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Interview with Minor Myers, jr.

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Interview of Minor Myers, jr.

This is the complete interview conducted by Jeff Hanna and Tim Obermiller (in January or February 2003) that was the basis for the Spring 2003 IWU Magazine article "Staying on Track" (digitalcommons.iwu.edu/iwumag/vol12/iss1/2). The interview was found on a CD in the University Archives, summer 2016, and reformatted for online access. It is apparent this was originally in an audio tape format; what sound like flaws in the original transfer are retained in the following.

Interviewer [presumed to be Jeff Hanna]: When you came, where did you think you'd be?

Minor Myers : Where did I think I'd be?

Interviewer: Where did you think we'd be? Where did you think the institution would be at this point in its history.

Myers: Well, I think they – that part I didn't know. I had hoped maybe we might wind up in the top quartile, but I can tell you it's – it's a minute story, I've told it in public sometimes, but I don't think it is for the magazine. But it – it'll inform both of you of my own thinking. I had this collection of college catalogs, most of it now over in the library and being added to the collection, comes out of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester. Ultimately, it's a long tale of how I got it but ten to twelve thousand items... catalogs, treasures, reports, ... all kinds of things. And I'd written a book on the Graduate Program at Princeton. I'd done a lot of comparative studies of the leading colleges and I have to say I thought I was moderately literate in what was going on in collegiate world as opposed to the state university world or the larger university world. Head hunter called me, would I be interested in Illinois Wesleyan and with my own collection of 10,000+ items? I never heard of it. (laughs) So – so I said, but, you know, I didn't get these calls often so I well, Tell me two things – what are the SATs? 1160 – and I thought, Oh my god! Hobart goes back to 18 and 22 congratulates itself on its visibility and can't get a – a point beyond 1113. What's the endowment. Wesleyan: 56 million. I said, My god! Hobart has been working on the same thing since 1820s and it's kind of stuck at 24. I said, I'm very interested because it's – I knew three things there- that the quality somehow, and the strength were already built into the program, so the hard part had already been accomplished or had the potential of being accomplished very easily. And the... difficult part was going to be marketing and sales. I mean, manufacturing was done, distribution was the question. So I said I'm very interested and I would say that with every passing instinct- every passing year, I've come to the conclusion that my instinct of that first eight seconds was absolutely right -that the quality was here – not a kind thing to put on an article so if we could tone this down a little bit.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Myers: But I came here with every confidence that this was an extra-ordinarily strong and accomplished community that deserved to be better known than it, in fact, was. And that if it were known, its strengths would be manifestly apparent from what they were, not from what they were asserted to be. We have, for example, earlier-I'd better check with Routi-five or six hundred applications in Biology alone. This before we built a new science building. And, we

were in – entirely inviable position of being able to say we need a new science building, not for the program we might have if we ever had a new science building but for the program we already had. The strength was there – a house was the project. That sells things more quickly. I also knew that there were very strong people in virtually every sphere. People who had ideas, people with a history, people with an ability to plan, lead and execute. And ... we have had, I would say some turnover in the senior management in 14 years but there has been a great deal of continuity. Browning has been here the entire time. Routi's been here the entire time. Ben had been here the entire time in Development. We've had three different Deans of Students. We've had two different Provosts with a very successful interim year and your position has been created as a free-standing one and that has been a very useful addition. So, we've had a real stability of cadres, as the Soviets would've said in the old days, and I think that has been a great strength as we build. The question has been not, "However are we going to do this?" but "How can we improve this year's implementation?" As opposed the last year's and that's been a great deal of help particularly in Admissions.

Interviewer: You said, the question is not how are we going to do this. That's something I've heard in the past is, it's a belief that we can do what we want to do.

Myers: Well that I think has been a great strength that I've seen built or come together over the years – during the 90s at least. I thought I saw growing institutional confidence and it had been growing – I – I would say that that sense of institutional confidence as a new direction begins in Lloyd Bertholf's years and then grows over time. That if we just say this is something we think we can do, we can go ahead and do it. And the – the characteristic, I think, of planning up until this point as we undertake a new round is what are the best national standards and how do we follow them? It's not just looking 60 miles to the south, 60 miles to the west and 47 miles to the east and saying gee where does inspiration lie but just what is the absolute best and how do we go in that direction? That improves the result, it inspires the model and...intrigues supporters. It's a combination hard to beat [long pause]

Interviewer: Go ahead.

Myers: This is supposed to be question and answer, not just a lecture course. [all laughing]

Interviewer [presumed to be Tim Obermiller]: Well I wonder, because the institution's perceived to have grown so enormously over the last twelve years or so that as a leader, how do you go about inspiring people to keep that momentum going and to resist the temptation to rest our laurels at this point with the Ames Library and the – the Center for Natural Science and Hansen Center – all those great accomplishments.

Myers: Well, these are great and wonderful things but the next things to do put themselves in front of us rather naturally. One building looks very good until you surround it with buildings that are brand new. And what looked comparatively good 10 or 15 years ago may not look good at all right now if it's surrounded by a new standard of greatness. And that, I think, is the case of the theatre.

The theatre is one of those buildings that intrigued me when I came. And I was frankly surprised to hear of its deficiencies mechanically, deficiencies organizationally, that it...needed more space. I would've thought that was one place where we were pretty well set, but then you find

that there are needs, and so, we're looking at a new theater. We had, at one point a much smaller community, 1600 was our goal. I mean, 1650- I think- was, in fact, our targeted goal when I came. The goal is now 2000. We're a hundred over it but nobody is trying to fake a new level up to the level of-excuse me, 2100. 2000 is still our goal but if we want to house a higher percentage of our students, we're gonna need more student housing. So the success in one area breeds aspirations in another. And, from this new projects grow inevitably if not magically. And it's our task to see what we can do, what might do and what it would look like if we did them. We can always fantasize about some things that would be interesting to do. I have one guy who says we ought to open the law school, again. We had a law school until 1927. I was somewhat surprised to find from a local architect that even after it closed in the 20s, there were contingency plans for putting up a new law building in the 1930s and amidst of the depression. I – I would've not believed it at all if the plans weren't very explicitly dated and it actually says Illinois Wesleyan University right on it. So here people were thinking about reviving the law school but I don't think anybody is talking about it now, although there are still a few partisans here and there. But there you try to find those things that are the central core of our mission which if we added, would make this a stronger place. Now there is another answer to a question you didn't ask me. And the question you didn't ask me was, what kind of formulas has general planning followed through the 1990s? And the answer is, the planning has focused on the idea of being an undergraduate, resident, liberal arts college fundamentally for the 18-year-old. We have not sought to have evening courses, adult courses, courses for-that might be at a community college or a state university. Those elements are all there in our past, particularly around 1900 when we actually taught penmanship, commercial courses, housekeeping, nursing was a branch of domestic science – we taught many things that would be regarded today as the basic stuff of a community college or an outreach program at a state university. At this point, I think we've gotten stronger and stronger by focusing on the essence, the center core of what we're doing, which is being a very strong liberal arts institution rather than building ancillary sources of support at the periphery with these other little ventures. We've stayed toward heavy concentration in the center and that has been a formula for success. Wasn't that a good question I answered? [laughs]

Interviewer: That's absolutely...and we're doing that at a time when the issue is what is the future of a liberal arts institution, not just this institution but in general, because we're now – we continue to be part of a dwindling few who are committed to this, even those who are known as liberal arts institutions in the ratings and in the categories--

Myers: Well

Interviewer: --but aren't really, from time to time.

