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Publication Date

2013-08-02

*Teaching Writing in the Company of Friends:
An Oral History with Carol Freeman*

Interviewed and Edited by
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University of California, Santa Cruz
University Library

Santa Cruz
2013

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Introduction

In her thirty-four years of service to the University of California, Santa Cruz, Carol Freeman earned the affection and admiration of students, faculty, staff and administrators for her exceptional teaching skill, administrative acumen and visionary devotion to undergraduate education. She received the UCSC Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching in 1996 and the Dean McHenry Award for Distinguished Leadership in the Academic Senate in 2012. In nominating Freeman for the McHenry honor, the Senate's Committee on Committees noted that "Senior Lecturer with Security of Employment Emerita Carol Freeman ... personifies the ideals of collegial, creative, principled service these awards recognize," and praised the "persistence, dedication, commitment, and above all, excellence" that characterized every aspect of her multifaceted and "powerfully influential" work for the university.

Carol Freeman was born in Chicago in 1944. Her mother was a history teacher and counselor; her father, a professor of Romance languages, became dean of a prestigious music conservatory. Freeman majored in English at Carleton College in Minnesota, where she found a mentor in Owen Jenkins—"a brilliant scholar who absolutely cared nothing about publication"—whose interests in pedagogy and classical rhetoric came to influence many aspects of her career. When Freeman went on to complete a Ph.D. in English literature at Yale, the ideas to which Jenkins introduced her in college "were the ideas that fueled me all the way through my graduate study."

She arrived at UCSC in early 1974, accompanying her husband, Michael, who had been hired to teach pre-modern Chinese and Japanese history and art history. Expecting eventually to secure a tenure-track position in literature, she took what she saw as a temporary a job providing instruction and administrative oversight for the campus's foundering Subject A arrangement—at the time, a “miscellaneous and stop-gap” approach to the University of California's century-old writing competency requirement.

Some eight years later, having recognized the intellectual pleasures and challenges inherent in undergraduate writing instruction as well as its social importance, she “decided that I was going to give up any pretensions to being a literature person.” “I really, really like scholarship,” she says in this oral history, “but I suddenly realized I could *be* a scholar, an intellectual, and do this other thing, and it suddenly began to feel very rewarding.”

As the founding coordinator and eventually chair of the Campus Writing Program, Freeman shaped it into a vibrant, nationally acclaimed undergraduate writing program with a rich lower- and upper-division curriculum—characterized by a 1985 external review committee as a “campus treasure.” Emphasizing the hiring and retention of a diverse, collegial and dedicated core faculty of lecturers who took part in both pedagogical and administrative aspects of campus writing instruction, she deftly shepherded the program through decades of campus administrative changes and financial challenges—repeatedly inventing constructive responses to potentially devastating setbacks, including a round of budget cuts that wiped out most peer tutoring and almost the entire upper-division curriculum.

In this oral history, conducted over the course of three interviews in late October and early November, 2012, Freeman talks about the emergence in the 1970s of new approaches to writing pedagogy that inspired her enthusiasm and shaped her own approaches to teaching; about the maturation of the Writing Program's mission, goals and activities; about the often delicate negotiations, and sometimes gratifying relationships, with academic and administrative colleagues on which the program's continuing existence relied; and about her commitment to providing sustainable working conditions and professional respectability for university writing teachers.

As she wrote in a 1977 memo to then vice-chancellor Gene Cota-Robles: "I'm convinced that the best way to teach students to write is first to recognize that the ability to *teach* writing is a particular professional skill, and then to hire a sufficient number of competent teachers as full-time, permanent members of the faculty—to teach, to run workshops for faculty members in various disciplines, to train tutors, and to inspire the university as a whole to become responsible for its students' literacy. This is neither a cheap nor a popular solution to the writing problem, but it is working, if precariously and in an imperfect form, on our campus."

Throughout the oral history, Freeman ascribes credit for many of the Writing Program's strengths to the perspicacity and hard work of staff and faculty colleagues—particularly the late Don Rothman, who was hired by Oakes College to oversee writing instruction there shortly before she arrived on campus. "Don's and my approach[es were] complementary but not the same," she says at one point. "Our styles are very different... Don was always asking about the *meaning* of it all, at meetings, and I was always saying, 'Okay, so what

are we going to *do*?' And that was very valuable, to have somebody with his stature, and with the admiration and devotion that he inspired, to play off of." She invokes a quip by Writing Program colleague Tim Fitzmaurice, who affectionately characterized Rothman as "sort of the rabbi" of the program, and Freeman as "the Machiavelli."

Freeman also discusses her extensive Academic Senate service, which began long before she was granted Security of Employment in 1987 and became an official member of the Senate. She touches on her stints on the Committee on Committees (including three years as chair), the Committee on Teaching, and the Committee on Preparatory Education, as well as ten years on the Committee on Educational Policy, which included six years as chair and two years' service on the system-wide CEP. She led efforts to invigorate the intellectual life of the residential colleges, to revise campus general education requirements, to establish an advance enrollment system for classes, to support rational and effective changes in systems for evaluating student coursework in a changing campus context, and to include non-Senate teaching faculty on Senate committees. As the McHenry award nominators observed, her contributions "helped shape the course of undergraduate education at UCSC." The oral history also touches on Freeman's service as provost of Cowell College and her participation in campus and community music performance groups.

I came to these interviews no stranger to Carol Freeman. I first met her in 1985, when, as a graduate student in UCSC's science communication certificate program, I enrolled in her graduate-level seminar on teaching composition. My admiration for her and enthusiasm for the subject led me to apply for a position as a lecturer in the Writing Program, where I began teaching later that year. I

continued teaching for the program until 2001, when I moved into the environmental studies department.

My personal familiarity with Carol and my proximity to some of the history she discussed in the interviews proved helpful in some ways, but also a potential liability. I took care to avoid the pitfalls that can attend this situation: to intrude too far into an interview with my own recollections and perceptions; to fall into shared colloquialisms and shorthand that can shut out audiences less familiar with the material we covered; to neglect topics whose significance I might have taken for granted. I hope that for the most part I succeeded.

I transcribed the interviews verbatim and edited them lightly for flow. Carol carefully reviewed the transcript for accuracy and returned it with corrections and clarifications. I am grateful to her for the time and thought she brought to this project.

Copies of this volume are on deposit in Special Collections and in the circulating stacks at the UCSC Library, as well as on the library's website. The Regional History Project is supported administratively by Elisabeth Remak-Honnef, Head of Special Collections and Archives, and Interim University Librarian, Elizabeth Cowell.

—*Sarah Rabkin*

*Regional History Project, University Library
University of California, Santa Cruz, August 2, 2013*

Early Life

Sarah Rabkin: This is Sarah Rabkin. It is October 29th, 2012, and I am with Carol Freeman in my house in Soquel, California. And, Carol, I will start with the question that I always ask everybody at the beginning of an interview: Where and when were you born?

Carol Freeman: I was born on July 12th, 1944, in Chicago.

Rabkin: And tell me a little bit about your parents and family background.

Freeman: My father [Joseph Creanza] was born in New York, in 1905, during the two or three years when his father had come over from southern Italy—he was actually working in a piano factory. He went first, and then his wife [Maria] — with two, maybe three small children by then—followed. And during the time when she was in New York with Peter Creanza, my father was born. And she *hated* New York. And so after he was born she took, I think it was then four small children, on the boat back to southern Italy. And then his father returned to the little town in southern Italy two years later. And so, of all the seven children in the family, he [my father] was the only one who was an American citizen, having been born in New York.

And then—to make a very long, complicated story short—his father died; the family was impoverished. They moved in with my maternal great-grandparents.

None of these were educated people; none of them had ever really gone to school at all, but they were cultured nonetheless. And my great-grandfather insisted that the family of my grandmother, including my father, learn to speak Italian, and not just the Gravinese dialect.

My dad quit school after fourth grade; worked very hard in many, many things. When he was a young teenager, some benefactors of the family made it possible for him to go to a lycée in France. So, from the lycée in France, he ended up coming to this country as a French tutor in a religious high school, an academy, in the Chicago area. And then he got his bachelor's degree at a place that eventually became Illinois Institute of Technology, and went to the University of Chicago and became a professor of French and Italian.

Rabkin: So when he arrived back in the States as a young man, he spoke Italian, and his Italian dialect, and French—?

Freeman: —and French very well, and I think he also knew some German. So then eventually he became head of the Romance language department at Central YMCA College in Chicago.

And my mother, in the meantime, was the child of Swedish immigrants who were born in Swedish villages very, very close to each other but didn't know each other, but met in Chicago. She [Alice Engeson] was their only child. This was during the Depression, and life was very difficult, but her mother was convinced that she was a prodigy, so sort of pushed her through school. So she

went to Central Y College when she was only fifteen years old. And the day after she graduated, when she was nineteen, she and my father got married. He was her French professor in college. That was in 1943, and I was born in 1944.

Rabkin: So they had fallen in love while he was—

Freeman: Oh, yes, very much. Yes, they had dated—and nobody knew anything until they got married.

We lived in Chicago until I was in first grade; then the family moved to a suburb in western Chicago named Glen Ellyn—although my life, much more than most of my friends' in Glen Ellyn, was still very closely tied to Chicago, because my father continued to work there.

I need to tell a little more about him, because I realize as I've gotten older the extent to which he was an influence on many things that happened to me. So [in 1945] Central Y had a quota for the number of Jewish and black students it would admit. My father at that point was the chair of the faculty. And the faculty asked the board of trustees to eliminate the quota. The board of trustees refused to do this, and the entire faculty, with one exception—a chemistry professor—resigned. My father was a very short man—he was actually shorter than I am—but a charismatic figure. There are stories of him standing on a chair, taking a vote of the faculty.

So they resigned, and they then organized themselves and founded a new college, called Roosevelt College—which is now Roosevelt University—as an urban, non-residential college, for the people of Chicago. It became a very fine university when I was a kid. At some point soon after the founding of it, my dad was teaching Italian and French, and chairing the language department, and they needed somebody to run the music school—they had a growing music school. He actually had no formal training in music, but he was very musical. And he was Italian, so they figured— So he became the dean of Chicago Musical College. And all the time I was growing up, he was the dean. And it became, during those years, the best music conservatory in Chicago. So I grew up in a family full of music, with all the perks that come with having one's father be influential in the music scene—not only as an administrator, but also as an impresario. He brought in various groups to give concerts.

But I always remember that when the faculty founded Roosevelt College, they made two rules. One was that there would be no pay scale for administrators separate from faculty members. And the other was that every single administrator had to have a vote of confidence of the faculty every three years. So I always feel that I had certain ideas about administration, especially of academic institutions, before I stumbled into my own situation.

So basically I lived in Glen Ellyn, which was a very nice suburb with a fine, fine public educational system. And then I went to Carleton College in Minnesota, where I met my husband, Mike, on the second day I was there, and we got

married just after we graduated, and both went to Yale. And then from Yale we came to California.

Carleton College

Rabkin: What made you decide on Carleton?

Freeman: Well, for some reason I knew that I wanted to go to a small liberal arts college in the Midwest. I had no interest in going East. So I applied to Oberlin and Carleton, and actually Grinnell, also.

This is another weird part of my past, but my father was a Protestant Italian. That's a very complicated story, which I don't want to go into, but anyway, he was. And when he [my grandfather] was in the United States for those few years, he converted to Seventh-day Adventism, and went back to Italy and founded the Seventh-day Adventist Church in his little village. When I was a kid, it seemed to me that almost all the Seventh-day Adventist ministers in Italy were related to me. My father remained active in the Italian Seventh-day Adventist Church in Chicago, and in the Church in general. And, as with many parts of his life, he managed to be a member of something and also completely follow his own views of everything. And one of those was that the Seventh-day Adventists believe very strongly in parochial education. It makes it easier, because if you're trying to be a Protestant who keeps the Sabbath, life is complicated if you go to a public school. But he and my mother (who actually did not ever become a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church until after my dad died)—my

parents were not at all interested in my going to an Adventist school. But one of the things that my dad *was* worried about was whether any school I went to would be open to my not attending classes on Saturday or taking exams on Saturday. And most colleges at that time, especially private colleges, had classes on Monday-Wednesday-Friday and then Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday. I was most interested in Oberlin [College] and Carleton, and Oberlin was not sure they could accommodate that. And Carleton thought that there would be no problem. Though I'd originally been more interested in Oberlin, that's why I chose Carleton.

Rabkin: Had you been brought up in the religion?

Freeman: Oh, absolutely. But, as I say, with a very skeptical—with the fact that my dad, for some reason, because he was charmed, could do many, many things which Adventists did not think were acceptable, in terms of literature, in terms of films, I mean all that kind of stuff. So throughout all my youth I was an outsider. We did, as a family, keep the Sabbath, and that meant that I didn't participate in activities that happened on Friday night or Saturday. On the other hand, I was not at all an insider with the young people at church, because I just had a completely different intellectual and social cast. First of all, we were flaming Democrats. Roosevelt was known as being pinker than the University of Chicago, which during the McCarthy era was something. Glen Ellyn was a very, very conservative suburb. I was the only person I knew with a last name that ended in a vowel. I had only one other friend all the way through who was a Democrat—Cathy Deppe. The first time Stevenson ran, in second grade, there

was a vote, and it was 35-2, and it was Cathy and me. Four years later, there was another vote; it was still 35 Eisenhower to 2 Stevenson.

For a lot of my youth—all my childhood, we went to the Seventh-day Adventist Church on Saturday, oftentimes connected with this huge bunch of Italian friends, and then on Sunday, I went to the Glen Ellyn Swedish Mission Covenant Church, to keep track of the Swedish side of things.

Rabkin: Had your mother, by the way, been employed outside the home?

Freeman: Not initially. She was nineteen when she got married; she was twenty when I was born, and then there were four of us kids over the next seven years. She had graduated as a psychology major. But when I got to high school, she went to Roosevelt, actually, and got a master's in education. And the year when I was a senior, I think, in high school, she started to teach. She taught fifth-grade and then seventh-grade history for a long time. My parents moved to Arizona after she retired, and then after he died, she went to Arizona State University and got a second master's degree in counseling, and at the age of about seventy-two, was professionally counseling people, until she had an aneurysm and had to stop. So, not while I was a kid, but after that she was employed for a long time.

Rabkin: When you went to Carleton, what did you major in?

Freeman: English. I was determined that I was going to be a music critic. I was going to be a journalist and be a music critic; that was what my goal was when I

left high school. I was editor of the paper in high school, and enjoyed that a lot. But then when I got to Carleton and got involved in English, I decided that I wanted to go on to graduate school in English, and teach literature.

Rabkin: Did you have any particularly influential mentors or courses at Carleton?

Freeman: Yes. First of all, it was a great place; it was just perfect in many ways, and I loved it. And I had many, many fine, fine teachers. But there was one in particular Owen Jenkins, a professor of English. It's interesting because Stephen Thorsett, who was a professor of astronomy here [at UCSC] and now is president of Willamette University—he left a few years ago. He's quite a bit younger, but he also ran into Owen Jenkins. Jenkins was famous in the college for caustic wit, sarcastic put-downs of students and great lectures. He was terrific. I took a seminar on Jane Austen, a course on eighteenth-century fiction, and then a very influential course on the history of literary criticism, and eventually an independent study. He was a brilliant scholar who absolutely cared nothing about publication.

In spite of his intimidating manner he was extremely interested in pedagogy. It was the first time I ever ran into anybody that you could see how he thought about not just *what* he was teaching, but also *how* he was teaching it. There are many aspects of that that influenced me for a very long time. I had him from about '64 to '66. I remember in the lit-crit class, we were doing eighteenth-century criticism, and he was going to give a lecture on Dryden and Dryden's

criticism. His lectures were a hoot. I still have the notes with all the clever things he said. And he came in and he said, "I'm not going to give my lecture on Dryden today." And everybody looked at him, and he said, "No, you can all go home." He said, "I was reviewing my notes on Dryden last week, and decided I no longer believe that they're true, and I don't have time to put together a new lecture for this year. So if you want to hear what I have to say about Dryden, you'll have to come back next year and hear the class." And we just sat there, you know, and everybody was disappointed, because it was fun to hear him. But just the idea that somehow when you're talking to a class of undergraduates taking an introductory—it was upper-division, but still a *class* in literary criticism—that you might decide that you weren't going to tell them *anything* about Dryden because you'd changed your view of Dryden. That was really revolutionary, and it's always stuck in my head as a really good example of taking us and what he was doing seriously.

He was the very first person I ever knew that—he had this idea that what you did *as writing* was worth something. And so, for example, in the seminar on Jane Austen, when you got to write your paper—everybody had to do one major paper to present to the seminar—he gave you copies of the papers on the same topics that students in the past five years had written, with the idea that it would be a good idea to take that into account. And nobody had ever dealt with student writing like that. That was very interesting. And then he was the first person who actually ever really *criticized* my writing. I can remember arguing with him about something, and saying, "but I *implied* it!" And I can remember him saying, "Miss Creanza, you are not writing poetry." And also, he was the first person in

my experience who actually had people turn in drafts, and criticized the draft. And this is way before this was common.

And then, the most amazing thing of all: I was doing an independent study with him—it was the winter of my senior year. And I was also taking a course in Romantic poetry. And we got to some really interesting ideas in the independent study. It was about Shaftesbury, and ethics as they related to Jane Austen, and stuff like that. And I said, “But I gotta stop it now, because I have to study for final exams.” Final exams at Carleton were like Judgment Day. There was a big Dead Day, and they were two-and-a-half-hour exams, and you wrote in your bluebook, and you just studied like crazy. He said, “Well, maybe I can help that.” So he calls up the professor who was teaching my Romantic poetry class, and he said, “Elvan, (his name was Elvan Kintner) Elvan, you know perfectly well that Carol Creanza is going to get an A on your exam, so there’s no sense in her wasting time taking it. She needs a couple more weeks to work on the independent study.” And it worked! And I thought it was, like, you know, the Second Coming or something. I couldn’t believe it.

Basically, ideas I got in his classes were the ideas that fueled me all the way through my graduate study. I just simply worked them out. And in fact, I remember, he had come from the University of Chicago, and I thought the University of Chicago would be more suitable theoretically. But when I got into Yale, he said, “No, you need to go to Yale, because Yale will always be a ‘union card,’ a Yale Ph.D.” And he was absolutely right. To this day—and it irritates me, because it’s so stupid, but to this day, the fact that I have a Yale Ph.D. makes a

certain population— You know. He was absolutely right. But nothing I did at Yale was as important as the stuff that I did, really, at Carleton, in certain kinds of ways. And when I finished my dissertation at Yale I sent the draft to him, and he did the comments on it. And his comments became a sort of model for me of how to comment.

And then, he taught a course on the history of rhetoric. And as with everything he did, he created for the students sort of his own text, which was a whole introduction to Aristotle, with a huge bibliography. We had a continuing relationship, so when I started to teach the History, Theory, and Practice of Rhetoric here, he sent me all his scholarship and his outline of Aristotle. Of course, I adapted it in various ways but it was invaluable. The last time I worked with him, I ended up being asked to go to Carleton on an external review of the English department. It was while I was provost of Cowell College, so it had to be about 1996. He died about ten years ago. At some point, Steve Thorsett, who had gone to Carleton—and I realized that we had Owen Jenkins in common.

Rabkin: And you graduated from Carleton in 1966?

Freeman: Sixty-six, yes. And I got my degree in '71 from Yale.

Graduate Study at Yale

Rabkin: And tell me a little bit about what you studied at Yale.

Freeman: Basically, eighteenth-century fiction. I knew that that was what I wanted to do. At Yale, for the first two years, you took a number of seminars, and I took them on all kinds of things. But I knew that I wanted to work on eighteenth-century fiction. I worked with Martin Price. He was also George Amis's thesis advisor, and also, I believe, possibly, Helene Moglen's.

Rabkin: Any important mentors at Yale?

Freeman: No. First of all, I wasn't quite going to fit the mold. I was very interested in teaching from the very start. The first thing that happened was that Mike and I got married in August, and we both appeared at Yale in September. And never in my whole entire life up to that point had it crossed my mind that the fact that I was a woman was relevant to my choices and how I'd be perceived. That was true in my family, and in school, and at Carleton. But I remember the very first thing that happened: Yale was a little upset that I hadn't informed them that I had gotten married in August. (Because, of course, I had to go and say, look, I've changed my name.) And I can remember somebody—I can't remember who it was exactly—raising some questions about whether this would affect the seriousness of my pursuit of graduate studies.

I think I also had a feeling that Yale graduate school was more set up for insiders in a certain way. Stephen Greenblatt—a brilliant guy, who has just written this book called *The Swerve*—it's terrific, wonderful book. He was in a number of my

classes with me. But he had been a Yale undergraduate. And suddenly I became conscious of how the world can work if you have certain kinds of connections.

But people were fine, and I did everything fine. I did have trouble getting my thesis advisor to read my thesis drafts (which is one reason why I sent them off to Owen). By the time he had read the first one, I said, well, no, here, I've finished the second one.

I kind of went through Yale without paying a whole lot of attention to networking. They did know that I was interested in teaching. At that point Yale graduate students in English did no teaching; I don't know if they do now.

Rabkin: There was no training?

Freeman: Nothing, no. You didn't even have to do any TA'ships. I had fellowship money; I never had to TA in anything. I had a Wilson fellowship but also a Danforth fellowship. And Danforth not only gave me all these years of pay, but they also paid a stipend for Michael. He had his own fellowships, too, but—

Rabkin: —by dint of being your husband—

Freeman: Yes. So that was funny, sort of the opposite of the conventional gender arrangement.

They did have a few spots for people to teach a Yale seminar that was supposed to help seniors get ready for their comprehensive exams, and I did that—so I was one of very few English graduate students who taught at Yale at all. But then that fell apart because that May 1970 was the year of the huge demonstrations having to do with the Black Panthers and the Bobby Seale trial.¹ So actually, that semester, classes never quite finished. (laughs) But then I did have to hang around for a while because Michael was still finishing, the year after I finished my degree and graduated.

Rabkin: What year was that?

Freeman: This was '71.

The other thing I did which was not ordinary in their view of things was that I decided I wanted to start having kids. It seemed to me that the perfect time was while I was writing my dissertation. So in 1969, Kyri, our first daughter, was born. Before and after that, I had said that I was interested in getting some teaching experience, so the graduate director helped me get a job at a place called

¹ Bobby Seale cofounded the Black Panther Party with Huey Newton in 1966. Seale became chairman of the Black Panther Party and was chairman when in 1969, members of the New Haven Black Panther Party kidnapped fellow Panther, Alex Rackley, who they suspected was informing for the FBI. Rackley was held captive at the New Haven Panther headquarters and tortured for two days until he confessed. During that time, Seale visited New Haven and spoke at Yale University. The next day Rackley was murdered by several members of the Black Panther Party who said Seale had called for the murder. Seale was later acquitted in a well-publicized trial which became a rallying point for leftist critics of the Nixon administration and the infiltrating tactics of the FBI. Protests became heated at Yale University during the time Freeman was referring to. Beginning with the pretrial proceedings, tens of thousands of supporters of the Panthers arrived in New Haven. They were housed and fed by community organizations, by Yale students in their dormitory rooms, and by the Yale college dining halls. Yale students went "on strike" from May Day until the end of the term. Classes were made "voluntarily optional" for the time and students were graded "Pass/Fail" for the work done up to then.

Hartford College for Women, which was in Hartford, and it was sort of the urban junior college branch of Mount Holyoke. It had been founded during the Depression for kids who couldn't afford to go to Mount Holyoke for four years. But then the hard thing was that when I started looking for a formal job, by that time I was pregnant with Adrienne, the second one. And as I say, this applying for a job while pregnant didn't quite fit into my Yale advisers' view of the world. (laughs)

Rabkin: How long were you teaching at Hartford College?

Freeman: I taught two semesters. It was a very small place. There were two English professors. I took the place of one for one semester while he was on leave, and then there was a year in the middle because in '71-'72 we were in Japan while Michael was doing his research. And when I came back I taught a semester taking the place of the other. And then I also taught for one semester at Yale—Introduction to Poetry, I think.

Rabkin: Do you have any standout memories from those first teaching experiences?

Freeman: Well, at Hartford College I suddenly got a sense of what it might be like for a male instructor to be alone in a class with a whole classroom of young women.

The other thing I most remember about it: I had two students that I had to report for plagiarism, one at Yale. And, of course, Yale has a college system. So a kid plagiarized a paper on Robert Frost, and it was stupid, because he just took it out of a well-known book. And so I had to go and talk to the master of his college, and I did, and he looked him up and he said, "Oh, this is going to be a bad day for the Republican member of the House of Representatives from—somewhere in Illinois—because we've just had to call and tell him that his senior son is not going to graduate because he didn't pass, and now we're going to have to tell him that his younger kid is going to get kicked out." And the reason they were going to kick him out is very interesting: was that he had gone to a very sophisticated prep school. He was a freshman, but they said, "This kid knows better." I don't know if they ever let him back in.

Then at Hartford College a young woman who had been chosen—and I'm making no moral implications about this, but she'd been chosen as a delegate to the Republican National Convention, plagiarized a bunch of her papers in my class. I don't remember what happened about that. But those are the two things that stand out about teaching at that point. (laughs)

Coming to UCSC

Rabkin: Tell me about coming to Santa Cruz.

Freeman: I came to Santa Cruz because Michael was recruited by the history board to come and teach premodern Chinese and Japanese history and art

history. And basically, again, it's the way the world used to work: somebody at UCSC called up his advisor, Arthur Wright, who was the world's greatest expert on pre-modern China, and Wright said "I have this guy"—and Michael came out and was interviewed.

I'd never heard of Santa Cruz. I had no interest in coming to California at all. I came with Michael for the interview, and Harry Berger—he also went to Yale, of course—he and I had a nice talk in his office in Cowell, and it was all about how there would be an attempt to find something for me when I came. There were all these people from Yale, as I said. In fact, much of the lit board at that point was from Yale.²

So we came in January of 1974. We came in January because Adrienne was due to be born in September, and Yale at that point had an extremely enlightened insurance program where, basically, kids were free. And secondly, Yale-New Haven Hospital was the total leader in neonatal care and stuff like that. They were one of the very first hospitals to have fathers in the delivery room. She was born in September, and that's why Mike said that he couldn't come for the first quarter of the academic year. So he started in January of '74. He joined as a member of College Eight.

