

ACADEMIC STATEMENT AND MENTORING PROPOSAL

As amended and passed at 11/16/11 Faculty Meeting (72 in favor, 13 opposed, 5 abstentions)

PROPOSAL #1 – ALL FACULTY COMMIT TIME IN FALL QUARTER TO SUPPORT ACADEMIC STATEMENT

All Faculty teaching in full-time (12- or 16-credit) programs will commit a minimum of six hours to supporting Academic Statement development and planning in the fall quarter, with proportional commitment from less than full time (8 credit) programs. Faculty will serve as mentors to the students in their programs, with concentrated work occurring in the fall of every academic year. The distribution of these hours is at faculty discretion. For students on contract, online templates and modules will be developed intended to guide students through the development of their academic statements. Sponsors of contracts and internships for 12-16 credits will oversee that process for their students, as well as providing substantial response to senior drafts. The EWS Planning Unit will also develop additional support processes for students enrolled in courses only. Faculty and administrators at the Tacoma campus and the Reservation-Based programs are asked to develop a modified advising process providing equitable support for their students. (see Section III – “Workload Analysis”)

PROPOSAL #2 – ORIENTATION WEEK COURSE FOR INCOMING STUDENTS

All new students (first year and transfer) will attend a required, non-credit bearing O-Week course taught by faculty. The course will incorporate Academic Convocation, introduce students to Evergreen’s philosophy, academic expectations, the liberal arts, the academic statement, and mentoring structures, and include a seminar component. Faculty will opt-in to teach the course and will be compensated for the extra work.

PROPOSAL #3 – MENTOR COUNCIL

The college will establish a Mentor Council. This standing governance body will be responsible for creating a shared culture around mentoring- and Academic Statement-related work; it will be closely involved with the development of support materials, planning for O-week, organizing the quarterly all-campus activities, and facilitating assessment activities and conversations.

PROPOSAL #4 – ALL-CAMPUS DAYS

In-program advising will be supported and supplemented by all-campus activities for one day in winter and spring quarters (All-campus Days).

PROPOSAL #5 – ENTRANCE ESSAY

Evergreen will require an Entrance Essay. The essay will become a part of the online Academic Record where it will be available to program faculty and mentors. The essay will be designed to lead into work on the Academic Statement.

PROPOSAL #6 – ACADEMIC STATEMENT SUBMISSION TIED TO REGISTRATION

The annual iteration of the Academic Statement will be submitted by students to the online Academic Record as a condition of registration. Academic Statements will be due for all active, continuing students by the end of the spring quarter.

PROPOSAL #7 – LENGTH OF ACADEMIC STATEMENT

Each iteration of the Academic Statement will be limited in length, with the final iteration limited to a maximum of 750 words and given substantial review (not approval) by all faculty teaching seniors in fall quarter programs. Any earlier iteration included in a transcript will also be limited to 750 words.

PROPOSAL #8 – STUDENT SELF-EVALUATIONS

Students will be required to submit self-evaluations to the online Academic Record, but faculty will no longer have the option to require self-evaluations for the transcript. This proposed item leaves open the question of students’ voluntary inclusion of their self-evaluations in the transcript.

PROPOSAL #9 – ASSESSMENT & REVIEW

The college will commit to ongoing assessment and built-in review of the processes and policies we adopt today: both short-term, ongoing assessment and a self-report and discussion scheduled for five years after implementation.

PROPOSAL #10 – The College will work to restore or expand support for the full development of the faculty including staff support, faculty institutes, sabbaticals and travel.

ACADEMIC STATEMENT AND MENTORING MODEL PROPOSAL

Prepared by the Re-Modeling Teaching and Learning at Evergreen (RTaLE) DTF
for the November 16, 2011 Faculty Meeting

This document is divided into three sections, with the MIDDLE, "Proposal," section representing what the faculty will VOTE on.

I) Directives and Commentary: In developing the proposal for the vote, the Re-Modeling DTF looked to the Academic Statement Resolution (November 17th, 2010) for what we here call our "directives." The *commentary* that accompanies the directives (see endnotes) is intended to articulate the spirit of the central commitments and, where necessary, indicate the direction of the DTF's thinking on matters that will be decided finally, in consultation with faculty, during implementation.

II) Proposal and Commentary: The DTF has articulated its proposal in paragraph form. We consider the proposal's elements to be interdependent. **Each part of the proposal has a function within the whole. During faculty meeting discussion, comparable substitution is preferable to striking.** The *commentary* that accompanies the proposal pieces (see endnotes) is again intended to articulate the spirit of the central commitments and, where necessary, indicate the direction of the DTF's thinking on matters that will be decided finally, in consultation with faculty, during implementation.

