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Bruce Cochran oral history interview by Yael V. Greenberg, April 10, 2003

Bruce J. Cochran (Interviewee)

Yael V. Greenberg (Interviewer)

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

Narrator: Dr. Bruce J. Cochrane (C)
Current Position: Associate Dean and
Professor of Biology
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TRANSCRIPTION

G: Today is Thursday, April 10, 2003. My name is Yael Greenberg, Oral History Program Assistant for the Florida Studies Center. We continue a series of interviews here in our studio in the Tampa campus library with USF faculty, students, and alumni in order to commemorate fifty years of university history. Today we will be interviewing Dr. Bruce Cochrane who came to USF in 1981 as an assistant professor of biology. He is currently Associate Dean and Professor of Biology. Good afternoon, Dr. Cochrane.

C: Good afternoon.

G: Let's begin by you taking us to the year you arrived in Tampa and what circumstances brought you to the University of South Florida.

C: Well, prior to being at USF I was on a post-doctoral, research-associate position at University of North Carolina. Like everybody in that position I was looking for a permanent, tenure-track job in biology, genetics in specific. I was applying and interviewing around the country and USF was actually one of the more attractive positions open that year because it was a position specifically in my area, which is population and evolutionary genetics. Actually, I first arrived in Tampa to interview in probably about March of 1981. In fact it was the weekend the first space shuttle was

supposed to go up, but it didn't. Don't ask me why I remember that. What I remember was a very interesting introduction to the department. The search committee, which was mainly younger faculty, were bright, energetic, wanna-be researchers; they were exactly the kind of group of people I wanted to be with. The older faculty were more, shall we say, traditional. This was I think a legacy of USF having been founded as a teaching institution. What I saw was an opportunity, a bit of a gamble, but an opportunity to join a group of young, active faculty like myself who want to make a name as researchers.

G: Once you were hired to come to USF, what were your first impressions of the campus?

C: It's very different from any campus that I've ever been at before. Having been at North Carolina, Indiana, Cornell - they're your traditional old campuses in college towns; it was a bit different to come to an urban campus. Actually, one of the things that struck me was it got very quiet after hours and on weekends. It's very much a business hours type of campus. Actually, I have to say, this is sort of a negative but it's become a positive, that one of my first impressions was the inadequacy of the building we're sitting in. The library collections at the time were really not that that you would expect to have at an institution that was promoting research. That has changed, however. So those are some of the things that I remember. I also remember seeing my first class of 185 students and realizing that these were not students like me, but they came from many different walks of life. They had very different levels of preparation for college. That, actually to this day, remains a feature, which I've come to appreciate at USF, the diversity of our student body not just in the way that diversity is typically defined but in terms of their backgrounds, their motivations, their reasons for being here.

G: Let's talk a little bit about the Biology Department and how it was organized at the time, in what college it was at the time, and who was there in terms of faculty.

C: That actually is a good point you made. When I came here we still had the College of Natural Sciences. That was biology, chemistry, geology, physics, math, and marine science. It was a small college. Everybody knew the dean on a first name basis. It was a different world. The department actually was, in terms of numbers, was about the same size as it is today. It hasn't changed much. The faculty, as I say, there was really two groups. I don't want to sound like this was any kind of conflicting groups. They were just people with different [focuses]. Stewart Swihart was a department chair when I first came. He had been hired. He had not done his whole careers here. I think of Marvin Alvarez who was actually a geneticist, and to some extent a mentor to me. These were the senior faculty, ones whose careers went back to an earlier era at USF. [There was a] relatively small number of associate level people. It was sort of a two-peak curve. Then a big group, as I mentioned before, of younger faculty, some of whom were still here - Earl McCoy, Henry Mushinsky, Susan Bell, Lee Weber, Debbie Nickerson, Alan Michaels - have left for other places. So the demographics were a little bit odd. What it meant was us younger faculty ended up probably doing more things in terms of running the department and committee work and so forth that typically junior faculty do.

G: In terms of diversity of your department, I think you mentioned a woman's name. Were there a lot of diverse groups teaching biology at that time at USF?

C: Reasonably so, I mean it stayed pretty much constant over the years. At that time, I can think off the top of my head of at least three women who were in the department. We

had one Hispanic, one Asian American, and we've sort of maintained that level. The number of racial minorities in sciences is very, very small and very hard to recruit. Over the years I think we've had, not for lack of trying, but we probably could have, based on the applicant pool, had a higher number of women than we have had. Again, I've been on many, many search committees and we have made every effort we can. We've certainly interviewed plenty. I think, in the sciences at least, the focus is we want to get the best possible person and we can't afford to have prejudices one way or the other; if the person is good we're going to go for it.

