

Remarks In Celebration of Paul Kellermann Becoming Professor Emeritus

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Paul, colleagues and friends of Paul Kellermann,
It is my pleasure and honor to be able to be here today on this occasion. Truly, I thank you for this opportunity to explain a little why I say this.

Why have I travelled nearly 5000 miles for my allotted ten minutes on the program? It may seem to be a luxury to do so, although my impression is that the allotted time is somewhat flexible at these sort of events. This is not really an important point to me. I would be here whether or not I had a part in the program, whether I had a seat in the front row or stood at the back against the wall. I would be here because it is important that I show my appreciation to Paul for what he has done in creating the relationship between our two universities, and what it has done for me personally.

Actually, my original idea to attend today's event began as something of a misunderstanding. For faculty at my university, becoming emeritus is formal change in status that ordinarily equates to saying, "So long! It was nice you were here. You did a rather good job, but now we will be going on without you." Maybe you will still have a place to park the car if you insist on staying around a bit longer. Perhaps if there is space beside the furnace, with the brooms and buckets in a corner, you can have an "office", even with some mismatched furniture remaining from earlier renovations, a place where you can count your old pencils, and, of course, you may place yourself at your leisure in the library with other dusty materials. In short, to become emeritus is to be retired and to leave our university in most cases.

In thinking how I should frame my remarks for today, I thought I should look for an appropriate theory in the same manner as I would expect Paul to act. I confess I didn't find a satisfactory theory in my short search. However, a rather humorous model came to mind that could have been applied, at least partially in jest. It is Cyril Northcote Parkinson's famous 10 stages toward retirement that he published in his little book from 1957, **Parkinson's Law**. The process begins with the age of qualification, and thereafter follows the stages of discretion, promotion, responsibility, authority, achievement, distinction, dignity, and wisdom. Those nine fine stages are then followed by the tenth, which takes a marked turn toward the negative; that is the stage of obstruction, brought on by the pressure of those who lust after the incumbent's position while he remains in place. Well, we can safely say that Paul Kellermann has achieved all of the first nine stages, and with today's event he should be able to escape the last one. As becoming emeritus here does not have the same meaning as I knew it, the whole framework of Parkinson may be moot for us today.

Here one can go on with at least two of the pillars of university life - teaching and research - and receive pay, regardless. Our U.S. operationalization of becoming "emeritus" may be one example of the many ways in which our importation of the European university model has been modified, rather dramatically in some ways, if I may say so without implying too much criticism. At the

least we can say that the U.S. university has developed in different directions from what you gave us and from what you have continued to develop.

There are two aspects of my remarks today, first concerning our university partnership and second in regard to the more personal side of this relationship. With respect to the first, and in summary, my university has several formalized partnerships with other universities, and in addition students travel abroad to study in many places, as do some faculty members teach elsewhere for short periods of time. But the partnership with the University of Klagenfurt is the only relationship that is designed to be complete. While the actual number of participants on an annual basis probably is probably less than 20 persons, we have students coming to Klagenfurt to study for one or two semesters, faculty coming to teach a short course in English, others coming for joint research purposes, librarians making a comparative study tour, and at least once a secretary has made a trip of discovery. The same occurs from your side with a range of people coming our way. While the numbers are only a very small fraction of the total population, the point is that we have included studying, teaching, research, and support services. And the exchange seems to go along more or less on the overt initiative of only a few interested people, with a significant amount of support from the staffs of international study offices on both sides. I add here special recognition of the intensive orientation program you have developed for the incoming students. This was a very positive invention and our students profit from it. We have a parallel program at our university. The comprehensive scope of our exchange is important not only because it offers opportunities to a wide range of persons, but mostly because it reflects the larger concept of a true university. By that I mean to contrast it with a "school" that is focused on teaching more or less passive students. Instead a university has "universality", being broad, multi-faceted, and interconnected. In this way, the partnership actually teaches us what it means to be a university. It is a learning community, in which we all learn from each other in various ways. You may already have known this, but my impression is that many on our side at least do not.

We can ask ourselves, only briefly today at this occasion, what it should mean to have exchange agreements and university partnerships. For the past year or so, many in the U.S. have taken an interest in a book by the provocative title, "The World is Flat", by the New York Times journalist, Thomas Friedman. This book has been the Number 1 best seller for many weeks. It lays out the argument that we have been undergoing a series of social changes that "flatten" the world, most especially with respect to economic systems. This analysis of the globalization process says that we are now past not only the transition from the agricultural and industrial ages, but even past the first phase of the information age. Whereas we have been spending much energy on understanding how the influence of companies has overtaken that of nations, we have missed noticing that individuals are displacing even the companies by way of their having personal access to information, and their personal ability to add to the body of information (if not always in a way that would constitute "knowledge"). That is, no matter where a person decides to reside, the world is available to them, and it is open to their contributions to it at their own finger tips. If so, we should begin to consider seriously what we are aiming at when we organize and promote partnerships between our universities. What competencies should we be emphasizing, and why those and not others?

Now let me say a little about the more personal aspects of our university partnership. I knew immediately when I first met Paul some 15 or so years ago that he was someone I wanted to know better and would likely to become a friend. First impressions are strongly influential. I first noticed that he was tall, but more importantly that he was serious. I mean this in the best way in

that he was genuine. He spoke carefully and with much forethought, but also with politeness and consideration. We were free of any obligation to follow up on his proposal. Paul came to us to investigate the possibility that we would create a partnership of our universities, we had not come to him. He had the vision and took the initiative. We both think of ourselves as being regional universities, and we have some overlaps in curriculum and missions. Taking the initiative is a signature trait of Paul. He knows nothing new is likely to happen without acting on an idea, even if it is a good idea.

A second trait of Paul is that he was a shepherd of the partnership. He looked after it, was responsive to questions, suggested solutions to problems. He didn't disappear once we began the process of creating the relationship, nor did he forget about it once it was well underway. He often escorted students from your university coming to ours, and did so by way of a visit to New York City in order to enlarge their experiences (and to take some pictures, of course). He took care that the initial physical and emotional needs of the students were attended to. I think he did more of this than we realize, and he did for our students coming here, as well.

Even more than being a shepherd, I would say there is a third trait. He took "care" for the partnership's health. Taking care means that one does those things that are needed to increase the chances for success, and it is done with an intrinsic motivation that values the enterprise for its own sake and not for some ulterior purpose. Taking care of things is a continuing part of Paul's linguistics as well as his behavior. It is a really wonderful characteristic in a person, revealing his deep humanity. In taking care, Paul is never authoritarian nor dismissive to others. Instead, he is kind and respectful, even if he offers a challenge to what is happening now and then.

I said this was also personal. I do think of Paul as a model. He has combined the teaching of students, research on his own and with colleagues, and even administration responsibilities without any of these suffering neglect. Few of us can manage this. He has modeled critical thinking skills in all of these aspects. I have learned much from him.

Eleven years ago, our university recognized Paul's contributions to our university by creating a special status for him. Following some discussion, in that it was a completely new idea, he was given the title of Associated Professor of Sociology and Research Scholar of the University of Northern Iowa.

Paul, now I would like to present you with a Certificate of Appreciation from our university, in Recognition of your contributions to our collaborations. It is signed by our university president, Robert Koob, our interim provost and academic vice-president, James Lubker, and our associate vice-president for international studies, Tim O'Connor. On behalf of the University of Northern Iowa, I say thank you.