

4/7/76

PROGRESS REPORT
LONG-RANGE CURRICULAR PLANNING FOR EVERGREEN
(Proposed Structures for Achieving Continuity)

During the past several weeks the Long-Range Curriculum DTF has divided its efforts among three separate concerns which seemed to loom large in our early discussions: Questions of teaching modes, questions of continuity, and better definitions of institutional goals. This report deals particularly with continuity issues and presents a proposal for structures which will enable us to realize continuity while also achieving our other goals. We recognize that recommendations on modes will have some influence on what follows, but we have treated them as largely separable issues.

We have seen our task as one of reflecting on our experiences from the past five years, learning from our past successes and mistakes, and plotting a course for our future based upon that past. Previously, we have had a great institutional reluctance to make any long-term commitments in an effort to keep our options open and to experiment with curriculum on a college-wide basis. The present dissatisfaction among faculty and students alike with our one-shot, unpredictable curriculum leads us to believe that there is a broadly based desire for more continuity and predictability. However, we do not wish to lose our experimental capabilities either. The following is a first cut at providing a balanced and more designed system for achieving both of these desirable objectives.

We want to invite your discussion, your suggestions, your alternatives—either in written form or in oral testimony before the DTF—during the next two or three weeks. It is our hope that we can get some general sense as to whether or not we are moving in a satisfactory direction during this next week. The discussion of details and balance of options will take longer.

The DTF has discussed a set of guiding principles for curricular design which we believe are important to preserve the special qualities of Evergreen. More detailed goals statements will soon be forthcoming in a more complete form but for purposes of the plan presented here we want to acknowledge having considered at least these general principles:

- 1) a commitment to good teaching and close student-faculty relationships,
- 2) a commitment to Interdisciplinary Study as a guide to curricular design,
- 3) a commitment to innovative modes of instruction for a substantial part of the curriculum,
- 4) a commitment to help students to develop leadership qualities, to learn how to learn, and to take charge of their own educational decisions.

In this proposal we want to provide for more continuity and predictability in the curriculum, to improve the opportunities for advanced study, and to reduce the tensions associated with the present curriculum-planning methods. We want to preserve some of the experimental and open-ended nature of our present curriculum. We want to make it possible for students to specialize in the traditional divisions if they choose, without turning over our entire

curriculum to this purpose. And we want to design and offer some intriguing and compelling alternatives to the traditional divisions as a special feature of an Evergreen education. It is in this spirit that we offer the following for discussion.

SCHEMATIC OF THE PROPOSAL:

- Part A. Basic Coordinated Studies 5 or 6 Programs 20 to 25 faculty; 400 to 500 students
- Part B. Experimental, Individualized & Rotating Options 30 to 50 faculty; 600 to 1000 students
- Part C. Advanced Curricular Pathways
- 1) Interdisciplinary Specializations
 5 to 9 areas of study to be developed 25 to 60 faculty; 500 to 1200 students
- 2) Divisional Specializations 15 to 20 faculty; 300 to 400 students

(Note: We have not yet developed our thinking on graduate work so wish to remain both silent and neutral on this question for now.)

DESCRIPTIONS:

Part A. Basic ^{Programs} Coordinated Studies:

Each year we should offer 5 or 6 Basic ^{Programs} ~~Coordinated Studies~~ designed especially for first and second year college students but open to anyone. These would be taught by a self-selecting but rotating pool of faculty who particularly like this mode of teaching and learning and who have shown themselves good at working in this mode. These should be one, two or three quarter length programs, carefully designed at least a year in advance by those who are going to teach in them, as Interdisciplinary Studies. They should involve students in reading, seminar, writing, investigating moral dilemmas and social values, exploring intellectual and personal options for the future. **First** and second year students, new to Evergreen, would be strongly advised to enter one of these programs as a way of developing the above skills and of learning the cooperative group mode of learning that distinguishes Evergreen. A strong part of each of these programs must be personal academic advising and familiarization with the Evergreen styles and opportunities for learning. We have a lot of experience to draw upon here, we simply need to design good programs and select good faculty teams to carry them out.

Part B. Experimental, Individualized & Rotating Options:

This is the least defined and most open-ended option within the curriculum, intended to provide opportunity for considerable freedom of action for students and faculty alike. Neither mode nor content are predefined; students and faculty determine both on a need and interest basis. Programs can be either student or faculty initiated and designed jointly. Here would be the seedbed for new curricular designs which might later become part of the regular or continuing curriculum; here would be opportunity for a few "far-out" curricular experiments without threatening the continuity and stability of

the rest of the College; here would be staffing for individualized student options, self-paced learning, internships not covered elsewhere, external credit, off-campus studies, etc. This option should provide the cutting edge for institutional innovation and, on a rotational basis, would be available to all faculty wishing to participate who have a good idea to try. To be eligible for consideration, such curricular experiments should include some effective evaluation methods designed into the format to assure some learning from the experiment. On a biennial basis, we would expect to publish the results of our successful efforts for use by other schools.