G: In terms of when the department moved from the College of Natural Sciences to the College of Arts and Sciences, when did that happen?

C: That's probably the most significant event that's happened in USF I think since I've been here. It was 1990 when the first dean came. This was President Borkowski's sort of signature act was to take the College of Social Behavioral Science, Arts and Letters, and Natural Sciences and combine them into one. I will say although I was a big supporter, and obviously since I'm associate dean of that college now I remain a supporter, that it met with resistance in the sciences. It was felt that we were losing this nice, small group of departments with common interests and that it might get lost in a larger whole. The first dean of the College of Arts and Science was in fact himself a geneticist. In fact he was my Ph.D. mentor at Indiana University. It was just coincidence we ended up at the same place. That, in some senses, I think reassured people in the sciences that their interests were going to be represented. At the same time, he had the mammoth job of combining three bureaucracies, of staffing, and I think a lot of people felt we're just not

getting the attention from the college we used to. You can't walk in to the dean even today. A faculty member can't just knock on the dean's door and expect to get an audience, which was the case under the old system. It was one of those experiments, and I will say that I think it's really been in the last three to four years that we've really come together as a college. Some of those intellectual benefits of having social scientists, humanities people, and natural scientists at the same table, working on the same table, working on the same problems, talking about some more ideas is really starting to happen.

G: This early resistance of the three departments combining into the College of Arts and Sciences, first of all, why was USF interested in combining these three programs under the heading of the College of Arts and Sciences?

C: At the time I was just a faculty member who wanted to do my research and teaching, and these things really didn't concern me that much. I think it was largely driven by the intellectual concept I referred to, that the arts and sciences together comprised a set of disciplines that do overlap, that do have commonalities. If you look at a lot of major universities that's the way it's done. I got my bachelor's degree at Cornell University; it has a College of Arts and Sciences. Ours is unique in that in addition to what I like to refer to as the Aristotelian discipline, the ones that go back to the Greeks like physics, philosophy and so forth, we also have things like rehabilitation counseling, social work, applied departments. So that's a unique feature of this college that really differentiates it from many others. I have really enjoyed working with those departments, but it is kind of, at first glance at least, kind of an odd mix.

- G: Did you ever have an opportunity to meet President Borkowski?
- C: I did meet him on one occasion at sort of like an open forum. I think I shook his hand, I was not, again, what do you want to call it, a front-line faculty member. Presidents, those are for the big shots. I'm here to do my work, leave me alone.
- G: You talked about one of your first classes here in the 1980s, a class with 185 students. Can you tell me a little bit more about your students and why they were interested in taking biology?
- C: That was a non-majors class. I only taught it once or twice. It was quite frankly kind of a disaster. The class, it was called Topics in Human Biology. People were there because they had to take a science class. The interest level was very, very low. Actually, that class is no longer on the books. It was an attempt to go through all of biology, from a human perspective, in a semester for students who had no interest in being there. I got out of that very quickly. In fact the course that I taught most frequently is General Genetics, which is a majors class, a 3000 level class. I love that class. Again, student numbers range from 100 to 200. It's a difficult class for students because it's the first one they hit in biology where they have to use numbers. It's also often the first biology class that junior-college transfers take when they come to the university. The best students I have in that class are as good as you could ask for anywhere. On one occasion I remember I had a summer session of class that was dominated by that group and it was just fun. I looked forward to coming to class, which for a summer class is really saying something. The problem is that you typically have that group of students who do very well, they are earning A's and B's, and another larger group that struggles. The

challenge for a faculty member is to be able to challenge both groups in ways that they can succeed. Again, this is a reflection of the kind of institution we are. Quite honestly, I'm sure I could find happiness in an elite university where everybody is in that upper piece, but at the same time [that's] where I think USF does an excellent job of providing of opportunities to students who might not otherwise have them. But they have to be students who are willing to make the effort. I tell them all the time, you can get as good an education here as you can get anywhere in the country but you have to work at it, it's not going to be handed to you.

G: Is the General Genetics course that you teach a required course for a particular discipline?

C: Yeah, it's required for biology majors and all premedical students. A pre-med student can major in philosophy if he or she wants to, and many do and they actually succeed quite well, but they do have to take certain core science courses and General Genetics is one of them.

G: Why are you interested in teaching population and evolutionary genetics? What sparked your interest in teaching this?

