

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT DANIEL S. PAPP

CONDUCTED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT AND DEDE YOW

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Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
KSU Oral History Series, No. 50
Interview with President Daniel S. Papp
Part I conducted by Thomas A. Scott and Dede Yow
Edited by Susan F. Batungbacal
Location: President's Office, Kennesaw Hall

Part I, Thursday, 3 August 2006

- TS: President Papp, why don't we start with a little about your background, your time in Cobb County and maybe a little before you got here as well?
- DP: Sure. Before I got to Cobb County I was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio. I did my undergraduate work at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, got my bachelor's degree in international affairs, Phi Beta Kappa at Dartmouth. I played some football and basketball and learned how to play rugby and ski while I was up there and did all sorts of neat things.
- TS: Do they have football scholarships at Dartmouth? Is that how you got up there?
- DP: No, Dartmouth is a Division 1, non-scholarship institution. So you still played serious football and all that. But I only played freshman year because I screwed up my knee when I was there.
- TS: Why did you go to Dartmouth?
- DP: I went to Dartmouth because it was an excellent undergraduate institution, and I knew that I wanted to go to school out of state and out of Ohio. I was recruited to play football and visited Dartmouth, Yale, and Harvard. People were just friendlier at Dartmouth than anywhere else, and I wound up deciding that was the place to go.
- TS: Three colonial colleges.
- DP: Yes, exactly. But the football at Dartmouth was basically one of these situations that the football coach would get mad at you if you came to practice and you had a chemistry test the following day. "What are you doing at practice with a test the following day? Get out of here."
- TS: Really?
- DY: That's refreshing.
- TS: It is.
- DP: The reason I picked on chemistry is because I started as a chemistry major and went from chemistry to math to economics to international affairs.

- TS: Well, we can see what you were moving away from. I guess the question is what attracted you to international affairs?
- DP: International affairs, Tom, is really interdisciplinary. I had a little bit of history, a little bit of economics, a little bit of political science, a little bit of sociology, a little bit of religion, a little bit of everything.
- TS: A real liberal arts education.
- DP: A true liberal arts education. It was also right at the center in the world of 1965 through 1969. During those years, you're talking about the Vietnam War; you're talking about the height of the arms race; you're talking about the Prague spring and Soviet troops rolling into Czechoslovakia. So it was just one thing after another. Yes, a true interdisciplinary education, a true liberal arts education. But it was plugged into what was happening everyday on the world scene.
- TS: Were you marching out in the streets protesting the war in Vietnam or were you a supporter or where were you at that time?
- DP: No, I did not support the war in Vietnam, but I was not one of those who opposed it strongly enough to go out into the streets. As a matter of fact, when the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) took over Parkhurst Hall and a couple of other administration buildings, a couple of my fraternity brothers and I set up a lemonade stand and made enough money to fund a weekend in Boston. It was great [laughter]. We had the state troopers buying lemonade from us and we had SDSers coming out of Parkhurst Hall buying lemonade from us, and we had people just hanging around
- TS: You should have majored in business.
- DP: We did it as a lark just to be funny, but we made a couple of hundred bucks.
- DY: A weekend in Boston, hey!
- TS: Did you have long hair and a beard back then or were you a conservative student?
- DP: I had hair just about like this now, although at some point in time you will see one picture of me from 1975 when I had just come back from leading a group of Georgia Tech students to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and hadn't shaved in three months and hadn't gotten a hair cut in three months. Well, actually I did shave, I had—what did they call it—a VanDyke? I also had a Cossack's shirt on.
- TS: So you looked perfectly normal for '75 [laughter]!
- DP: Yes. I did my undergraduate work, and then I went back and I taught high school at the same high school from which I graduated for a year, which was a fascinating experience.

DY: What did you teach?

TS: Was it a public high school?

DP: It was a public high school. I taught American government and U.S. History. I coached football, basketball, and baseball, and did that for a year and came to really appreciate not only how difficult high school teaching is in a teaching sense, but also in an intellectual sense. To go over the same thing

TS: Five times a day?

DP: Well, I had three preps. It was three times a day. But then to do it year after year without really being able to much change the content of the courses because the content was dictated by state rules.

TS; It's easy to understand how teachers burn out.

DP: Exactly, Tom, exactly. I burned out as a high school teacher after one year.

TS: Was that '69-'70?

DP: Yes, '69-'70 was the year I taught high school.

TS: How on earth did you get through a doctoral program so quickly?

DP: In three years? I had a wonderful undergraduate education at Dartmouth, and I had a superb set of faculty members at the University of Miami who were very much plugged into three or four things: number one, providing an excellent graduate education; number two, guiding students through so they didn't spin their wheels; number three, getting what they considered good folks out into the work force as soon as possible. So I started my graduate career in June of 1970, about six or seven days after I got done teaching my last high school class.

DY: I bet you were ready [laughter].

DP: And then got my doctorate in August of 1973.

TS: So you just skipped the master's and went straight to the Ph.D. program.

DP: Yes, straight Ph.D. program, which I opted for. I figured I was going to go on for the doctorate anyway, so why stop with just a master's.

TS: I guess you've explained why you went to the University of Miami, but I'm wondering why there?

DP: Actually I didn't. It was a superb program, and I'm very glad that I went down there. Florida was one of only a couple of places where I could get a high school teaching certificate and go to a good school at night. So I originally moved to Miami with the intention of teaching at [Henry H.] Filer Junior High School during the day and taking graduate courses at night. But in the spring of 1970 the lottery came around, and I got a pretty high lottery number. I believe it was 256.

TS: So you're not worried about the draft, so you didn't have to teach?

DP: Exactly.

DY: Everyone remembers their number.

DP: Yes, exactly. On the night of the lottery the high school teachers played Marcus Haynes and the Harlem Magicians, which was a low rent version of the Harlem Globetrotters. So, of course, everybody, instead of wearing their basketball number wore their draft number. So it was a hoot [laughter]! But that's why I wound up going down to Miami, to teach. I was also looking at graduate school at Yale, but I couldn't get a teaching certificate in Connecticut. I could have obtained a teaching certificate in Colorado to go to the University of Denver, but decided on Miami.

TS: Well, Miami is a little warmer than those other places.

DP: Yes. So we went down there and had three years and three months or so

TS: You say, we went—were you married at that time?

DP: No, I went down there. I played a lot of rugby, met a lot of good people down there, traveled all over the Caribbean while I was in graduate school playing rugby.

TS: Well, one thing we've been asking everybody is about mentors along the way that had a particularly strong influence. Are there any that come to mind in your case?

DP: Let me start with influences and then go to mentors. My dad was a big influence because he served in World War II.

TS: What's his name?

DP: Stephen Papp. Dad died in May of 2001. He would often have his cronies over or we'd go over to his buds or down at the local bar. This was in the '50s, and they'd tell war stories. Dad was blown off of—he originally served on a munitions ship when we were invading Guadalcanal. It was in Iron Bottom Sound, and his ship got sunk, so he spent some time in the water. I heard some of those stories. Then he wound up being on a destroyer, so I was interested in things military, et cetera. When I went to Dartmouth, with my evolution from one major to the other—which by the way is great, because when a student comes into the office and says, "Dr. Papp, I don't know what I want to major

in.” I can say, “I can relate. Don’t worry about it. It’s no big thing. Part of the process of being an undergraduate is to discover who you are.”

TS: I started out in zoology.

DP: There you go. What did you, Dede, start out in?

DY: Well, I had my bachelor’s in history, and then I got a master’s and Ph.D. in literature.

DP: Good examples as well. Mentors up at Dartmouth and influences—Charles McClain. He was professor of Political Science. In addition to getting a scholarship to go to Dartmouth—Dad was an assembly line worker. We couldn’t afford sending me to Dartmouth, so Dartmouth gave me a nice scholarship. But that wasn’t quite enough to make ends meet, so I did work-study and got put with Professor McClain who was a Sovietologist. So that got me really interested. Another one of my mentors was a geographer by the name of Robert [E.] Huke. He was big even then in climate change and physical geography and that sort of stuff. So that, of course, blended chemistry and geology with the physical world and policy. So that was absolutely fascinating. I guess those were probably my two biggest mentors.

TS: What was it about them that made them mentors for you?

DP: Interesting people. Professor McClain was a superb skier, and he also, maybe once a quarter or so, disappeared for a couple of weeks, and he’d be off in the Soviet Union. I thought that was pretty cool. Then Professor Huke was really big into Southeast Asian affairs—not the war or anything; he was involved with something called the Mekong River Project in an effort to make the Mekong River more productive—try to put some dams on it and generate hydroelectric power.

TS: Wasn’t it Lyndon Johnson’s proposal that they just accept that and just stop resisting and we’d build all these dams for them?

DP: That was part of it. So here were folks who were good people and good athletes and involved with things of the mind and involved with real world situations. And, wow, that was pretty neat.

DY: Renaissance men.

DP: Renaissance men, really.

TS: Well, I guess in the ’60s you thought there would always be a need for Sovietologists, I guess.

DP: Yes. In the ’60s and in the ’70s and a lot of folks thought in the ’80s, that there would always be a need as well. I was not one of those, by the way. I did not see the break up of the Soviet Union, jumping forward. But probably the best article I ever wrote was

published in 1982—maybe best isn't the right word; maybe the most foresighted article I ever wrote was published in 1982 in the *U.S. Naval War College Review* [XXXV (July-August 1982): 50-68] after it had been rejected for publication four or five times. The article was entitled "From the Crest All Directions Are Down." The original title was "From the Crest All Directions Are Down: The Growth of Major Problems in the Soviet Union." The editors up there thought it sounded neater if you said, "From the Crest All Directions Are Down." And that became the title of the article. I started writing this in the world of '80 and '81. Of course, it was the Reagan election in 1980 and it wasn't cool to say that the Soviet Union has problems in '81 or '82 or even '83—I got some considerable flack for some things I said.

TS: Sounds like you were agreeing with Reagan?

DP: No, no, no, no. The article didn't say that.

TS: Wasn't that what you were implying, though, that you wouldn't want to be associated with Reagan?

DP: I was implying that even in the world of academia, the alleged objective world of academia, in the early '80s or in the early 21st century, publication is in fact subject to political pressures. So what the article basically said, Tom, is, "Let's all agree that the Soviet Union's military is really impressive. Maybe it's as good as ours, maybe it's better than ours, maybe it's not quite as good as ours." I couldn't find any admirals or generals in the U.S. that wanted to trade militaries, so my guess was theirs was a little bit worse than ours. That having been said let's just accept the Soviets had a doggone good military and then put that aside. We're done with that. Let's look at what's left. You've got a country where the average age at death is going down. You've got a country where the rate of growth of the agricultural output is negative—they were growing less and less each year. You've got a country where the industrial output in non-military sectors—the growth rate—was negative. You've got a country where at least on an anecdotal basis there was the growth of nationality problems. I have two specific examples from leading my kids over in '75—my first trip to the Soviet Union was in '75 with a whole bunch of students. We were in Samarkand, Soviet Central Asia. When you travel in the Soviet Union you have a country guide that goes with you the whole time and a city guide that goes with you just in the city. Our country guide was a lady by the name of Natasha, ethnicity Great Russian, very nice lady, Communist party member. So we're in Samarkand, and I'm walking down the street with her one day, and I noticed that many of the locals when they get relatively close, maybe from here to the wall, would step out in the street, some of them would cross to the other side of the street, and some of them when they got past you a little bit would expectorate in the street. So I asked Natasha, "What's going on here?" She says, "Don't worry about it—old local custom." A day or two later I'm with the country guide, not the city guide, and I don't remember her name. I asked the same question when the same phenomenon occurs, and her response is, "Don't worry about it; they think you're a Russian!" Okay, so . . .

TS: Anti-Russian sentiment.

DP: Anti-Russian sentiment, exactly. Then a couple of weeks later we're in Soviet Georgia in Tbilisi, and this was when the joint Soyuz-Apollo shot went up. I've still got [in my office] my Soyuz-Apollo poster that I brought back from the Soviet Union in 1975. So we're at a quote, unquote, "party"—[watching] a TV where the Russians broadcast the American Apollo launch live and delay the broadcast of the launch of Soyuz. "Why do you broadcast Apollo live?" "In case something goes bad—show American humiliation if something goes bad." "Why do you do a tape delayed broadcast of Soyuz?" "In case something goes bad—you'll never see it." That's the kind of stuff that really went on. We're at this party, and my college students and a couple of my friends went over as well. Most of our kids were eighteen to twenty-two or twenty-three, and the Soviet Georgian students are in their early thirties and propagandists, et cetera, et cetera for the party. My kids did pretty good defending themselves and defending the American way of life and the western way of life while at the same time pointing out all of our shortcomings. But the word came in that the Soyuz and Apollo hooked up. The leader of the Soviet Georgian group jumped up on the table with his glass of vodka or vinjak or whatever he was drinking, and says, "To the United States and Apollo." And everybody in the room, Americans and Georgians toast: "To the United States and Apollo." So I'm thinking, okay, I'm leading the U.S. group. I've got to respond. So I jump up on the table, and I say, "To the Soviet Union and Soyuz!" Every one of the Americans in the room says, "To the Soviet Union and Soyuz." And all the Soviet Georgians go [silence]. So the Soviet Georgian puts his arm around me and says, "Dr. Papp, you don't understand, 'To the United States and Apollo.'" Every one of the Soviet Georgians goes, "To the United States and Apollo." So here we have in about two weeks two incredibly telling incidents where there are nationality problems, immense nationality problems, just below the surface. I built that into the article. So I used seven or eight or nine or ten different parameters. You take the Soviet Union, take the military there, and in issue after issue outside the military it's a country coming apart at the seams. Conclusion: the next Soviet leader—[Leonid] Brezhnev was still alive when I wrote and published it—the next Soviet leader is going to have to cope with these problems or there will be hell to pay in the Soviet Union. I concluded that the next Soviet leader would have to cope with these problems in one of two or three different ways: if he does not cope with the problems, the country will continue its downward spiral. If he attempts to cope with the problem in way number one—way number one is to find an external enemy and try and bring the country together—a classic way to do it to bring your country together, find an external enemy and rally around [the flag]—so that's one possibility. Another possibility is you might have a reformer come in who will implement some serious economic reforms, political reforms, and social reforms. If there's any way the U.S. can get that kind of person in, that would be wonderful. We got lucky. We got, well, [Yuri] Andropov got in—Andropov, had he lived longer would have been very, very dangerous. Fortunately he died quickly. [Konstantin] Chernenko came in and he was irrelevant because he was old and infirm when he came in. Then we got a reformer [Mikhail Gorbachev] who came in. From the crest all directions were down.

TS: So you think it was blind luck on our part?

DP: Yes [laughter].

TS: Okay.

DP: Yes. The Reaganites try to claim too much credit. I do give them some credit. I'm not one of the analysts who said that it was Ronald Reagan who brought down the Soviet Union. Bull. The Soviet Union was in the process of coming apart at the seams anyway. What Reagan's defense policies did, and what his standing up to the Russians did, was to convince Gorbachev that internal reforms were necessary. So I think Reagan has to be given some credit for Gorbachev's going in the direction he did, but not as much credit as the Reaganites [claim]. There wasn't nearly as much credit as the Reaganites [claim].

TS: The right place at the right time—but the wrong person in the White House could have really messed up everything.

DP: Yes, the wrong person in the White House or the wrong person in the Kremlin. So the world was very fortunate that we had Reagan and Gorbachev together. You don't hear that perspective very much from either the Democratic Party or the Republican Party or the academic world.

TS: Right. Any particular mentors at Miami that stand out?

DP: Yes, one in particular, Dr. Leon Goure. Leon was my thesis advisor, and Dr. Goure was the guy who took me under his wing from the day I met him. He said, "Dan, what you need to do during your first semester is identify a thesis topic. Work with me on identifying a thesis topic." This is first semester. "What you need to do"—you asked me before, Tom, how I got done quickly. Here's why I got done quickly—"What you need to do then is in all of your graduate courses that you take, have them oriented in some way, shape or form towards doing research on what your dissertation is going to be."

DY: Yes, in an ideal world!

TS: So Miami strikes me as a private school that maybe was highly selective in who they let in, but who they let in they expected to get the doctorate, so from day one they're preparing you to get through.

DP: Right. Now, the Center for Advanced International Studies (CAIS)—the faculty there was primarily retired state department types, retired think tank types, and only a couple of people who had come up through the traditional academic ranks. Some of my professors, like Gerald Govorchin and a couple of others who were in history or in political science were folks who had come up through the ranks, but a significant percentage of the folks that I studied under and worked with were people who had their doctorates, but who had non-academic and so-called "real life" experiences.

TS: Right. So does that kind of steer you toward maybe applied research, an interest in applied research?

- DP: Absolutely. Applied research has to be based in many or most cases on original research. That having been said, my orientation is clearly towards applied research, which fits in really nicely here at Kennesaw. At the doctoral level what did the Board of Regents say we could go ahead and do? Not a Ph.D., but applied doctorates. It's a nice fit from that perspective. But Leon was my biggest influence at Miami, and he was very good.
- TS: By the time you get through in '73, the job market's not the greatest in the world, I guess. You went to Georgia Tech and you pretty well stayed there, and, of course, we think of Georgia Tech as an engineering school, but I know they've got the history of technology doctorate and things like that.
- DP: We didn't create that until twenty years later.
- TS: Right. So why Georgia Tech at that time?
- DP: Three or four reasons, Tom. I came up to Georgia Tech first because I was dating a girl in Atlanta who was a stewardess. She'd come and visit me in Miami once in awhile. So at spring break she'd come down to Miami and I came up here, and I thought it's not a bad city. Even in '73, Atlanta was a pretty nice city, so when I visited her, I said, "Well, I wonder if there are any job opportunities in Atlanta?" At that point in time I knew I was going to get a doctorate in either August of '73 or December of '73; it was that close. Reports were positive. So it was just a question of how hard I worked during the summer of '73. So I thought, "Hm, I'll go visit the universities." I went to Georgia State and met the chairman of the department of political science, Chuck [Charles B.] Pyles.
- TS: Oh, yes. I remember him.
- DP: Chuck was a great man, became a good friend of mine after I moved to Atlanta. He didn't give me a job offer though [laughter]! I went over to Emory, met Dennis [S.] Ippolito, who ran political science. Then [I] went to Georgia Tech and met Pat Kelly—no job offers or anything. So I went back to Miami and I was still looking at going to work for the Central Intelligence Agency. I was looking at the possibility of Auburn, they had an opening; University of Redlands in California had an opening. Then on Memorial Day 1973, I had just come in from the pool in Miami and my roommate, Mark Miller, said, "Hey, Dan, there's some guy on the phone from Georgia Tech who wants to talk to you." So I went over and it was Pat Kelly who was the chair of the department of social sciences at the time, and he said, "Hey, I've got a job for you starting in September if you want it." I said, "Well, how much time do I have to think about it?" He said, "Three or four days." I asked how much it would pay, and he told me how much it would pay. I went and talked to Leon Goure who was—we talked about this before—a big influence on me. Now, the gentleman that I'm about to discuss was not really a big influence on me, but he had a big role in my taking the position at Georgia Tech—his name was Mose L. Harvey. Dr. Harvey was the director of the Center for Advanced International Studies where I was getting my degree. He was the former head of policy planning at the Department of State. He was also a graduate of Emory, so he said,

“You’ve got a chance to go to Georgia Tech, take it” [laughter]! “Okay! Dr. Goure says it’s a good place to go. Dr. Harvey says take it. Dr. Kelly told me when I needed to be there.” So that’s how I wound up moving here. I broke up with the girl, by the way. So that was okay. She wanted to be a movie star, so she flew for about six months after I moved here and then she moved to California to try to become a movie star, but never quite made it. So that’s how I wound up getting to Georgia Tech. Why did I stay at Georgia Tech? Tech was very good to me. Tech gave me the opportunity to teach what I was interested in teaching, to do research in what I was interested in doing research on—and this was just the beginning of the era. Joe [Joseph M.] Pettit had just come in as president in ’71, or something like that with the specific job of making Tech a research university—most people don’t remember this, but this was one of my biggest challenges at the Board of Regents, when I was there, to get people to remember things.

TS: Institutional History.

DP: The University System of Georgia—and we in the USG get pilloried all the time for our relative lack of research—except for UGA’s agricultural research, there was zero research being conducted in the state of Georgia before Joe Pettit came to Georgia Tech. So the history of true academic research, outside of the very good agricultural research that UGA was doing, dates to roughly 1971. So here we are in the world of 2006, thirty-five years after Joe Pettit came to Georgia Tech, and the University System of Georgia is about the tenth or eleventh largest generator of academic research, collectively, in the United States. USG research is only thirty-one years old. You look up at the Cal. Berkeleys, you look at the Ohio States, you look at the

TS: They were getting all that grant money in the ’50s and ’60s.

DP: Exactly. So this state is doing doggone good, we just don’t appreciate our starting point. Our starting point for research is doggone recent. So why did I stay at Georgia Tech? I got to teach what I wanted to. I got to research what I wanted to. I was “present at the creation,” to use Dean Acheson’s phrase from his book [*Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1969)] of the movement into scholarship and research at Tech. We did it—I’ll give Pat Kelly a credit for this—in social sciences, we did it all the time, saying, “number one on the block” for just about everybody is teaching—with one or two exceptions—number one on the block, you’re a good teacher. If you’re not a good teacher, I don’t care what you bring in or what you publish. With the exception of one or two faculty, if you’re not a good teacher, no matter what you bring in, you’re gone. It can be done. I’ve experienced it.

