Kenneth Hammond interview

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Jones: Today is part of the Living History Project. We are interviewing Dr. Ken Hammond. I’m the interviewer, Bob Jones; Ham Howard is running the camera. Ken would you start off with a brief biography of your life up to this point?

Hammond: I’m a native of the State of Washington, and while that’s not unique, as Ham will testify, it’s a little unusual for the faculty at Central Washington University. 1934 was, I guess, the bottom of the Great Depression, and we were a family of limited means, I think it’s fair to say. I was born in January at Mrs. Allredge’s House on the edge of Old Kettle Falls on the Columbia River. That’s about a hundred miles from Spokane. I mention that because Mrs. Allredge was a neighbor. There was no doctor there; a doctor showed up a couple of days later. I’m now nearly sixty-five and I’ve never yet been checked into a hospital, and having not been born in one may be a good start for people. I’m passing that on. Old Kettle Falls is now covered with water, mostly, from the back waters of Grand Coulee Dam, but the people moved to Meyer’s Falls which was nearby, but higher. And then they moved to change the name of the town to Kettle Falls. So what you know as Kettle Falls is not the Kettle Falls which was on the Columbia River that I was born in. Actually we lived many miles back in the hills in an area known as Sherman Creek. And it was on the north half of the Colville Indian Reservation. We had a farm, of sorts, mostly rock, and we had a program which dealt with poverty. It was called “work.” The effort that was required to subsist in the 1930’s and the 1940’s was substantial, but I believe that work ethic has served me well over the years. I’ve got a lot of stories of life in that area, but I’ve brought a photo of the school. This was my school. There were eight grades in one room, and at that time some grades had no one, and I was the whole first grade. As a matter of fact I was the whole second grade the next year, and I’ve told the story several times that I had to repeat the first three grades. I started school when I was five, and the entire library for the school was about three shelves with four feet each maybe, and since my brother who is in this photo as well, right there, had taught me how to read a couple of years before, I went through the first grade before Christmas, but I was still only five, so the teacher made me do it all over again. And at the end of January then she let me do the second grade which I then had to do over again the next fall; I repeated that in the third grade, (?) wound up doing all the books that were available for all three grades. But it was not that limited because I could listen to the eighth graders, and there were three of them, after all. Anyway that picture tells more about me and where I’ve come from, and I think it’s good for us to look back, as to where we came from. It was a very difficult area.

Jones: How many members of your family are in that picture?

Hammond: There’s only my brother and I in this photo. My brother is here: I’m here. I had a sister who was two years younger, and then eventually another sister who was fourteen years younger. These were all the children in the area for a space of probably three miles in each direction. So you had people who might have walked as much as three miles, everybody walked to that school at that time. There was a horse barn there, but saddling a horse was not worth your time, if you wanted to, you know, it was only a mile or two miles or three miles to walk, so most people walked. And the barn eventually was torn down. There was no high school. My father started driving the school bus to Marcus High School. This school was called Stony Acres School. This was District Number 19. My mother had gone there and she named the school which she had taken out of a book that she had read. My mother got to the eighth grade, but she didn’t get to take the State exams because she had to plant something that day in the fields. But, so, my father only went to the third grade for several reasons. Partly because he didn’t start school until he was eleven, and a fourteen year old in the third grade wasn’t working out all that well. In any event he started driving the school bus to Marcus High School which was thirty-four miles away, but it allowed me to ride a bus. The only way to
make sure the bus came to our house which was at the end of the line was for him to drive that bus, and it took about an hour and a half each way to get there. And sometimes we did it twice a day. We did not belong to the high school; we didn’t pay any taxes to Marcus High School, but Marcus ran a bus out there for us anyway. The school was very small. In that particular part of the world the normal expectation was that a man would eventually get out of school, or soon, take a job and stay with it until he died, or retired. My brother did just that. He came home to what we called supper, when he was eighteen he had taken a job on the railroad, and he said, “Just forty-seven years and I can retire.” And that was, he never looked back. I didn’t follow that particular pattern. I actually liked school, and I even had, sort of, fleeting thoughts about going on, but I didn’t have a clue as to the mechanics of how to do that, and there were no school counselors, and the bottom line was there was no money either. It was an accident, which is a story I won’t tell in total, but it was really a peculiar combination of circumstances that allowed me to go to college. I was too young when I graduated from high school to go to work in the woods, and that was a very prominent matter. It was OK if I went on to school, since I couldn’t get a job anyway for a year, so it wasn’t at least disrespectful. This college(?) were desperate for students in 1951 because the vets from World War II were leaving, so a recruiter actually came to our school which was a unique event; none had ever been there before, I think. And I was not interested in listening to her, but was talking to my English teacher, and before it was over, as Valedictorian of my class, a graduating class of thirteen, she promised me that we, I could get a scholarship that would pay all my fees and tuition for a year. I took it. It turned out to be only a hundred dollars, fees and tuition were almost nothing in those days, but I promptly left high school, lied about my age, went to work on the railroad, and started saving money to go to school. I told them I was eighteen and the railroad records will show that I’m a year older than I am. I worked on the railroad five days a week. I worked on the farm two days a week. We did our fanning at night, and I saved enough money to pay for a year at Eastern, and I didn’t realize when I signed up to go there, applied, it was a teacher training school. A College of Education is just a place you get an education. I didn’t know there were teacher training schools. And it was really something of a shock, but I can tell you becoming a teacher was nowhere on my list, nowhere. If you listed all the things I liked to do, that would not have made the list, I’m sure. Anyway, I was only going to go to college one year because I was sure that after one year I wouldn’t have the money, but I soon began to realize I could do this, I could pay for it. And not only that, I was having a pretty enjoyable time. I really thought, “I’ll just do this forever I can go to college forever” And it kind of worked out, I did. That’s the way it worked out. There was a question there about my military service. I joined the Marines Air Reserve Unit, and volunteered for boot camp in the summer of 1953, the better to get to the Wars, I thought, but Korea wound down, and they never did take me, even though I wanted to go in and get the G.I. Bill. But I wound up putting in four years in active reserve and four years of in-active reserve. My brother signed up to go, and they took him. So he spent two years in the military service. I never used his G.I. Bill. The second year of college, I didn’t go back in the fall, I had a good job in a sawmill. I was making pretty big money, fourteen dollars a day, so I worked into the fall. It turned out it was a very cold miserable fall, and we were all out there re-piling huge stacks of lumber in the wind blowing in zero weather, and I thought, “That could be me forty years from now; there’s got to be a better way.” And I packed my bags and went back to college. I met a freshman named Britta Jo Torrance, and a year later we married. And if she keeps being good, I’m going to continue that operation for, it’s now been what, forty-five years. But any way being a college student forever was no longer an option. I was probably going to have to make a living. And I left Eastern in 1956 with two degrees, one in Geography and one in Education, and there were lots of teaching jobs, and no wonder, the pay was pitiful. The State minimum was $3200.00. I took a job teaching high school at Camas down near Vancouver, and my teaching assignment was four sections of sophomore Biology, one section of senior public speaking, and one section of eighth grade reading and spelling. This was every day of the week, and frequently there was no lunch hour because you had noon duty. It’s hard to get really too sympathetic with people who think they are overworked. But, anyway, by the spring of 1958 it became clear that we couldn’t live on my salary. There were now two children, my wife and I, and I decided if I was going to starve I would simply go back to school. And I took my little bit of retirement money out of the teacher’s retirement fund, got an assistantship to teach World Geography, and went to Oregon State College for a Master of Science Degree. I had a specialty in Natural Resources and a minor in Fish and Wildlife Management. I tried to do the entire program in one calendar year, but with teaching halftime and a few other things, I didn’t quite make it, but I almost did. I had to finish writing the thesis the next year when I was invited to go back to Eastern for about a year to teach as a one year replacement on the faculty. And I thought, I remember also I was paid $5,000.00 to go there that year. But the first quarter my teaching load was seventeen credits, five classes,
one repeat. Four separate classes, five sections. I didn’t get much writing done I assure you. It was difficult, but I did finish writing and defended the thesis the next summer, and had applied to the University of Washington, Geography Department for a Ph.D. Program, and I was accepted. I had an assistantship. In 1960 I taught Physical Geography and one quarter I taught characteristics of the Northwest, I had taught both of them before at Eastern, and so they simply gave me assignments which were something I had already done and that was very good. But while I was there, it’s a very long story, but I wound up applying for and receiving a Ford Foundation Internship with the State Legislature, and I worked for fourteen months with the Legislative Council. It was a very rewarding experience. In the mean time I was offered a job, or was a one year replacement in the fall of 1962 in the Department of Geography at Central. And I came here as a Lecturer at a salary of $6,400.00 as I recall, and assumed that I would go back for my Ph.D. Program the following year. In fact, before the year was over I assumed the position, or asked to take position of the Director of Extension Correspondence, and as I recall the pay was something like $8,600.00 for twelve months. I actually had many separate responsibilities and jobs, one of which was to direct the Sophomore Honor’s Program, which was, at that time, it’s different from the Honor’s Program today, the Douglas Honor’s College. But in addition to directing that, I got my first experience in team teaching. Bill Bakke of the Technology Department and I team taught a class. It was extremely rewarding and I subsequently did a lot of team teaching with a large number of faculty. I really enjoyed it. I also visited a fair number of first year teachers and interviewed them that year. And Roy Ruebel and I used to go out, and others. The main reason that I was doing it, probably, was not because that I was the best interviewer, but because my program had money, and therefore I could travel and I was traveling a lot any way, and so I did it, and I felt that was a good contribution and I enjoyed it. There were a lot of other jobs, but the Extension was the focus because there was a need to get Central accredited with the National University Extension Association in order that our credits would be transferable. We were not accredited prior to that time. I agreed to try to do that, and it took two years. And I did just that. In the mean time, my wife had graduated from Central, and while I felt the urge to complete a Ph.D. I was no longer quite so interested in what I was doing at U. W, and so in the fall of 1965, Jo, my wife, took a job in the Ypsilanti or in the Willow Run Schools in Ypsilanti township as a teaching librarian. Her undergraduate training had been part in Librarianship, and I took an assistantship at the University of Michigan, and we moved to Ann Harbor. I was the very first graduate-teaching assistantship in the School of Natural Resources at the University of Michigan. And at the time I was there, I was the only one who was teaching, who had responsibility for teaching a class, and I taught a senior level class called Resource Conservation, or Conservation of Natural Resources, actually I think was the title. The class was actually assigned to my Chairman, the instructor had passed away, my Chairman had been assigned the class, I had taught the class before, both at Eastern and at Central. And in the two years I was there, he did not spend one minute in that class. He did sign the grade sheets, usually, but when I signed them they went through any way. We both thought it was a great arrangement. His name was Lyle Crane, and I admired him a lot. He had plenty to do without teaching my class which I could do very well, and it was a very good arrangement. I came back to Central in the summer of 1966 with a peculiar title, I was the Visiting-acting Chairman of the Department of Geography that summer of 1966. And I especially remember writing the annual report for the prior year. Don Warner was the Dean; he asked me if I had my annual report done, and I sort of said, “What?” Since I hadn’t been here, but I wrote the report, apparently, Marty Kaatz told me that the Dean thought it was a very good one, and maybe annual reports were not that important, I really don’t know, but I did the best I could do with it. I had resigned my position from Central when I left in 1965. I probably could have taken a leave, but I did not want the job of Director of Extension back, and any way I thought it would be very difficult to hire a replacement of quality if the likelihood was there that I would simply come back and take the job. In addition, I just figured I could get a job any time, so it didn’t really matter if I took leave or not. And in those days it was a pretty good bet. You could get a job. That was my experience for most of my life; there were plenty of jobs. Starting when I was nine years old I worked for wages. I took a job driving a horse pulling hay up into the barn. It was a pretty good job. Only ten hours a day, and I made five cents an hour. I worked twelve days and I made six dollars. I was paid in six silver dollars; I should have kept it. Any way, I returned to Central in 1967, I was rehired at Central in 1967 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography. I had gotten a grant through the Federal Office of Water and Resources Research which, with sonic matching money from Central, totaled more than $40,000.00. And that was a very large amount of money at that time, several times my annual wages, and it was very convenient to have it to fund my remaining dissertation, research, and writing, and I got very accustomed to hiring students as assistants through grants, and throughout my career I did rather a lot, in fact I got a lot of grants. As a matter of fact,
it’s probably something of an aside here, but I don’t even know how many grants and contracts I worked on and applied for at Central, but it was a lot, two dozen at least, or more.