² One of the literature professors to precede Freeman at UCSC was Yale graduate Michael Cowan, who discusses Yale in his oral history. See: Irene Reti, editor and interviewer, *"It Became My Case Study: Professor Michael Cowan's Four Decades at UC Santa Cruz,"* (Regional History Project, UCSC Library, 2013) available at <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3j5438d7?query=michael%20cowan>
See also the forthcoming oral history with Professor Harry Berger available through the Regional History Project in 2014.

So we moved, and rented a house up off of Western Drive. A bunch of those houses were just new. I stayed home with the kids for those two quarters, but by the beginning of the summer I was going crazy and had to find something. It turned out that nothing was going to happen in literature at UCSC, so I applied and got a part-time, temporary job teaching composition at San Jose State.

Now you have to understand, I knew *nothing* about teaching composition, *nothing*. I mean, I did teach freshman comp at Hartford College for two semesters, and I basically imitated stuff that my freshman—I had a good freshman comp teacher in high school (I exempted out of it at Carleton), so I used a lot of her ideas. But those courses were mostly organized as Introduction to Literature, really. When I got this job at San Jose State, I remember they asked me in the interview what was a comma splice—and I think I told them the wrong thing, because I thought of “splice” as, you know, “cut.” That just sort of amuses me to think of. (laughs) But they gave me the job anyway. So what would I do now?! I went into the [San Jose State] bookstore and picked out a whole bunch of comp textbooks and took them home, figured I’d better find out what to do.

Subject A

Relatively late in the summer, somebody let me know that UCSC had decided that it had to do something about its Subject A program. Basically, when UCSC was founded, it was assumed that the students at UCSC would not need any kind of writing courses at all. And to the extent to which they did, it would be supplied in the college-based core courses. And at the beginning, Cowell and Stevenson and Crown—I’m not sure about Merrill—they all had multi-quarter

core courses that were taught by the regular faculty. And, of course, the students at the beginning were a pretty elite bunch.

Rabkin: And is that why the university assumed they wouldn't need writing instruction?

Freeman: Yes, they figured they would get whatever writing instruction they needed within their courses, and especially in the core course.

So we arrived in 1974, basically nine years after the founding. And one of the very striking things about that, when I look back, is that when we arrived, the feeling definitely was that the golden age had come and gone. It surprised me afterwards to realize how short a time had been there before. By this time, UCSC had grown to the eight colleges, although, of course, College Eight and Oakes didn't have a building. And all the old core courses had disappeared. Well, there were a few one-quarter courses left, but some of the colleges didn't even have core courses, and Stevenson, of course, was the only one that was holding on to more than one quarter. And there had been huge fights that split people up in various kinds of ways. And there were more and more black and Hispanic students, so there were more EOP students. And basically, also, there was this general feeling that writing had gone to hell in a hand basket. And, of course, the other thing was that there was no English department; there was the literature board. And the lit board had no interest at all in taking on writing in any way, shape, or form. And there was this big thing on the campus: "There Shall Not Be A Composition Empire. We are not going to do this."

Now one little problem was that there was the systemwide Subject A requirement.

Rabkin: Can you say a little bit about what that was?

Freeman: The Subject A Requirement, a standard of competency in writing had existed for 100 years, and it had gone through various permutations. But by that point in history, it was understood to be a remedial requirement, and courses satisfying it were not supposed to be funded by University funds.³ The numbers of UCSC students requiring “remedial” writing help were relatively small, but in the seventies they began to get larger, and so the question was what to do about the students who had to do something for Subject A. Instruction was done sort of hit-and-miss by the colleges. The colleges hired people—some of them did, and some of them didn’t—to take care of this. But since the students couldn’t get credit for remedial work, the whole thing was run through [University] Extension, and the students had to pay forty-five dollars apiece to take it. In the years before I arrived, this developed into a crisis, because the morale in these courses was terrible. The students who needed it most were having to take three regular courses plus the Subject A.

³ For an excellent history of the University of California’s Subject A Requirement (recently renamed the Entry Level Writing Requirement), see *The Rhetoric of Remediation: Negotiating Entitlement and Access to Higher Education* by Jane Stanley (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010)—Carol Freeman.

And so the heroes in all of this: there were a couple of them, but especially Forrest Robinson and John Jordan, who really picked up the ball. I've got a whole bunch of reports from the years before I arrived, and they tried different kinds of things. And at some point, Forrest said they were just doing it by "civil disobedience" because a number of the colleges were teaching courses that satisfied Subject A, and they were just giving five units of credit for it and ignoring the systemwide edict. But the colleges were still having to charge them students forty-five dollars because nobody wanted to pay any money for these students.

Rabkin: Did that cover the cost of the course?

Freeman: Well, it seemed to. I think the colleges hired the people, and then got back forty dollars per person for the students who did it.

So in the meantime, Forrest and John Jordan are agitating for something new to happen. And Oakes, in '73, split with everybody else and hired Don Rothman,⁴ not only to teach a Subject A course but also to put into place a couple of other courses. The proposal that John Jordan, working with the Academic Senate, finally got the university to agree to, was that they would hire somebody full-

⁴ Don Rothman joined the Oakes College (then College Seven) faculty in 1973, hired to teach writing and coordinate the writing tutoring program. Both of these became models for the rest of the campus. In 1977 he founded a literacy education think-tank for k-university teachers, The Central California Writing Project (CCWP), which he directed for 27 years. He also twice served as provost of Oakes College and as a member and vice president of the Shakespeare Santa Cruz Advisory Board. Rothman retired in 2007, after 34 years of teaching writing, but continued to be a very active and beloved member of both the UCSC and Santa Cruz communities, including working on behalf of the Dreamweavers, an organization that supports undocumented students at UCSC. Rothman died suddenly on November 29, 2012 at the age of 67. See Carol Freeman's remarks at the memorial for Don Rothman in the appendix to this volume—Editor.

time—a lecturer—to teach courses that would satisfy Subject A for the students whose colleges weren't doing anything. Crown had a woman named Lois Natanson who taught there; Nancy Spriggs had been hired by Stevenson. So there were little pockets. But it was really only Oakes that had thrown college money at it.

So, then, where were they going *put* this new lecturer? They decided, when the job proposal finally came out, it was for a full-time lecturer to be hired by the Language Committee, because that was the only place that they could figure a writing instructor would fit— So I applied, and I was interviewed by this committee. Michael Caspi, who taught Hebrew, was the chair, and there were a few other people—somebody from French—and then John Jordan. I interviewed and I got hired. So then I called up San Jose State and said I'm not coming.

Rabkin: This was in the summer of '74?

Freeman: Yes, it was at the *end* of the summer of '74. The responsibility was, first of all, to give the Subject A exam to the students. Wherever there was somebody in a college, the instructor just gave a Subject A exam of some kind, and made the decisions all by themselves. But for the five or so colleges that didn't have anybody, I was going to give the Subject A exam and then teach eight courses—mostly Subject A courses, called English 1. And it came in the catalog right between Chinese and French. (laughs)

Rabkin: (laughs) So you were hired as a full-time lecturer, both to administer this program and to teach eight courses a year?

Freeman: Yeah. Yeah. Also, this was very close to the beginning of the academic year, and the extent to which I didn't know anything about anything is mind-boggling. I had no intention of doing this as more than a stopgap till I could find a job in literature. I, as I say, knew nothing about teaching writing; I knew nothing about anything going on in writing pedagogy; I knew nothing about administering writing programs. And I can't figure out how I had the time to do this. But I did teach, for the first two years, eight courses. I actually gave a few independent studies as well. The classes were small—they were twenty. Not real small, but there was a limit. And some of them in those first two years were actually a little less.

So I can remember finding myself sitting in an office in Merrill that was actually a regular faculty member's office—Linda Burman-Hall, a musician. She didn't mind if I used her office while she was on sabbatical, but I wasn't supposed to move anything. Then eventually I got another office in Merrill. So, with some help from John, I made up the first Subject A exam, and gave it and scored them.

Rabkin: So there was no statewide Subject A exam?

Freeman: No, that came quite a bit later. There had been something of a statewide exam—I'm a little vague on this history—but it had been dropped. And now, every campus was doing it completely on their own lights. And the

current systemwide exam didn't come in until 1987. By that time, I was very much against it. I opposed it. I told Chancellor Sinsheimer that I thought we should resign, we should secede— But that's another story; I can come to that later.

Rabkin: And the point of the Subject A exam was to determine whether a student was ready to write at a university level?

Freeman: Yes, and whether they had to take the Subject A course. And the course that I gave satisfied—for these two years, this was '74-'75 and '75-'76—it satisfied Subject A for the students who were held for it. And the campus found funding for it, so students were no longer paying a fee, and they were getting five units of credit for it. The campus just thought they were going to fly under the radar of the regulations. So they were regular courses.

The interesting thing is, right from the start—and this snowballed over the next couple of years—the number of students who were *not* held for Subject A who wanted to take the course because there were no other writing courses on campus—*none*. And both Don and I began to get reputations. That was before we had any kind of pre-enrollment, so we had “shopping for classes.”⁵ So you'd get there to the first day of class and have fifty kids. You'd take the ones who were required for Subject A, and do whatever you were going to do for the rest.

⁵“Shopping for classes” refers to the practice UCSC had until the mid-1990s, whereby students could sit in on classes the first two weeks of the quarter and then choose which classes they wanted to enroll in. As the campus grew this practice created challenges in academic planning and was finally discontinued.—Editor.

The other thing was, I'll never forget, on the very first exam I ever gave, one of the people I failed was the daughter of a senior faculty member—whose name I will not mention, but who is dead by now—anyway, who called me up, and said what did I think I was doing, failing his daughter? I can remember making the case to him that she was going to be much better off having a course than not. To the day that he died, I don't know if he ever remembered that that was me (laughs), but we became very good friends.

Rabkin: So you failed her on the test.

Freeman: Yeah, I failed her on the test, so she had to take a course. I can remember sitting there in that very empty office in Merrill, talking to this person.

So that's how I ended up here. And basically I spent the next two years reading every single thing I could about composition. The seventies was an incredibly rich period; it's when the whole change in the whole paradigm of teaching writing was taking place. As I did that, I realized that the kind of stuff that was particularly attractive to me—although I read everything, just everything—was the stuff that was grounded in classical rhetoric. I really did not have any kind of background in the classics, although I had done quite a bit of serious work with Aristotle's writings on tragedy as an undergraduate. So I got busy and did a huge amount of, not only reading of the primary texts, but also the scholarship on classical rhetoric, just because that was the part of teaching writing that really

attracted me. I think that when one is very young, one has a lot more energy. (laughs) I still have all the notebooks.

It took about eight years before I decided that I was going to give up any pretensions to being a literature person. I wrote a very unhappy letter at one point to the academic vice chancellor complaining because the lit board had asked me to teach a class, and the central campus administration felt that I should really stick to teaching comp. But I did teach a couple of classes for literature and one for Kresge College in the early years. And I kept looking around for jobs. But by that time Mike was settled here, and it got very complicated. Also there was a big downturn in the job market. And when the job came that Harry Berger had kind of said, "We're going to need an eighteenth-century person," when they made that appointment it was Helene Moglen, and it was at a very senior level. But it took a long time before I thought to myself, I'm no longer a lit person; I'm a writing person.

The Evolution of Writing Pedagogy

Rabkin: You talked about a shift in this period, in the seventies, in pedagogy in general. Can you characterize that?

Freeman: Well, it was huge. It was the change from a very hide-bound, prescriptive pedagogy, and the remnants are still in the textbooks that ask students to write in different modes: first of all you write a narrative, and then

you write a comparison-and-contrast, and then you write an argumentative paper—very prescriptive in the sense of, these are the rules and you follow them—to something that became much more interested in the pedagogy. You have all the work of Janet Emig, and [Lev] Vygotsky, and other people, about how students learn to write, and about the developmental aspects of writing, and stuff that was very influential to me about the cognitive development of young writers. In their early years and through much of college, students were still developing as thinkers. So writing wasn't something that you could think of students as having mastered in high school. And a lot of interest in looking at different kinds of discourse, and also especially about thinking of writing as *process*, that what you needed to work on with students was not a finished product, but thinking about how they found ideas. And new ideas about teaching grammar. Also, by '77 you have Mina Shaughnessy, because that was the beginning of open enrollment at universities, so suddenly people were having to deal with students who had problems that were much vaster than anything seen before.

Actually, though, as I've learned since, this is all cyclical, and education has gone through these cycles many, many, many times. And often they've been motivated by some crisis, where somebody has decided that students' writing is even much worse than it used to be before (laughs). When Harvard suddenly started, in the late 1800s, to give an essay as part of their entrance exam, that sent ripples all the way through the whole entire country. So this new approach to teaching writing was served by many things, and it was many-faceted. Another one—Peter Elbow in 1973.

Rabkin: His first book?

Freeman: Yeah. *Writing Without Teachers*. I was more interested in Young, Becker and Pike, and stuff that was more rhetorical. But I remember my first year teaching, Don and I didn't know each other. There was no effort to get us together at all—except in weird ways to create some tensions. I taught in Merrill, and Merrill had those big, big—do you remember those big, round tables?—there are some of them around still. I can remember coming in and there were ashtrays on the tables. I remember a student coming in, holding a copy of *Writing Without Teachers*, and saying that he'd heard all about this from Don Rothman, and why did I still think that I could talk about writing the way I did, when clearly all I was supposed to do was to have students write? So I thought, well, so all right, I'd better go read *Writing Without Teachers*.

Basically, by reading all this stuff, I figured out how I wanted to do it. I was especially influenced by Ann Berthoff; Young, Becker, and Pike; Ross Winterow; who applied principles of classical rhetoric—I just read their textbooks.

Agitating for Writing Instruction

I don't even remember the first time I met Don, but I did notice, in looking through all my papers, that by 1976, we had managed to get the various people who were teaching writing talking to each other. By '76—well, it was before that—there was a general realization that something was going to have to be

done to try to get this mishmash somehow more organized. In October 1975, I wrote a proposal to establish a coordinated writing program with half-time writing lecturers in each college, which was accepted and implemented in fall 1976. I have, dated January 31, 1977, a letter that I wrote to Gene Cota-Robles, who was still the academic vice-chancellor, explaining what those of us who taught writing on campus were doing. I wrote an introduction to it, and then all these people who were teaching wrote parts of it, including Don. And then we made proposals. And we were already agitating. Everybody at that point had to be hired every year—there was a rule that lecturers could only teach more than half time for five years, and then there was a cutoff. Actually the formal cutoff systemwide was eight, but the campus had decided they wouldn't hire anybody for more than five years.

Rabkin: I remember it being referred to as the “four-year rule.”

Freeman: Well, yeah, and I think that they did it in various ways. But I remember it as being five.⁶ But by fall 1976, we had organized into a writing program, were *calling* ourselves a writing program—although it was pretty rudimentary, and in fact that's what I was saying to Cota-Robles. When my proposal to have a half-time writing instructor in each college was being discussed, one of the very first things that the administration proposed was that all of these people should be hired at 49 percent. And I remember very clearly saying to whoever this was,

⁶ Sarah Rabkin is correct. UCSC had implemented a rule stipulating that lecturers could not work at more than half-time for longer than four years. At some point before the AFT-UC contract was negotiated in 1986, the union—led by Roz Spafford, I think—brought a grievance against the campus and won: UCSC did not have the power to cut the UC systemwide eight-year rule in half—*Carol Freeman*.

“Well, then, I’m through. I’m not going to hire people at 49 percent,” when 50 percent would be benefits eligible and 49 percent wasn’t. And I can remember at that point I absolutely didn’t care. Because I didn’t think running a writing program was anything that I was going to be doing forever, and I didn’t think anything was important enough to get involved in that kind of thing. I guess in the end it didn’t matter that much to them, so everybody began to be hired at 50 percent.

In the report that we sent to Vice-Chancellor Cota-Robles, we said that “things are not good, but they’re better than they have been” (because it was so totally miscellaneous and stop-gap before). For some reason, an academic administrator in Saint Paul, Minnesota, picked up on this in a publication where I was quoted as saying that probably writing was “being better taught, campus-wide, than ever before.” And he wanted me to tell him what we were doing.

In October of 1977—I’d been here for three years, ‘74-’75-’76. I wrote to him—you see, he was asking me what were these wonderful, innovative things we were doing—and I said [reads]:

“If the program itself is not innovative, much of the *teaching* that goes on in various courses is innovative. The teachers hired to teach composition come from a variety of backgrounds, but all have a firm commitment to the profession of teaching writing in addition to being scholars of literature, journalists, or whatever. Although each of us approaches the teaching of writing differently, we are all students of the pedagogy of writing, and try to use our combined experience as well as the research and ideas published by others to become more effective in our classes. Our program has been extremely successful. About one third of the students who took the courses last year were not required to do so (see, by that time, other people were coming), because our teachers are

dedicated, skilled professionals who are constantly searching for new ideas and better ways to do what they already do very well.

“The weaknesses of our program are simply that we still do not have enough courses for everyone who wishes to take a writing class, and more important, the entire writing program operates on soft funds and the missionary spirit of the instructors, most of whom are hired as half-time lecturers, and are therefore overworked, underpaid, and without any job security whatsoever.

“I’m convinced that the best way to teach students to write is first to recognize that the ability to *teach* writing is a particular professional skill, and then to hire a sufficient number of competent teachers as full-time, permanent members of the faculty—to teach, to run workshops for faculty members in various disciplines, to train tutors, and to inspire the university as a whole to become responsible for its students’ literacy. This is neither a cheap nor a popular solution to the writing problem, but it is working, if precariously and in an imperfect form, on our campus.”

So— (laughs)—by that point, we knew what we needed to do. And what’s interesting is those same issues have stuck around the whole entire time, and some of them got solved, and some of them didn’t. (laughs) But it’s really interesting to see how—to some extent—how quickly everything was clear. And actually, I think if there’s one thing that I decided on very, very early, even when I didn’t think I was going to stick with this was that really the only kind of program I was interested in doing was one that was attractive to really good colleagues, and where you’d put together a bunch of really, really smart, excellent people, and then let them do their thing—rather than a model of composition taught by TAs. We had TAs even from the beginning; there were a few.

Rabkin: Were they graduate students in literature?

Freeman: Yeah, mostly. Or the common model where you have one director, and then a huge panoply of adjuncts who simply come and teach a course. And so that was something I was really clear about from the very beginning, that I wasn't interested in that. At one point a few years later, a colleague of mine did have a scheme for the two of us taking over the whole thing. This person foresaw the need for graduate students to have more and more TAs, and so we would run a program basically entirely with graduate students. And I wasn't interested in that. So then he went on to do other things at the university.

The other idea I rejected was that really what the Writing Program needed to become secure was to have one director. And then once you had a director in place, then you wouldn't have to worry about the security of the program. So you'd look for one permanent faculty position, one SOE [lecturer with security of employment], who would be the director and everyone else could be hired as a temporary adjunct. It's interesting because I can find my notes from meetings where I said that that wasn't the model that we wanted to follow. That was true, that's what everybody else did—but we wanted a model where we had a core of fine faculty, and instead of concentrating all the administrative stuff in one person who didn't teach—which is the way it usually is, or who maybe teaches one course that trains the others—that what I wanted to do was to split the administrative stuff up. And also, not to let anybody be an administrator who also didn't teach. And that's the way it worked. That's been the strength of the program from the start.

See, if you have TAs or you have miscellaneous adjuncts, the only way you can control the quality of your program is by controlling the curriculum, and telling people how to teach. Actually, things have gotten a little better now, but still, most places who use young TAs, they give them a pattern: you get a choice of textbooks or you're given *a* textbook; actually, even assignments are central. (People still have discovered in core courses that there's that great impulse to make everybody do the same assignments.) Same thing with adjuncts: if you have a lot of adjuncts—people who just have no stake in the program, you come in and teach a course—the only way you can control the quality is by controlling the curriculum. And we just never did that. We instead hired first-rate people, and then said, “teach.” And if we can have common goals and good assessment procedures, then that's what will keep the quality high.

Rabkin: So your CV says that as of '76, you were the designated writing program coordinator.

Freeman: Oh, yeah. I think they called me, for the first couple of years, the coordinator of Subject A. And '76 is when we changed from being just this miscellaneous thing, and we actually called ourselves the Writing Program.

Rabkin: Did you initiate that?

Freeman: Yeah, with Don Rothman.

By the next year or so—it says here [pulls out another document], “the UCSC Writing Program is now in the middle of its second year,” so that would have made it ’77- ’78.

Rabkin: And this is a letter to Chancellor Sinsheimer.

Freeman: Yes: “After reading your description of the state of the university last week, it occurred to me that you might be interested in the state of a small *portion* of the university...” —and it goes on, and on, and *on* [flipping pages]—and, I don’t know, I— [smiles, shakes head]

Rabkin: *Many* singled-spaced, typed pages.

Freeman: Yes! And I was very direct!

“...The question which we writing instructors, in particular, and the university at large now face, is whether the university is willing to do whatever is necessary to see the program realize its potential, or whether the program has, in its present form, reached the limits of its possibilities. The answer to this question rests, of course, on a larger issue: Does the university wish to make a permanent, comprehensive commitment to the very best instruction in writing for all its students, with their diverse needs and interests, or does it believe that the need for teaching writing is a temporary phenomenon to be met, until it disappears, with Band-Aids and migrant workers?”

So, and I got a polite answer— It goes on and on. Again, I’m not sure when I had time to do all this. I sent him the Subject A statistics—

Rabkin: And you say you got a polite response?

Freeman: Yeah, I got a polite response, which I have here somewhere.

Rabkin: Was it substantive?

Freeman: Mm, I don't know. Not terribly. But it said, "Thank you for your thoughtful and well written"—I remember being annoyed by that (laughs)—"statement concerning the UCSC Writing Program and its limitations and opportunities." And he would be pleased to discuss with me the contents.

But we did agitate from the start.

Humanities Foundation Seminars

And also, the next important thing, I suppose, that happened, was that Helene Moglen was hired as the dean of humanities. And one of the things she did, which was a wonderful vision, was she started up—because the core courses had fallen into such disarray, she had this idea that there were going to be the humanities foundation seminars. Her idea was that they would be taught in the fall—but not necessarily all in the fall, they could be spread out—and every freshman was going to take a foundation seminar. And the foundation seminars were all going to be taught by ladder faculty. And to mount them, every faculty member in the humanities division was going to have to teach a seminar—that's a writing course to *freshmen*, hah!—I think it was every three years.

But first of all, there was no thought about how this was going to coordinate with Subject A—if there was going to be any coordination. Don and I got an instructional improvement grant, with Helene’s blessing, to offer a late-summer workshop in 1979 for the faculty who were going to be the first humanities faculty to give the foundation seminars, because the foundation seminars were supposed to teach writing. And a lot of the senior faculty were going to teach these seminars. And Don and I thought that it would be a good idea, to, you know—

Rabkin: To teach them to teach writing, help them learn to teach writing?

Freeman: Yes. And I can’t believe that we— Thinking back on it, the *nerve* that we had! We got an Instructional Improvement Grant to rent someplace called the Greenwood Lodge⁷, which was out in the woods.

Rabkin: It’s now Land of Medicine Buddha—in Soquel.

Freeman: I think so, yes. Anyway, we had all these faculty members come out and spend the night, and listen to us, for two days, talk about teaching writing. And who were these people? Nobby [Norman O.] Brown; Hayden White—the whole crew of them. I can remember, before it all started, thinking, you know, are we totally crazy? But we did it. And among other things, we assigned them all to write a paper their first night, with the idea that then we would put them in

⁷See:<http://www.worldcat.org/title/at-the-end-of-prescott-road-the-tale-of-a-historic-soquel-inn/oclc/45143770>

groups to discuss it. And Nobby Brown didn't do the assignment! (laughs) But I have actually, here, a couple of very nice notes from participants—and it was a big success. And it also sort of put both Don and me on the radar with a lot of people. Nobby even went so far as to say that he thought it was the “only thing that was going on” in undergraduate education. We did it again the next year, but much briefer, and a third time in 1981 on campus. But I can remember this awful moment on the afternoon of the first day, thinking, what am I going to do with these people for twenty-four more hours? But it all worked out.

The foundation seminars created a kind of crisis for the Writing Program, because were students going to be taking Subject A courses at the same time as writing in foundation seminars. But they also created another crisis very quickly because the faculty basically rebelled. They were not interested, every three years, in teaching freshmen how to write. And it the requirement to teach foundation seminars also was coincidental in time with a huge new emphasis at UCSC on research over teaching. So at the same time that the humanities division was saying “you need to teach a course to freshmen every three years,” they were also refusing tenure to people who had not done their first books and everything like that.

So within three years, Helene, I think, recanted on the program. But before she did that, I convinced her—there was tons and tons of carrying on about all this—but that there had to be some sensible integration of Subject A instruction with the foundation seminars. It was creating a huge problem for a lot of students, and besides, wouldn't integration make sense? We tried one scheme first that

didn't work very well. The second scheme was: they were having trouble staffing these foundation seminars, so why don't we, in each college, put the students who haven't satisfied Subject A in foundation seminars that are taught by writing instructors. So that was the first integration in fall 1980.

When in 1979 the Writing Program got started as an independent unit, basically, writing instructors, with the exception of Don Rothman, were no longer hired by the colleges, and were losing their connection to the colleges. Integrating Subject A instruction with the foundation seminars addressed that problem. And the foundation seminars then lasted only one more year, and they were replaced by every college starting some kind of core course.

College Core Courses, Subject A, and Humanities 1

So the core courses took the place of the foundation seminars. And by that time, the Writing Program people were already built into those. And the colleges were then getting—the funding for those courses was coming from the central administration.

