

University of Louisiana at Monroe

My good friend Larry Romero, whom I graduated high school with, entered college at the University of Louisiana at Monroe (ULM) in August 1978. One Saturday afternoon that October, my sister, Linda, along with a first cousin, and I drove to ULM and visited Larry in his dorm room just to check it out. Larry said he was having a blast at college. Despite the fact that I was no longer satisfied with my work at the autobody shop, and I had pretty much ruled out the idea of opening my own shop, the thought of going to college still hadn't entered my mind. We had a nice visit and that was that, for the time being. A couple of months later during the Christmas Break, I bumped into Larry and other former high school friends as well who had gone off to various universities, most of them in Louisiana. I had two takeaways from those conversations. All my friends who had gone to college seemed to be enjoying the social experience as well as being out on their own. And I recall most said their grades had not met their expectations, likely due to their enjoying the social aspect perhaps a bit too much. Those conversations made an impression on me, but similar to my prior visit to see Larry at ULM, I still was not envisioning quitting my job in favor of college.

And yet, the two events that would end up being the ultimate influence on me in regard to eventually leading me to leave the autobody shop to go to college became even more prevalent in my life. I got caught up in watching *The Paper Chase* on CBS. It premiered in September 1978, and the timing couldn't have been more fortuitous. I watched nearly all the episodes that inaugural season. We all have those moments way back in our lives where we have vivid memories of certain events, even if they are seemingly minor at the time, and watching the first episode of *The Paper Chase* was one of those moments for me. I was fascinated by the setting of the fictional law school (read Harvard Law School) in the northeast. And I found the plot, which revolved around the journey of a handful of students as they navigated their way through law school, in particular through their interactions with a renowned professor of contract law, to be riveting. But what really captured my attention was the focus in the classroom on the Socratic method of teaching, specifically by the contract law professor. I found this concept of open-ended questions by the professor and the shared dialogue and cooperative arguments during the class to be incredibly intriguing. I had no idea that teaching ever occurred in this fashion—it had not been my experience—and I was drawn to it immediately.

Looking back, I have no recollection of what drove my initial interest to watch *The Paper Chase* in the first place, but I know it was a drama, which I preferred to comedies. Perhaps it stood out because most of the TV series of that season, including *All in the Family*, *Mork and Mindy*, *The Love Boat*, and *Three's Company*, were free of any serious drama. Sadly, and to my great disappointment, the viewer ratings for *The Paper Chase* were dismal and, despite its high acclaim and some great actors, the series was cancelled after that first season. I imagine the biggest problem the show faced was where it was placed in the lineup, opposite *Happy Days* and *Laverne & Shirley*, specifically, both of which had extremely high ratings. Even though there were a lot of protests and strong letters from avid viewers who were sorry to see the show go

off the air, CBS did not really reconsider pulling the plug on the show. A few years later it was picked up by Showtime and became the first drama series to hit cable TV. It was a big hit. In many ways, the show was ahead of its time, and I'm sure would be a hugely popular today if it had launched now on Netflix or another streaming service.

The Paper Chase may not have succeeded on network TV, but the series changed my life in an extraordinary way. By early 1979, after being employed full-time for over half a year at the autobody shop, I was starting to entertain the thought of going to college. At that point I saw it solely as a means to an end to get to law school in light of my attraction to the Socratic method of teaching after watching *The Paper Chase*. It was not so much that I wanted to become a lawyer, rather my intention was to attend law school and experience something similar to what I was watching on *The Paper Chase*. It is hard to explain, but suddenly I had this intellectual curiosity which I had not seriously experienced ever before.

