Q. This is the oral history by Dr. J. Robert Warmbrod, interviewed by Frank Himes. Dr. Warmbrod, you were born?

A. I was born December 13, 1929.

Q. This interview was made October 3, 2001. Bob, could you summarize when you were employed at Ohio State?

A. I was employed here January 1, 1968, coming here from six years on the faculty of the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. I was appointed as professor in the Department of Agricultural Education and I continued in that role until I retired as professor in 1995. But in the interim, I served as Department Chair for eight years from 1978 to 1986. In 1989, I began six months as Acting Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture. On July, 1989, I was appointed as Acting Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Dean of the College of Agriculture, and served in that capacity for 27 months until the end of September, 1991. And at that time I returned to the faculty and served until I retired on April 1, 1995. And for the next five years, I taught part-time in autumn and spring quarters. And I terminated that in 2000.

Q. What were the areas of agriculture education that you did your research and teaching in?

A. Okay. My main emphasis and really I was recruited to join the faculty here primarily for graduate education. And specifically, to give attention to the
research program in the department, not only the conduct of the research program, but teaching courses relating to research. So my teaching responsibilities were almost exclusively graduate education. I did have some involvement in undergraduate education. I advised some undergraduate students. I did very little teaching of undergraduate courses and my particular research interest related primarily to policy analysis in agricultural education regarding funding and also research relating to various dimensions of research methodology.

Q. Very good. You’ve indicated then that you were recruited for studying graduate education. So that was the main factor that caused you to come to OSU?

A. Yes. It’s been an interesting story really. I came to Ohio State in the fall of 1967 on sabbatical leave from the University of Illinois. And my work here was at the National Center for Research and Vocational Education. Almost immediately after arriving, I was approached about joining the faculty here by the Department Chairman at that time, who was Ralph Bender. And my first reaction was that I’m pleased to be approached in that fashion, but I’m on leave from Illinois and I’m receiving half of my salary from Illinois, and also I agreed when I took the sabbatical leave that I would return for at least a year. And I thought that would take care of the situation. But Ralph and his persuasive but very subtle fashion kept bringing this up. And it became kind of an interesting idea and finally he convinced me that he would like to see my vita and he would like to share it with some people. Well, before too much had happened, I was given an offer to join the faculty here. And so there had to be some negotiations with the University of Illinois to make it possible for me to terminate my employment there. Ohio State
was very favorable to those negotiations and the two institutions did reach an agreement.

Q. What were some of the experiences that you had that led you into wanting to be or being selected for administration? Did you have a desire or was it that people felt that you had the capabilities and were asking you to do it?

A. I didn’t come here and I didn’t begin my career at Illinois in higher education with any thought whatsoever of being an administrator. And I didn’t come here thinking or with the aspiration to be an administrator. I had a very good ten years here, my first ten years here in teaching and advising graduate students, doing research and so forth. And Ralph Bender who was the Department Chair retired in 1978 after 30 years in that position. And as his retirement approached and they knew when that was going to happen for a couple of years, people began to make comments about that I would be a good person to be the Department Chair. And I suspect the more you hear that, the more you begin to think about it. And when the position was open, I did apply and was offered the position. So that was my first venture into administration. And I served eight years and asked not to be considered for re-appointment because I thought eight years was enough for any one person in that position. So I thought my administrative experience was over. Well, a couple of years later, in late 1988, Fred Hutchinson was now the Dean of the College and the Associate Dean retired in December, 1988. So Fred approached me about serving as Acting Associate Dean, as he put it, for about a year, while a search was made. And he said he would like to bring about a restructuring of the role of Associate Dean and would like for me to be involved
in that. So that sounded like an interesting experience and I agreed to that and began on January 1, 1989. And was having a very good experience working with Fred, but I noticed he had never mentioned anything about appointing a search committee to look for an Associate Dean. So we were going along and everything was doing fine. And then in June, our Provost resigned, Myles Brand. And one day Fred came into my office and said, “The only other person who know this is my wife, but I’m going to be Acting Provost as of July 1st.” And I said, “Well, what’s going to happen here.” He said, “I don’t know, that’s up to the President.” And so there I was Acting Associate Dean and immediately of course, when it became public that Fred was going to be Acting Provost, the speculation was about who was going to be Acting Vice President and Dean. And the word began to spread that I was going to be that person. And I had no indication of that. And Fred was leaving on vacation right after the commencement in June, and then he would be over at Bricker Hall in the Provost office beginning July 1 and he was gong to be gone most of the time before that. I recall our last conference before he went on vacation, he said, “Well, I’ve just been to the President’s office and it’s going to be what I want it to be.” And that’s all he said. But I noticed he had been asking me to do a lot of the things that he had been doing including meeting with people. So I don’t remember the date, but a week or so before July 1, the President called me and asked me to come over and asked me if I would serve in that role. Again, thinking that would be not a long term experience. Since Fred was Acting Provost, the President wasn’t about to appoint a search committee until, in effect, some decision was made about the
Provost’s position. Fred became a candidate for that position and was appointed to that position, I believe formally January 1, 1990. I believe that during the same board meeting where Fred was appointed as Provost, President Jennings announced he was leaving the Presidency in the following June. And the President then indicated to me later on that since he was leaving the Presidency, he was not going to fill that position and he would leave that for the new President. So that meant that at least until we had a new President, a search would not be initiated. Well, the new President, Gordon Gee, came as I recall in September, 1990. And my conversations with Gordon, he didn’t seem to be in any hurry to make an appointment. In fact, he told me that, “Well, let’s don’t worry about this now. We’ll go on for a while and see what we’re going to do.” And so in effect, President Gee didn’t appoint a search committee until a year later in March, 1991. So, this resulted in me being in that position for 27 months. And so it turned out to be much longer than what I thought.