Myers: The evolution of American higher education is interesting, because in the future, up to the—uh in the future, in the past—up to the – about the eight – seventeen nineties virtually all the colleges were classic, Latin, Greek, liberal arts – we don't care if it's practical. In fact, if it's practical, we don't teach it. That is – I've actually had a colleague who used that as standard of what a liberal arts college is, if it's practical, we don't teach it. Then, with Jefferson, the University of Virginia, the movement to the West and the rise of the state university, comes the notion that perhaps not everybody wants to study Latin and Greek. Perhaps some people want to only learn architecture or drafting or medicine or law. So you get the rise of the state universities with all their contingent departments for people who want to do just a very focused thing, a

liberal arts college remains part of – of it, with the whole question of liberal arts – up for debate: is this a good thing or a bad thing or a watered down thing or a concentrated thing, and by the year 1900, there are state universities, regional state universities that are set up to teach mining and mining engineering - all kinds of practical things like nursing or as we even had penmanship, how to play the violin, how to play piano, how to paint, how to be a thespian– we had a school of oratory at one point. We’ve been through that tunnel around the year 1900. And as we hit the 1920s, we still had some graduate work, but the focus became ever more intensely be a liberal arts college, and I believe that in the future of higher education, there will continue to be at the very top of the market, in the most selective schools, severe competition to get into those colleges which most touch minds, inspire minds, bring new vistas, give a kid a new sense of self, a sense – utopian or otherwise – of what a society might be. There will also be a great deal of market for those who are offering practical courses, the Universities of the Phoenix— Phoenix or whatever they are, who are telling you how to be an accountant over the internet; that is a skill you can learn and it’s not at all what we’re trying to do. We may train accountants but we train them in a liberal arts tradition, not just to be accounts. And colleges are gonna find themselves asking are they in one camp or another, and those who tend towards the liberal arts models may be thinned out, but it’s my guess that there will be a very good market at the top of that group. But at the bottom, may have a very tough time indeed.

Interviewer: And how do we – how do we stay near the top?

Myers: By aiming at the highest standards. That’s why I keep talking about a 90 percent graduation rate. That is the one single number which seems to describe to me the essence of what a great place would be. There are only seven, on average, I have done calculations – each year in America, amongst the colleges that graduate 90 percent or better of the freshmen who had entered in that particular class. And those are the ones who take the kids who come to them, inspire them, keep them there, keep them amused, challenged, delighted, always amazed—with a sense of themselves, a love of curiosity. And once you graduate students at that level, competition to get in, pride of place, usually resources, all follow very naturally. I wouldn’t say that just graduating 90 percent alone is going to do it, but the things that come with that pattern inevitably build a place that is hard to exclude from the very highest ranks of American colleges in anybody’s guide.

Interviewer: I had a question related to the recent economic downturn that has affected the work of many college and universities, endowment portfolios and including us of course

Myers: Mm-hmm.

Interviewer: Do you anticipate that this drop will have a major impact on either day-to-day operations or long-term planning for the university?

Myers: It’s going to have a medium impact, or it will have an impact that varies from place to place; all depending on the kind of planning that’s been going on. At some places, it could be very dramatic long term, short term as well as intermediate term. With us, it will have, we hope, a moderate impact at best because we average three years at a time. We plan 5 to 10 years in advance constantly. We run budgetary numbers continuously and they are interrelated, that is, we put many assumptions together and we may see that with the assumptions we have packed up at the point – at this point, that things will look good this year, next year but the third year out we

have a problem. So, Ken Browning always goes back and figures out how to fix the third year out so that any time we adopt a budget, it's with every confidence that if these vectors continue for five years, we're sitting pretty and if they continue five years, it's - usually something he runs a little bit beyond that he regards it as fiction after five years but it's still interesting fiction. And that's the way we do it. Now if one has become too dependent on an endowment that disappeared, that's not good. There was once one university and I'll mention it because it's my example, Macalester that got that Reader's Digest endowment believed, I think, at the time to be \$400 million all in Reader's Digest stock which was not to be sold. Now I don't know how much you want to put in of this, but I'll just tell you, the planning that went on almost precipitously went something like this: the faculty members will be increased to a ratio of 10:1, student/faculty. The domestic minorities will rise to 20%, the international population would either be, I forget, whether 10 or 30. In other ways, they just went on a spending spree, because they had all this endowment and they were spending it in theory, cheek by jowl. So if the endowment collapsed, as it began to do, in Reader's Digest stock, long before the general decline of the Dow Jones and the NASDAQ they had to retool considerably to say, what does all this mean? We've never had the luxury of being able to do anything like that, so we don't have it to undo at this point. But, that, that's why a fortune, at times, breeds future difficulty because you learn how to spend everything you've got immediately and we - we never did that.

Interviewer: But the institution, as you look around it, other institutions has lived within its means, has it not?

Myers: We have lived within our means, very consciously and very definitely. We have tried to build to endure, a library is a good point. We probably could've put up a center block building that would've had as many places and for books, would it have been inspiring, would it have been interesting, would it have touched souls and elevated perspectives and ideas the way that building does- I don't know. But when that building opened our applications, went up 500 I've got to think there's a connection here and that was not alien from our planning right at the start. So the question is, what really is an economy? Something that's going to last and inspire or something that will be dull when it was built for a very short life span.

Interviewer: So it makes good economic sense to build a building like the Ames Library.

Myers: Well, to build something that's going to last and will continue to last and inspire from the days - day it opens; if one looks at the University of Virginia, there's the great rotunda just as Jefferson designed it more or less. At Princeton you have Nassau Hall. Other places, Columbia has the great Low Library. When you look at it, you say, Wow! And you get a program to go with it.

