

# Enrollment Growth DTF: Student Focus Groups and Growth Proposal Ratings

## Introduction

Focus group question prompts were collaboratively developed by Enrollment Growth Committee members, Christine Ciancetta and Peter Ellis, and Institutional Research staff, Laura Coghlan, Genna Fain, and Sean Riley. Two simultaneous focus groups were held on February 7, 2005 from 3-5 PM. The 17 student participants represented a variety of undergraduate planning units at Olympia, the Tacoma program, and graduate programs. Students were referred to the focus group by their faculty who serve on the DTF and from a CPJ announcement of the event. Before the focus groups began, Peter Ellis provided a summary overview of the work of the Enrollment Growth DTF and described current enrollment levels to help students conceptualize the scale of the growth that is anticipated. After the focus groups, students reviewed a summarized list of enrollment growth proposals, and they indicated which proposals were of interest to them or might be of interest to other students.

This report first provides a summary of the questions that were posed in the focus groups and a brief overview of the student responses. The second section provides a more in-depth summary of the issues and ideas raised by the student participants. The report concludes with a table of results from students' review of the checklist of growth proposals.

## Summary of Focus Group Results

Focus group participants were asked a series of common questions; a brief overview of their responses is provided in this section of the report.

- **What do you think might be different about Evergreen with 5000 students?**

Students saw opportunities for expansion of the curriculum, but they were also concerned about increased competition for high-demand programs and equipment needed by programs. They considered whether the intimacy of the campus climate would be adversely affected in terms of student-to-student communication, faculty-student ratio, or larger class sizes. They wondered about the desired mix of new growth from resident, non-resident, graduate, undergraduate, and transfer students. They expressed hope that Evergreen would preserve core values and student academic freedom. They identified various student services, academic facilities, and housing needs that would be impacted by growth, and they asked if tuition might increase to fund such expansion. They also mentioned that growth might provide opportunities to expand satellite campuses or to develop new food service options.

- **What academic areas would you like to see grow or added to the curriculum at Evergreen?**

Olympia campus focus group participants identified areas for curricular growth in Ecological Design, Culinary Arts, Natural Sciences, Mediaworks, photography, Fine Arts, advanced writing and literature, a new MIT endorsement, opportunities to meet MIT pre-requisites, and a variety of ideas to enhance real-world, community-based learning experiences. A Tacoma program participant described needs for a math instructor, more opportunities in Neuroscience, and additional guest speakers.

- **In order to add 1000 more students, we will have to attract students who aren't currently coming to Evergreen. What programs would attract students who aren't currently considering Evergreen?**

The students suggested that new opportunities in Health Sciences, student engagement in business and civic endeavors, and development of new off-campus learning sites might attract new students. One student thought offering Running Start at Evergreen would be a great idea. Two students offered support for a new graduate program in Fine Arts. One student was enthusiastic about an enrollment growth proposal that she had reviewed for a merged MPA/MES program. Some students felt that improving the way that the college is represented and explained to prospective students could potentially increase enrollment.

- **What student support services do you think should grow or be added as we accommodate 1000 more students?**

The participants thought that transportation, advising, financial aid, health and counseling resources, affordable housing, and technology staff need expansion to accommodate growth.

- **What facilities or equipment resources would need to grow or be added to accommodate 1000 more students?**

Facilities and equipment that these students specifically thought should grow were computer technology resources, science labs and equipment, art and media resources, and the College Recreation Center.

- **How do you find the information that you need about Evergreen? What do you think the effects of adding 1000 more students might be on these current communication methods?**

The students reported that they currently find information about Evergreen via the college web site, word-of-mouth, posters, flyers, the catalog, the CPJ, and billboards. As the college grows, one student expressed concern that word-of-mouth communication and faculty-student conversation could become more difficult. Several students made suggestions for new features for the Evergreen web site that could improve its usefulness as the college grows. A few students discussed current difficulties with their ability to locate information about the work of administration and how they can participate in college governance. Students also suggested creating an information help desk that could answer all kinds of questions and offer them direction about navigating Evergreen.

- **How do you currently find and connect with other students for social or academic reasons? What suggestions do you have for how this process could be easier?**

Students meet each other through academic programs and other courses outside their primary program. They also connect with other students through student activities and interest groups, program list-serves, through other friends, in Housing, on the bus, and downtown. They offered ideas for inter-program communication, and they described the current limitations of available social spaces. Students would also welcome more guidance, support, or structure to help them take initiative and responsibility. Implementing peer counselors to help students who are feeling alienated was suggested. And one student thought that recruiting more students who live on campus would help build community.

