

Analysis of Over 16 Credit Load

Summary

- Beginning in Fall 2001, students at Evergreen had a new option of enrolling for up to 20 credits per quarter.
- There is no additional tuition charge (beyond regular full-time enrollment rates) for enrollment up to 18 credits; enrollment beyond 18 credits is subject to per credit charges.
- In the first quarter of implementation, Fall 2001, 6% of all undergraduates enrolled for more than 16 credits. By Fall 2002, 13% of all undergraduates were taking more than 16 credits.
- The top two reasons that students choose to enroll for over 16 credits are to graduate faster and to increase breadth in their education.
- In its first academic year of implementation, enrollment for over 16 credits generated an additional 213.8 student FTE (fall 01, winter 02, and spring 02 combined) plus 19.5 student FTE during summer quarter 2002.
- In Fall 2002, enrollment for more than 16 credits resulted in the generation of an additional 97.6 student FTE toward targeted enrollment goals.
- There is no statistically significant difference in retention rates of students taking more than 16 credits compared to those taking 16 or fewer credits.
- There is no statistically significant difference in the ratio of credits attempted to credits earned based on enrollment for over 16 credits.
- Nearly three-quarters (73%) of students taking more than 16 credits were doing so by enrolling in a course in a different disciplinary area than that of their largest-credit program or course. Fine arts courses accounted for 41% of all additional courses (those other than the largest-credit course or program), followed by humanities (28%), natural sciences (20%) and social sciences (10%).

I. Introduction

Beginning in fall quarter 2001, Evergreen instituted a new policy to allow students to earn more than 16 credits per quarter. Evergreen was the last of the six public four-year institutions in Washington State to allow this option for students.

Students can now enroll for up to 20 credits per quarter. There is no additional tuition charge for enrollment up to 18 credits, but the 19th and 20th credits require students to pay additional per credit charges. The policy also increases the number of credits per quarter that may be transferred to Evergreen to 20 credits.

In order to monitor the impact of this new policy, several modes of assessment were employed. Students enrolled for over 16 credits were surveyed in Fall 2001. The faculty who were working with these students in Fall 2001 were also surveyed about their impressions of the students' success and implications on teaching practice from the new policy. In the subsequent fall quarter, student records were analyzed to explore how the over 16 credit students fared in comparison to students enrolled for less than 16 credits. The results of these analyses are presented in this report. The Appendix attached to this report includes a copy of the announcement of the new policy to faculty and staff in August 2001.

II. Student Results from Over 16 Credit Survey Fall 2001

Sample:

A total of 235 students were registered for more than 16 credits at the time of sample selection on 10/30/2001 (week six of fall quarter). More continuing students took advantage of the new policy than students who were in their first quarter at Evergreen.

Class Standing	New to Evergreen Fall 01*	Continuing	Total Students taking over 16 credits
Freshmen	15	5	20 (9%)
Sophomores	18	51	69 (29%)
Juniors	24	71	95 (40%)
Seniors	4	47	51 (22%)
TOTAL	61 (26%)	174 (74%)	235

**includes 4 "returning Greeners"*

Of the students taking more than 16 credits, 55% were taking 20 credits, and 45% were taking 18 credits. More non-residents were enrolled for 18 credits, than 20 credits. Conversely, more Washington residents were enrolled for 20 credits than for 18 credits.

Residency Status	Enrolled for 18 credits	Enrolled for 20 credits	Total enrolled for more than 16 credits
Residents	69	99	168
Non-residents	37	30	69
TOTAL	106	129	235

Female students made up a greater proportion of the over-16-credit sample than they did in the general population of full-time undergraduates at Evergreen.

Gender	Over-16-credit sample (N=235)	All Full-time undergraduates Fall 2001 (N=3476)
Female	(155) 66.0%	(2010) 57.8%
Male	(80) 34.0%	(1466) 42.2%

The proportion of Caucasian students in the over-16-credit group was also slightly higher than in the overall full-time undergraduate population.

Ethnicity Code	Over-16-credit sample (N=235)	All Full-time undergraduates Fall 2001 (N=3476)
African-American	(9) 3.8%	(158) 4.5%
Native American / Alaskan Native	(8) 3.4%	(151) 4.3%
Asian / Pacific- Islander	(6) 2.6%	(154) 4.4%
Hispanic / Latino	(6) 2.6%	(154) 4.4%
Caucasian	(169) 71.9%	(2330) 67.0%
Ethnicity Unreported	(37) 15.7%	(529) 15.2%

The campus distribution of the over-16-credit students was as follows:

- 229 Olympia campus
- 5 Tacoma campus
- 1 Tribal Reservation-Based Program

All students enrolled for over 16 credits were enrolled in more than one academic offering. Most of the over-16-credit students were taking two different academic offerings, but some were taking combinations of three to five different programs, courses, contracts, and/or internships.