III) Recommendations and Analysis: This section relates to the directives and proposals but extends beyond the reach of the DTF as a faculty governance body. Here you'll see thoughts on institutional and staffing impacts, curricular matters, and workload reconfiguration and compensation.

I) DIRECTIVES

1. Iterative Academic Statements, with the final as a condition of graduation. The Academic Statement Resolution (November 17th, 2010) reads in part: *"In order to better meet our institutional commitment to a culture of critical reflection, an iterative Academic Statement will be required of all degree-seeking undergraduate students. The final version of the Academic Statement will be required in the transcript as a condition of graduation."*¹

2. College-wide advising structures. The Resolution reads in part: *The Statement will serve as a key feature in annual college-wide advising structures, which will include sustained faculty-student work on intellectual synthesis and enhancing the breadth and depth of students' interdisciplinary liberal arts education.* This proposal constitutes the results of the Re-Modeling Teaching and Learning DTF's multi-year process of design, faculty and community consultation, and feasibility work.

3. An online Academic Record. An online Academic Record will serve as a central support structure for in-person mentoring activities and Academic Statement work. By providing students and faculty with a centralized and visible location for all reflective and evaluative documents, the site will strengthen our culture of critical reflection by facilitating ongoing integrative work with Entrance Essays, Academic Statements, student self-evaluations, and faculty student-evaluations. It will also allow faculty to share their mentor notes with students and other mentors. This online Academic Record will allow document submission, storage, sharing, and tracking, as well as offer a mechanism for providing advice and feedback to students.

4. An explicit institutional commitment to faculty development opportunities. The Resolution reads in part: *Implementation of the Academic Statement is contingent on... institutional support of these structures and of faculty.* The Re-Modeling Teaching and Learning DTF will forward recommendations to both the United Faculty of Evergreen and Evergreen's administrative representatives. These will include: summer support for collaborative development of curriculum, workshops,² and tools³ to support mentoring and Academic Statement work; structural support from the two Centers for Active Student Learning (CASL), the QuaSR and Writing centers⁴; specific Student Affairs support, particularly from Academic Advising⁵.

5. Workload reconfiguration and compensation. The Resolution reads in part: *Implementation of the Academic Statement is contingent... on institutional support of these structures and of faculty, to include workload reconfiguration and possible compensation.* Workload considerations played a major role in crafting this final iteration of the proposal. The Re-Modeling Teaching and Learning DTF will forward recommendations to both the United Faculty of Evergreen and Evergreen's administrative representatives. Please see Section III, "Recommendations and Analysis," for details. We agree as a DTF that this proposal involves both replacing current work with different work and adding work that is new altogether. While decision-making and negotiation of workload are beyond the DTF's capacities as a faculty governance body, it is in no way our intention with this proposal to commit faculty to additional, uncompensated work.

II) PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL #1 - ALL FACULTY COMMIT TIME IN FALL QUARTER TO SUPPORT ACADEMIC STATEMENT

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PROPOSAL #9 - ASSESSMENT & REVIEW

The college will commit to ongoing assessment and built-in review of the processes and policies we adopt today: both short-term, ongoing assessment and a self-report and discussion scheduled for five years after implementation.⁹

III) RECOMMENDATIONS + ANALYSIS

1. RECOMMENDED: An assessment of current evaluation practices and workload. The current proposal addresses some of the problems in Evergreen transcripts. Concerns remain regarding its length, audience and readability. We recommend ongoing assessment of the length and purpose of the program description, as well as of the audience and length of the faculty evaluation of student.

2. RECOMMENDED: The establishment of a curriculum DTF. We anticipate that the academic planning and reflection work that is part of the writing of the Academic Statement will make some improvement toward student efforts to improve the breadth and depth of their academic studies. In addition we recommend the establishment of a curriculum DTF to examine structural changes that further improve opportunities for students to develop breadth and depth in their education.

3. RECOMMENDED: Negotiations around the Academic Statement and mentoring workload reconfiguration and compensation take our estimate into consideration. Please see "Workload analysis" below for details.

- Workload ANALYSIS

Let's begin with the caveat. Given the diverse practices and self-regulation of workload among faculty, estimating new faculty workload for this model is a tricky endeavor. Some faculty may see all of this work as "additional" to regular program work that they will continue to do; other faculty may see all of this work as replacing work that they currently do in the program. The following analysis is our attempt to strike the right balance between these two ends of the spectrum.