Interviewer: Just a follow-up question, the same downturn is affecting state and federal budgets and obviously, state schools are really feeling the pinch right now but some people might assume because we're a private institution that we won't be feeling that impact -

Myers: We must be watchful in every direction, Tim. Last spring - there are potential coronary arrests all over the place. That is, the state went from having so much money it didn't know what to do with it in a space of 12 to 18 months to being absolutely desperate and there was fielded at least publicly a trial balloon that the Map Grant, which supports a great percentage of the private students would simply be stopped. Now some legislators say, Well, this was just a doom's day

scenario that would we absolutely have to do we might do ... but we never really thought it would happen. Well that wasn't altogether evident last spring. And two or three of the private colleges Eureka one of them, said if that state grant stops, we're dead, we must close. Others were saying it privately, some saying it publicly, but a state budgetary crisis in a community of colleges that has tied itself too closely to state money sets up ripples all over the place and that's the worry – if there is money being handed out, any rational organization is gonna be there to get it, it's just like depending too much on an endowment and if your endowment goes down, where are you and if your state budget endowment goes down, where are you then? So that standalone resources, our own budgeting that foresees many difficulties, and doesn't depend too heavily on any one potentially shaky resource, is always a good thing. That is we don't count on the state budget decreasing, on the other hand, if it did, we think we know what we might do here and there. One point of financial difficulty, a couple decades ago now, they did put in the budget here – a potential increase in the state individual student financial assistance. It didn't happen and they really got caught up short. Many people were running around unhappy. So we just learned we don't do that before we – we – if anything, we budget in the opposite direction, we budget for as close to absolute certainties as any human can and that gives us more potential to be surprised on the happy side. And that's the general principle of budgeting here. Only good surprises. And right now we've got to live with the other, but it's not as bad as it might have been otherwise had we really tried to spend to the hilt.

Interviewer: What about our students do you like?

Myers: They're vigorous. They're interested. They're quite varied, not all the same by any means but they have a common quality that to me becomes more and more intensive over the years. I had a student – I had two students come to see me this morning and I talked to them for longer than I should have simply because I found them interesting. One was talking about African-American bibliography. Rather than just say our library is deficient, he put together a very long list – this is Wilson [inaudible 00:24:25??] who you are working on—of books he thought we ought to have in the library. He was rather surprised to find that we have 80 percent of them already and Wilson is going to work with the Development Office and alums to try to raise special funds to find still more and improve the quality of the collection. Well it's that kind of combination that's almost hard to categorize that's fun. It's certainly showing initiative and academic interest. It shows an interest in – both in education and his college and – and in the world of learning and moving the whole process ahead for the community and that's just inspiring. The next student came to see me, I think Chrissie is a Freshman, let me just see, I think she is a Freshman ... and she came to see me to talk about her, um, trip to... – let's see, yes, she's a freshman.

Interview: Chrissie. What's her last name?

Myers: Yenowine. Y-E-N-O-W-I-N-E. And she had studied in Okinawa. She comes from Springfield, Virginia but she's very interested in Japanese Studies. She had been visiting students in Japan in a—in the Kansai region, which is Kyoto, Osaka, and... [inaudible] other precincts... [long pause] Kansai, K-A-N-S-A-I. And most students are doing well learning any Japanese at all. It's a very difficult language. Chrissie has somehow mastered the Kansai dialect so that she has the very interesting perspective of being able to speak Japanese with relative fluency but in a dialect people in Tokyo don't always understand directly or they find, I mean there's unintentional humor, sometimes as particular words and thoughts are misunderstood. So here is

Chrissie who has just learned what she has learned and in so doing finds she has an unexpected linguistic sophistication in that she now understands Japanese the way almost no student in America does because she can speak two very different dialects and I know enough to say, well, how do you say this? And she said – she said it in a Kansai dialect and I... ‘*what?*’ what? ...[chuckles]... it’s so different. But this is, um, I guess that’s a good way to say we often find we have students here who are learning to live with talents they’ve developed they never expected and A.J. Robb is another example. I remember when A.J. was a Freshman, he was a pianist in the School of Music. Now he’s a kind of superstar who plays for public occasions. And from my seat I get to see a lot of things that other people don’t and there at the opening Convocation this fall, we had all the parents, and we had all of First-Year students coming in a big procession. It was a very long one. A.J. was playing at the piano. And, what I could see that no one else could was this extremely complex and florid piece that he was playing was something he was making up completely as he played, that he had no music. It was just a spontaneous improvisation, and I said to—I said to him, where did you come up with this? You had a theme you kept using. And A.J. said, Well I looked over at the door and I saw you come in and for whatever reason I saw – I just thought of this court sequence, which he then used for an improvisation that probably went on for twelve minutes. Now that’s a very exciting thing. It’s exciting for me to hear about the students who do these phenomenal things from one area to another – that’s the fun part of my job. And to – to see the talents they develop, sometimes sadly, the talent they must give up as they go on. Wilson, for instance, says he wants to go into business. He’s a natural academic—what a loss to higher education—but that’s what he says he wants to do. And, anyway that’s....

Interviewer: Well is one of the messages, you have emphasized the multitalented students, is one of the messages that these students can do more than one thing in their life—

Myers: I think – I think they vary- let me say this about multitalented. There’s a national phenomenon about that. You – you’ve sent me a couple of articles of kids doing double majors. There’s two ways you do double majors – one is you do it because you don’t have any interest at all in either thing but you think a potential employer is going to be very impressed. So it’s like wearing the right suit of a sort you’d never wear anyway to an interview because you think somebody is gonna be impressed with it. Liberal Arts colleges are discouraging that kind of performance in some cases, strange as it may seem. But what I think we get here is the kind of multitalented pursuit that grows only out of a soul. I don’t think anybody told Chrissie that she had to study the Kansai-dialect in Japan. I don’t know of any kid. I don’t know of any other kid. I never talked to one who can distinguish Kansai from other Japanese speech. I’ve even asked Japanese friends about it, Can you demonstrate the difference between the two di-No, not really. Chrissie can. It’s something she has done because she’s interested. It grows naturally out of the soul. This kind of multitalented behavior can be squelched. It can be ... helped. It can be enhanced. But it’s got to be real to be a success. And it grows out of the soul in combinations almost no one could ever predict. Authentically, it is what it is. It doesn’t necessarily take practical forms and people do what they do. Now one of the things that I’ve discovered in my studies of the multitalented, I came to several realizations over the summer, I’ve been working on this, and I concluded that the multitalented were a highly, highly, highly creative group. And before I went too far along that path, I luckily reeled myself in. I realized something; that the only way people are remembered two hundred years after the fact at all, except by descendants and genealogists, is for having done something where they’ve been recorded. And once you

