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FINAL REPORT

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Vol I. Introduction
Evolution of Goals and Strategies
Project Reports

Vol II. Evaluation of Evergreen

VOLUME I

FINAL REPORT

Volume I

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I. INTRODUCTION

This is a report on two years of work for The Evergreen State College, and what I can see of the results.

The job title listed in the NSF grant was "Evaluator." Neither the project director nor I liked that very much, and sometime after I got started we agreed to a title of "Director of the Office of Educational Research and Assistance." Lately I've more often referred to myself as the "evaluation consultant."

Chapter II summarizes how the job's goals and strategies evolved. I was asked to help Evergreen appreciate and improve educational results. Finding a method and role was part of the job.

Chapter III summarizes the various projects that I've had more or less of a hand in.

Chapter IV is a "visitor's evaluation of Evergreen." A lot of people have asked me what I've learned about Evergreen. When I pulled out my typewriter and tried to write a few pages, they quickly expanded to more than a few. The chapter begins with the argument that most Evergreeners do not have a shared notion of what the College is; that lack of focus inhibits evaluation, policymaking, and a clear public image. Evergreen actually is an interdependent whole, and some of its elements are more central than others: not-disciplinarity, freedom, full-time programs. Evidence and theory seem to indicate that Evergreen is changing in each of these three particulars, though. The chapter's second section presents a complementary picture of the College, showing some of its diversity. The chapter concludes with a set of recommendations for the College.

The appendices include a short description of the College, a lexicon, an extension of the model, a discussion of the theory used to create the

model, a set of problem statements directed toward graduate and undergraduate students (they're intended to be both of intellectual worth and to have results useful in the evaluation of Evergreen), and an essay recommending the establishment of an Office of Research.

Evaluating my own success has been difficult. Michael Scriven, visiting Evergreen, said my role was "educator" but there have been no armed evaluators around to estimate my impacts (we tried twice to get one; that is reported within). You will have to form your own conclusions.

Acknowledgements

Everytime I try to put "acknowledgements" together, the list rapidly grows to include virtually anyone with whom I came into contact here, as well as a lot of people from other places. In order to preserve some of the trees of America, the list is not being reproduced here.

There are a few people, though, whose names just refuse to stay off the page, because of their consistent intellectual stimulation, active ears, critical tongues and support: Leslie Ehrmann, Peter Elbow, Jim Gulden, Linda Kahan, Rob Knapp, Ed Kormondy, Fred Tabbutt, and Byron Youtz. Betty Muncton made the office run and has been promoted to better things. Naia McClelland, Karen Porter and Barb Unroe have helped substantially.

Having let those names slip, I've got to go back to the first list, and especially to Evergreeners. I could not have functioned here without a working majority who saw me as both insider and outsider, and who saw the task of learning about education as their own responsibility.

Thank you.

II. THE EVOLUTION OF GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Introduction

As will become apparent below, my job had two components: figure out what the job was to be, and get it done. The two processes were iterative, a sequence of uncontrolled experiments that resulted in a job description and set of activities/failures/accomplishments that evolved together.

This chapter will concentrate on the first process.

The RULE Grant

This job was created under a grant from the National Science Foundation's Restructured Undergraduate Learning Environments (RULE) Program. The evaluation money was only a one part of the eight hundred thousand dollar total.

The RULE proposal, as funded, charged the "evaluator" with

- a. strengthening program evaluation (Evergreen's courses are full-time and are called 'programs')
- b. evaluating the effectiveness of the major institutional modes (programs, learning contracts, modules (courses))
- c. measuring teaching effectiveness in the natural and social sciences

The Evaluator was to begin by teaching in a program in spring quarter, 1975, in order to get the feel of Evergreen. During the summer and early fall, the Evaluator would work with faculty in a variety of programs to prepare "evaluative mechanisms" that would provide continual feedback through the year as to how well their programs were doing. The Evaluator was also to discover or create measures of student achievement consonant with the College's goals.

During several weeks of the following summer, the Evaluator would work with a faculty-student review team to analyze data gathered during

the year. They would evaluate teaching effectiveness at Evergreen by comparing student achievements in Evergreen programs with achievements of students at other schools, and with Evergreen's goals. The review team would also study student transcripts and do follow-up studies of alumni; their findings would then be passed on to student counselors.

The second year of the Evaluator's work was to be devoted to implementation of evaluation schemes worked out during the first year and summer so that, by the time the Evaluator completed the work, an evaluative mechanism would be in place and operational.

During this process the Evaluator was to report to the Project Director of the grant; no mention was made of other reporting relationships, or of report-writing of any kind, for that matter.

Evergreen requested \$118,000 for evaluation (including support for faculty teams writing histories of selected histories). Of the total, all but \$2700 was devoted to salaries; that remainder was the budget for creation, purchasing and validation of tests; hiring of consultants and referees; travel; supplies; miscellaneous.

Debate in the RULE Committee

The goals of the workplan were summarized in a job description for a "TESC-RULE Evaluator in the Natural and Social Sciences;" it was widely reviewed and discussed in the College, I gather, before being sent out to candidates.

Nonetheless, problems developed.

In the process of interviewing the first round of candidates it became apparent that members of the steering committee ("the RULE Committee") had substantive disagreements about what this person was to do. (This is

not surprising.. Judging from the ambitiousness and ambiguities of the task description and the rather small budget for expenses, it seems apparent that the description never had represented a thought-out work description for a single professional.)

Faculty member Rob Knapp summarized the disagreements in a memo to the committee:

"...There are several things we seem to want to know about education at Evergreen. In no particular order:

- 1) Are our students any good when they leave? (Or, as good as the University of Washington? Good enough for graduate school? Good by our own standards? etc.)
- 2) Are our modes basically the most effective? Or could we be more effective in other modes?
- 3) Why is it that our present efforts at evaluation don't seem to improve things as much as we'd like? Why don't they answer questions 1) and 2) to our satisfaction?

....How would an evaluator help...answer these questions?
Several different answers were voiced (in the meeting):

"We (a team or an individual) could consult with him/her as programs unfolded to see whether we were meeting our goals."

"We (team or individual) could consult with him/her initially to see if our plans or initial goals were consistent, realistic, etc., or to establish criteria for achievement."

"We could get advice on the organization of the learning modes to save ourselves time, effort, etc."

decide what to do exactly, and how. It was also agreed to set back the deadlines so as to be able to interview more candidates, even though this meant abandoning the plan of having the Evaluator begin work as a teacher for a quarter.

Getting Hired

With no specific training in evaluation or educational research¹, I placed little importance on such formal education. When a respected colleague heard about the job and expressed the opinion that I would be perfect for it, I believed him.

My own first attempt at giving some definition to the task was the essay I wrote as part of my job application.

My priority was 1) an evaluative scheme that would provide clues to causal mechanisms, not just outcomes, so that where change was needed, action would be stimulated instead of defense, 2) a scheme that would begin with some attempt to describe the activity being evaluated.

(This second item turned out to be even more of a problem than anticipated. The charge was focused on science education, yet Evergreen had no (science) departments, no formal science majors, and few programs that were purely in the natural or social sciences; almost everything seemed to be interdisciplinary and to include some science. The question of how to evaluate a science program that didn't exist, per se, remained unanswered in my essay.)

My treatise ended with the statement that this was "a menu rather than a meal plan. The scale, direction and detail of the design all depend on the desires of the community, the findings of the initial studies, and the extent to which faculty and students get involved with the process... The important thing is that the process works well enough to be tolerable and to provide information necessary for Evergreen to improve itself."

I was invited for an interview, and spent two days nosing around campus talking to people and reading. My interview 'speech' consisted of listing things I'd noticed: people's worries about departmentalization, how graduates do on GREs, 'do we measure up to the University of Washington?'; "academic standards;" "inefficiency of setting up labs that have to be torn down again quarterly or yearly;" "not enough time to try, fail, and improve;" "hard to teach because it's difficult to know when you're doing well."

After listing changes that appeared to be occurring at Evergreen and briefly describing the theory of evaluation, I talked briefly about how I might begin work.

The activities I listed included: interviewing graduates, their employers, and advisors; reviewing program histories that had already been written and writing guidelines for improving them as evaluative mechanisms; doing concentrated research on people transferring in and out of Evergreen; trying to operationalize a concept of 'institutional memory' as

Goals and Strategies The First Year

I was interviewed in April 1975 and by the time I arrived to begin work in September, I still had no firm ideas about what the role should be: Would I be an evaluator/judge? A helper? What tools would I use? Would I work alone or with people?

In a September talk to the faculty at their first meeting, I stressed that my goal was to somehow help them learn from their experience so that Evergreen could be a better educational institution, that I didn't know how I was going to do that², but that while I was trying to figure that all out, I was available. I would be willing to work with anyone who wanted to learn something, to evaluate, to clarify goals, or who had a curiosity about some specific aspect of how Evergreen was doing. The only criterion was whether it contributed to the overall goal of contributing to self-observation for self-improvement (which I called "institutional learning.") I could offer my own skills, RULE money, secretarial support, materials and so on. I would do no more than 50 percent of the work on any given project, I said, so that I could work on a variety of efforts.

This was meant as a temporary stance that would prevent my being trapped in an ineffective role (as I feared I would be if I introduced myself as the Judge; initial impressions of me as Evaluator would never let me escape from that stance, even if it turned out not to be an effective role). In fact, "research partner" turned out to be successful enough that I continued it as my full-time modus operandi for the first

Starting a Project

Projects were started in a variety of ways, but the usual procedure began with a conversation between me and an Evergreener: faculty, student, staff member.

My curiosity about things Evergreen was voracious, and I was determined to overcome my shyness so that people would know who I was. I went about introducing myself to people at random. The conversation would often turn to Evergreen and become an interrogation of them by me. When an unclear phrase or assumption came up, I would focus. "Why do you think that's true?" would be the crucial question.

If the person had no strong answer but was interested in finding one, the ground would have been set for an initial, playful discussion of how one might go about finding the answer. If interest continued, I would broach the possibility of the investigation becoming real, if the person (or someone else) were willing to shoulder half or more of the work involved. In short order, my available time was filled. (The projects are described in the next section of this report.)

Making Patterns

A random collection of projects was fine in principle but 1) I had more projects and partners than time, so I needed a way to choose, 2) a coordinated attack, with projects reinforcing and building on one another seemed more likely to succeed in having a long term effect on the College.

Every several months I tried to pull together what I was doing and what had been learned about the College in order to set overall strategy for my efforts.

Looking back over this sequence of strategy sheets, it becomes apparent

that I was bouncing between 1) a desire to formulate a plan large enough in scope to affect "institutional learning" for the College as a whole, 2) the lack of resources to accomplish that end, and 3) the constraint of finding co-workers (i.e. resources). I was also sticking to the co-worker strategy because of the conviction that most possible strategies were ultimately dependent on a cadre of faculty who had tried evaluation, and liked it. This also meant, though, that efforts had to be keyed to what those faculty wanted and were able to do.

After a year of work, it was becoming apparent that the co-worker strategy was not working out as planned. A large number of faculty had expressed initial and sincere interest, but the time needed to obtain even meager useful results had produced a rapid thinning out. Even a trivial project required large amounts of time, and it was difficult to find project ideas that were 1) desirable, 2) nontrivial in their anticipated results, 3) feasible, 4) within the resources available.

A New Strategy

In February 1977 I announced a new strategy already underway.

Evaluation could be thought of as a process of question-asking and question-answering.

"It is difficult for people to ask good crucial questions (whose answers could make a big difference to the ways things are done). Question-asking takes practice and up till now there haven't been resources available for getting answers. But the problems also did stem from lack of time, money, and expertise. Mostly time.

Two Recommendations

My first two recommendations to Evergreen come out of that experience. If Evergreen is to really make any progress toward appreciating or improving education, people here must:

1. Establish effective, partly centralized resources for answering questions.

2. All become proficient at asking questions whose answers can make a big difference."

The key to the new strategy was graduate students from other schools.

Evergreen has no graduate school, no institutional research office, no permanent educational evaluation operation, not even a department of education. The question that had persistently stymied me was, who was going to do the research once I left? Efforts to get students and faculty, working individually or in teams, to the point of doing good evaluation work useful to the College had proved only marginally useful. Many of the most important projects were beyond the scope of the co-worker strategy.

But graduate students, doctoral students particularly, might provide part of the answer.

If Evergreeners could concentrate on asking questions whose answers would be crucial for educational practices here, we might be able to find students who would tackle the answering: as theses, major papers, literature searches, whatever. The RULE grant, Evergreen, and perhaps new grants could be used to supply money for direct expenses.*

Much of my remaining time has been spend 1) working with Evergreeners to formulate a set of such questions (appended), 2) developing procedures by which such proposals could be screened (appended), 3) writing, phoning, and traveling to make contacts with students, 4) writing grant proposals and pre-proposals to get more money to support such work.

The process is underway. No proposals have been submitted for final review but, at this writing, four doctoral students, from the University of Washington, Stanford, Berkeley, and the University of Oregon, are in the pipeline. The problem statements have been widely distributed, within

*The planned summer study was scrubbed so more money was available to support research.

Evergreen as well as around the country. Dean Rob Knapp is now in charge of coordination.

Program details and progress are described in the next chapter.

In general this strategy has the obvious advantage of greatly increasing the power and technique that can be brought to bear on specific questions. It may also improve the education of the students who do the work. It can be superior to normal education research in that it focuses on questions of local importance in terms that increase the probability of local implementation. It lets people have the courage to identify questions which they themselves might not be able to answer.

It has at least three disadvantages: 1) it is slow, 2) it may decrease commitment to implement results, and 3) the previous strategy helped to improve question-asking ability at Evergreen since the question-asker had then to answer her own query. This strategy doesn't impose that discipline.

Summary and Conclusions

The role definition shifted from "evaluator" to "research partner" to "research agent," in a search for a way to help Evergreeners learn how well critical educational practices were working.

Evergreen ought to have a person or people in all three of those roles, since each has somewhat different strengths and weaknesses.

The evaluator role is best suited for problems of limited scope requiring some "distance," consistency of data-collection or special skills.

The research partner strategy is meant to multiply the people available for question-answering and to help those people get better at question-asking; it is suited for evaluative and research questions of limited scope and not requiring too much in the way of special skills.

The research agency concept fills at least part of the gap left by the first two; doctoral students can tackle some kinds of ambitious research and evaluation projects that an evaluator wouldn't have time for and research partners wouldn't have the skills for.

The research partner and research agent strategy are complementary. The agent concept calls for lots of Evergreeners to think about crucial questions. Some of the questions identified may then be tackled by the research partner strategy or even by the "evaluator" mode.

III. PROJECT REPORTS

Introduction

As described in the previous section, the bulk of my work at Evergreen has consisted of a large number of only partially related projects, most of them done in concert with at least one Evergreener.

This section is devoted to describing those efforts, and those results.

Faculty Contact

One of my major purposes has been to influence how people think about evaluation and education research; influence is impossible without some form of contact, so one of my success indicators is the number of faculty with whom I've had at least one conversation involving education or evaluation. Over the period of two years, I had at least one such contact with every faculty member in the natural sciences, with all but one in the social sciences, and with all but five in the humanities and arts (there are now about 130 faculty at Evergreen). There was no attempt to see people systematically; contact was usually accidental, but I was anxious to get to know people.

Projects

1. The Evergreen Transcript. Virtually the first project suggested was also one of the more successful: not a coincidence. It was Rob Knapp's idea and he pulled much of the load.

The question was "How is the Evergreen narrative transcript used outside Evergreen?" This was an important question not only on its own, but because the success of the evaluation is key to improving other aspects of Evergreen.

We ran a workshop in which potential employers and graduate school representatives, already on campus, for a "Job Day" in a particular professional field, read sample transcripts. They then were questioned about what the transcripts had been like. Faculty who had written pieces of the transcripts were present and listening.

This procedure was repeated by Rob and Career Planning and Placement people several times during the next year and a half.

Rob, now a Dean, reported, "A number of small but troublesome points involving layout, indexing, and the like have been identified. Several general themes have been apparent in the reactions, in particular a concern over the nature of the evaluative criteria that lie behind the words of the narrative--what are they? Do they include comparisons between students? The consistent appearance of these themes has already led to the consideration of alterations in the form and content of the evaluation and transcript to communicate more effectively the substance of what students are learning. A next step appears to be to try out altered formats on the Job Day groups, to keep a continual check on the effects of the changes we try."

Registrar Walker Allen's doctoral dissertation has taken a different cut at the same subject; I was able to provide a little help there, too.

2. "Theoretical Physics." I tried to set up collaborative research with a number of programs of different types which would also be writing program histories under the RULE grant (See #7 below). The effort was only slightly successful. This particular group contract was one of the high points.

During the first quarter (1975-76) faculty member Sig Kutter and I had a series of conversations on evaluation which culminated in distribution

of a questionnaire to members of his program. It was aimed at student evaluations of program process and progress.

Although no questions were specifically directed at the issue, we discovered indirectly that students were anxious about whether they were learning a sufficient amount of physics (at least they were anxious during the week they were interviewed). They worried that students at the University might be covering more topics than they were; several asked that depth be sacrificed for more breadth.

This kindled my interest in what Rob Knap has called "knowing what you know." The students were learning, but they were uncertain how much they had learned, or what it was worth when measured up against commonly accepted standards.

3. Program questionnaires, other questionnaires. A frequent activity during my two years has been consulting on the design of questionnaires. Some of the people and programs helped: "Paradigms in Crisis" (midterm feedback survey); John Lundberg (evaluation of a newsletter he edits for Evergreen faculty and staff); Jim Martinez (an evaluation form for students who had been in his contracts and programs); Walker Allen (a survey asking people for the most interesting facts they knew about Evergreen); Nancy Taylor (a survey of 1975-76 students: Would they be returning? Why or why not?).

4. "Matter and Motion"; Basic Science Survey. Al Leisenring, Jeff Kelly and I began to talk about the lasting impacts of a program that they had taught in 1973-74; "Matter and Motion" was a coordinated study meant to teach natural sciences and calculus in an integrated fashion.

Over the course of two years, Fred Tabbutt, another member of the "Matter and Motion" team, replaced Al and Jeff, and a survey went through about ten drafts; it was sent to alumni of the program, and of basic science courses at the University of Washington and Pacific Lutheran University.

The object was not to prove anything conclusive--that is impossible looking at things only after the fact--but to gather some suggestive data. We wanted to jar people, to come up with some provocative and specific hypotheses about what might have happened to students in various types of science education. The survey is aimed at providing the stimulus for such hypothesis-creation; its questions are directed mainly at curriculum content, format, and the role of self-directed learning, during and after basic science. Polly Newcomb has been doing data coding and analysis.

At this writing, the last surveys are still trickling in but initial analyses are encouraging; if people actually sit down and look at the data, it should help them to think. No more and no less.

5. Journal-Writing in "Health: Individual and Community." After a series of discussions, two members of the faculty team of "Health" and I decided to do a study of journal-writing as a method for improving student writing.

The practice is to require students to write a certain volume of material each week, about program ideas if possible but anything goes. Journals are traded around so that students can give one another feedback. Does this practice improve some, all or no facets of a student's writing? Linda Kahan and Russ Fox were curious.

This question first forced us to think about what is meant by "good

writing," and how it might be measured. After reading some of the literature, we concluded that it was a multi-dimensional concept and quite difficult to measure in any reliable fashion (i.e. people tend to not only disagree about just how "good" a given piece of writing is, but also to disagree about how "good" the "grammar" is, or the "organization"; even these traditional subcriteria have multiple interpretations.)

We decided to proceed anyway. At the end of the year (1975-76), we engaged three doctoral students in English, all of whom had extensive teaching experience from the University of Washington. They were asked to compare the first and last twenty pages of each of forty student journals that had been kept throughout the year; the judgment was whether, for each criterion we gave them, the journal writer had demonstrated perceptible improvement over the course of the academic year. Each "judge" worked independently after an initial calibration session (when they marked five sample journals together).

This process would not tell us anything for sure about what journal writing had caused, just something about whether a change, detectable in student journals, had occurred.

Interjudge reliability was low; unanimity occurred in only 52 percent of the judgments. If the judges had each been flipping a coin to make their "yes/no" decisions, on the other hand, unanimity would have occurred by chance in only 25 percent of the cases, so it's clear they were observing something.

A substantial proportion of the journals exhibited noticeable change in the categories of "expressivity" and "intellectual development." The judges reached unanimous "yes, we see improvements in expressivity" judgments in six of the thirty-eight journals where they all voted; a majority

voted "yes" on ten more. On "intellectual development," all three judges agreed "yes" on four of the thirty-eight journals; a majority was "yes" on seventeen others.

The other four criteria (a holistic "did the writing improve?"; "grammar"; "organization"; "idea flow") were areas in which few of the journals showed noticeable improvement.

In a final question, the judges were asked whether students in this program were writing as well as University of Washington first year students; the answer was yes in almost all cases. (This was, of course, not a random sample of Evergreen students; the journals came from only one program.)

Conclusions: if journal writing improves anything it is probably expressivity, not the other criteria. (This conclusion comes from interpreting the data in light of notions about what journal-writing is supposed to do.)

We also learned, I think, something of how difficult it is to evaluate writing.

Postscript: we had a chance to talk to the three consultants about writing-teaching and about Evergreen as seen through these journals. They felt journal-writing to be a valuable practice for dealing with "writing block" and helping a student to "find her voice," but differed on how it should be implemented; they also expressed the opinion that teaching at Evergreen seemed more interesting than at the University, due to the diversity of the students and the extent to which faculty and students get to know one another.

6. Evergreen and Medical Schools. This is a good example of how

frustrating these projects can be. Shelby Heimdahl, a student, was interested in knowing something about how Evergreen students interested in medical school had fared. She decided to work on a project with me in addition to her normal academic load.

She talked to Evergreen faculty who'd been concerned with pre-med, went with Rob Knapp to a medical school to discuss their reactions to the Evergreen transcript (this was part of the Evergreen transcript project (#1 above), too), and put together a set of three surveys: for Evergreen students interested in med school, those who had applied and been turned down, and graduates now in medical school. At that point there were not too many people in the latter groups so it was planned to interview as many as possible.

Shelby pre-tested the surveys, got them into shape--and left school.

If anyone is interested in continuing this project, the files and survey forms are being left in the care of Dean Rob Knapp.

7. Program Histories. The one part of the RULE evaluation task that was structured and under way before my arrival was program history writing. Faculty members from selected programs and group contracts were supported for two summer weeks with student assistants, in order to write extensive histories and evaluations of their programs.

One set of these histories was complete and printed by early 1975; Their evaluative value of the histories as written seemed quite limited. In an attempt to improve them, I organized a seminar of the faculty slated to do histories the following summer, so they could think about making observations and gathering data while their programs were in operation.

The faculty read past RULE-supported histories and critiqued them

(most frequent comments "too long," "insufficient organization," "hard to see what was learned"), in preparation for writing their own. I wrote a series of guidelines and questions that I hoped they would address in their writing, and helped to edit several.

The ultimate success of this exercise will have to be judged by someone else; most of the last summer's histories were still not complete as the final dash of this summer's work began. Now most of them are done, but I haven't had a chance to read them.

In summer 1976, I also had a long work session on program histories with faculty in the "Culture, Ideology and Social Change in America" program.

The third part of this program history effort came with the hiring of a consultant, Tom Maddox, to evaluate the RULE and non-RULE program histories.

Tom read all histories written about Evergreen programs and contracts (and every program in Evergreen history is supposed to have something written about it by its faculty); he concluded that the average quality of history is quite poor. But these histories are our only institutionalized memory system directed toward the substance of the educational process (student and faculty evaluations have a different focus). He concluded that they ought to be improved, Evergreen-style, by stimulating and supporting faculty in efforts to say what can be learned from their programs. The report is available from the Deans, and is a thoughtful and incisive discussion of the role of history in institutional evaluation.

8. Seminars. When faculty members say they have great seminars, are they telling the truth, or just trying to look good? How can a

seminar be run more effectively? What range of purposes and forms can seminars have? These were the sorts of questions that animated a series of discussions that Betsy Diffendal, Linda Kahan, Carol Spence and I had in 1975-76. We wrote several short papers about seminar-ing, did a literature search but decided against going into active research. The papers have been recopied several times, though, and given to other people interested in seminars, including a pair of doctoral students interested in them as a dissertation topic.

9. Video, Panel Studies, and Evaluation. Several strands of projects crisscrossed here.

One began with the thought that education could be seen (and therefore evaluated) as a performance, and an ephemeral one at that. What was needed was a way of recording it so that it could be judged. Shortly thereafter, Collin Palmerston, a recent graduate, approached me to talk about the use of video media in evaluation. He was interested in films directed toward the general public and toward the College that would clarify Evergreen and the goals of higher education. I hired him and we began preparations.

The third strand came from my conviction that the demonstration of cause-and-effect relationships was crucial to evaluation that would stimulate improvement rather than defensiveness. In order to get data about why change occurred in students, I began making plans for a "panel study," in which one or more waves of students would be interviewed repeatedly, before arrival, shortly after arrival, and on into their years as students and then alumni.

These three strands combined as we discussed the possibilities of using video tape to record open-ended interviews.

We worked for a while on questions for surveys, finally realizing that neither plan would work without some sort of narrower focus or set of foci. A set of project descriptions were prepared, each centered on some particular Evergreen question; each description included an explanation of the concept, the media in which the study's results would be reported (print or video), and sample questions for interviewing.

The study plans were submitted to the Administration with the suggestion that a committee be convened, if only for one meeting, to set priorities, since Evergreen lacked the resources to sponsor all the studies.

The meeting was never called, and the project was forced to stop. The problem statements became the basis for the student research strategy, however, so the time was well-spent. (See #21 below)

10. Craftsmanship Program. I sat in twice with Jim Gulden's program in craftsmanship and have been told that I was of some assistance in helping that program become clearer on goals and strategies. At any rate, it was fun.

11. Educational Demand and the Shape of the Curriculum. In fall 1975, Dean Lynn Patterson convened a task force to gather information on student curriculum preferences; the information was to be used to solicit and select proposals for programs for 1976-77. Several such surveys had been done in the past, all without useful results so far as we could find. Evergreeners do not have a language with the kind of words that would allow students to describe what they want in terms useful for program planning; the past surveys had no way of detecting the elasticity of demand,

either.³

One way out would be to assume that faculty are already getting information on student desires and that the shape of demand changes slowly enough so that the curriculum is able to keep pace. If that were true no student survey would be needed. It would be easy to do a study to discover whether demand was changing unpredictably in relation to change in the curriculum. I was unable to find a research partner for such a study, however, and it was not what the committee had been charged to do, either, so it has not been done.

Instead, after the curriculum had been designed in a preliminary way, Dean Rob Knapp presented it to students for an expression of opinions, which were used in final planning. This strategy provides the language necessary for specific comments.

12. "Foundations of Natural Science." This program has been the subject of a lot of evaluative discussion, starting in 1975-76 when a discussion with its faculty convinced me that 1) they were sincere in saying that their teaching was integrated in an interdisciplinary way, and 2) they would be hard-pressed to prove that it was.

This is a real problem for Evergreen. How "interdisciplinary" is an Evergreen program as compared with a control group's curriculum at a "traditional school?" No one learns or is taught in a completely fragmented way, and without a language for describing teaching phenomena in terms of its "not-disciplinarity," it is very difficult to know why and

³Suppose that one hundred students say that they would like a program in health. How many of them would like a program in natural medicine? If a program were offered in the ecology of the Evergreen environment, how many would take that instead? If there are no health-related programs, how many would take other sorts of programs instead?

how students learn what they do. This larger problem of language is discussed in the next chapter of this report.

Linda Kahan, Fred Tabbutt (two members of the 1976-77 Foundations team) and I met regularly that year to talk about what they each meant by "interdisciplinarity" and how it might be measured. "Foundations" is a successor program to "Matter and Motion" so these discussions helped that study (#4 above) immeasurably.

We attempted to set up a research collaboration with one or two doctoral students from Oregon State University. The faculty at the university were enthusiastic, and several traveled to Evergreen to confer with us, but there were only two students at that point who were about to select dissertation topics and both ultimately chose other problems. This problem statement remains in our set of doctoral dissertation topics (See Appendix).

13. A Theory of Evergreen. This effort began in Fall 1975 and continued through to the present. Its latest product appears as Chapter IV of this report.

The effort was to find a way of tersely describing Evergreen in a goal-oriented fashion; I needed a structure to hang phenomena from, to organize my own thinking. This effort flowered in several directions, one of which is discussed immediately below. Another was a thought paper on ten different meanings of "interdisciplinarity" and their links to various philosophies of education.

14. Long Range Curriculum Planning Task Force. The Provost charged this group to reexamine Evergreen's curricular structures and planning process, and to make recommendations. I was half-asked and half-volunteered to serve as consultant-without-portfolio. I wanted to help the

group think of Evergreen as a goal-oriented, interdependent whole where appropriate, and to help them talk clearly and explicitly about their separate understandings of the College, its problems, and their causes.

The task force's major recommendation was the establishment of specialty areas as an aid to planning and publicity; these are analyzed in the next chapter. The report, which does begin with a discussion of College goals in rather specific terms, is available from the academic deans.

15. Multiple Modules. Mark Bonin, a student, wanted to take three modules (courses), a move which is against Evergreen policy. The Deans agreed to let me take him on if he would also write a paper analyzing why the three-module policy was or was not valid. Mark attacked the module policy, saying that the purpose of interdisciplinarity was to provide an education which was integrated from the point of view of the student; these three modules each met desires that he had, and since he was a person, they were, by definition, sufficiently integrated if he had good reason to want each one.

16. Oppositions and Evergreen. I sponsored two other students on individual contracts, each of whom saw Evergreen in terms of opposing values. George Wood wrote a paper on the genesis of the College while Michael de Angelo was interested in current practices.

17. "State in Contemporary Society." Margaret Gribskov and I met regularly last year over a long period of time to clarify the goals of this program for state workers. This year she and her team did extensive work on their own during the program this summer; she and Eleanor

Caine did a profile of the former students. The evaluation was funded under a grant she secured from the State. This is one of two cases where a person with whom I worked subsequently was successful in securing new money from outside to support evaluation work.