Q. An interesting way that the University fills positions.
A. Yes. And there were other vacant Vice President or Dean positions at the same time. People in acting roles and they got caught almost in the same thing.

Q. Right. Well, with these years of experience here and having been on many committees and as an administrator, you observed some changes in the College, which some of these changes I’m sure have been of interest to you.
A. Well, yes, there have been some significant changes. And a part of those changes of course have been accompanied by or happened at the same time as changes in personnel, particularly the Dean of the College. I would say that one of the major
changes I’ve seen is what I would call the academic program of the College, particularly the undergraduate program. And that it has, I think, steadily improved. I think it has become more academically rigorous. I think a program that is more grounded in some of the basic sciences and fields on campus where our students have been, the curriculum revisions have resulted in our students getting a better foundation. So I would say that’s one major change. Another major change I think has to do at the undergraduate level, particularly the characteristics of the students that we enroll. Of course, a major change in that area would be the substantial increase in the number and percent of women enrolled in the traditional production ag field. That’s been a very significant development. Another development has been the fact that there is a higher percentage of the students who do not come from traditional rural farm backgrounds. The natural resources part of the college obviously has throughout its time had students from different backgrounds than have the traditional production programs. But the change I’m talking about in student makeup is broader than just in the natural resources, throughout the entire student body. Another change that I think that occurred, well all of this I think has taken place in an atmosphere of the university that has placed more emphasis upon academic quality. I don’t think that’s just a function of the college. In fact, I think it’s a part of the whole university. As a part of that, I think our college, at least in my experience here which basically began in the late 60s, there was less emphasis on some service activities. The changes I’ve talked about in reference to the quality, the academic quality of the curriculum, have been accompanied by noticeable
changes in what is taught. I think in some of the courses, and particularly the level at which it is taught in agriculture, which in effect some people criticize in that it got away from what is generally referred to as the practical hands on aspect. And some people did see that as a positive. Other people saw that as being a move where the college somewhat separated itself from really preparing undergraduates for specific work, either in production agriculture or in other occupations.

Another change of course in the curriculum was the emphasis shifted from almost exclusively production to cover all phases of agriculture, not just the production aspect which had been the tradition of most colleges of agriculture, including ours. Another change that I would highlight is in the governing style, the governance of the college. And specifically, that is tied to a great extent to the change in the Dean’s position. Dean Kottman, Roy Kottman, served 22 years as Dean, retiring in 1982. And I think he exerted a tremendous leadership in the period of time he was here in developing the College, including the Extension Service and the of course the research function at OARDC. But his style was one of very direct, very heavy from the top down. And upon his retirement, that began to change. An interesting transition was in the interim, between Dean Kottman and Max Lennon who succeeded him, was the one year tenure of Francille Firebaugh as the Acting Vice President and Dean. And she really was the person who was in the position to begin to change the manner in which the governance of the College was handled, faculty involvement and so forth. Max Lennon, when he was appointed in 1983, continued that and my interpretation is that one reason Max was somewhat effective in changing the governance
structure of the College and how we operate, was that clearly he was reading the
signals from central administration. And as a result of all of this, what I think was
a very significant change, was that the College really became more integrated as a
part of the total university, rather than tending to operating as an entity. And I
think that’s important. To be perceived by a lot of people as being kind of an
independent operation and didn’t pay much attention or didn’t want to pay much
attention to what the University was doing.

