Billy Dan Lamkin
Oral History Memoir
Interview Number 8

Interviewed by Lois E. Myers
February 20, 2002
Lamkin home, 14555 CR 211
Brookesmith, Texas

Myers
This is Lois Myers. Today is Wednesday, February 20, 2002. I am in
Brookesmith, Texas, and this is the eighth interview with Dr. Bill Lamkin.
This interview is sponsored by the Baylor University Institute for Oral
History, and it’s part of our project on the history of the university. Dr.
Lamkin, last time we talked, we came up to 1981 and you told us about the
process in which there was a search committee and you were chosen for the
deanship upon Dr. McNamee’s retirement. As you entered that new phase
of your life, what did you perceive as the greatest challenges that would be
before you?

Lamkin
As I indicated earlier, I really had never set my sights on becoming dean, and
so I really didn’t have any ideas about what I should be doing or what
changes I might want to make or anything of that nature. And so, I guess
my major goal was just to find out what my role was and to define it in some
way. Dr. McNamee had been relatively, I would say, passive in his leadership
in the fact that he had not asserted himself a great deal among the faculty.
He had just kind of kept things going. He innovated a lot of things that he
himself was involved with, such as the gifted program and reading programs,
and this type of thing. But he didn’t really initiate much with the faculty as a
whole to do things and such. And so I really didn’t have an example there of
what I should be doing. I guess the main thing I thought of was that we
needed some strengthening of the faculty in some areas. And we needed to
be giving more attention to the specific teacher education programs that we
had and to look at them so that we could make sure they made sense, that we
were providing for the students what they needed to have, and that we
should get the faculty members in those various programs communicating
more among themselves, so that they would be sure that they understood
how the courses they were teaching fit in with the courses that others were
teaching. And so that was a kind of thing I wanted to do. Secondly, I think
that most of the faculty perceived the department of HPER as being outside
the rest of the school of education. And there was some resistance, I think,
when I was appointed dean from HPER because they did feel like they
would like to have somebody there with—from their discipline that would understand them a little bit better. So, I thought I should do something in order to bring them more into the group, the whole school of education.

**Myers** Anything else that you had—saw before you—

**Lamkin** (speaking at the same time) Well, we had—before this all started, we had been investigating the accreditation by NCATE. And so, this was kind of an ongoing thing, but it was—I think that I felt at that particular time that Baylor needed to be moving on into more of a national recognition than we had had in the past. And some of our students had run into difficulty as they had gone back into their home states out of Texas, in getting certification. Unfortunately, there—this is true, I guess, in most professions, there is no automatic, reciprocal certification. And so a student from North Carolina who comes to Baylor to school and finishes a teacher education program is not guaranteed that they will have certification when they move back home. And in fact, in most cases they were required to do additional kinds of things. However, the one exception was that those schools that were NCATE approved very often were granted certification by the states on the basis of their NCATE-approved programs. And so that was a major goal, that if we could be NCATE approved, then we would be able to assure our students that they were could be certified in some areas. Now, that was not true in all states but it was true in many states. And so that was a major thing. And then I also wanted to emphasize our faculty getting more involved with state and national organizations, I guess, national more than state, since we had been relatively active in the state organizations but not as active in the national organizations. So, I tried to encourage our faculty in that area. We wanted to encourage research, but at the same time the faculty—the teaching load was very heavy on our faculty, and so we didn’t try to make that as a goal. But we did try to encourage those who wanted to get involved in research. And one way of doing this, of course, was to get them involved with some of their national organizations so that they could then present papers at meetings. And this would be a beginning to publishing and such.

**Myers** How did you feel—how did you perceive the relationship with administration, vice president and president, in terms of being on your side as you faced those challenges?

**Lamkin** The—I would say nothing but support from both President Reynolds and from Dr. Belew. I’m not sure what his title was at that time. He was the academic vice president or provost or—he was our—the immediate supervisor of the academic programs. And from the time we began—I
began as dean, they supported me in everything I requested so long as I could justify this. And so I—you know, as I tried to look at our programs and to send faculty to meetings to find out about the accreditation processes and things of this nature, they were always there to support the program—what we were doing. So, it was a—it was a very strong support that they gave me at that point both at a verbal level, as they made certain that the school of education accomplishments were recognized across the university and such, but also at the financial level because, as I mentioned earlier, at that point we were not in the black. And we had gone into a period in which the schools were to be financially autonomous. And so the budgets—the first budgets that we drew up showed us operating with a deficit of up to a half million dollars. And they supported that. They talked with me, and I talked with them about how we could cut expenses or bring in more income or whatever we might do in order to reach the point where we could have a balanced budget. But they didn’t have us curtail our programs or cut out things just in order to reach that particular goal.

Myers Okay. How about the dean of graduate studies?

