

THE LONG HOUSE PROJECT

PROPOSED ACADEMIC PROGRAM

BYRON L. YOUTZ

VICE PRESIDENT & PROVOST

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. Ernest Boyer, former U.S. Commissioner of Education and former Chancellor of the State University of New York, stated in a keynote address at the TESC Conference on Alternative Education in September, 1981, "I believe that in the 1980's innovators must tackle the toughest of all assignments. We must somehow find the way to bridge: to preserve individual differences and acknowledge the uniqueness of each student while also building a greater social understanding which gives meaning to individual lives. Putting it another way,....we must help students to confront their separateness and recognize their togetherness."

The development of a Native American Longhouse on the campus of The Evergreen State College will be a unique step in the direction suggested by Dr. Boyer on behalf of one of the major cultural groups in the State of Washington. It will provide a rich setting where all of our students may confront cultural differences, acknowledge uniqueness, build social understanding and recognize togetherness. It will provide a cultural home where Indian students may preserve a heritage and give meaning to their individual lives.

For countless generations, the Smokehouse Longhouse has been the place of hospitality and tradition for Native American people of the Northwest Coast. It was and is the home, a life-connection, coming from and going toward the people, with a commitment that no one in need of community shall be denied. This Longhouse, then, will be a symbol to the Indian peoples of this state of the commitment of The Evergreen State College for providing a sense of community along with special educational opportunities to Indian students in the future, as we have done in the past.

Mary Ellen Hillaire came to Evergreen in 1972 with a special vision for the higher education of her people. This vision found reality through the invitation to alternatives which the college provided, and Mary opened the door to Native American Studies. A key part of her vision was the development of a traditional gathering place in which this educational vision could be sustained, a cultural home for rediscovering and retaining the traditions of the Indian people while preparing for the world of work in whatever cultural setting might be required. In this gathering place the Indian student, while keeping faith with his or her cultural heritage, can develop academic skills to meet the demands of a plural society.

The Evergreen State College is in a unique position to perform this cross cultural educational function. We have a commitment to Affirmative Action goals which are far in advance of any other educational institution in the state. We have a flexible curricular structure which fosters and nourishes specially designed educational programs for special clientele. We are located in a part of the state which has more Native American tribes and bands than does any other educational institution in the state (see Appendix for map and list of tribes). We have a mandate, through the new C.P.E. Six Year Plan for Higher Education in the State of Washington, to serve the entire state with our unique educational programs. It is therefore entirely fitting that we should become the site of this unique educational structure.

HISTORY

This proposed Longhouse started with Mary Hillaire's vision drawn from generations past. She carried this dream from her Lummi people to Evergreen where, ten years ago, she founded Native American Studies. In 1978 the first recorded talk about the building of a Longhouse took place between President Dan Evans, Mary Hillaire, and student Colleen Ray. Talk became action in 1980 when the first Longhouse Planning Group was established as part of the Native American Studies Program called, "Life Modeling--A Sense of Being". This program was joined by the Environmental Design program and the "Making of America" program in a unique, three-way venture. A planning group was formed which met every Tuesday for three quarters to establish the concept, to recommend a site, to talk with tribes and to set up conferences and gatherings to promote the Longhouse idea. The student chairman was Mel Moon, Jr. (Hupa). The faculty who worked with him were Mary Hillaire, Lloyd Colfax, David Whitener, Rainer Hasenstab and Phil Harding. Support was also given by Gail Tremblay, Mary Nelson, York Wong, Maxine Mimms and Betsy Diffendal. The diversified student group, with different tribes and cultures represented, was enthusiastic and committed to the idea and the ideal of a Longhouse on the Evergreen campus.

