

ADMISSIONS OFFICE

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Purpose

As The Evergreen State College Admissions Office completes its third year of operation, it has begun to emerge from its nascent state where initial policies and procedures related to the total institutional philosophy were developed. During that early formative period, the staff relied heavily on Evergreen's sister institutions within the state for advice in developing office procedures, computer use, high school relations programs, etc. Admissions requirements consistent with institutional philosophy were developed with the advice and concurrence of faculty and staff members on campus before the college opened its doors to students. These requirements were revised to their present form by a DTF evaluation during Evergreen's first year. It was determined that because of Evergreen's unique programs, a student's earlier records of academic performance at more traditional institutions, scores on standardized tests and other objective data were not necessarily valid predictors of student success at Evergreen. The college was seeking the student who has initiative, who has a sense of purpose, and who has set some general or particular goals for himself regardless of the level of his educational development. The DTF constructed a supplemental application form that was designed to require the prospective student to think about himself in relation to various areas of Evergreen's uniqueness before arriving on campus. Admissions needed to know that the prospective student understood Evergreen and was willing to accept the challenge of the demands of non-traditional education.

Thus, the primary tasks of the Office of Admissions became those of informing prospective students of Evergreen's unique program and identifying those students who can profit from that program.

Present Program

In order to accomplish the task of informing prospective students of Evergreen's program, the Admissions Office is responsible for:

- A. Building and maintaining relationships with high school and community college personnel. This is accomplished by the following means:
 1. Participation with other Washington public and private colleges in the Washington High School-College Relations program.

2. Personal visits to individual high schools and community colleges by individual admissions staff members.
 3. Sponsoring counselor visitations to the college campus.
 4. Admissions Newsletters, mailed to each high school in the state, informing high school counselors of Evergreen happenings.
 5. Contacting counselors regarding specific prospective students.
 6. Sending admissions literature to each counselor in the state.
 7. Sending reports naming each Evergreen student enrolled from each counselor's school to the student's former counselor.
 8. Coordinating student and faculty follow-up visits to high schools and community colleges.
 9. Hosting community college faculty members by their Evergreen counterparts for on-campus visitations.
- B. Answering student inquiries by mail, telephone and personal interviews.
- C. Working with the College Relations Office to inform the local community and neighboring adult schools concerning special programs at Evergreen.
- D. Establishing and implementing follow-up procedures designed to continue to inform applicants and their parents concerning up-to-date information about new programs, housing, extra-curricular and recreational opportunities, payment of fees, etc. This is done by mail, telephone and receptions in major Washington population centers with the assistance of students, faculty and financial aid personnel.
- E. Giving assistance in interpreting the college's purposes and programs to all of its clientele, e.g., speaking to service clubs and professional organizations, assisting in the preparation of catalogs, viewbooks, brochures, newsletters, etc.

- F. Working with the non-white students on campus and the Affirmative Action Program Director to formulate and implement plans for non-white student recruitment working through educational clearing houses, counselors, community workers, etc., in order to inform non-white students of opportunities available at Evergreen.

In order to accomplish the task of identifying those students who can profit from Evergreen's program, the Admissions Office is responsible for:

- A. Receiving and processing the admissions application and the supplemental admissions form.
 - 1. Evergreen is required to use the Washington State Uniform Application, but Admissions also asks the student to fill out a special supplemental form that asks the student six subjective questions designed to measure his understanding of Evergreen's philosophy, evaluation system and how he feels he will adapt to the college's special demands.
 - 2. The application is coded for the computer so that the necessary admissions data can be collected and stored.
 - 3. Periodically the student is informed either by mail or by telephone as to the progress of his file.
- B. The reading and evaluation of completed admissions folders.
 - 1. Each completed folder is read and evaluated by an admissions officer and several faculty members. Faculty members are chosen bi-weekly at random to perform this task.
 - 2. The student is expected to be in the upper one-half of his graduating class. If not, the case may receive favorable consideration if the applicant can present a letter of recommendation from someone familiar with his desire and his academic skills. Test scores or high school grade point average are not felt to be relevant predictors of success in Evergreen's unique programs. "Desire and a readiness to work hard and constructively" are considered more important than the student's previous academic record.