Do anything, but evaluate it afterward

Part C. Advanced Curricular Pathways:

Advanced Curricular Pathways should be of two kinds: 1) a carefully selected group of Interdisciplinary Specializations involving a two or three year sequence of offerings; 2) an opportunity for specialization within a division, i.e. Divisional Specializations. These should be carefully designed in advance and considered as overlapping or intersecting pathways...taking advantage of any common curricular features as a way of achieving more efficient staff utilization in the teaching and to provide some mix for students between different specializations. Considered as two or three year sequences, each specialization will have to address the question of preparation and pre-requisites for the advanced work of the specialization, designing it into the sequence whenever possible *(i.e. not mainly in Basic programs)*

Part C1. Interdisciplinary Specializations:

We suggest establishment of between 5 and 9 areas of advanced interdisciplinary study which are carefully planned out in advance, advertized as special offerings of Evergreen which students come here particularly to do, and which are guaranteed to students for a set number of years into the future. These are considered as two year or three year planned sequences of Coordinated Studies, Group Contracts, Internships, Courses, Self-Faced Learning...or whatever modes will best do the teaching/learning job for that particular specialty. Planning in each of these areas would be done by a self-selecting group of faculty who would also teach in that specialization area on a rotating basis. (This is an example of what was referred to in the Fort Worden Papers as a "natural grouping" of faculty, not the divisional grouping which it has become). Current students interested in a particular specialization should be included in an effective way in the development of the initial plan. The planning groups for each area will decide on the duration of the sequential study...either two or three years, based on considerations of breadth, accessibility to transfer students, total staff required, etc. Each specialization will be allowed two full cycles of operation (subject to annual internal review and improvement by the faculty and students involved in its operation). At the end of two cycles, each area will be subject to a critical review by an all-college Curriculum Review Board (to be described later under Operations). Following is a list of 13 suggested Interdisciplinary Specializations, with suggested durations, staff and student numbers, from which some group of 5 to 9 might be selected.

Suggested Interdisciplinary Specializations

<u>Title *</u>	<u>Descriptors **</u>	<u>Duration</u>	<u>Max. Number Faculty FTE</u>	<u>Max. Number Student FTE</u>
1) Environmental Studies	Ecology, Field Biology, Chemistry, Pol. Sci., Econ., Sociology, Planning, Design, Graphics	3 years	8	160
2) Marine Studies	Marine Bio., Econ., Politics, History, Literature, Boat Design, Marine Crafts	2 years	5	100
3) Life & Health for the Individual & Community	Human Biol., Lab. Sciences, Nutrition, Public Health, Psych, Sociology, Econ.	3 years	8	160
4) Human Development and its Social Context.	Psych, Human Biol, M & F Roles, Anthro, Sociol, History, Philosophy, Education, Counselling, Arts, Literature, Writing.	3 years	8	160
5) Expressive Arts	Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Media Prod., Communications, Psychology, Literature, Writing, Art History, Music History & Theory.	2 years	7	140
6) Cultural & Area Studies	a) Native American Studies History, Literature, Arts, Politics, Economics, Education, Language	2 years	10	200
	b) Non-Amero-European History, Literature, Arts, International Relations, Comparative Studies, Languages	2 years (rotating areas)		
7) European & American Studies	Cultural and Political History, Literature, Arts, Philosophy, Econ, Pol. Sci, Sociology, Minority Studies.	2 years	6	120
8) Political Economy	Philosophy, Pol. Sci, Economics, History, Literature, Psychology.	2 years	5	100
9) Management in the Public Interest	Economics, Business, Ethics, Management, Psychology, Public Admin., Ecology.	2 years	5	100
10) Humane Technology	History, Econ, Sociol, Philosophy, Applied Sciences, Technology	2 years	5	100
11) Good Earth Agriculture	Econ, History, Ecology, Earth Science, Technology, Agronomy, Entomology.	2 years	5	100
12) Outdoor Education	Alternat. Education, Recreation, Field Biol, Sociology, History, Psych.	2 years	5	100
13) Intelligence & Knowing	Philosophy, Logic, Math, Computers, Comm. Theory, Artificial Intelligence.	2 years	5	100

* These titles and the subject areas they represent are open for discussion and improvement. New areas can be developed within the Experimental Option and introduced as the college grows or as these are phased out in the future.

