



## CIRAL 101

# What is CIRAL?

- CIRAL is the *Civic Intelligence Research and Action Laboratory* at the Evergreen State College
- Now in its 6th year! Started when Doug did the same assignment the students did: *Propose something for the college.*
- It's an educational experience in which students take the law into their own hands. (mostly)
- It currently includes students taking *the Global Hunt for Civic Intelligence* for 12 credits and students taking the *Undergraduate Research in Civic Intelligence* offering.

## CIRAL Objectives

- Prepare students for the future
- Involve students more deeply in the design of their learning environment. We are making the road by walking.
- Deeply integrate theory and practice
- Work on “real-world” problems through a focus on civic intelligence
- Incorporate community work into academic / research work in a more regular and coherent way
- Build longer, sustaining relationships. This would benefit the community and the student experience.
- Explore and develop a new model for Evergreen
- Become a node in a network of research and action labs

Civic intelligence is the ability of people to solve its problems equitably and effectively through working together.

Civic intelligence combines theory and practice; reflection and action.

Civic intelligence takes different forms in different situations.

Civic intelligence incorporates knowledge, aspirations, creativity, organizational & social capital, & other resources.

It really makes no sense to teach about civic intelligence without trying to practice it.

# CIRAL Foundations

## 1. Civic intelligence

CIRAL focuses on civic intelligence; civic ends though civic means. This means that all of our projects are intended to advance and practice civic intelligence. In other words, we don't begin with something that we'd like to do and assume that it fits this criterion. Sometimes this means that we don't do something just because it's a good thing to do.

## 2. Collaborative

Our projects are intended to be collaborative. We are trying to build on each other's work and develop and create projects that are not plausible without other help. What this means in practical terms is that students generally speaking will not be doing projects on their own.

## 3. Give Back

Unlike more traditional approaches to undergraduate education (at least) where every quarter is brand new and the old students are replaced by new ones, CIRAL is intended to persist. For that reason we focus on contributing useful information or other resources to future generations.

## 4. Ownership

We are consciously trying to build a new approach through CIRAL. This implies that our projects should assist with the improvement, promotion, and institutionalization of CIRAL. This can take many forms but it usually follows from students assuming ownership of CIRAL.

# Clusters are at the core

- Students will work in 3+ member teams (“clusters”)
- Clusters are theme-based and involve research and action
- The general plan is as follows:  
  
Ideas *evolve-into* themes *evolve-into* cluster *evolve-into* mission statement *evolve-into* project(s) *evolve-into* plan (deliverables, time line, roles, resources) *evolve-into* action.
- Clusters report and meet weekly
- BTW, people help people in other clusters too!

## Clusters we have or have had\*

- Home Office (perennial)
- Historic (partial list): Media, Digital Story Telling, Journalism, CIRAL vs. Homelessness, Ambassadors
- Current: Home Office, Community Health, Co-ops, Education, Evergreen Renaissance, Food Systems, Games, Greener Tide, Non-Profits, Open Source Governance, Pattern Languages, Veterans

\* Clusters may be in development, active or dormant.



# Three Examples — among zillions (literally!)

**6-730PM** TIME TO COME TOGETHER

THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

**FORUM ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS IN OUR COMMUNITY & CAMPUS**

AT THE LONGHOUSE EDUCATION AND CULTURAL CENTER

**MAY 23**



Activist Road Trip

**Civic Ignorance**

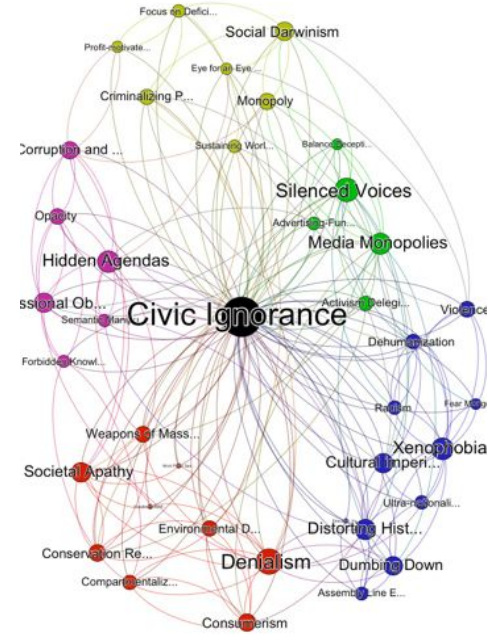
Civic Ignorance describes how well a group or person ignores the civic ideas, problems, or solutions of those surrounding them. The need to solve problems intelligently and taking account of all solutions is cast away in favor of the quick, the easy, and the brutal. Maybe the problem will just go away? Critics of this should be marginalized, ignored or otherwise disabled or destroyed.