Jones: When you came back, did you have your Doctorate?

Hammond: I did not. I finished writing while I was here. I had been in residence at Michigan two years, which was the minimum required, and this grant was funding my dissertation, but I came back here, I taught part time, part of that time I bought out with grant money. And I taught in Olympia, as well, because my research included doing work in Olympia. And Marty Kaatz, bless his soul just simply assigned me to teach a couple classes over in Olympia, so I could go over there teach on Wednesday night, Thursday night, and do research and interviewing during the day. It was a very convenient operation. I could pay for the travel through extension courses, or through my grant, or whatever, so I actually taught some classes while I was doing it.

Jones: Marty was the Department Chairman?

Hammond: Marty was the Department Chairman. Marty was the first Department Chairman and remained Chairman for many years. And I’ve said many times, and I told him, he was the finest chairman one could imagine. He always said, ‘Well, the Department just kind of ran itself.” Marty was the person who really assembled the people in the Department and set the tone for that Department, and if I have drawn up specifications in advance, I could never have drawn up a better set of specifications for colleagues or a Department to work with, than I enjoyed here for many years.

Jones: So you came on, on a tenure track?

Hammond: I was on a tenure track position, that’s right.

Jones: Prior to that, you probably weren’t.

Hammond: I was not on tenure track when I came here, I was here as a visiting replacement for one year before that. But as I said, I got a rant and over the years. I’ve brought more money to the University than I was ever paid total. That includes of course, the largest single grant the university ever got, $1.46 million which I got to help assist native American and native Alaskan students to graduate school. I left before that grant was completed, we were spending about $200,000 year on it, and it should continue through the year 2001. But it was... I didn’t realize that it was the largest grant the University had ever gotten when I applied for it, and of course I didn’t really expect to get everything I asked for, any way, but I did. I think my experiences with, just grants and contracts would consume the entire hour, experiences just with the Business Office could consume some of that. As a matter of fact at one period of time I quit doing that because it was so difficult, I felt, to work through the Business Office on campus. When Marie, Marie Roethier first, then she married Nick Heinz, when she was there, it was great. She would run interference for me through all of the other people who I never could understand what they wanted. But when she retired, and except for a couple of contracts, I did nothing for several years. It was not a very desirable situation from my stand point. I retired at the rank of Full Professor. I was twice elected to Chair the Department of Geography, and from my perspective at Central, as I told them at the time, the word “Chairman” is not a word. It is a sentence. It is a four year sentence. I was not... I did the best job I could do, but I was not happy with the meetings, the forms, the reports, the harassment, and the general lack of respect I felt was accorded the Chairs of departments. We were asked to work all summer for $200.00 for many summers. I had absolutely no discretionary money for years in the Department. We just bought Xerox paper, and so on. At one time the Dean wanted to approve every change I made, even class size. I finally suggested, I would send one in for every one person, and somehow that got changed, anyway. I felt it was pretty low esteem for what really was deserved. We spent a lot of time supplying numbers to the Deans and the Provost. Numbers which really didn’t mean what they thought they would mean. They were going to use them even though I tried very hard to persuade them that they could not be intelligently useful in the decision making purposes because of the limitations. I think I was unsuccessful. They were used, not
intelligently, but used. Anyway, I think you...I got the feeling that I was spending my time doing too much of that. It was time to do something else, so I retired, at the end of Fall quarter, 1997, or the January 1, 1998, which in a sense, ended a career that had left me doing what I wanted to do to begin with, just keep going to school forever.

Jones: You didn’t take phased retirement?

