

**TRANSCRIPTION RE:**

**CSUMB Founding Faculty  
Oral History Project 1995-98  
Rina Benmayor, Project Director**

**Interview with Brian Simmons, Professor  
Department of Social Work  
Dean, College of Professional Studies**

**Interviewer, Rina Benmayor, Professor Emerita  
School of Humanities and Communication  
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Narrator: Brian Simmons  
Interviewer: Rina Benmayor

1           **Benmayor:** *Today is April 24, 2019. I'm Rina Benmayor and I'm here interviewing Brian*  
2 *Simmons for the Founding Faculty Oral History Project at CSU Monterey Bay. Brian, do I have*  
3 *permission to record this interview?*

4           **Benmayor:** Yes, of course.

5           **Benmayor:** *Okay. So could you start by just stating your name and your title?*

6           **Simmons:** I am Brian Simmons. I am a Professor of Social Work at CSUMB.

7           **Benmayor:** *Okay, so Brian let's start with the early part of when you first heard about this job and*  
8 *how you heard about it and what motivated you to apply for it.*

9           **Simmons:** I was still a grad student at UC Berkeley and I had taken my qualifying exams, was  
10 working on my dissertation, was not done yet but I was out on the job market. And the National  
11 Association of Social Workers has a newsletter that goes out to all the membership and not only are there  
12 clinical and casework kinds of jobs but there are also academic job listings. And so I saw this  
13 announcement for a position at a brand new university in the CSU system down in Seaside. I'm a native  
14 Californian. While I was out looking across the country for a job, staying in California was a fairly high  
15 priority for me. My folks were both still alive at the time. My dad has since passed away. But I also have  
16 stepchildren and grandchildren all in California and so it was kind of important for us to stay as close as we  
17 could. So I applied here. There was actually one personal connection. I'm not even sure you know this  
18 story. Ruben Mendoza's wife, Linda is, and actually so is Ruben, from Bakersfield but I have known  
19 Linda's family for many, many years. Her mom and her sister and I both worked together in the Kern  
20 County Department of Human Services in Bakersfield. And in fact Linda's sister and her mother both used

21 to work for me when I was the Child Welfare Director. And I had played bridge at Linda's mother's, her  
22 mother and father's house, and so I actually knew Linda when she was a very young woman. So there was  
23 a personal connection as well. So I applied for the position, was invited to come down for an interview  
24 from Berkeley. And like many things at CSUMB in those days this was not the best, well organized  
25 interview I had ever been to.

26 **Benmayor:** [Laughs]

27 **[3:06] Simmons:** And I had one firm job offer on the table and another one immediately forthcoming  
28 thereafter that I was pretty sure was coming, and so as I walked out the door with the search committee  
29 Chair I said, "I'd really like to come here but you guys are going to have to hurry because I need a job and  
30 there's a Dean at the University of Texas who is waiting for me to call her and tell her yes or no." And so  
31 the Search Committee Chair said, "Well, we want you to come but I can't promise you we can move the  
32 paperwork that quickly." So I actually declined the offer from Texas without having a firm offer in hand  
33 from Monterey Bay. Yeah, pretty scary. But it did come and so actually I came down that summer. This  
34 was 1996. So I actually came as a Special Consultant in the Summer of 1996 to work on the document to  
35 get the Collaborative Human Services Major as it was then called approved by the California Post  
36 Secondary Education Commission. And then I went back to Berkeley, wrapped up what I was doing there  
37 and came back in time for the start of Fall classes in Fall 1996.

38 **Benmayor:** *What was your impression when you first came and walked onto the campus for your*  
39 *interview?*

40 **Simmons:** Well, I grew up on a naval base in the middle of the Mojave Desert. And I felt very  
41 much at home. Because here it was an old military base and military buildings look like military buildings  
42 whether they are in Monterey Bay or the Mojave Desert. So it was not all that foreign to me. It did not look,  
43 though, much like a university. It still looked much like an old military base. But I think we were all kind  
44 of in this mode of well, we're going to make it work. And so we did. And so my first office was in a very

45 small corner of what became – well, actually, it was still technically part of the VA clinic. And then I  
46 moved into a bigger office inside the VA clinic. And then ultimately we got kind of kicked out of there and  
47 moved into one of the campus buildings. Yeah, I think it was that spirit of we were new and pioneering and  
48 we could do it any way we wanted to do to make this rather odd situation with all this old military stuff  
49 around, we were going to make it work.

50 **Benmayor:** *What was it that attracted you to apply in the first place besides it being in California?*

51 **Simmons:** Well, and a couple of different reasons. But one, my wife and I used to actually come to  
52 Monterey on vacation frequently. We lived in Bakersfield and she would frequently say, “Well, how do  
53 people get to live here?” So that was sort of this personal thing. But the other piece for me really was the  
54 University Vision Statement. There’s something very compelling about that. And as I said, my background  
55 is in Social Work. I found a lot of the core values of the Social Work profession are actually incorporated  
56 into the CSUMB Vision Statement. Certainly the social justice piece, the inclusivity piece, the importance  
57 of human relationships and it just felt very, very comfortable and consistent for me to come here having  
58 been a social work faculty my entire professional career, to come and teach Social Work and Human  
59 Services just felt like it was natural thing to do.

60 **[6:50] Benmayor:** *So you went back to school to get your Ph.D., is that what happened?*

61 **Simmons:** I did. Actually I ... well, I had like an eleven year hiatus. I did my Master’s in Social  
62 Work. Actually at Berkeley they call it Social Welfare. And so I joined the doctoral program right after  
63 that. I spent four straight years of grad school at Berkeley and I decided that was more than any human  
64 being should have to endure so I bailed out. And didn’t come back. Well, actually I went back to Berkeley  
65 as a staff researcher for a year and then re-joined the doctoral program the year after that. So there was an  
66 eleven year gap between my status of being a doctoral student. And in between time I was in Bakersfield  
67 and I was working for the County Department of Human Services in a variety of social work and social  
68 work administrative positions. But when I arrived at CSUMB, I was still ABD (all but dissertation). And

69 that added to the – what is the right word – angst of the first couple of years because I got hired to start the  
70 Collaborative Health and Human Services major. Of course we were all – this was the second year the  
71 University was open. And so we were all still very much building the infrastructure of the University and  
72 I’m trying to finish my dissertation. All that same year. And it wasn’t a lot of fun. And I didn’t see much of  
73 my wife. And a lot of, lot of long hours trying to keep all the balls in the air.

