

New Academic Directions Project Feedback

2020 Fall Academic Retreat

September 17, 2020

This document is to capture feedback on the New Academic Directions project as we present at the 2020 Fall Academic Retreat. Click on the link below to navigate to the section where you can add your feedback.

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NAD Project Summer Update

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UPDATE:

Two years ago, the college created a cross-divisional team for institutional implementation of new programming coming from the Student and Academic Life division. The implementation/feasibility team's membership consists of representatives from offices across the college: enrollment services, business services, institutional budget, inclusive excellence and student success, institutional research, advancement, information technology, marketing, human resources, purchasing and contracts, and academic administration. Throughout the summer as proposals were turned in from the various project leads we held implementation/feasibility sessions. We actually are currently reviewing a few of the proposals that have been recently submitted and working on providing our feedback in the next two weeks.

Our feasibility and implementation review consists of looking at the proposals through the perspectives of financial, human resource, and institutional capacity – which includes facilities, equipment, and systems.

Over the summer general themes surfaced. At the core of the input gathered, there are concerns about the ability of our current foundational systems, business processes,

equipment, and human resources to meet the demands of current programming and services offered at the college.

General themes that came out of the discussion with the feasibility/implementation team include:

- Evergreen is shrinking as we are building. Our systems require a lot of human labor and it is impacting the quality of delivery of support and services, as well as response time to students, faculty and staff.
- As a value at Evergreen our systems are set up based on the freedom of creating our unique and sometimes complicated content, policies, and processes.
- We lack standards for many critical activities and systems, which impacts efficiencies in business processes and systems.
- As a public institution within Washington State, we must comply with regulations and policies for business processes that are in tension with our own creative processes. This causes delay and additional workload for offices in implementation.
- Our lack of cyclical, collaborative and systematic assessment of our policies, business processes, budgets, and systems has made it unclear to the institution how to prioritize and invest in sustainable initiatives.

It is clear to the feasibility/implementation team that all of the proposed elements of the New Academic Directions Project are designed to grow our college and expand our ability to meet the needs of a brand-new population of students.

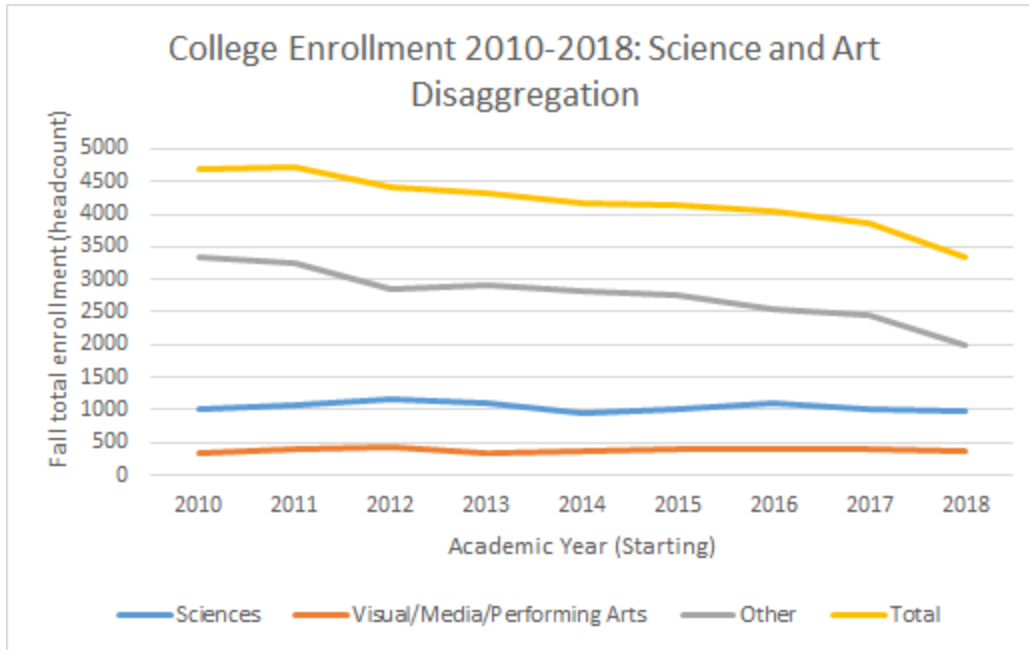
Our summary of general themes and concerns identifies the current risks of moving ahead with new initiatives and proposals without addressing some underlying foundational and organizational structures.

At the same time, there is clear recognition by the representatives of the implementation team that we must act now in order to build new curriculum and related support programs.