## **Detailed Compilation of Focus Group Results**

### **What do you think might be different about Evergreen with 5000 students?**

Students responded to this opening question by brainstorming possible issues and questions related to enrollment growth. Many of the issues that they raised were explored in greater depth as the group discussion continued. The following is a list of the general issues raised by students as the focus groups began:

- Opportunities for expanded curriculum
- Increased competition for spots in desired programs and for equipment needed by programs
- Impact on student-faculty ratio or larger class sizes
- Less intimate culture/setting
- Increased need for communication
- Number of transfer students may increase: Are they less likely to participate in student activities and public involvement? Are some transfer student coming here because they didn't get into another university, not necessarily because they are interested in the model of Evergreen?
- Who will make up the growth? Residents vs. non-residents; Graduate vs. undergraduates
- What number of students want to get in? Do they share the same values and interests? Will Evergreen have the same core values?
- How will Evergreen resolve the tension about its mission – to serve the state residents or serve as many people as it can, or what?
- Will there be growth in pre-requisites for undergrads? As school gets bigger, there might be more emphasis on managing your options.
- Strain on counseling, medical and other student services
- Current housing may be inadequate; Would more apartments be converted to freshmen dormitories?
- Impact on local environment due to more consumption
- Are there plans to develop more of the campus, especially wooded areas?
- Is there enough parking?
- Opportunity for new food service options
- Equipment: Current computer center and science lab space limitations.
- Need for new off-campus sites and/or to expand the satellite campuses
- Is Seminar II enough to accommodate growth? Would other facilities be expanded?
- Will tuition increase to fund the new facilities and services needed for growth?
- Everything!

### **What academic areas would you like to see grow or added to the curriculum at Evergreen?**

Olympia campus focus group participants identified areas for curricular growth in Ecological Design, Culinary Arts, Natural Sciences, Mediaworks, photography, Fine Arts, advanced writing and literature, a new MIT endorsement, opportunities for civic engagement and real-world experience, and improving access to MIT pre-requisites. A Tacoma program participant desired a math instructor, more opportunities in Neuroscience, and additional guest speakers.

#### **Sustainability**

Several students expressed interest in sustainability. One had heard a lot of interest on campus about ecological design and architecture. This student took Eco-design last year, and she mentioned that it covered a broad range of issues, but clarified that more upper level work in sustainability or more specific programs to go deeper into different aspects would be welcome. A different student also noted that there are often

waitlists for the Eco-Design program. Several students talked about connecting the organic farm and students to the food services at Evergreen. Students in both focus groups suggested a Culinary Arts program in conjunction with students running a food service facility on campus through which the students would get education in business, finances, food preparation and culinary art.

### **Real-world experience**

About five students recommended various ways to increase student integration into the day-to-day operations of the college. One student used Warren Wilson College's model of employing students across all areas of the college to demonstrate this concept, "It really contributed to the viability of the college, ecologically and economically." This student felt that a similar model at Evergreen would give students a sense of ownership in building the college and ensuring its future. Another student added that if students were more integrated into the staff, they might feel like they had more influence in college decision-making and communication between students and administration might improve.

Another student encouraged the college to expand opportunities to work in the surrounding community, which she described as "real-world application as part of education." A different student suggested offering an extension school in Olympia that offered contracts and internships that would help get students outside the "Evergreen bubble" and expose them to the broader community. Yet another student thought that a program in civic engagement would be a benefit. The student expanded on this idea by noting that the college's location in the state capital seemed like a natural tie to expansion of civic engagement, and the Evergreen could tap into alumni who are involved in non-profits, lobbyist groups, and the legislature. Another student described her current program studying the chemistry, biology, and social aspects of fat. She wishes that the program went a step further to apply their knowledge to cooking techniques and nutritional planning, "instead of just reading the books and learning the science about it; we could be doing it."

