

Senior Transitions

This module includes a set of items only for seniors, with questions adapted from the Strategic National Arts Alumni Project. The senior items explore post-graduation plans, links between the academic major and future plans, and confidence with skills developed during college. Other colleges and universities who completed this module and are in the comparison group (ST-Peers) include:

College of Charleston (Charleston, SC)	University of Mary Washington (Fredericksburg, VA)
Daemen College (Amherst, NY)	University of Montana (Missoula, MT)
Eckerd College (Saint Petersburg, FL)	University of Redlands (Redlands, CA)
Hampshire College (Amherst, MA)	University of Washington Tacoma (Tacoma, WA)
Lewis & Clark College (Portland, OR)	Washington State University (Pullman, WA)
Rochester Institute of Technology (Rochester, NY)	Willamette University (Salem, OR)

Do you expect to graduate this spring or summer?

	Evergreen		ST-Peers	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Yes	110	87%	1,186	79%
No	17	13%	312	21%
Total	127	100	1,498	100

After graduation, what best describes your immediate plans?

If "Yes," student expects to graduate this spring or summer

	Evergreen		ST-Peers	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Full-time employment†	62	56%	2034	59%
Part-time employment†	6	5%	150	4%
Graduate or professional school	21	19%	628	18%
Military service	0	0%	25	1%
Service or volunteer activity (AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Teach for America, etc.)	6	5%	48	1%
Internship (paid or unpaid)	2	2%	192	6%
Travel or gap year	6	5%	157	5%
No plans at this time	2	2%	107	3%
Other	3	3%	100	3%
Total	110	100	3441	100

†Do you already have a job for after graduation?

<i>If plan includes employment</i>	Evergreen		ST-Peers	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Yes, I will start a new job	9	13%	485	22%
Yes, I will continue in my current job	19	28%	435	20%
No	39	58%	1255	58%
Total	67	100	2,175	100

To what extent have courses in your major(s) prepared you for your post-graduation plans?

Of those expecting to graduate this spring or summer

	Evergreen		ST-Peers	
Very little	5	5%	208	6%
Some	22	20%	782	23%
Quite a bit	41	38%	1313	38%
Very much	41	38%	1128	33%
Total	109	100%	3431	100%

Do you intend to work eventually in a field related to your major(s)?

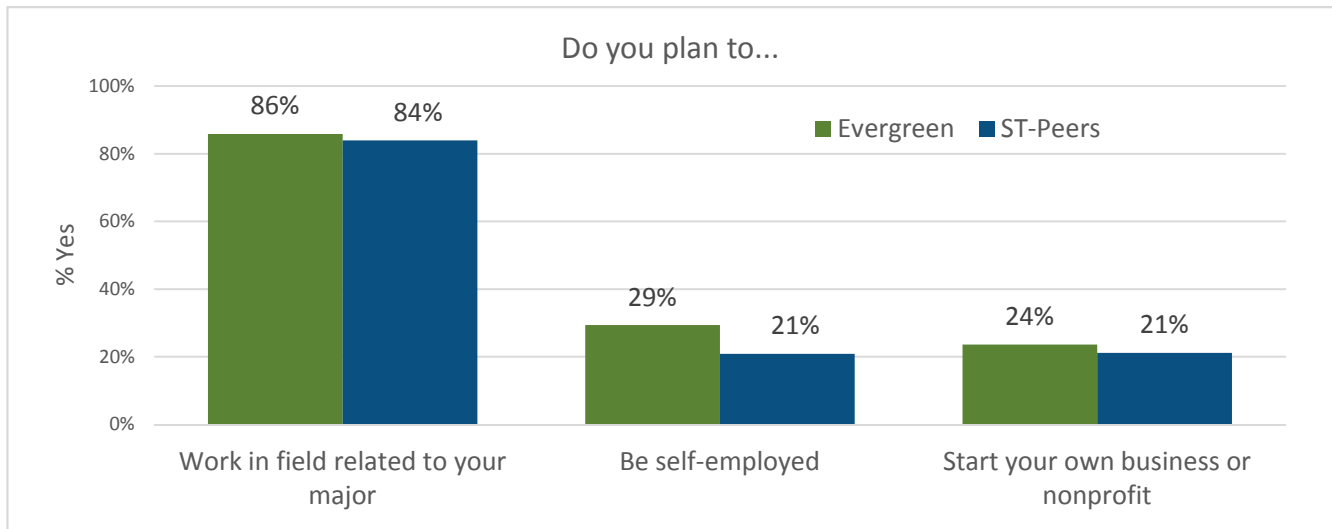
	Evergreen		ST-Peers	
Yes	109	86%	3132	84%
No	4	3%	164	4%
Unsure	14	11%	437	12%
Total	127	100%	3733	100%

