



## HOW TO GET YOUR WRITING PUBLISHED AT EVERGREEN

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“Because you have something to say” is the motto of Evergreen’s Writing Center. It is also the mantra of the little voice inspiring word-obsessed poets and storytellers who choose to rescue their words from moldering files to pursue the many publishing options at Evergreen and beyond.

As some agonizing soul observed, there are two types of writers: those who publish and those who perish. If you’ve decided to publish, you have both my commiserations and my congratulations. Writing is both a gut-quivering and ecstatic enterprise—throw in the possibility of having your luminous lyrics rejected—well, it can be daunting. The creative writer can navigate the Evergreen system to get published and to self-publish in many media, including in print, on the air (both radio and television), and in performances highlighting the written and spoken word.

Writers should pursue both traditional and nontraditional approaches to publishing. The traditional route involves submitting work to a publication, and the untraditional way involves self-publishing work in a zine or other venue. The traditional route’s advantage is respectability: an editor likes the poem or story enough to put money into sharing it with the world. However, it has the drawback of actually getting someone to notice your work in the slushpile (where all unsolicited submissions live until someone looks at them...after the solicited submission are read). Obviously, this process can be slow going, but still possible. The advantage of nontraditional publishing is that you can take an active, grassroots approach to let people hear what you have to say, especially locally.

### TACTICS FOR TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

The student literary journals at Evergreen are *On Uneven Ground*, published by the Writer’s Guild, and *Slightly West*, published by the S&A Board. Become familiar with the literary journals published by other colleges and universities, too. These are excellent places to begin establishing your publishing credits. A few journals to look for are the *Allegheny Review*, which only publishes undergraduate writing, *The Bellingham Review*, *The Missouri Review*, *Ploughshares*, and *Third Coast*. Follow submission guideline rules, start becoming familiar with publishing opportunities and send out your work. You won’t get published if you don’t try.

Writers also should check out small press literacy journals such as *Zyzzva*, *Glimmer Train*, *Tin House*, and *Ninth Letter*. Use books such as the *International Directory of Small Magazines and Little Presses* or *The Writer's Market* to give you detailed listings of places that publish the kind of work you write. Familiarize yourself with who publishes what so you don't waste your time sending Ginsberg-inspired philosophical rants to a journal that only publishes sonnets. There are thousands of writing niches, and your work probably can be published if you are persistent.

Many student groups publish zines, which are small publications of about four to twenty pages that are photocopied, stapled, and distributed for free or low-cost. Some student groups that publish zines are the Writer's Guild, Evergreen Political Information Center (EPIC), the Women's Resource Center, and the Center for Environmental and Natural Skills Education (CENSE).

#### TACTICS FOR NONTRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

The second approach to getting published is the do-it-yourself method. You can publish your own work in a self-made zine, at a public poetry reading, on the Internet, or on the air. Give yourself permission to step out of the traditional box and take matters into your own hands to build your reputation as a writer. An effective way to self-publish is to make zines and distribute them (check out a copy of the *Zine Making Bible* at a Writer's Guild or EPIC meeting; both student groups have copies). Photocopy as many as you can comfortably afford and distribute them to friends; ask the Evergreen Bookstore, Danger Room Comics (in downtown Olympia), and the local bookstores to sell a few of your zines on consignment. You can also host a poetry reading and give or sell your zine there.

Paperless publication is running amok—so run with it. Learn how to make a website and put up a web portfolio of your work. Start a blog and feel the thrill of instant publishing. The Evergreen radio station, KAOS, has several radio programs of the literary persuasion. Check out program listings and contact hosts about appearing on the show to perform. Yes, reading your work in front of real live people as part of a performance is a type of publishing.

Open mics are often frequented by people who enjoy hearing poems and short-stories—such as the ones in your self-published zine. Attend open mics around campus and in town. If you can't find an open mic, get some writer friends together and start one. Possible locations include the library lobby, lecture halls (including the Rotunda), the CAB, Red Square, the HCC, and the amphitheater in front of the gym.

Evergreen offers a senior thesis option to present a major project. Usually this involves a small reception and a performance if the student is a writer, or a gallery showing if the student is an artist. The senior thesis is a wonderful way to end your Evergreen career while preparing for similar public performances in the real world. The funky twice-yearly Arts Walk in downtown Olympia is an excellent place for Greeners (and alums) to showcase their work. These types of events do not take a lot of money, but they do need thoughtful planning. Work with others of like-minded publishing ambition to help get your name out there.

Publishing your work is possible if you are persistent and creative. Realize and accept that you will be rejected at some point—it's not the end of the world because there are so many opportunities. Be brazen in your publishing efforts. Set publishing goals for yourself. Make a habit of submitting work and try to publish a few zines each year to build a reputation as an established writer in your community. There are many opportunities to publish, and if you persist, everyone will know what you have to say.

## RESOURCES FOR WRITERS

*Come to the Writing Center to find out more about the resources listed below.*

**Writing Center:** [www.evergreen.edu/writingcenter](http://www.evergreen.edu/writingcenter)

**Student Groups:** [www.evergreen.edu/activities/studentgroupdescriptions](http://www.evergreen.edu/activities/studentgroupdescriptions)

**Writer's Guild:** [www.wrtsgld@evergreen.edu](mailto:www.wrtsgld@evergreen.edu)

**Slightly West:** [www.evergreen.edu/groups/slightlywest](http://www.evergreen.edu/groups/slightlywest)

**Pacific Northwest Writers Association:** [www.pnwa.org](http://www.pnwa.org)

**Cafe Press (printing on demand):** [www.cafepress.com](http://www.cafepress.com)

**Poets and Writers:** Both the magazine and newsletter are awesome resources: [www.pw.org](http://www.pw.org)

**Writer's Chronicle:** Excellent magazine with lots of graduate school ideas. Pick up a free copy at the Writing Center.

**Writer's Market:** Available for perusal at the Writing Center.

**International Directory of Small Magazines and Little Presses:** Available at the library, this is a directory by genre of every small publication.