While I did not perform well academically in high school. I was always an avid reader. Growing up, I loved going to the library and checking out all types of books, especially history and sports. And I always looked forward to the arrival of all the periodicals we subscribed to including the daily newspaper, a weekly newspaper, and various magazines. I remember my parents had a subscription to *Newsweek* which I enjoyed reading. I was especially attracted to a column written periodically by the celebrated economist, Milton Friedman. I credit my being introduced to his thoughts and philosophy as the second event that put me on a different path. Even as a fairly recent high school graduate, as I was working in the autobody shop and thinking about starting my own shop, I was trying to make sense of the high inflationary environment during that period as well as the moderately high unemployment. Friedman posed all sorts of questions and analysis about economics that I found fascinating and that highly correlated with my personal opinions, and not just with respect to work. For example, I was intrigued by the harmful effects of inflation, as I saw how inflation depleted my grandparents' savings for their retirement. I started to wonder if it would ever be possible to buy a house given all the inflation uncertainty. My anecdotal observation was that inflation could be quite detrimental, that is, to the extent that we did not expect it. Similarly, I was always struggling to understand how my parents in the fast-food business were able to cope with high inflation. But I had no idea as to what was causing inflation during that period. Friedman gave me the answer in his columns. And he gave me answers to a lot of other questions that I had, even on topics that I did not think were necessarily of economic importance. Moreover, Friedman had a strong distrust of government intervention in private matters, and I was in full agreement with him on that point. Likewise, Friedman was a strong proponent of markets, competition, and the invisible hand –those unseen forces that move the free market economy –in allocating scarce resources, and I found this line of reasoning to be extremely powerful. At the time, I had no concept of the Chicago School of Economics and its strong philosophy in markets and competition, but, thanks to *Newsweek*, I was captivated by Friedman's reasoning.

I might argue that a third thing also nudged me in the direction of pursuing higher education, though it took me a while to connect it all. Despite my lack of academic interest leading up to that point, I was always thinking ahead. My attempt to gain insight into whether or not I wanted to establish and open my own autobody shop – which, as I mentioned, I tried to do while still working at the Bellevue Body Shop during the day – was proof of that. It also made me realize that, in addition to not loving working alone, that I was not equipped by any measure to launch a successful business without gaining a better understanding of how businesses should work in the real world. Even more than that, I was thinking big at the time, not just wanting to operate my own autobody shop, but instead, I had grandiose thoughts of having franchised autobody shops under my belt. I imagined the autobody shop industry was ripe for a massive change in organizational structure whereby autobody shops could be franchised just like many fast-food establishments to convey a certain standard of work performed on each vehicle. I came to see that gaining a solid understanding of economics would be advantageous in my launching a business.

When I worked at the autobody shop, I usually took my lunch break at my parent's Jena Burger Barn since I did not have to pay for my meal there. But one day in the middle of February 1979, I grabbed my lunch to go rather than eating it there and went home to place a phone call to the Admissions Office at The University of Louisiana at Monroe (ULM). I picked ULM because I was a bit familiar with it having visited Larry there just a few months before, and it was only about an hour and a half from my hometown. I did not seriously contemplate reaching out to any other school. I called with the notion of starting immediately even though I knew the semester was already well underway. Obviously, I was a bit naïve about the process. I quickly learned that it would be the summer before I could enroll, and, I was thrilled when the admissions officer, after listening to my story, informed me that ULM would be happy to accept me. I could start in the summer. I was excited. In my eagerness, I took off early from work the next afternoon and drove up to ULM to obtain the student handbook and the catalog of courses the school offered. They would have happily mailed the materials to me, but I did not want to wait that long. I read through both several times over the following weeks.

The transition period from my deciding in February to enroll in ULM until I started that summer seemed to drag on forever. I had mentally checked out of working in the autobody shop despite showing up for work every day and continuing to put in lengthy hours. I think everyone was skeptical that I would last long in college and expected that I would come back to my regular job once I tried it and failed. Even my former high school principal was not that encouraging. I remember sitting at the counter at the local Napa Auto Parts store to pick up some automotive parts for the autobody shop and Mr. Coleman, my high school principal, walked in. I would say that I did not favorably impress Mr. Coleman when I was in high school as he viewed me as someone who didn't apply myself at all, at least in school. But now I was excited to tell Mr. Coleman that I was headed off to college. He wished me good luck but also expressed doubt that I would make it. I have no idea if he told me that because he believed it or if he was simply trying to motivate me. Or perhaps he was still peeved at me for cutting doughnuts in front of

Jena High School with my Corvette while I was supposed to be in class, and he said it to get back at me. Whatever the reason, that conversation threw me for a loop. On the one hand, he gave me a bit of pause, leading me to immediately question my decision. And on the other hand, suddenly I had a chip on my shoulder with something to prove.

