the University of South Florida? Was there outreach for both sides?

Spain: Yes, yes. They were hungry to hear more about us and to learn more about us. The geographical distance, distance isn't the word, but the development around the campus now wasn't here at that time, and so we were in a sense logistically more separated from much of what we see in Temple Terrace and Tampa, but the commitment was there. In fact you probably know that there was a great deal of competition on the part of St. Petersburg, Sarasota and maybe one or two other towns and cities to land USF. The other communities, having lost the institution, labeled us "Suds U." and "Bottle Cap U." referencing the proximity to the brewery and that type thing. But the healing process set in very early and it was explained, for example, to the people in Pinellas County that the location here resulted in a much larger radius of service area then it would be if it had been located in St. Petersburg. Furthermore, Dr. Allen explained to that legislative delegation that we weren't going to stand still once we got established in Tampa. We were going to reach out, and reach out we did. Starting quite soon, junior and senior level classes, graduate classes were at St. Petersburg, at the old maritime base where, incidentally, Eckerd started as a college. Then we eventually moved to the beautiful campus that we have there now. But we have, as you know, that operation there. Then we were operating in Sarasota and in Ft. Myers, but there was competition for the location of the University. There is no doubt in my mind that the choice of this site was a wise one.
Once USF was opened and students were here for a couple of years, what do you think were the biggest changes that occurred in those early years in terms of developing both curriculum and academic programs and in trying to develop outreach programs in community relations?

I think the biggest change in the curriculum area was that we had not anticipated starting any graduate programs until about a decade underway. And we had not anticipated getting a full-fledged engineering program nearly as early as we had it. And other programs where putting them in place was an accelerated process compared to what we had planned for. The whole idea being just as there were almost, there were 450 transfers in the entering class, something that we hadn't expected, but the people were literally knocking on the door and pushing it open saying "Hey, I need a masters in education and I want to take a full-fledged program here in engineering." We started, you know, with a 3-2 program with Florida where the student could do 3 years of engineering, pre-engineering here, and transfer there. Well, I don't think very many ever went that route because we put the engineering college in place, I think, in 1964. But it was 5-6 years in advance of what had been the planned date. So I think the expansion of the curriculum, the educational opportunities, and the options would be the keynote to what settled in after we got under way. We did make some other adjustments. I think that if we had had the resources and we were growing so rapidly, there wasn't a question in the '60's of whether we would grow. The question was at what percentage rate would we grow. I remember 2 years in particular when we grew 12% over the preceding year and in other case, 16%. So far as growth goes, educational growth and enrollment growth, I look at the '60's as the golden decade for growth. We had problems in the '60's and maybe one problem was that this institution didn't have adequate
resources perhaps to do community outreach work to the extent that our primary mission dictated that we do institutional and prospective student and parent outreach. Hindsight is always 20/20, and no doubt there could have been more work in that area. But, no we did not. We maintained the old ties that we had with the Chamber of Commerce, the civic groups and that type thing. And I guess in my mind's eye I would see it as a situation where our doors were always open. We were always receptive, but maybe we were not as proactive as would have been desirable and would have been the case if the resources had permitted.

Hewitt: I believe it was the second year that USF had the first residential students and the first dorm opened?

Spain: I believe that's right, '61 I think.

Hewitt: How did that change the atmosphere on campus, and did it have an affect on your office in terms of the kinds of things that were required to be done for residential students that might not have to be done for commuter students?

Spain: Well the per capita of enrolled students really made my operations easier because there is no easier and no more cost effective population then a population living on campus taking full loads. Think about it for a moment. It takes five students on a part-time basis doing three hours per term, and there are alot of them that do that and my hat is off to them. It takes five to equal one student whose circumstances permit taking a 15 hour load right off. I did a presentation to the Board of Regents in the late '60s. The presentation was entitled "Urban U. is Unique." I had one man stand and he was a part-time student. He had five class schedules because he was taking
one three hour course for five terms. We had another student standing and he was the "traditional" student, as we call him today, living in the dorms, and he didn't need five class schedules, he had one. He didn't need five catalogues, he had one. We made the point that you had to set up five folders. You have to have five times the filing cabinets, five times the space, five times the postage, almost five times the parking spaces because rarely, you know, can space be rotated and turned over. Sometimes it can be and that's good. But the easiest population that my office dealt with was the full-time residence hall student because you did it once, and you know the FTE yard stick, you had a full-time equivalent with one head count. This plea to the Regents with "Urban U. is Unique" was that we change the funding to total head count THC rather then FTE and at that time FIU had not opened, but its president was here. The University of Central Florida was just under way, and the University of North Florida (FIU), was not opened, but they opened in '72. Anyway these three presidents asked for copy of that script because they wanted to go home and start the same campaign there.

