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Sylvester, Ray Oral History Interview

Gwenn Browne

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FACULTY EMERITI INTERVIEWS
UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC ARCHIVES



Sylvester, Ray (1972-)
School of Business, Associate Dean

December 31, 2005

By Gwenn Browne

Transcribed by Rebecca Taylor, University Archives

Subjects: Founding of School of Business, Sid Turoff, general education, Clifford Hand.

UOP ARCHIVES FACULTY EMERITI INTERVIEWS
SYLVESTER (RAY), SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, 1972—Present
December 31, 2005
TAPE 1, Side A

BROWNE: —Oral History Project of the Emeritus Society, Gwenn Browne interviewing, and I'm talking to Ray Sylvester. And it is somewhat unusual because Ray has not yet retired, but we wanted to get the beginnings of the School of Business, and therefore, he was picked as a target; that means that some of the questions, like "what have you been doing since you left?" will not be relevant, but anyway. The first question is what circumstances brought you to UOP, and what in particular attracted you, and I think that will take us into the topic we're most interested in, so.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, I had just finished my doctoral work at Michigan in 1972, and I had never heard of the University. And suddenly, out of the blue, I got a letter from Sid Turoff, who had just been here for a year, had been hired. He came in the possession of my vita by way of University of Connecticut; I had sent it up to all of the schools, thinking I was going to stay in the East. And they didn't need anybody in Connecticut in my field, so they sent it out to Sid, and so suddenly this letter came to me: "We're interested in hiring somebody in marketing." And I think really what interested me the most—and I had never been in California; I had never heard of the University—I did immediately turn to a professor of mine at Michigan, and I asked if he knew anything about the University, and he spoke very highly of it. He talked specifically about the Cluster Colleges, but when I called Sid, I was taken by a couple things. One, the size of the school and the obvious emphasis on the teaching, and the other thing, which was probably irresistible to me at the time was that they had nobody in my field on staff at the time, and Sid said I was going to be the only marketer for probably three or four years before we grew, and so the curriculum was mine to design. And I think that, as a lure to a thirty-two year old coming out of a doctoral program, is just irresistible, so I came out. I had never been in California. I came out for the job interview; I flew out of Detroit. It was late February; it was eight degrees. I was dressed in heavy woolens; when I got here, it was seventy-eight, the birds were singing, and there were real flowers at the airport. They were running around in shorts; I was attracted to that right away. One of the things I recalled when I first arrived in Stockton—this is before I-5 went through Stockton—

BROWNE: Oh yes, long before.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, long before, but the only way to get from the airport at the time to campus was to drive through south Stockton, through by El Dorado, and that was a pretty tough part of town. It was the first thing that you saw, so you know, the industrial southern part of Stockton, and I remember thinking, "Wow, you know, where is this University going to be?" And then I remember coming north, just, almost, the visual change in the nature of the city was really, pretty much amazing. When I was here for the interview, they talked a lot about the deep water channel, and I remember seeing a ship [laughs] going across what looks like a field. So that was kind of fun. But I had a

great interview. I loved it. I had to catch myself in the interview to remember that Sid was in the process of really building, in the long run, a school. And he had, at the time, there were a total of six people, one of whom was part-time. And I liked everybody, and then I had to keep reminding myself that three of them weren't going to be around anymore, so Sid was really starting to build the nucleus at the time. But, of course, [laughing] he was a fairly magnetic person.

BROWNE: Well, it's actually a good thing that your professor didn't know too much other than the general University and the clusters, because it was a joint department of economics and business, and the reputation was pretty bad. And that was why the administration had decided that they wanted to split it into two entities and groom the Business Department to be a separate school, and that was why they brought Sid.

SYLVESTER: And I think he in the letter said, "We are currently a department of five. We have plans to be an AACSB accredited separate school." And I remember thinking, *woah*, you have a ways to go on that. But he certainly fulfilled that particular measure. I mean that way fascinating to me, the concept of sort of having the field and the curriculum to develop to be, if you will, a resident expert in the field. You just don't get that shot very often; that, and the fact that I knew it was a teaching-oriented and relatively smaller place. I didn't want to go to another Michigan. I had discovered that I could do research where I was at in my doctoral program, but I had the teaching before. I taught at Gettysburg College for five years, so I knew that it was the teaching that was in my blood [_____?].

BROWNE: Yeah. Gettysburg is even smaller than UOP.

SYLVESTER: Oh, Gettysburg's only eighteen hundred and one college.

[Pause]

BROWNE: Okay, you said that you came in '72—

SYLVESTER: Yeah, I came in '72; I've been here ever since.

BROWNE: We should perhaps say that this is the last day of 2005.