Q. Very good. When you were talking about some of the changes in the
undergraduate program, was some of this influenced by the change in the BER
requirements that the University established?

A. Yes, I think so. I think that was probably the trigger that allowed and encouraged
us to make some changes, yes.

Q. Had some of those changes then forcing a re-structuring of some of the
agricultural courses and changing the number of hours that a student could get in
an ag major?

A. Yes, I think what it did was, in effect, it decreased the number of courses or hours
and courses labeled agriculture that students were taking. And I would say that it
was not a major disadvantage or problem. I think one thing about our
undergraduates, my experience with undergraduates, is that they need more, it’s
easy for our undergraduates to think their university experience as College of
Agriculture, rather than university experience. And I think they need to be
exposed to more in the general education field. I recall when I was interviewed to
continue as Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Dean my
interview with the other Deans on campus. And one of the Deans in the liberal arts raised this question. He said, “How would you react to the idea that students who were going to study agriculture would be required to have a liberal arts degree before they studied agriculture?” And I said, “I would like to see that, but we would have very few students in agriculture.” Because the students come from rural backgrounds, their culture and their motivation are that I’m interested in agriculture and that’s what I’m going to study. It will be 20 years from now before we realize that they wished they had taken more general education and liberal arts courses. And I said that would be ideal, but we wouldn’t find very many students in this state who would elect to take that route.

Q. Very good. Well I guess you’ve mentioned some of the changes in the College, but also included some of the changes at the University level. Any other changes at the University level?

A. I think the major change at the University level, and change in the undergraduate curriculum, University wide, is a part of this, is an increase in the academic quality of the University. And I think the University, I would say, that really became a priority under President Jennings’ administration. That’s where at least I first became aware of it and was a part of it. And I think that has generally continued to the present.

Q. You’ve already mentioned a little bit about Dr. Kottman. He wore three hats. Maybe you want to talk about how he worked with each hat and then why it was an advantage to have all three on one head, so to speak. And so maybe start of as Dean of the College.
A. Okay. Well, the three hats he wore for 20 some years, for his entire time here, he was Dean of the College, he was Director of the Experiment Station and Director of the Extension Service. An interesting and significant fact here is that the Extension Service Budget and the research budget, which was the OARDC, which is the name I understand he gave to that agency shortly after coming here, rather than the Agricultural Experiment Station. Each is a separate state appropriation from the Ohio State University general budget. So that allowed him, and he was by the way extremely effective, to use his major strengths as an administrator in these three positions and his ability to work with, lobby if you want to use the term, not only the legislature, but the influential, and very appropriately so, the various agricultural special interest groups throughout the state, including various commodity organizations. The most notable organization, of course, would be the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. And since he was really directing all three programs, again he took a very strong leadership position in all and he had tremendous contacts throughout the state. And as such, was able to not only get substantial state appropriations for Extension for research, but I suspect he was very effective in raising money from the outside for special uses in the academic program in the College. A major caution about all of that is there tends to be built first of all divisions between Extension, research, and teaching. And that has really made more evident since individual faculty members are funded from more than one of those sources. And my impression was, and this was confirmed when I was Acting VP, is that if you were funded by Extension, that was what you did. Research was not a part of Extension, particularly if you were
funded by OARDC, that’s what you did. You did research. And outreach was not a part of your position and clearly teaching was not. And then there were a few persons who were funded solely from the academic budget and they were kind of considered to do teaching and that’s it. But of course that doesn’t fit very well with what the role of a faculty member is or should be and particularly on the promotion side, that created some problems sometimes. So this also, this separate directorships of extension and OARDC also didn’t contribute a great deal to the College being an integral part of the University. And I have not observed this myself or been participating in it, but people point out that before OARDC was merged as a legal part of Ohio State, that the Board of Control of the Research Center, OARDC, was the same people with one exception, the Board of Trustees of the Ohio State University. So the Ohio State University Board would meet and the President would be the chief OSU officer. They would adjourn and reconvene as the Board of Control for OARDC, and the President of the University was out of the room and Roy Kottman was the chief OSU person. And that did tend to create some separateness. That basically in the long run I think is not healthy for the University or for the College.

