

File name: 181213_AMacpherson_Interview_final

Transcribed by: Transcription Ninjas (MW)

Edited by: Alice Macpherson

Length of file (time): 01:00:49

[Beginning of transcript]

P: The black one here?

I: Ah, red one.

I: The red one. Zero, one, two, three.

P: Yeah. Alright, put that about there.

I: Ok, hi Alice.

P: Hi there, Roger.

I: [Laughs].

P: Good to see you.

I: Seen you before.

P: Mm-hmm.

I: So, this is an interview with Alice Macpherson who has done a number of different and wonderful things at Kwantlen –

P: [Laughs].

I: - with her career here. So, I'll just ask her first a little bit of background, how and why did you end up at Kwantlen?

P: I ended up at Kwantlen because I had heard good things about it and Linda Coyle recruited me initially to come in and do some contract work with the courses that she was teaching, which I was happy to do. And then, I was asked to come in and take over the management of a project that was happening, Derek Nanson was the administrator on that. The woman who had been running the program had some health issues and had to be off for three months, so I had a three-month contract to continue that program, which is outreach into the high schools around trades. So, I'll back that up and say that I'm a tradesperson. I've worked on everything from chainsaws to hundred-ton dump trucks. I love three-dimensional jigsaw puzzles and I had a wonderful career in the trades. I hold TQ's in three areas, but I also know what my genetics are, and I knew that this was not a career I

could continue probably past my forties. So, and at this point not that it's a big issue here, but I have severe osteoarthritis, I've had a couple of joint replacements and so the answer is now I wouldn't be crawling around on the concrete floors. But, I like teaching, I did do some contract work for various colleges throughout the province as a Continuing Ed instructor and I liked it, I thought it was great. I had a job after having my own company for a while, but again realizing this is – different things are coming up – I shut that down and began to look at how could I do other things. So, I worked for BC Safety Council for a while, both maintaining their fleet, which ranged from tractor trailer rigs down to motorcycles and some power equipment, and also teaching for them. I got a contract at BCIT to do some teaching (in the) motorcycle / marine area and I also got a contract here at Kwantlen teaching – I was still doing these part-time gigs for Linda Coyle and her area – but teaching as a contract instructor in the TRAC Common Core program. So, I was in the classroom helping students work through math, science, various things having to do with the trade that they were going into. It was a common core program that all of the trade students went through before they were enough up to speed to be able to go directly into a shop environment and start working on the trade that they had chosen. So, I worked with Jerry Murphy and Vern Young, and I think that Geoff Dean actually hired me at the time. And so, the institution a year or so later decided that they were going to run an outdoor power equipment program and they got some funding from the government to do some curriculum development, as well as BCIT did as well, which is kind of interesting. So, I was doing continuing education in that field at BCIT, so I ended up getting the two Deans together to talk to each other and saying, “look, why don't you instead of trying to develop this separately” – they're both asking to hire me to do curriculum development work – I said, “why don't you talk to each other? Both of you pay me something and I will do it and then you can jointly have the curriculum,” cause the curriculum was going to go back to the province anyway. That eventually did go back through C2T2(the Centre for Curriculum, Technology, and Transfer) I think is what those acronyms were, and we ended up on the cover of one of their publications. So, I developed a curriculum for the outdoor power equipment program, BCIT didn't have the money to implement a program at that time, Kwantlen did, so I ended up being hired full-time at Kwantlen when we opened the new Langley campus, and that was great.

I: So, certainly a lot better than hanging upside down working on diesel motors and boats.

P: Yeah -

I: [Laughs]

P: - a lot better. [Laughs] A lot better, diesel is not my favourite, although I worked on diesel, propane, gasoline, whatever, ok, battery vehicles, electric vehicles. In the mining industry there's a lot of electric-only vehicles inside of the mill and shops.

I: Sparkless motors or something?

P: Well sparkless motors, but also you can't have any fumes. So no big thing. [Laughs]. I find it all quite fascinating.

I: Yeah it is, it's quite amazing. So, you were qualified in three trades, all around motor?

P: Oh yeah, all mechanical trades, ok, and as they say, I'm not fussy about what I work on. I've also had the privilege to be part of the process of bringing motorcycle technician into being a Red Seal program. So, I feel very fortunate to have had that opportunity. I was on the Item Committee, Item writing committee for the final exams. I worked with the folks here in apprenticeship in British Columbia on the British Columbia exam before that happened and that is part of what it is. I think I was given some credit for the fact that we also brought a lot of industry members together to talk about this and give their support.

I: Yeah, it would be very critical, I mean on a motorcycle you're pretty vulnerable anyway and if you have a mechanical breakdown, especially chains or brakes or something –

P: Yup.

I: - big deal. [Laughs].

P: I –

I: Or lose power on a corner.

P: Yup, those are all things that – it's my background so I – how did I get into that? I bought a motorcycle, because I couldn't afford a car.

