

Daniel J. Evans
"State of the College" to students
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...I hope that no one has come with excessive expectations. I asked about ten days ago or two weeks ago to set up an opportunity just to meet with students and whoever else on campus would like to get together to talk about some of the events of the fall which have had or may have an effect on Evergreen and just to have an opportunity to respond to your questions. Somehow, in the course of setting it up, it was listed as a "State of the College" address which sounds like someone should have played ruffles and flourishes before I came in, but please don't. This in reality is an opportunity to share with you some of the information and material I shared with faculty members and staff members a little while ago; to report on these events of the fall which may very well have an effect on Evergreen and in fact on all higher education; and maybe some random thoughts on what I've seen and discovered and felt in the last few months; and then respond to your questions or comments during the course of the noon hour. The first and to many people disturbing event of the fall of course was the small drop in enrollment at Evergreen. I don't believe that any college ought to be measured by how large it's enrollment is and how rapidly it's growing, but we are measured against a contracted enrollment figure set by the legislature. It's really an artificial way but perhaps a necessary way for a legislature to try to put some limits on the budget they put together. It's difficult anyhow to predict ahead two years as to what the budget's going to be and the needs are going to be, but by establishing a contracted enrollment figure for each college or university they're able to set some definitive figures for the budgets of each of the units of higher education and have some hope of sticking to it. If you don't reach contracted enrollments then they ask for some of the budget which has been set aside for a certain number of students to be returned to the state's general fund. That's essentially the position we are in or could be in this year. We have about 2400, a little over 2400 full time equivalent students. You may feel a little folded, mutilated or punched or something by being referred to as full time equivalents

instead of persons, but it's a way for the legislature and for the budget office to translate part-time students and full-time students into some way of comparison. We're down about 90 or a little more from the numbers which we were contracted for. It's usually the case, but doesn't have to be, that winter and spring enrollments tend to drop below those of the fall. That means that our average enrollment for the year might be even a little lower than it is now, and that would mean ever more in the way of lost resources. The money potential, or the money loss potential, could be as high as \$180,000. We're doing everything we can to both minimize the amount and to make sure that whatever monies might be required come in a way to not effect insofar as we can either the quality of education nor the opportunities for students at Evergreen. I guess we got most of the publicity on a drop in enrollment. But four of the six four-year state institutions had a drop in enrollment. Only the University of Washington and Western Washington University had enrollment increases, and with the single exception of the University those were very small. The other four had some enrollment declines and it's a reflection of two things happening: fewer students graduating from high schools, we've reached a peak in terms of high school graduates; and, sort of puzzling, a smaller percentage of high school graduates going on to college. That's a trend that started about four years ago and which is continuing both in this state and across the nation. That's something that effects Evergreen individually, the potential for some money cutback and it could have some effect of course on our ability to do some things. But I think it's small enough, we can keep it under control well enough, we have some resources to put against this potential money loss, that I think we can avoid any significant adverse impact on our educational operations this year. The other event doesn't effect just Evergreen. It may effect an awful lot of people in this state, almost anyone or any organization which depends to a degree on public funds. The passage of Initiative 345 to many people, obviously to a majority of our electorate, was a good thing. The sales was taken off food and in that respect our tax system was made a little more progressive rather than

the terribly regressive tax system we've had in the past, but it also meant a very significant loss of revenue for the remainder of the biennium. That won't take place until July of next year, but for the last year of the biennium there will be a pretty significant money loss unless there is some replacement which can only come through legislative action. It's still pretty uncertain. I wish I could give you a better view of what's likely to happen. The Governor has issued an Executive Order which calls for certain spending limits. Those relate primarily to out-of-state and some in-state travel. They relate to replacement of personnel, when someone leaves we have asked the question because it's obvious we would have a severe impact if we could not replace on a year to year basis faculty members, particularly those who are on one year contracts, and we have already received information that indicates that that will be exempted from that Executive Order. So we do have an opportunity to continue to maintain our faculty and go out and hire replacement faculty, and in fact if our enrollment sustains it, the new faculty which would come along with increased enrollment. No one knows, and the only one who can tell is the Governor, as to whether there will be a session or not in the early months of this next year. If there is not a session then there are significant problems financially for all state organizations and agencies. If there is a session, there's the question obviously as what a legislature will do. It's going to be a difficult task for anybody serving in the legislature to come in in March or April of an election year and face the unhappy prospect or alternative of either cutting back directly on a good many services in the state or raising some taxes to replace the revenue which was lost through the initiative. In this case, the people got the privilege and the pleasure of lowering their own taxes; the legislature will have the dirty work eventually figuring out where the replacement comes or what will cut as a result. Let me turn from those events to some reflections on my own experience during the course of the last several months. Those I guess if there has been a frustration, the frustration has been too many new things to do and new places to be, too many things I would like to do, and too little time.