reach that and you find that somebody is in the records two hundred years ago, who is both a composer and an astronomer... it's creativity that got him in the record to start with. So if you find out the multitalented are creative ...umm... that was kind of a given. That's how you found them in the first place. They were on the list of the creatives so you've done nothing, and I – and I almost was saying something else and then I realized that, Whoop! That would be really stupid since everybody came off a list of the creative; to say the multitalented are creative would be kind of dumb because that's the only way I found them. So I inverted the question. I said how often, if I look at books that study creativity, particularly, some of them cite hundreds of examples. There's one book that goes through three hundred lives, another at six hundred, another that's a thousand. I said, what percentage of those people are multitalented? So far as I can tell, and my answer, when I have counted, one by one by one, very boringly, very painstakingly and very carefully has been consistently thirty to forty-five percent of those the world regards as creative, worth talking about or considering in a survey on creativity thirty five – thirty to forty-five percent of them generally wind up in the category of multitalented and one of the reasons I think this is true is that the multitalented do by nature things other people pay a lot of money to go to seminars to learn. That is, if you read creativity book and says "first become"—most of them do, become an expert in your field and then learn to think as though you weren't in your field ... that's, you know, the multitalented – the pianist/biologist is carrying around two worlds simultaneously. Every field is inevitably seen from two perspectives. And – and so the – multitalented do by instinct what others hope to do by design if they're only doing one thing. And it has been a very exciting year for me figuring all that stuff out, but I think it is why some of our students have a creative edge, first of all, because they think like people, not trained professionals in their fields. One of the traits of the creative very often is that, if they're scientists, they think in visual patterns; if they are novelists or artists, they think in numerical patterns. In other words, they are – their minds get mixed. They jump from one thing to another. And this is pretty well documented in a lot of the literature. And it's something the multitalented do almost by instinct, or I would say completely by instinct, is jump around from one thing to another. So, being able to look at things from multiple directions is, some of them would say even a bother, they get too many ideas. Ideas come as a rain and you get wet. It's a stimulus you can't turn off sometimes, which in its worst form just, you know, leaves a person going in too many directions. That's a whole different subject. We don't want to wander in that but it's clearly a theme.

Interviewer: Is that something though – that appreciation for that, that you can actually build into a curriculum or is it [overlapping of words]

Myers: Well you can try to find the kids who are that way. I don't think you're going to have a kid who comes in who wants to be, let's just say, a business accountant, and you tell him you ought to be interested in Japanese grammar. If they're not interested in Japanese grammar on their own. A motivational lecture about how interesting people do multiple things ain't going to do nothing for 'em. It's that simple. And, I'm convinced of it, it's like some people have brown hair, others are multitalented. I don't know that I'd say it's genetic but it's ... you know, some like doing it and others don't.

Interviewer: But beyond that you've really tried to inspire an attitude here of people, students following their passions as opposed to –

Myers: --Well, it's just that all—

Interviewer: --pattern of what's going to look good on their resume [overlapping]

Myers: --the success people--I really got to know are doing something they're passionate about. I wrote a biography on Arnold Beckman. Nobody told him he had to do all these things. He started – he was a professor at Cal Tech. He loved playing with equipment. He was in the same department as Linus Pauling. Linus Pauling was a great chemical theorist. Linus Pauling was working on chemical theories in the same department at Cal Tech in the faculty. Arnold Beckman loved working with chemistry equipment. He liked dials, he liked measuring things. He liked wiring things up, making things out of glass; it was a passion! And one day a friend came in. He said, “Arnold, I'm in a lemon juice business. I'm having a terrible problem with acidity. One day the juice we turn out is really acid, the other day it's not very acid at all. We need uniformity.” Well, Beckman knew enough about measuring pH that he thought, well, there's a piece of cake. I can make you a little acid meter that might help you. So he dinked around in his little lab with tubes and wires and electrodes and he produced this thing that his friend could use. Couple months later, his friend was back. He said, “Arnold, I got a problem. You made this thing and we wanted it for the production line but they like it in the lab so much, we got the same problem on the production line. It is as though it doesn't exist. Can you make another one?” Well, Beckman who is a very quick study, he's about to be 103, said, “Wow! Sure I can make you another one,” and then he got to thinking, if I can sell two of these to my friend, maybe America would like some more. So he made up still a third one, went to a whole bunch of chemical meetings where the word was very discouraging, and they said, “Well this is very expensive. It does only one thing and I don't know that you're really gonna sell more than a hundred of these in a decade.” Beckman started counting – in a decade – sounds like a good deal for me. Let's go! ...[chuckles in the background]... He starts manufacturing these things and the rest is history. Beckman Instruments grows from this little machine to measure lemon acidity to a major, major, major power. And he did it simply because he was interested. And if he could measure one thing in 1933 and 4, he had the confidence that he could measure the ultraviolet or the infrared spectrum had grown equally well in the forties, so he and his colleagues are working – well, if we can do this one, we will do that one, we'll do this one, we'll do this one – that one, and ultimately, he has a huge corporation that makes a vast array of scientific measuring devices so much so that the guy who used to be the selection head for the Nobel Prize Committee said, “There are two great eras in Chemistry: Pre-Beckman and Post-Beckman.” A good example, Arnold, or Walter Alvarez, who is the geologist who figured out that the dinosaurs probably were eradicated by the impact of an asteroid in the Yucatan did it on the basis of parts per billion of iridium and he was coming like, I don't know, seven, eight, nine parts per billion of iridium is a highly atypical distribution that must've had some extra-terrestrial stimulus. If you think about that – that's crazy unless you can measure parts per billion, one part in a billion, you can't ever approach that kind of conclusion. Beckman produced the yard stick that other people could use to measure. And that's a perfect example of somebody following his own natural propensities, wherever they might lead. We get a lot of kids like that ... really get interested in something, they start following that. And then they are amazed that how far they've gone when they thought that they were just doing what a normal kid does –no such thing.

Interviewer: Let me ask you about the faculty. You've probably ... the faculty here, as opposed to nationally, younger by some amount—

Myers: We know that for sure, because in the salary averages, we see that our people are on average of a rank junior to the national average and particularly, the most, most, most selective of the colleges where the professor is typically senior.

Interviewer: The—an advantage – an advantage there is – we’re not in a position of having a big excess as many schools are—

Myers: --We hope not –

Interviewer: -- Right—[overlapping]

Myers: --that’s the worry about keeping salaries up; that as retirements hit other places, our wonderful faculty may be sitting targets for other people’s searches. So that’s why not only keeping the salaries up but moving and forward is a very, very important task for protecting our faculty as assets for the students. We work very hard to find the wonderful people we have and we wanna keep ‘em.

Interviewer: What is that process as you – as you watch it finding – how – how do you go about finding people who fit this community?

Myers: You go into the national market – that’s the one part of my job that I miss. When I was a provost, that’s the part of my old provost job I really miss. I was provost five years so I got to do this – Janet McNew does it here; working with the faculty and you define a position and then you develop a means of advertising and recruiting. You look at the people who wanna come and you bring them in; and you see what they look like; you see them – how they talk, you look at their eyes; you see how they sparkle; what they say, and there are some types that are eminently suited and others that are eminently not suited to be here. The first type – not suited is the one who just wants to be a good teacher; who holds it as a post of pride that they just teach. They don’t do research because that detracts from good teaching. I don’t think that the faculty believes that. I certainly don’t. The greatest teachers are the ones who are inspired from the inside because they are asking interesting questions to which they are finding answers and in doing that they pass along a real and authentic enthusiasm for discovery in their own field and any other field. And ...[phone rings]... let’s just see what that is. Hold on.

