This is Lois Myers. Today is Wednesday, January 30, 2002. I am in the home of Bill and Robbie Lamkin in Brookesmith, Texas. This interview is sponsored by the Baylor University Institute for Oral History and is our fifth interview with Dr. Lamkin, covering his years with the Baylor school of education. This interview is part of our Baylor project. Dr. Lamkin, we ended last time with your beginning, a new beginning, having completed your PhD in educational psychology at The University of Texas [at Austin] and starting your first full-time teaching position at Baylor. You’d been away from Baylor a few years. Describe for me what Baylor was like when you came back.

Lamkin

Well, it was larger, of course, for one thing. They had more students than they had the last time I was there. I really—even though I lived in Waco from ’53 to ’60, I didn’t have a very close association with Baylor during that time. I finished my master’s at Baylor in ’55, but that was primarily just going to the Browning building and working in there and going home. I really didn’t have a lot of association with Baylor during that time. And then, in the fall of ’59, I took a single course in education there and was on campus a little bit at that time. But I really have to go back to when I was a student as to what it was like and so forth. I guess one of the main things was the new buildings that had gone up and the refurbishment of buildings and so forth. Not as many as were built in some school years, but at least there were a good many more buildings that were built than when I was there, when I left there in 1950. Our graduation in 1950 was in Municipal Stadium, where Baylor played their football games. And when I—of course, when we moved back, well, the new stadium was built and they were playing there. Basketball had outgrown Rena Marrs McLean gym, and basketball games were being played at the Heart of Texas Coliseum at that point. And so there were those things that moved off campus. The new library was under construction at that particular point or shortly after I got there. I don’t remember the exact dates, but Moody Library was being constructed and that meant that everything out of Carroll Library was going to be moved out
pretty soon and so forth. The—Old Main and—

Myers Burleson.

Lamkin Burleson and Harrington were in the process of—they were talking about what they were going to do with those and so forth. And they were utilized primarily just for overflow faculty offices. I know some of the school of education people had their offices in Burleson Hall, which, of course, when I was there was the senior girls dormitory. But it was one of those places at that point when you walked up the stairs you hoped that you made it up the stairs (laughs) because everything creaked and so forth. And so those buildings, which were the heart of the campus when I was a student there, were really in disuse at that particular point and not much was going on in them except for overflow kinds of things that were there. And, as I say, the campus was much more crowded than it had been when I was there, when I was there previously. Let's see, the school of business, I guess, had been built during that time and the school of law. When I was a student there, the campus ended at Fifth Street, except for Rena Marrs McLean gym. And now it extended on the other side of Fifth Street. The old drug store was still there, and so that was one landmark that remained when I came back. And the post office was still on Speight there at the—close to the corner of Fifth and Speight, as it was, so that did not change a great deal during that time. But there—of course, there was another men's dormitory and there was—the Russell complex had been built, and so there was a lot more space on campus for students.

Myers I guess, during the interim when you were gone is when we had urban renewal—

Lamkin Yes.

Myers—in Waco and changed the area around the campus. Between the campus and the river had changed.

Lamkin Right, in fact the—of course, the time I came back, the faculty housing area was opened. I'm not sure exactly what year it was opened, but I know that Dr. Strickland and his wife were building a home there when we came back to Waco in ’67. So I assume that in the mid sixties that faculty housing area started developing.
Myers  Uh-huh. Well, also, Baylor had a different president than when you were there. Abner McCall was president.

Lamkin  Right.

Myers  What were your impressions of him?

Lamkin  Of course, Dr. McCall was a well known person in town. He was on the school board when I was teaching in the Waco schools, and so I knew him by reputation at that particular point. I would have to say I didn’t always agree with him. As I recall, his biggest crusade while he was a member of the Waco school board was merit pay for teachers, and he insisted that there was a way to do it and so forth. He never did get anything through on that. But that was the thing he wanted to talk about more than anything else and the thing that he tried to push all the time. And I didn’t disagree with him, particularly. I just—as I recall, his idea was that you give students tests to find out how much they’d learn and then pay teachers if the students had learned that much. And he didn’t take into consideration the variabilities of students and teachers who taught remedial classes, and things of this nature, and so forth. So it was a little bit of a—it’s a messy area, which it’s still a messy area, how do you really measure the effectiveness of teachers—and as I told you, that was the topic of my dissertation, actually. But anyway, I knew him by reputation, but I didn’t really know too much about him as far as an administrator was concerned. When I interviewed, Dr. Goetting did take me down to meet him and we talked. And he was very easy to talk to. And I guess I was more impressed than anything else in the fact that his door was open and while—we just walked in and Dr. Goetting said, “We need to see Dr. McCall.” And she said, “Go right in.” And while we were there, well, students came by and so forth and it was not a very structured thing. It was never, Well, do you have an appointment? kind of thing and such. So, it was very relaxed kind of feeling. And I think this—I felt that this really spread all over Baylor. Now, my perspective was entirely different, and it was kind of a funny thing to be there as a prospective peer to those people who had been my mentors. And, you know, this gave me kind of mixed feelings as to just exactly how I would approach those various things.

Myers  Well, here you are, not in the English department anymore, but here you are in the school of education. How would you assess Baylor’s school of education when you began teaching there?
Lamkin  It was very typical, I guess, of most schools of education in the fact that the classes were rather large in professional education areas. And it was primarily a lecture type of program that was culminated by experience in student teaching. Now, of course, student teaching had been expanded considerably from the time I was there. At the time I did my student teaching in 1950, as I think I mentioned earlier, I was in the school for one hour a day. And now students were in the schools for a half day for the full semester. They were either there all morning or all afternoon. And this tended to be the largest learning experience for students at that point. And the—I became interested as soon as I got there in trying to work with other faculty members to see how we could get students into the schools a little bit earlier than just their student teaching. Most of the students had not been back in these schools since they were there as a student when they went out for their student teaching. They had been told about it as far as their classes were concerned, but they really hadn’t experienced a school at that point. And so it was really just kind of an academic learning situation. This was not dissimilar from what was going on around the nation and within the state. And I knew that Baylor was well thought of by the state department of education, as well as their—other institutions in the state for the teachers that came out.

