Jean A. Battle oral history interview by Nancy Hewitt, June 21, 1985

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Hewitt: I am talking today with Dr. Jean Battle of the College of Education for the USF Silver Anniversary Oral History Project. Dr. Battle, what was your first contact with the University of South Florida?

Battle: When Dr. Allen, the first president of the University of South Florida, was first named, he came over and talked to me. I was dean of Florida Southern College at Lakeland. He came over and talked to me about the school. I talked with Dr. Allen a long time, about some of the ideas he wanted to develop here. Before that I had been on a commission with all the colleges and universities in the state where I would talk about opening new universities, not necessarily the University of South Florida, but new universities in the state because the universities were up where the pine trees were and the people were down in this part of the state and there wasn't any university. So I had been on a commission before, but actually when Dr. Allen was named, he came over very early and talked to me about it because one thing he had talked to me about was these ideas about general education and liberal education, that is what he mostly talked to me about at that time.

Hewitt: So you were at Florida Southern then . . .

Battle: Florida Southern as Dean of the College.

Hewitt: . . . as Dean of the College. Did Dr. Allen's ideas about liberal arts education seem fairly innovative in those days?

Battle: Yes, to some extent. University of Florida had this kind of a program. Most of the Florida state universities had turned down the idea though, and
they had a general education program at the University of Florida for a long time. I knew before the University opened, Dr. Allen very well and had been in contact with him a lot when he was vice president of the University of Florida and he was also acting president of the University of Florida. I talked to him and had him visit Florida Southern College many times and he was very much interested in general education, more so than most anybody in this state.

Hewitt: Did the College of Education in particular, which you were the first dean of, try to develop more contacts with other colleges and other departments than most colleges of education?

Battle: We had our faculty members teach in all the colleges except the Business College. We had them in the Business College too, I forgot. They taught in all the colleges and we had all of our students take courses in all the other colleges. We required a concentration for all of our students in a Liberal Arts major at that time, elementary students as well as the other students. And we were meeting all the time with the faculties of the colleges.

Hewitt: How long did that kind of contact between the College of Education and the other colleges last? It seems to me now that there is not the same kind of contact.

Battle: It lasted strongly for eight years and started tapering off... We opened here in 1960 and it lasted until 1970 very strongly. Then when Dr. Allen went out as president it all fell apart.
Hewitt: Did you feel that the changes that were made after Dr. Allen left were helpful to the College of Education or did you prefer the earlier form of organization and contact?

Battle: I much preferred the former. At the present time, we don't even know the people in our own department much less in the other colleges. It is a very cold situation. The former situation was very good. We had an "All University Book" which everybody studied and everybody got together. It wasn't required. They just read it on their own and then we had a panel to discuss it and had questions from the audience. Students and faculty read this book. This went on for about 6 or 7 years, two or three books a quarter, and it would be discussed in the Oracle. It was a friendly, fine relationship. The students were very friendly at that time, too. It was really a wonderful feeling on the campus, and it was really an accent on learning and an accent on liking people.

Hewitt: That sounds wonderful. About how big was USF at that time in terms of faculty or the number of students?

Battle: They expected to open the University with 2,000 full-time equivalent students which meant much more than 2,000. And it was much under that number because the word got circulated by some of our competitors that we were not accredited. And then we were way out of town for the other people. So we had to recruit. We had coffees all over Tampa. The women's groups would have us in and the faculty would talk to them. We went around to all the high schools and so on. So we opened up with about 1400 full-time equivalent students and some people say it was 1900 students that we had here. We quit counting on full-time equivalent early. That is what we were planning on counting on. We just counted breathing bodies. Then they started coming
so fast because of our good program. We had the best undergraduate program we thought, practically in the country, and certainly the best in Florida. Because of our program they started writing us up all over the country. The New York Times wrote us up and so did the Miami Herald. We started getting a big group of students from New York, Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, and all of those groups. So we started growing too fast. One year we had to double our faculty and we had over 125 more faculty. That was more at that time in 1970, for instance, than we have now in the College of Education. We had to double our faculty in one year. We had to hire, in one year, over 100 faculty members, and that was too fast to grow. We should have held down the growth. Once it got started it just went in tarts.