74 **Benmayor:** *So you were writing your dissertation in your office, is that it?*

75 **Simmons:** Either that or at home at night. Yeah. So.

76 **Benmayor:** *So do you remember any stories that stand out in your mind about that first encounter*  
77 *with this new project? Or how was your interview, for example?*

78 **Simmons:** That was interesting because again there were so few people actually on campus at the  
79 time that my search committee ... I mean there were no social work faculty so they had to bring in faculty  
80 from across campus to be on my search committee. But there were different staff people. You know, the  
81 guy who was the Director of Student Activities was on my search committee and professors of Liberal  
82 Studies and Behavioral Science. Bill Head, from the Science Department was on my search committee. So  
83 that was kind of interesting. It was certainly an eclectic search group. The other thing  
84 **[9:40]** I remember actually was walking around. I’m sorry, that wasn’t my interview, that was later. It was  
85 my first time on campus after my interview of going out and seeing the President of the University  
86 throwing a football to someone on the quad. “Oh, this is interesting, okay.” So there was that memory. But  
87 I remember how welcoming the committee was. And then, like so much of the rest of the time at CSUMB,  
88 those people who were on my search committee were among and remain among my closest friends on  
89 campus. And I’m still in contact with many of them. And it was really the beginning of for me what was  
90 really an important part about CSUMB, which was the relational aspect of the people that you worked with.  
91 Especially this startup where we all were running around all the time - who we had was each other. And a  
92 lot of those relationships were founded in my very first day with my search.

93 **Benmayor:** *So you were the only faculty member in the department?*

94 **Simmons:** Yes, I was the only full time. Back then of course we were institutes, not departments.

95 **Benmayor:** *Right, right.*

96 **Simmons:** And my institute director was also actually a  $\frac{3}{4}$  time Grad Dean and then he was a  
97 quarter time professor. But he was a Political Scientist. I'm not exactly sure how he got picked to start the  
98 Health and Human Services major.

99 **Benmayor:** [Chuckles]

100 **Simmons:** But again, that was the interdisciplinary nature of CSUMB, right? So I guess that was  
101 okay. But he was delighted to have me be there because I at least knew something about the world of  
102 Health and Human Services. So yeah, I was the first full time and only full time person for a couple of  
103 years in the Program. And then of course like I think all the other programs at CSUMB I always had the  
104 impression we got started much sooner than we should have. We were definitely, I am sure you remember  
105 the phrase we all used all the time was that we were building the bicycle while we were riding it. And there  
106 were just things that ... like I was teaching the Major Pro Seminar my first semester there and all of a  
107 sudden it occurred to me that we hadn't figured out how to do capstones yet. And yet my students in the  
108 Major Pro Seminar were asking me how do we actually graduate and I didn't know the answer to that. And  
109 so we just kind of kept making it up as we went along. I think that was part of the charm and the  
110 [12:18] excitement, too. Also there weren't a whole lot of rules back then either because nobody had the  
111 time to make them, I don't think. And so we could be very creative. And there's a line in the Vision  
112 Statement about cutting across organizational boundaries and I think we took that very seriously back then.  
113 You know, I had students who were doing double majors and so I would get together with the capstone  
114 instructor from the other major. We would cook up this creative thing that the person could do one project  
115 for both majors. I don't think you could do that now. But yeah, it was ... I guess the other part about being  
116 the only full time person was, for good or for bad, I didn't have a lot of people to bounce things off of. I did

117 pull from other departments. I remember going to see Betty McEady on a number of big – I had to ask  
118 somebody something, and so I went to her. And she was extraordinarily helpful to me during those early  
119 days. But not having another social work faculty or human services person there, or a public health person  
120 there, I just kind of did what I thought we should do.

121 **Benmayor:** *And how many part-time faculty were there at the beginning?*

122 **Simmons:** Oh, probably half a dozen, maybe.

123 **Benmayor:** *Oh.*

124 **Simmons:** Yeah, but they only taught one or two classes apiece. So. And then the other piece,  
125 again, we were in the Institute for Community Collaborative Studies and there really were two parts to that  
126 institute. We had the academic side which was putting on this Collaborative Health and Human Services  
127 major but we also had a community side to the Institute and we had a Community Director on top of the  
128 Academic Director. And the Community Director really was literally out in the community trying to drum  
129 up a collaborative approach to doing the business of Health and Human Services. And I always thought that  
130 was a wonderful expression of the Vision Statement. We went outside the ivory tower. We were actually in  
131 the community and getting different organizations who might not ordinarily talk to each other to talk to  
132 each other and to think systemically how to approach human problems.

133 **Benmayor:** *So is that a sort of standard approach within your field? To be...I mean you probably*  
134 *always have people doing internships and things like that.*

135 **[14:55] Simmons:** Right, we have that. I think what was really different, though was that this was ... I'll  
136 even use the community organizing. We were out there trying to make things happen. And I don't know  
137 that's always a standard function of Social Worker and Human Services faculty at other universities. This  
138 was very much driven by the Vision Statement.

139 **Benmayor:** *So what were you trying to make happen?*

140           **Simmons:** Well, for example, we did... one piece was on interprofessional education. And so we,  
141 at the behest of the directors of everything from law enforcement to public health to probation to social  
142 work to mental health they were all looking for a workforce. So one of these things was actually go out  
143 there and do like a needs assessment of these agencies, what exactly are they looking for in a workforce.  
144 And so we then took what they wanted us to do and tailored our learning outcomes in the major to address  
145 the desired skills and knowledge sets that the employers wanted from entry level health and human service  
146 providers. So we actually, we had this initial set of major learning outcomes created but we refined them in  
147 a couple year long process to be responsive to the stated needs of the community. But more than that we  
148 would have these initiatives, for example, trying to get Behavioral Health and Social Services together to  
149 address a common population. One thing we kept saying was that it's the social service agencies that put  
150 people into silos. We talked about them having a poverty issue or a mental health issue or a criminal justice  
151 issue. They don't think like that. They're just folks that have got stuff going on in their lives they are trying  
152 to deal with and it's the professionals that put them in these boxes. So can we start tearing down some of  
153 the walls and get people to think more collaboratively even in the way they assess what is going on with the  
154 family and then apply perhaps a broader perspective in terms of applying interventions. So it was  
155 innovative and a lot of fun.

156           **Benmayor:** [Laughs] *Yes. So what was your – do you remember what your initial job description*  
157 *was?*

158           **Simmons:** Oh, yeah. I was the Assistant Professor – I mean that was my title, was Assistant  
159 Professor of something. But yeah, I ... was to teach a broad range of courses in the Health and Human  
160 Services which of course left the door extremely wide open. But I also was the Academic Advisor, again  
161 being the only full time person in the program. But also it was very real to me that I was to be part of  
162 building CSUMB, not just my own major.