Number of different academic options in which over-16-credit students were enrolled during fall quarter 2001	Number of students Total N=235	% of all students enrolled for more than 16 credits
2 academic offerings	187	79.6%
3 academic offerings	37	15.7%
4 academic offerings	10	4.3%
5 academic offerings	1	0.4%

Of the 235 students who were registered for more than 16 credits at the time the sample was drawn, 205 (87%) were taking one of their offerings at full-time level (12, 14, or 16 credits). For eighteen of these

students, their full-time offering was an independent learning contract or internship, which leaves 187 students taking most of their credits in a program.

Looking more closely at the 187 students who were enrolled in at least 12 credits in a program, the following table shows the planning unit of the “primary” full-time program and the planning units associated with the other offerings that students were taking. The table shows that students taking full-time programs were most often adding additional work in Expressive Arts (47%) and foreign language (23%) to their studies. Both of these areas were identified as areas for improved access in the last accreditation self-study in 1998.

Primary Program Planning Unit	Frequency	Other offering in foreign language*	Other offering in CTL**	Other offering in ES	Other offering in EA	Other offering in SI	Other offering in SPBC
Culture, Text, Language (CTL)	32	14	3	0	13	1	4
Environmental Studies (ES)	27	7	3	2	9	6	0
Expressive Arts (EA)	17	2	1	0	16	0	0
Native American World Indigenous Peoples (NAWIP)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Scientific Inquiry (SI)	19	2	1	2	9	4	1
Society, Politics, Behavior, Change (SPBC)	22	4	6	0	4	1	7
Tacoma (TAC)	5	0	0	0	0	3	2
Inter-area (CTL and EA)	9	3	1	0	4	1	0
Inter-area (CTL and EA and NAWIP)	2	0	0	0	2	0	0
Inter-area (CTL and EA and SPBC)	12	2	1	0	8	0	1
Inter-area (CTL and ES and SI)	2	1	0	0	1	0	0
Inter-area (CTL and SI)	7	0	0	0	6	1	0
Inter-area (CTL and SI and SPBC)	12	5	0	0	6	1	0
Inter-area (CTL and SPBC)	2	1	1	0	1	0	0
Inter-area (EA and ES)	11	2	1	0	6	2	0
Inter-area (NAWIP and SPBC)	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
Inter-area (SI and SPBC)	5	0	0	0	2	4	0
TOTAL	187	43	18	4	87	24	18

* This category includes Arabic, French, Greek, Japanese, Latin, and Spanish.

** This CTL category includes course offerings that are not foreign language.

When the new policy was implemented, the College expected “this change to encourage students to take coursework that increases their breadth of exposure to different disciplines – as recommended by the Gen.

Ed. DTF.” (See Appendix to review the policy announcement letter.) The data shows that many students are taking advantage of the academic opportunities provided by the new policy to engage in additional work in different planning unit areas than their primary program area. For example, all but two of the 27 students in Environmental Studies programs were also enrolled in work outside of Environmental Studies. The use of planning units for this analysis also disguises disciplinary breadth within planning units, such as a student in a Psychology program taking a Business course, a Mediaworks student taking a dance class, or a Biology program student taking statistics.

Students are also using the new policy to enhance the depth of their studies by choosing additional coursework that corresponds closely to their primary program. This pattern was especially evident for the students enrolled in Expressive Arts programs. Many of the students in performing arts programs supplemented their program with additional studies of dance or music performance, and students in visual arts programs also enrolled in photography or drawing courses. Outside the Expressive Arts, other examples included students in International Feminism who also engaged in study of foreign language, dance of other cultures, or globalization, and students in natural Science programs also taking upper-division work in Salmonid ecology.

Student Survey Methodology:

Academic Advising sent out e-mail versions of the survey on 11/6/01 (week seven) to all students who appeared to have a current e-mail address in Banner. Hard copy versions were sent out 11/13/01 to those without e-mail and those students whose e-mail addresses were discovered to be out of date. No incentives were offered for student participation.

Although the deadline for returned surveys was officially Nov. 22, 2001, they were accepted until Jan. 1, 2002 for analysis. A total of 99 student surveys were completed (42% response rate). 70 students completed e-mail surveys, and 29 students returned hardcopy surveys through the mail. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment processed and summarized the students’ responses.

Student Survey Results:

Of the students who completed the survey, 27% reported that they were in their first quarter at Evergreen.

The two primary reasons that students registered for more than 16 credits were to graduate faster and to add breadth to their education.

What factors made you decide to register for more than 16 credits this fall?