C: Well, actually when I first went to college back in the late 1960s I had discovered computers, which at that time of course was a totally different ball game from what it is today. In fact computer science didn't exist as a discipline. I love numbers, I love computers, but at Cornell where I did my undergraduate work, to do that I had to be either an engineer or a math major. I knew I didn't want to be an engineer, and I discovered I wasn't going to be a math major for reasons I won't go into. Then I said so what am I going to do, I love quantitative things. I'm actually a fourth generation

biologist in my family, so I've been around biology in general for my entire life and I liked it. Actually, it was a history professor that I had at Cornell who was teaching history of science who got me interested in the origins of modern population genetics. As I saw what the discipline was I realized this is a quantitative, problem-solving discipline that addresses real biological problems. I just fell in love with it. That's really been the focus of my biological interest ever since.

G: You've been in the Department of Biology for twenty-two years or so, how has the department changed since you first arrived?

C: Quite a bit, in terms of numbers no, we're still the same size we were, but in terms of what we do and the kinds of people we have there's been a tremendous amount of change, especially in the last five to ten years. In a College of Arts and Sciences at a research university, which is what we are becoming, it's critical that you have strong departments of biology, chemistry, physics. These are the departments that will generate the research productivity measured in a variety of ways, not just in terms of grant funding but that's a big one. When I came here, and I was very fortunate, I got an NIH grant within nine months of coming here. The attitude I got from the department [was] that's okay, that's kind of nice. Go do your grant. It was considered almost a secondary activity by certain members of the department, not by this younger group I was alluding to. They were like now you're rocking. You've got your NIH grant, that's the thing you focus on. That's totally changed. If you look, at especially in the last few years since Sidney Pierce became chair of the department, it has become one of the research leaders. So you look at people bringing in \$2 million, \$3 million, \$6 million grants on kind of a

regular basis now. They've done that, built themselves into what's becoming a very credible research department with a strong Ph.D. program, and that's one of the other areas where we've seen great improvement, without sacrificing undergraduate teaching. There's often this myth out there that a department or faculty member can do research or do teaching, he can't do both. I don't agree with that at all. I think research and teaching are two sides to the same coin. I think quite honestly biology, and other departments, don't let me just say [biology] . . . As a dean I get to see all of them. Chemistry has done an outstanding job in this regard, building up its research profile while at the same time improving its curriculum, helping students succeed in the discipline. These are not easy majors. Science majors, if you want to finish in four years you've got to come in ready to start from day one. I think it's an unfortunate thing I think. Students should have a little more time to explore, but it's reality. What I've seen is in my department and the other departments I'm familiar with, in the last five to ten years certainly, there has been much growth in terms of research productivity while at the same time that is reflected on improving quality in undergraduate education.

G: You mentioned between the last five and ten years being significant in these changes occurring throughout the Biology Department, why those years?

C: [There's] a couple of reasons. First of all, we have had sort of personnel changes. Those younger faculty that I talked about earlier moved into leadership positions, and they had not by and large lost their excitement about the research. There were changes that happened at the university level, especially when President Castor came in. There was a renewed focus on the importance of research and particularly funded research. Finally, it

just took time. One of the things that's absolutely critical for new faculty coming in in the sciences is they be provided adequate startup resources to get their research programs going. I didn't receive that. That's just a simple statement; I won't even go into it. Even as late as the early to mid 1990s it was a struggle. It was recognition at the college level I think by former Dean Stamps and certainly by Dean Khator and up the provost and into the office of research that you're not going to succeed, your younger faculty members are not going to succeed as individuals and you aren't going to succeed as an institution unless this investment is made. So those kinds of investments have been made in recent hires and it shows; it's just in general a growing awareness of what it truly takes to be a strong department at a research university. The other thing I will plug is something that we have done across the college quite successfully, recruiting strong chair persons for departments. Dr. Pierce, I mentioned, in chemistry came in from the University of Maryland, an established department, and basically said folks this is the way it needs to be done. You can be part of it, and I'll help you be part of it. If not, so be it; you're not going to be at the center of what's happening. The department has responded wonderfully. Same thing has happened in chemistry. The same thing has happened in some of the non-science departments. Sociology has an outstanding chair that's really moving that department. It's a combination of changing times, changing priorities in the university, and getting the right people in to be the catalysts.

G: Physical location, when you came here in 1981 where was the Biology Department located on campus?

C: It's always been scattered over buildings. The office was in the Life Sciences building

and most of the research labs were in Science Center. In 1988 or 1989 Biosciences opened. I had had a lab in Science Center, I moved to Biosciences, and that's where we still are. Most of it is in Biosciences, Science Center, with a little bit in Life Science Annex.

G: When you came here in 1981, did you expect to be here twenty-two years?

