

## EVALUATIONS: A HOW-TO GUIDE

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“We don’t get grades at Evergreen”: a statement every student at this unique, if slightly unorthodox, institute of learning will find themselves faced with justifying at one point or another. In the stead of grades and the ominous GPA, we have evaluations. Our faculty write narratives of our work, we write about our own learning experience, and these two strange animals known as “evals” come together to form the Evergreen Transcript.

The Evergreen Transcript is big: both in terms of its importance, and in physical comparison to the transcripts that students accumulate at other colleges. Your transcript is where your evals end up; it’s what you hand to possible future employers or grad schools to persuade them to acquire you based on your college experiences. Here’s what your transcript will look like:

- **The cover sheet comes first.** This lists the programs, classes, contracts, and/or internships you took on.
- **Beneath the cover sheet is your Summative Self-Evaluation (if you choose to write one).** The Summative Self-Eval is completely optional, but absolutely recommended. This is really your big opportunity to say what you want to say about your time at Evergreen; it’s a perfect opportunity to show your accomplishments and growth. [The Summative Self-Evaluation was discontinued in 2012 and re-envisioned as the Academic Statement.]
- **Next is your program information.** Each program will be included (beginning with your most recent, which means that the first program you ever took will be on the very bottom), and each consists of three (3) documents:

**The Course Description:** The faculty writes this, and each student in the program will have the same one. It outlines the expectations of the program.

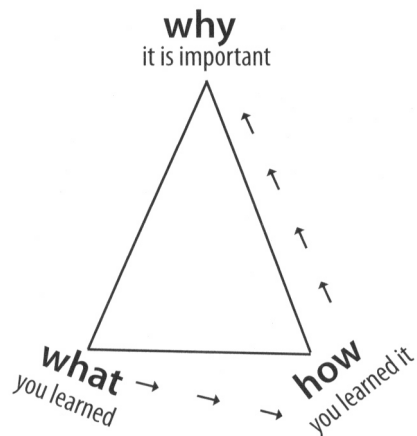
**The Faculty Evaluation:** Your faculty’s evaluation of you in the program.

**The Self- Evaluation:** YOUR evaluation of you in the program.

So, now you’re ready to get started. Go to the Writing Center. You don’t have to have a draft, we can help you brainstorm. We’re all students, so we’ve been there too. Most of us are still there. Come talk to us.

The most important part of your transcript is the self-eval: it says so much more about you and your learning experience than a grade ever could. Use your eval to provide a firsthand account of your learning; show what you have learned and what it means to you; tailor it to the particular audience you plan to be showing it to (grad schools, employers, etc.). If nothing else, remember this: show, don't tell. Show the kind of student you are. You can back this up by writing well, with passion and excitement.

Basically, the format for your self-evaluation is:



Each of your examples of what you did, what you learned, what you hoped to learn, etc. should follow a format similar to this:

*Through doing \_\_\_\_\_, I learned \_\_\_\_\_, and that's important because of \_\_\_\_\_.*

There are some general points covered in the typical self-eval, that you can almost look at as a “before, during, and after” template (before I took the class, I thought something. During the class, I learned/did/experienced something else. After the class, I plan to do something similar/different because of something):

- 1) What's your program? Why did you choose it? What did you expect, and why did you expect it? Do you have any related background to the program learning?
- 2) What did you learn in the program? What did you do? What did you encounter that you did not expect? How did you improve? What do you still need to improve? What did you do particularly well?
- 3) What's next? Do you want to keep studying the same type of thing, or have your interests switched and, if they have, what brought about this switch?

The Writing Center (as well as the Writing Center's website) has some very handy handouts that can instruct you as you write and revise your evaluation.

We also hold workshops to help you write your evaluations. These typically take place weeks 9 and 10.

When you feel that your evaluation is concise, clear, and complete, use your evergreen.edu username and password to sign on to my.evergreen.edu to write evals and save them in the correct format (these will be saved for as long as you remain an active Evergreen student). From here, you will print two (2) copies of your evaluation(s), sign them, and turn them in to Registration and Records.

Now, when you find yourself faced with the "No grades! What?!?!" conversation, maybe you'll be a little better prepared to explain the strange and daunting idea of the evaluation. More importantly, maybe you'll be a little better prepared to write yours.