TS: Did your department have a major when you started at Georgia Tech?

DP: No. And we started a phrase there that you’re going to hear me use with modifications here, but for different purposes at Kennesaw. We didn’t have any majors, but we wanted to influence every student that we had. Our line was, “every student is *our* student,” and it was true. I used to bug my friends at Emory all the time that Georgia Tech engineers got a much more liberal education in the classic definition of what a liberal education

was, than the students at Emory did. Why? You could go through Emory without taking a math course. You could go through Emory without taking a natural science course. You couldn't ever be an engineer coming out of Georgia Tech without taking at least eighteen hours worth of humanities and at least eighteen hours worth of social sciences. You could not do it. So the classic definition of the liberal education is what? A little bit from here, as we talked about before, Tom, a little bit from natural sciences, a little bit from the social sciences, a little bit from the mathematical sciences.

TS: I've heard Bob [Robert B.] Ormsby say exactly the same thing—the retired president of Lockheed-Georgia.

DP: I taught his daughters by the way.

TS: Did you really? He was making that point that he knew a whole lot more about Shakespeare than English majors knew about quantum physics.

DP: Yes. Here's a trivia question, and please don't think I'm pro-engineering. Engineers do a wonderful job; there are some real issues with engineering education. Other than philosophy majors—this was true twelve years ago, so I don't know if it's still true—in the world of 1994, as far as we knew, other than philosophy majors there was only one other major in the world that we could track that required at least six hours of philosophy to graduate. What was that major? Good trivia question.

DY: Yes. Not history?

TS: No, I don't think so.

DP: Electrical engineering.

TS: Is that right?

DP: You needed a course in general philosophy, and you needed a course in ethics.

TS: So your department played a major service role then at Georgia Tech.

DP: That's all we were during the 1970s, exclusively service. Every student is our student, and we had a huge impact on a huge number of kids. Every one of our faculty members, with one or two exceptions were good researchers, but teaching was number one. Make sure that those engineers and make sure that those managers and those natural scientists really were interested. to get them interested you had to be interesting. So that kept me there and plus, I got to travel.

TS: You got a whole year to go to the War College [U.S. Army].

DP: I taught at the War College.

TS: You were at Georgia Tech for four years when you went there, three or four years?

DP: Even before I went to the War College I arranged a visiting professorship, actually an exchange professorship in Australia. So I lived in Australia for seven or eight months and then came back and immediately went to the Strategic Studies Institute in Carlisle. I had just a wonderful, wonderful time there, learned a lot, and worked in the Pentagon for a couple of months during that period, and did a project on the neutron bomb, the military utility of the neutron bomb, which was fascinating. I did another project on the army strategic environment from 1990 to 2000, which I'm scared to go back and look at because I'd be afraid how badly we missed. I did a number of other projects. That's when I started to do my work on Soviet policies in the Third World. In fact—I was there in '77-'78 which was when it became public knowledge, the extent to which the Soviets had been mucking around in Angola, I think '77-'78 was when they went into Ethiopia.

TS: What did you do your dissertation on?

DP: My dissertation was on "Soviet Perceptions of the Goals of and Constraints on U.S. Policy toward Vietnam, June 1964 - December 1965." It was basically diving deep into Soviet literature and seeing what they were saying.

TS: Yes. It's really Third World though, the emphasis on Vietnam.

DP: Exactly. So that was a good dissertation. My first book was entitled, *Vietnam: The View from Moscow, Beijing and Washington* [Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1981].

TS: Were you able to get into Soviet records? You couldn't get the Soviet records.

DP: No, just public Soviet commentary. One of the tools of the Kremlinologist during that era, a tool that some mainline political scientists and mainline historians disagreed with tremendously, was reading Soviet sources to see if you could cipher and decipher slight differences in emphasis. I remain convinced that was a very, very useful methodology.

TS: So you must have picked up Russian pretty early on.

DP: Yes, I picked up Russian; my Russian today is miserable. I have not used it really in fifteen or sixteen years, since just after the break up of the Soviet Union because I began re-orienting my research at that point in time.

TS: You are doing a ton of research and you've got what, ten books nowadays?

DP: All of them stacked right behind the plunger [on the book shelf in his office].

TS: All right. You've got a couple of textbooks maybe. I was interested in your resume on the Dean Rusk book. You said you edited 100 percent and wrote 30 percent of his autobiography [laughter].

DP: I had about 3,000 pages of transcripts of interviews with Mr. Rusk. Some of it, to make it really a book you wanted to read, had to be rewritten. You ran it back by him to make sure it was exactly what he meant. I have a couple of good anecdotes, one of which I maybe ought not use in mixed company, but I will anyway unless you tell me not to.

DY: I don't consider myself mixed!

DP: The first one, I was up there one day interviewing Mr. Rusk just after the former Soviet foreign minister, Andrei Gromyko, wrote his memoirs, and Mr. Rusk said, "Dan, have you read my good friend Andrei's autobiography yet?" I said, "Yes, sir, I have." Mr. Rusk said, "Well, tell me what he said about me so I know what to say about him" [laughter]! He meant it as a joke! So that was the first one. The second one came back from Mr. Rusk talking about—this is a true story, although the first one was a true story as well—in 1963 Gromyko was still the Soviet Foreign Minister and Mr. Rusk was Secretary of State, and they were at a cocktail party together. Of course, Mr. Rusk's classic comment about the Cuban Missile Crisis was, "There we were; we and the Russians were standing eyeball to eyeball; and the other fellow just blinked." Gromyko came up to Rusk at this cocktail party and said to him, "Dean, I do not understand. You said we were standing there balls to balls and . . ." [laughter].

DY: Lost in translation!

DP: Lost in translation! Long before Bill Murray ever got lost in translation ["Lost in Translation," by Sofia Coppola (Los Angeles, CA: Focus Features, 2003)].

TS: I met Richard Rusk when he came—we invited Steve Oney in to speak at the 1st annual Jewish Life in the South symposium in 2004, and he was talking about the Leo Frank case, and Richard Rusk came to try to get people interested in a memorial for Leo Frank.

DP: The way I got involved in the Rusk project—this is worth telling. The way I got involved in the Rusk autobiography was that Mr. Rusk and Richard were totally alienated over the Vietnam War. Richard had been a student at Cornell. [He] had [some emotional difficulties] over his dad's role in the War, refused to talk to his father, moved to Alaska to get away from everything. Mr. Rusk had a stroke, and the book project began as a father/son near-death reconciliation project. But Richard couldn't do it. Richard just couldn't do it. So the people at the Southern Center for International Studies, Peter [C.] and Julia [A.] White, whom I worked closely with, knew that I had known Mr. Rusk from during graduate school days. They asked me if I would be interested in getting involved in the project to save this father/son reconciliation project. That's how I got involved.

TS: Thank you.

DY: Thank you so much.

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
KSU Oral History Series, No. 50
Interview with President Daniel S. Papp
Part II conducted by Thomas A. Scott and Dede Yow
Edited by Susan F. Batungbacal
Location: President's Office, Kennesaw Hall

Part II, Tuesday, 5 September 2006

TS: Dr. Papp, we talked a lot last time about your background. We got up to Georgia Tech and some of the things you were doing there, your scholarship and so on. I'd like for us to get started today talking a little bit more about your career at Georgia Tech. I thought a good way to get into the interview today is with some of the honors that you won there. You were Outstanding Faculty Member in 1976. I believe that was selected by the Student Government Association.

DP: Yes.

TS: And then you won a Distinguished Professor Award in '93, which I guess would be the equivalent of our Distinguished Professor Award here, maybe the same type of award.

DP: I think so.

TS: Overall teaching, scholarship, service.

DP: Teaching, research and scholarship, service, the whole nine yards.

TS: Obviously your reputation in the classroom and the things that faculty members are expected to do was sterling at Georgia Tech. I wonder if you'd talk a little bit about those awards and maybe a little bit about your perceptions of the role of teaching and scholarship and service.

DP: Sure. Let me start with the awards and then do my perception of teaching, scholarship and service. I have a unique perspective on teaching, which we'll come back to in a minute—I think it's unique anyway. I was very surprised to get the Student Government Association Award because I'd only been at Georgia Tech for three years at that point in time, but obviously pleased to get it. At that point in time, I was teaching three classes per quarter.

TS: Five-hour courses?

DP: Actually ours were three-hour courses.

TS: Well, yes, you wouldn't be teaching fifteen hours at Georgia Tech.

- DP: We were doing nine hours. One of my classes every quarter was the large section of American Government. I had 225 students in that class every quarter, and then I would teach two other classes in my field or specialty, American Foreign Policy or Soviet Foreign Policy or U.S. Defense Policy or International Relations Theory, that kind of stuff. On a quarter to quarter basis, I always had 300 students, and we had no graduate teaching assistants either.
- TS: You didn't have the doctoral program at that time.
- DP: No doctoral program, no master's program, nothing like that. All of us in international affairs and in political science and history and sociology and philosophy, the units that made up the old School of Social Sciences, were all teaching between 200 and 350 students per quarter. So I figured by that point in time, Georgia Tech was probably only about 9,000 or 10,000 students. After I had been there three years, I had probably taught already about one-third of the student body! That having been said, I was still surprised to get that award simply because I was such a "newbie" at that point in time. Then the 1993 award, I was also surprised to get that because up until that point, nobody other than an engineer or a natural scientist had ever received that award at Georgia Tech. This was a combination of alumni, faculty, students, and administrators all got together and did this. I was pleased and proud to get both those awards. My view on teaching, you've got to figure out a way to get students interested. I don't care where you are, I don't care if you're at Georgia Tech or Kennesaw or Southern Poly or Georgia Perimeter College or Waycross College, you've got to figure a way to get students interested. I always try to find a hook in one of my classes or preferably multiple hooks. My whole philosophy of teaching is to confuse students about what they really believe in such a way that they want to learn for themselves. I don't want them to take my beliefs. I want them to think; I want them to think for themselves. So that is what my objective is: confuse them about the beliefs that they previously held, so that they want to rethink their beliefs and their outlooks on their own. If they reach the same conclusions, that's fine. If they reach different conclusions, that's fine. At least have the students be critical thinkers on their own and not listen to somebody else, most of all, the professor. Just get them thinking.
- DY: Complicate their world.
- DP: Yes, complicate their world, Dede.
- TS: Did you find it easy or difficult to encourage critical thinking when you were doing those large classes of 250?
- DP: Difficult. But there were ways to do it. You did a little humor—one of my favorites was the electoral college example, where you explain why the electoral college came into being, and then you talk about the way the electoral college really operates so that you could have somebody win with a minority vote.
- TS: Which we did in 2000.

DP: Which we did in 2000, exactly correct, and still wind up being elected president. So that got people thinking, well, gee, is there a better way to do it then? Go back to the context of the times when the electoral college was put in, where you had few people reading, few people deeply involved, it seemed to work. But the class of 225 was always a challenge. That was always taught in D.M. Smith 105—that was the room number; that was the name of the building. Research? I was blessed; I was doing research in a field that was critically important to the United States and to the world, the inter-relationship of the U.S. and the Soviet Union, whether it be in strategic nuclear policy or whether it be in U.S. and Soviet policies in the Third World. That was something that students were interested in, and it was something where I had no problem putting what was cutting edge research into the classroom in ways that students were interested in it. Service? Service was easy. I loved to be on a college campus working with students. You can do all sorts of things working with student organizations. I was the faculty advisor to a fraternity for a number of years. I was the founder of the Georgia Tech Rugby Club. I'd go out and lecture in high schools all over the state, primarily in Atlanta and primarily in Cobb County. I worked very closely with the Southern Center for International Studies on a host of different projects.

DY: So your service was very student focused.

DP: Very student focused and also service focused to the profession. I was chair of the American-Soviet Section of the International Studies Association. I was twice chair of the Southern Section of the International Studies Association. I served on the executive board of the Comparative Interdisciplinary Studies Association, [and] served on the executive board of the section on military studies. So I was very much involved in service to the profession as well.

DY: But not so much with administrators. You were not on committees necessarily with administrators; is that what you're saying?

DP: Yes. Not until later on.

DY: That's very interesting that your focus was students.

DP: I started in '73, and then in '79 or '80 I wound up becoming director of the School of Social Science at Tech. Then, I started beginning getting a bit more involved with the administrative side of the service.

TS: Was that a tough decision for you to move into administration as director, or was that something that you wanted to do?

DP: No, it was just something that I wandered into, to tell you the truth, Tom. Our school director resigned, and we had a school that consisted of a few political scientists and historians and sociologists and anthropologists and religion folks. We were a mini school of humanities and social sciences. We had about 23 or 24 faculty members, and it was internecine combat very frequently—"are we going to get that position"—and I just had a

knack to bring people together. So a couple of other faculty members said, “Gee, we’re spending all of our time politicking; why don’t you let us nominate you to be chair because you can probably bring everybody together. Then we’ll all have more time to do our teaching and our research and our writing because we won’t have to worry about politics.” So that’s what happened. I went into administration because if I went into administration running the School of Social Sciences, everybody would have time to do their teaching and their research and writing because they wouldn’t have to worry about politics. We’d just sit down, and instead of conniving behind each other’s backs, we’d sit down and have meetings and, “At the end of this hour, we’re going to reach consensus. If at the end of this hour we don’t reach consensus, we’re still going to have a decision, but everybody will have heard everybody else’s arguments and we’ll be done. Then we can go teach and research and write.” So that’s why I got into administration.

DY: So you saw yourself as a mediator, in a mediating role.

DP: As a goal directed mediator. I was not and am not one of these folks who will sit around and say, “Well, we don’t have unanimity, therefore we can’t reach a decision.” I’m not one of these folks who says, “We do not have a hundred percent of the information that we need, therefore, we will not reach a decision.” Those two examples are honestly one of the reasons why the academic world is held in less than stellar regard by many people on the outside, because until unanimity is there, no decision is made. Until you have perfect knowledge, no decision is made. That’s not the way to move forward and get things done. Will you make some mistakes on occasion? Sure. But not making a decision is an even bigger mistake.

TS: I was thinking that nobody would ever get a book or article finished if they waited until they had all the knowledge before they wrote something.

DP: Exactly.

DY: Yes, a good analogy.

DP: We, in the academy, write books all the time without perfect knowledge, but yet when it comes to making a decision we either want unanimity or perfect knowledge.

TS: Right, we become Quakers at that point, I guess [laughter]. Well, you moved into administration. I guess one of the things that interests me is that you moved into administration without sacrificing your scholarship or your professional service to your discipline.

DP: Or my teaching.

TS: I didn’t know how much teaching you were doing at this time, but I see lots of administrators around here who practically give up their scholarship once they become administrators.

- DP: What I was doing was too fascinating to give up my scholarship. I just couldn't do it. And I've tried to keep at least the toe in scholarship up until basically about a year or two ago, and I still tried to keep up my toe in scholarship, even as senior vice-chancellor. That came out about a year and half ago [pointing to *American Foreign Policy: History, Politics and Policy*, by Daniel S. Papp, Loch K. Johnson, and John Endicott (New York: Pearson Longman, 2004)].
- TS: Yes, I saw that on Amazon.com.
- DP: That's what I call integrative research. It is a textbook, yes, but what it does is take a whole bunch of different perspectives from different experts in the field of American foreign policy. Starting with the *history* of American foreign policy, going through the *process* of American foreign policy, going through *issues* of American foreign policy and in each of those areas, integrates the perspective of other folks in those three separate areas, and comes out with what I think is something new.
- DY: Do you see the intellectual energy that propels you and gets you moving to do this kind of work—how does it engage you in your administrative work? Do you switch off one and flip on another?
- DP: Yes. Thank you for phrasing it that way. The simple answer to that, phrasing it that way, [is] yes, absolutely. [Scholarship] is almost relaxation. And it really has always been relaxation, even when I was less involved in administration.
- TS: But I guess if you're studying American foreign policy it's all about diplomacy, and when you're talking about being a mediator as an administrator, it's kind of the same thing, isn't it?
- DP: In many respects, it is. You're exactly right.
- DY: Well, and having been a student of military history I can see how you would come out of that with a view of a mediator.
- DP: Particularly when there are nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction around. We don't want to use those things! But you don't want anybody else to use them either. When my second oldest boy was growing up, he said, "Dad, what do you do for a living?" I said, "Basically, my chief objective is to keep faculty members from killing each other and to keep Americans and Russians from killing each other" [laughter].
- DY: Guess which is easier [laughter]!
- TS: That's great! I notice that you also have an Outstanding Civilian Service Medal from the Department of the Army.
- DP: I got that twice.

- TS: Twice? I noticed the one in '79. I guess I missed the other one.
- DP: The '79 one was for work that I did when I was up at the Strategic Studies Institute of the Army War College. I was living in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and the Army War College was at the home of the old Carlisle Indian [Industrial] School, which was where Jim Thorpe went to school. But what I got that first Outstanding Civilian Service Medal for was for a series of projects that I worked on for the army that included things—some of the projects, for example, were the study of policy implications of the neutron bomb, the technical name for which was the Enhanced Radiation Reduced Blast Weaponry [laughter]. See, that's what it does. It's a baby nuclear weapon, so it's got a small blast, but the radiation—they build it in such a way that they enhanced the radiation so the killing mechanism at a distance is the radiation, whereas the blast and the heat killing radius is very short.
- TS: It's a much more horrible way to go.
- DP: You're dead either way.
- TS: I guess so.
- DY: "Fire and Ice," as Robert Frost says [originally in *Harper's Magazine*, December 1920)].
- DP: Exactly. Another project we did was Army Strategic Environment 2000, which we wrote in the world of 1978-79. For this, we did prognostications of what the world would look like in 2000, and then tried to figure out what the army should look like. We did not predict the demise of the Soviet Union; we did predict the growth of state sponsored terrorism, which of course occurred before the breakup of the Soviet Union. The terrorism of today is just another version of state sponsored terrorism. So we were decent on that projection. Then the second time I got the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal was three years ago, something like that, for some work that I did at the University System office to help make the University System of Georgia more friendly to folks serving in the U.S. military and their families. We worked with the regents and wrote policies so that folks serving in the U.S. military based in Georgia could pay in-state tuition, even though they didn't have in-state residency. We thought that was the right thing to do. We got the board to do that. And we extended it to their families as well.
- TS: Let me ask you, you've done a lot of professional service, but you've also done some community service as well, and I'm just wondering about your philosophy on that. I know you were in the East Cobb Kiwanis Club at one time. You coached a lot of youth sports when your kids were growing up.
- DP: When my two oldest kids were growing up—I've got two step sons now, and now I'm just a fan. I just go to their games. I just don't have the time to go coach them anymore.

TS: You did everything under the sun at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection [on Paper Mill Road, Marietta] for a number of years as well.

DP: I did that as well. Until I changed memberships of churches.

TS: Is that why it ends about '99?

DP: Yes, exactly. I went through a divorce, which is one reason I changed, and then I also had some issues with the previous minister there, who I didn't think was very pastoral.

TS: But you were like a lay minister there?

DP: Right, an assisting minister, which basically was that you got to go to the altar and say the prayers and distribute communion and all that kind of good stuff. So I enjoyed that.

TS: So you were heavily involved in the community then.

DP: Yes. Very much so.

TS: How does that fit in with, I guess, the overall picture of service? Is that as important, do you think, as professional service?

DP: Yes. I've got to divide my yes into two parts: is it as important as professional service? Yes. Should it be counted—because we're all parts of the communities in which we lived—in promotion, tenure, reappointment and raise consideration, should it be included? No, because we ought to be doing that regardless of whether we're employees of Kennesaw State University or Georgia Tech or assembly line workers or postmen or whatever we're doing. We all ought to be contributing to the community. As an administrator, don't ask me to count the stuff you ought to be doing. The line there can be sometimes vague and hazy. Let me give you a specific example. When I was at Georgia Tech, I used to coach the Georgia Tech Rugby Club. Well, that was with Georgia Tech students; so you were a role model, hopefully, for students, which is important [laughter]. Did I ever put that in? No, I never really claimed it, but I sort of hoped that the people who looked at me—I have no idea if the people who looked at me and who were assessing me ever counted it, but they knew that I was coaching Tech students. Also I was coaching basketball and football for my kids. Did I put that in? Absolutely not; so there's a gray area in certain endeavors.

TS: Sure. I think it's important for us to be out in the community so they can see faculty members at Kennesaw as relatively normal people, hopefully.

DP: Absolutely. I agree completely.

DY: Well, in that sense we're stewards for the college as well. Good citizens.

DP: Yes.