18. Evaluation Sections of Grant Proposals. One type of service I provided was working with grant-writers on the evaluation sections of their proposals: a CAI proposal on improving student writing by Jack Webb; a capital development proposal to the NSF CAUSE program submitted by a team led by Provost Ed Kormondy; a proposal to fund an Upward Bound Program at Evergreen.

19. Citizen's Evaluation Panel. An outside review panel of Washington citizens was convened to study Evergreen and make recommendations. I was asked to review their study plan and make suggestions (which I did); I also had the pleasure of sitting in on a couple of their sessions.

20. Evaluation Social. In Spring 1976, it seemed a good idea to let the various people working on evaluation projects know just how large a group they actually were. Virtually everyone at Evergreen has some part in institutional learning, but I couldn't afford to throw that large a party. I did manage to spot almost sixty faculty, students and staff who were working above and beyond the call. We had a sociable get-together to celebrate ourselves.

21. Problem Statements. This project grew out of the film project (#9 above) and out of a notion I had that Perry's scheme for intellectual and ethical development in the college years would be able to account for some of Evergreen's virtues and dilemmas; the only problem with the latter

was that it would take a major research effort over two years of preparation, execution and analysis--I didn't have that kind of time. That got me to thinking about finding a doctoral student to do the work as a dissertation and from there it was only a short step to using doctoral students for other intellectually important evaluation and research.

The first set of problem statements were translations of the film/interview study descriptions that Collin and I had created.

In Winter Quarter I began a program of faculty interviews that had two purposes, 1) to see how specific faculty could be about the educational goals that really meant something to them (this data is, in part, the basis for the description of Evergreen goals that appears in the next chapter), and 2) to get them to either agree to "sponsor" one of my projects or to create one of their own.

The set of projects appended to this report comes from both sources. I helped faculty to formulate problem statements by first getting them to talk about their goals, then about how they felt these goals were achieved (or blocked). We then tried to identify critical assumptions in their line of reasoning which they themselves felt were actually questionable in the light of their Evergreen experience.

That's what we were looking for: critical assumptions in current practice that experience indicated were actually questionable. If research could cast some light on that assumption, we were virtually guaranteed of some important findings.

As winter became spring (this year there wasn't much of a change), the balance shifted from question formulation to looking for question-answers and support for them.

The search for students took the form of solicitations to Evergreen students (many of the problems could be tackled, if only in a preliminary way, by undergraduates; there was virtually no interest, however. The effort was hampered by lack of publicity and will be repeated by the Deans in the fall) and to graduate students elsewhere, via their faculty. In some cases I visited campuses to speak with classes, seminars, and special meetings.

About a dozen students have expressed active interest and, of these, four or more are actively pursuing a course toward an Evergreen-centered doctoral dissertation. The four all have at least preliminary approval from relevant faculty; they come from the University of Washington, Stanford, Berkeley, and the University of Oregon and are thinking about projects on the history and viability of the Evergreen model; dilemmas associated with Evergreen as a nontraditional organization in a traditional environment; modes for improving the teaching of writing here; an evaluation of the Evergreen Outreach program at Clark College.

I wrote a grant proposal to the Research In Science Education program of the National Science Foundation; it asked for \$190,000 to implement and evaluate this concept of an education research agency. Preproposals have been sent to seven other funding sources; three replied that their present guidelines precluded considering proposals in this area, two said that it did not have sufficient national implications, one simply rejected it, and one is still thinking about it.

The concept does have implications for other schools because of its emphasis on identifying and testing local theory; the emphasis is on local implementability of findings rather than on theoretical generality and depth of understanding. The concept comes directly from traditional

engineering science which studied and used structural beams, for instance, long before it had a theoretical understanding of why beams behave as they do.

Nonetheless if Evergreen is going to test its own theories, it appears likely that the College will have to provide at least the seed money for dissertations and student projects from internal funds (either state-provided or from outside donations).

In the meantime the RULE grant and Evergreen funds should be sufficient for the four proposals now anticipated.

22. Self-Paced Learning. The RULE grant supported a large investment in the production of new self-paced learning units (SPLUs).

In Summer 1976, Byron Youtz asked me to talk to the SPLU writers who were almost finished with their work and were ready to think about evaluation. This was probably a bad time to begin, since people were already committed to their products, behind schedule and tired. Nonetheless I worked with three of them on feedback questionnaires, and with a fourth on a literature search for evaluation material related to self-paced learning.

In 1976-77, planning went forward for a summer conference on self-paced learning. I suggested that one of the speakers deal with evaluation techniques and that another review education research that bore on the construction and evaluation of SPLUs; Michael Scriven of Berkeley seemed a good candidate and he located Barbara Davis who wrote a review paper. Scriven's presentation (including Barbara's paper), was, I'm told, was the hit of the conference. Thank you, Barbara and Michael.

23. Admissions Office. One of the continuing challenges of thinking about improving Evergreen's institutional learning capability is "Who's going to do it?" Expert question-answering capabilities must be provided for at least some types of questions; there are some tasks that students just can't do, for lack of time or expertise or because the intellectual payoff isn't there.

One natural site for institutional research is the Admissions Office. I took part in the search for a new Admissions Director last year and lobbied for candidates with the background and inclination to ask good questions and do real research to get the answers.

Greg Vermillion was one of those, and since being hired has gotten studies underway on student origins, why some students choose not to come after being admitted, present academic standing of students, the progress of fifteen area students who are first year students, the effectiveness of the supplementary admissions form, and the effectiveness of Admissions Office publications. He has recently resigned to take a job in industry, however.

24. COG III and the Impact of Quaker Institutions. The newest Committee on Governance failed to explain why it was advocating "constituencies" in its draft document, and this stimulated me to write them a letter and to talk with them about the virtues of clarity. I cited research indicating how few colleges seem to have any real impact on their students (ordinarily, research indicates, the quality of a school has little impact on how much undergraduates learn), but that religiously-affiliated colleges do seem to often have an impact, and of these the Quaker-affiliated schools seem to be the one type whose impact is toward

scholarship. This is because the press toward "Quaker values" pervades not only almost every classroom, but the rest of the campus as well. COG III is as much a part of the Evergreen educational process as a seminar or a faculty meeting, and the ways that the College "learns" ought to exemplify the ways we would like to see students learn. Thus: reason rigorously!

25. Hiring New Faculty and a New President. Since good question-askers are needed throughout the College if it is to be able to improve itself. I wrote a memo to the faculty-hiring task force, outlining my notion of how one would recognize such a paragon in an interview. I was preparing a similar memo to the Presidential Search Committee but they heard about it and selected Dan Evans as new President so they wouldn't have to write back. I substituted a talk with the new President, instead.

26. Impacts of the Advanced Specialty Areas. Mike Beug wanted to know whether the new specialty areas were on the way to becoming disciplinary departments. The first step was to find out if faculty were grouping into disciplinary clumps in the meetings they chose to attend; Evergreen had not been keeping track of which faculty were involved with which area so Betty Muncton, our secretary and factotum, did a survey of the various "convenors." The areas were indeed all interdivisional and some faculty, though not many, are active in more than one area.

27. Evaluation for Curriculum Development. In the first year a letter was sent to all faculty offering RULE support for worthwhile evaluation and education research projects. There were no takers. In the second year three such grants were awarded for summer studies. Don Finkel

was supported in a writeup of work he had done at the University of Washington and at Evergreen on a workshop mode of instruction; the evaluation, similar to a program history, was a description of the method and a reflection on its strengths and weaknesses.

Betsy Diffendal collected data on the experiences of Native American students at Evergreen for use in planning for the Native American Specialty Area; it is expected that her work will also be a model for evaluation and curriculum planning in other specialty areas.

Alan Nasser noticed the similarity between research for curriculum development and research for curriculum evaluation. Money from the RULE grant was used to support a trip East where he evaluated two programs in Political Economy; the information should be of use in the new Political Economy specialty area and in the evaluation of the program here.

28. Office of Research. Evergreen will continue to waste opportunities to learn about itself until it has a specialist in higher education, evaluation, and organizations, at least part of whose job is to answer such questions. After Dan Evans took over as President and as the College prepared to figure out how to spend the reduced budget allotted by the legislature, I prepared a position paper arguing the merits of this way of spending the tax dollar. Request denied. The paper is appended to this report. (The Legislature has now turned down specific requests for money for institutional research for four straight biennia, has funded a study of Evergreen out of the Council for Postsecondary Education instead, and has in general both demanded that Evergreen learn about itself and discouraged the process simultaneously by making it a high-risk proposition. Evergreen is the only senior institution in the

state without an institutional research operation.)

29. Evaluating the Evaluation Consultant Model. As my own role became more defined, the question arose, "Just how successful is this strategy as a way of improving an institution's learning capacity?"

The first move to get some information was to include that question as one of the problem statements being sent to dissertation students.

Second, Russ Lidman and I had some preliminary conversations on a possible two week summer study by him about the role. We concluded it wasn't feasible during the summer.

Third, Carl Slawski, an associate professor at California State University at Long Beach, visited Evergreen for a month this summer. He drafted a pair of evaluation surveys that could be used to gauge the success of my efforts, gave some suggestions on the problem statements, and wrote a short guide for Evergreen newcomers on how to quickly get ready to do research (the paper is appended). We provided office space, phone, supplies.

30. Conferences. Margaret Gribskov, Collin Palmerston and I attended the annual meeting of the Washington Education Research Association, which, unfortunately, was devoted almost entirely to public school matters. I was invited to give a paper at the annual meeting of the Association for Institutional Research in Montreal on the dilemma method of institutional research (which was used to produce the model described in the next chapter). I also attended the annual meeting of the Society of College and University Planners in Seattle this year, which was perhaps the best of the three. I gave oral summaries of the better papers at each of the last two conferences for interested Evergreeners.

31. Miscellaneous. A number of projects are too small to report separately, too varied for generalization: helping one faculty member clarify a program proposal's educational goals, helping a student plan evaluation for an individual contract, talking with the Director of Computer Services about the evaluation of a potential computer-assisted instruction system, a series of conversations about how the external credit operation might be evaluated, helping to evaluate the need for an Evergreen graduate program.

32. Stillborns. In addition to these foregoing projects all of which had results of one sort or another, another ten failed to pan out or didn't get far enough (yet). Among these: an effort to get faculty to collaborate across program lines on evaluation projects of importance to both programs (e.g. in basic programs which all have similar goals but often differing strategies); a project initiated by Dan Ahks to study the attraction and impact of Evergreen on working class students; a set of columns for the Cooper Point Journal; attempt to find programs interested in using a test of skills of scientific thinking; a set of essays for programs on how to set up self-evaluation processes; a study of difficulties in learning economics in a coordinated study.

One non-project that deserves special mention was an effort to design an institutional learning inventory.

It was soon apparent that one way to improve an institutions's learning capacity would be to regularly measure that capacity: a GNP-like index of organized learning capability. Such a tool would have many applications: studies of the impacts of specific interventions (like hiring me), raising organizational consciousness about the nature and

importance of learning, experiments with different organizational structures, and so on.

The effort was abandoned when it became clear that it would take several years of use and refinement before really bearing fruit; my term of office was two years and with no Office of Research the development of such a tool would be wasted effort.

APPENDIX I. PROBLEM STATEMENTS

This section comprises a set of the problem statements formulated for use by students at Evergreen and elsewhere. Their purpose and history is described in Volume 1 of this report, and in Appendix VI ("Policies and Procedures," a document sent to potential researchers).

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT: College Structure and Organizational Fragmentation

OBJECTIVE: (By fragmentation, I mean three things:

1. Heterogeneity of academic values and languages that blocks
 - a. interdisciplinary cooperation and
 - b. shared judgments (due to a lack of shared standards) about how good or bad an innovation is
2. Lack of organizational cohesion, leading to decisionmaking based not on college-wide criteria but on departmental or divisional grounds.)
3. A lack of interpersonal contact. This affects not only communications and formal coordination, but also an organization's capacity to handle problems without rules. (e.g. if there are shared values (#1 above) and if enough people are visible to enough other people, deviation can be suppressed without formal procedures. This can be vital if an organization wishes to maintain faculty autonomy and professionalism. (Differentiating between deviation and innovation is another issue entirely.))

Evergreen has dispensed with departments and has adopted a policy of annual changes in its curriculum in order to promote interdisciplinary and organizational integration.

Evergreen faculty were (self) selected and socialized in the traditional system, however, and the College does have a full-time program system (which means that faculty teach only one thing at a time, and students take only one program or contract at a time for up to a full academic year. Evergreen is, in a sense, a college of small, temporary departments). These two factors might promote fragmentation.

One speculation is that the College is becoming an academic community that is increasingly unfragmented as its people get to know each other.

Another opposite speculation is that the faculty is becoming alienated with no allegiances or common values at all; since every attempt at making ties is broken up by annual program change, they gradually withdraw altogether.

What is actually happening? How does Evergreen look alongside other, more traditionally organized colleges of similar size and age? What accounts for the differences and similarities? What kind of theories of academic organization can be induced from this data?

STRATEGY: This is wide-open. Some sort of survey methodology would certainly have to be a part of the strategy in order to get comparable data; I suspect that some degree of close observation (interviews, participant observation) would be needed to get behind this data.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Doctoral student in higher education, management, sociology, etc.

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROBLEM STATEMENT: What are the implications of Evergreen's changing enrollment profile?

OBJECTIVE: The average age of Evergreen students is rising, while the number of students coming to the College directly out of high school is declining. Growth is coming from transfer students. Do these various student groups have different learning styles? Different stay times? What do these patterns indicate about admissions policy and curriculum planning?

STRATEGY: Some pencil and paper work with existing records should give some first approximate answers to these questions. What are the patterns of programs taken and time stayed, when one compares these several groups?

These findings could be augmented by a survey of samples from each group.

One hypothesis that is particularly worrisome is that the older students are less inclined to take and to stay in the broad, theme-centered coordinated studies, and they tend to more disciplinary group contracts and individual contracts.

If that turns out to be true, then a second study could be launched to find out why and indicate what sorts of not-disciplinary, full-time, freedom-emphasizing, group-centered programs might be especially attractive to older students.

STAFF CONTACT: (none so far; call Dean Rob Knapp, Lib 2207; 866-6521)

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: Each year since its founding, fewer first year students have come to Evergreen straight from high school; the highest enrollment of 19 year olds was in the first full year of operation. Their numbers have been declining at the same time as growing numbers of transfer students have almost constantly boosted Evergreen's total enrollment. This year, with a new Director of Admissions, perhaps an even more vigorous push was made for high school seniors, yet next year's numbers are now projected to reach a new low.

What is going on? What policy options are open?

STRATEGY: Four hypotheses seem capable of accounting for this differential, and each has a different implication:

1. Nineteen year olds with no college behind them do not have as satisfactory* an experience as transfer students do. The dissatisfied students then often tell their friends and counsellors, and the net result is declining enrollment from those high schools. Policy implication: do research to discover why those students have relatively bad experiences, and then do something about it: either by changing the education or the admissions policy.
2. The second hypothesis is that no one has a very satisfactory experience at Evergreen, as compared with other colleges. The only reason transfer students keep coming is that the previous, dissatisfied transfer students are not as likely to report back to their school of origin as are dissatisfied high school graduates. Both groups are unhappy, in other words, but only one group squeals. Policy implication: do research to discover exactly what is going on, and then make changes in the Evergreen education or the admissions policy (very likely a different set of changes than if #1 were true.)

* "Satisfactory" of course has nothing to do with the quality of education received, just with the student's perception of its quality and of how enjoyable the college life is (except that if the student leaves the school, the education won't be "received" at all).

3. Hypothesis #3 is that Evergreen has an unjustifiably bad reputation among high school students, their counselors and/or their parents, due to rumors, adult prejudices, or the news media. If the students do come to Evergreen, they then are likely to have good experiences but the message does not get back powerfully enough to affect the powers-to-be. Transfer students come to Evergreen in increasing numbers because they are out from under the parental thumb or because Evergreen is known more accurately in other postsecondary institutions. Policy implication: publicity and admissions procedures targeted to counter-act the specifics of the bad reputation.
4. Hypothesis #4 states that high school students' values and desires are changing and that, increasingly, they do not want what Evergreen offers. They discover that Evergreen is not for them simply by reading its publicity, listening to Evergreen and high school counselors, and so on. Feedback from alumni simply reinforces what they already know: Evergreen does not offer what they want. Transfer students, on the other hand, have different desires and Evergreen tends to be more attractive for them. Policy implication: Same as for #1.

So which of these four is operating here?

Evergreen already has four bodies of data which promise to be of use in deciding which of these four hypotheses is more correct: records of how many students come from which high schools over the years; records of length of stay and sequences of programs taken by students of various ages and admissions backgrounds; student narrative transcripts which include the faculty and student evaluations of that quarter's experience; Admissions Office records of visits and publicity.

- A. School of origin: if one looks at high school (or college) of origin over time for all students, several patterns are possible:
 - a. A number of schools send steadily large or increasing numbers of students. This pattern would tend to rule out Hypotheses #1, #2 and #4 (since no one seems to be going back to those schools to tell them how lousy Evergreen is). Hypothesis #3 seems to be operating, since steady feeder schools are probably the result of good feedback; the decline in 19 year old enrollment is coming from schools that never sent enough students to Evergreen to get that good message back. Hypothesis #3 would be further strengthened if the feeder schools were closer than average to Evergreen, since student feedback seems more likely to closer schools.
 - b. On the other hand, if few or no schools are steady feeders and if the total number of schools is stable or increasing each year, that would tend to rule out Hypothesis #3 and #4 (presumably bad reputation would result in a declining number of schools) and consequently to favor #1 and #2

(something must be causing the decline, and if it isn't #3 or #4, it must be #1 and/or #2). If pattern b is found for high schools but not colleges, Hypothesis #1 is favored. If it is found both places, #2 is favored.

- c. Other patterns don't seem to let us discriminate between hypotheses. A declining number of schools and a declining number of feeders could be explained by any of the hypotheses, for instance. (So these data give us no way of detecting whether the decline is caused by Hypothesis #4.)
- B. Public data on length of stay and types of programs taken. If the attrition of recent high school grads is higher from Evergreen than from other colleges, it would be a sign that Hypothesis #3 may be untrue. (Since that hypothesis assumes that people who come have good experiences.) Similarly, if the ratio of high school attrition to transfer attrition is higher at Evergreen than elsewhere (showing that the former group is relatively more dissatisfied than the latter), Hypotheses #2 and #3 are more likely to be untrue.

If Hypotheses #1 or #2 were true, one might see a correlation between students dropping out and later declines in enrollment from their high school of origin. Such a correlation would support Hypotheses #1 and #2.

- C. Transcripts. Looking at transcripts may give a much more real view of how satisfactory an experience a student has had. Once again one would try to find a correlation between bad experiences and later declines in "volume of feed" from the old school.
- D. Records of how much admissions office investment has been put into various schools. This date, in combination with similar data from other, traditional colleges, should allow us to see whether hypothesis #4 is the most true one. If Evergreen is indeed facing a market that increasingly has not wanted what Evergreen advertises, then Evergreen's yield of students from schools it has canvassed should be consistently less than that for other schools of about Evergreen's age putting an equal investment into similar schools. Historical records should indicate a decreasing return to such investments (e.g., if Evergreen put x amount of time and money into a particular sort of school several years ago, 10 students registered, whereas on the average last year for similar first visits to similar schools, the yield was 5 students). This data by itself is not inconsistent with Hypothesis #3, unfortunately. One more piece of the puzzle is needed: evidence that other schools profit from their admissions investments in ways that Evergreen doesn't. That would seem to prove that Evergreen is purposefully telling people things that they aren't interested in hearing.

All of these studies would be much more persuasive if parallel data

could be obtained from other schools, both traditional and nontraditional, that face markets similar to or the same as Evergreen's. Comparisons with other schools would allow us to gauge how many steady feeder schools we should expect to find, for instance.

These studies could be paralleled or followed by research aimed at getting new data to test and flesh out those four hypotheses.

One might start a polling operation in selected high schools and colleges, for instance, perhaps in cooperation with other institutions. In addition to the positive side-effects of getting the Evergreen name out and getting early warning about changes in the wants of prospective students, such a poll could be used to explore the changing nature of positive and negative opinions about the various colleges and universities. (Don't forget that Evergreen's "bad reputation" may simply be the accurate perception that it does not offer what certain groups of prospective students want. Hypothesis #1 may simply mean that students don't want what Evergreen offers, at least until after they have been exposed to a little more life or another institution.)

Also quite useful would be a panel study of groups of entering students. Two groups of high school graduates and two groups of transfers would be tracked. One group of each are tested rigorously and periodically re-interviewed, while the remaining two groups aren't even told that their public records are being watched. The purpose is to discover whether the high school graduates and the transfers have different types of experiences and, if so, whether a different admissions or internal process might result in greater satisfaction. It would be useful in this sort of study to test where entering and leaving students score on Perry's scale of intellectual and ethical development as there is reason to believe that cognitive structure may have something to do with high school graduates having less satisfactory experiences at Evergreen than at other colleges (or than transfer students here).

TYPE OF RESEARCHER WANTED: An Evergreen undergraduate, particularly if skilled and thoughtful about empirical research, could certainly handle almost all of this research project (except, possibly, the Perry study); the only limitation is time--there is an awful lot of work here, and a student team might well be a good idea. Graduate students could presumably discover more powerful approaches, and use this as a stepping off point to further thesis research.

8/31/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVES

1. To analyze the changing shape of certain of Evergreen's original ideals.
2. To summarize findings so that Evergreen faculty and students can make their own decisions about whether they are satisfied with the state of educational practice and the process of discourse that has led to it.
3. To draw some conclusions about the dynamics of change of educational philosophy within a single institution.
4. To improve, by all this, the quality of discourse and the rationality of change.

STRATEGY

Evergreen faculty founded the school with a number of ideals in mind which have grown, changed, withered, and sprouted in a variety of ways.

Each project would center on one of these ideas (a doctoral dissertation might trace a number of them). The first step might be interviews with founding faculty, probing the fantasies and dreams they had as they came. This could be augmented by and contrasted with a summary of education literature in the subject. Then the ideal would be traced to the present. The data would be a large set of historical case studies, each focusing on one faculty member in one program. In each case study, the objective would be to see in what way the ideal was implemented, and why. In many cases the research may indicate that ideals have flourished or withered without much direct evidence of their success or failure. A probing research methodology with several types of measures will be necessary.

Some of the ideals that are candidates for study:

- * co-learning: students and faculty learn new material together; student relates to faculty member as apprentice learner. This notion, strong at Evergreen's beginnings, is now the subject of laughter and derision, and is practiced little. Why?

- * uniform full-time quarter long blocks of credit: students were to get full credit for one quarter's work or no credit. Among the reasons for this were a desire to discourage competitiveness and to prevent students from concentrating on building credit totals instead of learning. This policy is largely intact with some exceptions that may be on the increase. The original philosophy behind it may not have fared so well, rendering the policy as a whole possibly brittle in the face of future challenge.
- * learning how to learn: this piece of rhetoric, cited as perhaps Evergreen's central goal, is apparently less in the air than it once was. Rather than developing and elaborating, it appears to be in a state of stasis or gradual decay; its central status as a goal is one of the chief rationale for many of Evergreen's educational structures and practices.
- * students teaching students: large full time programs were to cope with difficulties of student heterogeneity by using advanced students to help those less advanced. The state of implementation of this ideal is uncertain (i.e. I don't have any data on how widespread this practice is, whether it is on the rise or wane or is changing form, or why). What is happening, and why?
- * Seminars have been a central educational mode within Evergreen programs from the beginning. What were some of the original motives and forms? How have these changed over time, and why?
- * Affective learning was stressed in at least some of the original rhetoric. The student was to become a whole person. There were some negative experiences the first year and things changed. What happened? What are the present forms of this goal complex?

FACULTY CONTACT: Rudy Martin, Lab II 3269; 866-6759 or 866-6102 (messages).
or
Willi Unsoeld, Lab II 3261; 866-6763 or 866-6102 (messages).

2/16/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT: Student Change in Personality, Attitudes, Values

OBJECTIVE: Are Evergreen programs causing greater-than-usual student personality or attitude change (due to close faculty-student contact)? If not, why not?

STRATEGY: LeRoi Smith recently completed a study of undergraduates from Evergreen and Washington State University. Although his methods preclude any real generalizations about either school, his findings are intriguing. Briefly, students in an Evergreen program of several years ago were, a year after the pre-test, no less competitive than students from a course at WSU (even though Evergreen has a non-competitive narrative evaluation system); it was the WSU students who, overall, had a greater personality change, (measured on the Interpersonal Checklist, part of Leary's Interpersonal System of Personality) and it was the WSU students who registered as more open to talking about their personalities.

The problem could be attacked on a couple levels. A Master's student or advanced undergraduate could attempt a replication of the Smith study (available through Evergreen or WSU, it is a doctoral dissertation based on data from early in Evergreen's history.) A more ambitious researcher might use a larger battery of measures of personality and attitude, perhaps more closely coupled to academic goals; it would also be useful to do such a study in tandem with actual behavioral observation of subsamples from the institutions under study.

STAFF CONTACT: LeRoi M. Smith, III, Lab 3012; 866-6729

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: Does Evergreen limit students' possibilities for unexpected growth?

One might guess that a school without structured majors and with an emphasis on student control and responsibility might inadvertently prevent students from growing through having to do things they didn't know they were capable of. Another hypothesis, with an opposite prediction, would be that the student is quite capable of getting himself or herself into a situation like that and that the faculty role is key in simply making sure that the student doesn't back away from it; Evergreen might even foster more of this type growth than other schools.

STRATEGY: Survey graduating seniors of alumni of Evergreen, one or more schools based largely on individual learning contracts and student-structured curricula, and one or more "standard institutions" with majors and required subjects. Collect data on whether the students feel they learned or grew in unanticipated ways and what factors seem to be important in getting this experience of doing more than you thought yourself capable of: faculty role, program structure, experience of other students, expectations about achievement, etc.

FACULTY CONTACT: Russ Lidman, LAB I 2008; 866-6086

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: Discover whether and how a student culture forms in an Evergreen program* and mediates student learning.

The usual model for understanding and manipulating student learning includes only a single student; the effects of the classroom and living environments are omitted. Whether or not this is ordinarily adequate, there is reason to believe that at Evergreen, with its fulltime, longterm academic programs, what any student learns is affected by what classmates are learning.

There are a couple of ways in which that may occur, both of which are of interest: 1) a student culture forms a shared (and perhaps distorted or incorrect) understanding of what the 'message' of the program is, and suppresses deviation from that understanding, 2) a student or program culture forms and facilitates the group process of seminars.

The objective of this research is to learn about these phenomena in such a way as to enable faculty and students to do a better job of running a program, detecting the dysfunctions of such a culture and exploiting its possibilities.

STRATEGY: A number of styles of attack are possible, singly or in combination, drawn from sociology, anthropology, and psychology.

FACULTY CONTACT: Eric Larson; LAB II 2253; 866-6757 or 866-6102(messages).

*program - a full-time, quarter or year long course. Faculty teach only one at a time (usually in teams) and students take only one at a time.

8/31/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: Higher education leaves some of its graduates in a quandary: their attitude about what constitutes an acceptable job is incompatible with the jobs and ways of life offered them. The mismatch may be in terms of prestige, money, freedom, ability to use the talents they recognized and cultivated in college, ability to continue to live in the area of the college, and so on. Many, but not all, of these people also lack the capacity to somehow change their situation so that it is more satisfactory. Some lack the capacity to lower their own expectations so that they are satisfied with what is available.

Are Evergreen graduates more likely than graduates of other colleges to 1) find what they expect and/or 2) change the situation to suit their expectations, either by actually creating a niche, changing their new institutions, or traveling until they find a situation which suits them?

Are some Evergreen graduates more likely than others to find satisfaction in these ways, and, if so, what factors manipulable directly or indirectly by College administration, faculty and students seem able to make a difference?

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Master's and doctoral students desired.

FACULTY CONTACT: David Marr, LAB I 1010; 866-6764

9/1/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE #1: Borrow or develop measures of a person's ability to interpret intellectual issues from several sides and to develop a personal position that is strong enough to form a basis for argument and action.

STRATEGY: I suspect that several types of measures are available, represented by the work of Perry (INTELLECTUAL AND ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COLLEGE YEARS) and Heath (many books and articles, the most recent of which is "What the Enduring Effects of Higher Education Tell Us About a Liberal Education," J HIGHER ED, XLVII:2,1976,173-190).

OBJECTIVE #2: Test the hypothesis that the Evergreen coordinated studies program is an exceptionally effective mode for fostering this type of capability.

OBJECTIVE #3: Test the hypothesis that the possession of this capability enables more, and more types of, self-directed learning after college. My hunch is that there is a correlation between these two things but that the relationship is complex and interesting, not simple.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Doctoral student with interests in developmental psychology.

FACULTY CONTACT: Don Finkel, LAB I 1008; 866-6726

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: Test the hypothesis that a significant number of students either do not come to Evergreen because they systematically misunderstand what the school is about, or leave the school after a quarter or two for the same reason, and, further, to test the hypothesis that the reason for this misunderstanding has to do with the fundamentals of how they interpret the educational setting.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Graduate student or advanced undergraduate interested in quantitative methods and developmental psychology.

STRATEGY: The hypotheses are based on Perry's work on stages of intellectual and ethical development in the college years. Briefly, Perry and others have shown that college students progress through a sequence of ways of understanding the world, from a right/wrong dualism through multiplicity ("everyone has a right to his own opinion") to a balanced relativism in which several perspectives can be employed for learning and action. A person at a lower stage may systematically misperceive situations if the situations can only be correctly understood from a multiplistic viewpoint.

A typical Evergreen coordinated study for entering students is about as far as one can get from the situation where an authority tells students what is right and true. On the contrary these programs are interdisciplinary, emphasize the different ways of examining issues, and so on. The purpose of the project is to devise and use an interview technique capable of discriminating between Evergreen leavers (or non-comers) according to whether they are understanding what Evergreen is about, and whether cognitive structures are responsible.