### **Natural Sciences**

Two students identified the need for more programs in the natural sciences. They stated that major programs, such as Molecule to Organism, are offered only once a year beginning in fall. So, if students don't get in, then there aren't other options until the next year. One of the students thought it would be nice to have two different programs to choose from that both covered the prerequisites for moving onto the next level. The student added that it might not work to have two programs at the same time that relied on the same equipment and lab space, since that is already tight now. The student also mentioned a need for more upper division Biology, since once a student has taken M2O there is only independent research to move onto the next year, and it would be nice to have other options. The other student lamented that there is one biology-focused physics program, and it was only offered in the summer.

### **Tacoma**

One Tacoma student said that they need a math faculty member, and she would like an expansion of Neuroscience opportunities. She added that more guest speakers would allow students to be introduced to more ideas.

### **MIT**

One pre-MIT student said that some faculty aren't informed about the pre-requisites for the MIT, and that makes it difficult to prepare and earn required credits. This student recommended developing a program for undergraduates who want to go into teaching where students could work on earning the pre-requisites for MIT. One current MIT student wished that an English as a Second Language endorsement would be added, (and another MIT student replied that one will be starting this summer.)

### **Art**

One student mentioned that Mediaworks and photography programs are very popular and often have waitlists. Another student would like to see an expansion of the fine arts in general.

## **Other Ideas**

One student wished for more advanced writing and literature programs.

One student supported the expansion of support for independent contracts. And another student mentioned that larger class sizes could put a strain on faculty, which could make it even harder to find contract sponsors.

Another student said, "Evergreen pays a lot of lip-service to interdisciplinary studies," but this student thought that especially the arts and sciences are not really stretched that far. This student believes that really good learning comes from making big stretches across disciplines.

## **In order to add 1000 more students, we're going to have to attract students who aren't currently coming here. What programs would attract students who aren't currently considering Evergreen?**

The students suggested that new opportunities in Health Sciences, business or civic engagement programs, and development of new off-campus learning sites might attract new students. One student offered support for an enrollment growth proposal that she had reviewed for a new graduate program that combined MPA and MES. Two others encouraged adding a new graduate program in Fine Arts. One student suggested enrolling Running Start students at Evergreen. Some students felt that improving the way that the college is represented and explained to prospective students could potentially increase enrollment.

## **Health-Related Study**

Two students suggested more options in terms of pre-medical study. One student thought Evergreen could concurrently improve the resources at the health center and offer more education to pre-medical students by opening the health center to students who want to learn there. The same student noted that community college nursing programs are overloaded, so perhaps Evergreen could provide a pre-medical or nursing program. A second student was aware of students who "wanted to go to graduate school in medical fields that have difficulty matching the requirements, because there isn't a set curriculum for them here."

## **Satellites and Extensions**

One student mentioned a Blackboard distance learning program she had heard about that might allow students without direct access to Evergreen to participate virtually. Another student thought Evergreen should create more satellite programs. This student explained that the most attractive thing about Evergreen is interdisciplinary studies, and that more money and more exposure to Evergreen would come with more satellites. Another student added that more community-based learning would spread out growth, which seemed a better way to grow than just Olympia campus. A student wondered if there would be money to expand the Tacoma and Tribal programs? This student stated that Tacoma has a wait-list, and she would like Tacoma to expand or add a new site.

## **Student-run Business**

Four students discussed ideas for various student-run businesses or public works programs. One of them suggested a public works program that connected Evergreen students with teens in the community who are involved in sustainability. Another described an idea from a television program about a student-run volunteer business that developed a new fertilizer, and the business has since become a viable economic and ecologically-sound company. The third student thought that a program that included government and how to start a business or organization would be a big draw. The final student felt that integrating more "hands-on real-life experience" would be a good idea. She said, "We don't have a lot of anything that sounds like it would be useful afterwards." She suggested student integration into businesses, food service, or civic projects on or off campus could be a good idea.

## **Running Start**

One student, who had done two years of Running Start at SPSCC, thought offering Running Start at Evergreen would be a great idea. This student said that SPSCC had not provided the kind of education that she wanted. She added, “I got to Evergreen, and now I’m a senior, and I still want to be here. I don’t want to be done, because there’s this wonderful method of education that I totally missed out on my first two years of college.”

### **Graduate Programs**

One student was excited about the growth proposal for merging MPA and MES, saying, “That would be a graduate program that I would stay here to take.” Two other students supported adding a graduate Art program, since it seemed like a good fit for the college.