Lamkin I’m not sure when the transition—I assume that Dr. Collmer was dean of graduate studies at that point, as I recall. I think Dr. Toland had moved on. I don’t remember the exact sequence, but it was during that time that the transition was made. I would, frankly, say that the dean of graduate studies was not as supportive as the other divisions. On a personal basis, I had a very good relationship with Dr. Collmer. Of course, my background being in English, we had some commonalities there, and we had a very, very good—but Dr. Collmer was not enthusiastic about our doctoral programs particularly. He was very—he felt they were suspect, I think. One of the early things that I did, as I became dean, was to look at our graduate program in school administration, doctoral program. Now, we had the master’s programs, and they—we were fairly comfortable with those. Those were mostly master’s of science programs that required anywhere from thirty-six to forty-five semester hours to complete them. And the variation there was in terms of how many hours it took to receive certain types of certificates. For example, the superintendent certificate required forty-five semester hours beyond the bachelor’s degree. And so in school administration, we had a forty-five hour program, but we also had a thirty-six hour program for those who just wanted to go for what was called mid-management, which would be the principal. And so they could complete the thirty-six hour program. Or, if they wanted to have both mid-management and superintendent, see, they could do the forty-five hour programs. So those were—those were good, stable programs and were well established, although we continued to examine them on a regular basis. But our doctoral program, first of all, was very small. It had dropped down to just a very few students.
that were active in the school administration program. And so, I basically, arbitrarily, but in talking with the chair of the department of educational administration, declared that we would have a moratorium on admissions into the graduate program in school administration. And so we stopped admitting anyone into that program until we could look at it and revise it and make changes and so forth as need be. It actually—I don’t remember the exact dates, but that probably happened about ’82 or ’83, after I had been in the deanship for a couple of years. And for about three to four years, we did not have any doctoral programs in school administration. We were examining it. During that time we had the changeover in faculty. Dr. [Henry T.] Norris, who had been a part of the faculty for quite some time and had come to Baylor from a junior college presidency in Kansas, was the chair of the department of school administration. But his leadership was very weak, I would have to say. And he was not really that interested in trying to promote the school of education or his program in school administration. And I believe it was in the summer of 1985 he resigned and took a position at Oral Roberts University. And I was in England at the time, and Dr. Belew called me to let me know what had happened. Actually, this was something that Dr. Belew and I had talked about for some time, and we were not sure what we were going to do with Dr. Norris. So we were both rather pleased that he had felt that he needed to go somewhere else, and so that worked out very well. I had been—for several years, I had been talking with Dr. Dwain Estes, who was a Baylor graduate at the undergraduate level and a doctorate from The University of Texas, and had been regional—had been director of Region 20 Education Service Center in San Antonio. And Dr. Estes had joined our faculty about that same time. I don’t recall the timing exactly. It seems like maybe he was there a year before Dr. Norris retired. I'm not sure, but he may have come after Dr. Norris left. I’m not sure of the timing. But anyway, Dr. Estes was a very innovative kind of person, and we talked with him about what we could do with that particular program. So he set about revising the program and developed the program that we know of Scholars of Practice [doctoral program]. Now, all of this is in reference to your question about the relationship with Dr. Collmer. And so it leads up to this: that in 1986 we said that we were reopening the program at that point for new admissions and so forth, as we had revised it and gone on. We had not put in new courses or anything. The major change that had been made was that we were having classes meeting on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, rather than on Monday, Wednesday, Friday, or Tuesday, Thursday, or night classes, or such as this. At that point Dr. Collmer made an issue with Dr. Belew that we could not open that program without his approval of it. And so through some memos to Dr. Belew and Dr. Collmer and so forth, Dr. Belew agreed with me that the program had not been closed by the graduate school and so there was no reason that the graduate school would have to be involved in opening the program. And so the program was reopened and we developed the program from there. I guess that Dr. Ann Karaffa and I—Dr. Karaffa had joined the faculty in 1981—and when I became dean, I asked her to
become the associate dean for graduate studies. And she and I talked about this relationship quite some time over the period of years. And we always felt like there was a little bit of undertow there that was criticizing the graduate programs in the school of education and that we really did not have the support there. Sometimes dissertations were questioned not on the basis of their form and—well, I guess the form that was used, which we perceived to be the graduate school's prerogative, to be certain that we were following the style manuals, but they were being questioned on content and procedures. And we did not feel that this was a legitimate role in the graduate school. Plus, it was people who were not familiar with what went on in a doctor of education degree trying to make a dissertation and program that matched what went on in an arts and sciences degree. And, of course, these were not the same kinds of things. And although we were always able to prevail and we got things going, it was a continual struggle there that we felt that lack of support, I guess you would say. Now later on, the graduate faculty—other departments on the campus were having the same type of difficulty. And the graduate faculty set up the rules that basically said the graduate office will be responsible for reading and approving dissertations on the basis of style but not on the basis of content. And so this was resolved in that particular way.

**Myers**

Uh-huh. Did—what did you think might be the objections? Was it—since it wasn’t just the school of education, it was just general, was it—

**Lamkin**

I talked about this with several of the other deans who were experiencing the same kind of things, and I would say the school of business at this point didn’t—they didn’t have any doctoral programs but they had master’s programs and they were receiving a lot of criticism also about their programs and such. But, I guess primarily they were because they did not have a terminal kind of activity, i.e. a dissertation or thesis or an oral exam which would cover the content of their work and so forth. That was an issue there and such. I guess our conclusion was that the graduate school was a strange kind of entity which basically has no faculty and has no income. And when a period of time when we were talking about the autonomy of—the financial autonomy of the schools—and yet the graduate school has income only as it comes from the general budget because they don’t have any—they teach no classes, and they have no faculty except as it is faculty from the other schools. And so we felt like it was just an effort on the part of the graduate school to assert their authority in some way, and that it was more of that than it was—I guess, a natural kind of first conclusion would be that there was a conflict between professional schools and liberal arts. And I’m not sure that that was the major thing. I think it was more of, Who’s going to be in charge?
Myers

Uh-huh. It’s all—it seems like over the years Baylor has kind of wavered between wanting to be an undergraduate institution, being strong there, and then kind of reaching out with these graduate programs, kind of a back and forth. Is that the way you perceive it?

Lamkin

I think that’s—I think that’s what was happening. And each new graduate dean has tried to strengthen the graduate programs, which in most cases meant enlarge the graduate programs. And then the successor of Dr. Collmer, Dr. [Henry H.] Walbesser—one of the things that he did initially, with the blessing of the other—of the administration, was to initiate new doctoral programs, and had some vision that there would be thirty-some odd doctoral programs at Baylor within a very short time. Well, some new programs were initiated, but that didn’t go very far. And soon, I guess, the administration realized that that was very unrealistic for what existed at that time for financial support of graduate programs. So it was kind of a drawing back in that particular area. But I think—you know, the idea of strengthening and enlarging, and you had that initial push and then there’s kind of a pullback that says, No, we’re really an undergraduate institution.

