

COVENANT WORKSHOP

This workshop will help us to cooperatively create our program covenant, a document that will guide the conduct and development of our learning community. What do you want us to value as a community? How can we create a covenant that will have a strong and positive effect on our community?

- The first step is to read through the covenant sampler you've been given. As you read, notice how different covenants are organized and what categories there are. Notice words or phrases like: respect, engagement, responsibility, resolving concepts, etc. Which of these ideas appeal to you? How do different wordings reflect particular values? Do you notice a difference between top-down covenants and learning community focused documents? Note them and discuss with your group. NOTE: Evergreen's Social Contract is a given, but we may want to repeat or clarify ideas within it in our program's covenant.
- In your small group, discuss similarities and differences among the covenants.
- If words or phrases seem particularly strong, mark them or keep a list. If you come up with specific statements, phrasing, sentences that you think should be in our covenant, put them in quotations. Keep in mind that most program covenants are pasted together from other covenants. There's no need to reinvent the wheel if you like what you see. (Refer back to the sampler to clarify ideas.)
- Use your large sheet of paper and Post-Its to write down your group's core ideas. Put large categories on one color of Post-Its, and sub concepts on your other color of Post-Its. (Post-Its will come in handy in stage 2 when we try to reorganize ideas from all the groups.) Remember that it is important to have a sense of the specific content of our covenant and the broader categories within which to organize that content. Transfer ideas to Post-It notes.
- When your group is satisfied that you have gathered all the ideas you can from the covenant examples and conversation, arrange the Post-Its on your large sheet of paper
- In the afternoon session of the program, we will display all of the sheets on the walls. When you get there, put your group's work up, and then walk around and take a respectful look to see what others have written. Go back and make additions or changes to your work, if you like.

▪The next stage is to look at similarities and differences among the covenants, regrouping our ideas according to some broad categories, and looking for any gaps in what has been recorded thus far. We will all do this cooperatively.

▪From these notes, Peg and Liza will assemble a draft of our program covenant which, pending edits and suggestions from you early in week 2, will hopefully be adopted by Friday of week 2.