**These areas of study must be described to that they are broad enough to be feasible with the number of staff allowed but broad enough to be significantly interdisciplinary.

Part C2. Divisional Specializations:

This option will provide faculty for advising and teaching those students who wish to specialize in some of the traditional divisions. In general, these should not be conceived as departmental but as divisional: Humanities, not just Literature; Physical Science, not just Physics; Arts, not just Music. To the extent possible, curricular offerings of the Interdisciplinary Specializations should be used, not duplicated. Additional offerings would be provided as required through quarter-long group contracts, individual contracts, internships, self-paced learning, perhaps an occasional advanced Coordinated Study in high-demand areas. Opportunities for this kind of learning should be clearly advertised and guaranteed to students. Through careful advising by the faculty, students must be cautioned away from over-specialization and narrowness, which is a special hazard of this option. Another major danger of this mode is the tendency to over-commit our resources to carry it out, thereby turning us into a conventional institution.

ORGANIZATION:

A number of organizational questions immediately spring to mind which are critical to the successful operation of such a curricular system: Who plans what, when, how? How and by whom are the specialty areas designed? How and by whom are staffing assignments made? What is the faculty rotation policy to be? How are specialty areas changed and how often? How do we keep these subdivisions and specialty areas from becoming self-perpetuating entities (often called "departments")? These are crucial questions requiring careful discussion and advice. Here is our thinking to date on these matters:

- 1) Each faculty member should **self-select** into at least three of the available eight to twelve options created by Part A, Part B, Parts C1, and Part C2. No more than two of these should be in C1 so that the possible phasing out of various C1 options does not create a "life-and-death" matter for anyone.
- 2) The groups thus constituted by self-selection become the "natural groupings" for design and implementation of that particular option or specialization. Each faculty person therefore becomes a member of three groups for participation in overall planning and assignment for teaching.

cf. Fort Worden

As a rotation policy, we recommend that teaching assignments be for two consecutive years in a particular option, providing substantial advantages for both the faculty member and the development of the curriculum. Some exceptions to this may become necessary under unusual circumstances. Teaching assignments will continue to be made by the Deans for the overall health and balance of the curriculum, but since these assignments would be made for each person only within the **chosen** three options, much of the "pain" should be reduced.

demography doesn't work at all right.

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- 4) Each of the C1 specialty areas would have a faculty coordinator who would serve for two years and turn the coordinator role over to a person with one year's teaching experience in that area. These would probably be the only people who would serve for three consecutive years in a particular option. This degree of continuity seems desirable for the smooth management and development of an advanced area of Interdisciplinary Specialization. Permanent chairpersons are not desirable.
- 5) An all-college Curriculum Review Board would be assembled by the Dean in charge of curriculum, either annually or biennially, to give critical review to the Advanced Specialization Pathways which are approaching the end of their second full cycle of operation and are thus coming up for renewal or phase-out. Such a decision would be made on the basis of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the program in achieving its educational goals and in meeting student needs, the ability of the program to attract and hold adequate student interest, the interdisciplinarity of the program, the degree of faculty support for continued strong staffing of the program, and the extent to which the program continues to further Evergreen's goals and sense of mission. The decision would also have to be taken in the light of other alternative specializations which were developed and awaiting implementation. This kind of institutional flexibility must be maintained to assure continued responsiveness of Evergreen's curriculum to a changing world and student needs. It is precisely this kind of flexibility which most academic institutions find almost impossible to maintain. In other words, this Curriculum Review Board must be critical, tough-minded, and effective.
- 6) Organization of the Deanery around these structures is difficult to define at this moment because of the general state of flux of the whole Deanery structure. But, four deans or two, there are certain general principles which should be observed. We should not have a Dean over each of the four options, which would tend to create separate "colleges" for each of them. Perhaps each of the options should be divided between the Deans (simpler if there are two rather than four). A particular faculty member should stay with a certain Dean for a long enough period of time for effective opportunity for faculty development and evaluation. Budgetary allocations would be done on an all-college basis similar to the one used at present, which seems reasonably effective without creating enormous budgetary competition.
- faculty turnover*

CONCLUSIONS:

This is the direction of our current thinking. It is not a radical departure or reversal of our present efforts, but a way of building on our past and committing ourselves to a more organized, less frantic future that preserves most of our values. It provides more continuity but still allow us an arena for experimentation and curricular innovation. It provides a way of advertizing ourselves to our future clients while preserving a reasonable amount of institutional flexibility for coping with a rapidly changing world. We are eager to receive your reactions, suggestions, criticisms and advice.