Hammond: No way! Phased retirement is not for someone who is as intense as I. If I were around part of the time, I would be working full time. If I’m going to work full time, I may as well stay on full time, so I took...I just...and anyway, let’s face it, TIAA-CREF is not that bad. Therefore, why struggle with the current times. Plus, I did not feel, and I do not feel that the University is very well managed at the moment. I don’t believe the President is doing a good job, and apparently many of the faculty agree with that, therefore, if I thought I could have stayed around long enough for it to be back on track, I might have done so, but I think my age...time was against me on that. So I gave it up. I taught in a lot of other programs, besides the Department of Geography from time to time. For example, I team taught a class with Ray Smith in the Humanities Program, and it was on the Columbia River. We had a real good time with that, and some really good students, and if I haven’t said it before, I’ll certainly say it again, I had a lot of really good students at Central. There were some deficiencies here and there, but I had a lot of really good students. I team taught Environmental Studies Program for many years, for more than twenty years, Marco Bicchieri and I, plus, frequently an economist like Richard Mack or someone would teach with us, a course in the Spring quarter that was extremely rewarding kind of thing, and the class was pretty popular.

Jones: You talk about the exceptional students you had here, were you able to further their careers in ...?

Hammond: Oh, I think so, but I’d leave that for them to evaluate. There’s an old saying, you never want to take credit for anyone else’s success, unless you’re willing to take the burden of their lack of success; therefore, I did the best job I could do with them, and many of them have turned out very well. In fact I’m going to mention that later. I just am delighted with my students. I also team taught a course with Bob Yee one time. I team taught with Bob Bennett in the Physics Department, courses in energy. Clint Duncan joined us for summer programs for teachers. I got the grant, one of many, and could pay teachers to come here, all of their expenses. Tuition, their fees, parking, which presented me with a problem with the Business Office. But anyway, we had a very successful program I felt for twenty people. I got another grant for teachers in the Yakima area. I could take ninety of them on a course that’s spread over two quarters. John Ressler helped me with that. John Ressler and I team taught resource management courses, and many others. I do not know how many courses I team taught with Curt Wiberg, and Skip Smith, and others, Bill Barker, but there were a lot. I found them to be a lot of work, but well worth the effort to work with those people.

Jones: Were these classes taught through, or handled through the Geography Department?

Hammond: Some were and some weren’t. It didn’t matter, you know. Some Environmental Study Courses were a separate Program. I spent a lot of time in the Resource Management Department, or Resource Management Graduate Program which really, in very large measure was modeled after the work that I had done at the University of Michigan, so the Resources Management which gives you a firm foundation in the Bio-Physical aspects, but also in policy aspects. That is a jointly operated program between Anthropology and Geography. I liked to be in a position where I really didn’t care where the class was. If it was worth doing, let’s just do it. Now, let’s be blunt; there was always some concern on the part of some people about who gets the credit hours, really a sad situation, because that’s not important. But I never, I tried to stop even thinking about that. If this is an opportunity to teach a class and it’s labeled as Political Science aid I can contribute, or Humanities, who cares. And in many cases I’ve taught them as an unpaid overload anyway, so who should complain. I used to teach a literature course in the evenings, environmental literature with Bob Benton for English. A very rewarding class, but I think it was always taught as simply an add-on, unpaid overload. It was fun. Why not, you know? And Bob Benton was a very good colleague. I think, and I said this at my retirement party, if anyone remembers me, the one thing I’d
like you to remember is if they knew me. They knew I gave whatever I could and whatever I did. Just, you
know, I grew up that way. You work all out, and it was at no point did I feel as if something was wrong. I
was overworked. I’m still alive, I couldn’t have been overworked too badly. I’ve been asked about
problems I encountered. I’ve mentioned a couple of them. There were...I really believe, and I’ll say again,
that I think Central had faculty that was far better than the State deserved for the way we were treated, and
far better than the administration deserved, mostly. Perhaps I was more sensitive than most. But I really
believed that if I knew what I was doing, I deserved support, and if I didn’t know what I was doing, I
deserved to be fired. Don’t tell me what to do. Don’t give me a lot of orders. I don’t take orders very well. I
will drive myself to excess. No one can drive me anywhere; therefore, work with me and I will work very
well. If you try to get me to work for you, I will probably not be quite so cooperative. Anyway, the most
difficult times that I experienced at Central were not involving me individually. They were really the RIF
times, when people were being, tenured faculty and others, new appointments were being dropped, the
atmosphere was very poor. It pitted one individual faculty member against another too often, or one
Department against another. It was a very difficult period.

Jones: Was the Geography Department involved in the RIF program?

Hammond: We did not lose any tenured faculty, but we lost outstanding new appointments who were on
tenure track. One of the individuals was eventually, or went to Boise State, and was selected Teacher of the
Year down there one time. He was a very good potential faculty member, but we were then reduced, pretty
much, to the core of our tenured folks, Kaatz, Jakubek, Eberhart, Andress, Ressler, Macinko, and me,
which was the Department for many years. That... no new hires, losing no one, Jim Brooks joined us later,
but... no, we were not involved in losing tenured type, but it was a very difficult time, none the less, for all
of us because it affected the entire atmosphere of the University. I think, to have justify your existence on a
continual basis is always difficult, and I really believe that sometimes the focus was lost. The work that
justified the existence of the University is the teaching-learning, research publication, public professional
service. That’s the work of the faculty. The Faculty’s work is what justifies the existence of the University,
and everything else is peripheral, everything else is support. And if it isn’t, and currently it is not at Central,
it is strictly not, then you’ve got a bad, potentially a bad situation. It creates, I think, a very unhealthy
climate. The University certainly had its share of, had occasions of really good leadership. I felt that the
transition from what had been a College of Education, primarily devoted to training teachers, and to a
Liberal Arts School was well done by Jim Brooks as President, He was very interested in that, and it was
under him that Departments were formed. Before that we had Divisions, and Departments then began to
take on a much larger role, a more important role. He did a good job of that. I think there is at least one
thing that applies to Jim Brooks he’s a first rate human being, and there’s an old saving that first rate people
surround themselves with first rate people. Second rate people surround themselves with third rate people,
and third rate people, probably can’t tell the difference. Jim Brooks tried to find, I think, assistants, and so
on, who were first rate people, and the fact that some of them went on to become University Presidents
elsewhere, Charley McCann, Don 1er else were Department Chairs elsewhere. So it was, he was
sufficiently confident, secure that he could do that. I think, I want to comment because Don Garrity
deserves some credit. He and I had many differences. He was important in developing a greater
International awareness on campus, I think. Japan was his hobby, after all, and he wanted greater
involvement for the University (?). I felt very good leadership was taken by Dale Comstock in the Graduate
Office. He elevated the quality of the Programs and expanded the number of Programs. He also maintained
that he wasn’t just a director of research, but he was out getting money for research projects. I directed at
least two or three of the Programs which he got funded through the Department of Energy. And he was, as
far as I know, was always happy with the work that I did. He was happy to get the money, and he was
happy to have me manage the Program. Ed Harrington was active in reforming and improving the General
Education Program. He sent a team of us to Colorado Springs under the Danforth Foundation for a summer,
and the team was Don Schliesman, Tony Cariedo, Dave Hoford, and I. Out of that we got some pretty good
ideas, I think, toward how the General Education Program should go, and for many years it was, pretty
much, along that mold. Of course, with new President Nelson, who wants to change things, primarily for
the sake of change, not necessarily making them better, that’s an editorial comment, it was changed once
again. And I don’t know that it was better. I think that the leadership developed by a lot of faculty, it’s not
widely recognized. Very many times faculty work in comparatively anonymous jobs. They are working on
major committees, the Curriculum Committee, General Education Committee, Curt Wiberg established the Yakima River Basin Center, that took a lot of initiative. No real recognition for that, but I’ll say again, the faculty in general at Central were never a disappointment for me. They were...if there were any deficiencies it was not on the part of faculty.

Jones: Can you compare the present day faculty with the people you’re speaking of?