Myers

Well, I guess graduate education is—oh, has to do with the national economy and all kinds of things. It’s kind of—for some people it’s a luxury; for others they have to do it, depending on their career. You had said that earlier limits had been placed on the number of years you could spend in a doctoral program. You had to finish eventually, but they put a limit on years. And this was in place by the time you became dean. Did you lose many students through that change?

Lamkin

No, we really didn’t. What we had experienced previously, and I was a part of this the same as other faculty members, we would have students who would come in who had their master’s degree and they would be coming back to school to gain some certification. In other words, maybe they had completed a master’s degree in elementary education or in reading, and now they decided that they wanted to move into administration. And so they had to come back and get—take the courses that would qualify them for a certificate as a school administrator. When they would come in for advising we would say to them, You need to go on and apply for admission to graduate school—they had to apply for admission to graduate school because graduate credit was required of these certificates—but you need also to indicate that you’re going to work on a doctor of education degree, because after you complete those twenty-five, thirty, how many more hours they might need, when you complete those you may decide that you want to go on and work on a doctorate, and if you do then you can’t go back and
take those courses that you took as non-degree graduate courses and make them now degree graduate courses. So go on and apply. So we had, you know, our file drawers full of people who had come back for certification, taken their certification. That’s all they wanted and they—but they were in the doctoral program. Now, with this limit on it, we still might use the same kind of argument with them, but also we would have to tell them, you know, that they have only a certain length of time in order to complete that degree and that they would have to decide if they were going to go on with it or if they are willing to just stop. So actually, we did have more students coming in for non-degree graduate work, working only on certificates or endorsements, and fewer that were actually applying for a doctor of education degree.

Myers  How did the graduate school respond to those special kind of graduate students, postgrad students, I guess you’d call them?

Lamkin  Well, it’s—again, you see, the certification—most of the certification of the basic teacher, elementary or secondary teacher, required graduate work. And so postgraduate work was defined, as it was defined at Baylor—now, this is not true at all institutions—postgraduate work as defined at Baylor was not graduate work, (laughs) even though you know, the course might be numbered so that it was a graduate course. So the— the graduate school had to accept the idea that students would be admitted to take graduate work even though they were not working on a graduate degree. So I guess we probably were one of the only schools or departments in the university that were offering a lot of non-degree graduate work. But it was a very large group. And after we were able to explain to the graduate office why this had to be and why we had to work it that way, there was no problem. The only problems we had were sometimes students would slip through in some way and would sign up for postgraduate work, and when it came time to get them certified, we would see it listed as postgraduate, and then they would have to petition to the graduate school to count this—to change that from postgraduate to graduate. And sometimes we had some problems there getting the paperwork done on those kinds of things, even though in truth, there was no difference between what the students had done regardless of their classification. There was no difference in the instruction or the requirements for students who were postgraduate or graduate.

Myers  You mentioned that about—that you, when you reopened the program, you reopened it with, rather than the night classes, the Thursday, Friday, Saturday, this concentrated—wasn’t every week. It was—
Lamkin —once a month.

Myers Once a month. How did that improve the program?

Lamkin Well, it strengthened the program; we strengthened the program a considerable amount. The school actually had put in requirements on their Graduate Record Examination a few years before which were not always very stringently enforced. There were always exceptions to them. But this program had the Graduate Record Examination [GRE] requirement. There were other examinations, which could be taken in lieu of the Graduate Record, because in some places they were unable to find the location where they could take that. Also, it was found out that the examination which is used for admission to business schools—and I don’t remember the exact name of that [Graduate Management Admission Test, GMAT]. But the—actually, the predictive qualities of that particular examination are equal to that of the Graduate Record Examination. So that was also accepted as a possible entry requirement. There were other requirements that were on this program. One requirement was that the individual applying had to be in an administrative position or had been in an administrative position. So that was loosely defined. It was almost anything outside of just a classroom teacher. They might have been the head of a department within a secondary school, may have been assistant principal or principal. They could have been a director of guidance in counseling. There’s several—any of these would qualify in that particular area. They had to have the permission of their school to take the time to complete the program. The program required them to attend school every month. One month, they were there on Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, four days; and the next month, they were there on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. So it was a four-day, three-day kind of rotation. And that was every month beginning in September and continuing through May.

Myers I need to turn the tape.

Tape 1, side 1 ends; side 2 begins.

Myers This is side two of tape one.

Lamkin Let me go on just a minute—
Myers

(speaking at the same time) Let’s work on that some more.

Lamkin

—a little bit more about that particular program because it was innovative. And, interestingly, at the time we instituted this, it was one of the only ones. In fact, we knew of none other in education within the United States. Business was getting into this somewhat with what they referred to as their Executive MBA. Baylor had started an Executive MBA in Dallas. And I’m not sure whether that was at the same time or before ours or after such. But anyway, business schools were getting into this, but not in other professional schools at that time. So in order to meet the requirements of the graduate school, we had to show that students were in class the same number of hours that they were in class if they had been taking a night class or a Monday, Wednesday, Friday class or such. In the fall and spring terms the students took nine semester hours each term. And then in the summer they would take from six to nine hours, usually six hours. And the schedule was very, very well worked out and the students knew what to expect and what was going to come. And they had a series of examinations for admission into candidacy and so forth. Ideally, it was set up so that students could be admitted to candidacy after the second year. And then in the third year, they might have one or two courses to take but then they would be working on their dissertation. So it was a three-year program. Not very many people finished it in three years; probably three years plus a summer was the best they could do. And most of them took about four years to finish the program because of the dissertation, the time that it took to write the dissertation. I guess the other innovative thing in this program was that during their first summer, as they were admitted into the program and they came in the summer, the first thing they did was to have a seminar and an introduction to education in Texas. The class met in Austin and had interaction with the state board of education, with legislative committees, with the Texas Education Agency, and with the coordinating board. And it was a full week that they spent in Austin for that particular activity. The next summer they spent about ten days in Washington with the same kind of interaction, interaction with the Department of Education, meeting with Texas senators, meeting with the members of the House of Representatives from various districts that these people were from, and again meeting with a lot of the professional groups who have their headquarters in the Washington DC area. So they spent their time there. And then a third activity, which generally happened in their second year also, in the summer of their second year, they had an international experience. And they all went as a group. Arrangements were made for them to visit in various countries and visit the educational things that went on in those countries. They did a—of course, an English one year. They did a European one year. They did an East European one year. When the leadership in the department changed, Dr. [James L.] Williamson took over as chair, and he had a lot of
contacts in China. And so for several years they did Chinese educational tour. And on these—this was not a sight-seeing tour, although of course, they did take advantage of that, but they made arrangements to meet with school officials at all levels as they went into these countries. So they had the international experience. So it incorporated the state, the national, and an international experience within the program.