The integration of Subject A with the foundation seminars was sort of like the system in place now: you took the Subject A exam, and if you didn't pass it you were placed in a foundation seminar that was taught by a Writing Program person. Then, if you passed the test at the end of the quarter, fine; if not, you took something called Humanities 1.

Rabkin: And that was the course to get—

Freeman: That course satisfied Subject A, so you didn't have to take it the exam after that. And there's funny stuff—I think it was John Marcum at that point, writing and instructing the provosts that the writing instructors were going to do this, and they should welcome them into the courses.

Rabkin: And what was John Marcum's role?

Freeman: I think he was probably academic vice chancellor by that time.

When the Writing Program as opposed to the colleges suddenly was hiring people, then the humanities division wanted to know was there any assessment going on, and wanted everybody's courses to be reviewed. We now had the Campus Writing Committee—Forrest [Robinson] and John Jordan took turns chairing it and then Paul Skenazy took over—so we sat down and we invented procedures for personnel reviews. I have the draft, and it looks very close to what we still do. Basically, all the writing instructors got together and we invented the procedures for personnel reviews.⁸

⁸ The "Brief History" I wrote for the Self-Study prepared for the Writing Program's 1984 External Review clarifies the organization and reorganization of the Writing Program in its first five years:

"By 1976, each college employed a half-time writing instructor who taught its Subject A courses and perhaps one intermediate or advanced writing course per year . . . A . . . problem that soon became evident was the lack of uniformity among colleges with respect to hiring, review, and reappointment of writing instructors.

In 1979 . . . the campus undertook an extensive faculty 'reaggregation' that . . . reduced the academic role of colleges and strengthened that of the Boards. Since writing belonged to no Board, however, the writing curriculum (with the exception of Oakes College courses) would be

And then, actually, this happened way back in fall 1977, we got an instructional improvement grant to pay us to do a common reading of the Subject A exams instead of each college writing instructor doing his/her college's exams alone, so that you could have two readers—

Rabkin: Two readers for every student essay, independently scoring.

Freeman: Yes. Right. And we had to assure the provosts that this was not taking their control of standards away, but it was making sense in terms of research, and this and that, and that students didn't feel like they were being failed just because they needed to fill a class. Actually, once we made the case, the provosts didn't care. So we invented the whole process for reading the exams communally. I have a funny memo here where I'm telling people that they have to absolutely promise not to look at the names on the exams as they were reading them. So we initiated that.⁹

offered under the aegis of the Humanities Division offerings as an interdisciplinary program supervised by a faculty committee reporting to the Dean of Humanities. Funding for the program came from the Vice Chancellor's office. The Campus Writing Committee was established, composed of faculty from all three divisions as well as the Chair of the Senate Subject A Committee and two writing instructors . . . Regular procedures were established for the hiring and review of writing instructors. Carol Freeman was appointed coordinator of the Campus Writing Program as well as campus Subject A coordinator."—Carol Freeman.

⁹Subject A essay exams were scored on a six-point scale according to a carefully developed rubric that associated each score with a set of clearly articulated criteria. Before beginning to read a particular essay exam, all participating faculty gathered to read a number of sample exams, comparing and discussing scores until everyone in the group could apply the rubric with reasonable consistency. In order to maximize the fairness and objectivity of the scoring process, each student's essay was read separately by two instructors (and readers were directed to avoid looking at either the other reader's score or the student's name). Each of these readers assigned a score independently; the two numbers were then added to derive the final score. Exams whose two scores straddled the line between a passing and non-passing grade, as well as those marked by discrepancies of more than one point, were read a third time—*Carol Freeman*.

Rabkin: Did you invent the norming system for getting everybody to score?

Freeman: We must have normed, but I don't remember— That came in a bigger way with the advent of the systemwide Subject A exam. We must have done something like that.¹⁰

But then, the next crisis was in about 1983, when the systemwide Subject A Committee and the systemwide Academic Senate decided to crack down on the whole issue of giving credit for remedial courses—and funding, too, for courses that were remedial. There was a re-writing of the legislation, which gave us a little wiggle room, because it actually did say that there was *certain work* that was remedial, and that was work that addressed grammar. It had a definition of what remedial was. If that was being taught, you couldn't be giving credit for that, and it couldn't be funded.

By that time, lots of campuses were teaching some Subject A courses that gave some credit. Basically, most campuses, in the face of that the enforcement of the new regulations, began to give partial credit, so that they could say some of the work was university work, and some of it wasn't. And, of course, we couldn't do that, because Santa Cruz at that point gave *no* partial-credit courses. Everything was five credits. And you only took three of them, besides. [UC] San Diego, who had had a system more like ours, where Subject A was integrated with core

¹⁰ "My memo of July 12, 1977, to the provosts says, "After much discussion, we decided to try this fall a new way of grading Subject A exams based on the system presently used by the CEEB [College Entrance Examination Board] to evaluate writing samples. In this system, the Subject A exams will be pooled, and each will be read by at least two instructors after we as a group have set some standards developed from the essays themselves. An exam will be passed or failed on the basis of the total score given by its two or three readers."—Carol Freeman.

courses and stuff like that—they just threw up their hands and said, well, if that’s the way it’s going to be, we’re just going to ship it Subject A off to the junior colleges. So San Diego did that. And I suddenly had this idea that was really clever, actually, thinking about it: that we just won’t teach *any* course that satisfies Subject A. We will do Subject A entirely by exam. And at that point we invented the whole system of the “workload tutorials.” Those tutorials were the places where you met with tutors; those were the places where all the so-called remedial stuff was happening. And there would be no course that would satisfy Subject A at all; none of our courses would. And it was like magic.

Rabkin: Just to clarify—there were *sections* of college-based core courses—?

Freeman: Well, no, the way we were doing it, the college core courses never satisfied Subject A. Students took the core course in the fall, and then if they didn’t pass the exam at the end of that, then before the tutorials were instituted they took a course that satisfied Subject A, which was Humanities 1. So they were taking the core course first, or the foundation course, and then if that wasn’t sufficient, then they took Humanities 1.

Rabkin: Yes. So at that point did you not have segregated sections of the core courses—?

Freeman: No, no, we did. The people who hadn’t satisfied Subject A were placed in the two sections of each college’s course taught by the Writing Program people.

Rabkin: So they were regular core course sections in the sense that they were five-credit courses, and they were paid for the normal way—

Freeman: I think the Writing Program paid for them. But, yes—

Rabkin: —and they had special attention to writing.

Freeman: Yes. And then the students who needed more, because they didn't satisfy the test in November, satisfied Subject A by doing Humanities 1 in winter or spring. So what we did in 1984 was to decide we were not going to do any courses that fulfilled Subject A. The Subject A Requirement could be satisfied only by exam.

And Henry Alder, who was a mathematician and Chair of the University Committee on Undergraduate Preparatory and Remedial Education [U-CUPRE], was the head of the effort to purge remedial education from UC—well, he had trouble with our response, our way of dealing with it. This was also happening at the time when UCSC was suddenly deciding that it needed some general education requirements—so this was '83 and '84. And Jim Gill was chair of CEP [Committee on Educational Policy]. Except for the sciences, the campus had really not thought it was going to need to worry very much about things like prerequisites. Basically the early breadth requirements were just three courses from the humanities, three courses from the social sciences, and three courses from the sciences. So it meant that students satisfying what was called a breadth

requirement would end up trying to take an upper-division history course. But there was a lot of sentiment among people that breadth requirements shouldn't be overly prescriptive, and you just ought to let everybody take everything, and if somebody wanted to take an upper-division course, it didn't matter.

But Gill did a huge and amazing job in shepherding through the first, which people then made fun about as being "alphabet soup," but they were actually very good, and I'm not sure the new ones implemented recently are better.

This proposal to introduce general education requirements seemed like the perfect moment to cement the Writing Program's future. And it coincided with this whole Subject A thing. So when we solved the problem of Subject A courses being defined as remedial by having no courses that satisfied Subject A, then I thought: fine, we'll make the core courses deal with the Subject A by preparing students to retake and pass the exam, and we'll change all of our old Subject A courses into a regular writing/comp class.

I can remember the meeting. I sat there at CEP and presented a proposal modeled on the writing requirements at Columbia that made sense to me, for a two-quarter writing requirement—a composition (C) course and a writing-intensive disciplinary (W) course. I had a little chart that explained how I thought that 80 percent of the students were going to need Writing 1, and we could exempt 20 percent.

And so that happened at the end of this ten years, and we had gone from a situation where there was nothing, up to a situation where we were locked into the general education requirements, and it all made sense. Now, I can't remember the exact date when the union contract was signed.¹¹ The AFT-UC contract was signed in 1986. Because, of course, that was crucial, because it suddenly made it possible for people to work more than half time. I know that the bargaining was going on in '82 and '83, and, of course, there was the incredible work, especially of Roz [Spafford].¹²

Anyway, U-CUPRE Chair Alder felt that the wool had somehow been pulled over his eyes, in our decision that we simply weren't going to offer any Subject A courses. So he wrote a letter to Jim Gill as chair of CEP, complaining that wasn't it going to contaminate the content of— you know, the regulations were very clear, you couldn't take another *comp* class before you satisfied Subject A, but wouldn't these core courses be sullied if—

Rabkin: —if students were in the courses who had not yet satisfied Subject A—

Freeman: Yes, yes, and supposedly they were working on it at the same time. And I wrote a letter back to him [pulls out a document], and Jim Gill signed it, because the inquiry had been made to him.

¹¹ See <http://ucaft.org/content/uc-aft-history> for a history of the UC-AFT lecturers' contract—Editor.

¹² Roz Spafford was a lecturer in the Writing Program from the early 1980s until 2006. She chaired the Writing Program for several years and also was coordinator of the UCSC journalism program. She also served as provost of College Eight. Spafford is a writer and an activist and now lives and writes in Toronto, Canada. See <http://www.rozspafford.org/>—Editor.

Freeman [with letter in hand]: Anyway, Alder was really in charge of the committee that was wanting to enforce this whole business. And so, the letter I drafted that Gill sent to him said, among other things [reading]:

“Finally, as UCSC faculty members, we must apply systemwide regulations within the unique context of UCSC. UCSC does not give partial credit for its courses; it does not give grades in lower-division courses; students enroll in only three courses per quarter, and they are members of the small residential colleges, which make possible the tutorial program we have planned. . . . The new campus requirements, including this provision for Subject A, are completely integrated with the new general education program, the result of three years of thought, hard work, and cooperation of the entire campus community. To duplicate at UCSC composition programs perhaps appropriate to larger campuses but inappropriate to UCSC’s students, faculty, organizational history, curriculum, and financial resources would be to sacrifice pedagogy in the name of standardization.

For all these reasons, we believe our lower-division curriculum, including our handling of Writing, Subject A, and remediation, fully conform to the explicit requirements of SR 636. . . . We cannot accept an interpretation of that regulation which would require writing programs on all campuses to look alike, therefore violating the policy of diversity and autonomy, which characterizes the UC system. Nor can we accept as correct an interpretation of SR 636 which would, in effect, convert Subject A into an entrance requirement.”

The implication of his logic was that students should not take any course that involved reading and writing until they had satisfied Subject A—which was, of course, what would make it an entrance requirement.

I don’t think we ever heard back. So we just went ahead with what we did.

Rabkin: What was SR 636?

Freeman: It’s the legislation in the form of a Senate regulation, which defined what was “remedial” education in writing, and said that neither credit nor

money could be spent on that. Actually, we did spend money on the Writing 10 tutorials. Students who hadn't satisfied Subject A took the core course with writing instructors, and then in addition were required to take a "workload 2-credit" tutorial, which the writing instructors supervised, but they were individual meetings with tutors.

Rabkin: And these were trained undergraduate peer writing tutors? We'll talk about how they came to be.

Freeman: Yes. They came to be very early. And Writing 10, in my mind, was totally the ideal way to do it give students "remedial" help. Students were accountable in that they got a pass or a fail in the tutorial even though it was for workload credit only. The one-on-one tutoring gave them exactly the kind of attention that they needed to get. Actually, they got a narrative evaluation in the tutorial. The tutors were directly in contact and working with the faculty member. And for students who had special challenges, it meant that they could take a full load with two courses plus the tutorial. So when we lost the funding for that in 2002 I think there is at least a correlation, though we can't be totally certain about the cause, with a decline in the success of students in passing Subject A at the end of the fall quarter.

Rabkin: At some point, you lost the funding to support the tutorial—

Freeman: —the tutorial programs. The funding was reduced so much that we had to go to group tutorials; we no longer could give the Writing 10 workload credit. And that was a serious loss.

Rabkin: And just to clarify about the workload credit: students had to take at least twelve units per quarter in order to be considered full time—

Freeman: —for financial aid. Yes.

Rabkin: Okay. Well, there's a subject that follows directly from what you've been talking about—it might take us another fifteen minutes or so. Do you have the energy?

Freeman: That's fine. Yes.

Composition Instruction

Rabkin: So you mentioned that at this point, with this new system to deal with the Subject A situation, you now were transforming what had been Subject A courses into a composition course that fulfilled what became the C requirement.

Freeman: Right.

Rabkin: And this was a requirement that all undergraduates had to fulfill—either by testing out of it in various ways, with college entrance exams, as I recall—

Freeman: Actually, I think the only way that you could get out of Writing 1—

Rabkin: Writing 1, which was the course that fulfilled the C requirement—

Freeman: —right—I think was by getting a four or five on the AP exam, or, I think it was, an eleven or twelve on the Subject A exam. So basically, 80 percent of everybody now had a freshman writing course. And then that was also the point at which we suddenly got our courses actually listed in the catalog as “Writing.” It had been, first of all, English, and then for a little while they were all college courses, and then it was Humanities 1. And then finally, probably in ‘84, that was the first time that we had a place in the catalog, and it was Writing.

Rabkin: So ‘84 was the first time you could thumb through the catalog to “W,” and find courses actually listed under Writing.

Freeman: I think so. I believe that that’s true.

Rabkin: Okay. And these composition courses were not necessarily typical of the way comp was taught at other universities and other campuses. Maybe you could talk a little bit about the nature of Writing 1.

Freeman: I would say that probably they weren't so different from some places—but again, the main thing about them, that was this fulfillment of the vision, was that we began, very early on, to talk about *goals*. And I think that my first draft of our Statement of Goals for Writing 1 is not in this folder, which ends in '84. So it must be right after that, because this ends with us getting the composition requirement. So we decided we would agree on goals, but then leave the method by which people achieved those goals very much up to them. And that, as I said, was possible by hiring really great people who were very able to teach. So we were characterized by a lot of different approaches. Some people chose subject matter from many different disciplines; other people made their courses—I always taught mine without a so-called subject matter; I always made the subject matter writing itself, just because I think every once in a while you needed to have a course which, when students didn't like any of the other ones, they could do that.

And then, the other thing that came along with this, and again it came pretty quickly: whereas on so many campuses, the very youngest graduate students are given the assignment to teach writing, with the idea that when they get more experienced in their disciplines, then they could be TAs for their disciplinary courses—because of the way we did it, we were not going to use graduate students as TAs; we were going to use them as graduate student instructors. So in order to teach a writing course, graduate students had to be eligible to be the instructor of record of their courses.

Rabkin: Did that mean they had to be advanced to candidacy?

Freeman: Yes. Yes. And then eventually, we formalized a whole system of training. The Writing Program, of course, couldn't offer any graduate courses, so I taught Writing 169 for the first time in spring 1981.

Rabkin: 169 was the course for tutors?

Freeman: Well, no, originally it was the course on Theory and Practice of Teaching Writing. And I just began to teach it because I wanted a course. And I think probably Tim Fitzmaurice might have taken it on— but it was a course for graduate students. And then, eventually what happened was, the lit board decided in 1983 that they wanted me to teach that course as a graduate course in literature, the third course in their proseminar. So then it became Literature 203, and we taught it that way for a long time, until the literature graduate students rebelled in 1998, and they wanted to change everything. By that time they let us do a graduate course, so that's why it's Writing 203 (laughs) because it was the third course in the lit proseminar. But for a couple of years, I just taught it as 169. Then, when we made that into the graduate course, then we changed 169 into the course for training tutors.

I think that probably Writing 1 became a course that was recognizable to places where students were transferring—that it was a freshman comp course, like a 1A or 1B. Before that, people at other colleges and universities had trouble seeing where UCSC students were getting their comp from.

Rabkin: Do you remember some of the topics that these courses were focused on? Or approaches that different instructors took?

Freeman: Why don't I think about that, and we can talk about it next time. I do have the old [pulls out a document]— It's interesting to look at the names. This is my curriculum plan for '84.

Rabkin: It's a handwritten, three-column—

Freeman: Yes, and in fact, Laurel Woodside, the Writing Program's manager from 1984 to 2007, called it my "three-column chart," *forever*.

One thing we should probably talk about is that, from the very start, from the start when we first began to hire people to teach half time, I'd say from '76, when we said, okay, we're the Writing Program, and we're going to hire half-time people— By the way, the only reason it's an eight-course load is because eight courses was the load for the Language Program, and for those first two years we were part of the Language Program. Don got hired by Oakes at a six-course load. And so it was totally arbitrary. And that's something we've never been able to change, and that's one of my—

Rabkin: This is the number of courses a lecturer had to teach in order to be considered a full-time employee.

Freeman: Right, right. And totally apart from whether eight is reasonable for language lecturers—that's why the load got set at eight.

But from the start of the Writing Program on, we hired people to do three comp classes and one intermediate or advanced course, and then we had a bunch of courses that were designated 62, 63—the sort of intermediate-level courses in research and writing—and the 160s, the advanced courses in research and writing. So from the very start, we had an upper division. And that's ironical, that even when everything was so temporary, somehow the university didn't have any trouble seeing the need for intermediate and advanced courses. And by '85 Roz Spafford was doing the courses for re-entry women; we had Peggy Miles teaching special sections of Writing 1 that would be for ESL students (we called them Writing 1B), Greg Sarris, who worked half-time for us and half-time for EOP], and also there was Conn Hallinan teaching journalism. We had already started to hire him at half time.

Freeman: [shows Rabkin the "three-column chart]

Rabkin: This is 1984.

Freeman: Yeah, it's 1984, and you can see, by that time, that was, I think, the first year Ginny Draper was there, and, of course, Chuck Atkinson started in 197. In the beginning years, we were able to hire people to teach four courses, and then because we said we don't have a director, we passed off to a bunch of people another half time as academic coordinators, to keep people off the clock. So I

taught four courses and had half time as an academic coordinator to run the program. I think Chuck Atkinson had four courses and then a segment of his appointment that was an academic coordinator to run the writing tutor program. I just kept splitting stuff off. So then I decided, well, I couldn't also be the coordinator of Subject A, so I made Roz the coordinator of Subject A. Then when Writing Across the Curriculum got to be a big thing, I just split off some more of that and gave it off to Ginny. And that's how we were able to get more people into higher percent-time appointments.

Rabkin: And then people were also teaching core course sections?

Freeman: Yes, right, although until the contract came, people basically couldn't teach more than four courses. I think as an academic coordinator you could teach one course, so for a few years lots of us taught five courses, and then had three equivalencies for running the tutor program or something like that. But it's interesting to see how early—how this set of 1984 course offerings basically looks like what it was for a long time.

Rabkin: It's three columns because it's one column for each quarter, and you've got the names of all the instructors assigned to all the different courses that the program is offering.

Freeman: Right. And as coordinator of Subject A, Roz was in charge of the eight sections of Writing 10. And there were a few GSI's—graduate student instructors.

Rabkin: Before we wrap up for today, can you say a little bit about the goals for Writing 1?

Freeman: Why don't I see if I can find the early document. Because, just like we did everything, we got together and talked about it. Tim [Fitzmaurice] gave a little talk when he retired—there was a Writing Program reading, and he gave a very funny talk about the Writing Program, and one of the things he said was, "We did an awful lot of consulting, but one always knew that Carol had it all figured out before we said anything." And there's some truth in that, I confess. (laughs)

But still, the strength of the Writing Program came from having a whole lot of smart people who, even if you thought you had it all figured out, you were going to have to persuade that that's how it should be done. The most important thing in those beginning couple of years was putting together a program that convinced smart people that they wanted to get involved in it, and that, in fact, the work that they were doing was incredibly valuable—even if, for so long, the university itself couldn't acknowledge that. And refusing to buy into the definition of "temporary," and then finding ways to get around it. If that hadn't worked, if it hadn't been possible to make people feel like they were part of something that was really good and interesting, with engaging smart colleagues, and refusing the implications of the labels of the institution, it wouldn't have worked.

Rabkin: *Thank you.*

Freeman: All right.

Rabkin: This is Sarah Rabkin, and I am interviewing Carol Freeman. This is our second interview. It's Thursday, November 1, 2012. We're at my house in Soquel, California. And, Carol, I'd like to start with a few follow-ups from our last interview—just some clarifications, and asking for some elaboration on a few things—and then continue with the history and development of the Writing Program, and related matters.

Freeman: Okay. Great.

Rabkin: So my first follow-up question is very particular, and pretty circumscribed. You mentioned, when you were talking about your graduate education at Yale, that at a certain point, you took note of the fact that it was helpful at Yale to have sort of inside connections. You noticed that it was convenient in some ways to be an insider there. And you used as an example Stephen Greenblatt, with whom you had some classes, and you said you noticed that he, as someone who had been a Yale undergraduate, had certain advantages. I wonder if you could just give an example or two of what you meant by that.

Freeman: I think it's probably something kind of personal. I'd always felt very comfortable in all the environments of the institutions where I was—not exactly

socially, with the other students, but just feeling that it was a place where there wasn't an inside group of scholarly elite, and then people who were sort of on the outside. In the case of my position in the English Department—I had access to all these fine professors, and really Yale was this amazing place where you came in the door and read the list of where people's offices were, and it was all of the world's greatest experts right there. But when I got to Yale, was one of the very first times that I felt like—I had the feeling that other students were operating in a way that was connecting them more closely to the *insiderness*. In some ways it might have been the fact that I was married, so I had a social connection somewhere else. I think it probably was my personal style as well as the institution.

The funny thing is that Michael was part of a very small number of students sort of hand-picked by a professor in pre-modern Chinese history. And we immediately became insiders into *that* group. He invited us to his very fancy house in Guilford—a lot—and Michael was sort of like his protégé. The English department, of course, was larger, but I think there were people who had that kind of relationship. One had the sense that certain people were being groomed to fall into certain kinds of positions in the larger world—just as, in fact, as I told you, when Michael got hired here, somebody called up Arthur Wright and said, “Who do you have,” and he said, “Here he is.”

Yale in the late 60's and early 70's was an interesting place. It was at that time that I first began to be conscious of certain attitudes about women. It also coincided with my getting introduced in a major way to the women's movement.

I had friends in the— It was while I was a Yale graduate student that I suddenly decided—I can remember this so clearly—that I no longer could use the generic “he” and “him” in papers. I had done it, and I had always assumed that that ‘applied to everybody.’ And I remember that there was just a watershed moment when I said, “No, I can’t do that anymore.” So that was all in the mix, too.

Rabkin: Did you begin to say that you had friends who were involved in the women’s movement?

Freeman: Yeah, very much so. Sometimes I think—and this is, again, just meditating about it—many of the women who had more conventional academic careers than I did, who started out in literature and went on and became professors of literature, waited to have their kids until they had tenure. (laughs) I’m not making any—again, you can’t make correspondences of that, and I’ve never been sorry that I didn’t wait to have kids. I never, ever considered any of this overtly at all; I didn’t make these decisions on that basis. But this was historically a time when women’s professional careers were getting entangled with their private lives in a new way. And of course, I ended up at Santa Cruz was simply because I came with Michael.

The other interesting thing is that we were at Yale during the time when Yale College admitted women. And that was very interesting, because you could stand in line at the films, and hear the guys talking about the differences—about having women around all the time, as opposed to just busing them in from other local colleges on the weekend. I can remember being very amused by the degree

of how this was so revolutionary, because I had come from a background that was totally, 100 percent coeducational. I couldn't even imagine why anyone would want to go to a women's college. I remember that that made a big shift, very quickly, in lots of the aspects of life at Yale.

I just want to clarify: when I said I taught at Hartford College for Women, when I began to wonder about the interesting dynamics of an all-women's class with a male professor—it's, again, nothing that I've thought a whole lot about. But I was taking the place of an English professor who was going on leave, and so I sat in on one of his classes. It was all lower-division, because it was a two-year college. It was a literature class, and they were discussing something by a woman, possibly even by Jane Austen. I sat there and I realized that he was suddenly feeling a little bit constrained by the fact that there was another adult in the room, and that that adult in the room was a woman. And I realized that if you're sitting in the room with a bunch of eighteen-year-old women, I think at that point in time, he had a certain license to play a certain kind of role that having the presence of one adult woman in the room made it harder for him to play exactly the role that he was used to playing. It was just an interesting insight.

Rabkin: How would you characterize that role?

Freeman: I'm not even sure I can. It was an intuition. I heard him saying some things, and then I heard him catch himself. It just changed the dynamic. Those were just impressions I had at that time. It was just interesting, because I guess I was thinking about those kinds of things at that time, in ways that I had never,

ever thought about before—which speaks to both my family and also the nature of the education I'd had.

Rabkin: In light of those observations, I'm curious about your first impressions of UC Santa Cruz as an institution, when you first came out here.

Freeman: The first impressions that we had—(laughs) and I can remember that from the moment that we first arrived for Mike's interview— It was the end of the winter quarter, and the cherries or something had just blossomed in the Cowell [College] courtyard. So all my first impressions of Santa Cruz had to do with the weather and the beauty of the campus. I had been to California twice with my family at various times, but I didn't know anything about it. We moved to Santa Cruz in January. We'd spent Christmas at my family's house in Chicago, and then Mike drove the car out, and I flew out with the two kids. And I can remember getting off the plane in San Jose, and the nature of the air— We had been having an ice storm, and snow in Chicago— But the funny thing was, that January was the January that Santa Cruz had the biggest snow it's ever had. Neither of us, when we were driving over [Highway] 17, could get over the fact that *everybody* was out building snowmen on their car hoods. And there was *tons* of stuff falling down in the woods because of that big snow.