Myers  Okay, good. I’m glad you shared that. I was gonna ask you to kind of compare it because tuition was not as high then as it is now, but it was still a private school and there were many state teachers colleges in Texas.

Lamkin  That’s right. And comparativewise it was still an expensive school because—in other words, at that particular point my tuition at The University of Texas for all of my graduate work and so forth was fifty dollars a semester, period, and whether I took one class or three classes or whatever I took and such. And I had to pay fifty dollars. And there were a few fees. I never paid more than sixty-five dollars a semester. As I recall, the tuition at Baylor when I came there was about thirty to thirty-five dollars a semester hour, about thirty dollars a semester hour. I think a course was ninety dollars. And so a student who took five courses had to pay $450, which is considerably more than fifty dollars. And so it was expensive in comparison to what other schools were charging and also based upon what the average wage was at that time. In other words, the teachers were paid on the basis of their degrees and for their work. And so graduate programs were very important, I learned very quickly. And in fact my major assignment was in the graduate programs after my first semester. And I usually taught two or three graduate courses at night and then I had one or two groups of student teachers. And it wasn’t until I had been there for two or three years that I taught an undergraduate course. Because, really, there was only one undergraduate
course in educational psychology, and that was theories of—basically, adolescent development. And that was the only undergraduate course and such. The secondary teachers just took a curriculum course and a methods course, the adolescent psychology course, and a foundations—history and philosophy of education. They took four courses and then student teaching, and that was their program. So I taught graduate courses, primarily. The beginning salary for teachers at that particular time was around twelve hundred dollars. Well, excuse me, around twelve thousand dollars per year, which would, if you were on the ten-month basis, gets down to about twelve hundred dollars a month and such. Well, to take out $450-500 and pay for a course is very expensive for them in comparison. Nevertheless, we had a very large graduate program there.

Myers What do you think accounts for that? Is there anything about Baylor that was distinctive, that would attract people there to become teachers?

Lamkin Well, I like to think it was the outstanding faculty. (laughs) I guess, that—two things, one thing is just convenience in the fact that there was—to get a graduate program at that particular point in Waco, teachers would have to have gone either to Austin, because Mary Hardin-Baylor didn’t have anything and there was no Central Texas College or anything, or they’d have to go somewhere in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, which probably meant North Texas because there was no state institution in that area. I guess, UT Arlington then was—had a different name.

Myers Arlington State.

Lamkin Arlington State, right. And they had a program, but I’m not sure they had a master’s program at that time. And Tarleton didn’t have a master’s program. And so, in a way, we had a captive audience because they had no other way of getting a master’s degree. And there was considerable incentive there because once they got a master’s degree they had a very, very nice increase in their salary. As I recall, it was around two thousand dollars that they got an increase automatically in their salary when they got their master’s degree. So that was that incentive. Also, many of the people in the Waco area had connections to Baylor and they liked Baylor and they knew faculty and so forth, and I think it was a place where they had confidence that, you know, that they would be treated fairly and that things would go well for them.

Myers Well, you’ve told me kind of the state of educational psychology at Baylor, just one course.
Lamkin: Undergraduate.

Myers: An undergraduate course, now that was—

Lamkin: That was the only undergraduate course.

Myers: Okay, in adolescent psychology.

Lamkin: That's right.

Myers: So, that would be useful for secondary teachers.

Lamkin: Right.

Myers: Was there anything for elementary?

Lamkin: There was another course for elementary teachers that was—I don’t recall the exact title, but it basically was child development. That was for the elementary teachers. I did not teach that class. At a later time we combined those two classes so elementary and secondary teachers would be together in the class that we just referred to as educational psychology. And we covered child through adolescent development and such, the whole thing.

Myers: The dean, Dr. Goetting, had been your friend in the past as a student. He was dean, I guess, about the first three years that you were there, till ’71.

Lamkin: That’s right.

Myers: Tell me about Dr. Goetting’s leadership in the department.

Lamkin: Dr. Goetting is a very interesting person. It’s hard to characterize his leadership. I would be tempted to say that it was probably nonexistent. He pretty well kept to himself and did things, and you had to go see him and so forth. But his primary goal was to just kind of to maintain the status quo, and he tried to pick people—he tried to find faculty members that would
continue and could work independently. I took the place of a faculty member who had been there for a short time and left, and I didn’t understand exactly what was going on at the time that Dr. Goetting asked me to come up and we talked. I talked with him and then we went down and talked with Dr. McCall. And—but he made several comments about—well, when he introduced me to Dr. McCall he said, “He’s our kind of person.” And I didn’t know exactly what that meant at that point. I found out later that in the—apparently there had been a move during a period of time there in the early sixties to try to bring in other types of people and diversify the university and so forth. And there had been a series of three or four people who would come through and had stayed for a year and either left voluntarily or involuntarily during that time. And there had been a very unstable faculty during that time. And apparently Dr. Goetting had convinced Dr. McCall that there needed to be some stability here, and to do this you need to recruit people that would understand Baylor’s mission and would fit into the Baylor faculty and so forth. And so he really hired faculty and then he kind of let us do our thing and such. And if you had an idea about something you wanted, well, you could go up and talk to him and he would listen to you. He didn’t really vary—I don’t recall his initiating much. It wasn’t a period of time in which higher education was doing much initiation of things. Higher education was generally pretty static and not a lot of changes were going on at that time.

Myers Well, I have a Baylor annual (laughter) from that time. And I was going to have you look at the photographs of the faculty, and if you will, describe for me what you recall about them and their contributions to the department.

Lamkin Well, of course, Dr. Goetting had been there a long time. He came with Dr. Stretch as dean, and then he became the dean. Interesting enough that I—in doing a little history of the school of education back just before—well, when Dr. McNamee retired, we were planning a retirement dinner for him and so I went—that was when we went back and researched all of the heads of the education division, and their pictures are now in the office. We got to the Baylor library, the Texas Collection, and got pictures of all of those that from the time it started in the early—about 1920–’21, when it was officially formed, until the, well, Dr. McNamee’s picture. And since that time, well, they’ve added the others of us who were dean hanging there. But the term dean was not used to describe the head of the department or the division of education, which was called a school of education, but the head was called the chairman until after World War II. And I’m not exactly sure what had happened. In fact, Dr. Stretch—and I couldn’t find any official record, but in looking at the catalogues somewhere in there, and I can’t date it exactly, but in the 1940s—late 40s or early 50s, Dr. Stretch was referred to as dean for the first time. And I don’t know what that meant or why it occurred in
that way, but that’s the way it happened. And so she was dean, actually, for a very short time before Dr. Goetting became the dean.

