

Shaping Our Future: Building on Our Past

Strategic Plan 2016-2020



**the evergreen
state college**

evergreen.edu

About this Plan

This plan outlines six overarching goals intended to help the College achieve the aspirations of the mission, vision, and core themes. Each is described with related objectives and tactics. Much of the detail for these aspirations and their measures of success is contained within our [Year-Three Accreditation Report](#). Additional assessment intentions are described at the end of this plan.

The work required to achieve these goals will be pursued across the College, largely through existing teams and structures accountable for specific areas of work. Success will depend on the engagement and contributions of the entire Evergreen community.

Fall 2016

Introduction: A Plan to Build on Our Strengths

The Evergreen State College embraces many of the foundations of a traditional liberal arts education:

- Exceptional teaching and one-on-one engagement with students;
- An emphasis on developing writing, speaking, collaboration, and critical thinking skills;
- An emphasis on breadth and depth of knowledge; and
- A focus on citizenship, social justice, service, and preparation for work and career.

Evergreen reaches beyond the traditional to serve students in ways that distinguish it from other liberal arts institutions.

Critically, Evergreen is public; one of just a handful of such liberal arts institutions in the country, providing access to a much broader range of students than its private counterparts and focused on serving the public good.

Its greatest distinction, however, is that Evergreen approaches teaching and learning in a fundamentally different way than most colleges and universities, offering students:

- Interdisciplinary, multi-quarter, and team-taught programs;
- Engaging classroom and hands-on learning opportunities, anchored upon a deep trust in the talents and creativity of faculty;
- Substantive narrative evaluations of their learning; and
- Freedom, and responsibility, to choose and help create academic pathways tailored to their personal, academic, and career goals.

These characteristics set Evergreen apart and provide students with learning opportunities not available elsewhere.

Our Vision

For every student, a distinctive education in the liberal arts marked by extraordinary success; for our society, graduates prepared to lead their communities, professions, and the larger world.

Our Mission

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

In 2020, we envision an Evergreen that:

- Provides the most distinctive, innovative, and relevant educational experience in the country, one dedicated to the liberal arts and sciences, learning across disciplines, and grounded in critical dialogue through seminars and working groups.
- Ensures that all students achieve extraordinary levels of academic success.
- Affords every student abundant opportunities for social, emotional, and intellectual growth beyond the classroom.
- Pursues diversity, social justice, and sustainability as paramount institutional values such that students, faculty, and staff represent the sociocultural mosaic of our society while also respecting the critical needs of our environment.
- Sustains vital, cohesive, and engaged campus communities in Olympia and Tacoma.
- Possesses a foundation of financial and administrative support that provides robust aid to students and the needed resources for advancing institutional quality and growth.
- Cultivates and promotes a national reputation for academic learning that prepares its graduates to lead their communities, professions, and the larger society.
- Offers inviting, advanced spaces, facilities, and electronic infrastructure to further student learning.

Core Themes

Evergreen’s four core themes, intended to encompass the essential elements of the mission, were developed in the College’s ongoing accreditation work and can be reviewed in detail in the [Year-Three Accreditation Report](#).

The core themes are:

- Integrated, interdisciplinary learning;
- Individuals engaged in community;
- Environmental stewardship and social justice; and
- Diversity and equity.

These themes are deeply woven into this strategic plan. The plan also includes institutional goals, objectives, and tactics to help focus our resources and achieve the aspirations articulated in the mission, vision, and core themes.

Five Foci

- **Interdisciplinary study:** Students learn to pull together ideas and concepts from many subject areas, which enables them to tackle real-world issues in all their complexity.
- **Collaborative learning:** Students develop knowledge and skills through shared learning, rather than learning in isolation and in competition with others.
- **Learning across significant differences:** Students learn to recognize, respect and bridge differences—critical skills in an increasingly diverse world.
- **Personal engagement:** Students develop their capacities to judge, speak, and act on the basis of their own reasoned beliefs.
- **Linking theory to practice:** Students understand abstract theories by applying them to projects and activities and by putting them into practice in real-world situations.