I have felt it important to start out by attempting to reach out beyond Evergreen and to talk to and work with the many community organizations and people, both those who serve in the legislature and in state government who effect us; those who are leaders in the communities of southwest Washington where we have a regional responsibility; and those both in the state and outside the state who reflect Evergreen's regional and national responsibilities. That has not given me as much chance as I would really like to sit in on and take part in some of the faculty seminars and some of the activities which are going in all of the buildings and in many of the programs here at Evergreen. But those random thoughts of a new president, or I guess by now a slightly used one, are first a concern I feel in talking to students, and faculty members, and in just sensing what's going on here on campus; a concern over Evergreen's direction. Some, especially those who were here at the beginning, concerned that the original promise and the original direction of Evergreen might be compromised or modified and we may lose some of the uniqueness of Evergreen. There are others who have equal concern, and that concern is over what they feel is a needed change -- needed change in order to better serve the requirements and concerns of students of today and students of the next few years. The one thing I find from both those who might look ahead to some further change in Evergreen and it's format, those who have a concern about the original Evergreen and it's preservation, share one thing which I think is almost uniquely Evergreen: that's an intensity of concern which I frankly have not seen in the many visits I've had in the last dozen years to other campuses, colleges and community colleges and universities through this state, either public or private, and that intensity of concern for a school, for it's uniqueness, and for it's opportunity is one of the great assets which I hope Evergreen never loses. As you might guess there are varied opinions about what ought to happen here at Evergreen. Even varied opinions as to what is Evergreen. When you ask people, I've asked faculty members, I've asked students, I've asked staff, what do they feel about Evergreen, what is their view as to what makes Evergreen itself and what makes it different from any-

thing else, and those opinions are almost as varied as the people you talk to. Perhaps there is no single Evergreen and perhaps that's one of the great strengths of a school like this, that it can be what you want it to be and the very fact that students have some real opportunity to plan and direct their own education; that faculty members have an opportunity, perhaps not as full as some would like, to plan and to replan a curriculum with each year; makes it a different kind of institution to different people. Some are concerned, I can't say I've heard it from any of the student body but I've heard it from some others -- faculty members, staff -- who are concerned about the difference in student attitudes from the late 1960s and early 1970s when Evergreen was born. I'm not sure that concern is well placed, there's probably little question that students of today are different, but every generation of students is different from the generation preceding. Probably because the country is different, the needs of the world are different, the issues are different and that's unquestionably going to make not only a different student generation but it's probably going to change all of us to some degree as the years go by. But it's interesting to listen to and to hear that expression of concern that students aren't like they used to be. I haven't heard anybody say it yet but there are probably some who would say Thank God. But most of the concern I've heard is the other way -- that they appreciated the times of stress and of concern within the campus as well as off the campus and wonder where it went. I do find the enthusiasm of students in some interesting ways. An enthusiasm of students over what they are doing but some expressing a sort of a haziness still as to the whole Evergreen format and precisely what they are getting out of each of the programs they're in. But even though it may be hazy almost uniformly students are articulate in expressing their ideas and their enthusiasms about what they are doing. In getting off campus and in talking to members of the community, those random thoughts turn to questions of negative community attitudes. I don't find that that's as true as some perhaps think. Sure there are some negative attitudes toward Evergreen in this community and in some other communities, but any institution