Dr. Goetting had the most miraculous memory of anybody I’ve ever known. He could remember everything. But the first time I went back to see him when I was beginning graduate school and I needed a job while I was—in the summer I went back and talked with him to see about working for him in the film library. And I had had no contact with him then for several years. I guess in 1949, when I had my last class with him, was the last time. And he says, “Oh, yes,” he says, “I remember you. You sat right over there by the window in that room over there,” and such. You know, he had just a very good memory. His office was a terrible mess, but if you walked in and asked him a question he’d say, “Yes, I have it right here.” And he knew which pile to look under and where to find it and so forth. Really talented kind of individual. Dr. Strickland was probably the person that influenced me more as a teacher than any other person. Had him for just one course as an undergraduate, but it was called, oh, Problems in Adolescence, I believe. I don’t know. It dealt with discipline in the schools is what it was. And so I—and he was so practical and it was so good and such that I just really attached myself to him. And so it was very good to be back and to be with him during that time. I never could call him Connie. He was always Dr. Strickland to me. And we became very close friends and worked together on a lot of different projects. He was very, very student oriented. He liked his students. He worked with the students. I don’t know—I think I’m correct in this statement, but it may not be absolutely correct, but he was one of the first ones that students voted as their outstanding professor within the university. And if he wasn’t, he was among the first. It may not have been the first year that they did this, but it was among the first. That would have been in the mid sixties when they first started doing things of this nature. Of course, the students picked them initially, then they went to a faculty committee, which I think is used at the present time. He was a well prepared teacher. He taught the first courses in special education in the state of Texas. And he initiated a program for the teachers of the mentally retarded. He used to joke and say, “I was the first mentally retarded professor in Texas.” A young man who lives on campus and works in the Baylor student union now was one of the students who graduated from a program that he started there, vocational training for students with limited mental abilities. And he graduated from that program, was one of the first, and has stayed on the Baylor campus, and everybody on the campus knows him at this particular point. I could talk a long time about Dr. Strickland because he was marvelous. And just the sadness of the fact that he retired in May or August, I’m not sure which, and they were building a house re—extending their house out on their farm when he died of a heart attack that fall and—very sad. He left—he and his wife—his wife also had health problems and she died just a couple of years later. And they left all of their estate to Baylor, establishing a scholarship in their son’s name who had died as a young man,
and giving the rest of it to—just as a Baylor endowment to the school of
education. Dr. McNamee came to Baylor just a semester before I did. He
was assistant superintendent of the Waco schools while I was a teacher in the
Waco schools. And he stayed there until, I guess, 1966. And in the fall of
’66 he went to Texas A&M as a professor, and he didn’t like it at all. And in
the spring of ’76 [ed. note: 1967] he returned to Baylor. Dr. McCall, of
course, who had been on the school board while Dr. McNamee was assistant
superintendent and so forth, and he brought him back to Baylor as a
professor and he got up there in the spring of ’67, and I came in the fall of
’67.

Myers  Let me turn the tape.

**Tape 1, side 1 ends; side 2 begins.**

Lamkin  (recording speed distorted) Dr. McNamee was very intense about everything
that he did. He was most interested in elementary children and reading, and
he worked very hard in that particular area. He created a little lab there in
Pat Neff Hall, where we were at that particular point, so he could have the
children come in. And he was one of the first to have his students actually
working with elementary students in the schools while he was there. And so
he worked with their students—they had actual laboratory types of
experiences, limited, because we didn’t have much space at that point. But
he was very interested in that and such. Of course, he became dean when
Dr. Goetting resigned or retired, I guess in about ’71, when he retired, and
he was much more involved with the school, the faculty, and so forth. Now,
that was the time when we were looking forward to a new building. And it’s
hard for us to realize that the school of education had the second and third
floors primarily of Pat Neff Hall at that particular time. And that was for
offices and classrooms, and look at the faculty that we had at that time. And
Mr. Mitchell’s office was over in the Old Main, or old Burleson, and so we
thought we were very crowded. (recording becomes increasingly distorted
and untranscribable)

**Tape 1 ends abruptly; tape 2 begins.**

Myers  This is tape two of our interview five with Dr. Lamkin. We had technical
problems on side two of tape one, so we’re going to try to go back and
recreate a little bit. It won’t be the same, but we will do as well as we can.
And Dr. Lamkin has been very cooperative with that. Let’s go back and talk
some more about Dr. McNamee. We had started with him, I believe, when
we started that second side.

Lamkin	Okay, I may be repeating myself some, but I will try to recall. Dr. McNamee, of course, came to Baylor just a semester before I did, and taught primarily in the elementary reading area and elementary education in general. He started a reading laboratory for students to come in after school, and his own students, then, who were taking his reading courses would work with them and such. And this was one of the first times that we had any type of real experience for students in their—with actual students—teacher education students with actual students before they went out into the schools for their student teaching. He was a well-liked teacher. He did an exceptionally good job with his classes, was very conscientious and so forth. And then in 1971, when Dr. Goetting retired, he became the dean of the school of education and was a much more proactive kind of dean than Dr. Goetting had ever been. He involved the faculty in decision making. He organized the faculty. Actually, that was the first time that departments were created in the school of education. So he created a department of educational administration, department of educational psychology, a department of elementary education, and a department of secondary education. And so there were four departments and department chairmen and so forth of those particular departments to take a leadership there in those particular areas. He asked me to be the chair of the Department of Educational Psychology. Of course, that consisted of me, Dr. Baker, Dr. Mitchell, and, I guess that’s all (laughs) at that particular time.

Myers	I believe you mentioned earlier, too, how—although Dr. Goetting had—about his retirement.

