Fred Muskal (1972-2009)
Professor of Education Administration
Chair Academic Council

February 24, 2015

By Roland diFranco

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Subjects: Chair Academic Council 1992, Education Administration, Information & Imagination Program (I&I), and faculty/administration interactions.
ROLAND DI FRANCO: Okay. Alright. This is Roland di Franco. It is February 24th, 2015. [ ] here is Professor Fredrick Muskal. The interview is being conducted in Room 4 of the University Library. Let’s start, Fred, with the years you served at the University. Did you have any official titles in that period of time?

FREDRICK MUSKAL: Well, I was an assistant professor that made associate and then finally made full professor. I’m trying to remember when, but that’s alright. That was it – all my titles!

DI FRANCO: Any administrative titles?

MUSKAL: I was department chair for one summer school course.

DI FRANCO: What circumstances brought you to Pacific?

MUSKAL: Work. [both laugh]

DI FRANCO: A job opportunity?

MUSKAL: A job opportunity. I was looking for a job, and UOP was one of the places. So I was interviewed by Mark Jantzen at AERA which was in Chicago. So, it was an “L ride” downtown and I didn’t get the job, but they hired some guy from UCLA, and I heard this later, from Bill Bacon. He showed up on campus and said, “I’m going to live in Berkeley, and I can teach on Tuesday and Thursday, so set it up! Set up my schedule and get me at this phone number” and so, Jantzen just said, “No, let’s go to number two on the list.”

DI FRANCO: And you were number two?

MUSKAL: I was number two!

DI FRANCO: Alright.

MUSKAL: It was probably a very short list.

DI FRANCO: [laughs] Let’s see, what were your first impressions of the city and the people of Stockton?

MUSKAL: I didn’t get very many impressions of the city, I mean, I did come out for a job interview with Jantzen, and I was really impressed that you could grow flowers in the winter. And I looked around for things. I didn’t trust Jantzen and so I didn’t want to say, “Gee, do you have a synagogue in town?” and that was very wise, and so he said, “Is there any place you’d like to see. And so I said I would like to see the Sikh Temple. So, he took me by the Sikh Temple,
etc. After we had been here a year or two, Ruth Jantzen called up to invite us to dinner and Anne said, “We can’t go, that’s Yom Kippur” and she said, “I’m sorry,” like you’re a leper. I’ve looked up Stockton, not where you would normally look it up, and I looked it up in Daniel Elazar’s book on political culture and found out it had a political culture much like Chicago. I felt comfortable with that. And so we just settled in and found a place to live and had one kid. You know you had [ ] at the time. We tried to survive on a bicycle, but it got very tiring loading two bags of groceries on the bike, going back buying two more bags of groceries and so eventually we had to buy a car. We liked Stockton. It was strange to me because I had never lived in a place fewer than two to three million people. Stockton was definitely smaller than that.

DI FRANCO: Yes, indeed. That’s the city. How about the University? What were your first impressions of the University?

MUSKAL: Looked like a college [laughs] and I liked it. I felt they spent too much money on buildings and the grounds, but I was gonna forget that anyhow. I just started to get to know the place. The School of Ed was – I was an alien in the School of Ed. I mean they were all, rural mid-Western, German. I mean they were just strange, and so I was a curiosity in the School of Ed.

DI FRANCO: Where was the School of Ed located at that time?

MUSKAL: In where the Conservatory Practice Hall is now.

DI FRANCO: Got it.

MUSKAL: I forgot the name of the hall.

DI FRANCO: Yea. Okay.

MUSKAL: It was up there on the second floor, and Jantzen ruled the roost, and he and I never really got along. He didn’t always tell me that, but he screwed me over occasionally. He’d give me a summer school assignment and then he switched – he switched the schedule, and I rented out my house for the time we weren’t gonna be there. It ended up being the time I needed to be there, so I had to move my family to Chicago. So we drove to Chicago, and I lucked out and contacted an old friend and he found a pick up job for me. At least I could make some money while we were in Chicago, and then I could come back and teach, while my wife stayed in Chicago with the baby. So, that I didn’t particularly care for. I mean I confronted Jantzen on it, but he wasn’t smart, so he just said – I distinctly remember, “You agreed to such and such” and I’m going, “No”. It was like trying to piss up a rope. [laughs].

DI FRANCO: Was there any sense of community amongst the faculty?

MUSKAL: I think there was. I just wasn’t in the community.
DI FRANCO: Okay.

MUSKAL: Yea, I’m sure there was. They were all so rural.

DI FRANCO: Yea. Yea. Was there anyone at Pacific who was helpful in getting you oriented to the University?

MUSKAL: Yes, Cliff Hand.

DI FRANCO: Ahh?

MUSKAL: He was my savior. Cliff was just a dear, and my position got justified at least partly or half, I guess, by Jantzen guaranteeing somebody to go teach at I & I and it was me. I adored the program and Cliff was just wonderful. I had all these things I wanted to do, and Cliff knew we had some old faculty who weren’t ever using the extra money for films or other things. He would get me whatever I wanted and I’d said, “I need somebody from Gay Lib from Oakland, I can get for 75 bucks” and he says, “Okay”. So, he made teaching at I & I a lot of fun because I got one guy from San Francisco, once, and he came and we had this whole room full of people, and I was distracted, and so a student looked at this guy and said, “What’s your concept of beauty?” So, the guy looked around and points at me and says, “He’s kinda cute.” The only time they were laughing, that I didn’t make the joke. It was a lot of fun and there were couples who came out in that class. It was fascinating. That was my – the only thing Cliff did was he had to put that course at the end of the catalogue because I named it the Politics of Love and Sex.

DI FRANCO: Wow, that’s interesting. Well that sort of shows what things were like when you came here. What changes have you seen in the curriculum since you were at Pacific?