I: [Laughs].

P: And of course, the motorcycle I could afford wasn't very good. [Laughs]. And then I found out how much mechanics got paid compared to what I had been doing as a young female in industry. So, I'd been a waitress, a clerk, a typist and they get paid a lot better than those jobs did. So, I thought, "ok, now what do I do?" So, I went and looked at apprenticeship and to get an apprenticeship you had to have an employer. So, I did a lot of work on my own first, but then I managed to find, after much looking, an employer who would give me a job. Now this isn't because the employer was forward-looking or a good guy, in fact he was the worst employer in the Toronto area, unnamed, but anybody who was around in that era would know exactly who I talked to, and he couldn't get anybody to work for him [Laughs]. So, eventually I got a job there. I lasted nine months, and that was a world record at the time in terms of employment with him. Many people lasted a day, two days, a week, and so I'm out looking for a job again because I got – I'm into my first year of apprenticeship. So, I went back and start my list of who I'd really like to work for, and the first place I went to, they said, "so, I see you're back, where have you been?" Now I know at this point darn

well that they knew exactly where I had been and who I'd been working for and any other gossip that might have gone through the industry, but so I told them and he said, "ok, I'll give you a try." And I stayed there for the rest of my apprenticeship.

I: Oh, cool.

P: So, that was fine, that was good. I had a good time, I learned a lot and got sent off to school a few times, because they give you about a month of schooling every year. Anyway, so here I am, I've worked on all kinds of stuff, I've been a journeywomen and been around the province. This all happened in Ontario, but I moved out West because that's where most of my relatives are and eventually, I think our whole family has moved out here, anyone who left came back.

I: Yeah, that's great. So, you started some curriculum development -

P: Ah, yes.

I: - over at Kwantlen and particularly this -

P: Well the outdoor power equipment -

I: - Joint program -

P: Yup, and we did that and as they say, that ended up being showcased by C2T2 and that was fine, and I'm now teaching. And we started up a program here at Kwantlen under John Bowman that was looking at learning development services is what they called it, but it was going to be a, "we'll develop some curriculum and sell it to whoever." - other institutions, industry, whoever. And the one, the program they picked was the public safety communications program. The gentleman who was running that basically said, "oh, it's a great program, we should be able to sell this," and so on and so forth, and everybody agreed and that was fine. But he didn't want any of his secrets written down. [Laughs]. So, the problem with curriculum development, you have to write things down [Laughs] to have outcomes, objectives, processes, and I'd worked of course with modularized materials, so the chunking was not a problem. I'm very clear about objectives. And before I got hired full-time at Kwantlen I had completed my instructor diploma program with, well it's housed at VCC, but it's right across the province, and it's an excellent program and so I really felt quite comfortable with the standards that we were being asked by our government departments who wanted this stuff written, standards that are necessary in trades, which of course are right across the country. And so, working with this gentleman was a little on the difficult side, he basically fired me. "I'm not going to talk to you, you don't know, they're using you." I said, "ok." [Laughs]. Anyway, so he went away and the people at the administrative level, that included Bette Laughy, who was the manager at the time, John Bowman, they said, "well, who else have we got?" Well, as with many of our applied programs, this was a program that employed contract instructors, who we called NR1's at this point,

and they were from all kinds of wonderful areas. So, I got to work with a woman from VPD, a gentleman who was working for the fire service in Port Moody, and it just went on and on. So, I get to work with some wonderful content experts. So, this is what we call in that era “subject matter experts”, and they were fabulous. So, we wrote curriculum, they double-checked it, we pulled together a program advisory committee, who said, “yes, yes, yes, no, change that, ok, no problem,” and I have been able to sit in to both apprenticeship branch meetings on curriculum as well as stuff with C2T2. So, I already had some facilitation skills, so I managed to be there, write it all down, get it back, get it approved, and we had some really solid curriculum and a program advisory committee that was fabulous. And then, the college realize it was – well we had just become the University College at that point, realized well we have to have somebody to actually teach this besides these contract instructors. So, they put a cross-Canada ad for a program coordinator who would teach some of the courses, but also be the hired coordinator to teach the other ones. And there was quite a large contingent that applied, there was a smaller contingent that were interviewed. The committee, (and I was not on the committee because I was writing curriculum), the committee said, “well, this is obviously the best person, but I don’t know if we can hire them.” And it was sort of “ok, why are you talking to me about this?” I’m in the office, you know taking care of paperwork as it were. They said, “well, because it’s your sister.” I went “what?” So, my sister was the communications manager at Pearson International Airport at the time, RCMP civilian member, and had been for sixteen years. She had worked her way up through the ranks and all the rest of that, and yup, she was hands down best qualified person [Laughs] to teach communication, public safety communication, probably across Canada. But she was related to me, and I said, “well, that’s pretty dumb, I wasn’t on the hiring committee, you can’t accuse her or me of bias, so, like, get your act together.” I might have said something ruder than that.