Lamkin	Okay, yeah, he—as I say, he retired and stayed on for a year after his retirement with the assignment from Dr. McCall to work on ideas for a new school of education building. The school of education had outgrown its facilities in Pat Neff Hall. We had the two floors of Pat Neff Hall, but it was very crowded. There were not enough office spaces. Dr. Mitchell’s office was in Pat Neff—it was, excuse me, in Burleson, and everybody was pretty packed in. Baylor was expanding and the school of education had made the choice to ask for a new building, as opposed to work on the renovation of Carroll Science Building, which was a choice that had been given to them. And we looked at Carroll Science, but one thing that we wanted to have—well, two things we wanted to have. One was an area where we could have large group instruction. And there just wasn’t much space in Carroll Science where we could do anything like that. And secondly, we wanted some flexible space, space that could be multipurpose kinds of things, used for different kinds of things. I guess there was a third thing, too, and that is that
we were getting much more into bringing students to campus for laboratory types of experiences and so forth, and so we wanted some areas where we could have students coming in from the public schools for demonstration purposes and things of this nature. By this time we had gotten into a little bit more of this kind of thing. I mentioned earlier I taught primarily graduate classes, but before we left Pat Neff Hall—I guess it was in the early seventies, about '72 or '73—I asked Dr. McNamee if I could teach the undergraduate adolescent psychology class and if I could put a requirement in it that the students would have to spend three hours a week in a secondary school just observing and so forth. And so he said that would be fine. And we let them have a one-hour credit for the time they spent in the schools and then a three-hour credit for the course. And I had about twenty students who signed up with that understanding and so forth. And this is kind of an experiment of how we could begin to get students out into the schools at an earlier time. So there was much more interest in getting teacher education students with the public school students than there had been in the past. (clock chimes) So we look at those kinds of things as far as making decisions about the new building.

I mentioned at some point in here that I’m not sure that Dr. Goetting—
(pause in recording to check technical quality)

I'm not sure that Dr. Goetting retired voluntarily, particularly. He did have a lot of other interests. He had a ranch where he raised cattle, and he was very interested in the cattle. He also, as he retired, got his real estate license. And so real estate—but he was allowed to stay on that year and given office space and help and so forth to create this plan, which was not really followed, except that it did make us think about what was available and what we might be able to do and so forth. And so we started the planning of the building. And the administration told us that we could have the first two floors of Draper, and all we had were the dimensions of the whole building and where the hallways would be and so forth. And we had the first two floors of Draper that we could work with, and then we would have the first two floors of Burleson for our faculty and the dean’s office and other such things. And so we worked with those. Now, Burleson we didn’t really have much to do with because most of the interior walls were bearing walls, so the bedrooms—the rooms that were in the dormitory became offices. And that was about all you could do with that. And on the first two floors we also had some other—the dean of arts and sciences was placed in there as a part of his office and the continuing education office was placed in there at that particular time. And so what we had there was just a lot of offices that faculty members could be assigned to. And then we started working on the other areas. And Dr. McNamee kind of divided it up and he knew that there were certain people who wanted certain kinds of things; and so the first floor was to become an area of kind of special areas, and the second floor was to become the classroom areas and the learning resources center. And, of
course, this is one thing that we all wanted and that was a good place where we could have the textbooks and not duplicating what the university library was doing, but having materials that students would be using in the schools when they went out. So we’re talking about textbooks and learning materials. And later on, as time developed, it had space for (telephone rings) a computer lab and that type of thing.

So on the first floor, we had four different areas that each one of us designed. We had an area for educational psychology because our—basically, I would say it was for the counseling area. Counseling was our largest program at the graduate level. And we needed a place where students could be observed while they were working with students because we had practicum kinds of things for them, and we needed a place where students could be brought in and tested as they were taking testing courses and things of this nature. Then Dr. [James W.] Wiley, who had taken over reading when Dr. McNamee became the dean, was very interested in laboratories and such for reading. And so he wanted a much larger flexible space for the reading area. Miss Betty Ruth Baker, who was in early childhood education, wanted a demonstration classroom. So that became a part here. And then the person who was in charge of special education at that particular time wanted a demonstration classroom for children with special problems. So that’s actually the four areas of the first floor of Draper, in addition to the large auditorium which we said we wanted, which became Bennett Auditorium. And there was some space left for a classroom on each end, so we have two multipurpose classrooms there as well. So we planned all of those, and Dr. Wiley and I worked together on one end there. And he had need for some individual spaces and I had need for some individual spaces in the counseling area, and so we built two rooms with some little rooms down the middle with the doors opening to both sides so that they could be used in either direction. We put two offices over there: an office for the person in charge of the counseling program and an office for him in the reading area with a little reception area there and such. So that became that area. And then Miss Baker had the early childhood with the one-way viewing glasses where she could—I’m not sure how this is continued, but at that time, about three days a week she would have different kindergarten classes, would come in for a morning or an hour or two and her students would work with them while the teachers would sit behind the one-way glass and observe what was going on. And also, her students who were not working with them could sit there and observe and such. And then she had a workroom there where they could work on materials and so forth. And then the special education area was also designed and equipped with an observation area and also moveable video cameras and such, which you could take pictures and so forth of what was—could tape what was going on in classrooms, and mikes where you could hear what was going on with—and most of that was for individualized instruction. So that became my project for a number of years. It seems like a long time (laughs), actually, but we were all looking forward to it very
much. And that was Dr. McNamee’s leadership in that particular area that really got us the facility that we needed at that particular point. And it has continued to serve well, I think, even though a lot of the things have changed from what our programs were then. Well, they’ve changed somewhat, but they’re still—the space is still very usable.

**Myers** Yes. And now I—there’s, I think, a distance learning space.

**Lamkin** Distance learning is in a part of that area which is reading and counseling. The distance term has been brought into that. The reading area has become the laboratory for that distance learning.