Q. Now because he had the three persons, I’m thinking particularly of extension and research, was he able to sort of begin to make that line gray and the people in extension had some research funds and activities and the research people maybe had some extension?

A. I think the opportunity was there. My candid opinion is that Dean Kottman didn’t do very much in that direction.
Q. Okay.

A. There have been movements since then. I would say the person that made, in my experience, the person who made the greatest contribution in that area would be Fred Hutchinson. He began to move it in that direction. And my kind of long distance view of it now is that Bobby Moser has made considerable change in that area.

Q. Okay. You indicated that some of the admission policies for students and particularly undergraduate have changed. What has the effects on the nature of the ag students or students in the College?

A. I think that has had an influence when OSU went to selective admission. And more selective admissions I guess would be a more accurate thing. I think that has brought about students coming to the College having a different high school curriculum background. Because our admission policy of course encouraged what was termed a college preparatory curriculum. Most students had four years of English to begin with, but more science, and more mathematics were required. And it also encourages, if not requires, a foreign language and our students prior to that time, very few of them had studied any foreign language in high school and they are now meeting the requirements. So I think our students are better prepared and that’s been reflected, I think, in the data that we receive from admissions about ACT scores and so forth.

Q. It indicated that there was a big increase in the number of women in the undergraduate programs. How do you explain that change in number?
A. I would explain that primarily as just simply a change in our society of the role of women. I don’t think we, the OSU, did anything out of the ordinary to bring that about. But I think it was just simply a part of our culture and changes and we realized that we needed to be a part of that. Clearly, we had to be receptive to that, but clearly that was a major change.

Q. As a teacher and then as an administrator, you saw both sides of the use of SET forms and so on. I guess first as a teacher, how did you use your own forms or did you use the University forms and then how did it evolve?

A. I think that’s an interesting phenomena really. I can recall in my early days in higher education, I started out formally getting reactions from my students to my courses and my teachings. I don’t know when this evolved. But there clearly, what 20 years ago or so, there began to be emphasis that we needed to get some kind of a reading from students as to how they felt about what their reaction was to the course in which they were enrolled and specifically to the instructor. And the University in effect got involved in this and they developed forms and we called it the SET. My experience is that the faculty members, the instructors, who use SET are the most effective to begin with. They know that they are doing a pretty good job and they are very willing to have that idea confirmed by the students’ reactions to the questions. The University published a few years ago, and I think the student government was the major actor in this, the reports of the SET summaries, not the individual, but the summaries. When you look at those, you would think that every instructor was just absolutely super. And the reason for that is that the people who use the instrument are those who are the better
instructors. If you know you’re not doing well, you don’t necessarily want that documented. Another part of that has really been a major evolution in this area is, when I was first involved in various promotion and tenure committees and as the department chair with promotion and tenure early on, we never insisted as a part of the P&T documentation that there be any kind of appraisal of teaching effectiveness from students. By the time I retired, a candidate for promotion and tenure who didn’t include in his or her dossier evidence of reactions and appraisal by students would be at a clear disadvantage. And the insistence was that we must get students to do this. And I think one thing we need to realize is that student feedback about teachers is one dimension of appraising the effectiveness. It is not the only way.

Q. Since Acting Vice President, you had to worry about people in extension and OARDC also. How did evaluation across the gambit develop?

