

**The Evergreen State College  
Strategic Plan 2020-2023:  
Fostering growth, equity, and resilience for  
our students and for Washington**

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## Accelerating our tradition of innovation for today's students

Dear Governor Inslee,

At Evergreen, we didn't wait for a pandemic to rethink the college experience. Our transformation of higher education began more than 50 years ago. Over the last two years, Evergreen's evolution has gained significant momentum. We are taking a unique model of education which has served generations of Washingtonians well, and transforming it for our state's new generation of non-traditional students.


The Evergreen State College has always excelled at making an outstanding education accessible to all types of learners from all types of backgrounds. Through our unique model of teaching and learning, our students develop the capacity to integrate knowledge from multiple disciplines in analyzing and solving the complex issues our communities and society face. They graduate prepared to create, innovate and lead in the high-demand jobs and careers of today and the future.

With decades of demonstrable commitment to social justice, we are proud to serve a high proportion of non-traditional students. They include veterans, people of color, returning adults, LGBTQ+, tribal members, low-income and first-generation students, and students with disabilities, all with talent and potential. Our commitment to access and equity is reflected in our richly diverse student population. They thrive in Evergreen's flexible, affordable study programs and earn marketable degrees faster than at any other public college in the state.

Our state and our world have changed. And Evergreen is changing, to expand opportunity for those students seeking new areas of study, who benefit from alternative learning platforms, and those who desire additional professional and academic credentials to achieve their life goals.

As a college recognized nationally for innovation, we are creating new academic programs, credentialing opportunities and the remote and online platforms needed to deliver them. Based on research and deep conversations with those we pledge to serve, Evergreen is becoming even more sharply focused on the needs of underserved students. As a public institution, we are significantly increasing the reach of our programs to students seeking an education that prepares them for the way the world is now, and the careers and opportunities to come. We cultivate diverse leaders to serve our communities and Washington.

Evergreen's strategic plan is our promise and our future. As our state looks to expand opportunity for all Washingtonians, education and innovation are the way forward. With your help and the support of the Legislature, we will transform Evergreen to ensure more students have an opportunity for a life-changing college education.



George S. Bridges  
President

## Mission

As an innovative public liberal arts college, Evergreen emphasizes collaborative, interdisciplinary learning across significant differences. Evergreen's academic community engages students in defining and thinking critically about their learning. Evergreen supports and benefits from local and global commitment to social justice, diversity, environmental stewardship, and service in the public interest.

## Vision

For the local community, the region, state, and nation, Evergreen provides an exceptional education preparing every graduate to create, innovate, and lead in building a more just and resilient society.

## Who we serve

- Enrolled students as of Fall 2019: 2,854
- Average enrolled student age: 27 years old
- 85% are from Washington
- 60% are women
- 31% are students of color
- 52% are low-income
- 50% of Olympia undergraduates identify as LGBTQ+

## Our unique role and model

As Washington's designated public liberal arts college, Evergreen is dedicated to ensuring that a college education in Washington is rigorous, accessible, and affordable. We take pride in admitting, supporting and graduating students from groups underrepresented in and underserved by higher education. Evergreen prepares students for today's challenges through collaborative work, hands-on experiences in and out of the classroom, and active community engagement. The college offers two undergraduate and three graduate degrees: Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Environmental Studies, Master in Teaching, and Master of Public Administration.

## Our goals

1. Achieve unprecedented levels of student academic success and personal development in a manner responsive to students' unique career goals, talents, identities, and diverse perspectives
2. Significantly expand support for our local community, region, state, and nation during an unprecedented period of social and economic turbulence
3. Become a much stronger, more resilient, and adaptive college by expanding our capacities to serve a much wider range of students and to achieve our vision for fully contributing to the larger society

## **Goal 1: Achieve unprecedented levels of student academic success and personal development in a manner responsive to students' unique career goals, talents, identities, and diverse perspectives**

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Objective 1: Fully support students personally and holistically

***Develop and implement clear, consistent, and comprehensive academic/career support services tailored to the individual needs of different students***

Tactics:

1. Create and fully implement proactive academic/career advising and support services, including technology solutions for use by advisers and faculty to enable student progress toward goals
2. Provide equitable access to tools, technologies, resources, social networks, high-impact practices, and opportunities to allow all students to be successful in their academic studies
3. Provide proven academic transition programs for all new students
4. Establish a formal process for routinely reviewing and improving academic policies and practices through a student-centered, equity lens

Objective 2: Realize our commitment to equity, inclusion, and justice

***Cultivate and sustain a campus culture that fosters a strong sense of personal belonging, and embraces and affirms all through open-hearted engagement, humility, and individual empowerment***

Tactics:

1. Increase students' sense of connectedness to each other and to the Evergreen community
2. Using climate survey results, identify the aspects of campus climate that undermine a sense of belonging and create barriers to an inclusive education; improve institutional structures to promote transformational growth for all our students, particularly those underserved by higher education
3. Design, develop, and execute interventions to strengthen equity, inclusion, and belonging for students, faculty, and staff experience

Objective 3: Integrate all aspects of the academic curriculum

***Create an integrated curriculum by leveraging connections within curricular areas and across the college***

Tactics:

1. Develop clear and consistent levels of progressive rigor within each of Evergreen's paths of study, ending in rich, culminating learning experiences
2. Integrate programs and courses: across full-time and part-time and across daytime and evening and weekend programs

3. Identify and leverage synergies between existing and planned undergraduate curriculum and graduate programs
4. Design and implement structures for organizing ourselves and our curriculum to create greater coherence, to foster innovation, and to achieve excellence

