

The Evergreen State College
Evergreen New Student Survey 2007

Olympia Campus – First-time, First-years and Transfer Students

Information about Evergreen That Was Hard to Find

The Evergreen New Student Survey 2007 included the open-ended question: “Was there any information about Evergreen that was hard to find?” Comments were grouped together into themes and are summarized for first-time, first-years and transfer students in the tables below and on the next page. Some students had comments that fit into multiple themes.

Themes among new students reporting few or no difficulties

	Number of First-time, First-years (N=347)*	Percent of First-time, First- years**	Number of Transfer Students (N=235)*	Percent of Transfer Students**
Nothing was difficult to find	238	68.6%	117	49.8%
Positive comments about availability of information	5	1.4%	6	2.6%
Nothing difficult to find, but qualified statement	8	2.3%	7	3.0%

*N refers to the number of students who responded to the question.

**Percentages exclude students who left question blank. One-hundred ninety-two first-time, first-years and 128 transfer students skipped the question.

The majority of first-time, first-years (68.6%) and about half of transfer students (49.8%) who responded to this question wrote that no information was difficult to find. A small number wrote positive comments about their ability to find information from sources such as the website, alumni, the College Board website, and college staff. Positive comments included “No, the website is very user friendly and staff are always happy to help and go the ‘extra mile’” and “...everything [I] need to know is on-line.” There were also a few comments in which students indicated that they were able to find information, but qualified this statement by writing that they were “still exploring the website” or that they had to call for information, yet they were still able to get the information they needed.

The table on the next page summarizes themes among students’ comments regarding information that was hard to find. The most common theme was difficulty finding information about class schedules and descriptions, the catalog, and registration. This was mentioned by 8.4% of first-time, first-years and 16.6% of transfer students who responded to the question.

Themes among new students reporting difficulties in finding information

(Note: Some students had comments that fit within multiple categories; therefore, percentages add up to more than 100%.)

	Number of First-time, First-years (N=347)*	Percent of First-time, First-years**	Number of Transfer Students* (N=235)	Percent of Transfer Students**
Class schedules and descriptions, catalog, and registration	29	8.4%	39	16.6%
Difficulty in website navigation, other web-specific comments	17	4.9%	30	12.8%
Evergreen's unique structure	17	4.9%	13	5.5%
Housing and Residential Life	10	2.9%	6	2.6%
Financial aid information and cost information	8	2.3%	11	4.7%
Student activities, clubs, recreational opportunities	8	2.3%	1	0.4%
Dates, deadlines, and important events	4	1.2%	2	0.9%
Alternative Study Options (Study Abroad, PLE, Internships)	2	0.6%	3	1.3%
Transferring credits and Upside Down program	3	0.9%	4	1.7%
Advising information	2	0.6%	4	1.7%
Book lists and Evergreen Bookstore	0	0.0%	4	1.7%
Life after Graduation and Graduate Programs	0	0.0%	3	1.3%
Physical campus information (directions, buildings, tours, parking, etc.)	5	1.4%	2	0.9%
Contacting different faculty/offices	2	0.6%	2	0.9%
Support Services	1	0.3%	1	0.4%
Something unspecified difficult to find	3	0.9%	3	1.3%
Other comments	2	0.6%	4	1.7%

*N refers to the number of students who responded to the question.

**Percentages exclude students who left question blank. One-hundred ninety-two first-time, first-years and 128 transfer students skipped the question.

Detailed Explanations of Themes

The following are detailed explanations of the kinds of comments found within each of the themes described on the previous page. Some students had multiple comments that fit within different detailed categories

Class schedules and descriptions, catalog and registration

This theme includes a range of comments related to the selection of classes, descriptions of program and course options, and registration. The table below shows further detail and the number of students who had comments in each area.

Difficulty with class schedules and descriptions, catalog, and registration
Detailed categories (Some students had multiple comments)

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
Class schedules/times	8	10
Current list of programs, courses and detailed descriptions in catalog	8	6
How to register and difficulties in registration	6	6
Finding CRN numbers	3	4
Information about music classes	3	1
Information about audio production, audio engineering, and audio recording	2	1
Class websites	1	0
Getting a student ID number	1	0
How to select classes	1	0
Information about dance programs	1	0
Information about theater classes	1	0
Evening and Weekend Studies - "how exactly to get started in the evening weekend study program," the difference between Evening and Weekend Studies and full-time schedules, and course listings for Evening and Weekend studies.	0	3
Class location	0	2
Finding and using Gateway for registration	0	2
Finding classes open to sophomores	0	2
Information about pre-med	0	1
Opportunities for creative writers	0	1
When to register	0	1

Difficulty in website navigation, other web-specific comments

Some students had comments related to difficulties in navigating Evergreen's website, as detailed in the table below. The most common kinds of comments pertained to navigation of the website. Some students suggested additional photographs of the campus and student life.

Difficulty in website navigation, other web-specific comments
Detailed categories (Some students had multiple comments)

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
Difficulty with searches, finding information on web, difficult to navigate (e.g. crew, housing/meal, freshmen information, catalog, Gateway), have to "wade through too much	9	20

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
information"		
More pictures of campus suggested (inside and outside of college, dorms)	4	1
Website is confusing, "convoluted"	2	2
Odd wording, difficult to understand descriptions of Evergreen	1	2
Difficulty creating account on-line	1	0
Website is nice on the front page, newer pages but disorganized and clutters on others	1	0
Difficulty "figuring out" the website	0	2
More information needed, increase user-friendliness	0	2
Don't like the website, no further description	0	1

Evergreen's unique structure

Some students wrote comments related to difficulties in finding information about Evergreen's unique academic structures.