- TS: I was interested in your resume. You had Southern Center for International Studies more in the community service rather than in the professional service category.
- DP: It could have gone either way. To tell you the truth, I have no idea why I put it more in the community side than I did on the professional side. That's one of those that from my perspective could have gone either way. I lectured very frequently for the Southern Center to folks in the community.
- TS: So it's not peer reviewed.
- DP: Yes.
- TS: Let's talk a little bit about your different positions as administrator. You've talked about being director of the School of Social Sciences, and then in 1990 you became the founding director for the School of International Affairs. Why don't you talk about your role in creating the School of International Affairs at Georgia Tech?
- DP: When Pat Crecine [John Patrick Crecine] came in as president at Georgia Tech, he was given the directions by the Board to expand the number and types of majors that kids could major in at Georgia Tech. He looked at the School of Social Sciences. We had, by that point in time, in the late '80s developed something called a Master of Science degree in Technology and Science Policy that took kids who had technical competencies and gave them policy understanding with some policy capabilities as well. We had three separate tracks. We could have gone farther with three different degrees, but we decided to create one degree and track it three ways. One of the tracks was in the history of technology, which made sense for Georgia Tech since we had a lot of historians, a lot of sociologists, and a couple of philosophers involved in that. We had another track in Technology Policy Analysis; we had a lot of political scientists involved there. The third track was in International Security and Development where we had political science and historians and folks coming out of philosophy and religion and some economists. The Master's of Science in Technology and Science Policy with three tracks bound together all the disparate disciplines. So Pat came in and said, "Hm. You have these three different tracks. They're good enough so that each one of them deserves its own school, and that also will help expand the purview of the social sciences at Georgia Tech." But by that point in time, our faculty liked what the School of Social Sciences was doing so much that many of the faculty opposed Pat's expansion. And since I was the director, I was at the center of it, and Pat thought that I opposed him. He kept an enemies list. I made his enemies list because I disagreed with him on the way he was going about doing things and some of the narrowly based specifics of change. I told him on more than one occasion, "Pat, your problem is you don't have enough confidence in the value of your own ideas. Instead of trying to do things via force, just go out and explain it and people are going to sign on like crazy." Eventually he and I got back together on viewpoints and he understood that I was not his enemy and that I really supported the reorganization. This led to as many as thirty new faculty slots, ten in history, focused on the history of science and the history of technology, probably another ten in technology policy analysis,

and probably another ten in international affairs. So I was right at the heart of the reorganization that took place at Georgia Tech. As it moved down line Pat asked me to become the director of what became the Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, which now has about 300 undergraduate majors and about 75 or 80 master's degree students.

TS: So the School of Social Sciences goes out of business at that time and divides three ways.

DP: Right. Each one of the three tracks in the old Technology and Science Policy program became the heart and soul of a new school.

TS: I know Bob McMath [Robert C. McMath, Jr.] has been there forever.

DP: He's gone now.

TS: He is?

DP: Yes, Bob is running the Honors College at the University of Arkansas.

TS: I didn't know that.

DP: Bob is wonderful.

TS: I agree. And I guess maybe Ron Bayor [Ronald H. Bayor] was coming in at this time?

DP: Let's see. That whole group of us, we came to Tech in the world of '72-'73. Bob came in '72—Joe Pettit [Joseph M. Pettit] came in as president in '71, I believe. Joe was basically given marching orders from the Regents to “make Georgia Tech a research university.” Before Joe, Tech was not a research university; it was a bench engineering institution. It was one of the most incredible things that happened at Tech, now the eighth best public university in the country. As a research university, it's only 35 years old. Bob McMath and Bob Whelan came the year before Ron Bayor and

TS: Ron's been there that long?

DP: Yes, Ron and I were in the same class of the faculty at Tech. Barbara Karcher, as a matter of fact, was—I think Barbara came to Tech with Bob McMath and Bob Whelan.

TS: That's right, she was there awhile.

DP: She was there, I think, for two or three years. Gus [August] Giebelhaus, you probably remember him.

TS: Yes, I know Gus.

DP: Gus came in, I think, in the faculty class of '75. Gerry Reed [Germaine M. Reed], I don't know if you know Gerry. She was there for a long time. She has since retired. But the

real star historians who came in then were Bob McMath and Ron Bayor and Gus Giebelhaus. Did you know Dorothy [C.] Yancy?

TS: No, I don't believe so.

DP: She's an African-American lady; she's now the president at Johnson C. Smith [University]. We just had a stellar group of folks there.

TS: So you ran the—I guess it wasn't Sam Nunn when you were running it?

DP: At first it wasn't the Sam Nunn School. It was the School of International Affairs. When I went up to the president's office as Executive Assistant, that's when Senator Nunn retired. I had known Senator Nunn because we were both students of international affairs and defense policy. Since I knew the senator, I called him up, and asked, "Hey, with you retiring, would you be interested in having a school named after you?" He said, "Well, I don't know." I said, "That sounds to me like a definite maybe." He said, "Yeah." I said, "I'm going to have some meetings with President [G. Wayne] Clough." And then President Clough and Senator Nunn and I worked it through and talked with some other alums at Tech and by 1994 or '95, sometime in that time frame, we got Senator Nunn to add his name to it.

TS: Great. What did you do as executive assistant to the president?

DP: Whatever Wayne didn't want to do [laughter]. A little bit of everything. The same thing that my faculty executive assistant is going to do [laughter].

TS: I guess it's great to be president where you can let somebody else do it.

DP: The second job he gave me, and thank you, Dr. Clough, was to kick my old fraternity off campus. They deserved to be kicked off.

DY: I don't even want to know what they did, but I can probably guess.

DP: They had been warned multiple times about hazing. They grabbed a couple of freshmen, brought them over to somewhere in Alabama, threw them out of the car with a quarter and their underwear, and somehow one of these two kids got into a fight with a motorcycle gang and got stabbed. So, I mean, there was no doubt that they had to be kicked off of campus.

TS: Was this the one that you had once advised?

DP: Not only the one that I advised! As an undergraduate I was an SAE at Dartmouth. I had been the advisor, yes, for SAE at Georgia Tech. By the way, the current president of the Kennesaw State University Foundation, Tommy [Thomas] Holder, is also a Georgia Tech SAE. Tommy Holder's one of my former students at Tech and a member of SAE. That was before we kicked them off. Tommy had graduated by that point in time.

DY: He's my father-in-law's [Lawson Yow's] next door neighbor.

DP: You're kidding!

DY: No, I'm not. I told Lawson last night that Tommy had told me that, and he said, "That's his claim to fame!" But I remember the SAEs—I went to Agnes Scott—and I remember the SAEs.

DP: They deserved to be kicked off.

DY: I'm not surprised.

DP: By the way, my son, when he went to Tech also joined SAE. He had graduated by that point in time as well.

TS: You offended everybody.

DY: So that was your second job.

DP: Yep, but even worse, the president of the Georgia Tech Alumni Association that year was SAE; the incoming president of the Alumni Association, from Maier & Berkeley Jewelers, the Maier of Maier and Berkeley, was SAE; and Tom [E.] DuPree, [Jr.], who had just given the college of management 25 million bucks of Applebee's stock to name the Tom DuPree College of Management, was also SAE. They were all SAE.

TS: So it was not a good career move [laughter].

DY: Hauled up your mediation skills on that. What was the first thing you did?

DP: The first thing I did, I had been in the office about two or three days, and I'm serious, I really did not know where the restroom was at this point in time. I got a phone call from Homer Rice—Homer was the athletic director at Georgia Tech, and I had known Homer for a while. He said, "Dan, congratulations on being named faculty executive assistant. Who is the president's office going to have at our news conference when we announce the naming of the McDonald's Center?" I said, "I don't know. Let me go ask President Clough." So I went and asked President Clough, and Wayne says, "The naming of what?" Homer, without telling anybody, had struck a deal with McDonald's to rename Alexander Memorial Coliseum the McDonald's Coliseum. So my first job that Wayne gave me was to tell Homer that a) nobody was coming to the press conference; and b) the press conference wasn't going to happen until the whole thing got reviewed and restructured. So that was my first job.

DY: Don't shoot the messenger on that one.

TS: Well, it's still Alexander Memorial I think, isn't it?

- DP: What we wound up doing was keeping it Alexander Memorial Coliseum, but it became Alexander Memorial Coliseum at McDonald's Center.
- DY: I love those prepositional phrases. You can do anything with them!
- DP: We worked with the people at the Board of Regents and struck out a geographical area. The geographical area became the McDonald's Center and we put in a time frame. The time frame would have been ten years, I think, after which both Georgia Tech and McDonald's would re-evaluate the naming. It is no longer McDonald's Center. That time frame expired two years ago, and Georgia Tech opted not to continue. I think McDonald's would have opted not to continue as well. So I did all sorts of interesting things like that. One of the other interesting things that I did was give back a million and half dollars.
- TS: Give back?
- DP: Well, actually tell the prospective donor we refused to take it.
- TS: Strings attached?
- DP: There were strings attached, yes sir. One of the strings was that the prospective donor, who is somebody that is well known in Cobb County, but I won't go any further than that, wanted to sit on the search committee [sigh]. So, Wayne said, "We're not taking that money." And we didn't take the money. I got involved in faculty governance reorganizations, chaired the diversity forum, worked closely with the alumni association, scheduled Wayne's visits to all the campus academic departments and the operational departments. It was a fascinating time. Until this job it's probably the best job I had.
- TS: Did you just carve out a few hours for your scholarship each day, or how did you do that?
- DP: Exactly. It was more like half a day a week. Sometimes I managed to sneak it up to two days a week, but yes, that's exactly what I did.
- DY: How did that change your perspective on teaching faculty when you had that job, that role?
- DP: It didn't. By that time, Dede, I had been a school director for fourteen years, so I still understood that faculty come in all flavors. Some folks are just absolutely exquisite and dedicated professionals, and some have retired on active duty, and some you've got to be careful that you don't take advantage of because they do absolutely anything because they love the kids and they love the work. There are others who will complain about anything if they have class sizes that are larger than two. You take the two extremes and you fill every hole in-between. Faculty folks are just like the rest of us.

DY: Well, it must have positioned you well, though, to do faculty governance work, I mean, as well as bringing in your own background.

DP: It did. I don't think it changed my perspective on anything faculty related. It changed my perspective on what it took to run the university. That really changed!

DY: That's an interesting point to talk about.

DP: I remember going in on occasion and, "Wayne, we never talk about things academic." We really didn't. I mean, we did talk about teaching strategy, we talked about retention, progression, and graduation, but we didn't talk about things like string theory in physics. We didn't talk about deconstructionism, the things that as a faculty member or as a department chair you talk about at the faculty lounge—which we've got to get here—and talk about all the time. We just rarely did that. But learning, that was really where I learned what it meant to run a university in the three years that I spent in Wayne's office as his executive assistant. I even got to close down the university one time when Freaknik was projected to come roaring over, and I was all set to close it down and I said, "Wait, you can't close it down because if you do we're going to wind up losing about a million dollars." "Why, to close down a university?" "Well, because all the contracts will not be billable on that day." "Oh, I never thought about that, that's right." "You close the university, that means the university's closed, and you don't bill contracts for that day." "Okay, what we're going to do is cancel classes and urge everyone who can do their research at home to do their research at home." Again, it's wording. I mean, you knew if you closed down the university and used that phraseology you were still going to have your computer science and lab folks. They were going to be in the labs.

DY: I'm curious about your chairing the diversity forum. What did you learn from that?

DP: Two or three things: number one, I think I always knew this, but it was really driven home—that different folks can use the same words to mean totally different things. So even though people are saying the same words, don't think they understand each other. Like I said, I think I always knew that, but, boy, chairing the diversity forum [brought it home]. It also drove home to me that, using the old Winston Churchill line, sometimes, "jaw-jaw is better than war-war." [From remarks at a White House luncheon, 26 June 1954, as quoted in the *New York Times* the following day] Sometimes there is no good resolution to an issue, but if you can just keep people talking with each other the issue will stay there; the tension might stay there, but the issue might never get larger and the tension might never escalate. That in itself is great progress on some issues.

DY: Yes, because there will be evolution in that individual's thinking, whether it gets out there on the table.

DP: Exactly right. You might not be able to resolve the issue, but you'll get people—"Well, so-and-so, I totally disagree with him, but he's not as bad as I thought he was." That's progress in some cases. So those are probably the two biggest things I learned.

TS: Well, in 1997, you became interim president at Southern Poly—I guess it was still Southern Tech?

DP: Southern Polytechnic State University.

TS: Oh, it was already by '97. [University status achieved in 1996]

DP: Yes, in the spring of 1997, just before I came on board.

TS: Right. They chose some other name first, didn't they?

DP: Yes.

TS: Okay, so you became interim president and I guess this is when Steve [Stephen R.] Cheshier left.

DP: That's when Steve retired.

TS: There were some controversies there at that time. [Laughter] From everybody I've heard, you must have done a great job there because everybody seemed to be very happy and wished that you'd stayed.

DP: Yes, we had a real good, thirteen or fourteen months there.

TS: Could you talk a little bit about that experience?

DP: Let me start with the controversies.

DY: Oh, do!

DP: During '95 and '96 and '97, I don't know how many times it happened, but two or three times the faculty and the department chairs and deans had voted no confidence in Steve, and there's a whole bunch of reasons why that is not relevant. Steve was too nice a guy to be president, quite honestly. Instead of moving people on when they needed to be moved on, he'd just find another position for them. Instead of when somebody was doing two-thirds of a job, if he didn't want to move them on, he would just take the responsibility that they weren't doing and put it somewhere else. So it was just a real discombobulated situation they had out there. About three or four days before I got out there, I've forgotten the specific number, something like five or six of the department chairs and one or two of the deans issued a statement of no confidence in the vice president for academic affairs, who was Harris Travis—just a nice, nice man who quite honestly had retired on active duty. So Harris said, "You guys have every right to say whatever you think about me as faculty members, but as department chairs and deans you have no right to do what you just did, so you're now former department chairs and deans." So I get out there and we've got a whole bunch of leaderless organizations.

DY: And hostile former leaders.

DP: And hostile former leaders. Everybody wanted to know what I was going to do, and I said, "The first thing I'm going to do is go visit everybody." So I talked to all the hostile former leaders and talked to Harris and talked to a bunch of people on campus. I did nothing the first two weeks out there except visit people in one-on-one's and reached the conclusion that this was one of those situations where nobody was right. I said, "Okay, here's what we're going to do." One of the deans was widely respected, a man by the name of Ed [Edward A.] Vizzini [Dean, College of Arts and Sciences], so I talked to Harris. The department chairs and deans petitioned me to put them back in, so I said, "Harris, I'm going to support your decision, but I need you to retire at the beginning of January." He said, "I'm ready to retire."

TS: He was already pastor of Zion Baptist Church, I think, while he was vice president.

DP: Exactly right, Tom. Exactly right. So I worked with Harris and I worked with Ed Vizzini, and I called a university meeting, and said, "I'm going to uphold Harris, but Harris is going to retire at the beginning of January. Dean Vizzini will become Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs. We're going to conduct a national search for every open position. Anybody in the nation, including the people who Harris fired, can apply for the positions, and we'll have the best person become the department head or dean." And that's what we did. So that was a very interesting way to start the year of the presidency. As it turns out, about two or three of the folks who had been fired got their positions back. Britt [K.] Pearce, head of the Department of Mechanical Engineering Technology, got his position back. Then Sandy [William Sanborn] Pfeiffer got his position back [as head of the Department of Humanities and Technical Communication and later as Vice President for Academic Affairs], and Sandy, by the way, is now the president at Warren Wilson College [Swannanoa, North Carolina near Asheville].

DY: Interesting. That must have been fun composing those search committees.

DP: It was interesting. I was very careful on that and relied very heavily on the advice of Becky [Rebecca] Rutherford [professor of Computer Science], who's still over there, and Joel [C.] Fowler [head, Mathematics Department], who's still over there. Joel was the head of the faculty senate that year.

TS: I know Mike Murphy [Michael G. Murphy] very well [current Dean of Computing & Software Engineering].

DP: Mike was one of the guys involved in that as well. Mike wound up coming back in.

DY: So you went to the faculty for advice on that? Is that what you're saying in part?

DP: To select the people. Becky Rutherford was my faculty executive assistant, and Joel Fowler was the chair of the faculty senate so, yes, very definitely went to them, and it worked out okay. We also kicked off strategic planning in a big way. They, also, had

been operating under an ancient strategic plan. We also had athletic association issues. Within about three weeks or a month after I got there, we were at a retreat in Brasstown Bald and got a phone call from our comptroller and the comptroller said, words to the effect that, "The secretary to the athletic director [who also happened to be the basketball coach] has just come in with \$12,000 in cash in a brown paper bag." I said, "What did you do with it?" He said, "Well, I took it from the secretary and I put it in the safe in my office." I said, "That's the right thing to do. We're going to suspend the basketball coach/athletic director until we get to the bottom of this." We did and found out that what he had been doing was taking all the Pell grant checks from his athletes, his basketball players, having them sign the checks over to him, and then he was cashing their checks and doling out money to them according to how much they said they needed and he thought they needed. This \$12,000 was what was left over from the preceding year. He had previously been making small contributions to the operating accounts in \$800 and \$900 increments, just below the \$1,000 mark. So we fired him.

TS: Breaks a few rules.

DP: Breaks every rule in the book.

TS: Well, we've gone beyond our time limit. I guess you have other appointments.

DP: I've got a four o'clocker and a 4:30.

TS: Maybe we can come back and do a third and final one?

DP: That sounds good.

TS: Thank you very much.

DP: Thank you for putting up with my babbling.

DY: It's very, very interesting.

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
KSU Oral History Series, No. 50
Interview with President Daniel S. Papp
Part III conducted by Thomas A. Scott and Dede Yow
Edited by Susan F. Batungbacal
Location: President's Office, Kennesaw Hall

Part III, Thursday, 28 September 2006

- TS: President Papp, last time when we stopped we had you up to your interim presidency at Southern Poly [Southern Polytechnic State University]. I think, actually, the last story you told was about having to fire the basketball coach, over there, over some financial irregularities. I think we pretty well covered coming in there and shaking things up, and of course, you spent fourteen months there. Is there anything that maybe we should say as a way of concluding that experience there? Anything you learned from it maybe, or anything that maybe ought to be said for the record about your year there?
- DP: Probably three or four things, Tom. One of the things that I definitely learned there is that—I shouldn't say that I learned it, but I had reinforced during my time there—was that you might think that you're being very clear in saying something, but if there is any way that something you say can be misinterpreted, not out of maliciousness, but just out of accident or just out of alternative explanations, it will be. And, again, that's something I didn't learn at Southern Poly, per se, but it sure got driven home.
- TS: You actually talked about that last time a little bit, when you were heading up that diversity thing at Georgia Tech, so it reinforces that language is important.
- DP: Absolutely. It doesn't matter if you're executive assistant or president, it can happen. But the impact is greater if you are president. So it just re-emphasized again the need to be particularly clear, and to try to be as clear as possible. That's part one. Part two—again, I didn't learn it there, per se, but it got re-emphasized—is how there are always secondary and tertiary and whatever the fourth level is, as well. Any decision you make as president has secondary and tertiary and other impacts, and you need to the greatest extent possible to think through what your secondary and tertiary and fourth level impacts will be. Any decision, even if it's a relatively minor decision.
- TS: Unintended consequences, is that what we're talking about?
- DP: Yes, there will be consequences of any decision. First level consequences—that's what you want to happen. Then the second level, I won't say unintended because if you think them through, you can figure out a lot of them. There will also be unintended consequences, things that you don't think about. So that got driven home enormously. It was also driven home to me how delicate the sense of community at a university is. As I think I said in our previous session, Southern Poly really didn't have much of a sense of the community when we got there. I like to think during my time there that we really did succeed in creating a good sense of community, but throughout that year, as we were

creating that sense of community, there were folks there who, because of their previous experiences, were ready to go oops, ready to step back again. So that's what I mean by how delicate a sense of community is at a college campus. I think those are three of the big things that I learned there as president during '97-'98.

DY: Did they affect your, to use jargon, "leadership style" or "communication style?"

DP: I think they affected my communication style. I don't think it affected my leadership style, Dede, other than to influence me to be even more aware of things that I was already aware of. It might have led me to be more wordy than I used to be. "Here's what I thought I said, now, did you hear what I thought I said?"

DY: Right. I guess the few meetings that I've been in with you, what I've noticed, very happily, is that you are process-oriented and you're very interested in inclusivity, and you're very interested in knowing what's thought.

DP: Right. Absolutely. That did not really come from my time at Southern Poly. That came all the way back from my time back when I first entered academic administration, back in the days of the good old School of Social Sciences at Georgia Tech when there were all these warring factions. We really had the need to bring everybody together.

DY: That makes sense.

DP: Right then I needed to reach out to everybody to find out what folks thought, or try and bring viewpoints together to try to fashion something that moved us in the direction that Joe Pettit [Joseph M. Pettit] wanted us to move, but at the same time could be inclusive so that everybody could be part of the show. Almost everybody could be part of the show, so that you didn't have folks consciously trying to prevent progress. That is part of what I'm bringing here to Kennesaw State. As a specific example, [I] discovered last week that one part of the new governance structure is that the chair of the university council is to be on the president's cabinet. I'm not comfortable with that. The president's cabinet needs to be the the president's cabinet, so I've already talked with a number of folks about that, including Dick [Richard A. Gayler]. One reason we have the faculty executive assistant on the president's cabinet is to have that [connection].