SYLVESTER: This is the last day of 2005, I'm still here, and I think I'm still working hard. As you pointed out, I started with what was then the Department of Business within COP. We spun off separately, I guess technically, in '77; I think '78 is the year that they cite for the founding of the Business School. But I've been with the Business School all the way through, became the first Assistant Dean of the Business School in 1980, then was moved up to Associate Dean, I think, after one or two years, was in administration through '83, then went back to full-time teaching. Then when Elliot Kline, who was the first Dean, when he left in '86, we had an Interim Dean who had only been here a very short time, and he asked me to come back as Interim Associate Dean, and I've gone over to the Dark Side, I've been—

BROWNE: Yeah. I was going to say, I'm not sure I remember who the Interim Dean—

SYLVESTER: Tom Kale. Tom Kale was hired as an Assistant Dean and had no business background; then the Dean left; Tom was then the Interim Dean, and we were due for re-accreditation, and so he really needed someone who had been around the accreditation process and who knew the school history, so I came back in as Interim and then, as it turned out, when we hired Mark Plovnick to be Dean, he kept me on as the Associate Dean, and Tom went somewhere else. So. I've been with the Business School that whole time. I recall being very taken when I first came here with everything—I think faculty is, as I said, I had to fight a little bit to remember that some of those faculty weren't going to be around anymore. I actually had an interview with Binkley—and I can't remember; is it Don?

BROWNE: Bill.

SYLVESTER: Bill. Bill Binkley. He was the [pause]

BROWNE: He was the Dean of the College of the Pacific.

SYLVESTER: He was Dean of College of the Pacific when I came for the interview—

BROWNE: Left in a grand furor after the end of that semester.

SYLVESTER: I had heard that, but I remember he was the administrator I met. I guess Bob Burns had died... previously or—

BROWNE: A year, yeah.

SYLVESTER: Because they had Alistair McCrone, I think—

BROWNE: Acting President.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, when I visited, and then by the time I came back, Stan McCaffrey was President. But, you know, I don't know about you, but I didn't really care that much about who was the high level administrator as a beginning faculty member. I don't think you're paying that much attention, not as much attention as I would now. I remember really liking the place. I remember early classes—I was the great unknown—the Business School was just starting to take off, so I had some very small classes. I remember feeling very close to the students, I liked my colleagues; with Sid, of course, when you walked across campus, you had to plan a few hours for that kind of thing, and so instantly, I just met a lot of people. I was very taken by the sense of community. It seemed to me that there were relatively few divisions—of course there were fewer political entities at the time, we weren't even a separate school—but I was taken by the kind of togetherness, and everybody seemed to be in it together. That's one of the things I think that's changed; of course as you become a separate Business School, and the pay

differentials, and a lot of other things... I'll probably come back to that, but I think there is a little less of a sense of community; there's much more turf now, I think than there—there really wasn't a lot of turf then. You know, I didn't sense it. Maybe you did.

BROWNE: Well, there was; turf battles were involved in the Binkley departure, so it was already there, but you came during the I and I Period for General Ed., and I remember you did marketing with somebody, with the freshmen, because I remember the discussion as it was being worked up as to whether or not this could be done reasonably, and I think that built acrossed boundaries because you had linked freshmen courses.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, I was struck by the INI Program. Of course, that was part of the I and I deal—

BROWNE: Yeah. It had just come in when you were interviewing.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, it had come in, and the expectation was that if you were a new faculty member, you were going to teach in it. The 4-1-4 Calendar was in too, and I remember that very well. I remember first teaching in the I and I and going to the meeting where you were supposed to—

BROWNE: —find your partner!

SYLVESTER: —find your mate [laughs], and I realized immediately that a lot of people had done a lot of homework already and so when they said, "Now, let's pair off." It was like a dance. I looked at all these people sort of getting up and moving off, and I said, "Aw, and I haven't done any homework." And then Gene Pearson, in Geology, came up to me and said, "Let's talk a little bit. How 'bout this as a—

BROWNE: Let's settle rocks.

SYLVESTER: So we—[I know!?!]—so we really put together a kind of interesting thing on the business of energy, where he did the geology of it, I did the business of it, we had a really very good time. I was struck—

BROWNE: —It had a good reputation, 'cause I remember.

SYLVESTER: And I was struck by the fact that that was a valuable program. There were some administrative things about it that were kind of strange [laughs], but it did, and it also led you to some interesting conversations with people outside your unit. And, you know, Gene and I have worked on a lot of stuff since then. But yeah, the I and I, and I'll never forget the first winter term that I taught because they had already done a little homework for me. They really thought it would be good to do some kind of research project with a local business, and since I was going to teach Marketing Research, they hooked me up with a guy who was the head of Bekin's Moving and Storage, and we proposed to do a piece of marketing research for him. I recruited students from my first Marketing Research to be in my winter term class, worked them like dogs, 'turned out,

for about four weeks, turned out really first-rate project, which he was very taken with, and I did marketing research projects for, I guess, isn't that when I and I and 4-1-4 went out, but wasn't too long—

BROWNE: —Well, I and I went before 4-1-4.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, I and I went, and then the calendar changed, and that's what I can remember. Enjoying; it was hectic; it was—

BROWNE: Oh yeah.

SYLVESTER: Oh! If you were really going to do something serious, you had to compress it wildly.

BROWNE: Well, you had that, and we gave up a part of our vacation—

SYLVESTER: —Oh, [_____]

BROWNE: —because we didn't go back to school—I mean, you went back to school a day or two after New Year's, and you then had this intense one month—

SYLVESTER: Yeah.

BROWNE: —with various parts of school [_____], very easy for us.