Six Expectations of an Evergreen Graduate

- **Articulate and assume responsibility for your own work.** A successful Evergreen graduate will know how to work well with others, not only in the workplace or social contexts, but as an active participant in the struggle for a more just world. You will assume responsibility for your actions as an individual and exercise power responsibly and effectively.
- **Participate collaboratively and responsibly in our diverse society.** A successful Evergreen graduate will understand that by giving of yourself you make the success of others possible. A thriving community is crucial to your own well-being. The study of diverse worldviews and experiences will help you to develop the skills to act effectively as a local citizen within a complex global framework.
- **Communicate creatively and effectively.** A successful Evergreen graduate will know how to listen objectively to others so as to understand and accept a wide variety of viewpoints. By developing a genuine interest in the experiences of others, you will learn to ask thoughtful questions, to communicate persuasively, and express yourself creatively.
- **Demonstrate integrative, independent, critical thinking.** A successful Evergreen graduate will have the ability to appreciate and critically evaluate a range of topics, across academic disciplines. As you explore these disciplines, you will develop a greater curiosity toward the world around you, and its interconnections, that will enhance your skills as an independent, critical thinker.
- **Apply qualitative, quantitative, and creative modes of inquiry appropriately to practical and theoretical problems across disciplines.** A successful Evergreen graduate will understand the importance of the relationship between analysis and synthesis. Through being exposed to the arts, sciences and humanities, and coming to your own critical understanding of their interconnectedness, you will learn to apply appropriate skills and creative ways of thinking to the major questions that confront you in your life.
- **Demonstrate depth, breadth, and synthesis of learning and the ability to reflect on the personal and social significance of that learning.** A successful Evergreen graduate will be able to apply the personal frame of reference developed as a result of this unique education in order to make sense of the world. This understanding will allow you to act in a way that is both easily understood by and compassionate toward other individuals across personal differences.

Who We Serve

As a public institution, Evergreen serves both students and society.

More specifically, Evergreen aims to serve a student body comprised primarily of Washington residents representative of state demographics, enhanced by students from beyond the state and nation who contribute diversity of background and experience to our academic endeavors, and financial resources to support our mission as a public institution.

How We Serve Students

Evergreen provides an academic experience—characterized by the Five Foci and demonstrated in the Six Expectations of an Evergreen Graduate—that prepares students to successfully pursue their personal, academic, and career goals.

How We Serve Society

Evergreen produces graduates who possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities to engage in graduate studies and/or lifelong learning and contribute as citizens, economically and socially. The College identifies, prioritizes, and pursues current and new strategic partnerships—across the spectrum of non-profit, government, and private enterprise on the local, national, and global level—that are mutually beneficial and based on an exchange of knowledge, talent, and resources. In doing these things, Evergreen demonstrates the value of a liberal arts education.

Our Commitments

- A commitment to strengthening and enhancing rigorous, well-taught undergraduate and graduate education, founded on the Five Foci, the Six Expectations of an Evergreen Graduate, and the acknowledgement of student goals and aspirations, including preparation for work and service.
- A commitment to hiring, developing, promoting, and retaining faculty members who are excellent teachers—as well as leaders in scholarship, the arts, and professional accomplishment—and actively contribute to the vitality and vision of Evergreen.
- A commitment to hiring, developing, promoting, and retaining staff members who excel in their areas of work and actively contribute to the vitality and vision of Evergreen.
- A commitment to working with student populations and communities, such as the Tacoma and Native American communities, to enhance educational opportunities aligned with Evergreen’s mission, vision, and goals.
- A commitment to promoting teaching, scholarship, and artistic opportunities within and across traditional disciplinary boundaries.
- A commitment to strengthening and expanding the College’s local, regional, national, and global connections through academics and public service.
- A commitment to enhancing our residential campus and co-curricular experiences for our students.
- A commitment to aligning our policies, processes, services, operations, and the development of our physical campus with our values as expressed in our mission, vision, and core themes.
- A commitment to supporting financially sustainable operating and capital budgets aligned with the values expressed in this strategic plan and built on a foundation of enrollment-based revenue, legislative funding, and fundraising.

