

PREFACE



Archives

The Evergreen State College
Olympia, Washington 98505

The College's framers intended to question traditional means which have become machinery that dominates, not to say obscures learning. We hoped to outline an environment which stimulates the learning process, encourages the student to come to grips with his mind and ideas at the beginning of his undergraduate years, expects him to know not only the facts but how they are found, how to deal with them and how to articulate them.

We realized that students and faculty will bring to and leave Evergreen with a variety of backgrounds, experience and ability. We conceived a college which will not attempt to "produce" a "product" as such; that is, someone stamped with the point of view of a particular elite, constituency or narrowly-conceived vocation. We assumed that the most valuable service a college can offer a student is to initiate a process of continuing learning: by preparing him with the methods of learning and experimentation, by encouraging independence in pursuing inquiries that interest and motivate him, by providing him with resources to test his knowledge and ability.

Three lines of development have appeared consistently in Evergreen's planning: (1) provision to allow the student to progress on his own terms in view of his objectives, motivations, learning style and ability, with a resulting emphasis on independent study; (2) provision for a student to get acquainted with vocations through work-study programs that allow him to sharpen his competencies on the job; and (3) provision for taking full advantage of the College's location at the seat of state government.

Realizing that people demand a voice in the running of their community affairs at the same time they demand efficiency, we are working toward a form of college governance which will resolve both needs as finely as possible.

Little really new ever appears on the educational scene. While some new approaches will appear at Evergreen, its essential boldness will lie in the refusal to treat proven but unconventional approaches as expansive experiments rather than as basic components of the College program; and in Evergreen's commitment to provide a fresh, flexible climate in tune with the outside world but not out of step with the College's necessary academic role, which must include criticism and inquiry.

We believe such a community can be achieved, but with utmost difficulty. It will require students willing to study life and not have life presented to them. It will call for administrators less concerned with keeping things tidy than with keeping the operating machinery responsive to the environment. It will need faculty responsive to this time, not to when they were students, and sympathetic to undergraduate studies that are not riveted to a narrow discipline. All: students, faculty, administration, and our external constituencies, must be willing sometimes to forego, if necessary, the security and comfort of familiar structures, willing to remain patient in the continuing debate and willing above all to resist the strong temptation to accept quickly assembled, easily identified packages.

Charles J. McCann
President



Institutional Goals and Statement of Purpose

Society needs trained minds to maintain and improve commerce, industry, the professions, government, science, technology, social services, and the arts. It needs new information, fresh ideas, and construction, reliable responses to new problems from citizens capable of dealing creatively and positively with the complexities brought by rapid and massive change. Citizens of this society have their own needs: Flexibility and confidence, as well as a highly cultivated ability to learn new ideas and skills and to master quickly new bodies of information. These needs shape the nature of undergraduate study at Evergreen which is designed to assist students to continue learning, to continue schooling their intelligences, to continue thinking things out, applying that new learning to the problems of contemporary life.

Evergreen endeavors to build a mode of learning that starts from the individual rather than the curriculum. Thus, in the Evergreen learning mode the line of development is to be from individual to occupation, or from individual to discipline, rather than from occupation to individual or discipline to individual. Evergreen tailors programs of study to the individual so that its graduates will tend to vary from the thoughtful specialist to the broadly informed generalist. In general, its clients are those who plan eventually to enter upon graduate study, those whose intended occupations are among the many that demand breadth of training, or thirdly, those whose intended career may be furthered by whatever specialization the Evergreen faculty may be competent to support at a given time.

Although Evergreen's academic programs are designed to enable students to sharpen basic intellectual skills, learn techniques for solving problems, and develop an awareness of the implications of central human issues, the college places strong emphasis on the interrelationship of fields of knowledge rather than treating academic disciplines as entirely separate. Evergreen stresses cooperation and interchange among members of a learning community, allowing faculty and students to work together in a mutual quest for information and for solutions to real problems.

Evergreen encourages students to assume increasingly greater responsibility for their own work as they progress toward the Bachelor of Arts degree, with their studies matching their interests and career goals. Academic study achieves its best, Evergreen believes, when students can sample a reasonably wide range of actual jobs, working under conditions of genuine responsibility to themselves or as members of teams, subjecting this relevant experience to reflection about themselves and their future.

Evergreen's goal involves developing an academic program which enables the individual student to initiate a process of continuing life-long learning by preparing that student with the methods of acquiring information and of experimentation, by encouraging independence in pursuit of inquiries that interest and motivate him, by giving him practice in team approaches to formulating problems and to solving them, and by providing him with counsel and resources to test his knowledge and ability.



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In order to achieve the highly individualized programs of study called for by our goals, and best achieved by our modes of learning, the college has organized itself to allow maximum concentration of resources and faculty time at the point of faculty-student contact. Evergreen will not allow departments to exist; it will not order particular experiences in courses to be "given" year after year; it will not order courses in curricula. Evergreen will allow the professional, without the superimposition of committees before the fact, to do what he is fit to do; it will allow him to advise and to help the student to learn and to articulate. It will encourage professionals to learn along with students, thus "teaching" by example. Evergreen will blur the distinctions among who is "faculty" and who is not; it will continually realign talents. In order to achieve the above ends, Evergreen has committed itself to continuing evaluation of students, staff, administration, and faculty.

Evergreen, in short, endeavors to develop a learning community that reflects the nature of the real world, where none of the problems man faces is simple and where none of the parts becomes, in its own conception, more important than the whole.