One current MIT student said, “If we put more people into graduate programs, I’m not sure much would change, because we have so few people now.” Another current MIT student expressed concern that as the new 2+2+1 proposals are considered, MIT should be mindful about retaining the rigor and emphasis on student teaching and practicum that are current strengths of the teaching program.

### **Representation and Recruitment**

Several students had suggestions for improving how the college is represented and new recruitment approaches that might attract students to the college.

One student mentioned that perhaps it wasn’t a deficit of any particular area of study, but rather Evergreen’s progressiveness that discouraged some prospective students. She thought that transfer students, in particular, “are ready to get what they need to finish up their degree, and it’s not clear to them” how to do that here.

One student who works with high school students said, “These students don’t have perception of what it means to empower yourself through education.” This student recommended employing more students of color in recruitment efforts in high schools. Another student suggested that the college employ current students as recruiters, “They could talk about their programs, because they’re so passionate about what they’re doing.” This student was willing to take the job herself, she said, “I’m on that. I am so there. You don’t even have to pay me that much. I’ll do it, because that’s how I feel about this college, and how much it’s brought to me.”

Two students encouraged Evergreen to emphasize its strength in interdisciplinary learning in recruitment contacts and publications. One student thought it would be good to connect the Gear Up or Upward Bound kids who visit during the summer with Evergreen students while they’re on campus. Another student suggested hosting an overnight visit, where prospective students would be paired with a current student and hang out with together.

An undergraduate student commented on how a representative from the MIT program came to talk to students at Tacoma, and “it really turned people off.” According to this student, the representative was using language that was far removed from the experience of the students. The students were told that they not to worry about affordability, because there are lots of scholarships available for people of color. Some students, especially those with extensive math and science experience, were offended by this approach and felt it didn’t honor their strong academic backgrounds. This student recommends that MIT be more aware of how it communicates if they want to recruit students.

### **What student support services do you think should grow or be added as we accommodate 1000 more students?**

The participants thought that transportation, advising, financial aid, health and counseling resources, affordable housing, and technology staff need expansion to accommodate growth.

### **Transportation**

Several students talked about the inadequacy of the bus service to and from campus. Specific issues raised were the need for more frequent buses during peak hours, buses later at night, and routes after seven on Sundays. One student wondered if having more students could help leverage additional services from IT. A student in each focus group thought that creating an organized carpooling system for people within the Evergreen community would be a good idea, since more people will be driving cars to and from campus. Another student mentioned that the bike shop is not always staffed, and so there's not always someone on call to help with flat tires on wheelchairs.

### **Advising Resources**

Access Services, KEY, and First Peoples' Advising were singled out as services that would need to grow to support new students. One student said that Academic Advising could be strained if it becomes even more difficult to organize a contract and find a faculty sponsor. A student mentioned that it is awkward to discuss personal finances in front of other at the counter top in Financial Aid. This student encouraged having an advisor in an office that could be available to discuss financial, career, and academic issues when students are having a hard time.

### **Student Health and Counseling**

At least four students said that medical and counseling services are already strained and should increase as the college grows. One student suggested that some type of student health insurance would be desirable. Two students mentioned difficulties accessing counseling for students who are not in acute crisis. One said, "It's already difficult to get in to see a counselor, as long as you're not suicidal." The other student said she works with students who are having a hard time coping with coming to college and adjusting to a new culture, but she doesn't really have a place to refer them. She said the Counseling Center has to do a lot of triage and can only help the people who are having a really hard time, and they refer everyone else to off-campus resources. Another student added that the Health Center is really a "band-aid station," and that although it's the only resource that many students can afford, it is not adequate as a health center.

### **Tacoma**

One student wished that Tacoma had a math center and healthcare resources. This student felt that Tacoma has technology equipment, but she is not aware of any technical staff person to help students learn to fully use the equipment. A Tacoma student supported the development of a low-cost student housing model near the campus, to improve student presence in the local community and provide options for students who are commuting long distances.

### **Student Housing and Finances**

An Olympia student also raised concern about the availability of enough affordable housing for students. He mentioned that on-campus housing is more expensive than the typical apartment rate per square foot in Olympia. He wondered if the college could develop new low-cost housing options. Another student who works in Housing said that the majority of students she has seen leave Evergreen did so because they couldn't afford living expenses. She added that housing on and off campus is expensive, and there aren't many jobs available on campus or in Olympia. She felt this was especially true of students who do not get much financial aid and don't qualify for work study.