Hewitt: Well, it certainly expanded enormously since then because we are 25 years old today and have something like 25,000 students. In the early years when you mentioned going around to the women's clubs and the local high schools, how much support was there from the local community and were there groups in the community that were more supportive of the university or were there groups that felt that a university might, somehow, be inappropriate, or it was too far from town?

Battle: Up until the Johns Committee came, which we'll talk about later, the people in the city were very supportive of the University. It wasn't until the church group, the fundamentalist church group, started worrying about what people were teaching out here that there was any problem at all. We were welcomed everywhere we went. But the people with money didn't intend to send their children out here. They were going to the University of Florida or Florida State if they were going in-state and many of them went out of state. So we had a very economically poor student body the first years. It
was so different from Florida Southern. Every year the faculty's cars were looking poorer and the students cars were looking more rich. It was nice coming over here because I had a better car than the students had. But that didn't last very long. Pretty soon it got very "in" for Tampa students to come here and for people living around this area to come here. But in the beginning, it was for people who just couldn't afford to go anywhere else.

Hewitt: Did you feel that the faculty in those early years had more contacts with the community than they did today?

Battle: Oh yes. Nearly everyone was invited out all the time and they knew the people who were always inviting them out. While there was some protection, people were worried about the University of Tampa and how we were going to hurt them. Well, we really helped them. They really started going off . . . We started getting the local students, and they started getting the students from the north with money. As a result, Tampa was better off and we were better off. The people were interested in cultural activities. When we first came here I believe there was only one bookstore here, and it was a Bible book store and now there must be at least 40 bookstores in Tampa. Probably even more than that. I think the University had alot to do with stimulating this.

Hewitt: That's interesting because I know now, maybe it's because the University has gotten so big, that it is easier to stay on campus and make all your contacts here. In the early years it sounds like you had much more contact with people in the community, professionals, and businesses.
Incidentally we had a better bookstore at that time than we do now. When we had 2000 students we had a far better bookstore, and it was used more and that's because of the competition off campus. We have the worst bookstore I have ever seen for a university.

Well, I can't argue with that.

I'm not talking about the textbook store.

No, you mean the regular bookstore bookstore. Was there a Student Union then or other areas on campus in addition to the bookstore where people gathered around on campus?

Yes. The University Center was what they called the student union. It was a very, very popular place because there was nothing on Fowler Avenue or Fletcher Avenue that students could go to, so they gathered there. That was one of the first buildings that was built. The Administration building, the Student Union building, and the Chemistry building is where we had our College of Education classes and where almost everybody else had their classes. The library was a little late building. They had the library when we opened in the student union building in the present ball room of the University Center.

Well, fortunately, the library has expanded a little since then.

We have had two buildings since then.

You mentioned the Johns Committee before. Could you tell me a little bit about your experience with the Johns Committee and how you think it affected the growth of USF?
Battle: Well, it didn't affect the growth at all, it helped the growth for us in physical numbers because we got advertised in all the papers all over the north, the east, and the west. People were very sympathetic with us. The editorial pages of the St. Petersburg Times were strongly supportive of us and the editorial pages of the Tampa Tribune strongly supported us. The front pages didn't help us very much. But the editorial pages helped us a lot. The only book they got to the College of Education about was Summerhill by S. Neill. They found out that we had skipped an objectionable chapter. We would hear about it everyday and we would have meetings with the deans and so on. But I actually didn't have much contact with them except when we had a publication called "The Purpose of the University," which the College of Education had put out. We had people from all over the University write in it, and they didn't like what we said because we quoted Woodrow Wilson in it. What he said had bent them out of shape and they didn't like that. They got on Dr. Allen, but they never did get on me. I was the editor of it.

Hewitt: Did other areas on campus or other departments on campus get visited more often by the Johns Committee than the College of Education?

