The Evergreen State College

Self-Study 1998

Volume 1

We Believe:

1

The main purpose of a college is to teach, and good teaching involves close interaction between faculty and students.

2

Collaborative or shared learning is better than learning in isolation and in competition with others.

3

Connected learning — pulling together different ideas and concepts — is better than teaching separated bits of information.

4

Active learning — applying what's learned to projects and activities — is better than passively receiving knowledge.

5

The only way to thoroughly understand abstract theories is to apply them to real-world situations.

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Self-Study 1998

Volume 1

Prepared for the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges

The Evergreen State College

Reaccreditation All-College Steering Committee
Barbara Leigh Smith, Virginia Darney, Rob Knapp, Lee Hoemann, Nancy McKinney, William Bruner, Shannon Ellis, Steve Hunter
Academic Affairs Subcommittee
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Table of Contents

Self-Study — Introduction 9
- Editor's Introduction 12
- President's Introduction 15
- Summary of Conclusions in 1998 Self-Study 18
- Updated response to the 1989 and 1994 recommendations of the Commission on Colleges 25

Standard 1 — Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning, and Effectiveness 29
- Mission and Goals 33
- Planning and Evaluation Processes 37
- Communication of Results 46
- Results of the Planning and Evaluation Process 49
- Concluding Analysis and Future Issues 51
- Summary of Recommendations and Findings 52

Standard 2 — Educational Program and its Effectiveness 53
- Overview of the Academic Program 59
- Strengths of the Academic Program 59
- The Process of Curriculum Design and Review 66
- The Educational Program 71
  - Graduate Programs 93
  - Off-Campus Programs 98
  - Part-Time Studies 102
  - Summer School 103
- Student Learning Outcomes 104
- Institutional Support to Academics 119
- Policy on Educational Assessment 120
- Transfer Credit and the Evergreen Degree 127
- Credit for Prior Learning 127
- Continuing Education and Special Learning Activities 128
- Study Abroad 129
- Concluding Analysis and Future Issues 130
- Summary of Recommendations and Findings 133

Table of Contents

Standard 3 – Students 143
Introduction 148
Purpose and Organization of Student Affairs 148
General Responsibilities 153
Academic Credit And Records 169
Student Services 172
Intercollegiate Athletics 193
Concluding Analysis and Future Issues 195
Summary of Recommendations and Findings 199

Standard 4 — Faculty 205
Introduction 209
A Sampling of Issues Currently Facing Faculty 210
The Faculty and the Curriculum 211
Assessment of Faculty Work: Evaluations, Portfolios, and Reappointment 214
Faculty Development 223
Terms of Faculty Work: Salaries and Rank 226
Research, Artistic Creation, and Scholarship at Evergreen 230
Concluding Analysis and Future Issues 231
Summary of Recommendations and Findings 232

Standard 5 — Library and Information Resources 285
Introduction 289
The Core Collection 291
Information Resources and Services 292
Planning for Information Services and Resources 293
Developing the Ability of Students, Faculty, and Staff to Use
Information Resources Independently and Effectively 294
Availability of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures for Information Resources 295
Facilities and Equipment 296
Access 297
Qualifications of Information Services Personnel 299
Involvement in Curriculum Development 301
Financial Support for Information Services and Resources 301
Concluding Analysis and Future Issues 306
Summary of Recommendations and Findings 309