Decision-making Factor	N	%
Graduate Faster	56	57%
Adds Breadth to Education	51	52%
My only chance to take course	48	49%
Challenge myself	43	43%
Balancing tougher work with easier/more fun work	23	23%
One choice enhanced the other	17	17%
Financial	17	17%

**Note: categories are not mutually exclusive, since many students selected more than one reason.*

Most of the students were able to make connections between the material in their different academic offerings.

Do you find you are able to make connections between the content areas of the different enrollment options you have chosen?	
Yes (73) 77%	No (22) 23%

**N=95 for this question, since 4 students did not respond.*

Most of the students found their academic workload to be challenging, but manageable.

How's the workload for you?		
Overwhelming	N=11	11%
Challenging, but manageable	N=84	85%
Too light	N=4	4%

17% of the surveyed students were concerned about earning full credit during fall quarter.

Are you concerned about earning full credit this quarter?		
Yes	N=17	17%
No	N=81	83%

**N=98 for this question, since 1 student did not respond.*

In addition to a heavy academic credit load, these students were juggling a variety of other time commitments, including jobs, volunteer work, family responsibilities, and other activities.

62% of the students reported being employed in addition to attending school. Most of the employed students (59%) were working less than 20 hours per week.

If you have a job, how many hours do you work per week?	N=61 employed students	% of those employed
9 or less	13	21%
10-19 hrs	23	38%
20-39 hrs	8	13%
40 or more	8	13%
Did not provide # of hours	1	2%

A total of 61 students (62%) mentioned at least one off-campus obligation or commitment other than paid employment. Community service and family responsibilities were most common. Other off-campus obligations included music/band practice, other community-based classes, sports/exercise, medical visits, religious meetings, workshops, hobbies, and clubs.

Off-campus Obligations/Commitments		
Community Service/Volunteer Work	N=27	27%
Child/Family/Partner/Pets	N=26	26%
Other Off-campus Obligations	N=20	20%

**Note: categories are not mutually exclusive, since many students selected more than one reason.*

A total of 30 students (30%) mentioned at least one on-campus obligation or commitment other than paid employment. Student activities were most commonly mentioned, including a number of student clubs and organizations, leisure education classes, movies, and teach-ins. Nine students mentioned on-campus sports commitments; crew, rugby, and personal exercise regimens were named specifically.

Other On-campus obligations/commitments		
Student Activities	N=20	20%
Sports	N=9	9%
Volunteer Work	N=3	3%
Other On-campus Obligation	N=2	2%

**Note: categories are not mutually exclusive, since many students selected more than one reason.*

Compared to your previous experiences in school, how easy is it for you to balance your school, leisure, and other commitments?		
More difficult	N=35	34%
About the same	N=47	45%
Easier	N=15	20%

**N=97 for this question, since 2 students did not respond.*

One-third of the over-16-credit students felt that their enrollment for enrollment status had caused some problems, especially with regards to keeping up with workload.

Has enrolling for more than 16 credits caused any problems for you?		
Yes	N=34	33%
No	N=63	67%

**N=97 for this question, since 2 students did not respond.*

Types of problems mentioned:

- Time Management/Keeping up with Workload (N=23)
- Scheduling (N=13)
- Attendance (N=4)
- Stress (N=2)

Over half of the students said they would make the same choice again to register for more than 16 credits, but 6% thought they would not repeat this decision.

Would you make the same choice to register for this many credits again?		
Yes	N=68	69%
Maybe	N=24	25%
No	N=6	6%

**N=98 for this question, since 1 student did not respond.*

III. Faculty Results from Over 16 Credit Survey

Sample and Methodology:

Beginning on November 30, 2001 (week nine of fall quarter), Academic Advising staff sent out e-mail surveys to all faculty who were noted in Banner to be working with students enrolled for more than 16 credits. Surveys were sent to faculty working with students in programs, courses, contracts, and internships. Faculty returned their surveys to Academic Advising who then forwarded the replies to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment for data input and analysis.

Faculty survey questions were primarily student-specific, in that they asked faculty to respond to a series of questions about the academic performance of a specific student. This means that many faculty members were asked to complete more than one survey about different students. The final question on the survey asked faculty about any impact they had experienced from the implementation of the new policy. Since that question was more general and related to faculty experience, faculty members were only asked to complete that question one time, regardless of the total number of surveys they completed for individual students.

Surveys were e-mailed to the primary contact faculty for each academic offering in which each over-16-credit student was enrolled per the Banner system. Frequently, the faculty members who received the surveys assisted with administration by forwarding the surveys to the most appropriate member of their faculty team for completion, (i.e. forwarded to the student's seminar leader). One limitation of e-mail survey distribution is that faculty members who do not have ready access to e-mail or who are not comfortable with e-mail may be underrepresented in the results.