163 **[18:06]** I don't know if you want to go into this particular piece or not. Administratively we weren't  
164 actually in one of the academic centers when I got there. There was a center that had Student Services and  
165 Recreation and Mary Ellen Ashley, do you remember that name, was our Dean.

166 **Benmayor:** *Right.*

167 **Simmons:** And for some reason the Human Services Program was in with Student Services  
168 organizationally, which I never really understood. But she decided that I should take on creating the  
169 Personal Growth and Counseling Center.

170 **Benmayor:** *Oh. Wow.*

171 **Simmons:** On top my starting the BA program, on top of my being the only full time faculty and I  
172 thought you must be kidding. And so ... there was so much else going on that that didn't get a lot of my  
173 attention, thank God, and I was delighted when Caroline Haskell got hired because then there really was  
174 somebody who could direct some attention to that. That was sort of an answer to your question about my  
175 job description. That wasn't in my job description but again there was so much building at the University to  
176 do that we all got assigned things to do because there was no one else to give it to. And so that was an  
177 example of that.

178 **Benmayor:** *So do you remember any particular committees that you were assigned to that stick out  
179 in your mind and your memory as being memorable for whatever reason, good or bad? [Chuckles]  
180 University-wide building kind of ....?*

181 **Simmons:** I remember being very early I was on the Ethics ULR Committee. And that was by  
182 choice, though, because professionally I think this is one of my areas.

183 **Benmayor:** *And the ULR is...?*

184 **Simmons:** I'm sorry, thank you, the University Learning Requirement that was CSUMB's version  
185 of the General Education Program but driven by the Vision Statement. So we had our own unique  
186 categories and ways of thinking about what general education should look like, which, by the way, I still

187 think make a whole lot of sense even though we've gone to sort of the CSU generic model of general  
188 education, I still thought the ULRs made a whole lot of sense and were a better way of doing business. But  
189 no one asked me that.

190 **Benmayor:** [Chuckles]

191 **Simmons:** So there was that but... you know, we didn't have colleges then, we had centers. I was  
192 on the Dean's Committee for this and the Dean's Committee for that. There were so many of them I'm  
193 actually trying to, I'm having a hard time placing one. The one thing that I do remember was being on an  
194 incredible number of search committees for other departments which again I thought led to our sense of  
195 interdisciplinarity. So I was on SBS's search committee, and I was on a Service Learning search  
196 committee, I was on two or three Liberal Studies search committees. First of all because they didn't have  
197 enough people in their own department to have a full search committee but also because I think we were  
198 interested in what each other was doing. I remember actually you chaired the search that brought us John  
199 Berteaux..

200 **Benmayor:** *I did?*

201 **Simmons:** I think so. Maybe you didn't.

202 **Benmayor:** *I don't recall that.* [Chuckles]

203 **Simmons:** I remember going to his public presentation and you were sort of facilitating it so maybe  
204 I assumed you were chairing it.

205 **Benmayor:** *Ah.*

206 **Simmons:** But anyway, I wasn't on that committee but it was part of that, again, that interest that  
207 we all had in what each other was doing and because John was an ethicist and I had this interest in  
208 professional ethics I wanted to know who this guy was that you guys might be hiring. And so I think we did  
209 a lot of that kind of stuff to...yeah, to see what was going on. Because we were so small and we knew each  
210 other and we had a sense of what was going on everyplace on campus.

211 **[22:12] Benmayor:** *Do you remember any of the committees that you were a part of? Like were you on*  
212 *the Senate or the Faculty Affairs Committee? Or...?*

213 **Simmons:** Yeah. I was on the Senate for years. And then as part of that there was a Senate  
214 Committee on Student Affairs. So it was the faculty relationship with the Financial Aid and Admissions  
215 and all of those folks. I was on that for a couple years. I was actually instrumental in getting the Human  
216 Subjects Committee started at CSUMB. One of our colleagues posted something, it was a survey or  
217 something that he wanted all the students across campus to take and I thought, "Oh, this is interesting."  
218 You remember we had First Class [an email system] back in those days and so I responded (unintelligible).  
219 I said, "It strikes me there are some human subjects issues here. Has this been vetted by anybody?" And  
220 next thing I know we are starting a Human Subjects Committee on campus because we didn't have one.  
221 And so I was actually the first chair of the campus Human Subjects Committee and later was Vice-Chair  
222 for many, many years. And when I became Dean in 2007 I got off. But ... so essentially from probably '97  
223 or '98 until 2007 I was on the Human Subjects Committee. One year I was the Human Subjects Committee.  
224 We had no other members.

225 **Benmayor:** *Yes, that was as particularly puzzling committee. I remember. [Chuckles]*

226 **Simmons:** Yeah, yeah. In fact, the whole Oral History was ...we had to tackle that one in a way  
227 that made sense to everybody. So.

228 **Benmayor:** *So you became a Dean?*

229 **Simmons:** I did.

230 **Benmayor:** *A Dean of...?*

231 **Simmons:** The College of Professional Studies.

232 **Benmayor:** *Oh.*

233 **Simmons:** You didn't know that?

234 **Benmayor:** *No.*

235           **Simmons:** Oh, yeah. So Dorothy Lloyd was the Founding Dean of that college.

236           **Benmayor:** *Oh, right, okay.*

237           **Simmons:** And then she retired and we had an Interim Dean for a year and then we hired a new  
238 dean and he only lasted a year. So I got this email from Kathy Cruz Uribe who was the Provost at the time  
239 saying could you come and see me and I got offered the opportunity to serve as Interim Dean for a year.  
240 And I thought well, I can do anything for a year, so okay. And then I threw my hat in the ring and they kept  
241 it. So I was Dean from 2007 to 2014.

242           **Benmayor:** *Whoa. Okay. [Chuckles] See? I didn't realize it. Or I didn't remember it. So you are*  
243 *still currently teaching, is that correct? Or are you retired?*

244           **[25:02] Simmons:** I'm FERP-ing. I retired officially last August and then took all of Fall Semester off.  
245 And then I'm teaching a full load this Spring. And now I'm teaching just graduate students in the Master of  
246 Social Work program.