3. The item in the student's file that is scrutinized most carefully is the supplemental admissions form. The subjective answers on this form are read in an attempt to determine the student's seriousness of purpose, his understanding of the programs, how he sees himself as related to Evergreen's purposes, philosophy and programs and how realistic he is regarding his goals and expectations.
- C. Informing the prospective student as to the admissions decision. The admitted student is sent a packet containing a letter inviting him to become a member of The Evergreen College community, a request for a fifty dollar deposit, housing information and a health form.
- D. Complying with state imposed restrictions on enrollment:
1. As a result of dramatic drops in enrollment at her sister institutions, Evergreen's growth rate has been severely curtailed through legislative action. Consequently, several hundred students could only be offered waiting list space or were turned away this year.
 2. The college is inundated with applications from out-of-state students. The out-of-state application count is rapidly approaching 50% of all applications read. No definite ceiling has been established on nonresident enrollment. But, the college feels that the diversity of backgrounds and the resultant flow of ideas that is characteristic of a rich out-of-state mix is beneficial to all students. The college also feels that by educating out-of-state students, we are importing talent. Most of these people are excellent students and about half tend to remain in the state following graduation. Furthermore, these students contribute heavily to the local and to the total state economy while they are at Evergreen.
- E. Admitting students for whom there is an excellent prognosis that they will be retained and will make normal progress toward their degrees. The college's success in this area can be examined in Table I.

Analysis And Appraisal

Inasmuch as this is Evergreen's third year of operation, there are a number of areas where it is difficult to assess the office's effectiveness, and there are a number of areas that have emerged as problem areas.

Student achievement is measured by faculty and student narrative evaluations. Thus, there are no letter grades with which to compile statistics that would measure student admissions against student achievement; however, Evergreen's retention rate spring to fall, 1973 was 85% and fall to fall, 1973 was 62.5% (OPP&FM Report 11/73, see Table I), which would seem to indicate that a high percentage of those admitted are not only succeeding but continue to be satisfied with their choice of college. Student success at institutions to which they have transferred is difficult to assess unless the students themselves elect to forward this information to the college. Student placement statistics are cited in the student service section of this self-study report.

To date, no students have been dropped for academic reasons. There were 9,160 registrations during the six quarters of 1971-72, 1972-73. Of these, a total of 640 registrations received less than full credit as a result of inadequate academic performance, illness, emergency absence, or other reasons. 184 students left the college immediately following a quarter in which they failed to earn credit. See Table II.

Many students have been counseled about becoming more serious about their work or perhaps leaving. Usually the student who is not performing academically will leave after this, but to date a newly adopted policy on academic standing has not yet been implemented. Therefore, there are no academic drop or readmitted statistics. A few students have been dismissed for other than academic reasons, e.g., psychological disturbances or personal action that represented a direct threat to self or others.

If a student is an applicant for readmission, his portfolio is examined and often instructors are contacted personally. If there are indications that he was "counseled out," we ask for an interview or a letter explaining why he feels he should be readmitted. His case is then discussed with faculty members and student services, and a determination is made as to eligibility for readmission.

Evergreen's enrollment is limited by legislative action. This year the college had to turn away 250 students at winter quarter because of the imposed enrollment ceiling. Most of these were resident transfer students who could not have entered at an earlier time - the delay imposes a great hardship upon these students and gives birth to in-state rumors that Evergreen is over-crowded and will not accept students in other quarters either - thus hurting the college's enrollment of resident students in the fall.

of nonresident applicants that the college is able to accept. A decision will have to be made as to whether Evergreen should continue to admit out-of-state students on a first-come, first-served basis or should examine other criteria.

The State of Washington has gone on record as recognizing the need for Affirmative Action and the college has stated its commitment to non-white students; however, at the present time, Evergreen has little to offer the non-white student other than quality education and excellent internship programs. The remote physical location of the college presents special problems in this area. Olympia itself is not known for its tolerant attitude toward non-whites, and recreational activities attractive to non-whites are noticeably absent - both on campus and in the community. Inner-city schools and schools serving migrant labor populations often are highly structured and very traditional in their offering, and thus, usually give little preparation for Evergreen-type programs. This problem has resulted in the formation of a DTF consisting entirely of non-white students, faculty, and staff with no whites below the rank of Dean or Vice President. The mission of the DTF is to develop a long-range program designed to meet the needs of non-white students in both academic and social areas. It is hoped that this plan will help provide a climate favorable to non-white students and will thus aid our recruitment and retention of those students. Statistics related to the college's high non-white attrition will be found in Table II.

Related to the non-white recruitment and retention problem is the fact that as Evergreen's reputation grows, the college tends to attract more of the academically talented students from upper middle income and upper income families. These students are a welcome addition to any student body, but the college will soon have to examine its student body rolls, look at the student mix and take the necessary steps to assure that Evergreen continues to work toward forming a student body that is a reflection of American society in microcosm.

The Evergreen State College has suffered from diverse public images since its opening three years ago. The main criticisms are a result of the suspicion of the new, the untried, the innovative. Counselors and prospective students and their parents are concerned about the fact that the college is not yet accredited, are concerned that the legislative criticism will lead to closure, have a stereotyped image of long-haired, non-motivated, slovenly and slothful students, and question the value of an Evergreen degree as a prerequisite for graduate school or a career.