### **Technology Support**

One student said that students living in campus housing don't have enough technical support people to support computer users.

### **Communications Lab**

A student recommended that Evergreen create a Communications Lab, similar to the Quantitative Reasoning and Writing Centers, that could help will all kinds of communication and presentation skills.

## **What facilities or equipment resources would need to grow or be added to accommodate 1000 more students?**

Facilities and equipment that these students specifically thought should grow were computer technology resources, science labs and equipment, art and media resources, and the College Recreation Center.

### **Technology Resources**

Many students discussed issues related to computer technology access and resources at Evergreen that are currently strained. The most common issue was there not being enough computers available for students to use on campus. A student who depends on computer resources in the CAL described overcrowding of this area, especially when half of the space is often used for class instruction. She added that specialized software is only available in the CAL, so it is not an option to just move to the other Computer Center. Four other students chimed in about similar overcrowding in the Library 4<sup>th</sup> floor Computer Center, especially at peak hours and when classes are meeting. One explained that when the computer center is overcrowded the students move to the Library terminals to do their word processing, and it can be difficult to find a terminal to access the catalog and reference system. Two students raised the idea that internet connections to the campus networks should be available to students on and off campus students, and that better off-site connectivity and improved modems in housing could relieve some demand for on-campus computer resources. On behalf of her “tech friends,” another student said that those students would also like to see the Linux room and computers expanded. A student at the Tacoma campus described competition with other community groups that rent their computer space which creates limitations on the hours that computer resources are available to Evergreen students. She said, “We’re competing with the retirement home and the YWCA, and they are all valid and they should all be there, but it’s stressful.”

### **Science Labs and Equipment**

Two science students discussed modernizing more lab spaces as has been done in Lab II; one specifically suggested adding gas pipes into lab spaces to replace the need for hand-held torches. These students also discussed the need for updated equipment, and specific issues about difficulty in scheduling the use of equipment resources that many programs depend on, such as the spectrometer.

### **Art and Media Resources**

One student described the photo studio as a tight space to schedule, since many students are interested in photography. He added that more Evening and Weekend students are also competing for these facilities. Another student mentioned that the need for resources and staff in digital media is growing all the time, not simply for Mediaworks, but for several other programs that use the resources.

### **Campus Housing**

One student who works in Housing, said that to create a better community in Housing, it needs to be a place where people want to live. She said that students living in phase one freshmen housing are dissatisfied because it is falling apart.

### **College Recreation Center**

Two students identified the need for updated equipment in the CRC; the weight room and cardio room were mentioned specifically. One of the students mentioned that space is an issue, particularly when basketball courts and swimming facilities are being used by other local school groups. A reconfiguration of the confusing layout of the facility was also encouraged by this student.

### **Social Space**

One student suggested adding a student government or Student Union building that could include the Student Activities and organizations, places to hang out, and study spaces.

### **Food Service**

Three students discussed the limitations of current food service. One felt the market was too small to handle the demand, especially during lunch break. This student encouraged offering new options, such as food carts on Red Square. Two students were particularly concerned with limited food service, cooking facilities, and access to supplies for students who have to live on campus.

### **Commuter Support**

Two students said the college needs more alternative commuter facilities, such as showers and covered bike racks.

### **Other comments**

One student was discouraged that college departments charge each other for use of facilities and resources. This student thought the facilities should be more open, and the process could be streamlined for use of resources. Another student felt strongly that the new seminar buildings had been over-equipped. Yet, this student felt it was unjust when his student group was told they be charged 50 dollars an hour to have access to one of the cd players.

## **How do you find the information that you need about Evergreen?**

The students identified a variety of ways that they currently find information about Evergreen; their methods are listed below in order of most frequent mention:

- Evergreen web-site or program web-site (10)
- Friends, other students, word-of-mouth (9)
- Posters or flyers (3)
- Banner Gateway (3)
- Faculty (2)
- Billboards (1)
- Printed catalog (1)
- Cooper Point Journal (1)

## **What do you think the effects of adding 1000 more students might be on these current communication methods?**

One student expressed concern that as Evergreen enrolls more students, “it seems things like word-of-mouth and conversations with faculty are going to get harder to have.” Other students mentioned the necessity of on-line information, and some offered suggestions for ways the web site could be more useful. Some students wished that it were easier for students to understand the work of the administration and how they could get involved. The idea of a creating a general information center received support from several students.