C: No, I expected two or three years and then I'd move on. There were times in that first two or three years I really wanted to [move on], I'll be quite honest. As I said, although I had a group of friends who wanted to do the right things, I saw leadership that didn't understand what it took to get it done.

G: What are the qualities or initiatives that helped you to remain here for twenty-two years and to help you keep that excitement going in twenty-two years?

C: Well, I think a big part of it was that I always, even when the leadership wasn't there or it seemed as though events at a higher level were counter to what I thought should be happening, I always had incredible colleagues and students I should say. I've mentored a lot of Ph.D. students and master's students, [and I've] had some very good ones. So, I think that whatever criticism I might have, I was always left alone. I could go into my lab and do my thing. The teaching assignments were always there and doable; I never felt overwhelmed. In the early 1990s at a point where I was newly appointed to associate professor I was looking for new things. I became graduate director in the department, that was a lot of fun, a whole lot of work but a lot of fun. I got to know not just by own students but all 100 or 115 or so of the students in the program. I guess what I would say is that number one are the people that I've been able to work with, both when I was in

biology and subsequently when I moved at first [to] Interdisciplinary Studies and then to the college. What I tell people routinely is the day that I wake up in the morning and I don't want to come in to work, then I've got to look for something different. I won't say that there haven't been any of those days, but they don't predominate.

G: You mentioned this lack of leadership in those early days, was this something unique to the 1980s in the university?

C: I obviously can't speak to what went before. I think it was more a reflection of the transition the university made from its original intent [to] teach the masses, to the becoming the comprehensive research university that it is today. We grow our own leadership typically, rise [them] through the ranks. Occasionally we bring somebody in from outside, but even there the person we bring from outside is someone who has gone through the academic [community]. Our chairs are all established researchers. Our deans have distinguished academic careers. I think it was really just a reflection of that transition, and I don't want [to be] too negative about it. For example, the last dean of the College of Natural Sciences, Leon Mandell, came with a tremendous amount of energy and focus on what needed to be done. George Newcomb [was] another who was vice-president for research for many years. These were people who, during that period, did have a vision of where we needed to be going. It's just that it took a while for the culture I think to develop, and it's probably still developing.

G: When did you become graduate director of biology?

C: 1992.

G: What circumstances led you to become the graduate director of biology?

C: We had a change in the chairmanship in the department. Marvin Alvarez had been chair and he stepped down and John Romeo took over. I had been on the graduate-admissions committee, Romeo had been graduate director prior to becoming chair, and I was at the time probably just about as active as anybody in terms of mentoring students on my own. Basically Romeo came to me and said let's talk about it. I gave him some of my ideas; he gave me some of his. He and I are good friends. We get along quite well, so that was a big part of it. We shared a vision for where we wanted to be taking the graduate program, so that was basically my incentive for moving into that position.

G: How was being a graduate director different from being an assistant professor?

C: Time management becomes a whole bigger problem. Although, I had an absolutely wonderful program assistant, Jenny Gallagher, who without her I would have been a miserable failure. She was extremely good at saying this is what has to be done, this is what I can do, this is what you don't have to worry about. It's a different role. I was promoted to associate professor in 1988, so I was tenured by that time. I would not wish this job on a non-tenured faculty member at all. It meant that I had to add to the balls that I juggled, not only my research program and my teaching and whatever committee service I already had, but also this administrative responsibility to manage one of the larger graduate programs on campus. The big plus is I got to work with all those students. I love working with graduate students, it's what I miss most about the life I'm in now. It's just a tremendous opportunity, and it came at a good time because the department was increasingly building graduate programs. Money was becoming available for assistantships and so forth. It was just something that seemed like it would

be an appropriate thing for me to do, and I think I did reasonably well at it.

G: What were some of the initiatives as a graduate director that you helped to bring?

C: I think the main thing that we did was to build a Ph.D. program. When I went in there the vast majority of our students were master's students. At one point I think, shortly before I became director, the Ph.D. program was down to something like eight students. We were able to bring it up, and now it's up to nearly fifty, but in my time we got it up into the thirties. I had a lot of help. I don't want to claim credit where it isn't do. As I said, Dr. Romeo was very good at getting the resources to recruit students and so forth, because you can't get graduate students without the money to support them. So, we increased our number of assistantships, increased the amount that we were able to pay. Unfortunately, in my time we didn't get it up to where we really wanted it to be, it is there now, but I don't take credit for that; that happened well after I stepped down from that position. Basically, it was a period of growth in the program that was really not punctuated by major new developments but rather just by growth and then a recognition of the centrality of graduate education and what the department does.

G: How long were you director?

C: Four years.

