

Introduction

The self-evaluation forms one component of your transcript (others being the program description and the faculty evaluation). It is extremely important that your self-evaluation be well written. This is your chance to tell future employers or graduate schools about your goals and accomplishments as a student. A badly written self-evaluation will reflect poorly on you and may detract from any positive comments that your faculty makes about your work. Please make good use of this workshop to write a self-evaluation that you can be proud of.

Workshop Instructions

Use your completed self-evaluation worksheet as a guide for writing a draft of your self-evaluation. The questions in the worksheet are chosen and ordered to elicit responses that should be appropriate for including in your self-evaluation. You will also find it useful to read the attached guidelines for writing self-evaluations (adapted from those posted on the academic advising website). If this is your first Evergreen evaluation, start with what brought you here and to this program and finish with a look to the future. Focus on your learning and best academic accomplishments – do not make lists of everything that you did.

When you have finished your self-evaluation have at least two people from your peer evaluation group read your self-evaluation and edit and sign it, using the guidelines below. Incorporate suggested changes into a revised draft. Include both the revision and the two edited copies of your evaluation in your portfolio, which is due on Thursday, December 6th.

Guidelines on writing self-evaluations:

1. You are literally writing your transcript! So the evaluation must be clean, neat, well typed, and free from spelling, punctuation, and syntax blunders. Really bad copies probably won't be accepted by the Registrar's Office, but some persistent students have managed to get sloppy evaluations accepted. They pay for that later when they discover to their horror that the transcript cannot be changed! Take no chances. If you are planning to leave the program at the end of this quarter type your self-evaluation directly on to the [Student Self-Evaluation](#) form.
2. The self-evaluations taken as a whole should provide a running account of your ACADEMIC PROGRESS through Evergreen. Readers who start with the first evaluation and read through to the final one, should be given an autobiography of your work here. Why did you choose to come to Evergreen? What were you prepared to do? What did you want to do? Why did you want to do it? Why did you choose this program at this time? What did you learn? How have you changed? grown? developed? Are your goals still the same? What do you plan to do next? why? The first evaluation in the transcript should provide all the preliminary information: "I came to Evergreen from a Community College in Arkansas, where I had concentrated on secretarial skills and accounting. After

working in the Florist business for 10 years, and saving a modest amount of money, I decided to move to Centralia, Washington, where I had family. I enrolled in Evergreen largely to round out my education and to study all those things I had been forced to ignore back in Arkansas... I joined the Multi-cultural Fractions program because I had no past experience with mathematics, but I hoped to learn how to..." Every evaluation thereafter should start with a similar statement of your reasons for taking this particular program. Each should end with a statement about what you plan to do next: "Now that I have satisfied all my curiosity about Inca mathematics, and have decided to do studio art next, because I hope that all that work on mathematics will help me to..." The final evaluation should sum up the entire Evergreen experience, not just comment on that final program. What has your work at Evergreen meant to you? What have you accomplished? What have you yet to do? Do you want to get a job? go to graduate school? take a long vacation? sell surfing equipment in Hawaii?

3. Self-evaluations would be quite long if you tried to cover everything that happened. You can't cover everything so you must select carefully. **Things to leave OUT of evaluations:**
 - a) Mere lists of your activities and accomplishments– these are never convincing: someone who never read the books and who slept through every seminar can make a list of books he supposedly read.
 - b) Negative comments about yourself, your own work, your own abilities. You can acknowledge poor work, but should let the faculty evaluation describe it. It is appropriate to mention areas that you are working to improve, but you should concentrate on what is positive.
 - c) Negative comments about the program, its format, its faculty, your fellow students... Save this stuff for the evaluation you write of the faculty! Your future employer or graduate school doesn't need to hear this, and it can do you great damage in their eyes.
 - d) Emotional statements, "feeling comments," and excessive information about your personal life, unless such information is absolutely needed to explain why something went wrong, or why you did something different from the other students. You can, of course, say that you were pleased with something or not pleased, but be brief.
 - e) Descriptions of the program – the faculty write the program description, you don't need to repeat it.
4. **Things to put INTO evaluations:**
 - a) Explain what you hoped to accomplish, why you wanted to accomplish it, and to what degree you met or surpassed your expectations. Choose the two or three (no more than three!) specific items that were most important during the quarter, for whatever reasons, and discuss these in detail. If you make convincing statements about these things, showing that you really do understand

them fully and well, then lists of other items, and general claims of accomplishment will be convincing.

- b) It is important to be CONVINCING, to make the reader see that you really do know what you are talking about. Raise substantive issues and make substantive statements.
- c) Mention accomplishments or learning you did not expect but nevertheless turned out to be very important to you. Explain why they were important.
- d) While it is important to be positive and blow your own horn, you want to avoid arrogance and boasting. Admitting deficiencies and/or failures can actually strengthen a positive evaluation. Don't go on about these deficits at length - just admit them, explain why they were important and what you hope to do about them in the future.
- e) Focus at least 1/3 of the evaluation on anything in the program that would be important to your future plans, a future employer, or future graduate school. If you know what that is, then tailor your self-evaluations accordingly. After all, it is stupid to write evaluations that ignore any connections with journalism if you know you are going to try enter that field. (On the other hand, all future employers want to hire people who have more than a narrow competence or experience, so, once you have put in what an employer would need to know, you should freely discuss other matters.) Don't worry that you might change your career goals in the future. An evaluation tailored to the goals you have now – if you make those goals explicit in the evaluation – will read better and make you seem a better student no matter how your goals change. If your goals change while you are still a student, simply acknowledge and explain that fact in the next self-evaluation.
- f) Concentrate on things that
 - (i) pertain to your future goals
 - (ii) connect to past work, or point to future work
 - (iii) were vital to the work of the program, and your relative accomplishment in it;
 - (iv) personally affected YOU whether or not they were important to the program or your future work.
- g) Make the self-evaluation as uniquely yours as you can, so it is a recognizable portrait of yourself.