Table of Contents

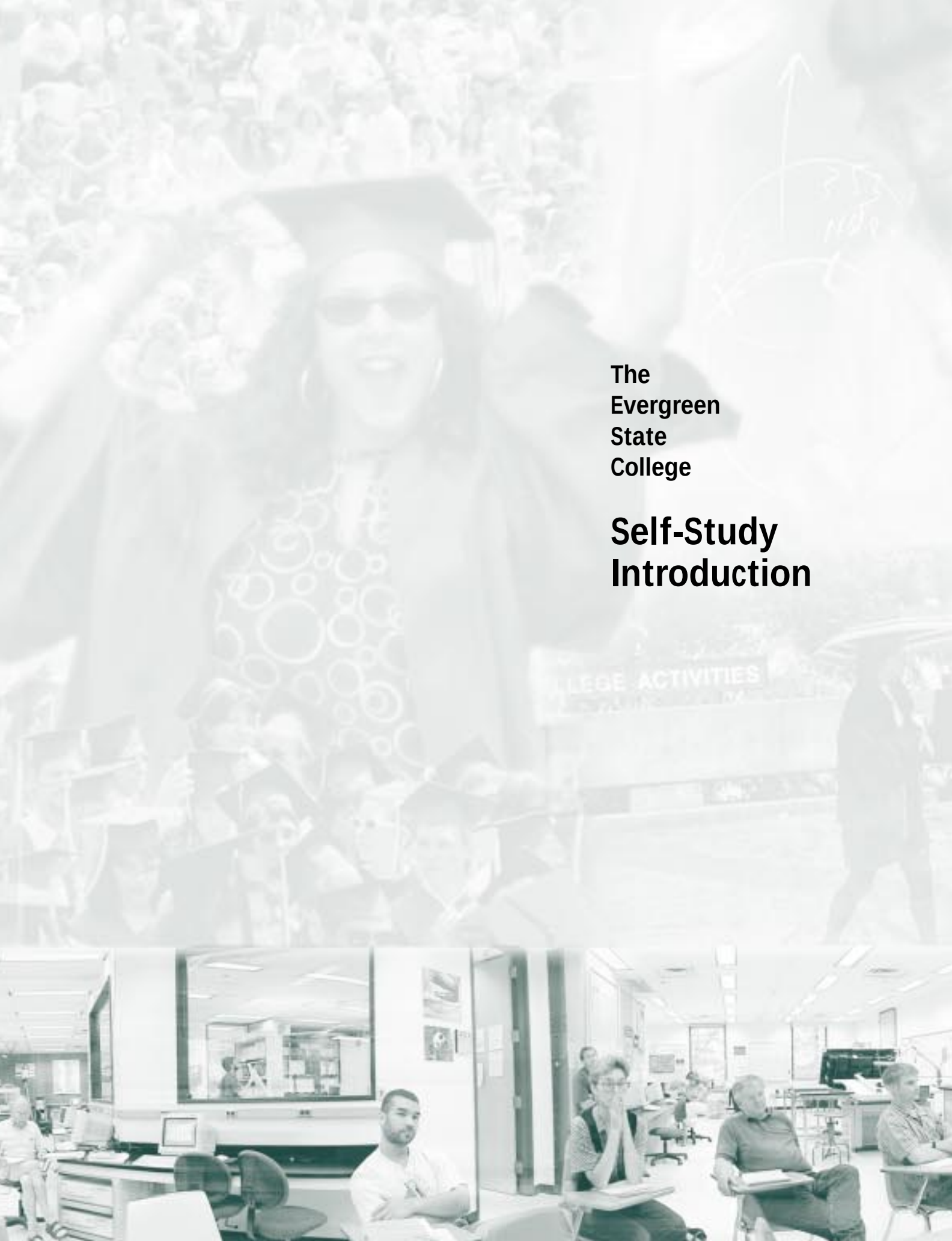
Standard 6 — Governance and Administration 325
Overview and History 329
External Factors 330
Current Internal Governance 331
Administrative Processes, Challenges, and Successes 338
Leadership – Transformation, Collaboration, and Focus 342
Faculty Role in Governance, Planning, and Policy Development 344
Student Government 350
Union 351
College Advancement 351
Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination 353
Change — The Impact on Leaders and Leadership 355
Summary of Recommendations and Findings 357

Standard 7 — Finance 359
Introduction 363
Financial Planning 363
Adequacy of Financial Resources 366
Financial Management 368
Fundraising and Development 370
Concluding Analysis and Future Issues 374
Summary of Recommendations and Findings 375

Standard 8 — Physical Resources 387
Introduction 391
Instructional and Support Facilities 391
Equipment and Materials 401
Physical Resources Planning 403
Concluding Analysis and Future Issues 405
Summary of Recommendations and Findings 407

Table of Contents

Standard 9 — Institutional Integrity 409
Ethical Standards 413
Policy Development 413
Public Actions 413
Regular Evaluation of Policies, Procedures, and Publications 415
Accurate Representation 415
Conflict Of Interest Policy 417
Commitment to the Free Pursuit of Knowledge 418
Summary of Recommendations and Findings 419



The
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State
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Self-Study Introduction

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Table of Contents

Editor's Introduction 12
Format for the Self-Study 13
Timeline of Self-Study 13
Reaccreditation All-College Steering Committee 14
Academic Affairs Subcommittee 14
President's Introduction 15
Summary of Conclusions in 1998 Self-Study 18
Standard 1 – Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning, and Effectiveness 18
Standard 2 – Educational Program and its Effectiveness 18
Standard 3 – Students 21
Standard 4 – Faculty 21
Standard 5 – Library and Information Resources 22
Standard 6 – Governance and Administration 23
Standard 7 – Finance 23
Standard 8 – Physical Resources 23
Standard 9 – Institutional Integrity 24
Updated response to the 1989 and 1994 recommendations of the Commission on Colleges 25

Self-Study Introduction

Editor's Introduction

Evergreen recently celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. Shortly thereafter we initiated the reaccreditation self-study process. We decided to fully embrace the self-study process as a timely opportunity for reflection, self-assessment, and team-building. We felt a substantial and creative all-college review process was important since we are in the midst of a period of significant change. The senior leadership of the institution has changed since the last review. Many new faculty and staff have joined the college, and major organizational changes have been made in our curriculum as a result of our recent review process. Furthermore, turnover of the faculty and staff will increase even further as many of the founding staff and faculty retire over the next few years. Stopping to pause and reflect is particularly important in times of intense change.

Work on the self-study extended over a two-year period of time. In keeping with the campus commitment to cross-college dialogue and collaboration, all sectors of the campus were involved in the self-study process. The provost initiated the process by appointing an all-college steering committee. Each of the divisions of the college appointed sub-committees as needed to complete the self-study process. All of us committed to make the process genuinely consultative and to use the opportunity as a means of learning more about ourselves, improving planning, internal dialogue, and team-building. It was essential to us that we ask questions that were fundamentally important to us, even if they went beyond the requirements of the reaccreditation process.