Mike started in January. So, for the first two quarters, in the winter and the spring, I stayed home, with the kids, pretty much, and took Caroline (Kyri now, but Caroline then) off to pre-school and stuff. And I really didn't know anything about the campus at all. We were quite close to the person who was then the

chair of the history board, who had hired Mike—Dick Olson; he was an historian of science. He was only there for two years after that, and he's been, ever since, at Harvey Mudd [College]. The faculty seemed very friendly. And Mike got very involved, immediately, with stuff at College Eight; College Eight was trying to figure out how it was ever going to get a building. But other than that, I didn't have many impressions. And at one point I was home with the kids, and somebody called, and said, "Dean and I would like you to come for dinner," so could we find a time? I said, "Well, no, I'm sorry, we just can't." I had assumed that this was some dean calling, and it was, in fact, Dean McHenry. (laughs)

When I started to teach, the students at that point definitely did not write as well as the students I had been dealing with. It was an interesting time. I had a number of students, actually, who had fried their brains on drugs, in a way that I haven't seen for many years. Not overwhelming numbers, but it wouldn't be too unusual to have a couple. But the students were interesting. That's about it; I don't really remember. At the beginning, I sort of wandered around the place by myself. That was one reason why I needed colleagues. (laughs) I needed to hire people! Of course, I say that, but I also have to say that I had tremendous support from, especially, John Jordan and Forrest Robinson, and then, very soon, as we went along, with Paul Skenazy—who really are, as I say, three heroes of this whole thing. But I don't have any strong memories about the students, except that they didn't seem difficult, in any particular way. There was not a whole lot of diversity at that point, of the students I was seeing. They were fine; they were enthusiastic.

Rabkin: Did you see any echoes of the gender double standard that you'd run into at Yale?

Freeman: No. I reverted to my previous conviction that my being a woman made no difference. And in fact—I guess I do remember a few things—for one thing, one of the things I noticed immediately was when you got to California, everybody called you by your first name, no matter what. I'd forgotten what a big difference that was. And, of course, that was a Santa Cruz thing. And it's funny, because now I have to *struggle* to get students to call me by my first name. I don't know if it's disappearing from the campus culture at large or not, but I have to really insist that that's what I want them to do.

Rabkin: I still find it surprising, how that's changed. I don't completely understand it.

Freeman: One thing is, I think that they have so many huge classes that they would never have any particular reason to call the professor *anything*. I'm amused sometimes when I ask them, "Well, who did you have last quarter?"—and they can't remember the people's names. (laughs) But I realize that's probably true for me, too.

There was a much, *much* more informal attitude. But it wasn't only just students—everybody. You went into the grocery store, and everybody called you by your first name. The other thing that amused me was the way people dressed. You could, on the very same day, see one person all dressed up in their parka,

looking like they were headed for the snow, and right next to them a person in shorts and flip-flops, and it didn't have any association with the weather.

But I was dealing mostly—not exclusively, but mostly—with first- and second-year students, and they weren't all that different from, say, the women at Hartford College for Women. They were less high-powered in some ways than the Yalies.

Rabkin: How about the gender ratio and dynamics among faculty and administrators?

Freeman: Of the people I dealt with, there were very few women. But that didn't particularly surprise or bother me or make any impression on me. And in fact, I have to confess that some of the administrators that I've had the hugest trouble working with were indeed women—which is always discouraging, but that's the way life is. I basically fought with every administrator there was for so long that (laughs) it didn't make any difference.

Beyond Notions of “Bonehead English”

Rabkin: You brought up a sort of general attitude toward composition instruction on the campus. At one point you said there was this sort of “There Shall Not Be a Composition Empire” attitude. I wonder if you could elaborate a bit. What was that about; what was it a reaction to; what was it based on?

Freeman: [Sighs] All right. So first of all, I think when the campus was founded, one of the things they were trying very hard to do was not to replicate standard department structure and the kinds of categories which had sort of chopped undergraduate education up into little silos. The standard way to treat composition on most campuses was, usually—I always used to think of it as the English department's "colonies"—basically the cash cow that supported their huge graduate programs. I think that the idea had been that, just as the boards were not going to be called departments, and they weren't going to be typical, and there was going to be much more interdisciplinary stuff, they were not going to replicate the standard composition institution.

And, as I said, part of the assumption was that the students were going to be so elite that they wouldn't need that, and there would be all these small classes, and these wonderful core courses. And the amusing thing—I guess it's both tragic and it's amusing—is how quickly that fell away. It disappeared for a whole lot of reasons. First of all, as they admitted more students, there were more and more students who needed more help. There's also debate about whether even the very, very talented students who came in the first couple classes couldn't have perhaps done with some little bit of writing instruction too. But also, by the time we got here, so many things had already changed. The faculty had definitely withdrawn, in many instances, from the core courses. Nobody *wanted* to teach freshmen to write. And the literature board established itself as a *literature* board, partly to have all this great interdisciplinary synchronicity between the literatures of various cultures, but also on the grounds that it was going to be more theoretical, or cutting-edge. They certainly weren't going to take over any

responsibility for teaching what was considered at that time to be “bonehead English”—and especially not what was considered not only “bonehead” but remedial, which was the Subject A instruction.

So, when I arrived in '74—and that's, as I say, not even a decade after everything had started—there were just the beginnings of something which was going to, in a few years, become a big crisis, which was the decline in admissions applications. And, then, the (supposedly) lowering of standards for whom we were admitting, increases in EOP students, and a faculty that had come to Santa Cruz with a vision that they were going to do things differently, and certainly that wasn't going to include teaching writing, or using any big part of the budget to fund these things.

Then, added onto that, there were very few graduate students; the graduate programs were very, very small—although literature was a little bit bigger than some of them. And none of the literature graduate students—I wouldn't say none, but nobody was thinking in terms of needing to teach writing to support graduate students. That didn't become an issue until almost ten years later. And there were a few graduate students who did teach writing, and it gradually increased. But it was just this whole revolutionary mindset.

I have a theory that this whole thing is sort of like our backyard, in that our house is on sand—some of the purest sand in California.

Rabkin: This is your house in Ben Lomond.

Freeman: Yes, our house in Ben Lomond. In fact, there's a sand quarry right down the road. And it means that if you want to grow a garden, you have to spend a lot of time with compost, building up the soil, because otherwise you have pure sand. And if you leave it for a while, its tendency is going to be to revert to sand. And I think we still have not solved in this country, or maybe anywhere, the problem that no matter how much compost you put into making an interdisciplinary campus that avoids departments and everything, eventually it will revert (laughs) into the traditional departments, back to the sand. It took Santa Cruz two decades to do that. Merced—which, when it was founded, started with, again, very interesting ideas that everybody believes in, of interdisciplinary organization and all these things they were going to do. But there, it was funny, because *it* reverted to sand before it even opened. (laughs) Not entirely, but you know what I mean? Before you knew it, what had looked like this revolutionary setup looked pretty standard.

So that's why there had been no provision for teaching composition. And especially in that first ten years, there was no freshman writing requirement. And this became a crisis for the campus. The first time, when there was the enrollment crisis, one of the ways that they tried to address the enrollment crisis was with the Berkeley redirect program, where students would be admitted to Berkeley on the condition that they would take their first two years here and then transfer. Well, so that meant they needed A and B, and we had nothing that looked like—

Rabkin: This was English 1A and 1B?

Freeman: Yes, English 1A and 1B. And we didn't have anything that looked like that. So I had spent a lot of time writing letters that the articulation people could use to deal with Berkeley. Eventually, it became a tool that I began to be able to use, to say, well, if we're still having all these redirect students then maybe we should be offering writing courses to prepare them to transfer. At one point, actually, they asked for faculty volunteers to call up students who were potentially Berkeley redirects to convince them that they might want to come to Santa Cruz. Somewhere I have a nice little letter thanking me for calling. That was not particularly interesting or fun.

Anyway, then, when we began to put together a writing program, nobody was interested in providing any hard funding for any of these positions. So it all had to be carved out of soft funds. And that continues to this day. That's something that's never changed. Which means that it's always vulnerable to cuts, because it's the pot of money that isn't tied down.

But it was true that especially in the first ten years—and even up to the point, in 1983, when the first general education requirements were adopted —people were very squeamish about having a comp requirement, because that still, to many people, felt retro.

Rabkin: Can you just flesh out, a little bit, the picture of that standard composition program that people were familiar with on other campuses, on big

campuses, that they were trying to avoid? What was this sort of composition factory?

Freeman: I think in many cases it was maligned. But usually the way it worked, and still does to some extent, was that there was some kind of a required freshman sequence. And, of course, it differs. When I was at Carleton, there was a freshman comp requirement, and they gave an essay exam, and some people exempted out of it. But all the English faculty—all of the faculty—taught comp courses, so that there was no separation. So I just exempted out of it, never took it. Mike was in a comp class, but after his first essay, he got exempted. So he wrote all his roommate's papers for the whole quarter— (laughs)

Rabkin: (laughs)

Freeman: —and was very proud of the fact that he got him a B, because he knew that if he could have got him an A it wouldn't seem right—and that Chuck, his roommate, got a note that praised him for his gradual but significant improvement.

And that was the kind of model that I was used to from Carleton. There was no graduate program. But in bigger places, essentially, there was somebody in the English department who was the supervisor of comp, and there was usually a standard curriculum, and a text that everybody adopted. The model, for a long time, was basically—and it still is this way in many places—that TAs teaching composition were oftentimes just in their first quarter of graduate school, so they

were three months out of being undergrads. And then some places had some kinds of training; some didn't. But I think this was seen at Santa Cruz as primitive, which in many ways it was, and unnecessary, and also that somehow whatever was happening in it was not very intellectually interesting. I mean, they were right in the sense that the ideal way to teach writing would have been integrating it with the core courses and the senior faculty teaching it. But, going back to the sand metaphor, it took very, very little time for most of the senior faculty to realize that they didn't want to deal with student writing in that context.

And the interesting thing is— Forrest Robinson, who, as I said, was such a hero. And I had big, huge disagreements with him. But the world divides between people that you can really argue with without losing respect for, and have some influence on, and they'll have some influence on you—and the people who you argue with and don't hear anything. But he was chair of the Writing Committee, which was the committee that ran for a long time, that was sort of our “keepers” (but we always had Writing Program people on the committee, too). This was the very first time when we were talking about doing personnel reviews of faculty in 1980. And I remember him making a comment, talking about people who teach composition, and he said—“Well,” he said, “all those mud hens, toiling away.” And, of course, that became a sort of legend—and he probably doesn't remember it.

Rabkin: (laughs)

Freeman: But it was important for me, because I realized that so much of my arguing had to be about removing this notion that these brilliant people who were not only teaching, but had brought so many other innovations and ideas, and such energy to go out and make things spread—that somehow, by definition, people who would want to teach composition were “mud hens.” But that was a whole view of what teaching composition was all about. And the idea that it made a difference whether the person who was teaching was able to transform the course from a very prescriptive—you know, “you need to do this and this and this,” or whatever—teaching of sort of recipes, into something that was intellectually vibrant, and their difficulty in perceiving that, was the main thing.

Actually, there are parallels to this in almost everything. In any field, when you’re teaching introductory stuff, it can be superficial and boring. But when you’re trying to explain the grammar of a sentence, you can do it in a way that’s simplistic and boring, *or* you can do it in a way that involves huge insights about meaning, about the structures of language, about all kinds of things. And to try to get people to see that difference is an ongoing struggle. And it took pages and pages. I mean, that’s one reason why you think, “It doesn’t matter who teaches your composition courses. Why pay extra to people who are going to be around?” And one of the very first things we did from the beginning—and I’m proud of this—is that we started reviewing people every two years and giving them merit increases. And that was actually not customary. And our review procedures for evaluating teaching was one of the many things about Santa

Cruz's Writing Program that we invented that then actually were adopted in the contract—which I think was 1986, when the contract first came—

Rabkin: The Unit 18 UC-AFT—

Freeman: Yes, the Unit 18 contract. But after the contract was put into place, and we thought we had won this great big victory, the very first year that we had put forward the five people who were ready to go through the big review that would make them be ongoing people instead of temporary people who could not work over half-time for longer than eight years—

Rabkin: This was the one that was called the “eye of the needle” review?

Freeman: The “eye of the needle,” yeah. And it was after, I think it was six years of service. The way the contract still does work was that, you had to demonstrate the instructional need for the on-going position first, and get that approved. And then, you took the individuals who were filling that need, and then they were reviewed on their excellence. And the first time that we did this, we submitted this the statement of need to Michael Cowan, who was the dean [of humanities], and he didn't exactly turn it down, but he wanted to change all the criteria. He felt that we did not have any need for five people because there was “no need” to hire ongoing people to teach composition, that composition could be perfectly well taught by members of the faculty. As if there were *any* faculty members out there, ladder faculty who would be willing to teach comp. Or by graduate students, of whom there were few. Or by people from the temporary lecturer

pool. So there was “no intellectual need.” The only need that you had for ongoing lecturers was to give administrative continuity to a program. So you only needed about two or three of those.

And Paul Skenazy was chair of the Writing Committee at that point. And here we thought we’d won this big victory, and then it was just being taken completely away. So we wrote this long response (that I was re-looking at just before I came to this interview), and the very first thing that we said was, “We will not pursue our review under those circumstances.” That was the first thing. And then *three pages*, actually, after that, is all about what having professional writing teachers, who were conversant with the discipline and knew what they were doing, and had experience—why that was different from, and not at all the same as— First of all, we just said, “Look: (laughs) there are *no* faculty who want to do this, and to bring that up is dishonest”—

Rabkin: No ladder faculty?

Freeman: Yeah, ladder faculty. And secondly, there weren’t anywhere near enough, even if they wanted to do it at all. But then, having over and over again to make the crucial point—the argument that every group of, at that point, twenty students, in any class that what they’re getting is not *statistical* excellence—you know, because you have one or two really hot people who are running the program. They’re getting the experience of *whoever is teaching them*. And *that’s* their experience of the program. At that point, we had ten years of experience of the qualities and the abilities of all these incredible people.

I also knew, and at the end of this long memo we raised another issue: Is this *really* about the fact that the academic vice chancellor has announced that she's only willing to spend so much money? So, it was actually a quota. In other words, you were going to be able to get writing teachers through the eye of the needle, but there was a quota. And, of course, that was all totally illegal according to the contract—and other campuses got into big grievances over quotas—I can't quite remember how it all fell out, but the campus backed down, because the contract very specifically said, not administrative need, but *instructional* need.

And the campus was new at dealing with contracts like this, too. But it came back to that idea, which is just like the problem that grade-school teachers have. People think that, "Well, I went to fourth grade; I'm sure I can teach fourth grade. Anybody can teach fourth grade. Why do we have to pay anybody to teach fourth grade?" It's the same kind of thing, and it still exists.

Rabkin: Did Michael Cowan come to a new understanding as a result of this?

Freeman: Well, he must have. I mean, we just said, "We're not going to do it." At the end, we suggested that maybe—perhaps, he didn't really believe this what he had written— but it was all because the (laughs) academic vice chancellor had made this quota. But we did put our five people forward to be reviewed for

continuing lecturer status, and they all got it. And I remember Ginny [Virginia Draper] made a celebratory cake that had camels on it.¹³

Rabkin: [Brief pause] *Oh*—the eye of the needle! (laughs)

Freeman: (laughs) So, anyway. But it just goes to show how hard it is, and I think it's still there, for people to understand how *hard* it is to teach writing, and why you need really, really good people to do it—smart people.

Rabkin: There's another element, too, to what it means to have ongoing faculty who log a number of years in the institution. That means they have a different relationship to the institution.

Freeman: *Oh*, yeah. And that's just enormous. And that was in there in the memo Paul Skenazy and I wrote to Michael Cowan, too. I became conscious of this from the very beginning. When we began the external reviews, we began to list our goals, and these goals got more and more and more global. But I realized that one of the problems with most composition programs was their *extreme* parochialism and insularity. One of the things that made teaching writing—and now for any adjunct, makes them less effective than they could be—is you drive into a campus; you might not even have an office. You have no connection with

¹³ Actually, the struggle to defend the Writing Program's need for continuing lecturers did not end with these first "eye-of-the-needle" reviews. In Fall, 1989, after the new Dean of Humanities, Harry Harootunian, decided that only 27 of its 100 required writing courses needed to be taught by continuing lecturers, I met with him and persuaded him that all six of the lecturers eligible for reviews that year needed to be granted them. The notes that I prepared for that meeting reveal that I argued the case on grounds of academic excellence, ethics, and the legal obligations of the contract.—*Carol Freeman*.

anybody. You teach your class and you leave. And that always struck me as a real waste of money and resources. If you get good people and then you get them connected, then they can start to do all these valuable things for the institution. And every single person, just about, who's been an ongoing writing instructor— And by the way, that was a word that we invented, “ongoing.” Because you couldn't say “permanent.” But all the titles were “visiting,” and “adjunct,” and everything. Eventually, in one of my stints—I can't remember which one—when I was chair of CEP, I was able to introduce the word “ongoing.” So we talked about the “ongoing lecturers,” as opposed to the *truly* temporary, who were people who were just subbing for somebody who was on leave, or something.

Rabkin: Yes. And I think the official contract language is “continuing lecturer.”

Freeman: Yeah. So, the idea that these people *accrued value*. One of the really dangerous things about composition programs is that you end up having a bunch of people who might not even have any connection or experience with the academic experience outside of the freshman year. So that was one reason why it seemed so important to me—and not everybody agreed with this at the beginning, when we began to have some big debates about this in the Writing Program—that the colleges offered a place where, if people could get associated with colleges, they would have colleagues of the other faculty, and be connected to something in the university that was bigger than an isolated comp program. And it's worked that way. And I worry now that, again, not as many Writing Program people are being located, in meaningful ways, in the colleges, beyond

the people who are the core course instructors, or the college writing coordinators.

But that wasn't the only way in which writing instructors got involved in the larger institution. Through Writing Across the Curriculum programming¹⁴ we started to take advantage of the fact that we had part-time people with time available to teach, for other departments—like Chuck Atkinson teaching with the literature board; you with environmental studies. Because we had enough course equivalencies, we were able to have people in *all* the divisions helping figure out how to teach writing. Or working with graduate students on their writing. And then, of course, say, Roz's work with re-entry women¹⁵, spreading out that way.

Another idea I had to coordinate with other campus units, which turned out to be a struggle, but it was wonderful while it worked, was to work with EOP [Educational Opportunity Program]¹⁶. They always had somebody who was in charge of writing support, tutoring, for EOP students— and also did a lot of work with the orientation courses that they offered for students before they came, in the summer. So instead of having that person be all isolated over there—

¹⁴ Writing Across the Curriculum is the title of a well-recognized international movement in writing instruction to spread the teaching of writing throughout the curriculum. We called Ginny Draper the WAC coordinator, and although we didn't have an official program, capital P – as in the Writing Program or Language Program—we did have WAC programming and it was a line-item in our budget, with capital letters.—*Carol Freeman*.

¹⁵ In the early 1980s, Roz Spafford began teaching writing classes that focused on the special needs of re-entry women—Editor.

¹⁶ According to their website, the Educational Opportunity Program provides “a variety of academic and personal support programs designed to improve the retention and academic success of first-generation, low-income, or educationally disadvantaged college students.” <http://eop.ucsc.edu/> See the forthcoming oral history with Rosie Cabrera for more on the Educational Opportunity Program at UC Santa Cruz, particularly the Summer Bridge Program of the 1980s.—Editor.

Rabkin: Was that the Summer Bridge program?

Freeman: Yeah. And I taught the Summer Bridge program one year just to find out how it worked. So, in 1981, the same year we hired Peggy Miles to teach ESL students, we established a joint-appointment where we'd have a person who was a half-time lecturer in the Writing Program, and then half-time the writing-support person in EOP. Every time you do something like that, it's a big pain, because you have to agree on a person. And all those early interviews that we did were a similar kind of thing. When we hired a half-time writing person, I just imagined it was a real position, and we actually got the provosts involved, so that people were interviewed by, not only the Writing Program but also by the college.

So all those were different ways of getting one's tentacles into lots of things, so people weren't isolated, and they had ways of meeting other people and learning about different things. It's inefficient, in the sense that it's much easier just to sit in a room and hire people, but it was really, really valuable. In the end there were four different people who were half time EOP and half time Writing Program, until finally it fell apart. But for almost twenty years we had somebody in that state, and it was very good for both the Writing Program and EOP.

Rabkin: And that evaporated eventually?

Freeman: Yeah, and I think it eventually got impossible. Actually, what happened is that they dropped that position, pretty much, from EOP, and then hired a Learning Support Services person. So it was a different arrangement. What I'm saying is that part of the thing was of avoiding the "mud hen"— And also, giving people who we kept around, giving them scope to really become valuable to the university as a whole. Finding ways to not be isolated was a really important thing.

Rabkin: So my association with that "mud hen" image is of a sort of unimaginative, not intellectually sophisticated or challenging person, in a position that's essentially sort of menial and constrained, and basically something you could do out of a manual. And sort of scuttling around doing what has to be done, with no sense of vision. Is that what's implied by that image?

Freeman: I think it was implied by it, but I also actually think there's something else which is kind of funny—and you can catch this sometimes in some of the early references to writing teachers: They were also faculty wives.

Rabkin: *Oh. Oh.*

Freeman: So it's complicated in many different ways.

Rabkin: You mean that's a term that was used to refer to faculty wives?

Freeman: No, no, no. The people who were teaching the comp were often faculty wives.

Rabkin: Often *were* faculty wives. So the hen connotation was—

Freeman: Yeah. People who were doing not-very-dignified work, as sort of a sideline. And many of those people were excellent. For example, Lois Natanson, who was the Subject A instructor at Crown—I think she left before I came, but I read a couple of her final reports. But I think that's part of the—you know, young graduate students, but if you didn't have the young graduate students, another pool would be faculty wives. (laughs)

Rabkin: I see. Yeah.

So, after, you said, about eight years at UC Santa Cruz, you underwent this shift from seeing composition as a sort of stop-gap, interim activity, on the way to a job teaching literature, once one materialized.

Freeman: Yes.

Rabkin: And you started seeing it as a career in itself. And you talked about various circumstances that played into this. But I wonder if there's anything else you'd like to say about what propelled that change for you.

Freeman: Well, one important thing was that I became completely fascinated with the history and theory of rhetoric. As I have already told you, Owen Jenkins took a rhetorical approach to many things. And I ended up writing a dissertation that was actually inspired by something I read on the rhetoric of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. My dissertation was about how *Clarissa*, a long novel by Samuel Richardson, played with the rhetoric of romance. So I already had become interested in issues of rhetoric. But when I needed my own intellectual orientation to teaching writing, I found it in not only the history of classical rhetoric, but rhetorical theory: Kenneth Burke and a lot of other people. And then I got interested in the theory and history of argument, and all kinds of things like that. I can say that once I'd found that, I became as interested in that as in literature. And it's interesting because the teaching of literature was moving towards becoming much more theoretical. And a lot of the rhetorical stuff fit in with a lot of that.

I also became interested in the whole problem about how you teach writing. And it became very compelling. It was always assumed—this was another myth that people had—it was always assumed that if you taught writing, and you read all those papers, you were inevitably going to burn out. That you *had* to. That nobody could deal with freshman papers for very long before you'd just become—you know (laughs)—

Rabkin: (laughs) We need video for that visual expression!

Freeman: —Yes! Your mind would rot! And that would be the end of it.

Rabkin: There are those little spirals in your eyeballs—

Freeman: Right, exactly, exactly. And what I kept trying to tell people is that you don't burn out. Well some people might. But if you have interesting ideas of cognitive development, if you're fascinated by the problem of how do you teach something that's so complicated, and if you can get interested in all these questions: how is reading connected to writing, and how do you do it—

The reason you burn out is because you're asked just to do way too *much* of it. If you're in an ideal situation, not only if you don't have to do too much of it, but if you're *respected*, and if people think that you're doing something important and valuable, then you don't burn out.

I would say that another thing that we managed to do—and I don't know exactly how, but together, as a program—is I think that for a long time, people were really convinced that, whatever the university thought about us, first of all, that we were really hot, that we were first class, and the very best there was, and that we were doing something that was really socially important, not just academically important. It was important academically, *and* there were so many levels on which it was socially important. I mean, as more and more students came in who were first in their families to go to the university, or were just not prepared, and from all kinds of different backgrounds, the idea that this was a meal ticket improving their lives in so many different ways. Of course, we were also all reading [Pablo] Freire, and thinking that it was not only an economic

benefit for them, and social power, but that it was a *civic* thing. And this was where I got so connected with the *history* of rhetoric, where rhetoric got invented because it was necessary, in a democracy, to persuade by argument—not by shooting people, or bribing them. But any democracy, then, is going to depend on the ability of the people to think and to respond.

All these ideas, and there were tons of them. And not only that, but the whole question of what is the connection between language and meaning. And where does meaning *come* from, and what constitutes a— There were endless interesting things like that. Style—*infinite* numbers of interesting things. I got fascinated by all of it. It felt like I never—even if I went home disgusted in certain ways, especially with the institution—I never felt like I was doing something that wasn't useful, and even good to be doing. And at some point I got to thinking, "I'm not always sure I would feel that way, exactly in the same way, if I were teaching literature, or if I were spending most of my time doing literary research." I mean, I really, really like scholarship, but I suddenly realized I could *be* a scholar, an intellectual, and do this other thing, and it suddenly began to feel very rewarding.

Working with Don Rothman

Rabkin: [Pauses] I'm going in about three different directions here. I'm tempted to follow up on several things. But hearing you thinking about the social context of teaching composition, and that it felt like socially worthwhile work, puts me in

mind of Don Rothman, whom you talked about several times on Monday. And that, in fact, was the subject of one of the follow-up questions I did want to ask you: if you wanted to say anything more about the nature of the conversations that you and Don were having about teaching writing.

Freeman: Well, as I say, it all happened so easily and gradually that I can't really remember exactly how it happened. Maybe one of the first major things we did together were those workshops.

Rabkin: The ones for faculty?