The team recommends that the college begin to review, assess, prioritize, and update key internal organizational systems and structures as we review the comprehensive New Directions proposals and make decisions about implementation. By raising and addressing these issues now, Evergreen can create sound and efficient systems and structures in order to implement these new initiatives successfully.

FEEDBACK:

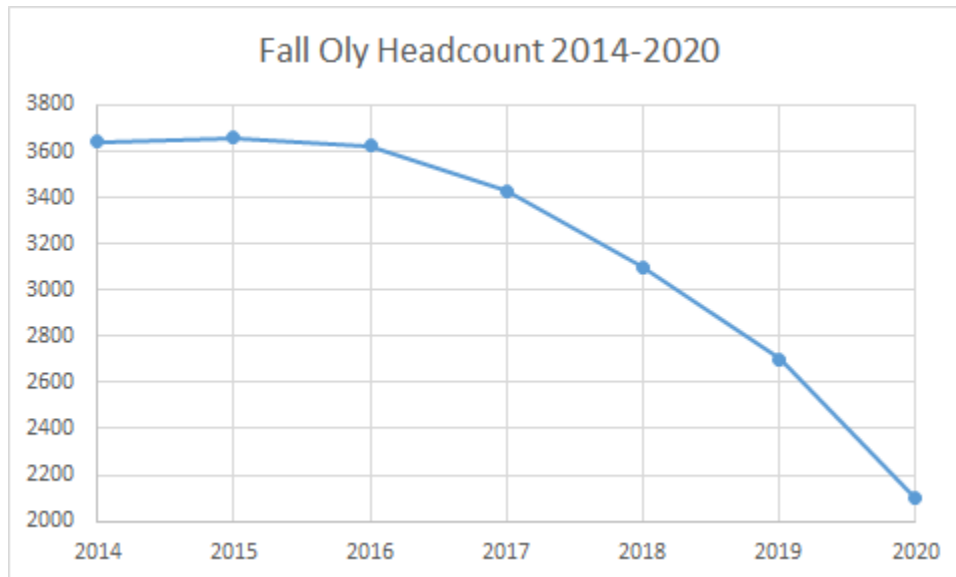
- I. This needs to be a data driven process; it is not. Between 2010 and 2018 college enrollment fell 38% but both the arts and sciences enrollment were unchanged. Art is represented in the NAD proposals. Why not science?



College is expensive. Evergreen was created by the Legislature to serve the students of SW Washington who are place-bound above anyone else. The above graph illustrates how students see cost/benefit.

Feedback comment: Current enrollment report, and data from previous few years clearly shows where demand is and is not. It is not in social sciences, yet we are presenting a climate justice proposal that is social science based, NOT science based. Why are we not listening to the consultants we hired, AND our own enrollment.

Who is no longer coming to the college? Who did we lose? Why are SPSCC students no longer transferring at the same rate as before? There has never been a complete assessment of the underlying issues that caused the downturn.



Listening to alumni is important, but remember we are looking for NEW students, those who wouldn't normally come to Evergreen, or those students we lost.

Capstone

UPDATE:

Workgroup: **Hirsh Diamant, Emily Adams, Shaw Osha, Amy Cook, Ellen Shortt-Sanchez, Brian Walter, Grace Huerta, Stacey Davis, Steven Hendricks**

In August, a faculty work group met to begin to plan proposals for college-wide undergraduate capstone structures, support and increased visibility. Students already have incredible opportunities to complete self-designed advanced senior year capstone projects in programs, ILCs, SOSs, internships, etc. A renewed emphasis on capstones across the curriculum, for all students, would highlight Evergreen's student-centered strengths; counter public misperceptions about a lack of rigor at the college; help students fulfill college expectations to acquire "depth" and "take responsibility for their own learning," and could serve as a method to hone mentorship for all students. Regularizing and making transparent capstone possibilities both inside and outside paths would further equity and inclusion for all students. We discussed the possibility of highlighting each student's capstone on the first page of their transcript, as a way to signal clearly their acquired depth of knowledge/experiences and their area of

concentration. We are highly aware that any change in faculty work load due to increased capstone mentorship would have to be negotiated through the union. Our summer Capstone Work Group developed a set of short-term, medium-term and long-term goals for the development of such a college-wide capstone system: the first step would be for the Agenda Committee to charge a faculty LTC (including staff and student representatives) this academic year to develop a full proposal.

slideshow

https://evergreen0-my.sharepoint.com/:p/g/person/hendrics_evergreen_edu/EUITNBGhvSFJqAsmrPVwbpEBBCJNuWZ1ZKjxYVfq6eqRZg?e=zu5Aov

preliminary thought-experiment modeling report

https://evergreen0-my.sharepoint.com/:w/g/person/hendrics_evergreen_edu/ETYNrCBfB0dDuUuteVklS5sBoKOX_eMaFb_74JG17mnXZg?e=0UqQ7O