Some aspects of our process were unique. First, the college chose to do a self-study process that simultaneously involved program reviews of most of its academic areas as well as reviews of many administrative units and services. This is an approach that has been endorsed by the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board. We were convinced that this combination would result in a rigorous and useful set of conclusions that could guide us in the future. We also designed the process to feed into our next strategic planning effort which will commence after the reaccreditation review. We designed some nontraditional venues for reviewing our practices. These included a conference that gathered our nontraditional peers from across the country in October 1997. Included were longstanding innovative institutions such as Hampshire, Alverno, Western College at Miami University, and Empire State University, as well as more recently established institutions such as California State University-Monterey Bay, Florida Gulf Coast University, and Arizona International University. Through this working conference, we at Evergreen had the opportunity to learn from our peers and to ask critical questions about how we measured up in terms of assessing student learning, faculty roles and rewards, shared governance, approaches to faculty development, and innovation in a variety of different arenas. The conference provided considerable food for thought, new collegial relationships, and ideas for refining our own approaches. We are grateful to the American Council of Learned Societies for sponsoring this conference.

Off-campus retreats were a key strategy in focusing our energy around early drafts of the self-study. The first retreat in October 1996 focused on discussing the college's mission and the major challenges of the past decade. Nearly all of the deans and directors of the administrative units of the college and the academic leadership attended this two-day retreat which involved nearly sixty people. For many newcomers, the retreat was a unique opportunity to learn about the college's history. It provided numerous opportunities for cross-divisional discussion. The follow-up retreat, a year later, further deepened the discussion as the same group

carefully read the various self-studies and early drafts of the responses to the standards. Noted educational writer and Evergreen dad, William Bergquist, served as a facilitator at the second retreat, providing an excellent workshop on the "four cultures of the academy." This workshop provided a valuable perspective on the differences we were noting between the diverse cultures within our own institution. Bergquist's admonition to write a document that would be useful in the future was a guiding idea for the entire self-study process.

In addition to these all-college retreats, there were many opportunities for each division in academics, finance and administration, and student affairs to gather and discuss various elements of the self-study. All of the divisions used this as an educational opportunity to think about student learning and the ways our practices supported the college's espoused values. Since this came at a time when we were developing new curriculum planning groups with new leaders, this was a good opportunity to develop our understandings of the curriculum as a whole. The language around "learning outcomes" was new for many in the institution. It is accurate to say that we all struggled to find the words and means of describing important institutional values. Deeper institutional understandings have certainly developed. The process was rich and served us well. We learned a great deal and look forward to the October visit from the Commission on Colleges.

Format for the Self-Study

The self-study is organized in two volumes. Volume 1 presents the narrative for the nine standards and contains a listing of the materials in Volume 2 (which accompanies Volume 1) and the campus exhibit room. Each standard ends with the steering committee's set of recommendations reached as a result of the self-study. These recommendations will be a starting point for us to move into a new strategic planning process. Any member of the review team who wishes to have these supplemental materials in advance of the visit should contact Sandra Abrams in the Provost's Office at abramss@evergreen.edu or phone 360-866-6000, extension 6400.

Timeline of Self-Study

April 1996	Reaccreditation steering committee appointed Subcommittees appointed in each division
October 1996	Retreat with management group and academic leaders to discuss themes for self-study and mission
April 1997	Board adopts new mission statement
August 1997	Academic work on program reviews; retreat to discuss self-studies
October 1997	Retreat with management group and academic leaders to discuss self-studies Alternative Interdisciplinary Education Conference
October-April 1997-98	Individual units discuss self-studies
April 1998	Retreat of academic planning group leaders and academic administration
June 1998	Retreat of Senior Staff to finalize self-study
October 1998	External visitation
Winter 1999	Discussion of next steps in new strategic plan

Reaccreditation All-College Steering Committee

Barbara Leigh Smith, Provost
Virginia Darney, Academic Dean (Lead Standard 2)
Rob Knapp, Academic Dean (Lead Standard 4)
Lee Hoemann, Executive Associate to the President (Lead Standards 6 & 9)
Nancy McKinney, Special Assistant to the Vice President (Lead Standards 7 & 8)
William Bruner, Dean of the Library (Lead Standard 5)
Shannon Ellis, Dean of Students and Academic Support Services (Lead Standard 3)
Steve Hunter, Director of Institutional Research and Planning (Standards 1 & 2)

Academic Affairs Subcommittee

Virginia Darney, Academic Dean and Chair of Academic Affairs Subcommittee
Rob Knapp, Academic Dean (Standard 4)
John Cushing (Summer School)
Susan Fiksdal (Part-Time Studies)
Lee Lyttle, Academic Dean (Core)
David Paulsen (Scientific Inquiry)
Sally Cloninger (Expressive Arts)
Michael Beug (Environmental Studies)
Richard Cellarius (Master of Environmental Studies)
Michael Vavrus (Master in Teaching)
Carolyn Dobbs (Social Science and Master of Public Administration)
Rita Pougiales (Culture, Text and Language)
William Arney (Culture, Text and Language)
Tina Moomaw (Longhouse)
Magda Costantino (Evergreen Center for Educational Improvement)
Jeanine Elliott (Washington Center)
Helen Lee (Labor Center)

President's Introduction

When The Evergreen State College was established, the founders expressed the hope that the institution would be unique and, in their words, ". . . as modern fifty years from now as it is today." Though only half of fifty years have passed, to a very large extent their wishes have been fulfilled. Most of the original educational structures and practices remain vital and intact. Evergreen remains a remarkably coherent institution in terms of its values, structures, and practices. Fortunately, innovation, flexibility, and nimbleness were values built into the original design, and they have served us well.