A total of 514 surveys were sent to 138 different full-time and adjunct faculty members. Although the deadline for returned surveys was officially Dec. 14, 2001, (the last day of fall quarter), they were accepted until Jan. 8, 2002 for analysis. A total of 144 faculty surveys were completed, which is only a 28.0% response rate based on the number of distributed surveys. Another way of looking at response rate for this survey is that 138 different faculty members were sent surveys, and 70 different faculty members completed at least one survey (49.3% response rate).

The number of faculty who responded to the various survey questions varied considerably, since some questions were not appropriate for all types of academic activities, (e.g. "participates in seminar" or "comes prepared to class" for students on independent learning contracts). The number of faculty responding to each question is provided with the following results.

Faculty Survey Results:

According to their faculty, the students enrolled for over 16 credits were performing fairly well in comparison to other students. 72% to 79% of the over-16-credit students were performing equally as well as other students in the areas of attendance, tardiness, preparedness, and seminar participation. Over-16-credit students were having the most difficulty with "turning in work on time."

Compared to other students studying with me this quarter, this student...	Yes	Sometimes	No
Attends class regularly (<i>N=130</i>)	(101) 77.7%	(23) 17.7%	(6) 4.6%
Arrives to class on-time (<i>N=124</i>)	(98) 79.0%	(22) 17.7%	(4) 3.2%
Comes prepared to class (<i>N=130</i>)	(98) 75.4%	(29) 22.3%	(3) 2.3%
Participates in seminar (<i>N=106</i>)	(79) 74.5%	(22) 20.8%	(5) 4.7%
Turns in work on time (<i>N=134</i>)	(97) 72.4%	(27) 20.1%	(10) 7.5%

Faculty comments:

- Although her attendance was not entirely perfect due to winter illness, with a few exceptions, her work has been good.
- Class is a graduate-level class, and so some tentativeness from undergraduates in seminar is no cause for concern.
- Don't know if this student comes prepared to class; she doesn't talk.
- Student is not a talker, but is attentive.
- Seminar participation was pretty spotty at the beginning, and she says it was for other reasons. Changed about week 7. Turning in work on time was a big problem. She is completing her portfolio a whole week late, and we were trying to really be observant about this issue. It happened nonetheless, and the student claims it wasn't because she was taking too many hours.
- I don't know if she turns in work on time – she's in the other seminar group. I know that initially she was.
- I think this student comes to class prepared, but I am not sure.
- This student has a documented disability and has spoken with Student Services staff. We allowed the student to take more time to take the exams and to submit material.
- It would make more sense for his Field Supervisor to answer these questions. As far as I know he's doing great.
- Several questions are not applicable; she's an independent contract with no classes.
- This student did an individual learning contract with me, so most of these questions don't apply. He met all the deadlines and requirements, so we had no problems. He's a graduating senior that I have worked a lot with over the past two years, so I wouldn't have expected any difficulties.
- This was an independent contract so there were no classes. She did the work and came to the meetings, but it was often difficult to arrange a time when we were both free. She is a great student.
- Missed one class and field trip
- Missed four classes and a field trip
- Missed about 15% in a system where we take roll and reduce credit.
- Missed the field trip.
- Student missed one class and field trip.
- Student was asked to drop the program in week three due to non-attendance of several seminars and workshops, so I can't answer the other questions.

Nearly one-third of the responding faculty (31.2%) had some level of concern about the academic success of the over-16-credit students in comparison to other students.

Compared to other students studying with me this quarter, this student causes me concern for his/her academic success N=141		
Yes (21) 14.9%	Some (23) 16.3%	No (97) 68.8%

Faculty comments:

- He was spectacular in the 16-credit contract. He is extremely bright and hard-working, completed everything he set out to do, and completed it superbly. He faithfully attended our 2-hour weekly discussions and was ready for intense seminar every time. We wish all of our students could be as capable and responsible.
- I don't feel that this student is working up to her potential. Most of what she does skims the minimum requirements.
- This student was a little shakier as a contract student was. He didn't come through on a few of our planned meetings, and his excuses seemed a bit lame. His work seems to have been done pretty much as he planned, however. He will receive the 14 credits he wanted, for in the end, I believe that he earned them as I peruse his portfolio of notes and papers.
- This student is doing fine – but another student is sinking, and I didn't know that he was a 20-credit student until I talked to him.
- This student is swimming harder to make ends meet, but I think that he'll be fine.
- I didn't realize student was registered for so much work. Student's in an ambiguous position with me. She was doing good work, I thought, but then stopped coming to class and finally said she had a lot of difficulty with the program because they didn't feel they had the formal background in the subject needed to understand the books we've been reading. In fact, I think little or no formal background is needed, but that's the way she felt. So she's expecting to get less than full credit for my program, and doesn't seem to feel bad about it. But with this new information about her, I have another factor to feed into my conversation with the student.
- Not the best student I have ever had, but did OK.
- Student has only received 2 of 16 credits.
- Student is not doing more work than other students taking my program for 16 credits are.
- This is a very motivated student.
- This is such a fine student; I didn't know till now she was registered for additional credit hours.
- This student was an individual contract student of mine this quarter, so these questions don't really apply to his case. I can say that he seemed to work well, was prompt in checking in with me, met with me as we planned, and completed the work he set out to do. He will receive his full credits in this contract. I don't know how he did in whatever else he was taking.
- This student would succeed in any environment.
- This student is doing great.
- This may not be a typical response as this student is a highly motivated, older student, who was a good writer when she arrived. And she commuted over an hour to attend this program...so she had more to contend with than the usual younger person we see around here.