Faculty offer (at least) three 2-hour workshops (6 hours total) during fall quarter. Faculty could develop their own workshop material or they could use modules, templates, and other supporting material developed by the Mentor Council during the summer. We recommend that faculty be compensated for 4 hours of summer planning for each workshop (12 hours total). Among other things, this planning time might be used by faculty members from different programs (especially those teaching alone) to coordinate and collaborate on joint workshops.

Total workshop planning and facilitation = 18 hours

Faculty provide substantive feedback on the academic statements of all seniors in their programs during fall quarter: 2 hours for skimming transcript, reading academic statement, and providing feedback for average of 9.5 students (19 hours total). Note that faculty are not required to provide substantive individual feedback on academic statements for non-seniors. However, faculty may choose to assign the academic statement as an integrated part of the program and provide individual feedback to every student. Also note that this workload will vary depending on the class standing of students in the program (e.g. lower division vs. upper division).

Total average time devoted to feedback on academic statements for seniors = 19 hours

We estimate that these two key activities will take 37 hours of faculty time before and during fall quarter. (Note that Mentor Council summer work and O-week planning and teaching is optional, compensated work for faculty.)

We recommend that the UFE bargaining team consider these workload estimates in their deliberations and negotiations.

We see three options for bargaining, and we've started to imagine what each looks like:

(1) All work might be viewed as reallocation of current teaching, advising, and governance responsibilities. In this option, this work might replace a variety of other work responsibilities during fall quarter, such as planning and teaching other academic program material, governance duties, the portion of program time devoted to supporting self-evaluations, and the portion of evaluation week conferences devoted to providing feedback on self-evaluations.

(2) All work might be viewed as additional work beyond current teaching, advising, and governance responsibilities. In this option, this work is viewed as an expansion of current workload and should be compensated by extending the contract, even though some of this work will be completed during the school year.

(3) A hybrid approach in which work is viewed as a combination of additional work and reallocation of work. As one example, we might consider planning for 3 academic workshops to be additional work to be completed during the summer (3 x

4 hours = 12 hours), but the facilitating / teaching of these workshops to be reallocation of current work. As another example, we might consider that significant work on the academic statements of seniors (both skimming the transcript and reading the statements) might occur during two days of Thanksgiving week and be compensated by moving the start date for the contract forward by two days, but that individual conferences with seniors during evaluation week be reallocation of current work.

In considering our recommendation to the UFE bargaining team, it is worth keeping in mind that faculty are currently responsible for “counseling and advising students” and “fostering students’ abilities to communicate well.” (CBA 6.2.1) Most faculty currently devote significant time to counseling and advising students, helping students develop a self-evaluation, consulting with students about the content of their self-evaluation, and offering students substantive feedback on their self-evaluation. If we adopt this proposal, some of this work during fall quarter might be redirected toward helping students to develop and refine their academic statements.

ENDNOTES

I) DIRECTIVES *commentary*

¹ **The Academic Statement** will be written yearly and will function as a locus for ongoing work and conversations about each student's self-directed education. Although templates and models will be developed by the Mentor Council (see Proposal #3) for faculty to use with students, there will likely be as many types of Academic Statements as there are student pathways – for some students, it will be a completely unique document, while other students may be well served by a more standard document modified to describe their particular accomplishments. The Academic Statement will also serve as the first page of the student's transcript, introducing that student's transcript and undergraduate career to an outside audience. Students must submit a final version of the Academic Statement to the transcript as a condition of graduation, but students who need to send transcripts out before graduation are invited to include an interim Statement. The Academic Statement will serve a dual role as a catalyst for academic planning and reflection *and* a summary of a student's academic career. In addition to its benefits to individual students, the Academic Statement should improve the clarity, focus, and consistency of Evergreen transcripts.

The first materials for the Academic Statement will come from the proposed Entrance Essay (see Proposal #5), which will serve as a central feature of the proposed O-week course for entering students (see Proposal #2). All iterations will be housed in the online Academic Record (see Directive #3) and be available to students and mentors; as far as possible, the system will seek to support students in sharing the document with other parties: the Writing Center, peer review groups, and other faculty. Both the process of Academic Statement development and its products will be featured in all-campus work on and celebrations of academic reflection.

Graduation Requirement Policy and Administrative Tracking: Each quarter students are assigned a registration time reflective of their class standing. Once a student becomes eligible to register as a senior, an Academic Statement requirement hold will be placed on the student's record and the student is notified. Once the statement is reviewed by the faculty and the final version submitted by the student to Registration, the hold preventing graduation will be removed so that staff involved in graduation processing can finalize the award of the student's degree and release the student's diploma and transcript.