FACULTY CONTACT: Don Finkel, LAB I 1008; 866-6726

9/1/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: To test the hypothesis that academic program objectives for intellectual growth are at best in a zero-sum game relationship with program objectives for personal or holistic growth.

The ideas here about the relationship between personal growth (a more differentiated and integrated personality, close friendships and love relationships, growing ability to relate to different types of people) and intellectual growth are varied: a positive relationship is often assumed in theory and not infrequently questioned in practice. Some people see personal growth as enabling intellectual growth, others feel that until personal baggage has been inspected and put aside that intellectual growth is hindered, and others that personal issues are irrelevant (like student time) to intellectual ones except as they demand resources that could be used for academic purposes, and others that personal issues are best dealt with if academically ignored.

The objective of this project is to provide insights that will be useful to faculty and/or students in the design and conduct of academic programs meant primarily to facilitate intellectual growth.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Given the ambient level of ignorance about this community, the question can be attacked at any level.

STRATEGY: A review and critique of the literature seems the first step. Second might come a review and critique of community wisdom on the subject. The third stage will probably be some form of educational experiment, although it could take other forms based on what will have been discovered in the early stages of the research.

FACULTY CONTACT: Mark Levensky, Lib. 2220; 866-6714 or 866-6385 (messages).

2/15/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: It is useful to try to educate college students to have a balanced approach to problem definition and solution, neither knee-jerk fast nor paralyzingly comprehensive and original.

A knee-jerk definition and solution is one in which old models are swiftly and uncritically applied, in spite of signs that a mismatch has been made -- the person is not looking for such mismatches and does not see them.

A paralyzingly comprehensive and original approach is one in which the historical and the narrow are scorned to such an extent that no approach is either original and creative enough nor comprehensive enough to deal with the problem in its full glory. In short, nothing ever quite gets done.

The central question for research is "To what extent can an educator deal with a "balanced approach to problems" as a single set of competences which can be learned in isolation from the particular problems to which they will later be applied?"

If this is a skill, the next questions are "To what extent do college students usually possess it, and can colleges help to make lasting changes in this competence?"

STRATEGY: Cognitive psychology and alumni interviews both seem to be good starting points in looking for an answer to the question of whether "a balanced approach to problems" can be usefully seen as a separable, learnable skill.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Graduate student and/or faculty. Some roles for undergraduates.

FACULTY CONTACT: Tom Foote, Com. 305

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: One reason why problem-defining and problem-solving are valued goals is that it is assumed that 1) they can be learned in a lasting and widely applicable way, and 2) they are survival skills in later life (e.g. that they enable promotion, raises in salary, or feelings of potency and productivity in standard or nonstandard career tracks).

The general question: are these assumptions correct?

It is important to test the first assumption simply because so much research has shown that various traditional goals of higher education are in fact not being fostered in the ways it was thought they were. I could believe it if new research demonstrated that the "skill" of problem-solving was in fact not influenced in more than a transient fashion by any schooling process tried; I could also believe the opposite.

Research has also shown that education is usually not well-correlated with anything that happens in later life, let alone occupational success. The statement that this particular result of education is in fact important later deserves to be challenged. Problem-solving skills may well be more important in some careers than in others.

STRATEGY: It is important to us that the projects output be believable and applicable in an Evergreen context. This means that problem-defining and problem-solving (or whatever set of constructs you substitute for these to denote this general type of activity) should be defined in a recognizable way and measured in a way that is seen as valid by Evergreeners.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Faculty member or graduate student in management, occupational sociology, education or cognitive psychology.

FACULTY CONTACT: Tom Foote, Com. 305

9/1/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: Explore the assumptions that students whose prime identification is with the natural sciences graduate from Evergreen knowing more unspecialized knowledge* (that is, having a deeper insight into basic scientific theory) and less specialized knowledge (that is, knowledge applicable only to a few situations) and also more capable of applying their unspecialized and specialized knowledge to problem-solving, and the assumption that this is a worthwhile goal.

Being audacious, I claim that undergraduates, for instance, don't need an introductory course to solid state physics if they really understand thermodynamics, quantum and classical mechanics and know what a crystal is.

STRATEGY: There are two aspects to this project: the assumption about what sorts of science "majors" are graduating from Evergreen and the assumption that this educational result would be a good one, at least as good if not better than others in the context of success in jobs, and entering and succeeding in graduate school. Both must be explored.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Doctoral student (or two).

FACULTY CONTACT: Rob Knapp, Lib. 2207; 866-6521

*compared to students of comparable aptitude graduating from other more traditionally organized schools.

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: To explore what might be called conceptual scientific thinking and its components, particularly as it is learned (and not learned) by women and Third World students.

Conceptual thinking is much harder to describe and measure than simple factual mastery, but it involves being able to use concepts in an insightful and powerful way, to predict what an experiment's results will be before doing it, to see analogies between types of phenomena, and so on.

There seem to be a number of elements needed to be able to do it: perhaps some generalized aptitudes, the living idea that it is possible in a given situation, facts and background to work with, a lack of anxiety that might otherwise keep one from taking necessary risks.

The objective of this project is explore this thought mode, do experiments, or devise tools so that Evergreen faculty will be significantly aided in their efforts to help students, particularly women and Third World students, in learning to think in this way.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: A woman or Third World graduate student would be preferred as such a person is more likely to have had the kind of problems that this research revolves around.

FACULTY CONTACT: Kaye V. Ladd, Lab II 3272; 866-6337 or 866-6102 (messages).

2/17/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: To help faculty in a program like "Foundations of Natural Science" to improve their perceptions of what is happening when some students claim that they cannot understand a point linking two disciplines without a thorough understanding of each while the faculty believe that they are quite capable of understanding said point.* Are the students correct in saying that, essentially, they really do not have the tools to understand the point properly (perceptual, conceptual, factual)? Does the explanation have something to do with anxiety? What options are open to faculty and students to diagnose the situation and design a more successful learning interaction?

STRATEGY: The first step, after making contact with a program, might be a continuing series of interviews with students in the program. (This project appears conceptually quite close to the "conceptual scientific thinking" project.)

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Someone familiar enough with program content to be able to create hypotheses about the nature of the problem from subtle data in student responses, and capable of working at a high level of trust with both faculty and students. Imagination and skills in appropriate forms of hypothesis testing also requisite.

FACULTY CONTACT: Kaye V. Ladd, Lab II 3272; 866-6337 or 866-6102 (messages).

*for instance, a faculty member in one program wanted to illustrate that chemistry could be used to explain biological phenomena and attempted to use the example of a cell membrane's function. A portion of the class objected on the grounds that they did not yet know about cells, and the relation of membranes to cells.

2/17/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: To evaluate the interaction of student skills in self-directed learning and cooperative learning with the success of some strategies for college mathematics education.

It seems reasonable to conjecture that Evergreen students may have a different success rate in using some innovative learning strategies in college level mathematics, such as self-paced learning units or "group learning." In group learning, students learn cooperatively in small groups; the faculty do not lecture but instead circulate to help people over the rough spots in the books they use. Differential success rates seems a reasonable assumption because Evergreen claims to be educating students to take control over their own learning and to learn in groups; one would expect to find students with some Evergreen education to be more competent at learning math in these ways, than students from other schools with similar math aptitude.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Doctoral student, in psychology or (science) education preferrably.

STRATEGY: This could take the form of a multi-school educational experiment in which a given body of mathematics material is learned by students from each school using the experimental methods or the traditional method of lecture/recitation.

Depending on the progress of other research here, there may or may not be measures of student competence in self-directed learning and cooperative learning available.

FACULTY CONTACT: George Dimitroff, Lab 2009; 866-6701 or 866-6600 (messages).

2/16/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: To test a new method of teaching science.

This is a wide-open project. You may have an idea, or have read about one, for more effectively teaching science. Evergreen is the experimental college for the State and we would like to be available as a site for educational experiments that are compatible with our existing structures (to give some negative examples, we are not able to be a site for experiments that assume a student body larger than 3,000 students or a multitude of courses, since we have a student body of 2,600 and most of our curriculum is in the form of full-time programs).

The important thing is that we learn something useful from your project.

STRATEGY: Up to you, of course. It must center on effective evaluation of the innovation.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Doctoral or master's student.

FACULTY CONTACT: Jeff Kelly, Lab I 3010; 866-6728

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: To increase faculty and student ability to see and use different forms of seminar behaviors as instrumentalities. What are their operating characteristics, the types of learning that they encourage, their dilemmas?

Seminars are so widely used at Evergreen that student skills in using them have been identified with the verb form "to seminar." But what is seminarng? Or, more properly, what are the various kinds of behaviors that are labeled seminarng skills and seminar forms good for?

Too often now seminars are treated as goals (Well this is Evergreen -- of course your program has to have seminars, and they had better be good!) and given an emotional loading that is probably destructive. Under this pressure the different forms of "seminarng" have continued to differentiate until now all that the extremes have in common is that the faculty member usually remains seated during the process.

The objective of this project is to provide hard information that will help us to use seminars, rather than vice versa. Particular types of information: actual learning that is facilitated by various forms and skills; operating characteristics; dilemmas (any format that is focused on doing one thing well will, in consequence, do other things less well and cause certain types of characteristic problems).

STRATEGY: Steve Ehrmann, our consultant, suggests beginning with anthropological observation and faculty interviews to identify different types of seminars. (This could be a separate project.) The next step could be a goal-free evaluation of one or more of the forms that have been identified.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: For the whole thing, a doctoral student. For the first piece, graduate or advanced undergraduate.

FACULTY CONTACT: Richard Alexander, Lib. 1605; 866-6597 or 866-6605 (messages).

2/16/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: Evaluate the operating characteristics and uses of dream reflection seminars. This learning mode was developed at Evergreen. Students write about recent dreams and then discuss their writings. These seminars usually take place once or twice a week as part of a larger program.

STRATEGY: The description of dream reflection seminars is rather short because it strikes me that goal-free evaluation might be the most appropriate technique to use, and the first requisite of that procedure is that the evaluator not know what the goals of the "treatment" are.

Goal-free evaluation involves deliberately insulating the evaluator or researcher from the intended goal of the "treatment" in order to render him more sensitive to unanticipated impacts. It is by no means required for this project - it just struck me (Steve Ehrmann) that it might be applicable and interesting here.

The dissertation may take the form simply of the evaluation but it would probably be more useful if the evaluation were used to set certain research questions which were then pursued. Alternatively these questions could be the subject for later research or theses.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Doctoral student.

FACULTY CONTACT: Richard Jones, LAB 1003; 866-6004 or 866-6483 (messages).

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: To discover what "modules" really are. In the last couple years the College has begun to offer part-time learning experiences called modules to complement its normal, full-time, programs. There has been a fair amount of disagreement as to whether modules, as now offered and used, are courses, pure and simple, or whether they are (or are meant to be) something different. People taking the latter stand say that they are meant to be less intensive and less encompassing as a course, since they are meant as adjuncts to full-time programs to serve the purpose of special skill training or as a community service for people who want part-time education. But what is really happening? The College has brought in many part-time faculty to teach modules and many students take them. What are their motives, perceptions of what is happening.

STRATEGY: Several approaches would be of use here, including the anthropological. I would like to see some grounded hypotheses created, and tested.

12/2/76

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE #1: Relate extent to which progress on various measures of learning in natural and social science is influenced by level of competence in critical reading, writing, and seminarng. The object is to contribute some information to the debate over what "basic programs" ought to be doing, and what the prerequisites for programs ought to be. This ought to be coupled to a second project:

OBJECTIVE #2: Study the various ways in which students at Evergreen improve their skills of reading, writing, and seminarng in the threshold range (i.e. the skill range between the level of the less skilled students admitted and the level desired for progress in more advanced programs). What sorts of learning modes seem to work best for various types of entering students who need to learn in these areas.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: This sounds like doctoral dissertation material to me. Some of our own faculty might begin the process by seminarng on what shape the research ought to take. It is likely to be a series of projects that will, I hope, build on one another; the domain is large.

STRATEGIES: for objectives #2, the first priority will be to simply identify a good range of measures of "various types of learning in the natural and social sciences" (I specify the natural and social sciences for relatively arbitrary reasons, in part because of their apparent dissimilarity from the basic skills, the connection to humanities being more obvious, and in part because the RULE grant which sponsors my work at Evergreen comes from the National Science Foundation and not from either of the National Endowments).

FACULTY CONTACT: Jim Gulden, Lab 3020; 866-6734 or 866-6700 (messages).

11/11/76

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: What basic themes appeal so much to given types of entering students that fascinating programs can be organized around them?

Each year Evergreen offers a set of basic coordinated studies programs for entering students (many are at the traditional age; many are older). These programs are meant to accomplish a set of educational objectives including: help students develop an enthusiasm for learning, test out interests and abilities in different areas, see which talents or desires begin to develop into real strengths, find out what college is good for, learn how to organize college resources to achieve personal goals, learn how to set personal goals and work toward them, and acquire adequate levels of several basic learning skills: reading critically, writing, seminarizing (thinking and acting through and as a group). None of these objectives makes reference to content or theme, but it seems probable that not all content is equally good as a medium for learning these objectives.

Coordinated studies are organized around central themes or problems rather than along disciplinary lines. On the contrary, the theme is usually chosen so that its study will require work in a number of disciplines.

Students are interested in and excited by some themes and central elements more than by others. For instance, in one program, evaluations at the end of first quarter revealed student interest to have been uniformly piqued by the topic of ethnocentrism which had only been casually introduced, once, by a guest speaker.

One way out of this quandary is to let students design program content. Not all entering students, by any means, either want that or are capable of it. In particular one's interest and enthusiasm can't be aroused by something one has personally never heard of before.

Since arousing student enthusiasm for learning is an important goal of these programs, the question is an important one: what knowledge or tools can Evergreen faculty use to create program designs that will make it more likely that the learning objectives will be met?

STRATEGY: One could begin by assessing the seriousness of the problem. To what extent and in what ways are present objectives not being met due to a lack of student interest in basic program themes?

A dissertation might consist of a validated set of tools that would help a faculty team more speedily perceive which of a set of possible themes or content elements are likely to appeal to a particular set of students. Another kind of dissertation might shoot for a stable set of themes or content elements that seem likely to appeal to certain types of students. It seems to me that the initial stages of research would be the same in either case and that initial findings will indicate which road to take.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: Doctoral student. A contract student or Master's student could do the initial needs assessment.

FACULTY CONTACT: Thad Curtz, Sem. 3109; 866-6770

9/1/77

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: Provide information that Evergreen, other institutions of higher education, and the State of Washington could use in planning offerings needed by Native Americans.

STRATEGY: One piece of the project would be a statewide inventory of formal programs, including data on enrollment, source of support, types of curricular options, program histories, and other institutional information that would allow a view of the ecology of resources already available. With this type of overview, a given institution would be better able to find a niche.

A second piece would concentrate on patterns of enrollment by Native Americans in various formal programs, whether designed for Native Americans or not, as a means of gauging what types of education are desired at the moment, and which patterns have been present in the past.

A third subproject would be a survey of quasi-formal and informal programs (e.g. a grant-supported workshop for tribal chairpersons on aboriginal rights). Which ones are credit-generating? At what level? Sources of support? Level of use?

The summary analysis would take in all this data to depict the educational resources available and, by inference, not available, analyzing prices, barriers to access, needs for new programs and so on.

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: The project as a whole is a doctoral scale enterprise but it might also be done as a set of smaller projects.

FACULTY CONTACT: Betsy Diffendal, Lib. 1403; 866-6335 or 866-6605 (messages).

The Evergreen State College

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Office of Educational Research
and Assistance

PROJECT

OBJECTIVE: To evaluate the role of "evaluation consultant" as it has evolved at The Evergreen State College so that colleges can better understand when a consultant or staff member of this type may be of value; to evaluate the proficiency with which Stephen C. Ehrmann has filled the role.

These two tasks are inseparable simply because, to date, no other example of this brand of beast has been found, so the characteristic of the role cannot be entirely separated from the performance of this particular role-holder.

STRATEGY: The objective of the role is to help improve people's capacity to formulate their "dreams" as clearly and strikingly as possible, to perceive in what ways they are or are not coming true, and to act when necessary to change the educational process or the dreams. Let's call this larger process institutional learning since it refers to the institution's capacity to learn to be a more effective educator.

The role has two sides: first develop a system, then operate within it. The system is a trading relationship between actors engaged in the day-to-day work of education and inquirers engaged in clarifying, evaluating, and suggesting improvements in that system. The role of the evaluation consultant is to promote trade, so that the educators (faculty, students and staff) can operate with greater integrity and confidence while the researchers can effectively help to improve the state of theory and art. That's the dream, at any rate.

The role is implemented through: discovering or inventing crucial questions about education and institutional learning at Evergreen; help others to ask better questions; make sure that as many important questions as possible are answered; help improve available resources for answering future questions.

Some of these crucial questions are described in "project sheets" available from Steve Ehrmann.

Some of the attributes of the role: being treated in some respects as an outsider, in some as an insider; the need to develop authority based on knowledge, insight and/or wisdom (as opposed to power); the ability to relate as a colleague and gentle critic to faculty, staff,

and students; ties to the education research and evaluation community.

STRATEGY: Some crucial questions that might be addressed in this piece of research:

- a. Does the theory or the history of practice of evaluation, education research, or organizational organizations indicate any fatal flaws, serious dilemmas, or likely puzzles in this model of how to intervene constructively in a college? What attributes ought a faculty to have if this kind of endeavor is to succeed? an administration? How is faculty/administration polarization likely to affect the process of improving education?
- b. Are Evergreeners today seeing progress as possible in education? Rational inquiry and clear dialogue as instrumental in such dialogue? What is their opinion of rational basis for claims made about why one should go through higher education. If the answer to the first two is "yes" and the third "damn little", there are grounds for thinking further progress on this tack is possible.
- c. Do people perceive an increased possibility that their questions about education can be answered?
- d. Do people feel that their own contributions to education at Evergreen have improved as a direct or indirect result of the presence of the evaluation consultant?

TYPE OF RESEARCHER NEEDED: This could be done by a graduate student, faculty member, or undergraduates on individual contract. Speed in getting started is essential since Steve Ehrmann may not be in the area after Summer 1977.

FACULTY CONTACT: Russ Lidman, LAB I 2008; 866-4086

9/1/77

APPENDIX II

THE EVERGREEN EDUCATION RESEARCH AGENCY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

April 27, 1977

PURPOSE: The Evergreen State College wishes to encourage and support educational and institutional research whose outcomes will be useful for this College.

SUMMARY OF PROCESS: Evergreen faculty, staff, students and the agency director create problem statements. Research proposals, for use on these and other problems, are solicited from graduate students and faculty at universities and from our own students and staff. The College, through the agency, supports the direct expenses of the researcher or offers a seed grant.

SIZE OF GRANTS: Grants for dissertations and projects of greater magnitude are expected to average \$1,000 per project. Smaller pieces of research, including interview programs and literature searches, will also be supported at an average level of \$2-300 for direct expenses. Travel expenses will be supported. Per diem expenses will not normally be supported, but the College and its staff will make every effort to defray these where possible (for instance by putting up visitors in people's homes) and special cases will be listened to.

STAFF CONTACTS: For each project an Evergreen staff member will act as contact. The role of the staff contact during early stages is to provide some initial insight into the nature of the problem and of Evergreen. During latter stages the contact will keep up with project progress and will be the person to whom other Evergreeners can look for information about the project. At all stages the staff contact will have the responsibility of helping the student and his committee

to define and redefine the project so that its outcomes will be of use to Evergreen.

COORDINATION: Steve Ehrmann, evaluation consultant to the College, will be "agency director" and have responsibility for coordinating the program until August 15. Thereafter operational coordination will be in the hands of Assistant Dean Rob Knapp, who will have been kept up to date on progress to that point. The agency director will report to Vice-President and Provost Ed Kormondy who will have overall responsibility for policy. Decisions about the giving of grants will be made by a small committee which will include at least the agency director, the director of the RULE Grant, and at least one other faculty member.

CRITERIA FOR AWARDING OF GRANTS: The prime criterion will be the expected value of project results for the College, expected value being a function of the clarity, likelihood and magnitude of predicted implications for educational practice at the College. (Magnitude of value means "net"; benefits relative to costs.)

In case of close calls between proposals, degree of theoretical importance, our desire to set up longterm symbiotic relationships with several institutions¹, and considerations of equity² will all be secondary criteria.

¹ The latter criterion would be exemplified by a situation in which a decision must be made between two proposals with roughly equal expected values. One might have come from a nearby department that has already received three grants from us. The other might have come from a school that is further away and has never submitted a proposal before. The grant should be given to the school that is closer and has helped us more in the past. In this way we would try to build our relationship with them and increase the probability of their modifying their programs so that more of their students would be likely to do research of use to this College in the future. The important thing about this clause is its intent: we want to get more students and faculty doing this sort of thing in the long run.

² "Considerations of equity". If two proposals have roughly equal expected values, and one is from a person who has already invested time and effort in a pilot project, it does not seem fair to leave that person hanging without support to complete the full project, assuming there is still real expected value for the College.

STAGES OF A RESEARCH PROJECT

1. Problem is conceived, either at Evergreen or elsewhere.
2. Person who is vaguely considering becoming a researcher makes initial contacts with Evergreen. This can be done in any or all of the following ways: by a visit with the agency director; a visit to the Evergreen campus; visit with the staff contact for the problem; telephone conversations. In some cases, one or two Evergreen faculty may visit a campus to solicit advice on how to rework their problem statements. Student or faculty visits to Evergreen for purposes of reconnaissance will ordinarily not be financially supported unless an outcome useful to Evergreen is expected, in which case application through channels should be made; a visit is highly recommended if at all possible, particularly if field research is contemplated.
3. Once the researcher has decided to actually take at least a first step, she should write a proposal describing graphically what is to be done next and how. These proposals should receive prior approval from a student's graduate advisor or committee, and should include
 - 1) budget³ (including estimates of non-monetary costs to the College, including people's time and any anticipated mental anguish.)
 - 2) expected outcomes and values of the proposed work
 - 3) methods and schedule.Appropriate guidelines concerning use of human subjects should be cited and followed.

The proposal should be legible and exhibit the results of thought.

³ Budget items need not add up to the penny. We are mostly concerned with the bottom lines.

A student may wish to make a single proposal for the entire project, or to begin with a small piece of it (e.g. interview study to make a fuzzy concept more concrete; literature search); all support decisions will be made by the criteria described above.

4. Applications for support will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Available funds are limited so speed is a consideration. Processing of applications is expected to take about three weeks. If several students are known to be preparing proposals to do approximately the same project and if schedules permit, processing of the earlier applications will be delayed to permit the set to be evaluated together.

CORRESPONDENCE: All grant applications should be sent to the agency director, care of The Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington, 98505. Steve Ehrmann's phone number is (206)866-6292; Rob Knapp's is (206)866-6521. All Evergreen participants will accept collect calls; just say you are calling about education research.

APPENDIX III

EVERGREEN SHOULD ESTABLISH AN OFFICE OF RESEARCH

As Evaluation Consultant charged by the College to help improve Evergreen's capability to learn from its experience in natural and social science education, and in response to a request from Vice-President and Provost Edward J. Kormondy to examine the larger question of whether Evergreen should have an Office of Research, I recommend the establishment of an Office of Research.

The choice is Evergreen's however. The best way for me to inform your judgment at this point is to describe what the mission and activities of such an Office might be. That should give you something solid to balance against other ways of investing resources.

Mandate for the Evergreen Office of Research

HELP TO RATIONALLY INCREASE THE VISIBLE QUALITY OF EVERGREEN EDUCATIONS.

"Visible quality": without visibility of results, no one knows whether educations are good or bad. That is the present situation. And that means that an office of research must be committed not only to increasing the visibility of quality, but to improving quality itself. The two don't necessarily go together, since finding out that something is wrong is different from discovering how to set it right. But each project must hold the promise of both increased visibility and increased quality.

"Rationally": the major thrust of this office is to find and explore truth. That should be more important in a college than anywhere, and honest feedback is essential if Evergreen is to learn to improve itself. If the Office does not have a reputation for integrity, it won't be believed inside Evergreen when it has bad news nor outside Evergreen when it has good news.

"Help...Evergreen": the Office's mandate needs to be a wide one in two senses.

First, since it is responsible for visible improvement in the quality of Evergreen educations, the Office ought to be available to help any decisionmaker whose choices can affect that quality and that visibility: the President, faculty, staff, students, prospective students, legislators, the public.

Second, the scope of individual research or evaluation projects should not be artificially restricted to only the classroom or only overall statistics or only money. Since all those factors influence educations, their roles must be subject to comprehensive evaluation. One can't evaluate the success of the "Evergreen plan" without examining the role of the Admissions Office in selecting students and shaping their preconceptions. Similarly it would be destructive to evaluate the Admissions Office while ignoring its educational context.

Some Priority Projects and Functions

1. Operating responsibility for most of the data-gathering and research is, and should be, mostly decentralized: vested in the decisionmaking units that produce or use the data. A centralization of function would often slow down and distort the flow of useful information. A first priority of the Office of Research should be to help those units do a better job, for themselves and for one another. Is the Registrar's Office collecting all the data that the budgeting people will need for planning? If no one else has asked that question, the Director of Research should, and then help set up new arrangements if necessary.

2. There are other ways in which the Office can improve the functioning of a decentralized information and research system, and the common denominator of many of them is "investing in human capital." To make such a system work well requires lots of people who think truth is important and have the skills to discover it. There are two basic ways to get such people: bring them in from outside, and improve the people already inside. A Director of Research can help in both those processes by sitting on hiring DTFs, working with Admissions, lobbying for curricular changes, offering mini-courses in evaluation, circulating interesting pieces of research, and just talking at lunchtime. Collaborative research projects are also helpful (see final section).

The other (and, in the long run, more important) part of the Office's responsibilities is to undertake research that cannot be done

by existing units. This work will either be done by Office staff or by students (as doctoral dissertations, individual contracts, etc.).

Some examples (in no particular order):

3. Investigate the implications of the full-time program plan. Should Evergreen be publicly recommending that other schools adopt this scheme or considering substantive modifications to it here?

This is an excellent example of the kind of research that the Office should foster. This scheduling system is the keystone of a whole structure of facts about Evergreen, facts as diverse as narrative evaluation, team teaching, and the educational goals of inter-disciplinarity. It may also be linked to the difficulties in centralized planning and the decline in enrollment by students directly out of high school.

Research should be designed to help make the plan work but also to show whether the plan is truly a valuable alternative to the course system.

4. Carry out studies to make Evergreen more visible to itself. What educational goals are now being served by various programs and offices? Making the goal fabric explicit would give people an opportunity to rationally change it. (By "goals" I mean value-laden statements that are implicit in present student, faculty, and staff decisions about what not to do.)

5. Marketing and needs assessment. Is Evergreen serving groups of students that other educational institutions cannot serve? How can the College attract more such students? This information would be useful in the days ahead as traditional markets shrink; it is also important to know whom the College is not now serving well so that policy decisions can be made.
6. Provide information for special questions from outside that can not be answered by other offices. Provide spotcheck quality control on the integrity of information leaving the College.
7. A prospectus for potential Evergreen students. Provide hard, honest, useful information about Evergreen's strengths and its weaknesses to aid students in making decisions about whether to come. This kind of document should have the dividend of giving new students more realistic expectations of Evergreen.
8. Provide coordination and quality control in the evaluation of grants to the College (most grants and contracts have evaluation components these days, and gains are likely if some of the work can be centrally done).
9. Insure that data needed for future planning, management, and research are being collected and preserved. This implies keeping one eye directed toward the future, and acting as an early warning system for the College's decisionmakers.

Some Closing Words on Organization and Mission

An Office of Research could do all these things and more. It is probably evident by this time that covering all these bases will be rather difficult, particularly if the Office consists of only one professional.

Two routines that I have used as consultant may be helpful in expanding the range.

First, virtually all my work here has been done in collaboration with a client (i.e. a potential user of the results); this has the result of 1) expanding the effective workforce, 2) helping the client to understand the results, 3) influencing the client to use the results, and 4) increasing the ability of the client to do the work independently next time round. It has the disadvantage of slowing progress.

A second and equally important innovation (which, so far as I have been able to discover, has never been done before anywhere) has been for this College to ruthlessly exploit the doctoral students of the nation. Some questions of importance to Evergreen's educational and organizational future are quite appropriate as thesis problems or research paper topics. It takes a while to build a network of contacts at universities and then to find graduate students, but such workers have much more time, expertise (in sum), and energy than any single Director of Research.

A final recommendation, implied by all that has gone before, is that Evergreen's Office of Research must have a minimum of continuing, operational responsibilities (e.g. production of quarterly statistical volumes). There are two quite different reasons for this.

First, most responsibilities often centralized in an Office of Research can actually be done more efficiently by the units who produce or use the information, and who are often already expert at data management. Most standard externally-demanded reports (e.g. HEGIS) can be assembled by the major producer of the data, and are now. Also, for internal reporting, a budget head is usually more likely to understand and use data if the work has been done in the local shop. This will mean upgrading local "analytic" capabilities and responsibilities. Assisting in those processes is a responsibility of the Office of Research.

(The Director of Research should also make sure that people know what information is being collected, why, and where it is stored. This is an appropriate continuing responsibility.)

Second, there are many important, one-time research projects that must be done by an Office of Research because they cannot be done anywhere else. Each acquisition of a continuing responsibility reduces, for all time, the ability of the Office to carry out these other primary assignments.