TS: That's Dick Gayler? Dick Gayler is chair of the faculty senate or the council?

DP: He is chair of the faculty senate, and the chair of the faculty senate is also the chair of the university council.

TS: And the chair of the university council is supposed to be on the cabinet?

DP: Right. So that's what it says, that's the way it's going to be until we figure how to amend the university council, and then I'll explain my reasons for amending it. I would really want the chair of the university council to be the chair of the President's Planning and Budget Advisory Committee (PPBAC). But this is how it is now, going back to being

process-oriented, so until we get it amended, hopefully we'll get it amended, that's the way it's going to be. Dick will be invited to the cabinet. But that just again goes back to me being process-oriented. You've got to have process; hopefully the process isn't too convoluted.

DY: Or slow!

DP: Or slow, yes. You've got to move forward with those things.

TS: I noticed by the time that you had gone to Southern Tech

DP: Southern Poly; the people over there don't want to be called Southern Tech.

TS: Excuse me, sorry. I remember when it was Southern Tech.

DY: We all do.

TS: I think Lisa [A.] Rossbacher created some kind of penalty, so many demerits if they called it Southern Tech, or something like that. Deducted their pay or something. But at any rate, by the time that you were at Southern Poly, it looked like your scholarship had moved into new directions. You edited a book that came out in '97, *Information Age Anthology* [*Information Age: An Anthology on Its Impacts and Consequences (Information Age Anthology, Volumes 1-2-3-4)*, David S. Alberts (Editor), Daniel S. Papp (Editor, Author), Joel Achenbach (Author), David A. Alberts, W. Thomas Kemp, Andrew Kupfer, Thomas A. Stewart, Alissa Tuyahov, Frank Webster (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1997)], so it looks like you're moving into technology and its role with the military. Your publisher was the National Defense University Press, so I guess the anthology is defense directed. [President Papp holds up a copy]. That's the anthology, and it's a thick anthology. Let's see, it looks like

DP: Volumes 1, 2 and 3. Volume 1 had four parts.

TS: So that's coming out at this time, and you had mentioned, I think, at the first interview, that with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and so on, that your scholarship went in a different direction. Is this the different direction that it goes into?

DP: Exactly correct. My scholarship, I think you could probably say my cutting edge scholarship, had three different phases: the first was very much involved with the technologies—U.S. and Soviet strategic nuclear exchange doctrines. The second was U.S. and Soviet policies towards the Third World, and the third was the impact of information and communication technology on international affairs. Those were really the three major phases of my scholarly career.

TS: And in fact, you've got the first chapter in here with your co-editor David Alberts, "War in the Information Age: Military." Were you a computer geek, or did you get interested in computers real early?

DP: No, not really. The way that I got in this is that all of the things that I was looking at academically, Tom, are what I would describe as big picture issues—strategic nuclear exchange doctrine—if somebody screws up, the world gets blown away. U.S. and Soviet policy toward the Third World, well, except for Europe, North America and parts of Oceania and Japan, the Third World is the rest of the world. If somebody screwed up badly there would be misunderstandings, and you could possibly blow the world up again. The Soviets disappear and I ask what's the next big picture issue. We're in the early 1990s when people are beginning to talk about globalization of communications. People are beginning to talk about the CNN affect on foreign policy. You do a little bit of reading and work with technology a little bit, and—I was still at Tech when I began to move in this direction—lo and behold, I began to discover that I was having more communications about things scholarly with folks in California and New York and Moscow and Beijing, than I was having with folks at the end of the hallway, and, whoa, something's happening here. You go down to visit Argentina, go down to visit Buenos Aires, and you discover that I've forgotten the name of the Buenos Aires newspaper—even in the world of 1994 or '95, [the newspaper was] 100 percent online. So you can have Argentinians living in Atlanta knowing what's going on in Buenos Aires the very morning that it goes on in Buenos Aires. Wow, that's got to have an impact on the way people look at the world and think about the world. And then you begin looking at the impact of information communication technologies on economics. You can have global corporations shifting production, based on the different costs of factors of production, changing virtually on a weekly basis. Overcapacity in a production plant is suddenly not a bad thing if it allows you to expand production and take advantage of decreased costs and factors of production in country "x" or "y." Then you look at the incredible impact even in the early 1990s that information communication technologies were having on the military. Think back to Desert Storm and Desert Shield. As an example, there you were, sitting in the living room and Forrest Sawyer, former newscaster from Atlanta, is in front of a dune in Kuwait and five or six Iraqis come out and surrender to him on television. The world is changing because of this kind of stuff. I figured at that point that the next big picture issue is to look at the impact of information communication technologies on international affairs. Since this was funded by the Department of Defense, the first set of four was on the global look of things, what the information communication revolution is all about, the impact of information communication technologies on business, commerce and services, on government and the military and then international affairs generically. The next volume looks at national security implications generically. Then we got down into real military operations. There's one scary—pardon me for my monologue here—there's one scary thing, if you realize this came out in March 2001. It was written in late 2000. Somewhere in here, it talks about the dangers of an anthrax attack on the United States. Another article talks about how the Internet allowed terrorist groups to get together and coordinate efforts to hurt the U.S. economy. So there were folks who were talking about things like biological attacks on this country and using the Internet to create economic issues, even before 9-11. The problem was nobody was listening.

TS: That's all right. I was wondering how you got involved in the Yamacraw project, but maybe that's a natural extension to what you're doing with your scholarship?

DP: A little bit, but it was also more than that, I think, Tom. I'd been president at Southern Poly, I had been executive assistant to the president at Georgia Tech, by this point I was relatively familiar with things technological, in part because of my research, in part because of having lived at Georgia Tech for so long and at Southern Polytechnic for so long. I had developed by that point in time a reputation for being able to bring people from disparate viewpoints and disparate outlooks together in pursuit of larger objectives. What the educational component of Yamacraw was all about was to get seven institutions ranging from three research universities through four state universities to work together on hiring faculty in a relatively narrowly defined area of expertise. How do you get [G.] Wayne Clough and Mike Adams [Michael F. Adams] and Carl [V.] Patton and Betty [L.] Siegel and Lisa Rossbacher and Bruce [F.] Grube and Tom Jones [Thomas Z. Jones] and Carlton [E.] Brown to work together? How do you get department chairs of computer science on seven campuses to work together, computer sciences or electrical engineering? So you needed somebody who knew the political side of the game, who knew enough of the technology to be dangerous, who could also work particularly with those fourteen people. So Stephen [R.] Portch looked around and Governor [Roy] Barnes looked around and found me. So that's how I got downtown working with Yamacraw.

TS: Were you happy with what you accomplished then?

DP: Yes. We got the strategic plan in place; that was part one. The hiring process was already in place. We had to figure out how to divvy up the money, so we figured out how to divvy up the money. To do that you need a strategic plan, so we did a system wide strategic plan—sound familiar? We divvied up the money, and then we worked with the seven presidents and the seven heads of computing and/or electrical engineering. I actually held veto power over who got hired. To get funding, folks who got hired had to fit within Yamacraw areas: digital signal processing, wireless telephony, wireless broadband, and two or three other related areas. If somebody didn't fit in that area they didn't get funding. So we turned down some, but not that many. We had to turn down three or four people before the folks on campuses realized that they had to fit within the Yamacraw area or they're not going to get hired. Why waste your time trying to hire somebody if they're not within our areas? I didn't have to turn down anybody at Kennesaw, as I recall. Kennesaw, I think, hired three people. Southern Poly, I think, hired four. Savannah State didn't hire anybody. Georgia Tech had the lion's share; they hired about thirty-five. They were the driver behind it. So I should have mentioned before that my connection to Tech was obvious, since Tech was going to hire half.

TS: Then you go from there to being Senior Vice Chancellor for Academics and Fiscal Affairs. That very title sounds almost like our provost here, I guess. It's more than academics. You're also dealing with budgets, and so on, but it looks like you're main job there was planning various types, strategic planning, dealing with admissions standards and retention, and that kind of thing. Would that be a correct assessment?

DP: That was part of the job. I really had four main portfolios: academic, faculty, and student affairs. So we did

- TS: All promotion and tenure.
- DP: Exactly right. Then I had budget and finance, and then I also had information and instructional technology for the whole university system—both the academic side of the house and the administration side. The fourth part was strategic planning and analysis.
- TS: That was just a fourth of your time then.
- DP: Yes. We spent a lot of time—this maybe falls into strategic planning—I ran the statewide assessment. Kennesaw State was advantaged by the conclusions of the statewide assessments because—using the old terminology—we, the State of Georgia, needed to get some universities that were classified as Carnegie research intensives. Georgia didn't have any. [Research intensive] means limited non-research doctorals. Kennesaw was the logical one to get it: Kennesaw, West Georgia, Valdosta and Georgia Southern, so that was both strategic planning and economic planning. We also, with Frank [A.] Butler as the primary point man, looked at specific academic programs and turned some down, killed some, and approved others. The faculty affairs: we looked at faculty workload issues, looked at student issues. Fortunately, I was blessed with a very good associate vice chancellor of student affairs, didn't hear too many student complaints or parent complaints, because Tonya took care of most of those.
- TS: Who did?
- DP: Tonya [R.] Lam. So that was on the academic, faculty and student side of things. Then budget and finance—we spent a lot of time with Bill Bowes on what is now a five billion dollar budget. It was about a four billion dollar budget when I came in, but it was an interesting job. I was never bored.
- TS: I guess not. I would think that, that knowledge of budgeting for the whole system would be immensely valuable now that you're here at Kennesaw.
- DP: It is. I know some of the arguments to use and some of the arguments not to use. I also know that one big problem that Kennesaw had, quite honestly, and you've heard me say this publicly on more than one occasion, is that everybody thought Kennesaw was "Camelot" because that was the image that Kennesaw projected of itself. If everything is that cool, why do you need more money in a place where everything is cool?
- DY: Gosh, when I was on that university budget committee, I thought everybody went down there hat-in-hand for faculty positions and buildings, and all of that kind of thing. So it's very interesting that you come from the outside and say, "Gosh, y'all are just fine here."
- DP: That's the image that kept getting projected that everything was fine. Yes, Kennesaw and West Georgia and Clayton State are near the bottom of the state university—state expenditures per full time equivalent student. But if everything is fine there, because you keep saying it—we tried to get money coming in this direction to balance it off, and to go

to West Georgia and Clayton State. We put a policy in place that I'll come back to in a minute, to try to even things out. But I knew enough people out here that I knew that everything wasn't fine, but when you go to make the case, if everything is fine, where's the need for more money? Well, the need for more money is that everything is not fine. That's why one of the reasons you keep hearing me harp about graduation rates, our graduation rates are much too low for the quality of the students that we get here. It's not because of insufficient quality of faculty. It's not because of insufficient quality of student. It's not because of insufficient quality of infrastructure. It's because of insufficient number of faculty and classrooms and advisors and mentors. Give us more money! We need it! Everything isn't fine. So what Bill Bowes and I did put in place and what Chancellor [Thomas C.] Meredith accepted was something called the eighty-twenty policy, whereby 80 percent of new workload funds generated each year by increases in FTE were returned to the university. The other 20 percent was to be used for system-wide strategic purposes, which ran the gambit from providing expanded bandwidth for PeachNet—you haven't heard any problems about PeachNet for the last four years, have you—whereas, when we put this policy in place that was part of where it was going to redress serious inequities in state allocations per FTE. The first couple of years Kennesaw, West Georgia, Clayton State and at the time Georgia Perimeter College benefited from that policy. We only got about \$400,000.00 and that's chicken feed, but it was a start. If we could have kept that policy in place from 2000 up to today, Kennesaw would be about two million dollars annual budget better off than it is right now. It didn't happen. We did it one year and then a bunch of cutbacks started.

DY: I remember that well.

DP: And the decision was made over the objection of this senior vice chancellor and Frank Butler and Bill Bowes that the budget cuts would be handed out evenly, and that rather than do the eighty-twenty, that about 95 percent of any increases would be returned to the institutions. Kennesaw wasn't hurt as badly as West Georgia and Clayton State because Kennesaw continued to grow, but Kennesaw still didn't benefit as much as it would have.

DY: Still treading water.

DP: Still treading water. So what has happened now that Chancellor [Erroll B.] Davis [Jr.] is in; he's also ditched the eighty-twenty. He has gone to a policy, or at least last year he went to a policy where 80 percent of the new workload money that was generated at research universities was returned to the research universities. State universities, including Kennesaw, got 70. Two-year schools got 60. The rest would be used for strategic purposes. We got \$400,000.00 out of strategic purposes money. That would be RPG money that was returned. It was better than nothing, but it basically made up for the difference between the 70 and 80 percent. So we're still making the case, and Chancellor Davis said that he fully understands that there are apparent inequities—and “apparent” is the right word—apparent inequities in the distribution of funds. The reason I say “apparent” is the right word is I fully buy the argument that we as the largest state university in the system have economies of scale that a place like Georgia Southwestern or Fort Valley do not have. You can amortize administrative costs across 20,000

students, whereas at Ft. Valley or Georgia Southwestern you amortize administrative costs across 3,000 students. But economies of scale don't explain our full shortfall.

TS: You had an opportunity to be chancellor of the Florida system in 2002. On the surface that sounds like a good job. What happened? Why did you choose to withdraw?

DP: You used exactly the right term—"on the surface." Putting it very simply and somewhat diplomatically, after I was selected to be chancellor of the University System of Florida, which occurred in September 2002, I was supposed to go down to become chancellor on January 1, 2003. I went down a couple days a week so I could hit the ground running. Over time, I discovered that what had been described to me as the job was not the job. Did I say that diplomatically? I guess it's nicer to say that than to say people lied to you.

DY: Right, the passive voice works well [laughter].

DP: So that's basically why I stayed up here.

TS: There was something about an Amendment 11 that I didn't understand in the announcement.

DP: Yes, Amendment 11 actually had nothing to do with my decision. What Amendment 11 was all about, a couple of years before I went down there, Governor [Jeb] Bush eliminated the Board of Regents in Florida and he created something called UBOTs—University Boards of Trustees.

TS: Universities. Each one is going to have a separate board?

DP: Exactly correct. Now Amendment 11 was poorly worded, but Amendment 11 was an effort on the part of Bob [Senator Daniel Robert] Graham and others to recreate the Board of Regents of Florida. Amendment 11 passed in fall 2002, so there was real uncertainty about where things were going, but that could have been fun if the amendment were a little bit more clearly worded.

TS: But that's just the excuse for the public, is that what you're saying?

DP: Absolutely correct, and I did not put that statement out. The governor and his people put that statement out. The truth of the matter why I did not—and I've never published an article on this, although I've been urged to—I've talked about it—but in Florida politics the article would be nothing other than muckraking, I guess is the right word. There were three or four parts to my decision. Things seemed to be going nicely until shortly before Thanksgiving. I'd been going down all of October, most of November and in the middle of November, or so—there were four university presidencies open, and my memory is that there are eleven universities in the system—so that gives a Chancellor a chance to put his mark on the system quickly. I was told that the Chancellor of the University System of Florida would have a significant role in determining the presidents, not final say-so; that would be held by the UBOTs, but you would have a veto over the list of two

or three names that you send out to the UBOTs. Okay, that's okay. The four universities were the University of Florida, Florida State—two flagship universities—Florida Atlantic University and the University of North Florida. So its the middle of November, I get called aside by the Commissioner of Education for the state of Florida, and he said, "Dan you're not going to have a role in the decision at Florida State University."

TS: What's a chancellor do if a chancellor doesn't have a say in the president?

DP: Yes. And by the way the new president is going to be the former Speaker of the House, who was the previous president of Tallahassee Community College, who also happened to have headed Democrats for Bush.

TS: Do you think there might be a little politics involved there?

DP: Okay. So I won't play a role in that. I've still got three. And then the Monday or Tuesday before Thanksgiving I got told, "Oh, by the way, you're not going to play a role in Florida Atlantic's new president. We're going to stop the search there because the lieutenant governor has let it be known that he's interested in the position." His previous claim to education was that he was superintendent of a county system before he went into politics. And then a day or two after Thanksgiving, I get told, "The North Florida position is going to go to the mayor of Jacksonville, so you're not going to get a role there either, but you will be able to help with the University of Florida." Well, that's okay, but you've got three politicians who are not qualified to be there, so that's part one. I'm a slow learner; I didn't resign then. Again, about the same time I get told about North Florida, just after Thanksgiving 2002, I get in the office and discover that the governor's transition commission from his first term to his second term had fired about 33 percent of the university system of Florida's office staff.

TS: Sounds like [Governor] Gene Talmadge in the '40s in Georgia.

DY: That's exactly what I was thinking.

DP: That's exactly what it was. They said, "We did you a favor, Dan, now you can bring your own people in." I said, "My own people are doggone good. Which one of them is going to come in knowing that I don't hold the final authority over whether they stay or go? Not a single one of the people that I'd bring in. You did me no favors whatsoever." At the end of that week I get called in on Friday morning and get told that I need a gap analysis in by Monday close of business of all the needs of the University System of Florida for the next five years. "What's this for?" "Well, it's so the governor can put together his strategic plan for his next four years and the year after." We've never done a gap analysis, plus I'm operating on two-thirds staff. "Well, we need it by close of business on Monday." I said, "I'll see what I can do." So I went down to my office and told my secretary to call up Delta and make an airplane reservation home to Atlanta.

TS: Good for you.

DP: And I've not been to Tallahassee since. So I was a slow learner, and that's what happened. Amendment 11 had nothing to do with it.

TS: I appreciate that.

DP: It would have made an interesting article. It would have caused a firestorm for about a week and a half or two weeks, and then

DY: Well, maybe on down the line you'll have an opportunity.

TS: I'm surprised that SACS isn't interested in that.

DP: [Sigh].

TS: You are too?

DP: Yes. If SACS were to do what SACS should do, they wouldn't spend as much time looking at institutions like Kennesaw and UGA and giving good institutions hard times, they would look at things where there's clearly political intrusion. They would look at the store front operations that are thrown up around Georgia and the southeast. I'll give SACS credit, they did do at Auburn exactly what they needed to do at Auburn; when you have whatever that guy's name was that basically determined who the president was going to be. I think Belle [S.] Wheelan is going to help turn SACS around where it ought to be. SACS, by the way, is the best of the regional accrediting agencies by far.

TS: Well, I know we're getting short on time.

DY: We want you to get to KSU [laughter]!

TS: I wonder if we could do that. I know last year we had two major searches going simultaneously for the chancellor and the president of Kennesaw, and I guess you had to apply for both of them about the same time, didn't you?

DP: Yes.

TS: I know you're disappointed on the chancellor's position, but let me just ask maybe as kind of a question at least leading up to a closing question of why Kennesaw? Why did you want to come here? What did you see here that attracted you to Kennesaw?

DP: Kennesaw is an institution on the verge of greatness, putting it bluntly. It has everything sitting here to become the next great higher educational institution in the United States. So it was a pretty easy call. We've got a great faculty. We're in the midst of a growing economic region of Georgia; we've got good students, excellent community support.

DP: It's got everything that is needed to take it to the next level and maybe beyond the next level. When Betty announced her retirement, it was sort of a no-brainer. After I was told that I was nominated, I said, "Of course, sure I'll keep my hat in the ring." It was easy.

TS: Any surprises since you've gotten here?

DP: Not really. The reason I say it is that I've lived in Cobb County for thirty-three or thirty-four years, I've known a lot of the faculty members and a lot of the administrators and staff here because I've been in the system for so long. I've worked in the system office for five or six years and talked frequently with President Siegel, and with Lynn Black [Lendley C. Black] and [Belton] Earle Holley and Nancy [S.] King. I knew the institution pretty well even before I came here. I've still learned a lot. I know that I have a lot to learn, but I haven't seen any real surprises so far. If there was one thing that surprised me, it was the extent to which business and finance operated in a silo. I was aware that it was not well connected, but I was surprised to the extent at which it operated in a silo. I was surprised the extent to which there were things happening that shouldn't happen. I had an indication of that though, and the indication was a year and a half or two years ago when we were asked to approve the movement of HR [Human Resources] from Business and Finance to Information Technology. Let's just say that having a vice president for Information Technology and Human Resources is a unique organizational structure in higher education [laughter]. So that was an indication that there were issues.

TS: And you've already made personnel changes and I guess also structurally for the provost position, not necessarily that particular problem, HR, but the provost is going to have more say, I guess, in financial matters.

DP: Absolutely.

DY: The faculty is very glad to see the changes. The faculty knew this. The faculty had been knowing this.

TS: When you see us positioned for, I guess, greatness, just elaborate maybe as a closing question from me, just elaborate on where you see our greatest strengths or maybe the greatest needs that we can really fill to do something that's better than anybody else.

DP: Let me start with general education. I think we're in a position where we can review general education and find ways to put some things in general education, and not just general education, but also the majors as well. I've said this on numerous occasions—information technology, everybody who graduates from here needs to be literate in technology. Everybody who graduates from KSU needs to have an understanding of globalization and internationalization. Those two are the easy two, quite honestly. The third one will be more difficult. I'd like to see everybody who graduates from Kennesaw State have experience in community/civic/corporate engagement before they graduate. The first two will be easy because you can move those into classes, but the third one will be a little bit more difficult because that's almost additive as opposed to incorporative. I think Kennesaw has a chance to be among the leaders nationally in that area.