A couple of months later, and a little over a year after graduating from high school, I started summer school at ULM. Summer school was split into two six-week terms and each class met daily for an hour and a half. The normal course load was two classes each term. For the first term, I took *Pre-Calculus and Matrix Algebra* and *English Composition I*. I started off majoring in pre-law, given going to law school was the primary reason I went to college. The pre-law program was housed in the Department of Economics and Finance in the College of Business Administration which turned out to be fortuitous. Normally, the pre-law program would have been in a different college, say the liberal arts college within a university, but luckily for me at ULM it was not. Plus, I was highly interested in economics due to my recent fascination with Milton Friedman.

I did not take a car to campus immediately and I recall my parents dropping me off at my dormitory, Sherrouse Hall, on a late Sunday afternoon with classes starting the next morning. There may have been some sort of an orientation, but I doubt it, and if so, I skipped it. Instead, I went directly to the sign-in location to learn my dorm room and from there we started the process of unloading the car. My roommate, who was paired with me randomly, was already in the room. His name was Michael Canova. Michael was from Baton Rouge and had this combination of an Italian and Cajun accent. Michael had just finished his first year as a Pharmacy major, but due to an abundance of late-night activities, he had to go to summer school to get his course hours up.

To this day, I still have pretty good memories of that first week at college –it was such an important week in my life, not only leaving the emotional safety of my parents and my home, but also making the sudden switch from a blue-collar career to heading off to college with the intent of going to law school afterwards. *Pre-Calculus and Matrix Algebra* was from 7:30-9:00 a.m. and *English Composition I* was from 9:15-10:45 a.m. Since it was a short six-week term, I had papers due in *English Composition I* that first week and a *Pre-Calculus and Matrix Algebra* exam at the end of the week. Meanwhile, I was enjoying life out of the autobody shop and out of my parent's house. Other than the first Sunday night when we just hung out in the dorm room after I unpacked and my parents departed, Michael and I, along with some of his friends, went out every night. It was a packed and fun week. Then the true reckoning came, the first *Pre-Calculus and Matrix Algebra* test on Friday morning. I knew immediately that I did horribly to say the least. I had not studied at all other than skimming my notes and had not even purchased the textbook yet as I was too busy having fun. Some might think it was a terrible start to a college career. With some time and perspective, I would say it was the opposite, the best thing that could have happened to me. After taking the test, my first stop after my next *English Composition I* class was the bookstore where I purchased the textbook. I was not going to let

Mr. Coleman say I told you so, and I am still a bit mystified to this day as to what I was thinking that week. I know I was plenty serious about doing well in college, yet for whatever reason I temporarily dropped the ball in terms of purchasing books. All I can imagine is that it was the immediate shock of the lifestyle change.

I spent most of that first full weekend at ULM going over all the material which I should have already learned that week and getting ahead for the next week. On Monday, I received my *Pre-Calculus and Matrix Algebra* exam back with a score in the low 40s. I was not surprised. I was confident that I would do far better on my exam that upcoming Friday. And I did, scoring in the high 90s. I did well the next Friday as well, and continued in that positive pattern. The class size was roughly twenty students when we started and most dropped out, and I think, in the end, only seven or eight students stayed in the class. The professor, whom I liked a lot, posted the grades with social security numbers on his office door, and I ended up with the highest grade in the class which was a B. Obviously, this was before grade inflation as we experience in higher education today. Plus, he weighted every exam uniformly, thus no higher weight to the final. I was extremely pleased with my grade, considering I started with an exam score in the low 40s. It turned out to be the only B that I made at ULM. And I made an A in *English Composition I* and was confident I could succeed in college as long as I studied. I took *Calculus I* the second summer term and completely aced it start to finish.

Following the first week of not taking college seriously enough, I developed a time schedule which I adhered to during all three years as an undergraduate student. First, I made it a point to complete all my classes by noon and thus, I chose early morning classes whenever it was possible each semester. I found it was always far easier to get a slot in the early classes. Second, I would break for lunch, then religiously go to the library nearly every afternoon after class and do all my work until dinner that evening. Afterwards, I was free to enjoy myself. And I tended to do a good deal of studying on weekends, too. Coming from a full-time job at the autobody shop, this schedule was easy for me, and in fact prepared me to treat college almost like a job. Part of the reason I devoted so much time to my studies at ULM was that I had let a few years lapse as a junior high and high school student during which I basically ignored school for the most part. I had some catching up to do. I took a real effort to make up for those earlier years where you can learn quickly.