MUSKAL: Well, they killed I&I from lack of interest. I was one of the few people still interested in it. Also, they killed the Winter session which I participated in very deeply. I had a lot of students that I worked with and it was just interesting. So, I went to a more orthodox kind of thing – I don’t know – it became a less interesting place, but that time, I think Jantzen retired. And Jarvis, as dean, he was fun to contend with too. But, Jarvis moved me into teaching graduate courses. Jantzen would let me teach one graduate course and he let me be on one dissertation committee. Jantzen wasn’t very smart, he didn’t want to argue with me and I lost a couple of those “deanly” arguments with him in terms of dissertations where he made somebody go back and he said you’re going back to Chicago and you’re gonna study John Dewey. You’re gonna do this and you do that and the guy looked at me and said, “what am I gonna do?” I said change your proposal, change this sentence and give it back to him. So, that was a constant battle. I didn’t really get to do much graduate stuff till Jarvis got here. So, he put me into graduate stuff and at least with Jantzen, I did get to do a lot teacher training which I liked. So, I had the teacher training for a long time, and then I was fully in the School of Ed, but
the teacher training and the graduate stuff. So, that was good. I got back into it with – oh that was when Faye was around and she kicked me out of the School of Ed. She did. She traded me for a broken baseball bat. I went over to COP and I thought, yeah I’ll get to know Bob Benedetti. I never really got to know him, but she put me in there instead of teaching my ed courses, I was teaching Pacs Sem 1 or 2 or whatever it was, I, basically. It was like I&I except it was a little more constrained, but I enjoyed the kids. I did a lot of that and I still had the graduate stuff. So, that was pretty good. I was no fan of Jarvis’, but he was a least more intelligent than Jantzen and then came Faye. And Faye was a mess. She was okay for about a semester and she said, “Well, I’d like to mentor you” and I said, “You go ahead, I’d enjoy that.” She never did. Well, she did try. When I got to be Chair of Academic Council, she sat me down and said, “I’ve picked the theme for you as Chair.” She said, “I negotiated it with the President.” Of course she was so close - I think she was partly in love with Atchley. Yeah, I couldn’t see it. I told her that, “Gee that’s nice, but we’ve got to do strategic planning and all this other stuff, so I’m going to have lots of meetings and but thanks.” She was really pissed. She didn’t necessarily then, but she was really pissed. I went along and did that stuff and Atchley - god, Atchley was a little bit of a loony! I always had incredible regard for Kitty Gilbert because Atchley tried to get her copy of the notes of the meetings, so that he could rewrite them. Kitty and I had to arrange them quickly because I had more notes than she did. And so she would give me the notes and then she would give them out as the actual notes of the meeting. It got me keeping more notes at the meetings and the goings on. Kitty would play dumb. She would say to the president, “Gee…I don’t know if I can do, let me check with Frank.” Of course Faye was just a loony tune. One time, I guess it was Christmas Break or something, we went over to the President’s house and Faye was at the door and she started shouting to Atchley, “the Academic Council are here!” It was just me and Skip, so I think it took her a long time to get Skip because I was just walking him over there. I had no desire to go in there. Anyhow, it was just interesting because she was like that, and there was all that crap she was involved in. [Dean Philapone] was doing Atchley’s sons business when they were taking computers out of the bookstore and keeping them for a year and then turning them back when they were valueless, and they never paid for them. She kept all the books for that stuff – did Atchley’s work. She used to write the thank you notes to everybody. And so it was really crazy.

DI FRANCO: Hmmm.

MUSKAL: Then DeRosa got here, I mean, she just said the wrong thing and he fired her immediately. She was very upset, but one Eberhardt or another came to her rescue and hired her for the Bank of Stockton. Word is that’s where she finished off her career. It was very chaotic then. I think that the young Atchley got bounced because he had his buddy who was on the police force here and got caught with hands in the wrong cookie jar, and I think he ended up doing time in prison. So -
DI FRANCO: How did things go under DeRosa?

MUSKAL: Well by then I was doing much better, but DeRosa - Skip and I had a faculty meeting, one of those evening things, where DeRosa was there and a student of mine was there, and I’m still in touch with him, and DeRosa couldn’t remember Skip’s name or mine. And so as soon as DeRosa left the kid looks at me and says, “That means he doesn’t like you that he can’t remember your name” and I said, “Ohh? Gee, that continues my record, unblemished.” So, DeRosa was very good at raising money. He was arrogant in his own way, and the word around campus was that people couldn’t figure out if his suit was filled or empty? And I think that’s probably a good way to look at it – he had the Institutional Priorities Committee, and I was on that for the first year, and he had this thing with Phil. I mean Phil would sit there and say, “I talked to the president last night at midnight.” They were talking to each other 11 to 12 o’clock every night, and I guess Phil stayed in his office until then.

DI FRANCO: Wow!

MUSKAL: And DeRosa did too, and so they were working very closely and I mean he did some good things with that. He insisted that they develop a reserve fund which was much needed, and you know at least he had a budgeting process. Skip told me because I don’t know these matters. After about a month of meeting with [ ] and that crew, and I forgot what the committee was called, just the budget committee, but Skip figured it out right away that they didn’t have a budget and we checked, we asked Dale about this. “About when do you pay for your bills?” “Oh, we always pay for last year’s bills.” So, they didn’t have any money.

DI FRANCO: This is Dale who?

MUSKAL: Dale McNeal.

DI FRANCO: Oh, okay.

MUSKAL: He was Chair of Biology at the time. So, I guess – I don’t think Atchley ever really developed a budget. [ ] was just a little bit of a wacky guy, and he didn’t like me from the get go, but that’s because I showed up a meeting and he got lost and people sort of tore him apart, and he came up to me and he said, “You’re the Academic Council Chair, you’re a part of the administration now, you have to jump in and save me.” “Gee, that’s not my concept of this!” and then he really got pissed later on because, when his wife left him. She started working for Anne. And so that didn’t help, but that helped her get away from him. Although, it seemed like a very humane thing to do, and I don’t know where he disappeared to. Their son sided with Mike that he was right and that humble woman should just come back, so these were all these sidebar issues that were floating around there. I didn’t have any – I didn’t like DeRosa because he had a little too much social class piled onto whatever he was doing. In fact, he was doing a
better job, still, not that much of a job. I should say after all my experience with these deans and administrators, it’s conviction that the faculty were much better than the administrators. Then we in the end have to suffer under those idiots, and I think that seems to be a tradition that’s enduring. So, I don’t understand it totally. Everybody else who says, you know, we can make this into a hell of a good institution, if we tried a little bit. I don’t know if anybody tries.