Hammond: Well, it’s very difficult for me to do that because I don’t know a lot of the new faculty, but I’ll be honest, I believe that there is a tendency for us, for our faculty to have moved farther toward greater concern with their own careers, and their own time, and their own things, and away from what I felt was our major focus on this is our life, this is our way of life, you know, teaching at Central was not my job, this is the way I live, and basically this is what I did. I have an old farm for therapy. It’s cheaper than a shrink. But I was willing to put in whatever time it took, and I think there is a tendency today to be more oriented toward an individual’s own career and advancement, but it is not easy for me to make that comparison because I know few of the new people. And the situation is different. It’s more difficult to be enthusiastic and totally devoted if you’re demoralized than if you are enthusiastic, and certainly the Sixties were mighty fine times for us, and you could get very enthusiastic at that time, at which is what I was getting here. There were some problems, I never had any serious problems with Jim Brooks, excepting that once he was really enthusiastic about the three year B.A., and it comes hack to me because today the same kind of cry is being raised about cutting down the amount of time it takes to get a Bachelor’s Degree, and at that time I borrowed a cartoon from the New Yorker and had Joel Andress modify it with a sign which says “Three years is too much”, and passed it around fairly widely. I’m not sure it had the slightest influence on the whole affair, but the three year BA. tended to fade away at that time. It’s back again today. Says, (my comment), “Be truly innovative and save a bundle” because the caption says, basically, I want my country to be the most educated country in the world; therefore, I give everybody a diploma. So perhaps we could just give out Bachelor’s of Arts Degrees along with birth certificates, and we would have a very educated nation. It was not a big fight, but it does express what we think about higher education, educating particularly. There are people who seem to believe that education is simply the transfer of knowledge and the acquisition of skills, and nothing could be further from the truth. The education is an ability to be able to answer the right, ask the right questions, to attack problems with a systematic and purposeful way. If you’re simply looking for skills for a job, that does not require very much education, usually it requires learning a trade. Don Garrity didn’t tolerate people very well who were critical of him, or of his actions. He also really didn’t tolerate very well, people that he couldn’t intimidate. He and I had numerous clashes. I felt he had a serious ego problem. There were three that were, I think, most important which I won’t dwell on a lot. One was over the development of the administrative evaluations. I had originally proposed that the AAIJP sponsor that, and Beverly Heckart, I think, sagely said that the Senate is the right place to sponsor that, and it shouldn’t be just for the President. It should be for all administrators. And so I was on the committee, of course, along with Doris Jakubek, Gary Heesacker, Beverly Heckart, and Greg Trujillo. Now Greg took a lot of flack from the administrators, and he dropped off fairly shortly, but he made significant contributions to development of the questions. Without going into great detail on it, the President directed his administrators to not cooperate with us, and in a meeting with us he pounded his fist in front of my place at the table, and said, “This is the dumbest damn thing he’d ever seen or heard of!” And that they would not cooperate, and I said, “That’s fine. The faculty want to do this. They deserve to do it, and we’ll treat your non-response simply as a non-response.” Because we had submitted all of the questions to every administrator for their consideration. If they wanted to change something, warned to add something. Fine. I think the instrument didn’t turn out the best. It was too long, but, I think, and the President said he didn’t pay the slightest bit of attention to the results, but I notice, maybe it was only coincidence, but the next year, at the Fall faculty meeting his talk was prepared, and that was not the usual course of events. Usually it was just sort of shoot from the hip. So maybe it helped a little. The second rule was when I learned we were going to be removed from Shaw Hall in the newspaper. This was an administrative decision, executive decision, President’s decision, and I called the Chair. He didn’t know anything. It was Ressler. Called the Dean, Bob Brown; he didn’t know anything about it. So I called Barbara Stanef over in the Business Office, she had worked for me once before, and she said sure come on over. Here was a page saying that Shaw Hall would be remodeled for use of Business School. I felt that this was pretty high-handed and suggested I resented it very much We moved to Lind Hall in 1988. The most
bitter clash I had with Don Garrity was over the confidence vote for Bob Edington, and that is a very long story, and I happened to be going back through the note books on that which I kept. But fundamentally the Provost was in the process of putting together a plan which, I happened to be Chairing the Academic Affairs Committee in the Senate, and the plan was of interest to us, and he made no provision for us to be involved. When I raised the issue he put me, I did not want to be on the Camp Field Planning Group, but that’s what he did anyway. He put me on it, and I thought, “O.K., I’ll do that.” We put together in the Senate several items that we wanted to be included in the Plan. The Senate passed them. I took them to Camp Field, and Bob Edington said we will not consider these because they did not originate with this group.

This did not set very well with me. I had him repeat that twice, on tape because it struck me that the Senate should have a role, other than simply taking a plan when it was done and approving or disapproving of it.

And that along with a number of other grievances which people had, led to the formation of the Chairs Ad Hoc Group which ultimately decided that a vote of no-confidence, or confidence should be taken for the Provost. Since I was the only Chair who was also a Senator, I did what was necessary to put that through the Senate. It was not a sure thing, because the Senate had a rule that you would stop by the clock, business ceased at five o’clock. In order to cut off debate, you had to have a two third’s majority, which we got, and the rest of it is history as they say. I did not believe that the Edington vote was important in the resignation, or firing of Don Garrity, by the Board. Nor do I believe that the loss of accreditation, or threatened loss in the Education Department was particularly important. The important thing which Don Garrity did, which eventually led to his downfall, was he fired Dean Nicholson. In that, the public took an interest, they might not care much about whether or not there was a vote of confidence in anything, but they certainly cared about the Nicholsons and the basketball program. I’ve not agreed very regularly with the current President. I simply believe he has the wrong approach. In writing, has said “Don’t talk to me about quality, that’s merely academic rhetoric.” And of course that does not strike me as being correct. I suppose if you can’t distinguish among ‘em: good, bad, or better then you might downgrade the concept of quality, but quality what may not be exactly, easily defined I think we should be able to distinguish some things that are better ‘some that are not so good. When he suggested the departments would be 15 people because they’re merely reporting units, obviously I did not agree with that. Departments have many important roles other that just reporting to some higher up. In perhaps his first department, the first school meeting he handed out a list of assumptions, some of which were not assumptions for planning, but again Bob Bentley of Geology asked him if any of them were non-negotiable and he said yes they are, but I’m not going to tell you which ones. For me this was the end. I did not respect anyone who would play that kind of a game and simply says that if I have to agree with you, what you want you’ll get it, if I don’t you won’t. Why would you even participate in such a planning event? Well, as you all know, an enormous amount of energy has gone into long-range strategic planning, but when it came to professional leaves, the professional leave committee was abolished by the president. He did not want sabbatical leaves. The job for evaluating the proposal was turned over to a different committee in spite of the fact that it was a violation of code. They were all read and ranked and then leaves were granted to, I think it was numbers 2, 3, 8, and 13 on the ranking of, this was justified by adding new criteria. For example, if you’d ever had one before you couldn’t have another. Which was a total violation of code. Several of us decided that we would file grievance. The Grievance Committee held in our favor, but the Board of Trustees, since the President’s part of the grievance, the Board of Trustees backed him. Your next step is to get an outside hearing officer which two of us Terry DeVietti and I decided we would do, and at that point I’d had advice from a layer who said that you can’t lose. No Administrative Judge in the Nation would allow them to not follow the rules. It turned out they had to grant all thirteen, because they’d already granted them to number thirteen and you couldn’t go back and take it away from him, or he would sue (?). So it was very interesting. During the year the President said, “If you can be gone for a year, you’re not needed here.” But I just point out that during that year I finished all the research that I set out to do on water. I was the President of Northwest Scientific Association, and Bill Barker and I ran the meetings here this year, the largest meetings they’ve ever had. And I worked up and got a negotiated grant for one point four-six million I thought if was a pretty good year for us. (?) In addition I finished three graduate students. I believe it represents a reluctance, or a lack of appreciation, for people who are performing well. Which professional leaves should he designed for, that’s why they are ranked, based on the quality, and the President, obviously, disagreed. So, he and I disagreed on just about everything, and probably will always do so. The only student-administrator problem I remember was that there was a sit-in at the President’s office during the Cambodian invasion, but the President, who was Jim Brooks, was pretty shrewd and he ordered up a couple of hundred hamburgers, and it’s pretty tough to shout and holler with your mouth full of hamburger, and it kind of all just went away.
They arrived. He would wait. There’s a whole list of things that I’d like to comment on, salary schedule, for example, and I’ll just tell you that I was never much concerned about salary. It’s a good thing, too, because I sat on the same step of the salary schedule for many years.