APPENDIX IV

HOW TO LEARN THE EVERGREEN ROPES FASTER

As a Potential Researcher from Outside
Not to mention from Inside Too
by Carl Slawski

It is best to have a sufficiently focused topic unless you have lots of time for milling around. In any case, visit "THE STEPHEN C. EHRMANN MEMORIAL SHELF."* It should contain the following reading material:

- The TESC Bulletin
- TESC Catalog Supplement (latest edition)
- Current Evergreen Campus Directory (of offices and phones)
- Nifty Concise Guide to The Evergreen State College, brought to you by the Academic Advising Office (1976-77 version has yellow cover). This guide also contains the all-important two pages entitled: "Evergreen as a Second Language."
- Some Program Histories (also available in Dean Will Humphreys' office) for a good feel of what actually happens on projects and in programs, contracts, and in coordinated studies and related encounters.
- Some SPLUs of interest to you. (One copy of each ought to be available for the novice on this MEMORIAL SHELF.)
- Steve's "project statements" for potential doctoral dissertation research projects, preceded by his Introductory Letter explaining what it's all about.
- Steve's first Annual Report (9/1/76) plus Follow-up reports, as well as the Final Report to NSF-RULE: Includes an evaluation of the college as well as his description of his two years work as "evaluation consultant."
- Richard Jones' long long "letter" to his friend Jack Michaelson of UC, Santa Cruz, analyzing and evaluating the early history of TESC and comparing it to Santa Cruz and other experimental type colleges.
- Peter Elbow, Bill Aldridge, Margaret Gribskov, "One-to-One Faculty Development," a lengthy report to the Danforth Foundation about their visitations to colleagues' classrooms, seminars, etc., with a view to improving teaching. Very perceptive and insightful on the teaching process as well as on the politics of faculty-faculty and faculty-administration relations.
- A file of Back Issues of the Cooper Point Journal. (These ought to be on the shelf, but it may be necessary to seek them in the library or in the offices of the Cooper Point Journal itself.)
- Dean McHenry and Associates, Academic Departments, especially chapter 8 by Charles J. McCann, "Academic Administration Without Departments at The Evergreen State College, pp. 147-169.

ON A NEARBY SHELF

Also useful for reference would be the following documents:

The Administrative Code

The Faculty Handbook

The Budget for the past and next succeeding fiscal year.

The Accreditor's Report, a self study done by faculty or administrators at TESC

Naia McClelland, History of Evergreen (in progress)

A general file of research and/or evaluation studies done by and of TESC faculty to date.

Note Also

The ARCHIVES in the main library, second floor, which contain documents and maybe some tapes about the planning of the College.

"For What It's Worth," a film about the founding years of TESC and philosophies and opinions and problems of its innovative approaches.

Admissions Office, for slide-tape shows, introducing the College to newcomers, etc.

Attend a Trustee's meeting as soon as possible, as well as other general faculty meetings, not to mention lectures, seminars, and whatever group encounters you can talk your way into, or unobtrusely overhear.

During your first week here, latch onto at least one faculty member, probably one in your area of expertise, and two students to be your informants on who's or what's who or where, and what the grapevine says.

If one happens to be going on, join a workshop (such as the one I attended for a week on CAI and PSI (Computer Assisted Instruction, and the Personalized System of Instruction). Attendees came from all over the Northwest as well as New York, California, North Carolina, etc., which was stimulating to the TESC faculty and opened them up more naturally than would be the case in individual private conversations.

Inquire ahead about accommodations, especially if you plan to stay in your camper. There must be some faculty members willing to grant you space on their farm or spacious lot.

*Contact the Academic Deans to find the location of the "Shelf."

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FINAL REPORT

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Educational Evaluation Consultant

Vol I. Introduction
Evolution of Goals and Strategies
Project Reports

Vol II. Evaluation of Evergreen

VOLUME II

FINAL REPORT

Volume II

Stephen C. Ehrmann
Educational Evaluation Consultant to
The Evergreen State College

August 31, 1977

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A.IV THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF THIS MODEL-MAKING PROCESS

PROLOGUE

This document was written because a number of people have asked me what I've learned about the College.

I'd told quite a few uneasy minds that I wouldn't be writing a report --that I was here to help, not to evaluate--but since we're all friends now, I've changed my mind. I owe it to the College, and to myself, to try to make some sense of the things that I've learned in the course of doing my job here.

The Argument, Summarized

Evergreen, a college without many of the traditional external and internal supports, cannot exist with integrity unless it has

- * a shared vision of its aims, central values and practices
- * an equally vital diversity out of which that vision can be renewed

Evergreen is strong on the diversity-of-aims side, but needs help on the shared vision.

The first section of this chapter will suggest a partial shape for that vision: a model of what has been most fundamental about the College. It will be argued that Evergreen has been changing, almost invisibly, away from that central vision. The model is used to suggest some simple evaluative tests of whether "Evergreen works."

The second section is a brief, complementary view of Evergreen's diversity, as seen through the eyes of this itinerant consultant.

The third section makes some specific policy recommendations that may be of some help in attaining the dual strength that Evergreen needs. Each section, however, is meant to stand on its own, and each has a different contribution to make to organizational renewal.

Some people will see this vision as a limited one; my contacts have been mainly with the faculty and students, and these pictures of Evergreen center on the organized practices of the academic program.

Others, not familiar with the College, may find it confusing. For you I have enclosed two appendices, the first of which is a brief overview of Evergreen (drawn along the lines of the model I'm recommending), and the second a lexicon of local jargon. The table of contents for this chapter should be a useful outline of the total argument of the paper.

In addition to those people acknowledged in the introduction to my total report, I'd like to thank the people who've read the drafts of this paper and given me very valuable feedback: Carla Jackson and Daniel Kegan at Hampshire College, Don Williams at the University of Washington, Bill Brown, Jovana Brown, Jim Gulden, Rob Knapp, Ed Kormondy, Tom Maddox, Patty May, Polly Newcomb, Carl Slawski, Fred Tabbutt, Greg Vermillion, Karen Vialle, and Byron Youtz at Evergreen.

A. A MODEL OF EVERGREEN. Introduction and Summary

This section begins with the claim that Evergreen is somewhat confused about itself. People describe it as though it were an unrelated list of items, each a way that Evergreen is "different" or "the same" as other colleges. This formlessness seems to be causing problems.

After describing what a model is and how one can be useful, I suggest that Evergreen can be modeled (thought of) as though it were organized around three fundamentals: *the goal of not-disciplinary learning*, the value of freedom and responsibility to control learning, and the structure of full-time programs.

The relationships between these three are described. Appendix III details how they can be used, singly and in combination, to account for a great number of other practices and problems here.

The model illustrates that Evergreen is an interdependent whole, and that is further demonstrated by using the model to forecast the many implications of increasing enrollment in modules.

It is then asserted that Evergreen is in a process of fundamental change: in each of the three ways in which it was initially designed to be different, the College has been changing toward the traditional. These changes are demonstrable and predictable.

Changing isn't necessarily bad or good, but there are some reasons to think it should be planned. The fundamentals are held up against some forecasts about the 1980s to help you think about what kind of Evergreen you would like to see.

The section concludes by suggesting some research projects, some easy and some hard, that test the viability of the model for Evergreen.

Evergreen Is Not Clearly Understood By Evergreeners

Evergreeners do not have a clear, shared, summarizable picture of what Evergreen is, or what it is for.¹ Most talk and act as though the College were a short set of unrelated characteristics, and different people value different things.

One faculty member described Evergreen in terms of its principle points of difference from most colleges:

1. No grades
2. Curriculum not isolated courses in different disciplines
3. Seminars and independent study are primary study modes
4. No majors
5. Offers only a bachelor's degree in the liberal arts
6. Also, no departments and no faculty ranks

Another faculty member described it as a place whose particular strength was in developing a number of alternative modes in higher education, particularly in interdisciplinary studies.

A third described it first in terms of its goals, 1) to help students begin a process of lifelong learning through the application of theory to practice, 2) to tailor programs of learning to individuals of varying goals (specialist vs. generalist) and characteristics (age, culture, economic background, interests, etc.), 3) to encourage faculty research with undergraduate apprenticeship, 4) to provide a genuine alternative among existing undergraduate state colleges.

¹Most colleges are also quite fuzzy and internally confused about what they are. This is largely the result of 1) the hugeness and rapid growth of knowledge, 2) the nature of power in academic institutions, 3) the particular mix of functions acquired by these institutions. This paper will attempt to explain why Evergreen is more mixed up than most.

There is only one statement common to all three descriptions:

Evergreen is different.

That is not a very informative statement about what the College is, but it is a powerful explanation of some of the College's possibilities and problems (particularly in a period when it is perceived that prospective students want something that is "not different.")

Two more exhibits support the contention that Evergreen is rather confused about what, at root, it is and what it is for.

Exhibit #1 is a summary of the statements made about the College in its first catalogue (1971-72). Exhibit #2 is a similar summary made from the current catalogue (1977-79).

1. Both catalogues are somewhat vague about goals. (This is particularly true of today's catalogue. It is marshmallowy in its attempt to include everything. It is also quite traditional and non-alternative in its occasional flights of fantasy in its description of current practice.)
2. Each catalogue describes Evergreen with a chain of (apparently unrelated) descriptors: Evergreen is this and Evergreen is that and the other thing. It seems purely a coincidence that Evergreen has full-time programs, teaching teams, narrative evaluation, and interdisciplinary study, all at the same time.
3. Each catalogue tends to describe Evergreen primarily in terms of its differences from traditional education, though the present catalogue stresses that Evergreen is both different and the same.

Exhibit #1. EVERGREEN: A PARAPHRASE OF THE 1971-72 CATALOGUE

absence of GPAs, class periods, course requirements
 opportunity for individualized program of study
 faculty working and thinking with students, other faculty
 faculty encumbered by least possible red tape
 without departments; frequently changing faculty teams
 stringent and public evaluation of teaching
 economy of operation due to responsiveness and flexibility
 work-study option
 book learning
 support for learning of techniques
 wide involvement in decision making so as to be responsive
 many rules and procedures not yet written; will come later
 education to address the big issues of our time: training for today's
 jobs or tomorrow's unknown jobs; is needed for good citizen of
 tomorrow; can young people sharpen their knowledge of self and
 others better through traditional study or through combination of
 intellectual work with outside experience
 college must exhibit values of decency, willingness to listen,
 shared responsibility for the whole institution
 values must be supported by clear rules and procedures to be drawn up
 as time goes on
 coordinated study and contracted study, one at a time, to be used by
 each student
 full credit or no credit
 most full-time students here for four years
 coordinated studies are small cooperative learning communities involving
 some 100 students and 5 faculty
 *designed for thorough exploration of some of man's most urgent
 problems, most important challenges, most highly prized values
 *faculty from different fields to cut across boundaries
 *students to join them to define problems, develop skills,
 search for answers
 *study theme through use of disciplines
 *instead of mostly listening passively to lecture, students
 active discussant shaping, documenting own ideas
 *receive not grades but portfolio of evaluations, examples of
 work
 *fieldwork
 *one program at a time
 *day-to-day flexibility, encouragement of individual projects
 *core of required activities
 *most are interdisciplinary
 *major goal: help students learn how to learn
 *common reading list of original sources
 *seminar heart of program; no place to hide
 *lots of writing
 *literacy in other media too
 *continual and careful evaluation by faculty; rigorous criticism
 *rich diversity of activity within program
 *quarter or half-time enrollment possible, too

Contracted Studies for a substantial part of student career, as individual or part of small group, in order to do specific project, master specific skill, or cover specific body of subject matter

- *designed to help students progress toward learning on their own, but isn't doing your own thing (if that's what you want, you're better off not at Evergreen)

- *good for pursuing a problem raised in a coordinated study, experimenting briefly but intensively with a new interest, collaborate with faculty on a front-line research venture

- *contracts can last from a few days to months, infinite possible forms

- *mode a difficult one and Evergreen will have to learn to use it. While the school is small, emphasis will probably be on small-group contracts and faculty initiative, with priority for advanced students

- *full-time

students will generally earn about one third of their credit in coordinated studies

emphasis on self-paced learning, without coordinated studies and contracted studies

work-and-study, internships in order to combine intellectual and on-the-job development

etc. etc.

Exhibit #2. EVERGREEN: A PARAPHRASE OF THE 1977-79 CATALOGUE

(section entitled "Philosophy and Goals" is unintelligible mush. What follows is an attempt to summarize it by listing the stressed words.)

"...trained minds..new information..fresh ideas..new problems..citizens..complexities..rapid and massive change..flexibility..personal growth..confidence..ability to learn new ideas..skills..information..assist students to continue learning..thinking..applying..Evergreen integrates education with development..sharpen basic intellectual skills, learn techniques for solving problems and develop an awareness of the implications of central human issues..strong emphasis on the interrelationship of fields of knowledge..assume increasingly greater responsibility for own work..studies matching their interests and career goals..sample a wide range of actual jobs..learning community that reflects the real world where problems not simple and parts not greater than whole"

graduates successful

student faculty ratio of 20/1 provides small classes, close working relationships

flexible program enables focus on areas of individual interest

internship strengthens individual attention paid to each student

accredited: "Evergreen students unusually busy, interested, personally involved"

"high student engagement with intellectual issues, principles"

"emphasis on student responsibility has evoked authentic self-motivation"

"faculty-student relations remarkably open, friendly, direct"

"high intellectual calibre, imagination, commitment of faculty"

"unusual emphasis on thorough program evaluation"

small class size, mostly in seminars

no major

each student works out overall study plan with subject matter emphasis interdisciplinary: e.g. when studying psychology, learn about related biology, sociology or anthropology

students with interdisciplinary experience have unusual advantages in seeking employment or graduate school admission

students may also develop a traditional liberal arts degree

unique blending of academic studies and practical opportunities

internships; problem-centered programs

strong liberal arts base

many faculty have doctorates

environment informal, intense

few students come being self-directed but environment demands development

basic programs rather structured but emphasize development of capacity for independent work

special programs tailored for various types of part-time students

(e.g. housewives, government workers)

most students enroll in one program per quarter
 coordinated studies: 3-5 faculty; 60-100 students; common theme;
 several disciplines
 group contract; 1-2 faculty, 25-45 students; 1-2 disciplines
 individual contract normally one quarter long, one student, explicit
 contract
 full-time commitment
 group contracts and individual contracts an opportunity for speciali-
 zation
 modules: late afternoon or evening courses, quarter-time, primarily
 for part-time students
 coordinated studies integrated, rather than separate classes
 *small (60-100 students; 3-5 faculty)
 *close student-faculty relationships
 *genuine collaboration in learning
 *sense of responsibility for one's work
 *faculty from different backgrounds
 *central problems or themes
 *portfolio of evaluations, examples of work
 *fieldwork
 *coherent
 *common reading list; all faculty read all books
 *seminar; heart of program; not rap sessions; no place to hide;
 rewarding
 *lots of writing
 *continual evaluation; no letter grades or competition; it's
 natural to want to do well since program depends on cooperative
 effort
 *16-32 hours of faculty contact per week
 *faculty also seminar, learning
 *not repeated year after year

group contracts similar to coordinated studies (small, seminar, theme,
 full-time)
 *smaller, 25-45 students
 *some disciplinary, some not
 *many involve fieldwork, lab, film-making, other active work
 *opportunity to go further, faster than normal; sometimes grad
 school level

individual contracts
 *uniquely flexible opportunity for learning; difficult
 *faculty carry up to 15 contracts, on the average; some staff
 sponsors
 *most useful for advanced, continuing students
 *sponsor won't be able to answer all your questions, or do work
 for you
 *need to plan carefully in advance
 *wide variety of activities possible, including internships,
 off-campus
 *negotiating a contract takes time, preparation

modular courses

- late afternoon and evening courses

- some are required components of programs

- some specifically for needs of part-time students

- a few in fields where subject matter cumulative (e.g. math, music theory, foreign language)

curriculum planning a major responsibility of faculty; students can participate, but mostly faculty do it

planning two years in advance

programs are not replanned once they've started so that students can get what they paid for when they read the catalogue

faculty have covenant to guide resolution of disputes

faculty have final responsibility for making sure curriculum plan carried out

students have right and responsibility to evaluate faculty

students and faculty have academic freedom (sic)

advanced specialities are continuous, regularly offered programs in certain areas; represent areas of greatest resources

etc. etc.

Evergreen suffers from several problems which may partly result from this lack of clear self-image and purpose. These difficulties will be detailed in the body of this evaluation but they include: a high rate of student attrition (possibly stemming, in part, from the rude shock of finding out what the place is really like); a rather unfavorable and fuzzy public image, unanticipated events that stem from a lack of comprehension of how the school really works; Evergreeners who see Evergreen as "them" or "it" rather than "us."

Simply writing this evaluation will not automatically "clarify" Evergreen. The model indicates that this internal confusion results directly from some basic facts about the College. The problem is a dilemma.

Even if dilemmas can't be completely solved, however, they can be ameliorated. I'm distributing this report because I think it may help Evergreen make some headway against its stream of difficulties. (I hope so; I owe the College a great deal for what I've been able to learn and do here, and I appreciate this opportunity to partially repay the debt.)

What Is A Model, and Why?

The objective of this model is to suggest a way of understanding the College.

It seems common enough for people to think they know an organization because they know its people, or because they know how to use the organization, or because they can exist comfortably in it.

That is not the sort of understanding I'm talking about here.

In high school I marched in a band during football halftimes. To a bandperson, marching in a show consists of playing music while doing certain dancesteps and marching a certain number of yards, pivoting, marching a number of steps further, stopping, and so on. That is the way I "understood" a marching band.

The view from the bleachers is entirely different. The spectator sees patterns: a flower unfolding, a wagon wheel rolling across the field.

That is often the way: a person standing some distance away sees not a shapeless mist but a sharp-featured cloud.

As a consultant to Evergreen for two years, I have also been a spectator. My job has involved talking to a variety of people and being inquisitive: What are you doing? Why do you do it that way?

This report takes the perspective of the spectator looking at the marching band or at the mist in the sky. It describes the overall structure of what I have seen.

The purpose is to describe Evergreen so as to be useful not only for understanding the pattern, but also for measuring its worth or for changing it. If one knows that the raggedy pattern of people on the field "is" a flower, then one can ask how good it is. If one knows that the flower's form was shaped the design of the director and the (im)precision of the marchers, one can create a better flower, or even a rotating wagon wheel.

The modeling process began with a large set of "because"s: statements that A was true because B was true, or that X was one of several reasons for doing Y. Each "because" is a pair of related facts about Evergreen.²

These fact pairs can be fitted together like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. A section of the original network of causes and effects, reproduced below, illustrates this interconnectedness; the whole network is summarized on page 23.

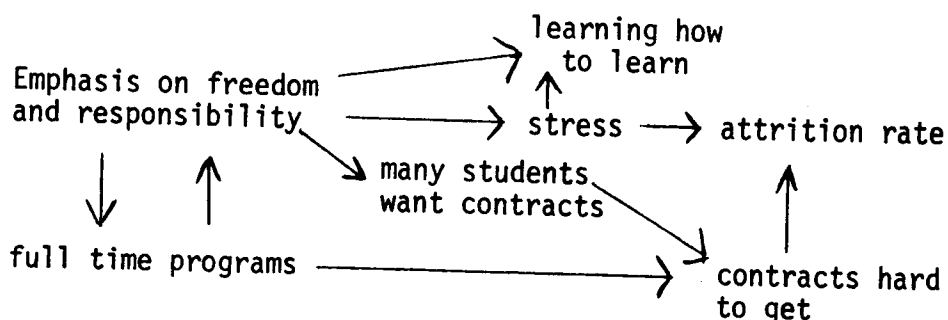


Figure 1. A Piece of the Puzzle

Each arrow connects two parts of a "because" (e.g. 'there is stress because people are told to be free'; 'there is attrition because there is stress,' 'there is learning because there is stress.')

The model itself consists of three facts which connect to a great number of others, which means that they are useful in accounting for a great number of other things about the College.

²These "because" relationships are stated as though they were completely true. And that is false. In fact I can vouch for only a few of them, and the strength of each relationship is open to question, too. For instance, one pair says that Evergreen programs must be frequently changed because they are full-time (if they weren't changed faculty would be isolated from one another, and community would break down). But is this really true? And if programs were changed somewhat less frequently, what would be the size of the impact on "community"? Without research, I don't know.

The section entitled "Using the Model In Planning, Policy-Making and Evaluation" suggests which of these "because"s most need to be investigated.

Some of these "because"s are drawn from conversations or Evergreen documents; others are my own inferences.

A simple picture of an institution can be useful in a number of ways:

1. Explanation. If you want a stranger to understand the College, it is not a good idea to list every fact you know, nor are a few randomly-chosen facts likely to say very much about the College as a whole. The elements of this model are the facts which seem to me to have the most power to explain the Evergreen I have seen over the past two years.
2. Coordination. If people are to work together but still have autonomy, they need to share some ideas about their ultimate objectives and basic strategies.
3. Policy-making. An institution can't learn if it can't see. Right now Evergreen is invisible to most Evergreeners, in part (but only in part) because they lack a simple shared picture of what the school is and what it is for. And that makes planned change difficult.

When an administrator or faculty member or student or legislator is about to make a choice, and when that choice will change a piece of Evergreen, it would be nice to know how that change will reverberate: what implications will it have for all the other pieces of the institution? For instance, if Evergreen puts more weight on modules, what implications might that have for educational goals here? student satisfaction? work routines in the registrar's office? faculty socialization? budgets? This model is meant to provide a skeleton for that kind of "investigation of consequences."

4. Evaluation and research. Any project, even a useless one, takes a fair amount of time and resource. So it is nice if the things

evaluated or researched are things that are important. The elements of this model are those things which are, in my opinion, the pieces of Evergreen most worthy of research and monitoring.

A Model of Evergreen

This model is composed of three statements about Evergreen, one each about its goals, its values and its structure. Call these the "fundamentals." It is also an explanation of how the three are supposed to relate to one another.

In order to help you understand why these three are especially fundamental, the appendix entitled "Using the Model to Explain Evergreen" lays out the rest of the puzzle, piece by piece.

In other words, the model plus the appendix are a portrait of Evergreen, structured around the model. That means that there are plenty of things that won't be in the portrait, or that will be perhaps given more or less weight than you would have. That's the point of a model: to give some organization to a picture.

After the full picture (the fundamentals and the things they explain) is laid out, some uses of the model will be discussed.

Fundamental #1: The Goal³ of Not-Disciplinary Learning⁴

Both Evergreen's rhetoric and Evergreen's actual practices make it clear that the most important aspect of educational goals at Evergreen is that they be different from, and transcend, those of "traditional" disciplinarily-organized colleges.

³At this point, you have a right to ask, "What is the meaning of the claim that Evergreen's goal is such-and-such? How can you tell what an institution's goals are?"

A goal is a statement about a desirable future for the organization. Furthermore, it is a statement that actually influences present organizational behavior. A goal is not real unless it is being used.

An educational goal is a goal that has to do with the results and processes of learning.

I see "not-disciplinary" learning as Evergreen's chief educational goal because it seems a good reason for Evergreeners to do many things that they have, in fact, done. Just what those things are is explained below in the sections "Facts Linked to the Goal of Not-Disciplinary Learning," "Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning and Freedom," "Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning and Full-Time Programs," "Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning, Freedom, and Full-Time Programs."

Another completely different view of "goals" is that "goals are what the ultimate boss says they are."

There is no contradiction between these two points of view, since this paper describes what Evergreen's goals and practices have been, whereas "the ultimate boss" perspective is one point of view about what they ought to have been.

⁴"Not-disciplinary learning": Evergreeners almost universally call the goal 'interdisciplinary learning'. I have changed the name for three reasons: 1) by making the familiar a little strange, the familiar becomes visible, 2) the goal is, at root, negative and this new name brings out that fact, 3) because it is negative, the full range of practices justified by it include more than some people mean when they say "interdisciplinary"--in fact, the full range includes all kinds of learning that are "not disciplinary."

This fundamental (and the other two) can each be seen as opposed to some traditional and opposite position.

Of course it is a myth that Evergreen is or was totally devoted to not-disciplinary learning, just as it is a myth that other institutions are totally disciplinary. In fact the meaning of all these phrases is a little slippery because "disciplinary" itself is a term without clear reference.

So this "axis" (between poles of complete disciplinarity and complete non-disciplinarity) is mythical, as is the popular view of Evergreen's position on the axis. But it is also real, because people act on what they believe to be true.

Because not-disciplinarity is essentially a negative vision, it encompasses several different positive goals:

1. The first is simply the negative: don't do anything that might be labeled disciplinary (or narrow or traditional).
2. Second is the goal of helping students learn how to learn: to become people who will continue to learn and make use of their new knowledge and skill after they leave college. (It sounds like helping students to become "intellectuals.")
3. Third is the goal of learning things in terms that transcend disciplines: seeing connections; seeing things from several angles; using disciplinary tools to solve interdisciplinary problems. (See "What Kinds of Not-Disciplinary Learning Do Evergreeners Care About" for a more detailed discussion.)

4. Going right along with these things is an intense ambition and optimism. I felt it soon after arriving here: I was reading more and more sorts of things, talking and listening about a variety of topics, and I found myself thinking, "My gosh, maybe I really can learn everything that is important": a kindergarten dream revived (and Evergreen, with its lack of departments and devotion to learning skills, has been compared to a kindergarten).

This spirit is reflected in Evergreen success stories that tell of students arriving with hope but no apparent talent and who bloomed, found new dreams, and began to achieve them.

5. It is possible (but not appropriate for this paper) to subdivide this goal into different families, each of which has different definitions for terms like "interdisciplinary" and "learning how to learn," and somewhat different notions about what is important in education.⁵

⁵This Evergreen taxonomy and an earlier version of this model are described in one of my working papers entitled "The Fundamentals of The Evergreen State College. What and Why," dated April 1976.

Fundamental #2: The Value of Freedom to Control Learning

"Freedom" is the concept buried in the "liberal" of "liberal arts": learning to set people free.

It is actually a set of concepts that imply one another: freedom, uniqueness, flexibility, person-centeredness, escape, opposition to regimentation and regularity. (Since any learning or planning or acting require some notion of repetition, "freedom" is a concept at war with itself.)

It too is a reaction against a myth of the traditional: that other colleges are dominated by rules.

Evergreen was to be as free as possible from rules and other constraints that might prevent people from reaching their full potential.

The College was meant to give people more power and more responsibility (it hasn't always been successful. That will be described, too).

This value is based on the assumption that people (or at least most of them) are good, not evil, need carrots more than sticks, self-control more than external constraint.

Fundamental #3: The Structure of a Full-Time Program Scheduling System

There were many competitors for the honor of "most important structure" and some, like "no departments" were tough to eliminate. Full-time programs (i.e. having one student responsible to only one faculty member at a time) were selected because they relate to more facts about Evergreen.

Evergreen has been moving away from its reliance on full-time, long-term, large programs, just as it has been moving away from the other two fundamentals (my evidence for that will be discussed after the model

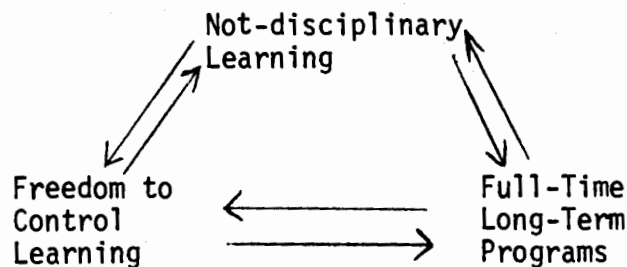
itself has been described).

The full-time scheduling system is still in place, however, along with many other practices and values to which it is linked.

The Fundamentals Assembled

These three fundamental elements, the goal of not-disciplinary learning, the value of freedom to control learning, and the structure of full-time programs, together form a structure.

Figure 2. The Fundamentals Assembled



The fundamentalness of each of these elements depends on your interests.

A person interested in policy-making might see the educational goal of not-disciplinary learning as the most fundamental and unchanging of the three, and if evidence showed that the other two did not promote it, would discard one or both of the other two and try something else to help students learn.

Many of the people attracted to Evergreen were probably at least as drawn by "freedom to control learning" and might be more inclined to hold on to that.

The only tangible element, however, is full-time, long-term programs and because it can be seen and easily measured Evergreeners may hold to it most tightly of all.

Present Evergreen theory says that these three reinforce one another.

Freedom, exercised through the instrument of full-time contact between students and a faculty member, is supposed to promote various forms of not-disciplinary learning.

Active, transcendent learning (rather than packages of facts passed to passive pupils) helps to maintain an atmosphere of student freedom and initiative. And active students free faculty to be active teachers.

The full-time program system helps to maintain student and faculty freedom by giving them more room to maneuver (e.g. students can leave campus on field trips), and fewer masters to satisfy.

The emphasis on student freedom and responsibility is necessary to maintain full-time programs; the alternative is one faculty member giving the equivalent of four or five courses worth of lectures per week to twenty passive, more-or-less receptive students.