Concern for the academic success of these students was sufficient that 21% of them were at risk of earning less than full credit.

Student is at risk of losing credit N=141		
Yes (20) 14.2%	Maybe (10) 7.1%	No (111) 78.7%

14% of the students had discussed workload management or workload adjustment with their faculty.

Has the student talked to you about a workload adjustment or to seek advice about his/her workload? N=133	
Yes (18) 13.5%	No (115) 86.5%

Faculty Comments:

- I initiated the talk about a workload adjustment.
- I talked about her workload at our eval conference. She has more success in math-related programs, which may mean she could handle a greater than full-time load of math.
- Student only discussed workload, because I pursued her to do so.

Over half of the faculty surveys revealed students who appeared successful with handling an above normal workload. Conversely, 21% of the faculty identified students who they felt were *not* able to successfully manage a greater than full-time credit load, and a considerable number of the faculty were unable to predict this ability based on their experience with the student.

Based on your experience with this student, do you feel he/she is able to successfully manage a greater than full-time credit load? N=141		
Yes (79) 56.0%	No (30) 21.3%	Don't Know (32) 22.7%

Faculty comments:

- The student is able to manage a greater than full-time load, but just barely.
- Don't know about greater than a full-time load. She had "extenuating circumstances" interfere this quarter.
- Student was doing their Senior Thesis with me. Student said that she had trouble putting a full 16 credits worth of effort into her independent study and, in general, more trouble organizing her time. In my view, student completed solid work in their studies with me.
- I don't think anyone working full time should take more than 8 credits, though a very few can handle 12.
- I think this situation might be unique – he took Photography, which happens to be his hobby! Also, this is an exceptionally organized and disciplined student.
- Student was enrolled in my program. Student told me that the additional course made studies more difficult. Student said that he did more "mediocre" work in all classes, (since this is a 12-credit program, student was taking two 4-credit language courses in addition). In my view, student completed solid work in his studies with me. In his view, he bit off more than he'd anticipated, and would have done better if he'd had only the one commitment. I agree: he sometimes seemed more distracted and less involved than he might otherwise have been.
- Student would benefit from having more time available to invest in this class.
- This student got very depressed this quarter and essentially stopped attending class as of week 6. I don't think it had to do with how many credits she was registered for. She has struggled with clinical depression before coming to Evergreen, ...for next quarter, she is planning to only take 2 modules instead.
- This student could possibly handle a greater than full-time load.
- This student is a particularly able and motivated student and is definitely able to cope with up to 20 credits. However, this quarter she enrolled in a 12-credit program, an intermediate foreign language for 4 credits and another language for 4 credits. The two languages were too much for her. I would not advise any student to enroll in more than one language course per quarter.
- This student is an individual contract student and can easily manage a greater full-time credit load.

- This student was outstanding – one of the leaders of the group. She is responsible and focused; you can set your watch by her – an ace. She sets the standard for others in terms of class preparation – a leader. Participates in seminar and all program activities. Turns work in on time, and excellent work it is. Does more than is required. Bless her. Bless you for recruiting her. Please send me more just like her. Only talked to me to ask for more work, more challenge. Hard to say about the credit load. She can do anything she sets her mind to do. But why? Youth is too often wasted on the young. I hope she is enjoying herself. The race does not have to be run at top speed.

The final question on the faculty survey asked faculty members if they had noticed any impact on their teaching load or practice as a result of the new credit policy. Of 70 the different faculty members who responded to the survey, 61 answered this question.

Do you feel there has been any impact on your teaching load, scheduling, program activities, or other aspect of your teaching practice as a result of the new credit policy? N=61		
Yes (7) 11.5%	Somewhat (7) 11.5%	No (47) 77.0%

13 of the 14 who had identified some impact from the policy provided comments regarding the nature of that impact. In the following list of general policy-related comments, the names of specific faculty and programs have been edited to protect confidentiality.

