

**Final Report  
Presidential Search Process DTF  
Initial Draft  
2/20/91**

The Presidential Search Process DTF was charged with making recommendations in four areas:

- Identify primary tasks and challenges facing Evergreen in the 1990's.
- Identify the qualities and traits that Evergreen's President must have to meet those tasks and challenges.
- Comment on the advisability of using a consultant in the search process.
- Recommend composition of the actual Search Committee.

The DTF felt that implicit in its charge was the responsibility to make recommendations on the overall process that the Search Committee will use.

Our final recommendation has been the result of extensive discussion, among ourselves, and by each of us among our peers. It is also the product of public input, both written, and from a well-advertised public forum.

**Evergreen's Tasks and Challenges for the 1990's**

The DTF has identified many tasks and challenges facing Evergreen in the coming decade. The following goals are certainly not meant to be the complete and final statement of Evergreen's 10-year vision, nor should they be considered as in any way superceding the college's future direction as envisioned by the Strategic Planning process or any other campus-wide endeavor with such long-range planning goals.

However, they represent the primary concerns which are guiding the Search Process DTF in outlining the characteristics for a future Evergreen president. The goals identified include:

- Restoring and nurturing Evergreen's sense of experimentation and innovation, both within the curriculum, and as a social experiment, a uniquely alternative approach to the development of an educational community.
- Restore and nurture the sense of community at Evergreen. Central to this goal is a deep and comprehensive commitment to open communication and community-wide participation in the governance process. Evergreen must struggle to overcome the unprecedented levels of distrust and alienation that have developed throughout the community in the past several years.
- Learn how to socialize newcomers to the "Evergreen tradition," and how to pass down the core curricular values from generation to generation of faculty. At the same time, learn how to sensitize oldtimers to the values and interests of newcomers.
- Increase access and sense of welcome for all students, and especially for students of color, the physically challenged, returning students, and the poor.
- Integrate multiculturalism into the curriculum, and into the Evergreen community as a whole, including faculty, staff and students. Resolve the desirability of curricular integration, as opposed to separate learning communities, such as Native American Studies.
- Maintain and enhance the "real world" emphasis of Evergreen's curriculum, and its sense of mission.
- Either develop or abandon the concept of Pacific Rim as a primary embodying theme in the educational process.
- Resolve the issue of community service as an integral component of the educational process.

- Maintain a freshness in the faculty for innovation and development of new ideas.
- Provide adequate support and development opportunities to faculty and staff.
- Optimize Evergreen's allocation of technology, funds and staff support, in order to get the most educational bang for the buck.
- Increase accessibility of the campus and its services to the communities of Thurston and Pierce Counties, and to state government.
- Maintain and enhance a positive image among our various "publics," including potential students, legislators, the greater Olympia community, and others.
- Place the college on a sound financial base, including the establishment of an endowment and a capital construction fund.
- Develop Evergreen's size (enrollment and physical plant) and resources in a comprehensive and relational manner, that permits an interdisciplinary, responsive and flexible learning process.

Overriding all other concerns, the Evergreen community has spoken of a need for "healing," for a re-weaving of the web of community and mutual support which has been so severely sundered over the last several years.

#### **A President's Necessary Qualities and Traits**

Evergreen's underlying "alternative" philosophy is not simply a different coat of paint on a standard educational edifice. It implies a different approach to the design even of the basic foundation of the educational institution.

There is a residual skittishness within the Evergreen community regarding our relationship with the outside world (the legislature, the base of potential students, etc.) — a holdover, in large part, from the enrollment crisis of the mid-1970's. However, it seems clear that the greatest danger Evergreen faces is not from some external threat, but from within. Evergreen's commitment to experiment and innovation, to consultative and decentralized administration, and to communitarian values and collective autonomy, has eroded drastically in the last decade.

These three factors — proven commitment to the spirit of academic experimentation and innovation; a strong track record of consultative, decentralized, democratic administration; and in-depth experience in the dynamics of an alternative educational community (including the process of collective self-governance) — are the baseline by which presidential candidates must be measured.

Any of the goals that Evergreen has given itself, from the most difficult to the most trivial, are goals that the community as a whole must accomplish. The president alone cannot achieve any of these goals. However, she can act as a catalyst, as a facilitator, and as our chief articulator of our shared vision.

In other words, she must be, by character and spirit, a leader. Not a leader in the traditional authoritarian mold; not the pinnacle of our little managerial elite, governing by memo from on high; not the slick sophist with a hidden agenda and a knack for glad-handing and public relations. She must be a collegial leader, in keeping with our nature as a genuinely collegial institution, able to facilitate the ongoing, campus-wide project of community self-governance.

#### **Recommendations on the Use of Consultants**

##### **The Search Committee: Composition and Process**

The search committee will be much more tightly focused in its task and deliberations than was this DTF, and can therefore accommodate a larger and more representative membership.

All constituencies must be represented on the committee, as well as as many specific interest groups as can be accommodated. However, the special concerns and unique position of the faculty, as the primary agents of the college's educational mission, must have the major role in the makeup of the committee.

We recommend that the search committee be composed of 8 members of the faculty, 4 students, 2 classified staff, 2 exempt staff, and 2 alums, with all members selected by their constituencies as appropriate. Further, we urge all constituencies to consider gender balance and representation of minorities in selecting their representatives.

In addition to these regular members, we urge the search committee to include ex-officio representatives of the Board of Trustees, and of any interest groups that wish to participate in the committee's ongoing process, such as the First People's Coalition, and the various unions on campus.

The re-weaving of community at Evergreen can begin with the process that the search committee adopts. Our DTF's deliberations have shown that the search for a president in tightly coupled with our own self-definition as a community. Meaningful consultation of the Evergreen community must be an ongoing part of the committee's process.

This consultation must occur from the very beginning, not just after the final three candidates are selected. The search committee's first task should be community-wide validation (and perhaps alteration) of this DTF's final recommendations, which are intended to serve as the committee's guiding document.

The search committee should plan on extensive community input throughout the search process, and should try to open that process to the greater Olympia community to the extent possible.

Evergreeners tend to be program-focused, and it is sometimes difficult to get them to come out of their academic shells. The committee is urged to be creative and persistent in their efforts to involve the entire community. If this means going into the seminar itself, or offering credit for participation in the search process, or whatever else, then by all means, try it!