During the fall and spring semester of my first year, there were three classes which stood out, in large part because they were totally new to me. I took two of them, *Financial Accounting* and *Introduction to Psychology* during the fall semester, and both were incredibly eye opening. As was typical for my schedule, my *Financial Accounting* class was at 8:00 a.m. and Professor Kaplan was superb. While working at the autobody shop after high school, and especially when I was thinking about starting my own business and rented the garage at night to do autobody work on my own, I tried to teach myself accounting in terms of income statements and balance sheets. As I mentioned, that had been difficult. But the financial accounting class brought it all into focus, and I found the framework of everything tying out, or agreeing, between the income

statement and the balance sheet to be invaluable. It was a brand-new and exciting language for me to learn. I remember the class had an optional accounting lab every afternoon for two hours with a graduate teaching assistant and I went every weekday even though the class was only Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Likewise, *Introduction to Psychology* also stood out as it was brand new to me and gave me a far better understanding of human behavior than I had previously had. Suddenly, I found answers to human behavior which I was very naïve about beforehand. Regrettably, this was the only psychology course I took in college though I have somewhat kept up with the academic literature.

My most memorable class in all of college, including graduate school, was during the spring of 1980, my first year at ULM. The course was *Introductory Macroeconomics* and it delivered a lot of what I was searching for. It was not the macroeconomics part of the course which captivated me, though I found it incredibly interesting. Rather, it was the first part of the course where we covered opportunity cost, scarcity, supply and demand curves, price elasticities, and so forth, basically the same material you get if microeconomics is taught first instead of macroeconomics. Suddenly, tons of questions I had over the years were getting answered and I quickly realized I had a brand-new framework to analyze all sorts of questions and problems. I continued to be enthralled by Milton Friedman's editorials, and now, with my newfound knowledge, I felt I could potentially develop a similar framework to what he used in viewing the world. To say that was exciting would be an understatement.

Without intentionally changing any decisions or plans, I found myself more and more interested in the field of Economics. It wasn't simply the subject matter which drew me in, but the professor, Ernest Moser, was simply outstanding. Professor Moser had received his Ph.D. in Economics at Texas A&M. I was not aware at the time, but Professor Moser used a very influential textbook for the class, one which was known for being rigorous and mathematical, and used in higher-level courses as opposed to just introductory economics.¹⁴ Looking back, the textbook was difficult, far more difficult than textbooks used in today's introductory economics courses, but Professor Moser's excellent teaching made it very accessible for me. On the first exam, I recall receiving a 14.5 out of 15.0 and I was super pumped about that grade. I still have the *Financial Accounting* book in which I recorded all of my exam scores the first year at ULM. I vividly remember what happened when Professor Moser passed back the graded exams for the second test, announcing to the class that he had never given a perfect score on an exam before, but that I had earned a 20.0 out of 20.0. Fireworks could have gone off and cheers could have erupted, not because I did so well, but because it was the moment my life changed again, or, to be more accurate, turned down a different path. At that moment, I knew Economics was for me. I went on to take *Introductory Microeconomics* and *Intermediate Microeconomics* from Professor Moser. I felt incredibly lucky that he chose to teach at ULM. After spending a couple of

¹⁴ The textbook Professor Moser used was *Economics* by Lipsey and Steiner and it was considered as one of the best economics textbooks on the market. At the time, the premier economics textbook was by the Nobel Laureate, Paul Samuelson, of M.I.T. But the textbook by Lipsey and Steiner was on the same quality level was eventually adopted by Harvard University over Samuelson's text.

decades at ULM where he became the Associate Dean, Professor Moser went on to become Dean of the Business School at the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Coincidentally, when I was taking my first class in economics that spring semester of 1980, PBS launched the ground-breaking television series, *Free to Choose*, featuring my academic idol, Milton Friedman. Suddenly, for me, Milton Friedman came to life. It was one thing to become fascinated by his editorials in *Newsweek* which I avidly read while back in Jena, Louisiana while at the autobody shop. But to see Milton Friedman in action and actively debating other commentators was mind blowing for me. The show focused on basic economics principles, for example why markets tend to work. In watching *Free to Choose*, I was also mesmerized by one of Friedman's proteges, a youthful Thomas Sowell, who made a handful of appearances on the series. Sowell grew up poor in Harlem, New York City, dropped out of high school due to poverty and bad conditions at home, joined the military, then blossomed as an undergrad at Harvard and eventually as a Ph.D. student under Friedman at Chicago. In many ways, his story resonated with me, and I was enamored by how he viewed the world. Suddenly, it was not just Friedman but other important figures like him who I was also starting to greatly admire. Interestingly, at the age of 93, Thomas Sowell is still going strong with writing books on education, race, ethnicity, economic freedom, poverty, and especially about markets. And to this day, a lot of people, especially young adults, continue to be exposed to Milton Friedman and his proteges largely by watching the old broadcasts of *Free to Choose* even though there were only ten episodes.