### **Evergreen Web Site**

Several students raised issues about how the Evergreen web site could be improved, and several others defended its recent improvements and usefulness. One student suggested creating an integrated student interest site with links to student employment, community events, study abroad and everything. Another student struggled with the structure of the web site to find information such as start and end dates of the quarter and classroom locations. One student who has had a lot of success finding information on the web site would like to see more information available on the site about what other programs are doing. This student attends the Tacoma program, and she wishes it were easier to find out what’s going on at the

Olympia campus. She suggested a central calendar site that has meetings, events, and other activities that are updated regularly. Another student seconded this idea, and added that events should identify who is welcome to attend. Another student wished that the current web calendar was more inclusive beyond the “internal events” sponsored by specific departments, (e.g. Housing or Academic Advising). A student who previously attended the UW described a personalized calendar option they had available which was populated based on the interest categories that a student indicated.

### **Student-Administration Communications**

One student described difficulty knowing what decisions the administration is making and how to participate. Another added that he tried to look up the Enrollment Growth DTF’s work on the web site to write a paper, but he was unable to locate it; this student would like to see more about DTF’s and administrative work on the web site.

### **Information Center**

Several students felt the need for a general information center. One said the parking booth becomes the default information center, but the staff can’t be expected to direct everyone all over the place. A student who works at the Writing Center said students often assume that since she’s behind a desk, she will be able to direct them to information they need, but that isn’t always possible. One student suggested that we have a student-run “Ask It” desk, where support is available to answer any question about the school. Another student thought that training a work study student in each department or service area to respond to questions would be easier than having to interrupt other staff members to ask a question.

### **Other Communication Issues**

One student wishes that 80% of the posters and signs were taken down, because there are so many different boards and it takes a lot of time to sift through them.

## **How do you currently find and connect with other students for social or academic reasons?**

Students meet each other through academic programs and other courses outside their primary program. They also connect with other students through student activities and interest groups, program list-serves, through other friends, in Housing, on the bus, and downtown.

### **Academic Venues**

The most frequent response was that students tend to meet other student in their programs, or through people in their programs. As one student said, “the best source of information I’ve ever had at this school is my fellow students... my best knowledge and experiences come from other students.” One student revealed that her best friends were those she had met in a poetry course she took outside of her primary Science program. Several students also mentioned using list-serves to communicate with students in their programs. A student who lives off campus said that he doesn’t feel there is any real way to connect with students other than through the academic program. One student said that in terms of academic connections, she rarely ever studies with other students and tends to work on her own. Another student described her situation in terms of opportunities to study with other students as “isolated.” She added that she feels study groups are necessary, but she’s not sure how to build them.

### **Student Activities**

Several students talked about meeting other students in workshops, activities, meetings, and student interest groups. One student who is involved in a student group said she uses flyering, the CPJ, KAOS, announcements in programs, and sometimes e-mail to share information with other students. She added that some student groups have their own list-serves where people can get more topical information.

A student from the Tacoma program described a community garden that has been started on the campus. She said that she was surprised at how many students are involved in the project. She added that the project had initiated communication between the day students and night students. Another student from the Tacoma program was excited by having more students in the program this year. She said, “They bring in a greater culture and different experiences.” For example, new students have brought their connections to non-profit agencies and political organizations to the campus.

### **Housing**

A student who transferred to Evergreen said his roommates in the dorms were the first people he met at Evergreen, and then he met other students through his roommates. A participant who works in Housing said that she sees students wandering around Housing listening for loud music to try to connect with other students to hang out with. She feels that these situations often end up being parties where substance use is occurring, which doesn’t encourage a positive, healthy community.

### **Other Responses**

One student added that he does a lot of socializing on the bus and in the bike shop. Two students said they meet and hang out with other Evergreen students at bars in downtown Olympia. Another student said he doesn’t have the time to connect with other students.

## **What suggestions do you have for how the process of connecting with other students could be easier?**

### **Inter-program Communication**

One student would like to see a more organized structure for communication among students, including the other campuses and graduate programs. She added that she is an undergraduate involved in student activities, “but that group is very disconnected with the other aspects of Evergreen and tends to forget that Evergreen isn’t just undergraduates here on this campus.” Another student thought “it would be really cool to have some times when programs interact with each other across disciplines to learn to communicate and speak each other’s language.” A third student supported the idea, and he saw “a tremendous opportunity for social gathering spaces across programs.” He added that Evergreen is not like a traditional four-year college where you meet people in many different classes, since at Evergreen students are in one program.

