

The Evergreen State College
Evergreen New Student Survey 2007
Olympia Campus – First-time, First Years

Plans after Graduation

Students were asked to respond to the open-ended question, "What do you plan to do after you graduate?" There were no further prompts and students could write on any topic. A total of 505 first-time, first-years wrote a response to the question and 34 skipped the question altogether. Some students wrote about multiple themes, such as traveling, going to graduate school, pursuing a career, and having fun. Some students focused on long-term goals, while others wrote about what they planned to do immediately after graduation. Students' comments were categorized and are summarized below.

Pursuit of Careers

There were 259 responses pertaining to work after graduation from Evergreen. Some students mentioned work or career without specifying the field in which they planned to work. Students commented that they wanted jobs in their field of study, jobs that will bring them happiness, and jobs that pay enough so that they can live comfortably and pay off student loans. The following themes among careers were identified: Artistic/Creative Work; Education; Health, Social Work, and Social Services; Entrepreneurialism/Starting Businesses, and Environmental Conservation and Natural Resource Careers. Students also wrote about a variety of other professions.

Artistic/Creative Work

Seventy-eight students wrote about future plans to pursue creative and artistic work. Students wrote about a broad range of plans to create art, films, videos, comic books, video games, animation, TV shows, music, novels and other fiction, children's books, tattoos, commercials, and graphics for snowboards. Some students wrote about performing music, dance, or acting. Students planned to create and sell their own art, start their own distribution and production companies, start record studios and labels, work in the film and music industries, join a theater company, open a record store, and play and compose music. Other jobs mentioned included: dance choreographer, film director, art curator, museum director, photojournalist, recording engineer, professional musician, director of photography, fashion designer, film editor, graphic artist/designer, writer, and screenwriter.

Education

Among the students who wrote about employment, 43 students specified that they will work in the field of education. Students said that they will teach in pre-school, K-12, high school, and college. They also mentioned a range of subjects they are interested teaching. They indicated that they planned to teach English, history, math, science, U.S. government, politics, art, art history, music, psychology, languages, and physical activities. Other students mentioned outdoor education, coaching, and teaching English and other subjects abroad. Some students expressed interest in setting up schools in underdeveloped countries. Students mentioned Teach for America, an organization that is aimed at addressing educational inequity. Some students were interested in educational administration.

Health, Social Work, and Social Services

This subcategory includes commented related to work in health, social work, and social services. Thirty-one students wrote about plans for future work in these areas. Students cited the following careers: mental health/substance abuse counselor, social worker, geneticist, psychologist, psychiatrist, art therapist, nutritionist, pharmacist assistant, medical assistant, EMT, doctor, and nurse. Other students wrote that they planned to work in sexual health, family planning, population awareness, and wilderness therapy.

Entrepreneurialism/Starting Businesses

Twenty-five first-time, first-years wrote comments related to starting and owning businesses. These included comments such as developing a business plan, starting an organic farm, developing a bicycle industry-based business, starting businesses in the arts, film, and dance, and starting a private counseling practice. Many of these comments overlapped with students' future plans in the arts and environment.

Environmental Conservation and Natural Resource Careers

Twenty students wrote about plans to work in fields related to the environmental conservation and natural resource-related careers. Some wrote generally about conducting research on the environment, engaging in environmental activism, and raising awareness about the environment. Others wrote about sustainability consulting, working in organic agriculture, finding employment in a wildlife refuge and in wildlife rehabilitation, becoming a safari guide, and working in forestry. Students planned to work for a variety of environmental and wildlife organizations.

Other professions

Twenty-eight students wrote about a variety of other professions. These included:

- Nonprofit/nongovernmental work related to peace and justice, community development, humanitarian aid abroad, and political activism.
- Careers in public administration, political science, business management for human services, and human resources
- Librarian
- Book editor
- Work in engineering, botany, and in other scientific fields
- Police officer, Crime Scene Investigator (CSI), and other careers in criminal justice
- Emergency management
- Massage therapy
- Military
- Journalism
- Chef
- Architect, land design
- Mayor or other community leader
- Interpreter
- Maritime career

Graduate School/Further education

A total of 159 students wrote about their intention to go to graduate school or pursue other educational opportunities after graduation from Evergreen. Some students specified the type of degree and/or the fields they wanted to pursue. Many students wrote that they planned to earn a Master's degree or PhD. Some students wrote about other educational opportunities such as attending police academy, massage therapy classes, acupuncture classes, midwifery school, and earning a teaching certificate. Students wrote about earning graduate degrees in a variety of fields including: anthropology, art, art history, botanical research or horticulture, museum studies, education, teaching, law, religious studies, zoology, biology, philosophy, social work, film, psychology, literature, medicine, dental medicine, sound engineering, photography, journalism, and political literature. Some students mentioned enrolling in Evergreen's Master in Teaching program. Students mentioned attending other institutions including: Tokyo University, Lewis and Clark, Southern Oregon University, University of Southern California, and John Bastyr University. Some students referred to further education or graduate school without reference to additional details.

Unsure

Some level of uncertainty about future plans was expressed in the comments of 124 students. Some students indicated that they were unsure about their future direction, but had some ideas. For instance one student wrote: "At this point I am unsure. I have many passions and things that interest me. Right now I picture myself working as a photojournalist, but that is definitely subject to change. I am hoping that at Evergreen I will make new discoveries and new doors will open. What I picture doing after graduation now, and what I actually end up doing are probably very different." Other students simply indicated that they didn't know, were unsure, or were simply waiting to see what happens and then decide.

Traveling/Do Something Abroad

A total of 83 first-time, first-year students included travel or doing something abroad in their response. Several students mentioned that they want to travel with the purpose of doing humanitarian aid. Joining the Peace Corps was classified both as "working for the greater good" and travel because it involves traveling outside the country. Many students mentioned travel with the intention of initiating cultural and environmental change. Some students commented: join Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, go to Africa to teach AIDS awareness, travel to Latin America, relocate to San Diego, study abroad, move to Europe, take classes at universities around the world, live in Japan, explore the communities around the world, and travel around the world. Other students said that they will travel around the world to teach others how they help preserve the environment, to make a difference, study people and restore natural habitats. One student mentioned using his/her education to better understand and help the lives of others. Another student indicated that they would like to explore their roots in another country. Other students wrote about travel without specifying where or what they are going to do.

Working for the Greater Good: Helping Communities, Individuals, and the World

Fifty-six students wrote comments that touched upon helping others, from helping individuals to whole communities to the entire world. Some students generally wrote about helping or saving the world, making a difference, saving the environment, and being an agent of change. One student wrote of "spreading awareness for issues that

hold direct importance to mankind and our world." Another wrote about "making positive environmental and social change." Other students wrote about helping through joining the Peace Corps or working in fields that will bring about change. Some students wrote of wanting to help people at a personal level by helping them grow, giving advice, and being a role model.

Time off/Relax

Nine students wrote comments about taking time off, taking a vacation, or otherwise relaxing after graduation. There were also comments about "sleeping a lot" and camping.

Finding Happiness

There were six students who wrote about having fun, enjoying life, and finding happiness.

Family

Five students included comments about having a family, getting married, and having children.

Other Comments

There were five other comments that were highly specific to individuals and could not be coded into other categories.