FEEDBACK:

- A capstone is a specific term used by many colleges and has an associated standard. Can we ensure that capstone maintains a standard.
- Right now supporting some capstone work falls outside the work of full-time faculty - we have to support students to do research on top of our full-time teaching load. This is a hidden cost of this kind of powerful work for students - how can we make expanding these options for students sustainable for faculty? Holding this as a requirement would be unworkable with the number of faculty we currently have. (agree with not required)
- I agree that they are powerful. Why can't we just make it recommended instead of required? (We could! We could make it a "norm" but not a requirement. The trick is to get all students access to capstone experiences and the mentorship that would go with those experiences.)
- (agree with "not required") --This is Steven H. I think, though, that considering the requirement "challenge" helped us to problem solve what it would mean to invest in the promise of capstone... so produced some good strategies.
- I would love to see a backward design workshop at the Learning and Teaching Commons to consider what generalized pre-capstone capacities might transfer across the curriculum. We might attempt to create some standards and processes to better prepare students in any area of the curriculum.
- Just adding the possibility of undergrads pairing up with an MES student working on thesis research to do research as a (env studies-related) Capstone. With faculty as an adviser, and with an application process on the MES side so we believe the MES student is mature and capable.
- We could recognize programs that integrate "capstone" work in their syllabi, particularly three-quarter programs that end with students planning and completing an independent project in their last quarter.
- This is Ulrike. We don't have the range of expertise in the faculty to effectively supervise all the different kinds of capstones students might want to do. Especially with the shrinking of our faculty. I support the "optional" idea.
- This is Laurie M. I agree that the capstone should NOT be required. No only do we not have the faculty capacity to support all students doing capstones, but not ALL students want to do capstones, particularly given the flexible shape of paths of study that allow for broader interdisciplinary work at the senior level. Capstones could be encouraged but OPTIONAL.

- Capstones should be an advanced option with set standards along the lines of a senior thesis or the current BS degree.
- We do not have the expertise or capacity to do a “required” capstone.
- What if capstones are re-envisioned as culminating senior experiences? That way internships, community service, etc, would count as well as traditional senior thesis-style capstones.
- This absolutely should NOT be a requirement. Evergreen does not have requirements. This is part of our pedagogy. It’s an important part of our pedagogy. In order to support capstones, all we need to do is make it something students “declare,” like they declare the intention to do a BS. If we have multiple divisional degree programs, it could be part of declaring their intention to earn a divisional degree. Students already do all kinds of projects that count as capstones that develop out of the studies they already do with us. No need for more layers of content here, just layers of administrative infrastructure to organize this and make it more transparent.

Certificates

UPDATE:

Work group: Julie Sloan, Ralph Murphy, John McLain, Eric Pederson, Colby Morelli, Lori Klatt, Larry Geri, Amy Betz, and Sue Feldman.

The new certificates intend to increase Evergreen’s reputation as an excellent and useful community partner providing relevant, and rigorous professional development. Certificates intend to increase Evergreen’s community relevance throughout SW Washington, increase the number of people enrolled in Evergreen to earn stand-alone certificates and the stand-alone certificates will establish a new revenue stream through self-sustaining budgeting.

Two forms of certificates are proposed and implementation ready: 1) degree applicable certificates made of currently planned programs/course for degree applicable credit; 2) self-sustaining, community partner certificates designed and provided with community partners and focused on identified workforce development.

[Download Handout](#)

FEEDBACK:

- Who would be responsible for teaching courses or programs for self-sustaining, community partner certificates? How would that impact current curriculum, particularly paths of study that are already strained through loss of faculty who were previously affiliated with our paths?
- Is it possible to have some “for instance” examples of non-degree certificates that we have community partners for? How will these avoid the economic losses we sustained when we did Extended Ed? (Great question!) - maybe Union activism and leadership development designed with and for union partners?
- Several schools that have Labor Studies majors or grad degrees have done this; Rutgers has a program called LEARN; mostly leadership development. It’s very hard for it to be economically sustainable, let alone self-supporting. They’re usually financed as public service initiatives.
- We are very fortunate to have the gifted scientific illustrator Sharon Birzer teaching scientific illustration during summer. I wonder if we might grow this offering to include

Sharon in the EWS curriculum during the year and other artists into a modest scientific illustration certificate. That's a great idea!

