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THE WEST COAST DEANS

1956 - 1971

Some History - Some Interpretations -

Some Comments

Arleigh Williams

First and last revision

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INTRODUCTION

Shortly after the 1977 year began, Robert S. Lawrence, Vice-President of NASPA Region VI, asked me if I would be willing to write a history of the original "non-organization" of the West Coast Deans. He wanted it completed by January 1978. The time he gave me to do the job seemed to be reasonable. I was sure that I could locate all of the original documents required to write an accurate history; I accepted the challenge.

Half of 1977 disappeared before I was able to give some thought to the project. Finally, when I began to work, it didn't take long to realize that I could not write a history or even a reasonable statement about the West Coast Deans by 1978. My original judgment was faulty because only a few of the original documents describing the "non-organization" were available. Records had either disappeared because of the file demolition policies of colleges and universities, or the records didn't exist because the "non-organization" didn't develop a complete set of them during its yearly sessions.

It was now crystal clear that before the assignment could be completed, I had to consult with some of the members of the organization who participated in its creation and its growth and development. Consequently, an appropriate appeal to extend the deadline was sent to Bob Lawrence. He was very gracious and understanding; he extended the time limit to the beginning of the 1979 year.

On May 25-26, 1978, a meeting was held in Eugene, Oregon. Seven of the 22 charter members of the West Coast Deans were present. They were: Don Anderson, Ret. Vice-President of Student Affairs, University of Washington; Byron Atkinson, Dean of Students at UCLA; Stanley Benz, Ret. Dean of Students at San Jose State University; Tom Broadbent, Ret. Dean of Students at the University of California-Riverside; Don DuShane, Ret. Dean of Students, University of Oregon; Dan Poling, Ret. Dean of Men at Oregon State University; and Don Winbigler, Ret. Dean of Students, Stanford University. In addition, five of us who became active members of the West Coast Deans at various dates after the birth of the association were

also present, namely: Bob Bowlin, Dean of Students, University of Oregon; Channing Briggs, Executive Director of NASPA; Robert Chick, Vice-President of Student Affairs at Oregon State University; Peter Steiner, Dean of Students at Olympic College; and Arleigh Williams, Ret. Dean of Students at the University of California-Berkeley.

I am deeply indebted to Don DuShane who convened the group and acted as host and chairman for our two days together. In presiding with great competence and good humor, he managed to keep some semblance of order so that we were able to accomplish our purpose for coming together.

One of the agenda items called for a discussion of the organization of the West Coast Deans. The charter members didn't hesitate, nor did they have difficulty in recalling and describing many anecdotes related to the reasons for its creation. They made it possible for me to close some historical gaps, and to obtain a clearer picture of what happened during the life of the organization. Once again, I became indebted to them for coming to my rescue, but even though I have unlimited reasons for being grateful for them, I discovered that the memories of respected and revered friends lack, at times, the accuracy required to support the placement of the stamp of validity on a planned project. They couldn't close all of the gaps, and I couldn't locate all of the necessary documents. Therefore, I can't pose as an historian. Consequently, I take the liberty of describing this statement as "<u>some</u> history, <u>some</u> interpretations, and <u>some</u> comments about the West Coast Deans from 1956 - 1972".

SOME HISTORY

The Beginning - 1956

The late Hurford Stone, who retired on June 30, 1959 as Dean of Students at the University of California-Berkeley, was the "father of the West Coast Deans". He wanted to create this organization because of his intense belief that regional, rather than national meetings would be more profitable for participants. He had concluded that it would be very easy for established deans to exchange ideas with one another, and that it would be more valuable for them to have the opportunity to discuss and debate issues and problems common to each of them. His colleagues agreed with him, and they added other factors which supported the need for the development of a regional group. The deans involved were members of NASPA. They enjoyed and respected the National Association, but they did harbor some disappointment because NASPA did not meet their needs. Its vision, at that time, appeared to be somewhat myopic, and it seemed to lack the ecumenical qualities required of an organization which was designed to serve national constituencies. For these reasons, Hurford Stone and his colleagues were determined to have a relatively small group of knowledgeable deans who could assist one another in resolving problems.

The time for Dean Stone's idea finally arrived. Tentative plans for the development of a western organization were drawn up when he and a group of western deans, attending the 1955 Purdue Conference in Lafayette, Indiana, held a happy hour in some unremembered downtown hotel. These tentative plans were productive, and Dean Stone's vision became a reality on January 27-28, 1956, when he and the late Dean William F. Shepard hosted, on the Berkeley campus, a conference of 22 deans representing colleges and universities from Los Angeles to Seattle.

The first meeting was a success. Those attending enjoyed it, and felt that it was profitable because they found it to be of particular value in solving common problems. They agreed unanimously that it should be called again in 1957,

but before doing so, they debated open vs. limited membership. All but one member felt that open membership would proscribe the ability of the group to function effectively. With this preponderance of agreement, they planned to limit the invitations to the succeeding conference to NASPA members only. They then established themselves as the "Western Conference of NASPA Deans", or "NASPA Western". The latter title appealed to the majority of the deans, and at least for one year they were labeled as "NASPAW". Dean Stone was drafted once again to assume the role of host-chairman of the 1957 Conference.