DI FRANCO: Were there courses or innovative programs that you helped develop at Pacific?

MUSKAL: Well, I did an awful lot of I&I and that was doing a course every semester which I enjoyed. I could play with the different things that I knew. I really loved I&I. When I&I was done, I got to work on teacher training because we had accreditation that came up. One of my big disappointments was that we were kind of lazy as an institution, and the accrediting people really didn’t give a shit and that really pissed me off. I mean I knew the guy who was running the accreditation thing, Randy [ ], I sat down and I said, “Randy, it seems to me that accreditation is a lot of frosting, but not much cake.” He said, “You’re right.”

DI FRANCO: Oh dear.

MUSKAL: But that’s the way he was gonna run it. I mean he was telling me very nicely none of your business. So, I was hoping the accrediting people would make us do a little more. But, Marilyn was never really interested in doing more. She’s very funny. I mean she’s the department chair to this day, and she does all the heavy lifting. She does all the reading and all the other stuff and everybody else is happy, so they let her play department chair, but there is no leadership or anything else. At least Linda Webster will be the new dean when Lynn retires.

DI FRANCO: Ahh, okay. Show’s what I know. I didn’t know that.

MUSKAL: They worked that out before Lynn announced she was leaving. Lynn is gonna take a semester sabbatical and a maybe a year to go get married and then come back and teach. Anyhow, programs – yeah, last year I was here full time. I worked with Lynn on revising the doctoral program. She was writing it out, but we would look at different articles and things, and then we would sit down for an hour a week and argue. I crank a set out of notes about the issues, and then she would put some stuff down on paper that would deal with that. That was a real joy and I really liked that. That was a lot of fun. By then I was senior faculty member, so occasionally she would sneak into my office and sit down and talk. That was definitely a lot of fun!

DI FRANCO: Sure.

MUSKAL: The first time I said, “Seems to me that your leadership style is to let people do what they want because they’ll do more of it and we’ll get ahead.” And she said, “You understand
me.” [both laugh]. I just adore Lynn and still do. That was a lot of fun, working on that program. The teacher training programs were fun, but nobody any sense about where they wanted to go or how they wanted to do it. And I wanted to develop something coherent and everybody wanted to say - what do we put in this course? What do we put in that course? I taught the courses that had all the topics that nobody wanted to cover, which was fine with me because I could make it what I wanted.

DI FRANCO: Sure.

MUSKAL: But, teaching education students is a strange kind of thing because most of them don’t listen. I mean they made up their minds early on about what they wanted to do, so they just sort of pursue it stubbornly. Then at the end, this happened with every dean, they were fishing for compliments. What did you think a good job at the School of Ed did? And they’d all say School of Ed didn’t do anything, I did it all.

DI FRANCO: Did you have much of an impact on Pacs Sem?

MUSKAL: Not really. Pacs Sem was sort of a packaged course and so -

DI FRANCO: There was a committee that developed it?

MUSKAL: Yes, and did the book. Then we got the book, and so you could play with that a little bit, but not much. And it was fun. I mean I liked some of the readings. It wasn’t as vital as some of the stuff you could do with I&I. It didn’t get into contemporary issues.

DI FRANCO: Right.

MUSKAL: We were looking at creation myths and everything else. The only time it really got good was for some reason I became really hot stuff with Coptic Christians, all from Egypt. I got friendly with all of them actually. One of them, I said, “Can you tell me the Nicene Code from memory?” and she did.

DI FRANCO: Oh my gosh!

MUSKAL: Wow! That’s good. All I had to learn was the Declaration of Independence, no, the Gettysburg Address. But for some reason – for two years it didn’t make any difference when those kids came. The Coptics would grab every new one, and they’d make them take my course, and they’d change their whole schedule around it.

DI FRANCO: Wonderful!

MUSKAL: I enjoyed it. They were really good kids. They were bright! I don’t know how we got them.
DI FRANCO: Amazing.

MUSKAL: At first, I said, “I know how to spell Coptic, but I don’t know what it means.” “You know the stuff on the online dictionary, Wikipedia, that’s a pretty good essay.” So, I went and read that. They were just sweet people. One more thing, I forgot.

DI FRANCO: Sorry.

MUSKAL: Umm, that’s alright. I’m the only one besides Greg who taught every course in the honors program. I used to play with that because they had a couple titles. I ended up doing the senior project proposal. That was a lot of fun. The one before that, I can’t remember the name of it, it was a very open ended course. I would give them – what’s his name, I can see his face. I would give them an article on music and the article said, ‘that some music is candy, and it just feels good and some is nutritious and it makes you think’. I had them write an essay on the difference between candy and nutrition. That was wonderful! I got great essays out of that! So, when I taught that course, that was a lot of fun. The second course was a lot of fun. The first one was okay and they were all okay. I had only one bad class. I had one class and nobody wanted to read anything, and they were a pain in the ass. Greg begged me because I gave them all C minuses.

DI FRANCO: [laughs]

MUSKAL: and so I said alright, I’ll give them all Bs, and that made him happy. I liked the honors program stuff and I like talking to Greg because he’s a bright guy.

DI FRANCO: This is Greg - ?

MUSKAL: Greg Camfield.

DI FRANCO: Ahh, right.

MUSKAL: So, we would mess around with that and I said, “Greg, you’re not doing any course evaluations?” He said, “You gonna check for the [ ]?” I said, “No.” and he said, “Me neither!” That finishes off the programs, I think. It’s a fair number too.

DI FRANCO: Yeah. It’s good. Yeah. In [ ] we think of the faculty enhancing the educational and academic programs of the university. What are the challenges of that?