G: Were you also teaching at the same time?

C: Yes, I had a somewhat reduced teaching load. Basically, I got one semester every three or four off from teaching, or something like that. That was my only real reward for doing it.

G: From being the director of the Biology Department, where did you go to next?

- C: I actually just went back to being on a regular faculty. I stepped down. There were a variety of things I don't want to go into that happened. I'll state it simply. In order to get my next promotion I could not afford the time, so I actually stepped down agreed upon. It was a second two-year term. [I] took a sabbatical and then returned for the following three years roughly, until the fall of 1999, just being first associate and then full-professor of biology. At that time, that's when David Stamps, who was then dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, asked me to become director of Interdisciplinary Studies for the college, and my life sort of changed dramatically. It has gone on changing since.
- G: Let's talk a little bit about Interdisciplinary Studies. What is Interdisciplinary Studies?
- C: I guess the best way I can explain that is to tell you how I got into it. In the mid 1990s at Rollin Richmond, the first dean of the college, at his request USF created what was called their Learning Community Program. This is a program which was designed to bring fifty first-time-in-college students together with a team of faculty. The students would spend their first two years working together in an interdisciplinary mode to fulfill most of their general education requirements. It was designed to be staffed by regular faculty who had that ability to see beyond and work beyond interdisciplinary boundaries. Again, my good friend Jack Romeo asked me if I would be willing to be on one of these teams. Well, I jumped at the chance because as an undergraduate a long time ago I'd developed a love of history, and here was an opportunity to team-teach with a historian. I said wow, I can use my hobby, if you will, professionally. I won't go into the ups and downs of that program, but it got me involved with it. There was that program [and] there was the Bachelor of Independent Studies Program, which was an off-campus degree for non-

traditional students, students in the workforce; Interdisciplinary Social Sciences; and all these programs were brought together in this entity called Interdisciplinary Studies. The idea was this would be an administrative home. It would also be a place where new programs could develop, so if you wanted to change the learning community program, something else where you needed to bring people together from the different disciplines, largely focused on teaching. What happened was shortly in 1999 the then director of the program stepped down. I had actually just finished a two-year term on the Arts and Sciences Dean's Advisory Council. I chaired it the second term, so I'd gotten to know Dean Stamps fairly well, and I let it be known gently through channels that I might be interested in discussing this with him. That was what led to it. So, I spent two full years in that positions, and then for a semester I was actually fifty percent in that and fifty percent in the dean's office. So, about two and half years I was involved with that unit.

G: Is the program still around at the university?

C: Yes, although it's changed considerably as a unit that like is going to, because things come and go. The Learning Community Program, which was what really attracted me to it, and I've now been on two faculty teams and it's been a great experience. The problem with that was two-fold. One, it was a very expensive program. To have six faculty for fifty people just cost too much. In today's budgetary climate we couldn't sustain that. The other was a bigger problem and that was that we couldn't get faculty either because of temperament or because their chairs wouldn't release them from other teaching. So, we ended up staffing these things with graduate students and adjuncts, and I take nothing away from the teaching they did but it had just had gone so far from the model we wanted

to do that ultimately this is actually the last year of the program. The last three communities are in their second year. What we've replaced it with is what's called a link-course model where students for one year, groups of fifty students, take different courses together but they are not team-taught. We'll see where that goes, but that's basically it. What we trying to do is to make the psychological size of USF smaller for new students because this is a huge place. For freshman coming in maybe from a small high school, maybe without real knowledge of what college is all about, it can be overwhelming. The idea is that if you get them in a group of people that they see on a regular basis maybe they get to feel more at home. There are educational benefits as well, and we have good data to show that it works; writing skills and thinking skills of the students who go through these programs are superior to those of people who don't. So yes it's still there, its mission changes constantly [and] shifts all over the place. Some disciplines have spun off out of that. Women's Studies was originally an interdisciplinary subset, it's now its own department similar to Africana Studies.

G: Why would USF be interested in establishing connections with community members and putting on such an experimental program if you will?

C: Are you referring to the learning community?

G: Yes.

