

**Date:** February 2, 2016

**To:** George Bridges, Michael Zimmerman & Wendy Endress;  
Academic Deans; Agenda Committee; College Readiness DTF; Mentor Council; Standing Committee on Equity and Diversity (former); Washington Center Advisory Committee; Latina/Latino Standing Committee; Standing Committee on the Curriculum

**RE:** Academic Statement and O-Week Essay Reading on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Dear Colleagues,

As many of you know, about twenty-five faculty, staff and administrators convened on Friday, January 8<sup>th</sup> to read and score a representative sample of Academic Statements submitted to student transcripts, followed by a sample of Fall 2015 O-Week essays. The purposes for these two reading emerged from multiple sources.

### **Impetus for the Academic Statement reading**

As most of you know, on June 1, 2015, two Evergreen Writing Center tutors publicly raised a concern that by requiring students to include Academic Statements in their transcripts, the college was, in effect, creating a high-stakes writing requirement without systematically providing support (see Appendix I). Writing to Evergreen faculty, administrators, staff and students, Natasha Russi and Siloh Radovsky argued that the Academic Statement initiative “has created a situation where students who are not supported in developing foundational writing skills are then required to showcase their writing —access to foundational writing skills is not made universal, but the assignment is.” What’s needed, they argued, is this:

It is necessary for the school to provide the means for students to gain basic skills in undergraduate writing without signing up for a full-time writing program. If the institution doesn’t do the work of distributing these skills, it reproduces existing structural inequalities in which those who have been marginalized by educational systems continue to be shut out of academic and political discourses. (Russi & Radovsky, June 1, 2015)

The concerns raised by Russi and Radovsky in themselves were worthy of attention, and as members of the Mentor Council noted in deliberations last fall, the authors of the AS initiative were aware that this very thing might happen—that instituting a writing requirement, albeit one designed to serve other, critical purposes, might well raise questions about our college’s approach to helping students develop as writers across the curriculum.

Another impetus for the AS review came from the Mentor Council itself, as part of the process of assessing the AS initiative, a process written into the language of the proposal adopted by faculty.

### **Impetus for reading O-week essays**

The interest in reading O-Week essays came from a different source. The College Readiness DTF has been charged with considering how we might identify entering students whose needs for academic support in writing, reading and math would potentially fall outside the capacities of their regular program faculty. Knowing that all incoming students write orientation essays, the question was raised in the DTF about whether these existing samples of student work could be used to identify students who might need additional support.

## **Methods used for the reading**

As members of the Mentor Council, the College Readiness DTF, and the Washington Center Advisory Committee, and as writing faculty, we took on the task of organizing this reading. Laura Coghlan identified appropriate samples for both readings, and then Amy Betz and her team retrieved the documents from OARS, so they were available for the reading.

We organized the first reading of Academic Statements with members of the Mentor Council. For that reading, we elected to use a version of the six-trait writing rubric endorsed by national organizations as a way to assess students' writing. Our choice to use a writing rubric was linked to the questions we were trying to address—were there notable gaps in Evergreen graduates' writing; and were there indicators in the 0-week essays that students might require support beyond what they would be given by their program faculty. While the first rubric worked, participants found some phrases in the rubric to be vague, and some phrases were overly oriented towards literary writing. Based on that feedback, we elected to adapt the 2014 Traits Rubric for Grades 3-12 from Education Northwest as our assessment tool for the larger reading, because of its ability to articulate the incremental development of writing traits in language accessible to faculty, regardless of professional preparation to teach writing. In addition to the rubric (attached) we also asked readers to give each text an overall score.

The process we used at both readings followed standard practices for writing assessments. The readings began with a calibrating (harmonizing) session, in which everyone read and scored the same document. Scores were displayed so we could see how our individual scores compared with those of our peers; we could also see how congruent (or divergent) the scoring results were. For the most part, readers' scores were similar, and as part of the calibrating process, we talked out the most significant differences. After reading two samples of student writing together, readers began working in pairs. Each reader read and scored the same set of student essays. They compared their scores, and attempted to agree. For the most part, readers could agree on scores and on their overall assessment of the piece.

## **Report on results**

We have compiled the results of the reading, and they are attached to this document. We have done very little analysis—for instance, we have not tried to determine whether lower scores for sentence fluency and conventions are correlated with an overall assessment that the Academic Statement reflects well neither on the college as a whole nor on the student. In short, more analysis might be in order. However, we wanted to get this information out to the groups who participated.