SYLVESTER: Ah, I think it was a classic case of a very innovative program, and there should be an expectation that you're not going to have good outings all the time, and you're going to have some things that don't work. I'm talking about both I and I and the winter term. But then, there has to be a mechanism so that the quality control is a little bit more vigilant. I think it's a classic case of Gresham's Law where some of the weak stuff in winter term drove out the strong stuff, and students started to say, "Hey, I'll take Experiencing and keep a journal for thirty days, and that's a nice soft way to pick up four units."

BROWNE: Well, I mean a part of Gresham's Law was everything was enrollment-driven in those days, and therefore, the easier you were, the more enrollment you got, and yeah. That's how it worked. Okay. There's one question in the first part that I'd like you to address because I think it will get to something that I want to hear on the tape. Was there any particular person or persons who were especially helpful in your initial orientation?

SYLVESTER: Well, that would be dominated so much by Sid Turoff—

BROWNE: That's what I wanted to hear.

SYLVESTER: [chuckle] The man was so unique and such a force, as you know.

BROWNE: Yes.

SYLVESTER: I met you through Sid, I think I met everybody who I would classify as somebody who is important to me in my early time here, would be somebody that I directly met through Sid; it'd be somebody that if I had met them, and I would have met them eventually, but it would have been later; it wouldn't have been immediate, it would have been further on down the line. He just had a way of getting you right out there. That's like we said before; walking across campus with him was an experience. You had to take a couple of hours to do it. And I was immediately struck by his honesty, his forthrightness. I sort of learned that you could pretty much take it to the bank. He had political reasons for doing some of the things he did. He uh—

BROWNE: He was very political, but he was also very good at it and very honest.

SYLVESTER: —Very honest, which is not a thing you put with it. So he was the guy that sticks in my mind. I think Gene Pearson comes to mind because of the I and I experience. Doug Smith in an interesting way because I always found that getting into Advising was one of the better ways to really get yourself acclimated to an institution, and Doug was just starting his student advising program, so he invited me into that very early.

BROWNE: Well then your deanship duties took you directly in contact with that too.

SYLVESTER: Oh yeah. No, in fact that set really almost a major part of my role as an Associate Dean. I'm much more hands-on advising. I'm much more involved in the advising process than I think I would have been without all that emphasis. But Sid is the guy that gave me my chief cut-in orientation to the University.

BROWNE: And while we're doing this, since it is the history, talk about how he happened not to become the first dean since he'd been brought in to build the School of Business and he had the direction and the timeframe in mind.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, that's interesting, and I still wince a little bit at it, partly because of the way things happened, partly because he didn't get to be the first Dean, and, I suppose, partly also thinking back now that I've seen the way those things work, my own naiveté when we were going to be spun off to be a separate school, clearly we needed a dean. To a lot of us, and I think of Mike Ballot and [Weston?] and myself in particular, the logical next step was for Sid to become the first dean. When they announced a national search, and it was very clear that Sid was not going to be the first dean, I remember Mike and I went over to see both the Academic Vice President and the President, to ask, you know, why. And they said, "Well, part of it is that there's a need for school building, a need for—they didn't use any phrase like "new blood," things like that, but that's what they were saying. They were also saying that Sid, in his rough-hewn way, was not sort of what you'd expect in a Dean; "Well I've had some pretty rough-hewn Deans," I said, "so I'm not sure I'd go with that." I think there might have been a need—although Sid was

very much in favor of the public administration, and it was the School of Business and Public Administration, I think, was first established—there may have been some felt need to signal the seriousness of the interest in public administration, and actually the first Dean we hired was from the Public Administration side of the house. But I think in some ways Sid was too rough in the opinion of the people here. One of the things that—I don't remember if it was the President or the Vice President said something about, "Well, you know, he has alienated some of the local business people." And I said, "Well, they probably needed [laughs] alienating because of some of the way that—especially the real estate folks and the construction folks were running roughshod. I don't know if most people know it, but Sid and the people in the Business Department actually supported the union side of what was going to be—

BROWNE: Oh yes!!

SYLVESTER: —a quite nasty situation with the maintenance people, and that was probably unheard of in the Business School to do and probably not very palatable to upper-level administrators and some of the local businesspeople. But, you know there was always to me a bit of a slap—I see it more with the perspective of time and hanging around probably too many deans—I see the point a little bit more, but it was not something that we wanted to hear at the time.

BROWNE: But very typical of Sid, they gave him a year's leave, but he was there to see the new dean through and make sure that it worked.

SYLVESTER: Absolutely—the rapport between Sid and Elliot [Kline?]. You know in some situations, that's not a tenable situation. In some situations the person who has been passed over has to leave the institution, and this Institution has been, I think, particularly rough on its internal candidates for most positions, you know, certainly in the recent past I can think of a lot of people—I've not so jokingly said to people that if I were ever going to go for a position an internal promotion, I would not announce it until I was sure that I had it signed, sealed, and delivered. I'd never go for it because I think many times you do have to leave. But no, Sid was invaluable to Elliot in getting the school going, and so while Elliot in some ways became the face of the School and the voice, it was still Sid to a great extent explaining the logic and the wisdom of policies.