Jones: But during your Chairmanship, the Senate, I remember that there was a State-wide effort to jack up our salaries, and we got involved with a comparison between our salaries in the University, and ended up in the second tier, and so on and so forth.

Hammond: Yeah. Salary was never my major consideration. I always seemed to have enough to live on. And what was my consideration, really what the focus was, what kind of conditions do I have under which I must work? How can I get this job done, and who is going to be available for support to get this job done? I have no real concern about salaries. I realize a lot of people do, but I never got anywhere near the top of the salary schedule, so it’s a good thing I wasn’t that concerned. I felt that academic freedom at Central was always there, I felt no inhibitions what-so-ever, The Faculty Code is not always a... it isn’t the best... it’s better than nothing. It can be changed by the Board of Trustees without the faculty wanting it, and that’s not so good. I really believe that the question on faculty-administration collegiality... There has been some. There are some efforts. I believe the new Graduate Dean, Duncan Perry, makes a sincere effort in that regard. I think for the most part, it’s not very good. Marty Kaatz, I had this second hand because Marty told me I wasn’t there, he went to talk to the President about collegiality. and the President said to him, collegiality was dead. That’s President Nelson. And Marty was very down-cast when he returned to the office because he understands. as I do. that that’s the best model for a University to function under. You would get a lot better work out of your best people if there is a collegial working relationship, rather than some kind of a top down. I think the relationship between the city and the University is/was extremely good under both Brooks and Garrity. I think it is not very good now, but we had. I think, almost an exemplary relationship with the town for many years. It’s a pity that it isn’t better.

Howard: Two minutes.

Hammond: Let me just comment once more, a little bit more on academic planning because I view academic planning as the best time to get everybody on the same page, working toward common goals. The future by definition is unknowable. You can’t predict where you are going to be as the years... But you can set up a process, as it’s practiced at Central, now especially, it is used as an opportunity for people to position themselves favorably, compared to other people, or other Departments. That is a very bad way to use academic planning. So it is not only just a waste of time, it is an opportunity for the academic program to go to garden weeds, people try to suck up all the resources to take advantage, and some do, Do you want me to just stop?

Howard: You still have a minute.

Hammond: OK.

Jones: Why don’t we stop and... 

Hammond: I want to talk a little bit about awards and honors because I want to say something... 

Jones: Why don’t we stop and put in a new tape?

Howard: OK.

TECH TALK ON TAPE FROM A PREVIOUS INTERVIEW? FORWARD TO BACK SIDE OF TAPE

Hammond: A number of items that have been given to me as possible things to talk about at the University, and one of them was publish or perish. I never felt at Central, and quite frankly, it was one of the
attractions, I never really felt I had an enormous amount that needed to be published, and there was plenty of things being published. Now that does not mean that I did not publish because I did. I wrote a book, contributed to a book that was edited by a British Geographer and published by Oxford University Press on U.S. public policies. I contributed to the Environmental Source Book which I, along with Macinko and a lady named Wilma Fairchild. which I edited in its entirety. The University of Chicago Press published it. I take a certain amount of pride in the fact that the manuscript was exactly 1,000 pages long, and Chicago found no errors. They skipped the galley proofs and went straight to page proofs on that book. A number of contracts and grants which I got required significant reports, final reports to be published, and there are several of those around. One of the really interesting ones was on Mt. St. Helens where we, with David Kaufman, Gordon Warren, and I produced a book called *Come hell and High Water* and looked at the aftermath in that area. It was totally an unfunded project. It was kind of funny. I enjoyed it. But those things are published and one of the things I’ve come to realize is that nowhere do I have a complete collection of everything I ever wrote. It doesn’t bother me that much, but sort of interesting. I contributed two sections to a book on Water Resource Management, in Maryland because my Chairman, Lyle Crane was the person writing the book, and I got to help him, and I also helped him edit it because he got ill toward the end. So I did not feel any pressure to, well, publish, and perhaps that was a mistake because usually when someone wanted something that I could write I would do it. I was more interested in getting grants or contracts where I could hire students, employ students and give them the experience and have some income which was definitely important, I felt. I never felt there was any conflict between teaching and research. They are just two parts of the same experience. Students can be really very profitably, educationally profitably, involved in research writing projects and I did it many times. So these are undergraduate students as well as grad students. They’re quite capable and it worked out.

Jones: Did most of your research grants come from the particular area of(?)

Hammond: Well, most of them were from the Federal Government, although I did run one from the Audubon once, and did a couple of contracts. One from the State Department of Wildlife, pardon me, State Department of Game it was called at that time. It’s now called Fish and Wildlife. One for the County Sheriff. Really all they wanted was a map and a study of off-road vehicle use of our county here. But clearly, the large money came from the Office of Water Resources, Research. The Environmental Education Program at Federal level. And the Department of Energy. And then the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation. That’s where the biggest one came from. And I did another one from them. I got another one from them for $20,000.00 which I really turned over to a colleague and (?), and it turned out fine.

Jones: These were related to conservation and water resources?