Goals, Objectives, and Tactics

Goals in Brief

1. Enhance Evergreen's distinctive educational experience.
2. Recruit, develop, and retain outstanding faculty and staff.
3. Effectively employ technology, facilities, and the natural attributes of our campus to enhance teaching, learning, and community.
4. Build and strengthen mutually beneficial internal and external partnerships.
5. Ensure enrollments and revenues sufficient to achieve the goals and aspirations outlined in the strategic plan.
6. Enhance recognition of Evergreen as an extraordinary institution locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

GOAL 1

Enhance Evergreen's distinctive educational experience to support learning, student success, and enrollment.

Objective 1.1

Using the expertise of the faculty and staff, and building upon academic strengths, cultivate improvements and innovations in curriculum, teaching, and support beyond the classroom to further promote student success and enrollment.

Tactics

- 1.1.1 Pilot and assess recommendations of the College Readiness Working Groups.
- 1.1.2 Assess staffing levels of academic support programs and increase as needed.
- 1.1.3 Develop and implement academic programs that repeat over academic terms and assess outcomes.
- 1.1.4 Develop and implement coordinated study programs with varying credit levels and linked modules.
- 1.1.5 Increase space in and programs covering subjects in high demand.
- 1.1.6 Review and develop a revised planning group structure and Planning Unit Coordinator job descriptions for planning curriculum and pathways.
- 1.1.7 Expand student participation in service learning, internships, and career connections.

Objective 1.2

Enhance faculty and staff capacity for mentoring students and involving them in scholarly and artistic activities.

Tactics

- 1.2.1 Raise faculty and staff awareness of factors influencing students' progress to degree at Evergreen.
- 1.2.2 Develop and implement new mentoring and transition programs for entering students.
- 1.2.3 Advance support, facilities, and programs for students as entrepreneurs.

Objective 1.3

Advance Evergreen's commitment to supporting and celebrating diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Tactics

- 1.3.1 Recruit and appoint a Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
- 1.3.2 Develop and implement a college-wide plan for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion for students, faculty, and staff.
- 1.3.3 Implement recommendations of the Equity Council.
- 1.3.4 Improve the College's response to bias incidents.
- 1.3.5 Expand student Unity Lounge and establish an LGBTQ center.
- 1.3.6 Strengthen community-campus police relations.
- 1.3.7 Strengthen Evergreen's commitment to Indigenous education and culture.
- 1.3.8 Increase enrollment of Tacoma program.

GOAL 2

Recruit, develop, and retain outstanding faculty and staff to support student success and achieve the College's aspirations for diversity.

Objective 2.1

Improve the College's competitive position in terms of total compensation, working environment, development opportunities, and visibility.

Tactics

- 2.1.1 Reorganize, centralize, and strengthen staffing of faculty development, and create a Teaching and Learning Center that coordinates faculty development.
- 2.1.2 Increase faculty participation in development programs.
- 2.1.3 Review faculty and staff hiring practices to ensure an equitable process.

- 2.1.4 Improve the College's website and specific web pages that prospective faculty and staff access when seeing information on the College and/or the Olympia area.
- 2.1.5 Implement a web-based tool for managing and processing applications for faculty and staff positions.
- 2.1.6 Define and implement a standardized method (and supporting budget) for advertising faculty and staff openings to a diverse audience.
- 2.1.7 Continue working to provide more competitive staff and faculty compensation.
- 2.1.8 Provide strategically chosen professional development opportunities.

GOAL 3

Effectively employ technology, facilities, and the natural attributes of our campus to create and sustain an inclusive, accessible, and safe environment that will attract and serve students, inspire and support teaching and learning, build community, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of College operations.

Objective 3.1

Develop, renovate, and maintain campus facilities.