Do you plan to be self-employed, an independent contractor, or a freelance worker someday?

	Evergreen		ST-Peers	
Yes	37	29%	779	21%
No	39	31%	1708	46%
Unsure	50	40%	1244	33%
Total	126	100%	3731	100%

















Do you plan to start your own business (nonprofit or for-profit) someday?

	Evergreen		ST-Peers	
Yes	30	24%	792	21%
No	44	35%	1640	44%
Unsure	53	42%	1300	35%
Total	127	100%	3732	100%



How much confidence do you have in your ability to complete tasks requiring the following skills and abilities?

% Quite a bit/Very Much

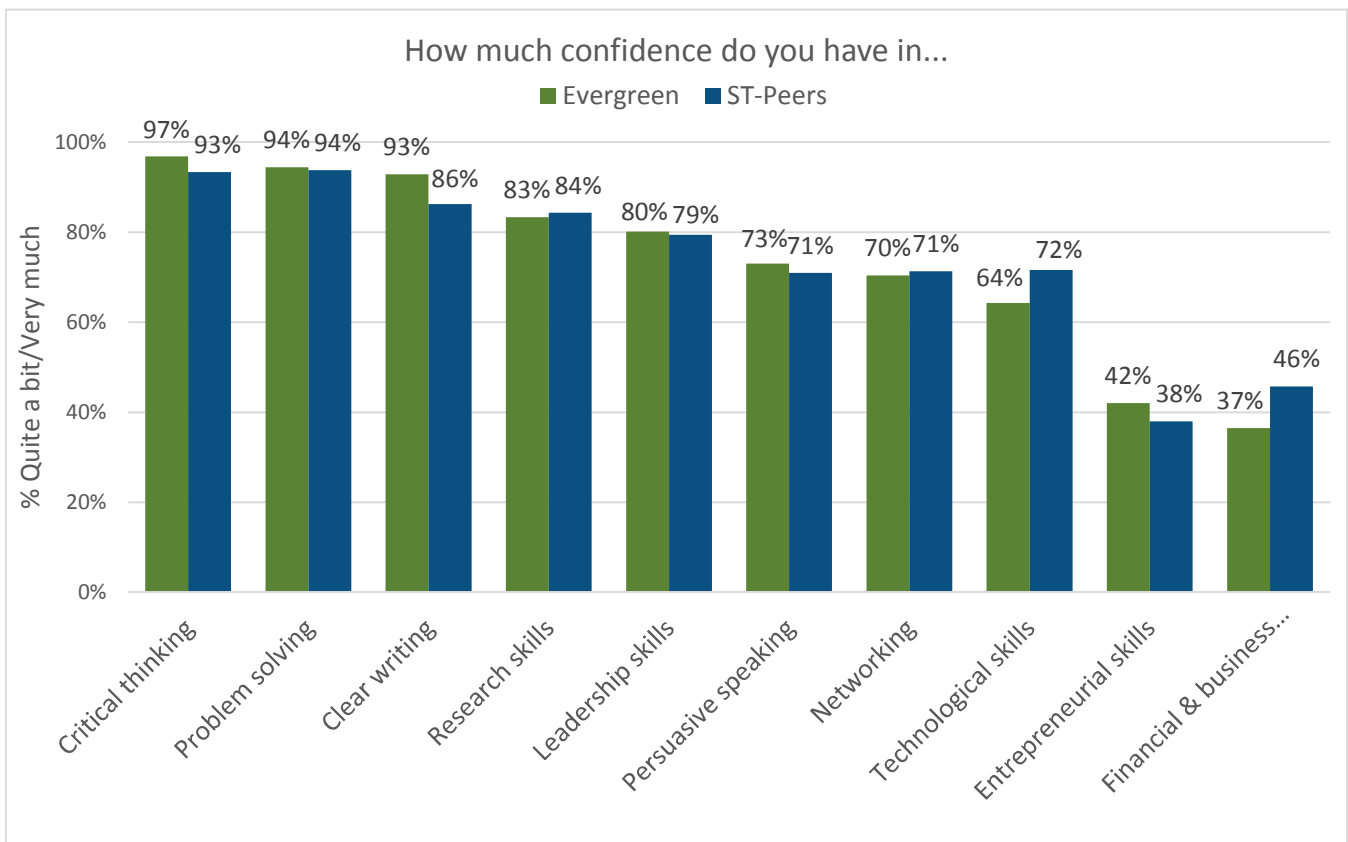
	Evergreen	ST-Peers		Evergreen		ST-Peers	
Critical thinking and analysis of arguments and information	97%	93%	Very little	1	1%	25	1%
			Some	3	2%	224	6%
			Quite a bit	38	30%	1233	33%
			Very much	84	67%	2252	60%
			Total	126	100%	3734	100%
Creative thinking and problem solving	94%	94%	Very little	0	0%	22	1%
			Some	7	6%	209	6%
			Quite a bit	31	25%	1223	33%
			Very much	88	70%	2269	61%
			Total	126	100%	3723	100%