[recording stops/starts]

Interviewer: Okay, so faculty – faculty who are successful—

Myers: -- Yeah – yeah – yeah – yeah! I’m going through two categories of faculty who aren’t appropriate here and the first one who is – just wants to be a good teacher. Second one is the one who just wants to be a researcher and not work with students. That’s fairly self-evident. [chuckles] This is not to quote, but once we were handing out researcher grants at Hobart and William Smith, the President and I were sitting going over all these papers trying to figure out endowment. And, we came to one guy who was up for his 3rd or 4th—you know-- leave on a research grant in three years and he looked at me and he says, “Why don’t we give one to Henry Steele Commager, he doesn’t teach here either.” ...[all of them laugh]... And that kinda – that kinda catches the essence of it. If you wanna – the – the ideal person is somewhere in the middle; is somewhere who bristles with curiosity and ideas for research; who figures out entrepreneurial ways to involve undergraduates in this wonderful world of discovery. It’s done, I suppose, most

easily and most often in the sciences. And there you've got Susie Balsler, you've got Ram, you've got Gabe, you've got all those others you've written about it; I could go on and on and on and I didn't realize until a week ago Friday, that our guy who gave the talk last week, David Bollivar, had his own research group as well, but, that's the kind of ideal academic who wants to come here to do research with the students rather than apart from, and when you get that, several things happen. You find the students are energized about particular things – that the love of the professor becomes the love of the students. So that we will probably, in our library, have far more on bats than your average undergraduate college; far more on starfish because [recording stops] that the library becomes a trail, an unexpected document of the faculty interest and achievements. That's true. So that's the kind of ideal professor very luckily we've been finding all over the place.

Interviewer: And you made a point that the – that the challenge is keeping the college—
[overlapping]

Myers: --the challenge is keeping them – I mean, there are – there are two pulls: other colleges will want them, but if their research is really good, some universities may have at 'em too and say why should you teach all those undergraduates when you can spend all of your time just doing research? So – something we worry about.

Interviewer: The other – the – the alumni then, is the third component: students, faculty, alumni and you've interacted with our alumni since you've been here. How have you found those interactions and what is it about our alumni that intrigues you, interests you, gives you pause?

Myers: Well, it didn't give me much pause, but it's – it's something where we're making some real progress, is the alums seeing how they are part of what we're doing regardless of the year in which they graduated. We travel the country and we have-- I wouldn't say we have homecomings every weekend; that comes one big weekend a year, but there are always a lot of alums coming back. They always seem to be highly impressed, very pleased with everything they see. They look at the Ames Library, they look at The Gates. You know, when I came, even in 1989, the directions were drive west, turn right at Mike's Market. That's how you'll know you're there. Well, nobody but nobody is going to miss it now with the gateway we have. And the alums seem very, very, very pleased about that and I think a lot of them realized that as our stature and visibility has grown, that has not hurt the quality of their own credentials as they say they're from Illinois Wesleyan. The gap we have to close, frankly, is in the alumni Annual Fund, and we are getting a great, great, great drive of activity this year out of the class of the 1990s. When they realize that a gift to the Annual Fund, however small, is a vote of confidence as U.S. News looks at us they ask, what is the degree of alumni satisfaction. And for whatever reason, they take the percentage of alumni donating as the answer to that question. And when a student says, "Oh I didn't know it was a vote; I thought it was a donation." It turns out to be both. And the 90s are really rallying around a new view and if we close that gap, we will have done what Carlton and Williams has done, which is to keep the alums constantly tied to the institution from the time they graduate.

Interviewer: What is the most important thing right now that you're trying to convey to our alumni about this institution and its future?

Myers: Well, I think the one thing to convey is that with their help, we've move from 2nd position on the regional list to the top quartile of the national list. That didn't happen by accident. It happened by thinking we could do it and realizing we have done it. And that future progress and improvement is quite possible but it's gonna take a – a lot of the alums really want to be on board, one way or another. Some can do great things, some can do – I mean, some have the great capability of making major contribution – others can be supporters in still different ways, but again this connection between the alums – what we're doing now and if they graduated 20, 30, 40 years ago realizing they're still involved – we have to establish, I think, that sense that Oxford has in an entirely different vocabulary. One is less a graduate at Oxford, perhaps more a member of the university. They call themselves members, and when there's a chancellor as there is now – there's an election for chancellor coming up- the chancellor is elected by the members of the university who actually come to Oxford to vote. That's the only way that a chancellor is chosen, because the members of the university are there. And convincing people that they really are members of a body corporate and continue to be whether they graduated or not is what the three of us are engaged in doing.

Interviewer: Of course the national alumni association is one means for-

Myers: - yeah – yeah – yeah – yeah – put in that I talked a lot about it.

Interviewer: - [all of them laugh]... Okay.

Myers: Because that –it really is. You've got it.

Interviewer: The issue – the one issue that we're hearing a lot about on our campus but now we're hearing about it everywhere is the question – is – is diversity- Well, not the issue but the word – for better or worse. Couple questions about that-

Myers: -yeah.

Interviewer: - where do we – where do you stand? Where do we stand in the University of Michigan case as it goes forward? How does it... how does it impact an institution of this sort?

Myers: As – as of ... Oh, God! I better be very careful – we – we'll get a chance to edit this, won't we?

Interviewer: Yes.

Myers: Okay.

Interviewer: This is a good practice run because the Pantagraph wants to talk to us about that, too – about this –

Myers: -okay. That means I might actually have to read about it. I'll tell you why I haven't. We know what we wanna do and ... what the Michigan case says is – whatever the Michigan case says, we know what we wanna do.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Myers: And as a private institution, we'll figure out how to get there. Several years ago, I began to hear a new phrase and I wondered, what the hell is this all about? I listened for a few weeks and I said to my friend Fuller, who runs the Associated Colleges of Illinois up in Chicago. I said, "Jerry, mark this one down in your vocabulary book. I'm sure I've translated right." As some people are critical of affirmative action, the phrase 'First-generation college students' accomplishes the same thing without the slightest bit of complication. And so if you say I wanna be, uh, supportive of First-Generation college students and the fact that 70 or 80 percent of them are Hispanic or African-American is, you know, somebody may wanna come at that in a different way but ...[chuckles] ... you bought yourself five or six years of legal space, and then you can come up with a new phrase. And that I think is the inevitable task of the liberal arts colleges, whatever the rule we see what a mission must be, which is to spread education at the highest level as best we can through society because it's very clear that the key to permanent improvement is education. The higher the education, the higher the improvement and the people it touches. And ... that's what we're trying to do. That's why we have these aspir- efforts, now, whether you wanna put something in here about our heritage or not, I don't know. This Diggs fellow, that Carl is finding, that story is shaping up by the hour. I've got an interesting bio piece out there I haven't even read yet-

Interviewer: - I just did read it. It is interesting.

Myers: What does it say about him?

Interviewer: Well, he was a fascinating guy and he was very – he was – this ... this is a Ph.D. Sociologist. He was in the forefront of a lot of important things.

Myers: I mean, Jeff, you know, three weeks ago, we hadn't even heard of this guy.