Tactics

- 3.1.1 Develop and implement a three-year plan to beautify the Olympia campus.
- 3.1.2 Identify and establish designated multicultural and LGBTQ centers on the Olympia campus.
- 3.1.3 Improve the Costantino Recreation Center.
- 3.1.4 Advance improvements and/or expansion of campus housing and student service facilities.
- 3.1.5 Develop new facilities and programs designed to take advantage of the College's heavily forested campus and expansive waterfront on Eld Inlet.
- 3.1.6 Address ongoing facilities needs at Evergreen Tacoma.

Objective 3.2

Provide technology and support to promote learning and improve efficiency and effectiveness of campus operations.

- 3.2.1 Migrate student conduct, Title IX, Clery tracking, early intervention, and Students of Concern case management to new software system.
- 3.2.2 Adopt new software to case manage and track services for students with disabilities.
- 3.2.3 Fully implement admissions CRM.
- 3.2.4 Improve technological strategies for increasing student engagement with Career and Academic Advising, Student Wellness Services, etc.
- 3.2.5 Implement solutions to provide mobile/responsive/remote access to information and functionality for students, faculty, and staff.

- 3.2.6 Maintain and improve data security.
- 3.2.7 Provide equal access to information technology for people with disabilities (e.g. provide technology training, support, organization, physical access, and ease of use).
- 3.2.8 Fully migrate Financial Aid to imaging software.

Objective 3.3

Develop and implement an improved plan, grounded in environmental stewardship and social justice, to help the College clarify and achieve its sustainability goals.

- 3.3.1 Update Evergreen's Climate Action Plan.
- 3.3.2 Increase integration of sustainability and social justice into the curriculum.
- 3.3.3 Actively integrate sustainability into all Evergreen construction.

GOAL 4

Build and strengthen mutually beneficial internal and external partnerships.

Objective 4.1

Build, strengthen, and maintain strategic internal and external partnerships that enhance student success and contribute to the long-term ability of the College to fulfill its mission.

Tactics

- 4.1.1 Identify and support current and new partnerships.
- 4.1.2 Identify and implement clear and effective means for external stakeholders to connect with Evergreen.
- 4.1.3 Develop methods to build internal awareness of existing partnerships, opportunities, and needs, and improve coordination and synergy.

GOAL 5

Ensure enrollments and revenue sufficient to achieve the goals and aspirations outlined in the strategic plan.

Objective 5.1

Attract students who will benefit from and contribute to the Evergreen learning community.

Tactics

- 5.1.1 Increase student applications.
- 5.1.2 Increase yield of admitted students.

- 5.1.3 In conjunction with Student Affairs and the Office of Admissions, revise and enhance all communications materials and plans for student recruitment beginning in 2017.
- 5.1.4 Improve the College's advertising plan (and budget) to align with the goals and audiences identified by admissions, Evergreen Tacoma, EWS & Veterans, Longhouse, Tribal Programs, and Graduate Programs.
- 5.1.5 Design and implement functional improvements to the Evergreen website and social media properties where prospective students are the primary audience.

Objective 5.2

Retain and graduate a higher percentage of students.

Tactics

- 5.2.1 Increase routine collaborations with all divisions focusing on programs that increase student success.
- 5.2.2 Maximize impact of financial aid awards on retention and graduation.
- 5.2.3 Conduct and report routine assessments of student co-curricular needs and interests.
- 5.2.4 Upgrade Evergreen's resources devoted to campus safety including the administration of Title IX.
- 5.2.5 Strengthen and expand recreational opportunities for all students.

Objective 5.3

Generate a sustainable balance of tuition-based, legislative, and private funding to support current programming, financial aid, and aspirations for new initiatives articulated in the aspirations and Core Themes.