TS: We do have academic programs like our public history program, and so on, that could certainly move in that direction.

DP: Oh yes, no problem having some of our programs move in that direction. I'd like to see it be universal.

DY: This is sort of incorporating what has become the gap-year experience for many students—going out and having community service, incorporating that into the education that they have here and into the curriculum. That's wonderful.

DP: It'll be difficult to do for lots of reasons, money being one. I think most faculty would say its a wonderful idea. We ought to take the extra time needed out of that department, but not this department.

DY: It depends on the faculty. You're probably going to have better reception to that than you think you will.

DP: The easy way to do it would be simply to add three-hour requirement, except that means the Board of Regents would have to buy into it.

DY: Somehow it needs to be discipline related, or maybe if not discipline related at least related to curriculum in some way. I applaud that.

DP: We'll broach it and bring it forward.

TS: We could ask a million more questions, but I think we've exhausted our time. What I really wanted to do in these three interviews is to kind of set the scene of who you are, where you've come from, and where you see us now. What I'd really like for us to do is hopefully come back in two years and interview you again and see what has changed, and then two years after that and two years after that, and after you've been here twenty years somebody else will be doing the interviews.

DP: I promise you I won't make it twenty years.

TS: Anyhow that's our goal, but we really appreciate it.

DP: Ten, fifteen. Let's see, if Betty retired at seventy-five and if I can make it to seventy-five that'll give me sixteen years.

TS: That's good. We'll shoot for that then. Thank you.

DP: Thanks, Tom and Dede.

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
KSU Oral History Series, No. 50
Interview with President Daniel S. Papp
Part IV conducted by Thomas A. Scott and Dede Yow
Edited by Dede Yow
Location: President's Office, Kennesaw Hall

Part IV, Friday, 9 January 2009

- TS: President Papp, last time we interviewed you was in September of 2006, and we did three short interviews when you were in your first two or three months on the job. We thought maybe a good question to start with was your statement in that interview. You said, "Kennesaw is an institution on the verge of greatness, putting it bluntly. It has everything sitting here to become the next great higher educational institution in the United States." Maybe as a good starting question, do you still believe that, and do you think we're making progress toward becoming the next great higher educational institution?
- DP: I see nothing with one exception to change my mind, and that one exception is the budget crunch that not only Kennesaw feels, but every other institution, whether it be a higher educational, business, or financial institution. Everybody is facing the same, or at least a version, of the financial crunch. We continue to have a great faculty; we continue to have excellent staff; our student body is good and getting better; we have just purchased eighty-eight acres of land; we have new bachelor's degree programs; master's degree programs; and doctoral programs that have come on board. If things go well at the February and/or March and/or April Board of Regents meeting, we'll have two more doctoral programs on board. So the trajectory, despite the budget crunch, continues to be upward. The budget crunch is very painful, but there is no doubt about it: had this budget crunch not happened, we would have had the second largest increase in state funding for this institution in its forty-five year history. That would have helped us tremendously, but as it is, we are hurt much less than we would have been. Putting it bluntly, because of that large budget increase from last year to this year, we're not hurting as badly as almost every other institution in Georgia. I see nothing to change my mind—but the crunch will slow us down.
- TS: When we did that interview, you said that there had been no real surprises when you got here, after you got here, from what you had expected before you came, and what you found—with the possible exception of business and finance—and you said at that time that you were surprised at the extent to which it operated in a silo. Do you think we've put changes in place in the last few years that make it easier to get through the budget crunch?
- DP: I certainly hope so, and I hope also that one of the things that has occurred over the last two and a half years is that there is a greater understanding of the budget process on the part of more folks on campus. I sincerely hope that the folks in Business and Finance have been getting out—I know the folks in Business and Finance have been getting out—to the academic and other non-academic areas in the institution so that there is a greater

degree of transparency about what is happening with the budget and about budget decisions, and a greater degree of input to budget decisions. We're not where we need to be but we are light years beyond where we were two and a half years ago. I have found out that under the previous Vice President for Business and Finance, the folks in Business and Finance were under strict instructions not to talk with people on the inside. When I found that out, it somewhat amazed me.

TS: Including the President's office?

DP: You said that, I didn't. Yes.

TS: So you think that's been straightened out.

DP: I think so; I know so. Again, like I said, we're not where we need to be, but we're getting there. It takes time to change a political culture.

DY: Coming out of your office, one of the things, two of the things you've done: one, you made the President's Planning and Budget Advisory Committee, a committee actively engaged, and two, you engaged actively with that committee.

DP: Absolutely. We have input from that committee on every major budget decision.

DY: Right. And that has a wide constituency representation as I recall from having been on it in the past. I would say that the other thing that you've done is that you've created the position of Faculty Executive Assistant, (Sarah Robbins), to give information and to answer questions.

DP: Absolutely correct.

DY: Anything else along the way?

DP: Definitely. A third part of it, Dede, is that our folks in Business and Finance are going out to the academic units and operational units. [Dr.] Ashok [K.] Roy [Assistant Vice President for Financial Services] has been going out, and Susan [M.] Dalton [Controller] has been going out, talking with the department chairs and deans and those faculty who are interested to provide another avenue of communication.

DY: Good.

TS: We thought maybe that one way to organize the interview today is to look at the strategic plan and talk about where we are and where we are going. A bunch of weaknesses were identified, and this is 2007, I guess, that it went into effect, but basically the first year that you were here—and we wonder if we could just talk about what we recognized as weaknesses and whether we're making progress. I guess first on the list was low brand recognition. Have we made progress in getting out the word on Kennesaw, do you think?

DP: I think we're making a great amount of progress. We're consciously focusing publicity on faculty achievements and student achievements. We're consciously focusing our public relations campaign on the great things that are taking place here at Kennesaw, whether it be all the neat stuff going on in the College of Arts, whether it be the teaching awards that faculty have received continually—I'm not talking about just the Kennesaw teachers' awards, but I'm talking about the Board of Regents teaching awards, and we've got another one coming up this year. I'm talking about the grants and contracts that faculty members in science and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences are winning. That visibility is getting out there, and we're consciously emphasizing it. Indeed, we titled last year's annual report "Not Just Bigger, Better." Look, for example, at *U.S. News & World Report*, which had a new category this year entitled "Up and Coming Universities." I believe there are something like 3,500 universities in the United States, and only 70 universities were identified as up and coming national universities. We were one of the 70. I think the answer to your question is "Yes."

TS: I guess the second thing on the list, a whole bunch of different items had to do with insufficient funding which we already talked a little bit about today, but the first thing on the list was classrooms, labs and offices. Of course, we've had a few new buildings open up and under construction since you got here.

DP: And we're going to continue to push. We've got four more. We were so far behind that we've still got a significant deficit, but the opening of the new Social Sciences building, the addition of the College of the Arts' Bailey Performance Center, the new Health Sciences building, some of which are already operational, really helps. The last will hopefully be operational within a year and a half or so. The dining hall is also important, although that's not state funding and is going to be funded through dining hall fees that are on the board for full-time students. This year we are on the Regents list again, and we've been told that the Governor will support a nineteen million dollar addition to our lab sciences building. So we've had a lot of stuff happen over the last three years when it comes to new buildings. But we've still got a long way to go.

TS: You've already mentioned the 88 acres, and I guess the second area was playing fields that we had a shortage of.

DP: Playing fields—we have a very definite shortage: we have 21,400 students, and we have only a 1.7 acre athletic field. The purchase of those 88 acres will allow us to build, depending on what the final layout is, possibly as many as seven or eight additional fields for intramural use or club sport use and for intercollegiate athletic use, soccer for example. Hopefully we can also figure out a way to put a 400-meter track in the area as well. We've got a fifteen-acre lake there; we'll put a jogging and walking path around the lake and workout areas. There is Gold's Gym which is now the property of the Kennesaw State University Foundation. Gold's Gym is going to move out, and the building will be converted into a workout facility for students, faculty, and staff.

TS: That would be down here where it says Gold's Gym here? [Referring to a map in the office].

DP: Right, where the existing Gold's Gym is. And this area will hopefully become a stadium at some point in time.

TS: Oh, I've got my roads mixed up.

DP: Right. KSU Center is right here. [pointing on the map]

TS: Right. So that would be right along George Busbee Parkway and then you've got apartment complexes here.

DP: That's in the north up here.

TS: So the track would be just south.

DP: Fifty yards south of the apartment complex, if that's the layout we wind up using.

TS: Then you have a stadium below that. I thought the stadium was going to be over at I-575.

DP: That's where it was originally, at least in concept, for a whole bunch of reasons, one of which was that it would then provide naming rights next to I-575. But as the folks worked with the topography, et cetera, the topography was such, and the footprint was such, that if we put the 7,500 to 10,000 seat stadium by I-575, it would take up about three athletic field spaces, whereas over here it would only take up one athletic field space. So that's why the thought was, if we build a stadium, it would go here. The reason I say "if"—we don't have the money for it, but we're working on it.

TS: But it would be accessible from Big Shanty, which is two-lane, and then the Busbee Parkway and that's at least three lanes, I guess.

DP: Exactly, and one of the things on the Department of Transportation . . .

TS: I guess four lanes actually.

DP: Yes. It's four lanes, exactly. One of the things on the Department of Transportation's plan is to build the Big Shanty connector, which would go all the way under I-75 and connect with that road that goes around Town Point, which, according to Department of Transportation traffic engineers, will knock about 30 percent of traffic off of this area right here, which will be good.

TS: That's great.

DP: With the strong support of the Student Government Association, which has fully supported an increase in student fees of \$40.00 per student per semester, and with the strong support of the student fee committee, we will be making that proposal to the Board in April. The Board has already said that they will support it, which, of course enabled

our Foundation to go forward and put the upfront money in that allowed us to purchase this land. If there is a bright side to the current academic downturn, it is that the price of that land went down considerably; we couldn't have afforded to buy it otherwise.

TS: So the Foundation owns it now?

DP: Yes.

TS: And they're going to sell it to the Board of Regents, is that the way it works?

DP: Well, the way it works is that the Foundation lets bonds, and then when they're paid off the Foundation then says: it's now ours.

TS: And the \$40.00 per student per semester is going to pay off the bonds.

DP: Exactly.

TS: So as long as we've got 21,000 to 30,000 students

DP: As long as we're over 20,000 students we're okay.

TS: All right. We'll just have to keep it that then.

DP: There's a shortfall of \$16,000 at the 20,000-student level, but since we're at 21,400 students there is no shortfall.

TS: All right. Meeting and event space was on the list: have we done anything as far as meeting space?

DP: Meeting space not yet, but when the new dining hall opens next August that will enable us to close down all of the dining outlets in the student center with one exception. I believe the decision has been made that the only one that's going to stay open in the student center is Chick-Fil-A. I'm not sure that's the final decision. I know we're only going to keep one food outlet in the student center and then the rest of it is going to be converted into student meeting space. John Anderson and the folks in Facilities have already done the lay down and the costing, et cetera, for that. So again, we do not have enough meeting space, but we're moving in the right direction on that as well.

TS: Right. So all those meal plans, are they in stone now, or are they still being negotiated?

DP: The student meal plans are now in stone; the faculty meal plans are in the process of being developed. There will be three meetings of faculty and staff with the Auxiliary Services folks in January to elicit input from the faculty and the staff about what kind of meal plans they want.

TS: That's great because the way I read it I thought it was just going to be informational at those meetings instead of input.

DP: No, there will be a number of different ideas and concepts put on the table.

TS: I guess I better go to one of those meetings!

DP: Go to one of the meetings, exactly!

TS: Well, next on the list was parking and we probably don't need to talk about that because with the Central Deck I guess we've got that taken care of.

DP: We figure we've got four to five years worth of space.

TS: I haven't seen it full yet.

DP: It has not been full yet, so that's—four to five years we think.

TS: The last thing in terms of insufficient funding which surprised me in the strategic plan is the deferring maintenance costs.

DP: Right. Good news and bad news here. The bad news, yes, we have deferred maintenance; we have several million dollars worth of deferred maintenance. Good news, on a comparative basis: Tom, since we're a relatively new institution, we're forty-five years old and we have no buildings older than forty-five years, we have a number of buildings younger than ten years old, so in comparison to other universities, even though we have a multi-million dollar deferred maintenance backlog, ours is small compared to a lot of other places.

TS: Yes. And even the old buildings have all been renovated, I guess; I can't think of any that hadn't been.

DP: I think they all have been. One of the things that we're talking about, we're going to be looking back at the master plan this upcoming calendar year, 2009 calendar year: do we want to knock down some of the old buildings, or do they get put on a historical register? They are basically one-story and two-story buildings that are not space efficient or energy efficient. If we knock them down and build some five-story and six-story buildings, we make better use of scarce space. They'll all be green buildings too.

TS: The original faculty was never crazy about those original buildings anyway. I think the old Administration building, even though it's the only one-story, or one of the few one-story buildings, needs to be kept for historical purposes and built around or something.

DP: Maybe there's a way we can do it like the Notre Dame stadium was done. They kept the shell of the old stadium and built a new one around the shell.

TS: Maybe so. Another area in terms of weaknesses had to do with faculty and faculty student relationships: faculty salaries, faculty workload, student-faculty ratio.

[Thirty-minute break in interviewing]

TS: We're starting back up after about a thirty-minute break and we were talking about weaknesses that were identified in the strategic study including matters of faculty salary and workloads and student-faculty ratio and also staff-student ratio. I guess our general question is—are we making progress in those areas? Are we going backwards? How do you see us?

DP: Over the course of the first two years of my presidency, we held relatively constant. We grew in the number of students and we added new faculty and new staff proportional to the number of new students that we got in each of those first two years. In the original budget for this fiscal year we would have been able to make a significant dent in the shortfall of faculty and staff. We could have added, if memory serves me correctly, approximately forty-five faculty above what was needed to maintain a constant student-faculty ratio and approximately thirty staff members above what was needed to maintain a constant student-staff ratio. This budget reduction is right now at 8 percent, so with each percent being about \$900,000, we've lost about \$7.2 million dollars. Right now where we are, what was true the first two years is again true this year: we're just about holding our own when it comes to what the student-faculty ratio and student-staff ratio were my first two years here. That having been said, given that we are still in a budget downturn, we have put a hold—right now it's a sixty-day hold—on staff hires. So when there's a staff opening, we are not yet at the point of a freeze, but we are delaying hiring any staff persons for open positions for sixty days. We are all holding our breath to see what the December tax returns are from the state. General walking-around instructions from OPB [Office of Planning and Budget] are we are at an 8 percent reduction, but expect a 10 percent reduction and plan for twelve. Again, we're protecting the student-faculty ratio, but quite frankly I do not see a way that the student-staff ratio is not going to get worse.

DY: I know one of the concerns when we were working on this plan is that when you came here we were already in the hole with student-faculty ratio, and I think we had a goal of 27?

DP: We were at 29, our first goal was 27 and we went down to 25.

TS: We're 27 now?

DP: We're about 29 now.

TS: We're back to 29?

DY: I guess one of the ways that we've been dealing with that is to hire part-time faculty, and of course we have concerns about delivering too much of our programs through them.

- DP: That's exactly right. Full-time faculty as a general rule are obviously much more committed because this is their intellectual home, their academic home. That's not to say you can't have a committed part-time faculty, but as a general rule, when you've got a faculty member who is working forty or fifty or sixty hours a week, and sees the students on a very regular basis, that faculty member is going to be more committed to really doing an absolutely off-the-chart-job as opposed to a part-time faculty member.
- TS: When you were talking about the new faculty positions, were those going to be tenure track?
- DP: Yes. I said that too quickly. My recollection is about two-thirds of them were going to be about tenure track. There was a split: I think it was two-thirds/ one-third but it might have been three-fourths/ one-fourth. Might have been sixty-forty; it was in that general vicinity.
- DY: And those non-tenure track faculty that we would hire in as lecturers would be devoted primarily to delivering our General Education programs?
- DP: That's correct, General Education or extremely specialized upper level courses.
- TS: Another area that was identified in that strategic study was the low graduation rates, and I know you've addressed this extensively: retention, graduation rates, and progression toward degrees. Do you see us having made progress in the last two years?
- DP: Yes. Statistically we're up by about 2.5 percent on graduation rates from two years ago to last year. Two and a half percent doesn't sound like much but it's over a two year period, so that's a percent and a quarter a year which by itself is a pretty significant growth. Our retention is moving up also but not as rapidly. My recollection is that we're up about 2 percent, almost 2 percent on retention.
- TS: Two percentage points meaning . . . ?
- DP: Two percentage points
- TS: Like if 20 percent were staying before 22 percent are staying now?
- DP: Right, exactly.
- TS: I mean, it'd be a lot more than that.
- DP: It's like seventy-seven and I think we're at seventy-nine now. Our graduation rate has gone from about thirty-two to thirty-four and a half. Again, the graduation rate is nowhere near where it needs to be at a place like Kennesaw, and again this is the six year graduation rate.

- TS: So about a third of the students having come here as entering freshmen graduate in six years.
- DP: That's correct. Slightly more than a third of the students who come as first time, full-time freshmen who come to KSU graduate in 6 years. That's the coin of the realm, so to speak. And the 78, 79 percent retention rate from first fall to second fall is again first time full-time freshmen.
- TS: And the other two-thirds may possibly graduate from somewhere else, we just don't track that if they leave us.
- DP: They graduate from somewhere else or take longer than six years to graduate. Actually we also keep twelve-year graduation rates, and we have the six-year, seven-year, and eight-year rates. But regarding twelve-year graduation rates, we're up in the low forties.
- TS: Which, in a sense, for a traditional university that would be awful, but I mean, it's very striking to me, every graduation, but particularly sitting on stage this last time to see that just about every student out there that was graduating when you asked, did you hold down a job while you went to school? I mean, probably some people just stood up out of embarrassment because there weren't too many that were left. It's just incredible the number who held down two jobs.
- DP: Exactly right.
- TS: It's hard to get through in four or five or six years if you're working forty hours a week and trying to go to school.
- DP: Exactly right. And then in addition to the work factor, Tom, there's also the marriage factor, which means you've got another commitment besides school. There's also the kid factor.
- TS: All those. A lot of them stand up. It's incredible how many stand up on community service also. They're doing a lot besides going to school.
- DP: Absolutely correct. It's not like you're at a traditional university in the 1950s or 1960s.
- TS: So it seems to me that what we really need to be compared to is other schools like us, and if we're doing better than other metropolitan universities, good; if we're not, then we've got a problem.
- DP: We've got a problem.
- TS: We're not?
- DP: Given the kind of university we have with the kind of students we have, we ought to be in the high thirties, low forties. There are a number of issues: high student-faculty ratio.

That is another way of saying not only that we have too many students in classes, but also that we can't offer required classes in majors as frequently as we need to be offering them. My classic example is Vice President Randy Hinds' son whose graduation had to be delayed an entire year—he's a 4.0 student in the Coles College of Business in Accounting—but he couldn't get a required class! So here is the son of a vice president who has a 4.0 average who can't get a class. His graduation was delayed a full year. That's just one of God knows how many.

- TS: I see it with Education students, too, that go berserk when they've got to take the TOSS [Teaching of Specific Subjects] courses at the right time, and they've got to do the student teaching at the right time, and they are trying to take three or four other courses just to make things work.
- DP: Absolutely. So that's a real factor in reducing our six-year graduation rate. Another factor, quite honestly, is advising.
- TS: I was going to ask about that because one thing in the strategic plan was mandatory advising through sixty hours and I haven't seen that happen yet.
- DP: We aren't there yet. We would have gotten up—again we come back up to this seven and a half million dollar reduction for this fiscal year—we probably could have gotten up to forty-five hours worth of mandatory advising here, but not now.
- DY: Because some of that, I think, plays into the fact that students aren't aware of the options that they have at this university. I know that we're bringing in graduate programs because there are more and more students who want to go on to graduate education of some sort. While we certainly want to serve, we want teachers, we want nurses, we want business folks, but to guide students to their own areas of interest you have to have a faculty mentor to help them go there.
- DP: That's exactly right.
- DY: And most faculty simply don't have the time or don't see how they can take the time for necessary mentoring and deal with their own research agenda or their service agenda. That's something that I hope that we're going to be working on.
- DP: You're absolutely correct. We're creating a first year advising center. We've managed to sequester enough funds to make sure that will happen this year. That will help at zero through thirty hours. One other things we've put in place in most colleges, but not all colleges, is a three semester into the future calendar of the courses are will be offered so students can sit down and say, "Well, next fall I'm going to take this one, next spring I'm going to take this one, in the fall, after that I'm going to take this." So that will help.
- DY: That will give them some structure, and of course, the first year that's important, but you know when students start really freaking out is when they're nearing the end of that second year, and they wake up and they realize they have to choose a major. That's when

it happens. When they're freshmen they're just trying to find their way around to the Coca-cola machine. That first year, that's fine and they feel good and they love Kennesaw, but when they get to the second year, they need the mentoring just as much as when they came in.