Interviewer: Yeah. He was one of the ...

Myers: I mean, be ... careful about those things-

Interviewer:-yeah.

Myers: We had that fellow speak at the Martin Luther King dinner- the Gospel Festival a couple of weeks ago and his biography made him sound as though he was at the very center of a Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Paul Bushnell has a whole volume biogr – history book of it ...[interviewers speak in the background]... and does not appear in the index anywhere.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Myers: And from what he said, there should have been a whole chapter devoted to him.

Interviewer: Okay.

Myers: So –

Interviewer: He was a 19-year-old gopher ...

Myers: Yeah, well ...

Interviewer: ... in the King, in the King [inaudible 00:55:21??].

Myers: ... yeah.

Interviewer: And his picture that he sent was I think, taken when he was 20... [Myers laughs]

Myers: we've got the same guy here ...[laughs in the background]...

Interviewer: There's a resemblance, but it's vague. But the issue of diversity is an issue that the institution is grapp— not grapp – I don't wanna say grappling – the institution – as other institutions of our type, you know ...

Myers: I think in – in – in that we are reflective of the nation as a whole as – as I got to thinking, when we had this ... the Martin Luther King Dream-dinner, kids across America learned to recite the Martin Luther King "I have a dream" speech. Now this is not to be included but yesterday, we all heard the 12th ... uh the 23rd Psalm. If you weren't feeling very good and I gave you a staff and a rod, would you feel particularly comforted?

Interviewer: No, not particularly – no.

Myers: I mean if you listen to that thing and say – and try to make any sense of it – if you're – if you're sick with the cold and flu and I give you a staff and rod and rub oil on your head, you're gonna tell me, get the hell out of there. But, you know, we get all weepy about that. In the Martin Luther King speech, you can say meaningfully and get teary – I have a dream, but what is a dream? What really do you mean and how do you get there?

Interviewer: Mmm.

Myers: That's a task before all of higher education. What is it? How do we get there? Far from easy to say but you know I can stand around, hold hands near the campfire, sing Kumbaya -- you're nowhere closer to doing anything so I'm a little cynical on that subject. But if only that, you see so many things that look as though they ought to be making some progress and you hear others act as though nothing has happened and it couldn't be worse.

Interviewer: And that's, I guess, that – that is the ... that is a characteristic of trying to keep things moving forward is to make sure nobody thinks they've gotten what they want yet, so that we have to keep moving forward.

Myers: Right.

Interviewer: The people – if we were there, what would we have left to do?

Myers: Right.

Interviewer: So we can never get there-

Myers: - a cynic could say this is like the end of the Vietnam War for some people-

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Myers: -you know, the protestors were out of business once the war was over, right? I know a guy for whom that was true. H didn't know what to do. This space, you know, he wore all these buttons, this space for rent.

Interviewer: Well, I wanna leave room for something of this topic before we move on it of something maybe we can have on the record because -

Myers: Well some of this you can use, I mean-

Interviewer: Okay.

Myers: - what I've said. I mean type it up and I'll yell and scream and cross it out

Interviewer: Okay. But – but from your point of view, what is Illinois Wesleyan doing right and what can it do better toward the goal of having more underrepresented students and faculty in its ranks?

Myers: Number one, recruitment. Number two, recruitment. Number three, recruitment and number 4 keeping 'em once they get here.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Myers: The task is getting more people to be part of the community so that their – their faces, their causes, their issues, their joys are all part of what the community is. And that should be true for every constituent element whether it's the old New Englanders, or the underrepresented Chicano migrants. Whoever they are, they ought to feel comfortable. I once talked to a guy who was an Ambassador to France. Far different context but same idea. He had been in Balliol College, Oxford. He was a Rhodes Scholar before the Second World War. And he said, "When I left Oxford I knew someone from every major city in Europe." Well, that's the kind of model for our kids – that when they leave college, they know someone of every sort and condition; they can understand, they can see; they can emphasize, emp – empathize, whether they have their own private plane or no clue as to how they're gonna get their bus ticket. And that's what I'd like. More on the faculty side. One of the things that is very difficult is to hire characteristic faculty in an area where the kids themselves aren't interested in going into a field. That's why I'm very proud of these early alums, why I hope we can use it as a stimulus to send more of our own students to graduate school and wanna be professors. You - you sit down with a group of African-American or Hispanic students and you say, "Do you wish we had more faculty like you?" "Oh, absolutely! First priority." "How many of you wanna be professors?" Well, it used to be no hands would go up. And I said, "Behold the result and you understand the dilemma.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Myers: But now, we're getting quite a few who really, really, really wanna be professors and that's inspiring. That's why the Diggs guy, that's why Coffin are so interesting, because they're not only part of our history, they're models for our future. [whispers] I just made that line up ... [everyone laughs]...

Interviewer: That's very good. I like that a lot. Completely original thought I've never had.

Myers: I hope your tape was running.

Interviewer: It definitely was.

Myers: What else have you got for me?

Interviewer: Let me ask you – this may be a – I don't know, it's a – how did 9/11 – we heard at the time that that happened that everything was gonna change, including what we do and that's what we were saying- asking to ourselves. How has it changed?

Myers: I think it has. In that– we as a nation are now doing many of those things we used to make fun of other countries for. We used to – we used to joke about nations that needed internal passports to go from one place to another. We now show our identification as readily without thinking about it, getting on a –an – an – an airplane; have our luggage searched – do all kinds of things that we would've thought were the essence of an oppressive government, 20 or 30 years ago if they were even suggested, let alone implemented. And doubt and mistrust, locks and checking are much more, I think, the key to daily life where as the essence of civilization, is a set of shared ideals rather than shared doubts; shared aspirations rather than worrisome doubts about others. It has been a step backwards, I think, toward building a fort mentality that is shared without so much a shared set of hopes, aspirations and good feelings. I mean, they – the way New York came together after ... the impact of the airliners is altogether inspiring. The way the country helped New York is not unlike the way the country helped Chicago after the fire in 1871, or Boston in 1872. But beyond that, it's been an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty. We don't wanna go to the shopping center. We don't wanna go up and down U.S.1 during that spree thing around Washington. Let's not fly, let's just stay home. We don't wanna go on international travel. There's a great deal more fear. There's a great deal more uncertainty at a time when the world needs unity, um ... there's been a ... out of all of this, a great deal of doubt. Worry about terror. What was it given: is – is now a debatable. It may take a long time to reclaim that consensus and confidence

Interviewer: What role does a college education, a higher education, an education that we offer play-