Policy Impact Text And General Comments
◆ I admitted seven more students than have ever been admitted to this module due to unprecedented demand. The demand for music related modules is noticeably higher – this is good, but it does mean more work for a full time faculty. On the other hand, it can mean survival for a module taught by an adjunct. Perhaps the 16+ credit students are self-selecting. The slackers just don't go there??
◆ I've never taught a course that filled up so fast, or that so many people tried so desperately to get into. This is proving true for the same course, which I'm repeating, in winter quarter. Don't know if this has to do with the 20 credit thing or not. I've heard several students make appreciative remarks about the possibility, and about what they perceive as a somewhat broader choice of 4 credit offerings this quarter.
◆ It's NOT affected, but only because I have just one student doing this. Given a few more, it would be too much for me.
◆ More students and no more resources!!
◆ Small amount of extra work – one contract student.
◆ I'm more concerned with students being unable to complete all their work, being very tired during class, or doing work for another class during our program activities.
◆ Students had problems participating in the field trip. Students talked to me about their difficult load with >16 credits. Especially those in languages have problems keeping up with everything. However, it much depends on the student.
◆ We have a student taking 20 hours in Part Time Studies, she's lost some credit, and she's doing work that's probably not up to her abilities. I had her in another program, and she's a bright student, but in a hurry to graduate. She has complained about the workload in our half time program, but I don't feel we're assigning too much. She works full time and is trying to take 20 hours, 12 in one program and 8 in another, both programs with lots of reading and writing. Situations like this make me want to require a faculty signature, because I'd deny it in this case. I'd like to make sure that the message coming out of advising is this: "The largest academic load you should take while working full time is 8 credits. Only after several successful 8 credit quarters should a working student attempt 12, and only with advising." While we don't have "grade inflation" like other schools, students will pressure us for credit inflation. They said as much in our liberal arts workshop Fall quarter, when one group asked that half time intensive weekend programs be scheduled on opposite weekends so students could take two programs!

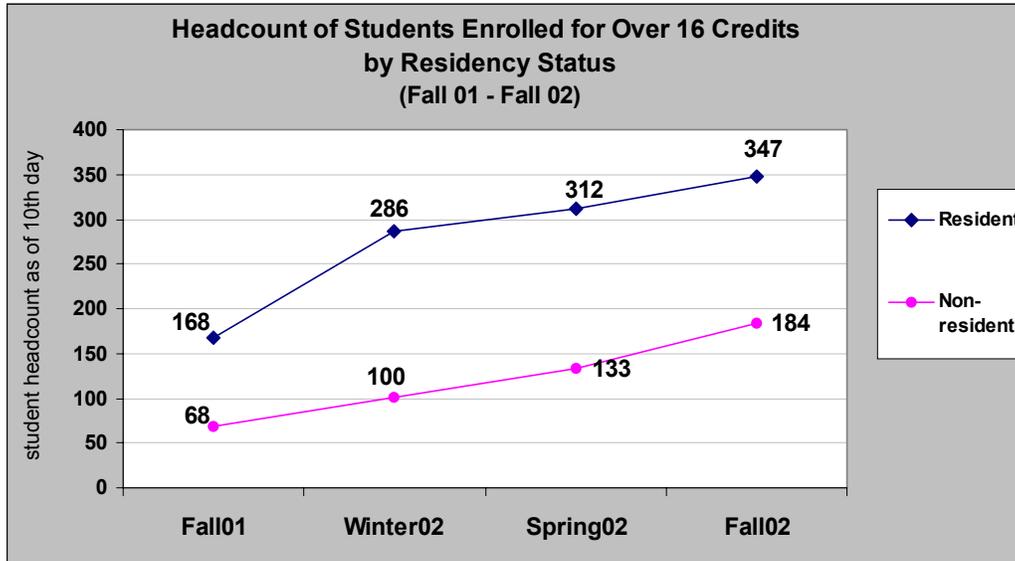
Policy Impact Text And General Comments, continued...	
◆	The 16+ students who remained in the class earned their credit, completed their assignments, but were not outstanding. Perhaps doing too much? This quarter the 2 credit classes filled up right away. Is this a good idea? Students seem to do the work, but not realize their potential.
◆	There needs to be some way of notifying faculty about which students are doing more than 16 – it's not on the registrar's class list.
◆	Yes, but the impact is a good one, for the most part. The new policy has allowed students to take language classes in addition to full-time programs. This is a great thing BUT it is only right for some students. Students need careful advising before taking on an 18-20 credit load. Firstly, I am absolutely in favor of raising the credit limit, because of the opportunities that it gives able and motivated students to push themselves, and because of the resulting financial benefits to the college. However, it seems that some more formal advising is needed before students register for 18-20 credits. Would it be possible to require students to have an advising conference with a faculty member or adviser prior to registering for 18-20 credits? Many students already get advice prior to registration from faculty at the academic fair, in evaluation or advising conferences (if they are already Evergreen students), and at academic advising, especially if they are new students. But, in my experience some students this quarter have registered for 18-20 credits without getting any advice from anyone prior to registration about the possible pitfalls. In our program, we had one student, who had a learning disability, registered in the program, the required foreign language, and an additional internship. We had another student registered in our program and two foreign languages. This was disastrous for the first student and problematic for the second. At the beginning of the quarter, when the faculty realized what was going on, we tried to help these students out. But then the students had to make difficult decisions about what and if they should drop. Basically, these students needed advice earlier on. In conclusion, it's great for students to have this opportunity to take more credits. But I think that we all, faculty and staff, need to come up with a better way to make this work for students. I think that some students have an unrealistic view of how much work an extra four-credit class entails!
◆	Only filling out these questionnaires
◆	Answering the same thing over and over for the different students.