This same dedication has been carried over to this year's planning group. Mel Moon, Sr. was elected chairperson. Some of last year's students continuing on the committee are: Ann McManus, Galen Galler, Ruth and Wesley Penn (all Native Americans), Herb Dowell and Jutta Riediger. New members are Richard Johnson, Joyce Connell, Edna Harper (Lummi), with faculty support from David Whitener, Lloyd Confax, Mary Nelson and Betty Kutter. Staff support has been provided by campus architect, Jon Collier.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

The Longhouse will serve as the focus and primary setting for Native American Studies on the Evergreen State College campus. It will be an important recruitment tool for Indian students by providing a culturally relevant setting for a specially designed academic program. It will be a place where the spiritual, artistic and cultural elements of the Native American can be preserved. It will be a living museum and a place for demonstration and discussion between Native and non-Native Americans. It will be a place to celebrate Indian culture and a place of inspiration to Native Americans and non-Native Americans alike. It will be a center of communication and a bridge between cultures. It will serve as an Affirmative Action effort, easing the transition for Indian students coming to Evergreen.

In particular, the Longhouse and associated spaces will serve as the academic home for the following Native American Studies activities:

1.) Northwest Native American Studies Specialty Area

The major goal of the Northwest Native American Studies Specialty Area is to provide an open educational opportunity for Native Americans to study; it is not merely a place to study Native Americans. However, this interdisciplinary area is designed to serve two specifically different student groups: Indian students who are interested in living and enriching their unique cultural heritage and developing strategies for self-determination in the pluralistic society in which we live, and students interested in learning about traditional Native American cultures and values, including the dynamics for change in a plural society.

The Northwest Native American Specialty Area will include at least one major program and two auxiliary programs each year, as well as a minimum of one course each year. In addition, the specialty area will collaborate and design symposium components with other areas on topics such as health, science, art, environmental studies and management. The college's new emphasis on Indian Education within our Teacher Certification Program provides a new and special opportunity for collaboration. In particular, this area will provide programs to prepare Native American students to enter the Teacher Certification Program and will advise students wishing to prepare to become certified teachers. This area will also provide a setting in which the non-Indian Teacher Certification student may learn from a cross-cultural experience.

Within the cultural setting familiar to Native Americans, we will provide opportunities for students to prepare themselves for the following career pathways, taking advantage of the curriculum available within the rest of the college, as well: Indian Affairs, Tribal Government, Indian Education, Marine Studies, Environmental Studies, Health Studies, Social Services, Community Development, Management Studies, Computer Studies, Traditional and Contemporary Expressive Arts. Each student will have an interview with a member of the Native American Studies faculty and plan an individualized course of study to prepare the best curriculum possible for satisfying that student's particular needs.

Students within the Northwest Native American Studies will work to develop the following abilities: Individual Identity, Group Loyalty and Personal Authority. Having developed these abilities and the particular set of skills they need, students will be able to return to their communities and have a positive impact on the world around them.

2.) Degree-Oriented Native American Contributions to the College Curriculum.

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| a. Native American Studies | k. Native Languages |
| b. Survey of Indian History | l. Native American Religions |
| c. Sociocultural Anthropology | m. Native American Music |
| d. Comparative Philosophy | n. Native American Dance |
| e. Contemporary Problems | o. 2D and 3D Art |
| f. Tribal Government | p. Ethnobotany |
| g. Treaties and Laws | q. Native American Nutrition |
| h. Political Geography | r. Traditional Native Architecture
and Technology |
| i. Literature and Mythology | |
| j. Contemporary Drama | |

3.) Other contributions to the College.

Provide a resource for the development of Native American Curriculum materials for the schools or for other classes on campus.

Provide culturally diverse opportunities and curriculum skills for teacher certification students of all races.

Increase the attractiveness of the campus for Third World students.

Be an artistic resource for the traditional and contemporary Indian Arts.

Provide sponsorship and location for education conferences, forums and workshops on Indian culture and Indian affairs (e.g. Indian youth conferences).

Provide a space for policy meetings between local and state government representatives.

Serve as an archive and research center for the study of Native American affairs.

Provide space for cultural events such as: Ceremonies, Social Activities, Art exhibits and displays.