Myers: - I think – I think that it's gotta be long-term, that is, there's not much – a single college. Even all the colleges in America can do overnight about international terrorism, threats, doubts, code reds, code yellows, code whatever that come from entirely external stimuli. A college can ask, why would anybody hate America. Presumably if America didn't exist...the threat of terror would go away. It's hardly an **[inaudible1:04:45 ??]**. The question of building an international understanding for world civilization that isn't based on some ism, is – is – is probably the prime task. It was – it's interesting that in the 1700s, the intellectuals of Europe began to see themselves as corresponding with each other as working on learning as a whole in what they call the Republic of Letters, that stood apart and above from- it was distinct from, any particular kingdom. And it was modelled on science and the exchange of information: the philosophes, the Enlightenment movement grows right out of this and we may be back to a similar sort of thing, that we develop a world civilization that is based not on this affirmed truth or that affirmed truth or ... but on mutually understood interests that can somehow be respected rather than imposing one country's isms on another. It's like you look at most of the 18th century wars in Europe, other than lands grabs, it's a little hard to figure out what they were about, though, there must have been a great deal of patriotic fervor about them at the time. And, when somebody comes into your country and knocks down two major buildings and kills more than 3000 people, there

certainly is something to talk about. But the question is, what's the long-term meaning of this on a global scale? What is it to bring satisfaction if you talk about diversity on your own campus? What is it to have a satisfied diverse world? A cynic might say people will always do this; it's the way they get ahead; make a name for themselves; get to be leaders. I got to be a leader at one thing by opposing somebody else. One might hope that we can get beyond things like that. But in large measure, that's got to be what colleges are about is trying to think ahead 10, 15, 20 years – what things might be and seeing if you can work toward it.

Interviewer: And the liberal arts being something that promotes that kind of mutual understanding that you were-

Myers: You see, that was the whole idea of science as it grows out of the 1600s; that Science was something that could be verified by the people in Prague as well as London; that the same experiment would work in Peking as well as Alexandria. And that once these things were discovered, they would be communicated one country to another through international journals. So experiments, correspondence and publication were constituent parts of this hope and belief and in the world of science, it certainly turned out to be true. How you extend this into the humanities may well be the great question. One of the paradoxes is going around and affirming that all values are equally the same but no values are better than any other. It's a very difficult thing to argue ... and it's been quite interesting to me that the people who very often say that complain about the status of women. Well, if – if all values are relative and anybody can have, you know, all values and students are equal, how can you possibly complain about the status of women on anything but a personal – personal doubt under Islam. And I think it's – what it is doing is forcing us back to the natural – old concept of natural law, which is an outgrowth of the Renaissance in the 1600s and the 1700s which is, are there certain rules that simply are logical human behavior in all places, nations and times?

Interviewer: In your belief or it was kind of universal...

Myers: I'm rather close to it ... [everyone laughs]... it's got to be the only hope for the future. The Roman solution of simply imposing one civilization on our – on the rest of the world maybe increase peace for half a generation but probably not much longer.

Interviewer: We probably don't have much time left but I thought I'd ask you a few more personal questions if it's alright.

Myers: The nature of truth?

Interviewer: Well... no more related to your ... well, looking back at almost 14 years that you've served as president of Illinois Wesleyan, what has been the most rewarding aspect of the job from a personal perspective?

Myers: From the personal perspective I think it's being seeing the happy, happy faces of the students as each new building has opened taking a program with it. In other words, it's nice to have a new library. But what it's done is quintuple the number of students using a library at any one time and when they get in there and they jockey for particular spots and they wanna sit there and do their work, that pleases me a great deal. We had student research before, but when we opened the Science building, whether it's 22 individual student research labs and one particular faculty have individual research teams that worked throughout the years and some of them begin

to look as post- like post docs in other countries – that really does please me, and again, it’s when major leaps forward allow students to do things that otherwise would have been unimaginable or wouldn’t have been so delightful and have this much ... verve for the kids as they do – that’s been very pleasing.

Interviewer: The other question, how would you describe your style of leadership as -

Myers: - I try to have no style ...[Interviewer chuckles]... I really don’t. I do not read style books. I don’t try to do this style. I don’t try to do that style. I simply try to work as I can, helping people. I – I – I mean that – I do not read you know, techniques to do this and techniques to do that. I avoid it, as a matter of fact.

Interviewer: Well, beyond just the techniques – are there any – have there been any influences on you personally or -

Myers: -Yeah. Howard Swearer at Brown would said the exact same thing ...[everyone laughs]... those books are for people who need them. I mean, Swearer was brilliant. I got to work with him for a year. Here he was. He was president of a liberal arts college, Carleton, and he’d gone off to run Brown. And he ran Brown like a small community... He ... when he arrived, there had been labor problems ... there was underpaid faculty, they had trouble raising money, they didn’t have very many students. Swearer came in and he started putting people in jobs by their talents, not their vits. He took a guy from football, put him in-charge of admissions where he did so well, he put him in-charge of the Development program. I mean, no rational place would do that because he didn’t have the ... the guy didn’t have the credentials; he was just brilliant in everything he did. And I thought, Wow, and I went to ask Swearer that same question, “Do you read those books?” “No. I don’t, at all.” And I thought there was great wisdom in what he said; if you don’t know ... If you can’t get people to do things then maybe read books like that or if you’re absolutely clueless, then you’ll [speaks in a low voice] God, don’t quote that...[Interviewers laugh]... then you read stuff like that. But every time somebody coming at me in it with an ism like HBO or TQM or whatever it is, I know next year they’re gonna be saying something else...[interviewers laugh]...

Interviewer: Sells books?

Myers: Yeah. Well, it sells books but does it really do anything other than sell books, and lead somebody to think, I’m either writing material for Dilbert or, without accomplishing anything, I’m faking it. I don’t know-

Interviewer: Fair enough...[chuckles]... I don’t know wh- I’m sorry I asked that.

Myers: No! No! No! but I get these questions. That’s a practiced answer, “What is your leadership style?” And write back, “I tried not to have one.”

Interviewer: Right. Okay.

Myers: That’s it?

Interviewer: Well, we could go on but ...[overlapping]

Myers: Well what have you got on your list there

Interviewer: But we won't torture you any longer... well, one of the, I mean, first of...

Myers: Well you've got 2 pages and it's ...

Interviewer: Yeah, I wondered if your recent experience of being a parent with sons in college at law schools has given you a perspective on college and university life that you maybe didn't have before.

Myers: If anything that's exacerbated my worst tendencies. [Interviewers laugh] because they convince me that I've been right all along [laughs]

Interviewer: Really?