C: The story is, then again if you don't know Rollin Richmond you won't appreciate this, the story was Rollin, who was a very impulsive person, very bright; in fact our budget director said his favorite words, which were her least favorite words, was let's go for it and don't worry about where the money is coming from. But he apparently went to a

meeting and heard about these and came back and said we've got to do this here. So it was a number of faculty like Mark Amen, I think Joe Moxley was involved with this, possibly Darrell Fasching, I'm not sure, but very bright, committed teachers, scholars in the classical sense of the word got together and designed this program. It was designed sort of with [the idea that] money is no object almost. It rose more practically out of the recognition that we lose an awful lot of students in the first year. So for retention purposes, for just getting the students up to where they need to be to really be majors in the upper level this is something that we wanted to try. The success with students is clear. Teresa Flateby in Testing and Evaluation has been doing every kind of assessment on this and it's clear, our thinking skills and writing skills are superior. Writing across the curriculum was a big part, so the students were writing all the time, not just English assignments but also writing for science for me. It was a genuine attempt to improve the quality of our lower-level education, to give self-selective students the opportunity to find what it is they want to do. The problem was that it wasn't implemented in way that was truly practical for both the faculty and economic reasons I mentioned.

G: You mentioned the Dean's Advisory Council. What is the Dean's Advisory Council?

C: It's a committee that's established by the bylaws of the College of Arts and Sciences. It's an elected committee of, I want to say, about ten to twelve faculty members.

Nominations come forward from the departments and then ballots are circulated to all five hundred faculty in the college. People who are on it serve a two-year term. They're basically there to communicate between the dean and the faculty because [of] the size. Although, our current dean is very good about getting out and seeing faculty and getting

to know them. It's difficult. In fact when I was in that position Dean Stamps was dean of Arts and Sciences and he charged us, this was a time when the university was just getting into the whole strategic planning mode of what are we going to do the next five years, he said forget all this sort of number crunching, quantitative approach of strategic planning. [He would say], what do you think? Where do you guys want to see the College of Arts and Sciences in 2010? So, we created a number of sub-committees of faculty and those reports are out there. They're really quite interesting reading because, for example, I remember that we had the quality committee, and they said something that is absolutely true but it would never emerge from a typical strategic planning of classes. USF needs a college town associated with it, a place with restaurants, shops, and so forth. Anybody who's been in a college town knows the value of that. This even happens in urban settings. Look at the University of Washington as an example. These were the kind of things that were emerging that would only emerge from a faculty group. It was not said how do we increase our enrollment by X or our research funding by Y. That's the way Dean Stamps used it. Now recently, with many of the things with USF in the new in the past year, our advisory committee passed a resolution on the Al-Arian situation. It made a statement regarding the issue of the union contract and the work rules. They've been very vocal in making concerns of rank and file faculty known to the higher administration. See, we also have a council of chairs that meets once a month. That's great, the dean can hear from the leadership, but that's not necessarily the root from that rank and file faculty. So that's really its function. Different deans have used it in different ways.

G: You mentioned the Dean's Advisory Council being a way for faculty and the dean to communicate. What are some of the issues that faculty are concerned about and are bringing up at this council?

C: Of course this will change depending on what's going on at the university, but the ones I just mentioned have clearly been a major one. My area of responsibility is graduate and undergraduate studies which means my staff and I are responsible for figuring out how to put a summer school on with the limited budget that we have. It was very limited last year. It was about sixty percent of what it had been the previous summer, and yet we were able to generate eighty to ninety percent of the student credit hours we did. I'm really happy, wow this is good. Just to give you a sort of anecdote, one of the other things the council does is to organize our fall and spring assembly, which is when all of the faculty and staff are invited to meet with the dean. The dean gives the state of the college report, the chair of the council may say some things, and we usually bring in a guest speaker, the president or provost, someone like that. So, Dean Khator asked me to talk a little bit about summer and I said I was really pleased with what a success summer had been because of these budgetary constraints. A faculty member, who will remain nameless, shouted out "it was horrible." I realized that yeah, to the faculty it was horrible. This reduction in money was reduction in salary dollars for faculty. It was as simple as that. Here I am as a bean counter, I hate to think of myself as that but that's what my job is saying. [So I said] we've accomplished our mission of generating the student credit hours, and I wouldn't have gotten that response from the chairs, but I get that from faculty. I think that's where the council, where the assemblies and everything

are so important. I don't want to lose sight of what it's like to be a faculty member but it's awfully easy to do so. When you're spending your days doing things that are so far removed from what they do it's easy to overlook the impacts.

G: From Interdisciplinary Studies did you move into the associate dean position?

C: Yes, directly.

G: How did you get involved with being an associate dean?