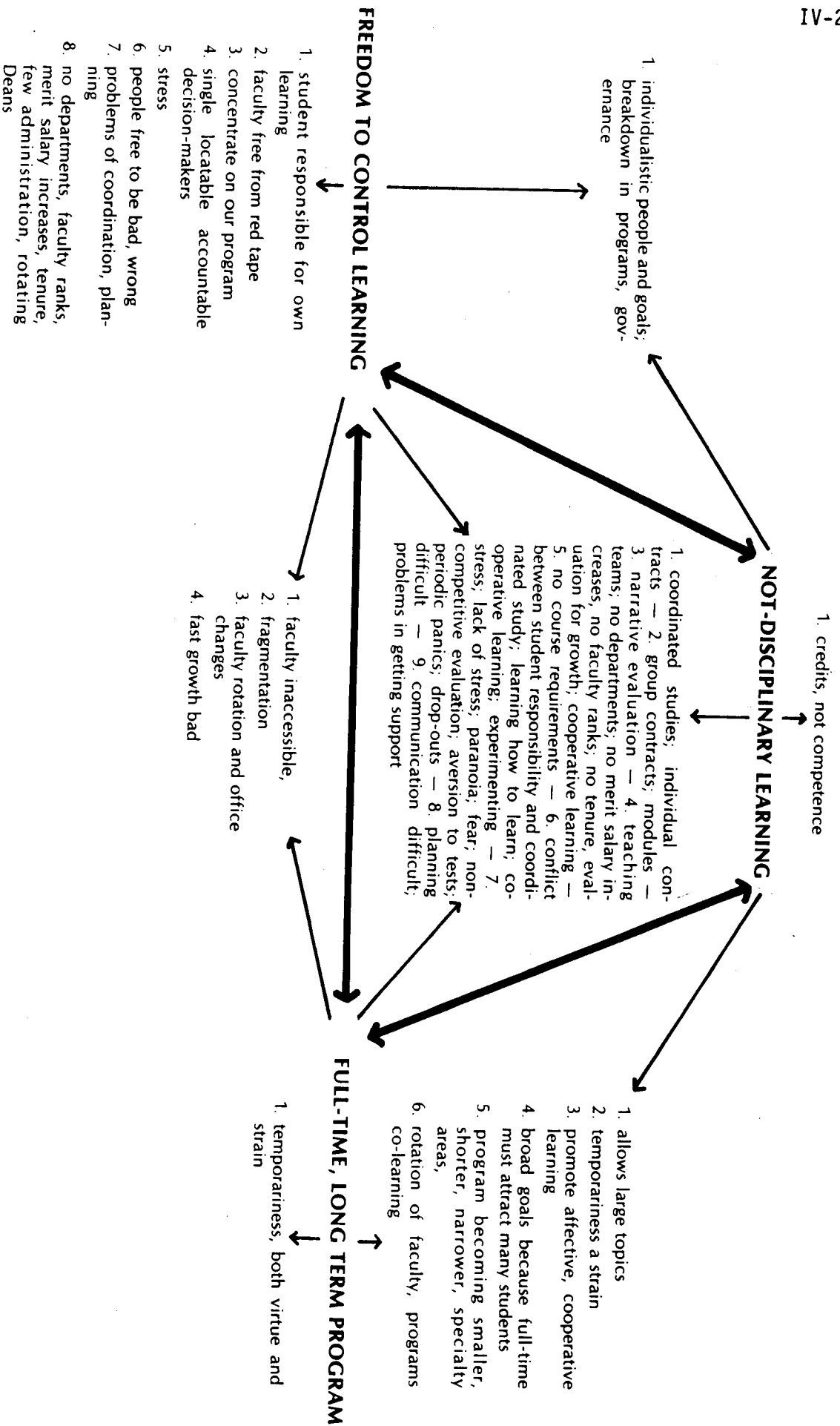
An ideal of not-disciplinary learning is necessary for a College structured around full-time programs. Full-time programs mean that a few students see a given faculty member a lot, but most have no chance to use her at all. That's acceptable if the faculty are interchangeable parts (e.g. all of our faculty can help a student learn to be a not-disciplinary problem-solver). On the other hand, if each faculty member represents a different unique strand of the cobweb of knowledge, complaints about faculty inaccessibility would probably render full-time programs impractical, particularly if student initiative is emphasized.⁶

The basic model of Evergreen is of three elements, each supporting the other two. The relation of the fundamentals to other Evergreen facts

⁶Evergreen's reactions to this problem, specialty areas, is discussed in Appendix III, p. A.III-13.

is laid out in the Appendix; this full portrait of Evergreen is summarized in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The Full Portrait



Using the Model. How Changing One Element Can Influence Others

The most important point of this entire evaluation is that Evergreen is composed of many interdependent elements. It is not a machine (where a movement of one gear forces change in all the others). But changes in one practice will often create pressures for change in others.

One use of the model is to predict what directions these pressures will take.

For instance, the model (in combination with the material in Appendix III) can be used to predict what sorts of pressures are generated by increasing the use of modules. (See Figure 4.)

Modules are courses: part-time, quarter-long, faculty-designed learning programs. Over the past few years, Evergreen introduced this 'new' mode of teaching, and now a significant fraction of Evergreen students, full and part time, are enrolled in modules each quarter. Some of these students would not have come to Evergreen otherwise and some part-time students may never take anything but modules.

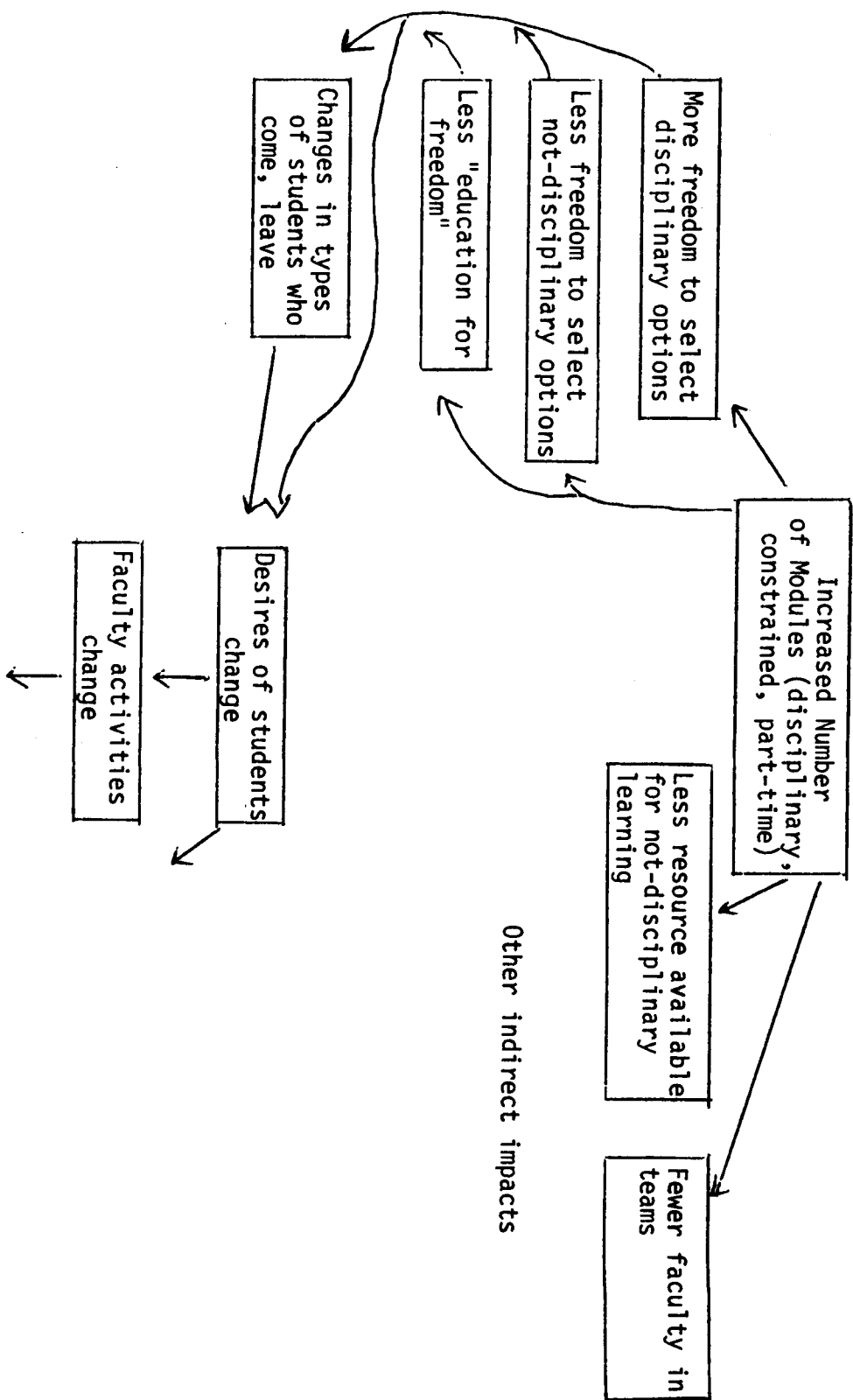
Nonetheless they are part of the Evergreen system; they use faculty and resources from the same pool as do programs.

What does the model indicate about implications of increased emphasis on modules?

1. The first place to look, since modules are an alteration of full-timeness, is at the other two fundamentals.

Full-time programs facilitate freedom and responsibility by allowing faculty and students room to maneuver; by promoting close faculty-student contact, full-timeness is thought to help students handle freedom and learn on their own. On the other hand, full-time programs constrain

Figure 4. Possible Impacts of Modules



freedom by pinning faculty, students, and a particular subject matter together for long periods; most students can't "use" that faculty member nor can students within the program get variety of faculty teaching; full-timeness also means fewer programs and therefore fewer alternatives for students dissatisfied with their own program.

Modules would presumably affect all these dimensions of freedom. Students taking modules would presumably get less "training in freedom"⁷ (ditto for the faculty teaching them). Teaching flexibility should also be lower.

On the other hand, modules allow a student to exercise the freedom of taking what he desires. Some students, even self-directed and mature learners, leave Evergreen in order to get material they need a teacher's help to learn, but which isn't offered at Evergreen. (Of course, most modules now offered are not directed toward these students seeking advanced material.)

* In sum, if Evergreen theories are correct, modules should both increase the opportunity to exercise some kinds of freedom and decrease the opportunity for other types. They may also reduce Evergreen's capacity to educate students for freedom.

2. The next place to look in assessing the potential impacts, good and bad, of modules is at the third fundamental: not-disciplinary learning.

⁷ This isn't as mystical as it may sound. Reading student evaluations, for instance, I was struck by students saying in their evaluations that they had learned in this way or changed in that way. Not only does narrative self-evaluation encourage this kind of self-examination but the size of full-time programs allows learning significant enough to be seen, by the faculty member and the student himself. And a student who can sense his own learning is presumably one who can feel good about it and direct it.

Full-time programs were meant to foster not-disciplinary learning by allowing programs the time, faculty and resources to attach large themes.⁸

Modules require faculty and other resources that might otherwise support not-disciplinary learning; modules are ordinarily very traditional, disciplinary courses.

Modules can also be of use to augment not-disciplinary teaching, however. One program may offer part of its teaching in a module-size package, open to part-time students and students from other not-disciplinary programs. This scheme has the advantage of allowing a more efficient use of resources, but the disadvantage of separating one chunk of material from the rest, teaching it out of context.

* As before, modules affect Evergreen's other fundamentals, not-disciplinarity this time. Once again, the model indicates what directions these effects might take but it does not say how large or important each one is.⁹

3. Modules also affect other aspects of Evergreen.

In fact, there is potentially a direct impact on each other fact that is linked to full-timeness, including those that are linked jointly to

⁸The model indicates that there are other definitions of not-disciplinary learning and other ways that full-time programs affect it, but, for this example, looking at large themes will be sufficient.

⁹Since the model is just a shorthand summary of what Evergreeners suspect is true about their College, it shares the defects of everyday dialogue about educational planning. It is common to hear one person say that modules, for instance, will hurt not-disciplinarity and another say that modules will help not-disciplinarity. Often the disagreement revolves around an inability to gauge how large the effects will be (or have been).

Modules could allow a more efficient use of resources, but how much more efficient? That depends on the amount of needless duplication of effort that goes on now. It also seems clear that modules could distort theme-centered programs by isolating learning experiences that should be integrated (e.g. where the faculty member should, minute-by-minute, be pointing out the relevance of the material to the larger theme), but in how many potential modules is this sort of integration an important factor?

The usefulness of the model is in pointing out where the issues are, not in resolving them.

full-timeness, freedom, and/or not-disciplinarity.

More than that, each of these changes can potentially cause others in a ripple effect.

Modules, for instance, change the shape of the curriculum toward the disciplinary, which may attract a different type of student (that indeed is the intention). The new students in turn can place more disciplinary "demands" on faculty who in turn may begin to shift their own teaching, not just in modules but in programs and contracts. This in turn affects "standard" Evergreen students, in modules and otherwise.

* Many (though not all) of Evergreen's elements are interdependent. Models like this one can be useful for seeing how changes in one element might affect others, directly or indirectly.

Evergreen Has Changed Fundamentally

The model says that Evergreen is organized around three fundamental elements: the goal of not-disciplinary learning, the value of freedom/responsibility, and the structure of full-timeness.

That's not as true as it used to be. Evergreen has changed along all three of those axes since it was founded.

Change in Full-Timeness: This is the easiest type of change to document, and the type that is most obvious. Evergreen was founded with two basic types of programs, coordinated studies (which usually had four to six faculty and twenty times that many students) and individual contracts, sponsored by faculty who did only that. Most programs were a year long.

This year Evergreen had four major types of curricular structures: coordinated studies (three faculty on the average; sometimes 100 percent and sometimes "75 percent" (a student takes a coordinated study and a module or a quarter-time contract)); group contracts (one or two faculty);

individual contracts; modules (i.e. courses). Most are 1-2 quarters long.

The balance of enrollment in each of these modes has changed also:

Figure 5. Enrollment in Various Study Modes

Mode of Study	Fall 1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
Coordinated Study	93% (1093)	61% (1236)	56% (1294)	57% (1400)	41% (1065)	41% (1098)
Group Contract	1% (8)	18% (376)	24% (551)	15% (361)	26% (678)	18% (488)
Individual Contract	6% (76)	21% (423)	19% (434)	27% (669)	23% (602)	25% (685)
Module	0%	0%	2% (42)	1% (16)	10% (269)	16% (423)
Total	100% (1177)	100% (2035)	100% (2321)	100% (2446)	100% (2614)	100% (2694) ¹⁰

As indicated by Exhibit #1, Evergreen (or at least the catalogue writer) anticipated that eventually only about one-third of Evergreen's students would be in coordinated studies at any given time. Coordinated studies have changed too since then, however.

So, in sum:

* Evergreen's programs are becoming shorter, smaller, and narrower.

Temporariness: It is argued on p. A.III-6 that an institution with full-time programs would be better off if those programs (and the resulting

¹⁰ This figure is a head count of fall enrollments. In all modes but modules, head count and full-time equivalent are the same. Modules are a different story, of course. In these figures full-time students registered for a coordinated study (75%) and a module (25%) are counted only under coordinated study, and similarly for an individual contract. If a part-time student is registered for two modules, that student would be counted once in the module total. Auditors are not included.

of people) were changed regularly.

As it happens, Evergreen seems to have been shifting along this dimension also.

Specialty areas have been established which both regularize faculty interrelationships to some extent, and provide for certain types of programs to be regularly and predictably offered.

Even before that, the re-offering of certain program designs was occurring more frequently.

"Temporariness" has been declining on the administrative side of the College also, as evidenced by the institution of two "professional" Deans with long terms, to replace a set of Deans who all rotated in and out of the faculty with three year terms of office, and who regularly exchanged desk assignments"¹¹.

Finally, I suspect that one other type of "temporariness," innovation, has been declining. The first catalogues featured a barrage of notions unlike those at other schools with which I'm familiar; more recent programs seem variations on those original themes.

* The rate of change in Evergreen programs and practices appears to be have declined.

Not-Disciplinary Learning: A change in this second of the three fundamental elements is harder to document. I do believe such a change has been occurring, however. One of my spies, a retailer in Olympia, reports hearing Evergreen students talk about their studies, always in terms of traditional disciplinary categories, even referring to

¹¹ Non-Evergreeners who wish the details of the evolution of Evergreen's Deanery might read McCann (1977). It is really quite an interesting story and, among other things, charts this shift away from temporariness.

'majoring' in one discipline or another. (That, of course, does not indicate that a change has taken place; Evergreen students may have talked that way from the beginning, when in town.)

Hungry for numbers, I scanned several Evergreen catalogues, and attempted to classify coordinated studies and group contracts on the basis of the number of "divisions" (i.e. natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, arts) each represented.

Figure 6 shouldn't be taken as gospel, since 1) it derives from catalogue copy, 2) it is the hurried judgment of one observer.

A program was judged to "contain" a division if the claim was made that students would be either learning or using knowledge from that division. "Natural science" includes any studies of the natural world or related mathematics; "social science" includes any studies or applications of social technique; "humanities" includes any concerns with the nature of the human/self; "arts" includes references to the production of artwork, or an intensive use of artifacts as material through which to study a culture.

There seems to have been a trend away from including multiple divisions within programs. The trend reversed as of the most recent catalogue, and this may not be a coincidence: Evergreen has just instituted advanced specialty areas and in general taken a new look at its curriculum. For whatever reason, the whole curriculum, not just the advanced areas, has become more interdivisional again. Even so, the emphasis is still less interdivisional than in the first year.

To summarize:

- * Evergreen programs have become more focused in terms of traditional divisions of knowledge, although the institution of specialty areas may have partially reversed the trend.

Figure 6. Number of Programs Containing One, Two, Three or Four Divisions
(Humanities, Arts, Social & Natural Sciences)

<u>1971-72</u>			<u>1974-75</u>			<u>1976-77</u>			<u>1977-78</u>		
CSP ¹ GC ¹ T ¹			Basic (inc. annual) CSP GC ² T			CSP GC ² T			CSP GC T		
one:	1	0 1	1	23 24	2	24 26	1	4 5			
two:	3	0 3	6	7 13	0	9 9	9	7 16			
three:	2	0 2	0	0 0	2	0 2	3	0 3			
four:	1	0 1	1	0 1	1	0 1	1	0 1			
Advanced (inc. intermediate, specialty areas)											
CSP GC T			CSP GC ² T			CSP GC ² T			CSP GC T		
one:	0	0 0	6	0 6	10	0 10	4	13 17			
two:	3	1 4	5	0 5	7	0 7	7	7 14			
three:	0	0 0	6	0 6	1	0 1	2	1 3			
four:	2	0 2	0	0 0	0	0 0	0	0 0			
Total											
CSP GC T			CSP GC T			CSP GC T			CSP GC T		
one:	1	0 1	7	23 30	12	24 36	5	17 22			
two:	6	1 7	11	7 18	7	9 16	16	14 30			
three:	2	0 2	6	0 6	3	0 3	5	1 6			
four:	3	0 3	1	0 1	1	0 1	1	0 1			

¹"CSP" = Coordinated Studies Program. "GC" = Group Contract. "T" = Total. Explanation of figure in text.

²Group Contracts in these years were not classified as basic or advanced so they have all been lumped as basic.

Freedom and Responsibility: This is the most difficult of the three elements to measure, but there is reason here also to believe that some change has taken place.

Faculty member: A freshman chaired the task force that made the policy on reductions in force. (That occurred in 1973-74 and I much doubt that any similar exercise of student responsibility has occurred recently.)

Faculty member: In our first years we went through a good deal of worry about whether we had the right to substitute our judgment for that of the student. Most of us concluded that we did.

One thing that enables people to exercise freedom is access to money. Evergreen initially seemed on its way to operation on a very opulent scale, but in deflated dollars it has probably had a number of budget cuts, when reckoned on a per-student or per-faculty member basis. The equipment was bought originally with capital from the construction budget; Evergreen's last building has now been completed and repair and replacement may be a problem.

There continues to be some amount of agitation to reduce student use of the individual contract mode and to set higher academic standards, both of which (whatever their other virtues) would reduce a student's ability to do precisely what she wanted.

The legislature is extending its control over higher education by putting more strictures on the way money is spent, thus reducing the Evergreen administration's ability to reallocate their budget.

State budget categories, among other things, seem to be creating an increasing distinction between faculty and staff. The catalogue too, which once listed all personnel in a single group, now makes that distinction.

A study of student transcripts from the Winter Quarters of 1971-72, 1973-74, and 1976-77 indicates a possibility that student "freedom and responsibility" are declining. (This is a possibility, not a definite conclusion--my methods were too slapdash and the sample too small.¹²) More research is needed.

¹²Sixty student names were selected, twenty each (an average of five first through fourth year students) from winter quarters of 1971-72, 1973-74, and 1976-77. The faculty and student evaluations for each student for that quarter were examined. Comments were noted if they bore on student exercise of freedom or responsibility; student discomfort with freedom and responsibility; program provision of freedom or responsibility. Transcripts were examined in alphabetical order, without reference to year or class.

The goal of the scoring system was to provide a crude measure of the offer or acceptance of freedom. An offer of freedom that was too much for a student was rated the same as an offer accepted, or a claim to freedom not offered.

After notes were completed, they were scored. Two points were given for each comment such as: student was virtually self-directed; took major responsibility for several projects; severe difficulties with an ambiguous environment; student has strong internal standards and direction. One point was given for comments such as: program provided an internship; student was on individual contract; program provided students with choice of internal workshops; student was supportive in seminars; student sometimes exhibits leadership.

The total points were then divided by the total students rated for that year.

Scores:	<u>1971-72</u>	<u>1973-74</u>	<u>1976-77</u>
	3.1	4.4	2.6
	(n = 18)	(n = 17)	(n = 18)

Although the most recent year was lowest, as expected, little credence can be placed in these findings, per se. The sample was neither stratified nor truly random since a casual effort was made, within categories, to get a variety of program types. It doesn't reflect the population because of the equal numbers per class, and because the proportion of individual contracts in the samples probably does not reflect the total population.

The procedure could be improved somewhat by scoring each statement in a transcript. Although laborious, this would eliminate any bias introduced by trends in transcript length. The real problem is that transcripts have not apparently been consistent or thorough in their comments in this direction; this might be compensated for through the use of a considerably larger sample.

Student (in a film about Evergreen, "For What It's Worth): "I think a lot of people who weren't here at the beginning don't have the sense that it's their school and so they don't charge out and do what they want to do. That was a lot of the real feeling of Evergreen: you were really here to do what you wanted to do, to do it and create it, and that seems somehow to have changed. I don't think people are being encouraged to think that, to make sure that this is your school and that things are going just as you want it."

Faculty member (in the film): "I've always fought the notion that Evergreen is a place where you can do whatever you want."

Faculty member (in the film): "Both students and faculty have more freedom to pursue their academic desires in an atmosphere where they get more support from colleagues and less harrassment and less red tape from administrators than anywhere else."

Tom Maddox: a former Evergreen student and faculty member, has reviewed all histories written about Evergreen programs and contracts. They indicate a growing tendency to use tests (which imply a certain degree of internal uniformity in programs). History writing itself has been declining in quality and quantity, even though it is now required.

Visitor: Evergreen is one of the most bureaucratized colleges I've seen. The number of forms is amazing.

Colleges everywhere are struggling amidst a growing number of demands from the outside.

* Evergreen students, faculty and staff have probably all suffered some lessening of their freedom (i.e. of their opportunities to exercise responsible choice.)

Summary

This kind of impressionistic data tells little that is conclusive about what is really happening to the College, but it is certainly giving some strong hints.

The College is less of a "pure" place than once it was. Once one might have pretended that Evergreen was purely not-disciplinary, purely full-time, perhaps even purely free. Now it spans the range between

traditional and not-traditional along each of its three axes. On the average it seems to have moved from the not-traditional toward the traditional.

How Should the Change Be Interpreted - Research Suggestions

It would be interesting to know, as time goes on, whether Evergreen is still changing and how that should be interpreted:

1. As minor adjustments and finetuning in a maturing, successful institution?
2. As a retreat from an educational plan that has failed?
3. As a set of changes which are occurring independently of Evergreen's success as an educational institution but which are
 - a. destroying its success
 - b. increasing it.

If options #1 or #2 are true, then detailed studies of the actual changes that have occurred ought to show that the people who did the changing were acting on some perceptions of the success of the plan, both before and after the change (if option #1 is true, then the actors should be perceiving improvement consistent with the plan; if option #2 is true, then improvement inconsistent with the plan should be noticed).

If option #3 is true, as I suspect, then detailed examination of actual changes should find that the motives had little to do with the plan (as sketched in this evaluation). That detailed study would also indicate that, in sum, these changes were indeed having a fundamental effect on Evergreen.

The next section explains just how that could be occurring.

One Reason Why Evergreen May Have Changed

Evergreen was set up to be "different" but not to stay different. It was given the goal of being "alternative," but its structure does little to counteract environmental pressure to become more traditional.

Evergreen has to interact with its environment, constantly, if it is to survive.

- * New students have to find Evergreen and decide to come;
- * Faculty have to come and feel comfortable about staying (i.e. not believe that this job is rendering them totally incapable of finding another one);
- * Students also must believe that, after Evergreen, they will once again be able to live and work in a not-Evergreen world, or they're not likely to come;
- * The state needs to understand Evergreen well enough to exert its customary control and give money.

Entry of students, entry of faculty, exit of graduates, accepting of state funds are only a few of the transactions that Evergreen conducts with its environment.

Yet each time a transaction is conducted, Evergreen's points of difference create problems.

There are three ways for Evergreeners to deal with such problems (call them mismatch problems):

1. Do nothing. Grit your teeth and bear it.
2. Try to resolve the difficulty in a way that is consistent with the Evergreen plan.
3. Resolve it in a way that isn't consistent with the plan.

The latter move is the most common, I suspect, because few people know what the whole plan looks like, or realize that their one action can affect it.

One way or another, the adjustments are made:

- * People concerned with admissions or publications writing stress that disciplinary as well as not-disciplinary objectives can be pursued here, that Evergreen is for everyone (and perhaps it is); students enter with traditional expectations and make traditional demands;
- * Faculty begin to get tough with students, to raise standards, to insist on hard work if credit is to be earned. ("What would my colleagues elsewhere think if they could see me in a seminar, not really knowing what I was talking about?") ("The students want more direction, more structure.")
- * Shorter, smaller, narrower programs are offered to attract more students so that enrollments won't decline, and to service demands for disciplinary learning.
- * Specialty areas are invented to enable hard, advanced interdisciplinary learning to take place, and to reduce the unpredictability of the curriculum that had been frustrating student efforts to plan their programs.
- * Public listings of Evergreen faculty and staff begin to separate one from the other, to list faculty disciplines, and whether they have Ph.D.s.

So, on the one hand there is pressure to become more traditional in order to deal with mismatch problems and on the other there is evidence that the College is actually becoming more traditional.

What is the linkage between the two? Is such change inevitable? The answer to the first should supply an answer to the second.

As indicated above, mismatch problems can simply be ignored (at some cost) or they can be solved but without changing Evergreen fundamentally.

The third option, conceding to the traditional demand, is probably the easiest way out, however.

Each of these concessions, though small, can have a large and cumulative effect in two different ways:

1. The changes simply add up, since most forces on the College today are probably toward the traditional.
2. They also multiply. Each one potentially increases the pressure to make the others; that kind of chain

reaction was described in the discussion of modules ("Using the Model. How One Element can Influence Others," on p. 24)

This is still not the full linkage between the pressures and the actual changes. Why don't people refer to the Evergreen plan when dealing with mismatch problems?

Because there isn't one.

More accurately, few people, if any, carry the whole thing around in their heads (and this is the first place I know of where it has been put in writing).

Evergreeners wanted freedom so that they wouldn't have to worry about anything except what they were learning or teaching; they wanted to be free to concentrate on their programs. That means that only a few administrators are charged with trying to see Evergreen whole. But the leaders aren't the only ones who face mismatch problems, and even when administrators do encounter such difficulties, they too often haven't got the time to worry about the ramifications of the quick fix.

So Evergreen's concentration on its full-time programs tends to fragment the College, and isolated people simply aren't prepared to see the larger implications of their actions.¹³

¹³My job has required me to talk to virtually everybody, and to think about Evergreen as a whole. It wasn't until I served with the Long Range Curriculum Planning Task Force last year that I realized that not everyone was capable of seeing the implications of particular policy changes. I tried to get the Task Force to think in these larger terms, i.e. how a particular change might affect other parts of the College, but the attempt was basically a flop. I didn't realize how much knowledge and thought is required to keep a complex model in one's head (whether it is the model I propose or one entirely different). When the plan for specialty areas was proposed, few of us could see in advance what its full implications for the College would be.

Secondly, because Evergreen's plan is negative in so many ways, there is often disagreement as to what the essence of the plan is. A person who came to Evergreen because of the freedom may see no cause for alarm if a smidgeon of not-disciplinarity is sacrificed. A person who values full-time programs and hard interdisciplinary work may not notice if student responsibility is discouraged by a new policy.

Yet many of these "little" changes eventually affect the entire system.

Summary of the argument to this point:

- * Evergreen seems to be changing, fundamentally;
- * Such change is predictable because being "different" causes problems;
- * Solving a mismatch problem by changing one element of Evergreen has implications for the rest of the College, too;
- * Accidental, fundamental change is made more likely because people are free to only worry about their own programs, and do. They are too isolated and too busy to notice the larger implications of change.
- * People each have their own "pet" part of Evergreen. If each one only reacts when their "pet" is attacked, accidental, fundamental change is also made more likely.

Is Changing Good or Bad?

Neither, necessarily.

There are several reasons that one might have for being dissatisfied, however:

1. The College was commissioned to be alternative, perhaps even experimenting. Yet the drift is toward being the "same" (few if any colleges are wholly traditional; most are mixes, just as Evergreen is becoming).
2. The higher education market is shrinking, and not every college can be Harvard. A stable enrollment may depend on being distinctively and desirably different (but not too risky).
3. The College was created around these three fundamentals and at great expense. Yet no one has ever discovered if they were worth the effort. Should a College like Evergreen (was) ever be founded again?¹⁴
4. Research has shown that the only schools with observable, specific effects on their students are those with "a plan", a set of values or attitudes that are pervasive. It stands to reason that student change is more likely in such an environment than in one where each experience may contradict the last one.¹⁵

¹⁴Some people might think that simply because students came to Evergreen and (some of them) left happy, Evergreen was a success. That's not an adequate proof because 1) a student can only be at one place at a time, and so their physical presence is not evidence that they know they are better off here than elsewhere, 2) a student may be here for reasons in addition to (or other than) Evergreen's capabilities for fostering learning, 3) lots of students leave, and it may be that they know more than the ones who stay.

(It is my own private prejudice that Evergreen is worth something, by the way. That is the fruit of brilliant insight or sentimentality, however, not evidence.)

¹⁵Following this argument too far can lead to brainwashing. Rejecting it totally leads to a college which stands for nothing, not honesty, not a love of knowledge, not effective action, or loving acceptance, or freedom, or anything. Rejecting it, however, has been the rule in higher education recently.

(It is only recently, for that matter, that I've noticed something odd about faculty or students who demand that the university be "socially responsible," but simultaneously protect their own right to be different with a claim of "academic freedom." Internal academic freedom is not always consistent with institutional action, and that is a dilemma.)

- * In summary, change is not necessarily good or bad, but it may not be a good idea for Evergreen to become like other schools, a mixture of the traditional and nontraditional. That is particularly true if the change does not stem from an internal conviction that the Evergreen experiment has failed.