I: [Laughs].

P: [Laughs] Anyway, they hired her. Which led me to believe they weren’t too dumb after all.

I: [Laughs].

P: So, she came, and I was more than happy to hand over all this material, because she, of course, double checked it. She is my younger, smarter sister, just to be clear. And she took that program and ran it from 1995 until the institution decided that they didn’t need it anymore about two years ago. That’s as it is, and then she’s retired at this point. So, that was part of my curriculum development work. Meanwhile, I’m also an ISW facilitator and you know I mentioned that –

I: That’s the instructional skills workshop.

P: That’s right, instructional skills workshop, which is a component of the instructor diploma program which I’ve mentioned that I had completed. And, I got asked to come back into the

instructor diploma program and teach some of the courses. And they also look and work with contract instructors around the province. So, I had become an ISW facilitator and taken the facilitator development training and eventually became a trainer of that, and I'm still doing that at that point. So, the ISW was very core to what I could bring to the institution, and I took my first ISW here at Kwantlen on the old Richmond campus with buckets –

I: [Laughs].

P: - for the water, it was coming through the roof. And I facilitated my first ISW here on the Surrey campus – on this campus yes, in one of the brand-new buildings. So, I've been doing it ever since.

I: That's great.

P: It's been a core thing. We can thank Linda Coyle for making sure the ISW was embedded here. There were other people as well, but she has such a strong personality that there was no brooking that this was going to happen. And I've been doing it for a long time. So, we've just today, as a matter of fact, we're having a PD open house with the Teaching and Learning Commons and ISW is being showcased there. So, after almost forty years it's still a really vital way of helping people who have content expertise become teachers and I'm happy to be part of it.

I: Yeah, it's really great, because there is no requirement. You don't have to go and get a B. Ed. or something –

P: Nope.

I: - to come and teach here.

P: Nope.

I: So, it's very, very good to have something that people can go to and get some assistance with. And I think that ultimately you ended up doing a lot, you and people teaching it did a lot of mentoring that –

P: Oh, yeah.

I: - at least after the people had taken the course.

P: Absolutely, it's a peer-based process. So, what you're dealing with is it is for faculty, by faculty. And although occasionally we have other people who take the facilitator training, they're usually working with faculty members. And because it's a peer-based process, it isn't a hierarchical one. We're not telling people how to teach, we're saying, "so, what do you think good teaching is?" And since they're in a group, they become a cohort. It becomes a very short-term four-day learning community, but it often persists a lot longer, because they make connections to the faculty that are

there. We encourage those connections to be cross-disciplinary, if not multi-disciplinary. We're multi-disciplinary when we walk in the door on the first day, but hopefully we're a bit more cross-disciplinary by the time we get out at the end of the fourth day and –

I: And this is not reported to their Dean's or –

P: Nope.

I: - supervisors or anything?

P: Nope. I have very rarely had someone say, "could you tell me how so-and-so did in the ISW?" And I would say, "you need to talk to so-and-so." It's not up to us, we're not part of an assessment process.

I: No, exactly and that's one of the beauties of it, is that it's not part of the assessment and it's not reported to supervisors so.

P: And yes, you get either a certificate – our certificate process turned into a Letter of Completion, that's all fine, but you get something that says that you've completed this process, so, it's not evaluative either. Now, when it is part of the instructor diploma program and taught through the VCC process, it is given a grade, because those courses go through VCC's curriculum development process and it's a graded process. But as we would say here at Kwantlen, it is a completion course. And I think it's quite good. You always see people coming back and saying, "wow, that really helped me," ok, or they're still connected, you know. You hear about a group that is still having every – once a semester having a dinner together –

I: Yeah that's great.

P: - talking about teaching, which is just fabulous. So, for me, that's probably one of my really formative pieces that I had coming into Kwantlen but have been able to continue with it. So, this actually led me to curriculum development. We did the public safety communications, we shopped it around to a number of other institutions who were interested. Most of them, perhaps it was a more naïve ethical time, just wanted to lift the stuff and walk away with it. [Laughs].

I: Just wanted to plagiarize it.

P: Yes, absolutely and some of them did. But there was certainly no process to follow that up. So, that's as that is, they decided this wasn't going to make him any money, so they stopped funding that area. Now at the same time, we had a group called Professional Development Support Services which provided PD for staff, faculty, and occasionally administrators who wanted to drop in, ok. And Ron Johnson was in charge of that at the time and Lori Norum / Scanlan was his assistant. And Ron and I were ISW facilitators as well, so, lots of other good background, and that was working

fine. I was doing ISW through there and doing other work and said, “well, I’m still working on the curriculum.” And for better or for worse, the institution hired Ron to also run the IT department and then overloaded him to the point that they decided they were going to get rid of everything. So, it was very strange, I mean I was watching this as a faculty member from somewhere way out here.

I: So IT meaning Instructional Technology?