Battle: The English department was the main one. They didn't like any of the books. First place, we had . . . It was very innovative by that time, in 1960. We used paperback books. At that time paperbacks were thought of as lurid-type books. Even the Grapes of Wrath would be thought of as a kind of lurid-type book. So they were picking on all books that were in paperback. They were against paperbacks in general. The English department was using mostly original sources instead of anthologies. We had an original . . . really a
stimulating group. Students were interested in learning. None of them had parents that had gone to college. They were so interested in going to college that they wanted to learn. Our faculty members were all stimulated and they were using original sources. So they could get them in to Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck, and so on. They would get all these books, paperbacks in general. In particular the *Grapes of Wrath* was one they fought so much about.

**Hewitt:** Was the Johns Committee a state wide committee?

**Battle:** It was appointed by the State Senate. Senator Johns was a State Senator. He had never been to college, and he was suspicious about colleges. It was a state-wide committee to look at all universities. So they went to Florida, and Florida had a strong alumni association so they were careful about them. Then they went to Florida State and Florida State had a strong alumni. We didn't have any alumni protecting us. And they came here. They liked staying down on the strip, down on Dale Mabry. They stayed down in one of the fancier motels that had night clubs. They had a good time. So they wanted to stay on here. The papers were building it up and so on. And then we invited them in. They were in the papers everyday and they felt they were really making headway. They didn’t know there was a lot of reaction against them.

**Hewitt:** How did the Johns Committee situation finally end?

**Battle:** Well, it ended when they put out a very lurid book called the "Purple Book." They were made fun of and laughed out. The newspapers wrote editorials against them and they were the laughing stock. But it did hurt us. It hurt us very badly. Not for growth, it helped us for growth. But it hurt us
because people wondered why we were trying these new things and they thought we should be like other universities. So we did. We became just like other universities. And the Johns Committee was one of the two things that hurt us the worst, that happened here, for the early growth of the University, for innovative educational ideas. The same ideas they are talking about now all over the country. Harvard was copying. Stanford was copying. Columbia was copying. We had it here in 1960.

Hewitt: You mentioned that the Johns Committee was one of two things that hurt that kind of development at USF. What was other thing?

Battle: Well, the other thing was when the new administration came in and we general education against liberal arts. A man with a business degree came in and that was the other one. The least said about that the better.

Hewitt: Well, we will leave that topic then. I would like you to tell me a little more about these early programs. I understand there was something called the College of Basic Studies early on? How was that different in terms of the organization of a curriculum than what we have today?

Battle: In the first two years every student was required . . . it was Liberal Arts. It was an interdisciplinary type of liberal arts program. They had such courses as American Idea. This course was very much criticized by the Johns Committee because they were for Thomas Jefferson and the Declaration of Independence. Some of them thought that the Declaration was subversive. They had courses in the humanities where people learned . . . everybody had to take all but one of these courses. They had courses in science that were interdisciplinary and all of the courses were . . . We were trying to get
people interested in the liberal arts. And as a result our students, when they came to the College of Education, the College of Business, and the College of Engineering later, they had a liberal background. Now when they come . . . most of them do not have that kind of a background. Students had been talking about ideas and ideals and so on.

Hewitt: That is very interesting. It is a shame we don't have . . .

Battle: It was the first two years of required courses for everybody. They didn't get into another college till their junior year. Everybody belonged to that college for the first two years.

Hewitt: How did you attempt to recruit faculty who would be capable of teaching interdisciplinary courses and be willing to work in this kind of innovative curriculum?

Battle: There wasn't any problem, I don't think, and I was in on the discussion about it because alot of them taught in our college. Our people, everybody that had a subject-type of course such as mathematics and math education, taught in the Basic Studies math course. There was alot of people that were interested in it. The way it partly got killed, and it was killed by the new president, but it was also killed . . . He was just following what graduate faculty, when they started getting graduate faculty, they had to get a new breed of cats to speak. They didn't like that idea at all.

Hewitt: They were more interested in specialization . . . ?

Battle: Specialization. Most of them wanted to teach, and that was true in the College of Education too, they wanted to teach the course they had had in graduate school. Alot of them were young faculty members. We had a great
group of young faculty members who just got their degree, and that was a mistake because they wanted to imitate their university professor and their graduate professors. We thought they would be young and innovative, but that was not the case.