² In order to support a serious commitment to the RTaLE initiative, substantive **faculty development opportunities** will be developed. In particular, summer institutes will be used as a vehicle to engage faculty in developing curriculum for the O-week course and to assist all faculty in developing skills to mentor students in programs. Faculty who opt in to teach the O-week course will work together with the Mentor Council to develop the syllabus and course materials, concentrating on pedagogy, peer review, and the writing an academic statement. In part, the syllabus will cover a range of topics including (but not limited to) readings/ discussions about what it means to attend a public, interdisciplinary, liberal arts college.

³ The **online Academic Record** will be designed by a team of specialists and users (staff, faculty, and students), who will also be responsive to faculty and staff efforts in developing workshop materials and optional online tools for supporting Academic Statement writing and mentoring. Faculty, students, and staff will also need training and ongoing technological support.

⁴ The **Writing Center and the QuaSR Center (Centers for Active Student Learning/CASL)** will work with students, staff and faculty to support mentoring and Academic Statement writing. The CASL will also play an important role in facilitating students' thoughtful design of a coherent Liberal Arts education at Evergreen that includes competency in critical reflection, writing, and mathematical reasoning. Each center will each provide mentoring and Academic Statement support in various ways. They will be active participants in O-week and college-wide advising/mentoring activities. The Centers' Directors will also be standing members of the Mentor Council, as will one lead student from each center.

Writing Center: Faculty can expect the Writing Center to play a visible and critical role at all stages of students' iterative development of the Academic Statement through one-on-one conversations with writers at any stage of their writing process; in- and out-of-program workshops tailored for critical junctures of the iterative process; and a print and on-line storehouse of support materials and Academic Statement models. The Writing Center will also play a role in faculty development around mentoring and Academic Statement support. A faculty member of the Mentor Council (see Proposal #3) could rotate into the Writing Center. New faculty can expect a substantive writing workshop, developed with Writing Center staff, that introduces them to the Academic Statement and the role of writing in practices of critical reflection.

QuaSR Center: The QuaSR Center will work with students, staff and faculty to communicate clearly both why mathematical reasoning is important to a liberal arts education and how to pursue it here at Evergreen. Additionally, the Center will develop workshops aimed at helping students see what mathematics are necessary to and meaningful for their choice of study.

⁵ Student Affairs, and in particular **Academic Advising**, will support faculty in the development of advising activities and materials and continue to support students in their navigation of Evergreen's complex curriculum. Some examples of possible forms of that support from Academic Advising are:

- Assist with faculty development (summer institutes, workshops, materials)
- Design and facilitation of O-Week activities, all-campus days activities, and in-program mentoring activities (e.g. Individual Study Options, International Study, Career and Life Planning, Academic Skills, Six Expectations in Action, Academic Pathways, Preparing for Registration and Academic Fair, Community Opportunities and Internships Fair, Graduate Fair, etc.)
- Consult with faculty as requested on matters relating to mentoring students (e.g. answering questions relating to college systems, policies, curriculum, and resources, Student Affairs referrals for students in difficulty, etc.)

II) PROPOSAL *commentary*

¹ While college-wide events will address the broader issues of a liberal arts education, **mentoring within the program** is aimed at helping students reflect on their own academic paths and work on their academic statements. Faculty will exercise their judgment in planning the minimum of six hours in fall quarter, either by generating their own teaching material, or by adapting exercises developed by the Mentor Council (see Proposal #3).

In one scenario, the six hours could be divided into three 2-hour workshop sessions:

- introduce issues important to a particular group of students (e.g., juniors, performance artists, pre-law, etc.)
- students read and discuss different examples of the Academic Statement
- students read their own transcripts and peer edit Academic Statement iterations.

Two or three programs might choose to form a mentoring alliance, combining workshop activities, sorting students into affinity groups, and drawing upon the expertise of different faculty members.

² The **O-week course** will incorporate an introduction to Evergreen's philosophy of teaching and learning and the institution's academic expectations. Central to this is a focus on the liberal arts, the Academic Statement, the Academic Convocation, mentoring structures, and a seminar component. Students will be guided in writing their Entrance Essays (see Proposal #5), which will serve as the initial iteration of a student's Academic Statement. Faculty will opt to teach the course and will be compensated for the extra workload. Students entering the college in winter or spring will be required to attend the O-week course the following fall or the equivalent. Faculty opting to teach will inherit some developed curricular materials but be given the chance to develop these over the summer as part of the summer institute series (see faculty development). One suggestion that would serve the ends of continuity, workload reduction, and institutional memory, is that faculty commit to teaching the O-week course for two years running, with no more than fifty percent turnover each year.