Hammond: Pretty much resources, although a fair number of them were teacher training, preparation, pre-graduate interns in environmental education. Post-graduate for Cispus. I ran a program over there for a year or two and got funds for three years for teachers primarily, and then the energy programs which I mentioned earlier for teacher preparation. Try to get them up to speed on basic energy concepts and how to teach about energy and water. Water, energy, environmental education I guess were at the core of it, but there were a few other...resources, you know, that was my field, so they were focused mainly on resource problems. As I say. I don’t have a list of all of them. I suppose, somewhere there’s a list that’s available, but there had to be twenty, maybe more different programs (?) I was going to mention problems in the Business Office. One time I was running four programs simultaneously, and I get a print out on the budget which shows I’ve dramatically over spent the benefits on one program and not spending on the other side. I went to the Business Office and they said, “Well, the computer won’t handle four distributions (?) So we just took it all out of one.” You can’t do that. I’ll be in trouble with the auditors. “Well, then we’ll have to do it by hand if we don’t do it that way.” I said, “Do it by hand.” So they had to do it by hand. Hey, those were mostly energy programs I think. Some of them were money that Dale Comstock had obtained through the Department of Energy, but I was Directing the programs. But anyway as I was saying, I think research is a vital part of being a University faculty member. I never felt the great urge to publish a lot. I didn’t have much to say, or felt that it would detract from the other things that I was doing, but, I don’t know, I just never felt the pressure to do it. The students at Central, I mentioned several times, I had a lot of very good
students while I was here, and I could name many of them, and I go back through some of my grade books and remember that there were a lot of good ones. In terms of the students preparation, I quite bluntly believe that it’s not as good as it once was, that the students are less well prepared to do college level work now than they were twenty, thirty, or forty years ago. I don’t believe that’s just because I’ve gotten old and crotchety. I believe it’s because the public schools are simply expected to do far too many things, other than provide academic preparation. The academic preparation is down graded by peripheral social objectives, but the consequence of it is, you get decent people, teachable people, and you just simply have to do it, that’s all. If you must teach them how to read and write, then you must do that. You must have to teach them how to do percentages, or how to derive a percentage, or how to do long division, and I’ve taught all of that at the college level, people who simply came to the University, and graduate students, who had very little skill in writing, but, and they were projects. But if they’re teachable, I’ll do that. That’s what it takes. At least a few of them have expressed their appreciation many times. I used to get calls from Washington D.C. Mark Reed, who unfortunately now has passed away, and tell me that he had been invited to write something or to speak or something, and he would never have been able to do it if I hadn’t spent hours with him, days, as a graduate student. He was extremely grateful. And a young man who now works for the Yakima Nation has expressed his appreciation many times because his writing skills were extremely deficient, but he was teachable. And so that’s what you do. If you get them, but if they can’t...if they can’t read it’s pretty difficult, if they can’t write, or do arithmetic, they can learn. I would simply hold, after doing even seminars, I never said let’s do your bonehead make up type work, I’d just say, we’ll have a seminar at four o’clock, and if you can’t make it, then we’ll do it at five. That’s not good, we’ll try seven. Six in the morning is OK with me. Many times, Saturday? Fine. Whatever it took. And some people responded very well sometimes because if they’re willing to work, I’m willing to work. So the students, it simply leads me to the question on awards and honors because I remember a story about the Elder Huxley in England, and one of his students had discovered an error in Huxley’s work, a classification, a Biological work, and the student was somewhat reluctant to go and tell the old man that he’d found an error that he’d made. But ultimately screwed up his courage and he did so, and Huxley looked at the material and he looked at the student, and the student was being a little nervous, and Huxley said, “No greater honor can come to a teacher than to have his students exceed him.” And thanked the student very much. I read that many years ago and I thought, “Boy, is that a good lesson.” And many of my students have exceeded me in many ways, and I do not feel put down by that. I’m elevated by that. That is exactly what you should want. Two of my graduate students, Linda Hoffman and Alan Sullivan, their theses won the Distinguished Thesis Award for that year. There may be other faculty who have more, but I don’t know of anyone. I was on many graduate committees. I never kept a record of how many. Somewhere there probably is a record. I chaired many of the committees. Some of the theses produced here would earn Ph.D.’s with these theses, with very little effort would have gotten Ph.D.’s at another University. There is no question in my mind. I did not require that amount of work from them. They simply did it, and with very little help. They did an outstanding job. Pat O’Hara is a very well known photographer and graduate of Central. He was not a major of mine And one time I saw he was going to come back to speak at the campus, and so I went to listen with my wife, (?). He named three people who had been influential with regard to his career. I was one of them. I was astonished. I had no reason to imagine he would even remember me, much less, think of my contribution as being important in his selection of a career and his success. He introduced me to his daughters as the best teacher he had ever had. For me that was an honor which exceeds almost anything that you could get on some formal basis. I was elected the President of the Northwest Scientific Association. That’s an honor. T4e’s only one President a year and it’s only been going for seventy years, but during that year we held the meetings on this campus. Praise Bill Barker and his wife Eileen who worked hard to make it a success. We had expected perhaps two hundred people, over four hundred showed up. They were very well received and out of that and a few other things I did for Northwest Science, I was recognized. I never did any of that in order to, I never did anything thinking that I would get an honor of any formal type, but sometimes you do And if you take the three aspects of work, teaching, scholarship, and research, or service. I was selected as Distinguished University Professor for Teaching in 1981. It was a considerable in my mind because you don’t apply for things like that, someone must nominate you and a committee of your peers must evaluate whether or not you are worthy. Not every year is it necessary that someone be selected, and I felt very pleased at that time to join Chester Keller, and Fred Cutup, and Curt Wiberg at that time as the Distinguished Professors for teaching. Then 1993 I was selected as Phi Kappa Phi’s Scholar of the year at Central. I don’t believe that I could ever have qualified for any such thing without all of the grant support I had and a lot of students for which I did research in order to involve them
in research, and in some cases published to fill a need, but it was a great honor for me to be selected and I enjoyed it as a lecturer and a scholar for the year I remember the Grupe Center was filled to capacity. I thought it was pretty unusual at three o’clock in the afternoon to have that many folks, but it was nice. And in 1997, the Northwest Scientific Association gave me honorary life membership in recognition of outstanding service, professional service to that group over the years. I never felt that I’d done anything spectacular, you know, I’d been on the Board of Directors for a number of years and had served on several committees, and had set up meetings, and served as President, and you know, things that you just simply do because they need doing, not because you think you’re going to get an honorary membership, but as with one formal award in teaching and one in scholarship and one in service, I think I have a right to feel at least satisfied if not proud. I think the Department, I tried my best to develop new courses for the Department. I have no notion how many I courses I taught or developed, but I can guarantee you it’s in the neighborhood of fifteen to twenty over the years. Several of the REM, Resource Management, Graduate Program Courses were developed by me. They are now either not being taught at all, or being taught by somebody else. There was no model for it, so it wasn’t like you just take somebody else’s course and start going. I think the number of Graduate Committees that I served on was useful in the Department. I did that both before and after the Resource Management Graduate Program was formalized. I used to do graduate students one at a time before there was a formal program. Remember the old Individualized Studies Program? You could do a Master’s in that. One of my students, he did what I couldn’t do, he finished his Master’s in one year. Roger Jacob, he was a Yakima Indian. Started and finished in, maybe it was, I think it was only four quarters. His thesis was done and defended. Great thing. Exceeded me, but T was delighted. He was a good student, an excellent, very devoted student. I think the grants that I got helped the Department in many ways, and I must say, and I want to say again that a lot of these grants came at the last minute. A teaching schedule is already set out, so that this year’s program is already designed before I’d get word in September that I’d received a grant which meant in order to meet the auditor’s requirements, I would have to not teach part time. There was never a time, not ever once when someone in the Department did not immediately pick up the slack. There was never a problem. I can’t imagine ordering anybody to do that, but there was no need to even ask. You know, we could cancel the classes, or we could make some other arrangements, and my Department, there was never any question, you just sort of(?) do the job, and that was the way I liked to work, and I really enjoyed those people. T don’t believe, I’ll turn that around, that is not the standard way for Departments to work. I’m sorry to say. But it was the way that we worked, and for at least twenty years I marveled and enjoyed that kind of relationship with those people. And then of course people began to retire and the situation changed, and so on, but it was marvelous.

Jones: There were other people in the Department who also getting grants as well, weren’t there?

Hammond: Certainly. The grant that produced the Sourcebook on Environment was Macinko, but Macinko was going to go on leave that year, and so he wanted an editor for the book. The money came here because George was here and George is nationally, internationally known in the field. I never was and never cared, But George knew me and asked if he was gone, if! would edit, and I said sure, and so I did. There were twenty-six writers from around the country. Many different institutions, but we had a grant, we had a deadline, but we managed. I remember editing some things dramatically thinking that guy at the University of Wisconsin’s going to hate me, but it turned out that they were all, with maybe one exception, they were all extremely grateful for the work I did on their. .and in some cases it required very little work because they’re actually writers anyway. But they were really long. I had to cut them down a bit. It was fine. So, yes, other people were doing projects. Ressier got a project to do, a couple of them, one to do an atlas for the Yakima River Basin, and one to do an Atlas for all of the County in sections where it would show all of the homes and all of the water sources. This was for the fire dispatch people, because they could then say, “Here, go here, go there.’ Now today they’d be done off GIS and satellite, but then it was all in paper. Who do I think wanted those copies of those maps? Real estate people. The real estate people bought more copies of that than the fire dispatch people ever wanted because they were an immediate reference to every place with all the names to all the homes and everything else which was in place. I think one of the more significant grants was done by Joel Andress which was a small grant, but he produced the centennial map for the State. He and our students, undergraduate students produced that centennial map which has printed on one side Washington as it was at Statehood, and on the other side, Washington in the modern era. It was an enormous effort to produce all of those, and it was one of the last that was done by hand, and not done
by computer. All of that. If you ever see one of those maps, every dot that shows the shaded relief, was
drawn by one person, one student who put those on there, and it was amazing, and it was a fine, fine piece
of work. I still have some of them. I figure that in the bi-centennial I’ll be able to sell them at a profit. Give
me another hundred years, they’ll be worth something. No, I bought them unrolled, I bought them rolled
rather than folded, so that they could be flattened out for framing. And then I sold them. All of the money I
got from selling them went to the Foundation. I didn’t take any money back. I put a fair amount of money
into the Foundation over the years to support various programs, and I think it’s very worthwhile, but I will
say flat out, they’d have a difficult time of getting any money out of me now. I’m not as favorable as I once
was even though I have a lot more money. I served on committees never ending, I guess. Certainly I held
every office in the Senate, including Senate Chair, and I don’t recall all of the other committees I know
that...J Chaired Academic Affairs during the Edington affair. I served on the Professional Leave Committee
for a number of years, (?), Chaired the Distinguished Professor Committee where they selected among
people who were nominated. I even served on the Grievance Committee once, and I say that because that is
far more difficult than many people might imagine. That is a very stressful kind of committee, certainly,
but very important, I think. Perhaps the most important committee that I served on was General Education.
I was for many years on the General Education Committee, especially before and after going to the
Danforth Workshop in Colorado Springs. I’m a real strong believer in general education. In fact, that’s
where education is. I cringe when people say, “Get those University requirements out of the way.” That is
the wrong approach. That is your basis for real education. I say that from experience because I would
never, as an undergraduate, (?). I would never have selected courses in Greek Mythology, or Survey of Art
and Architecture in Music, and Early English Literature, and the kinds of things in Humanities which
would have been a great loss. I might not have known that it was a great loss, but it would have been a
great loss never-the-less, and while some might say there is nothing relevant there, I say, “Baloney.” It
provides you ways of thinking and recognition of other people’s thinking, and ways of expressing that you
other-wise would avoid. I think, to some extent, the same is true of sciences. Some people would avoid
them if they could. But, you simply can’t know too much about Biology. You need to know more. Of
course, at one time I thought I would know everything, I thought I did know everything. What I didn’t
know, I would pick up in very short order. But anyway, the Humanities would be neglected, I think, if it
were not for the requirements. If I were King, my requirements for General Education would be far more
extensive than exist. I happened to go through a core-type curriculum. Where say, with some modification,
you took a sequence of three Humanities courses, plus you selected two more from among approved
courses. The same is true with Science and Social Science. You took a sequence. Everyone took a
sequence. I don’t know if that’s necessarily good or bad. It worked out fine for me. A year of, you know,
Humanities and Science plus selected other courses gave me a lot of insights and I think it’s important for
other cultures. But I do really get annoyed when someone says, “Well, you know, get those General
University parts out of the way, and then get on with your life.” Kind of thing. Wrong. There was a
question on your list, or some list that said what committees were the greatest for progress. Which one
would I designate? I’d just say you have to look out for that word. I really don’t like the word “progress”.
Progress is always easier when you’re going down hill. People who think that’s progress, may really be just
saying that’s change. That may not be progress. I fault Ivory Nelson in that way as we
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saying that’s change. That may not be progress. I fault Ivory Nelson in that way as we
however. I’ve had students who would take a class and do very poorly the first time, and simply say, “I wasn’t prepared to do that kind of work.” But the second time around they did very well. They simply got prepared to do that kind of work. College is not easy, even for the best students it’s not easy, in fact. Especially for the best students it’s not. It’s not supposed to be. It’s supposed to be a place where you learn to stretch. And so it’s difficult to do that if your students do not have the skills, the organizational skills, or the basic reading, thinking, writing skills. Therefore, we do a lot of remedial classes. It takes a lot of resources, but unless you do them, just as an individual faculty member (?) If you do them yourselves. Like I did a lot of them, then they don’t cost the University much additionally.