A. Well, that’s an interesting, really an interesting development, particularly in the College. And it relates to the formation of a college promotion and tenure committee. When I was department chair, you built a case for a promotion and tenure based upon obviously what the faculty member’s responsibilities were. And clearly the most direct way of building a case was through research and writing. And even with faculty and many of the faculty in my department, in fact none of the faculty members in my department at that time, ever had an appointment where any of their appointment was OARDC. They were all 100% OSU general funds. So therefore, we operated as the faculty in other colleges throughout the University, that a faculty member’s responsibility covers not only
teaching but also research. And so we built the case in that way. Now then, with people who were 100% research, quite frankly, if they were productive, they could build a dossier relatively easy. The people who really had the tough road were the people in extension because quite frankly, the extension function was not considered to be as central to the mission of the University by some and as sophisticated and rigorous as some of the others. When the College formed a Promotion and Tenure Committee, this would have been during the time of Max Lennon’s deanship. And then my appraisal of all this is that that came about specifically through Max from the initiative of the Provost, who at that time was Myles Brand, who emphasized that there needed to be a Promotion and Tenure Committee at the College level. Some colleges apparently already had those, but we did not. So, our Promotion and Tenure Committee resulted from that. I was on that first promotion and tenure committee. And I would say that it was interesting to see. Of course our policy was that the only people on the Promotion and Tenure Committee had to be full professors, obviously with tenure. So all of us were experienced people. And there were two or three of us on the committee that were former department chairs. But by and large the committee was made up of professors who had not been administrators. And it was made up of professors who were highly regarded within the College. One of the first things that evolved in that committee was that we had to re-examine how we appraise, how we evaluate the credentials for promotion and tenure from an extension agent. Extension agents do have faculty appointments, regular appointments like all the rest. Or a faculty member at the Agricultural Technical Institute. How can we
appraise that person fairly -- knowing that that person’s role is different. And in my opinion, a very interesting thing happened. I can remember we began with saying well, it is just never going to be possible for us to be able to evaluate an extension dossier because really what they do is so different. What happened on that committee, all of a sudden when we began to review and study and analyze the dossiers, we realized that people who did not have the regular role of strictly teaching and research, but they were doing other things such as extension, or they were teaching only, that when you really got into what they were doing, they were doing very sophisticated scholarly work. But it was not like publishing in journals. And I think that was a major education for a lot of us on that committee, to realize that excellent work, sophisticated work, scholarly work is being done by faculty throughout this College, who are doing things other than research and writing about it and that you can demonstrate your scholarship by working in extension, by teaching and so forth. And I think rather quickly what evolved there was a respect for and a recognition of excellent work throughout the College, that I think has contributed a great deal to being able to say we began with what a person’s responsibilities are. First of all, we know that service, teaching and research are all functions of faculty members and there are ways you can appraise the quality of that work.

Q. How did the P&T committee or how did the Dean sell the University promotion and tenure committee and the Provost on this diversity of scholarship?

A. Well, that was not easy and my guess is that it was never done without any problems. Now I did serve one year, the year before I retired, on the University
Promotion and Tenure Committee. And there you had to make the kinds of decisions that I’ve just been talking about at the College level. The key was the letters that would accompany a dossier, particularly from the Dean of the College and from the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The procedure we developed in the College Promotion and Tenure Committee was that as a part of our process, we would write a detailed letter to the Dean on each case which indicated whether we concur with the Department’s recommendation that this person be promoted for tenure and then we would go into considerable detail in documenting that decision. And then we encouraged the Dean as he made his assessment and recommendation, which would be separate from ours, to also in his letter that would accompany the dossier to the University level to provide a detailed assessment, particularly for those cases which were not traditional research oriented. So I think that is what helped a great deal. The College was, at least when I was involved was very successful and rarely would a college decision, assuming the Dean and the College P&T Committee concur, in a recommendation for a promotion of tenure, rarely was that ever reversed.

Q. Very good. You mentioned the Ag Technical Institute. It was located at Wooster instead of Columbus. Do you feel that is appropriate or should that have been reconsidered? What’s your impression?

A. Well, I would say I think, as I look back, I think it was better that it was at Wooster for these reasons. The Ag Tech Institute came about in the late 1960’s. In fact, when I came, the decision had already been made to establish that. And this was a part of kind of a nationwide effort in agriculture to, first of all, establish
what were called technical programs in agriculture, which meant they were not baccalaureate level programs. And this was being done all across the country in a lot of institutions. Most of the time these were set up not as part of the University but as part of a technical institute system or even an extension of some of the vocational schools as a way of providing a two year program beyond the high school level. And some of this was prompted by what I referred to earlier about the University courses in agriculture becoming less practical, hands-on oriented. And people, including people who were going into farming, but particularly people who were going into other areas of agriculture said, “We want people who know how to do certain things.” So, at Ohio State and I think again I’d give Roy Kottman primary credit with his way of operation. He didn’t have to form committees. He just said we’re going to have a tech institute and he got the resources to do it. And he came basically to the Department of Agricultural Education for much of the work on that. Two people who would be very active in that were Ralph Bender, the Department Chair at the time, and Ralph Woodin, a faculty member. And he hired as the first Director of the Agricultural Technical Institute a Ph.D., a person from California who had just gotten their Ph.D. in Ag. Ed. He had been in a state college out there, who got his Ph.D. at Ohio State, Jerry Halterman as the Director. And when I came here, Jerry had just been appointed as the Director. His office was in the Ag Ed Department. And from there, he developed the Institute. The decision was made to put it at Wooster. That’s where we had land. That’s where we had space. It’s my understanding that some people at OARDC were not too happy with that, but Dean Kottman didn’t
allow that to get in his way. And so they took some land that was part of OARDC and they built a very nice campus up there. I suspect he got special money out of the legislature to do that. I do not know the details of that. So therefore, what that Institute began with was a very practical oriented curriculum. It required internship on the part of every student. They immediately got access to a major farm that belonged to the state that was located in Wayne County in the Wooster area. It was a state farm for, I don’t know if it was mental retardation, but anyway, the state closed the facility, but they had this 1,000 acres or 2,000. ATI took that over and ran that and that became a laboratory for the students. Those kinds of things would not have been possible in Columbus. There began to be clearly, I think, those of us in Columbus and the College regarded ATI as a different type of institution. And my feeling is that it probably was more successful by being away from Columbus than it would have been if it would have been located on this campus, as a part of the College of Agriculture. Some universities did that. Michigan State and I assume still has a tech institute as part of their College of Ag. Virginia Tech is the same, but I think by our institution being in Wooster and could develop its own identity, could develop its own program and it was very effective in getting students. It was very effective in preparing students who were very successful in their employment.