P: Yeah, well yeah.

I: As opposed to computers, information technology –

P: Oh no, no, it was all of those.

I: Oh was it? Ok.

P: Yeah, I think at some point they thought they could put it all together. Ok, and I actually applied for the job and got an interview as well, but they hired Ron cause he was already at the administrative level and they felt that they could, and I don’t know who they were at the time, but they felt they could add to the portfolio and so there he was in the late, mid-to-late 90’s with this huge portfolio and eventually it just all kind of blew up. And again, I don’t know how it blew up but it blew up, and as they do with administrators in this institution they said, “well, we’ve decided to make that job go away so thank you very much and see you around sometime.” Linda Coyle was just becoming a VP at that point and ended up picking up what was left of Professional Development Support Services and it still exists in – I love accounting on this level, because accounting doesn’t make things go away –

I: [Laughs].

P: - it still exists, ok, it’s still the same account number [Laughs] and has been all the way through. And meanwhile the learning development services was being shut down, so she said, “well, you take on a piece of this.” And she also had another group called Contract Training – oh, CTC, CTCS, I’ll come back to that. Anyway, what it was, and they were doing contracts outside. So, I got contracts outside, we did a bunch of diversity training for the province, ok, and we did other inclusive curriculum things, we did all kinds of things. There were all kinds of little contracts that she managed, and her manager Judy Deeley took on. So, that was fine. And meanwhile I got this piece called Professional Development Support Services and we continued offering the ISW and we built up other things. There was a leadership program developed in conjunction with our HR department at the time. Debra Hawker was the sort of lead on that. Liz McKinley was there and supporting it. Debra at that point was reporting to Liz. And we developed a program that we ran a dozen times over the years, and it was anyone who wanted to take it, so it could be faculty, it could be staff, could be administration. Some of the people who came were people who were staff looking at

administrative positions or supervisors who were encouraged to take it even if they weren't going to become administrators, they had to deal within the BCTE environment with supervision and myself and Debra and a few other people were the primary deliverers of this information. And we did this as a personal leadership process, and it had an appreciative inquiry focus. Now well, it didn't at the very beginning, although it did, except we didn't know what appreciative inquiry was at that time, it was just starting to emerge and it was sort of like when it emerged it was like, "oh, that's what we're doing." [Laughs]. It was good, which is getting people to think about what's working and how can we do more of that, that's the kind of simple answer to that. So, that leadership program was really quite exciting, and we delivered that, as they say, a dozen times.

I: Did that push people into Royal Roads?

P: It could have, ok, I'm not entirely clear. We weren't focused on –

I: No I know –

P: - going external –

I: - I'm just wondering if it –

P: - but we did deliver it by the way to Surrey Memorial Hospital and a couple of other places as well, PICS, I think was one of our clients at one point. And again, Linda Coyle picked it up and ran with it. Linda and I developed most of the written curriculum and so we had quite a good documentation and customized training – Customized Training and Contract Services. Ok, we were out there with that as well as doing it internally, but it did start as an internal process. Again, John Bowman was part of that, Gordon Lee was part of that, and I was, "well, I like learning" at the beginning and then I ended up with the whole thing [Laughs] as it were. So, that was great. So, Professional Development Support Services was supporting pretty much all of the employees that weren't getting outside PD, the administrators very rarely came in, but everybody else did, so we were happy to do that.

I: So is this around, was Jim Gillis still here as –

P: Yup.

I: - Continuing Ed or was this -

P: Yup, yup Jim was still here and -

I: Jim was still there.

P: At the very beginning Jim was here as Continuing Ed, and when we were trying to sell this curriculum, part of the fantasy was maybe we could be working with Continuing Ed on that. Now,

Jim retired, he did retire, he just wasn't here, but he retired. And then it went on to someone else, Ron whose last name is escaping me, who was there in parallel with Customized Training and Contract Services. In fact, we shared space on the Newton Campus in the same general area and at some point the institution decided we didn't want to have Continuing Ed anymore either and shut down all of it and did it in a very rapid and brutal fashion.

I: And I remember at some point they brought it back after I had retired –

P: Yup, yup.

I: - because I remember meeting with –

P: Professional –

I: - the new –

P: - Professional something, yeah.

I: - a new person, I think that only lasted a couple of years though.

P: They've gone, they've cycled through and we'd have to take a look at the documents, but they cycled through a whole bunch of people and –

I: [Laughs].

P: I'll just leave it at that. [Laughs].

I: Yeah, well it's always been interesting, because a lot of the stuff that Continuing Ed, being a good example, would be supported by the province, and then it wouldn't be supported so there'd be no funding and so suddenly it would become entirely self-supporting.

P: That's right.

I: I remember the Surrey School District kind of went through a couple of iterations of that too.

P: Speaking of which, when they shut down Continuing Ed and Customized Training, Surrey School District moved and picked up all of the programs that were making money and they're still running them. [Laughs]. So, ok. You know how that goes.

