8 May 2001

Barbara Smith
TESC

Dear Barbara,

This is too important to just send you an e-mail, though of course you may want to respond by e-mail. The point of this letter is simply that I have performed a lot of important governance services for the College in my years here and I want to continue to do so—to feel truly useful—in my last year of regular teaching.

As I consult the mini-vita I keep for myself here, I see that I've done many important duties:

DTFs AND OTHER SERVICE

- Curriculum Planning Review DTF, 1974
- Learning Resource Center DTF, 1974
- Rotation of Deans DTF, 1974
- Working Climate DTF, 1974-75
- Quinalt II Task Force, 1975
- Design for Enrollment DTF, 1978-79, and Advisory Panel following
- Evaluation and Transcript Review DTF, 1980-81
- Faculty Leave DTF, two years
- Administrative Evaluation DTF, 1989-90
- Recycling and Waste Reduction DTF, 1990-91
- Conflict of Interest DTF, 1991-94
- Provost Search Process DTF, 1992-93
- Academic Governance Study Group, 1993-94
- Faculty Hiring DTF, Spring 1996
- Laboratory Safety Committee
- Laboratory Council
- Convener of Scientific Knowledge and Inquiry Area
- Faculty Representative to Board of Trustees, 1983-84
- Academic Advising Advisory Board, 1986-88(?)
- Faculty Agenda Committee, 1987-89

Those groups were not always fruitful. Our long, careful study of academic governance never resulted in any changes, and the Conflict of Interest DTF kept producing reports that were always somehow trumped by directives from the Governor. But I am proud of my work in establishing the Student Advising Center and in developing a recycling program for the College, and the work I did quietly for John Perkins, when he was a Dean, is the reason we all have chalk in our classrooms (or are supposed to have). But I haven't done much lately except to work on hiring subcommittees. Of course, it is entirely appropriate for our newer faculty members to do more and more of the work that shapes the college they will teach in, but I do feel sometimes as though I'm being put out to pasture early.

As I think I told you once, I believe I am best in behind-the-scenes work. All the theatre work I've done has been designing and constructing the scenery; I'm not the type to go out in front of it and act. I can't play a role like Brian Price's, as he moves his DTF's work through the faculty discussions, but I think I'm very effective behind the scenes. Now, during the coming year I

expect to continue serving on the Lab Council that Kelly Smith has established and to work on two longer-term projects. First, I have initiated an effort to develop a teaching resource room for science faculty members, where we can keep books, periodicals, models, transparencies, slides, various papers, and many computer files of valuable materials for teaching; I'm continuing to work with Kelly Smith and Michel George on this, but space is very tight and the project may move very slowly until Seminar II is completed. Second, I'll continue to work with Betty Kutter, Andy Brabban, and others on developing a facility for molecular biology and microbiology.

However, as I consider my teaching experiences over the past few years and as I talk to other faculty members—especially scientists—about our common experiences, I am struck by a general deterioration in the quality of the average student, particularly those in science programs. While the best are as good as ever, our classes are being dominated by students who simply do not have the mathematical and logical facility to study science at an appropriate level and to become truly successful in scientific work. I have proposed to my colleagues that the long-term solution to the problem is largely in recruiting. I am afraid the Evergreen still presents the wrong image to the public—a general matter that I know others are working on—and high school students who are well-prepared and are smart enough to do excellent scientific work perceive the UW and WSU as their only logical choices, in spite of our excellent capabilities here. (Think of Nalini and Betty and Clyde and Jeff and Jack and Paula and Andy . . . the list goes on.) My colleagues reacted positively to my suggestion about the importance of recruiting, some of them pointing out the importance of developing long-term relationships with high school teachers. The SI faculty had a conversation some time ago with people from Admissions about using us more effectively in recruiting, but I don't think anything came of it. There was a time when many of us went out on the road shows, and last fall I told Admissions folks that I would like to be involved in recruiting work. But I gather that Admissions has its internal problems right now, and between their problems and my own lack of time, nothing happened. Several years ago, some of us put together a nice booklet on Science at Evergreen, which was used for a while for recruiting. When we proposed to develop a new one, we were told there was no money for it. (But I see a fancy booklet on Native American Studies at Evergreen . . . hmmm.)

I would like to explore the development of what I'll call a working group (because I expect its members to work actively on the matter, not just develop policies) to promote science at Evergreen and to seriously recruit the excellent students we need and deserve. In fact, I would like to recruit excellent students for all areas, not just science, but I see science as being in a special position to attract students and to enhance the general image of the College. I would like to make this work my principal governance duty for the coming year.

Best wishes,

Burt Guttman