Freeman: The ones for faculty before the foundation seminars. And then, of course, he was on the Writing Committee.¹⁷

Rabkin: Was he hired with security of employment?

Freeman: No, no, no. Oakes hired him as a full-time lecturer. For one thing, we should have gone with them, because he was always hired at a six-course load. All the way through. (laughs) He got security of employment in 1983 and I think it must have been through Oakes, but I'm not sure about that. Oakes had a big part in it. But anyway, and I think I probably told him this at the time, that it was

¹⁷ While reviewing this transcript, I was moved to do some research in the Writing Program files and unearthed my very first direct communication with Don. In October 1975, he proposed to Dean of Humanities Edward Dirks the establishment of a "West Side Writing Center at Oakes College." I responded with a proposal to establish a campus-wide writing program based in the colleges. In closing, I wrote, "Actually, Don, most of what I say here is merely expanding your proposal to include the entire campus. What sounds good for 'the westside' would sound even better, I think, for us all . . . In any case, thanks again for propelling me into thought."—*Carol Freeman*.

extremely fortuitous that he got security of employment first. Because it meant that security of employment at Santa Cruz would never be tied only to the director of the program. Because, you see, if you had somebody who got security of employment just as director of the program, and that was it, then you didn't need any more SOE positions. And that has stood us in good stead ever since.

The other thing is, Don's and my approach was complementary but not the same. Our styles are very different. And that's good, too, because another thing about teaching writing is, I think, that there are many, many different approaches that work. The Writing Program really tried to honor that in our personnel reviews. And so to this day, I'm uneasy when somebody in the personnel committee comes in and says, well, they visited someone's class, and they counted the number of times that students talked to each other instead of to the professor. Or some other rubric like that. And I would say, "But what about the effectiveness of the whole class?" Or when somebody says, "You should never lecture." Or thinks that small groups are, in and of themselves, some terrific virtue. Because you can have small groups that are miserable and don't work at all. So I think that the fact that our styles were very different, but there was so much that we agreed about, opened up the Writing Program to a lot of diversity.

And then, we also went off in different directions, which suited our abilities. Don, very early on, in 1977, took on the Central California Writing Project, and that was terrific. And in fact, through the beginning of the nineties, almost up until the whole crash with Dean Godzich, that was another way for Writing

Program people to expand their horizons, working with the Central California Writing Project, and then working with so many of the different high schools around. Whereas, I was concentrating on the strategic details of administering the Writing Program, Tim [Fitzmaurice] had this nailed, when he did his little funny caricature of us a couple years ago at his retirement, year before last, where he said that, you know, Don was sort of the rabbi, and I was the Machiavelli. (laughs)

Rabkin: (laughs)

Freeman: I'm not sure he quite used those words, but that's what he meant. And that was true, you know, that was it, and it suited us both just fine. Don was always asking about the *meaning* of it all, at meetings, and I was always saying, "Okay, so what are we going to *do*?" And that was very valuable, to have somebody with his stature, and with the admiration and devotion that he inspired, to play off of. We've been really, really fortunate in the Writing Program that we've had lots and lots of diversity like that. And almost, with a few little wrinkles here and there, everybody's managed to get along very well. And that's been a real pleasure.

Rabkin: Thank you.

Composition as a Professional Field

Another direction my mind was going, when you were talking about how you sort of solidified your decision to stay in teaching composition, was to wonder whether there was a parallel development going on in the profession of teaching composition nationwide. That at the same time you were beginning to see it as a worthwhile lifetime endeavor, whether there was also a development of a larger respect, in academia, for composition as a field.

Freeman: Well, definitely, I think starting in the seventies, composition began strongly to be identified as both a profession and as a professional field. However, to this day, people still debate about that. But the biggest evidence of the success of that is—in the last ten years, especially—the burgeoning of graduate programs and graduate degrees in composition. I think this is a mixed blessing, actually, myself. It's true that some people, many people, have come to understand that teaching writing is a specialty, and that it's a profession. But, as I say, there's been a huge increase in the graduate programs that turn out people who have Ph.Ds in composition. And now, if you do a search, for many positions, people are *looking* for people with those degrees. And that's great. But what was noteworthy about the Writing Program's last search for a lecturer with Security of Employment that we did where we hired Heather [Shearer] (who I think is terrific): none of the finalists had degrees in anything other than composition studies, of some sort. And one thing in this last search that the dean insisted on, was that we only consider people with Ph.Ds for the SOE position. So that was my last fight with a dean, that a Ph.D was not a *preferred* qualification for candidates, but a required one.

So, while I think that having respect for the profession, and realizing that there is a body of study—an *interdisciplinary* body of study, because if it doesn't get interdisciplinary it very quickly can get very niggling—I think that that's all to the good. But, as with so many things, then it goes too far especially when you consider how many of the program's outstanding leaders have not had PhD's. And one of our huge strengths has been that people in the Writing Program come from multitudinous disciplines, and bring understanding of the rhetorics of different disciplines, bring different approaches, bring different kinds of knowledge into the interdisciplinary approaches.

And the professionalization—in my mind, there are dangers to it. And certain parts of it now begin to feel perfunctory. Like, you go to graduate school and you take a *course* in things that used to be really living theory. I remember, I asked one interviewee, what was her view of Mina Shaughnessy, and what she gave me, clearly was the two sentences from her graduate course on Shaughnessy. I think that if we ever got to the point where we were only hiring people with backgrounds in composition, we would lose a lot. It's hard because it seems sort of contradictory. I'm saying writing people need to have experience and they need to know something, but I'm also saying I don't think, necessarily, learning that kind of stuff in graduate school, as a study, is always the very best way to get it. And if it becomes the *only* way—

You look at these candidates, and they've all published stuff. Tons of articles, many times written with their graduate professors. So what you're doing is you're reproducing a kind of mill of publications, which I don't even think is

adding much, all the time—I mean, some people are writing brilliant stuff, but much of it is replicating a system which I don't believe in.

Rabkin: I remember coming into the Writing Program and being struck by, as you say, the number of interesting, smart, thoughtful, lively, capable, and dedicated writing teachers, *and* the diversity of their backgrounds. I remember there was somebody with a degree in nutrition; there were people with degrees in anthropology, or history of consciousness, and literature, but also, I came in as a science writer— And that did seem like part of the vitality of the program.

Freeman: Yeah. Yeah. And then, of course, it allowed, when we got to Writing 1, and then Writing 2, for people to offer courses that ranged all the way from hydrology, to poetry, to you name it. And being willing to face the question of, how do you teach a course with content from all those disciplines that is still a writing course, and *clearly* a writing course, and *primarily* a writing course? It's something that people still struggle with. It was one thing that we learned a lot about by doing the core courses.

When we first integrated with the core courses, we had big debates. And in fact, I came across, in my notes, a transcript of a meeting about this. I had been asking for advice, because when I said we're going to see if we should integrate, so that writing program people are teaching in all the core courses, and you're going to be teaching students who need to be preparing to pass the Subject A exam, so it's gotta be a writing course. But you're going to have to do it with the content that gets thrown at you. And there was a lot of uncertainty about that, and debate.

But one of the advantages of doing it—there were many—but one of them was that everybody had to figure out how to teach writing when there is content. Which has become important because it moved us away from the feeling that many people have about composition courses on other campuses that, it's basically people sort of playing around with narrative, or the personal, where it wasn't really preparation for writing in the disciplines.

So I think that having people from all these different backgrounds, and with different approaches, was really good. And especially back in the days when everybody used to go and—much more than I think they do now—when we had a lot of emphasis on people visiting each other's classes, and seeing all the different kinds of ways you could do things.

Rabkin: I remember still—and I swear some of these were purple, mimeographed, multi-page handouts—the descriptions of all of the different Writing 1 sections being offered in a given quarter. And there'd be one that was focusing on how you turn fiction into film.

Freeman: Yeah.

Rabkin: I mean, sometimes I would read these descriptions and think, "How do you teach a writing class based on that?"

Freeman: Well, sometimes I thought that, too. (laughs)

Rabkin: But then I would visit a colleague's class, and be struck, often, by the success of whatever it was they were doing.

Freeman: Right, right, right.

Rabkin: And, of course, writing always has content.

Freeman: Well, it *has* to, because you can't write writing. And the thing I have to keep coming back and saying to people is that you've got to have content, but it's the question of how you approach the content. And actually, in a writing class, you approach the content as being writing. So you're writing about writing, but the content doesn't exist, in a writing class, as a sort of objective something, but rather, all the stuff that you read in the content becomes pieces of rhetoric itself. And so actually, a good writing course has a little bit of the sophistication of, say, a historiography class, or something, where you have to be able to understand what the content says, it's good to practice that—but then, to think about, after all, somebody *wrote* that, and thinking about it in those kinds of ways. So content becomes grist for the mill.

Teaching Writing 1/Writing 2

Rabkin: I think it would be lovely, if you're willing, to bring in an example, in the form of one of the Writing 1s that *you* taught. I'm thinking—and you might want to use a different one, but I'm thinking in particular of one that you taught, I think, quite a few times in which you used issues of the *New Yorker Magazine*.

Freeman: Yeah, well, I did that for the last ten years. And, in fact, I did it again last spring, when I came back and taught.

I ended up always teaching a Writing 1 course, a Writing 2 course, whose content *was* writing. And oftentimes I just said that the content of this course is, “what’s good writing?” And part of the reason for that was that I thought we needed a couple of courses so that if the only course that was left was something on animal rights, and if they students looking for a section didn’t care anything about animal rights, they could go to somewhere that didn’t have a set topic. Because when I taught my *New Yorker* course, for every single assignment students could choose what they wanted to write about from a number of different articles. So right there, you had a huge diversity of content just built into it.

I did that for a lot of reasons. I had been using a really good reader—collection of essays—that I liked a lot, but I was getting a little tired of it. I needed to change every so often. The main reason you have to change every so often is because you start saying the same things over and over again, and *doing* the same things over and over again, and not paying much attention to whether or not they work. But also, it got to be that even used copies of the reader were costing students forty-five, fifty dollars. And I discovered that I could get everybody a ten-week subscription to the *New Yorker* for less than seven dollars apiece. So I discovered that I could just buy twenty-five ten-week subscriptions, and I could collect seven dollars.

Rabkin: This was some educational deal that the *New Yorker*—

Freeman: Yeah. They got better at it, too. At the beginning they were sort of sporadic with their mailing, which made it difficult. But the last five or six years I did it, they were very on top if it; other people had obviously taken them up on it. And a couple of other people—Maggie Amis teaches her course from the *New Yorker* the same way.

So I could give students a lot of choice about what to write about. It wasn't very expensive. And it was current, and there was an awful lot of good writing on an awful lot of different things. But the other thing is, the *New Yorker*, for our students now—and this has been true for, oh, I probably did it for about twelve years—the writing in the *New Yorker* is hard for, not the very, very best students, but many, many students. And it's hard for interesting reasons. And the articles are also *long*. And those are all things which, when you deal with, you're helping them learn to deal with those kinds of things in other classes—or in life. (laughs) It's a way of providing real content, and difficult content, challenging content, without picking a field.

Rabkin: Yes. Can you talk about the kinds of writing assignments you gave the students?

Freeman. Yes. I always liked to start out with two short assignments. They were a little different every time, but they both had to do with choosing an article, and

I would give them a list. I think the first assignment would often ask them to say, how did the article change them, if it did. And I always used to start out with a little exercise based on some research about how, if you think about anybody who reads something, there's a whole continuum of possible changes that can happen, all the way from: you can believe one thing and then believe something else—you know, be completely changed by it—or where there can be no change at all. You can have not known anything about it the subject, and this suddenly lets you know some things. You can have some of your certainties be shaken up a little bit. You can be confirmed in what you think, or add information to the stuff that you know. So I'd talk about the variety of possible effects, and I'd have them read a little essay about image and change. So then I'd assign them to pick one of the articles, and then write about the extent to which, given who they were when they came to the article, how were they changed.

Then the second assignment, I think, was more asking them to look at, what were the choices that the writer of the article had made. What did they put in; what did they leave out. That got us into thinking about all of the gazillions of things that you can choose. You have tons of choice when you write. Most of the time students don't think they have much choice at all.

Rabkin: Choices of content, or tone, or—?

Freeman: Tone; content; where do you start, where do you stop; why do you put that in the order what would happen, if you made a different choice; style; why

do you choose— And, of course, especially as Writing 2 became a little bit more research-oriented, although it was always focused on sources—

Rabkin: Writing 2 is now the name for what used to be called Writing 1, is that true?

Freeman: Ah, yes, basically. Now it's called, I think, Rhetoric and Inquiry (as opposed to Composition and Rhetoric), with a little bit more emphasis on research— And then you go through the same litany, you can't write about all the choices, so you have to make decisions. So then they do those two papers, and I have them choose one of them to revise.

That was the first third of the quarter. The second third of the quarter was involved with research. I think there were three assignments that led them through this. Again, by this time, because I front-loaded the subscription, they had about six issues of the *New Yorker*. And I made a big, long list of possible essays that would be good for this, and I let them pick something that they were interested in, and then do research on the topic, with a view of writing a paper on how their research on the topic added to simply reading the *New Yorker* article.

Rabkin: Aha. So they would choose a topic that had been addressed in one of these *New Yorker* articles.

Freeman: Yes. Or some aspect of it. And their essay could be critical; it could take some aspect of the topic and look into more views. You could, say, take a *New Yorker* article and look up just scholarly articles on the same thing. And you could, if you wanted to, do a rhetorical or a stylistic comparison. Students had to find a certain number of sources, and the first paper was actually an annotated bibliography. But the final paper—they could actually just use, if they wanted to, one other source. Because there were so many different ways you could do the assignment. But the whole point of their essay was to add value to the reading of the *New Yorker* article in some way. And it worked really well for a research topic, because it was contained; depending on the abilities of the students, it could be rather contained for people who couldn't manage a whole lot.

There was some really good writing. I just yesterday wrote a recommendation for a young woman who's graduating, and is off to pharmacology school. She had read a very difficult article by George Packer on Dresden. It was about how Dresden was reinventing itself, and rebuilding itself, and the controversy about, in doing this, whether Dresden was ignoring and whitewashing its very anti-Semitic past. And this got complicated because Dresden, of course, was so terribly bombed by the Allies. In this was the feeling that, because they had suffered so much in the bombing, that this was expiation, that they didn't need to make amends for their past anti-Semitism. And it was a typical *New Yorker* article where Packer talked to lots of people with different perspectives, and it doesn't really come to a conclusion at the end. One of the nice things about *New Yorker* articles is that they have very definite purposes, and they often are leading you towards one direction, but lots of times they do not have a thesis. I like that.

This student was from San Francisco, a Chinese American student who was not interested, particularly, in the humanities, but she really did a lot of research. She wrote, in the end, this extraordinarily thoughtful paper, arguing that (she looked at all this research) nothing cancels anything out, what the people who bombed have to take responsibility for bombing Dresden; that the people who killed all those Jews and Gypsies have to take responsibility. But it was really cool, because—and I just wrote this in this recommendation that I sent for pharmacology school—her seriousness—those were really difficult ethical questions, and the temptation to come up with some simple formula, you know, like, well, the kettle shouldn't call the whatever-it-is black—she didn't go there. So, that was just one example. There were lots.

That was the second third of the quarter. Then the third part of the quarter, there were many choices. One of the choices was that they could choose a writer in the *New Yorker* that they liked, and look at others of their works, and talk about the work as a whole as opposed to one article. There are a lot of people *New Yorker* writers] that you can do that with. And students could do something with the cartoons if they wanted to; they could do something with the covers if they wanted to. Most of them chose another alternative, which was to write a *New Yorker*-style article. And that had two parts to it. The first part was: we identified the various genres in the *New Yorker*, like there's the Comment, at the beginning, the Talks of the Town, they're wonderful, you know, wonderful little things. Or the longer sort of pieces that have titles like "Letter from" somewhere, or, "Annals of..." And then the reviews. The one thing I would not let them

students do is imitate or write about the “Shouts and Murmurs,” because I had a couple who tried it, and some of them wrote about them without realizing they were satiric.

Anyway, first of all, if they were going to write a *New Yorker*-style piece] students had to read two or three articles that were of the genre that they were going to be writing, and write a—it wasn’t really a paper, but it was formal notes on, how would they characterize the genre, what are the qualities of the genre. If you were going to write a Talk of the Town, what would you notice about it. And one of the things that eventually they noticed was that the Talk of the Town almost never uses “I,” even though they’re essentially first-person reportage. Or the reviews: lots of students were interested in the pop music review. Sasha Frere-Jones is a great reviewer, all right, so what is characteristic about his reviewing style? So that would be the first part of the assignment, and then the second part of it would be to write the piece. (It wouldn’t be as long as most *New Yorker* articles.) And then we did this great thing, which I stole from Ginny [Draper], where instead of getting in groups and discussing their own papers, they submitted their draft to an editorial board. And the editorial board could either accept it as is and say it’s wonderful, or reject it—

Rabkin: —and tell them why?

Freeman: Yes. Or reject it plain, saying, you know, you’ve got to start over. Or, give suggestions for revision. And then they would revise. I only had two incidents where the editorial boards rejected students’ articles. And both times

they were absolutely justified. One was a huge case of plagiarism, which they caught. Somebody just copied something from somewhere else. The other was too short and perfunctory to be a good-faith response to the assignment.

Rabkin: Good for them.

Freeman: So that was the course. And so I taught some versions, pretty much, of that, for a long time.

Rabkin: I remember, in a conversation we had several years ago, about this course, being impressed by another element of one of the assignments, in which students chose a topic, and then part of what you had them do was to write about it—to compile a bunch of information without making an argument or taking a position. And then—did they have to also take someone else’s position?

Freeman: That was actually the version of the course before this. For a while, I was asking students, on their research topic, to write a white paper first, in which they were on the staff of—like they were clerking for a Supreme Court justice, where they had to lay out all the pros and cons in the arguments. And then the second paper was for them to take a position.

Rabkin: I see.

Freeman: Because I got so tired of students, when they had to write a position paper about something, take a position ignoring— I mean, their research already

was cherry-picking the things that were going to support their position. So it was always very predictable. I discovered that by doing it in two stages, I could prevent that happening.

Composition Courses – Goals and Practices

Rabkin: Okay, great. Thank you. But that's really helpful. And it might be useful, now, to open out into the more, sort of, general principles on which the whole idea of this composition and rhetoric course was based, the goals of Writing 1.

Freeman: Yeah. [Searching for a document in her file]. Every once in a while now, people complain, and they say that we're demanding more of the course than we used to. So I did dig out [pulls out document]— In 1984, so that was a long time ago—that's when we first invented Writing 1, when Humanities 1 (the Subject A courses) were no longer going to be Subject A, because we couldn't have a course that satisfied Subject A, and Writing Program faculty had moved into the core course. And so Writing 1 was now required of everybody except the 20 percent who had scored four or five (on the Advanced Placement test). So we got together, and we tried to describe what we thought Writing 1 should do. And I just love it.

Rabkin: And the title of this document is—

Freeman: "DRAFT:—

Rabkin: (laughs)

Freeman: —What We Try to Accomplish in Writing 1.” And it’s interesting: this lasted for a long time [leafing through pages]. And I think we didn’t do anything with to change it until ‘98, when we revised it, and it said “DRAFT: The Writing Program’s Goals for Writing 1.” Both times, it also had a little bit of common practices, about what you did. In 2004, the requirement got changed so that the core course satisfied the C1 requirement, and then Writing 1 became Writing 2 and it satisfied the C2 requirement. Then we did a new Goals and Expectations for C1 and C2 courses. And so that’s the third iteration. Then they didn’t put “Draft” on it, which I thought was too bad.

I have a friend who—I’m forever telling him he has to be “strategic, and not operatic.” But then, reading all this stuff, I realized that we, and I—I mean, the program, but also me, in my own things—I was *terribly* operatic at the same time I was also being strategic.

Rabkin: “Operatic,” meaning—

Freeman: Passionate and eloquent. (laughs) You know—carrying on.

So I’m going to just read through a little of these. So, “Writing 1”(this is the first draft) “helps students to experience and understand the power of language to generate meaning, to create identities for the writer, and to change readers. It

enables them to explore writing as a means of self-expression, and as a means of growth, discovery, and learning, as well as a means of communication.”

That was only “1.” of 7 points. So: “2. Writing 1 helps students understand the implication of viewing writing as a process, encouraging them to examine and experiment with their own systems for writing papers, and teaching them a variety of strategies for discovering material, making sense, revising, and editing.

“3: “Writing 1 helps students become rhetorically sophisticated. They learn to analyze a writing assignment’s rhetorical situation—that is, the nature of the audience they are addressing, the conventions appropriate given the situation and audience, and the kinds of arguments and evidence that are persuasive given that situation.

“4: “Writing 1 helps students understand the nature of form, coherence, clarity, and persuasiveness. Since students will be writing in different disciplines that use different conventions, we attempt to teach the essence of these qualities, not merely one model for achieving them.

“5. Writing 1 helps students experience and appreciate the pleasures of word play, the epistemology of style, and the satisfaction of working to master an exacting craft.

“6. Writing 1 gives students the skills and resources they need to write effectively and accurately in standard English.” (It’s interesting, because in my old age, I’d

change that to what I'd call standard *professional* English. But anyway.) "It helps them to evaluate their writing realistically, to eliminate those errors that can be corrected in ten weeks, and to devise strategies for dealing with problems that need more time to disappear."

And "7. Writing 1 helps students see how critical reading is the other side of composition's coin, that perceiving and analyzing meaning in a text that one is reading is related to creating meaning in a text one is writing."

So that was '84.

Rabkin: Did you draft this?

Freeman: I drafted it, but then I can remember us sitting around a room, and we all fought about it. But we fought more about '98's revision. And actually, there, we ended up with eight items. [Pulls out a new document.] Well, it's a little different: "Writing 1 students learn how to conduct research and to find, evaluate, use, and cite written sources, including those available online." And, "Writing 1 students learn how to become more effective readers and editors of other students' papers, discovering in the process that their peers can be stimulating, thinkers, writers, collaborators, and audiences." So some of it is the same, and then there were additions and revisions— And then, as I say, the requirements for C1 and C2 grow out of it.

But the point about this is, even way back in 1984, this description grows out of the kind of pedagogical and intellectual thinking that had come into the whole teaching of writing. So you were dealing with really, really big questions of ethics and epistemology and rhetoric and politics. And our theory was that anybody who had these goals in mind was going to teach an intellectually sophisticated class, even if you were talking about grammar.

Rabkin: Can you talk about some of the “Common Practices”?

Freeman: Oh, the Common Practices. [Shuffles papers] I seem to have left the Common Practices off of my copies of the goals from '84. But this was from the '98 one: We agreed that we would “require six to eight pieces of substantial writing per quarter—counting, in some cases, major revisions and emphasizing argument and analysis, as well as various amounts and kinds of purposeful informal writing.” And then, “Two:”—which was typical of us—“require a substantial but not overwhelming amount of reading.” “Three: give students ample opportunity to receive individual attention, not only in instructors’ regularly scheduled office hours . . . but also in conferences or small tutorials. Four: Assign work that requires students to do research, use written sources, and consider issues of documentation and plagiarism.” That’s when Writing 1 sections officially took over the responsibility of introducing students to UCSC’s library resources by making at least one class visit to either McHenry or the Science Library. “Five: Discuss and practice strategies for completing the more common kinds of writing assigned at UCSC. Six: Emphasize revision. Seven: Encourage collaborative learning, and create opportunities for students to read

and comment upon each other's writings. Eight: Address issues of grammar, usage, and style through references to students' actual writing."

Some people really felt that the C1 and C2, especially the C2 requirements, were upping the expectations for what would be taught in the class beyond what had been expected in Writing 1, the predecessor to those courses. So then we got this out and looked at it, and it turned out there was very little difference.

Rabkin: Great, thank you. That's really helpful.

Let me just throw out a bunch of possible directions, and we'll have time today to enter into maybe a couple of them. But whatever we don't get to today, we can move into [at the next interview].

So what I'm thinking about, right now, some possibilities: I'm interested in hearing a little more about how you approached the training of graduate students to teach composition. That's one possible direction. There's also the Learning Assistance Program in Writing—the training of tutors—and also the administration of that, how it worked. And that is linked, in part, to Writing Across the Curriculum, and the work that Ginny Draper did with people in different boards and eventually departments to cultivate introductory courses in their fields that had a writing-tutoring component. The journalism minor. And eventually the communication and rhetoric minor—that short-lived one—

Freeman: Very short-lived. (laughs)

Rabkin: You've made some reference to the writing courses for re-entry students, and, of course, Roz Spafford and I, and maybe somebody else, taught some specifically for re-entry women. And there was a brief period when I think Tim Fitzmaurice and maybe somebody else were teaching those courses for men, as well.

Freeman: Yes.

Rabkin: I'd be interested in hearing a little bit about what was behind the creation of those courses. Also, assessment of the impact of the program on the campus, both internally and then eventually by external reviews. Anyway, those are a few possibilities.

Building and Losing an Upper-Division Writing Curriculum

Freeman: I have to say that I don't have a lot to say about the tutoring or the courses. But these are examples of what comes when you hire really good people with interesting interests, who see needs and then move to deal with them. So, as with Don and the outreach to the schools, although I did co-direct a summer workshop in Salinas one year, and I visited and talked to the re-entry women courses on occasion, those were things that people put into place and did spectacularly, and were really, really important and interesting—and about which I knew very little. And that was fine with me. (laughs) I mean, it was the kind of thing where you could just sit back and appreciate other people's work.

Don Rothman introduced peer tutoring early and it spread once we had a Writing Program person in each college. In 1981 we decided that since there was no campus writing center, that we would have a writing center in each college.¹⁸

The interesting thing was that the college writing instructor, him or herself, sat in the Writing Center and had open hours, and tutored people who came in. I was the writing “preceptor,” I think we called them, for Cowell, and I sat and saw Cowell College students. And then Marcia Brody, who was at Eight, quit, so I went over and was the writing preceptor over there.