Q. Now the technical institutes, not only Ag but others began to develop and students found out that they enjoyed classwork after all, the legislature began to put pressure on how this would transfer to “the more academic departments.” What’s been your experience with that transition?
A. I think a wonderful thing that happens to people, particularly these young men and women who didn’t necessarily have aspirations of getting college degrees, but they did see the program offered fitting them. A wonderful thing happened to some of them, many of them, when they get there, and they realize I can succeed in this and really I want a degree — a baccalaureate degree, not just a two year technical degree. And in effect they began to say, “Hey, I want to transfer to Columbus, since that’s where I can get a four year degree.” Well, of course, yea, you can come, but you’ll probably have to start over. Clearly what you have there is not really the equivalent. So this began to build pressure various ways. And that just didn’t happen here in Ohio, but it happened all across the country. And there began to be interested in the areas of articulation and transfer. And I think fairly early on we began to get students from ATI, not a large number, but some, who would transfer to campus. And eventually I think worked out an arrangement where certain courses were transferable. One of the disadvantages perhaps of ATI being in Wooster was that they had separate faculty. In other words, if it had been located in Columbus, then perhaps the same faculty who were teaching in resident instruction would have been teaching some of them. But since it was a separate faculty, the question was raised about the quality of, well maybe not the quality but the level of instruction, and the fact that the early instructors that were hired would have been more practical oriented and many of them would not have had advanced degrees. So, that became an issue for a long time. But gradually, over a period of time. More people learned about ATI and the Institute, the Ag Technical Institute, rather immediately began to hire faculty members, many of
whom had Ph.D.’s. So this tended to work out. Now an interesting development of that is -- well this was one of the issues that I had quite a bit of experience with as Acting Vice President and Dean -- which was the transfer issue. We kept some rather complete analysis of students who had transferred from ATI to the Columbus campus. And we found that in general those students did just as well as the people who began their career here. Of course, there would be a selective group of people who transferred because they clearly could have done well here if they had begun here. So we began to explore the idea, since ATI is a part of Ohio State. Ohio State has other regional campuses that offer regular, at least according to the book, the same courses at the undergraduate level on the regional campuses as they do on the Columbus campus. Could we take up that idea and think about a way that maybe ATI could become for students who wished to transfer, who really wished to get a four year degree, is there some way that the ATI program can be adjusted such that courses, some courses, not all, some courses taught at ATI were in effect regular OSU undergraduate courses. And then we don’t have to worry about transfer, since it would be just like coming from Mansfield or Newark or any other regional campus. It took a while to work through that and wasn’t finalized by the time I left as Acting Vice President position. They have it now I understand. So what had happened is that some of the basic courses in particularly the sciences, the biological sciences, in chemistry, the courses there now are in effect the same as chemistry 101 or whatever the number is here. Another interesting very good result of all of that is that this, for some reason, allowed there to be collaboration between the faculty who were at
the Ag Tech Institute and the faculty who were in Wooster who were primarily research faculty. In the early days of ATI, OARDC really was not at all interested in ATI. In fact, didn’t think it was a very good neighbor because clearly it was not of the rigor and the caliber of the good research that was being done there. But all of a sudden, we began to realize that we’ve got fantastic faculty members in Wooster at ATI who are just as capable, probably more so, to teach courses like chemistry than a graduate student teaching it here on the Columbus campus. So we began to encourage that collaboration such that a faculty member could be a researcher at OARDC and could also teach a course at ATI in chemistry or biological science or whatever it is. ATI had been authorized by the Board of Regents only to offer a formal degree as an Associate Degree. And I don’t remember the exact terms now, but it was an Associate Degree that clearly indicated it was a technical degree. There is, the Board of Regents, does allow a degree, called the Associate of Science degree, which is in effect a basic science degree and eventually ATI was approved to award that degree for students who wished to, in effect, use ATI as an entry point to a baccalaureate degree the same way that a student would use the regional campus.