DP: There's also a problem in the second year, Dede. You are exactly right with your assessment of the first year, and probably at the end of the second year when you get into the major, but it actually starts before that because at the end of the freshman year there is a surprising percentage of kids who say, for example, "I think I'm going to be an Education major." They wind up taking a sophomore level Education course. Then, by the time they come to the end of their sophomore year, they say, "I don't want to major in Education. I want to major in English. But oops, that sophomore level Education course isn't even usable as an elective. So instead of graduating with 120 hours you're kicked up automatically to 123 hours because you've taken a course which would have been great if you were going to be an Education major but not if you're an English major.

DY: Yes. And I think your choice was an apt one because students are going to go for something that they know will offer employment upon graduation. They think, well, hey, I can teach, there's an outcome to it, there's a job there, and for some it's almost a default choice. But again that's because they aren't getting the advisement or mentoring.

DP: See, that's why hopefully this advising center is going to concentrate on the zero to thirty hour students. We'll advise just about every student—freshman year, first semester sophomore year—taking General Education courses that are going to be, if not required in every major, at least usable as an elective for every major.

DY: Good place to start.

TS: In the strategic plan, under retention, there's a bullet point about best practice teaching strategies for learner-centered teaching; in other words, I guess improvement in the delivery of teaching and making it more learner-centered. You've mentioned this in speeches over the last several years. Do you see us actually doing that—making progress toward even letting faculty members know what learner-centered teaching is?

DP: I think we're beginning to make progress there, but again, we're not progressing as rapidly as I would have liked to progress two years ago. In part, I hate to fall back on funding, but it is a funding issue. Learner-centered teaching to me means that faculty and students, and indeed, in the best of all worlds, staff as well, participate in the expansion of the mind and expansion of knowledge collectively as opposed to faculty members simply lecturing: a sharing of ideas, viewpoints and facts and knowledge, as well: of course, having more students involved in research projects. The issue there, and that's why I say it's part of a resource issue again, is that you can't require faculty to have students get involved in their research because it's a huge commitment on the faculty's part.

TS: It's a very rewarding part though.

- DP: It's rewarding but it's also time consuming, and again, as an administrator, you need the resources to be able to reduce the student-faculty load, to reduce the faculty teaching load, to reward the faculty for helping out students in the research. To put it bluntly, the money just isn't there right now. We do quite a bit of student-centered research here, but a lot of it is borne on the backs of the faculty.
- DY: Well, you know, there are so many initiatives that come out of CETL that can promote that kind of intellectual engagement that you're talking about, but when you have faculty, particularly our newer, younger faculty, it's kind of like the boomers. You've got faculty that are retiring now, and when you're a new faculty member, you're just trying to get it together for yourself, to teach your classes, you have your own research agenda, and so it may just well be in terms of where we are as an institution that that's got to evolve. It's really good to have it as a goal.
- DP: We've got it as a goal, we've got—what's the right word?—we've got incipient programs in place, but to get where we need to get to, it's a resource issue.
- TS: Do you see outside funding as part of the solution?
- DP: We're hoping. For example, we've got both the Clendenin money, a million bucks, and the Holder money, another million bucks, will be used to generate about \$40,000 per year per endowment ad infinitum for faculty research support. The Clendenin money will be used both for Kennesaw State graduates and for Kennesaw State faculty who do not have terminal degrees to allow them to go on to graduate school. The answer is yes. That is \$80,000 per year and that is a good start.
- TS: Right. In the strategic plan, I guess the third goal has to do with campus resources, and we're a long way through a comprehensive capital campaign now. You talked a little bit before we were on tape, but could you say something about where we are on the comprehensive capital campaign?
- DP: As a matter of fact, I just got the December 31 report today; we're at \$44 million dollars and fifteen months into the public stage of the five-year campaign, so that's not too bad. It's a \$75 million dollar campaign. We've gone after the low end, obviously, so getting the first \$44 was a little bit easier than getting the next \$31 is going to be, but I'm very encouraged about where we are. We're going to reach the \$75 million dollar mark.
- TS: You said \$8 of the \$44 was for the health science building.
- DP: Eight million of which we raised already, yes, \$8 of the \$44.
- TS: We've got to raise \$13 and we've got \$8 raised.
- DP: Right. We've got \$5 more to go. There are targets out there; that's all I can say.

- TS: In the comprehensive capital campaign, what are some of the other targeted areas that we're going to spend the money on?
- DP: Well, as we were talking, support for faculty, scholarships. We've raised multi-million dollars already in student scholarships. Some of the money for the Bailey Performing Arts Center, for example, is part of that \$44 million as well as money to make this an all-Steinway school. There are many different targeted areas. One is the library, and as a faculty member this isn't what we like to hear, but it's doggone tough to raise money for a library. It's just difficult so we've got that targeted with \$1.5 or \$2 million dollars. So we've still got to work on that.
- TS: We talked about parking, traffic flow; that was tied in with resources.
- DP: We talked about the traffic flow for the Big Shanty Connector; one of the other things that is on the drawing board for DOT—given what Gena Evans [Comissioner of the Georgia Department of Transportation] has been saying the last few weeks, and I didn't mention this before because I don't honestly hold much hope for this happening, at least in the near future—where are we? here? [pointing to map] Here's where the new deck is—right here.
- TS: The Central Deck?
- DP: Yes, the Central Deck is there. It's to have an overpass over I-75 with an outlet right here. Then this would become, instead of an onramp to 75 it would be—what do they call it?—not a bypass, a perimeter road coming down through here.
- TS: Perimeter road coming down between 75 and our campus?
- DP: No, between 75 and . . .
- TS: The other side [of the interstate], I got you.
- DP: There would be another entrance to 75 here.
- TS: So a connector road on the east side of 75 with an overpass to go to the Central Parking Deck.
- DP: Exactly right.
- TS: Is anything still on the table as far as pedestrian overpasses like over Chastain Road to Town Point?
- DP: Supposedly that is also a part of the Big Shanty Funding, so the answer is “Yes.” We'd also like to put in place a shuttle system on campus. That again, is going to cost money.
- TS: I liked the shuttle system last year, actually.

DY: I did too.

DP: One of the unexpected benefits of the shuttle was that people wound up seeing people that they hadn't seen in a long time.

TS: That's exactly right.

DY: And there were students who had been on other campuses that had shuttles that once in awhile would try to jump on one thinking it's a student shuttle bus!

DP: That's where we need to get to. One of the ways we'll do that, not this upcoming year, but maybe two years down line, we'll ask students to increase not the parking fee, but the transportation fee.

DY: Right.

TS: I don't want to hold you too long, but one of the things that we haven't really talked a lot about yet is student life activities, and we're seven years into having residence halls on campus now, and one of the goals is to enhance student life activities and prepare students to be leaders. Do you think we've made progress in that in the last two years?

DP: Absolutely. The number of student clubs has proliferated. I've forgotten specific numbers, but it's somewhere up in the two-hundred plus with student clubs, and in order for a student club to become a student club, I believe you need ten registered members. We have many with over one hundred student members. Greek life is thriving. We've got something like sixteen or seventeen fraternities and sororities on campus. One of the things we were exploring was to purchase additional land to the north of campus to create a Greek village. That has been put on hold until we digest the eighty-eight acres that we have. Club sports are going great guns; we have something like eighteen or nineteen club sports teams on campus. So yes, I think we're definitely moving in the right direction. Space is an issue. When we redo the Student Center, once we close some of the retail food outlets after we open the dining hall, that will help space a little bit.

TS: I know we've done something just this last year on study abroad.

DP: Study abroad—we brought on board the \$10 per student, I'm sorry it's \$12.

TS: I thought it was \$14. At any rate, they're paying a fee.

DP: You're right, it's \$14; we asked for \$20, we didn't get it all, we got over half of it, so it's \$14 per student per semester, and our study abroad numbers are climbing significantly. There's a complex formula that Student Success has put together in conjunction with the Institute for Global Initiatives that takes into account student's family income plus student's grade point average to determine how much students who are applicants for student loans get. The formula seems to be working very nicely.

- DY: I would think, too, that as we grow with our graduate programs and we bring faculty in and students in who are interested in these graduate programs, it's going to happen there with the study abroad.
- DP: Absolutely. Look, for example, at the Master's in Social Work. Master's in Social Work has significant numbers of its students going abroad; the Nursing program has a significant number of its students going abroad; the Conflict Management program has a number of its students going abroad.
- TS: And our goals, the last one had to do with, and we've talked about this already, but improving service, strengthening accountability, and establishing a stronger sense of community. I presume that means campus community.
- DP: That's correct. We've talked about some of the ways: increase transparency of budget decisions and all decision making. That's one of the ways to do that. Accountability: hold people responsible. We had the unfortunate incident the first year of my presidency with one of the deans that illustrated the need for increased accountability; we now have three auditors on staff. There was a period of about seven years when KSU didn't have any auditors, and for an institution that was then 15,000 growing to 20,000 not to have any auditors in the place. . . . To this day I remain convinced that if we had an auditor who would say, "Can't do that, or that's okay," then at least some of those issues wouldn't have occurred.
- TS: This will be kind of a wrap up question for me and I don't know if Dede has anything else?
- DY: I do want to ask about this idea of campus community, thinking about how we tie into faculty connecting with students—and faculty and staff and students all connecting—is that you have a place where people can gather and connect with each other. I know when I'm working with students, when they're doing graduation applications or something like that, we end up going up here to the Starbucks on Wade Green road. So to have places like that on campus, not to mention a faculty club, would be really nice.
- DP: I am convinced that the dining hall, when we get it going, will have as significant an impact on the sense of community as residence halls have had because there will be places in the dining hall where you can go and connect. One thing the students, to this point, have been adamant in opposing is that since the dining hall will be built with student dining plan funds, that there not be a place set aside for faculty and staff. This is why one of the reasons it's so critical—from my perspective—to get the faculty and staff dining plan in place, and hopefully a significant number of faculty and staff will sign up for a dining plan, so we can go to the students and say, "Students, you're paying for 90 percent of it, faculty and staff are paying for 10 percent of it; there's going to be a faculty and staff dining hall on part of the second floor."

TS: I presume where you have faculty clubs, faculty pays a fee for a privilege of using the club, don't they?

DP: That is correct.

DY: That's a different thing from the dining hall. I know you're aware of that, but you're saying that this is kind of incremental, and we have the faculty dining and then the faculty club.

TS: And it could be part of the dining hall if the students were willing, I guess.

DP: Correct. So you start with that. I mentioned earlier that we're going to go back and do the master plan once again, and there's a space where you could probably create a faculty club. That would be five, six, seven, eight years out in the future, but I'm assuming that we're going to have a relatively high faculty and staff demand for use of the dining hall, which will be able to morph over time into a true faculty hall.

TS: Did you have any follow ups you wanted to ask?

DY: I do want to ask you a question: Will you be teaching a course this semester?

DP: Yes ma'am. I'm teaching a course entitled Policies and Popular Culture of the Nuclear Apocalypse. We're going to start by talking about what the world was like in 1945, and what were the pressures that led to the development of the atomic bomb. We're going to talk about how atom bombs work; I'm sure I'm going to get some flak from somebody who is saying, "You're teaching kids how to build atom bombs?" We'll talk about the kill mechanisms of atom bombs; we're going to talk about the huge differences between atom bombs, hydrogen bombs, cobalt bombs, and neutron bombs; we're going to talk about how American and Soviet nuclear policy, and Chinese and French and Indian and Pakistani and North Korean nuclear policy, evolved over time. We're going to talk about the impact that the nuclear specter has had on popular culture, primarily in the United States. We'll watch *Fail Safe* and read *On the Beach*, watch *Dr. Strangelove* and *The Day After*; we'll watch *War Games*, we'll watch *The Atomic Café*; listen to songs like "Enola Gay" and Barry McGuire's "The Eve of Destruction." So it will be a real combination of policies and pop culture revolving around the threat we all grew up under.

DY: It's going to be fascinating.

DP: Yesterday I found out I've managed to get a nuclear weapons officer who used to fly FB-111's to come in and spend time with the class talking about what it's like to fly a nuclear mission. We're working with some folks in King's Bay to get either the commander or executive officer of the USS Georgia fleet ballistic submarine to spend an hour talking about what it's like to live under water for sixty days with more explosive capabilities than have been used in the history of human kind right behind your bulkhead.

DY: Is this interdisciplinary? This is Cultural and Regional studies.

- DP: Yes. I'll be teaching it with Tom [Thomas M.] Pynn [Instructor of Philosophy] and David [A.] King [Professor of English]. We've got it listed under Political Science, International Affairs, American Studies and Peace Studies and Film. We've had seventy-four kids out of the seventy-five slots in it, so it should be an interesting mix of students.
- DY: I know that faculty appreciate your coming into the classroom; students of course, but faculty too because you still have that connection.
- DP: I try to.
- DY: That's important to know that the president of the institution isn't simply sitting way up here away from everything.
- TS: And has a discipline that you keep up with.
- DP: Right. The reason I don't do interviews or appear on the media anymore is that I know just enough to be dangerous. I'm no longer at the cutting edge, and I recognize that. The stuff that I was dealing with, I was never in a position if I make a mistake people die, but that was the kind of stuff I was talking about.
- TS: I have a kind of wrap-up question that's interesting to me. I want to get your impression but I've been pretty well convinced by Ed Rugg that we ought to be calling ourselves a metropolitan university these days; do you buy that?
- DP: Yes.
- TS: Do you think that's the best description for what we are?
- DP: Comprehensive metropolitan university, I think that's accurate.
- TS: And comprehensive means what to you?
- DP: We have a very wide array of degree programs at multiple levels. Obviously at the bachelor's level we have a very wide array, not as extensive an array as at a research university, but still a very extensive array. We have a significant number of master's degree programs in a number of disciplines and a number of colleges. Hopefully by the end of March or April we will have doctoral degrees in four of our colleges.
- TS: What will those be in?
- DP: We already have the DBA in the Coles College; we've got the Ed.D in the Bagwell College; we've got a Doctorate of Nursing Sciences proposed and hopefully that will be on the February agenda for the College of Health and Human Services.
- TS: With our new building we can support it.

- DP: Exactly right. The fourth one is a Ph.D. in International Policy, which will be focused primarily, but not exclusively, in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.
- TS: So that's going to be on the agenda for the board to be approved?
- DP: Hopefully the DNS will be on in February; we are still having some struggles with a couple of our colleague institutions about the Ph.D. in the International Policy.
- DY: That's our first Ph.D. isn't it?
- DP: That would be our first Ph.D.
- DY: Our other doctorates are applied.
- DP: That's right. Georgia Tech has said, "Go ahead and do it." The University of Georgia has said that they're not going to have any objections, but we don't have anything in writing from them yet, and our friends at Georgia State are saying, "Do you need another doctorate program?"
- TS: They didn't think we needed a four year school out here either.
- DP: Right. What's really interesting is that the three areas of concentration, well, the four areas of concentration, were originally going to be Conflict Management building off our very successful master's program; International Environmental Policy building off of our growing—right now it's only a bachelor's program—with a program in environmental; Homeland and International Security because that's a big area, rather critical, it's going to be critical for the rest of our lives; and the fourth area is International Development. The biggest overlap would have been with Georgia Tech. The folks down at Tech said, "The more the merrier; you're going to be competing for a different audience."
- DY: That's right. Serving a different population and area.
- DP: Exactly. Georgia State said, "International Development, we do that; you don't need that." So the combination of bowing a little bit to Georgia State and the budget—we've excised International Development so a) it won't cost as much to bring in the doctoral program now, and b) what's Georgia State going to think about it now?
- TS: I guess where I'm kind of going with this is in terms of the future. Some of the institutions—that, you know, in Ed Rugg's report where he talks about comparable institutions but also those that we aspire to be like—are really metropolitan universities that are area research universities, I guess George Mason or somebody, and so do you see us evolving into a metropolitan university that is a heavily research-oriented institution when we get these Ph.D. programs?

- DP: Well, there will be one Ph.D program; the others will be applied doctorates. Although I did use the terminology comprehensive metropolitan university, it's a pyramid sort of thing. I don't see us in the mid-term future—when I say mid-term I'm talking ten to fifteen years—ever going beyond five doctorate programs. I've talked about four—what's the fifth—? but down the stream the next one would probably be one to add over in the College of Science and Math, probably in applied computing. So that would then give us, we would again be at the bachelor's level, very comprehensive, a little more focused at the master's level and then at the doctorate level.
- TS: Well, in terms of infrastructure we've got a lot of master's programs to fill in before we get too far into doctoral programs.
- DP: Absolutely correct. That's why I'm saying the mid-term future, going out ten or fifteen years, we've got a lot of building to do at the master's level.
- TS: So we're going to be doing more scholarship, but we're not going to be a research institution basically.
- DP: Yes. In the best of all worlds, I'd like to see all faculty members as triple-threat faculty. At an institution like Kennesaw State is, and like Kennesaw State is going to become, we will have a huge number of faculty whose primary focus is going to be teaching and service; they're still going to have the scholarship component, maybe the scholarship of teaching, which is a very, very critical area. It might be what I term "integrative scholarship" where you take a brilliant piece of primary research here, and a piece of primary research here, and integrate the two.
- TS: Which is a Boyer category.
- DP: Correct. And you know, if you want to look at it in a different sense, Albert Einstein was not an experimentalist. He described himself as a thought experimenter; he never had an intense research lab. He sat around and did a lot of pretty good thinking.
- TS: I thoroughly enjoyed interviewing Nikolaos Kidonakis [KSU Distinguished Scholarship Award 2008] and it's the same thing, he's not into—we don't have the lab resources for experimentation—and yet in theoretical particle physics, he's about as big a name as you can find.
- DP: Absolutely correct.
- TS: Well, that's I guess the end of my questions for today for you, and we certainly appreciate your time.
- DP: Thank you Tom, thank you Dede. Welcome back from retirement.

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
KSU Oral History Series, No. 50
Interview with President Daniel S. Papp
Part V conducted and edited by Thomas A. Scott
Location: President's Office, Kennesaw Hall

Part V, Tuesday, 7 July 2015

TS: I've wanted to ask you this question for over a year now. It was a well-kept secret when the chancellor announced on November 1, 2013, that Kennesaw and Southern Poly were next in line to be consolidated. So I've got a Howard Baker question for you: What did you know, and when did you know it?

DP: That indeed is a Howard Baker type question. Lisa [A.] Rossbacher and I were called down to Chancellor [Henry M. (Hank)] Huckaby's office. I forget specifically how long before that, but it was at least a week or it might have been two weeks before the November Board of Regents meeting that approved it. [Ed. note: Dr. Papp's calendar shows that he and Dr. Rossbacher met with the chancellor on October 31, 2013, the day before the chancellor announced the proposed consolidation publicly. On November 12, 2013, the Board of Regents voted unanimously in favor of the consolidation of Southern Polytechnic State University with Kennesaw State University.]

TS: Right, I think she said it was about ten or eleven days.

DP: It was something like that. I could look it up on my calendar.

TS: So you went down with her?

DP: Yes.

TS: She said she didn't know what the agenda was before she went down.

DP: I did not know what the agenda was.

TS: And you didn't either?

DP: That is correct. I did know that Lisa and I were both supposed to go down there. Given the four consolidations that had already taken place, I sort of expected it, but I did not know.

TS: I was wondering. I had an informal conversation with Ken Harmon, and he said that he sort of expected it because of the kinds of information that the regents were asking him to send down to the board. Is that the same in your case?

DP: That's absolutely the same. Things like, how many programs do you have at Kennesaw that are also offered at Southern Polytechnic? That's sort of the signal that somebody is

thinking about duplicative academic programs. How many programs could you offer at Kennesaw that are currently being offered at Southern Polytechnic? Well, the answer is there was only one or two because they are primarily engineering and engineering technology, architecture, etc. Since I was formerly interim president [at SPSU], and I was formerly down at the University System's office as senior vice chancellor for academics and fiscal affairs, I could guess by the kind of questions that they were asking that they were thinking about a consolidation. But I didn't know about it until Chancellor Huckaby had Lisa and me down there.

TS: She says in the interview that he was really pretty blunt about it all, a minute of chit-chat and then . . .

DP: Yes, that is just Hank's way. That is just Chancellor Huckaby: "Get to the point."

TS: Okay. What was the reaction in the room? Was it just the three of you in there?

DP: I believe that Houston Davis was there as well. Houston is the executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer. I won't say that for a fact, but if memory serves me correctly, Houston was there as well.

TS: So basically your old job?

DP: Basically my old job, somewhat narrower.

TS: Just academic affairs?

DP: Yes, I had four major portfolios. I had all of academic and student affairs; I had all business and finance; I had all information and instructional technology; and I had strategic planning and analysis. That's since been split up into three different groups.

TS: Well, it must have been awkward in the room at that point, I would think. What was the reaction in the room?

DP: I think awkward is a very appropriate word. I think Lisa appeared, shocked is probably too strong a word. I hate to put words in anybody's mouth. I think she perhaps knew what was coming, but hoped that it wasn't, which would be a totally understandable reaction. Both of us at first thought, I think, "What does this mean for me?" Then Chancellor Huckaby said, "Dan, you're going to be the president of the consolidated university."

TS: And her position was up in the air.

DP: That's correct.

TS: She does say in the interview that a member of the regents had tipped her off ahead of time.

DP: Okay.