**Violence**

Much can be achieved through dominance and submission by using violence. If the subject cannot be subdued psychologically through fear, then injury can be inflicted. If injury is not enough, then the subject can ultimately be eliminated by murder. This is ultimately the underlying threat of violence.

Public Forum on Homelessness

Dominating Voices Anti Patterns



## Anti-Pattern Project

Evergreen Students developed an “anti” pattern language that contains 40 “patterns” that create and sustain oppression and inequality. Remarkably, this was ultimately liberating, probably because it helped unearth and demystify some important ways that civic ignorance is perpetuated, thus, hopefully leading to useful interventions.

Some examples from the various clusters....

## Community Health

IS OUR COMMUNITY SICK?

*What's up w/ Evergreen?!*

*WE'VE BEEN TALKING... lots of folks on campus are feeling disconnected & disoriented with Evergreen Community life... Do you? We're making a short film about it & want to interview you!!*

**WHAT WE WANT:** Your story!! If you love, hate, or feel indifferent about the general health of the TESC community, we want to interview you!! Especially encouraged: students who are considering leaving TESC, incoming students, faculty, students of color, 12th grad, Exchange & Weekend students

**WHO WE ARE:** We are two groups through Evergreen's CIRAL program; we are interested to assess what's been going on w/ TESC, our project is called the Community Health & Wellness Assessment Project.

**THE DEAL:** Evergreen is facing issues with low enrollment retention - Basically people are leaving & we want to know why.

*Send us an email if you want to be interviewed or are interested in knowing more!*

[teschealthassessment@gmail.com](mailto:teschealthassessment@gmail.com)

## CIRAL vs Homelessness

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WE NEED YOUR HELP! LET'S ADDRESS STUDENT HOMELESSNESS

EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

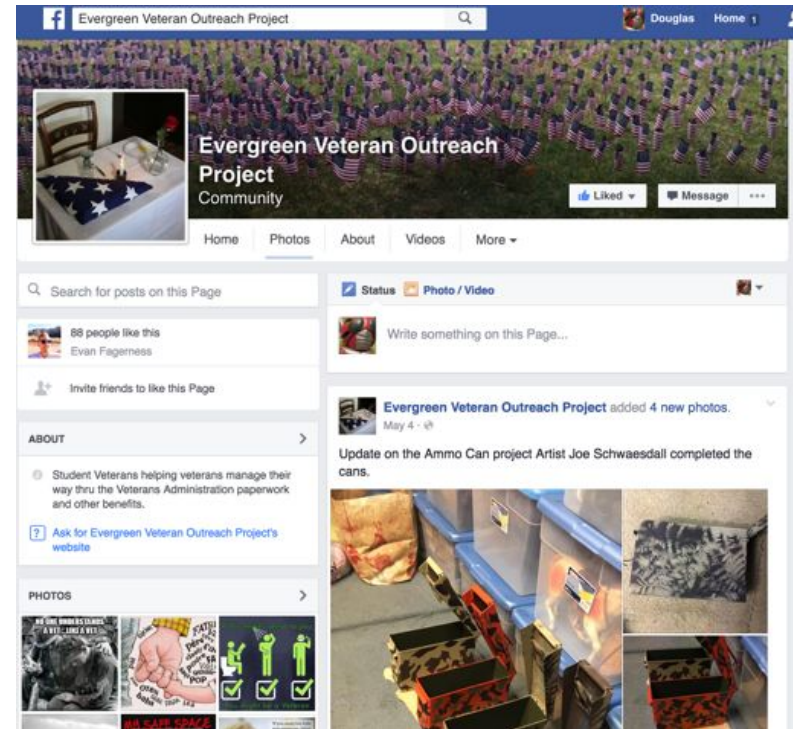
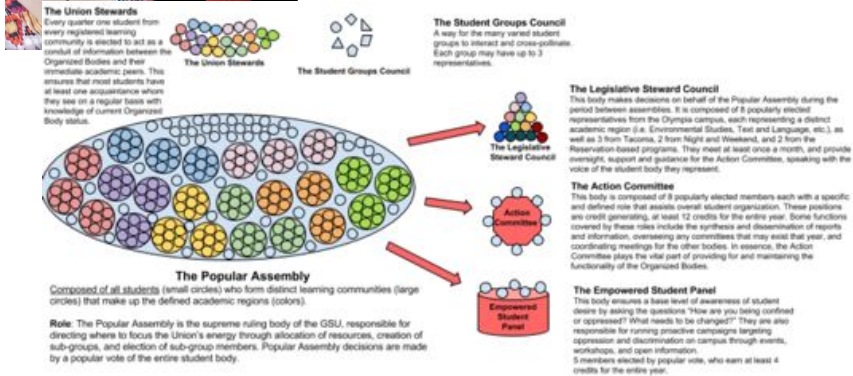
**HOMELESS SURVEY**

IN RED SQUARE

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD **MAY 23**



## Greener Tide



## Architecture Lab