

Academic Prog. Planning, Seattle

THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

August 26, 1970

MEMORANDUM

To: President McCann

From: Joseph Shoben

Subject: Some reflections on our recent retreat with the Trustees

*Received 9-5-70
DUP*

Read and discussed with Joe

Trying to get my thoughts in order as a consequence of our recent get-together with the Trustees, I'm setting these reactions down for your consideration. In general, there are three topics to be touched upon: (a) the general purpose and nature of our informal meetings with the Trustees, (b) the nature of our academic program as it was laid out at the meeting in Tacoma, and (c) the implications of the way in which our 06 Program was discussed last Wednesday and Thursday for our overall organization.

PURPOSE AND NATURE OF TRUSTEES' RETREATS

On the first score, I find myself just a little confused as to our objectives in getting together with the Trustees, just as I am a trifle uncertain about the extent to which these interactions can best be conceived as an open debating society. Although my response here may well be a function of having once been burned, I really don't care what the ground rules are; I should simply prefer them to be clearer than they seem to be. My own inclination is to devote these sessions to informing the Trustees, to indicating the issues which have not yet been resolved by the staff and to ask for Trustee inputs to further deliberations, and to receive any questions that the Trustees may have. When those questions can be answered, they obviously should be; when they bear on matters that have not yet been decided and are primarily topics about which staff consensus is important, then they should, in my judgment, be deferred to a subsequent get-together. On the other hand, I shan't mind -- and would even welcome -- a free-for-all if it is understood that a free-for-all is looked upon as entirely in order. I hope that you will agree that either some discussion of this matter is worthwhile, or that you will simply indicate the ways in which you want these interchanges conducted. As I have indicated before, my own belief is that our relationship with the Trustees is one that you should control by virtue of the fact that you are responsible to them and for the kind of support and contribution that the Trustees make to Evergreen.

OUR ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Let me turn now to the presentation of our curriculum as it was laid out in the Tacoma conclave. I find it exciting, possessed of great intellectual appeal and wonderfully free of the discipline dominance that I have argued against ever since we first talked together in Buffalo. In many ways, it is the kind of thing in which I, socialized as I have been, would thoroughly enjoy participating, either as a student or as a faculty member. The model is, of course, Joe Tussman's; and as you may well remember, I wrote to you a year ago, before coming to Olympia, to recommend Tussman's Experiment at Berkeley and to urge that this curricular