³ If in-program mentoring and support for the academic statement are to be visible as new and sustained commitments,

we will need strong, consistent planning, support, and assessment. The **Mentor Council** is a standing committee of approximately 11 members, to include five at-large faculty members, the Academic Dean for Faculty Development, the Advising and CASL (QuaSR and Writing Center) directors, the Director of Institutional Research, and at least two students. The faculty membership of this team should rotate, but members should serve for three years in order to provide stability and expertise.

The Mentor Council may be responsible for the following kinds of out-of-program support:

- planning summer institutes on advising/mentoring/Academic Statement support
- planning O-week curriculum with affiliated faculty and staff
- planning all-campus days and designing workshops and curriculum for students
- selecting exceptional academic statements for inclusion in all-campus events (graduation, convocation, all-campus advising days)
- redesigning all these activities as needed based on assessments.

This work would count as governance, but we also recommend two more weeks pay to cover the many summer planning activities. During the first summer, it would be advisable to make that a month, and in the year before the all-faculty discussion and assessment (five year benchmark) there should be substantially more summer support for the Mentor Council.

⁴ The O-week sessions will establish the liberal arts/alternative education context. The **all-campus days** will continue this focus and add three important areas to the discussion: 1) Academic Statement writing support, 2) navigating the curriculum, 3) careers/graduate school/pathways. Activities would include one day in winter and one day in spring when all faculty are on campus so that faculty may send students to their colleagues for consultation; disciplinary/grad school panels; writing workshops (peer- and writing center-led); workshops about the curriculum. In-program advising would be supported and supplemented by these all-campus activities. The Mentor Council will be responsible for coordinating these activities in cooperation with Student Affairs and the relevant administrative areas.

⁵ All students entering Evergreen for the first time will be required to submit an **Entrance Essay**. Whatever other purposes the Entrance Essay has, its primary purpose should reside in mentoring. The essay could be written with the application or written after admissions, during O-week.

The Mentor Council will design the Entrance Essay prompt and format, and will adjust these in consultation with the faculty teaching O-week on a yearly basis as part of their compensated work. The time it will take program faculty to read the Entrance Essay is included in the workload recommendations at the end of this proposal as a part of the time devoted to reviewing Academic Statements. The Entrance Essay has the benefit of letting faculty know which of their students are new to the college.

⁶ The following is a model for the **Registration policy as it relates to annual submissions of Academic Statement iterations**: All continuing, active students eligible to register in May for the following fall quarter will be notified after the 10th day of spring quarter of the requirement to electronically submit their Academic Statement before fall registration which begins during week 8 of spring quarter. A hold preventing registration will be placed on each student's record that can be immediately removed once the student submits a version of the Academic Statement.

⁷ We recommend thinking developmentally, and in ways to ensure deep revision, about creating different length restrictions for earlier iterations.

⁸ **Students are required to include their self-evaluations in the online Academic Record.** Instead of adding yet another registration hold, however, this requirement could be enforced by locking access to the Academic Statement site until self-evaluations for all completed programs and courses have been submitted. This would further strengthen the self-evaluation's role as preparatory writing for the Academic Statement.

Student self-evaluations will continue to be required in programs and courses and will be stored in the online Academic Record, but students can no longer be required to submit self-evaluations to the transcript. In recent years, faculty have had the option to require students to submit self-evaluations to the transcript. This practice was enacted with the intention of increasing the consistency of student voice in the transcript, but it has had unintended consequences. The requirement has led to sporadic student voice in individual transcripts, adding bulk without improving quality. It has led to inequitable requirements such that some students, some of the time, are required to reflect immediately and permanently on some piece of their coursework for the transcript, whereas other students, or the same students at other times, can wait until the end of their time at Evergreen and submit self-evaluations at their discretion and with the benefit of retrospection. Faculty will still be responsible for requiring student self-evaluations as part of program and course work, and these will play a new and important role internally at the college, but faculty will not determine whether individual student self-evaluations must appear in the transcript.

⁹ In order to ensure continued faculty-led direction, we suggest that Mentor Council play a central role in overseeing the ongoing **assessment** of this work, in cooperation with the Office of Institutional Research. Current assessment processes will be used and/or adapted to provide feedback and outcome assessment. For example, the existing biennial National Survey of Student Engagement and the Evergreen Student Experience Survey will show changes in students' perceptions of relationships with faculty, career planning, and advising and mentoring. Transcript review sessions will evaluate the extent to which students are meeting the six expectations upon graduation and effectively including their voice in transcripts; this will be compared with results of previous transcript reviews. Retention analysis will be used to see if the initiatives positively influence student persistence at the college. In addition, assessments will consider student, faculty and staff feedback on the mentoring process.