At the same time, many of the original ideas behind Evergreen are now at the forefront of national reform efforts in higher education. Many aspects of Evergreen's educational philosophy are being validated by recent research on student learning and educational effectiveness. Over the past decade the college has consciously assumed a vigorous leadership role in educational reform efforts throughout Washington State and the nation as a whole. Much of the impetus for the national "learning community" reform effort around integrated curriculum and collaborative learning began at Evergreen. On many fronts, ranging from science education to mathematics reform to cultural pluralism and Native American education, Evergreen has been a leader.

Evergreen is proud of its accomplishments and hard-won solutions, but we are not content to sit on our laurels. Continuous learning and improvement are institutional priorities in a dynamic institution.

Looking back over the last decade and into the future, we recognize that many challenges lie ahead. The following challenges are highlighted here and more fully developed in the self-study:

1. The challenge of access:
Evergreen prides itself on being an institution that promotes face-to-face interaction and personal engagement in learning, both traditionally characteristics of small institutions. At the same time, the State of Washington is experiencing an accelerating need to provide college education to a growing population. Evergreen will play a role in accommodating the increasing number of students interested in attending college. Increasing access (enrollment growth) while preserving the intimacy of personal and face-to-face learning is a major challenge that has been with Evergreen for much of its life. Recruiting students most able to take advantage of Evergreen is a high priority. It will continue to be an important factor in the next fifteen years.

2. The challenge of continuously strengthening our curriculum:
The college has continued to strengthen and revise its curriculum to serve student and societal needs. Evergreen is unique in the way it redesigns its curriculum each year. This gives it a vitality and currency that is important. Many new areas of the curriculum have developed over the past decade—including our own Master in Teaching program, a reservation-based tribal program, new offerings in international studies, part-time studies, and many others. Meanwhile, preexisting programs have undergone a process of continuous revision. The Introduction to Environmental Studies program today is far different from the program of just a few years ago. Furthermore, new ways of delivering excellent interdisciplinary programs have evolved. The part-time studies program is a good example of a new and successful effort to reach deeply into the community and address important educational needs. Improving retention remains an institutional concern.

3. The challenge of diversity:
America is a diverse society, founded on the ideals of equal opportunity and respect for difference. We believe it is important that our nation's colleges reflect and embrace that diversity. Evergreen sees diversity as a societal and an educational priority. It has been one of the founding principles of the institution and it underlies our commitment to interdisciplinary education, where issues are examined from the multiple points of view of the academic disciplines. Critical thinking develops and flourishes through the challenge and argument of diverse viewpoints. Much progress has been made in embracing diversity at Evergreen in terms of academic offerings, staff and faculty development, public service programs, and staff, faculty, and student demographics, but this work is far from complete. The new students who will attend Washington's colleges and universities in the future will be increasingly diverse.

4. The challenge of maintaining a strong faculty and staff:
The college continues to recognize the central importance of a strong faculty and staff to a vital educational program. We continue to invest heavily in faculty and staff development, especially in the context of entering a period of high institutional turnover. Attention to this priority is particularly important in an institution that prides itself on its unique educational philosophy.

5. The challenge of technology:
Technology is on everyone's minds these days, often with little regard for critical questions of purpose. Technology can be a means of increasing quality and effectiveness. We see the judicious use of technology as an important factor in Evergreen's future, and it is clear that the institution will need to make serious investments in this area. The college will continue to explore uses of technology that are consistent with our values and the central role of student and faculty interaction in the teaching/learning process.

6. The challenge of collaborative leadership:
There has been a consistent effort to improve coordination and collaborative leadership at all levels. This extends from the senior staff to the curriculum planning-unit coordinators and into all offices of the college. There has been an overall trend toward "professionalization" and development of written policies and procedures. These steps are sometimes in tension with our wish to be friendly and personal, but they are necessary to increase institutional effectiveness and deal with issues incumbent upon becoming a more mature, and growing, institution.

7. The challenge of accountability and assessment:
A related trend has been a much expanded use of accountability and assessment information to improve student learning and institutional effectiveness. This trend will undoubtedly accelerate. Evergreen aspires to be a model in terms of effectively practicing continuous learning. We will continue to support meaningful assessment and push for approaches that are congruent with our institutional mission.

8. The challenge of statewide leadership and public service:
The college provides statewide leadership in selected areas of public service through its five public service centers: the Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education, the Educational Improvement Center, the

Labor Center, the Longhouse Education and Cultural Center, and the Washington State Institute for Public Policy. These centers have provided powerful leadership on many different issues and position Evergreen as a center of innovation for the state. We embrace this larger responsibility with due recognition of the reciprocal learning that can come from this role.

9. The challenge of limited resources:
Developing and maintaining our physical infrastructure to support teaching and learning is a critical priority particularly as the institution begins to show signs of aging. As needs continue to outstrip financial resources it will be important for the college to be carefully guided in its planning toward the long-term health of the institution.

Jane Jervis
President

Summary of Conclusions in 1998 Self-Study

Standard 1 — Institutional Mission and Goals, Planning, and Effectiveness

- The college should plan for increasing student enrollment with attention to educational quality. The long-range plan for enrollment growth needs to be refined and annually reviewed with respect to assumptions about program and student mix. Questions about scalability of existing organizational structures, services, and approaches need to be addressed in light of the institutional commitment to grow to 5,000 students.

- The college should continue to develop meaningful forms of participation in governance and planning.

- Evergreen should develop and implement a more integrated and less time-consuming approach to planning with better articulation of various efforts.

- The college should continue to plan carefully for staff and faculty turnover.

