

Interview with Jess Mancini (full panel)  
2/15/08, 2:45 p.m.  
753 Engineering Sciences Building

Roy Nutter: Explained Jan Boyles' role as recorder. Also explained that information may be made public through Freedom of Information Act requests.

*RN: Describe overview of service in the West Virginia University College of Business and Economics.*

Jess Mancini: Began working at WVU in 1976. Started in controller's office in grants accounting, sponsored research, finance, accounts payable. Worked as assistant controller and controller. Moved to COB in 1999. Worked as assistant dean. Now Associate Dean for Administrative Services. Received MPA from WVU and bachelor's in accounting from WVU.

*John Burkoff: Concern that no paper records are available. Can you tell us what happened that led to the destruction of those records?*

JM: Doesn't have much knowledge. Reviewed storage space in Summer 2007. Asked program coordinators to place elements into three distinct categories:

1. Items accessed day-to-day
2. Items accessed infrequently
3. Items that can be thrown away.

JM: For each category, individuals were asked to assess the amount of storage space needed, including storage space needed outside the building at a secure facility. Most departments replied that they could make due with the storage space available within the college. Few requested outside storage. Had little input into what documents were destroyed. "Didn't put a value judgment on what was destroyed." Recommended that individuals contact Admissions/Records for information about student records.

*Lori Franz: Who was this request issued to?*

JM: Directors and assistant directors.

*Art Centonze: Do you know if there is a rule regarding student records older than five years?*

JM: Looked for an institutional rule. Did not find one.

*JB: When did you discover the records were destroyed? When did it come to your attention?*

JM: When it was published in the paper [Post-Gazette].

*JB: So you discovered the records were destroyed in the fall?*

JM: Yes.

*Michael Lastinger: Did the request go to every unit?*

JM: Yes, to every individual department that manages files.

*JB: Who did the shredding [of the records]?*

JM: "I have no idea."

*LF: Is it unusual to keep students records of students in the program 10, 20 years? Is there a University rule that a student can only use credits for eight years after starting the program?*

RN: Graduate hours can be used for eight years. Undergrad hours can be used forever.

*LF: Do you know if there is a University policy for keeping student records?*

JM: "Not that I know of." Not involved with student records. Think would keep if someone would work toward the degree.

*JB: Have you ever met Heather Bresch?*

JM: No.

*JB: Do you know Leah Summers?*

JM: Yes...

*AC: In what capacity?*

JM: Taught couple of eMBA courses. Saw at alumni events.

*JB: Do you have a policy now about the retention of student records?*

JM: Haven't met about a policy. Did meet with a company that does document scanning and indexing with redundant storage.

*JB: You met with this company of your own initiative?*

JM: Yes.

*AC: Is there any other place within the institution that records for Heather Bresch would be?*

JM: My impression is that records were scanned and placed on Zip disks.

*AC: The COB had a scanner?*

JM: Since 1999-2000.

*AC: Why do you think they were not found [the records]?*

JM: "Paul Speaker is very meticulous about records. I don't know."

*AC: Was Paul Speaker in charge when that e-mail was sent?*

JM: Cy Logar was acting as interim director. Jerry Blakely director later.

*ML: So this was during the transition period?*

JM: Yes.

*LF: Do you know why the Zip disks were thrown away?*

JM: No idea.

*LF: Were tapes available of the eMBA lectures?*

JM: Used to make tapes. Now done with streaming video. Library kept recording.

*LF: Do you know how tapes were stored at the time?*

JB: Guess kept by tapes. After each class, may have mailed tape to everyone. Paul [Speaker] would know that better.

*ML: Did you teach in the eMBA program?*

JM: Taught a couple of courses.

*ML: When?*

JM: Last year.

*ML: In 1999, who was running the eMBA?*

JM: Don Adams, then David Funk, then Paul Speaker.

*ML: JM told panel that Paul [Speaker] was "meticulous about records." What observations can you make about Paul Speaker's management style?*

JM: "Paul was fair but firm. I don't think he would give one student something that he wouldn't give to anyone else. He was extremely fair, but expected...to do work. He was not one to hand out favors."

*LF: eMBA seen as outreach. Used as financial vehicle to support college. At time, new market. Were there any discussions about eMBA viability, student revenues?*

JM: When started in 1999, not generating profit. Paul [Speaker] would "knock on doors in various industries." Revenues tripled. 1:1 contact with industry. Last year, enrollment dipped. Reason is not lack of interest. Relationship-based program – need to heavily recruit students.

*LF: Was there a pressure to get students in the program?*

JM: "Not to my knowledge. When Paul [Speaker] came back to the program, he may have looked at people who did not graduate and say, 'Here's what you need to do to finish.' But to my knowledge, there was no pressure."

Interview ending time: 3:02 p.m.