- A wetland delineation certificate would add value to an Evergreen student's transcript/resume who is seeking professional work after graduation in restoration ecology and natural resource management. It might be incorporated into the Wetland Internship program we already offer in summers in partnership with the Washington Dept. of Transportation. That's another great idea. We already have one partner.
- Make sure credits earned through Evergreen certificates can be used in a Evergreen BA/BS/BAS
- Yes, I strongly agree with the above.
- A certificate in Media Literacy for K-12 educators could build on the expertise in both the Media Arts and MIT. It could perhaps be a summer program.
- Can we make sure that we agree what kinds of things are "certificable"? We had a very productive discussion during path of study summer institute in thinking about certificates as ways to highlight skills that our students develop through participation in our path, but it may be that others are speaking of certificates at a very different level.
- What evidence is there that students or prospective students want these? Usually one does a good deal of market research before developing a new product....
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It would be really good to see the content covered within a given Certificate before moving forward with any program. But it can be a great way to bring in students who are ambivalent about taking on a whole graduate program -- more achievable to earn 15 credits in something. Emphasize our high-touch model, for working professionals.

Here's an example of an actual need, and an outline of a actual program:

Certificate in Regional Governance.

For workers at the city or county level. Compare proposals with other schools, like U of Pittsburgh, aimed at governance workers who need some quick expertise after being elected or appointed, below the MPA level.

Certificate in Strategic Communication (at Purdue):

For writers who want to work within an organization.

Harness a certificate to a repeating UG program? For example, take "What Are Children For?" and add an option to it such as:

Certificate in Fundamentals of Developmental Psychology

-- History of childhood

-- Overview of counseling skills and occupations.

In all of the presentations about this over the last year or so, there has rarely been a single example offered to us so we know what these certificates would be. What's the content? Unless we figure out a way to take some chunks of our full-time programs and turn them into certificates, this will take more people when we already have too many.

Holistic Advising

FEEDBACK:

Download [proposal](#)

FEEDBACK:

Thank you so much for this!

More details would be nice - is there something we can read?

Thank you! I value the idea of holistic advising. Would love to see a visual of the model you are proposing. This would help me better understand how it's complexifying/refining what we have been doing up to now.

Our Evening and Weekend students have felt very left out through our current model. If returning adult learners are a big part of our "new" demographic, how would the model address the different sets of concerns that they have? How would it address the careers they already may have in mid-stream?

Curriculum: Climate Justice

UPDATE:

In June a group of 12 faculty and staff met to develop a proposal for a new climate curriculum. The group was composed of graduate and undergraduate faculty, from the natural and social sciences and the humanities. These 12 faculty presented their ideas to a group of 16 stakeholders made up of students, staff, and faculty. The stakeholders represented the natural and social sciences, the humanities, the arts and also included EWS faculty. The ideas were also presented to a panel made up of alumni from a variety of fields in the private and public sectors. Alumni agreed that this proposal had the potential to draw new students to Evergreen while building on our strengths in teaching critical thinking, collaborative learning, and linking theory with practice. Building on this feedback, in July lead writers Shangrila Joshi and Prita Lal developed the Climate Justice and Resilience proposal, which can be found at the Big Bets website. We believe this curriculum has the potential to educate students who will contribute to new collaborations and leadership and more just systems that can tackle the climate crisis. Students who understand that there are multiple, often competing visions for climate justice are better equipped to collaborate with others to work towards consensus-based solutions.

This proposal includes the development of a new interdisciplinary, interdivisional path of study, Climate Justice and Resilience (it could also be called Climate Justice and Sustainability). This path will build on existing paths of studies at Evergreen, including PEGSEJ, ES, NAIP, and Food and Ag. [Other paths could also be included as the path is created.] The NAD proposal criteria asked how we might include centers, co-curricular work, certificates, and capstones, so all are addressed in the full proposal. Currently we are waiting for feedback from the implementation and feasibility team. Advancement has discussed the possibilities of facilitating conversations between our team and potential donors to explore potential interest in supporting this curriculum. Finally, we want to draw attention to all of the work that is happening in other areas around developing climate curriculum for the 20-21 academic year, with strong summer institutes from faculty including Rachel Hastings, Sarah Williams and Alison Styring, and the 2-credit Climate Academy program, which will host a Climate Academy series in the fall, winter, and spring quarters.

FEEDBACK:

- There is no evidence in the Hanover data or any national student interest data that climate justice has great student interest. A large investment here will attract few students for the associated cost. It is a direction driven by faculty interest not student interest.
- I didn't write the comment above but yep, it is true. This part of the project is NOT data driven and will actually hurt what we are doing here. Please use data and don't let faculty interest push an agenda that consultants, IR data and analyses don't support
- The January 2020 Hanover Report called "Benchmarking: Climate, Environmental Justice, and Sustainability Programs" did provide data to support a climate justice area of focus for Evergreen.
 - (~~This report provided evidence of strong interest and job prospects in science-based environmental jobs~~)
- Asking students they are interested in "Climate, Environmental Justice, and Sustainability Programs" is very different from Climate Justice. The Hanover report also miss framed it with Climate Science, this proposal has none of that content. Climate science has some student interest in national student surveys.