**Myers** Well, going back to your first years there when you were in Pat Neff Hall—

**Lamkin** (speaking at the same time) Let me mention a couple of other faculty, if I may.

**Myers** Okay.

**Lamkin** I think the only people I have—there’s just a few people I haven’t talked about. Dr. [Guy C.] Mitchell was a—I’m not sure what his background was. He was a very fine gentleman who kind of kept to himself. He taught an advanced seminar in educational psychology and he was one of those, too, that the graduate students liked and admired because he was very knowledgeable, but he couldn’t relate very well to undergraduates, and that was a problem. Dean Murphy—his name was Dean, and everybody called him Dean Murphy. And for a long time I couldn’t understand why he was Dean and we had another dean. He was there just a short time. He taught the undergraduate educational psychology class and was a very good teacher. My impression is he had retired from the public schools and such, but he was just there for, I believe, the first year I was there, maybe the first two years I was there. Dr. [H. V.] Williams had been there, was one of my teachers as an undergraduate, but I never did really get to know Dr. Williams very well. He retired again a couple years after I was there, and he taught elementary students. We did not overlap a great deal. I think again he was one of those that the students liked him, but he wasn’t at the top of their list. And Bob Rigby was another one that had come just a few years before I did—very knowledgeable kind of person, very demanding of his students, sometimes became crossways with his students and he—I guess it was one of those situations where you had students who would say, He’s the best instructor I’ve ever had. And then you’d have—maybe half the students
would say that, and then the other half of the students would say, This is the worst instructor I’ve ever had. And so he was kind of a controversial person all the time that he was there.

Myers  Well, starting out, I have that you were an assistant professor.

Lamkin  Right.

Myers  When you started, what had you been told or what did you understand were going to be your qualifications for moving up to tenure?

Lamkin  Nothing. (laughter) Tenure was never discussed. The ranks were never discussed. And after a year of being there, I understood that this was true of everyone. There were no provisions for anything. After two years I was promoted to associate professor. It wasn’t until I had been there for two or three years that tenure was even mentioned. And I don’t recall ever receiving any kind of information about tenure. I assumed that once these provisions were put in at the university level—and I think this probably was done when Dr. Reynolds came in as an assistant to Dr. McCall. And I think Dr. Reynolds was the one that looked at it and—you know, there was no faculty handbook. There wasn’t anything. And I think that he probably put those in. And I assume that those of us who were there at that particular point were automatically granted tenure. That’s all I can think of. Now, I did come under the provisions of the promotion and so forth that read at that time that, I believe, it was six years to associate professor and then fifteen years for a full professor. And so I was promoted, as I say, to associate professor after the second year. But then from that time on, they applied the rules to me that I had to be there at least fifteen years. Fortunately, Dr. McNamee was on my side and such, and so after thirteen years I was promoted to full professor. But as I say, there were no rules in place when I got there, but they did apply them then to those of us who were there after they put these rules into effect.

Myers  Interesting. What about your teaching load? How would you describe the number of hours you taught?

Lamkin  Twelve hours was the teaching load and no provision for graduate courses. If you taught, you taught four graduate courses, or you might teach four undergraduate courses, whatever. And initially, my teaching load was generally two graduate courses and two groups of student teachers. And, well, the graduate courses were all taught in the evenings. So that meant two
evenings a week from—I guess, classes met from six to nine the night of the class. And then during the day I had nothing except preparation for class and then going out supervising my student teachers. And we were required to visit our student teachers a minimum of six times each during the term.

**Myers**

You mentioned two groups of student teachers. How did you define that?

**Lamkin**

Yeah, well, a group was defined by the provisions of the state in terms of—for the accreditation of your programs and so forth. Generally, a group of student teachers was con—the equivalent of a course credit for student teachers was somewhere around six to nine student teachers, okay. And the state said if you have six student teachers, that should be equivalent to teaching one class. Now, what that amounted to was it's a little bit of a financial burden. If it was kept at six and they got six semester hours, that would be the equivalent of having a class of twelve. But most of the undergraduate classes, particularly, were larger than twelve at that particular time. And so, usually at Baylor at that particular time in the spring, particularly, it wasn’t unusual to have nine or ten students as a group. But also, in the fall when there weren’t as many student teachers, you might not have but four or five as a group. And so, you know, it would balance. And as I say, we had the help of a lot of graduate assistants at that point, ten or twelve. And they all would have two groups of student teachers each time, except in a few cases where we had—generally, we found somebody who had skills in teaching science in the elementary school and that person didn’t have any student teachers. They taught two sections of teaching science in the elementary school. And a few other cases, well, they taught actual classes.

**Myers**

Uh huh, what were the—I have down here that Baylor at that time had a master of arts, an MA, in education. Is that correct?

**Lamkin**

We had one, but I don’t think it really was ever—there were very few people who pursued it. It was in the books. Most pursued a master of science. As I said, most of our graduate students were teachers in the public schools, and they got credit for a master’s degree, and it didn’t make any difference what it was. We would have a few students who would want a master of arts. Master of science required thirty-six hours of course work, period. The master of arts required thirty hours of course work, including a three-hour thesis. So they had less course work, but they had to write a thesis. And we really discouraged students from doing that, I guess primarily because of the faculty load. It’s very difficult. We all had large classes and were teaching twelve hours, and to try to find the time to supervise somebody writing a thesis and such was very difficult, and we just suggested that. Occasionally,
students would come in—more often than not, foreign students that we had would feel like they had to have an MA because, of course, many of foreign countries do not know what a master of science in education is. And so they would insist on writing that. For a short time after Dr. McNamee became the dean, while we were still in Pat Neff Hall, he instituted at the, I guess at the suggestion of Dr. Reynolds, a master of arts in teaching, which was theoretically to help students prepare for teaching at the college level. And it was to be a program that was interdisciplinary in the fact that they would do most of their work in their major area and they would take six hours in a block of—that would involve teaching strategies and understanding college students and growth and development for college students and things of this nature. And there were probably eight or ten who went through that program, but it was not generally successful. And I don’t know that those programs were ever officially disbanded. They just kind of disappeared from the catalog. In fact, the MA may still be in the catalog as an option. Because, as I say, there are some people who come in and they feel like they have to have that MA for professional reasons.

Myers And then there was an EdD degree, right?

Lamkin Right, and that’s the doctor of education we still offer.

Myers Okay, and that’s where your TAs [teaching assistants] came from, or your assistants at the time.

Lamkin That’s right, that’s right; they were working on their doctorates.