Q. Well I know some of the people in the Science Department here who have taken chemistry and biology and so on, said well, “The science teacher at ATI is not a member of our department. Our department doesn’t select or have a chance to approve.” Has that been worked out with these changes?

A. It’s my understanding that we moved rather quickly to in effect involve those, particularly those in the Science Department, in reviewing course syllabi and then
reviewing credentials of persons that were hired and my understanding is that once a department, say a Department of Chemistry or a Biological Science Department, sees both the syllabi for the course and sees the curriculum vitae of the faculty, particularly if it’s a faculty that has a Ph.D., they immediately say “These folks are as well qualified as the people we have teaching chemistry at Lima or anyplace else.” And that happened pretty fast.

Q. I know that was a real drag there for a little while. And I’m glad to hear how it was solved.

A. In the beginning it really was and it was a legitimate problem.

Q. You indicated that none of the faculty that you worked with in the Department of Agricultural Education was on the OARDC appointment and likewise, none were located at Wooster. But in your role as Acting Vice President, was there concerns about some of the faculty at Wooster having to come down to Columbus and teach, and maybe how some of the Columbus faculty saying, well these graduate students are not getting a full graduate program by having to spend time at Wooster for the research?

A. Well I think one of the major negatives about the whole separateness function that we discussed of OARDC, was that it pertained to graduate education. And it tended to clearly separate the teaching and the research functions. Now, most of the departments in the College would have faculty at both places. There were only, to my knowledge, there was only Ag Education and Food Science and Technology and I think Ag Economics that did not have faculty at Wooster. But what this did, it tended to say we do the research at Wooster; we do the teaching
in Columbus. Now clearly, there’s a lot of research going on in Columbus as well. But particularly the Wooster faculty, for some reason, did not see a great, did not demonstrate a great degree of willingness to do graduate education teaching. That is, particularly teaching courses. Now, a lot of arguments were put up that they would have to travel to Columbus and so forth. Later on, when the technology got there, that could have been overcome some. Then, so therefore, in many respects the OARDC faculty at Wooster, were not as active participants in the departments that had people in both places. In my opinion, they could have been and should have been and could have contributed to the graduate program. I suspect what that resulted in then was that some graduate students may have gotten caught into the situation of where, if you’re wanting to do a certain type of research, you’re probably going to have to go to Wooster to do it. And clearly, the coursework had all been taken here or most of it had been taken here. And that doesn’t sound to me like the best arrangement. But clearly, I don’t have enough detail to know, but clearly at Wooster, we had a first class research facility. At one time, I’m pretty sure, were superior in many cases, than the research facility in the Columbus campus. I suspect that’s not as true today as it was some years ago. So I think that probably it made graduate education in some of those departments not as smooth as it could have been.