- Actually, Hanover didn't poll about any current issues that many young people are investing a lot of time and energy in advocating for. That was a gap in their study. There are other ways to know about possible student interest than Hanover, especially if you follow the news.
- Yes, the incoming student interest survey (can't remember the exact name) does highlight climate change as a big concern of incoming students.
- Response to above: Climate Change is a science. I do remember the surveys and we hired Hanover for a reason so you can't now say they didn't look at climate justice and we should go off of the news! The news is not data or research. This is our problem. Lead with the science and then add these very important topics. That is what the data is telling us in order to attract new students. Get them here for the science they want and then teach them these very important topics.
 - But climate change has social impacts. One of the values that we offer as an interdisciplinary college is recognizing that there are many ways, that we are richer when we have multiple ways of looking at a problem. Relying on data is absolutely necessary! But it doesn't discount other ways of looking at a problem.
- WHERE IS THE COMPUTER SCIENCE? If the group knows how to use data as claimed then it is a mystery why we abandoned computer science. If the admin knows how to use data then why are we in the position that we are in with our enrollment?
- Feedback comment: I didn't write the above comments either: current enrollment report, and data from previous few years clearly shows where demand is and is not. It is not in social sciences, yet we are presenting a climate justice proposal that is social science based, NOT science based. Why are we not listening to the consultants we hired, AND our own enrollment.
- My positionality for this comment is as a natural scientist who has collaborated in climate change-related research, and recognizes that many of us have NOT typically paid enough attention to the human dimension of CC impacts. I DO think there could be room for more climate science in this path and to move ahead with a multi-, inter-, [trans-disciplinary](#) (after Tress et al.) approach.
- Having climate justice graduates with a weak background in climate science is highly problematic, just as there are abundant historical / common concerns about natural science students graduating without an understanding of social science, justice, and sustainability studies. The original proposal as I understand it proposed foundational work in several disciplines including natural sciences with students then moving on to focus on their area of interest, and that makes a lot of sense.
- I agree with the point above, and the Climate Justice proposal core team was made of an interdisciplinary team that included 5 natural scientists. It would be helpful to get their input on this, I recall there being some barriers to building more science in this curriculum but I can't properly capture them.
 - Same poster as ^: AND could lead to a 3+2 or 4+1 model for getting a B.S. and MES (or M.S.?)
- Listening to alumni is important, but remember we are looking for NEW students, those who wouldn't normally come to Evergreen, or those students we lost.
- This proposal needs to be framed in terms of improving the future, that's the sustainability part.
- [Hanover Report](#) page 3 (emphasis added):

“[Recommendation 1] Pursue a Climate Justice pathway to complement existing Environment and Sustainability studies pathways. Labor demand indicators are positive, while student and community need for climate, environmental justice, and sustainability education is clear and growing. Trends among benchmarked programs suggest that a program focused on Climate Environmental Justice would be optimal to provide Evergreen with a competitive advantage and complement current programs.”

“Less than half of benchmarked programs focus on environmental justice, meaning that Evergreen will face few competitors in this field. Although all benchmarked programs provide coursework aimed at the study of environment – human interactions, more than half focus their coursework on environmental and sustainability studies. Evergreen can leverage this opportunity to fill the existing gap in environmental justice programs.”

- Climate justice should be one aspect of the climate NAD, not the dominating aspect. Using a single lens as the all encompassing approach does not allow for “learning across significant differences” as the conclusion is already determined.
- I would like to lift up a comment that Kendra Aguilar made in the chat this morning: “allowing NPP to create MOU/MOA with Tribes out of the state (such as California, Oregon, etc.) and allowing in-state tuition pricing would increase enrollment now and continuously. That is not just bold and transformational but is rooted in EQUITY.” Based on my reading and the research of some of our colleagues, it seems there is great interest in tooling up to respond to climate change in Indian Country. Already, some tribes have successfully launched new businesses such as solar energy companies. Curriculum that incorporates social justice, climate change, entrepreneurial leadership, and transformative change could be highly attractive to students and help the college garner support for our redesign from Governor Inslee.