*Difficulty Understanding Evergreen's unique academic structures
Detailed categories (Some students had multiple comments)*

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
How programs/classes work	10	7
Explanation of credit system	2	0
How to narrow field of interest and gain expertise at Evergreen, how to study a particular subject	2	0
Core curriculum, requirements; what it will be like with few requirements, how to earn a degree	1	4
How evaluations are performed, whether one receives grades in addition to evaluations	1	1
Switching program mid-year, whether have to take programs a full year	1	1
What degrees can be earned	1	0
What is so unique	1	0
"Bizarre class structure"	0	1
Wondering what interdisciplinary study will be like	0	1

Housing and residential life

Students wrote about difficulty with both on-campus and off-campus housing options.

*Difficulty finding information about housing and residential life
Detailed categories (Some students had multiple comments)*

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
General housing information	3	3
Opinions about housing, photographs and description of what housing will be like	2	1
Roommate information	2	0
Finding housing application on-line	1	0
Housing availability	1	1

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
Housing cost	1	0
Meal plan	1	0
Payment information	1	0
Off-campus housing information, options	0	1

Financial aid and cost information

Some students reported difficulty in finding information related to financial aid and costs associated with attending Evergreen.

Difficulty finding financial aid and cost information

Detailed categories (Some students had multiple comments)

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
General financial aid information	4	2
Cost information	3	1
Scholarship information, including applying after February deadline	1	1
Financial aid as an independent student	1	0
How to get residency	1	0
How and where to pay	0	2
Employee benefits	0	1
Grade point average required to get reduced tuition	0	1
Late financial aid	0	1
Payment plans for students who are not taking out loans, receiving aid	0	1
Veterans benefits	0	1

Student activities, clubs, recreational opportunities

Student activities, clubs, and recreational opportunities were mentioned by some students.

Difficulty finding information about student activities, clubs, recreational opportunities

Detailed categories (Some students had multiple comments)

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
Social/student life at Evergreen	2	0
Clubs at Evergreen	1	0
Crew team	1	0
How to work for KAOS	1	0
Recreational opportunities	1	0
Sports	1	0
Swim team, use of pool	1	0
Theater productions	1	0
Off-campus organizations	0	1

Dates, deadlines, and important events

Six students wrote about dates, deadlines, and important events.

Difficulty finding information about dates, deadlines, and important events
Detailed categories

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
Registration Deadlines/Deadlines in general	2	0
Timelines and important dates	1	1
Event dates	1	0
Date of academic fair	0	1

Additional study options

Five students wrote about the desire for more information about additional study options.

Difficulty finding information about additional study options
Detailed categories (Some students had multiple comments)

	First-time, First-years (N)	Transfer Students (N)
Internship/work at Capitol	1	0
Study abroad options	1	0
Prior learning experience credits	0	2
Campuses other than Grays Harbor	0	1
Certificate programs	0	1
Independent research	0	1

Transferring credits and Upside Down program

Three first-time, first-years wrote comments about difficulty in finding information about transferring credits; one specifically mentioned difficulty in understanding how to register as a Running Start student and the other two had questions about transferring credit in general. Three transfer students commented on a lack of information about earning upside-down degrees and one transfer student had questions about transferring out-of-state transfer units.

Advising information

Six students commented on a lack of information about advising or wrote about information they felt was missing from the advising they received. Three transfer students mentioned a lack of information about orientation and required workshops. Another transfer student commented that they felt advising was not as available as had been stated. One first-time, first-year wrote that advising should be clearer about the structure of classes (i.e. they are not "100 style"), while the other first-time, first-year was not aware of "when advising started."

Life after graduation and graduate programs

Three transfer students had remaining questions about graduate programs and life after graduation. One student wondered about information regarding life after graduating from Evergreen. Another student indicated a lack of information about graduate programs at Evergreen. The third student wondered about fulfilling requirements for Evergreen's Master in Teaching program.

Book lists and Evergreen Bookstore

Four transfer students had questions about the Evergreen Bookstore or required books. Three of the comments pertained to the desire for lists of required books prior to the beginning of classes. The fourth student merely wrote in: "the bookstore."

Physical campus information

Seven students mentioned difficulty in finding information about physical aspects of the campus. Transfer students wrote about parking and rules regarding cars (N=1), the location of campus and directions (N=2), and the location of the Communications Building (N=1). One transfer student commented that they thought the tour of the campus was "poor." A first-time, first-year student wrote about a lack of information about parking. Another first-time, first-year student simply responded: "Yes, why concrete buildings?"

Contacting different faculty/offices

Four students reported difficulty in finding contact information. One first-time, first-year specifically mentioned difficulty in finding e-mail addresses or other contact information for faculty. A first-time, first-year and a transfer student commented on difficulties in contacting multiple departments and offices; one suggested that it would be easier if there was one contact person rather than having to track down information from multiple offices. Another transfer student requested an "on-line reference book of phone numbers."

Support services

A transfer student commented on a lack of information about Child Care services and the wait list. A first-time, first-year commented about a lack of information on the website about K.E.Y. Student Services.

Unspecified difficulties

Three first-time, first-years and three transfer students wrote that there was information that was hard to find, but did not provide additional detail. One of the students wrote that Evergreen was "a little mysterious at first."

Other comments

The rest of the comments could not be categorized into other themes. One first-time, first-year wrote a comment that could not be deciphered; the other first-time, first-year wondered where to find information about: "How to become the Geoduck." There were four other comments from transfer students:

- "A downside"
- "It would be great if there was more info about faculty- i.e. faculty interviews with even more professors."
- "Population"
- "What is best cell service? What banking is available?"