247           **Benmayor:** *Nice.*

248           **Simmons:** Which was one of my ... one of the achievements of my deanship about which I am  
249 most proud. We had tried actually probably three times before the final attempt was successful in creating  
250 a graduate program in Social Work. I think the other two times, actually there were three times, were just  
251 too early. We weren't ready. The resources weren't there. One time we had an Associate Vice President  
252 who just blew me out of the water. She was not interested whatsoever and didn't care to see me again. And  
253 so it was after she left that we tried it again. But I think harkening back to this, you know, our commitment  
254 to the broader community it really was the public and non-profit agencies in Monterey and Santa Cruz and  
255 San Benito counties again who were looking for a workforce. Given the cost of living and cost of housing  
256 here they were having trouble attracting graduate-level social workers to come to the Tri County area to  
257 work. So the guy who was the Director of Monterey County Behavioral Health at the time thought, "Well,

258 then we need to grow our own because they're already here." And so he came to us and said, "What do we  
259 need to do? And we'll give you money to do this."

260 **Benmayor:** *Nice.*

261 **Simmons:** And so yeah, California passed it's called the Mental Health Services Act many, many  
262 years earlier and part of the money that came from that was for training. And so Dr. Clark, the Director of  
263 Behavioral Health at the time, convinced his regional colleagues that all that money should go to Monterey  
264 Bay to start the Social Work program. And so they paid for us to hire a consultant. They paid for the  
265 feasibility study. They paid the first year of the Founding Director's salary. We would not have done it  
266 without them. And so we feel very beholden to our community colleagues for ... in fact, when we were  
267 putting the proposal through the Academic Senate to go on to the Chancellor's Office for approval, there  
268 were like a dozen community members who came to the Academic Senate, three of whom spoke to tell us  
269 that they wanted this program. So it was approved.

270 **Benmayor:** *And that's why there is no Humanities Master's Program at CSUMB. [Laughs] Yeah.*  
271 *Exactly. I mean not that you had anything to do with it but we didn't have that kind of community support.*  
272 *It just doesn't, you know, go on peoples' radar.*

273 **[28:09] Simmons:** So yes, I knew that I was approaching retirement and that if I ... deans at CSUMB  
274 don't teach and so that was the great irony for me, was that one of my initial goals upon arriving at  
275 CSUMB was to have a graduate program in Social Work and now we had one and I couldn't teach in it.

276 **Benmayor:** *Ooh. [Sympathetic chuckle.]*

277 **Simmons:** And so I thought to myself, "Okay, I'm sooner or later going to retire and I want to  
278 teach in it before I do that. And so I gave a year's notice that I was stepping down from being the Dean.  
279 And actually that's when they split the colleges, you know, the College of Professional Studies doesn't  
280 exist anymore. And now we have three colleges. The College of Business and the College of Education and  
281 the College of Human ... Health Sciences and Human Services. And so they took advantage which I

282 thought was a wonderful idea, by the way, of splitting that college. So they took advantage of my stepping  
283 down to do that split. So I've been back teaching since I had a sabbatical in the Fall of '14 and started  
284 teaching again in Spring of '15. So.

285 **[29:18]** [audio skips]

286 **Benmayor:** *Has teaching for you changed from the early years?*

287 **Simmons:** I don't think so. No, I don't think so. I mean I hope I am better at it. But I still think a lot  
288 about teaching the way I did or actually maybe I should say the way I was trained to thinking about it. And  
289 I think back to people like Amy Driscoll who taught us so much about assessment and outcomes and that  
290 kind of thing. So I still think very much in those terms. So like when I hear people saying, "We're giving  
291 extra credit." I thought well, how do you give extra credit in an outcomes based environment. How does  
292 that even work?

293 **Benmayor:** [Chuckles]

294 **Simmons:** But I don't hear people talking about outcomes as much as we used to. And I think that  
295 maybe that's too bad. But for me personally? No, I think I still approach it the same way. It's different  
296 teaching only grad students, though, both in the kinds of assumptions that I can make and the kind of things  
297 I can ask them to do. And the level of conversation is much...

298 **Benmayor:** [Unintelligible]

299 **Simmons:** Yeah, higher than in the undergraduate program ... and more intense.

300 **Benmayor:** *So what was your encounter with the students like in the beginning? Did you have a*  
301 *wide range of ages in your ...?*

302 **Simmons:** I did. So yeah, it's now called the Collaborative Health and Human Services major.  
303 Back then it was just Collaborative Human Services. It was very small initially. I don't know if we had  
304 twenty majors when it first got going. But you're right, there were people who were 20 years old and there  
305 were people older than I was.

306 [31:07] I always admired that early group of students because we referred to them as the pioneers and I  
307 think that's a really good term. Again, as I said about the capstone experience, we didn't always know  
308 what it was we were doing and were making it up as we went along and they were a very hardy bunch.  
309 They rolled with it. In many respects they helped us form the major. Again, being the only full time faculty  
310 member I got a lot of input from the students about what they thought we should be doing. And social  
311 workers being advocate types they weren't shy about offering their opinions either. So yeah, they were  
312 really, really fun folks to be with. And I'm still actually in touch with a lot of them from that first cohort.  
313 That's been a really wonderful part of the experience, too. Probably one thing that hasn't changed, though  
314 is there were a lot of very independent souls and there were a lot of people who needed a lot of handholding  
315 for whom the lack of structure at CSUMB was actually very challenging. You know, they wanted someone  
316 to tell them, "You must do this and you must do this and you must do this." And in the early days where  
317 we were all very radically outcomes based I'd say, "Well, what do you want to learn?" I'd say, "What  
318 classes do you want to take?" You know, "What are you here to learn?" And so... but they were good and  
319 they were hardy and willing to roll with the uncertainties and living with the paradoxes and were able to  
320 accept the 'I don't know' or 'we'll figure it out as we go.'

321 **Benmayor:** *So were there any particular challenges aside from overload of work that stand out for*  
322 *you that you experienced?*

323 **Simmons:** Well I think ... yeah, there were many. So besides the workload I think there were  
324 always resource issues. Even though we kept talking about how we had an enriched funding formula and  
325 how the Department of Defense had given us so much money I was never quite sure where it went.