IV. Enrollment for Over 16 Credits

When the new policy was implemented, the College expected “this change to earn some revenue that will be directed to help fund Gen. Ed. Innovations.” (See Appendix to review the policy announcement letter.) Additional revenue is generated by per credit charges for enrollment above 18 credits. A further benefit of the new policy is that student FTE is increased without adding additional students. The additional FTE helps the College to meet its budgeted FTE goals with the State Office of Financial Management.

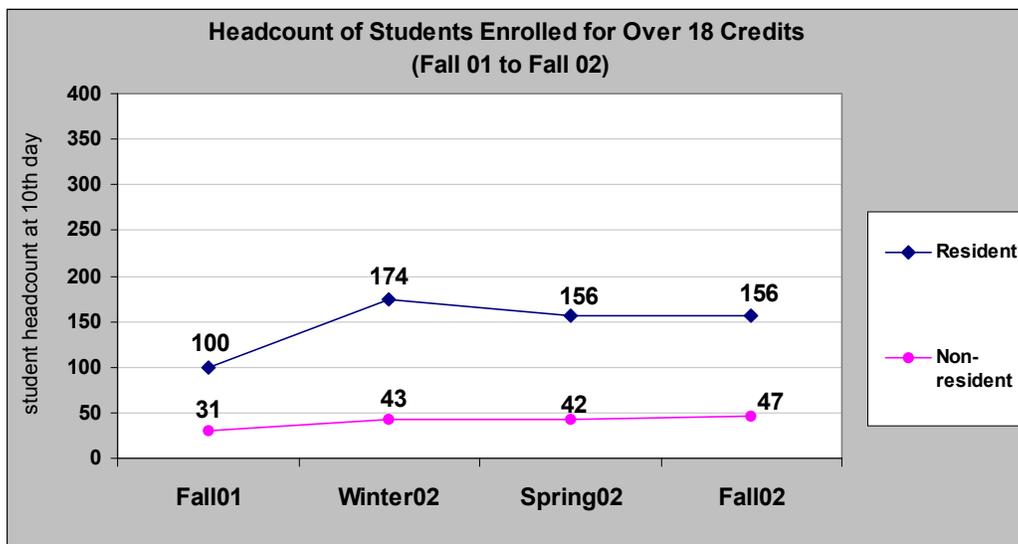
The popularity of this new enrollment option has increased a great deal since its implementation in Fall 2001. The next table shows the percent of all undergraduates who enrolled for over 16 credits in Fall 2001 and Fall 2002. 13% of all undergraduates enrolled Fall 2002 were taking more than 16 credits.

Residency Status of Students Enrolled for Over 16 Credits	% of undergraduates enrolled Fall 2001	% of undergraduates enrolled Fall 2002
Resident	6%	11%
Non-resident	7%	21%
Total	6%	13%



Note: An additional 82 students enrolled for over 16 credits during summer quarter 2002.

The previous chart shows the growth in the number of students enrolled for more than 16 credits, and the trend is increasing as time progresses. Additional tuition revenue is only generated for the 19th and 20th credits. Enrollment at this highest level has not increased in such a pronounced way as enrollment for 17-18 credits, and in fact for resident students the peak was during winter quarter 2002. The following chart shows the headcount of students enrolled for over 18 credits.



Note: An additional 65 students enrolled for over 18 credits during summer quarter 2002.

The next table shows the additional student FTE generated by allowing students to enroll for over 16 credits. The analysis only includes the additional credits above 16, not the total credits for which the students enrolled. In Fall 2002, enrollment for more than 16 credits resulted in the generation of an additional 97.6 student FTE toward targeted enrollment goals.

Fall 2001	Winter 2002	Spring 2002	Summer 2002	Fall 2002
48.9	80.1	84.8	19.5	97.6

V. Assessment of Student Success

A critical question about students taking more than 16 credits is the effect of this additional workload on their academic success. We examined the retention of students taking more than 16 credits in one or more quarters of the 2001-2002 academic year, and compared the proportion of students returning in Fall 2002 to those taking 16 or fewer credits, correcting for graduation. We found no significant difference in retention rates – indeed, retention is slightly higher for those taking more credits, but this difference is not statistically significant. Likewise, there is no significant difference in the ratio of credits earned to credits attempted between those students attempting more than 16 credits compared to those taking 16 or fewer. Again, the ratio is slightly higher for students taking more than 16. These results suggest that the more capable students are self-selecting for the over 16 credit options.

