

ORIENTATION PROGRAMS

Prepared under the Direction of
Larry R. Stenberg
Dean of Student Services

Evergreen's general orientation programs, under the auspices of the Dean of Student Services, have been developed anew each year with considerable help from students, faculty, staff and administrators. Because as an institution we have and will continue to grow and change, it is difficult to envision a standing program. In planning, attempts are made to orient new and returning students, faculty, staff and administrators. Common goals of the past three orientation programs include: (1) helping members of the community discover and explore the Evergreen philosophy, curriculum, services and facilities; (2) facilitating first steps towards making individual contacts within Evergreen; (3) offering information and resources from the greater Olympia area (businesses, services, contacts, etc.).

The basic purpose of the 1973-74 orientation program was to make entry/re-entry to the campus an understandable informative process. Our goal in preparing the program was to respond to the immediate individual needs of students (both new and returning), faculty and staff. A central coordinating office, open meetings, consultation with persons from campus and Olympia, inclusion of prospective students as well as returning students were all important factors of the planning for Orientation. During June and July, the basic components of the orientation program were established. A series of summer mailings which included information from throughout the campus as well as the orientation schedule, was coordinated through the Dean of Student Services' Office to consolidate communication with students.

The basic daily design of Orientation Week included at least one rallying event per day and a variety of short presentations. Participation in orientation activities was not mandatory for anyone, permitting people to choose an interest and pursue it.

The week began with a general introductory meeting at which the President spoke, academic and orientation processes were described, and communication vehicles were identified. This was the only mass presentation at which persons were spoken "at." The rest of the week was geared to individual participation in activities. For six days, the whole campus coordinated various activities, conferences and events. Competition for time and participation was slight. The continuity of the program was largely due to the coordination and cooperation between the Academic Deans and Student Services.

After the Orientation Program was completed, requests for evaluations were conveyed through various campus media services. The responses received, mostly from staff and administrators, were very positive; conversations and comments with faculty and students also indicated support of the program. In our search to improve the orientation program, several suggestions and wishes evolved, among them: (1) more faculty participation in non-academic activities; (2) more social get-together activities to expand contacts; (3) specific activities for on-campus residents and (4) the need for a facility where the whole community can gather for presentations.

Currently, when a person is admitted to Evergreen in the midst of an academic year, or prior to winter, spring or summer quarters, very little has been established to facilitate the entry process. At various times, different approaches have been used, but the need to design a concise, easy-to-expedite, personal program is yet to be addressed properly. With a slowed enrollment and continued cooperation throughout the campus, we hope to improve and develop new introductory sessions for all academic quarters.

Retrospectively, the orientations have been constructive for the respective quarters for which they were planned and expedited. Continual exploration for better ways to convey information are imperative to the growth of the college.