- Evergreen should continue to do meaningful assessment of student learning, educational outcomes, and institutional effectiveness to address local and statewide goals for educational improvement and accountability.

Standard 2 — Educational Program and its Effectiveness

- The academic area self-studies raise numerous questions about the curriculum, academic planning, and students needs and interests. The next academic year should focus on closely analyzing these issues, formally acting on the program review recommendations, and deciding how they should guide future directions.

- Evergreen needs to plan for growth and assess whether its current modes of curricular design and academic administration are adequate to meet increases in the student body. We need to explore future academic initiatives that take advantage of Evergreen's strengths. As the college grows, planning groups need to imagine new designs for their curriculum as well. Several entry-level programs are now at capacity (e.g., Data to Information, Introduction to Natural Science, Mediaworks), and cannot really add additional faculty. Areas might clone the existing program or design another with a different focus.

- Faculty widely support the principles underlying the curriculum in terms of the "five foci" but it is important that they continue to assess and redefine what they mean by this. There is interest in reexamining ways to "teach across significant differences" and "bridge theory and practice," for example. The budget initiatives to further develop the five foci around service learning and undergraduate research are a good example of ways in which the institution continues to evolve and refine its practices.

- The academic program supports a wide range of curricular formats and philosophies. The college needs to continue to debate the appropriate mix between repeating programs and a changing curriculum in light of student and societal needs.

- The structure of the curriculum planning units recently underwent substantial reorganization. The college should continue to refine and assess the effectiveness of the new configuration for planning and delivery of the curriculum.

- We need to design more effective ways to involve students in curriculum planning.

- We need to assure that faculty in areas of high student demand and recurring curriculum (like psychology, management, environmental studies, MIT) staff regular programs. Some work is needed to stabilize particular areas. We need, for example, to work with the social science faculty to ensure that psychology offerings are staffed to meet student interests and needs while still allowing for faculty rotation.

- One of the strongest messages from the Long-Range Curriculum DTF was the need to clarify expectations for all faculty. Evergreen must find new ways to communicate and clarify faculty responsibility for teaching in Core, for sharing rotating responsibilities, for teaching writing across the curriculum, and for fostering a variety of important liberal arts skills to which we are committed.

- Over and above the particular issues of any one area, we need to ensure that we design broad interdisciplinary programs college-wide. It is important to find new ways to help faculty do this. We also need to find better ways to learn from the excellent program designs invented each year. The program portfolios developed for this self-study are only one graphic example of a largely untapped resource. Collecting and sharing our "best practices" should become an important institutional priority.

- The college continues to struggle with the question of whether we can do better in terms of student retention. Continuing to appraise the adequacy of our structures and practices is important. Improving our ability to identify and recruit students most capable of taking advantage of Evergreen is also critical.

- Because well over half of our new students are transferring from another institution, we need to be more mindful of their admissions, orientation, and curriculum needs. We need to work more closely with faculty and advisors at our feeder community colleges.

- Expansion of the Tacoma campus is an institutional priority. Detailed planning for expansion should continue with attention to the resource needs of an off-campus center. In general, the college should continue to assess and systematize support to off-campus programs, including the reservation-based program.

- The college supports the continued development of a visible program and set of Native American initiatives, in both academic offerings and community-based Longhouse programs.

- The expansion of part-time studies has been successful and should continue at a moderate rate based upon student and community needs.

- Hiring priorities should continue to reflect future growth and retirement plans, and should support the identified priorities for strengthening areas, and staffing core and inter-area programs. Each curriculum planning area should develop hiring priorities based on area-specific plans for the future as well as broader visions about future directions.

- Continuing efforts should be made to improve programs for first-year students. Core staffing, administration, assessment, and faculty and student expectations should be reexamined and clarified, and mixed-level programs should be reviewed. Faculty need to address the chronic difficulties in staffing Core, and in providing support to students new to college. We should establish clearer forms of leadership for Core at the deans' level assisted by a Core advisory committee. In addition, we should continue to assess our work in programs for first-year students and give priority to planning Core.

- The college needs an in-depth discussion about which quantitative skills students need to learn in all parts of the curriculum. Following the summer 1998 ACLS Institute on Quantitative Reasoning, we need to define a more effective approach to address this on-going issue.

- The college invests substantially in faculty development for all faculty. This needs to continue so the college remains a vital, connected community. Evergreen will replace about a third of its faculty in the next ten years. The hiring and orientation process is time-consuming but critical. It is important to pass on the history of the founding and early years of the college while encouraging newcomers to establish new traditions, new pedagogies. Part of our faculty development agenda should be a discussion of what we mean by "Interdisciplinary Studies." We also need to continue the assessment begun by the agenda committee, to examine the quality of faculty worklife, including, but not limited to, issues about faculty/student ratio, salaries, faculty development opportunities, and staff support to programs.

- Evergreen should continue discussions about needs in the context of limited resources. This requires a close examination of interrelated issues about equipment, support staff, class size, and salary levels.

- Working relationships with Student Affairs have been productive and should be evaluated and expanded as appropriate. The academic program should continue to work with Academic Advising staff to improve coordination. Building on the work of the Narrative Evaluation DTF and the Advising DTF is an important priority. Each planning unit needs to design a process for student advising in the area.

- We need to sharpen the discussion of student outcomes, building on the work of the Narrative Evaluation DTF, the Advising DTF, and the area self-studies. We need to "close the loop" from assessment at the aggregate level to changes in program design based on assessment. The academic program should develop an ongoing assessment plan that extends into all of the curriculum planning units.