BROWNE: Okay then, the question is what is/was your impression of the changes in the programs and curriculum of UOP from your start until today?

SYLVESTER: Well, there are more programs, you know; more schools, more programs. Sometimes I wonder if they think through the staffing of the programs, if they don't sometimes spin out a program and then leave it hung out to dry. I'm always a little concerned about programs like Ethnic Studies. For a long time I was concerned about the Honors Program, which seemed to be a program without resources, without home—

BROWNE: Oh, why did you feel that way, just because I [ran?] it?

SYLVESTER: [laughing] Why did you feel that way? 'Cause it was true. I think the University has stayed up to date in its programs. I was commenting to somebody the other day, "We really need to take a pretty careful look at Business School curriculum because it seems like it's been a long time since we had any major revisions," and then at the same time, I look at some of the things we've done with the [garbled]—

BROWNE: And how often have you been reaccredited?

SYLVESTER: Well, we were accredited the first time when—

BROWNE: Yeah, the first time was the record time, was the minimum.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, just absolute minimum, the second time without a hitch, the next time without a hitch, and we're due again in '08-'09, and they seem to change our accreditation approaches a lot—this one's going to be kind of an interesting one with a lot of assessment and are you doing what you say you're doing—it's a goal-driven, objective-driven program. No, we've stayed, I think, on top of business education pretty well. We're a little thin for our resources in that we have quite a few concentrations for a unit this size, but at the same time, it's a generalist program, so we haven't gone so far out and committed so many resources. But I think we've done some interesting things with what we've got. I think our Business-Law concentration is really very, very strong and is a sort of a hidden jewel in there. It's probably the best pre-law program in the University. But no, I think the programs have been good; there are more of them. I think I do worry, as I said, a little bit about the staffing and the spinning off. I was and still am very concerned about the University's spinning-off of School of International Studies. I still don't know if there's a critical mass, if that belongs in a separate school, but you know—I—

BROWNE: They didn't ask you, I know.

SYLVESTER: [laughs] No. Although, interestingly enough, the original grant that ultimately—

BROWNE: Came to you guys.

SYLVESTER: —Came to us and in fact, Don Bryant and I wrote the curriculum and the proposal that got that money in. At the time, we said, "You may want to consider spinning this off to a separate unit—but when it's time; don't push it." You know, I think they have stayed up to par. I've particularly enjoyed, obviously, developing the Business School's programs—the accreditation part, which is so painful but so necessary, and when you're done, and you're already accredited, you say, you know, "We pulled that off." And it does really mean something. At the same time, I've always had this absolute fascination with General Education, which is kind of unusual for people in the business programs.

BROWNE: You've chaired General Education a lot.

SYLVESTER: I've chaired General Education a lot, and as I've said something the other day—this is going to come back to haunt me in an embarrassing moment, I think—“This is actually going to be my thirtieth consecutive year on the University General Education Committee. [Laughing]

BROWNE: Oh my.

SYLVESTER: So I think that's a record that may not be touched. But I've enjoyed working General Education; I've always been a little frustrated, it seems to me—and I don't think this is unique to UOP—but it always seems General Education is important, and is always the step-child in the resources. Maybe now, it's sort of cleared that hurdle a little bit, although, with its movement into the colleges, as the government—I'm not quite sure what's going to happen there. I'm nervous for them. I'm also pulling away a little bit, because it's one area where I catch myself starting too many sentences with, “Well, when we started this...,” and I think maybe it's—see if kids—

BROWNE: Well, you're going to have to adopt the newest eulogism, “Back in the day.” [laughs]

SYLVESTER: Yeah. “Well, when we started this...” or “When I remember, you know what we did with this...” But I think General Education, in many cases, if done right, gives a university a claim to fame that other programs don't—although I mean this one, I think, with a conservatory, that's in a sense as rich in history as this one, as with the pharmacy school that's as successful, with the dental school and the law school that are successful.

BROWNE: Of course General Ed. doesn't touch either of them on campus.

SYLVESTER: No, they don't, but I'm saying that the University has what they think of as crowning jewels—jewels in the crown. I wish they would think a little bit more about that, General Ed. I still think the early I and I and the winter term—some interesting things were done with it, and I wouldn't be surprised if there's even a glimmer of an argument for the return to that.

BROWNE: Well, I was going to say, I think at the last proposal I heard a ton of echo.

SYLVESTER: Yeah, yeah. And I've heard in the shifting now where Mentors 2 are going to go to the topical seminars, the next thing I heard was team teaching, and then the next thing I thought of—in fact it came up at the last GE meeting—was I and I's. And he said, “What does that stand for?” And I said, “I can answer that question.” But I have to watch that, because I think your elder statesmen—that just goes so far because it's how you become a pain in the ass.

[Pause]

BROWNE: Uh, did you find any particular programs and curricula that gave the Institution a certain uniqueness?