#### Objective 4: Deepen and expand the impact and reach of the curriculum

##### ***Develop academic programs, courses, and stand-alone learning opportunities delivered partly or wholly online***

###### Tactics:

1. Create online and low-residency academic programs and courses that offer flexible participation and increase access to Evergreen's BA, BS, MES, MiT, and MPA degrees
2. Create certificate and credential opportunities within programs and courses documenting students' development of professional competencies and skills

#### Objective 5: Create new academic areas of emphasis and excellence

##### ***Create additional academic directions in areas of high student interest and societal need***

###### Tactics:

1. Build on existing areas of curricular strength to create and deliver new undergraduate and graduate programs
2. Focus curriculum development on areas of high student demand, aligned with Evergreen's mission and vision and current/future job markets
3. Develop new academic programs integrating multiple disciplines to develop the skills and capacities needed to solve real-world problems such as climate, public health, and racial injustice

#### Objective 6: Develop and engage partnerships to enhance curriculum

##### ***Forge mutually beneficial partnerships with higher education institutions and other organizations to serve more students, to expand and strengthen academic paths, and to develop new academic programs***

###### Tactics:

1. Identify aspects of our mission and academic direction that may be advanced from partnerships
2. Identify potential partners, assess feasibility, and implement partnerships

## **Goal 2: Significantly expand support for our local community, region, state, and nation during an unprecedented period of social and economic turbulence**

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Objective 1: Prepare graduates for post-degree success

***Prepare students for post-graduate careers and graduate study in which they contribute meaningfully to creating a more just, sustainable, and equitable world***

Tactics:

1. Develop new graduate degree, micro-degree, credential, and certificate opportunities that lead to post-degree success
2. Significantly increase student participation in research, internships, and community-based learning
3. Develop and implement enhanced transcripts and online portfolios by which students record and articulate how their educational experience prepares them for future academic and career goals

Objective 2: Contribute to the region's workforce development

***Build capacity to support returning adults interested in completing degrees and credentialing programs, with an emphasis on community and career-connected learning and outcomes***

Tactics:

1. Partner with local and regional economic development, workforce-related, and higher education institutions to combine efforts in pursuit of shared educational goals that serve workforce needs
2. Integrate regional workforce development priorities into curriculum development

Objective 3: In accordance with the Centennial Accord and New Millennium Agreement, strengthen partnerships with Native nations and their citizens

***Increase Evergreen's support of Native arts, education, and tribal relations by deepening existing and developing new educational partnerships with tribal nations and other higher education institutions***

Tactics:

1. In partnership with representatives from local tribes, determine alignment of educational interests of our closest tribal partners with the college's current and future curricular offerings through the co-development of a tribal relations plan
2. Build programs for Native students that complement rather than duplicate other programs offered in the region and partner with other higher education institutions to achieve shared objectives

### **Goal 3: Become a much stronger, more resilient, and adaptive college by expanding our capacities to serve a much wider range of students and achieve our vision of contributing fully to the larger society**

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Objective 1: Grow the total number of students who enroll, persist, and graduate

***Broaden Evergreen’s academic appeal, capitalizing on the results of objectives outlined above, to attract students in new markets and to increase recruitment success in existing markets***

Tactics:

1. Expand and orient admissions efforts to attract more adult students, such as those individuals who have completed some college but have not yet earned a degree, and those seeking to increase competencies and skills for career advancement
2. Maintain and expand recruitment of high school graduates who enroll directly from high school
3. Develop new and strengthen existing partnerships to expand avenues for reaching potential students

Objective 2: Strengthen Evergreen’s financial position

***Secure, sustain, and steward financial resources to enable the objectives outlined in the first two goals above***

Tactics:

1. Reallocate existing resources to support new institutional initiatives
2. Identify, develop, and engage in partnerships in support of objectives outlined above
3. Diversify and increase revenue by increasing enrollment (while maintaining comparative affordability of an Evergreen degree), leasing space, and fundraising
4. Reduce costs and scale operations

Objective 3: Enhance and elevate Evergreen’s reputation

***Elevate our local, regional, state, and national reputation to increase enrollment***

Tactics:

1. Develop, deliver and promote big, bold initiatives that solidify Evergreen’s reputation as offering a rigorous, relevant, and accessible education
2. With the development of new undergraduate and graduate degree programs, assess the feasibility of becoming a state university, and, if feasible and beneficial, pursue legislative support for this new identity
3. Highlight and promote examples of innovation and student success at Evergreen



Objective 4: Build our individual and collective strength and resilience

***Recruit, develop, and retain outstanding faculty and staff, representing diverse perspectives and identities, to support student success and achieve the college's aspirations***

Tactics:

1. Foster a respectful, inclusive, and equitable campus climate, focused on student success
2. Increase opportunities for and participation in professional development for faculty and staff aimed at increasing student and institutional success
3. Review, develop, and implement faculty and staff hiring practices through an equity lens to ensure recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce

## Recent and ongoing strategic processes, intent, and assessment

[New Academic Directions concept model June 2020](#)

[New Academic Directions archive](#) (internal)

[Market analysis study 2020](#) (internal)

[Accreditation, including 2020 update and 2018 self-study](#)

[Evergreen renews 2018](#)

August 20, 2020

Board of Trustees Meeting  
Strategic Plan Video Presentations

(click on the links below)

1. [Strategic Plan presentation: President George Bridges \[4:21\]](#)
2. [Strategic Plan presentation: Director of Government Relations Jeremy Mohn \[4:06\]](#)