Research skills	83%	84%	Very little	1	1%	74	2%
			Some	20	16%	509	14%
			Quite a bit	38	30%	1442	39%
			Very much	67	53%	1698	46%
			Total	126	100%	3723	100%
Clear writing	93%	86%	Very little	1	1%	57	2%
			Some	8	6%	456	12%
			Quite a bit	48	38%	1410	38%
			Very much	69	55%	1804	48%
			Total	126	100%	3727	100%
Persuasive speaking	73%	71%	Very little	6	5%	171	5%
			Some	28	22%	911	24%
			Quite a bit	50	40%	1375	37%
			Very much	42	33%	1265	34%
			Total	126	100%	3722	100%
Technological skills	64%	72%	Very little	8	6%	174	5%
			Some	37	29%	884	24%
			Quite a bit	49	39%	1398	38%
			Very much	32	25%	1265	34%
			Total	126	100%	3721	100%
Financial and business management skills	37%	46%	Very little	28	22%	709	19%
			Some	52	41%	1310	35%
			Quite a bit	29	23%	1019	27%
			Very much	17	13%	684	18%
			Total	126	100%	3722	100%
Entrepreneurial skills	42%	38%	Very little	36	29%	952	26%
			Some	37	29%	1355	36%
			Quite a bit	36	29%	864	23%
			Very much	17	13%	547	15%
			Total	126	100%	3718	100%