I: I know what you're saying.

P: Oh yeah, and there was a push all the way through that time starting – you might have a date on here – I really started noticing it in the early '90s because I was still contract at that point, of every course needing a course outline and noting that there wasn't course outlines. And coming from the

trades side to begin with, I was really surprised about that because, I mean, we document things up to about here and you'd have to have plans and you have to do this and you have to have your assessment things in place and apparently the academics weren't doing that. [Laughs].

I: There might have been a kind of a difference 'cause all the UT courses had course outlines because they were articulated.

P: Right exactly, so they had to be documented.

I: They had to be documented, but they weren't as complete as they later became with learning outcomes and so on -

P: Yup, exactly.

I: - I mean they were basically -

P: Topics and attendance.

I: - yeah, they were agendas that, here's what topics we're going to cover and here's the method of assessment, but that was pretty wishy. In comparison to what came it, it wasn't as thorough.

P: Yeah, and as they say, I was just surprised in the early '90s when they were talking about, "well everybody's got to have course outlines," and thinking, "they don't?" [Laughs]. Oh, that's interesting. [Laughs]. So, maybe, for me anyway, the ability to actually write some curriculum and be able to document it was a plus for me in terms of where I've ended up. It often has seemed to me, the jobs I've ended up doing here at the institution, have been jobs that they want to have done, they're not sure who to get to do it, but let's see if Alice can do it.

I: Or how to pay for it.

P: Or how to pay for it. [Laughs].

I: [Laughs].

P: Well, it's probably easier to find that one FTE for someone you've already got on tap and it's worked very well for me. I mean I have no complaints. So, let me see, Professional Development Support Services -

I: And you did some stuff with the KFA.

P: Yup, I was the ombudsperson for a couple of rounds, that's the two-year, I think it's a two-year cycle, I did it twice. And basically making sure that we dotted our I's and crossed our T's and didn't do it the other way around. [Laughs]. And that's the job, we went through some iterations of

updating our constitution and bylaws. Well, you can't update your constitution, you can update your bylaws, and we went through a few rounds of that, make them clearer and less wishy-washy. But again, that was just really clean-up work, so I was happy to be part of that, not a time release position as they say, or as I prefer to say, a time reassignment position. Release sounds like this –

I: You don't have to do anything.

P: - teaching things here is horrible, right?

I: Yeah.

P: We're going to release you from that, and no, the answer is it's a reassignment at the time.

I: Yeah, exactly, because for some people it meant, "ok, I'm not doing that day."

P: I know, that really boggled me when I ran into that as an attitude. I'm the kind of person who gets really bored if I don't have a project ongoing, so.

I: Yeah, Centre for Academic Growth.

P: Alright, ok, and you were very much involved with that. I first met you when you were talking about first the CIDEA, but when you were talking about research and the idea of scholarly activity. I remember having some interesting discussions with you, and it was kind of a new idea for me, but that would have been again, early '90s, '93-'94, and sometime in '94, I ended up at a conference over on Vancouver Island and one of the speakers was talking about graduate school. Geoff Madoc-Jones from SFU and he was saying, well, you know we're looking at having people coming through graduate education without necessarily having an undergraduate degree, but they would have to have a whole lot of other things." Ok, started listing them off and I'm thinking, "that sounds like what I've got."

I: [Laughs].

P: [Laughs]. So, I applied, I got in, I was kind of boggled. I think they'd been planning to do cohorts which they did later, but I'm the sort of person who, "well, that's a good idea, let's jump on it." So, I ended up in and my advisor was the Dean of Education up at SFU. And I went there, and I got a Master's and I could have done an M.Ed., but it was sort of like, "no, no, no I'm interested in this research stuff that this guy Roger has been telling me about."

I: [Laughs].

P: So, I ended up doing a full M.A. and that worked out well for me. After my defence for the M.A. they take you out to lunch, I was asked, "well, are you interested in doing a doctorate?" and I have to admit at that instance I said, "no, [Laughs] not right now." But I came back a couple of years later