Challenge of the Eighties

So far this entire discussion has been carried on as though Evergreen were in a vacuum, except as it interacts with some nameless environment. That is a conceit that can't be carried any further.

Many of the changes noted are probably also caused by changes in Evergreen's environment.

The Evergreen plan itself is a product of everything that was au courant a decade ago in higher education, in an era of expansion, plentiful jobs, imperialistic education.

The College has exited from the sixties, is in the last third of the seventies, and headed pellmell for the eighties.

What can be said about the next decade?

- * In many ways, for a College, the eighties will be like all the decades before it. People will still be growing up, out, and old. Some will want education for employment or to understand their universe or themselves. Some will want a cloister, some a platform, and some will want both.
- * The demographic change that will shrink the numbers of young people coming out of high school will also be changing the job market and the whole economy too. The new agitation to raise the retirement age is not a coincidence. The "new majority" is getting older all the time. The nature of entry level jobs, the chances for conventional "up-the-ladder" promotion, the types of goods and services an older market will want--these things are all changing.
- * The threat of nuclear blackmail, nuclear and non-nuclear terrorism will continue to make this an international world, just as surely as the growth of international trade and the constraints on resources.

- * Our institutions are being increasingly entangled by the demands of one constituency after another. Our society is beginning to live by the slogan "let the seller beware, or sue the bastard." Interdependence makes such changes attractive, but each individual is going to have to face countless moral crises: "I do not know the consequences of my actions. Shall I act?"
- * The Cold War is over, but the challenge to freedom and democracy is not. More properly speaking, such ideals have been and are minorities in a hungry, angry world. Should a college be training "citizens"?
- * The electronics revolution is an exponential wave, and the changes that microcircuits, "artificial intelligence," and the rest will shortly be making in our working and leisure lives will make television, Apollo, and program-mable calculators look like small change. Ditto for the biological revolution.
- * If higher education fails to increase its productivity at the rate the economy as a whole does, its price may continue to increase. It may be an increasingly tight squeeze for not-rich tuition payers and tax payers.
- * This contracting, expanding, writhing world may make its greatest demands and threats on higher learning.

The conventional wisdom floating around higher education these days is that the recipe for the future is to do less than you have been doing, and for a lot less money. That course of action may be easy--I happen to think it will be difficult, as people don't like to make sacrifices without some ideal in sight--but, even if easy, "less is better" seems foolish. The world is changing and higher education wasn't doing all that well before.

Evergreen should certainly be changing in some ways, while maintaining itself in others--if it is to do more than survive in the eighties, it will have to be a much different sort of place.

But does this potpourri of forecasts and fears have anything definite to say about the value of the Evergreen plan?

The answer, I think, is simple: If the plan has worked before, it is going to be needed more than ever, here and elsewhere. If the College can do what it claims, it is even more an institution for the eighties than it was for the sixties.¹⁶ The eighties (and the nineties, and the next century) will need people who can be both accepting and active, interdependent but independent. If its basic plan is sound, Evergreen has hardly begun to fulfill its promise.

But is the basic plan sound? The model may also be useful in answering that question.

¹⁶The term, "the College," refers here to any institution embodying the three fundamentals and otherwise designed well for its environment.

There is one proviso: it has been pointed out that large, full-time programs must be broadly ranging and widely attractive, particularly in a small school like Evergreen is today. Specialization in our society continues to increase and that means that, somewhere in a person's life, they need specialized education. Evergreen can't do its job if nobody comes; broad college education may not be attractive if 1) potential students are skeptical and Evergreen can't offer evidence of its value, or 2) if other educational institutions can do an even better job (e.g. high schools?). I think, myself, that Evergreen can eventually offer such evidence (though it will take time and effort to compile it) and that the competition will not be too fierce for the time being.

Using the Model in Planning, Policy-Making and Evaluation

Evaluating Evergreen is a different proposition from evaluating the model.

One can ask a number of basic questions about either:

1. Are its educational goals feasible?
2. What value is placed on the goals by various significant judges (potential students, legislators, partents, faculty, staff)
3. Are the theories by which it claims to operate actually true (e.g., does close faculty-student contact often help a student learn how to learn?)
4. Are the theories by which it claims to operate actually in use (e.g. Evergreen's publicity claims that learning here is organized not-disciplinarily but is that really the way things are done here?)
5. If the answers to #3 and #4 are both true, then one should also find that the goals are being satisfied, or at least approached.

The real Evergreen is a heterogeneous hodgepodge of processes, theories, hopes, evasions, and sweat.

The model is a fiction that seeks to represent some of the more important aspects of Evergreen.

The model does suggest some questions whose answers might be significant for the real Evergreen:

1. What kinds of not-disciplinary learning do various Evergreeners actually care most about?
2. If these goals were clearly explained and were actually being achieved, would they be highly valued by various significant judges? (e.g., is "continued learning"¹⁷ an activity that is valued by real continuing learners? Is it an activity that is rewarded by employers?)

¹⁷Goal Descriptions would have to be more specific than "continuing learning," of course.

3. Do faculty and student freedom, exercised in the context of large, full-time, long-term programs, promote these various types of learning? For some student-types more than others? More effectively and less expensively than rule-bound, disciplinary courses?

Most questions can be answered with varying degrees of precision, and at varying costs. What is already known, or easy to find out, about the answers to these three questions?

What Kinds of Not-Disciplinary Learning Do Evergreeners Care About?

"Not-disciplinary learning" is, by itself, not much of a goal statement. Evergreen could, literally, be rated a smashing success if its students learned nothing at all, just so long as it wasn't disciplinary.

So what is needed is a list of types of positive, not-disciplinary learning goals.¹⁸

¹⁸Each of these is valued and promoted by many Evergreeners. That doesn't mean that everyone does, or that everyone should.

There are a number of ways to come up with such a list: by committee, reading the catalogues, asking people. I've done all three at various times in the last two years (all on a small, informal scale), and here, in no particular order, is my own list of types of not-disciplinary learning that matter to Evergreeners.

1. Task-centered thinking, learning and acting: it is believed that a problem has an inherent organization, or set of possibilities for organization, that are independent of a person's mental organization at the time he first encounters it.

An alumna ought to have the skills, attitudes and mental models to quickly perceive at least the outlines of the problem's true shape and the beginnings of what she needs to know to begin solving it.

Such a skill would be aided by a command of tools and knowledge from a variety of intellectual disciplines, as well as by knowledge, attitudes, and values that might not ordinarily be called disciplinary.

That means that, when confronting a problem, the person has to be able occasionally to transcend the labels attached to the knowledge when it was learned; this relabeling process can take place when doing a puzzle or when rethinking one's own career.

Task-centered thinking, learning and acting has to be learned, at least partly, through active experience. Lecturing, by itself, probably wouldn't help much.

I would add one thing to this goal. The common Evergreen emphasis is on the constructive relationships between learning and "real life." One faculty member put it, "ideas are vital and real and useable" and as another said, "I want students to learn that (my field) can be applied to problem they'll meet in their lives."

But learning can have three types of relationships to the rest of life; conservative, destructive/innovative, and neutral. Each of these three types can be good or bad, too.

I think an Evergreen alumna, among other things, ought to have a strong personal sense of these six possibilities and see them as real in her own day-to-day living and learning.

2. An Evergreen alumnus ought to enjoy learning and be quite capable of continuing to do it, working and playing.

A continuing learner needs several sorts of attributes.

The mental associations that guide his memory and further learning ought not to be simply disciplinary. If the knowledge is to be useful and personally meaningful, it has to be richly interconnected and organized through varied habits of use.

A continuing learner also needs the self-confidence and skill to look for her own ignorance and mistakes.

Self-confidence is also necessary to partially surrender to an expert. Whether one is using a doctor or a book or a college course, in order to remain master of one's own fate, it is necessary to surrender but not totally, to prepare by getting some estimate of whether the expert is worth the cost, and so on.

Finally, a learner ought to be fascinated by at least one sort of Learning.

3. Critical thinking. Learning how to think, to analyze, construct a solid argument: none of these are the property of a specific discipline. Although many college catalogues give such skills lip-service, their disciplinary organization may well discourage the kind of education that would help students learn how to think critically. That's the Evergreen theory, anyway.

4. Moral thinking. Thinking hard about choice is not seen as a disciplinary task today, either, perhaps not even in ethics.

Yet the use of knowledge always involves moral choice, just as any action does. Being able to see implications of a specific type of action (e.g., supporting a war) can be learned through experience and education. A school can encourage moral education by asking that its students make choices, take stands, and learn from the consequences of those actions. Every choice made and accepted lays the ground work for new choice--every choice denied leads to atrophy. (My own education improved my critical thinking but degraded and discouraged my moral thinking; we were called upon to analyze, but seldom to take a stand and defend it.)

Coming to know and be comfortable enough with yourself to be able to make and stick to difficult (moral) choices requires personal growth, not just facts. As one faculty member put it, "a successful Evergreen student finds his own voice."

One especially important subcategory of this goal might be called "education for citizenship." It's an old title but the goal is very real to a number of Evergreen faculty; the student ought to learn the real nature of the relationship between individual and community, citizen and state, and learn it so that it can be part of her own living.

This goal has been called "personal growth," and "affective learning" but I like "courage and humility" best. An Evergreen alumna should have been pressed to know enough about the world to be both courageous enough to make decisions and humble enough to know what that means.

5. The Field of Knowledge. Even if one doesn't believe that disciplines are devoted to gradually exploring an existing map of knowledge, it is possible to see how psychology,

sociology and anthropology are all looking at the same human beings, how physics and astronomy and biology are all examining the same natural world.

6. Metaphors in Knowledge, Tools and Methods. What one knows or can do in one area can sometimes be a useful metaphor for learning in another. Sometimes this is a rigorous relationship (as in various fields of mechanics where the same equations govern very different types of phenomena) and sometimes looser. If one realizes this, has the background, and can think divergently, this creative translation can be quite useful.
7. Reading, writing and seminarng. Like critical and moral thinking these are not-disciplinary skills that require work, and are worth it. Evergreen's basic programs are more directly aimed at these types of learning than are most first year curricula (or at least so the catalogue claims).
8. Earning a living. A student should have, or be building, some set of skills, knowledge, attitudes and values useful in sustaining herself economically and making some contribution to the larger community.
No kind of work ought to be necessarily "above or below" an Evergreen-educated person. Evergreen alumni may be blue collar workers, or even work at a job that others would call unskilled, and still be a success, by Evergreen standards, if they continue to learn and think, and are good at their craft.
9. Evergreen is for all its students. (That title is a tricky way of evading the empirical question, 'Is Evergreen for Everyone?')
Disciplinary education is often a watered-down version of education directed at the Future Professors of America. This is reflected, in part, by the emphasis on graduate school acceptance as a measure of success in the undergraduate education.
The classic Evergreen success story, on the other hand, is the person who came here without any apparent academic talent and then, nurtured by something or someone, bloomed.

Who Values These Types of Learning, and How Much?

This is really four questions, two directed to people inside Evergreen and two outside, two about what people say they want and two about what they actually do.

Since the goal list above is aimed at answering one of the four questions (what do Evergreeners say they want), we are left with answering the remaining three.

If we put aside the question of whether Evergreeners' actions actually reflect these goals (e.g. what actually is going on within programs), it still leaves two important questions:

1. What do potential students think they want from a college education? Legislators? Parents? Employers?
2. Are these Evergreen educational goals actually enjoyed by the people who have them? How do employers, parents, and others act toward a person who embodies these goals?

Getting answers to these two questions will be exceedingly difficult, but a lot could hinge on them.

One way to get some relatively quick answers to the first question is to collect twenty to thirty concrete educational goals, among which are these (or some other) Evergreen goals. Show the list to various types of people (e.g. high school juniors, legislators) and ask them 1) how important, relatively, each is and 2) whether they believe college can accomplish it.

Only if there are goals that come into question does Evergreen need to worry about the second question above. If a goal is questioned (by Evergreeners or by people outside), then it may be time to do some research.

Some people might wonder, for instance, whether "moral thinking" can actually be developed through a college education or whether "task-centered learning" is really useful in the working world. Research could help to answer their questions. (In fact, the research may have already been done; a search of the literature is an easy first step.)

In sum:

- * First, ask what potential college students and their parents think about a list of goals of higher education. If some valued Evergreen goals are doubted by either this group or by a large segment of the Evergreen community, research can indicate whether the goals are feasible and enjoyed by those who have attained them.

Do Freedom and Full-Time Programs Promote These Goals?

Once again some quick-and-dirty research can give some early clues as to the answers, although there is no substitute for really rigorous work.

On the hasty and filthy side, the first way to test this central hypothesis is to ask students. I would suggest initially concentrating on transfer students, in and out, between Evergreen and other four year schools. They are not necessarily "typical" but on the other hand they have had experience with two forms of college education.

Another way to use students directly is to send out a short survey aimed at finding a group of students for which "not-disciplinary learning," "freedom," and "full-time programs" seem to be important concepts. Then talk at some length with them about whether and how those three fundamentals have actually tied together in their own experiences. This is an opportunity to ask about the role of modules, too.

Ideally it would be nice to use Evergreen students as self-observing educational researchers; train them early and interview them periodically about their experiences. The interviews would be focused on the evolving relationships and dilemmas of the three fundamentals; do they seem to be useful in the way the model suggests, or not?

Freedom and full-timeness can't promote these goals if such programs don't attract students. Another quick study would involve using several

judges to rate programs along each of these dimensions, and then to see how popular each had been. (Undeniably popularity depends on other factors, too, but on the average some effect should be visible.) One faculty member has said that such programs tend to be less successful in attracting and holding students; is this really true?

The second level of difficulty is to actually make some measurements of what is happening at Evergreen.

In such a study (which might be run by consultants or by doctoral students using it for dissertations), there are two types of challenge: measuring student learning along these goals, and measuring program characteristics of freedom and full-timeness.

Such a study would require time and resources, but it should be obvious by now how important its results could be. Until Evergreen begins to get some conception of how its three fundamentals relate to one another, in practice, educational policy-making won't get far from wishful thinking.

There are other studies which could also be done, in parallel if necessary. One might, for instance, assume temporarily that all colleges shared Evergreen's goals and ask, "If a school organized itself with the three fundamentals, would it tend to become a more or a less expensive place to get an education?"

Over a period of years, Evergreen ought to be assembling a body of evidence which is useful for thinking about just how well its plan is working, compared to other ways of fostering similar goals.

The Model. Summary and Conclusion

A good many things about Evergreen can be explained if one thinks of

it in terms of three fundamental elements: the goal of not-disciplinary learning, the value of freedom and responsibility in the control of learning, and the structure of full-time, long-term programs.

That doesn't mean that other elements aren't important; some, such as the College's age, its size and growth rate, its status as a public college, and changes in its external environment are quite important in understanding it.

This also doesn't mean that Evergreen is, or ever was, completely pure along any of those three dimensions.

But a model like this one is quite suggestive, at least for me, in thinking about how this place works and could work as an educational institution:

1. It helps in explaining it to others, to Evergreeners, and to myself.
2. It should be helpful in guiding policymaking, publicity and a number of other operational functions.
3. It should be especially useful in suggesting what sorts of evaluation, institutional and educational research would have important results for the College.

B. EVERGREEN, AN ECLECTIC VIEW

The first, and largest, part of this evaluation has been a model designed to help Evergreen become more visible to itself and others. It is based on the premise that Evergreeners can and should have a shared, clear vision of their College.

The second part takes the opposite tack of simply listing lots and lots of comments, most made by other people, that illustrate the complement: a College needs disorder and metaphor, innovators and heretics--tomorrow's truth.

To evaluate the truth of this section, one must remember who I am: an evaluation consultant here for two years, working mostly with faculty and with others interested in institutional improvement, fresh out of MIT (graduate and undergraduate), full of illusions and hope, with entree throughout the College.

Most of the comments included were made by other people and they are so identified; those without prefix are my own.

The comments are in no particular order, save that imposed by my own subconscious. This is meant to be a picture of Evergreen's diversity and disorder, creative and otherwise.

Faculty member: Teaching here is more difficult than other places because you're more vulnerable. You can't hide behind quizzes and lectures and grades. You have to have the confidence in your intuition as a teacher. You have to have the confidence to go out there and fail some of the time, to fall on your ass. The students don't mind as long as you stand up there and take it. That's the way you expect them to behave, too. Most faculty who complain are having trouble with their teaching.

What would you like to know about Evergreen? Faculty member: How are we really doing? How do our students stack up against those at the U? How are they doing on GREs?

Faculty member: When I first came here there was a sense of a community-at-large, that people were of equal value in being able to contribute to the making of Evergreen. What's happening now is that the community has shifted to a smaller scale, to the faculty seminar, to the people most closely related to me. The first year when Evergreen was small, that contact could happen with everyone or at least with a large enough mix of them so that you had a community sense.

Staff member speaking about a student: He's not one of Evergreen's wheeler-dealer types, always pounding his chest, always selling. Evergreen told him it was all right to try to do what he wanted.

Graduate: Being in an environment where you're expected to be creative and produce is tremendous incentive to actually produce.

Staff member: A lot of the faculty came expecting to accomplish a great deal and when they didn't, even though they'd done a lot more than they could have elsewhere, they began to feel ambivalent.

Faculty member: In a normal school I would be in Department X but always getting into trouble for poaching in Departments Y and Z.

Staff member: Faculty are often insensitive to the needs of Third World people in programs. Their training is just not directed to knowledge people and issues that are of concern to Third World people.

Faculty member: Having the College in the state capital aggravates problems with the legislature.

Faculty member: We wanted an environment where it would not be easy to hide.

Faculty member: My time analysis shows I spend only five hours a week on scholarly work, out of a 65 hour work week. I'm living on what I learned in graduate school. I'm going to run out of ideas and become outdated. We're living off our capital. (Q: Why don't you slow down and change the way you spend your time?)...One member of our team suggested at the start that we each have two days a week uncommitted but she's here from eight to six every day now and nudges you if you aren't--I intend to take that up with her at evaluation time--and the students say "I can always find Jane. She's here. Why not you?" I can't very well say I think Jane is an idiot.

Faculty member: Evergreen makes you reluctant to do things that will be intensely frustrating to students. Here the feedback is immediate where elsewhere it might be much later before you got shit, and maybe then students would have seen its usefulness and never dump on you at all. We don't have the history to be sure the frustrations are really worth it.

Faculty member: Omigod, do we pretend that we give them the basics! But it's a sham. They're not well-rounded.

Faculty member: One thing we did foresee were the incredible joys derived from the good teaching we have all done at one time or another.

Faculty member: How do we feel about having gotten rid of departments? Good. I still talk about my field with people in my field, but the rest of the time I have to make sense to everyone else which makes me make better sense of it to myself.

Faculty member: Ironically, one of the commonest complaints from unhappy students and faculty is that Evergreen lacks "community." I have to smile, because this is the most relaxed and harmonious community in which I've ever lived.

Faculty member: Evergreen historically was biased against the notion of organizing itself to prepare students for graduate school. Since only about 15% of the State's college students actually go to graduate school, this may be quite sensible.

Evergreen does not seem to have evolved many shared concepts about what it is preparing students for, if not graduate school.

Evergreen faculty are mandated by their contracts to teach outside their areas of specialization every third year, yet some are pinned by understaffing, overcurriculumming and/or their own predilections into always teaching in the same field.

The specialty areas are turning out to be more separate and nonoverlapping than planned.

Faculty member: Many of my colleagues have given up on being proud of Evergreen and just work so they can be proud of their own programs.

The decisionmaking pyramid at Evergreen is flat: central power plus faculty autonomy.

Quite a few people have commented about Evergreen's internal close-knitness and its isolation from Olympia, socially and intellectually. A recent Cooper Point Journal "satire" of Olympia life gave further, unintentional evidence of that.

This is a State school, supported not by tuition from self-sufficient learners but by taxes from citizens. Few Evergreeners appear to have given much thought to the philosophical or practical implications of that fact. (The College has never even offered a coordinated study on "The State and The College").

Faculty offering group contracts and individual contracts were originally supposed to have their own faculty seminars, but, since they didn't have any common purpose, the seminars never panned out. There seems to be a lesson there.

Many newer Evergreeners feel that the College is dominated by a clique of administrators, faculty, staff and others who were "present at the

creation." If this were true, one might expect the old-timers to feel a greater amount of influence and for new-timers, feeling helpless, to be more likely to join the unions; this speculation is supported by the following data on membership in the faculty union plotted against year of appointment to the faculty.

	Date of Appointment to the Faculty						
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976
% and #							
In the Union	30% (6)	38% (10)	33% (13)	60% (6)	56% (5)	45% (5)	0% (0)
Not in Union	70% (14)	62% (16)	67% (26)	40% (4)	44% (4)	55% (6)	100% (2)

Equally interesting is the fact that the most recent faculty members are less likely to be in the union, just like the old-timers though perhaps for different reasons.

Graduate: It's easy to get things done at Evergreen. Faculty respect me and my opinion means something. There's not a lot of position power; the role doesn't decide who is the authority. I enjoy the type of people who feel that way.

Student: When I came here to visit for two days, I went around saying "I'd like to sit in on a program." No one could find one, where it was or what it was doing. I ran into some student who invited me to come along.

Graduate: My opinion has changed quite a lot since I graduated. When I graduated, I had a gnawing feeling that I was fooling myself thinking I'd done anything of value. I now know that I can organize myself, carry out my own education, keep good records, make study proposals and evaluate them. When I went to graduate school I was struck by how few students there could do those things.

Student: I took English at my previous school, but their approach didn't work. It turns out that I have dyslexia (though I didn't discover that until after I graduated). The people here were just interested in my getting work done, so they helped me develop papers by dictating them, revising them that way, and working orally.

Student: At times I've felt alone and helpless, not knowing where to turn to get answers. It's not easy to dig the resources out... It's difficult to find out what other people are doing.

Graduate: I found out a heck of a lot about sciences... Our group went to the University of Washington several times and were introduced to the researchers foremost in the field. It helped me realize a lot of what the field is. The professional end of science is seldom mentioned in the everyday world--the politics of getting grants, carrying on research.

Student: When I came here, I thought I was hardworking, ambitious, ideal. When I stepped in here, I knew immediately that I didn't know what I was doing. It was very much a cultural shock to get here. The community college had been a high school with ashtrays--the greatest excitement was over poker games during the classes and lunch.

Student: Self-discipline comes from sad experience.

Graduate: Instead of running them through the educational mill, Evergreen is giving the opportunity to explore aspects of being human and of human life. I hope that, just for the sake of being explainable, socio-politicoeconomically, that it doesn't just go to the traditional frame.

Graduate: In our program we read everything imaginable; we were bombarded. I couldn't possibly absorb it all, yet lately I've begun to realize I'd learned things I didn't even know I'd learned.

An Evergreen student, Matt Hausle, recently made a film about Evergreen, "For What It's Worth." He selected comments from interviews and put them in his film. Below are my selections from his selections:

- * Faculty member: Everyone came here to get away from something. They knew what they didn't want but they didn't know what they did want... that was true of both students and faculty.
- * Faculty member: The first year faculty came in with certain points of view that we really spent lots of time talking about and there were few enough students that we talked to the students about those points of view, about the ideals of Evergreen, and there was less of that the next year and even less the next year. In that sense... growth really has decreased the sense of unity.
- * Faculty member: Students in the first and second year (of Evergreen) came with an educational ideal of an alternative education even though they didn't know what it was.. Students coming in the third and fourth year don't have the vaguest idea of what alternative education is and they don't want it. They just come with very comfortable, traditional notions. The faculty the same.
- * Faculty member: Evergreen needs a real tolerance for ambiguity if it wants to stay open and alive.
- * Student: I've learned to teach myself.
- * Student: I could learn here because I didn't have to compete with anybody. I could pursue my own course of study. Evergreeners set a high standard for themselves.
- * Student: The whole ideology of "we're all the same here"... it's taken me three years to get through that and realize that we're not all the same.

* Faculty member: Students are doing more exciting, more different, more intellectually stimulating stuff than they've ever done before and they aren't merely driving us down these narrow little paths, even though they come in with more conservative goals.

Graduate: All that the undergraduates at my new school can do is botany where I have other options besides grad school. I could do a lot of things equally well... I call myself an ecologist; my advisor, a plant ecologist, doesn't understand why I want to bother with animals. I took a class in pesticides; he said if I continued to fritter away my time on such irrelevancies I wouldn't graduate. I have a different attitude toward my advisor than his other students. They tend to do what they're told. I tend to say, "No, that's not what I want to do."

Graduate: I'm more comfortable talking in groups. Seminarizing was really good for me. I hated it at first. I was scared of their opinion of me, thinking I was dumb. I was venturing my opinions, learning what I really thought about something.

Graduate: I had to take responsibility for myself, make my own choices, and then do it without being told... I started with stupid little things. I expected to be given a little red portfolio--why wasn't I given one?--it was the first step in responsibility. You have to learn how to seek if you want to get what you want. That's unique to Evergreen in comparison with the two other colleges I've attended. There mostly things were given to you. You were babied along and never forced to decide what you wanted to do.

Graduate: Evergreen was four years of rabid nonclosure--which was fine.

Graduate: The most important thing for me was that I chose what I wanted after a year and a half of broad learning. I began to realize that I wanted to focus on environment and science. I've lived in this area since I was three and I've always liked trees, but I knew nothing about them. I didn't even take biology in high school! It had a bad reputation. The programs I took here in my first two years covered psychology and sociology but with honest-to-goodness biology and natural science. It was very helpful and kept me in touch with all those things at once. At the U you take four or five bundles at once. We could shift focus at a moment's notice across disciplines and that happened frequently. I felt in touch with all of them. People I know who've gone to other places have told me how different it is elsewhere and I've visited other schools, but all I need to do is remember high school. There's never a focus there.

Graduate: The faculty I had were definitely outstanding. They were good teachers. (Q: What makes a good Evergreen teacher?) I'm not sure what it takes. They were able to spend large amounts of time working with students on a personal basis. They had the ability to take all questions seriously and answer in a clear and straightforward way without jargon designed to say "Leave me alone"... they were good provokers without being pushy. I tend to be fairly well self-motivated. They didn't push. They dangled the knowledge carrot and I went for it.

Faculty member: The gap between the rhetoric and the practice here is still tremendous and it is still giving some people a lot of pain.

Every field may have a very distinct and different set of problems in operating at Evergreen, yet too often "interdisciplinarity" seems to be taken as a command to treat all alike, and to ignore their problems equally.

I've been surprised at how few student extracurricular activities there are, and have speculated on the implications, but it's just guesswork. What causes this? What does it mean for student development?

Evergreen has been biased against textbooks and in favor of original sources in the humanities and social sciences.

Evergreen students come late and leave early. There are a lot of people who come as transfers and as older people; there are a lot of students who leave, temporarily or permanently, before they receive their degrees. Evergreen doesn't know whether this is a good thing for the students. It does appear to be a bad thing for Evergreen.

Faculty member: One day last week I went home after one of those awful Evergreen days when everything went wrong and I didn't even understand what went wrong. At (my old school) at least I knew what was wrong.

A random sample of three Evergreen alumni now all living in Thurston County were all enthusiastic about their educations here, and all were doing regular, serious, off-the-job reading. The students I usually see are also, mostly, enthusiastic about the College.

"Evergreen is for everybody." "No it isn't." "So-and-so isn't an Evergreen type." "There is no such thing." Are Evergreen students "different" from students elsewhere? From one another? There are a lot of opinions on the point.

Most frequently heard student complaint: "Faculty aren't there when you want them!" (Staff complain about it, too.) There is a greater amount of "wanting of faculty" at Evergreen than elsewhere. Whether faculty are more or less available, I'm not sure.

Faculty member (here less than two years): One thing that convinced me to come here was that so many faculty were talking about changing and growing.

The portfolio system is not working well.

Faculty member: Many faculty came to Evergreen, in part, because they didn't like to lecture, or couldn't.

Student: individuals here develop mostly through retreat, although they can also do it through action.

Faculty member: I've been talking to students all morning... I'm so freaked out I'm having trouble getting my mind to operate.

Fear: Evergreen students can hustle but they can't work.

In the few lectures I attended, fewer people were taking notes than I expected. I attended an engineering school as an undergrad.

Faculty member: Faculty seminars don't meet at people's homes during the day as much as they used to.

The age difference between faculty and students is growing?

Faculty member: Evergreen is set up to be manic-depressive.

Faculty member: A lot of the traditional faculty support mechanisms, things that tell you you're doing well, have been declared invalid and are missing here.

Student: The students here work much harder than at (my old school).

The Evergreen faculty have a tendency to panic over real or possible threats. It appears to me that the faculty union has occasionally exploited that fear in order to build solidarity.

Student: A lot of people here think this is the only alternative institution in the country.

Part-time faculty appear to have gotten the shaft here, in pay, in facilities, and plain old attention.

Evergreen students have the best track record in the country for applying for and receiving grants from the student-originated studies program. It appears that all Evergreen proposals have been from students in natural, not social, sciences.

Faculty member: I get thrown out of places in Olympia for saying I'm from Evergreen... the only reason I stay is that I couldn't get a job at this salary anywhere else.

Faculty member: We started out with everyone doing everything but we've gotten away from that.

Several faculty: Evergreen faculty are extraordinarily individualistic, perhaps because they were all hired as mavericks who couldn't stand to conform to their old colleges.

Faculty member (newish): Faculty work really hard here, largely from guilt. "I've got to help, to put in my oar." First year faculty will really be apologetic in a team about not pulling their weight. People here just give and give and give... I'm really impressed with the faculty here.

Staff: Our history with the legislature is one of always explaining, always qualifying because the titles of what we do never quite fit what we are actually doing.

Faculty member: Getting things to be visible around here is a hell of a job. A Dean called a meeting of all faculty with individual contracts and three people showed up.

At one point, President Ford made some major alterations in his Cabinet. Two days later only two of fifty-seven students in one program knew it had happened.

Evergreeners seem to think of themselves as an isolated chunk of the universe, isolated not only from the non-academic world (which is not unusual for a small college, I understand) but from the rest of higher education as well. There is little publication on education emanating from here, little visible desire that other schools adopt Evergreen's mode or learn from its experience. If other places could learn anything Evergreen, Evergreen faculty aren't talking about it.