My three years at ULM were a blur and flew by quickly. I never viewed going there as a final stop in education, rather just a stepping-stone on the way to law school. Looking back, I had incredible professors across the board, almost all of whom were tenured or on a tenure track. Very few were graduate students or instructors as is so often the case today. I don't recall a single class that I dreaded going to. I preferred my economics classes to the rest of the curriculum, but I liked nearly all my classes.

I was fortunate to have other outstanding economics professors at ULM as well. One of them, Professor Mohamed Amin Futayyeh, deserves particular attention as he was always interested in talking with me and provided tons of encouragement. Professor Futayyeh was born and raised in Syria and immigrated to the United States to complete his graduate studies in economics. I always found his personal story amazing in terms of why he left his homeland with no income or possessions to learn economics in the United States. He was pursuing the American dream just as Friedman and Sowell talked about. I learned so much from these professors, more than I ever could have imagined was possible back in Jena. A few of my professors along the way did even more than teach. They changed my life. Economics professor, Rodney Mabry, stood out as one of those people.

During the fall of my last year at ULM, I chose a course not based on the subject, but because of Professor Mabry was teaching it. By then, he had become somewhat of a mentor to me, and I thought very highly of him. With that in mind, I decided to take his *Public Economics and Taxation* course, even though I didn't have a strong interest in it. I figured any time in the

classroom with him would be valuable. I didn't know at the time how much magnitude that choice would have.

One Tuesday morning as the semester moved forward and with it the college football season, Professor Mabry began his morning class not with a discussion about economics or taxation, but with the announcement that Clemson University had won its football game that past Saturday and was currently undefeated. *Clemson?* I was sure I had heard of it but didn't really know much about it. I liked football, and proudly considered myself a New Orleans Saints fan, but I hadn't paid much attention to college football beyond watching the major bowl games. It started to click for me the following week when Professor Mabry began the class the same way, letting us know that Clemson remained undefeated.

I learned that Professor Mabry had a connection to Clemson. After he received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina, he spent a handful of years at Clemson University as a junior faculty member before taking the position as the head of the Department of Economics & Finance at ULM. Unexpectedly, I got caught up in Professor Mabry's enthusiasm and looked forward to his weekly announcements, hoping Clemson could keep it up. They did. On January 1, 1982, I watched Clemson on television win the National Championship with its victory over Nebraska in the Orange Bowl. I marveled at the intense school spirit – all that orange in the stands – and I quickly became enamored with Clemson myself.

Up until that point, I had planned to go to law school after completing my undergraduate degree in economics. I hadn't considered any other options despite my rapidly growing interest in economics. Then one day, I talked to Professor Mabry and told him how much I enjoyed the football season that year and the Clemson win. One thing led to another and without even realizing it my path shifted away from one thing and toward something else. Based on my work in his class, Professor Mabry strongly urged me to consider enrolling in the M.A. in Economics program at Clemson, with the option of attending law school afterwards. He pushed the fact that although the program was small at the time, it would provide me with an unusual level of personal attention in what he described as the most powerful academic department on campus.¹⁵

I didn't know what I thought of that idea, but it seemed at least worth investigating. When I look back, I can see how one thing so luckily led to another, but in the moment no single detail felt monumental. I figured, why not take a look? So, two weeks after Clemson won the National Championship, and not long after Professor Mabry and I had spoken, my parents and I drove to Clemson, South Carolina from ULM on a Thursday evening after my classes ended. I still vividly remember the orange Tiger Paws painted on the highway leading into town. I was surprised how excited I felt to be there.

¹⁵ Professor Mabry returned a few years later to Clemson University where he headed the Department of Finance and eventually spent 16 years as the President of the University of Texas at Tyler. In 2020, the UT System Board of Regents named Mabry as President Emeritus of UT Tyler to signify the enormous contribution he made in developing the university during his tenure.