- The college should proceed to explore future directions in developing a continuing education program since this is an interest of a number of curricular areas and the public service centers.

- Evergreen should continue to play an explicit role in Washington State's higher education and K-12 reform through the MIT program and the work of the public service centers.

Standard 3 — Students

- Student Affairs experiences a collaborative relationship with colleagues in all areas of the college, and shares the philosophy of supporting students in having the best educational experiences possible while attending Evergreen.

- Innovative and effective programs put student learning first in an attempt to recruit and retain a widely diverse student body for full and part-time studies. In creating and maintaining an inclusive campus environment Evergreen is committed to welcoming students with disabilities, international students, students from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, first-generation college students, and those from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds.

- Recruitment of in-state high school-direct students and retention of out-of-state first-year students remain challenges. Student Affairs should lead the way in working collaboratively with other college divisions to improve in these areas particularly as we grow to 5,000 students by 2010.

- Increased professionalization of Student Affairs has resulted in student-centered programs and services that teach students to be responsible for their own education. An ongoing commitment to professional development will assist staff in providing a supportive learning environment for current and future students.

- A "climate of assessment" is evolving in Student Affairs through the expansion of (1) regular gathering of baseline data, (2) ongoing needs and satisfaction surveys, and (3) an emphasis on educational outcomes.

- The absence of an undergraduate student government is a problem in ensuring student voice and input on all issues. A graduate student government is just beginning with the hope that it will provide an incentive to the undergraduates. Student Affairs remains supportive of all efforts to form a student government.

Standard 4 — Faculty

- Evergreen has an excellent faculty—versatile, well trained, unusually committed to teaching and student success. Generally there is high alignment between faculty and institutional values.

- We are now in an unusual period of high turnover since many faculty are retiring, including many from the founding period of the 1970s. For that reason, the college is entering an important transition time, in which careful balance must be sought between maintaining hard-won solutions and providing space and support for new energies and initiatives.

- Achieving a diverse faculty is an ongoing institutional commitment, as part of a wider college goal of becoming a multicultural institution. Current efforts in recruiting faculty provide an acceptable base of diversity, but further effort will be needed to bring appropriate diversity into all areas of faculty work.

- Workload is a concern, as is the increase in class size. In many institutions the student faculty ratio is not a critical factor but it is at an institution like Evergreen where loads are equalized, contact hour requirements are high, and the instructional format is very labor intensive (narrative evaluations, writing across the curriculum, etc.). The institution should attempt to deploy some of the savings from faculty retirements (achieved by replacing senior with more junior faculty) to address this issue.

- Compensation is a statewide concern. Faculty salaries have lagged and may become a major barrier if the issue is not addressed in the future. The institution should attempt to deploy some of the savings from faculty retirements to address this issue.

- Faculty development is a critical need at Evergreen, to sustain the intellectual capital and enhance the skills on which teaching depends. This is especially important in a time of high faculty turnover. Institutional investments in this area have increased dramatically and need to be continued.

- New procedures for faculty evaluation appear to be achieving their goal of regular, substantial attention to all faculty, with significant focus on improving teaching. Continuing assessment of these procedures is important.

Standard 5 — Library and Information Resources

- Evergreen has excellent and well-used library and computing resources that are uniquely organized to support the curriculum and provide open access to students.

- Enrollment growth and more intense use of media, library resources, and computing across the curriculum have stretched these resources in recent years. While resource concerns focus on information technology, they extend to staff, space, and collections as well.

- The college will soon have to make large investments in a new student information system and a new telephone system.

- The scheduled remodeling of a part of the Library Building into an Information Technology Wing provides an opportunity to creatively rethink the integration of media, library, and computing technologies to provide even better service to students, faculty, and staff.

- Growth has raised important questions about how to provide support to the Tacoma campus, evening and weekend, and reservation-based students.

- Questions about technology, the state's emerging K-20 telecommunications system, and faculty development need to be addressed.

Standard 6 — Governance and Administration

- The institution has an effective Board of Trustees operating with clear policies and procedures.

- There has been extensive turnover among college administrators since the last accreditation visit, and a period of turmoil in the early 1990s. The administration has now stabilized and is effective.

- Senior-level administrators have committed time to gain a more thorough understanding of leadership, planning, and budgeting processes. They have spent significant amounts of time to develop common understandings of shared leadership and the impact that deliberative and well-articulated planning have on their ability to provide direction for the college.

- Faculty involvement in governance is adequate and periodically reassessed. The role of the agenda committee and the faculty meeting continues to evolve.

- Student involvement in governance continues to pose challenges and may change with the addition of students on governing boards.

Standard 7 — Finance

- The financial situation of the college is healthy. The institution is well-managed and has a dedicated staff.

- The institution is making a transition to deal with the increasing financial flexibility we now have from the state because of locally-held tuition revenue carry-forward budgets from biennium to biennium.

- We recognize the need to set priorities and balance short- and long-term needs.

- The issue of whether Evergreen is too costly relative to its sister institutions—the unit cost issue—continues to be monitored. Over the past ten years Evergreen has grown and the cost differentials have decreased.

- The institution is committed to diversifying its funding sources and should continue to explore various opportunities through summer school, fundraising, grants and contracts, and various auxiliary enterprises.