Myers: You say that there—there was no model for these—this way of doing things. Whose idea—who came up with this?

Lamkin: Well, Dr. Estes is the one that came up with this. And it’s kind of a combination of things that were on the borderline of academic acceptability and a real academic program. I guess Dr. Estes had had some acquaintance with Nova Southeastern University. Nova University is a school headquartered in Florida who offers, basically, a non-resident doctoral degree. Students study on their own. They may come together occasionally, once a year for a day or two, in which they have lectures by different ones. But the idea of so many hours for three semester hours work and so forth is not a part of their program. And as I say, it was very questionable in most academic circles. If we had an application from someone who said they had a doctorate from Nova University we generally put it aside, because, well, it just was not an academically honest program in our opinion. But the issue was how can we take people who are making, forty, fifty, sixty thousand dollars a year and tell them that they must take a leave of absence from that job and come back to the university on a graduate assistantship, where we could pay them maybe five thousand dollars a year, and say that they need to do that in order to get a degree. Another problem was, how do you find people who are in West Texas where there are—the closest university where they can get a doctoral degree would be Texas Tech at Lubbock or University of Texas–El Paso, and they live two hundred miles from either one of those, so how can they go up even twice a week for classes? So all of those things put together said, What can we come up with that would be different and would allow students who are active in their profession to do the work for a doctoral degree and make it so that commuting would not be such a problem? And so this is what—Dr. Estes came up with this model then to say, Well, what we will do is we can bring them in on weekends and that way they can drive one weekend a month or in some cases the students would fly in, because we’ve had students from San Angelo, from Edinburg, from Brownsville, all over, and they would fly in for the weekend. And they felt it was worth their efforts to complete the degree. And so I would have to say that it was his idea. Two or three years later you would read that—(coughs) excuse me—that other universities were following this same model. And it is becoming rather widespread at the present time. Major universities, not the Novas of the world, but major universities are using that type of
Lamkin That’s right.

Myers So you knew that there were enough jobs to spread out a little bit. Tell me how you chose your people to help you.

Lamkin Well, we had—I inherited the chairs of various departments. I was the chair of educational psychology. Dr. [Raymond Emmett] Biles was chair of elementary education. Dr. Rosewell was chair of secondary education—(coughs) excuse me—and Dr. Norris was chair of school administration, and Dr. Powers was chair of the department of health, physical education, and recreation. And so those were in place when I took over as dean. So we started with that nucleus to help to see what we wanted to do with the rest of the school then and how we could organize it to get our jobs done at that point. There was immediate need of, that we saw, of someone to direct the graduate program. And I had served in that capacity as associate dean, and so felt that there was a need for someone to be the associate dean for graduate education. As I say, Dr. Karaffa was new at the university. Actually if she had known I was going to be dean, she probably would not have come. (laughs) Well, she was—it was a period of change for her, which was very difficult for her. You may remember that her husband was hired as as vice president for development. And she was on the faculty at North Texas University [University of North Texas] and was director of graduate studies for that university, and had a very good job and a very good relationship there. Her husband, Gerald Williamson, came to Baylor as the director of—as the vice president for development. And she continued her job there until—so that she could complete that. And I don’t know the exact timing, but just at the time that she was moving to Waco, he died of a heart attack. And so here she was leaving a job that was very good for her and so forth. She lost her husband here in this setting, and she was in a new town where she knew people only because of her previous acquaintanceships with Baylor, and she had taught in Corsicana, and, also, her husband was involved in Baptist work at the state level and so she had traveled with him quite a bit. But anyway, it was a very strange kind of situation for her. And she—we had employed her as associate professor of education because she had the skills which we needed in learning disabilities and in reading. And so we did
employ her while Dr.—in the spring when we knew that her husband was coming, and she came down for an interview, and Dr. McNamee led the faculty in requesting that she be employed and so forth. But that was before he resigned, and she didn’t know that he was going to resign. (laughs) But I don’t—I hope that she never did regret it. But she looked back at that point and said, “I don’t know what would have happened if I had known that Dr. McNamee was not going to be there,” because she knew him and was well acquainted with him and so forth, through the reading circles that she had been associated with. I knew her slightly in the fact that I had done some work in Corsicana when she was a teacher there. And so I had known her slightly there but did not know her well at all. But the various chairs—the chairs of the department agreed that she was the ideal one (clock chimes) to take that position. She had the experience in this. She could bring in experience from another university and so they felt like it was a good appointment. And so she was the one that was selected there. We also felt the need that we needed someone to coordinate our undergraduate programs. And we looked at what we might need and how we might organize there. And we had kind of an arbitrary division of elementary education and secondary education, even though there was a lot of overlap in some people who taught in secondary education, also taught some elementary courses, and some who taught elementary taught, some secondary courses, and such. So the department chairs working with me, I guess, I made the suggestions and either they didn’t—they were afraid to disagree, (laughs) or they didn’t want to disagree, I’m not sure which—agreed that we needed another associate dean for the—look over the professional education area. More and more we had to have contact with the Texas Education Agency about programs and there had to be some coordination there in those areas. So Dr. Curtis was asked to serve in that position as associate dean for undergraduate education, actually. And then we also combined the elementary and secondary into just a department of professional education. And Dr. Rosewell became the chair of that department. And within that department they subdivided for curriculum purposes into an elementary and secondary. When they were talking about the elementary curriculum, well, those who taught in the elementary area. This again—these were not two dichotomous groups. Some people would have to meet with both groups because they taught in both areas. And Dr. Williams, W. C. Williams, was asked to become the chair of the department of educational psychology. So he took that position. Educational psychology included, primarily, the counseling programs, the associate psychologist program, and the doctoral program in educational psychology, and the special education programs. They were all included in that in the department of educational psychology.