Hewitt: Being young then did not automatically mean they would be innovative. In the early years at USF I think there was a more personal atmosphere.

Battle: It was very personal. It was personal in an intellectual way. The intellect and the spirit were merged at that time. It was a high spirit and a good spirit--faculty, new students. And all the deans taught courses at that time. All the administrators were supposed to teach whenever they could possibly teach. We were meeting all the time and they had this great program in which . . . It wasn't like the University of Chicago's great book. It was the "All University Book" we called it. We would just pick a book and everybody would read it if they wanted to. It was amazing. There would be 400 or 500 people who would read this same book, get together for panel discussions, and ask questions about it. That was one thing that kept the different colleges together.

Hewitt: In terms of the structure of the University at that time, did students and faculty have more input into university-wide policies back then than they do now?

Battle: I think much more so. Students, up until the middle of the '60s . . . It started kind of bad when the Vietnam War, particularly around '67 and '68 . . . but we weren't nearly as bad as the newspapers made us out. There was one problem here that we all recognized. It was that we were a commuting university. We had very few students in the beginning who lived on
It was a problem because as I told some of the people who criticized us, and having all these wild things happen here about the Vietnam War, that we didn't have many bad things because it didn't happen in this kind of a university. I told them that we couldn't have a collusion among students because you couldn't get two of them together because they were running for the automobile. The most dangerous place to be, starting about 1968 when they started getting a lot of automobiles around here, it was dangerous to be in front of an empty parking place because someone would run over you trying to get it. Up until about '68, when the Vietnam war got hot among students, there was a great feeling among the faculty and the students. It was a great feeling then too. To a great extent there was a feeling that they had to do something like keep watch on the Administration building. But it wasn't really serious. They had all of the agitators come down from New York and other places. It was usually from those places and so on. People outside... One of the reasons that they wanted to get faculty and those students under control, the reason the criticisms started at the University, was that they thought the Vietnam War was going on so well, but it really wasn't. We didn't have many... Almost nothing went on the air... I had been a Dean of Students before I was Academic Dean over at Florida Southern College. It was tame besides what it was over at that Methodist school and I was accustomed to it. Some of the other faculty were not and they thought the students were kind of riotous. But there weren't any riots or anything going on. We did start getting criticism then.

Hewitt: You think after that point, between that and the Johns Committee and the new administration, that faculty and students really got isolated...?
Battle: We are just as good as practically any other state university. The problem is we know better. And at one time we were better. We were so superior to other state universities in our undergraduate work that it was pitiful. I went to three state universities and we were superior to anything I had gone to. It was a friendly, fine atmosphere. But I think the Johns Committee did cause us more problems than the Vietnam war. With the public, it didn't hurt us for students and the young people, but with the public it hurt us. They had got the idea that we were subversive. Then we quit experimenting.

Hewitt: Well maybe we will start again after everybody listens to these tapes . . .

Battle: I'm afraid there won't be very many people listening.

Hewitt: I know that one of the things you were involved in early on in USF was the recruitment of minority students, working with local schools in terms of developing programs in black high schools, and integrating the schools in this area. Could you tell me a little bit about USF's concern about race relations on campus and minority recruitment?

Battle: Let me start out first with when we opened up. We were the first university that opened up integrated in the state of Florida. I was Dean of Students over at Florida Southern College for years before I was Dean of the Faculty. I was head of a state-wide committee for student relationships. We had every university in the state and every college in the state that was then in existence in our group. We were integrated racially. It got so there were only two places we could meet in the state of Florida because we were integrated. Before that time it was OK. But when it started, after the
spring court ruling in '53, '54, '55, and '56, it got really rough because they were even talking about closing the state universities and closing the public schools in Florida. People like Senator Johns were leading the pack on it. It was immoral for the races to get together. I was also on a state wide committee for keeping the public schools open. We could not meet in but two universities. The University of Miami and Florida Southern College. We couldn't meet in any state university including A&M. We couldn't meet in any ... I won't mention the private schools. We couldn't meet because we were integrated at that time. So when we opened ... It was a few years later and it kind of settled down, but we were opened and integrated. All over the place there were plain clothesmen, but there were no instances whatsoever ... There weren't very many blacks that came out there. They were a little fearful of coming to this university, but they came in in pretty big droves. A bigger percentage than we have now. A much bigger percentage than we have now after the first three years. We had a black member of our first band. We had very fine orchestra and fine band. There was one black member and he sat right in front of the band. He was accepted and the students all loved him. So he went down to a nearby restaurant, the only restaurant that was open, and I won't mention the name. They wouldn't let him in. That was in 1961. The students said ... and the whites weren't coming in either. They were going to boycott the place, and they finally let him in. So they never had any problems. It was the only instance that I know of. We have had no instances on campus whatsoever.