We find it striking that a third of the Academic Statements that were read were deemed to reflect well neither on the college nor on the student. In terms of the 0-week essays, we note that readers agreed that six of the forty-three essays read suggested that the student would likely need support for reading/writing beyond what they might receive in their programs.

At this time, we make no claims about what types of support this might require. However, as the General Education discussion in the late 1990s led the faculty to vote on the Six Expectations of an Evergreen Graduate and an influx of resources to create the Quantitative and Symbolic Reasoning (QuaSR) and Writing Centers, we believe that over fifteen years later this current assessment of the writing associated with the Academic Statement initiative should lead us to examine additional support structures.

We look forward to whatever next steps this process yields, and we welcome your continued engagement.

Most Respectfully,  
Emily Lardner, Director, Washington Center  
Sandy Yannone, Director, Writing Center

## Appendix 1

1 June 2015

To the faculty, administration, staff, and students of the Evergreen State College:

We are two students who write in hopes of sparking a continuing dialogue about issues with Evergreen's curriculum. As confident writers, we have benefitted from Evergreen's open curriculum, and experienced the kinds of successes that the school advertises to prospective students. Natasha is this year's Academic Statement contest winner, Siloh has served on several student panels for Mentoring Day, and we are both active members of the Evergreen community. We are both tutors at the Writing Center, and are graduating with a sense that we have access to continuing education and careers that interest us. We're grateful for the opportunities Evergreen has provided us. We are also concerned that this structure privileges those who enter the institution confident in their writing and critical thinking skills, rather than providing the resources for all Evergreen students to build those skills.

Amongst other experiences, our work as tutors has exposed us to many struggles that fellow students experience with their writing and schoolwork, which reflect difficulty overall with undergraduate-level writing on campus, a deficit which the Writing Center alone is ill-equipped to remedy. We see the excessive burden placed on faculty and Writing Center staff as evidence of structural instabilities within an institution that has a high acceptance rate but no foundational writing courses. We are considering the Academic Statement initiative as an example to diagnose how the gap between the "Six Expectations of an Evergreen Graduate" and students' confidence in meeting these expectations results in anxiety about writing, as they are being asked to perform high-stakes writing with insufficient resources.

### ACADEMICS AT EVERGREEN

Evergreen, which prides itself on being a uniquely interdisciplinary publically-funded state school, has a high acceptance rate of 97%. This openness makes it possible for students with a range of educational experiences to delve directly into their studies without passing through the bureaucratic hoops of "remedial" classes. While we find the school's openness incredibly important, we worry that there is insufficient support on campus for all the students that are being admitted.

The school operates under the assumption that interdisciplinary programs will

naturally address the mechanics of academic writing. Our experience is that both students who enroll because Evergreen is geographically and financially accessible, and those who have an interest in experimental educational models, struggle unnecessarily with writing skills. This isn't because teachers aren't doing a good job—faculty work really hard to teach the subjects they have been hired to teach, and often work well beyond their job description, including those who have been considered temporary workers for years. But quarters are short, and make little time for the fundamentals of composition. Within this structure, it's easy for students who are floundering with writing to slip through the cracks. This makes it very possible for a student to depart with baccalaureate credentials, but not the skills.

It is necessary for the school to provide the means for students to gain basic skills in undergraduate writing without signing up for a full-time writing program. If the institution doesn't do the work of distributing these skills, it reproduces existing structural inequalities in which those who have been marginalized by educational systems continue to be shut out of academic and political discourses.

Necessarily, Evergreen must hold the tension between giving students the space to define what success means for them, and also the skills implied by a BA degree. We are not advocating for a standardized measure of success, but rather for making resources available and accessible, in order for students to have the foundational skills they need to define success for themselves.

### WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center is designed as a reflective mechanism that provides students with a venue to explore and develop their ideas with someone who serves in the role of a sounding board; we tutors make space for students to gain expertise regarding their own writing style and practice, and provide support around developing these. We do not interpret a visit to the Writing Center as a sign of crisis, but see it as an important part of collaborative learning on campus. Students demonstrate the level of engagement they have with their work by going to the center; while it is rewarding to work with these writers, we often cannot fulfill our role of supporting students in developing and honoring their voice when they themselves struggle to find that voice due to frustration with foundational writing skills. We are not expected to be experts, and raise these concerns not because we have the answer or solution, but because we are students who have struggled with this as well. As peer tutors who have been entrusted with the job of supporting fellow students, our message is simple: we are facing challenges in doing this, because we are being relied upon to do more

than auxiliary, support work. We are being asked to work beyond the capacity of our jobs as we understand them. We want all writers to feel comfortable bringing in their work, and strive to share our own skills and experiences with writing, but when we cannot provide the support they need we have nowhere else on campus to direct these students.

### ACADEMIC STATEMENT

The Academic Statement continues Evergreen's intention to showcase student voice in the transcript, and with that intention has brought to light the need, already present in Evergreen's structure, to address the way that writing is taught at Evergreen.

The first of Evergreen's "Six Expectations of an Evergreen Graduate" directs graduates to "articulate and assume responsibility for your own work." In this and the other expectations, Evergreen expresses its intention to equip its graduates with communication and reflection skills, but with the current hypothesis that you learn writing by doing it, it is unclear by what means students will gain these skills. The Academic Statement is intended to support this intention, and yet, since its inception, the expectations and standards for the Academic Statement have been vague. The only concrete guideline for the Academic Statement is that it not exceed 750 words, leaving all content at the discretion of the writer. For students who struggle with writing, the stakes for this already high-stakes statement are even higher; for a student who is not writing at college level, their struggles with writing are now posted as the introduction to their transcript. By making the Academic Statement mandatory for all Evergreen students, even those who do not graduate from the institution, this initiative has created a situation where students who are not supported in developing foundational writing skills are then required to showcase their writing —access to foundational writing skills is not made universal, but the assignment is.

*"As this year's contest winner, I think it is vital to point out that I arrived at Evergreen five years ago possessed of privileges that equipped me, long before I had to consider the Academic Statement, with the skills necessary to write one. It is crucial when addressing the Academic Statement initiative to consider how it privileges those who are already privileged, and disadvantages those who need support by failing to account for this need." --Natasha*

Everything tells us that alternative models of living are doomed to failure, when in fact this failure is not a destiny, but the result of a lack of adaptation when faced with change. Alternative models carry the difficult task of identifying what really works, rather than relying on existing notions of success for institutions that have historically excluded large numbers of people. We'd like to feel confident in

saying that Evergreen doesn't reproduce these same imbalances, and is in fact a place where students with a wider variety of learning styles and starting places are supported, and where "alternative" education can refer to more than the subjects studied. In order for Evergreen's experimentations to produce something new, and not return to the model they abandoned, they must incorporate feedback and demonstrate the same self-reflective critical thinking Evergreen expects of its graduates. We raise our concerns in hopes that Evergreen can realize its goals of being a more accessible, diverse learning institution—a place where students not only have the choice to experiment, but the skills and resources to do so.

—Natasha Russi and Siloh Radovs

**Appendix 2: Scoring w/Traits Rubric adapted from Education Northwest 2014**  
**Individual Score Form for Transcribed Academic Statements**

Name:

	<b>1 Beginning</b>	<b>2 Emerging</b>	<b>3 Developing</b>	<b>4 Capable</b>	<b>5 Experienced</b>	<b>6 Exceptional</b>
<b>Ideas:</b> Does the writer engage with fresh information or perspective on a focused topic?	Does not reflect a main idea or purpose; does not show author's thinking in developing or connecting ideas; does not appear to have the reader in mind	Focuses on a general topic but does not suggest a main idea; attempts to develop or support the main idea; shares information but does not anticipate what the reader knows	States or implies a main idea, but is unclear, unfocused, inaccurate, and/or underdeveloped; begins to develop supporting ideas; attempts to engage reader	Conveys a clear, focused, and accurate main idea with adequate development and/or support; provides adequate evidence from sources; engages reader in exploring ideas	Produces a clear, focused, accurate, and complex main idea with convincing development and/or support; integrates strong evidence from sources; anticipates reader's questions	Conveys a clear, focused, accurate, and significant main idea; unique, substantial insights are fully developed & supported; anticipates reader's knowledge and questions
<b>Organization:</b> Does structure enhance ideas and make them easier to understand?	Doesn't use identifiable organization; writing lacks a sense of direction; has no evident sequencing of ideas; leaves reader struggling to find purpose	Contains a lead or conclusion which is unclear or ineffective; uses weak transitions that fail to connect ideas; has ineffective sequencing, loose text structure	Has uneven organization that affects the reader's ability to follow the text; weak chunking of paragraphs or ideas; sequencing may be formulaic	Has basic organization that moves the reader through the text without confusion; includes transitions that connect ideas, logical and helpful sequencing	Reflects smooth and cohesive organization and varied techniques that build smoothly from one idea to the next to create a unified whole	Uses organization that enhances and showcases central ideas; orders or structures information in a compelling way; clarifies relationships among ideas
<b>Voice:</b> Does reader clearly hear this particular writer?	Author appears indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from topic, purpose, and/or audience; disengages reader with flat writing; has no evident tone	Relies on simplistic phrases such as "I like it" to convey any personal quality; follows a predictable approach; uses voice that is inappropriate for purpose	Has an emerging voice that is not distinct or unique; gives the reader an incomplete impression of the author's relationship to the purpose and topic; may have an inconsistent point of view	Portrays the author as sincere, yet not fully engaged or involved; begins to reach audience; includes tone that begins to support writing; voice supports purpose, may be inconsistent	Voice used supports author's purpose; clear and focused commitment to topic; tone used supports message & purpose; communicates with reader in a sincere/engaging way	Addresses the reader in an individual and engaging way that shows ownership of purpose and topic; is respectful of audience and/or purpose

	<b>1 Beginning</b>	<b>2 Emerging</b>	<b>3 Developing</b>	<b>4 Capable</b>	<b>5 Experienced</b>	<b>6 Exceptional</b>
<b>Word Choice:</b> Do choices convey precise, compelling meaning and/or create a vivid picture?	Uses limited vocabulary; uses vocabulary so broad/generic/vague or inaccurate that it fails to communicate or convey a clear message	Uses vocabulary that is so vague and mundane that the message is limited and unclear (e.g., “good,” “bad,” “nice”)	Employs vocabulary that is correct in a general sense; includes message that is emerging or can be inferred; uses limited or inaccurate domain-specific vocabulary	Features vocabulary that works to clarify meaning/purpose and beings to shape a unique piece; uses accurate domain-specific vocabulary	Has vocabulary that suits purpose well and clearly communicates message; uses domain-specific vocabulary appropriately to demonstrate author’s understanding	Creates vivid imagery, with powerful and engaging vocabulary; uses precise words and/or figurative language to enhance meaning in interesting, natural ways
<b>Sentence Fluency:</b> Does author control sentences so writing flows smoothly?	Structures sentences incorrectly so reader has to reread piece several times and still has difficulty reading aloud without pausing or substituting phrases; has weak or no transitions	Uses sentence structure that works, but may be overly simplistic for the purpose; incorporates basic transitions (e.g., and, so, but, then) that do little to lead the reader through the piece	Uses technically correct sentence structure, yet sentences are frequently not smooth; leads reader from sentence to sentence with a few, simple transitional words or phrases	Uses sentence structure that is correct and smooth, but mechanical in places; ste sentence hang together and are structurally sound; holds piece together with varied transitional words or phrases (e.g., either, therefore, although)	Has sentence structure that flows well and moves reader fluidly through the piece, using a variety of correctly structured sentence types; moves reader easily through the piece with thoughtful and varied transitional words or phrases	Uses strong sentence structure, underscoring and enhancing meaning; uses creative, appropriate, and varied transitional words or phrases that show how each idea related to the previous one and tie the piece together
<b>Conventions:</b> How much editing before piece can be shared as a final product?	Contains errors in the text that distract reader; requires extensive editing	Multiple types of convention errors scattered throughout the text; requires much editing	Handles conventions well at times; at other times, makes distracting errors that impair readability; repeated mistakes with particular conventions	Employs proper grammar/usage fairly consistently; problems are not serious enough to distort meaning; needs moderate editing to publish; has clear meaning	Includes correct grammar/usage; shows few grammatical mistakes and meaning is clear; requires only minor editing before publishing	Uses correct grammar that contributes to clarity and style; enhances meaning by sophisticated grammar/usage; needs almost no editing to publish

     This academic statement reflects well on Evergreen and on this Evergreen graduate