Myers Did you have a heavy load in the summer, then, with these teachers who—

Lamkin Oh yes, oh yes. The summer was our biggest time. Faculty were not given an option of whether they would teach in the summer or not. We had to have them. And most of it was graduate work, although we did offer the full range of undergraduate work so students could take their courses in the summer. But the largest classes were undergraduate. And as I say, our largest program was the counseling program, and I had classes at that point which would number fifty and sixty people in the summer. And that would be for a six-weeks course. And typically, our pattern was so the faculty could have some time off. You know, Baylor’s policy at that time, and I’m not sure what it is now, for summer pay was that you could teach one six weeks and receive 20 percent of your annual salary. But if you taught the second six weeks, you couldn’t teach but one course and for that you got only 5 percent
of your salary. So, whereas you got 10 percent for these first two, you got only 5 for the second. And, of course, that was fine for most departments in schools because the faculty generally didn’t want to teach but one six weeks, and by getting 20 percent of their salary, that continued their salary year around. But in the school of education, as I say, it wasn’t an option. And we were basically informed, You will teach both six weeks. But to equalize this somewhat, during the second six weeks most of our graduate courses were three-weeks courses. And so we met double time for three weeks. And so faculty members taught the first six weeks and then one of the three weeks, okay. So we still had a three-week time off. Actually, three weeks became about twelve days—twelve or thirteen days is what the—

Myers  But it was intensive teaching.

Lamkin  Intensive, right. And they met for three and a half hours daily in that.

Myers  Today, professors and assistant professors are very busy doing committee work on campus outside their department, or call it university service. Was that part of your earlier years?

Lamkin  It started developing pretty rapidly, actually. Again, I think this was primarily when Dr. Reynolds came on the scene. Of course, as I mentioned, Dr. McCall was kind of a laissez-faire type of operator; and he didn’t organize a great deal and such. So when Dr. Reynolds came on the scene, we started getting more and more of committee structures and all-university types of things that involved all of us. One of the first groups, committees, I served on, schoolwide, involved the computation center. Of course, when I came to Baylor there were no computers. I had been working with computers at The University of Texas and in Los Alamos before I came to The University of Texas, and the only thing, really, that all Baylor had at that time was what we referred to as accounting machines, which were used in the business office for accounting, and so their checks could be written and things like this by the accounting machines. But that was the only thing that they had. But not too long after that they started looking at buying computers and so forth. And so there was a committee that was set up as a university committee to look at these kinds of things. And Dr. Goetting was very interested in the school of education being involved and he was very supportive of everything that I suggested along that line. And after just about a couple of years he wanted me to teach a course for graduates in the application of computers in education. And so I started a course, probably in 1970 or '71, that we called “Data Processing and Computers in Education.” And that was a very interesting course and it was interesting to me because several of the students which I had in that class had gone on to
continue that particular type of work.

Myers

Let me turn the—

_Tape 2, side 1 ends; side 2 begins._

Myers

—with your computer work. You’re kind of here on the edge, you know, going forward before the rest of the campus had really caught up, I guess.

Lamkin

Right, we were one of the first to get involved there. Of course, looking at things as they exist now, this was very, very primitive. But I got Dr. Goetting to rent a keypunch machine that I could have in my office. And that had to be before 1971 because he’s the one that did it. And so I had a keypunch machine there in my office. And as soon as we got a computer, well, I had some various kinds of statistical programs that I could put on the computer and I had students start getting involved and everything. One of my first students, and she was a graduate assistant with me, was Jane Williams, who has been teaching in the school of business for, I guess, since she got her master’s from Baylor in mathematics. She was a mathematics undergraduate and taught school. Her husband was killed in Vietnam; and she came back to school, and she was my graduate assistant. And she didn’t know anything at all about computers, so we started working on these kinds of things. And she’s been teaching ISY [information systems] in the school of business ever since that time. And so we got things started there. Also the year after I came to Baylor, in ’68, the regional educational service centers were organized. And Region 12, which is located in Waco, had their initial offices over where the old post office used to be on Fifth and Speight. They were upstairs in the area there and they had their offices over there. And they also were interested in what computer applications we might have and what we might do and so forth. And as Baylor got the computer facilities and so forth, well, I started looking at things. And so I did some things for them as well, kind of breaking them in. They—I guess, one of the main projects, I got a student scheduling program from one of the software companies. And for a couple of semesters I scheduled the students for Temple High School. And they would make their choices and bring them over, and Jane would punch them into the cards and then—I could get the computer usually at night, and so most of the time I would go over there about eleven o’clock at night with my boxes of cards. And the program was over there, and I could put the program up and so forth, and we would run the schedule through and so forth. And then if we had too many conflicts and such, we would send it back to the schools and they would look at it and see what they might do to their scheduling and so forth. Anyway, that was the process. I would spend two or three hours over there in the middle of
the night running these things for them and such. But that—you know, it was a way of getting them started, and then we went on from that. And after we had done their schedule, well, we did their grade reporting. And so each six weeks we could run the report cards and such using, again, a punch card. Only they would mark it with the special pencil, you know, you used to use, and you run it through the machine and the machine punches the holes in it. And then we would run their grade reports. But anyway, that was the beginning of some computer things. And at that time I don’t—I guess that probably physics and chemistry and such were using the mainframe computer for some things, but primarily the mainframe computer was being used by the university business office for running reports and running schedules and starting to do the scheduling by computer and things of this nature.

**Myers**

As I recall, was that—it was in—physically down in the basement of Sid Richardson or somewhere?

**Lamkin**

That’s where it started, yes, yeah, down in the basement. And they had—of course, they had one room there that had to be temperature controlled. Well, they had about four tape drives over here and machines sitting here and all these memory things and so forth. And right now I have more power than that sitting on my desk in the office. And it’s amazing how far we’ve come with it. But that was a beginning, you know, and it was exciting, actually, to be there. And as I say, so many of the students which I had in those classes back at that time got a taste of it at that particular point, and that got them interested. And they have continued to develop their interest, and they are either teaching in these areas or are very active in that area.

**Myers**

Yes, there’s no shortage of students that are interested in it, that’s for sure.

**Lamkin**

No, that’s right.

**Myers**

We talked about the master of science in education did not have a thesis.

**Lamkin**

That’s right.