Hewitt: Let me ask you about one other incident from the very early years at USF and that is the visit of the Johns' Committee to the campus. Were you involved at all in that investigation or do you have any particular memories of that year?

Spain: I certainly have memories, although not directly involved, I was indirectly involved. You know the senator had gone over to Dale Mabry and rented a motel room and conference room and was pulling students and faculty over to give testimony for awhile, I'm not sure how long, not very long I don't think, before President Allen learned of this. Upon learning of it he
insisted that the committee come right over to the administration building and use the board room or the President's Conference Room as it was known at that time, and he would afford secretarial help and recorders and all of that, anything that they needed. And they took him up on it and came over. But that was a good way to handle that situation. It had the institution in a terrible state. Some, we were talking about hurricanes, and some referred to it as "hurricane Charlie." It hurt the institution, but who knows, maybe in the long run we were made stronger. I know that the president, towards the end, made an address to a joint meeting of the House and of the Senate in Tallahasse and stated the case very well and received an extended standing ovation in handling that situation. On the light side, Dean Battle, at that time, Dean of Education, suggested that we rename the restrooms, instead of naming them the "john" we would have to call them the "Charles" from that time on. And someone suggested that it was ok and then we would name the ladies restroom "Charlene." So, that idea never got off the ground, of course, and it shouldn't have. But the point is that even in that type of adversity, we had to keep our sense of humor, and President Allen was the one who referred to it as "hurricane Charlie." I really wonder sometimes how he stood up under it because it was pretty, pretty horrible the way they went about their job and the accusations, unfounded accusations, and that kind of thing.

Hewitt: Now one of the things that a couple of people have mentioned about the Johns' Committee is the effect it had on the community at large. You mentioned earlier that many of the students you were dealing with were first generation college students, and that their parents did not have experience with something like a university before. Do you think that it was more
difficult to recruit students at that time because of the investigation and the publicity that they got?

Spain: I don't recall that it was. You think that it would be, one would think so, but I don't recall. It slowed down the growth of the institution not nearly, certainly not nearly to the extent that it gummed up the internal workings and took a lot of time, a lot of valuable time that could have been put to a worthy use. I was doing the high school visits at that time along with other people. Questions were raised, but I don't think it got the play externally that it got here right in this immediate area. My recollection is, and I would want to check the enrollment chart which is available and it gives the opening fall enrollment for each year, and that would be an interesting thing to check to see if there was any dip at that time. None that I know of. More confusion I think than negativism as it worked out.

Hewitt: Since you did have so many first generation college students coming, did you have particular kinds of orientation materials or orientation activities that would have helped students, who had arrived for the very first time, adjust to college life and to the usual kinds of forms and procedures that college students might be aware of if their parents had gone before them?

Spain: We did. We had a series of orientation sessions that went on in the summer of '60 before we opened in September. And we had some of those continued, but the group of faculty that came in the summer of '60 for this purpose were paid full-time, they were working full-time on it and the orientation was a matter of them coming on board by way of university employment two months or so early. But we did a good bit, and the office of student affairs also did a great job in that regard in attempting to get them orientated to what the academic life was about, what the expectations were,
that type thing. The public had no concept of what the University was about. I remember at Plant Avenue we worked each Saturday. We were there from 8 till 3, and we did a thriving business. But I still recall getting a telephone call about two o'clock on Saturday afternoon from Lakeland and the young man asked what time we closed, and I was rather proud. We didn't close till four, I guess, and I told him that. He said, "I can't make it today." (Now remember this is Saturday). "What are your hours tomorrow?" And it reminds me of a student who wandered in after the opening congregational on September 26, and keep in mind that when that ceremony ended the brand new students were off to classes. They applied, they had been admitted, they had gone through orientation, they were registered and they were going to classes. I let go with a tremendous sigh of relief and found my way back to the office, and I sensed this young man was following me and I asked, "what can I do for you." He said, "I want to enter USF," and I said, "Ok, we'll give you an application and the next term starts late January or early February." This was the old semester system when we took a Christmas break. And he explained that it wasn't that term that he wanted to enter, he wanted to enter in the fall of '60. And he followed up on that clarification saying, "I didn't want to put everything off till the last moment, so I came on over this morning." That was part of the lack of familiarity with the dead lines and the fact that you had to take step one before you could take step two, and that type of thing.