(Continued...)

How much confidence do you have in your ability to complete tasks requiring the following skills and abilities?

% Quite a bit/Very Much

	Evergreen	ST-Peers		Evergreen		ST-Peers	
Leadership skills	80%	79%	Very little	4	3%	123	3%
			Some	21	17%	642	17%
			Quite a bit	40	32%	1298	35%
			Very much	61	48%	1659	45%
			Total	126	100%	3722	100%
Networking and relationship building	70%	71%	Very little	8	6%	214	6%
			Some	29	23%	855	23%
			Quite a bit	43	34%	1371	37%
			Very much	45	36%	1282	34%
			Total	125	100%	3722	100%

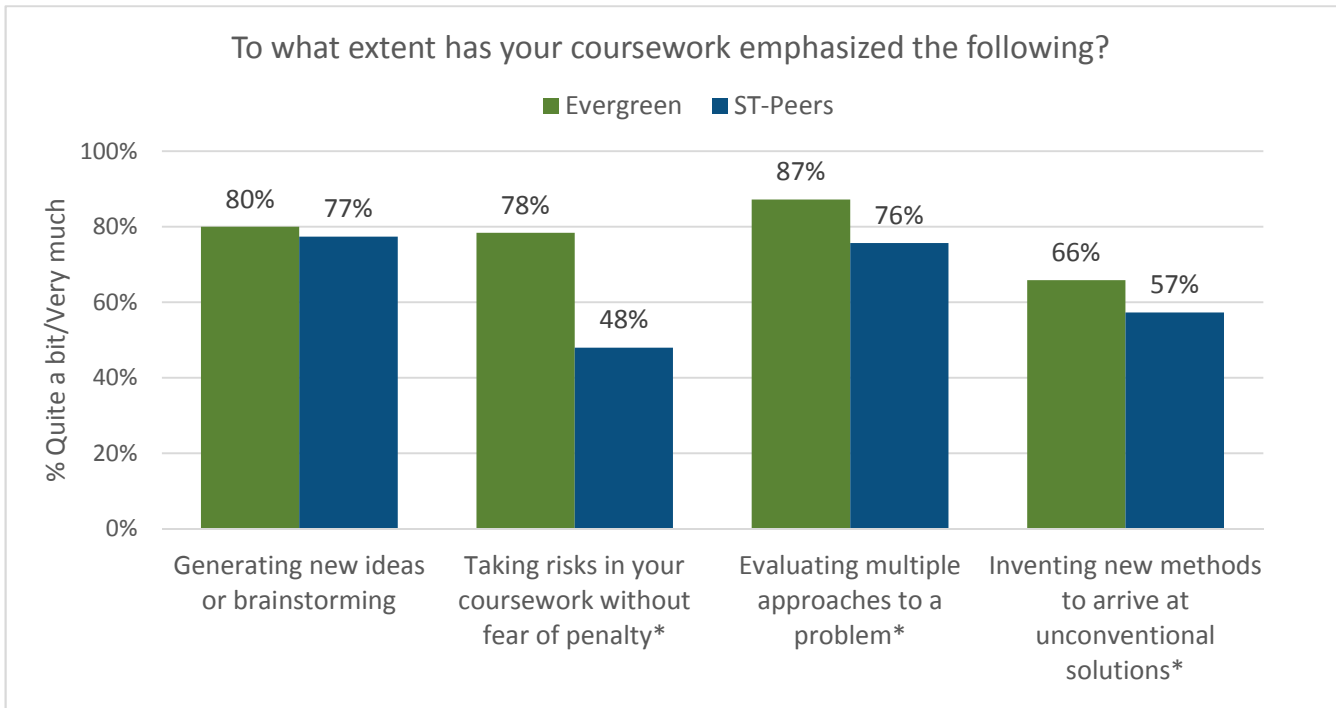


To what extent has your coursework in your major(s) emphasized the following?

% Quite a bit/Very Much

	Evergreen	ST-Peers		Evergreen		ST-Peers	
Generating new ideas or brainstorming	80%	77%	Very little	4	3%	136	4%
			Some	21	17%	707	19%
			Quite a bit	33	26%	1335	36%
			Very much	67	54%	1543	41%
			Total	125	100%	3721	100%
Taking risks in your coursework without fear of penalty*	78%	48%	Very little	11	9%	844	23%
			Some	16	13%	1088	29%
			Quite a bit	34	27%	927	25%
			Very much	64	51%	854	23%
			Total	125	100%	3713	100%
Evaluating multiple approaches to a problem*	87%	76%	Very little	3	2%	173	5%
			Some	13	10%	728	20%
			Quite a bit	33	26%	1366	37%
			Very much	76	61%	1432	39%
			Total	125	100%	3699	100%
Inventing new methods to arrive at unconventional solutions*	66%	57%	Very little	7	6%	462	13%
			Some	36	29%	1111	30%
			Quite a bit	31	25%	1075	29%
			Very much	52	41%	1037	28%
			Total	126	100%	3685	100%

*Mean significantly different at $p < .01$



Is there anything Evergreen could have done better to prepare you for your career or further education?

Expand advanced work

I have been accepted by two [Medicine] programs and am planning to continue my education and obtain a doctorate degree. I wished there were more science-based options at TESC, especially for upper-division credit. One program that is particularly lacking in the curriculum is anatomy and physiology, which is only offered in the summer and most of the time financial aid does not cover summer courses, so it must be paid out of pocket. I know I am not the only pre-med student and many of my peers are planning to work in the healthcare field, so more opportunities for interdisciplinary programs focused on health would be ideal. And if these programs also had the added bonus of completing common prerequisites for medical-related graduate programs that would be AMAZING!