1957-58

The second conference was held in Berkeley on January 25-26, 1957. The agenda was extensive. Thirty-two deans attended; they kept busy morning, afternoon, and evening, and terminated this conference with a revision of their 1956 decision concerning the relationship of the West Coast Deans to NASPA. The group agreed that they should not seek a formal relationship with the national organization. This decision, of course, supported the possibilities of unlimited membership, but it eliminated discrimination against individuals not able to be associated with NASPA.

The third conference, on January 30- February 1, 1958, was held at Lake Arrowhead under the chairmanship of Dean Tom Broadbent of the University of California-Riverside. His planning group proposed that this meeting should be patterned after the very successful Allerton Conferences held by Mid-West Deans, which Dean Broadbent had attended in 1957. He was impressed by the efficiency and quality of informality of the conference, and its tradition of developing the agenda at the first session. His colleagues supported him, and thus the third basic foundation desired by the founding father and his crew was poured by the West Coast Deans. The number of participants continued to increase. Forty-five attended the Lake Arrowhead conference.

1959-1960

The fourth and fifth annual sessions were held in Eugene, Oregon on January 30-31, 1959, and in Palo Alto, California on January 29-30, 1960. Don DuShane was the

wagon master of the Oregon affair. Stanley Benz and Bob Martin of San Jose State University teamed with Don Winbigler and Bill Craig of Stanford University as convenors and directors of the Palo Alto Conference.

Each of these meetings was organized in a style consistent with the established format. The attendance at Oregon remained at 42, but the California convocation, once again, was inflated. Sixty-one gurus of deanery were present.

Topics of Discussion - 1956-1960

During the first five years, a considerable number of topics were discussed. They are listed as follows and without any emphasis upon their order of priority:

1. Reviews of administrative structures of student affairs programs
2. Staffing formulae
3. Residence halls administration, philosophy, objectives
4. In-service training for professional and support staffs
5. Student involvement in the development of administrative policies
6. Use of administrative committees composed of students, faculty, and administrative representatives
7. Scope and objectives of counseling programs
8. Relationship of clinical counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists to student affairs administration
9. Policies governing the release of information about students by counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists
10. Accreditation programs for purposes of evaluating effectiveness of student affairs
11. Conduct and discipline: its purposes and the responsibility of the college or University for the conduct of students on or off campus
12. Residence halls programs
    a. student government
    b. social, recreational, cultural activities
    c. visitations
    d. assignment of students to halls

13. Liquor policy

14. Relationship of fraternities and sororities to

    a. College or University

    b. discrimination policies

    c. value systems

15. Relationship of College or University to off-campus religious organizations

16. Financial aid programs

17. Uses of University and College facilities

18. Identification and support of superior students

19. The apathetic student: causes, and ways to reverse the trend

20. Student government and student press: responsibility of administration to provide clear definition of

    a. degrees of freedom for students to administer their government

    b. responsibilities associated with freedom of press

    c. fiscal responsibilities of student government

These topics may appear to be pale in contrast to new and current issues which have arisen because of changes in the roles of students, our culture, and the dramatic challenges faced by our economic, environmental, natural resources, political, and social institutions. It is assumed, however, that some of the old issues continue to exist, and it is assumed that they continue to have an influence upon the personal and academic efficiency of students. If these assumptions are true, the old issues merit reexamination, along with a critical examination of current and new compelling issues which may have profound influences upon the lives of students, as well as colleges and universities, during the next two decades.

1961-1971

Documents covering the 1965-1967 conferences, plus the West Coast Deans rosters for 1968 and 1969 were the total of written data I was able to discover

for the 1961-71 period.

The West Coast Deans met each year in accordance with the established practice of scheduling conferences to permit each geographical area to host and plan the meeting (Central California - Southern California - Central California - Northwest). The locations were as follows:

1961 - Some place in Southern California

1962 - California Alumni Conf. Center, Tahoe City

1963 - Seattle, Washington

1964 - California Alumni Conf. Center, Tahoe City

1965 - College Student Personnel Inst., Claremont, Calif.

1966 - Stanford University

1967 - Cottage Grove, Oregon

1968 - University of Santa Clara, California

1969 - Las Vegas, Nevada

1970 - San Francisco, California

1971 - Portland, Oregon

Memories of many at our May 1978 meeting verified that the '61 through '64 gatherings followed traditional patterns, with attendance between 50 and 60 members. From the beginning, the West Coast Deans had been a pleasant, comfortable, stimulating, and profitable organization. For the most part, it met the objectives designed by its creator. However, in 1965 it was destined to face the ultimate challenge of whether or not it was truly worthwhile. The "Six Years War" in American Higher Education started on September 14, 1964, on the Berkeley campus of the University of California. The preponderance of West Coast Deans, with much credit to them, recognized that the conflict that had just started was not solely indigenous to Berkeley, and in all probability, many other campuses throughout the nation would eventually be embroiled in extremely profound issues which would influence changes in all segments of our society.