Tactics

- 5.3.1 Achieve annual philanthropic support goal of at least \$3 million in annual revenue received.
- 5.3.2 Complete staffing for Advancement, with priority given to development in the first half of FY17 (director of Development and Prospect Development Manager).
- 5.3.3 Provide annual training and development for all advancement staff.
- 5.3.4 Support the Foundation's Board of Governors to strengthen and sustain the board, expanding the board's capacity for giving, fundraising, and campaign leadership.
- 5.3.5 Improve and enhance policies and electronic infrastructure.
- 5.3.6 Increase personal visits with donors and prospects to reach target of 300 by June 2017.
- 5.3.7 Identify promising campaign major gift prospects and donors with support from the Prospect Development Manager.
- 5.3.8 Complete assessment of campaign readiness by December 31, 2017.
- 5.3.9 Board of Trustees and Board of Governors approve preliminary campaign plan by December 31, 2017.

GOAL 6

Enhance recognition of Evergreen as an extraordinary institution locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.

Objective 6.1

Make accomplishments of students, faculty, staff, and alumni more widely known.

Tactics

- 6.1.1 Lead an extensive and collaborative project that examines and improves how Evergreen presents itself to its many audiences.
- 6.1.2 Develop a distinctive messaging and promotional strategy for the College informed by the collaborative project.
- 6.1.3 Develop and execute a comprehensive public relations plan that promotes awareness of the College, enhances and expands the College's reputation, and encourages engagement.
- 6.1.4 Complete a CASE magazine survey to update the design and inform the content strategy for the Evergreen magazine.
- 6.1.5 Enhance and expand the College's social media use and define and implement a social media strategy.

Objective 6.2

Strengthen lifelong alumni engagement.

Tactics

- 6.2.1 Develop and deliver a robust annual schedule of meaningful events and activities for alumni, parents, and friends.
- 6.2.2 Increase alumni and friends engagement with the College, its students, and its programs.
- 6.2.3 Support alumni engagement by providing objective, creative, and communications support to alumni programs and development, and by maintaining the College's LinkedIn presence.
- 6.2.4 Develop a robust series of communications (including video) that capture and convey alumni success stories, build community among alumni and friends, and demonstrate the many positive impacts of engagement and giving.

Objective 6.3

Demonstrate the value of a liberal arts education.

Tactics

- 6.3.1 Refine and demonstrate the strengths of Evergreen's interdisciplinary model in supporting student success.
- 6.3.2 Widely communicate Evergreen's successes (through student, faculty, staff, and alumni stories) and their linkage to the College's distinctive liberal arts model.
- 6.3.3 Lead and/or actively participate in regional and national engagements with key stakeholders on the value and relevance of a liberal arts education.

Assessment

Most of the goals and objectives included in this plan reflect and/or integrate the Core Themes articulated in Evergreen's Year-Three Accreditation Report. That report includes specific indicators and targets for a wide range of activities, initiatives, and outcomes. The College will use those indicators and targets to assess progress toward goals related directly to the Core Themes.

For goals and/or objectives in this plan that are not specifically included in the accreditation framework, the College will document current status, compare that status to our future aspirations, set specific targets and milestones, and monitor over time to assess progress and/or determine changes necessary to achieve those goals.

Process

In winter 2014, the Board of Trustees charged a Strategic Planning Steering Committee to conduct a process that would yield an updated strategic plan extending to 2020. As it gathered information and began drafting language, the Committee sought input and feedback from students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members throughout 2014. Grounding its work in the College's mission and the Core Themes developed in Evergreen's ongoing [accreditation process](#), drawing on insights and recommendations from additional past work (including the Curricular Visions DTF, Re-modeling Teaching and Learning at Evergreen DTF, the Long Range Curriculum DTF, and the Campus Master Plan, among others), and responding to the wide range of feedback, the Committee developed aspirations and a strategic plan to guide the institution. A completed draft was delivered to the Board of Trustees in March of 2015. Given the imminent arrival of a new president, the Trustees deferred formal approval until the president could review and, in collaboration with College leadership, update the tactics necessary to fulfill the goals. . This plan was formally adopted by the Board of Trustees in November 2016.