**Myers**

Did the doctor of education have a thesis?

**Lamkin**

Yes, yes. The doctor of education has a dissertation.
Myers Were the students becoming interested in using the early computers to run their programs?

Lamkin Yes, oh yes. The very first doctoral student I had, a fellow by the name of Ken Speer, who was a chaplain at Fort Hood, came over for night classes and so forth. I don’t remember his topic right now; but I do remember that we collected the data, and the data was punched in the cards, and he ran the data through several of the programs that I had developed for it to compute the various statistics and such. And more and more students, who were doing whatever they were doing, surveys or experimental things or whatever they were interested in—because it was more accurate and saved so much time. And they got the taste of it and they were really ready to go with it.

Myers Uh-huh, that’s interesting. I wanted to ask you about the competency-based teacher education, sponsored by the, I guess, the TEA [Texas Education Agency], 1972, the pros and cons of that and what you think about that.

Lamkin Yeah, this is an idea which actually got started back in the fifties. It grows out of the operant conditioning things that are associated with B. F. Skinner. And, of course, from B. F. Skinner—Skinner was one of those whose research was used to develop the first teaching machines, okay. And the initial teaching machines were basically just mechanical kinds of things where a question was asked and you wrote your answer at the side and then you could move them in a window and see if your answer was correct or not, okay. And those were developed by Grolier Corporation back in the early sixties, I guess. I know they had a little laboratory in Albuquerque when I was in Los Alamos that I went down to visit one time to see what they were doing there. But the idea—of course, what you have to do here is to sequence learning, which means you have to first of all define what your objective is and then you have to figure out what the steps are to reach that particular thing. In other words, Skinner’s idea was that your learning should be sequenced so that a student never makes a mistake because you learn from what’s right, not from what’s wrong, okay. And so you sequence learning there, and so you have to establish your goal and then decide how you are going to reach it. That’s the basis of competency-based education. You have to decide what it is that you want students to know, or what you want students to learn. I guess, you would say to know—to know or to do, okay. Now, the problem with that—and the—you know, it’s a very noble idea. It really sounds very good. The problem is that so many of the outcomes that we are interested in in education, in educating students, are very difficult to define in those kinds of objective terms. For example, I taught English for a number of years and I was always interested in English
and one of the—in reading the curriculum guides for any kind of English curriculum, you will see over and over again the students will develop an appreciation for good literature. Okay, how do you—you know, how do you measure whether or not you have reached appreciation or not? And so the weakness of competency-based education was the fact that it reduced learning basically to a set of facts, because that’s what you could measure, or a set of skills. So you can ask students to perform mathematical computations, things that they have skills; but to know whether or not those skills transfer into real life is something else, you know. Are those skills useful to them when they are engaged in some kind of occupation or just in their daily life? So that was the weakness. And so just defining those is very difficult. I would say that we’re really kind of in that same mode right now, unfortunately, in Texas, and now being transferred to the national level. Because when we talk about accountability, accountability is being measured by a test which measures what a student can do and what he knows. And that, to me, is not the total end of education. And yet, of course, in Texas at the present time the schools spend an inordinate amount of time in preparing students to take a test. And our schools have classes that are just preparation for taking a particular test. And I’m not sure that that test measures what we want as the outcomes of education.

Myers  
Uh-huh, so apply it to teacher education. How is that going to measure a teacher’s competency?

Lamkin  
Okay, that gets down to the same thing as trying to define how a teacher should act or what they should do or what skills they should have. We can define what skills we want teachers to develop and so forth, but there’s an intangible in teaching which never has been defined. You can ask a set of people to identify a teacher who has been most influential for them and they can all identify somebody. And then you can say, Okay, describe that teacher to me. One will say, “This teacher was one that was very strict and required all of these certain things. We had to do these things. We had to do it right. Didn’t tolerate any kind of mistakes.” The next one will say, “This teacher was one who was really interested in me and gave me encouragement and helped me when I was having trouble,” and so forth. So the description of every one of those is different. We have never been able to identify what it is that makes a competent teacher. Therefore, how can we have teacher competencies established that we can really reach, or that are meaningful? So I guess we have to come to realize, in my opinion, that teaching certainly requires knowledge of what you want to teach, but also it’s an art that has to be developed, or maybe is innate, I don’t know, that will allow the person to communicate with students and to get them involved in things. As a teacher, one of the most rewarding things to me has been to know that students have continued in the area of learning that I introduced them to. And that’s what
I was talking about these people in the area of the computer work. But I also have several former students who have become English teachers and English professors and have been able to communicate and say, you know, You turned me on to this. And I don’t know—I can’t communicate to somebody else what I did, and I think that anybody who tries to model and say, I’m going to be just like you were, is doomed to failure. (laughs) And so I think it’s more of—it has a certain amount of that art that is in it, too.

**Myers**

Uh-huh. Well, how did this impact the program of students at Baylor, the students—the teachers, how did it impact your teaching of teachers?

**Lamkin**

Are you talking about the competency-based kinds of things?

**Myers**

Right.

**Lamkin**

Well, I guess the main thing that it did was to shift some of the emphasis away from the classroom on the campus into the classroom of the schools, or to shift the emphasis upon professor–teacher education student to teacher education student and public school students, with the professor being the one who directs and guides and so forth. And I think that’s what we saw going on during this period of time from the 1970s up until the present time, more and more of this. Those who were going to be good teachers have to have the opportunity to try out some things under the direction of a teacher—of someone who has been there before, and this might be the school teacher or might be the college professor or whatever, not overlooking the fact that there is a certain, oh, body of knowledge that teachers can use to build these skills on, okay. And so I don’t subscribe to the idea that there are teachers who are just born to teach and all they have to do is walk in the classroom and do it. I think that they can be improved if they looked at the body of knowledge that we have concerning how students learn, how we organize materials and so forth. I was talking about the weakness of competency-based education and so forth. And it does have some problems, but teachers have to learn that they have to have some kinds of objectives for students or they’re not ever going to get there. As I talked about some of the faculty members who kind of kept these things a secret from students in hope that they would discover it, I think that good teachers let students know from the beginning what they want them to learn as best they can and then help them to get there. And I think that a part of the training of the teacher is learning about how people learn and what you can do to promote that kind of learning.
Uh-huh. Well, it sounds like that coming into ’72, just as things were coming to par with beginning to think about your new building and planning it, that those two coming together kind of made for this new environment that we had.