SYLVESTER: Yeah, unfortunately I go back maybe too far to the I and I thing—that was unique. The 4-1-4 was unique. I think that the General Education Program that we are starting to reshape a little bit now gave it a kind of unique—I think the Mentor Seminars were unique, and now we seem to be rushing away from even calling them Mentor Seminars; I mean I thought they had the potential to give General Education kind of a uniqueness and make the school unique. I think we kind of blew it in the bigger development of the bigger General Ed. program. I think we left too many courses in, and we let it get watered down. We didn't make it a unique experience for the students. That was the original intent—to say, “When you come to the University of the Pacific, you will have an identifiable general ed. program.” I think we've done some forays into points of uniqueness. I never thought we had the resources or the uniqueness in our approach to experiential learning to make that a huge point of distinction the way I think the current administration still thinks they want to. I think some of the cross-school programs, the one that you are aware of that's become the Arts and Entertainment Management, the Music Management Program was a very interesting one. That is still a point of some uniqueness. It's a little frustrating; I think we've been on the verge of having things that could have given us a little bit more of a uniqueness and then not ridden them all the way out.

BROWNE: Yeah, well, not supported them. [Garbled talking]

SYLVESTER: Yeah, well, I think that goes back to my comment about probably too many programs. I mean, I like a place that spins off programs; you've got to have some resource base to do that unless you're expecting everything is going to be an instant success, which were if you [softly garbled]

BROWNE: [laugh] ‘Kay, who were or are the individuals that you have most admired, and why? And it says you can substitute memorable—

SYLVESTER: Well, and I then go back to Sid, and in fact, interestingly, when I go back to Sid, it brings in people like you. [pause] It brings in sort of a group of people that I think of as at the leadership, and it's faculty leadership. When I'm thinking of, Rosie Hannon comes to mind, people who really, I think define the institution, who are almost kind of pushing at the roles in the interactions of Administration. It certainly kept the Administration honest, to a great extent. So I always remember that [_____] of people as unique and memorable to the institution. Cliff Hand, to me, is a very, very memorable person, and that's probably because of G.E. My first stint as Chair of G.E. was when Cliff was the Academic Vice President, and of course was very ill, and a lot of the current G.E. Program really has some of its roots in what he was setting up. He wanted this unique program, he wanted a common program for all the students. And for all of Cliff's peccadilloes, and he had tons of them, I liked the fact that Cliff would listen; I loved his intelligence. I just used to sit, and he was one of the people I loved to talk to. His literary references were just kind of fun. And you know, when push came to shove,

he was a very analytical guy, he would eventually get down to it and say, “Well, here’s what we have to do.” I can remember the Business School trying to convince him that we were all underpaid, and [laughing] you know what he said, “Well, that’s too bad.” And Sid said “We’re going to lose faculty, and they’re not going to stay, and you have to make some adjustment.” And I remember Cliff going to a meeting with Sid and [Turrano?], a Business School Dean’s meeting, which is insufferable, and coming back and saying, “Well, I talked to a lot of people; you’re right,” and making some moves. I remember Cliff, I remember Sid, and Sid, the group even included around Sid is—is—Peggy Rossen, interestingly, who of course now I have a completely different affiliation with, but I remember meeting Peggy and working with Peggy when she was actually doing stuff with the Pharmacy School—

BROWNE: Yeah, she was Student Life in the Pharmacy—

SYLVESTER: In the Pharmacy School, and I remember being introduced by Ralph Saroyan. And it was fascinating because the Pharmacy School was going in one direction; the Pharmacy School was going into a de-centralized model in terms of advising, et cetera, et cetera. And this is when I was in my first stint as Assistant/Associate Dean. We were going just the opposite way; we were going to centralize. So Ralph and I would meet and have lunch, and we would talk about what we were doing. We were always struck by how we both thought it was a good idea to go in opposite ways. And, yeah, Peggy was working with Ralph, and so I remember she came to lunch. And I remember hearing her talk about the Student Life side of the house, because even then, I mean, that’s her forte. It’s [of course what?] she’s into now, big time. But I think she was the first person to ever really convince me that there was not only a need to bridge between student life and the academic side but ways to do it, ways to do it that weren’t just kind of lip service and “Oh yeah, you can take over this part, and we’ll keep this part.” I think she convinced me about the integration of the two sides of that house. And while I’m still considered pretty rough on students academically and et cetera, I certainly have a lot of student life concerns about the ways students are treated academically and in every phase of the operation. She really sort of convinced me that there is such a thing as the whole student, so she’s another one. Other than Cliff, I don’t think too many more administrators [laughing, words unintelligible.]

BROWNE: Unless of course we’re talking about bad memories.

SYLVESTER: Oh, yeah, there’s some of those too.

BROWNE: Well, the question here, I think, is less than clear, but it says, “What changes did you see between the students, faculty, administration, and staff,” and I think that’s relations among them and goes like best to last, one, two three, four—

SYLVESTER: And there, I really think there is more of a sense of community earlier and less of a sense of turf. I think one of my greatest disappointments—and I might be overdoing this, and this could be one of those things where everything in the past slips into this wonderful hue and everything in the present—eh, I don’t think that’s the case. I

think the idea that we were all affiliated with the University and that we had things in common—I think the commonalities were much more apparent to us than they are now. And I think one of the sadder things, as I said, I think the turf and the division and the fact that now it’s surprising when I go to the Humanities—I mean, it’s not surprising to me, it’s not as surprising to my friends in the Humanities, but when I tell my colleagues, “Oh yeah, I went to that wonderful party they had over in the Humanities, and the State of the Humanities and the State of the Arts, and you ought to go to that thing, it’s great.” And—“why?” So I think that that kind of division—

BROWNE: Yeah, there used to be a whole lot more Social—

SYLVESTER: Oh, absolutely!