TS: That doesn't mean that she necessarily believed what he said because she said that he had gotten drunk and tipped her off. I didn't ask her who it was, and doubt that she would tell anyone.

DP: I had no tip off. But again, given the questions that the regents' staff was asking of the staff here, I figured something was in the wind.

TS: She went out of town for a week after this to attend a professional meeting. She was gone until just a few days before the announcement. It was a Friday that they announced it, I believe. Their administration found out two hours ahead of time, and that was just the vice president for academic affairs and the deans and other top administrators. It didn't get down to the department chairs. I've interviewed several department chairs that found out when the public announcement was made.

DP: That is totally correct. We were told to say nothing until it got announced on campus.

TS: Did anybody know on our campus, like the provost?

DP: To maintain my own credibility I have to say no.

TS: Okay.

DP: I don't remember telling anybody until the public announcement.

TS: Okay, so it was a well-kept secret.

DP: Yes, it was a well-kept secret.

TS: That became a controversy in itself. I found an old *Marietta Daily Journal* editorial from November 7, 2013—almost a week after the announcement—under the title of “Merger Muddle.” The gist of the editorial is that the regents made a big mistake by not consulting people ahead of time, so that people at Southern Poly would have a chance to have some input. I think the essence of the argument was a lot of people were really angry because they weren't consulted ahead of time. What do you think about that? Do you think that the regents made a mistake or do you think they handled it exactly the way it needed to be handled?

DP: I think the regents handled it *exactly* the way it needed to be handled. The reason I say that is because Southern Poly was a good institution. The folks over there are very capable. They would have argued strongly and almost exclusively to keep it as a separate institution. I think the regents handled it the only way it could have been handled.

TS: So it would have caused more problems to involve people ahead of time when they already knew what they were going to do anyway?

DP: I think that's exactly correct.

TS: To what degree were the regents themselves involved as opposed to the chancellor and the chancellor's staff?

DP: I've not been involved in any of the consolidations at the ground zero level, but on the basis of eight years in the system's office, the way major initiatives generally are undertaken is that the chancellor's staff undertakes detailed studies of whatever the new idea is. It is studied and studied and studied, and then proposals are made and run by key regents. Then depending on what the key regents think about the studies that have been done on whatever the major initiative is, whether it's the adaptation of PeopleSoft, whether it's the creation of Georgia Gwinnett College, whether it's the decision to require board approval of new athletic programs, these are all things that I was deeply involved in. The regents' staff does the homework and comes up with what the proposal is. The proposal then gets run by key regents. Depending on the response of the key regents, it then gets briefed to all of the regents before a decision is made at the regents meeting.

TS: So key regents would be like officers of the board and maybe . . .

DP: Exactly, and key committee chairs.

TS: A regent from this area?

DP: Probably. Possibly is probably a better word.

TS: Possibly because you don't really know.

DP: I do not know. Again, I was totally in the dark until a week, ten days, twelve days, before it happened. But I sort of was expecting it.

TS: All right. Another complaint that people were making at the time is that the regents were not specific on how this consolidation was supposed to save money. I think you said in your State of the University address in the spring that it was going to save \$4 to \$5 million.

DP: Save is the wrong word; it was going to allow \$4 to \$5 million to be redirected. Save means taken away; redirected means changing the area of expenditure.

TS: Okay. And that \$4-5 million would be a one time or a year after year after year thing?

DP: It will be between \$4 and \$5 million of state money for fiscal year 2016. That redirected funding will be used primarily for one-time costs such as new signs, building repairs, new equipment to bring all of the IT world's equipment up to the same level of sophistication

on both campuses. This will also not only bring everything close to being up to snuff on both campuses, it will also allow us, now that we know specifically how much redirected funding we're going to have, to be able to make sane and logical decisions about where that money should be redirected on a long-term, year-after-year continuing basis.

TS: You said that the planning and budget committee . . .

DP: The President's Planning and Budget Advisory Committee.

TS: It is going to make suggestions?

DP: No, the suggestions and proposals will come from the colleges and departments and from the operating arms of the university. Those proposals and suggestions will go to the President's Planning and Budget Advisory Committee, PPBAC as it's called. The PPBAC will then develop and then make prioritized recommendations to the cabinet. So it will be a multi-stage process that begins at the department and college level.

TS: And then you make the final decision.

DP: Then we will make the final decision at the cabinet level, correct.

TS: You mentioned some of this was going to go to research, some to instruction.

DP: Instruction, educational support, and research; those are the three primary target areas.

TS: Would this be like internal grants or what are you thinking about doing?

DP: Some of it will be, for example, in the research side of things developing a seed fund for faculty research to develop startup packages for faculty who we are recruiting to come to Kennesaw State who want to start up the research efforts. So those would be the primary research efforts. Sometimes external funding that you receive requires matching funds of 10 percent or 20 percent or 5 percent. So we would develop, and again, we do not know how much would wind up going towards the research agenda, but some of it will go toward the research agenda. Scholarships and fellowships at the master's degree and doctoral level for students.

TS: And on instructional support, I guess one of the things that happens when you do more research is people get more released time, and that probably is going to mean more adjunct faculty that probably need some support?

DP: Not necessarily.

TS: You don't think so?

- DP: Not necessarily, no, because frequently what happens with more released time for faculty means an entire semester off or a number of courses off for a number of people that you then bring together, and you provide the opportunity for additional full-time faculty.
- TS: Tenured?
- DP: Either way. Either tenure track or non-tenure track. That's all again based on the likelihood or the probability of continuing funding.
- TS: Right. As I understand it, the arguments for consolidation were I guess, number one, you're going to redirect a significant amount of money. Obviously when you only have one president that saves a lot of money, or just one provost, that saves a lot of money. Does it really lead to less staff below that level?
- DP: Back office operations as well mostly definitely, particularly in a world where IT has so much of an impact on day-to-day operations.
- TS: So you don't need a full staff for IT at both campuses?
- DP: You don't need a doubly duplicated staff, that's exactly correct, just as you don't need a doubly duplicated senior level administration.
- TS: Right. That was one of the arguments. As I understand it, one of the other arguments was that it was going to improve retention and graduation rates.
- DP: Correct.
- TS: Could you explain just exactly how that's going to happen?
- DP: Sure. Study after study shows that in addition to having good faculty and great faculty leading students in their studies that the degree to which a student is connected to the university also significantly enhances student retention, progression and graduation rates. I'll use two specific examples here, one for what is now our Marietta campus and one for what is now the Kennesaw campus. We have a number of students here at the Kennesaw campus who are interested in automotives and cars, but we don't have enough of them here to have a student chapter of the Society of Automotive Engineers, whereas at the Marietta campus, what was Southern Poly, there are a ton of students who are interested in things automotive, and they do have a student chapter, a very active racing team chapter . . .
- TS: I saw that! In the Engineering Technology Center they have a lab where they were building their race car from the ground up.
- DP: Exactly. So now our motorheads that are at the Kennesaw campus now at their own university have a Society of Automotive Engineers and racing chapter to become plugged in with.

TS: Or if they want to be in the bath tub race?

DP: Well, that's now pushing; it's no longer motorized.

TS: Oh, that's right, because of liability?

DP: Yes, even when I was interim president they were building bath tubs that would go fifty miles an hour.

TS: Right.

DP: It was kind of dangerous. But in the other direction there are a number of students at the Marietta campus—former Southern Poly—that are interested in playing rugby—not enough, however, to have their own rugby club. So they've had to go out and play for Old Way or the Renegades or one of the city clubs. Well, now as Kennesaw State students, they can plug in with the Kennesaw State rugby club. Again, this all goes back to connecting to the university, which I said at the outset, study after study shows a degree of connectivity to student life, the life of the university, enhances graduation rates.

TS: I've done some fascinating interviews with people involved with the new media arts program at Southern Poly.

DP: That's an excellent example.

TS: That would fit in perfectly with what we're doing here.

DP: The gaming program, exactly, correct.

TS: Yes. So I think you made a big point in your State of the University address about how extracurricular and co-curricular activities play a major role in keeping people attached to the university.

DP: Exactly right.

TS: Let me just ask you in terms of retention and graduation, better student advising is also usually cited as one of the ways to increase retention. Are we doing anything with regard to that that's consolidation related?

DP: Absolutely, we will be doing some of that. That's the middle category. The first category is instruction, which speaks for itself.

TS: With the redirected funds?

DP: The redirected funds. The middle category is educational support. That's advising; that's mentoring. What are we doing there? We are expanding our advising teams. We

have discovered that the most effective advising is done by a combination of faculty, professional advisors, and students who are hired to be advisors. You'll never guess which are the ones that, apparently, according to students, have the most impact. The students.

TS: Right.

DP: So we're expanding advising teams. We are also increasing the number of advisors to improve the advisee/advisor ratio as well. We'll be adding ten to fifteen advisors this year, and next year we'll be adding another significant number, depending on the PPBAC recommendation to the cabinet.

TS: Right. I saw in one of your speeches or monthly updates that some of the redirected funds were going to go to revising courses that have that have very high "D" and "F" and "W" rates.

DP: Right, with the W standing for withdrawals.

TS: Now we've gone through this before on this campus, and it created a furor in the math department years ago over Math 101 [algebra] when Betty Siegel voiced a concern over the low success rate. Has it created a furor this time, and just exactly how is that going to work?

DP: To this point it has not created a furor, but that is probably because we have not yet begun moving money in that direction. How much money we'll move in that direction I do not know. But if you look at the results that have occurred at other institutions, when you decrease student/faculty ratios in those courses that have high "D, F, W" rates, and you increase the number of mentors and advisors in those same programs, the retention rate goes up. And we want to retain students. We're not talking about making the courses easier. We are talking about finding ways to make the courses more understandable, because after all that is what education is all about.

TS: Of course, this led to the earth algebra movement for a while in the Math Department here.

DP: We're not going in that direction.

TS: Okay.

DP: We're going to maintain rigorous standards, and just help students understand how to come up to those standards.

TS: Okay. Of course, one of the concerns that students at Southern Poly raised at the time of the announcement of the confiscation was that class sizes were going to get larger. Is that going to happen?

- DP: No, it will not happen. If anything, across the board they will get smaller. Again, we are going to increase the number of faculty, and that will drive down the student/faculty ratio. Now, I'm not saying that there won't be some classes that get larger. There probably will be. But if you look at the overall student/faculty ration, it's going to go down.
- TS: Have there been studies on how tuition and fees affect retention and graduation rates?
- DP: There have been. Obviously, as tuition rates go up, it makes it more and more difficult for some students to attend college. That's just the hard reality. But what is rarely talked about is why tuition rates have gone up so much. If you look at the level of state funding devoted to higher education on a per student basis, the level of state funding devoted to higher education per student basis has fallen off the table over the course of the last eight years or so. Obviously, the Great Recession or whatever one wants to call it over 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, made it very difficult for the state to sustain higher levels of funding. But we've gone from ballpark the state paying 75 per cent of higher education at most institutions in the state down to somewhere in the vicinity of under 50 percent.
- TS: I was wondering how far down it had gone. I knew it had gone down a long way. I used to tell students that every one of them was on a scholarship whether they knew it or not if they were paying in-state fees.
- DP: That's absolutely correct, and it varies on an institution by institution basis, but at Kennesaw State we're down under 50 percent now. We used to be at 75 percent.
- TS: I think I saw that tuition for full-time undergraduates this fall is \$2,660, plus \$1,003 of fees on top of that.
- DP: That's correct. Called ball-parking, \$3,500 to \$3,700 per semester. Now that's much higher than what it was, admittedly. But, number one, if you look at what has happened to state funding, I think it's understandable that tuition and fees have gone up; and, number two, if you look at that \$3,500 to \$3,700 for tuition and fees for full-time students at an institution in the state of Georgia like Kennesaw State, and compare it to similar public institutions in other states, in almost every other state it is 20 percent to 150 percent higher. So going to school in Georgia for an in-state student is still a doggone good deal in comparison to students that live in most other states in the United States.
- TS: It looks to me as though the consolidation has not had a negative effect on enrollment on either campus.
- DP: The student enrollment on both campuses is going up. If one takes the combination of the fact that we're going to have \$4 to \$5 million to redirect away from administrative costs and back office costs to instruction, educational support, and research, and combine that with the fact that it looks like the enrollment is going up to somewhere in the 1.5 to 3 percent range by this fall . . .
- TS: Which is a lot when you're over 30,000.

- DP: Oh, yes. If you're down at 3,000 students, and you go up by 3 percent that's ninety students? If you're at 30,000 and you go up by three percent that's . . .
- TS: Nine hundred students. And that's about what we're going to go up in the fall, isn't it?
- DP: That's what it's looking like. Of course, that leads to a different faculty concern—and a very understandable different faculty concern and a different staff concern—"Oh, my goodness, how are you going to cope with that large of an increase?" Well, the answer is, "We'll do the best that we can." We do have tuition funds and fee funds coming in. So that will help. But the problem of coping with an increase in students is a heck of a lot less of a problem than coping with a similar decrease in students.
- TS: Absolutely. Let me ask you, we had 81 operational working groups. I think you said before close to one thousand people were involved in that process. We may have saved \$4 to \$5 million dollars, but a lot of time got redirected from other things into service. What I wanted to ask you is about how you see that process now that it's over with. Did you have any disappointments with what happened with consolidation in any way, or is it a total positive as far as you're concerned? Is there anything that you would have liked to come out differently than what it did?
- DP: You've asked two different questions.
- TS: Okay.
- DP: Let me think about it.
- TS: You answer which you want.
- DP: I'll try to answer both. I think the outcome was as close to being perfect as it could have been. What could we have done better to reduce the level of angst as we went through the process? That's a different question. If all of us had done a couple of things differently once consolidation was announced, we should have had many more town meetings right at the beginning. We had a couple.
- TS: Do you mean town meetings for people to come in and get their gripes out on the table?
- DP: Exactly. Let folks express their gripes, and then respond to their gripes. That could have been handled a little bit better than I handled it and the whole leadership team handled it.
- TS: It couldn't have been pleasant sitting in there listening to all the gripes.
- DP: It was not, but I have a good story to tell about that. I'll come back to that. We could have made some of the decisions that were eventually made even earlier than they were made, thereby removing some of the uncertainty. In a certain sense you could say, perhaps, we were a little bit too democratic in some of the decision making processes.

TS: Too democratic?

DP: Too democratic because it took too long. I think those are the two big operational things that we would have done differently. The story: Shortly after consolidation was announced, Lisa [Rossbacher] and I had a town meeting of students over in the auditorium at Southern Poly. I was trying to illustrate that, hey, I spent twenty-four years at Georgia Tech; I spent fourteen months as interim president of Southern Poly; I am a friend of technology; I am a friend of technologists; I know how to work with technology folks and technologist and engineers; I'm familiar with this campus; after all I was president here eighteen years ago. One kid from the back said, "I wasn't even born eighteen years ago!"

TS: That puts things in perspective, doesn't it, from their perspective? Some of the processes could have been better, you're saying?

DP: Again, the two things that I would have done differently: We would have had more open meetings, and, number two, I would have pulled the trigger earlier on some things.

TS: Let me ask you: Some of the things that appeared in the newspaper were from alumni who were saying that if the name goes away, we'll never give another dime to the consolidated university. How has the consolidation of foundations gone, and is the money still coming in from Southern Poly alumni?

DP: The foundations are operating together. What was the Southern Polytechnic State University Foundation is now the Polytechnic Foundation of Kennesaw State University. The seven members of the executive board of the Polytechnic Foundation of Kennesaw State University have all received and all accepted offers to become trustees of the KSU Foundation. A couple of the trustees from the KSU Foundation are now adjunct trustees of the Polytechnic Foundation of KSU. Gradually, the foundations will, in fact, come together. There has been virtually no decrease in the donations being provided.

TS: No decrease.

DP: No decrease. What I'm about to say, I prefer if you'd turn that off for a second [Editor's note: the recorder was turned off for a short time. The interview resumed with the following question]:

TS: So it's been a wash? In other words, we haven't lost anything from the consolidation?

DP: Yes. And quite honestly, with the renewed emphasis that we're putting on community engagement and economic development, we really expect an increase, at first slowly, but then very significantly. We're right now in the very beginning phases of planning for our next comprehensive campaign.

TS: I wanted to ask you about that if we have time for that, where we were on that process and what the goals are going to be for the comprehensive campaign?

DP: We have not yet set the goals. We have hired the off-campus advisor, called the Benefactor Group out of Columbus, Ohio, which just helped kicked off Ohio State's \$1.5 billion comprehensive campaign. Ours will be nowhere near that.

TS: Well, we set \$75 million the last time, and we exceeded the goal.

DP: Right, we did \$75 million in four years last time. We're expecting it to be higher than \$75; how much higher, again, we're out testing the waters even as we speak.

TS: So testing the waters mean we're in the silent phase of the campaign?

DP: We're even before the silent phase of the campaign. We are trying to put together the campaign pro forma, find out where primary, potential donors might be, and then we'll get up to the silent phase sometime in the near future.

TS: So maybe next year we'll get the campaign underway?

DP: Maybe next year.

TS: In your State of the University address a few months ago, you asked everybody to think back to where we were ten years ago, and think ahead to where we might be in another ten years. The kinds of things that you cited are really phenomenal—the growth since 2005, the growth in number of students by about 11,000, I guess. What was it in 2005?

DP: In 2005 we were at about 18,000.

TS: At this [Kennesaw] campus?

DP: At this campus.

TS: And then you add SPSU; you put the two together. . . .

DP: It was about 4,500; so probably 22,000 or something like that [for the two campuses].

TS: So we've grown by 10,000 or 11,000. You mentioned, I think—it's hard to believe we only had fifteen masters programs on the two campuses. . . .

DP: No doctorates.

TS: Ten years ago and no doctorates, and now we have about as many doctorates as we used to have masters programs.

DP: Close to it.

- TS: So anyway you look at it, I think you said something like almost a half billion dollars of construction on the two campuses [in ten years], phenomenal growth in lots of ways. Do you think the growth is going to be that phenomenal in the next ten years?
- DP: Oh, good question, Tom. I don't think it is going to be as sizeable, but who knows what else could happen? Let's just play mind games for a minute or so. If you look at this reversible lane being constructed, fifty feet in the air, going up I-75, reversible lanes, going all the way from Acworth to the Galleria. That's going to be operational in about a year. What will that do to the ability for folks to get from downtown Atlanta out to Kennesaw State? If you look at the Braves stadium being built only four or five miles away from the Marietta campus. What will that do to Kennesaw State? If you look at the addition of football with our first game being some sixty days away. What will that do? We just hired a new vice president for economic development and community engagement whose responsibility will be to connect the capabilities of this university with surrounding businesses and governments and non-profits. What could that do to the two-way flow—expertise from campus going off campus, and willingness of off-campus sites to support on-campus activities? What could that do over the course of the next ten years? It's truly mind-boggling.
- TS: I was wondering, we are finishing up the ten years of the QEP on global initiatives. Is there any discussion of maybe making the next QEP related to economic development and community engagement?
- DP: That will be one of the ideas that I am sure will be put forward. We will be discussing this fall and next spring. We will go in much the same direction in selecting this new QEP as was done in selecting the old QEP. We'll see what the faculty and staff think about what direction we're going.
- TS: At any rate, we're going to be doing a lot more in that area with a senior administrator in charge of it?
- DP: Absolutely.
- TS: Although we've done a lot in the way of community engagement in the past.
- DP: We've done a lot, but if you look at what we could do now, let me just give an example. Ten years ago our externally funded research was at about \$2 million. We're now over \$13 million per year.
- TS: That's both campuses?
- DP: Yes, that is both campuses.
- TS: Over 13?

DP: Yes. Over ten years.

TS: Somewhere I had a \$16 million figure that you had cited.

DP: Yes, the \$16 million was new research grants. The \$13 million was research expenditures. New research grants often come in as multi-years. There are two different ways to measure it. So if you look at grants that were signed in FY 14, it was at about the \$16 million level. If you look at the off-campus research funds that were actually spent in FY 14 was about \$13 million. I don't know what the FY 15 numbers are, but just in the last couple of months we've got a couple of sizeable NIH grants and NSF grants in the couple hundred thousand dollar range. Now, again, compared to UGA or Georgia Tech we are very small, Tech was at the \$750 million dollar level. UGA is maybe at \$400 million. We're down at \$13 million. We are not designated a research university. We're what's called a comprehensive university

TS: Right. I get the feeling that you're saying, "Be happy with what we are," in your speeches. But my sense, from having been here for almost fifty years now, is that whatever we are, the faculty is going to want to go on to the next step.

DP: Which is absolutely fine.

TS: And so I'm sure there are going to be pressures as time goes on to become a research university.

DP: That is absolutely fine. The board has made it very clear that we are expected to become a world-class university across the board of instruction, research, and service, but that we are not going to get the designation of being a research university. Now, years ago, when I was down at the Board of Regents [as senior vice chancellor for academics and fiscal affairs], Frank [A.] Butler [vice chancellor for academic, faculty, and student affairs] and I conducted a study that was called ["Statewide Assessment: The University System of Georgia in 2015," launched in October 2002 and presented to the board at the August 25, 2004 meeting]. In it we discovered that of the fifteen largest states in the United States, there were only two that did not have what was then called research-intensive universities, also called R-IIs. Georgia was one of those two states among the fifteen largest that did not have an R-II. We made a recommendation then back in [2004] that Georgia consider helping some of its universities to become R-IIs. Kennesaw and Georgia Southern were the logical ones, West Georgia and Valdosta were just behind them. That's where we're going.