MUSKAL: Getting the faculty to do something. It just seems to me that was one of the frustrations of committee work. We had stuff like that in School of Ed too. It was frustrating because people would shift these little things around and put a new course title in there. Well, now we’ve got the best program. Which was really a problem because I would once in a while
sit in at Sac State because I knew some people up there, and they always thought they had the best school in the country. I’m going, there is something missing here – objectivity.

DI FRANCO: So, you’re saying that faculty resistance and [transience] too?

MUSKAL: Yeah. Yeah. Just a lack of interest. One of the things I found out when I was Council Chair is some people were saying, “Go get the bastards!” and others were saying, “Can’t you just get people to leave us alone and let us teach?” That’s always been that way and I’m sure it was that way in Chicago, when I followed the faculty politics there. It’s an academic committee thing to labor mightily and bring forth a mouse.

DI FRANCO: [laughs]

MUSKAL: That’s usually what I think with curricular revisions. I don’t know if anyone is serious about it or try it, but this place was better than most because I&I was very open and Pacs Sem was pretty open. Not that open because you could sort of complain, you know, to the assistant provost. I don’t know how many assistant provosts we have anymore. It just struck me that assigning somebody to do it was not the way to get it done either. It was much better – the nice thing about I&I, you had to get two or three people to look for ways to lengthen the courses. It was a lot of fun. You know, you could learn a lot from it. I always used to tweek Pat Jones and I was gonna say, “You do Chemistry and I’ll do Education and we’ll do a course on interaction.” He wouldn’t go anywhere near it. [both laughs] This would really work interestingly. There were a lot of I&I courses that I never got to do which would have been a lot of fun.

DI FRANCO: I’m gonna skip over the administrative sections because I don’t see you being an administrator at any point.

MUSKAL: Just that one time.

DI FRANCO: Okay.

MUSKAL: Hired somebody to teach a summer school class and everybody complained about it, and I said, “That’s enough administration for me.”

DI FRANCO: I will move onto the people of Pacific. Who are the most memorable people of Pacific? And why were they memorable?

MUSKAL: That’s an interesting-well, the most memorable in a positive light was Cliff Hand. He was just a delight! He was supportive in everything else. He was bright, which was quite a contrast from Jantzen. So, I really enjoyed him. I liked the people I met in I&I. That was a lot of fun. I liked the Honors Program. Greg Camfield was a lot of fun; he’s a very bright guy and we used to sit and argue. I would say something and he’d say-he wouldn’t respond to it, he’d say, “you have a very interesting mind.” Those two really stand out. There are people like you and
[Cedric], but we didn’t have enough professionalism to talk about, and the rest of them sort of ranged from “leave me alone” to “don’t bother me with this.” That was the School of Ed. The only time I didn’t make headway with the School of Ed was when Jack Nagle was dean. But, there were a lot of young faculty, including some I had taught, and so I was trying to help them get some research ideas together, and so we would have meetings. I would say, “I’ll just throw it out.” I’m going to quote Ted’s poem, “I’m gonna give you some lumber, you gotta build the house.” Outside of that, most of the faculty were interested teasing the bureaucratic secrets, which I found deathly boring because I could never figure out why they needed all this stuff, so there weren’t very many that were really intriguing professionally. Obviously, Cliff and Greg stand out, and everybody else was a couple of laps behind.

DI FRANCO: That’s the non-supportive group.

MUSKAL: Yeah.

DI FRANCO: Yep.

MUSKAL: Yeah you know we got told – I knew Pat and Gil [ ] in Chicago. They were trying to hire people from Chicago to upgrade the place. But, you know, you very quickly found out that you better make your own place. So, I guess John Williams was here too, but I didn’t know him till I got to campus. He was the chief bureaucratic investigator, I mean he did know an awful lot about what was going on, but I still don’t know what use it was. So, it was useful gossip, I guess.

DI FRANCO: They are asking us now to describe the various groups that make up the university, like the students that which you described, specific students while you were here.

MUSKAL: Yeah, I looked at that thing – to me the students didn’t change very much. In the sense that the very bottom were probably – well, to go back to my undergraduate time at Roosevelt, somebody told us – he said, “The best of you are too good for Harvard, but the worst don’t belong in high school.”

DI FRANCO: [laughs]

MUSKAL: We can see that. It was funny. I think that we didn’t have that many people who didn’t belong in high school, but there were some very weak kids. You know, you either carried them along or something. I didn’t mind them. The kids from the beginning were pretty good. The ones I had in I&I were very good and they were very interested in learning. That sort of dribbled away, and they got interested in having jobs. The bad ones ceased to be dumb, but became very lazy. I had one guy who introduced in Pacs Sem 3, he said, “I’m the screw up.” I said, “What do you mean?” He said, “I’m an econ major, I’ve got a 2.0 G.P.A., I can’t get into grad school. I can’t get a job. I’ve just totally screwed up four years.” I had to have them sign
attendance sheets, so he signed four weeks’ worth. He never showed up again. I thought, well what can I do for this guy? I can’t really flunk him, so I’ll give him a D-. There were just enough like that, so it really made it a terrible place, you know. I don’t know – I have no idea why somebody is like that. They just were. David Keefe talked to me, said, “You’ve ever had some econ students?” I said, “I’ve got such and such.” And he said, “Well, I’m sorry, but we have good students, too.”

DI FRANCO: [laughs] You talk a little bit about the faculty, what would you like to add about your descriptions of the faculty?

MUSKAL: I mean the faculty were in what was happening to the university and as Judy Chambers used to say, “When we first came here it was the faculty who kept the doors open, and then we started getting administrators who thought they knew what to do.” Not too clever. I think most people are trying to go do a good job. At least early on they have to worry about careers, so if they are doing well they get another job, and I don’t know what that says about the people who stay. But, there are certainly a bunch of good people who stayed [underground] and wanted to do a good job. I don’t know if they, well they don’t get involved. Even when I was on Academic Council I think [Don Bryan] put together a list – and then there were 18 or 20 people who together were set on every committee. You know. I went through that and sat on every committee as part of it. They just abandoned worrying about that now. So, you don’t get credit for any kind of service, which strikes me as stupid.

DI FRANCO: Yeah.