and went in and I did a doctorate as well. So, academically I have gone from a typist, a waitress, through to a doctorate in education PhD. And again, one of the options is to do an Ed.D but I wasn't interested in, no offense, policies and such like, I wanted to get down into what is it that we're doing, what actually helps students learn. How can we be better at this? So, I ended up doing my research topic on the ISW, Instructional Skills Workshop, because even though it had been around at that point it had been around for over twenty-five years, nobody had done any major research into it. So, and in a doctorate, you've got to come up with something that nobody else has done, so I managed to talk my advisor into that, wasn't his area of expertise, but he knew about it. In fact, he supervised people who did them. So, ok, we did it and we found out all sorts of good stuff and I defended that, got my doctorate, there I was. That was August 2011, I think, yeah 2011. So, let me take us back to the Centre for Academic Growth, which really was looking at, is professional development the purview of HR or is it something that when we're talking about academics, that it should be the purview of academics themselves. So, there was a committee struck that looked at what other people were doing around Canada and beyond. We had a couple of fieldtrips. They were multi-purpose fieldtrips, but part of it was to look at what are other people doing in this area. Gordon Lee dragged a contingent off to Ireland, which again I was privileged to be part of. It was not only speaking and looking at trades and what the institutes, the Cork Institute of Technology and the Dublin Institute of Technology were doing, but I was able to get some other stuff in at the time and look at so what is happening in terms of professional development opportunities for faculty. What is considered to be important? And I managed to get a little extra out of that. I was also again, privileged to have the opportunity to go to China and we had a partnership with the Dalian Institute of Light Industry, very much like us, and I worked there with faculty both observing their teaching and coaching them. I won't say mentoring because we actually had a discussion about mentoring one day, which would fit very well with what we're doing, except that in Chinese there is no equivalent concept. So, we spent a good wonderful half hour chewing it back and forth in English and Chinese [Laughs] to find out, "well, no, we don't really have a concept like that." I say, "well, let's take a look at what we're actually doing here, and this is we would call mentoring." And they went, "ah, ok, well we call it a bit of this and a bit of that." And that was all very interesting. So, I spent three weeks in China with wonderful colleagues there and good opportunities. And we also had a chance to take the ISW down to Chile where we had a connection with the Universidad Arturo Prat.

I: Oh that Spanish instructor from the area?

P: That's right. Patricio Ramirez.

I: Patricio Ramirez, yeah.

P: Absolutely, fabulous, but before I came along there had been several other initiatives, and then when they had some of their faculty up here, they said, "well, what would you like to know about?" And I'm not sure who did this, or if you were involved with that, but they said, "well, we want to

know about professional development and teaching skills.” So, I got dragged in to talk to them, “hi, can you show up tomorrow at the conference centre at ten o’clock and talk to these people,” “sure.” [Laughs]. That’s part of the Centre for Academic Growth right, always happy to talk about that. So we ended up talking to them and they said, “would you come down and work with us?” And it took a bit of work, we applied to all kinds of different pots of money, eventually got some, and four of us went down and did the ISW with two cohorts, one group of twelve in Iquique and another group of twelve in Victoria. And those are like two ends of the country. They are so far apart that it would be like Vancouver and St. John’s. [Laughs]. It was that equivalent. So, we had a great time. But then different administrations changed and whatever memorandum of understanding existed went away. So, we had planned a three-phase process where we would go down and we would actually help them develop as facilitators and be able to take it into their own institutions, but we never got to that point. So, the Centre for Academic Growth, after much looking at a variety of other opportunities, and also what do we call it, UBC at the time had their Teaching in Academic Growth Centre and the committee liked that academic growth part, so we became the Centre for Academic Growth. We did a whole proposal. Gordon Lee was leading that particular charge. We took it to the Deans, the Deans signed on. We started up a, in essence a teaching program, and the Deans actually said, “yup,” we gave them a list of topics we could do workshops on. They said sure, they would actually hire people and pay them for a couple of extra weeks before they started. It was great and we did that. It continued on for quite a while. Then Rob Fleming became our AVP, we didn’t call it Provost at that point, and he was very supportive. And during that time – and so, they said, “ok, we’ll get a director.” Well, I applied for the job, but I didn’t get an interview. We hired Elaine Decker on a contract and Elaine is wonderful. She’s no longer here at KPU, but she’s a wonderful person to work with and she had some great ideas. And the budget for the Centre for Academic Growth was pretty miniscule, so that’s as that is, but she had some ideas about what to do with it so we put together a budget and we were doing those things and the administration changed. And at that point it was, “why are you doing these things?” “We don’t need these things.”

I: Was this after it became a university?

P: Yeah, this is, we’re now the Polytechnic University. We hired Elaine on contract, but nonetheless, this is a woman who did her doctorate on humour in education, so fabulous stuff. [Laughs]. I really enjoyed working with her. and she ended up in a meeting and I have no idea whatever happened in that meeting, but at the end of the meeting she quit and just said, “I’m out of here.” She came and told us, there was two of us in the Centre at the time and she left. And so, I’m waiting for – there should be a hammer behind us, right? Nothing happened, so I went to talk to Gordon who was at this point our VP Finance and he had been running the Centre, but then had moved on to this other spot and we’d been assigned in a different place, that’s fine. He said, “just keep doing what you’re doing.” Ok, so I did. [Laughs]. I stayed quite a while longer, as a matter of fact, but because we had re-written the budget, I couldn’t get any money out. So, we went from having a miniscule budget –

but this new budget we were going to assign us to these other initiatives that were going to be run by the Director, but because we didn't have a Director, I couldn't get at that money. So, we did the silk purse from a sow's ear thing. And during that time, and I have to say, the Centre for Academic Growth started in 2006 and we did a yearly symposium and we did that every year except for one year and [Laughs] that one year was because the graduation ceremony had moved back to the Surrey campus. We had booked the conference centre a year in advance and they said, "no, no, it's graduation," and we could not get –

I: It's full of gowns.

