

## 2017-19 Biennium Budget Decision Package

Agency: 376 The Evergreen State College

Decision Package Code/Title: N5 Student Success Initiatives

Budget Period: 2017-19

Budget Level: PL - Performance Level

**Agency Recommendation Summary Text:** This request seeks funding to expand existing student success programs and to provide new programs and support services that are aimed at improving retention, persistence, and graduation rates at The Evergreen State College (Evergreen). These programs are specifically targeted to first-year students and new transfer students as well as populations who have been historically under-served, including students of color and students from the LGBTQ community.

**Fiscal Summary:** Decision package total dollar and FTE cost/savings by year, by fund, for 4 years. Additional fiscal details are required below.

Operating Expenditures	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
001-01 GF State	527,260	527,260	527,260	527,260
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>527,260</b>	<b>527,260</b>	<b>527,260</b>	<b>527,260</b>
Staffing	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
FTEs	12.7	12.7	12.7	12.7
<b>Object of Expenditure</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY 2019</b>	<b>FY 2020</b>	<b>FY 2021</b>
A-Salaries	369,380	369,380	369,380	369,380
B-Employee Benefits	79,880	79,880	79,880	79,880
E-Goods and Services	78,000	78,000	78,000	78,000

### Package Description

- **Background:** Evergreen is deeply committed to providing a successful undergraduate experience to its increasingly diverse student population. More than half of our students are from families with low income and 30 percent are first-generation baccalaureate seekers. Twenty-eight percent of our population are students of color, and 49% of our first-time, first-year students identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, or queer (LGBTQ). Almost 40% of our students are of non-traditional age, and 52% percent of our students are transfers from community colleges or other four-year institutions.

One in three new freshman at Evergreen do not return the following fall. Data from our Non-retained Student Survey of 2016 indicate that program experiences, fit with the campus community, and faculty support are key factors related to students' decisions to persist. Vincent Tinto's (2012) research on retention and attrition indicates that students are more

likely to persist when provided with 1) high expectations for student success; 2) clear and consistent information about how to navigate the academic environment and succeed; 3) access to academic, social, and personal support; and, 4) frequent and high quality interaction with faculty, staff, and other students.

- **Current situation:** Using funding provided for student success initiatives in the 2015–17 biennial budget, The Evergreen State College implemented initiatives that foster retention of students. Some efforts are focused on first-year students, such as lowering class sizes for first-year students and employing a director of new student programs. Other efforts are more broadly supporting student success. The new internship coordinator provides integrated student advising that supports career development. The new multicultural advisor works with individuals and groups of students to assist students with their transition to Evergreen and to provide direct academic and personal advising to all new and continuing students of color. The new conduct administrator provides guidance to students regarding their rights and responsibilities as well as resolving student complaints and allegations of misconduct.
- **Proposed solution:** In order to best meet the needs of this richly diverse population, Evergreen proposes to implement the following additional programs and services to provide targeted support to our most vulnerable populations.
  1. **Expand peer mentoring program:** Evergreen is piloting a peer mentoring program during the 2016–17 academic year that provides the components identified in Tinto’s research and the Non-Retained Student Survey. This model is also supported by our experience implementing similar program components in the federally-funded TRiO program. The goal is to provide students with a purposeful, high quality relationship with an upper-class student who is equipped to provide academic, social, and personal support along with clear and consistent information about how to navigate the Evergreen environment. The program will serve 180 first-time, first-year students in five core programs beginning in the fall of 2016. Each of these programs will serve 36 students. Two mentors will be assigned to each program, and each mentor will be partnered with a cohort of 18 students. The evaluation will focus on three areas of improvement that the program is focused on addressing: students’ perceptions of belonging and feeling supported in the campus environment, students’ ability to take responsibility for their academic choices, and students’ plans for life after Evergreen. This pilot will serve about 25% of all first-time, first-year students. Evergreen proposes to expand the peer mentoring program to all 726 first-time, first-year students during the 2017–19 biennium.
  2. **Employ student retention case manager:** Evergreen currently has a process for identifying students who are experiencing challenges that are impeding their academic progress. This process facilitates referrals by which faculty, staff, and other students who have identified students who may be experiencing challenges such as health concerns, exhibiting behavioral or psychological problems, or experiencing problems with substance abuse. This request seeks funds for a student retention case manager who would be responsible for ensuring that students receive appropriate support services. The case manager will coordinate student referrals, develop and maintain systems for reporting and tracking student cases, and provide leadership in addressing factors that

- contribute to student attrition and student success. This new service is estimated to cost \$80,483, which would provide funds to support one professional staff FTE and associated costs.
3. **Expand the First Peoples Scholars pre-orientation program:** The First Peoples Scholars pre-orientation program currently serves 25 students each summer by providing a two-credit residential program that builds a foundation for success by bringing first-year and transfer students to campus prior to orientation. Students engage in workshops and activities that help improve integration and build their connection to the campus community to facilitate a smoother transition. Students who participate in the pre-orientation program experience a 93% retention rate, as compared to the general population of first-time, first-year students, whose retention rate is 66%. This proposal would double the capacity of the program to provide services to 50 incoming students each fall. This program expansion could be managed by providing a slight increase in the time of one staff member and additional funding to provide supplies, food, and housing.
  4. **Provide additional support for the Unity Lounge multicultural center and LGBTQ Center:** Evergreen currently designates space in the Student Affairs Support Services area of the campus for the Unity Lounge multicultural center and an LGBTQ center. However, current funding is inadequate to support a permanent staff position for the LGBTQ center, nor is it sufficient to provide adequate peer support by student employees. This request would provide a full-time, permanent staff member for the LGBTQ center along with additional student employees who would be available to build, maintain, and enhance programs and services to our increasingly diverse population who is currently underserved.