Hewitt: When did USF actually open? Were most of the people who had worked on the planning at the Plant Ave office, were they still on board as members of the administration and the staff at the actual opening?
Spain: Yes they were. We lost very few people in the beginning years. We had a giant of a person here, Louis B. Mayhew, who didn't stay very long, and we regretted losing him. He went on to Stanford. He is there today, and he is a very, very prolific publisher. We were sorry to lose him. He and I were given the assignment of drawing up the first class schedule, and I had never shared or participated in such a committee. I had been an observer at another institution as the schedule committee worked. So he and I had a meeting to build the master class schedule for the fall semester, 1960, and in my mind's eye I was relying on him to guide me. I felt real good about that knowing how great he was. But he came in to my office and threw his folder down on the desk and said, "I never worked on one of these damn things, have you?" And so, we proceeded from there. He was with us for I think one year after the move, or a half year, something like that. But most of them stayed, yes.

Hewitt: Now many people have mentioned, it comes through in the Cooper-Fisher book on the history of the University of South Florida, that there was a rather drastic change in the curriculum in the sense of just what the mission meant. Perhaps not actually changing the wording of the mission, but what would be emphasized in that mission, that there were fairly drastic changes by either the late '60s or early '70s. Did those changes affect your office or did you feel this because you had been there from the very beginning? Did you feel these were drastic changes in the late '60s or did it seem like a sort of inevitable development with the growth of the University?

Spain: I think the latter. We have a number of things that we had to jettison out of sheer necessity. The "All University Book" was one. Over the years different things have happened with the "university free hour" which was
designed to permit clubs and organizations and other groups, committees, to meet. There have been changes in that pattern. One concept that we had which (basically, you know by now that I am fairly conservative,) one concept bothered me. This is one of the things we can thank Lou Mayhew for, and this is not where Lou was real great in this particular endeavor, but to force space utilization and to force the retention of students on campus throughout the day. We experimented with this floating class schedule which meant, in a sense, if you were taking Freshmen English you would meet at 8 o'clock on Monday and you might meet at 10 on Wednesday and you might meet at 2 on Friday. It was hard to tell in using it who really missed more classes, the instructors, because of the confusion, or the students. But we stayed with that a very short while, and I think in retrospect the concept was good, but again, it was good if you had the full time residence hall population who didn't have to leave and pick up a child from school and get back home and get back to work and that type of thing. I think the trend that I sensed then as we moved from the mid '60s to the late '60s was we were becoming much more unstructured in our general education package, then called basic studies. We started with various substitutions and that type of thing. I think we were more or less following what was going on in that other parts of the country more than we were playing a leadership role at that point. We relaxed, we got into different kinds of substitutions and other options. We, I think, are seeing the pendulum swing back now in other parts of the country and here too. I don't suppose there has been a year gone by since we have been open during which we did not have a committee working on the basic studies core or the general ed core, now we call it general distribution, and we now have a committee headed by Dean Ray, whom you certainly need to interview if you have not. He was the first faculty
appointment. He is chairing that and is doing a good job, but like so many institutions, we are constantly revising that basic studies general education core of courses. My office, as the advocate even then for the transfer student, had to insure that if the general education requirements had been met by the sending institution, then we (per state rule and law) could not require any other courses in the name of general education that we might require in a programmatic category, and a good example of that is the years the Math Department had required a foreign language of the mathematics major for graduation, not as part of the general distribution. So, we were caught up in that and as indicated earlier, it was a time of rapid growth, it was a time of tremendous expansion in the community college system, and we started getting transfers from all over. Pasco-Hernando Community College was the last one to open and that was in 1972. Hillsborough was in place in 1968 and they were feeding us as early as 1969 where students had transferred in there and had finished early, a repeat of the 1960 syndrome at USF. But I think the big change would have been the tremendous growth, the offering of more options and maybe a general "loosening up", which we're seeing now, to be addressed in a different fashion, and I think this happens periodically in the field of education. It swings one way, and then it swings another.