P: It's full of gowns and we could not get another time, another place, because, of course, everybody who is smart was booking space a year in advance if they knew about it. So, there was nothing during that springtime, and you get into the summer and people don't come, and then you get into the fall. So, we missed one year, but we did run it for a number of years, and the last one that we ran was in the Spring of 2012. So, the Spring of 2012 I'd already been given the word that well the Centre was going to be shut down, but they were going to start up something else. I thought, "ok, that's fine." We can hand it off, it is what it is. I was told that another position would be found for me because that's what was in the collective agreement, and so I continued on, did the symposium anyways. It was a good success, we had a wonderful panel of students telling – ranging in, not age but levels – telling us what their experience as students was learning in our institution. It was fabulous, really good back and forth with the audience. The faculty and people weren't upset, no names were given as being good or bad, but this is our experience, this is what we want, it was terrific. And, of course, at that point, Ihor Pona, who had been an interior design instructor, but had spent the last few years actually working with Facilities on a number of projects including furniture. He brought in a bunch of stuff from Steelcase, so we put together in the conference centre back corner a classroom of the future, and we actually did some of our breakout sessions in there. So, it was great, and we got really good feedback from people and we did, every year that we did it we got good feedback from people. And then come that Fall, there was no Centre anymore, there was nothing. And I went into the Learning Centre, which is a fabulous place. Basically, I went from being a mechanic to being an educational developer and that is a very new profession in Canada, in the States they call them faculty developers, but up here it's sort of like, "that's pretty rude." [Laughs]. Faculty doesn't want to be developed, it's "educational" development. But there are branches of it, of course that affect both faculty, students, and where the interface is, and the Learning Centre was, of course, doing it from a little bit more on the student side, but still working with faculty. So, it was a great transition for me and worked out very well. I was sad to see the other go, but that's as it is. My colleagues were sad, when are going to get a Centre again? When are we going to get a Centre again? So, eventually they did hire someone, but it was a pretty didactic situation. And the rumor, and this is I think after you left, the rumor was that that person didn't get the budget, or they probably got the budget I didn't have. [Laughs].

I: Yeah, well, I mean, I left in '06 so it was probably –

P: Oh, it was way after you then, ok. [Laughs]. You were important at the beginning when the Centre was getting started. And during that Centre time, not only did we do symposiums, we did workshops, we did instructional skills workshops, we still ran the leadership program in conjunction with HR, and we had more faculty that came to it at that point. We worked with anybody who wanted to work with us. We worked with Grant Allen. In the first week that he arrived on the scene, he came to talk to me and then we worked as much as we could on and off, I facilitated stuff for him and Arthur Fallick, and Arthur was his second as it were. That was great, that was all good stuff. We provided facilitation services, myself or other people, to any department who wanted something facilitated. We did appreciative inquiry processes again, leading groups through an analysis of what did they have, what did they want, what did they have to build on, and we did that with a number of groups. And one of the other processes that we did, we became in 2007, we became part of the Carnegie Foundation Initiative on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. And so, we were part of ninety-six institutions from, a lot in the US, most in the US, Canada, the UK, and a few others around the world. And we met three times over three years, and as smaller groups we were in clusters, we did work. Our cluster included Dartmouth College which had to drop out which was too bad, because they really had a lot of stuff to offer, ok. They're an Ivy League US college. The Ohio State University, and by the way "the" is in the Act that caused them to be, so you can't just say, "Ohio State University," you've got to say, "The Ohio State University." Ryerson, us, and Edinburgh, yeah, University of Edinburgh. And so, we were the cluster that was looking at scholarly activity. We decided to – and each group decided where the real focus was and then we put that forward to the foundation, the foundation approved it. They had some wonderful people who were assisting us and there were conferences. So, we did that, and our contribution besides our feedback to our cluster, was we started up a journal. A peer-reviewed journal on the scholarship of teaching and learning, which we called Transformative Dialogues. Balbir Gurm was and still is our editor in chief, I'm the technical editor and currently Laurel Tien, another faculty member here is our Associate Editor. Our Associate Editors have come and gone, we've had a number of them, many from our institution, and then they've moved on to other institutions, and a few that haven't been in our institution, but that's all been good.

I: So, you've done a whole bunch of things that have been formative, assisting people, and mentoring people, giving them tools they didn't have before.

P: Yup.

I: The facilitation things that you did, all of these, these are all time savers and money savers –

P: Oh, I'd think so.

I: - for an institution?

P: I'd think so.

I: And yet, a lot of institutions have trouble grasping them and understanding what they are and what's their cost-benefit analysis –

P: Yup.

I: - going on here because they don't pick it up.

P: Nope.