Jones: Do you think the students today are as well qualified or as well prepared as they were say twenty years ago? I’m talking about the product coming out of Central, not the students coming in.

Hammond: Oh, the students going out of Central. I don’t have much way of speaking for it, any thing other than those students which went out of my own program, and those who came into my graduate program from other programs, and there were a few of those. But obviously, I’m dealing here with graduate students which is a self-selective group. I’m not giving you just a general student body. I don’t think it would be unfair to say that they are, except for there may be a few more who not well prepared, there’s always been some of those. It doesn’t matter when it was, at any school, there’s always people who leave and succeed in terms of getting their credential, but they don’t have much in the way of education. I think they end up just about as good as they ever did. I set up a program, I set up a course in the Department which was designed specifically to help prepare students for graduate school. It was called Resource Policy. Kind of an innocuous title, but what I was really doing was teaching them how to organize their research project within the context of the subject matter of resource policy. Here’s how you organize. Here’s how you write. Here’s how you cite materials. Here’s the way you do it right, so you could be competitive if you go to graduate school. I wanted my students to be very competitive if they went to graduate school, and many of them did. Many of them went elsewhere and here. That course, students even threatened to print up tee-shirts which said, “I survived 445.” But that course, many people have come back and said it was the best thing that ever happened to them, because it put them at a graduate level of performance while they were still seniors. Everyone knew this. No one took the class that didn’t know what they were going to get into. I would require the first draft, the first part of the (?) in three weeks. I’d read it mark it and they’d have to do it over, add to it, Five weeks, mark it, do it over. Turn it in some more. I’d read the papers know less than three times. Mark them no less than three times. Meet with them, tell them what there problems are. Here’s what you’re not doing right. Here’s what you need to do. Here’s what you need to help. It was an enormous amount of work. I’d usually only take twelve students at a time, although one time I had twenty-one. But the point is when they got through then they were as well prepared as I could make them. That is true, in all of them whenever I taught, I would say, “I want you to be as well prepared as you can be.” Students would ask, “What do you want me to know?” and of course, the answer to that is, “I want you to know everything, but I don’t expect that. I really want you to know everything. That would be nice. The question is not what I want you to know, but what do you want to know?” “What do you want to know?” “What do you want to know?”

You know. “I want you to know everything, but what do you want to know?” OK. Once we got this straight then most of the students did want to know more and usually go further than they ever thought they could, and that was always very good because the next time they didn’t want to do less. Success begat success. I had a very simple set of respectable standards, and respectable standards are defined as those standards which if met by the student brings self-respect to the student. If the standards are low, the student will get no self-respect out of meeting them. Set respectable standards, do everything you can to help the students meet those standards, and then get them to go a little bit farther. You’ll wind up with some pretty darn good students coming out of the end of that program or that course. I taught very few classes that were required, and I got a lot of good students who chose to take them, and I don’t know.

Jones: Did your early teaching experience have any influence on what you did and how you taught here?

Hammond: You know what was probably most influential were the teachers that I had. I had a lot of very good teachers. I had a lot of teachers were any good, too. But I had enough very good teachers and I had an excellent teacher in first grade. Mrs. Miller was one of the finest teachers that could ever be, and she would teach piano. I was not disciplined enough to learn it, my brother did. She was a very good teacher.
Jones: I’m speaking of your teaching experiences in the public schools before you came to Central.

Hammond: I think I taught about the same in the public schools as I taught here. I liked to teach in the public schools, but you understand the public schools then. What I taught was totally different than today. At that time, in that school if I said to the vice-principal, I don’t ever want to see Bob Jones in my class again, that was the end of Bob Jones. I had to put up with nothing. The two years I did not spend ten minutes on classroom management. Not totally, surely not that much. I can recall every incident in two years. So you could spend all of your time really working with the students, teaching material and working with their problems, whatever it may be, but by then I had already developed pretty much, I think, a manner of teaching. That teaching and the fact that I was teaching six hours a day forced a certain amount of organization in your work. I actually taught my first college class in 1956, when I was a senior in college, and Jim Brooks was teaching at Eastern at the time I was there. He was teaching twenty-one hours that quarter, and he let me teach one of his classes. It was a problems oriented class. I think it met on Fridays at eight o’clock or something like that. Physical Geography. Maybe he had twenty-three hours, I can’t remember. Anyway it was, I actually taught a class that quarter. But I’ve had teachers, the English teacher at Eastern, Dr. Lass, Frank Shadegg in Geography, who was my major professor, my advisor. These were people who were enthusiastic about what they were doing. These were people who helped you go a little bit farther. This fall I went back to homecoming at Eastern. I called the English teacher, he’s still alive. I told him he’s important to my career and my life. I hope he felt very good about that; he seemed to. He’s still going strong.

Jones: Chuck Booth and Dale Stradling were…

Hammond: Chuck Booth, Dale Stradling, were contemporaries of mine. They were at that school at that time, Frank Shadegg, Jim Brooks, for a while, and then (?). The Department was very small, but let me tell you that out of that Department of the people who were there, there were well over a dozen who went on to graduate school. I may he the only one who actually finished a Ph.D., but many went on for Master’s Programs at Arizona, and Colorado, and Oregon State, and UW. I think there were over twenty out of a group of, you know a school of eight or nine hundred students total with thirty or forty majors total. Probably twenty went on to grad school. This was…they were pretty inspiring people, and always would give you the feeling that you could do this. You know, that you could do this. So I had some good teachers, I took lessons, by just watching, and by practice, I obviously had a teaching degree. I did student teaching in the public schools. In a public school where there were more problems than I had to put up with, hut I didn’t have (?). So it just all added up. I would do it again. I would, because of the students, and my colleagues and my friends. In fact I think I could probably not teach. There’s a satisfaction even though you never know if you’ve done it just right until maybe very later when you know if you gave it your best shot. You know that immediately. You either did, or you didn’t. But there is a satisfaction that is worth something, and I’ve gained that. I certainly, I had a model in my mind of what retirement is(?) but it didn’t work out. My model for retirement was Sam Dana at the University of Michigan. He wrote a hook, Range Policy. He was in his eighties when I was there. He was still in his office, revising his book, doing a number of things, and I sort of thought that’s the way it’d work out for me. He’d still sit on Graduate Committees, occasional classes. This type of thing. Central, if there’s no respect for the Chairs, my judgment is there’s even less for retired people. Once you retire, you’re basically gone. That’s a pity. Because it does not take advantage of all the experience that people might have and doesn’t cultivate long-term friendships. As a matter of fact, I find myself referring to Central as “that place” unconsciously.