326 **Benmayor:** [Laughs]

327 **Simmons:** And so why was I the only full-time faculty in a major? And then I think there were, as  
328 much be true in every organization, some interdepartmental competition for dollars that... and we had a

329 Dean who came out of a Teacher Education world and I think the rest of us all saw that that was her  
330 priority so trying to convince her that we were important, too was sometimes a challenge. I'm trying to  
331 [34:07] think what else. I think actually we were having a conversation with Armando Arias one time who  
332 was an Associate VP at the time, just offering the observation that we started too soon. That, for example,  
333 we had a fieldwork requirement for the undergraduate program but there was no fieldwork program in  
334 place. So on top of like preparing four classes a semester, brand new classes, and try to figure out what we  
335 were doing for capstones we had to put together a fieldwork program. And who was there to do that? Well,  
336 me. But fortunately, again, this is where the cross-campus collaboration was so important, our friends at the  
337 Service Learning Institute rose to the occasion, gave me one of their students to be a student assistant and  
338 opened up access to their database of agencies and agency personnel and let us have at it so we could place  
339 our 18 students in the field. But if we hadn't had that I'm not sure exactly what I would have done. But had  
340 I been there I ...sometimes I compare it to UC Merced which had like six years to plan before they saw  
341 students or seven years, whatever it was. Where our founding faculty had 10 months.

342 **Benmayor:** *Not even.*

343 **Simmons:** And then yeah, then I arrived, what, that summer to work on the CPEC documents, so I  
344 had three month. Again, I was teaching four classes and trying to ... I was literally a step ahead of the  
345 students.

346 **Benmayor:** *Why were you teaching four classes? Weren't your classes four unit classes?*

347 **Simmons:** Yeah, they were. But... well, maybe it was only three.

348 **Benmayor:** *Three would have been a full load. Yeah.*

349 **Simmons:** Right, it must have been three, you're right.

350 **Benmayor:** *But still.* [Chuckles]



351           **Simmons:** Right. So... yeah. I think there were those challenges that had we had more time before  
352 the students got there to actually think about the things and to work out, you know, conundrums before they  
353 actually happened, that would have been helpful. But none of us had that luxury.

354           **Benmayor:** *That's right.*

355           **Simmons:** So actually when I said that to Armando he laughed at me and he said, "We should have  
356 had 3 years." But nevertheless we were having the conversation while I was looking for a field program.

357           **Benmayor:** [Chuckles] *Yeah. Let's go back a moment to the Vision Statement that you mentioned*  
358 *in terms of what attracted you to the campus to begin with. So how did the Vision Statement guide your*  
359 *work or did it? Did it also have any impact on your daily practices on campus?*

360 **[37:12] Simmons:** I think it did but not even, not only just in the practice on campus, I think it had an  
361 impact on me personally. I'm thinking ... there's so much in there that was so valuable and so rich. I think  
362 in terms of, again, consistent with the values of my own profession the social justice piece was so  
363 important. And so I tried to think about that not only as content but also how did we do business in the  
364 running of the department and the University. But more importantly, for me as a white male, how did I  
365 engage my students, most of whom were women and a lot of who were women of color, recognizing, and  
366 I'm not even sure we used that language yet but in terms of white privilege and male privilege my own  
367 consciousness raising, especially in the earliest years was incredible. And sometimes painful. But I think  
368 necessary in terms of my own personal development as a human being but also as an instructor. And so I  
369 taught what I was learning myself. And I hope that made for a richer experience for the students. But also,  
370 again in terms of like for example when we talked about having a relatively flat hierarchy in the University,  
371 so we did our best and maybe again it was a function of there only being very few tenure track faculty, that  
372 the lecturers and the faculty had a voice at the table when we made decisions. And that was just a  
373 commitment that we made that I think that department still has. What else. Certainly the commitment to  
374 the external community. Again, having an Institute for Community Collaborative Studies, that was sort of

375 why we existed. But again, in the Collaborative Health and Human Services major we were teaching  
376 collaboration that was kind of the cornerstone of why we existed. So I think, yeah, we did our best in a lot  
377 of ways to bring that into fruition. And then certainly with the service component we did require – in fact,  
378 it's not as stringent now as it was then. We originally required 400 hour internship for our – across two  
379 years – for our students. Now it's like 250, I think. And so it's not as demanding as it once was. But again,  
380 I think that was sort of we were trying to make it real. So.

381 **[40:05] Benmayor:** *And how do you see the Vision – I mean you've been there since 1996 so I can't do*  
382 *the math but it's a considerable number of years, twenty-something years.*

383 **Simmons:** Twenty-three.

384 **Benmayor:** *Twenty-three. So how do you see the Vision shaping your department or even the*  
385 *Master's Program today? Is it still as viable and does it resonate as much now as it did then?*

386 **Simmons:** Again, I think I'm going to carve out social work as being something really exceptional  
387 because of our own well defined set of core values which resonate with the University Vision Statement.  
388 But, you know, I used to say, you know, ten, twelve years ago that not a day went by where I wasn't in a  
389 conversation with someone where the Vision Statement didn't come up. And now I couldn't tell you when  
390 the last time it was I heard somebody reference the Vision Statement. You know, we used to have this  
391 ceremony at the start of every year where the new hires would get up on the stage and they would sign a  
392 copy. I don't think we do that anymore. And I'm just not sure that it's ... actually, I'll say that differently. I  
393 also used to say that the CSUMB Vision Statement was very different and having been in a lot of  
394 organizations in my life where if there was a vision statement it might have been framed and was on a  
395 bookcase gathering dust somewhere and no one had a clue what it actually said. But I used to say that  
396 wasn't true at CSUMB. Now I'm not so sure it's not true at CSUMB. I don't know if you were to ask brand  
397 new faculty, even my own department, about the Vision Statement whether they would know. We used to

398 ask candidates before they came, candidates for faculty positions, to come and be ready to speak to the  
399 Vision Statement. We don't do that anymore.

400 **Benmayor:** *Why not?*

401 **Simmons:** I don't know.

402 **Benmayor:** [Chuckles]

403 **Simmons:** Part of it is first of all the questions now get vetted by academic personnel and the last  
404 two searches I had been on they weren't on the approved list of questions, which I really think is sad. You  
405 know, we used to talk about trying to not look like all the other CSU campuses. And I think we now pretty  
406 much look like most of the other CSU campuses. I think that hard core commitment to outcomes based  
407 education isn't there. I don't hear those conversations anymore. And maybe that's okay, maybe it's passed  
408 and it served its purpose at the time it was supposed to serve. But when you sort of asked earlier about how,  
409 you know, how is that reflected in our current curriculum I don't know that it is. Maybe I'll talk about  
410 outcomes but not in the same way that we did fifteen years ago. Twenty years.