Hewitt: In the late '60s, at least on northern campuses, one of the things that affected the development of curriculum in the administration of the college were various forms of campus activism by students, either civil rights or anti-war or feminism. Do you recall whether USF had much in the way of student activism in the late '60s and if they did, did it have an impact and was it significant enough to have an impact on the structure of the University or of the curriculum?
Spain: I think we anticipated far more activism than actually was the case as it turned out. There were some marches on the administration building, that kind of thing. Some protests of course. But as someone put it, it's kind of hard to generate a lot of interest and the solid core of support when your students are coming and going as commuters. You see, even today, not counting the St. Petersburg campus, Ft. Myers and Sarasota, I guess we have 23-24,000 enrolled here at USF. We have 4,000 beds and so the vast majority of our students are still commuting. Many of them come to us from St. Petersburg Junior College or from HCC. They are changing institutions but staying with the same employer. Many of them have family responsibilities. Maybe to us it looked turbulent in those days compared to what was happening in other parts of the nation. We had it good.

Hewitt: Several people have mentioned that the tone of the University changed from one presidential administration to another, and although people obviously put different interpretations on whether those changes were beneficial or not, how did the change from President Allen to President Mackey to President Brown, and I realize there were some interim presidents as well, affect your work in terms of either admissions or community relations?

Spain: We had combined with admissions and the registrar's work the articulation function as I alluded to earlier and I was, by 1968, personally involved in attending community college state-wide council meetings, the Council of Student Affairs, Instructional Affairs and the President's Council and other community college events. I don't know how much you know about the registrar's/admissions work, but you know that it is shot through with deadlines and dates that must be met, commencement being one, getting final
grades in another, and the first day of registration and drop/add, that kind of thing. Those functions started colliding with my external responsibilities to USF or vice versa, but we would frequently have Community College Presidents' Council meetings in Tallahasee and we would have a critical function to begin here or to end at this institution. So around 1970, we clipped the cord between articulation, which was subsequently named community college relations, and admissions/registrar work. This is by way of saying that I really served only under President Allen and part of the time under interim President Harris Dean as responsible for all three, admissions, registration and articulation. By the time President Mackey arrived, the two offices, the registrar and the articulation, had been separated, and I no longer had any of those responsibilities. So I cannot really react to that because what President Allen had in place and the commitment to the support in such, Dr. Dean, more or less, simply extended that. There were almost no changes in my operation during that passing of the baton. I do want to say that this office or this function in which I am engaged, and to reduce it to its simplest form, is the advocate for the sending institution for the student and the transfer student coming from that institution and for USF. I interpret USF—its policies, its mission add such—to the sending institutions. I interpret the changes that I perceive at those council meetings and such, and campus visitations to the community colleges in particular, to the USF administration so that we are synchronized as much as possible so that students don't come in with what I call either a gap or overlap. They don't come in missing some work that would be vital to success in another course in a sequence, and that they not repeat something that they've already had. Now the state wide articulation agreement has helped immensely in that regard and so has the common course numbering
system which is not always appreciated at the same level by all people who work with it, but it has helped immensely. I was going to say that I am very, very fortunate that Dr. Allen had the vision that he had in seeing how this institution would evolve and how it would work in concert with other institutions in receiving their students. Dr. Dean had it, Dr. Mackey had it, and Dr. Brown in his first week in office sent a letter to the community college presidents, the 28 of them, reaffirming his commitment to the 2+2 partnership theme that the preceding presidents had set in place and had nurtured over the years. Also in his first week in office, he met with the Community College Presidents' Council in a meeting down at the airport and reaffirmed verbally what he had written then. So this office has been very, very fortunate in having presidential understanding and appreciation of what the function is about and our dependence upon transfers. Transfers comprise 75% of our juniors and seniors. This is not realized in many areas in the University, but they are our enrollment life blood. So we want to work with them. We are committed to it from the very beginning. Irrespective of that commitment, when one ponders the dependence that USF has upon transfer students, you can see how the head of the institution, in particular, would appreciate the significance and the importance of a good working relationship on an interinstitutional basis.