Myers  Where did things like early childhood and gifted and talented come?
Lamkin: That all fell in the professional education area.

Myers: And the school administration was another area.

Lamkin: That’s right, was the other area.

Myers: And it had master’s and doctorate.

Lamkin: That’s right. Each—we had a master’s and doctorate in curriculum instruction, which was in that professional education area. We had a master’s and doctorate in school administration. We had master’s and doctor in the educational psychology areas, and we had the master’s programs in physical education.

Myers: Uh-huh, so you have—from four chairs you went down to three department chairs—

Lamkin: That’s right.

Myers: —and two associate deans?

Lamkin: That’s right.

Myers: Is that right? Okay. Earlier you had told us about the limitations in staff. How had staff grown to help?

Lamkin: Our staff at that particular point consisted, I guess, of two people. I had an administrative assistant, and then we had a receptionist who answered the telephone for the whole school except for the physical education. Physical education had also an administrative assistant for the chair there. All the rest of the work was done by student assistants. And we had a large number of student assistants. Every faculty member had available to them either a full-time student assistant, which was fifteen hours a week, or a half-time. They might share one with another faculty member. And this was based particularly upon their, especially, upon their needs, how much they had with them. And then we also had graduate assistants who were master’s degree people who worked with faculty and could help them in other professional
areas. They generally were not the typist and the filers. But they could help in research, library types of activities. They could help in teaching their classes, assist them if they needed some help there. They could help supervising some students on the campus. And so the graduate assistants worked there. Graduate assistants again were assigned on need. At any given time, we would have from ten to fifteen graduate assistants in the professional education areas. Physical education always had a large number of graduate assistants because the graduate assistants were used to teach the required physical education classes. And so they would have a large group over there. But the school as a whole had between thirty and forty graduate assistants. They weren’t paid very much. They really had to want to come back and get their degree. But the faculty members who wanted a graduate assistant would apply through their department chair and say, This is what I need them for and I need them about this much time. And, generally, we said the graduate assistants would work a flexible schedule that would be equivalent of about fifteen hours a week, something like that. And then Dr. Karaffa would get the list and she would then make the assignments of graduate assistants. Sometimes a graduate assistant would work with one faculty member; sometimes they would split their time with two faculty members. So all this, what they were doing was coordinated by the faculty members. In other words, not just—faculty members in two different areas that would pull them in a lot of different directions. And so they—that gave us a lot of help. We had in the curriculum library, which is now called the Learning Resources Center, we had a full-time person there who did not have faculty status, and so they were the librarian but they were not a library faculty. So that was another staff person. Now, soon thereafter we added a secretary for the both associate deans, and that gave us some people to help in that area. We had added another person in the learning resources center, so we had two people there. And they had graduate assistants who worked with them as well. We had a person in—and then we employed another staff person in the media area to help. We were getting more and more media going on. It was no longer just films and film strips. We had a lot of equipment in terms of VCRs and other type of projection equipment. We had the laboratory areas where students made overheads for their use in classes and where they laminated and made posters and such. And so we needed someone who could supervise that area and also could repair machines and such. So we employed a person who would be director of that media area to help us. So that increased our staff too at that time. We added another person in the physical education as a full-time staff person who would also help the faculty with special needs in that area. But we did not cut back on our student help in all those areas. We still kept the student help. And it was not until after I resigned as dean that secretaries were employed for each of the departments. Now, we—Dr. Estes had been able to generate some funds through the organization of a principal center, and through the generation of those funds he was able to support a full-time
secretary for school administration. And so he had a secretary there.

Myers Well, things have really grown.

Lamkin Yes.

Myers Was Draper still accommodating everything?

Lamkin We were stretching but we were able to get everybody in there. We had some rooms that had been used primarily for storage or extra rooms that became faculty offices. And so, you know, gradually, we were able to put everybody in particular—in little cubby holes, I guess. We had—later on we converted a room in Draper—we converted two rooms in Draper that had been set up for micro teaching labs, which kind of came on strong in the middle eighties and then kind of phased out. As we got students out in the schools more, there was less need for the role-playing type of things that we did on campus. And so those rooms we were able to convert into offices for faculty. We made an office for the person that we brought in to be head of our media area out of—taking a part out of storage, media storage area, made an office there. So we had to create some offices as well.

Myers Now, HPER wasn’t in Draper, was it?

Lamkin No. Now, during the early part of the time when I was dean, or maybe it was just before, I don’t remember the timing, but we did go through an extensive remodeling of Rena Marrs McLean Gym and created the suites of offices for them, which they had not had previously. They had really been crowded for any kind of office space. And so that was remodeled and made into a very acceptable kind of office area for them.