or organization or individual doing something and doing it aggressively and doing it perhaps in a different style is going to create some opposition or they aren't doing much of a job. I wouldn't worry too much about the negative attitudes of a few in the community. What concerns me more is that too many in the outside community, whether it's Olympia or the broader community of southwest Washington or even the state, are just not conscious of what Evergreen really is or what it can do and they can't describe very well or at all the Evergreen concept. They're not aware of what Evergreeners have done and are doing. And it's that lack of consciousness which concerns me more than the few negative attitudes which we're always going to have and I don't think can overly concern ourselves with. That's a task for everyone to try to change that lack of consciousness into an accurate awareness of what Evergreen is and can do and what Evergreen has done, because we are beginning to have a history now and a growing sense of accomplishment. Finally, as far as just these random thoughts, I find among some a feeling that Evergreen while an unusually handsome campus is isolated; it's not in a community although it's close to Olympia it's just far enough away that the combination of the highly personal but somewhat isolated coordinated studies programs where there isn't as much direct interchange of students as classes change in other schools, coupled with the physical isolation from Olympia, leads to some sense of isolation in the minds of some students. I think it might be worthwhile for me to know better whether that's the real concern and what if anything should be done about it. I find two contrasting but very interesting reactions from many students in their response to what they're asked to do in an Evergreen program. Some see others as finding it a way to slide through without doing very much work. Most, however, say that the very lack of specific requirements, or knowing precisely what it is you have to do which is typical in so many other institutions leads most students to do a lot more and end up really working much more heavily and in a much broader sense than they would if they had had

some rather accurately set requirements which would be typical in a different institution. (Tape turned off by mistake) ...reaction of a community is the contact with those who for one reason or another felt that Evergreen wasn't doing it's job or that they couldn't fit the Evergreen format. It's only been in the last two or three years that there's been a significant number of successful graduates, particularly those who have been at Evergreen for an entire college or university career. Those success stories are building the most important element to Evergreen's continuing success Evergreen's long-term continuity. Probably the most important single product that you can have is an alumni association, whether it's an organized one or an unorganized one, the very fact of a growing number of alumni who are outside doing things either succeeding in graduate work in the many, many schools Evergreeners are now studying in; or are succeeding in public or private enterprise; or as a good number, I think an unusual number of Evergreeners have done, taken the enthusiasm and the sense of self accomplishment here at Evergreen and translated it into their own business enterprises or their own individual accomplishment after they have left here. That's after all what a college or a university is all about --to give to those who attend an opportunity to learn, to leave with not only a sense of fulfillment while in college but an understanding of how to continue to learn and to grow and to develop during the remainder of a lifetime. Unfortunately an end result which doesn't occur as often as it should in a more typical or traditional institution. Once the diploma arrives the learning begins to be shut off. What about values here at Evergreen? I think there are some which I think perhaps are not understood very well by many of us who are here. First, just a physical value. The campus essentially new or for the most part new designed and now constructed to serve about 4,000 students has with 2,500 students excess capacity or at least capacity which gives the students and gives the faculty an opportunity for laboratory and space and equipment use, an opportunity not matched in many if any other institutions certainly in the state of Washington. Of course as Evergreen grows toward it's capacity of 4,000, that extra advantage

may diminish, but it is a special value, a particular value for those of you who are here now taking part at Evergreen. The open opportunity for students and faculty and staff to utilize the equipment here, the laboratory and media and communications equipment, to use it on a broad scale and virtually unlimited and free basis, creates some very special responsibilities. We're not, although I think that those special responsibilities have been lived up to by and large pretty well by Evergreeners, we are not immune from those who will rip off each other and the college and we have as all institutions have lost some of that equipment and materials, and I think it's up to the whole Evergreen community to recognize the rather unique responsibilities that go along with the unique opportunities we have in the wide scale use and the open concepts of equipment, laboratory and space use here at Evergreen. Just last week we received from outside one of those pieces of information which we were very much aware of, something we could talk about and did talk about, but it never made as much of an impact as when the same information is discovered by someone else and fed back to those of us at Evergreen. It represents a document and a story which we can now use because it has been given a sense of reality as it now has the stamp of the legislative budget committee. They have been conducting faculty utilization audits of each of the six four year institutions in the state of Washington, public institutions, seeking to find out what the range of classroom sizes is at each institution, how much time faculty members spend in each of the separate elements of work during the course of a week, and a significant number of other elements of that nature dealing with faculty utilization and space utilization. When that report was presented to the legislative budget committee about a week or ten days ago, the staff made the report to the committee, Dr. Kormondy and I had short presentations afterwards, and the first question from one of the members of the legislature was not to either of us but to their own staff saying I thought that a legislative audit was aimed at detailing the exceptions or the problems and setting them forth so an organization or an agency or institution could do a better job. He said that this is