     This academic statement reflects neither well nor poorly on Evergreen and on this Evergreen graduate (neutral)

     This academic statement reflects well neither on Evergreen nor on this Evergreen graduate

**Appendix 3: Academic Statement Reading**  
**Friday, January 08, 2016**  
**The Evergreen State College**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Voice</b>	<b>Word Choice</b>	<b>Sentence Fluency</b>	<b>Conventions</b>	<b>Average Score</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>1</b>	5	5	5	5	5	4	<b>4.83</b>	well
<b>2</b>	1	1	1	2	2	2	<b>1.50</b>	problematic
<b>3</b>	2	2	2	2	2	3	<b>2.17</b>	problematic
<b>AS 1</b>	2	2	3	3	2	1	<b>2.17</b>	well
<b>AS 10</b>	3	2	3	3	2 and 3	3	<b>2.66 and 2.83</b>	neutral
<b>AS 11</b>	2	3	3	2	2	1	<b>2.17</b>	neutral
<b>AS 12</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	<b>2.00</b>	problematic
<b>AS 16</b>	3	3	4	3	3	3	<b>3.17</b>	
<b>AS 18</b>	3	3	3	3	3	3	<b>3.00</b>	
<b>AS 19</b>	3	3	4	4	4	5	<b>3.83</b>	well
<b>AS 2</b>	3	4	4	4	4	3	<b>3.67</b>	neutral
<b>AS 20</b>	4	5	5	5	5	4	<b>4.67</b>	neutral
<b>AS 21</b>	3	4	3	3	2	3	<b>3.00</b>	neutral
<b>AS 22</b>	5	5	5	5	4	5	<b>4.83</b>	well
<b>AS 23</b>	3	4	4	4	3	4	<b>3.67</b>	neutral
<b>AS 24</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	<b>4.00</b>	well
<b>AS 25</b>	2	2	4	3	2	1	<b>2.33</b>	problematic
<b>AS 26</b>	1	1	1	2	1	1	<b>1.17</b>	problematic
<b>AS 27</b>	3	2	4	3	2	2	<b>2.67</b>	neutral
<b>As 28</b>	2	4	4	3	2	3	<b>3.00</b>	neutral
<b>AS 29</b>	3	1	4	3	3	3	<b>2.83</b>	neutral
<b>AS 3</b>	5	6	5	5	4	5	<b>5.00</b>	well
<b>AS 30</b>	3	4	3	4	4	5	<b>3.83</b>	well
<b>AS 31</b>	3	3	4	3	2	2	<b>2.83</b>	problematic
<b>AS 32</b>	5	5	6	5	5	5	<b>5.17</b>	well
<b>AS 33</b>	4	4	4	3	3	3	<b>3.50</b>	neutral
<b>AS 34</b>	2	1	3	3	3	3	<b>2.50</b>	problematic
<b>AS 35</b>	3	4	3	3	4	5	<b>3.67</b>	neutral
<b>AS 36</b>	2	2	3	3	1	1	<b>2.00</b>	problematic
<b>AS 38</b>	2	2	3	2	2	2	<b>2.17</b>	problematic

**Appendix 3: Academic Statement Reading**  
**Friday, January 08, 2016**  
**The Evergreen State College**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Voice</b>	<b>Word Choice</b>	<b>Sentence Fluency</b>	<b>Conventions</b>	<b>Average Score</b>	<b>Overall</b>
AS 39	1	1	2	2	2	1	1.50	problematic
AS 40	3	3	3	2	2	2	2.50	problematic
AS 41	2	2	2	2	3	2	2.17	problematic
AS 42	1	2	2	1	1	1	1.33	problematic
AS 43	2	2	3	3	1	1	2.00	problematic
AS 44	1	1	1	2	2	2	1.50	problematic
AS 45	4	4	4	3	2	2	3.17	neutral
AS 46	2	2	3	2	2	2	2.17	problematic
AS 47	1 and 3	1 and 3	1 and 4	1 and 3	2 and 4	1 and 3	1.16 and 3.33	neutral and problematic
AS 48	1	1	1	1	1	1	1.00	problematic
AS 49	4	4	4	2	2	2	3.00	problematic
AS 5	4	4	5	4	4	4	4.17	well
AS 50	2	3	2	3	4	4	3.00	neutral
AS 51	6	6	6	6	5	5	5.67	well
AS 52	1 and 2	1	1	1 and 2	1	1	1 and 1.33	problematic
AS 53	3	3	4	3	3	2 and 4	3 and 3.33	neutral
AS 54	2	1	3	3	2	2	2.17	neutral
AS 55	2	2	2	2	2	2	2.00	problematic
AS 56	2	2	3	3	3	4	2.83	neutral
AS 57	5	4	5	4	5	5	4.67	well
AS 57	3	2	4	1 and 4	1 and 3	1 and 2	2 and 3	problematic
AS 58	5	4	5	5	4	5	4.67	well
AS 59	4	4	5	4	4	5	4.33	well
AS 61	4	5	4	3	4	4	4.00	well
AS 62	6	6	6	6	6	5	5.83	well
AS 63	6	6	6	6	6	5	5.83	well
AS 64	4	4	5	5	4	4	4.33	well
AS 65	3	3	3	3	2	3	2.83	neutral
As 66	4	4	5	4	4	5	4.33	well
AS 67	3	4	4	4	4	3 and 4	3.66 and 3.83	neutral