Myers Uh-huh. Well, when you were a student at Baylor you looked up to certain people who were on the faculty, and here you are, you’re up in that position now. Who were you—who would you go to if you wanted—for advice or information? Who was your friend in that sense? (laughter)

Lamkin Well, within the department, within the school of education, I had very good relationships with Dr. Karaffa, Dr. Curtis. And the three of us talked very often informally. We had weekly meetings of our department chairs and our associate deans, and so we met continually there. But Dr. Curtis and Dr.
Karaffa and I talked very often about things that were going on within the school. So that was a pretty close group during that time. And then the next group would be our department chairs that we had there. I should go back here and say that I have overlooked completely the Department of Library Science. And we need to mention, of course, the Department of Library Science. Dr. Ed Jennerich was the chair of that department when I became dean. And we worked with him and with Dr. [Patricia] Sharp, who was the other faculty member of that department, for several years trying to create a viable Department of Library Science. I guess the major problem was just the bodies that would make up the students in that department. They just weren’t there. And I’m not just exactly sure why. One of the problems was that we never could get a large enough organization to think about approval by the accrediting agency so we could offer an MLS, which is the terminal degree for library science. So all we had was a program to certify school librarians. And I think it was a very good program and we did our best to keep the technology up with what was going on in libraries at the time, but classes were two or three students. And the only thing that kept them going was the fact that Dr. Sharp taught the children’s literature course for the elementary teachers, and those—usually, she had at least two sections of that each term, which would number anywhere from seventy to a hundred total. And so tuition was brought in through that, which we could justify carrying this on a little bit farther. But after Dr. Jennerich left and another young man came in to take his place, I met with Dr. Sharp on a number of occasions and she agreed that it really was not reasonable for us to continue that department. I’m not, again, sure of the exact year, but sometime in the mideighties the Department of Library Science was dissolved. Dr. Sharp remained on the faculty. The other young man who was a part of the faculty was offered a position to stay there if he wished, because he had enough training in elementary education we could have used him in some other things. But he chose to move on and got a good job in Louisiana. And so there was no problem there. But Dr. Sharp continued and teaches in the children’s literature area.

Myers So that course stayed on.

Lamkin Oh, yes. Yes. So anyway, I had forgotten and had not mentioned that when I was talking about departments at an earlier time.

Myers And we mentioned earlier certi—people who were in charge of certification, the Herringtons.

Lamkin The Herringtons were in charge of certification, yes.
Myers: And did that stay when you were dean?

Lamkin: They were part-time faculty and part-time in that certification area. And they also organized the advising and things of this nature. Each of them were half-time. They taught two courses and then they were half-time in that position. And we added staff people there, also. There was one staff person who had been there for some time and then we added another one, so there were actually—four people were in the certification area.

Myers: Uh-huh, all right, let’s go to tape two.

Tape 1 ends; tape 2 begins.

Myers: This is tape—this is tape two of interview eight. Dr. Lamkin, you said one of your challenges, when you became dean, you perceived as being to strengthen the faculty. Tell me what you think at that time were the faculty strengths.

Lamkin: Academically, I guess our major strengths were in the area of counseling and special education. We had several people there in that particular area, and that was a growing area. And all of them were well qualified and were very strong in that area. It was not always a cohesive group. I’m not sure that counseling and special education go together that well. Although they all grow out of the psychology area, it just doesn’t—they just don’t fit together too well. We had some good strength in the reading area, which Dr. McNamee had of course encouraged and had kept going. The school administration was a very weak area, as I mentioned previously. And in the graduate area of curriculum, instruction was not a very strong area. So those—that’s—you asked for strengths but I gave you strengths and weaknesses at the same time. (laughter)

Myers: I was going for that. That’s good. Okay, you mentioned, too, that you wanted to encourage research among the faculty. Who, when you went in, were those who were involved in research who had that kind of interest?

Lamkin: Dr. Rosewell had an interest in this area, and he had become the editor of what was called the Baylor Educator. That magazine was founded under Dr. McNamee, and then another professor had come in, who had retired from the University of Houston, and came there as a professor for a few years—
I'll come up with his name later [Dr. Wallace Strevel]—had been the first editor of that. And then Dr. Rosewell had taken over as editor of that. And he himself did a lot of writing and publishing. But also, through that magazine he encouraged students and other faculty members. And so it became a very viable kind of magazine, which it was a professional magazine. It was not a news of school of education type of thing; it was a professional kind of thing. And so it received good attention throughout Texas for the time it existed. And it existed until just two or three years ago. Now it has become basically a house organ for the school of education to see what is going on in the school of education. So Dr. Rosewell was interested and did a lot of work in that particular area. Dr. [Thomas J.] Proctor, who was in the school of ed—special education, also worked considerably in that area. Dr. Karaffa was very active in publishing and speaking and such. Dr. Curtis did not write a lot but he was very active in in-service work, which is, of course, a major activity of people in the school of education, going to various schools for workshops and so forth. Dr. [Elden R.] Barrett, who had joined our faculty I think—I don't think he joined until after I became dean—anyway, was an expert in what was called assertive discipline. And he traveled all over the United States training teachers in that particular area and did some writing in that area. Those are the ones that come to mind at the present time.

**Myers**

Um, that's interesting. You mentioned this wanting to get them more involved in national organizations. Who among the faculty was most interested in that or most involved?

**Lamkin**

Dr. Curtis, again, was very involved, and Dr. Barrett. They became leaders in Amer—let's see, Association of Teacher Educators, ATE it's called. They became very active in that organization and took leadership roles and made a big—they increased the visibility of Baylor through those particular roles, very active there. We had several people in the reading area that—and some of them were not there that long—that were well known and published a great deal in the reading area. And again, we had the president of the National Reading Association, and I have blocked on her name. Phyllis was her first name, but I cannot think. But she had to travel so much and she found Waco to be a very poor place to travel from, and she was having great difficulty with the commuter airlines. And it was—whereas travel that should have taken two days was taking three days. And so she stayed with us for just a year and then had to move on. But she was—you know, that was the kind of person that we were trying to get in. And she made a contribution while she was there, and we were very pleased to have had her at that time. Dr. Estes, who was gaining more and more leadership role, did a lot of publishing particularly with his students. He worked with them on their dissertations and such and so he became a joint author on a lot of
publications that his students worked through. And Dr. Williams, very active in making presentations and in writing papers. He wrote—he was published in several papers in educational psychology areas.