Jones: Did you get any kind of recognition at your party of retirement from the administration?

Hammond: No, I don’t know what it would have been, you know.

Jones: Just some letter of recognition, or appreciation, or whatever.

Hammond: Well, if I did I must have filed it so quickly it didn’t make any impression, but I think the answer is, what they’re really looking for is to reduce that salary, get rid of a high paid person and grab off
that office space (?) some way to get out of here, and that’s really too bad, but I built an office at home, so I have my own office.

Jones: We’ve got a couple of more things here to cover before we quit. You need to tell us about relatives or family have attended Central.

Hammond: Well, my son attended Central. He’s a Biology major. Bill Barker was his advisor. He is now the Fish and Wildlife Program’s Manager for Grant County Public Utility District.

Jones: This is Stewart?

Hammond: Stewart. Yes. He went to Central. Of course, my wife graduated from Central. She had done two years at Eastern, but once we got married she had to go to work and support her husband. But when we came back here, I was working and she finished. Then she went back to work, and I went back to school; I went back to work, and we both went to work. As you know for twenty-two years she was an Administrative Assistant in the Graduate Office.

Jones: Now, you have two books?

Hammond: Our oldest boy has retired from the military. He retired before I retired which seems a certain inequity there. He now came back to the Valley, and he now works at Al’s Auto Supply. My daughter went to WSU. She also was a Botanist. I told Bill Barker this many times, I did something wrong. To have two of my children become Botanists. She is a Botanist for the Bureau of Land Management up in Boise. But if you’re going to be a Range Manager or a Botanist, WSU is a very good place indeed. But anyway, that was the sum total. I believe I have a niece who’s going here now, but I haven’t been on campus to see her. I understand that she’s coming here. Actually she’s my niece’s daughter, so what does that make her, a niece once removed, I guess. But she’s a very good student.

Jones: The last question here says, will you please close with a statement of your feelings about your career at Central? I don’t want you to close with that statement. I’ve got another one for you, but... And then they go on to say was it pleasant, collegial, or challenging?

Hammond: I think I’ve mentioned along the way here, a whole lot of things about my career at Central. The Department was enormously collegial. It could not have been better. I believe it could not have been better. All of the work was challenging, and I take it, almost anything I do, I guess I take it as a challenge, and I never was concerned about the amount of time something took. I always, and I only failed once in my career, I tried always to return papers, to return exams the next class meeting. I never liked to wait as an under-graduate, and I never liked to keep my students waiting. Once I got terribly ill, and I did not get the Papers back on Monday. But the fact that I marked papers every other week end for decades was a distraction, I suppose. A certain hindrance on other things I might have done, but I just felt that was the right way to do it, so I... Again it was kind of a challenge. I don’t ever want to not get the papers back marked at the next class meeting, and if that meant staying up all night reading essays, then that’s just what I’d do. So, yeah, it was a challenge. Blue Books, you learn eventually. You’re not going to give Blue Book exams to eighty people. I’ve done it, but it’s, you know if you don’t stop to even go to the bathroom, it’s going to take you thirty or forty hours to mark them. So. Yeah, it was challenging. It was collegial. If rewarding. Especially with regard to watching students who grew so much, and who realized in some cases that they changed so much. I had a student once who came into my office, essentially apologetic for being alive. She was forty, had been a bar maid far many years, had a son who was in trouble, a daughter who was retarded, and going through a divorce. That lady really changed over three or four years. She would not have known herself(?). She became very confident, very able to speak, got on the City Council. Good job. Remarried, a really nice man. That... You just can’t imagine, unless you experience it, You can’t imagine the satisfaction of being able to help people to do something like that. People who couldn’t face a group to speak, like teaching in public schools. I was prepared to teach speech. I actually took work in speech for teachers as an under-graduate, so that I actually do that. And I had students there who were essentially
going to wilt if they had to stand up and say their name. Football players, six foot five, you know, who simply couldn’t do it. One of them, and this was in high school, one of them won the Spring, you know, he took second in the District Public Speaking Contest in the Spring. After a week in my class, he wanted out. I wouldn’t let him out. He was very good. There were a lot of students at Central who would, their knees would shake, and they would talk very rapidly and quickly, blush, stop and think. Everything you do you must have those skills. I simply worked on them over and over. I’d say look, “This is like a football practice, if you want to get better, practice. Here’s what we’re going to do, and preparation is the key. If you are prepared, that’s the first step.” In doing so a number of people became far more proficient in public speaking. So while I was teaching Geography, I was also teaching the things.. public speaking, grammar, arithmetic, writing, organization. You know, the things which... anything you need. What do you need? It might have just happened that my subject matter was Geography. The career... Central was not selected totally at random by me because I am allergic to natural molds in the air. I can only live healthily in a dry or cold climate. Dry---Cold Ellensburg. I wouldn’t say that was the only motivating force because I could have gone to Salt Lake City, but I drew a line. Here it is somewhere out of Leavenworth, my life in Ellensburg was certainly high on my priority list as a place to be. There were disappointments, to be sure. I think the University could have been better, but, hey, none of us are perfect, right?

Jones: Would you comment on the place of the Board of Trustees in regard to the faculty as well as the administration?

Hammond: Well, first I want you to remember the Board of Trustees are political appointees. They are appointed because they are active politically in politics because they are in a certain area, and are active in the party that’s in power. They are, to a very large measure they are at the mercy of the President who provides them with information. There aren’t very many members of Board’s of Trustees that either have the time or the inclination to go out collect information, opinions, so on, from students and faculty. Nor is that necessarily their job. But they have a function where they are in a position to make policy and to set policy that greatly affects what we can do. Very few of these people are what you thing of as scholars. That’s not the kind of people that get appointed to Board’s of Trustees. You’re far more likely to get appointed if you’re wealthy than you are if you’re a scholar, and far more likely if you are in the right political party. I think the Board is generally not very well briefed on what needs to be done. I was asked to come and share the Faculty Forum where the faculty had requested the Board of Trustees members there asking questions and getting responses, or not getting responses as the case may be. My goal was simply to, you know, maintain some sort of decorum (?) But there were several occasions where things that members of the Board of Trustees should have known, they did not know. I was specifically taken aback when a member of the Board of Trustees said that it was illegal for the faculty to have a meeting which of course is not true at all. It is simply, they are not (?) in the wrong which requires (?) which requires collective bargaining. That was corrected on the spot. That is not something that should have needed to be corrected. That should have been known well before. There were several occasions...I’m not...their lack of knowledge, probably real situation of what it takes to get good work out of, get the best work out of good people, is a hindrance. I’m not sure how that ever can change, really. The Board continues, does have a major role, where there needs to be a better pipeline of information to some of them. Some of them become very well informed. By the way, back in the Sixties when we had a Board comprised of Roy Wahle, who was Superintendent of Schools in Bellevue, I think, and Gosh, a lady from Weyerhaeuser, a man down in Tn-cities, who was a scientist down at one of...! thought we had a very informed and truly, a Board who was truly supportive. But there have been other times when I felt the Board members were insulting, at best, to us, and who didn’t really appreciate the role of faculty in the University. But faculty are the University. You can have a University with no students, you couldn’t have this one, but you could have a University. The old German Universities initially had (?). You had a community of scholars, and then students came later. You can have a University without students. You can NOT have a University without faculty. You can have a University without administration, if we wanted to keep our own books, and keep our own records, but we don’t want to.

TWO MINUTES

Hammond: You must have some questions,
Jones: No, Thank you very much. I hope we haven’t worn you out.

Hammond: Not at all.