I think that’s right. You know, if the school of education had been planning this building in 1960 it would have been entirely different. It would have been a set of boxes with classrooms is what it would have been. So in the seventies, as we were planning the building, we were in a changing time of looking at what it is that teachers need and so forth. And I think that’s—that really made a difference in what the building looked like.

Uh-huh. Through this period, how important or how scary (laughs) or how awesome were accreditation agencies and groups?

There was more and more emphasis being placed upon accreditation. I guess at Baylor I never did really look at accreditation agencies as being a threat. I think we had confidence that our program was good and that—you know, that we really didn’t have anything to worry about as far as an outside agency is concerned with us. Now, a lot of that is a reflection of the type of students that we’ve always gotten. An interesting observation is that Baylor has continued to have a school of education, which is a relatively large school of education, whereas a large number of private universities have completely done away with their undergraduate schools of education and they have graduate education only—Duke, for example. And I think a lot of that is a reflection on the type of student that we have traditionally drawn at Baylor and that is students who are more oriented toward service to others and such. And, you know, I—we have concerns, continually, about what’s going to happen as tuition has gone up. Well, every time we say, Well, you know, people are going to stop studying education because it doesn’t pay off. (laughs) And that’s being said again now. But it hasn’t so far. And we can hope that it continues. Whether it will or not, I don’t really know. But anyway the—I’m not sure where I was on that.

Well, we were talking about the accreditation.

Oh yeah, accreditation things. And so we—you know, we always approached accreditation as one of those things we had to do, but it wasn’t a big threat. I guess the biggest problem was finding the time to write the self studies and gather all the data that they wanted and knowing what kinds of—about knowing what kinds of questions they might ask and things of this
nature. Baylor school of education had been accredited by the Texas Education Agency from the beginning that they started accreditation. Baylor had never sought national accreditation until—well, that was one of the first things I did when I became dean is that we started the process of getting accreditation from the national—from NCATE, National Association Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education. And, you know, again, the faculty felt comfortable in what they were doing and that there wouldn’t be any problem with it and such, but, you know, it’s just a—you have to go through the everything of getting it done. And you never know for sure, particularly when you get inside the state—we could feel more comfortable than we could outside the state, because you’re never sure just exactly who might be on your visiting team that may just completely disagree with everything that we’re doing.

Myers

Just general in what Texas does in education.

Lamkin

That’s right. That’s right. That’s right.

Myers

You don’t have any control over—

Lamkin

And, of course, the, you know, there were certain kinds of things that are controlled either by university policy or by state requirements that don’t always match what the national group wants you to do.

Myers

That’s for sure. Well, we’ve talked about Dr. Goetting’s years and some about Dr. McNamee’s years as dean. One other thing there I wanted to ask you about. During those years, I think under Dr. McNamee, we integrated HPER [health, physical education, recreation]—

Lamkin

Yes.

Myers

—into the school of education, and also library science. Library science was just kind of out there.

Lamkin

Yes, I’m not sure just exactly how that all came about. I think, again, it was through Dr. Reynolds and Dr. McCall. The school of education, as I say, consisted of just the teacher education components, actually. And somewhere in there in the—I guess it was not too long after Dr. McNamee became dean, I’m not sure exactly what the year was, the university made the
decision that physical education would be more at home in the school of education. Maybe this is because their major purpose was training teachers and such. I'm not sure that that was a good marriage. You know, we had made it work, but I'm not sure that that's a good marriage and such. Library science, I think, probably belonged there so long as they were not large enough to have a school of library science.

Myers  The primary purpose was school librarianship.

Lamkin  That's right, that's right, training school librarians was what they were doing primarily. And, of course, it was a very, very small department that had struggled and struggled and finally, of course, met its demise during the time I was dean. There just were not the students to maintain that program. And it's unfortunate that Baylor does not have a library science program. But this has been true in a lot of schools around the country. Physical education has worked fine. I would have to say that Dr. McNamee had to work very hard to make them feel a part of the school of education, because as you look at it, even though they do primarily train teachers, their interest is not in the professional side of teaching, but is in the content side of teaching. And actually, I don't know, but you could probably look at the English department and say the English department is primarily in the business of training teachers because probably most of them go into teaching. And certainly, I don't think anyone would give serious consideration to putting the English department in the school of education. Although that was the idea of the old teacher education institutions, of course. Everything was education then. But, I guess the idea was that physical education and library science are more applied types of things than they are academic types of things. And, of course, education is more of applied. And there's the academic side to all of them, but there's still an applied kind of thing. So, I guess the idea was that they didn't fit in arts and sciences because there's nothing else in arts and sciences that is applied as such. Speech therapy comes the closest. And they have been separated now, haven't they? Or have they? I'm not sure. I guess they’re still part of the arts and sciences. But anyway, I guess that was part of the reasoning that was there.

Myers  It's a professional degree. It's a degree that in many cases carries a license and it's—so that separates it from liberal arts.

Lamkin  Separates it from just liberal arts, yeah.

Myers  Well, how would you describe the relationship between education and the
arts and sciences at Baylor? Was that friendly?

Lamkin

I think it’s generally been very friendly. There are isolated incidents of specific faculty members who are antagonistic toward the school of education. I started to mention earlier, and I still can’t come up with the name of the two professors at The University of Texas—J. Frank Dobie was in the English department and then the history professor, I can’t remember [Walter Prescott Webb]—but in the twenties for years and years they carried on a battle to get rid of the school of education at The University of Texas, the College of Education at The University of Texas. They decried it as being useless; and the idea was that if you know your subject, you can teach it. And that’s generally it. And so we have isolated incidents of this at Baylor. We have people that feel that way. But based on the department-wide kind of thing, I don’t think we have that kind of problem.

Myers

Well, I appreciate your time today. We’re about at the end of our tape and you’ve worked hard today. We’ve had to rework some things, so I appreciate it, and we’ll start there next time. Thank you.

Lamkin

Very good.

end of interview