MUSKAL: There are a lot of stupid things. I don’t know anything else. I mean, I think the faculty are basically sound. But, I wouldn’t say, “passion is a quality.”

DI FRANCO: What about administrators? Is there anything you want to add? You threw the ringer on them.

MUSKAL: I have a long history of getting screwed over by School of Ed administrators until Lynn, so Jack Nagle was the stinkiest. He wouldn’t give me a raise, and then he told Linda Webster who was a department chair at the time that Dennis [Brennan] was a really mean son of a bitch because Dennis wouldn’t give a raise. Dennis of course argued for two hours, he argued himself hoarse. I mean Nagle didn’t like me because at a faculty meeting, once, somebody said, “Well what do you do get rid of a dean.” And so I told him. And somebody ran down the hall, the minute the meeting was over, and so that was the end of my time with Nagle. We had a rent a dean, for a year, and he was terrific. He was very good. But aside from that, Nagle, I couldn’t understand Phil liked Nagle. I mean he was a failed dean, twice, so we were the third strike. Then he was out. I don’t understand Phil, either, obviously.
DI FRANCO: What about staff? You haven’t talked much about the staff.

MUSKAL: I really liked the staff. I mean Kitty Gilbert was a hero in my eyes. Because she would stand up to Jim – a lot of integrity. I really adore Kitty, you know, the secretaries I’ve had in Education have been very good. Some of them got fired because they were too good. Sonia, I can’t remember her last name, was essentially fired because she didn’t want to train and [ ] how to use a computer, and so Faye got rid of her. She kept in touch when Faye was on her way out. Sliding out of that. But, Lorrie, I can’t remember last name whose was my ex-secretary now, is just terrific. She moved into the School of Ed after being in OIT, and she knows computers really well. She’s very helpful. She’s very efficient, and she has that computer kind of thing. She’s got a hard drive in her head. She’s also a Beatles nut. She loves the Beatles! Somebody gave her the entire Beatles collections, all 18 albums.

DI FRANCO: Oh my!

MUSKAL: Yeah, and somebody else said, “can I make copies for a hundred dollars?” and she said, “sure” and then she said, “you want copies?” and I said, “yes” and she said, “you just go ahead and take them and make them.” So, we just get along very well. In fact she’s moving in with somebody, and I wrote Rueben and I talked to Rueben first and he sent me the – the guy is a jazz musician. He sent me the local jazz societies in Sacramento and Stockton, yesterday, and after I’m done with you, I’ll go over and talk to her and get her email address and forward them to her. I liked all the deans’ secretaries. Well, Dorothy King was a little – the best thing about Dorothy was at her retirement dinner. They were playing that Johnny Paycheck’s song, ‘Take This Job and Shove It!’ She cackled her way all the way through it. I liked Pat, Jarvis’ secretary, and went over with him to the Academic Vice President’s office, and then I guess I got bounced around. The secretaries have been pretty helpful and pretty capable. I was very happy with all of them. I haven’t really seen one that really wasn’t. So, you know, they were very nice, and I’m still friendly with [Danielle] in the honor’s office, and she gets screwed on salary. She really ought to get more because she is like a faculty member, and she’s sort of the heart and soul of the Honor’s Program. They give her a small budget and she buys chocolates and the kids come by and get them. Her office, it really is the center of the Honor’s Program. I liked the staff, they’ve really been good. The staff is good quality and maybe better than the faculty. The faculty is better than the administration. There may be a pattern there. [both laugh]

DI FRANCO: Well, the next question is, ‘how do you rate the regents?’ How would you describe the regents?

MUSKAL: I’m really unhappy with the regents. When Larry, gosh what’s Larry’s last name?

DI FRANCO: Larry [ ]?
MUSKAL: No. Larry, uh?

DI FRANCO: Larry Meredith?

MUSKAL: Meredith, yeah. When Larry Meredith told me about his college in Texas and that the regent – he went to one of these places where the regents decided to upgrade the school. So, they cut the size and put their money in it and that’s what happened to Trinity also. The regents, here, have always been dead-ass lazy. Bob Eberhardt just sat on top of his little empire and ran along the sidelines in the football games. ‘Captain Bob’ they used to call him. I don’t the regents have a clear idea. I mean the only good one was way back when with Bob Hoss from Levi Strauss, he only stayed on the board a year. He said, “If the campus doesn’t need the president for a year while he runs around, they certainly don’t need me” and he quit. He was the only one who was sensible. I mean he got appointed and he just spent the next couple walking campus and talking to faculty and talking to the kids. Jim [McCargo] did that too. He talked to everybody, and he called me in and we talked for about an hour and half and he said, “You’re the only one who has told me the truth so far.” And we got very friendly. But outside of that – I thought the regents have any – it was like a merit badge to be on the Regents. It wasn’t like it was a job to take seriously. The regents to me are just disgusting because they’ve got lots of opportunity, lots of money, and they don’t do anything. So, they go below the faculty. They go below the administrators. I just am totally fed up with the regents from the get go. They just don’t have any desire. I mean I read the alumni stuff from Chicago, and this regent and that regent is giving money and has this idea and that idea. Even if the ideas come from the developmental office, they’re good ideas, you know, they buy into them. I don’t see that here. This place has more strength than the administrators give it credit for or the regents. They just don’t know how to make it – which is really kind of sad. I don’t want to talk about Faye Haisley, it’s a disgusting topic.

DI FRANCO: What about the alumni and some of the university donors? Do you have any description of them?