**Base Budget:** If the proposal is an expansion or alteration of a current program or service, provide information on the resources now devoted to the program or service. Please include annual expenditures and FTEs by fund and activity (or provide working models or backup materials containing this information).

1. **Peer mentoring program:** In FY 2017, Evergreen employed 2.9 FTEs in the peer mentoring program at a cost of \$98,210.
2. **Case manager:** Students of concern are currently managed by an informal committee that meets to discuss their needs. However, there are no resources currently dedicated to providing case management services.
3. **First Peoples Orientation Program:** The First Peoples Orientation Program was staffed by 0.2 during the 2015–17 biennium. The total cost for this program was \$15,000 in FY 2017.
4. **Unity Lounge/LGBTQ Center:** The Unity Lounge and the LGBTQ center were supported in FY 2017 by departmental reserves to provide for 1.8 staff FTEs and a small budget for goods and services at a cost of \$82,863. These funds are available on a one-time basis only. Ongoing support is needed to sustain the operation of these student support services.

**Decision Package expenditure, FTE and revenue assumptions, calculations and details:** Agencies must clearly articulate the workload or policy assumptions used in calculating expenditure and revenue changes proposed.

1. **Peer mentoring program:** The funding request for the peer mentoring program would support 9.5 FTEs, which would allow us to provide services to all first-time, first year students at a total cost of \$311,292 per year.
2. **Case manager:** This funding request would allow us to dedicate one FTE staff person to provide case management services to students who are dealing with complex concerns that require coordination of services at a cost of \$80,484 per year.
3. **First Peoples Orientation Program:** This funding request would provide the additional staff and resources needed to double the capacity of this highly effective program to serve 50 students at a cost of \$30,000 per year.
4. **Unity Lounge/LGBTQ Center:** This funding request would provide funding to sustain the operations of the Unity Lounge and LGBTQ Center beyond the FY 2017 year. Funding that currently provides these student support services for students who have been previously underserved is available on a one-time basis. One-half of our first year students currently identify as LGBTQ and 28% of our students are of color. Ongoing support is needed to maintain services to this population that makes up a significant part of our student population.

### Decision Package Justification and Impacts

**What specific performance outcomes does the agency expect?**

Describe and quantify the specific performance outcomes the agency expects as a result of this funding change.

When fully implemented, Evergreen expects to see improvement in first-year student retention rates for both students who enter directly from high school and students who transfer from other two- or four-year institutions. We also expect to see improvement in the rates of persistence and degree completion.

**Performance Measure detail:**

Fully describe and quantify expected impacts on state residents and specific populations served.

**What are other important connections or impacts related to this proposal?** Please complete the following table and provide detailed explanations or information below:

Impact(s) To:		Identify / Explanation
Regional/County impacts?	No	Identify:
Other local gov't impacts?	No	Identify:

Impact(s) To:		Identify / Explanation
Tribal gov't impacts?	No	Identify:
Other state agency impacts?	No	Identify:
Responds to specific task force, report, mandate or exec order?	Yes	Identify: This proposal was developed in an effort to support the goals articulated in the 2015 Roadmap and the Results Washington project.
Does request contain a compensation change?	No	Identify:
Does request require a change to a collective bargaining agreement?	No	Identify:
Facility/workplace needs or impacts?	No	Identify:
Capital Budget Impacts?	No	Identify:
Is change required to existing statutes, rules or contracts?	No	Identify:
Is the request related to or a result of litigation?	No	Identify lawsuit (please consult with Attorney General's Office):
Is the request related to Puget Sound recovery?	No	If yes, see budget instructions Section 14.4 for additional instructions
Identify other important connections		

Please provide a detailed discussion of connections/impacts identified above.

What alternatives were explored by the agency and why was this option chosen?

The College considered a wide variety of options for supporting student retention and degree completion and selected programs and services with a proven track record of success in serving the specific student populations who will be targeted to receive the support.

What are the consequences of not funding this request?

The College considered a wide variety of options for supporting student retention and degree completion and selected programs and services with a proven track record of success in serving the specific student populations who will be targeted to receive the support.

**How has or can the agency address the issue or need in its current appropriation level?**

Evergreen used its current appropriation to address some of its identified needs for student support services. The current appropriation is not sufficient to address all of the identified needs. Current resources are focused on the most urgent areas in need of attention, but they are not sufficient to address all of the critical areas of support that are needed by the Evergreen student population.

**Other supporting materials:** Please attach or reference any other supporting materials or information that will help analysts and policymakers understand and prioritize your request.

New Student Survey (2014, 2012, and 2010)

<http://www.evergreen.edu/institutionalresearch/newstudentsurvey.htm>

Student Experience Survey (2015, 2013, and 2011)


<http://www.evergreen.edu/institutionalresearch/studentexperiencesurvey.htm>

National Survey of Student Engagement (2014)

<http://www.evergreen.edu/institutionalresearch/nsse.htm>

Tinto, Vincent. (2012). *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition* (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Information technology:** Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, services (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

☒ No 

☐ Yes Continue to IT Addendum below and follow the directions on the bottom of the addendum to meet requirements for OCIO review.)