**Myers**

Well, it sounds like, then, that you had a good basis to go from for your—to reach some of your goals and get more of them involved. You did have some new hires through these times. Just generally about the hiring procedure, how did you feel about your say-so in that, the department’s say-so, the field of folks you had to choose from, the people who were applying, that whole thing?

**Lamkin**

Well, the—during the time just before I became dean the hiring procedure had been formalized at Baylor so that there was a definite procedure that we followed. Now, as I was dean, it became more formalized as we had to complete more and more paperwork in terms of whether or not they had been informed about the type of institution that Baylor was, whether or not they—we had advertised this as we should have advertised the position and things of that nature. But we had a very good procedure at that particular point, which is still the procedure except for the additional paperwork, and the fact that we advertise for positions. And at that point, Baylor was in a good position because we were receiving literally dozens of applications for any position that we advertised. So this would seem to say that we were well recognized throughout the nation. It was not uncommon at all for us to have fifty or sixty applications for a position. Now, we had—a faculty committee was appointed. This generally consisted of at least two persons from the department where this person was going to have their major responsibility and then one person from one other department within the school of education. And that department received all of the applications. Well, they worked with me to devise the ad that would go into *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and then we had two or three other publications where we put this, also. And then they received the applications and they went through the applications. And I would talk with them from time to time. The chair of that committee would come in and talk about what they had and what we were looking for and so forth. One of the things that we had to emphasis over and over and over again was the religious affiliation, because we were at that point, although there was no written policy in this area, the university was still striving to have at least 50 percent of the faculty Baptist. And the general statement that was made was all of the things being equal, we’ll hire a Baptist over any other denomination. But we still want the best qualified person. And anyone outside of the protestant denominations were generally a hard sell. We did hire a Catholic while I was—soon after I became dean. And that was, you know, that was really unusual at that particular time. Not so unusual as it is now. We went through the process. We selected the person that we wanted. We brought those to campus that
were selected. There was no rule at that particular time. Later on there was
a kind of guideline that said for any position you should bring in at least
three people for interviews. We usually brought in two or three people if we
had that many that we really wanted to consider, but we really just brought in
those that we wanted to consider. And they spent usually two days with us
meeting with faculty, going out into the public schools, meeting with
administration. And we required them to make a presentation to the faculty
so they could get some idea about how they might act before class. And
then the faculty recommended to the search committee the one that they felt
would fill the position. That was given to me. I sent it to Dr. Belew, and
then received back from—with the recommended salary and recommended
rank. And then that was sent back with Dr. Reynolds and Dr. Belew’s
signature. There were occasions when they, Dr. Belew or Dr. Reynolds,
would call me and say, I have some question about this particular person.
Dr. Reynolds was very, very concerned about where people got their degrees.
And he—if we had a person from, for example, East Texas State he didn’t
have a very high opinion of those degrees, and he would question about
those. I don’t recall he ever turned me down on one. He just questioned
and wanted to know about others and he would have wanted applications on
that. Dr. Belew, also, sometimes would call and ask questions and such. But
all the recommendations that I made as dean to them were approved by the
administration, and they were appointed. Usually, I had talked to them
previously about rank and salary. Although in establishing the position we
had to give a salary range and a rank, sometimes we had to go outside of that
because of conditions. For example, when we employed somebody from the
public school, they might have had twenty-five years in the public schools as
teachers and administrators or whatever, the Baylor guidelines said that this
person would have to be brought in as an assistant professor because they
had had no college teaching experience. And so I would have to—if I—in
many cases, I felt they should be brought in at least as associate professor
and given some credit for this past experience because it related to what they
were going to be doing here. In fact, at that time the Texas Education
Agency required that all of those who taught in teacher education programs
have at least three years of teaching experience. And so we had to find
people with teaching experience and such. So we might have to negotiate
those kinds of things. And also the salary that a person was coming in
under, it might have to be raised a little bit, again, because of their previous
experiences and what they were doing and such. And even though they
came in as an associate professor, they might be getting a salary which was
equivalent to associate professors who had been there for quite some time,
because they did have this experience. But we negotiated those and it was
generally a support for them.

Myers

Were there ever any occasions where you really knew of someone out there
that you hoped would apply and you might not recruit them but let them
know that Baylor had this opening?

Lamkin  Oh yes, many times. You know, as you are with these people in various settings in the state and national areas, you become aware of certain people, who perhaps will be—would fit into your faculty. Of course, one of the strengths that we have in recruiting lies in the associations of Baylor with their students after they leave. And that’s not said very well. A big factor in recruiting faculty at Baylor is finding those people who have Baylor associations. And that has two or three kinds of things going for it. One thing is they know what to expect somewhat at Baylor. Although Baylor has changed since they were there, they know somewhat what to expect from Baylor and what kinds of things are there. Secondly, they will have more of a tendency to stay with you at that particular point, because they feel like maybe their coming home. And so it becomes a strength for them. And then thirdly, you have an idea of about what their back—a part of their background is, and that helps you also. So, you know, as you—through the years as you see people and talk with people, you say. Well, you know, someday when you get ready you might apply for a job here. That’s a way that we recruited Dwain Estes, that’s the way we recruited Jimmy Williamson, that’s the way we recruited Chester Hastings—those three particularly that I recall that had a Baylor connection or were in the community and such. So that was a—that’s a big thing. But then others that we recruited that had been as a recommendation of a fellow dean or someone who has known them when they were doing their graduate work or had known them in their profession.

Myers  Uh-huh. You mentioned people who had been teaching for years. What was the connection between new hires and folks in the schools in which we sent student teachers and that sort of thing?