What helps a theme-centered program to be successful? What is the difference between a "good theme" and a "not-so-hot-theme"? The variety and primitiveness of the answers I get to those questions convinces me that faculty haven't learned very much about it. If they have, the knowledge is still mostly tacit (like the answer to "How can I be a good artist?").

"Paranoia" and "reinventing the wheel" are oft heard Evergreen phrases.

A lot of people here want community and they are not finding it.

Faculty member: It is difficult to teach an advanced coordinated studies program if each faculty member is not competent in all the core fields.

Faculty member (newish): I'm astounded at how few faculty I've gotten to know well, as compared with my last school.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Boost the level of question-asking and question-answering.

The two are interdependent, because without an inquisitive population, no research will have any impact; without specialized question-answering resources for the tough queries, people certainly won't take the pains required to ask good questions.

My specific recommendation has been to establish an Office of Research. The Legislature has refused to add to Evergreen's budget for this purpose and Evergreen has refused to make the deep reallocations that would be needed otherwise.

Don't lose hope, however, since other policy alternatives are still available: decentralization.

The academic deans can and should take responsibility for 1) continuing the program of sponsoring doctoral dissertations and other student (including Evergreen) research and evaluation, 2) insuring that the curriculum and faculty increasingly reflect a quantitative and higher education slant so that Evergreen students can do Evergreen research. (Right now there are no faculty that I'm aware of who are interested in offering a higher-education-oriented group contract or coordinated study; the curriculum is, in general, very poor in quantitative social science; neither of these conditions is likely to produce many Evergreen students capable of doing evaluation or educational research.

Other evaluation tasks can be taken on by administrators, singly or in cooperation: Registrar, Director of Admissions, and so on.

Consultants can take up the slack where necessary.

2. Promising lines of research and evaluation. I've reported on this elsewhere and will not repeat myself (see above, "Using the Model for Policy-making, Research, and Evaluation", and below in the Appendices, "Problem Statements")

Three additional guidelines might be of use in selecting targets and methods:

1. Concentrate on questions with important answers
2. Tailor the method to the context
3. Be human

Number 2 needs a bit of explanation: some learning goals are highly specific and quantifiable, and evaluation of them should be equally concrete. Some learning, however, deals with questions like "what is it to be human" and evaluation of student learning or faculty teaching must be congruent with that which is being evaluated.

3. Use communal power instead of rules. That is not a blanket recommendation, but there are times when Evergreeners seem to think that difficulties have only two possible solutions: 1) ignore it (let people be free), or 2) make a rule about it. In the early years, the first option may have been favored, more recently the second.

There are, in fact, other ways of dealing with problems. They require courage, effort, and thought.

Sometimes what is required is a way of informing community opinion and then helping that opinion become visible. When faculty workload became an issue a while ago, the only two policy choices discussed were, 1) let faculty do as they wish, or 2) make a rule about minimum work (whatever that is).

A third kind of option would be to somehow increase the visibility of faculty effort, so that praise and blame can be carried a little further, on an individual basis, by colleagues and students. One might couple this with a confidential study to discover whether there were many faculty who actually did seem to be sloughing off to the extent that their students were really the losers.

Faculty make the mistake, perhaps even more often than administrators, of thinking that rules will solve problems: "Let's make a rule to cover everybody so that we can quash what Joe is doing without hurting his feelings." The costs of that kind of policy-making for a place like Evergreen can be horrendous. Rules really do imply that one is not a free agent or an adult, but simply a rat being trained to run the maze correctly.

Rules are sometimes necessary, and there are cases where Evergreen is ignoring problems that really do need some better procedures.

The best example of this that I know of is in the evaluation of people with power by people without power. Student evaluation of faculty, for instance, which is absolutely crucial for faculty growth and for faculty retention, is being handled in a slipshod fashion. Many students do feel intimidated and refuse to make hard criticisms for fear of reprisals. Faculty retort that their fears are mostly unjustified but that is beside the point.¹⁹

¹⁹ When the President drops a comment about how Evergreen needs to let a few faculty go, everyone trembles, even though only one or two people are likely to be ultimately affected. Students may realize intellectually that very few faculty would consciously alter their evaluations of the student to take revenge, but how can one be sure that this won't be the time?

The problem could be remedied if 1) deans placed more emphasis on a complete file of student evaluations, and made that point clear to students as well as faculty, 2) student evaluations were sent first (or simultaneously) to the Deans and not routed through the faculty member, and/or 3) faculty evaluations of students were written before (or simultaneously with) student evaluations of faculty.

4. Make Evergreen more visible to Evergreeners. A regular column in this summer's Cooper Point Journal was an excellent beginning: each issue described things in a different program.

But there is a lot more to do. A school that is striving to maintain spontaneity and live without rules needs to have a feeling for its own dimensions and history.

At the moment, as described above, most Evergreeners are isolated from one another and that is something that Evergreen, more than other schools, can't live with.

Communications is not a panacea but a more accurate "sense of self" is needed if Evergreen, as an organization, is to learn from its experience.

As one other way of making Evergreen visible, I recommend a set of "social indicators" similar to the "Soundings" surveys now in use at Hampshire College, University of Massachusetts and other schools in their cluster. They yield trend data on student satisfaction, administrative operation, and so on, all in a relatively compact package. Such a survey operation might be run out of Enrollment Services.

5. Educate the outside world. The last page or two of Appendix III uses the model to analyze Evergreen's problems in communicating with the outside world. Those problems are substantial, not merely cosmetic. Ever-

green is a state-supported school and, while impassable moat surmounted by a wall of invisibility might seem like the ideal relation between the College and the State, it will eventually lead to disaster.

Colleges are indeed different from other sorts of institutions, and Evergreen is more different than most. Hiding was only a good strategy in the days when the educational cloister was not financially dependent of large masses of outside goodwill and support.

One of Evergreen's missions ought to be a task of education and self-clarification that will enable its publics and constituencies to do a better job of appreciating and valuing higher education.

As usual, Evergreen's mission has to be carried out by its people--students, faculty, staff.

6. Simplify Evergreen terminology. (They say that reforming an educational institution is like trying to remodel a cemetery but here goes.) The distinction between coordinated study and group contracts once made sense, but not any more. Evergreen seems to actually have only two (or perhaps three) types of educational formats: faculty/student groups (which might include modules) and individual contracts. Within those categories there is an enormous variety, most of which is not well-described by the present jargon. If you want to be able to talk about size, then talk about programs in terms of the number of faculty, the size of time commitment, the length and so on. If you want to distinguish between theme-centeredness and disciplinary theory-centeredness, then choose some labels that reflect those differences.

I have little hope that Evergreen will actually do anything of this sort, but it would be one step toward rendering the school more intellig-

ible to its environment that would not imply any substantive, fundamental change.

7. Evergreen is an experimental school. From that stem two sub-recommendations.

First, as detailed in the discussion of the model, the dilemma of student control vs. faculty control can be partially ameliorated. Students should see themselves as researchers of their own educations, and the College should remember that this is what they are, too. That also means actually making an effort to use the data that they are gathering, and training them to do a better job of it. (See "Using the Model for Planning, Policy-Making, and Research").

Second, it means that Evergreen should be evaluating this experiment (this particular combination of ways of being alternative) and trying others that are consistent with what is working here already. It is obvious that Evergreen is not a good place for certain traditional kinds of experiments: its programs change too often to exploit innovations which are large, context specific, and require a front-end investment (locally designed computer instruction, for example). Also, faculty work hard and few leave themselves enough time for getting and exploiting new educational ideas. (Many blame the "system" for this but, at Evergreen more than most places, "we have met the system and they is us.")

There are experiments that do need to be tried: modules for instance. Modules have been in use here for four years but, so far, only as a mindless regression, not an experiment; little effort has been made to really thing about what they mean, when and how well they work. Instead, the usual attitude is to forget everything about them except how many students

they bring in. That's the usual, traditional attitude toward education innovation, isn't it.

D. POSTLUDE

An organization is what people, individually and collectively, believe it to be. Intentionally or not, they recreate it every morning.

Evergreen was commissioned to be an alternative: that means it must also be experimental--a learning institution--if it is to survive.

Evergreen is an institution of differences, not just from the outside and the traditional, but internally. This evaluation has argued that Evergreen has and must have internal differences if it is to be creative. But people must also put effort into recreating a common dream if the College is to continue to become Evergreen.

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APPENDIX I. AN OVERVIEW OF EVERGREEN

The major educational goal of The Evergreen State College is the encouragement of learning that is not of the traditional disciplinary sort. Faculty and student freedom to control the learning process are emphasized. Instead of courses, the unit of educational organization is the full-time program or learning contract; a student is responsible to only one faculty member at a time, from a quarter up to a full year. Not-disciplinarity, freedom and full-timeness reinforce one another.

Consonant with its not-disciplinarity and its emphasis on freedom and flexibility, the College has no departments, academic ranks, tenure, grades (narrative evaluation is used), or standing committees. Learning takes place in theme-centered or disciplinary full-time programs and learning contracts. In a contract, a student agrees with a faculty member that she will learn certain things and demonstrate that learning at the end of a set period. Learning that is applicable to later life is emphasized, and internships, field study, and lab work are prominent features of the Evergreen education.

Evergreen opened in 1971-72. It was commissioned in an era when rapid growth appeared in the offing for Washington and was designed to be a 10,000 student, alternative campus in the woods outside the state capital of Olympia. The demographic forecasts were off and the College has had an enrollment of about 2600 students, with about 130 faculty, for the last several years. Conflict with the Legislature seems to have been continual.

APPENDIX II. EVERGREEN LEXICON (adapted from "Evergreen Advising Package," 1976-77)

This is a partial (academic only) general glossary to help with your study of the esoteric Evergreen Idiom. Never assume that the language can be directly translated from traditional schools. When in doubt, look it up or ask; there are interpreters all over the campus who'll be glad to help. (How do you think they learned?)

COG - acronym for Community on Governance; COG document describes Evergreen governance and community decision-making; academic disputes settled by its procedures and guidelines; see COG document at Information Center or in 1976-77 Bulletin.

Contract - Agreement, covenant, compact, promise, bargain; form of agreement to work together with assigned activities; v., to promise or agree formally.

Contract, group - a study mode, usually full-time, in which a group of students agree to learn as a team with one or more faculty sponsors; often student-generated; requires approval of dean. See Bulletin.

Contract, individual learning - one student in a personalized academic arrangement with a faculty sponsor or sponsors for stated objectives, purposes, activities; a formal learning covenant between a student and faculty; a form, obtainable from faculty's secretary or registrar; See Bulletin.

Co-op Ed - Office of Cooperative Education, through which all internships must be arranged. See Co-op catalogue.

Coordinated Studies Program - full-time academic study mode, lasting 1-4 quarters, in which several disciplines are brought to bear on one subject or topic. See bulletin.

D.T.F. - Disappearing Task Force, an ad hoc committee formed to examine and make recommendations on a specific issue or function (often academic), i.e. curriculum DTF, dean selection DTF, etc.

Evaluation - document evaluating quality and level of student's performance in a program or in contracted studies; two required evaluation forms; student self-evaluation and faculty evaluation of student.

External Credit - credit to be obtained for demonstrating of learning outside the classroom or college. Check with External Credit office.

Faculty Evaluation of Student - replaces traditional letter or number grade; prose piece written by your faculty sponsor, on an evaluation form, at the end of a program or quarter and filed with registrar.

Faculty Sponsor - faculty member or members who signed your green registration card and/or learning contract; in large programs, your seminar leader will write your evaluation and is, therefore your sponsor.

Internship - on-the-job learning, sometimes with salary. See Cooperative Education.

Library - The Evergreen State College Library, often confused with its building (LIB); an integral part of academic work at Evergreen; contains much more than books (check out the library wall/book, take a library tour, or ask at circulation or reference desk about library resources.)

Module - a 1 or 2 unit course in a specific subject to be used for part-time study or with a program or contract.

Portfolio - 1) your record of performance on file with the registrar
2) empty, a red plastic briefcase 3) full or filling, student's briefcase containing copies of the formal record of performance at Evergreen; useful for checking progress, finding a faculty sponsor, a transfer, a graduate school, or a job (not to be confused with trash can or Dear Diary).

Program Secretary - a useful resource person, often overworked, assigned to work with faculty who are teaching in coordinated study programs.

Self-Paced Learning Unit or SPLU - indexed collection of technical resources (sound-on-sound tapes, computer instruction, etc.) for self-paced individual instruction.

Seminar - 1) SEM as in Seminar Building, or seminar leader 2) n., a scheduled discussion group meeting within a specific learning program; the group itself, 3) v., to discuss cooperatively in a manner peculiar to Evergreen.

Specialty Areas - areas in which Evergreen guarantees to offer sets of advanced programs and contracts each year (e.g., "Human Development in its Social Context", "Environmental Studies").

Sponsor - faculty member responsible for supervising student's work in coordinated studies program or learning contract.

Student Self-Evaluation - a formal document written by you, assessing your performance in a quarter's program or contract.

Subcontractor - anyone who supervises/teaches a specific part of your learning contract and signs it along with your primary faculty sponsor.

Unit, or Evergreen Unit - a unit (integer?) of credit in use at Evergreen for measuring work successfully completed; roughly equivalent to 4 credit hours at a traditional college.

You - the student responsible for planning your education at Evergreen, locating the necessary resources, and completing work.

APPENDIX III. USING THE MODEL TO EXPLAIN EVERGREEN

The three fundamentals were identified because they were linked to so many other facts about the College. This appendix describes some of those linkages. The model can be expanded to other phenomena here as well; this is just a beginning.

Uses of this section: this material can be used as a policy analysis tool as illustrated in the section "Using the Model. How Changing One Element Can Influence Others." Perhaps more important is its educational value. It is easy to believe that Evergreen is an interdependent whole, but hard to internalize a large enough model to know that it is. Use this model for practice in analyzing particular problems or policy changes.

To repeat my warning: Evergreen is not a machine with its parts mechanically and immutably linked as described in this manual. The "because" described here are simplifications of what various individuals think are the relationships between the elements of Evergreen. So read with caution.

Facts Linked to the Goal of Not-Disciplinary Learning (Figure 7)

1. Graduation from Evergreen is based on the accumulation of credits, not competency. This jibes with Evergreen's emphasis on learning per se since it is rather difficult to test "learning competency" or to say that Physics Phil has learned more or less than Literature Lil.

Facts Linked to the Value of Freedom to Control Learning (Figure 8)

1. For students, freedom translates into a norm that the student is

Figure 7. Facts Linked to the Goal of Not-Disciplinary Learning

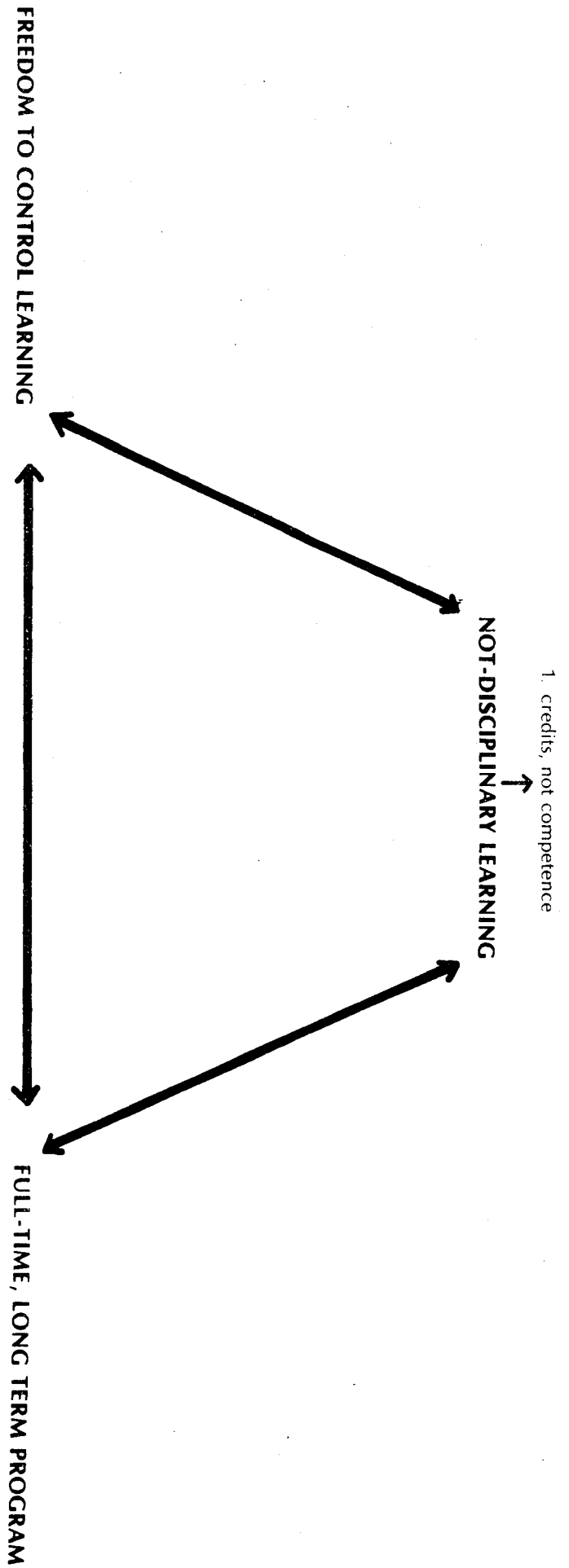
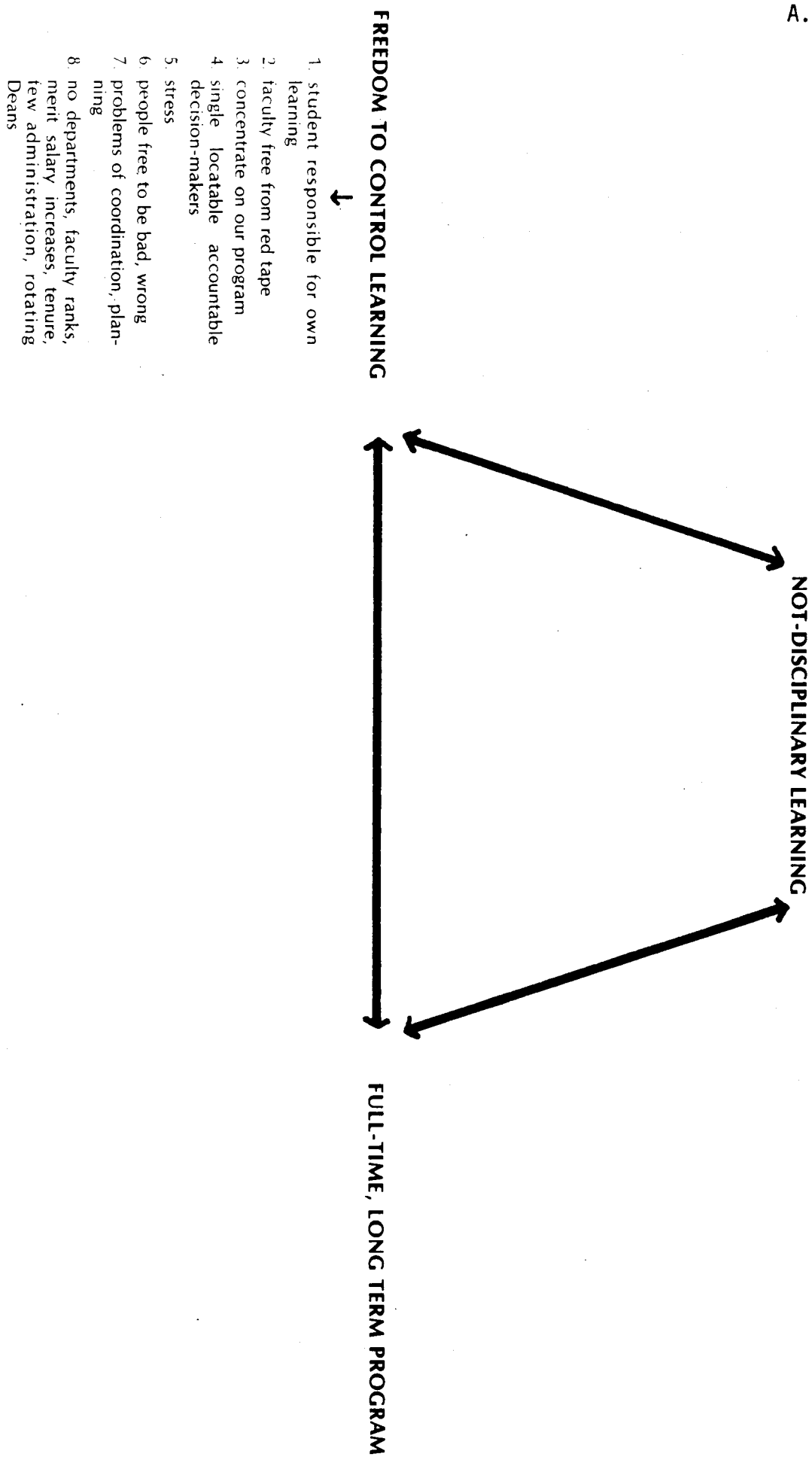


Figure 8. Facts Linked to the Value of Freedom to Control Learning



responsible for her own learning, and that the student should have power and opportunity to exercise the responsibility.

2. For faculty, it translates into a desire for a system where the faculty member can have freedom (from red tape, rules, routines) to do what she feels necessary for teaching.
3. It has meant a norm that all attention should go to the program (or contract) and that the College's structures should be designed so as to make the faculty and students most free to focus tightly on teaching and learning.
4. It has meant a governance structure designed to clarify the role of absolute power: single, locatable, accountable decision-makers (administrators) rather than invisible, oligarchic, consensuses were to rule Evergreen. The norm of freedom is based on egalitarian and people-are-basically-good assumptions. If one makes those assumptions then an emphasis on a clear, hierarchical model of power makes sense. It is simply an efficient way for most people to be able to ignore governance most of the time. They ask only that decision-makers be good or, at least, visible, so that, if questions arise, a finger can be pointed.
5. One dilemma of freedom is the stress that can come from not relying on rules: having to take fresh and personal responsibility for each and every choice. This can be true for the students who are unused to existential decision-making and for faculty and administrators who may see more clearly what it means, and who have to do a great deal of it, even when fresh out of enthusiasm.

6. Another dilemma of freedom is that people are free to do wrong, not just right, and poorly, not just magnificently.

(Rules, on the other hand, take the responsibility away from people. One is no longer an independent, achieving being: a real professional or a real learner--rules tend to make a person a cog pursuing designated ends for designated rewards, and avoiding (just barely) designated punishments. Rules also tend to proliferate so that after a while there is simply no time or energy for pursuing real excellence; all resources are spent in learning the rules and doing all the various minimums.)

7. Rules are not simply instruments of tyranny and degradation, however. The emphasis on freedom tends to prevent coordination and planning, even in coordinated studies.

8. Evergreen has no departments, few academic administrators, no faculty ranks, no merit salary increases and no tenure¹. One rationale for these policies is that they contribute to faculty freedom to innovate. Each of these steps increases faculty freedom to concentrate on teaching and innovation. The decision not to have departments, for instance, would seem to free faculty from some collegial pressure and prejudice.

No departments and few Deans means more autonomy too--it is difficult for an academic dean from another discipline and without specified powers to have many ambitions for controlling individual faculty members, particularly if each Dean has one quarter of the entire faculty to worry about (in this case, about thirty faculty members per Dean). Rotating Deans in

¹See also page A.III-21.

and out of the faculty and constantly changing which faculty report to which Deans² further decrease centralized power over academic processes and presumably increase individual faculty power and freedom.³

Eliminating the high pressure ad hominem decisions associated with rank, pay raises and tenure would also seem to make it easier for faculty to make risky decisions. (On the other hand, the removal of tenure does bring a faculty member up for an explicit contract renewal decision every three years for the remainder of her career. So the effect of eliminating tenure depends on the faculty member's perception that contract renewal does not hang on making nonrisky decisions.)

Facts Linked to the Structure of Full-Time, Long Term Programs (Figure 9)

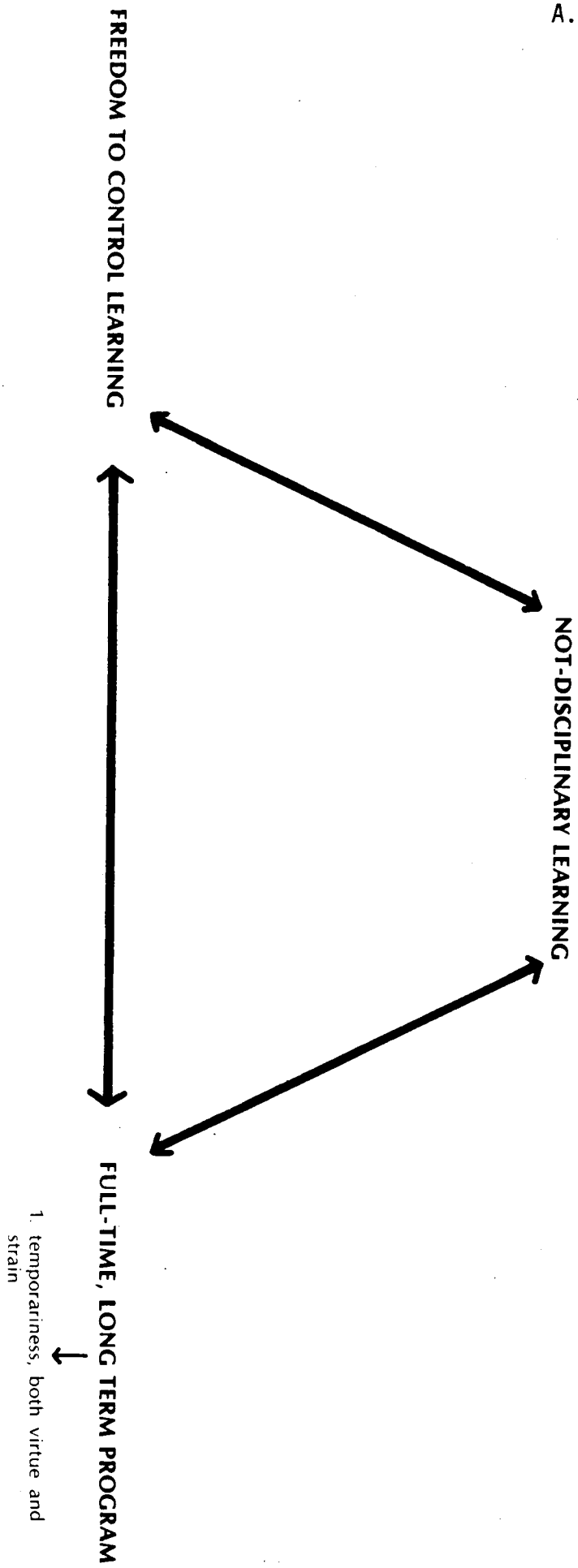
1. Perhaps the most important single implication of full-time, long term programs is temporariness. If faculty and students are to be clumped together full-time, it seems a good idea to periodically reshuffle them before 1) they run out of things to do, 2) they completely lose track of the other people and ideas in the College (which would have rather severe implications not only intellectually but for the survival of Evergreen as a self-governing community).

- a. This emphasis on temporariness has also been pervasive at Evergreen. Another bipolar axis could be set up, running from a pole labeled "temporariness/innovation/freedom to change/being forced to change/exhaustion from

²See also page A.III-17.

³That theory is based on the assumption that this power is a "zero sum game": that the less the Deans do, the more that each faculty member will be able to do. (This seems to me to be an oversimplification, if not downright false.)

Figure 9. Facts Linked to the Structure of Full-Time, Long Term Programs



change/flexibility/forgetting/anarchy" to another pole labeled "predictability/conservation of the good/freedom to stay the same/rigidity/staleness/fossilization/learning/bureaucracy." To a certain extent, Evergreen's position on the "full-timeness axis" determines its position on the "temporariness axis."

- b. As implied immediately above, the stress on temporariness is associated with both innovation and forgetting, exhilaration and exhaustion, options and a lack of predictability.
- c. Temporariness is a particular strain at Evergreen because, when a new program has to be designed, it is a full-time program, not just one or even three courses; that means more work and more possibility for error.

Interactions

The single most important point to be made in this evaluation is that "connectedness" is a word that applies to Evergreen, too.

The College is a system of interconnected and interacting facts and processes.

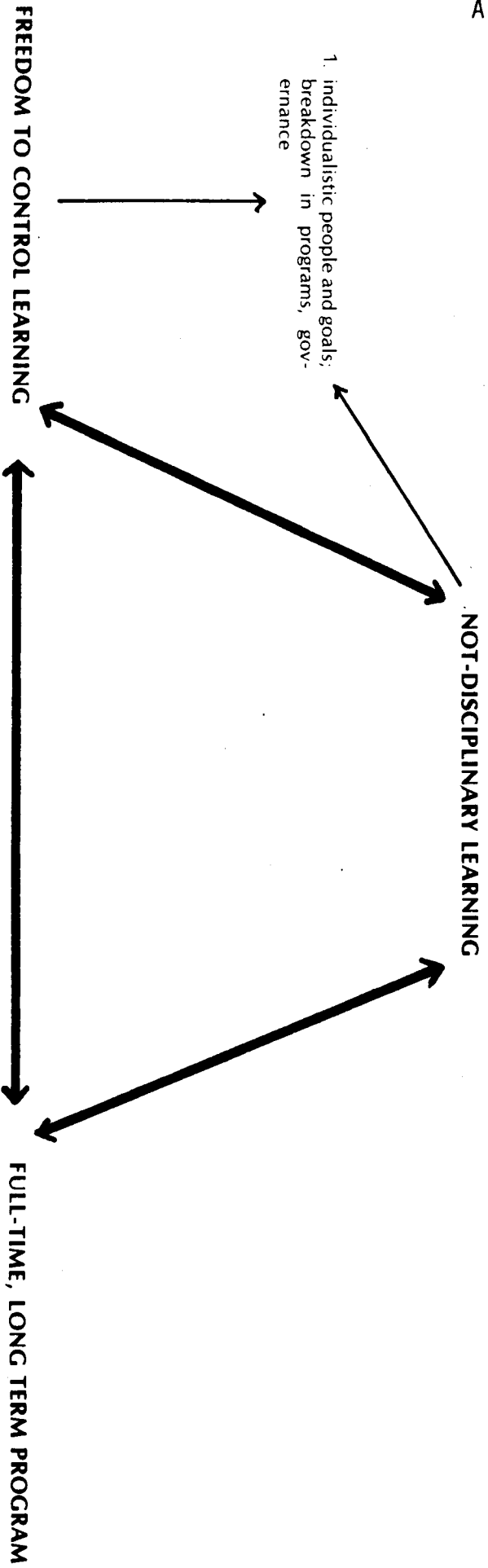
The three elements can separately account for many things about Evergreen. In combination, they can account for much more.