BROWNE: And do you remember or did you go to any of the parties in Clifford Hand’s back yard? Yeah.

SYLVESTER: Yeah. No, the Social was part of it—there was no surprise at the mixing. What I started to say, one of my greatest, really, frankly, disappointments, it’s quite a while now, but I can recall when faculty in the Business School were at least on if not chaired most of the major committees in the University and were *so*, so involved in everything. And now, sometimes it’s like pulling teeth to get people to show up for Academic Council or something like that, and there’s a bit of a “we-they” that—and I think to some extent it’s been fostered. I *think* to some extent the Administration, while they might de-cry it, may actually welcome it. I think Stan McCaffrey probably started it when he didn’t want his deans to talk to each other. You know the old adage of, you know, “Don’t let your employees talk about what they make among each other ‘cause it’s going to—”

BROWNE: Yes.

SYLVESTER: You know, it’s like “Full information will be the cause of dissention,” and I’ve never quite sort of seen that happen. But I think there’s a big difference; I think students felt more integrated into the University than they do now. So I think it’s not just faculty—administrations—faculty—faculty—administration—school—school, it’s just a sense of community.

BROWNE: And then we get to the “What is your personal opinion of the Administration, past and present.”

SYLVESTER: I think the current Administration is more efficient, they’re more business-savvy, they run the Institution more carefully. In some ways I think that the McCaffrey Administration was flirting with disaster from the economics of the Institution. So, so much for those halcyon days, because, I mean, there were years when not only did we take—zippo pay increases, but we started to worry if the Institution was going to survive.

BROWNE: Yeah, and you remember always waiting to see how many students we had at beginning of fall.

SYLVESTER: Oh, absolutely. So in that sense, I think this Administration, they are much more business-like—I don't want to use the word, "ruthless"—they're colder. They're corporate. This is a quite corporate administration compared to the much more, well, seat-of-the-pants, which has a downside, of the McCaffrey. The Atchley Administration, from a purely Business School perspective was probably a golden time for us because we were left alone. [Laughing] [Brave? Dave?] was basically told, "If you can make some bucks on it, do it, and we'll support it [if you can't]." So there was no second guessing or anything else. So it's a quid pro quo. I think they run the place better from a business-like standpoint, but I think maybe they've gone a little bit too far in that direction, and I think that goes back to sense of community. There is this kind of a coolness, which is much more businesslike. I wish sometimes they would stop paying all the lip service to the Pacific family if the next time they turn around it's, you know, it doesn't seem like a family at all.

BROWNE: Okay. What changes did you observe in the relations between the faculty and the administration?

SYLVESTER: Well there's more distance; there's a more formal relationship, I think, between the faculty and the administration. Although, interestingly enough, I think faculty governance has declined, has gotten weaker... maybe [lets out breath] maybe at a time when it's needed more. That's never been my passion, to get into faculty governance things. I'm one of these people who knows how important it is, and then, you know, "So somebody please take care of it because it's so important." I think now the faculty is more fragmented. It's a little bit of that turf thing. And I do think—I do think—I'm not sure the Administration had a grand design to do that—and I don't think they would vocally agree with this, but I think in the end, they are probably well-served by the fragmentation because the fragmentation leads to weakness. I mean, I don't think you're going to get too many Business School issues that get an outcry from faculty outside the Business School. And that's where the Administration's been very successful, I think, in fragmenting and leaving it weaker than it was. So I think there's a little distance. The Board of Regents, I was just thinking about them...

BROWNE: Yeah.

SYLVESTER: Um... see, I'm not a good one to... I've done dog-and-pony shows for the Board of Regents, and I've known a couple of Regents that I thought were pretty nice people. I think faculty is sort of warmer to the Board of Regents now, I think partly because the Board of Regents has a more clearly-defined role than they had. I think for many years, the Board of Regents was indistinguishable from the Administration, and I thought it was rubber-stamp. I don't really quite think of them as rubber-stamp now.

BROWNE: But, I mean, there were times when we didn't have much use for the leadership of the Board of Regents, and we kind of had no place to go but up.

SYLVESTER: No, yeah, you had no place to go but up. But I think there was an almost incestuous relationship, I think, between the earlier Administration and the Board of Regents.

BROWNE: Oh, you mean between the Bank of Stockton and—?

SYLVESTER: Between the Bank of Stockton and the University. And that's one of the things you do have to give some credit for, to the changes in that financial relationship. But I think faculty in general have had more pleasant experiences with the Board of Regents in the last couple of years and have gotten to know some of the Regents. And, well, I think the leadership of the Board of Regents is also a little bit warmer and a little more humane and interested in some of the things the faculty is interested in.

BROWNE: How did the differences between the faculty, Deans, and Administration affect your department or program in this growth?