**Appendix 3: Academic Statement Reading**  
**Friday, January 08, 2016**  
**The Evergreen State College**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Voice</b>	<b>Word Choice</b>	<b>Sentence Fluency</b>	<b>Conventions</b>	<b>Average Score</b>	<b>Overall</b>
<b>As 68</b>	5	5	5	5	5	5	<b>5.00</b>	well
<b>AS 69</b>	3	3	4	4	4	4	<b>3.67</b>	neutral
<b>AS 70</b>	3 and 4	3	4	3 and 4	3	2	<b>3 and 3.33</b>	neutral
<b>AS 71</b>	4	4	4	3	3	3	<b>3.50</b>	neutral

<b>Overall Count</b>	
<b>Well</b>	19
<b>Neutral</b>	21
<b>Problematic</b>	21
<b>Neutral and Problematic</b>	1
<b>Not Answered</b>	2

**Appendix 4: Scoring w/Traits Rubric adapted from Education Northwest 2014**  
**Individual Score Form—O-Week Essays**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>1 Beginning</b>	<b>2 Emerging</b>	<b>3 Developing</b>	<b>4 Capable</b>	<b>5 Experienced</b>	<b>6 Exceptional</b>
<b>Ideas:</b> Does the writer engage with fresh information or perspective on a focused topic?	Does not reflect a main idea or purpose; does not show author’s thinking in developing or connecting ideas; does not appear to have the reader in mind	Focuses on a general topic but does not suggest a main idea; attempts to develop or support the main idea; shares information but does not anticipate what the reader knows	States or implies a main idea, but is unclear, unfocused, inaccurate, and/or underdeveloped; begins to develop supporting ideas; attempts to engage reader	Conveys a clear, focused, and accurate main idea with adequate development and/or support; provides adequate evidence from sources; engages reader in exploring ideas	Produces a clear, focused, accurate, and complex main idea with convincing development and/or support; integrates strong evidence from sources; anticipates reader’s questions	Conveys a clear, focused, accurate, and significant main idea; unique, substantial insights are fully developed & supported; anticipates reader’s knowledge and questions
<b>Organization:</b> Does structure enhance ideas and make them easier to understand?	Doesn’t use identifiable organization; writing lacks a sense of direction; has no evident sequencing of ideas; leaves reader struggling to find purpose	Contains a lead or conclusion which is unclear or ineffective; uses weak transitions that fail to connect ideas; has ineffective sequencing, loose text structure	Has uneven organization that affects the reader’s ability to follow the text; weak chunking of paragraphs or ideas; sequencing may be formulaic	Has basic organization that moves the reader through the text without confusion; includes transitions that connect ideas, logical and helpful sequencing	Reflects smooth and cohesive organization and varied techniques that build smoothly from one idea to the next to create a unified whole	Uses organization that enhances and showcases central ideas; orders or structures information in a compelling way; clarifies relationships among ideas
<b>Voice:</b> Does reader clearly hear this particular writer?	Author appears indifferent, uninvolved, or distanced from topic, purpose, and/or audience; disengages reader with flat writing; has no evident tone	Relies on simplistic phrases such as “I like it” to convey any personal quality; follows a predictable approach; uses voice that is inappropriate for purpose	Has an emerging voice that is not distinct or unique; gives the reader an incomplete impression of the author’s relationship to the purpose and topic; may have an inconsistent point of view	Portrays the author as sincere, yet not fully engaged or involved; begins to reach audience; includes tone that begins to support writing; voice supports purpose, may be inconsistent	Voice used supports author’s purpose; clear and focused commitment to topic; tone used supports message & purpose; communicates with reader in a sincere/engaging way	Addresses the reader in an individual and engaging way that shows ownership of purpose and topic; is respectful of audience and/or purpose