MUSKAL: Well, obviously I know some alumns, I have a number who keep in touch with me. Not so much doctoral students who go on with their careers. I’ve known a regent or two and they’re nice people – my previous comments still apply. You can be a nice person who doesn’t do anything. That probably goes back to Eberhardt with Ted Baun and not really regent pushing for what a regent could do. I tried to get to talk to the regents. [ ] would say, “I don’t want to talk to you.” [both laugh]

DI FRANCO: Yeah, okay. This maybe a repetitive question in relation to what you’ve said already, but can you describe the working relationship between the faculty and the administration during your years at Pacific? Is there something you’d like to say to that?
MUSKAL: Well, there are lots of units on campus and they all seem to have different relationships with the administrators. I really like COP which had a council that the dean generally listened to which I thought was really good. We couldn’t even get a council started, a little bit, it fell apart because we did it with Nagle. That’s when somebody asked me how to get rid of a dean — then she ran down the hall and told them and she got a promotion. It just seems to me that the administrators being relatively weak people, except for Lynn, who was fearless about turning in non tenure recommendations and tenure recommendations. She’s honest about it. It just seems to me that the administrators are happy to be employed. And happy to make some money and probably thrilled with the idea from the administration to faculty positions because they keep their administrators salaries which I think is probably a bad idea, I mean maybe for a year, but that’s about it. What was the question we began with?

DI FRANCO: Working relationships with faculty and administrators?

MUSKAL: I don’t know how many administrators value faculty and I think that’s a huge mistake, but they all sort of passing through to look for a better job or to retire, and we seem to get both kinds and so, I can’t work like that.

DI FRANCO: What about your working relationships with the faculty and administrators? You talked somewhat about that.

MUSKAL: You know, it depends — if you go back to when I was council chair I never knew I had so many deans who were behind me but they couldn’t say anything, so they used to walk up to me and pat my elbow and say keep it up. I don’t know what it was, but there was a lot of that, and when Lynn nominated me for that Order of Pacific thing and Phil killed it, all the deans told her that I really got robbed. They knew I should have had it. With that said, that’s okay. Wait, are we on administrators?

DI FRANCO: Your relationships with administrators?

MUSKAL: All I can tell about the School of Ed ones it was never very good until Lynn, and then that was like a burst of light or something and an epiphany — I just adored her. She wasn’t the one we picked. We picked an African-American guy from Oklahoma and at the last minute his wife couldn’t move away from her grandchildren. So, he said he was going to stay in Oklahoma and Lynn was number two. I’m familiar with this since I was number two. Lynn came in and she was just a breath of fresh air, I mean Faye was a breath of fresh air, but she got stale very quickly and you know, Faye was a good, she was a good talker. She really hated me. I was in her cabinet for a while, and she would talk about people in the room who are saboteurs. She meant me. I didn’t tell her that everywhere I walked on campus that we invented a new explicative, ‘Your dean!’ [both laugh] You know I’d say, “Don’t call her my dean, we’re just in the same
unit.” You know I’ve always liked Cliff, and I always liked doing what I could with Benedetti, and I didn’t even mind working with Lou.

DI FRANCO: Lou Matz.

MUSKAL: Yeah, Lou Matz, and he never – after awhile he never agreed with me, but at least we could get into a decent argument. So, that was okay. But, the rest of them, I guess, they aren’t that smart. I mean Jantzen really avoided talking if he could and used his ‘deanly powers’ to isolate me as much as he could. Outside of that, when I was chair I was surprised at how much support I had from different deans, and people would come in and talk to me. There’s a bench behind School of Ed, I would sit facing one way and a dean would sit facing the other way. Sometimes, it was somebody from the Development Office about ‘What would you do if you had 20 million dollars?’ I said, “Well, I’d build a building that did this and this and this and put together the Art Department with Computer Science because they could share all these huge graphic machines, and find lots of things to do together, etc. etc.” Those were kind of interesting discussions. I mean I was just sitting there talking into air and getting questions back. Most of the deans, I did Art Dugoni. Art was a great admirer of mine, so whenever Faye would make a comment about me, he would say, “Oh, if he had skills, I would have [methoddental] schools.”

DI FRANCO: Were you president of the council when we did the evaluation of the president?

MUSKAL: I think so.

DI FRANCO: Do you have anything to say about that event?

MUSKAL: I’m trying to think of what happened. I think I found the original document and submitted that. Dale Redig was collecting them, wasn’t he? Yeah. No, I like that. That was very good, and I got very friendly with Dale Redig, then I do have lots of respect for Redig. He was just a delight.

DI FRANCO: Yeah.

MUSKAL: He also knew where to take the regents, if they bothered to go along. That’s when I became saboteur because when Redig got appointed to the Head of the Regents, I finished class early at the Dental School and allowed him to speak, which according to Faye meant I was trying to undermine Atchley or whoever was the president then. Faye had this fantasy that you know, she worked very to lie about Horace Fleming to get rid of him. You didn’t know that? She accused him of having an affair with his secretary, and Atchley bought into it and of course he got to be President of Southern Mississippi. She wanted to be Academic Vice President. Skip caught wind of that real fast and he was just coming in, after Monagan was made Chairman of
the Board. I don’t remember what the scuffle was, but the press was on campus and he was handling them, and then Skip went to talk to them, “Don’t! Don’t put that woman up for Academic Vice President, you’re gonna create a ruckus.” So, he held off, and so she wasn’t the Academic Vice President which would have been phenomenally interesting. What was his name, the guy who just died, Paul uh? The guy was from Pharmacy. He was on my Executive Board, but John Williams told me that after every meeting he would go back to Atchley about what I said, and he said-John said, “I don’t want to upset you.” I said, “You’re not upsetting me, I would like it if Atchley understood what I was doing.” I mean I liked Dale Redig.

DI FRANCO: Yeah, yeah.

MUSKAL: When they kicked him out, he and I hugged each other up at Sacramento after they kicked him out.

DI FRANCO: Yeah, I was there.

MUSKAL: I can’t think of it, so maybe it’s not every regent, just all but one.

DI FRANCO: [laughs]

MUSKAL: Some of the others had promise, but they never did anything.

DI FRANCO: Yeah, yep. Slight switch away from people to programs – what do you think was the program you had the most significant contribution to?

MUSKAL: Oh, it’s probably a tie between the Honors’ Program and I&I. The doctoral program a little more obliquely because I agreed with what Lynn wrote down and I didn’t know exactly what was I said that influenced her in what way. But, I&I we worked out stuff together. The Honor’s Program, Greg and I used to argue about the structure for each course and I used to change the structure when I was teaching some of them.