the first time in my service in the legislature, and this was a representative who has been around for a dozen years, the first time in my service in the legislature I've ever seen a legislative audit where there were no exceptions and no suggestions for corrections but rather some responses from the staff which not only detailed what Evergreen has done but suggested that we weren't even talking enough about the unique nature of Evergreen's faculty utilization. I'm not sure that every student or every staff member here at Evergreen understands how different Evergreen is from other institutions. All of the other five had essentially the same utilization or contact of faculty with students during the course of the week. Evergreen had about 30 percent or more of additional faculty contact with students than any other institution in the state of Washington. That's a particular privilege for anyone studying here. Probably not as well known as some would have it, and perhaps for some of you who have trouble finding a faculty member on occasion you may not even believe it. But nonetheless it is true that Evergreen's faculty does more teaching and is in more personal contact in probably a more personal way because of the full-time nature of coordinated studies programs than any of our other higher educational institutions. It's also true that the other five institutions have an almost identical curve in the classroom sizes at those institutions. They vary from less than five to more than two hundred, except in the case of the University of Washington where it goes as high as a thousand, but that's a flat curve and there are classrooms of all different sizes. At Evergreen there is a much heavier concentration at a much smaller level. We have no classes that really go above seventy or eighty and those are in programs where much of the teaching as you well know comes in seminars which are twenty or under. So that classroom size, the personal nature of Evergreen's style, and the extra number of faculty contact hours are now recognized fully by a legislative committee and believe me we are going to do everything we can to make sure every member of the legislature reads and understands their own ... (End of side of tape)...other values which is inherent and which I've found most decisively in the course of the last several months

is the feeling and the understanding and sometimes the frustration that students here have an opportunity to guide and to plan their own educational direction. Without the hurdles and the requirements and the boxing in and the splintering of education which can occur in so many other institutions. Let me finally turn to a little broader scene and share with you some of the futures of higher education, what we're all going to face. Much of it may not really affect those of you who are students here now but it's a future which will affect the next generation of students and the first element of it surrounds our own demographics -- what's going to happen to the state of Washington, what's going to happen to the population, both this state and the rest of the nation, in the course of the next decade. First, there's every expectation that the population here in this state will grow to the utter consternation of most, but it's nonetheless true. Every time there's another national article on Seattle being the best city in the country people shudder. Every time there's a similar article, and there have been several in the last few years, where they have measured states one against another, and say that in lifestyle, and the living condition, the state of Washington in each of those cases has been in the top three. People again shudder. But the end result is an expectation that the population will grow from its present three and a half million to about 4.3 million in ten years, about a twenty percent increase in population. Some of it from natural increase, most of it from immigration. There's a bigger change than just population increase. While the total population grows by twenty percent, the number of fifteen to nineteen year olds in this state will actually drop by six percent in the course of the next ten years. The high school graduates will drop radically. That obviously will have an impact on higher education with a particular impact on those institutions who depend primarily on high school graduates, the recent high school graduates, for their incoming students. The number from twenty to twenty-four will go up by 13 percent which is a somewhat slower growth than the overall population. The number from twenty-five to twenty-nine will go up by almost forty percent. When someone asks where have all the children gone, that's where they've gone. The wave, and it's