C: It would have been June of 2000, I was up at my place in upstate New York and I got an email saying that David Stamps had been asked to be interim provost and that Khator was going to be interim dean. Now, I didn't know Renu very well at the time, but I knew she was a go-getter. So I said immediately this is not going to be your average interim, and it wasn't. In probably January or February following then, she announced that all three associate deans were stepping down and that she welcomed nominations and self-nominations and so forth. I guess my reason for being interested in it was my position in IDS, because it was interdisciplinary I got to know an awful lot about the college because I had to work with the social sciences, the humanities and so forth. I knew people, I knew programs, and when you're basically dean of students for 16,000 students you've got to have a good grounding in that. I felt that my experiences may have prepared me, and did put me in a position where I did come in with some prior knowledge about what needed to be done. So, I was nominated by a colleague of mine. It was an internal search. I met with chairs, met with staff, met with her, and based on that interview process she asked me to take the position. It took a little bit of thought because it really is a major step away from the sort of research and teaching career. I have not been in the

classroom really almost since, which I miss. The last time I did teach a full class I was director of Interdisciplinary Studies and I did a terrible job, again largely because I just didn't have the time for preparation. Anyway, so that's how I got there.

G: What are some of the responsibilities of an associate dean?

C: This can vary depending on college, so I can talk about Arts and Sciences. We have three associate deans: one who deals with faculty matters, one who deals with research, and mine is basically as I said, student issues. My day ranges from the mundane of dealing with requests for, can I open a section of this, can I hire an adjunct and that sort of thing, and student complaints [such as a student saying] I didn't plagiarize when [the professor] said I did. [My duties range from those things] to the really fun part of it, which is sort of, program development, shepherding new degree programs through working with the various committees. We're really trying to develop new Ph.D. programs. We've had external reviews of Ph.D. programs, which I've been the coordinator for for the college. A big responsibility coming up over the next two years is I'll be coordinating our accreditation review, the SACS review, that's taking place over the next two years. I'm the point person in the college for that. I have a very, very good staff and they do a lot of the sort of day-to-day stuff. One of the things that's hard for a faculty member, faculty members are tried to do it all ourselves and delegating is something that takes some time to learn. I'm learning, I'm not there yet, but increasingly I'm identifying the people who can do the job better than I can so that I can focus on these larger, more long-range issues.

G: What kind of new Ph.D. programs is the College of Arts and Sciences trying to initiate?

C: Right now we have three that are in various stages of development. One is in liberal studies, one is in social work, and one, which is still in the very early planning stages, is a joint degree program between geography and environmental science and policy. It used to be under the old Board of Regents that you had to kind of fight to get on a list that was approved to plan, so it was a very difficult process. That is no longer the case. We have been encouraged by the central administration and indeed the trustees when they met with us one time. They said why don't you have more Ph.D. programs? As we become more of a research university there is the feeling that we should. I was at a meeting last week in Washington. There was somebody there from Brenmar, which is an excellent, small school. They have nine Ph.D. programs. In Arts and Sciences we only have thirteen. I've talked with people, somebody did one of these external reviews from Cincinnati said we have forty. So there's clearly a lot that we can be doing there. It's tough in tight budget times like we're dealing with, but if you don't get the process rolling . . . The new governing structure has, I think, freed it up considerably. We can think more creatively, we don't feel constrained like we've got to convince the BOR for reasons that have nothing to do with the academic validity of the program before we can even start planning.

G: On average how long does it take to get a new Ph.D. program started at USF?

C: Well, that's a very good question. Again, probably historically I would say three to four years. Social workers try to do it in ten months. There's incredible demand, apparently, for doctoral level work in sociology. They want it in place for fall, it looks like they're not going to get it until spring but they're going to admit students as non-degree seeking

students so they can get a jump start on it. That was when literally it was out there, but then again an excellent new chair came in and he said let's scrap the old way of doing things; this is the way we want to organize a Ph.D. He came to me, he said Bruce I want this in place by September. I said I'll do what we can, I can't promise. I think he's accepted the fact that it's going to be January, but it can be done fast-track. This is one of the things, as power has become decentralized, there's pluses and minuses about it, but we can do a lot more locally now than we used to be able to.

G: Student issues, without getting into personal instances can you give me a very general idea of what students come to you about, what they're concerned about?

C: There's a mixture of them. [We hear some say] I think my professor was unfair and that sort of thing, and we have a whole grievance process to deal with that. For example, there's what's called the Arts and Sciences College Council which is all Arts and Sciences students who are in student government. I meet with them on occasion. Their concerns are actually very similar to faculty concerns. They're reading in newspapers that budgets are being reduced, am I going to be able to graduate on time. An instance I will mention, since it was in the news there's nothing secret about this, one of the things we had to do for last year's budget reductions was to severely reduce the number of adjunct instructors we use. There was one in particular in Women's Studies that, our initial plan had it, she would not be rehired. Well, 300 students signed a petition saying we love this person, she's a great instructor, and they presented that to the student senate. As a result, I went and spoke with them for about half an hour or forty-five minutes. Our administration of Arts and Sciences, we try to be as transparent as possible, we don't

