

CHARLIE PATTON

ONE OF US

Chris Rasche One of original UNF professors retires

When Chris Rasche interviewed for a job with the University of North Florida, the campus was still under construction, as was St. Johns Bluff Road, which for years was the only route to the university.

UNF's Jeep was in the shop that day. So Rasche, who had

just finished work on her doctorate in sociology, did her interviews at an Arlington Expressway office building and left town without ever seeing the campus.

But she felt comfortable that the school would emphasize classroom teaching, which she knew she liked. She also knew she would get the chance to teach criminal justice, a subject that fascinated her.

So in the fall of 1972 she arrived in Jacksonville, the youngest member of a very young faculty at a brand new university.

UNF was a bit of an experiment in the early years, a school that didn't admit freshmen and sophomores and was

strictly a commuter campus. The students tended to be much older than the usual students, most of them part-time students with full-time jobs.

Rasche remembers standing in her bell-bottom jeans in front of a classroom of students in business attire.

As she hoped, UNF quickly recognized a demand for courses in criminal justice and in 1974 launched a program in which Florida State University instructors taught classes on UNF's campus. Rasche coordinated the new program.

"It was a cockamammy idea but it worked," she said.

In 1978, UNF started its criminology and criminal justice program.

The school was in the process of making other changes as well, adding freshmen and sophomore classes and dormitories and becoming a much more traditional college.

Now Rasche, who turns 62 next month, is retiring, leaving UNF with only two remaining members of its original faculty.

She said she is open to continuing to teach the occasional graduate course. But under the terms of the state's Deferred Retirement Option Program, she can't teach this spring.

She'll still have plenty to do, Rasche said.

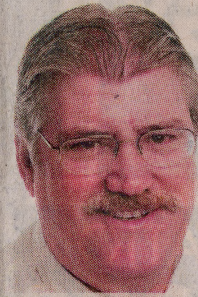
"The future is just so boundless," she said. "There's so

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JOHN PEMBERTON/The Times-Union

Chris Rasche retires from the University of North Florida having seen and steered many changes since the university's beginnings in 1972, including adding its own criminology and criminal justice program in 1978.



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