According to the rotation schedule, UCLA, under the leadership of Byron Atkinson, assumed full responsibility for the 1965 conference. It was held on January 28-29-30, 1965, at the College Student Personnel Institute, Claremont,

California. Dean Atkinson rejected the Allerton Conference procedure of developing an agenda at the first session. With good sense and justifiable reasons, he structured one of his own which contained some traditional items (housing, fraternities, financial aid), but more importantly, it included an opportunity for discussion of more current issues such as the compelling importance of humanism on campuses, legal developments in student affairs work, and "freedom" on campuses. Eason Monroe, Executive Director of the Southern California A.C.L.U. gave a challenging talk on "Freedom on Campus: Some Problems and Prospects". One evening was given to an impromptu presentation of the Berkeley experience, and a thoughtful dissection and analysis of the issues by a majority of the deans who attended the meeting.

Ninety-three west coast deans attended this conference. The "non-organization" met the challenge; it reached its zenith, and proved that its creation had been more than worthwhile. Professional and personal bonds had been well established over the years; they were strengthened and cemented as time passed, because of frequent consultations for the purposes of helping one another to approach or resolve complicated issues.

The conferences and agendas of the West Coast Deans which took place in 1966, and from 1968 through 1971, are not at all clear. Memories are blank. The intensity of events on our campuses prevented many of us from attending each conference. It may be significant that while the roster of member deans during this period showed a membership of 159, only about 50 or so were attending the conferences.

The 1967 conference was held in Cottage Grove, Oregon, on January 26-27. It was developed by the late Walter Freauff, Associate Dean of Students at the University of Oregon, and Dean of Men Dan Poling of Oregon State University. They designed a program which put <u>all</u> deans working with students under a microscope. It was accomplished by four speakers who addressed themselves to the following:

1. "The Role of Student Personnel Deans As Seen by the University Administrator" - A.S. Flemming, President, U. of O.

2. "The Role of Student Personnel Deans As Seen by Academic Faculty" - Dr. Kester Svendsen, Chairman, English Department, U. of O.

3. "The Role of Student Personnel Deans As Seen by the Business Executive" - Mr. Chas. Holloway, Vice-Pres. Northwest Natural Gas Co. (also Chairman of State Board of Higher Education)

4. "The Role of Student Personnel Deans As Seen by the Student" - Student representatives from the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, and Oregon College of Education

Regretfully, a recording and evaluation of the program are not available. This must have been an interesting and challenging conference, but, more importantly, we should recognize that critical analysis of this nature merits frequent repetition.

1971-1972

George Hibbard, Dean of Students at Bakersfield State College and Vice-President of NASPA Region VI, had discovered that the makeup of the West Coast Deans had changed. Few chief student affairs officers attended the conferences, and the programs had declined. He had also observed that young practitioners of student affairs didn't have opportunities for professional growth.

He saw the reconstruction of the West Coast Deans as a means of getting chief student affairs officers back into a professional fold, and he also saw that it could be a respected organization which could contribute to the professional growth and development of young deans. He presented his observations and thoughts to his Region VI Advisory Board. He obviously found a concurrence of minds, because in 1972, the "non-organization" of West Coast Deans became an official part of NASPA Regions V and VI.

George Hibbard's objectives were admirable. I sense that his perceotions that stimulated the Regions V and VI "piggy back" on the West Coast Deans were correct, and that the ultimate adoption of the new organization by the Regions was not inappropriate. On the basis of the Region VI documents that I have had the privelege of reading, I conclude that a professional organization in structure and program has been created, and that George's vision for the development of a vehicle which would contribute to the professional growth and development of young practitioners has become a reality. It is not clear, however, whether or not his objective of enticing chief student affairs officers back into the fold has been met. If it hasn't been achieved, perhaps the "new" West Coast Deans should examine it critically to determine whether or not such an objective has a valid significance.

My concluding words about the "old" West Coast Deans speak for me alone. It is possible that some of my friends may agree with me; some may disavow me; but wherever they align themselves, they will speak for themselves.

My association with the members of the "non-organization" was an extremely rich experience. They were professional people in the highest sense of the word. They provided support for me during the most difficult six years (1964-1970) of my professional career, and, in a sense, they were members of a "staff of advisers" upon whom I frequently called for help, and received it. The contacts described were not limited to just a few of us. They went in several directions and to several people.

As noted previously in this document, the foundation for treasured personal and professional relationships had been poured prior to 1965. I am sure that the common crises we were experiencing had considerable influence upon the positive growth of these relationships, but I am confidant that a comparable respect and friendship would have developed and been nurtured continuously had we experienced only the serene life that one supposedly enjoys when he works in the ivy-covered buildings of academia. We had, and continue to have, an

incredible "esprit de corps". I doubt that anyone will ever be successful in an attempt to analyze the chemistry that put it all together, but it would be a fascinating study of human relations. The only conclusion I can make is this: perhaps it is just people, rather than "non-organizations" or "professional organizations", who possess and contribute the ingredients for success....ingredients such as professional pride, but personal humility; a desire to help a colleague with never a fear of sharing a "secret formula"; a willingness to accept one another with never a thought of "one-upsmanship"; and, above all, a compassionate concern for each and every individual dealing with students, who are the life-blood of student personnel people.