- The reporting requirements for accountability and performance measures may be a challenge to the college in terms of the adequacy of our current information systems. A new information system should help and improve our capacity to produce management reports.

Standard 8 — Physical Resources

- The college has excellent physical resources in generally good condition and a dedicated staff. However, as we look beyond the walls and ceilings of our facilities, the infrastructure that supports the buildings is beginning to show signs of age and failure. Evergreen's challenge for growth will be to balance the need for new construction, renovation of existing buildings, and replacement of an aging infrastructure.

- Evergreen struggles to keep up the large physical plant with limited resources. This is a special challenge since most of the facilities were built at the same time.

- The college campus, previously isolated from the surrounding community, is experiencing rapid and sizable development of housing along our perimeter. Evergreen needs to become a better neighbor and work closely with the city and county to ensure that development progresses in a way that has the least negative impact on our property.

- We recognize the importance of systematic planning over time and balancing resources.

Standard 9 — Institutional Integrity

- From its earliest years the institution has operated on fundamental principles of integrity in its teaching, scholarship, and service, and remains committed to these values.

- The college recognizes the important role of leadership in setting the tone and example in terms of institutional integrity. The president and vice presidents have repeatedly taken public positions on important campus and statewide issues.

- The institution has a program to provide education and training for faculty, staff, and board members in state ethics law. It has updated and accessible policies and procedures related to ethics, academic freedom, and student conduct.

- The institution models its values not only internally, but externally as well. This sometimes creates situations where the institution takes a position that is unpopular or sensitive with external communities. One of our continuing challenges is to maintain a balance that allows us to be a voice for the highest ethical standards without unnecessarily harming the institution's relationships with the broader community.

- The institution encourages public discourse on tough issues of ethics and integrity and remains open to careful examination, and when warranted, reexamination, of decisions based on those values.

Updated response to the 1989 and 1994 recommendations of the Commission on Colleges

There were five major recommendations in the 1989 reaccreditation report which were revisited in the 1994 interim report as follows: "Without question the college has addressed the 1989 visiting team's major recommendations with seriousness and imagination." The following comments provide a more updated response to these issues. The quotations are from the Commission on College's 1994 visitors' report.

1. **"The team suspected that Evergreen's approach to organizing its curriculum allowed students to avoid exposure to major areas of knowledge, such as the natural sciences and expressive arts. It noted the college's lack of information bearing on this issue and urged Evergreen to track actual student pathways through the curriculum and to develop expectations for advisors and students that would assure such exposure."**

The recent self-studies explored various aspects of these issues in depth, resulting in a much more complex understanding of our students' enrollment patterns. Since a large proportion of Evergreen's students are transfer students, serious analysis must look at both Evergreen credit and transfer credit. In 1993 and 1997 such a study was done. The recent analysis of student transcripts to assess breadth and exposure to math, foreign language, and other major areas of knowledge yielded results similar to the 1993 study. Student exposure to mathematics and the arts remains uneven. Exposure to foreign languages remains uneven in the absence of distribution requirements, but there has been a substantial increase in institutional language and culture offerings and study abroad.

Exposure to quantitative reasoning remains uneven despite institutional investment in a number of directions to address this problem, including hiring more faculty trained in mathematics and quantitative approaches. Evergreen recently received an innovation grant from the American Council for Learned Societies on quantitative reasoning across the curriculum and has an emeritus faculty on a two-year contract to work on this issue. Her responsibilities are to talk broadly with faculty about how they teach quantitative reasoning, design a 1998 summer institute for faculty on promising approaches, and follow-up on local experiments. Hopefully, this approach will lead to more promising curricular experiments in this area.

Despite this uneven course distribution, there is clear evidence that more cross-divisional content coverage in quantitative reasoning is occurring than is revealed by the course equivalencies. Further, student responses to the College Student Experiences Questionnaire show substantially higher exposure to the arts in the co-curriculum and comparable levels of exposure to quantitative reasoning as at other liberal arts colleges.

Area by area self-studies were a useful supplement to this transcript analysis since they looked more deeply at outcomes in each of the areas. It is clear that some areas, e.g., Scientific Inquiry, have clear pathways while many others do not, some intentionally (Culture, Text and Language) and others unintentionally. Environmental Studies, for example, found that its introductory programs were not functioning as an area prerequisite as anticipated, due to student patterns. The pronounced pattern is for students to enter our areas of specialization as transfer students and then spend two or at most three years at Evergreen. This clearly suggests to us that we need additional work to further understand the implications of having such a high proportion of transfer students.

The overall trend in our new planning areas is to expand breadth within the area. This is reflected in all of the self-studies. Environmental Studies and Scientific Inquiry, for example, have been working explicitly on broadening the interdivisional reach of their areas in their recent hiring requests. Similarly, the Expressive Arts have become more interdivisional in the last decade. Beyond the issue of traditional content areas, we also looked carefully at the reach of cross-college skill aspirations in such areas as diversity, computing, and writing and identified areas for future improvement.

The question about the desirability of distribution requirements remains a difficult one at Evergreen. This may be a situation where we simply cannot "have our cake and eat it too." Hard experience has shown us that "tack on" approaches to build mathematics or other skills into integrated programs do not fare well. Perhaps the best the college can do is to provide more opportunities for freestanding courses in areas of need while also getting better at carefully advising students at the outset so that they make more informed choices. This remains a critical issue that the college must continue to discuss.