Hewitt: Are there experimental programs or innovative programs that you have tried over the years that have helped community college transfer students integrate themselves easily into the general USF population that either have been successful and have continued on, or are there programs that were experimental but for some reason weren't continued on?
Spain: That's a very good question. In the very early '70s and the late '60s, this institution was sending representatives to the community college campuses on what I call a solo basis. In other words, USF would be the only one represented. Around '72 or '73, my counterparts and I, and by that time, six or seven of the state universities with two opening only in 1972, North Florida and Florida International, but the others pretty much had a counterpart office, counterpart to this one, and I had a professional counterpart. We got together and decided that we should try a combined visitation program whereby instead of bothering St. Petersburg Junior College six or seven times asking for an appointment for this university or that university, let's go together. By the end we had nine, and so someone did a little logo, "U-9-ted We Travel" or something like that, and I have never (the program is very alive today, in fact we have received the copy for the 85-86 academic year) gone to a community college campus, (and there are 50 in the state, and we try and get to each one every year)--I have never gone with the state university system group as a team and not had more inquiries and more student interest and more community college staff interest in that mode than when I went solo. You'd think it would be the other way around. We are set up in a very visible place, usually in a cafeteria or a student center. There is one constant, and that is that we are always where the music is the loudest. This is for the student interaction. Then we have a meeting with the staff members there, and when the program is really going well, I have some people from the USF colleges go if they want to promote a certain program or be there as a resource person. The best and most effective plan of all, with adequate lead time, is when I can contact someone at a given community college and say, "Hey, we have a really terrific person here. Would you like to have this person give a lecture on April 21st for
the second-year students in physics or philosophy or whatever?" We've been taken up on those offers, and I've never had a USF person indicate that it was a disappointment. In fact, Willis Truitt, over in Philosophy, said he got a big kick out of it. He received sustained applause when he finished a lecture at St. Petersburg Junior College. That is something that we want to work out carefully. We don't just arrive on the scene asking if it can be done. It just takes some timing. The combined SUS team visitation has been a proven example of success. We've had in place, since '71 or the late '60s, a community college advising manual which has the academic program and the requirements for every program we offer from Accounting through Zoology. These are provided to the community college advisors and counselors. If a student wishes to go into business, it's indicated there in a kind of capsule from the seven courses that are necessary, the required GPA and that type of thing. This one we happened to put all seven for the College of Business on one page because this part is common to all of them. Then you pick up the accounting specialty, economics and so forth. So this is published annually. It's in concert with, in this case, the 85/86 catalogue. In some cases it's more current because we're able to insert changes that might have been approved after the catalogue has gone to press. But this is what I call an academic program road map and it is generally one page, one side unless you have more than one program on there. The student can almost take this and find his or her way through. This is another proven example of what has worked there. We have had some things that haven't worked. We've tried night visits but we don't get any business because the students are coming from work to take a class or they are going to work. That hasn't proven to be very successful. My counterparts and I have given presentations to groups such as the Florida Junior College
Student Government Association at their state wide meetings or the Florida Association of Community Colleges. I think the main thing is that we have projected the idea that the nine of us, my counterparts and I, are not in competition. You see, I list not only USF, but I list the other eight there. I think I have had a very successful day if someone wishes a program that we don't have, but I know that it is located over at UCF in Orlando and I can refer them to Ralph Boston. Now in the back the nine university articulation officers have booked an academic program matrix for all nine of the state universities. You can tell this first one, accounting for example, is offered at all nine. But when you get down to some of these others, it's restricted in some cases to only one. Did you know you could get a degree in Church Music out of Florida? I didn't know that until we put this together. I kid my counterpart a great deal when they are having bad days in football. I tell them that they should start a major in church prayer. The point is we are in a cooperative noncompetitive pattern and we work with each other.

Hewitt: With the growth of the University and certainly the division of certain kinds of offices, such as the one you worked in, into separate offices, has there been a change in the sense of camaraderie or the pioneer spirit that was originally here in terms of just your familiarity with everyone else on campus? I assume you no longer know everyone by name?

Spain: Of course not, no. In my particular function and responsibility it's ironic, but I know far more people in the community college network than I know now here at USF. On a working basis with all of the members of the three councils that we talked about, we receive problems in here and attempt to troubleshoot and that type of thing. No, some of us kid each other. We
talk about getting together and visiting and that type of thing. We don't do that very often. There is a group called "USF Pioneers." Did you know about that? June Miller in Financial Aids... That extension is 2621. You might want to talk to her about that group. It meets annually. It is comprised of some of the early employees who are currently here and some of the retirees who live in this area. Also George Miller did a history of USF and I think I have a copy of that if you have trouble locating it. It pinpoints some of the milestones in the early years.

Hewitt: What do you think is left, after 25 years, of that pioneer spirit of those of you who were here early on and had a conception of the early mission?