411 **Benmayor:** *We didn't know what they were.* [Chuckles]

412 **Simmons:** But yeah, I think if you were to ask current faculty about the Vision Statement I don't  
413 know that anybody reads it. That's kind of a sad commentary. President Ochoa when he first got there  
414 talked about it being a wonderful document written by people who grew up in the sixties. And I am  
415 wondering about ... certainly it was a wonderful, beautifully written – he wasn't knocking it. Only he  
416 didn't know if it needed to be revised. And I don't know that it's actually gone through any formal revision.  
417 Maybe he is still thinking about it, I don't know. But I guess ... well, yeah, it's a vision of where we want  
418 to be, not what we are and are we there yet? No, we're not. And so let's keep the Vision. I don't know.  
419 Maybe he got enough pushback about that that he dropped it as a topic. But ...

420 **[44:21] Benmayor:** *Well, thinking back, I mean the Vision Statement really comes to the issue of how*  
421 *universities grow and you have many more faculty now, you have many more students and does that in*  
422 *some way ... how did those changes kind of work their way through your own teaching or deaning?*

423 **Simmons:** Well, I still think we are committed to diversity in really, really meaningful ways. And  
424 again, my scope is much narrower now in the last five years since I'm not a dean anymore. And since in  
425 our own college I see that with our Dean, her commitment to diversity is just hanging on her sleeve. I'll  
426 back up for a second. So when I was Dean one of my departments was and it continues to be entirely white.

427 **Benmayor:** *Which department is that?*

428 **Simmons:** : Kinesiology.

429 **Benmayor:** *Oh. Ah-hah.*

430 **Simmons:** At least among the tenure track faculty there are no people of color. And I knew early  
431 on that Kinesiology was going to grow because I could see the numbers from across the country. And so  
432 while I was Dean they got a lot of new faculty lines because I knew... and they did. The students just kept  
433 coming and coming. And every time I would give them a new line I said, "You guys gotta do something."  
434 And the Chair would say to me, "I know, I know, I know but there aren't very many doctoral students of  
435 color in Kinesiology and everybody wants them. And so you'll get a sterling candidate from one of the  
436 programs, they're not coming to Monterey Bay, right? They're going to go to one of the big name  
437 Kinesiology schools." But that didn't mean I didn't stop lighting the fire under his feet because it was a  
438 conversation every time got a new position. "Okay, and what are we going to do this time to advertise more  
439 widely to go do something?" And I know that they sincerely did their best to do that." I also believe that  
440 he was correct, if you are a minority person in Kinesiology you are not going to come to Monterey Bay  
441 when you can get a research package and your own lab (somewhere else).

442 **Benmayor:** *Right.* [Chuckles]

443           **Simmons:** We have done a good job, though, with women in Kinesiology. Probably half the  
444 Kinesiology faculty are women. So that was good.

445           **Benmayor:** *How about the students?*

446           **Simmons:** I think that's pretty diverse. I don't have the numbers off the top of my head but I think  
447 they've always done a good job with the student body. Currently in the Social Work program, and I am  
448 FERP'ing, I'm retired, but I'm the only white male on the faculty in the Social Work Program. And we are  
449 hiring two...it was my position and we had another vacancy and then neither one of them is white. So one  
450 man and one woman. So we're doing okay. It's a small faculty. We only have six full time faculty. But  
451 we've done a good job with that. But that was one of those things and we kept talking about, our students  
452 need to see people that look like them and we are well over half Latino in the Program and I would guess  
453 75% female. So we had to do that. I know we're not supposed to officially talk about affirmative action but  
454 ...

455           **Benmayor:** [Chuckles] *A-hah.*

456           **Simmons:** But you do what you got to ... I mean there was no way not to do what we just did  
457 so....

458 **[48:37] Benmayor:** *So picking up on that I am wondering if you can reflect a little bit about some of the*  
459 *challenges we faced in the early years of the University with regard to diversity and issues of [cough*  
460 *obscures word]*

461           **Simmons:** There was a lot. I don't know how to say this diplomatically. Our Founding President  
462 didn't always get it. Is that diplomatic enough? And I don't know what that was all about. And certainly it  
463 wasn't not for lack of trying on the part of the faculty and staff to try and educate him but there was, I am  
464 thinking of CLFSA, the Chicano Latino Faculty and Staff Association and their allies which we were part  
465 of. Things were very tense and angry in those days. And I think ... a couple of things. Again, that was  
466 something we had to do. We as the faculty and staff had to take those positions. Otherwise the Vision

467 Statement wasn't going to be real. It was just a piece of paper. But so not only was it important for CSUMB  
468 as an organization but it was also an incredible teaching opportunity for us and our students. This is what  
469 this means. And this is what it looks like in action. Sometimes you do have to speak truth to power and it's  
470 not always very fun or very pleasant. And we, you know, people who lost their jobs because of that. So  
471 yeah, that was ... that was a challenging time.

472 I'm sure you'll remember, too. There was the one point when Chancellor Reed ordered an investigation of  
473 the CSUMB faculty and President of CSU San Marcos chaired this team that came to campus and tried to  
474 figure out what was going on at CSUMB. You and I were Department Chairs, we were Institute Directors  
475 at the time. And I remember having this meeting and Amalia was giving this impassioned statement about,  
476 as only Amalia can do with her passion, the social justice piece. And finally the guy from San Marcos says,  
477 "Are you telling me that you all think that higher education is an agent of social change?" And we all kind  
478 of sat there in stunned silence. And I remember you finally saying, "Well, yes. Don't you?"

479 **Benmayor:** [Laughs]

480 **Simmons:** That was one of our proudest moments. Yeah, go back and tell the Chancellor. Yeah,  
481 we do think higher education is an agent of social change. We *are* trying to make the world a better place  
482 here and using higher education as an instrument for doing that. So yeah. It wasn't always fun.

483 **Benmayor:** *Yeah.*

484 **Simmons:** So.