DI FRANCO: They’re asking which programs were not successful. I would like to ask the question, “Why do you think the I&I failed?”

MUSKAL: The faculty just lost interest. It was like extra work to figure out something for a course, and even when it was going, they dumped me in my first semester here with Doug [] and he was just sort of ‘retitling’ an old course he taught. I had fun because he didn’t really put anything into the course. He had them read The Godfather to find out what a big organization big organization was like.

DI FRANCO: [laughs]
MUSKAL: They were just totally lost and I just said, “Look, I grew up in this town where a lot of people belonged to the mafia, so let me tell you how it works.” That was people for five years and come into class and they’d say, “Would you do your mafia rap for us?”

DI FRANCO: [laughs] Wasn’t it the case that you couldn’t repeat an I&I course?

MUSKAL: I think – no, I’m sure you could repeat, but you might have to ‘retitle’ it.

DI FRANCO: Yeah. Sure.

MUSKAL: I think I did the ‘Politics of Love and Sex’ a couple of times.

DI FRANCO: Okay. Well, this is really repetitive. It says, what are the controversies that emerged during your period of service? Describe them. Who were the major players? Anything you want to add because you’ve done a good job talking about it.

MUSKAL: Well, I mean there was always controversy over salary, and Eberhardt would always have a meeting and tell us that we couldn’t afford any more money for faculty. But, that was just when I was a new faculty member. Well, the president became an issue, but I mean Atchley was you know – Atchley started looking for jobs his second week on campus. He sold Larry Meredith his old computer, and he didn’t clean it off. So, Larry started looking and saw these job applications that went down to his second week on campus. But, that was Atchley.

DI FRANCO: Yeah. Yeah.

MUSKAL: When they got rid of Atchley, and they did get rid of him, I remember somebody said to a regent, “You know that Muskal helped get rid of him” and they said, “No, that was our job and we did it.” Blah, blah. That’s fine. I didn’t intend to get rid of him. I just liked to ask him questions.

DI FRANCO: What are your most significant achievements?

MUSKAL: Oh, I don’t know. I’ve got some scholarship and I like doing it. Mostly, it was in the classroom and revising what I did in the classroom, and that’s where the rubber hit the road. That’s what I was most interested in. I read an article by some famous scholar, and he had a long article in the Journal of Higher Education about how teaching was the most important thing he did which I thought was really good. But, that’s where I put all my energy. I did work on some stuff, and I did get it published. I admit it was nice getting notes from people – can you send me a copy of this? I mean, that’s sweet stuff.

DI FRANCO: Yeah.
MUSKAL: I mean the intellectual stuff – doing that was kind of fun and doing the reading was a lot of fun because I just read what I wanted to read and somehow found a use for it.

DI FRANCO: What do you remember about the students at Pacific?

MUSKAL: What a range [laughs]! The good ones were too good for Harvard, and there were some who shouldn’t have been in high school. By and large, the education ones were serious. The other ones, whether it was I&I or Pacs Sem or Honors, I really tended to appeal to the ones who had some intellectual sparks because I had things from different angles. I would occasionally turn things into current events. The most interesting thing we were doing in Pacs Sem was when the election was coming up and gay liberation was a big issue and the kids of course were all for it. We ended up talking about the election after it was over. I had a couple of right wing ones, and they were shocked because I said, honest, we really need a Republican Party. I mean we haven’t had one since then, but we need one. So, I mean, it again comes back to the teaching. It’s how to get somebody get that ‘intellectual itch’ going. I mean that’s the fun.

DI FRANCO: Yeah. Do you think they changed over the years you were here?

MUSKAL: I don’t think they’ve changed that much – well, I think they change with the times. You know, so there are different issues, and now everybody wants a job, and before everybody was interested in staying out of Vietnam. So, that was a little bit different. I don’t think they’ve fundamentally changed, but I think they’ve reacted to what’s going on in the environment. They’re decent students, and it’s even remembering my colleagues in Chicago – there were some kids who were smart, but not that interested, and there were a lot of them who were, well, very interested. I was sitting with some friends at lunch one day, and they got into the discussion about what are the moves you make to become a college president. I said, “Who the hell would want that job?” That was a surprise to me, that people would sit and talk about that, and they really got down to the nitty gritty. Do you take a job at a big school or at a small one? And all these other kinds of things, you know, it’s the tactics of becoming a president.

DI FRANCO: Where do you think the energy is from for any progress or evolution at Pacific? Who provided the energy?

MUSKAL: Oh, I think the faculty did. I think they had to because it wasn’t going to come from anywhere else, and there was this history, I guess, of curricular innovation. We did a good job with all the things we did. I mean the only thing I’m really ashamed of is getting stuck in the School of Ed with the remainders from everything nobody wanted to teach. That wasn’t my idea of how to put together or teach a training program. Still isn’t.

DI FRANCO: I have to ask this question. Did Pacific meet your expectations?
MUSKAL: I’m not sure if I had any expectations coming out here. To tell you the truth – I mean, it was teaching college, that’s what I wanted to do. In some ways, it was wildly successful because it was so open to teaching different things.

DI FRANCO: Yep.

MUSKAL: That really helped. It really fit with my crazy reading habits, and Lynn used to say, “We got somebody who reads several literatures at once.” Everybody knew who she was talking about. Yeah, so it met my expectations that way. I mean, I never wanted to teach anywhere else, even when somebody was trying to fire me or get rid of me. Everybody thought I’d never show up in the fall and told me so.

DI FRANCO: Oh my!

MUSKAL: In the fall what I got was, “You’re back, oh my goodness!” I just like the place. I like the faculty and working with people, and the fact is, the administrators didn’t really know how to harass well enough. They didn’t, that’s all. You know I think it was like if we left the president alone, he’d be happy to leave us alone. When we got interested in making it a better place, the president wasn’t so interested in that. Any of them!

DI FRANCO: What about external perception of the university? Has it changed?

MUSKAL: Yeah. I only have one piece of evidence on that. I guess after DeRosa got here we’re trying to clean things up. I was visiting one of my best friends in Pasadena, South Pasadena, and we went to dinner with some guy from Cal Tech, actually, a chemist from Cal Tech, and I told him I was at Pacific and he said, “You guys have really come a long way in the past few years.”