Myers: Yeah, but – but – but do not quote that. [interviewers laugh] that – you know when you send your kids off to New England schools and they go to New England colleges and Minor goes to law school, you begin to see certain patterns that, you know, lead to success and other patterns that you know, are far, far, far different and - take diversity. This is, you know, I'll just tell you about this, like I don't think it's good for the article. – All right. Myer and Jeff both went to Andover, why? Well, we thought it'd be fun to send them to a New England school and frankly the headmaster was with me at Princeton so I knew McNemar real well, so, you know, can we come see you? Yeah. Amazingly Minor got in the next year. Well, if you go to the Andover community, which is, the school where George Bush went, there the minority level is 20-30 percent and these kids who are used to coming out daddy's private plane, regarded as normal to have that big a minority presence. They understand the real essence of America. These are the people who fly private planes that come from the families who run the major corporations; whereas the – you know, the kid who comes from a small town where they don't have to associate with all of those people, you know, where the family is trying to find an all-white kind of situation – they just don't get it. They don't just get it – if anything, the others have a far bigger dose of reality and Minor took one look at this place once and he said, "Dad! Why don't you have more [inaudible 01:15:52 ??] in place. What is this? What is this?" Another thing he said, not to be quoted is, and I didn't prompt him to this, he said, "Dad, you got all these merit scholarships. Why would you, if the place is good, why would you have merit scholarships?" This is not a question Routi ever asked. He just thought it would enhance our image. Well, if you think that the image- full spectrum of it is here, the merit scholarship might carry it from here to here but he forgets that's up here. Nobody thinks you need a merit scholarship to go to Yale or Williams, I mean, that's a- like Tiffany's or, you know, Cartier...

Interviewer: - correct.

Myers: ...that's at the top of the heap

Interviewer: Yeah.

Myers: So that's why I say it's exacerbated my worst tendencies ...[others laugh]... we won't say that. But – but in the – in the question of quality, the boys, I think, have kept me personally focused on a national model and one of the things I did say, again, don't quote – don't put this in, but I came , I said, "I don't wanna know a thing about what they're doing at Millikin. I couldn't care less about what the place over in Peoria is doing and certainly don't tell me about Augustana." Proximity has got nothing to do with comparative quality. Look only at the best

models, wherever they are. And, we've tried real hard to do that and I think, we finally got it pretty much out of the system. I will tell you. Again, not to be quo- you know, the – your machine is running, but in my first years, there was always a discussions about tuition. How was our tuition getting out ahead of Bradley? Are we charging more than Millikin? You know like, we're a high school in Bloomington you know, we got the Decatur High and we got Champaign High and we got, we don't wanna get out ahead. We haven't had a question about tuition levels and affordability in the Board I'll bet for six years. Have you heard at-

Interviewer: - I – I -

Myers: -people raise, I mean, even hinted at in your time?

Interviewer: And I've been surprised that it hasn't. I'm not – which is good.

Myers: because we have focused-

Interviewer: -Yeah.

Myers: -not on how cheap we look compared to the neighbors but how good we look compared to a national context. And there we look really good. We look relatively inexpensive.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm. It's all a matter of company.

Myers: Yeah.

Interviewer: It's creating the company you keep.

Myers: Creating the company you want to be known as keeping. Or in fact, you do keep.

Interviewer: -Right.

Myers: Or, in fact, you lead.

Interviewer: Right.

Myers: And sometimes it's like this kid who came to see me this morning. I – I – I – I'm just sitting here and dumbstruck all that she is making very interesting comparisons between Kansai-Jack – Japanese dialect; talking about characters that are no longer used in Japanese and the fact that most kids who are studying Japanese are just groping with the basics and wouldn't possibly understand what this Freshman is talking about...[chuckles]...

Interviewer: And she's a Freshman? That's what-

Myers: Yeah. But you see, she's lived in Japan. She learned Japanese in this dia- in this area to speak it with relative fluency and then she finds all of a sudden the rest of the world don't speak that way.

Interviewer: And she's from Springfield, Virginia?

Myers: Whatever I said – yeah. [overlapping]

Interviewer: Do we know –

Myers: We think- I think she has to be on that short little list that we have some of every year – my personal recruits. I don't know why she came here to start with, but on one of her visit days, she and I correspond- I mean, I chatted with her – I sent her some stuff, she sent me more stuff and one student who is very interesting is Amanda Braden. I owe Amanda a letter. Amanda is another one –

[Audio from 1:17:50 repeats at 1:19:54] had a question about tuition levels and affordability in the Board albeit for six years ...

[At 01:22:01 Myers' comments about Amanda Braden pick up again]

Every year there're one or two, and Amanda is one. She's now a student in Scotland and she came and was intrigued and I talked to her about multitalented stuff and she would send me little – I've kept all the things she sent me. She's an artist who does costumes and here she is, up in Northern Scotland. There's one thing she – this is the character herself – she's always that character here she is. These are all original drawings, you see.

Interviewer: Wow!

Myers: And here are some costumes that she made. She's helping those kids who come here. And I've got a few other, others of her cards – she's – I've saved everything she's ever made. Here she is going from Freshman – I mean you might have actually used that in the magazine.

Interviewer: Mm-hmm.

Myers: Here she is, going towards Sophomore year having finished Freshman year and she writes me a thank you for everything, and here she is getting ready, I think, to go to Scotland but she does this little cartoon character, which is her, constantly.

Interviewer: And she is from where?

Myers: [pause, moves away from microphone] I think she is from one of those Chicago suburbs.

Interviewer: Okay.

Myers: But I got my first one...they're little cartoons are-

Interviewer: That's great!

Myers: She's from Libertyville and let's see if I can find – I do kind of from the outset that this had talent. So when I see that I start **[inaudible 01:23:41??]** ... here's a letter from Chrissie from last year with a little Japanese inscription on it. Ah here's another from when she was a perspective student...[comes back to the microphone] Here she is, lying on her back, dreaming about IWU ...[chuckles]... and here she is -

Interviewer: - that's the first one you got?

Myers: -yeah ... and after she was – and then there she is – umm... she's very clever...[interviewers laugh]... So, I got – I've got lots more of these.

Interviewer: What's her major?

Myers: She's in Art and Theatre.

Interviewer: Oh wow, perfect!

Myers: At least I think she is. I'll just keep these all together, I'm trying to ... She knows I've saved all these and she has asked me to copy them for her... [one interviewer chuckles]

Interviewer: Yeah, I bet she'd like them back.

Myers: Yeah.

Interviewer: That could be something to have in – the library – in 30 years -

Myers: - aren't those cute?

Interviewer: [overlapping] They are wonderful

Other interviewer: -when she gets her Academy Award or her Golden Globe -

Myers: -yeah – yeah – yeah.

Interviewer: Exactly.

Myers: But she's – she's always sending me one of these little notes and here's a – I think, the one about Scotland.

Interviewer: Okay.

Myers: So ...

Interviewer: Well, is there anything you wanna-

Myers: - No, I think that's – I think that's about enough.

Interviewer: Okay.

Myers: Well, I mean, you look at it and if you think politically we haven't talked about something that we should, you know, we didn't talk about road workers and Woodstock county or Woodford county [all laughing] and that's a constituency that will feel completely alienated or not. I mean, that has been the frustrating thing, you know, the Homecoming brochure that has no blacks-

Interviewer: -Right.

Myers: - and we get zapped for that, and then some faculty complain, because there are too many minority pictures and you don't know whether they feel that's making it too minority or it's unrepresentative or -

Interviewer: The formula would be to figure exactly what's the percentage of minorities in the student body -

[Audio ends at 01:25:56]