485 **[52:01] Benmayor:** *What about what ...sort of reflecting upon what you remember in the early years as*  
486 *some of your major accomplishments, personally and institutionally?*

487 **Simmons:** I think, I mean there were a lot of things. One, and some of them aren't so big and  
488 noticeable, but I do think I mentioned earlier, for example, being on different search committees. So  
489 making a contribution to what the faculty looked like across campus. You know, nobody is going to notice  
490 that or remember that but I think that was really important for all of us to be part of. Certainly creating the

491 Collaborative Health and Human Services major was probably my first big one. I remember we went  
492 through our first program review and one of the external re – the external reviewers came after, you know,  
493 reading all of our preparatory documents. We had a, it was a Dean of Public Health at Stanford or  
494 something was our external reviewer. And so we all sat down and the first thing he did was look at me and  
495 said, “Is this program going to collapse if you leave?” And fortunately I thought the answer was no. If  
496 someone had asked that, you know, two years earlier the answer might have been yes. But I thought that  
497 was a really nice recognition that, okay, yeah, I had an integral part in getting this thing off the ground and  
498 going. And I don't know that I would say that it bears much of my imprint today. It's evolved a lot in the  
499 last twenty three years. And I've not been in the Department since 2007. So there's a lot of it that doesn't  
500 look like I had anything to do with it. But I know that I laid the foundation for that and I'm very proud of  
501 that. I think the MSW program was my other big smile that.... And again, I didn't do a lot of the nuts and  
502 bolts. I mean I didn't write the program proposal or any of those kinds of things. The faculty did the hard  
503 work on that. But as you know, going through administrative hoops and keeping the ball moving and  
504 keeping it on the radar screen, somebody has to do that. And I wonder if that's why some of our first three  
505 attempts didn't make it because we didn't have a champion at a senior level. So it didn't hurt when I  
506 became Dean that I was able to push that through and certainly, again, we had the community support and  
507 faculty support for that. It also didn't hurt that our president at the time was the former Dean of Social  
508 Work, Diane Harrison. So she was very much in favor of our doing that. I always appreciated, and I know  
509 she comes under some criticism, but I always appreciated that she left me alone during that process. It  
510 would have been very easy for her as a former dean to have just eagle eyed that all the way. But she was  
511 very good about, you know, once every six months I'd run into her and she'd say, “How is it going? What  
512 do you need for me to do?” Otherwise she let me do it and I was always grateful for that.

513 **[55:14]** And then there were other things like ... as I said, the Human Subjects Committee. I think that was  
514 one of those things that I ... I helped do. I think a lot of us contributed to the early support for the Service

515 Learning Institute, making sure that got off the ground. I think the Personal Growth & Counseling Center,  
516 the early days, I had things to do with that. Yeah, there's a lot of stuff. And again, I think maybe the Ethics  
517 ULR. I chaired the Ethics ULR committee for three years and was on it for from '96 until they quit doing  
518 ULRs. So yeah, those are some things I look back on fondly.

519 **Benmayor:** *Were there any things that you tried to do that you couldn't get any traction on? Or?*

520 **Simmons:** Well, again, the first three attempts at the MSW program went down in flaming failure.  
521 But ... I don't think so. Well, actually I would have liked to have also had – oh, actually I should talk about  
522 that. We – we did start the Master's in Public Policy Program. And we did that jointly with the Panetta  
523 Institute. When Leon Panetta came back from D.C. the first time he had been Clinton's Director of the  
524 Office of Management and Budget and then the Chief of Staff. And then he left and came home. And with  
525 his vision and name power we started the Master's Program in Public Policy. And it was a really good  
526 program. And it was a really good idea. And it never took off. We simply never got enough students in the  
527 program to make it break even. Financially it was just too much of a drain on the University. And that's  
528 probably my big sorrow, is that – and actually I was Dean when we decided to pull the plug. And to have  
529 been, you know, years putting it together as a member of the faculty but then be the one who had to say to  
530 the Provost, "I think it's time." But also enough sense of my own balance that it was true, the last cohort we  
531 admitted only had like three students, sadly. You can't run a program with three students. So.

532 **Benmayor:** *But it was a nice program. I remember we had some students from Human*  
533 *Communication that went into – they were older students, returning students in our program. So it was a*  
534 *very nice, you know, opportunity for them to get a Master's. Yeah.*

535 **Simmons:** That and I mean how often do you get to have a former White House Chief of Staff  
536 teach some of your classes?

537 **Benmayor:** *That's right.*

538 **Simmons:** It was pretty cool.



539 **Benmayor:** *Yeah.*

540 **Simmons:** I think maybe this is where you were going with the line of questioning. There was  
541 some other stuff, though that ...we all choose a path and then you – whatever happens, whatever happens  
542 when you choose that path. So I came from a very heavy research Ph.D. program at Cal. And was never a  
543 heavy duty researcher at CSUMB. And that had to be okay because there wasn't enough hours in the day –  
544 there weren't enough hours in the day – to ... to do everything that one wanted to do. Again, my  
545 background is in – my doctorate is technically in social policy. And with an emphasis in law. And I had  
546 great designs on doing this research on social workers in the courts. Some interaction between judges and  
547 social workers and lawyers and court preparation and all of that. We now call it forensic social work. And  
548 that's an agenda that went unrealized. I just never got there.

549 **[59:39] Benmayor:** *Were you ever able to fashion a course that would draw from some of that? Or?*

550 **Simmons:** I am now in the master's program. I teach a – in fact, we just taught it for the second  
551 time this semester, a Forensic Social Work class. Yeah. I put that together. So. And yeah, and so I am  
552 teaching things like social exchange theory. You talk about relationships between people who have more  
553 power than you do. But then also it's very practical skill-based things like testifying and forensic  
554 interviewing, those kinds of things. So yeah, it was good. But yeah, I had great hopes when I left Berkeley  
555 and came here that just didn't happen.

556 **Benmayor:** *I think that was the case for all of us. In my case at least, I tried to fashion it so the*  
557 *courses that I taught had some relationship to the research that I was interested in. So it was kind of like*  
558 *my laboratory, if you will. Yeah, it never really ... it was always kind of a tack on to teaching if at all.*

559 **Simmons:** Right. And I -

560 **Benmayor:** *Were you expected to do publication?*

561 **Simmons:** Yes and no. It was all very vague and I remember when Miguel Tirado, he always went  
562 – was my Institute Director for the first couple of years, he said well, you have to get something published

563 before you go up for tenure. Well, what does something mean? Well, no one knew what that meant. And I,  
564 when I left Berkeley I was wrapping up a research project and still had one in the fire. And so on top of  
565 doing my dissertation and trying to start the new program I was working on those things, too. And so I had  
566 – my wife calls it a book. I call it a monograph. It did come out after I got here. And I had several articles  
567 published out of the research work we were doing. So I – I mean I had some stuff going on earlier that got  
568 me tenured. But it was very ill defined. It still is, I think. Although I do think the culture has shifted  
569 decidedly. You could get tenured in those days without ever having published anything. Now I'm not so  
570 sure that's true. No one's – it's obviously not, you know, two articles a year in refereed journals. But I don't  
571 think you -you come up after being here six years and publish nothing and think you're gonna get tenure. I  
572 think that changed under Kathy and Diane. They really wanted to bring it up a notch. And that's probably  
573 okay. As long as there is support for the faculty, you know, and again, we're all teaching three classes a  
574 semester and when you do that -

575 **Benmayor:** *Exactly.*

576 **Simmons:** And we have done a better job with like with brand new faculty now. It's pretty  
577 standard that they get one or two course releases for a couple of years so at least they can get started on a  
578 research agenda.