But that was kind of how it began. And then I got sort of into this habit of taking a chunk of what I was doing, as I was sort of coordinating the whole thing, and then passing it off to somebody. And one of the very first things I passed off was the whole tutor business, to Chuck Atkinson, so then he was really responsible for developing an expanded tutor program.

And the Learning Assistance Program in Writing expanded exponentially. And, of course, then, when we began doing the Writing 10s, the two-workload-credit tutorials for core course students who had not satisfied Subject A—so we were

¹⁸ Soon after Don Rothman started teaching in Oakes College, he organized undergraduate tutors to work with his students, and before long other colleges were using peer tutors as well. The vibrancy and sophistication of their work are evident in *Life Sentences: A Guide to Undergraduate Writing and Research at UC Santa Cruz*, written in 1980 by tutors David Bank, Anne Gray, and Julia Sokoloff. Funding came from an Instructional Improvement Grant, and the authors “give special thanks to Don Rothman – teacher, critic, mentor, friend . . .” In 1986, with help from Chuck Atkinson, tutors revised and expanded *Life Sentences*, renaming it *The Good Word*—Editor.

hiring tutors to do Writing 10, but then the Writing 10 tutors became available to do the writing centers. It was a great system, and it worked very, very well.

Up until '92, from '74 to '92, we expanded. We created things; we invented things; we did many, many, many new things. At the same time, there were all these ways that we had to connect with one another—the Writing Program potluck, the faculty reading series, which Chuck, I think, also was instrumental in starting. I think of us as being sort of at our apex, from '92 to '95. Well, maybe a little farther. Say, all the way to '97. In '97, the real onslaughts on the budget began. And it wasn't so bad at first, because Jorge Hankamer was dean of humanities, and I was able to argue with him. But that was the point at which we lost some equivalencies, course relief, especially for Writing Across the Curriculum, as well as funds for tutors. I cut a deal with him to save journalism, which was to increase class size in Writing 1 from twenty to twenty-two.

And then there was this huge moment when I thought we'd solved everything, when Jorge Hankamer and I convinced then-Executive Vice Chancellor Michael Tanner to fund the Writing Program's freshman curriculum directly from the central campus administration according to a formula tied to enrollment]—not give the money as part of a block grant to the humanities division. There was a three-year agreement, and that went into place. When Wlad Godzich became the dean of humanities, the agreement was not renewed. I don't know if it's true but I have imagined that when he was hired, he was told, "If we go back to the block grant, you can have the money, and then whatever you take out of the Writing Program you can spend on what you want." But I have no—

Rabkin: You think he was told that?

Freeman: In effect, maybe. For one thing, this also coincided with the arrival, first of all, of Chancellor MRC Greenwood and—Executive Vice Chancellor John Simpson. I don't think that what happened to the Writing Program from 2000 on could have happened without at least the passive agreement of the central administration.

All this wonderful stuff that people had created, including much of the outreach to the schools, much of the peer tutoring, the minors in Journalism and Rhetoric and Communication, support for Writing Across the Curriculum, all this kind of stuff was stripped away, including all the upper-division courses which we'd had from the beginning.

The point is here, though, that things like the re-entry women classes were possible because we had those upper-division courses to play around with.

And then, for example, with Ginny Draper, who oversaw the Writing Across the Curriculum Program—that was another example, as with the tutoring, where I had sort of started it, and gotten a little something going, but was way too busy to think about it, and then turned it over to somebody who turned it into this really wonderful, big thing. Don and I—starting with those seminars for the core courses, we had started doing some Writing Across the Curriculum programming. Then when Ginny came, I turned a whole bunch of it over to her.

But we had enough course relief at that point so we were able to have coordinators in all three divisions supporting Writing Across the Curriculum.

For example, Dan Scripture was able to take one of our equivalencies and co-teach a writing course with computer engineering, for a couple years, until they were able to take the course over. And that became a required upper-division course in the major. And we were able to co-teach writing-intensive courses with all the divisions. Ginny took on Writing Across the Curriculum with *huge* energy, and did a number of really important publications, including one called *Writing and Learning* (a guide to incorporating writing in disciplinary courses), which is still—until recent times, copies of it were still in the copy center, and if somebody had wanted it, they could get it.

Rabkin: I used that for years, training TAs in the Environmental Studies Department, long after Ginny had retired.

Freeman: Yes. And somebody was asking about it—oh, I know: when the requirements shifted from the writing-intensive requirement to the disciplinary communications. We discovered at that point, from Ginny, that it was still possible to get copies.

The point is that, for not very much money, you could seed all this activity. And that's been totally lost, along with the upper division. And that's too bad. But while it lasted, the idea that instead of having all this stuff accumulate under one administrative person, and instead splitting it off—it meant that I didn't have to

do a whole bunch of things I wasn't all that interested in or good at, and to have other people do them splendidly. It was a model that was sort of atypical, but it really worked well

Rabkin: We're just about at two hours. Before we turn off the recorder, I'd be interested in hearing whether you have any retrospective insights. Having seen all that burgeoning of wonderful programs-within-a-program, and then having lost it—if you had it to do over again, whether there's anything you might have done differently, or whether you see it as having been really an inevitable process.

Freeman: It wasn't inevitable, I don't think, except that the budget constraints were real. I suppose the inevitability is the problem of: if you have to cut a budget and only a very small amount of your budget is not tied down, a program dependent on soft funding is vulnerable.

On the other hand, in the whole budget, even of [the] Santa Cruz campus, the journalism program— And there's another example of getting two really excellent people and letting them go.

Rabkin: Roz Spafford and Conn Hallinan.¹⁹

¹⁹ Roz Spafford and Conn Hallinan shaped, oversaw, and taught in the Writing Program's Journalism minor, whose extensive curriculum (with some courses taught by visiting media professionals) emphasized media criticism and theory alongside training and supervised practical experience in reporting and writing skills. The minor, along with most of the Writing Program's upper-division curriculum eventually fell victim to budget cuts—Editor.

Freeman: —and Conn Hallinan, with major help from Paul Skenazy. Again, I had virtually nothing to do with that. I mean, I just appreciated it, and put it in the budget all the time.

Even within the UCSC budget, journalism, the upper-division courses, Writing 10 tutorials, even the course relief received by faculty members for various administrative functions, which were allowing people to provide support, and the tutoring—all those things were a really very small amount of money, when you added them all up. When you looked around and saw other things that people managed to find money for, and you do a cost-benefit analysis, especially when you think of it in terms of undergraduates, I think it reflected not only a budget crisis but a shift in priorities. I think if other people had been present in certain positions at certain times, it wouldn't have happened the way it did.

I don't think there was anything that *we* could have done. The big problem, in the end, was probably inevitable when, for reasons nobody has ever been able to explain to me, they did not renew the Tanner compact, when they went back to giving our whole, entire budget to the humanities division as part of its block grant instead of having it earmarked for composition.

Rabkin: So that then, whoever was dean of the humanities at a given time could play with that money.

Freeman: Yeah, basically. The one way the Writing Program was protected in a way, say, that the languages never were, was that we were intertwined with the

general education requirements. You still had to get students through Subject A, and they had to satisfy their C requirement. There was talk at some point about whether other departments could teach courses that satisfied C. But that never went anywhere. (laughs) I suppose that's the advantage of the "mud hen" thing: nobody else wants to do it. And that's what we ended up with in the end: stuff that satisfies requirements, and nothing else. And the great danger with that is exactly what we were trying to avoid so long, was a parochialism: having a faculty which now doesn't necessarily ever teach anything other than mostly first-year students and sometimes second-year students in introductory writing courses. I think that's not a good thing.

Rabkin: Just going back to what you said earlier: it's a potential recipe for burnout, doing so much of the same thing over and over again. And then it also narrows the scope, and the resilience and flexibility, of what people are doing and can do.

Freeman: Right. And just having experience of upper-division students is an important antidote. It helps you put some perspective—

So, I don't think it was inevitable, but given the choices that people in administration were making, we did everything we could. And what's left—just one little footnote on this. Probably not everybody would agree with this, but I really do think that as the Writing Program integrated with the core courses, and made the core courses more and more into writing courses—and then, in 2005 I think it was, when the general education requirements were changed again, so

that for the first time in the whole history of the campus, the core courses satisfied a general education requirement. Without that, the core courses came within hairs' breadths of disappearing on numerous occasions. I was so amused by the Senate meeting. When the Senate voted—with no discussion, it was just sort of an afterthought—to change the requirement so that the core courses satisfied C1, or in some cases C2, what none of them seemed to realize is that suddenly the core courses were secure in a way that they had never been secure before. Because somebody was going to have to teach those courses. So that was satisfying. (laughs)

Rabkin: Thank you.

Rabkin: I'm Sarah Rabkin. I'm with Carol Freeman. It's November 5, 2012—the day before the [presidential] election. [laughs nervously]

Freeman: (laughs)

Rabkin: We're once again at my house in Soquel, [California], for our third interview this time. And Carol, what I'm thinking about this interview is that there are a few little pieces we might want to pick up from last time about the Writing Program. But then I'd like to devote the majority of our time to some things I know you wanted to talk about, and I want to hear about: your time as Cowell provost, and your work on CEP. And a little bit, also, on your statewide work with the preparatory education, Subject A—whatever you want to say about that.

Freeman: Okay.

Rabkin: Are there any other chunks of information that—

Freeman: That probably covers it.

Teaching About Writing Pedagogy

Rabkin: Okay. So, I'm going to just ask you a couple of questions that I'd like to follow up with from last time, and then, if there's anything you'd like to add that we haven't covered about the Writing Program, let's be sure to do that. The first thing that I'm curious about: You've talked about your work teaching people how to teach writing, with the Lit 203, Writing 203. And I wonder if you could say just a little bit about your approach to teaching people how to teach writing. I wonder what the most important ideas or insights are that you try to convey or model.

Freeman: I think that the most important things that I try to get people interested in are various theoretical perspectives, from different vantage points, that would then allow people to be self-conscious and make choices about their own practice. It's a little hard, because no matter who it is, when you're trying to teach people to be more effective teachers of writing—whether you're talking to high school teachers, or tutors, or graduate students, or anybody, it doesn't matter—is they tend to want to want recipes. The old thing always was, "What can I do on

Monday morning?" I always resisted this temptation, because I felt that instead, what I wanted to do was give people material that would make them think about *how* they would decide what to do. And, of course, there's nothing wrong, then, with going on and talking about things that work and things that don't work.

This goes all the way through 2005, when the core courses became officially part of the C1-C2 requirement, and I got an Instructional Improvement Grant to write a booklet that would help people who had taught in core courses for a long time, but hadn't really thought about them as writing courses, to try to think about how to make that transition. Which is, all the way back to the foundation seminars, things we keep talking about over and over again.

My tendency is always wanting to introduce people to the kind of theoretical perspectives which—and we're always autobiographical in these things—have most changed my own approach to teaching. So one of those would be, for example, thoughts about young adults' cognitive development—to help people understand more where, say, especially, a new student, a freshman, eighteen years old, is coming from in terms of their own development as thinkers. To help people who are going to teach them how to write to understand the education in writing that many of these students would have had before this. So that you would think about their attitudes. And then, different approaches to grammar, to creating form, to meaning, and to the *process* of writing. So the texts that I asked people to read in these courses were mostly, I felt, giving people information that then would allow one to think about one's own class. So that was the approach that I tried to use.

That's one reason why Mina Shaughnessy has always been so important to me, because Mina Shaughnessy makes one, even today (this was thirty-six years ago that she wrote), think about, "What's the significance of error?" Most people think, "All right, so, how do I teach people to write in complete sentences, and how do we *eradicate* error?" Whereas Mina Shaughnessy had this great idea, which completely changed my mind conceptually: that nobody makes errors on purpose. And there's often a *logic* of error. If *you*, first of all, as an instructor, can understand the logic of the error, and then you can help students to put it in a broader perspective, not "I've done something wrong," but "Why did I do this this way?"—then it completely changes your whole outlook. So just multiply that with lots of other aspects of writing, and that was basically how I tried to approach it.

Rabkin: Anything else you'd like to say about teaching people who teach writing?

Freeman: People divide into two groups. One, suddenly, light bulbs begin to go off, and they suddenly think, "Oh my goodness, if you think of everything as persuasion, what does that mean?" Or, if you suddenly realize that the only thing that matters, really, when you're writing, is that you're effective *in the context*— So, lights go on for some people. For other people, they get restive, and they still want you to tell them what to do on Monday morning. (laughs) And it's a tension that exists in all the contexts where one's trying to teach pedagogy.

Rabkin: You've made some references to a point in the history of the Writing Program (this is a new subject) that you described as sort of a crash, where the budget cuts were fairly severe. And this was under the reign of Dean Godzich, I think, during that time. I wonder if you want to say anything about that period in the history of the Writing Program, and what happened, and what you did about it.

A Series of Budget Cuts

Freeman: First of all, it's interesting, looking back, that really the university has been in a series of budget crises. There have been various ones, but starting in about 1991 was the first one. That one was, in an interesting way, largely covered by the early retirements that were offered to people—

Rabkin: This was the VERIP program?²⁰

Freeman: The VERIP program, yes. Because at that point, the University of California retirement system was making so much money that it was in danger of losing its nonprofit status. (laughs) So many, many people in the UC system took early retirement and then came back and taught. But the point of that is that the rhetoric of "We have to cut," in these waves of budget crises, and the one that

²⁰ The Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program [VERIP] program was an early retirement incentive program offered to UCSC faculty from 1991-1994—Editor.

will or will not get worse with Proposition 30 tomorrow²¹—that makes it now twenty-two years, two decades of just continual attrition.

In the case of UCSC, this was exacerbated by another thing, and that is that the campus originally, in a lot of its curricular arrangements, as a new campus, was funded at the same student-faculty ratio as the formula, but it had fewer students per faculty member. So as the campus grew older and as the need increased and as the number of students increased in proportion to the size of the faculty, it was not only having to cut, but it was also reaching a level that it was going to have to function at. So you had these two things working together.

Rabkin: You had an increasing ratio of students to faculty—

Freeman: In terms of the funding, what you were getting—how many student FTE you had to have to get a faculty FTE. You know, those kinds of things.

Rabkin: I see. So the formula—

Freeman: The formulas are on enrollment, the number of faculty FTE you have. And new campuses take a while to rev up. So a lot of what was possible in the first years was possible because you had an actual student-faculty ratio that was below the budgeted one.

²¹ Proposition 30 was a California ballot measure passed by the voters on November 6, 2012. It increased taxes to prevent six billion dollars in cuts to the education budget for California state schools—Editor.

So there was a tremendous amount of having to defend and to justify, for years. And in fact, my whole equivalency scheme, where I divided one course relief up into sixths, and then gave people a sixth of a course for this or that, came out of two things. So that people who were doing things other than teaching had to be assigned responsibilities, and then those responsibilities—I could justify them on a sheet of paper, and say, “This is what you’re getting paid, this little, tiny, tiny sliver of money, a sixth of a course, for doing.” That was a double-edged sword. The administration, early on, and this is from the late 1980s up through these budget cuts, claimed that we were over-administered because of the amount of course relief. So it was a way of justifying them very, very, very precisely and showing that we’re not really talking about “administration,” but we’re talking about teaching independent studies; we’re talking about all kinds of things that had to do with instruction—supervising tutorials, reading placement exams, attending faculty development workshops, etc.

And eventually, interestingly enough, as the budget cuts came, having the equivalencies also meant a way of being able to *cut*. I began to have this principle, which was: never accept a cut that does not result in a commensurate decrease in work. And so, therefore, as things began to be cut, starting in the early 90s, then we began to lose some things—things like some of the equivalencies that we’d been given to work with other departments. We had had a bunch of equivalencies to support lit graduate students and also histcon graduate students, for example, helping new graduate students write their seminar papers and revise their dissertations. Eventually, as the cuts came, we had to limit the number of people who could give independent studies. So the

detailed system of assigning equivalencies had started out as a result of my efforts to make sure that lecturers were paid for everything that they did.

And, of course, all of *that* would have been unnecessary if I'd been able to get a reasonable workload adopted, and I never was. Because then you would have had—say that the workload for a full-time lecturer was seven rather than eight courses: one of those courses would be divided up in the form of a course equivalency], for the three quarters, for all kinds of administrative and other stuff that you have to do in order to teach. And this would allow full-time lecturers to have a sustainable, two-course-per-quarter teaching load.

I would say through most of the nineties, we managed to keep doing all of the things we were doing. And there were some other enterprises—for example, the sudden increase in the amount of money that was available to help work with schools. So we managed to keep most of the elements of the program going pretty much just fine, with these minor cuts. It wasn't really until, was it about '97? that things got really tight. Starting around '95, '96. Jorge Hankamer was dean of humanities, and we got into a major battle. But it was a respectful battle. I can't even *think* of the number of memos, and back-and-forth. And this was all with a lot of consultation with Writing Program faculty and students, alumni, and faculty from outside the Writing Program. The bottom line is that we agreed to increase class size from twenty to twenty-two, in order to save journalism. And there were some other things. The Learning Assistance tutoring program was cut, to a certain extent—not eradicated, but cut. And along with that came the agreement that Jorge Hankamer would work with me, we'd work together to

figure out this formula for funding the lower division—basically comp classes and the freshman curriculum. Michael Tanner was the executive vice chancellor. We'd make a formula so that the humanities division would be protected from having to absorb extra costs if there was a bigger class, to give everybody enough Writing 1s. And in 1997 we achieved that formula.

As a result of that, we had a sort of halcyon year, where we had not only the assurance that no matter how many freshmen there were, that that would be covered, along with the need for administrating those things. Jorge Hankamer also agreed that we would start our rhetoric and communication minor. The division had never been really paying us our fair share back for the graduate students who were teaching in Writing 2. (Writing 1, at that point.) So part of the agreement was that he would give me half of that money back to do the communication and rhetoric minor. So after being very painful for about a year and a half or so, we came out of that struggle, I thought, with a lot of things in place.

Then there was a change: a new chancellor, new executive vice chancellor—[John] Simpson—and a new dean of undergraduate education, though I don't think that was significant. And, of course, a new dean of the humanities. And again, the cry was basically again: budget cuts, budget cuts. Very quickly—2000-01 was my last year as chair. Dean Godzich and I had had some disagreements, but basically I thought we had understandings, and everything was nailed down. But the next year he decided that—first of all, the compact was allowed to expire, and within two years he had wiped out everything except for

introductory courses that satisfied requirements, with the justification that the humanities division could no longer pay for these things.

Now, there were huge debates and protests, especially concerning journalism about a bunch of this, including the fact that the Writing Program's student-faculty ratio was second highest in the entire humanities division. So actually, the Writing Program, according to the formula, was bringing funds into the division rather than costing. But it's the old problem that our budget was almost entirely soft money. So therefore, for whatever reason, he felt that this was what he needed to do. And so, within two years, the only thing that was left of the Writing Program was the first-year program, pretty much. And an increased class size in Writing 1 to twenty-four per class.

The only reason class size didn't go higher was—who knows, but I think, was that—I actually was chair of the Committee on Educational Policy at this point, and I recused myself, stepped out because there were lots of questions about the Writing Program coming to the committee. And Richard Hughey, who now is the undergraduate dean of education (he's in computer engineering) took over for those agenda items. On my advice, Roz Spafford, who was chair of the Writing Program then, submitted a new course approval form for courses that satisfied the C requirement. CEP approves all course approval forms, but they especially are in charge of deciding at what point courses have changed so much that they can no longer satisfy general education requirements. So, sort of the last skirmish in all of this was that Roz looked at her budget and realized that in order to meet it, the class size in Writing 1 would be thirty students per class. So

she submitted a course approval form to CEP, asking to raise the class size. And CEP turned it down and said it would no longer satisfy the writing [C] requirement.

Then there were a lot of campus committees of various sorts talking about writing, but basically, nothing that happened during that time was ever ameliorated. But we did stop the attrition. Dean Godzich did really say that he didn't see any reason why writing couldn't be taught in big classes with TA sections. So we sort of stopped things. And later, things became much more peaceable, and there now are, I think, probably pretty responsible ways for figuring the Writing Program budget for required courses.

What happened in those two years is that the campus developed a huge float of students required to take Writing 1 who couldn't take it because we didn't have enough spaces to teach all the students who needed the course.

Rabkin: Physical spaces?

Freeman: Yes, so that a number of the students who needed the course were not being able to get into it. And this is sort of the ticking-time-bomb nightmare of any program which has a course where a big bunch of students are required to take it, because the worst thing is when people start calling their representatives in Congress and saying, "My kid is at the University of California and can't get into her freshman comp class, and there's a regulation that says she has to take it in her first two years." It got to be a big problem. So one of the things that

happened subsequently is that the Writing Program was given enough resources to eliminate this float. And things are on track, and I think are orderly.

But we really did go from being a full-service writing program, with its influence and its mission extending very broadly throughout the whole campus, and that had a very exciting upper division curriculum, in both the journalism minor, which was, of course, famous, I mean well known, and in the new but really flourishing communication and rhetoric minor. And those things—along with the campus support for the Central California Writing Project; many, many other things, so what we have now, left, is really what anybody looking at it would recognize to be a freshman writing program, not a campus writing program.

Rabkin: Do you envision it staying more or less that way, until and unless the university sees a shift in fortunes?

Freeman: Yeah. The thing is that for so long, we had so many new ideas and so many, many projects. We were talking about a graduate certificate on teaching writing. Virginia Draper had about three different schemes. It had just been burgeoning in so many different ways.

Now, that doesn't mean there still aren't nifty little projects that people carve out. There's new cooperation between education and the Writing [Program]. Little ways. But essentially, in terms of curriculum and in scope, it's been reconfigured as a first-year program. There's nothing disgraceful about that, but it's a big shift. However, I'm very relieved to discover that at the last search we did to fill SOE

positions, there was a very, very good pool, and there was a lot of good competition. And who knows. But it's going to take a tremendous amount of re-imagining and re-building to do that.

In the meantime, though, there's still a lot of terrific teaching in the freshman program. And the freshman program itself has become more logical, with some of the new general education requirements.

However, I will say one last thing about this. There seem to be, definitely, with the new Disciplinary Communication program of general education requirements, there definitely seems to be an impulse for the Writing Program not to get involved in that.

Rabkin: Say more about Disciplinary Communication.

Freeman: We had a Writing Intensive requirement which was put into place in '84, with the first general education requirements, whereby every student had to take a course, supposedly a disciplinary course, in which there was some emphasis on writing. And the Writing Program—we were given the responsibility by CEP for giving them advice about whether courses met the criteria for Writing Intensive.

Rabkin: So the courses would be developed within the disciplines—

Freeman: Yes, they were developed within the disciplines, but when departments sent CEP a course approval form—"should this course satisfy the Writing Intensive requirement?"—somebody in the Writing Program (I did this for a long time, and then Virginia Draper took it over)—CEP would send the application to whoever was the Writing Across the Curriculum coordinator to get advice about whether this was, in fact, a writing-intensive course. And then whoever was the Writing Across the Curriculum coordinator in that area would work with the faculty member. So the relationship between the Writing Program and the requirement, and also people teaching writing-intensive courses, was a very close one.

Then there got to be very predictable problems with the Writing Intensive requirement, because with the budget cuts, one of the things that was cut was all the Writing Program's *own* writing-intensive courses, which were providing people whose disciplines did not provide them with a course, a course to take. When those disappeared—

Rabkin: Those were the upper-division offerings within the Writing Program?

Freeman: Yeah. And so when those disappeared, and there were a couple of huge departments which didn't have enough W courses to accommodate] their students, so those students began to mob, say, Lit 1, because it was a writing-intensive course. So all of a sudden Lit 1 would be full of bio majors who couldn't find another writing-intensive course. So this created a huge crisis. So the very first part of 2004, when CEP was redoing all the general education

requirements, that was one of the first ones that they looked at. And they transformed it into something called the Disciplinary Communications requirement. It was a well-designed requirement. At that point Sarah-Hope Parmeter, who's a writing instructor, was the lecturer member of CEP, and gave them a lot of good advice. And my last year on campus, I had a half-time appointment working with Dean of Undergraduate Education Bill Ladusaw on proposals for how to implement that requirement. But I think in the end, although the work with certain departments panned out in certain interesting ways, the way it's developed is to exclude the Writing Program from direct cooperation with faculty who are teaching DC courses, or influence, or just any responsibility or any enrichment in any of that. Unlike the Writing Intensive requirement, which we were very deeply involved with, the Writing Program is not with the Disciplinary Communications.

Rabkin: So does that have the effect of reducing the amount of collegial interaction that writing faculty have—?

Freeman: Yeah. It is another way in which I would say that, at the moment—and this could all change— but at the moment, it feels to me, anyway, like (and since I'm not around, I'm not going to speculate any more), in which Writing Program people are isolated in a way that they weren't before and their expertise is not utilized.

The (Short-lived) Communication & Rhetoric Minor

Rabkin: You've brought up the communication and rhetoric minor a couple of times. I wondered if you wanted to say anything about the thinking behind the creation of that minor.

Freeman: Just a little. There were lots of students who wanted to do something serious with their writing, beyond a freshman course. And in the last decade, certainly, and maybe longer, students have become more and more concerned about, how are they going to get a job; how are the things that they're doing going to give them credentials. So we found that we were actually getting somewhat less of an interest in some of our upper-division courses outside of the journalism minor. Because, first of all, the number of courses required for majors has been creeping up. And then, students have this major interest in having credentials. So you find fewer and fewer students who are wanting to take a course that was just an isolated course, just for fun, or because they thought they needed the course content. They wanted it to add up to something.

So we put a bunch of these things together and decided that what we should do was, instead of having a miscellaneous variety of upper-division courses, which had been very popular, that we would put them together into a coherent minor. And communications majors are very popular on many campuses, because they're thought to be practical. None of us were interested at all in a communications major. But we thought that by putting together the rhetoric and the communications, we could come up with something that would follow the same really effective pattern of the journalism minor.