SYLVESTER: Well, early on, we were given a pretty green light to go into this separate school, and how our separate school status really was something that could and did, I think, benefit everybody. I initially expected that COP would be a bit reluctant to let go of the big program, and then I remember when Roy Whiteker was being interviewed for a position, and we said, "What do you think about these—." "I think it's great." And I said, "This is our guy! This is who we want." And of course he's right in the other sense is that it was this big, burgeoning program, which was so unlike a lot of the other Arts and Sciences programs that we... The elephant in the room, what are you going to do with this thing? So I think we were given a green light, we were given benign neglect in a sense by the Atchley Administration. Now, I think we're a bit frustrated because now I think it's clear that we are viewed as a cash cow, and maybe to some extent you could do that with a business school. The Business faculty feel very aggrieved by their treatment by the current administration. That's why the current hiring of the new Dean, I think—which I have nothing to do with—but I think is going to be a rather interesting one because the faculty, I believe, are looking for somebody on a white horse to come and save them, and I don't think this Administration is about to let somebody on a white horse be hired. So I have the benefits of, while I'm still here working, I don't have to be, so. But I think the relationship has changed. It kind of goes back to a little bit of the turf. I feel more connected to a lot of the other units than I think a lot of my colleagues do. I think Mark has raised the—well, I don't know what to call it—he's sort of made us more victimized than I think we really are, so he's got the faculty thinking that the Administration has done us in at every turn, and the Administration has done some silly things that they could have avoided, and certainly they added fuel to that fire. Letting us go as far as we did with the feeling that we were going to get a new building and the pulling it at the last minute when we were that deeply into the planning—had they said, "No," or "We'll get something else for you," there would have been much less damage done than sort of dangling something and then taking it away. So, there again, I think it's colder, it's more corporate.

BROWNE: 'Kay, the next question is about the campus and activities, but I think it means students.

SYLVESTER: Yeah. And here again, what I think of—[muttering] 'won't let this [_____]—but I do think of more student activities, I think the students were more into sort of their traditions, good and bad. [Sir?], I just finished heading up that thing for the last year of the Task Force on Greek Life, and I think Greek Life is a classic example of something that's changed, and probably changed on a lot of campuses as the risk factors and everything else. But there wasn't a day that went by when the [_____] didn't drive their fire engine by. You know, had the streakers and everything else. I think the students have much less in the way of traditions, and I'm not sure if that's either the waning influence of the Greeks or just fewer and fewer traditions. When I think of things like the uh, the uh—I always want to call it the IFC Sing, 'cause that's what they called it at that Gettysburg, but the—Band Frolic, which probably took way too much student time and energy, but when you think of what that led up to and then the centrality of it and their parties, again I'm really torn by that because I think some traditions are really good to have. Some of them they had here were much to alcohol-oriented and probably too Greek-oriented. I don't think students are—I don't know if they're joining as many things, or if they are, I think they more be joining more academically-related things. I don't know if students are as [breaths in and out deeply] into the Institution as they used to be. That may be my change in perspective because I'm not a faculty member anymore, and I mean I deal with more cases of alienation from the Institution than part of it. But I mean, I hope that that's not the case because I don't think you're going to turn out a good alumni base if they don't have some fond memories. I don't think it's quite as close as it was.

BROWNE: Well, what reaction do you see to the change in commencement?

SYLVESTER: A lot of what I've seen and heard from the students is negative... and what I would call almost a practical negative, not a "Damn it, look what they did to us without thinking it through," I mean they've come to me. One of things that I've heard most often is, "How am I going to get to other people's commencements? I can't." And of course, the Administration argues, "Yes you can, 'cause we're all going to go to one together." But I've never been in a place before where so many students went to their friends' graduations and could do it because they were separate. I've heard very practical arguments about, you know, parking, and the limitation of tickets—I don't think that's going to prove to be a problem, I think there'll be white market in tickets, but it's another thing I don't think was handled as well as it could be because most of us who've been here for awhile know that it's been on the minds of the central Administration, or not just this Administration but that they've sort of backed off when they've seen the strength of the feeling for it. I think perhaps they may have sensed that the strength of the feeling wasn't there anymore or that strong, but then to come across with these pronouncements that "We're doing it for you. This is all for you," it's uh, you know, it's a little phony.

BROWNE: Paternalism has never been approved by the student body.

SYLVESTER: No, and it's almost disingenuous when they say, "Well, lookit here, here is what we're doing for you, and we're going to change this for you." And the students are "Wait a minute. And why weren't we consulted about it?" There was a time when I don't think you'd do that without consulting other people.

BROWNE: Well, they alleged that they consulted a lot of people, but I haven't found anyone yet who feels that they were consulted.

SYLVESTER: Well, not only that, but if they consulted people, I think they may have gotten an opposite conclusion. So if you consult and then ignore, that's worse in my mind than not consulting. Now with that, I think that it's more illustration of a bit of a corporate model and a centralized plan, I mean, we've got to let some things go, and we'd love to let some things go. I'm not sure this was one of them.

BROWNE: Mmkay, what issues were you involved in which stand out in your mind as important to the growth and development of UOP as a whole?