We also examined the disciplinary areas of the programs and courses to see if students were using the over 16 credit option to increase the breadth of their academic experience. (These areas are the broad general education disciplines of fine arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, as defined by CIP code classification of the program or course.) We found that nearly three-quarters (73%) of students taking more than 16 credits were doing so by enrolling in a course in a different disciplinary area than that of their largest-credit program or course. Fine arts courses accounted for 41% of all additional courses (those other than the largest-credit course or program), followed by humanities (28%), natural sciences (20%) and social sciences (10%). Most of the courses in the humanities area were language courses.

Appendix: Announcement of New Policy

THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE
August 6, 2001

To: Evergreen Faculty and Staff

From: Twenty Credit Implementation Team: Andrea Coker-Anderson, Jin Darney, Steve Hunter, QyAna Manning, Collin Orr, Kitty Parker, Marla Skelley, Oscar Soule

As you know, the faculty has approved a policy change to allow students to register for up to **twenty credits** in one quarter. This change has now been approved by the Board of Trustees, and a team of individuals has been organized to figure out how to implement this change. Modifications are nearly in place to allow students to register on the Web, be charged the correct tuition for this option, and a plan for letting students know about their new option is in place.

We hope this change will allow our students better access to a broader array of subject offerings, and may be useful for some students who wish to complete their degree more quickly. This letter is to inform you about how this change will be implemented.

Faculty will receive this letter in two formats – paper and email. The email version has the letter sent to students appended.

Guiding Principles:

- We have increased the per-quarter credit limit from 16 to 20 beginning fall quarter, 2001.
- This increased credit limit is designed to allow students to develop more breadth in their education and to earn credits for work that some students currently do when they are enrolled in, and doing all the work for, a 16 credit program, but are receiving only 12 credits so they can enroll in a language or other course for credit.
- We do not regard all combinations of courses, contracts and programs that lead to 20 credits as equally satisfactory for the best learning situation.
 - ✓ We view 12 to 16 credits as a full load for most students, so the decision to enroll for 17 or more should be made knowing that the workload will increase significantly.
 - ✓ We do not recommend that freshmen choose this option.
 - ✓ We believe that students wishing to choose this option will be best served if they are enrolled in a 12- to 16-credit program and enroll for an additional 4 credit course (or even two if appropriate).
 - ✓ We do not recommend other combinations with multiple courses or contracts or partial programs combined to earn more than 16 credits.

How this will work:

- This change is effective for fall quarter, 2001– not before. No retroactive credit will be awarded.
- To ensure that we appropriately balance faculty workload while allowing students to increase their credit load, no single mode of study will be offered for more than 16 credits in a given quarter. (Modes include coordinated and group contract programs, courses, internships, and individual contracts.)
- Total registration in contracts plus internships may not equal more than 16 credits per quarter.
- Registration will be configured on the Web to allow additional credits to be added beginning August 13, 2001 at 7 a.m.
- Tuition will remain the same for 10 to 18 credits.
- Students enrolling for 19 or 20 credits will pay a tuition surcharge:
 - Undergraduate, resident: \$82 per credit.
 - Undergraduate, non-resident: \$321 per credit.
- Students must enroll for more than 16 credits on or before the fifth day of the quarter. No exceptions will be made to this rule.
- This option is available only to admitted, undergraduate students.

- Financial aid recipients enrolling for 19 or 20 credits may expect to have their cost of attendance automatically reviewed for tuition overload costs, and will be notified of any possible changes.
- Tacoma students must make arrangements with the Director of the Tacoma program to be eligible to earn more than 16 credits.
- This policy change increases the limit for transfer credit and/or concurrent enrollment credit that will count toward a degree to 20 credits per quarter.

Expectations

- We expect this change to encourage students to take coursework that increases their breadth of exposure to different disciplines – as recommended by the Gen. Ed. DTF.
- We believe this will shorten the time to degree for some students.
- We anticipate that fewer than 20% of our students will enroll for additional credits, and that, of those, most will enroll for 18 rather than 20 credits.
- We expect this change to earn some revenue that will be directed to help fund Gen. Ed. Innovations.
- We have informed students that they should expect to work increased hours for additional credits in the following way:
 - A student enrolled for 18 credits should expect to be doing a minimum of 45 hours of work per week, including 16 to 18 classroom hours.
 - A student enrolled for 20 credits should expect to be doing a minimum of 50 hours of work per week, including 18 to 20 classroom hours.