	<b>1 Beginning</b>	<b>2 Emerging</b>	<b>3 Developing</b>	<b>4 Capable</b>	<b>5 Experienced</b>	<b>6 Exceptional</b>
<b>Word Choice:</b> Do choices convey precise, compelling meaning and/or create a vivid picture?	Uses limited vocabulary; uses vocabulary so broad/generic/vague or inaccurate that it fails to communicate or convey a clear message	Uses vocabulary that is so vague and mundane that the message is limited and unclear (e.g., “good,” “bad,” “nice”)	Employs vocabulary that is correct in a general sense; includes message that is emerging or can be inferred; uses limited or inaccurate domain-specific vocabulary	Features vocabulary that works to clarify meaning/purpose and beings to shape a unique piece; uses accurate domain-specific vocabulary	Has vocabulary that suits purpose well and clearly communicates message; uses domain-specific vocabulary appropriately to demonstrate author’s understanding	Creates vivid imagery, with powerful and engaging vocabulary; uses precise words and/or figurative language to enhance meaning in interesting, natural ways
<b>Sentence Fluency:</b> Does author control sentences so writing flows smoothly?	Structures sentences incorrectly so reader has to reread piece several times and still has difficulty reading aloud without pausing or substituting phrases; has weak or no transitions	Uses sentence structure that works, but may be overly simplistic for the purpose; incorporates basic transitions (e.g., and, so, but, then) that do little to lead the reader through the piece	Uses technically correct sentence structure, yet sentences are frequently not smooth; leads reader from sentence to sentence with a few, simple transitional words or phrases	Uses sentence structure that is correct and smooth, but mechanical in places; ste sentence hang together and are structurally sound; holds piece together with varied transitional words or phrases (e.g., either, therefore, although)	Has sentence structure that flows well and moves reader fluidly through the piece, using a variety of correctly structured sentence types; moves reader easily through the piece with thoughtful and varied transitional words or phrases	Uses strong sentence structure, underscoring and enhancing meaning; uses creative, appropriate, and varied transitional words or phrases that show how each idea related to the previous one and tie the piece together
<b>Conventions:</b> How much editing before piece can be shared as a final product?	Contains errors in the text that distract reader; requires extensive editing	Multiple types of convention errors scattered throughout the text; requires much editing	Handles conventions well at times; at other times, makes distracting errors that impair readability; repeated mistakes with particular conventions	Employs proper grammar/usage fairly consistently; problems are not serious enough to distort meaning; needs moderate editing to publish; has clear meaning	Includes correct grammar/usage; shows few grammatical mistakes and meaning is clear; requires only minor editing before publishing	Uses correct grammar that contributes to clarity and style; enhances meaning by sophisticated grammar/usage; needs almost no editing to publish

- Based on this O-Week essay, I predict this student will need support for reading/writing beyond what they are likely to find in their program
- Based on this O-Week essay, I predict this student will not need additional support for reading/writing beyond likely program-based support
- I can’t tell whether this student will need support for reading/writing that may be beyond the scope of what they will likely get in program



**Appendix 5: Orientation Week Statements**  
**Friday, January 08, 2016**  
**The Evergreen State College**

Statement	Ideas	Organization	Voice	Word Choice	Sentence Fluency	Conventions	Overall
I 2							Needs Support
J 2							Needs Support
M 1							Cannot Tell
N 1							Cannot Tell
O 1							Cannot Tell
P 1							Does Not Need Support
Q 2							Does Not Need Support
R 2							Does Not Need Support
S 1							Does Not Need Support
S 2							Does Not Need Support
T 1							Does Not Need Support
T 2							Does Not Need Support
U 1							Does Not Need Support

Overall Count	
Needs Support	6
Does Not Need Support	27
Cannot Tell	9
Needs Support and Cannot Tell	1