DI FRANCO: Oh?

MUSKAL: That’s what I said, “Oh! Tell me about it!” [both laugh] You know you’ve been doing good things, etc. etc. and I said, “Well we’re trying to work at it.” I mean what are you going to say to somebody from Cal Tech?

DI FRANCO: Right?

MUSKAL: I mean, when you’re right. You’re right. My friend’s wife still lives in Pasadena, and she said it’s just a nice college town.

DI FRANCO: Oh Jesus!

MUSKAL: A very wealthy college town!

DI FRANCO: That’s right!
MUSKAL: A very wealthy college.

DI FRANCO: Yeah. Yeah.

MUSKAL: I think, let’s see, when we go up to Tahoe and when I tell them I worked at UOP, they’d say, “That’s a wonderful school, etc.” So, it had a very good reputation up there and around California, I think it does too. It survives on that I guess.

DI FRANCO: Let’s change gears a bit. What do you think Pacific has done for the local community of Stockton?

MUSKAL: I guess the interview’s over [laughs]. Not much, I mean, the School of Ed, you know would send people out to work in the schools, but then I’d go out and visit the kids and the kids in class would say, “Oh yeah, they got a different calendar, that’s UOP, here today gone tomorrow. That didn’t help very much. I’m not sure what else helps. We’re still very separate from them. Lynn has done a good job at trying to get things related because she has these different programs going, and she raises money has different kinds of training for bright kids. She’s done the best job of anybody. So, I’m not sure. I think the business school has tried to work with the farmers, but the farmers haven’t been interested in an MBA for farming.

DI FRANCO: Now, we have this “Beyond Our Gates” program, and it’s supposed to help the town-gown relationship. Do you think it’s improved? Stayed the same or gone down?

MUSKAL: What’s the Beyond Our Gates program?

DI FRANCO: Well, President Eibeck wants to – well there are a couple of things they’ve done. For example, they redid Pacific Avenue. Then there’s Harmony Stockton, and there are some other interests in helping the schools and so forth - that Lynn probably helped with.

MUSKAL: Yeah.

DI FRANCO: What do you think about all that?

MUSKAL: It’s a little bit like dipping one toe in the water. I’m sure it looks alright, but there isn’t any real money that goes into it, to really help out and do something. I think it really would be good to have something like an Academy to do college prep for junior high schools and have somebody put some money into it and maybe make it a charter school. They’ve been talking about that ever since they’ve been talking about charter schools.

DI FRANCO: Yeah.
MUSKAL: There is no money that comes into it. It’s just window dressing. I mean, Lynn’s stuff is good because she got 45 grand from—what’s the name of the bank? Wells Fargo. She gets that every year. So, she’s got some of those programs going that are good.

DI FRANCO: Have you ever heard of the Martin Gipson Community Center?

MUSKAL: No.

DI FRANCO: There is one.

MUSKAL: Where?

DI FRANCO: It’s out to the east of the university, and I was surprised as I drove by it one time. Apparently, Martin left some money to let that happen.

MUSKAL: Really?

DI FRANCO: Interesting.

MUSKAL: Huh?

DI FRANCO: You’re not supposed to be interviewing me. [laughs] Sorry.

MUSKAL: Wow.

DI FRANCO: Well, now anything you want to talk about? Anything we didn’t cover. Anything you want to say?

MUSKAL: Let me think. The craziness of that year as Academic Council. One of the memories I have is that—if I wanted to get lunch, I could count on it taking an hour and half to walk from the School of Ed to wherever they were serving food because people were stopping me along the way and saying, “What’s happening with this and what’s happening with that?” I’m not quite sure why. I mean, it seems to me they could have read something somewhere or done something else. Faye was hell to deal with then. She gave me a course off, but then I would have to sit and listen to her talk about me as a saboteur, and she was a conniver of the first order. I mean it. It got tense when we elected people to the Academic Council and nobody would look at me. They would just tap my elbow because I had a run for Academic Council, and she had Murray [Ehrman] run against me and Murray would say, “Everybody ought to run in a contest.” And I would say, “Fine, Murray, run.” It was interesting in the School of Ed because people didn’t know how to behave. I mean even after Bob Morrow died, his wife came up to me and said, “You know, Bob was behind you every step of the way. Well, now you’re in Academic Council.” So, I said, “Yeah, I know.” He would let me know in all these little non-verbal ways. [laughs]. I liked being Council Chair. It was very intense, and it was being in the
middle of things, and if you remember with Strategic Planning, I had twice as many meetings as anybody else. So, we were meeting twice of month. I just liked it. I was happy when it was over, but I was happy to let Skip take over and then after Skip... Why can’t I think of anybody’s name, anymore? Who followed Skip?

DI FRANCO: Was it Don Brian?

MUSKAL: What?

DI FRANCO: Don Brian.

MUSKAL: No. No.

DI FRANCO: Don was before you.

MUSKAL: Yeah, Don was before me. Jesus, why can’t I think. I owe her a lunch.

DI FRANCO: Peg Ciccolella?

MUSKAL: Yeah, Peg Ciccolella. I mean I know Peg Ciccolella. It’s that name any other time except when needed. Skip really talked Peg into running. I like intensity, that’s all there is too it. I mean I never minded teaching extra courses or doing things like that. For awhile Phil was keeping tabs on that, and so he turned out the figures, and I was up about 130% of normal. And he didn’t count the Honors courses, so- I like the Academic Council. I always liked being on it because at least you had some idea of what was not happening as well as what might happen. But, that just fits with my personality. I like getting involved with things. I don’t know if I have anything else, or if you think I have something else I should cover.

DI FRANCO: I think you did a good job.

MUSKAL: Oh, okay. Good.

DI FRANCO: Well, this concludes the interview with Fred Muskal. I want to thank Fred for being so outspoken about what really happened.

MUSKAL: You’re welcome.

DI FRANCO: An hour and twenty-eight.