Burt Guttman

For me, there is one fundamental issue, but it is a complex one, involving community, collegiality, trust, mutual understanding of one another's motivations and activities, and, finally, un-bureaucratizing the College. Although the atmosphere feels a little more comfortable this year, I think we are still living largely in a state of siege, an odd internal siege in which each person feels surrounded and besieged by everyone else, or perhaps in which little groups of people feel besieged by all the other little groups. Some of this is a legacy from Joe Olander (thanks very much, Joe); some is a legacy from the Board of his time, which created a legalistic system pitting the Administration against the Faculty, wherein faculty members have to keep looking over their shoulders; some comes from policies, such as the Sexual Harrassment Policy, which again foster suspicion, fear, and mistrust; and some comes from all the tensions raised by the move toward greater diversity and multiculturalism (what*ever* that means), which raises various fears and suspicions. Add to this atmosphere an additional set of tensions between old folks and new folks, which is in itself a rather complex matter.

I believe we need a lot of time to work on these issues and other closely related matters. The goals must be (1) to eliminate the tensions, fears, suspicions, and anxieties that divide us, and (2) minimize the bureaucratization and legalisms that have been imposed on us in recent years. I put it to you that the road to these goals lies primarily in discussions of our work here--the business of teaching and learning--so we all come to understand one another's motivations, goals, and activities. Focussing on these matters will also, I believe, help to create the sense of us all engaged in a common project of continually creating and re-creating the College. I expect that in creating that mutual understanding we will stop seeing one another as devils and wrong-doers; we will come to respect one another for what each of us does, and we will come to appreciate the strength of our diversity. And I emphasize the importance of us ***all*** achieving this, the all to include faculty, administrators, and Board members. I believe that a shared understanding among all three factions will lead to a reduction of factionalism and a return to that ideal state (which we probably never really had) in which everyone is working simply to make Evergreen the best possible place in which learning can happen.

A secondary issue for the College, which I don't wish to emphasize now, has to do with education for living in the twenty-first century, where the single most important problems will be overpopulation and ecological disaster. It is time for the College to recognize the primacy of these matters and give "ecological literacy" greater priority in our work.