SYLVESTER: I think issues related to General Education along losing a lot of those paths, but I think the issue of the centrality of the General Education Program to all of the students in the University. Actually, I don't quite know how to articulate it. I think in many ways the—legacy is not the word I'm looking for here—I have a very strongly held philosophy of student responsibility, and I think students just need to be very much responsible for what they do, for their performance and ownership of the programs, for understanding that actions have consequences. I think this is the place for that; they should try things out. I think this is the place where they should suffer failures which won't cripple them for life but will teach them very important lessons, because, I mean, it's just really important. I mean, it's probably the reason why I do some of the things that students don't like a whole lot. I think that issue of student responsibility I have grappled with and tried to act on in everything I've done for thirty-five years, and I think it's had some impact. I think I've redesigned some processes, and I think I've probably done enough soliloquies and enough Standards Committees and enough Academic Regulations Committees, and I think I've put the issue of student responsibility clearly on the Institution's agenda. So I think maybe that's, in the end, the thing that I'm proudest of.

BROWNE: 'Kay. I'm going to jump over the section that asks about what you did since you left, since you—

SYLVESTER [laughs] I haven't left.

BROWNE: What contribution do you feel UOP has made to the Stockton community?

SYLVESTER: I think more than is recognized, and I mean, you could use the economic argument: we make a big, big economic hit. But sometimes I think we are very defensive, overly defensive about not doing enough for the town, when I think we do quite a bit, and I think a lot of times we do it as individuals or affiliated with UOP or

brought here by UOP and then do our thing. And I think the University, as an intellectual institution has to be given some credit for that. I think the University could always do more; I think the University, for some time, saw the diversity in the Stockton community as a threat rather than an opportunity. I think they're coming around now; I think they're saying, "Wait a minute, this is a good thing." But over time, I think the University has done a lot of stuff. I think, I go back to Sid Turoff, and in fact, there's a question on here about what kinds of activities that I have been involved in. My first few years here, I think I kept it pretty much on campus, which I think most young faculty do, and then it was Sid that started pulling me into a broader community, so Sid was on a thing called The Citizens Economic Development Advisory Committee, you know, and he got me appointed to that, and that was my first foray into something that's become really a passion of mine, and that's been the rejuvenation of downtown Stockton. So with that as the backdrop [clears throat] that is directly the result of working with Sid in the University, I mean, currently I chair the Redevelopment Commission, and that's a direct linear continuation of stuff that—there's a lot of us doing stuff like that. And I think the community—

BROWNE: It isn't really known.

SYLVESTER: It's not known at all. And in fact, I've told people like Mark [Clogden?], I said, "If you ever really ask the question right, you will get stuff that people are doing that they won't put down on any of the forms you send out now, that are critically important." The leadership in United Way, not just on the University, but, you know, on committees and things, allocation committees, stuff like that. Your work [Browne breathes out] in terms of Metro Ministry, things like that. There's a lot going on. I've—and my colleagues too have used classes as a device to do some things for the community. I've done marketing-research projects for the theatre, for the symphony—nobody knows about and, I mean, that's fine, you know. I'll put 'em down on my yearly, you know, thing, I don't submit them to anything except on that yearly thing, you know, "What have you been doing..." but they're marvelous experience for students. You can always do more, and in any university, you've got *incredible* talent that you can harness, but I think there's a lot going on, and I think now with the experiential learning that we'll probably in more of our students directly involved, we've had, you know, students house and run an executives team and whatever, and I think that's a winner, so. But I have always felt, "Oh, man, we just immediately respond, blah-blah-blah-blah-blah; we need to do more." We do quite a bit.

BROWNE: Okay, what do you see as being special about UOP in the past, and what hopes do you have for the Institution's development in the future?

SYLVESTER: The close faculty-student relationship is to me sort of the hallmark and high point of the past, the involvement, the real sense of community, the lack of [roles?], the collegiality, and that [complies?] to students to, is I think unique. I don't want to really use past tense on that, I think we're going to have to do some homework on that though. That can get lost in a corporate model, that can lost in cost-benefit analysis. They have to have cost-benefit analysis—somebody's got to know, you know, what

things cost and what they yield, and where trade-offs have to be made. I think those analyses have to be done thinking about what you want the Institution—I think the idea of defining the Institution as heavy research in it would just never will have traction. Not unless you revamp the whole Institution. I don't think you'll define us as an Institution that's defined by experiential learning. I think you've got to go back to that capturing one of the—the closeness of students and faculty. Every faculty member who has been around here for awhile that I've talked to, that's what they remember about the place, and every alum. The students that come back to see us, and you have some that come back after a long time, and so do I, they say, "Wow, I can't believe how you used to make time for us and listen to us and really care about what was happening with us." And many of those people have taken that closeness and really generated, I think, a life's pattern. And I mean a life's pattern, I don't mean a \$200,000-a-year job, I mean a life's pattern where they really got something from it. We need to watch that. We need to keep that.

BROWNE: 'Kay, we have reached the end of the questions, and we're pretty close to the end of the tape—

SYLVESTER: And I've reached the end of my voice. Well, political opinions are mine, I'm—.

BROWNE: Thank you.

SYLVESTER: My pleasure.

[Tape stops; end of interview]