The following sections give some examples of phenomena that various combinations of the three elements relate to.

Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning Plus Freedom (Figure 10)

1. If you combine the goal of reacting against disciplinary practice

Figure 10. Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning Plus Freedom



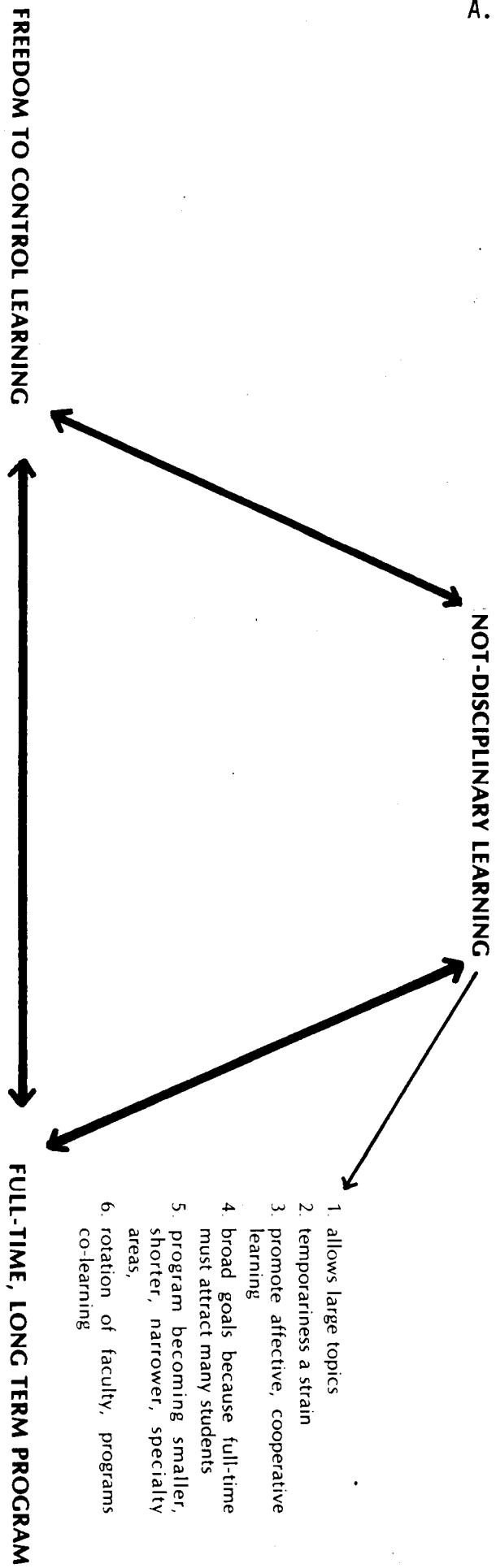
a desire for freedom to control learning, it is much easier to understand how Evergreen attracted such a large crowd of individualistic faculty and students with such a varied cluster of ambitions.

This heterogeneity has in turn been responsible for both creative new combinations and for numerous breakdowns in programs and governance because the individuals involved either had irreconcilable ideas and/or had never really learned how to cooperate with other people.

Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning and Full-Time Programs (Figure 11)

1. A full-time, long term program can promote not-disciplinarity by allowing larger-than-disciplinary topics to be dealt with. A full-time program or contract, even if one quarter long, is the time equivalent of four or five conventional courses, and a number of coordinated studies programs are three quarters in length (one was seven quarters long).
2. One reason why temporariness is a strain at Evergreen is that designing a program is difficult. Evergreen faculty can't even plagiarize their colleagues at other institutions, since not-disciplinary full-time programs are rather unusual.
3. Another way that full-time programs can promote not-disciplinary learning is by allowing improved interpersonal contact, seminars, and project teams. In particular these can promote affective learning (e.g. changes in values, attitudes, personality) through increased student-student and student-faculty interaction, and co-operative learning (i.e. learning that can be done more effectively by a group than by individuals--

Figure 11. Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning and Full-Time Programs



building a boat or writing a book may require teamwork; some kinds of analysis proceed more efficiently through a good seminar).

4. Full-time programs shape educational goals, not only because they allow large topics to be dealt with, but because they force it.

A coordinated study must be about twelve times more attractive than a standard course to be equally successful in attracting a share of the year's enrollment. A course asks a student to risk perhaps one twelfth of her year's investment by registering; a year long coordinated study asks for the whole thing. And coordinated study with four faculty requires eighty students to be fully enrolled; in Evergreen's first year's that was an average size program. That means (in a school Evergreen's size) needing almost 4 percent of the year's students (FTE) in a single program. A fully-enrolled twenty student module needs to attract only 1/40th that many.

So an Evergreen program must have a broader appeal than a course in a traditional university. And that puts pressure on faculty to design programs that match widely-felt student wants⁴, have a low entry skill and knowledge threshold, and that can hold student interests.

That Evergreen is meant to be interdisciplinary and student centered is widely known. That Evergreen's structure forces it in those directions (and others) seems to be less widely realized.

These pressures would ease if the College grew and would get worse if the College were to get smaller, other things being equal.

⁴"Wants": Curriculum design is usually in a creative tension between what students want and what they need.

(Given this unusual pressure to match widely-felt student wants, Evergreen's lack of market research is interesting.)

5. So if relatively few students want any given thing or if student interests are "disciplinary" (i.e. they want defined chunks of knowledge or skill or the certification for same), Evergreen is going to feel pressure to reduce the size of its programs: to make them smaller, shorter, narrower.

That pressure has been felt.

The College has responded in two ways. It has made its programs smaller, shorter and narrower (this is discussed in greater detail in the section "Evergreen Has Changed Fundamentally"). And it has introduced specialty areas.

Specialty areas, like selective marketing efforts, have the objective of changing the wants of Evergreen students by either changing the type of students who decide to come or influencing those already here. The purpose is to get larger groups of students interested in a few particular things so that an organized curriculum of large programs can be maintained in those areas. Of course the students whose interests don't fit in those slots (as they are free not to) will be less well served than ever. (It's like a library buying a lot of books in some areas but in consequence not buying much of anything else).

The main point is that the elements of Evergreen are interconnected: narrowing programs, creating specialty areas, or deciding not to do either all have implications for educational goals, scheduling, freedom, faculty and student satisfaction, and a number of other Evergreen facts.

6. Rotation of faculty and programs may have been adopted in part because of the not-disciplinary goal of "learning how to learn."

The reasoning would go like this: at other institutions, no course is ever quite as good the second time around--staleness accumulates. At Evergreen, faculty members are supposed to help students become learners: people who can actively and joyfully encounter their own ignorance and interests and learn new things as a result. One mechanism for doing that is co-learning: the faculty member learns new material at the same time that the student does. The student is, in a sense, an apprentice learner watching a master.

Co-learning was one of the ideals of Evergreen's first years, but has fallen into disrepute because of the workload implied and because at least some faculty and students wanted an expert instructor rather than a role model.⁵

While co-learning lasted, however, it was a powerful argument for both full-time programs (to allow the faculty-student relationship to develop) and regular rotation of faculty (to make sure that faculty were always encountering their ignorance, and learning new material at a level that students could appreciate.)

⁵Interviews with faculty and students lead me to guess that faculty were under four sorts of pressure: 1) students were coming from conventional schools and, at least first, couldn't comprehend a faculty member who was not acting like a confident expert, 2) students, perhaps even having learned how to learn, felt most comfortable if an expert were teaching them or validating their learning ("yes, you have got it now"), 3) faculty themselves felt guilty because they couldn't comprehend a role that was not that of an expert either (wrote one faculty member in 1973, "How can I count the...seminar as teaching time when I know that I would be embarrassed if academic friends of mine whose opinions I value were to sit in? How can I say I am teaching when there are students who know as much if not more than I... I find it impossible to discharge my responsibility of helping students become discriminating thinkers in my current seminar,") and 4) some types of learning are better done with a teacher, no matter how expert a learner one is.

By the same token, if co-learning is not an educational strategy at Evergreen, one big reason for having full-time programs and faculty and program rotation disappears.

Facts Linked to Full-Time Programs and Freedom (Figure 12)

1. A dilemma arises from the combination of full-time programs (in which faculty are devoted to working with one set of students, full-time, for up to a year and are therefore not working with all the rest of Evergreen's students for the same period of time) and the Evergreen student's mandate to be free and responsible for his own education. Those free, responsible students can get very frustrated at the inaccessibility of faculty (this will be elaborated in a description of the institution's response to the problem, and the consequences of that response; see "group contracts and modules," (p. A.III-19) and "Using the Model: How Changing One Element Can Influence Others" (p. 24).

2. The combination of the concentration on one's own program (stemming from the value of freedom to control learning) and the temporariness of programs (linked to full-timeness) is a tendency toward fragmentation.

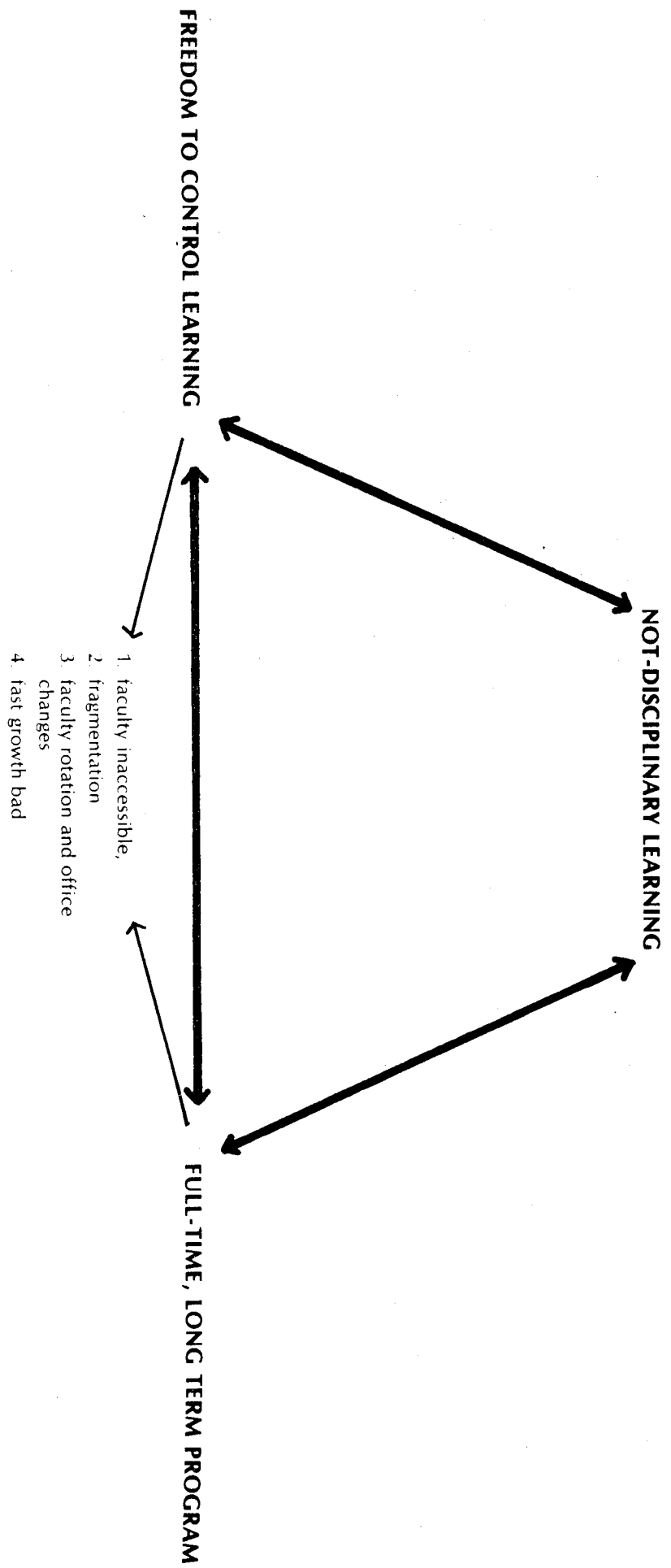
Any institution will tend to fragment as its people come to value means over ends and owe allegiance to their own units rather than the whole institution.

Evergreen was designed without departments in part as an attempt to deal with this problem.

But the all-out concentration on individual programs can have the same effect of gradually atrophying institutional consciousness.

3. One way of looking at a number of Evergreen policies is as attempts to deal with this problem of fragmentation.

Figure 12. Facts Linked to Full-Time Programs and Freedom



Faculty and students are together intensely in programs. If teams stayed together full-time for several years, faculty might rapidly fall out of touch with the rest of the College so they are encouraged to rotate into new teams and new programs. This mixing function is also furthered by the annual changing of faculty office locations (so that they are near their new team mates).⁵

The third conclusion that can be drawn is that fast growth would be bad for the College, at least in this respect. The longer faculty are here, the more of their colleagues they will have worked with in teams. That means a greater possibility of institutional cohesion and identity. Growth, on the other hand, can mean a fast infusion of new people, new ideas and values: fragmentation, as well as freshness are possible outcomes.

(The warning voiced at the beginning of the section bears repeating: this set of statements is guesswork and important guesses need to be verified through investigation.)

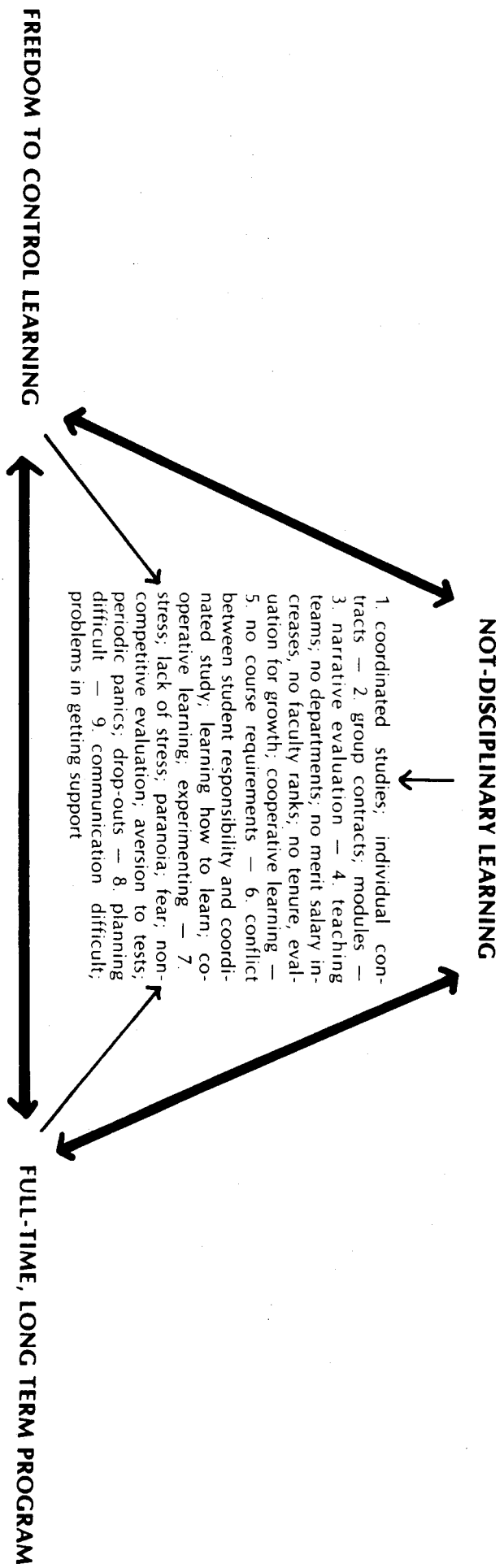
(This is particularly true when, as in this case, there are plausible counter-guesses. I've said that faculty rotation and mixing increases college-wide cohesion and consciousness. One faculty member disagrees, saying that the effect of rotation and the breaking up of sub-communities is to make the faculty members "withdraw"--she feels, in other words, that rotation decreases faculty involvement and investment, in their programs and in the College. A research project on this is in Appendix V.)

Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning, Freedom, and Full-Time Programs (Figure 13)

1. Individual contracts and coordinated studies programs are both related

⁵I suspect that the number of faculty changing offices each year has been declining. That might have an effect on institutional fragmentation.

Figure 13. Facts Linked to Not-Disciplinary Learning, Freedom, and Full-Time Programs



to all three elements of the Evergreen model.

The coordinated study is a full-time program devoted to not-disciplinary learning in which the freedom of the faculty member to help students is stressed. Full-time contact between faculty and student is also meant to help the student acquire the values needed to use her own freedom successfully too (see "cooperative learning," "affective learning," and "co-learning" above.)

The individual contract is a full-time program (sometimes) devoted to not-disciplinary learning (not-disciplinary in its integration around the student's wants) in which the freedom of the student to design a learning situation is stressed. The contractual nature of the relationship can also strengthen faculty power over the student.

2. Group contracts and modules, on the other hand, fill the gaps left by the model's strengths: desires for more disciplinary learning, or for learning needed by fewer people or for a shorter amount of time.

- a. Group contracts have problems, at least in the natural sciences. I was unable to find anyone to conduct an investigation with me, but initial interviews indicate that the cause is rooted in 1) one faculty member being responsible for all of a student's learning, 2) the natural sciences' knowledge-centered image of learning (which means that a group contract "should" be equivalent to four quarter-long courses, all taught by the same person, all for the first time, all at once), 3) the need to create labs for each new, temporary contract, 4) the extreme fact-centeredness of some sciences (e.g.) taxonomy) in which there is no

substitute for learning lots of knowledge from some expert source.

Group contracts were created because of problems caused by not-disciplinarity as a goal and full-timeness as a structure. The difficulties with group contracts seem to come from the same sources. (It is generally true that if one tries to do something to solve a dilemma, the "solution" will itself run into difficulties that have the same set of causes as the original dilemma.)

3. The success of the narrative evaluation system comes from all three elements of the Evergreen model. Narrative evaluations make sense here because 1) the quality of many types of not-disciplinary learning is difficult to evaluate in terms of "A-B-C-D-F", 2) freedom and responsibility require an evaluation mode in which the student and faculty each take an active part; freedom also implies the possibility that one student will be evaluated by different standards than another, and 3) full-time programs enable faculty and students to get to know each well enough so that an effective narrative evaluation can be written.

4. Teaching teams are a practice related to all three major elements of the Evergreen model.

The goal of not-disciplinary learning means students will often want to use more than one disciplinary area. If "discipline" is defined to be a packet of knowledge corresponding to the way a faculty member was educated, then the likelihood is that not-disciplinary course of study will require the use of more than one faculty member.

The value of freedom and control makes it more likely that a program will be wide-ranging and that a variety of types of support will be needed, and that one faculty member won't be able to handle the load.

The full-time program scheduling structure means that each faculty member has to support perhaps twenty different curricula (students) per quarter, full-time. Putting students together into a larger team-taught coordinated study (emphasizing larger learnings rather than packages of "narrow" expertise) makes it more likely that these demands can be handled, since overlap of student needs may be more likely with more students.

- a. If team teaching and real coordination are to be priorities, there are even more good reasons to have no departments, no merit salary increases, no faculty ranks and no tenure. All these policy options have the effect of reducing the number and importance of the times when one faculty member's career is at the mercy of his peers and administrators. The theory is that a faculty member will be able to help colleagues in a team more effectively, and to accept help, if he does not have to worry about being judged by them at a later date. (See p. A.III-6 for a discussion of the three year faculty contract review.)
- b. Going along with team teaching and freedom is Evergreen's emphasis of evaluation for personal growth rather than for certification. Team teaching can facilitate growth because team mates can watch one another work (to some extent). Team

teaching requires faculty growth, too, because faculty aren't necessarily going to be very good at team teaching when they first try it. A similar argument applies to students and cooperative learning: students can learn better cooperatively (see p. A.III-10) if they are not being evaluated competitively.

5. Evergreen has no course requirements for graduation. In particular Evergreen has no required curricula for "majors"; that is also consistent with its lack of departments (which are usually the designers of that sort of requirement.) This is intended to force students to think about their educations every quarter, and free them to act on their plans.

Neither does Evergreen have college-wide requirements. This fact is probably linked not only to the philosophy of student responsibility, but also to the heterogeneity of faculty goals and values (see A.III-10); Evergreen faculty have perhaps a more than traditional capacity to disagree about what constitute minimum necessary elements of a bachelor's degree education.

(It can't be repeated too often that this sort of 'explanation' of Evergreen policy does not mean that it is necessary or even a good policy; it also does not mean that the policy could not be changed--Evergreen could, for instance, create sets of requirements, either college-wide or within specialty areas, and the sky would not fall. It is my contention, however, that such policy changes would necessarily have implications for other aspects of Evergreen, and that this model (and others like it) can be useful in anticipating what those implications might be.)

6. One of Evergreen's most important dilemmas is the conflict between student responsibility and coordinated study.

The student is supposed to believe that she is free and in responsible control of her own education, yet she is encouraged to begin her Evergreen work in a program designed by a faculty team, and inhabited by a lot of other students who also feel they have a right to learn what they want, when they want.

This creates problems.

There are some partial ways out of the dilemma, however: the emphases on "learning how to learn" and "cooperative learning."

Learning how to learn: no one ever learns in a vacuum, in college or afterward. Resources are always tight. Experts are rarely available when you need them. Other people are always tugging at your sleeve. Students should be informed that learning to deal with a coordinated study is preparation for later self-education.

Cooperative learning: if programs are designed so that students must cooperate in order to learn, the dilemma can also be partly resolved. (The same dilemma, of individualism versus teamwork, also exists for the faculty, and the same solution is available; that's one reason why a "good theme" is important for a program. A good theme virtually forces faculty and students to work together in order to achieve their individual aims.

Evergreen's mandate to be "experimental" can also be used to help ease the pain of this basic conflict. Students ought to be urged to see themselves as educational experimenters learning from these difficulties, and reporting their results; it may keep them from seeing themselves as rats manipulating, or escaping from, the Evergreen maze.

7. Stress and lack of stress, "paranoia" and justifiable fear, are paradoxically, all results of the Evergreen plan.

Lack of stress: because Evergreen values freedom and responsibility, it also has tried to give students and faculty enough breathing room and freedom from pressure to develop and use their own initiative. This is one of the reasons for non-competitive evaluation, the flexibility of full-time programs and narrative evaluations, and an aversion to tests⁶ generally.

To the extent people try hard to fully meet important yet vague commands to "be responsible" and "achieve", they can be subject to stress. As a new institution that prides itself on its fluidity, the College offers few benchmarks for faculty, students or staff by which to judge their work. Anxiety can result.

This basic lack of achievement-based security is exacerbated by three other factors:

1. Unlike other academic institutions, Evergreen has few guarantees of security: no tenure⁷, no grades, little respect for credentials⁸.
2. Evergreen is indeed a place where people are free to be bad but the response to the "bads" is, too

⁶This anti-testing feeling is one of many aspects about Evergreen which appear to be changing.

⁷It is said that, because no one has tenure, everyone (including students) has tenure. That is true, and it is not true. It is true because very few people are ever officially forced out of Evergreen. It is false because some people are forced out, officially or unofficially, with no official word as to why one person is now gone. Which means that literally anybody could be next. Even the most senior and reputable faculty are not immune from this anxiety.

⁸This bias correlates with, but needn't necessarily stem from, Evergreen's curricular structure and goals which do emphasize generalized learning capability rather than chunks of knowledge provided by disciplinary (or not-disciplinary) experts. It probably is also a result of egalitarianism.

often, to pretend that they don't exist. Invisibility (invisible processes of power; nonlocatable reasons for unaccountable decisions, oligarchies where there are not supposed to be oligarchies⁹) and ambiguity are fuzzy facts of Evergreen life.

3. The emphasis on temporariness may also contribute to stress. Faculty and students are members of small temporary communities; in the long run, each is alone.

Where people face (or fear that they face) decisions made by others that affect their personal welfare, the result can be "fear" or "paranoia" (depending on whether an observer not in the line of fire thinks the victim's predictions are justified).

Some possible results: periodic rites of faculty and student panic; widely varying views as to Evergreen's benevolence and friendliness (this is a realm of self-confirming perceptions and self-fulfilling prophecies); some drop-outs who don't come back.

8. Planning¹⁰ is difficult because of all three elements of the model.

The deemphasis of traditional disciplinary terms deprives the College of a widely understood "language" useful for manipulating resources and ideas.

⁹The latest governance document repeats the view of its predecessors: no oligarchies. Yet there is a widespread belief that Evergreen is governed by a small, stable in-group, composed mostly or wholly of members of the founding faculty and staff. (See p. 57 in this volume.)

¹⁰Planning by anyone: administrators, faculty, students.

The emphasis on faculty and student freedom is in direct conflict with the rigidity implied by advance commitment of resources (unless those faculty and students are also considered free to go to another institution to fulfill their aims). Unbridled flexibility and planning tend to conflict with one another.

Full-time programs, and the consequent emphases on teams (adding the constraint of finding sets of faculty who can get along personally, several years in advance) and on temporariness of given programs (meaning that planning implies a reshuffle of virtually the whole curriculum, not just a few courses) add further difficulties to the task of planning.

There are other kinds of difficulties, too. For instance, if the academic program is not specified in advance, it is even more difficult to fill up the next year's entering class early, which in turn makes resource planning even more difficult.

9. Communication with the outside is difficult for a very similar set of reasons.

Not-disciplinary learning has meant a set of labels unfamiliar to "outsiders" and their pre-printed forms.

Freedom has meant a flexibility and a set of organizational modes also not easily recognizable.

Full-time programs are not only strange in and of themselves but have promoted temporariness (see "facts linked to full-time programs") which also probably periodically erases the familiar.

There are other difficulties impeding communications too.

Evergreen is, after all, an academic institution and that means that its blood and bones are--different. In theory any person with a college

education ought to be able to understand a college, but it doesn't always work out that way. (And, conversely, postsecondary institutions must help their publics and benefactors get a higher education. If someone can't understand education, she is unlikely to give it the kind of support it needs.)

The final communications problems stems from Evergreen's wide variety of people, goals, and values (see p. A.III-10). Explicit language seems threatening to at least some people; they fear that clarity will eliminate some of this diversity, perhaps their own.

APPENDIX IV. THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF THIS MODEL-MAKING PROCESS

Three major concepts underlie this approach: theory of action, artifactual science, and dilemma.

The notion of theory of action (Argyris and Schön, 1974) directed attention to the mental constructs underlying personal and organizational behavior: purpose and practice.

Artifactual science is a label I pin to the traditional mode of engineering science. An artifactual theory seeks to describe a thing (object or process) by observing it. In contrast, an elemental theory attempts to explain a number of apparently different things through a model of their underlying, common elements. An engineer may use artifactual theory (data from studying beams) or elemental theory in combination with artifactual theory (a theory of solid mechanics verified and calibrated by testing it on beams); elemental theory by itself is rarely useful in actual practice.

Since education as yet has few useful elemental theories, it seems sensible to conceive of theory creation in terms of the particular settings in which the findings are to be used. Thus Evergreen becomes the research site for the creation and testing of education theories to be used at Evergreen. One sacrifices the hope of generality and depth of understanding in exchange for theories with a greater chance of predictive and manipulative success.

Combining the notion of theory of action and the concept of artifactual science leads to a question: how does one decide which of these Evergreen theories is to be tested? In other words, judging by some standard, which theories are the most important?

This modeling process is based on the assertion that the most important are those theories with the greatest number of linkages to other theories.

The first step was to look for intractable problems, hypothesizing that they were caused by equally stable organizational or educational theories.

As these invariant theories were collected, they were aggregated as described in the methods section in the body of the report. Finally the three elements of not-disciplinarity, freedom, and full-time programs were identified as central to the aggregate "theory of Evergreen" that had been evolved.

This procedure was followed quite loosely and pragmatically in this case because the theory was evolving during the process. The aggregate model was put together in my head, not on paper, and the judgment that these three elements were central was made intuitively in the first instance. Their centrality was verified only by the listing (Appendix III) of their linkages to a large number of other Evergreen practices and dilemmas.

The procedure could be applied much more rigorously, using multiple observers, explicit expressions of each identified theory of action, and a computer analysis to create and map the network of aggregated theory.

Future possibilities at Evergreen: an institutional researcher has the choice of using this three-element model or replicating the procedure more rigorously to create a new model. One criterion for making the choice should be the reception that Evergreeners give this analysis: if there seems to be widespread agreement that this model "tells the story" and that the questions it raises are important, an investment of

replication might be wasteful of time and resources. If there is disagreement, or if a researcher is interested in testing and elaborating this methodology, a replication at Evergreen might be more informative than a test at another institution because one such model does already exist.

A word on limitations: it is not being asserted here that this is the model of Evergreen. Obviously the shape of the model is dependent to some degree on the types of theories which the observers choose to see, and the terms in which they phrase them (if the theories have been tacit.) An economist might (or might not) have come up with a very different sort of picture of Evergreen.

It is therefore important to keep one's purpose and perspective clear. In this case, my purpose was to help Evergreen, as an institution, become more educationally effective, and so my focus was on shared educational theories and associated dilemmas.

Data collection strategy will probably also affect the shape of the ultimate model. In this case data was collected mainly through faculty, student and staff interviews on the reasons for organizational practices and problems.