Curriculum: Interdisciplinary Arts and Design

UPDATE:

The Center for Interdisciplinary Arts and Design proposal was written by Ashley Williams, Arlen Speights, Joli Sandoz, Julie Russo, and Julia Heineccius based on a prototype built by a larger core group. The initiative brings together art, media, technology and myriad other fields through interdisciplinary coordinated studies programs, focused courses, certificates, internships, facilities and equipment (with associated staff), visiting artist/practitioner/curator positions, and dynamic faculty, all shepherded by a Director. The Design curriculum and center will enhance the public profile and distinctiveness of Evergreen; intersect multiple facets of our mission, resources, and pedagogy; and connect with community members and alumni. Implementing this initiative (with the aid of ambitious fundraising) will serve existing and NEW student segments by teaching career-oriented training and transferable skills, integrating broadly applicable design thinking with learning from other disciplines, and contributing equity-centered and liberatory design practices to the field. A particular focus on environmental stewardship and social justice will set Design at Evergreen apart from comparable programs and link to existing Paths of Study and partners like the Longhouse Indigenous Arts Campus, the Evergreen Gallery, CCBLA (internships and community projects), and Inclusive Excellence and Student Success (equity assessments). The Interdisciplinary Arts and Design proposal is currently with the feasibility team awaiting recommendations.

FEEDBACK:

- WHERE IS THE COMPUTER SCIENCE? If the group knows how to use data as claimed then it is a mystery why we abandoned computer science. If the admin knows how to use data then why are we in the position that we are in with our enrollment?
- You could make connections with the Physical Computing C
- It would be great to have an artist/computer scientist who could effectively bridge the two areas, making use of creative programming strategies, creative work that arises from data, and helping students understand the computing principles that underlie digital media (and, yes, physical computing).
- This is an area that has been “resistant” to the enrollment downturn and could bring in new students.
- Comment on above: actually enrollment in media programs has tailed off in recent years. Enrollment in media related courses is stronger
- It’s also an area where faculty lines have been disappearing as many retire or move on to other projects (from 25 two decades ago to 10 or so now). We will need to build lines in the arts back up.
- Enrollment in Arts and Sciences has remained relatively robust. This is an area to consider seriously. I do agree that computer science is absent - the term “technology” is used. I suggest expanding to computer science
- Listening to alumni is important, but remember we are looking for NEW students, those who wouldn’t normally come to Evergreen, or those students we lost.

Curriculum: Psychology:

UPDATE:

Summer Work Group Participants:

Arita Balaram
Mary Dean
Carolyn Prouty
Penelope Partridge

Nathalie Yuen
Stephen Beck
Wenhong Wang
Stacey Davis

Mukti Khanna
Marcella Benson-Quaziena
Toska Olson
Elizabeth Williamson
Eric Stein

In June and July, a workgroup met to begin to plan interdisciplinary curriculum in Integrated Psychology, Health and Human Services, as a way to respond both to increasing need in the state of Washington for mental health services, and to the high level of prospective and enrolled student interest in careers in psychology, counseling, mental health wellness, and related helping fields. A focus group of alumni working in these fields responded positively to the initial curriculum proposal: alumni were especially excited about Evergreen’s ability to infuse this curriculum with deep training in issues of equity and diversity, as well as the natural fit between Evergreen’s pedagogy and the need for counselors and other mental health practitioners to learn collaborative leadership skills. Any curriculum developed in this area would be widely interdisciplinary, including faculty teaching in the fields of sociology, psychology, public health, anthropology, gender and community studies, etc. Thanks to the presence of our new hires in psychology, we are well-positioned to continue designing this curriculum area this year; the college will begin by requesting legislative funding for an additional three faculty hires in psychology.

Presentation:

<https://sites.evergreen.edu/bigbets/wp-content/uploads/sites/529/2020/09/Psychology-Health-path.pptx>

FEEDBACK:

- This is the only area supported by the data. Good job. But, WHERE IS THE COMPUTER SCIENCE?
- If the group knows how to use data as claimed then it is a mystery why we abandoned computer science. If the admin knows how to use data then why are we in the position that we are in with our enrollment?
- We need to be careful of how we construct this. What students want must not be influenced and changed to what faculty want. These are often distinct from one another.
- We desperately need a psychology pathway, and an important area is linking psychology to biology and human health. Particularly development. BUT we need to hire psychology faculty with expertise in areas that there is demand for NOT what we think we/they want. Many students are looking for a sequence in psychology - foundational to advanced. It can't always be around social justice issues.
- Listening to alumni is important, but remember we are looking for NEW students, those who wouldn't normally come to Evergreen, or those we lost.
- I agree that we can't always put social justice issues at the center. If we were to develop a distinct sequence, how could we do it "Evergreen style"?
- What is the evidence that social justice issues are somehow at odds with a sequence in psychology for foundational to advanced, as framed by earlier comments? I do not understand why those are being positioned to be in opposition in reactions here. (They are not. The idea is to complement traditional psychology foundational-to-advanced work with work in sociology, equity/diversity, community studies, public health, the history of health systems, etc. - Stacey)
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Workforce Development