Every so often we would have this big discussion about, should it be a journalism *major*? Originally, the journalism minor, officially, as a minor, grew out of the fact that there were more and more and more people doing journalism independent majors. Ultimately, those were a ton of work, and there were so many people getting to be interested in it that it was too much work. But also, one began to worry about whether the available offerings—was it truly an intellectually respectable major, especially when students cobbled them together? But also, was that really the best thing for students? And wouldn't journalism work best if they had a major in a discipline of some sort, and then combined it with the journalism minor? So that decision was one made very much on purpose. And that worked so well that we thought we would do the rhetoric and communications minor along the same lines.

The other big moment with Dean Hankamer was, in trying to increase the student-faculty ratio—not only in writing, but especially in the division—was when we agreed that we would figure out how to teach the rhetoric and communications courses, aiming at a number, for most of them, of forty students per course, which was perfectly reasonable. We developed a lot of really interesting courses. Jim Wilson developed a speech course that was immensely popular. And ironically, as soon as we got these new courses, then we began to have students taking these courses who were not interested in the minor. But lots of people were. Dan Scripture put together a course on editing, which was the only course on campus, really, where students could go and learn how to edit their own stuff. Tim Fitzmaurice taught a course on the rhetoric of certain professions. They were really good courses. And then there was some

cooperation with journalism, too. So, for example, the journalism students had to take a course in theory, and one course they could opt to take would be my History of Rhetoric. But it was only around for about, I think, two or three years, the rhetoric and communications minor.

Rabkin: Before the crash that we just talked about.

Freeman: Yes. Exactly.

Writing Program External Reviews

Rabkin: We haven't said anything, really, about the periodic external reviews of the Writing Program. I wondered if you wanted to talk about that at all.

Freeman: Yeah. They were interesting nodal points. And I was just thinking: anybody who would want to just look at the history of the Writing Program, one good way to do it would be just simply read the self-studies, and then, if one wanted to, to read the external review committees' reports. I think the first one was in 1985. That's the one that said that the Writing Program was "a campus treasure." And then they came at regular intervals, every so many years. In looking back at them, first of all, you can see the mission of the Writing Program, its sense of its mission, expand. But it was very consistent from the beginning to the end. It's the same kind of themes that we've talked about before: the point of the Writing Program is to teach as many students as possible, in as many ways as possible, to be effective writers—but the way that you do that is by hiring an

excellent professional faculty. Always the last goal in all of these was to hire and sustain an excellent professional faculty, providing them with the remuneration and the inspiration and the opportunity to have a self-satisfying career, and to contribute widely to the academic community. And every single time we put that into the mission, there was somebody who thought that was sort of, you know, “going beyond.” But we left it there the whole time.

Rabkin: Somebody from the external review committee would think that?

Freeman: No, no, no. Somebody on campus.

Mainly the external reviews were extremely helpful and extremely satisfying and complimentary, in ways that it was really valuable to hear. I think in the earlier years they had a lot of impact—the last one probably much less so, even though, again, these reviewers are always “world’s greatest experts.” But there was one thing that kept coming up. The external reviewers almost always initially thought that we needed ladder-rank faculty, that one of the things that should happen, and that would secure our position on campus, and safeguard us from things, would be if we had at least one ladder-rank faculty member. One of the issues that came up with Dean Godzich was whether we should simply turn into a department, and that got batted around for a while, in sometimes possibly interesting ways.

At first, it was, well, especially, we need a Senate member, who can do the personnel stuff. So that got taken care of when Don got security of employment first, in 1983.

Rabkin: And SOE faculty are senate members.

Freeman: Yes. And then a couple years later, I did. And then one of the other things that we worked out with Jorge Hankamer was, I began to worry about the succession of the Writing Program. So we made an agreement with Jorge Hankamer that we would have two more SOEs. Because then we figured that there wouldn't be a "chair for life," but we could rotate the chairs. So that was successful. And in the very first search for SOEs, we had been approved to fill one or two positions, and Roz Spafford got one of the positions, and then Elizabeth Abrams got the other. So we then had four SOEs, which is unique in the UC system.²²

The Lecturer with Security of Employment position originally—and this is forty years ago—had been awarded to lecturers who'd been around a long time and people decided they wanted to keep them, and so they were given that position. Then things changed, and it became that a lecturer position could not automatically turn into a lecturer with security of employment. So if you were going to make that transition, what you had to do is have the *position approved*

²² I became a lecturer with Security of Employment in 1987, a not entirely smooth process, which required a great deal of Chair of the Writing Committee Paul Skenazy's persuasive skills and patience. In 1993, I was given the title of Chair of the Writing Program (as opposed to Coordinator) for the first time. At that point, the Writing Committee, which over the years had shrunk to only one person (the chair) finally dissolved—*Carol Freeman*.

and then the lecturer in question might apply for the SOE position. So it is not analogous to an assistant professor or associate professor or professor.

Rabkin: So that you'd have to have an SOE position approved within your program, and then you'd have to do a search for that position.

Freeman: You'd have to do a national search for it. So that's how these all came about.

Partly because the SOE position was strange, one of the things that kept coming up over and over, and with increasing frequency, was that, well, you really need ladder faculty. And it became an interesting debate, in which we kept deciding, no, we don't need a ladder faculty member.

Rabkin: Did you see a *liability* to having a ladder faculty member in the program?

Freeman: Well, yes. First of all, unless we changed ourselves into a department, any person who was a ladder faculty in writing would have to have an affiliation with a department, or they would have no one to review them, and they would never get tenure. So that was one thing. And then, we did a lot of research into the question, and one of the main differences, of course, with a ladder faculty member who does research is that they teach very little. And that's the typical arrangement, is to have somebody who's the ladder faculty member, and then the rest of the writing people are all down below. Well, by the time you get a

really reduced course load, and the requirements to do research, you then have to hire some kind of a lecturer or somebody to do a lot of the administrative nitty-gritty. There are many wonderful people in the UC system who are ladder-rank faculty who direct writing programs, but basically, we thought that there was no real benefit to bringing in a ladder faculty member.

And the other thing is that doing that ran afoul of a principle that we started very, very early. And that is that nobody should review anybody for something they don't do themselves. So, (laughs)— At one point there was an interest in having a senior person come to UC Santa Cruz. His wife was a teacher of writing—I'm not going to mention any names here—and an esteemed professional who had been doing administrative work at another UC. So the decision was put to us, would we accept her in—I can't remember what position, but I think it was going to be as a ladder faculty member in writing. I can remember, she came to visit one of our faculty meetings, and I think it was maybe the fall retreat, to introduce herself to us. And we were supposed to make some kind of statement about whether we would be willing to undertake this. And as a result of questions, one of the first things that came out was that she hadn't taught composition for something like thirteen years. But she'd *supervised* composition. And it was funny, because I could just sit there, you know, and I could feel this little chill run among all these people, most of whom had taught freshman writing for decades. And actually, even to this day, in the search that we just finished, one of the things we were very interested in, in talking to candidates, and it was one of the things that people commented on after candidates did their public talks to the faculty, was people Writing Program

faculty would say something like, “This person sounds like she (or he) would be really, really good at telling graduate students how to teach. But I was uneasy—this person didn’t seem to want to relate to the other professionals sort of on the equal level.”

Rabkin: As a fellow teacher.

Freeman: Yeah, as a fellow teacher, but also as intellectual equals—people with, maybe in some instances, more experience.

I remember one of the external review committees just backed down and said that our model was unusual, and after they’d thought about it they couldn’t see a reason why we did need any ladder faculty members. In the last external review, I think that people understood that it was economically not smart, because you weren’t going to get as much for your money, and that intellectually it was unnecessary and problematical. So I think at the end, we won that. And as long as you have lecturers with security of employment, who are Senate members, they can do anything, basically, that a ladder faculty member has the power to do. But that is one theme, as I say, that’s come up.

Collegiality

Rabkin: That makes me think about one of the signal aspects of the reputation of the Writing Program among its own faculty members, and, I think, beyond the

program itself. My sense is that there's recognition of a high degree of collegiality among the faculty in the program. That may be related to some of the things you're talking about—about deliberately avoiding certain kinds of hierarchies. I wonder if you have any thoughts about that collegiality.

Freeman: Well, I do. There definitely, from the very start, has been an effort to avoid replicating certain kinds of hierarchy. On the other hand, there's no question that the security-of-employment position has its perks. And one of the dangers is that the lecturers with security-of-employment become a sort of "kitchen cabinet," a separate group. And part of the way that we always avoided that was that tons of the administrative work was being done by non-SOE faculty, and the heads of things were people who were not necessarily the security-of-employment lecturers. I mean, examples like Virginia Draper, who headed Writing Across the Curriculum. And then, when we managed to win, by very good luck, Cissy Freeman away from Berkeley, who served as Subject A Coordinator. And so we managed never to congregate all the administrative work within the SOE positions.

Collegiality comes, first of all, partly from good procedures. And so the Personnel Committee, which always has been elected by the Writing Program lecturers—when we started doing this, that was a very unusual kind of thing in a program with mostly non-Senate faculty. And when new leadership or upper-division teaching positions came open, or new opportunities, making sure that, basically, you told everybody that this opportunity was available, and had people, then, who were interested apply. And, of course, then whoever's making

the decision has to make a decision. But you don't have this sense that-somebody has picked out somebody who is going to be the person to do these things.

Another rule that we made—I made—early on: As these opportunities to do different things multiplied, we made a rule that everybody—with the single exception of Conn Hallinan, who was doing journalism—would teach at least one section of Writing 1 or a core course. There was nobody who would suddenly find themselves just doing the more advanced or more fun courses. So when you lay down a system like that, that then prevents a lot of problems. And you do things like—as I think I mentioned—we were, especially for a while there, extremely encouraging of people to go visit each other's classes. The faculty reading,²³ and other things like that. It ended up that many, many people found their very good friends in the Writing Program.

Rabkin: At least one of us found our spouse in the Writing Program.²⁴ (laughs)

Freeman: Yes. (laughs) And that's not to say that there weren't some personality difficulties. I mean, there always are, in this kind of thing. But unless I wasn't paying attention—and, of course, there is an advantage to not hearing everything

²³ Every writing instructor at UCSC is also a writer, whether of literary or scholarly nonfiction, journalism, fiction, or poetry--though the demanding workload often prevented many of us from writing as productively as we wished. In the mid-1980s, to address this problem, lecturer Chuck Atkinson organized an event that was to become highlight of the Writing Program's academic year for at more than a quarter-century: the Faculty Reading Series. Each monthly event in this winter-through-spring series featured two or more writing faculty members reading their own work--sometimes polished or published material, sometimes work in progress. Many faculty members were also accomplished visual artists, and combined showings of their work with the literary readings. The faculty invited students, friends, and colleagues to these small, informal events, which not only helped cultivate a sense of celebration and community but also provided a deadline to stimulate the production of new work—Editor.

²⁴ Rabkin is referring to her own marriage to Chuck Atkinson, whom she met when she joined the program faculty in 1985.

that goes on, but there was a lot of good will; a lot of collaboration; a lot of friendliness. And spouses of Writing Program faculty members who were in other departments would come to Writing Program potlucks and say they were amazed at the good will. And that was a very, very fortunate thing, and I think for many people, the Writing Program offered an extremely comfortable, satisfying milieu in which to have extended careers, and very *wonderful* careers in terms of what they were able to accomplish, from my perspective looking at the quality of their work—in a situation in which the university never, ever, ever did admit that these were permanent people.

Stepping Down as Writing Program Chair

Rabkin: Thank you. Thank you. Would you like to say anything about the experience of stepping down as chair, after having been founding chair for so many years?

Freeman: That was surprisingly easy. It was a very calculated decision. As I say, I'd noticed, in some other programs, especially in the Language Program (I think they may have solved this to a certain extent now), the difficulty of not having a way to pass on the leadership of the program, other than bringing somebody in from outside the program. And then the other thing is that we had Roz Spafford and Elizabeth Abrams, who had security of employment, and both of them, naturally were interested in trying to see what it was like to be chair. So I just figured that rather than wait until this was forced by my deciding to retire—and besides, I was interested in spending some time doing some other things—that we would just act as though we were a regular department. Again, what we

did—maybe this partly comes from having a lawyer as a husband, but we made procedures for “what will the program do when it’s going to change chairs?” And those procedures exist, and were approved, and we just follow them.

When my father retired from being dean of Chicago Musical College at Roosevelt University, he did something very wise. He retired and walked out and didn’t go back. I think he met maybe every six months with his former secretary, quietly, privately, to get the gist of what was going on. And I didn’t do that, and I hung around for almost ten years and I gave a certain amount of advice and help and whatnot. But it was not a difficult decision. The only thing that made it difficult at all was that, as soon as I left being chair, things got really quite nasty in terms of the budget. And so I felt really bad about that.

Rabkin: So that transition happened to coincide with the budget disaster?

Freeman: Yeah, it did. I would say that in spite of the many, many battles, most of the time, I enjoyed what I was doing being the program coordinator and then chair. There was too much of it, but most of the time, even in some of the crises—and things were very tense for a while, I never felt like it was impossible, or I didn’t want to get up and go to work in the morning. And I think that probably, for some of the time that Roz was chair, it was very difficult. And so that’s the one thing I’m sorry about, that that happened that way.

Rabkin: Was it challenging for the two of you, not to have you spending time being essentially a chair consultant?

Freeman: Well, I spent a certain amount of time being a consultant, and for Elizabeth the same thing. But it seemed to all work out. I didn't have any trouble—well, you would have to ask them about that. (laughs)

Rabkin: (laughs) Okay. Enough said.

Freeman: But basically, I had other things to do, and I was not at all sorry I had stopped being chair.

Rabkin: Is there anything we haven't touched on about the Writing Program that you'd like to say?

Freeman: I should say that I'm satisfied that for all these many years— I take credit to the extent of saying that I think I helped create a context in which students got really good instruction in writing, and people had opportunities to develop enriching, valuable careers that might not have been possible under other circumstances. And my regrets: I could never do anything about the nature of the soft funding. And the thing that really still fries me is that I couldn't do anything about the course load. And I started trying to change that really, really early. (laughs) I think that's the thing that irritates me the most.

Rabkin: Did you have a sense of what would have been a fair course load?

Freeman: Well, I had a couple of different views. And at one point we thought we came really close. But you see, when you're worrying about this decreasing the course load, you always have to think between what the ideal is, and what you think is going to be possible.

Rabkin: Yes.

Freeman: And sometimes I think the regular Writing Program people don't understand this: the teaching load for lecturers with security of employment in Writing is six. But then you're supposed to do two more courses' worth of service. So lecturers with security of employment don't get equivalencies for, say, reading the Subject A exam, or all that other stuff. But still, as I've told so many different people, it's a different kind of work from teaching a course. Whereas you can't read forty more papers a week, you can do other things. So, keeping in mind what's ideal, I think that a six-course load would have been the ideal thing. And some other campuses now have achieved something closer to that—Berkeley, especially. But the basic thing is that I feel that nobody can teach more than two courses, or should have to teach more than two courses a quarter. (Although part of the problem is, some of our people do, and they do it very well.) But my idea would have been a seven-course load, but only six courses teaching and one for distributed work of other kinds.

Academic Senate Service

Rabkin: Great. Thank you. Shall we move over to CEP [the Academic Senate Committee on Educational Policy]—?

Freeman: Sure.

Rabkin: —on which you spent, what, ten years, not consecutively?

Freeman: At least that much. I was chair for six years. Once I got security of employment, then the whole question opened up of senate service. I have to give credit to George Amis and John Isbister. You know, people get appointed to senate committees by the Committee on Committees. And they were on various either local or systemwide Committees on Committees. And that's how I first got onto CEP.

I enjoyed the senate work very much. I had two opportunities when people sought me out for joining the administration per se. And I turned those down, and I'm never sorry. I don't know if ultimately I would have been chosen, but—

Rabkin: The central campus administration?

Freeman: Yeah. And I have never been sorry that I didn't get involved with that, for a lot of different reasons. But I'm a big admirer of faculty governance, and the way it's set up in the University of California system. I found the tasks of CEP particularly congenial, and because I knew a lot about undergraduates and undergraduate education, I was able to bring a lot of information, and I felt like I

had something to offer. The business of CEP ranges just hugely. It approves all courses; it has special purview to be in charge of the general education requirements. I enjoyed *being* on the committee, but I enjoyed being chair a *lot*.

During my first term as chair—this is another place where I think I made a contribution that might be lasting, and that's in relation to the core courses and the colleges. The core courses are, like most writing courses, also soft-funded. So they're another plum of money. So very, very regularly, at six-year intervals or something, people begin harping about (or they *did*) that the core courses were Mickey Mouse courses, now mostly taught by lecturers not by faculty members, and couldn't that money be better used? So this had come up.

The colleges, in the middle of the 1980s, had gone out of the business of really contributing to the academic curriculum, except in the core courses. Originally, faculty members had been hired both by a college and by a board. And Chancellor Sinsheimer, with his reorganization, ended that. So one of the big, big issues when I got to be the chair in 1989, was the status of the core courses, and also what was called "the intellectual life of the colleges." The Senate formed a joint subcommittee on the intellectual life of the colleges, which Carolyn Martin-Shaw, as chair of the Committee on Budget and Planning, and I co-chaired. And one of the delightful things about that was that I got to know Carolyn Martin-Shaw well. We did a year-long program of consulting with everybody under the sun on the colleges, and ended up in, I think it was April of '91, coming up with this big report about what we thought should happen, about the role that the colleges should play.

We presented it to the Senate, and it had four resolutions. It was based on this huge assessment project—in the sense that we had looked at everything: we had talked to students, we had talked to faculty, we had talked to the deans. And this coincided with (this also comes in waves) a lot of discussion among universities and theorists about undergraduate education, and about how faculty needed to be more involved in the education of undergraduates. So we were able to tie into a lot of that. Many people thought of UCSC as a place where this still existed. So in this whole report, we were able to talk about the colleges from all those different perspectives, and make the point that a lot of what people said about them, both praise and criticism, was not true.

One of the times I had the most fun of the whole time I spent as CEP chair was in the Senate meeting, when we presented our four resolutions [pages through document]. The report was pages and pages long, but the resolutions were: that “the Senate approves, in principle, that the colleges are social and intellectual entities with responsibilities to mount courses taught by Senate faculty; develop and administer an advising program; and plan and sponsor a wide range of extracurricular intellectual activities.” Because a lot of people had been saying that the colleges should really just be residential, and there were claims that advising would be more efficient if it were set off in some central place.

That was the first resolution. The second was that “all faculty members will be affiliated with colleges.” And we then suggested different kinds of fellows, because they had stopped appointing new faculty members to colleges. I’m still

not sure if that's going on. Three, that the involvement of the faculty in the colleges should be increased by instituting the following: Senate faculty members "will teach an additional one-to-three-unit course every three years, or offer comparable service to undergraduate education in a college or a board." And then we also had a section where we thought they could pay some faculty members stipends who were feeling in their careers that they would like to spend more time with undergraduates. Then the fourth one was suggesting that the joint Subcommittee work for another year to implement this.

Well, I can remember, it the meeting was in the [Performing Arts] recital hall Carolyn and I presented the resolutions and asked for questions. There was a long, long question period. And I remember thinking that it was fun: that people had all these objections, and we were really well prepared. All four of the resolutions passed in the meeting. And then there was a mail ballot—and I've got pages and pages and pages of our defense of the position—and all the resolutions were approved by mail ballot.

One of the recommendations that had been made to the subcommittee was that the colleges should be associated with departments or divisions. That way, for example, an introductory course in a department could be the core course. And in fact that idea didn't go away; it was still there a long time later. But instead we suggested that there be a division of colleges, which might be considered a division of undergraduate education—with the possibility that some programs, like the Writing Program and the Language Program, that were really interdisciplinary, without majors, could be moved into that. And I still have,

somewhere, the handwritten thing chart where I worked this all out. That was one of our proposals, and it didn't happen right away, or exactly as we proposed, but as you know, now the colleges are all under the dean of undergraduate education. The study on the intellectual life of the colleges had some important consequences, not as many as I would like, but it was a really interesting thing.

As part of that, we did, in 1991, a huge assessment of the core courses. It involved a lot of gathering of data, and it resulted in a CEP review of the core courses in 1991, where we said that the idea that these were "flaky" courses taught by uncontrolled lecturers is nonsense. And spelling out the things that the core courses did. The thing I want to say about that is, I realized that co-opting really rigorous and responsible assessment is an extraordinarily useful, valuable strategy. Because if somebody starts to talk about how, oh, something needs to be reviewed, and oh, there are no standards—if instead of sitting around and waiting for someone else to do the assessment, that you take charge of the assessment yourself, and do it very rigorously, and then provide people with all the data that they've been claiming that they want—then you have set the criteria that are meaningful and are not imposed. That's something that we did in the Writing Program, too, with the procedures for evaluating faculty. When people would say, "Well, who are these people who are teaching writing?" We could respond, "Well, this is what we do to assess their effectiveness."

The teachers' unions are very rational about knowing that they don't want to be trapped into having teachers being assessed by the results on these various tests. That's a big issue in the—

Rabkin: —in K-12?

Freeman: Yeah, K-12. But on the other hand, they haven't managed to take over the assessment-of-teachers project in a way that's been able to compel people to get ownership of that issue.

The other big issue during those first years I was on CEP was that the campus had always had "shopping for classes" as a way for students enrolling in courses. It no longer worked, because of the simple *size* of the campus. And there were other reasons. People Many departments and faculty had decided that they needed to be more careful about pre-requisites, and all kind of things. Shopping was extremely inefficient, but it was dearly beloved by lots of people who felt that it was crucial to the identity of the campus. I had previously, a long time before, invented pre-enrollment for Writing 1 sections, just because it was the only way not to go crazy. We just put up a table in the middle of McHenry Library and had people stand in line. (laughs)

Rabkin: And sign up for sections?

Freeman: Yeah. And they would complain, you know. They'd get to the table and say, "Well, I was at the back of the line, and my section is all gone." And I'd say, "Well, can you think of a fairer way to do this than first-come, first-served?" And nobody could.

Rabkin: This was before everything was done on computers?

Freeman: Yes. We just sat there. But by now, you could do pre-enrollment by computer, and the really smart thing the campus did was hire an extremely experienced and smart registrar, James Quann, to present data and alternatives.

One of the things I found that I was supposed to do as chair of CEP was to work through this issue. And, of course, the way you work through it is you consult and consult and consult, and then you come up with a proposal, and you do some more consulting, and then you write a report. It passed, and it was fine. But lots of students were convinced that advance enrollment was the end of something. And it *was* the end of something—but it was time.

Rabkin: This consulting you're alluding to is the sort of consulting that Tim Fitzmaurice was referring to, when he made his speech when he retired, and told us all that we did a lot of consulting in the Writing Program, but one got the impression that Carol knew what she wanted before—?

Freeman: (laughs) Well, no. People want to vent, and they want to make sure that when you make your decision, you've heard all the sides.

Rabkin: Of course.

Freeman: So that's what you're doing. And people who think that the fastest way to do things is to ram things down people's throat—it isn't worth it. I think we

spent a year preparing, and then a year implementing the decision. It was also the right thing to do at the right time.

There were a lot of things, right around then, that were coming to an end in a certain kind of way, and that needed to be addressed. Another thing that I did at that point was, we got the campus to accept variable-unit courses. There had not been one-, two-, and three-unit courses. And I laugh: I say one of my claims to immortality might be the “F” on independent studies. A five-unit independent study is just a 199 or a 99. But a variable-unit (one, two, or three) is a 199F. And the registrar just chose that for “Freeman.”

Rabkin: (laughs) I never knew that!

Freeman: (laughs) Yeah.

I enjoyed both the big projects and the really nitty-gritty ones. And when I say nitty-gritty—I just have to show you. [Flips through file to find a document.] I’m going to take the names out of this, but this is written to the academic vice chancellor: “The Committee on Educational Policy has considered your questions concerning Professor X’s stepdaughter’s enrolling in his (something-or-other) course. We have concluded that, given the nature of this course—a large, introductory course graded for the most part on the basis of objectively scored exams read by TAs—we have concluded that the stepdaughter should be allowed to take the course without restriction or qualification. Further, we think that answers to any questions regarding the fair handling of this case can safely

be left to the scruples of Professor X, in consultation with his board chair." So—
(laughs)

Rabkin: So this is the level of detail that you got involved with.

Freeman: Yes. And I must say that I liked it. When I quit doing that, while I was provost of Cowell College, I did end up being vice-chair and then in 95-96 chair for a year of UCEP, which is the systemwide Committee on Educational Policy. And that wasn't as much fun because it involves much more responding than decision-making.

Then I was chair of CEP again from 2000 to 2003, and the very first thing that came up was another review of the core courses. [flips through documents] So I have a second review of the core courses. This time, assessment of the core courses. This was addressed to Chancellor M.R.C. Greenwood. Another attack on the core courses, another idea that they should be turned over to departments, and then the core courses could be introductions to various disciplines.

Rabkin: Where was this attack coming from?

Freeman: Various people looking at that money, and thinking that if the divisions or the departments could get that money, that would be nice. So this time, we gave students questionnaires on the value of the experience of core courses. Because the first time I'd done it, in 1991, we'd looked at evaluations.

Rabkin: Students' evaluations of courses?

Freeman: Students' evaluations. (Strictly speaking, though, that's illegal, because evaluations are not supposed to be used for any purpose other than the limited purpose of the personnel reviews of the instructor.) This time, I realized that I had a captive population of everybody who was taking Writing 1 in the spring. So we started in the fall, a huge review of the core courses. We wrote to instructors, we did tons of stuff. We asked all Writing 1 instructors in the spring to pass out and collect a questionnaire about students' experiences in their fall core course. And we got almost 800 responses. And part of the trick with that was they passed them out and collected them right in class, so you *had* them. About 75 percent were first-year students, and then a few juniors and seniors.

Rabkin: —who were taking the spring sections of Writing 1.

Freeman: Yeah. But it meant, in the case of the first-year students, that they were reflecting back on the value of a course that they had taken two quarters before. And it gave us terrific data. So we wrote a report and explained all the wonderful things that the colleges were doing, but we were able to make some distinctions between—that basically, for example, one of the things our data showed us, probably not surprisingly, was that on the whole, students in the Subject A sections which were taught by writing instructors were more enthusiastic about the course than the other students. And then there were differences between the colleges, and we were able to pinpoint some problems and recommend some best practices and changes.