I would have liked more opportunities to take upper-division level humanities classes, particularly in the fields of linguistics, archaeology, and translation or culture studies. Also, in general, it would be beneficial to offer language and culture studies that allow for students to perform more work and analysis in foreign languages. For instance, as a student who has been studying French for [many] years, I felt disappointed that there were not better opportunities for me to take French literature or writing courses, so as to possibly better prepare me for pursuing a graduate degree in a French-speaking country. (And, while I understand that I could have designed an ILC or SOS for such learning, one of the most important features of language learning is the community and communication aspect, so it would not have served me as well to have performed such study so independently.)

I would've been happy to see more advanced courses offered in anthropology.

ILCs were above and beyond the best thing I could have taken at Evergreen. They really shaped my college experience and prepared me for my job far better than any class I've taken to date. No class I've taken at Evergreen has given me the confidence in my ability to perform in a job quite like ILCs have. I also definitely feel like some programs could easily incorporate service learning. Sometimes I feel like my learning in the course was a little stunted because of the lack of community based projects.

Evergreen could offer more part-time upper division science programs to accommodate working students. This would have allowed me to take more of these courses.

They could have offered more upper division classes in my area of emphasis, it was difficult at times to find relevant classes. There could also have been more unity and cohesion among the psychology teachers. They also could have given me a better idea of what career options there are out there.

Yes, there is no progression in coursework. I learned the same material in programs for three years in a row until I became a senior and met a faculty that helped mentor me for preparing for a career path I described. There is virtually no support for students wishing to pursue advanced coursework in the humanities unless you luck out and meet a competent faculty member like I did. Other than that, any serious work you wish to pursue you have to do independently and outside of class hours.

Mandatory writing/math classes

Because my institution is an untraditional four year college I think they should think of having some basic 101 classes in writing and economics. Everyone needs those two subjects to be a fully functional adult.

I believe a mandatory writing course for all incoming students would be beneficial. It's a skill every graduating college student should have.

Required writing and math courses.

Address equity gaps

The Evergreen State College administrators could make work on diversity and cultural differences issues mandatory with faculty, staff, and administrators. The "liberal," so-called "open-minded," "open-dialogue" approaches are not supporting students "of color" at this institution. Too much harm goes unacknowledged, unaddressed, and under-reported.

The institution did not address the issues affecting women in computer science. Women are affected in academia, the public sector, and the private industry. My classes have been dominated by male-identifying individuals, both students and faculty. Many of the women in my programs dropped out or felt discriminated against due to the culture in the classroom. Last year, a faculty member used the phrase "ignorant slut" in seminar, as a joke, and [when called out], the male students in the classroom [agreed with the faculty member]. Thankfully that faculty no longer teaches at my college. I have worked very hard these two years in the computer science program at The Evergreen State College to make my voice as a woman heard, and make space in the computer science community at our college that is safe, accountable, and protects women.

Faculty consistency

At Evergreen, there are no majors. Students take programs that integrate multiple subjects over the course of a quarter or a year, so answering questions about my major was difficult. The quality of education is variable, and depends on the professor. There were some who I felt could have better prepared me in the subjects they taught while some professors gave me the best education and I still refer back to my notes I made during their program.

Evergreen could start by firing the vast number of incompetent faculty and hiring better ones. Not catering to the slowest and least learned students. More upper class level classes for desired topics. The other vast number of problems that stem from the CBA and the fact that faculty have too much control and can do whatever they want.

Make sure the faculty is organized and not scatterbrained. It would also help if they didn't constantly lose papers that effect grades.

The biggest weakness of The Evergreen State College is that it doesn't have enough teachers that are able to take advantage of it's unique structure. It has the potential to be one of the finest learning institutions in the country but student interest and limited class selection get in its way.

The diversity in class work at this college is broad. Some classes have much stronger curriculum than others. I have ended up in some less strong curriculum programs than I know other students have. Streamlining the high expectations and strong curriculum requirements for all program would help so that students do not end up having high expectations and good challenges in one course and very little in others.