2. **"The team praised Evergreen's extraordinary success in recruiting a culturally diverse faculty and encouraged the college to continue its efforts to attract a comparably diverse student body to the Olympia campus."**

Evergreen has continued to make diversity a high priority throughout the past decade. Faculty diversity remains strong in the face of major turnover as a result of retirements and growth. Student diversity remains a priority. It has been increasing and now stands at 15 percent overall and 13 percent on the Olympia campus.

Major ventures in the past decade to strengthen the college's diversity efforts include (1) statewide leadership of diversity faculty development and strategic planning initiatives through the Washington Center for Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education—three separate projects that have been undertaken as statewide initiatives include a $1 million cultural pluralism project funded by the Ford Foundation and two smaller projects done in collaboration with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, (2) commitment to increasing diversity as one of the institution's state accountability goals, (3) construction of a Longhouse on campus and development of a Longhouse Education and Cultural Center public service program, (4) enhancement of staffing and direction in the tribal-based and on-campus Native American Studies program through a new Center for Northwest Native American and World Indigenous Studies, (5) a variety of efforts in Student Affairs to design summer institutes and other approaches to welcome students of color, and (6) increasing institution-wide training and development opportunities relating to diversity.

3. **"The team commended Evergreen's commitment to faculty development and recommended continuing attention and creativity to maintain the faculty's intellectual vitality."**

Evergreen has continued to invest deeply in faculty development. This past year the institution increased the investment in summer institutes, professional travel, and sponsored research grants. We also developed a "real" faculty handbook which is a hands-on practical guide to insiders. The college established an academic grants office in the provost's office to work aggressively on fundraising to support faculty development. The college has had numerous grant-funded initiatives over the past decade that provided faculty development and faculty leadership opportunities including major grants from the Ford Foundation, two from Pew Charitable Trusts, and four from the National Science Foundation. Faculty development was recently made a primary desk assignment of one of the deans and part of the responsibil-

ity of the Washington Center staff was formally directed towards faculty development at Evergreen. The dean has developed a comprehensive yearlong new-faculty orientation process as well as a "buddy" system to assist new faculty.

4. **"The team congratulated Evergreen for having refined its mission statement, developed a strategic plan, and begun a process of program review, but urged the college to make these activities part of an ongoing process."**

The college has continued on the path of using a strategic plan and a program review process to guide its planning. This process is described in detail in Standard 1. The current reaccreditation self-study is an integral part of our planning for the future.

5. **"The team praised TESC's success in providing intellectually challenging education to working, adult students of color at its Tacoma site and urged the college to place high priority on continuing this effort."**

As the 1994 interim report stressed, Tacoma remains an important priority. In the 1997-98 academic year, extensive long-range planning efforts were undertaken and plans were made to locate a new site and expand the campus to serve 250 students. This will provide better critical mass in terms of core faculty and disciplinary spread. A long-term faculty hiring list was developed which envisions adding one faculty per year for the next five years. Support staff coverage was also reexamined and two new positions were added to the campus in Student Affairs and building maintenance and security. The computer lab was updated in 1997 and connections are being put in place to connect with the state's telecommunications system. Efforts have also been undertaken with Tacoma Community College to refine the lower division bridge program to meet the needs of an increasingly younger student body.

The 1994 interim report made three major recommendations:

1. **The college should devote major attention during the coming year to the work, findings and recommendations of the Long-Range Curriculum DTF.**

The college has devoted substantial time over the past six years to developing a new long-range curriculum plan. The details of this process are described in Standard 2. Major changes have been introduced in the organizational structure of the curriculum and all college planning principles. New areas such as part-time studies have been developed. The college has made substantial improvements in curriculum planning and staffing as a result of the new structure of planning group coordinators. The recent deliberations of the Hiring Priorities DTF are a good example of the maturation of the decision-making process and the sophistication in looking at issues from the perspective of the college as a whole.

2. **The college should approach recruitment of new faculty members with unusually serious attention and thoroughness, in order to perpetuate its unique philosophy of teaching and learning through a new generation.**

The college approaches the recruitment and orientation of new faculty with due vigilance. All stages of the hiring process, from the hiring announcements to the actual interviews to the orientation activities of the first year, are designed to assure a good institutional match between new faculty and the institution's values and teaching and learning approach. As a result of extensive turnover, the college has dramatically increased its investment in faculty development activities. These, it is believed, build the teaching capacity of the institution, and help ensure that the human networks remain strong and personal as the institution increases in size. See Standard 4 for a more extensive discussion of the faculty.

3. **The college should make consistent use of its Long-Range Plan, to insure that difficult decisions made under fiscal pressure preserve its essential mission.**

The college has been guided by its long-range plan in budget decisions. Some of the most notable areas of investment have been to develop a comprehensive part-time studies program and to make necessary major investments in technology. As resources continue to tighten, we anticipate that the long-range plan will be even more important in planning for the future.

In addition, the 1994 report required that we file a report on the reservation-based Native American tribal program. This was done, and it has been approved by the commission.

The Evergreen State College has complied with Policy A-2 on "Substantive Changes" by bringing to the commission contemplated changes. In the past five years these have included changes to gain approval for the extension of the reservation-based tribal program to four reservation sites and a substantive change proposal to offer an upper-division Bachelor of Arts program at Grays Harbor Community College. Additionally, the college notified the commission and gained approval to scale back its Olympia-based MIT program and offer that program to one cohort at its Tacoma campus for a two-year period. The Olympia-based MIT program is now back at full operation.