Q. Changing a little bit, you observed some different provosts and some different presidents here on campus. Do some of them exhibit strengths that you would recommend to say were better administrators?
A. Well, my experience with some of the provosts, generally the ones that I have
gotten to know through committee work and others, have all been very pleasant
experiences. The provost, that in my experience, and a lot of people mention
similar things, of being a very effective person, but yet a relatively low key
person, was Al Kuhn. That’s really the first provost that I ever had any personal
contact with here. And all of this is a result of getting involved in various
university committees and activities. And I think that is something that the
College of Agriculture needs to be aware of, that at least in my experience here,
one way to inform people in other parts of the university about the college and
maybe help to correct some stereotypes that some people have, is to get faculty
involved in University affairs. And I think we’ve had some well know examples
of that. But Al Kuhn was Provost in ’70s when the University program review
was a major emphasis. And in some way, I don’t know how it came about, but I
ended up as a chair of the Program Review Committee for the Department of
Botany. And it turned out to be a tremendous learning experience for me and in
that, and it turned out to be a rather complicated and in some cases a controversial
review. And so that provided an opportunity to interact with Provost Kuhn
because there were some issues that came out of review that he had to deal with.
And so he, obviously, consulted with our Committee. So that was my first
experience with a provost. And his style clearly was one of being a person of
being a good listener and finding out what was going on and doing it in a very
gentle and a very thorough manner and not making quick moves, but knowing
what he was doing, in a very solid way. Of course, the other provost that I
worked more closely with, of course Fred Hutchinson. When I was the Acting Vice President, he was the Provost and he had been the Dean of the College. So I knew him and had worked with him. Fred is a tremendously personable, people oriented person and I learned a lot from him by way of working with people and so forth. I had very little contact with Myles Brand and, although I did chair a major committee on promotion and tenure system university wide, which he asked me to chair. But there was very little interaction. Francille Firebaugh was Acting Provost for what, a year or so. And of course I had known her and she is an extremely effective person as an administrator. Just an interesting aside on that is that, about Francille, she was the Acting Vice President in the interim between Roy Kottman and Max Lennon. And I can remember I was Department Chair at the time, the first department chairs meeting that she held after Dean Kottman had retired. And Francille’s style is completely different, even though she in effect worked for Roy for years as Director of School of Home Economics, her style is completely different from his. And she came into that meeting and in effect she says, “Well, you know how do you want to operate? What do you want to do?” And here were all of us department chairs sitting around the table and looked at each other and said, “Well, what in the world is going on here?” There was silence. What do you want to do? What should we accomplish in these meetings? So we finally got our courage to speak, but it’s interesting, we didn’t know what we wanted to do, but we knew what we didn’t want to do. So from that, here was the beginning of the transition of the governance. You could almost pinpoint the exact time that it happened, when Francille said … she in
effect, she didn’t say it, but from what she did, “Hey, this is a new game folks.
What are we going to do?” But anyway, Francille was the Acting Provost when I
left the Chair’s position. Our department had just gone through one of the
program reviews and she was Provost and there was a big, at the end of one of
those program reviews, there was this meeting where everybody signs a
memorandum of understanding. And she was the University Provost at that time.
So, she was very supportive of our department. And then I had quite a bit of work
with Sisson when he was the Provost and worked rather closely with him on a
number of things including a restructuring of the University. I found him to be
rather insightful about the University and how it functions and how it ought to
function. And I think he was the main person who was a major actor in
restructuring. Gordon Gee was clearly that, the person who was the visible
person in the restructuring that the University went through in ’93, ’94, ’95. But
Sisson was the Provost and very much involved in all this.

Q. Well very good. Well, are there other topics that you feel we ought to include in
this oral history?

A. Well, from my, I cannot think of anything of major import that we’ve not talked
about.

Q. Well, I feel that as part of the record, they should know a little bit about the
successes and the awards that you have received here. And so I wonder if you
wouldn’t list your awards that you received from the University and College as a
matter of record? They are very impressive.
A. Well, as a matter of record, I’ve been fortunate in that I have received the OSU Award for Distinguished Teaching twice. Both times a surprise. The first was in 1972 I believe. I had only been here about four years. And so that was a pleasant experience. And the second time was the year I retired, in 1995. I mentioned earlier that I had not taught undergraduate students. The last two years I was here I did teach an undergraduate course in data analysis in the College. And it so happened that the day that Gordon Gee comes around with his apples to surprise people was during that undergraduate course. So being in an undergraduate course was a new experience, but it happened there. So, those would be two of the major awards. I’ve received awards in the College in the earlier teaching. I don’t know if I can come up with the exact titles, but each year there’s a Gamma Sigma Delta award for teaching, I received that. President Jennings instituted some special appointments during his term of presidency and one of those was the designation of University Professor. Another was Presidential Professor. University Professor was primarily a research oriented recognition. The Presidential Professor was described as being a recognition that recognized teaching, research and service. And in 1989, I was selected as the Presidential Professor and that happened just a few days, or at least my notification of that, happened just a few days before I was appointed Acting Vice President. So, that was a significant happening. Then during the time that Dick Sisson was Provost, the decision was made to, in effect, instead of having two titles for those designations, to call all of them University Professors. And so upon retirement, you got the option of what your Emeritus title was. So, I elected to carry that into retirement.