a huge wave, of the babies born shortly after World War II first created a bulge in grade schools and we built new grade schools, then the bulge in high schools and we built new high schools, then the flood hit the colleges and universities and we built new facilities and in this case even a new college. In the course of that not only did we build educational institutions to serve the young but juvenile delinquency homes and prisons and the whole host of other facilities which also unfortunately serve that growing bulge of young people. Of course by the time another ten years has passed the new needs and the new pressures and the new responsibilities will lie very heavily with those in their late twenties -- in new family formation, in creation of a whole other new bulge of youngsters being born even if the birthrates are way down, simply because there will be so many people in the family forming years. So all of this has a real impact on what's going to happen to higher education and what may happen to Evergreen. In looking ahead toward a six year plan, and I guess we can't see well enough beyond that to go much further, we've created some background statistics. We have those available now, we will shortly be coming to the whole campus community to try to get some beginning input into what we do and what we want to become and what goals we want to achieve during the course of the next six years. It's obvious that it's not likely to solely in serving high school graduates of recent times because there will be so few of them. It may very well be a reaching out in new directions and in different directions to fulfill the responsibilities given to us when we were created just a decade ago. Of course maybe not all of you know what those are, those three major accomplishments Evergreen was to fulfill. First to serve southwest Washington; second to be a particularly close and a resource for state government because of our physical location; and third to be an innovative, alternative form of higher education and not a carbon copy of the other institutions of this state. I think we've fulfilled that third requirement very well. Some suggest we have fulfilled it well but are now drifting back toward a more traditional and less desirable direction. I guess we have served southwest Washington to some degree, some sixty percent of the

student body comes from southwest Washington, I'm not sure how many of those list Thurston County as their residence are long time residents of Thurston County, but nonetheless I do think we serve southwest Washington reasonably well. I'm not sure we have really reached out to work with and serve or be served by state government as well as we might. If I were to sort of reach out and suggest some potential things which could happen in the course of the next decade, let me preface it by saying these plans obviously depend on the interest and the willingness and the abilities of the whole Evergreen community, not just one person. Many have suggested, and I think there is good reason, to seek a graduate program here at Evergreen done in an Evergreen style. A Vancouver program which has proven so successful in the last year where we have taken Evergreen to the Vancouver, Washington community and provided there an opportunity for between sixty and seventy students in this two year period to study, seriously work toward a degree, and by the end of this year virtually all of the sixty-five to seventy will have received an Evergreen degree and will have done it while remaining in the Vancouver community, and those students range from the mid-twenties to the mid-fifties in age. Almost every other community in southwest Washington which has a community college wants to engage in the same kind of activity with Evergreen to serve people in their community. Maybe rather than just being a totally self-contained campus we, because of, not in spite of, our own way of doing things, can uniquely serve southwest Washington in a way few other institutions could. I hope, again depending on the attitudes of the whole community, I hope we will always continue to have a major emphasis on a true coordinated studies program. A concept which was unique at the beginning, which has gained Evergreen regional and national recognition, and which still represents the core of our activities. I believe we can and should move out towards state government to provide for them in many ways, whether pure educational opportunities individually for people, or training programs at sophisticated levels for those who need training for whom the agencies can't fulfill the tasks. I believe we can move more strongly towards state government in asking them to provide

their resources for our students and for the college in internships and in a wide variety of ways which they can provide the expertise of state government to an educational institution. I guess finally Evergreen ought to be proud of the reputation it has already achieved outside the boundaries of this state. Part of it is because so many of you have come from outside the boundaries of this state. Currently twenty percent of our student body is from out of state, a much higher percentage than any of our other state institutions, but it's more than that. In national higher education circles as I've talked to officials at the National Science Foundation, at the Carnegie Foundation, as I've visited with leaders in higher education from other parts of the country, I find a wide awareness of Evergreen, it's skills, and an equally wide admiration for what's been accomplished here. So while we can and should fulfill that southwest Washington requirement, a state government requirement, and a requirement to be innovative, I think in doing that we are likely to fulfill a fourth objective. That's to be not just a state college, and not just a regional institution for the state of Washington, but a resource of the state, of this region of the nation, and even a national resource to which many people can turn. If we let people know what has been achieved and what we are now achieving, the very special place Evergreen is, the special resource it provides, and can let others know of the successes of those who have preceded you, then I think Evergreen truly will be known as a national resource and maybe even some day we will be viewed by the average citizen of the state of Washington with the same sense of pride and ownership as the Space Needle and Mt. Rainier and the Boeing Company.