TS: So that's what we are now, is an R-II? What we used to call an R-II?

DP: What would have been called an R-II. The University System of Georgia terminology is comprehensive.

TS: I meant to ask you when we were doing retention and graduation, Georgia Southern is way ahead of us still in retention and graduation.

DP: Not really. A couple of percentage points.

TS: Have we moved up? The last I saw was the 2007 cohort, and I had Georgia Southern at 50.45 percent graduated by the summer of 2013, the six-year graduation rate [for first-time, full-time students], and us at 43.38.

DP: That's about accurate. We were thirteen points behind.

TS: Well, I considered 7 percent way behind. I don't know, maybe you don't.

DP: Not in comparison to where we were, but we are still behind where we need to be.

TS: Okay, so that's something we're shooting for.

DP: Absolutely right. We need to be up in the 50s. But if you look at the difference of nine years ago being 13 percentage points behind and now being 6 or 7 percentage points behind, we've knocked off 50 percent of the gap. I have a 3:00 meeting.

TS: We're beyond 3:00, so we'll end the interview right now.

DP: If you want to continue, can we schedule another time?

TS: Sure. Thank you very much.

DP: Thank, you, Tom. I appreciate it.

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project
KSU Oral History Series, No. 50
Interview with President Daniel S. Papp
Part VI conducted and edited by Thomas A. Scott
Location: President's Office, Kennesaw Hall

Part VI, Tuesday, 19 January 2016

TS: We're one year removed from the consolidation receiving final Board of Regents approval. I'd like to start today by asking you about the role of Chancellor Hank Huckaby in all of this. You read the paper I sent you that I've been working on. I was impressed with Chancellor Huckaby's framing the consolidations in terms of historical change, if you will, from an era of rapid growth to an era where we're not growing so fast and have to focus on efficiency. I'd like to start out with your impressions. Do you think that he has been right in his analysis that the era of growth in higher education is over?

DP: I think it depends very much on a case-by-case basis involving both specific institutions and majors at institutions and case-by-case when it comes to states as well. The overall growth in higher education, I think, will continue, but it may well change in context. Higher education at traditional doctoral, master's, and bachelor's universities—both private and public—is being supplemented and added to by for-profit universities, the University of Phoenix, for example. Beyond that, with renewed emphasis on job readiness the Technical College System of Georgia—although it has gone through difficult times in the past few years—should pick up in the future again. So I think the traditional way of looking at growth in higher education may in fact be in a period of, if not decline, at least stagnation as there will be many other avenues to post-high-school education that will be pursued.

When it comes to different majors, we're looking at increased numbers of folks going into what might be described as pre-professional and job-readiness majors, things like nursing, healthcare, business, et cetera. The liberal arts might be in for a rough time over the next few years. When it comes to locations for education—particularly in southwest Georgia or for that matter rural Georgia, regardless of what part of the state you're in—institutions of the University System of Georgia in those parts of the state are having a more difficult time of attracting students, whereas Kennesaw State, UGA, Georgia State, and Metro Atlanta [Atlanta Metropolitan State] College seem to be continuing to grow.

TS: Right. We've never slowed down, really.

DP: We've never slowed down; that's exactly right. We're an institution of roughly 33,000 students. When we have a 1 percent growth, that's 330 students. When an institution of 3,000 students has a 1 percent growth, that's a growth of thirty students.

TS: Right. So our percentages are not going to go up that much, but the numbers are going to continue growing.

DP: Exactly right.

TS: Well, maybe another way to ask the question: As you know very well from the report that you did back in 2004, the ratio of what the state puts into a student's education compared to what the student pays in tuition has been changing dramatically in the twenty-first century from students paying 25 percent and the state paying 75 percent to more like 50/50 today. Is that because legislators have become stingier with their resources or is it that the colleges themselves have become more inefficient in that expenses have outpaced the services delivered?

DP: I need to say multiple things about that. First, the University System of Georgia in comparison to university systems in many other states still receives a relatively large percentage of its operating monies from the state, even though, we have declined from a 75/25 percent split to a 50/50 split. Why has that occurred? Multiple reasons. Part one, the State of Georgia has many more demands placed on the income that the state receives from taxes and other revenue sources than it used to have. For example, if you look at the growth in prison populations—they have grown tremendously. Other areas as well; transportation here in Atlanta—I don't want to say that we are rather clogged in transportation, but depending on the time when you travel, we are rather clogged in transportation.

TS: People from other places in the country think we're clogged when they come through here.

DP: Exactly correct. Then when it comes to the efficiency of the universities, I don't think that we are any less efficient than we ever were. Indeed, I think in many respects we are more efficient. However, if you look at the amount of regulations and reporting these universities are not just expected to do, but required to do, it has gone up astronomically over the course of the last ten or fifteen years. I've not done this for the last few years as president here at Kennesaw, but in my second or third year as president, I did an analysis of how much the university in the world of 2008 or 2009 was spending to comply with off-campus reporting to the Board of Regents, to the state, to the federal government, or to various funding agencies, in comparison to what the university had been doing five years earlier. The requirements had gone up by a level of two and half to three times if my memory serves me correctly. With things such as the Clery Act [Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (1990)] in place and with things in place such as increased auditing requirements, we just have to spend more and more in absolute dollars and percentage of [the overall budget] on things that would not fall under the broadly defined categories of teaching, research, and service.

TS: Right. Well, that really leads to another question that is a standard complaint that you hear from faculty—that we've increased the number of administrators far more rapidly than we've increased the number of tenure track faculty positions.

DP I probably wouldn't disagree with that, but I would go beyond the number of administrators, because more frequently than not that creates the impression of vice

presidents and deans and so forth when it should actually include things like tutors and advisors that help students plan their course scheduling. Back in the day, and this may well date me, but if so that's okay, when I was an undergraduate, advising was basically you would get handed a course catalogue and you were told to figure it out for yourself. In the world of 2016, if any university tried to do that, you would see an outflow of students because students' expectations have changed. Many students today, not all to be sure, expect to have advisors at their beck and call. Many students expect to have all sorts of incredible facilities at their beck and call, and don't forget those facilities need "administrators" to run them and people to work in them as well. So the landscape of higher education in 2016 is tremendously different based on expectations and requirements that are induced by off-campus, non-academic organizations.

TS: Of course, I always considered it part of the faculty member's responsibility to advise students.

DP: Absolutely. But how many faculty members back in the day when you went to college would say, "Here is your course catalogue; go look it up."

TS: Probably more than should have been doing it that way.

DP: And I went to an Ivy League school. I had wonderful professors and advisors. But there were a significant number of other folks that you went to, and they said, "Here's your course catalogue."

TS: Right. Well, back to the consolidation, I'm just wondering, am I the only one that was surprised by the lack of political fallout from consolidation? I mean, this is a huge change in the university system. And I haven't seen anybody running for governor or the legislature saying, "We're going to roll back the clock to the way it was before all these institutions consolidated." It seems to me that something amazing happened that you could bring about such major change without somebody trying to exploit it politically.

DP: Well, I'm not entirely surprised that there has been virtually no political fallout for a couple of reasons. First, Chancellor Huckaby did an excellent job of explaining why it should occur. Second, it made a lot of sense in our consolidation of what is now the Kennesaw campus with what is now the Marietta campus. We're able to move ballpark five million dollars from duplicative administrative costs and back office costs into, for the most part, teaching, research, and service. How do you argue against that? The political side of it, again here in Cobb County, was that no campus was closed. Things are going from my admittedly prejudiced perspective better than ever before. If you look at some of the previous consolidations, there was political fallout over the consolidation of Waycross and South Georgia, located in Waycross and Douglas, but the big concern was whether one of the campuses would get closed. The answer was, "No." No campus was closed. What is now the Waycross campus of South Georgia State College is still a vibrant part of the Waycross community. The biggest political issue was in Augusta when what was the Medical College of Georgia and what was Augusta State University

became Georgia Regents University. And what was the political fall out there? The name of the university. So it's now Augusta University.

TS: Right. Well, I know that there are still faculty members that I've talked to over in Augusta that are still too emotional to talk about the consolidation.

DP: There you also have an issue of a research and teaching institution focused primarily and almost exclusively on medicine consolidating with a liberal arts bachelor level university. So that one in particular was more like mixing oil and water than any other consolidation.

TS: Right. So basically what you're saying is that a lot of people were disturbed to begin with but when they saw that it wasn't going to change that much and the campuses were going to stay open and people were going to keep their jobs . . .

DP: Most people were going to keep their jobs; exactly correct. If you look at Kennesaw State and Southern Poly, for example, two state universities, one of them four times larger than the other, but you put the two together and still have a state university, now one of the fifty largest universities in the country. And by the way, the grade point average upon graduation from high school of the student bodies of the two institutions was virtually identical. The SAT scores of the students entering the two universities were virtually identical. Admittedly, there was a different mix. Most of the folks at Southern Poly had math scores that were a couple hundred points higher than their verbals, and at the Kennesaw campus it was the other way around. But if you look at if you want to call it the intellectual horsepower, it is very similar.

TS: Let me ask you a question that you may or may not have inside knowledge on, but did Chancellor Huckaby figure all of this out for himself or do you think that when he was chosen as chancellor, the powers that be told him, "This is what we need to do?"

DP: Good question, and I have no insight on that whatsoever, but I will say this was being kicked around by different folks conceptually as long ago as 2004 when I was the USG's senior vice chancellor for academics and fiscal affairs. Frank Butler and I along with Bill [William R.] Bowes, who was the vice chancellor for business and finance at that time, did something called the Statewide Assessment that toyed with the idea of how much money could be redirected away from administration and back office functions. If my memory is correct, it was Middle Georgia College and East Georgia College that were our primary examples in 2004. So it's not an entirely new idea, but it took somebody with the gumption to go ahead and do it, and that was Chancellor Huckaby.

TS: Well, it seems to me that at least since Zell Miller, governors have had a great deal of impact on what the university system is doing and who the chancellor is and what-have-you. I'm assuming that, I guess that Governor Deal and Hank Huckaby had to talk about these things.

DP: I would bet that were true, yes. I don't know that for a fact, but if I were a betting person I would bet on that.

TS: It certainly looks like they had all the politics line up before all of this got under way.

DP: Yes, absolutely. And again, the logic behind it, particularly in this era of conserving resources, makes so much sense.

TS: Well, I guess my next question is what's left, do you think? There are fourteen colleges that have been affected by consolidation at this point, but that leaves twenty-one in the system that have been left out so far, and that includes University of Georgia, Georgia Tech, and three of the four comprehensive universities. Only one of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities has been affected so far; the state liberal arts college in Milledgeville hasn't been affected. Do you think that there's a master plan where we're going to end up with a boom of consolidations before this is all over?

DP: Again, I have zero insight on that. This is just Papp talking. I'm guessing we are going to take a year or two off and see how everything's going, and then see what the student count is at the different institutions, and then make a decision at that point in time about whether the consolidation wanes.

TS: So you think Huckaby's got a long way to go as chancellor?

DP: Again, I have no way of telling. When is the next gubernatorial election?

TS: Well, the election is two and a half years away and three years before a new governor will come in.

DP: Yes. I wouldn't be surprised to see Hank stay around.

TS: As long as Deal is in?

DP: Yes.

TS: That would be my guess too, but I certainly have zero inside knowledge. I mean, this has been one of the most secretive things, I guess, that we've done in the State of Georgia in terms of people being able to keep a secret over what the next consolidation is going to be until it happens.

DP: Yes, exactly right. The reason behind the wall of secrecy is so that no one has time to build up any opposition to the consolidation.

TS: Yes. But still those kinds of things usually generate political opposition.

DP: Well, again, if you look at the seven consolidations that have occurred, the two that have the largest level of opposition as far as I understand it are South Georgia and Waycross, because of the concern that the Waycross campus would be closed, and the Medical College and Augusta State because of the name issue and a mission issue. The next level

of concern was probably between North Georgia and Gainesville State again because of the level issue. Gainesville was primarily a two-year school, whereas North Georgia was primarily a bachelor's level school. In Middle Georgia you had Macon State and Middle Georgia in Cochran consolidate, two very similar institutions—not much opposition. Here we had obviously Southern Poly and Kennesaw—not much opposition. Georgia Perimeter College and Georgia State, my understanding of what happened at Georgia Perimeter College is that most of the faculty and staff and students were saying, “We’re going to stay as a two-year institution, but we’ll be an arm of a research university, so maybe resources are going to flow to us.”

TS: Well just last week I heard from a faculty member from Georgia Perimeter that was concerned about whether they were going to be held to research university standards in tenure and promotion.

DP: Tell that faculty member, whoever he or she is, that what she needs to do or he needs to do is look at the already approved requirements for promotion and tenure under the new Georgia State University [guidelines]. That’s already in place.

TS: Okay. So tell her she has not kept up with things?

DP: Read the faculty handbook.

TS: Okay. Well, let me ask you this: The last time we met you mentioned that we were going to redirect four to five million dollars per year as a result of the consolidation. I was just wondering if you’re any more specific now on how much we’re going to save six months after that last interview.

DP: Ballpark it is going to be about five million dollars. What we are doing with the fiscal year 2016 money—that is this fiscal year—is putting it into primarily one-time costs. We are tremendously ramping up IT [information technology], particularly at the Marietta campus, and new signage.

TS: They are an engineering school. They were behind us in IT?

DP: Far.

TS: Really?

DP: Go talk to Lectra Lawhorne [associate CIO and assistant vice president of information technology] or Randy Hinds [vice president for operations and chief information officer and chief business officer]. I’ll just say, “Go talk to Randy.” It was amazing, just amazing.

TS: Wow. So they ought to be happy over that then.

DP: Yes. That's where we put most of the money this year. We've already had a number of PPBAC committee meetings—President's Planning and Budget Advisory Committee meetings—to determine what we're going to do with five million dollars for next year. I believe that Provost [Ken] Harmon has already told the deans that at least two million dollars of that is going to hire additional faculty.

TS: Two million for tenure track faculty members?

DP: Yes. There will be a significant amount going to advisors—again, those advisors that never existed back when you and I went to school. There will be at least thirty additional advisors hired at a figure of probably forty thousand dollars per advisor. So that's over a million in new advising.

TS: Wow. Is this going to be pretty much spread across the board for the different colleges?

DP: Yes, absolutely.

TS: Wow. That leads to another question I had about the state of morale on the Marietta campus. Do you think that now that everybody knows his or her place in the new university that morale problems have disappeared?

DP: I won't say that they've disappeared, but I think they've been tremendously alleviated. There are still folks over at the Marietta campus who are saying, "We're now part of a massive university, and we've lost our own identity." So there might be some identity issues there. There are some identity political issues there, but most folks are, I think, looking at this along the lines of, "We are now part of a university that's on the verge of becoming a national actor."

TS: I guess my perception, which is not scientific, is that people over there that I've talked to—some of the faculty over there—seem to be proud to say that they're part of Kennesaw State. I think maybe the ones that it's been toughest on are the retirees. Their whole identity was tied up with Southern Poly.

DP: Absolutely. But we are still calling them the Southern Poly retirees. We're not calling them the Kennesaw State retirees. Again, it's an identity issue.

TS: Right. But you've already mentioned some things where the campus has been upgraded.

DP: We're doing a lot over there. If you walk around on that campus, it doesn't look like it used to look. It looks multiple times better. I perhaps should not say what I'm about to say, but I'm going to say it anyway. Chancellor Huckaby, within five minutes of the Board of Regents on January 6, 2015, having approved the consolidation—Hank came over and put his arm around me and said, "Dan, congratulations on the consolidation. You've got to promise me one thing." I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Make that campus look better. Its looks really need to be tremendously improved."

TS: I think you're right. My impression too is it could have used some landscaping and a lot of things.

DP: The IT closets there were a disaster. The wireless environment—we're still trying to get it up to what the Kennesaw campus's wireless environment is. The roof on the swimming pool—the swimming pool had been closed for something like three or four years. We're fixing the roof on the swimming pool.

TS: Oh, really? So the pool is closed now, but it's going to reopen?

DP: Yes, just as soon as we get the roof fixed. We're working on it.

TS: That's great. I know that you're putting some offices like economic development and community engagement over there.

DP: Yes. If you'll turn that off for just a minute . . .

TS: Sure.

[Tape off momentarily]

TS: Okay, well, why don't we shift gears a little bit. I'd just like to ask this: You're almost ten years into your presidency now. I think you were hired in February of 2006, and started officially in July, but you were really on campus pretty much from February on. So we're coming up on a tenth-year anniversary. Why don't you reflect on how the campus has changed since you started here and what the state of the university is in 2016?

DP: I don't want this to sound like a valedictory because I plan on being here for at least a few more years.

TS: Well, great. This is a ten-year anniversary reflection.

DP: Okay, let's do it this way. When I started we had just broken 18,000 students. Before consolidation was announced, we had just broken 25,000 students. With consolidation we're now over 33,000 students. Huge growth! Facilities—the numbers that have been run over the course of the last ten years—we're pushing half a billion dollars of construction projects on campus. We had zero doctoral programs when I came on board. Twelve days from now, the Carnegie Foundation is going to announce that Kennesaw State has been reclassified as a doctoral university. To be reclassified a doctoral university you've got to average over a three-year period twenty doctoral students getting their degrees for each of three years. So there have been a few changes that have taken place over the years. We now have a football program on board, which had a winning record in its first season. What else should I talk about? That's enough right there.

TS: Right. Let me maybe ask . . .

DP: Research—when I came on board here ten years ago, our research between then and now has grown by almost over 600 percent. That's sounds incredibly impressive until you realize it's gone from two million dollars to twelve million dollars. Georgia Tech averages six hundred and something million dollars per year.

TS: You're talking about external funding?

DP: External funding, yes. But I'm still very proud that we've had six times growth.

TS: You've got to start from somewhere. Well, let me follow up on that by saying that I guess maybe faculty have always complained about promotion and tenure as long as I've been here because we've always been evolving as long as I've been here. But maybe the standard complaint I hear these days is that if you go back to when we really started elaborate promotion and tenure guidelines in the 1980s, [former vice president for academic affairs] Ed Rugg used to tell us that we honor scholarship, but you have to be notable in teaching or you're not going to be promoted and tenured. A lot of faculty seem to be saying nowadays that the message that they're hearing is the opposite: We honor teaching, but you had better be notable or whatever the term is in scholarship or you're not going to get promoted and tenured.

DP: You need to hit it out of the ballpark on the first two. You need hit it out of the ballpark on teaching and then scholarship. Service—we want you to be involved in service as well. We want you to hit it out of the ballpark. I like to refer to the triple threat faculty member, somebody who hits it out of the ballpark on all three.

TS: So that sounds like you need an A grade in teaching and scholarship.

DP: An A grade in scholarship and probably a B in service, but we want you to do A across the board. We've got a lot of folks who are doing A across the board.

TS: So you're saying that you think the standards for teaching are as high as they ever were or higher?

DP: I think at least as high and probably higher, absolutely. Remember again what the Board of Regents, when they designated Kennesaw State a comprehensive university in August of 2013, said what that meant, for not just Kennesaw but also for our sister comprehensive universities, including Georgia Southern, Valdosta State, and West Georgia. The Board of Regents said that as a comprehensive university you are expected to become a world-class university. Does that raise the bar?

TS: Quite a bit.

DP: Quite a bit. That's a directive from the Board of Regents.

TS: Right. I have one last question. That is the role of adjunct faculty. It seems like they're carrying the load these days for general education courses on our campus. You may or may not agree with that, but it looks like that way in history.

DP: I won't say carrying the load, but their percentage has definitely increased. Two of the things we're going to be doing with that additional redirection fund—we're going to be increasing pay of part-time faculty, and we are also going to be adding faculty members to those high demand courses where we have a lot of adjunct faculty on board, thereby reducing once again the percentage of courses taught by adjuncts.

TS: Well, you basically answered my follow up question, which is what are we doing for the adjunct faculty. I know CETL is doing some things with them now and others as well, but that's good news that they're going to get a salary increase because I know that's been a problem for a long time that they get paid so little.

DP: My recollection is that's it's a nice lump sum.

TS: Good. Well, is there anything about the consolidation that I didn't ask you that you'd like to have on the record?

DP: We're moving towards consolidation of the two foundations as well. I should have also mentioned one of the things that we accomplished—we, of course, had Kennesaw State's first ever comprehensive campaign, where we set a target of seventy-five million dollars, which we reached. Now we're planning for another comprehensive campaign.

TS: Any idea when that's going to start?

DP: I do not know. My guess is within the next three years. What the latest guidelines are for comprehensive campaigns—they'd like you to have somewhere in the vicinity of two-thirds to three-fourths of the money already promised or in the bank before you kick it off.

TS: Well, that means you've got to stay for at least three or four more years.

DP: Something like that, yes.

TS: All right. Great. Well, that's about the end of our hour and my questions as well.

DP: Good. Thank you as always, Tom. I appreciate it.

TS: Thank you.

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