UPDATE:

[Download Handout](#)

FEEDBACK:

- I am particularly interested in the possibilities of workforce development related to aquaculture and the shellfish industry. WA SeaGrant has opportunities available for higher education and workforce development, but they generally require matching grants. I am still interested in working on CCBLA/Flaming Eggplant models for engaging students with internship opportunities in the community (and relating to capstone work...)--Pauline
- Unrelated to the aquaculture work above, EWS and NPP students are strongly in need of science curriculum. How can we contribute to workforce development by providing additional science training--Pauline
- Bolstering science in EWS will be necessary if you really want to expand on admission of returning adults.
- Computer Science at Evergreen has contributed significantly to workforce development for the last 25 - 30 years. Going forward, two issues should be considered in focus. First,

articulation with SPSCC and other community colleges. We get many students coming from community colleges. Second, drawing a more diverse population into computer science and supporting them. We have had a huge success over the years with Vietnamese students in Olympia, but that's about it for diversity.

- This is promising work and it is wonderful how this initiative centers racial equity. This group might think of ways to creatively bridge the supposed gap between workforce training and lifelong-learning. We simply cannot promise that an Evergreen education guarantees a good job. We can guarantee that an Evergreen education creates successful life-long learners. But these need not be in tension, and this aspect of the proposal can make us national--not just regional--leaders. See the AAUP statement "In Defense of of Knowledge."
 - <https://www.aaup.org/report/defense-knowledge-and-higher-education>
 - Critical paragraph: "Teaching is, after all, the transmission of knowledge and a means of its production. A narrowing focus on vocational training, combined with attacks on the liberal arts and general education, closes off access to the varieties of knowledge and innovative thinking needed to participate meaningfully in our democracy. As one journalist wrote, 'Stripping higher education, especially public higher education, of anything but pragmatic, technical, or transactional courses completely undermines the mission of a college or university.' Or, as the AAUP and the Association of American Colleges and Universities stated in 2018, 'Institutions of higher education, if they are truly to serve as institutions of higher education, should provide more than narrow vocational training and should seek to enhance students' capacities for lifelong learning'."
- Would it be possible to partner with local businesses, particularly those owned by alumni, to pursue this?

Transcripts

UPDATE:

Over the summer we worked on reimagining Evergreen transcripts with an interdivisional group of people.

If successful a reimagined Evergreen transcript has the potential to clearly articulate an Evergreen students' learning to an external audience, including certificates, capstone experiences, and areas of emphasis. It would also have the potential to facilitate translation to a traditional grading standard, when needed.

We identified a number of barriers the narrative transcript provides for students for students.

We considered possible shifts such as:

- a more clear cover sheet that could include capstones, certificates, areas of emphasis, and learning achievements, for an easy at-a-glance summary
- We considered the possibility of separating the narrative summary of learning from the transcript
- We considered offering students options of GPA, or pass/fail or non-graded (but possibly with a GPA in a black box that would only be taken out as needed).
- We discussed whether the GPA could be divorced from individual courses, based on demonstrating competencies in 6 expectations. This would offer room to fail and recover, and a more holistic assessment across all of their learning.

We believe this element of the New Academic Directions leads to enrollment recovery because students will be able to quantify their progress toward degree outcomes and personal goals, motivating them to persist.

One thing we are particularly excited about is having a learning summary separate from the official transcript because it could be a quick, valuable resources for students.

Our next steps are to work with the holistic advising group to coordinate how transcripts can best serve students.

If NAD were a zoo, the reimagined transcript would be a zebra because, while every students' transcript (stripes) would be unique, they would all be clearly discernible in black and white.

FEEDBACK:

- Before we begin a revision of the transcript we need to address previous initiatives. Did they work, did they improve the transcript to the reader, do they focus on student success for example. If the academic statement increased workload and transcript size but did it improve the parameters it was designed for (increasing student educational breadth and depth, student voice in the transcript etc?). If it did not it needs revising/removing.
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- What is the outcome of the Academic Statement assessment? We were supposed to assess the success of this. We continue to throw resources at it. Is it working? Is it helping our students? Is it hurting them?
-
- I like the focus on competencies... I wonder how Alverno College's approach or other colleges competency based assessment systems could help us. Please do not get into

a grade and GPA mode....There are other ways we can refine our approach that would help us better communicate the qualities of students work and learning with and for students. I do think it would help us to examine and clarify what it means to write about student work and learning in effective ways (i.e. strong/weak examples - principles). For example, I wonder if a rubric approach with clear assessment criteria (plus an emergent/other strengths criteria) would help us (and students!) have ways to describe *qualities* of student work and learning in transcripts along multiple vs singular dimensions. Concerns with grades: I don't think that switching to grades would address the underlying issue of clarifying what we are doing when we assess and evaluate student learning. The educational research on learning vs. performance orientation shows that grades are distracting -- they shift the focus away from metacognitive and intrinsic drivers of learning.