Spain: I think one main thread that is still left is that we envisioned that USF would be a college or university for the people who, if we were not here, would not have access to higher education. I think a great example of that is the extension of the program at the St. Petersburg campus to the entire southwest coast. You know the Ft. Myers area is quite remote, not so much so travel wise now with I-75. I think that commitment to access, if you will, is still very, very strong and that's great. I totally subscribe to it. I don't know when you consider the almost geometric growth in the '60s in particular, how one could have expected to keep the closeness that we had? The staff now would outnumber the charter class. As vacancies occur and new people come in, I suppose, the hope for that to be maintained perhaps is by discipline within a department, within a college, and that type thing. I don't ever see it being restored to an all university approach. I see some of my pioneer colleagues from time to time and not only do we vow to get together and visit, but we kid each other - are we still on the quarter system, are we still on the trimester system, or something like
that. It is entirely too long from my standpoint that we go without seeing each other. You may get a different reading from someone such as Don Harkness, Henry Robertson, or Mary Lou Harkness who has been here for a long time. Their responsibilities do not take them external to USF nearly as much as mine do. As I said, I see the deans, the provost, and the presidents of the community colleges sometimes more often than I see the USF counterparts. That sounds strange but you must realize that half of my time is spent in travel to different campuses, to different conventions, associations, council meetings, and committee meetings. This really picks up in the third week in September, and it's pretty rugged till the first or second week of April.

Hewitt: It sounds as though in some ways that the USF mission, which originally was envisioned as something that each individual would carry out, has now become something in which various personnel in the University carry out various aspects of it. It seems to me that certainly in terms of community relations, not just community college relations, but community relations, that you and your office carry out that part of the mission to a much greater extent than perhaps many of us on campus, where as many of us who spend more of our time on campus may focus more on internal relations, but we don't get off campus very much. I suppose at one point it may have been ideal when everyone could do a little bit of everything?

Spain: Yes, yes, but those days are gone because you have so much now by way of specialization and increased volume that we didn't have then.

Hewitt: Are there any other aspects of your career at USF that you would like to comment on as part of this oral history project that I haven't touched on in questions today?
Spain: Well, I guess an observation, and I haven't quite thought of it this way, but with this group of students for whom college and the university is such a new thing, I am noticing what I call the "second generation syndrome." We talked to an awful lot of students here and off campus at other places, and upon learning a student's commitment to USF, we frequently ask how they learned about USF. I'm talking now as much about out-of-state students as I am in-state. We get a lot of telephone inquiries, a lot of correspondence, and it's so rewarding. The answer at one time was that they had a friend or a relative who came here and had a good experience. That's how they learn about the University, and that's why they want to come. But more and more the answer now is, "I had one or both parents who went there and had a good experience." That's not bad for a 25-year-old institution, is it? It's good. So I think it is just about the best endorsement that you can get on any institution. I'd like to mention how the newness of it all can maybe be reflected in a little incident. We would never close at lunch or anything of that sort. We would work right through. One of our first employees, one which I hired, was quite young and the terminology and all of that was new to her. But she did a very good job. We had given standing instructions. First of all, don't take any abuse because you're not paid enough for that. Give it to me or someone else. And the other was don't get in over your head. If you don't know something, admit that you don't know, but tell the person you'll find out. Or if in this case, if I'm in, refer the call to me. One day during the lunch hour this young woman, who was nineteen, was having a terrible time with a telephone call. I was waiting for the buzz and it came. She turned the caller over to me and she was totally bewildered. She said, "Dr. Spain, I either have a drunk or nut
or both on the line." I said, "What's the problem Jeannie?" And she said, "He wants to know if we want a horse in a bottle?" And I said, "Let me talk with him." Well, I think in dealing with a population not familiar with the general scene, the higher educational scene, that one frequently must ask, as you have done in this interview, more than one question to find out what the real question is. What is it the person wants to know? Well it turned out that in this case the man had a mare who had miscarried. He had preserved the fetus in formaldehyde and he wanted to give it to the Biology Department. It was a perfectly sensible question once you've found out what the question was. But I guess if I had one word to describe it, it would be something along this line. When I learned from Dr. Allen in '59 that I would be coming here, his letter arrived saying the Regents had approved the appointment. The letter arrived on the very day that my wife and I closed a housing purchase in Owensboro, Kentucky. We went to the bank, and it was closed. We went home, and the letter was in the mail saying that we had been approved. Before that I had written, no, no, in response to that I wrote "I'll be there September 1st, and that I find it extremely exciting and challenging." In fact I wrote that I found it frightening and challenging, but more challenging than frightening. I think today that I would add to that that is was more rewarding than anything else. I've been very, very fortunate.

Hewitt: I am afraid that is all the time we have left for today. Thank you very much for a most interesting interview.