The problem that I soon recognized was with the teachers. For instance, they had a national teacher's examination which was put in to get the black teachers. That was the real reason that people said and I'm sure that was true. The place that they were weak in ... Surprisingly it wasn't science
and it wasn't mathematics, but surprisingly it was in the humanities. So I started working with black teachers in this area. We had night courses, and we got our humanities teachers to help them so they could pass the national teacher's examination. There were people who said that it was racist reasons it was put in and it was soon put out in about three years. All teachers had to take it, and they were suppose to be fired if they couldn't pass it. That was the way we got started in night classes. We helped four black teachers in this area so they could pass that national teacher's exam. Then we, in the College of Education, made a special effort to recruit black faculty members, but we couldn't find... They were paid so much. They were paid so much higher than every place that was looking for them at that time. And they were paid much higher than white teachers with doctorate degrees. We had a hard time finding them. So we had to start. We didn't have anybody practically in the College of Education without a doctorate degree. So we had to start to get them with master's degrees just to get black teachers.

Hewitt: Did other colleges try to recruit black faculty as well or was the College of Education unusual in this regard?

Battle: Well, I think we were a little unusual because of my being a Southerner, I was more concerned about it than some of the others. I think we were a little unusual. But the whole University was proud of being integrated and it was the first one... Tampa public schools didn't get integrated till twelve years after we were integrated. I was on the committee for integrating that. We had to cut out the two black high schools which had their football teams and their cheerleaders and so on to do it. We couldn't have
possibly done it by cutting out the white high schools. They ignored the court ruling for twenty years.

Hewitt: In the last couple of years there has been a lot of comment about the fact the USF is having difficulties recruiting minorities and the fact that we are below what we were in terms of the percentage of minorities. Over the years have you seen any change in policies that has created that difficulty in recruiting, or is it just the change in opportunities open to minorities that would make recruiting them at USF difficult these days?

Battle: I think we are not as interested, truly as interested. The president is very interested and the president's wife is very interested, but I don't see a whole lot of faculty interest in it. We are interested also in passing examinations instead of accent on learning. There is accent on testing. And unfortunately the blacks in general don't test as well. I think that was the problem in the early days too. We were working on them to pass the test because they come from poor backgrounds, or culturally poor backgrounds, and so they don't pass the SAT test and the other tests as well. I think it is probably also true that it has to do with our raising the SAT scores. That probably has something to do with it. In talking to my black students that I am teaching now, they say that fraternities are not letting blacks in, and they had to get their own fraternities here. Blacks are not accepted in any other white fraternities except with one exception. We have got two fraternity systems, one for the blacks and one for the whites here. We didn't have fraternities in the early days. So that wasn't a problem. Then there was real interest in it among all the faculty members in this whole business. I don't think there is a real dedicated interest like we had then. There was also an interest in the urban problems more that there
is now. The inner city problem. So we had our students ... They said what they wanted to do was intern in the tough places so when they go to the easy schools they will think it is easy. So we put them down in Ybor City and all around and what was called then Williamsburg. But over in St. Petersburg, the black area, we put them in Methodist Town and in places like that to teach. We were always working with the black teachers constantly. We were also working very closely with A&M and we were also working with the black principals, and we were working with the public schools on their integration problems. We gave leadership although it came rather late to the Tampa integration of the public schools.