I: I remember that Douglas had very early a guy named Gene McIntyre who was a faculty developer from the States. What did you say it was?

P: They called it faculty development. [Laughs].

I: In admin – so that was 1971 I think he came to Douglas, but there was – I mean it didn't really, people didn't know what to do with him or maybe he didn't figure out –

P: It was very early –

I: - exactly what to do with an institution like that where so many were brand new and a lot actually had previous teaching experience, some had B. Ed's -

P: Mm-hmm, which is great.

I: - and had their own way of doing it, so.

P: Well, here's an interesting thing. You mentioned to me about McMaster. Now in the end McMaster has ended up being an absolute hot bed of educational development. It is possibly because of your experience as an undergraduate student [Laughs] and your feedback that that has been true. I did my comprehensives for my doctorate on the history of educational development in Canada, ok. I can give you a copy of that if you're at all interested [Laughs] but yeah, McMaster was absolutely one of the places where this stuff started to well up and say, "hey, we could all help each other to do better."

I: Yeah, they certainly did different things. I mean I was just bending the ear of the current – no, he just left actually – so, one removed President in the last year and talking about that, about my experience and just saying, "this is what I hated about McMaster was there was no interchange –"

P: Well, there is now.

I: Yeah, and he was saying, “yeah, well we have definitely made some changes.” And when I read, not the journal, the online newsletter from there, and see some of the topics that are there, the online one you can search through it, so yeah, it’s certainly doing very different things.

P: Oh, absolutely. And they have a centre and all sorts of stuff, and other places have done the same. So, if you take a look at Canada over the last 30 years, in our university system it has definitely changed. Some of it was the impetus of the college system coming along and taking subject matter experts and turning them into teachers, and some has been more, I think, from the undergraduate point of view, of demanding. “This is not teaching. I’m not learning anything from this person standing up and just saying things.” And yeah, it may have come out of a more, what can I say, a more historic item where, yes, lectures were people who had a particular research expertise professing. But there was always in the British system, there was always tiers and tiers and tiers of people who were also helping students to learn and, of course, we’d said, “well ok, we’ll just have on professor then we don’t have to have anything else.” [Laughs] And we now have Teaching Assistants, but even those were a perhaps not as well-trained as they could have been, in fact they weren’t trained at all. [Laughs].

I: Yeah, I know it’s true. I remember Eugene Forsey, he was trade union, but a senator, lecturing at Carleton. And he had a course, not just coming in as a guest. And he would tell his students, he’d say, “put your papers away and your pencils aside and you cannot use them in this class.” He said, “you have to listen.” And he was probably seventy at the end, maybe sixty-five, but it was sort of that tradition of where pre-Gutenberg almost, where you don’t have a lot of paper, you don’t have a lot of ways of duplicating things, you don’t have you know, so you went and you listened, people had great talks and some people were outstanding lecturers as a result –

P: Well, orators.

I: They were orators yeah, he was really –

P: Absolutely.

I: He was an orator.

P: Yup.

I: And he was very, very good at it. But most were not, and most people did not have that, that’s a very rare skill to be able to grab an audience and keep them.

P: Well, in Canada we have not ever embraced that communication might actually be a discipline ok, [Laughs] which I find just absolutely astonishing.

I: Isn't it? I'm just reading Michelle Obama's *Becoming*, and she talks about during the presidential campaign, the first one, where she had been working with small groups, like roundtables and stuff like that. And then, "oh, you're doing such a great job." So, it keeps getting bigger and bigger until it's sort of up to a thousand and she was not feeling comfortable about it. So, she went – actually Axelrod called her in and said, "ok, I want you to watch some videos on here of what you've been doing." And she said, "I never had a single course in communications. In public communications, especially. Nothing, no background. I was a lawyer, Harvard, Princeton, etcetera. No background in this at all." And said, "what they were pointing out to me really quickly was," they turned off, no volume, they said, "look at your face." And she never smiled, because she was –

P: Right, because she –

I: - serious about the topic she was discussing.

P: Totally, and she'd argued this before court, and you don't smile at the judge. [Laughs].

I: So, it was kind of, "oh my god." And then she said, "what I had to learn was public communications. So, they got some people who had some expertise in it, and I was able to figure some things to do and they kept coaching me and analyzing what I'd just done" –

P: You can learn.

I: But it was so true, and I thought, right away I thought of Colleen McGoff Dean –

P: Exactly.

I: But of course.

P: Well, she advocated for communications courses for a long time here. And she now teaches back in her field at Western Washington. Our loss, that's all I can say.

I: It's a real commentary on it all, isn't it?

P: It is, it is, so, on this note, I'm going to maybe wrap this one up.

I: Ok, and we'll come back and we'll talk about some other things, your committee work and various other things that will be enlightening as part of the oral history of Kwantlen.

P: Absolutely, thank you so much.

I: Thank you Alice that's excellent.

P: Alright.

[End of transcript]