At Clemson, I had an appointment with Professor Hugh Macaulay who served as graduate student coordinator in the Department of Economics, in addition to his normal duties of research and teaching. It was a visit to remember. Professor Macaulay had boundless energy and was an incredible salesperson for Clemson. One of the first things I noticed was his bow tie, which struck me as academic and appealing. Little did I know at the time that it was his trademark, and I would never see him without one. I found out later his wife made all his bow ties for him.

During that initial meeting, I learned about some of the people who would be so important to me in the years to come, but of course I didn't know it at the time. Professor Macaulay had barely said hello when he began his apology; he was sorry that, due to being short-handed that day, I would not get to meet two of the prominent professors in the department: Bruce Yandle, who was serving as Executive Director of the Federal Trade Commission in Washington D.C., and Richard McKenzie who was out promoting a new book on economics and liberty. I wondered why he was apologizing to *me*. I was so grateful to have his time and attention; that seemed like more than enough. But Professor Macaulay appeared to care deeply about me, my future, and the impression I had of Clemson. His big selling point was not just the current esteemed faculty, but that Michael Maloney and Robert McCormick would join the faculty in the fall. Lastly, Professor Macaulay also had a prosthetic leg that clanked nonstop as he rushed around, guiding us on a building tour of Surrine Hall where the Department of Economics was housed. I learned he had lost his limb in France in 1944 during World War II while in active conflict and later received the Purple Heart. All these details pushed me in the same direction, one completely different from what I had pictured for myself just weeks before. My mind was made up. I was headed to graduate school at Clemson to study economics. Law school could wait. I sometimes wonder how things would have gone had I not taken Professor Mabry's *Public Economics and Taxation* course that fall, or if he hadn't mentioned football, or if Clemson hadn't done so well that season, but, luckily, all those things converged. I owe Professor Mabry all the credit for his influence early on in my educational career as he convinced me to delay heading off for law school immediately after graduating from ULM, rather to attend graduate school in economics at Clemson University.

I started at ULM during the summer of 1979 and graduated at the end of the summer Of 1982. Thus, I was able to catch up to my high-school graduating class who completed their college studies in four years and was even able to graduate ahead of several who took five years to complete their degree. I finished my last exam on a Friday morning, the day before graduation and then headed back for the 75-mile trip to Jena to pack up for the upcoming move to Clemson. It was a super-busy weekend consisting of my last final at ULM on Friday morning, then back to Jena to get ready for the trip, then graduation on Saturday evening, then immediately off to Clemson without sleep.

We were having dinner as a family back home that Friday evening after completing my last exam when the phone rang. Linda, my sister, answered and handed it to me. The person on the other end of the line informed me that I had the highest GPA (3.975) of the 482 graduating students during the summer commencement. I was blown away as I had made an F on my first

exam that first week just three years prior. Other than my sister who figured out what the call was about, I kept it secret from my parents and they did not know until during commencement when the President of ULM asked me to stand while making the announcement. It was a cool feeling and I expect a lot of people, including my high school principal Mr. Coleman if he had known, were surprised that I graduated at the top of the class. I still give a lot of credit to that first exam score of a F in *Pre-Calculus and Matrix Algebra* to spur me to success. These days, a 3.975 GPA would not yield the top graduating honors given the plethora of 4.0s granted at the undergraduate level, but grade inflation did not exist yet when I was in college.

I retain a lot of great memories of my three years at ULM. In addition to my first roommate, Michael Canova, I had a few other great roommates, one of which was Larry Romero, my close friend from high school, and Tim Mitchell, my first cousin, who went on to a successful career as a construction engineer. I think they all thought I studied too much, but I was super determined to finish what I started. I was lucky to be a student at ULM when it was in its heyday, having just completed an extensive phase of several new campus buildings and renovations. It was somewhat flush with cash at the time, largely due to high energy prices which benefitted public universities in Louisiana, and thus was able to have relatively strong faculty members as opposed to having to lean on instructors and graduate students to teach at the undergraduate level. Indeed, I marvel today at how much higher the quality of my undergraduate education during 1979-1982 at ULM was to a lot of the large public universities in the current day where it can be in the third or fourth year that you get to experience tenured faculty members in the classroom. Sometimes, timing is everything.