Hewitt: Yes it does seem like the urban mission of the University was more pronounced in those early days ...

Battle: It was very pronounced. We had two missions. We thought of ourselves as an international mission. We wanted to get into international areas and we wanted to get into urban areas. Those were the two things that we had. So we very early ... Students couldn't afford foreign travel very much. That was the problem. We had very few students that could really afford to get into the foreign program. But very early we started a program in London for our elementary teachers. We had some black students who were able to go because we were able to get some scholarships for them. It was an urban approach to London - London as a classroom. We just went into school rooms incidentally. We did go into the open class rooms in London and several other places in England. We studied London as a classroom so we could study Tampa as a classroom.

Hewitt: Was there any particular attempt to recruit Latin faculty or Latin students?
Battle: No. We had no problem with that because they were applying all the time. In fact it seems to me that most of our first student body was Latin. The students that I talked to had three languages in their homes. They had English, Italian, and Spanish, and they were from Tampa because the Cuban and the Spanish workers had jobs in the cigar factories here originally. The Italians - they wouldn't let them in the cigar factories. The Spanish were the highest on the totem pole, the Cubans were the second, and the Italians were the third of the Latin people. So they were the farmers and the vegetable people who lived around. They had a strike in the cigar factory years ago, years before we came. Our students' parents were thinking about getting married about that time. They broke the strike and had the Italians come in. As a result the Italians married Cubans and Spanish and so there were a lot of students with three languages. What we had to do in our classes was to tell them to up-play the Spanish because they were trying to downplay it. We had to tell them to up-play the Italian. Students were bragging about how their parents speak Italian and Spanish, but they didn't speak it. They were bragging about that. And that was one of the reasons we put an international thing to ... and very soon the College of Arts and Letters started programs going into Spain. We were very much interested in that and we put in a program in the public schools. There was a school called George Washington Junior High School, which was very appropriate. It was half Latin and half black. So the College of Education went down to Guatemala, had a connection with that school, and then went to Jamaica. So we had a Latin connection and we had an African connection. We had suitcase museums. They would send a suitcase full of their things up here and since nobody could travel back and forth, we would send suitcases
back to them. Then they got a new principal and it died out. We had a program in Guatemala in which our Latin students from the College of Education had their first foreign programs. The first was in Guatemala, then it was in Honduras, and then it was in London. The reason we went to London was because the Latin students said they wanted to go to Europe. So we figured out that we wouldn't have a language problem and we went to London. So we started going to London, Guatemala, as well as Honduras. A lot of our Latin students went into these programs, particularly the ones in Guatemala and Honduras. What we were doing in Honduras . . . We got the first grant, for the first time to teach a course which was prominent then, and the Peace Corps went together to put in a program that backed us in Honduras. We had this over in Africa. They backed up with Africans and we were training inner-city students and mostly black people with bachelor's degrees who were working on a master's degree. Our first master's degree was for inner city. They went to Africa and the Peace Corps paid for them while they went to Africa and the Teachers Corps paid for them while they were here.

Hewitt: That's very interesting. Is there any program like that now?

Battle: No, none whatsoever. It was the only time that the Peace Corps and the Teachers Corps ever worked together. The Peace Corps looked down on the Teachers Corps, and I had to get Senator Childs to help us get them together, talk to each other and so on. When they went into a foreign country the Peace Corps took the bell, and when they were here, the Teachers Corps took the bell. We were doing it in science and math because those were . . . We couldn't find science and math teachers who had an undergraduate degree, blacks who had an undergraduate degree, or people who were interested in
teaching in the city. So we took history majors who couldn't get jobs then and trained them in mathematics and science.

Hewitt: There must still be a lot of history majors that belong to that program if it still exists. You mentioned Senator Childs. Did, as a dean, or as a faculty member, you have much interaction with local politicians, state politicians in terms of . . . ?