- Developing GPAs seems incredibly problematic and at serious odds with our institutional mission and values, and also risks alienating the current students we have. We should also note that national leaders in traditional higher education are advocating moving **away** from grades and GPAs. Note this piece in the NYT, which neglects to mention Evergreen. It seems that better communicating to the outside world (especially national conversations) our strength in grade-free learning is a mission for marketing.
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/25/opinion/coronavirus-school-grades.html>
- Also, in spring, we avoided the difficult discussions and decisions other colleges had to have about what to do with grades during the crisis.
 - Yes! I wish we could have leveraged national press attention for that. We did not.
 - Yes and the only reason I could think of that Evergreen did not publicize this is that some of the people who could have done that were anticipating the possibility that we would be introducing grades
 - It would be helpful to hear from senior administration whether this is true or not, if for no other reason than to prevent paranoia and increase trust in this process.
- Discussions of evals -> GPAs should certainly try to take lessons learned by UC-Santa Cruz. I would hope good folk there have written about their process!
 - Regarding UCSC:
<https://www.sfgate.com/education/article/UC-Santa-Cruz-To-Start-Using-Letter-Grades-2773570.php>
- My understanding is that we are not proposing to add a GPA to transcripts routinely; I think the group just identified a place to report dean-calculated surrogate GPAs based on the usual narrative evaluations. Is this correct? It looks like this is going beyond. I don't see how we have faculty mix letter grades and narrative evals, and it's a lot of work to do the "translation" when a GPA is requested. I agree with the other commenter that we should not move to GPAs, though we might consider other ways to make transcripts easier to understand and read
- We shouldn't institutionalize grades any more than they have already been institutionalized (currently limited, I believe, to after-the-fact conversion of narrative evaluations to grades only for job/school applications that absolutely require grades for consideration). And, we shouldn't use the good-faith faculty ote that green-lighted work on possible revisions of the transcript to initiate reconsideration of one of the most important and well-known elements of Evergreen's identity and pedagogy. The faculty

did not vote to green-light a reconsideration of grades. This seems like significant overreach.

- I agree. Our narrative evaluations allow us to address each student's individual strengths, areas of growth, challenges, etc. They help us attract students who have been wounded by the inequities in traditional grading systems. It will be a sad day for equity at Evergreen if we revert to the GPA system which causes so much inequity at other institutions and in high schools across the nation. Grades force faculty to slot students into a continuum, comparing them to each other in a pseudo "objective" system.
- GPA is a categorical non-starter: please explain why this is receiving so much emphasis in the proposal. That has not been explained, nor was it included in anything voted on by faculty
- If I had to start assigning grades I would have to change how I teach. Students would need to know what percentage of their grade was associated with each part of the program. Examples of these kinds of calculations are all over most institutions' syllabi. Currently, students are competing only against themselves--we can teach accelerated learners and students with the weakest backgrounds in the same class because each has a chance to excel based on where they started. Grades fundamentally change that dynamic. As such, they are an obstacle to learning. I realize that post-hoc grades do get calculated, but this separation of evaluation from grade assignment is (to me) crucial to our work here.
- What's the problem with transcripts? Students are getting into graduate programs. Why is this a problem? Use Paul P's protocol for generating GPAs when necessary. This is an increase in faculty workload. Faculty-assigned number grades would inevitably leak. Let's look closely at transcripts and how they are actually working now: conferences, academic statements. Revisit student voice as a dimension of the transcript. Work closely with the writing center and institutional research.
- Agreed--based on a transcript read about ten years ago, the college began the process that yielded the academic statement (AS). We've had the AS since 2013. The AS was assessed a couple of years ago during a transcript read and the results were shared at the faculty meeting. The assessment showed that the AS makes a HUGE difference in the quality of the transcript, and that the college could do a MUCH better job of making sure that all students receive consistent support for it across programs, ILCs, and internships, throughout the years of their college education. That part of it still needs improvement. Otherwise, about 80% of graduates who apply to grad school get in, and over 90% are employed within a year of graduation. What is the problem with our transcripts again???!
- No GPAs or grades. We would no longer be Evergreen. Period.