579 **Benmayor:** *Right, yeah. That happened after I was Department Chair. Remember that?*

580 **Simmons:** Right.

581 **Benmayor:** *I mean I didn't ... I had already gone back to being faculty when that sort of came into*  
582 *being. So do you think that the campus culture has changed over the years in terms of work and creativity?*

583 **[1:03:32] Simmons:** In some ways yes and in some ways no. I ...I think we used to laugh in the early  
584 days about that the administration knew what they were doing when they hired all of us because they knew  
585 that we were hardworking people who would get the job done.

586 **Benmayor:** [Laughs]

587           **Simmons:** And so we all put in phenomenal, you know, 70, 80 hour work weeks were just  
588 standard. I hope it's not that way anymore but I'm not sure that it isn't. I still see an awful lot of people  
589 who are working awfully hard, especially the non-tenured tenure track people who just, I've just seen a  
590 pretty phenomenal amount of work. But I do think, I mean we are 24 years old and we don't have to build  
591 the infrastructure anymore. And we still fight, you know, we just went through another GE battle which  
592 fortunately teaching only in the graduate program I was able to avoid most of. But – so there is still some of  
593 that organizational administrative stuff that needs doing. But I do think this – and because there are simply  
594 more faculty than there used to be there is more space and more allowance for doing the other kinds of  
595 work that you might want to do because when there were so few of us and everything had to get done, well  
596 now there are more of us and there are still things that need to get done but you can spread it out further.  
597 And so I'm mindful. You know, we have a young associate professor on the Social Work faculty who  
598 really has a research agenda that's been on hold for a while. And I think she just tenured a year ago. This is  
599 her second year. But she's finally getting the space to do what she wants. She's going to be on sabbatical in  
600 the fall and she's got these elaborate plans. I'm just really, really hopeful for her that she can do some of  
601 the other kinds of stuff. And I hope that's true across campus. That may be one of the other downsides of  
602 our getting older and bigger, I don't know a lot of faculty anymore. And part of that was being Dean I  
603 didn't get out much. And then since I've not been Dean I've actually deliberately just kept a low profile.  
604 But I did get elected to the campus RTP committee a couple of years ago and I was reviewing portfolios for  
605 people going up for Full Professor and I didn't have a clue who they were. And I thought, "Well, that's real  
606 different."

607           **Benmayor:** *Yes, yes.*

608           **Simmons:** Because I used to know everybody. And then certainly and then the Assistants going up  
609 for second year and fourth year reviews, not a clue who they were.

610           **Benmayor:** *Yeah, it's curious. I often wonder how the different generations of faculty experience*  
611 *[these changes] because I know that this past GE shift and the shift in units is really undercutting a lot of*  
612 *things that were put in place before, that the stress of that has been extraordinary, not so much on the*  
613 *junior faculty I don't think, but on the Associate and Full Professors.*

614           **Simmons:** You mean like faculty relations between ...?

615           **Benmayor:** *Yeah, faculty relations. And also just the constant thing of having to shift and redo*  
616 *things over and over and over again. Like rewrite curriculum because the unit count has changed. So now*  
617 *we have to rewrite curriculum. All of that falls on faculty.*

618 **[1:07:34] Simmons:** Right.

619           **Benmayor:** *Plus, the fact that... Anyway, this is your interview, not mine! [Laughter] But. I have*  
620 *noticed that many of the people that you and I were involved in hiring who are now senior faculty, it*  
621 *doesn't seem that their lives are any easier than our lives were.*

622           **Simmons:** I agree. Yeah. And so maybe we hired the same people that hired us. We hired people –  
623 well, I think and ... specifically about Kinesiology again, they have an incredible work ethic in that  
624 department. You asked earlier about publications. Well again, there's no college standard. They don't hire  
625 people who aren't going to be publishers. And... but we also have spent a lot of money equipping them  
626 with labs, both so that they could actually, you know ... and sometimes the titles of some of their  
627 publications we know that – you know, “Excess Weight Factor Pressure of the Such-and-Such Muscle  
628 Group,” na-na-na. Means nothing to me.

629           **Benmayor:** [Chuckles]

630           **Simmons:** But they are able to do that kind of work. But I don't think they would last very long if  
631 they didn't either.

632           **Benmayor:** *Yeah. So is there anything that you have that I haven't asked about that you would like*  
633 *to add or ...?*

634           **Simmons:** Well, obviously I didn't depart. That was one of your questions. I almost did. I don't  
635 know if you know that story. As I mentioned earlier, we have family in Bakersfield still. And there was an  
636 opening for a Social Work position at Cal State Bakersfield which I interviewed for and thought I was  
637 going to be offered. And then at the 11<sup>th</sup> hour the Provost froze the money for the position so they weren't  
638 able to make an offer. Otherwise I might not have been here this long.

639           **Benmayor:** *What year was that?*

640           **Simmons:** Oh, I'm gonna guess 2004, maybe. 2005? Somewhere in there. But I think – I  
641 mentioned that I had an offer from the University of Texas when I came to CSUMB for my interview. I  
642 also had one that formally came afterwards but I knew it was in the works, from Tulane. And I've often  
643 thought about how different things would have been for me professionally had I gone to either one of those  
644 schools. One is a private university in a very poor city. And another, huge, they have like 1000 graduate  
645 students in the University of Texas Arlington Social Work program. At all three levels, doctoral, master's  
646 [1:10:44] and B.A. But I got tenured early at CSUMB mostly I think as a way of rewarding me for all  
647 those very, very strenuous first few years that I was there. And that was with Dorothy Lloyd's urging that I  
648 go up early for tenure. I don't know that I ever would have been Dean at one of those schools. I got the  
649 opportunity to serve as a Dean for seven years. And so I think there is something to be said for that, too that  
650 CSUMB – I used to say and it's probably still true, that there were times that CSUMB drove me absolutely  
651 nuts and there was no place else I'd rather be. And I think both were true. And so I – having just retired in  
652 August I have some time to reflect. I'm quite content with my career. I think I made a difference. And it  
653 was a positive one. And I think it's one of the things about teaching maybe especially in a profession like  
654 social work, though, that I get to watch my students go out and do the work that they do making the world a  
655 better place. And I take some pride in that.

656           **Benmayor:** *Well, I think that's a wonderful way to end this interview.*

657           **Simmons:** That's good.