Battle: Very much. And when he got elected sort of later. Sam Gibbons, a local Congressman, was really responsible not for the University being passed by the Legislature, but for it being put here. He was a state legislator. He was a State Senator and he was very instrumental in all the things. He was out here all of the time. When he was in the state legislature and after he got elected, months before he went to Washington, he was out here all the time. We were going to Washington, talking to him all the time, and he was a person that gave us the most help. He was our state legislator when they had the fight between St. Petersburg and Tampa about which one would get the university. The people in St. Petersburg said they were more cultured, with a capital C, than Tampa and therefore it should be put in St. Petersburg. His quip was that we should have it because we are more ignorant so we need the university. That wasn't the reason we got it though. We got it because we had more Democrats than they had over there. We had more Democratic power. St. Petersburg Times, which is one of my favorite newspapers, had editorials about it being put over here. They said we would be . . . we were right near the brewery. Shlitz had just been built and they were giving out free beer. We would be called "bottle cap U." or we would be called "brew U." They actually wrote editorials about it. If they looked back in '57 or '58, when they were going to name the University,
incidentally . . . Dr. Allen had thought about the University of Southern California, and so southern was a good thing and South Florida sounded good and so . . . He was going to name it . . . There was talk about naming it University of Southern Florida. And that was just Florida Southern College backwards! So we protested over there, and they put in the University of South Florida instead of Southern Florida.

Hewitt: Were there people in the community who were upset about having the university built so close to the brewery and so far from downtown?

Battle: No, I don't think people in Tampa . . . Tampa people were very tolerant about breweries. I don't think Tampa was concerned about that at all. Maybe later on. The only problem we ever had with the breweries was the Busch Garden birds would be here every morning. Our students, when they first got the first fraternity and sororities, would go over and steal the signs over there and they would put them on Dr. Allen's and my lawn out in Carrollwood. But there wasn't anything at all that came up about that after it got started. Nobody even thought about going over there. There was an awful lot of work for our students, jobs for the students and so on. The birds would be here every morning. They had the idea that if they had a nice place for them that they wouldn't leave. They didn't have many cages or anything over there. They didn't have animals first over there at all. They had a bird shelter. They had all kinds of birds and they had a bird show over there in the very beginning. They were just using that as a ploy over in St. Petersburg.

Hewitt: Well, St. Pete does have its own campus now. Were you involved in the founding of any of the regional campuses?
Battle: I was the one who founded the campus in St. Petersburg. Nelson Poynter was a friend of mine and he had asked me to talk to Dr. Allen about it. Dr. Allen was most interested in building it and he asked the deans to do something. Well, most of them weren't much interested in getting out that far and so we had the first courses in the College of Education. We had a very interesting program. It was an urban program over there. We required all of our elementary majors to have a concentration in Liberal Arts. It has since then been cut out except for the university distribution courses. We tried to have a concentration in one area and we couldn't get enough faculty. We only started with 25 students over there. We started in the old naval barracks over there which is still a part of the University. So we could get faculty members over there for only three or four mornings of this or that and so on. So what we decided to do was to offer urban interdisciplinary courses. We had to talk to the faculty members because alot of them asked what English had to do with urban areas. When we recruited a faculty member, we recruited a man from humanities, who happened to be a man at that time so it wasn't any problem about male chauvinism. But we recruited faculty members from Humanities, one from Social Science, and one from Natural Science, to come over and teach these people with an urban thrust with their teaching. They got their concentration in that way. The people got so interested in it that we got other courses started so they would continue it. And we continued it over there for two or three years. But soon people got... They got big enough classes and the other colleges came in. We started the St. Petersburg Bayboro Campus, as they called it.
Hewitt: Do you feel the connection between the regional campuses like St. Pete and the main campus in Tampa has changed over the years?

Battle: It is like our campus, but is more distant of course. Once I studied the Open University in England which is a television and mail order type thing, which is a great idea. I went over there and studied it. To keep from having to put in these campuses . . . I hated to see them divide up the library money and I tried to get the state to put in an Open University for the whole state so they could reach all of these places. I went up before the committee and I talked to the Commissioner of Education, but the demand of the communities was too great, and so we keep sprouting branches.

Hewitt: Well, thank you for your participation in the USF Silver Anniversary Oral History Project and for helping me sort out the many changes that have occurred over the past 25 years.