### **Social Spaces**

Students noted problems with some of the meeting places on campus. One student noted that there were few things to do and few places to hang out at night. Another added that the Housing Community Center is open until 11PM, but it’s not a very good space. Another student described the HCC as too small for some kinds of events and noted that it is located at the edge of campus, so off-campus students don’t ever go there. Two students said the social spaces and lounge areas in the new Seminar II buildings are hard to use. They elaborated that conversations in the small lounges are difficult, because noise can interfere with classes. And the larger group spaces are usually being used for classes, so students don’t have access to them for social events. Another student said that now that entertainment and TV have been removed from The Edge in A-dorm, “It’s kind of a hole in the wall, and no one wants to go in.”

One student suggested that perhaps Evergreen should serve beer, because at other colleges that seems to bring people together. Another student, who is under 21, wishes there were a place to socialize and have a drink or continue a conversation outside of class, even if you’re not eating. She said, “The Greenery is nice, but you have to pay to get in the door.”

### **Student Initiative**

Four students in one focus group discussed the responsibility that Evergreen places on students to be responsible for initiating things here. The students expressed a mixture of appreciation and frustration with

the expectation that students should be proactive. Most of the students agreed that they liked the emphasis that Evergreen placed on students learning to be responsible for their own involvement, action, and contribution to change. But they simultaneously wished that structures were clearer, and that faculty and support staff could be more supportive in helping students learn to “take that initiative and run.”

In the other focus group a student mentioned a similar concept when he described how he finds resources and information at Evergreen. He said, “If I’m in the mood, I can go dig it up myself, but we should try to bring the various aspect of the campus together a little more.” In terms of space scheduling, another student said he had no idea which spaces students are allowed to use or where he would locate information about how to schedule a space.

### **Community Building**

One student thought that offering peer counseling services could connect students and provide information that could potentially mitigate issues for students who were feeling alienated. Another student noted that Evergreen is primarily a commuter campus, and perhaps the college should bring in more students to live on campus to improve the sense of community.

### **Do you have any other comments or things that occurred to you along the way?**

Most of the additional comments that students offered in closing the focus groups have been incorporated in the most logical preceding sections of the report.

One student closed his focus group by saying that he thinks one of Evergreen’s assets is that there are many people here who want to make a difference and who embrace change, as long as they have access to conversations. He said, that this focus group had been “a great opportunity to talk about growth enrollment.”

**Student Focus Group Participant Ratings of Enrollment Growth Proposals  
in Terms of PERSONAL Interests**

(N=16 students completed an interest checklist about the proposals)

Proposal sequence number	<b>I would be interested in this program:</b>	Yes	No	missing
6	Center for Teaching and Learning: Peer Educators	11	4	1
10	Endorsement in Special Education and Bilingual Education	11	5	0
19	Initiative in Sustainable Economy and Society	11	5	0
38	Reservation-Based/Community-Determined Program	10	5	1
40	Evening/Weekend Studies Enrollment Growth	9	5	2
42	Take over the Union Institute's Interdisciplinary PhD Program	9	5	2
4	Social Services: Theory and Practice	9	6	1
14	Science and Mathematics for Educators	9	6	1
17	Master's in Interdisciplinary Science: Applied Biology/Chemistry	8	7	1
18	Natural History/Biodiversity Studies	8	7	1
20	MES/MPA Joint Program in Science, Environment, and Justice	8	7	1
35	A Program in Peace-Building	8	7	1
36	Evergreen-Seattle	8	7	1
21	Expansion and Development of Performing Arts Offerings	8	8	0
7	2+2+1 Teacher Education Sequence	7	8	1
9	M.Ed. -- Summer and Evening/Weekend & Professional Certification	7	8	1
16	Growth in Pre-Science/Pre-Health Programs	7	8	1
24	2D/3D Arts Education, and Arts Entrepreneurship/Management	7	8	1
15	Increase Transfer Seats in the Areas of Applied Biology and Chemistry	7	9	0
5	Evergreen Early Childhood Program	6	8	2
23	MFA in Interdisciplinary Media Arts	6	8	2
11	Tacoma 2+2+1 Teacher Education Program	6	9	1
12	Strengthen the Liberal Arts Core of the College	6	9	1
22	Expand existing media arts curriculum and strengthen links between media arts and information technology	6	9	1
28	Expand Management and Business	6	9	1
29	Evergreen Silk Road International Study Program	6	9	1
32	Middle East Studies Proposal	6	9	1
8	Undergraduate Education/Teacher Certification Program	6	10	0
13	Intergenerational Education	5	9	2
1	Bachelor's in Social Work (BASW)	5	10	1
25	Certificate Program in Woodworking and Furniture Design	5	11	0
27	Dance/Culture/Community Initiative	4	10	2
39	Expand Recruitment for existing Upside Down degree program	4	10	2
41	The Foundations	4	10	2
30	Chinese Studies	4	11	1
31	Chinese Language and Culture	4	11	1
34	Outdoor Leadership	4	11	1
37	Evergreen/WAOL Distance Education Partnership	3	11	2
26	Developing the Visual Arts Area's 3-D Design/Sculpture Curriculum	2	12	2
2	Master's in Social Work (MSW)	2	13	1
33	Sport Studies	2	13	1
3_1	Accelerated MSW for BASW students	1	12	3
3_3	International BASW/MSW	0	12	4
3_2	Distance MSW	0	13	3