Evergreen's high proportion of advanced students as compared to beginning students is related to this negative image the college has had in the minds of many parents and of many high school counselors. The transfer student generally is self-activated, while the freshman entering directly from high school tends to be more readily influenced by parents, counselors, teachers, and peer group pressure. This creates problems in that advanced programs impose a greater teaching burden on the faculty. Thus, it is imperative that Evergreen build a more positive following in the state so

that graduating high school students can make a more valid judgment concerning the ability of the college to meet their needs.

The college is attempting to turn this negative image around by inviting high school counselors from selected areas to visit the campus, sit in on the programs, have lunch with faculty and students, and tour the facilities. The college has organized similar programs for community college faculty so they they can interpret Evergreen to their students. A videotape production portraying the college programs is also being made for use with high school counselors and community college personnel in receptions to be held in cities east of the Cascades. Campus previews and parents nights are also planned as a continuing effort to acquaint more citizens with the college and its programs.

These programs require a great deal of planning, coordination, and the presence of at least one member of the admissions professional staff at each session.

Future

Dramatic budgetary cuts were imposed on Evergreen as a result of legislative action in spring, 1973. Consequently, the admissions staff was reduced to a director and an admissions counselor, two secretaries, and three part-time student clerks. This is a particular hardship for an institution that is non-traditional and innovative and thus is automatically suspect to many of its clientele. Evergreen is a highly successful educational abstraction that demands interpretation. It is virtually impossible to interpret Evergreen to the people of the entire state with a two-man staff. The office has an overwhelming public relations job to do with high school administrators, counselors, teachers, students and their parents, and the size of the staff is the greatest inhibiting factor in the performance of this task. As the college grows, the need to inform potential students concerning the educational opportunities available at Evergreen grows. This imposes a further hardship on an already under-manned staff. The need to increase staff is imperative when one considers that each year for the next ten years the staff must work toward increasing enrollment by roughly 200 additional students. Admissions is examining the possibility of paid internships for non-white students in an admission/student services combination. This would help to alleviate the office's manpower problem, but their supervision and training will initially place further demands on the staff. Thus, I would propose a staffing scheme similar to the one indicated below:

One Director

Two Assistant Directors - one with primary responsibility for initiating and coordinating counselor, community college faculty visitations, preview nights, telephone follow-up, and for supervising interns.

One Head Secretary

Two Assistant Secretaries

Five Part Time Student Clerk-Secretaries

Four - Eight Non-White Student Interns (number dependent on the number of hours of interns time that are devoted to admissions)

This staffing scheme would alleviate the immediate stress but would probably have to be revised as needs and priorities change. The interns can help in areas other than in non-white recruitment. This is especially true in the community colleges where Evergreen's percentage of the total state pool of community college transfers is a scant 2.6% of 4,559 transfer students. The community college counselor often plays very little part in the student's choice of a college where he will complete his higher education. The best approach appears to be faculty-to-faculty contact and student-to-student contact. Interns could help fulfill this need regardless of ethnic origin. Student and faculty volunteers are already giving assistance in this area.

As the college passes through its third year and as admissions prepares to build the fourth year's class, the problem areas listed above have begun to emerge and will have to be dealt with in addition to the routine tasks initiated during the first two years. These areas will tax the imagination and innovativeness of the staff, will require additional use of students in admissions work, and will place further burdens on the faculty as we seek their assistance.

It appears that admissions most important job for the next five years will be to interpret the college to educators throughout the State of Washington to the extent that they feel as comfortable counseling students about Evergreen as they do in talking to students about EWSC, WSU, PLU, or UPS. Concurrent with that task, the office will have to devise ways to sell Evergreen to the parents of those students who have indicated an interest in studying here. The college needs to inform all of these clientele of the types of things our students do as interns and of the specific kinds of jobs into which our programs are leading our graduates. Publications with this kind of information need to be designed to appeal specifically to each of the following groups: parents, high school counselors, community college faculty, non-white students. Hosting campus visitations of community college faculty and high school counselors will become a permanent on-going role of admissions as will hosting multimedia information sessions or receptions for high school and community college staff in schools and colleges east of the Cascades.

This year will be extremely difficult because the effects of the energy crisis and the anticipated recession are virtually impossible to predict. If the college can avoid becoming the center of another legislative debate, it should have more in-state drawing power than last year. Out-of-state

applicants will continue to climb but this will not help because the college is restricted here. More students will graduate and this will affect the job of maintaining enrollment. At this point, it is difficult to say what the chances of continued growth are, but it appears that because of the aforementioned factors, this will be our most difficult year. However, historically we have had the full cooperation and support of all segments of the college's administration, and assistance from faculty and students in helping to solve our early problems. This support is still present, and we have every reason to be confident that we shall continue to work our way through these obstacles as well as those that arise in the future.