have secrets. I explained the whole situation of what was happening. It ended up that we rehired the faculty member. I guess the instincts worked out. I got in a dialogue [and] what I hear from students at that level, their real concerns are exactly the same as the faculty. [They wonder] are we going to be able to maintain quality in the face of these external pressures that are being put on us? To what extent are they going to be heard and their needs going to met especially when it comes to courses needed for graduation, exit courses for their general education? Those are the ones that I take most seriously. I think that the person that comes complaining, just one person, about professor x well basically talk to the department chair, don't talk to me. That person knows the situation better. In general the students that I do talk with, I'm always impressed with their maturity and their concern for the institution. Again, at one of these meetings I went to, what I was hearing was from graduating seniors where what happened in next year is going to have no impact on them whatsoever, but they are concerned about the students coming along behind them.

G: I have two more questions. Can you talk a little bit about how often USF has to be accredited and what the process is?

C: It's every ten years. It used to be that SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) would tell us you have to create this committee, that committee, and the other committee and compare this big, huge self-study in which you address 460-sum must statements. [We fill it out] starting with you must have a president and working down in detail. That has completely changed now in a way that's really daunting, but kind of exciting. Instead of all the 463 must statements they have set out a set of core principles.

What we have to do is two things. We have to demonstrate that we are in compliance with those core principles, the so-called Compliance Report which is my responsibility in Arts and Sciences. We also have to prepare a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). So the compliance piece is where we've been, what we're doing now. The QEP is what we're going to do better. What's really exciting there, Dean Khator of Arts and Sciences is heading up the QEP initiative, and the focus there is on reforming our general education and incorporating research into the undergraduate curriculum. Provost Stamps has really been pressing this. It's a challenging thing to do, but that's something that will come out of it. The compliance piece, and this is where a fun part of my life is, is that every degree program has to have a outcome assessment plan. [This] means that they identify certain student learning outcomes that they want students to have; [they look at] how are they going to measure whether they're accomplished or not, are they accomplished; actually gather the data and then use the data for improvement. We need to have three cycles of that in place, which means this current year, next year, and the year after because it's the year after next when the visitation committees will descend on us. From that we will emerge re-accredited. They will have recommendation, which are not recommendations they're orders. USF is not going to lose its accreditation, but if you look around the state UCF, UNF, [and] UF have all had interesting experiences with this. We have to demonstrate this coming year that every faculty member meets the qualifications that are required to teach every class on campus. These are the kinds of things you have to do. It's a major, major undertaking. It's going to be driving my life for the next two years.

G: Where do you see the College of Arts and Sciences in the next decade?

C: I think we have a very bright future. There are some things happening now that if they grow, for example the creation of the Humanities Institute this year, the natural sciences are going to continue to grow as we bring in more new faculty, get more facilities, so forth. They are on sort of, I don't want to say autopilot, but they're on their way. The challenge now is in other areas like the humanities, like the social sciences to establish an identity; not only that, [but] to give the people in those fields, and by people I mean both faculty and students, the opportunity to have the excitement. The high point of the last couple of years for me was when Salman Rushdie came here to speak in February. This was a direct outcome of this humanities effort. We are going to have more of those in the future. The Globalization Research Center is something that will put USF on the map in a very big-time sort of way. We are now focused as a college that will do outstanding undergraduate and graduate education. That's not going to change. But, we also are on a trajectory towards developing real national prominence in certain areas. So when I go to California or even when I don't go to California, and I say I'm from USF, they won't say, "Oh that's San Francisco, right?" One of my fellow associate deans, Dr. Schneider, spent a year at NSF as a program director. She was constantly hearing from other people at the National Science Foundation about the great things that go on here. There are people that still will say, "Oh, that will never happen at USF." But, the reality is happening. We are going to have to struggle for the next few years with the state budgetary situation. The University of Virginia, which is an outstanding institution, gets eight percent of their funding from the state. This is the way the world is going. We have to recognize that, and bite the bullet, and move on. We have leadership right now that can do that. I'm

confident that it's going to continue. One of things I love most about USF is its lack of traditions. Being that we are only coming up on the fiftieth anniversary, it's not like, when someone says we've always done it that way. Always isn't very long. My alma mater institution, Cornell, I have friends on the faculty there, and they tell me, "You can't change anything." Here, we are always open to change, and that has been one of the really exciting things that has kept me here. The way we did things last year is not the way we have to do things next year.

G: Dr. Cochrane, thank you very much.

C: You're quite welcome.

End of Interview