So it was a very, very helpful survey. And we were able to point out all the things that UCSC would have to find replacements for if they were going to get rid of the core courses—all the many things that the core course accomplished. I think that these various reports in 1991 and 2002 were really helped the core courses remain in the colleges. I love the core course myself, and have taught in Cowell forever, and so I was very satisfied.

The other thing in my second term with CEP was: The year before I started, the vote had been passed to make grades mandatory. For various reasons that I'm a little vague about now, there were many loose ends, and there were certain messes. Anyway, when I was given this job—"One of the things you have to do is, this has to be neaten up and finished." So, ironically, in spite of the fact that I was not a fan of grades, and I was even less a fan of grade point, I had to oversee this process. Grade point is what I think is really dumb.

Rabkin: Giving every student a grade-point average.

Freeman: Grade-point average. Yes. It's funny, just as this was all heating up I was provost of Cowell, and one of the things I did was write to all the Cowell alumni and ask how many of them had found the absence of a grade point average important in their lives. And I got this huge, not surprisingly, answer from many, many people, telling me *no*.

Rabkin: "No," they—?

Freeman: That it had not been important. But, again, times were changing; more and more places graduate and professional schools were looking at students only on the—their first screening was grade point.

Rabkin: And what was it that you did not like about a grade point average, given that grades were acceptable to you?

Freeman: Grades were *more* acceptable to me. I wasn't all that fond of grades, either. But grade-point average—first of all, as with many test scores, I'm very skeptical about their significance to make fine distinctions. So: obviously, if you have somebody over here who has a four-point grade-point average, and somebody else who has a two-point grade-point, obviously there are big differences. However, you could tell that just by looking at anything else. And the trouble with grade-point average is it fools people into thinking that they can line people up on this continuum. And then you have a cut-off somewhere. And I think that there are broad swaths of this that aren't all that meaningful. It's a convenience, and maybe it's a necessary convenience when you've got too many people in the world and too few people trying to deal with it. But the other thing is that probably, grade-point average is only really significant for a very, very tiny window of time, when you're applying to something after your undergraduate career. And, of course, that is important, but it's very, very limited. On the other hand, thinking about grade-point average, once you've got one, has this huge impact on the way students run their educations. And it isn't so much whether they're going to get an A in a course. If they were just looking

at the grade, they'd be willing to take something even if there was a risk of getting a not-so-great grade. But if it's going to feed into your grade-point average, then it becomes a whole different thing.

Rabkin: So you might decide not to *risk* taking a certain course, whose topic you might be interested in—

Freeman: Or a certain instructor, or— It's when it becomes part of a grade-point average that it really begins to affect how people approach their educations.

But there I was, and I had to do something about dealing with the impact of the Senate's vote to make grades mandatory. So we spent a lot of time. And again, even if I don't approve, once I get into these projects, I get fascinated by the details. So we did a lot of research. We were working within the rubric of the UC regulations on grades. I looked at all the different campuses, and what their grading systems were, because there was a lot of questioning about, well, should there be pluses and minuses, and—you know, once you've opened this can of worms, there are lots of questions to deal with. And should the pluses and minuses be reflected in the grade point, and so on.

Preserving the Narrative Evaluation System

There were two questions, and the other was, what was the fate of the narrative evaluations, now that grades were mandatory? And after all this research, I

decided— This *is* something where I had made up my mind and then I convinced everybody else on the committee, and then we presented it to the Senate, and the Senate bought it: that we should have A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, F. And there would be no C-. And the reason for that was, I discovered, that to graduate from the University of California, you have to have a C average. So a C- is essentially not a passing grade, especially as it figures into your average. And to satisfy a general education requirement, you have to have a C. So if you were to get a C- in a Writing 1 course, you'd have to take it again. And also, an increasing number of majors had passed grade-point requirements for proceeding through the major, so that you had to get a C in, say, your introductory courses, in order to have them count. So then I found out that, because both the faculty and students had trouble keeping track of the fact that C- was not really a useful grade, there were at some campuses whole committees who dealt with appeals of C- grades. So I just said, "Why confuse the issue?" What is work that is worthy of graduating from UC, and is worthy of counting for both department and general education requirements? *That's* where the line is between a C and a D, and forget the C-.

So I convinced everybody, but then I remember the Senate meeting, when we had to approve this. There was this one Senate member and he was totally sure that it would be impossible to grade on a curve if you didn't have a C-.

Rabkin: (laughs)

Freeman: The more serious issue was, everybody kind of assumed that once you had grades, that it was no longer necessary to have narrative evaluations. And, of course, that's what, eventually, ten years later, has proven to be the case. But it took ten years. My proudest rhetorical moment in the Senate—almost even prouder than when Carolyn and I convinced the faculty that they should teach a one-to-three-unit course in the college for nothing—was when I had five minutes, because there were many, many, many people talking about this, both pro and con, and I remember Barbara Rogoff in psychology gave a terrific talk. There were many people supporting the continuation of the NES [Narrative Evaluation System]. But as chair of CEP I had the last words, and I had five minutes, and I gave a speech, which resulted in a standing ovation and a vote to keep the NES. And there was not even a mail ballot. I thought it was one of my better speeches. And it was prescient, because eventually what killed the narrative evaluations was not just workload, but people stopped talking about them to students, and students forgot about them. So in the end, students weren't even reading their narrative evaluations, even if you wrote them. They didn't know what they were. But, as I say, it took about ten years.

Anyway, I said, "Obviously, if workload problems cannot be addressed, the Narrative Evaluation System will ultimately fail. Just as clearly, if large numbers of faculty members decide that the best narrative they can write merely repeats the letter grade, then the narratives will vanish. But CEP believes that we are not at that point of no return. Rather, CEP believes that under the current NES legislation, and in the context of mandatory letter grades, it is very possible—not certain, but possible enough to work for—that UCSC *can* have a system of

assessment unique in its ability to acknowledge the vast differences inherent in different disciplines' modes of evaluation; a system that instructors can adapt to complement their pedagogical values and practices; a system that recognizes students' individual patterns of performance, that can meet the varied and unpredictable preferences of fellowship and post-graduate selection committees and prospective employers; a system that can deal with grade inflation, that doesn't exempt courses that students take Pass/No Pass from meaningful assessment—and finally, that recognizes that a system of assessment does much more than provide graduate and professional schools and employers with students' records. It also can shape a student's relationship to his or her education, and influence an instructor's mode of teaching, and say something to the world at large about the nature and values of the institution that espouses it." So—

Rabkin: —standing ovation.

Freeman: Yes. And it delayed the inevitable, but the inevitable came.

Rabkin: Why was that end of narrative evaluations ultimately inevitable, do you think? Was it a workload issue?

Freeman: Yeah, it was a workload issue. Everything had gotten too big. Many of the evaluations were being written by TAs; the TAs had workload issues. (And some people still do write some narratives.) But I think the thing that killed it for people, even people who believed in it, was when the students stopped reading

them. They were no longer mailed to students, so you had to log in to your MyUCSC account and read them. I myself, in my last year, discovered that none of the freshmen had even looked to see if they *had* any narratives. They didn't *know* about them. They didn't exist, in any meaningful way. So—the culture changed. I think it's too bad. But at some point I think we just became too big for many things. I don't know how I would write recommendations for students anymore without narrative evaluations. For all the years I taught, I have narrative evaluations on record. These two courses I taught last quarter, I only wrote them if students asked for them or if they'd taken the course Pass/No Pass. Then I didn't give them a choice; I wrote a narrative evaluation just because.

Academic Senate Committee on Committees

Freeman: I did then spend four years after that being chair of Committee on Committees, which I really, really liked. It's basically the committee that puts everybody on all the committees. It's a committee that people dread. It's the only committee which is elected; the members of the Committee on Committees are elected by the Senate.

Rabkin: Why do people dread it?

Freeman: Well, because it's a ton of work, and people think of it as being really hack work. But it selects all the officers of the Senate. And it not only puts people on all the Senate committees, but the administration has to consult the

Committee on Committees on all the people it appoints to many, many big committees—not every departmental search committee, but— And review committees. So there's a lot of power.

Rabkin: If you are elected to the Committee on Committees, how long are you expected to serve on it?

Freeman: Members are elected to two-year terms. It's getting hard to find people who are willing to do it, so in many cases lately, there isn't competition. Elizabeth Abrams is currently chair of the Committee on Committees, which is another good result of Writing Program faculty involvement in university affairs. When I say that the colleges are lucky that the Writing Program got involved, when I think about the provosts who have also been in the Writing Program, you can see why—²⁵

There were two things that were particularly satisfying during my service on COC. One is that I was able to play something of a role in the selection of the committee to make recommendations in the search for our latest chancellor, George Blumenthal, and I was glad to be in that position. The other committee (besides lots and lots of other little committee things—you make hundreds of appointments in the course of a year)—but one of the ones that gave me the greatest satisfaction was: I don't know if you remember the Tent University in

²⁵ As of winter 2013, Elizabeth Abrams is provost of Merrill College. Writing Program faculty who have served as college provosts include Carol Freeman (Cowell College 1992-97), Roz Spafford (Merrill), Don Rothman (twice acting provost, Oakes), Conn Hallinan (associate provost, Kresge)—Editor.

April 2005.²⁶ There were demonstrations, and there was a lot of question about the police response to that event. And eventually the Senate decided to form a task force of faculty, staff, and students to look into it—to make some evaluations about what happened, and also to make recommendations for dealing with student unrest in the future. I was really happy about the committee that we put together to do that, and what they did—especially that Carolyn Martin Shaw agreed to be chair and was a terrific chair of that committee. COC was instrumental not only in selecting people but also in suggesting what groups we thought should be represented on the task force, and we said that there should be a non-senate faculty member on it. And I put Cissy Freeman²⁷ on it, partly because when I think of people who are extraordinarily ethical, I think of her, and someone who had lots of experience with nonviolent demonstrations—including has been arrested for demonstrating against nuclear weapons labs. The task force’s report was terrific, and although it’s taken a long time, I think finally some of its advice has been implemented. And in the last few years, UCSC has done better with some of that stuff than some other campuses.

The other thing is, I worked really, really hard, many times, to make it possible for non-senate lecturers to serve on committees.

Rabkin: Yes.

²⁶ See the February 1, 2006 UCSC Senate document “Report of the Tent University and Restructuring Emergency Response Procedures Task Force” for a detailed account of this event. <http://senate.ucsc.edu/archives/campus-demonstration-response/TUSCreptSCP1479.pdf>—Editor.

²⁷ Writing lecturer Maria Cecilia Freeman—Editor.

Freeman: And a lot of them have. And I just hope that even though they can't get paid for it, that they understand that it's a terrific way to actually have influence despite not having voting rights as non-senate faculty members. Because very little in Senate committees is a result of votes. It's what ideas you can bring to the table—which is one reason why I like it.

Serving as Cowell College Provost

And then there was provosting Cowell. I was provost from '92 to '97; I was the first woman provost of Cowell.

Rabkin: Wow.

Freeman: Bill Ladusaw was the provost after I was; then there were two women: Deanna Shemek, who served with Tyrus Miller, her husband; and then Faye Crosby. There's a joke that to be a female provost of Cowell, you can't be much more than five feet tall.

Rabkin: (laughs)

Freeman: I loved being provost. Cowell had some resources, and had, more than some other colleges, still a body of active faculty members, even if they weren't teaching in the core course. Some were. And you could always count on all the old provosts to show up for things. The colleges, still, are sites of opportunity for imaginative endeavor. You're in this weird space. You're connected to students.

Your formal connection to them is through the core course. Provosts get engaged with core courses to different extents. These days, every provost, I think, is in charge of their core course. I, of course, taught in it the whole time I was provost—but then, I'd been teaching in it forever. The staffs in the colleges are just fantastic people. A provost also engages with some faculty members, the lecturers, parents, alumni. You know, there was the Eloise Pickard Smith gallery. There was just so much. You shake the hand of the parents when they drop off their kid and assure them that you're going to keep your eye on them; you shake the parent's hand again when they graduate. And there was just a terrific amount of stuff that I really enjoyed. There are difficulties. I was involved in a lot of difficult judicial cases of various kinds.

I was able to champion various faculty projects. I didn't live in the provost's house, so I was able to rent the provost's house out and make money for the college. I was also able to use it to—two summers, I let Shakespeare Santa Cruz bed their visiting company actors down in it, until they put tents all over the lawn, and that didn't work. French Language lecturer Angela Elsey—we had what used to be apartments that were vacant, so she and I drummed up “La Maison Française.”²⁸ You could do all these things.

In addition to the core course, which I really enjoyed both teaching in and helping to shape, when I was a provost of Cowell, we still had College Night every single Thursday night. Cowell still has College Nights, but only once or twice a quarter. But every single Thursday night—and I think Jim Carter, who

²⁸ La Maison Française was a Francophile dorm at Cowell—Editor.

was my college administrative officer, says he thinks that added up to 130 of them—you went and there was a sit-down meal, with tablecloths, and family style. And all the students would stand and wait till you came. And as the provost, you gave the pseudo-blessing, and you were at the head table. And everybody sat down; we ate, and there was some kind of a program. And—again, the Cowell staff, Angie Christmann, the college programs coordinator, came up with a tremendous variety of things.

I had just become provost, and I didn't really quite understand about all that. And Angie—who at that point was the head of student activities, and basically you just did what she told you—she said, “Well, this is going to be the first College Night, and the provost always—you have to have some kind of a pseudo-blessing to say before everybody sits down to eat. So think about what it is you want to say, because usually what happens is the provosts say the same thing for their whole tenure as provost.” So I thought, “Whoa, I've got to think of something.” I, for many complicated reasons, came up with an adaptation of Psalm 85:10. I had run across this passage—it's in many, many motets, but it's also famous in a lot of paintings. I still, to this day, will run into former students in Santa Cruz or somewhere and they'll say, “Oh, you were my provost. Do I have it right, is this what you said...?”

Rabkin: (laughs)

Freeman: It was, “Let it be said that here at Cowell College, mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have embraced and kissed.” And the

trope is the need for justice, which is blind so treats everyone the same way, but with this, you need mercy—which sometimes is translated as “love”—to see the particulars of individual cases. So it’s really justice and equity coming together.

And the other place where this is enshrined is—have you ever seen the film *Babette’s Feast*? Well, you remember that the community is extremely righteous, very strict, religious people on that north coast in Denmark. And in comes this French cook, bringing in the Mediterranean, and suffuses them, by putting on this big feast, with a kind of love—charity—that had been absent from their righteousness. And at the feast (this is, of course, from a story by Isak Dinesen), the funny member of the military, I don’t know, a corporal or whatever it is, stands up, and what he reads is that psalm. And it also spoke to something that had always seemed to me to be one of the most important things in teaching writing, and that is the coming together of *logos*—rationality, not in its narrow form, but in its most eloquent form—with *eros*. I’ve never been able to think about the right brain and the left brain, because somehow what you’ve got to do is bring together reason and desire. So that was what I said at Cowell. And a very nice touch: I was asked to give the Cowell graduation speech, the year that I retired. And Jim Carter, the college administrative officer, always gave the little pseudo-benediction at graduation, and he used that same passage. So that was a nice conclusion.

Statewide Subject A Exam

Rabkin: I'm conscious that there are a couple of things we haven't touched on that we had talked about including—one of which has to do with systemwide preparatory education service, and your thoughts about a systemwide Subject A exam. I wonder if you want to spend a few minutes on that, as a kind of appendix?

Freeman: I guess I'll only say this about it. I've worked actively on the systemwide exam since its beginning in 1987. The systemwide exam is an amazing institution, and it amuses me that I was very much against it when it was proposed. In fact, I wrote a long, long memo to Chancellor Sinsheimer, suggesting that we the UCSC campus secede, and not be part of it. I re-read it, and I realized that many of my objections were weighty, and that they had a lot of truth to them. However, looking with hindsight, I think that the exam has had the credibility to define the need for instruction in writing in a way that would have been very, very difficult for a lot of us to maintain. There was always the suspicion that writing faculty were failing students on the Subject A exam to provide themselves with employment.

So it's a test that I think has a remarkable amount of legitimacy, just in the fact that it's the only writing examination I know, offered to that many people (recently, 16,000 - 19,000 students each year), that asks students to read a considerable reading passage and respond, and gives them two hours to do that. And I think also there's a lot of integrity and thought, over the years, that's been given into the reading of it. Three years ago, the grading of the exam, because of financial necessity, switched from being a gathering at UC Berkeley's Clark Kerr

Campus to a reading online. I always have questions about lots of things, but that, again, was done intelligently, and seems to work pretty well.

So I'm glad I lost that particular battle, because I think it's something that would have been necessary. And that's another example of somebody—George Gadda—who is really, really excellent at what he does.

Rabkin: From UCLA?

Freeman: Yeah. And because of his knowledge, and again, because of his willingness to commit to something for a long time (laughs), it's an exam that I've never, ever felt reluctant to espouse. The process, I think, has a lot of integrity.

Rabkin: And the scores on that exam are meaningful and useful?

Freeman: Yeah. It's interesting that back when we instituted it, of course, there was this big thing that work that satisfied Subject A was remedial, and shouldn't be supported with university funds. That stricture was pretty much rendered moot by changes in the regulation in 1996. But when the exam started, it was very much in force. And I felt that, given the rubric, the passing score of eight was not truly a remedial line. And therefore, in places like San Diego or other places where students were going to get shipped off to take no-credit courses in junior colleges, more students would be defined as being remedial than I thought was justifiable by, if you looked around at what other universities saw as

remedial. And so one of my arguments was that I thought that a passing grade of six would have been more honest about what was truly remedial.

Now, as it worked out, the standard for satisfying Subject A never bothered me at Santa Cruz, because our students were appropriately placed but not penalized for not getting a passing score. And even though at Davis and San Diego to this day community college teachers come and teach non-credit courses in those campuses, I think I was right about that—that when finally the Senate regulations spelled out a definition of remedial work, it was lower than what we've always come to at the "eight" passing standard. But, still, I'm perfectly happy that the standard is where it is for purposes of placement, and that the label of "remedial" is no longer associated with it in the same way. So the outcome has been fine.

Making Music

Rabkin: One more question?

Freeman: Sure.

Rabkin: This might be a fun note to end on. We talked about this briefly, earlier: One of the facets of your participation in the life of the campus at UC Santa Cruz has been your musical life. And I wondered if you wanted to talk about that at all.

Freeman: Maybe just a little, briefly. Music has been a major, major, major part of my life, forever. The thing about my whole background in music is that somehow I completely skipped the whole pop scene. When I was in eighth grade and everybody was swooning over—whoever it was—I brought to class pictures of an Italian opera tenor. But I was not only interested very, very strongly in various kinds of classical music—especially opera and choral music—but also folk music. I used to listen to, late at night, the “Midnight Special” on Chicago Public Radio. And then raised my children singing union songs and Woody Guthrie, and “The banks are made of marble/with a guard at every door,” etcetera.

I took piano lessons for a long time, until I went to college, and I also played in the band—

Rabkin: What did you play in the band?

Freeman: Flute, up through eighth grade. But I’d also sung in church choirs, and when I went to high school, at that point in my very fine high school, the better program was the choral program. And so I got involved in choral music, and it was great. So I’ve sung in choirs ever since. The thing about choirs that makes it great is that you can have champagne tastes—which I do; I have very high standards, and I’m a competent amateur—but by being in really, really good choirs, you can get some of the thrill of doing first-rate stuff that you could never do on your own.

So as soon as we got to California, I started to sing in the little Episcopal church choir out in Ben Lomond. But then in 1982, Paul Vorwerk took over the ensembles at UCSC and encouraged faculty members to join, so I sang with the Concert Choir for two years and then with the Chamber Singers until Paul left. The most memorable experience, I think, was singing Handel's "Messiah" as part of the Santa Cruz Baroque Festival in February 1986, with world-class soloists and baroque orchestra. My parents came from Arizona and that was the last time I saw my father, who died a few weeks later.] I still sing. I sang with the Santa Cruz Chorale for years, and now I sing with the Calvary Episcopal Choir, which is a very good church choir. And the reason I sing is because—it's the same combination of logos and eros I said before. Choral singing takes a lot of being very precise; at the same time, there's a lot of emotional involvement. It's exciting, it's moving, but at the same time you're getting transported by doing this really good stuff, you can't forget. You've got to hang on. And at the same time there's also this physical aspect.

But the main thing is, maybe, that while you're singing, while you're giving yourself over to the music in the way that you do, you can't think one bit about this memo, or that paper. And the other thing about it is that it's an absolute commitment. If you're going to be in a choir, you've got to go to the rehearsals, and you've got to go to the performances, and you can't not show up because you've got too many papers to read, or something else has come up. And I laughed because I realized at some point that it was kind of playing the role of keeping the Sabbath, there was something about saying, "There is this period of time which nothing can intrude in." Come sundown on Friday to sundown on

Saturday, you've got to do other things and think about other things. And I guess in some ways, singing in choirs, you made this commitment and then, no matter what, you just had to do it. And you had this respite. You had to stop thinking about all the other junk in your life.

Rabkin: Thank you. Thank you so much, Carol.

Freeman: Well, thank you. This has been fun, and it's been interesting. It's been interesting for me, not only to come and talk—and it's been *fun* to come and talk—but it's been interesting to look back at everything, and think about stuff I'd forgotten about.²⁹

²⁹ I need to make one important addition to what I said here about my work with the Writing Program, the Academic Senate, and Cowell College. Whatever I was able to accomplish depended upon brilliant staff support from a large number of people but especially Laurel Woodside in the Writing Program, Karleen Meaker at Cowell College, Cathy Fong with Committee on Education Policy, and Mary-Beth Harhen with Committee on Committees. Their hard work, organizational skills, efficiency, patience, experience, knowledge, and advice were crucial, and I know that various of my ideas, projects, and battles complicated their lives—*Carol Freeman*

Appendix 1: Carol Freeman's Remarks at the Memorial For Don Rothman

UCSC Recital Hall, January 26, 2013

A year or so ago, Don created a book titled, *How To Teach Writing and Why*, and posted it on blurb.com. Some of you perhaps did the same thing I did—eagerly turned on your computers to find answers from a master, only to discover puzzles: a series of spare maxims, each seemingly illustrated by a close-up photo of an object from Don's whimsical collection of figurines and antique toys depicting fairy-tale men, women, and children and assorted beasts in the act of reading or writing. I am sure Don purposefully—and playfully—paired words and images and, I suspect, anticipated that, because we could find no obvious connection between the gnomic text and mysterious photos, our expectations would be upended, our curiosity aroused. Once one is curious, one can learn.

It's entirely typical of Don to begin a book titled *How To Teach Writing* not by addressing what we should do to our students but what we should do to ourselves: "Nurture your curiosity," he writes, "Nurture your curiosity about how others think." On the facing page, two wooden bears with jointed moveable arms sit at typewriters. Their opacity propels me into reverie, and I remember Don's insatiable curiosity about how students newly arrived at the university think about writing. "Do they know," he asked in an article in 1978, that "not everything that's published is a model of good prose? That university faculty often consult colleagues about first, second, and third drafts?" Do students know "why we believe writing is the best way for them to demonstrate their grasp of the course material?"

Fast forward thirty years. Don is giving a workshop on commenting on students' writing—a process, an art, that, even after something in the neighborhood of 20,000 papers, he still is fascinated by, curious about, busy perfecting, and refers to as “illuminating manuscripts.” “What do students think when they read your comments? What do they understand when you write ‘unclear’ in the margin?” he asks. “What research have you done to find out?”

A few pages further, opposite a photo of a tiny teddy bear cuddled up with a book in a sleeping bag, Don lays down what might at first glance seem to be a feel-good cop out but is in fact a daunting dare: “Insist that your students never submit an essay that they didn't want to write. Devote yourself to provoking, inspiring, and supporting their courage and ability to meet this expectation.” Familiar with Don's syllabuses and assignments, I know this is not a comfortable invitation to students to write only about what it's easy to say. Rather, it is an uncomfortable challenge to us to expand the circumference of what our students perceive as being relevant, as mattering to them, and then to help them discover the purpose and purchase that make taking risks and responsibility both compelling and worth while.

There are myriad reasons—many of which we've heard about this afternoon—for Don's success in creating situations in which students wanted to write. The most important, perhaps, had to do with his ability to transform how students thought about writing, seeing it not as a test or a trap designed to display one's ignorance and weakness, nor merely as dummy-run school exercises, but rather as a creative tool crucial for observing and understanding, for becoming critically conscious in relation to one's surroundings and therefore

eager and able to enter into the conversations that are—or should be—at the heart of academic discourse and democracy itself.

On the last page of his book, facing a small boy reading on the back of a water buffalo, Don returns to curiosity: “Assume,” he writes to all of us, “that colleagues, parents, and neighbors are curious about what you’re learning from teaching . . . Keep telling your stories.”

That’s what Don did. A writing teacher without borders, he told stories to everyone. Stories that enlarged our sense of possibility and responsibility. Stories that showed us how the quality of what we were able to do in our classrooms depended in part on what we could do to shape the university both as an institution and a community, and the communities and institutions beyond the university as well. Stories that insistently reminded us that our students were more than the words on their papers—more complex, more knowledgeable, more competent—and that it was not only our business but also our opportunity and privilege to listen carefully enough to discover what would enable them to harness that competence and express that complexity. Stories, in other words, that nourished our curiosity about how others think and encouraged us (to quote again from *Why Write*) “to be . . . obsessed . . . with the success of [our students’] education.”

Don arrived at UCSC in the fall of 1973, I one year later, hired by separate units to fill temporary positions on a campus with only a few scattered composition courses and no writing requirements. Our offices were about as far apart as possible. But within a year, Don and I were thick as thieves, plotting in spite of ourselves a future for writing at UCSC, joined by a host of committed,

brilliant colleagues who shared in, helped shape, and enriched what became our life work.

For all of us, it was a great good fortune to spend years—in my case nearly forty—pursuing the elusive truth of “How to teach writing ” in the company of a friend like Don Rothman.

-- Carol Freeman