**Student Focus Group Participant Ratings of Enrollment Growth Proposals  
in Terms of Whether OTHER STUDENTS Might Be Interested**

(N=16 students completed an interest checklist about the proposals)

Proposal sequence number	<b>I know <u>other students</u> who would be interested in this program:</b>	Yes	No	missing
19	Initiative in Sustainable Economy and Society	15	1	0
6	Center for Teaching and Learning: Peer Educators	14	1	1
32	Middle East Studies Proposal	14	1	1
36	Evergreen-Seattle	14	1	1
10	Endorsement in Special Education and Bilingual Education	14	2	0
14	Science and Mathematics for Educators	13	2	1
17	Master's in Interdisciplinary Science: Applied Biology/Chemistry	13	2	1
38	Reservation-Based/Community-Determined Program	13	2	1
22	Expand existing media arts curriculum and strengthen links between media arts and information technology	12	2	2
4	Social Services: Theory and Practice	12	3	1
8	Undergraduate Education/Teacher Certification Program	12	3	1
16	Growth in Pre-Science/Pre-Health Programs	12	3	1
18	Natural History/Biodiversity Studies	12	3	1
30	Chinese Studies	12	3	1
35	A Program in Peace-Building	12	3	1
12	Strengthen the Liberal Arts Core of the College	12	4	0
9	M.Ed. -- Summer and Evening/Weekend & Professional Certification	11	3	2
13	Intergenerational Education	11	3	2
40	Evening/Weekend Studies Enrollment Growth	11	3	2
20	MES/MPA Joint Program in Science, Environment, and Justice	11	4	1
31	Chinese Language and Culture	11	4	1
15	Increase Transfer Seats in the Areas of Applied Biology and Chemistry	11	5	0
2	Master's in Social Work (MSW)	10	4	2
42	Take over the Union Institute's Interdisciplinary PhD Program	10	4	2
21	Expansion and Development of Performing Arts Offerings	10	5	1
24	2D/3D Arts Education, and Arts Entrepreneurship/Management	10	5	1
1	Bachelor's in Social Work (BASW)	9	5	2
5	Evergreen Early Childhood Program	9	5	2
23	MFA in Interdisciplinary Media Arts	9	5	2
37	Evergreen/WAOL Distance Education Partnership	9	5	2
7	2+2+1 Teacher Education Sequence	9	6	1
28	Expand Management and Business	9	6	1
26	Developing the Visual Arts Area's 3-D Design/Sculpture Curriculum	8	7	1
29	Evergreen Silk Road International Study Program	8	7	1
25	Certificate Program in Woodworking and Furniture Design	8	8	0
39	Expand Recruitment for existing Upside Down degree program	7	7	2
11	Tacoma 2+2+1 Teacher Education Program	7	8	1
3_1	Accelerated MSW for BASW students	6	7	3
33	Sport Studies	6	10	0
34	Outdoor Leadership	6	10	0
3_2	Distance MSW	5	8	3
27	Dance/Culture/Community Initiative	5	9	2
41	The Foundations	5	9	2
3_3	International BASW/MSW	4	8	4