Lamkin  I mentioned, I think last week, that we had a policy for some time of having borrowed teachers from the Waco schools, and many times those borrowed teachers would want to stay on our faculty. There have been occasions when, not immediately but a few years later, that person has come back as a lecturer on the Baylor faculty. And one person I can think of that was kind of in this role that we recruited was Dr. Barrett. Dr. Elden Barrett had been principal and a teacher-principal in several schools around the area, and we knew him quite well because he and his teachers worked with our student teachers. And when Dr. Barrett reached a point that—well, actually, I guess we went to him and said, Isn’t it about time that you considered coming over to join us? And we recruited him in that particular way. Again, we had to do a national search and we did. I guess in those cases I’m not sure how I feel about it. It was kind of a foregone conclusion that he was going to be the
one we would chose, but at the same time I guess you never know that there might be someone else. And Dr. Barrett was brought in to be the director of student teaching. Dr. Curtis had been serving that role as director of student teaching along with his other work directing the undergraduate programs. And so Dr. Barrett came in as the director of student teaching because he had had so much experience out in that area. And then we needed an elementary science person at one time to assist Dr. Curtis, who was teaching a lot of the elementary science, but also there were other things that we needed Dr. Curtis for. And so we had one of our own graduates who had taught science as a graduate teaching fellow. And he was working at the service center. And we went to him and said—well, we employed him first just as a lecturer, so we didn’t have to do a search or anything. We employed him as lecturer and then a few years later the administration approved our putting him on a tenure-track position. Unfortunately, he didn’t receive tenure. (laughs)

Myers

How—how big a concern to you was creating diversity among your faculty?

Lamkin

We were very concerned about it. And we advertised in publications that went primarily to the African-American population. But we received very, very few applicants—applications from anyone, any minority. We did employ by word of—because we got it by word of mouth, one African-American woman, who was very strong. This again was a friend of ours from—who was dean at Texas A&M. He said, “I have a person who has been working with me for three years who is finishing her degree. And she is from the Temple area, and you might want to talk with her.” And so we talked with her and she came to Baylor as a faculty member, Nancy Harrison. And stayed there for quite some time. Nancy left just a year or two ago. Her husband was—came a little bit later as pastor of the Second Baptist Church [First Baptist Church] on Jefferson and then they were divorced. He is still in Waco, but she took a position somewhere else and left just two or three years ago. And she was a very, very good faculty member. So as far as I recall she is the only African-American that we’ve had. We did have a Hispanic whom Dr. McNamee had hired; Dr. [Dolores Muga] Coker was Hispanic. And she was in one minority that we employed. We had an oriental, Wong, May Wong, who stayed with school administration. And she was an excellent teacher, and was really one that we wanted to keep but she stayed with us only one year. She was a—she had been a principal in the Houston schools, and she left, frankly, she told us, because she had no peer group in Waco. And she moved back to Houston and was able to get a McDonald’s franchise. (laughs) But every time we recruited, we tried to find minorities, tried to recruit by word of mouth as well as our advertisements. But we just—we attracted very, very few applications. And the few
applications that we did attract were not qualified.

Myers

Uh-huh. What are your reflections on the cause of that?

Lamkin

Well, I think two things. First of all, there were so very few minorities receiving doctoral degrees. If you looked around at the universities in general, you'd find out that they were not graduating very many. And secondly, the demand was so high that most of them had jobs a year before they finished their degree. And they just—in other words, in the case of Nancy Harrison that we employed as she graduated from Texas A&M, that’s the way they were getting their jobs. They were not going out and applying—reading The Chronicle of Higher Education and applying for a job.

Myers

That’s interesting. You mentioned the borrowed teachers and I assume that part of the program are these part-time teachers supervising student teachers and adjunct professors. In what way were these—did these fit in with the department?

Lamkin

The departments generally were the ones who recommended the people who would fill these positions and such. Dr. Curtis and then Dr. Barrett found people who could supervise student teachers in various areas. We were becoming and had become more specialized in our supervisors of student teachers. And we were using a person trained as a speech therapist to supervise the student teachers in speech therapy. We worked out an agreement with the school of music so that they would supervise the student teachers in music. And we actually paid part of the salary of someone in the music school to supervise those in that particular area. And if we had other areas where we needed some expertise, well, we tried to find a person to supervise in that area. Most of the time, however, they were generalists, either elementary or secondary teachers as opposed to having been just elementary language arts teachers, because we just did not have enough students to have that kind of specialization among our supervisors. But these people were recommended by the directors of student teaching. They mostly were former teachers. Teachers who had our student teachers and then had either retired or resigned and wanted part-time work but did not want full-time work. In the other areas we used lecturers as we needed them for specific kinds of courses. At the graduate level, for example, in school administration we generally hired someone as an adjunct professor to teach school law, because it’s such a specialty area and one that people have to keep up with that our own faculty would not have the time to keep up with it particularly when they were just teaching that course once a year. And so we would have somebody in school of law that would work with them. We might also have someone in school finance that would work with them. So
we’d have adjunct people there. There were times, also, when we would have a situation in which the—we had too many people signing up for particular classes and we would have to add a section. This might happen in reading, which was very common, or in some other curriculum area in elementary and such. So we would go out and just try to find someone who had worked in that area. I guess our major resources were the same as before. But we also had some faculty wives as they had moved in, and again, they did not want to go to work full-time but they wanted to work part-time. And so they would take that kind of position to supervise student teachers or to teach one class or two classes on campus.

Myers  Uh-huh. I have one more question about the faculty.

Lamkin  Okay.

Myers  I don’t know when this came in but the idea of a teacher exchange where a Baylor professor goes out into the classroom for a year or a semester maybe and vice versa, was that under your deanship?

Lamkin  We tried that on a few occasions and we did have some who did this, yes, while I was dean. Dr. Anita Baker, I remember, was one who taught in the schools for a semester. And the kindergarten teacher that she was working with came back into the schools and worked. We—I don’t remember anyone other than her who did that. We did talk it up and we did try to arrange it, but it was very difficult and quite frankly not many college teachers are willing to go back to the structure of the public schools for a semester. It’s really a change in culture to try to do that.

Myers  I can imagine. Well, we’re at the end of our tape so we’ll start up there next time. Thank you.

end of interview