The Evergreen State College would highly benefit from having a database of faculty and staff that are open to Independent learning contracts. This would make this opportunity much more of a possibility to the average student at Evergreen.

I really loved the coursework in the reservation based program, however I had to leave because [...] my course director would not sign off any [independent learning]. This caused me to leave the program and I wish I could have gotten to graduate with my classmates from the program. She could improve a lot on how she runs the program because the content is pretty good, but she is difficult to work with.

Specific course requests

I so deeply wish Evergreen would invest in better Communications and Marketing faculty. The one faculty I have found with a communications background admits she isn't versed in marketing and wishes there were more options available. This is the only deciding factor in whether or not I would attend the school if I were pushed back in a time machine. I LOVE the institution and interdisciplinary learning, but they just don't offer what I need academically.

I would have preferred to take more individual classes rather than full programs so that I would have been able to focus more closely on certain branches of biology.

Résumé classes

More straightforward classes like English, math, etc. would have been nice. It's very hard to get prerequisites for upper division classes.

GRE preparation resources

Student support & advising

The institution could have been more explicit and frank in their advertisement of the purpose of school.

Academic advising that is done by people who used to be students at evergreen, and who actually can help get a contract sponsored.

Better guidance when seeking advice on a possible education path - it took THREE visits to get registered for ONE course, when I needed at least TWO to qualify for Financial Aid. Better guidance regarding what local graduate institutions might require (Evergreen should provide at least "some" information between local and major institutions). Additional course choices for part time and weekend students - for EVERY quarter.

I think Evergreen needs more guidance for students than it offers in terms of organizing your education. Assigning students academic advisors in their discipline would be much more useful because advisors would know the student and be able to offer more concrete advice about their future, the kind of courses they need to take for a graduate degree, etc. Evergreen does a great job for students who already have a path, but it needs to spend more time helping students discover what they love and then spend more time helping them get there.

I would love more Career Planning support, or just help discerning what it is I want to do exactly, and how to do that... All of the actually helpful support I've gotten has been from casual conversation with my past and present professors.

Internships or guidance on what to expect in a career. I do not think that all student can do internships because their jobs schedules. Some jobs have very unpredictable schedules such as the one I currently hold.

More time...it was a bit odd to explore a few programs freshman year and then go directly into year-long media courses. I felt like that was my path and I couldn't experiment with learning other subjects anymore.

Provided a list of courses I could've taken for all four years to achieve a given goal when I was admitted.

The main area where I feel my prior university excelled over my current is in career fairs. Evergreen holds several throughout the year, but they're not very large and the vast majority of representatives are not in my field. At my previous university, the career fairs were massive, with hundreds of representatives, many in fields that related to my degree (granted, it was a Tech school, so many areas of study had overlap).

Evergreen is full of slackers and I am suffering at this college where nothing gets done and no one is helpful.

Happy with Evergreen

[Evergreen] gave me the best tools.

I am extremely grateful for the time spend at Evergreen State College. The faculty was been very supportive and my advisor has become an immense important part of my academic career. I have applied at very competitive grad school programs in order to complete my MFA and wouldn't have been able to do so if it wasn't for the continuous support of my advisor. Evergreen is an excellent school. Thank you.

I had a [scholarship] from the National Science Foundation and won a few other scholarships along the way which was a HUGE help. Evergreen has been great an I got exactly what I needed to get into a Ph.D. program in Physics - which was my goal from the start.

My education at Evergreen exceeded my expectations.

The education I received was rigorous and interdisciplinary. I'm confident that the program helped me develop analytical, decision making, conflict resolution, advocacy, leadership, and communication skills that will serve me well in the future. I don't know if it could have been done any better. I needed only four quarters to complete my BA and it seemed a short time for everything I learned.

Other

The career field I want to enter is the Alternative Energy sector, It would be really nice to see Evergreen implement more of these under utilized technologies, it would at least give me a feeling that the school I go to, supports what it says it does. And it would show that my career field will thrive.

Have less emphasis on credit, and more trust in students, flexibility, new ideas, and risk-taking. Although I'm highly self-motivated, I often found myself needing to choose between getting full credit, or getting the most out of the class/learning the most, and this is a decision that should never need to be made at any educational institution.

Allow nudity in the school forests and beach.