

NEWS

The Evergreen State College

Olympia, Washington 98505

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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June graduation for about 180 seniors is lending a sense of urgency to the development of placement services at The Evergreen State College.

The only public four-year college in the state which combines its Placement Office under joint directorship with its Office of Financial Aid, Evergreen is also unique in its reliance on student interns for the "backbone of its staff," according to Les Eldridge, director of both services.

"Combining both offices under one directorship allows us to provide the services common to both areas more efficiently. It also provides far greater convenience for the students," Eldridge said. "Those who come in for financial aid are often in need of a job, and all of our staff are 'cross trained' to provide guidance on student finances and to help find part-time job opportunities. The initial contact with students seeking financial aid gives us the opportunity to talk to them about career placement."

With only one other full-time professional staff member, the Placement Office relies heavily on the work of eight student counselor-interns and three student clerks.

"Ours is the only state school which has involved undergraduate interns in both its financial aid and placement operations," Eldridge said. "They carry a great deal of responsibility here and have proved, thus far, to be invaluable additions to our office."

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Dick Nichols, Director
Information Services

Services provided through the interns in the Placement Office include job development, career information collection, senior seminar programming and personal placement counseling.

Job development is the major function of the office, according to Eldridge, and involves soliciting job listings of a part-time, summer or career nature, interviewing students, matching students to jobs, referring students to employers and keeping up-to-date lists of all **vacancies** throughout the state.

Career placement is the final step in a student's learning and exploration," he said. "It involves not only placement in 'traditional' careers, but entry into graduate schools and alternatives to career placement which allow the student to mark time while deciding on the course of his future."

All placement services are linked closely with Counseling Services and the Office of Cooperative Education at Evergreen, as well as with others on campus which are dealing with off campus personnel.

"Internships through the Co-Op Office are a perfect mechanism for career exploration," Eldridge said. "Faculty members are another important resource, especially in dealing with potential graduate school placements. We recently surveyed the faculty and received a terrific response which indicated that many faculty members are willing to contact graduate schools and work with the students on graduate school selection and placement."

The Placement Office also arranges on-campus interviews and is responsible for the grievance hearing board where complaints are heard from students against employers who interview on campus.

"If a student feels that an employer has failed to comply with laws against discrimination or has breached other fair employment practices, he can bring his complaint before the board and request that the employer not be allowed on campus in the future," Eldridge explained.

The Placement Office also tries to give students better tools with which to find jobs. "We offer hints on how to hunt jobs more effectively," he added. "We provide information on resume preparation and assist in development of detailed credential files. We also hold a weekly senior seminar to discuss topics of concern to graduates."

To provide up-to-date job listings, the office participates in the Washington State Job Bank through the Office of Employment Security and is exploring the possibility of setting up similar arrangements with other states.

Job forecasting is another arena of job development which Eldridge said the center is exploring. "We want to be able to give students worthwhile advice on which vocations are growing, on where the demands are."

Emphasis is also placed on helping solve the special problems of women and non-white students seeking employment, Eldridge said.