



## Evergreen Advocates Talking Points

December 2025

### Main Points:

- Every state university suffered budget cuts in 2025, but Evergreen was singled out for deeper, multi-year reductions, to meet a “per student” spending target.
- Evergreen's strong enrollment growth of 4% each year over the last four years already positions it to meet funding per student targets naturally by 2029. Fall 2025 total enrollment is up by 6.4% to 2,667 students.
- The extra cuts would reverse this progress, reduce enrollment and raise per-student costs.
- Evergreen offers classes, certificates and programs more students want because students come from a variety situations and backgrounds. Many are low-income, working part or full-time jobs or are first-generation college students. Evergreen’s unique curriculum is exceptional at supporting students in the classroom followed by successful, meaningful careers after graduation.
- Evergreen was ranked in the top 15% nationally by Washington Monthly for delivering outstanding value especially in overperforming in earnings, making almost \$11,000 more in early careers than peers with similar educations.

<https://washingtonmonthly.com/2025/08/24/25-best-colleges/>

**OUR ASK:** Reverse the \$2.7 million Evergreen-specific cut for FY27 so enrollment growth will align per student funding without sacrificing classes, programs or student support.

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## **Details as background for our Advocates:**

- All Washington public universities took budget cuts in the 2025 legislative session, but unlike the others, the Evergreen State College faces additional targeted reductions starting with \$2.7 million cut in FY27 and more cuts in subsequent years, totaling over 15% by FY29.
- Lawmakers say the goal is to align Evergreen's per student funding with other regional universities. The Legislature requires Evergreen to have a cost of \$18,000 per student by FY29. To reach that target, Evergreen's enrollment has grown for four years straight outpacing every other institution. That growth alone will achieve the per-student funding target by 2029. In other words, cuts are not needed and are contrary to the legislature's stated goals.
- These proposed reductions would do the opposite of what's intended: faculty and staffing cuts will result in decreased enrollment, increased per student costs, and threaten Evergreen's ability to deliver the world class, workforce-ready education Washington students deserve. To stay on track, we urge the Legislature to rescind the \$2.7 million cut in FY27 and allow the college to continue its upward momentum.

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## **Responses to possible questions:**

### **Q: What about increasing tuition or finding other ways to cut costs?**

**A:** The college has already maximized tuition increases within allowable limits, and it has also reduced faculty FTE by 17% since 2019.

### **Q: What programs would be at risk if these cuts are allowed to take place?**

**A:** Without a budget correction, Evergreen will be forced to cut critical programs and services, driving higher per student costs. These cuts would affect programs with higher per-student costs including teaching certification programs, the baccalaureate program for incarcerated students, Tacoma programs, student advising and support services, and community use of the swimming pool, which local high schools rely upon without a Thurston County public pool. As a result of such cuts, fewer students would attend

Evergreen, pushing per-student costs higher, directly counter to the stated intention of this legislative cut.

**Q: This is a very difficult budget year, and many worthy requests will have to be turned down. Why should we treat Evergreen specially?**

**A:** Evergreen has built up momentum over the last four years through enrollment growth. Budget cuts targeting the college risk a reversal of that progress. If enrollment begins to fall because of these cuts, it will be very difficult to turn around again.

The \$2.7 million requested is less than 2% of the overall higher education budget but the loss could be an existential threat for Evergreen.

These cuts could mean a downward spiral for the 50-year-old college that has produced graduates with stunning wins for our state. From this year's top-grossing animated movie ever (**Zootopia 2**, directed by Greener grad Byron Howard) and the online learning platform, lynda.com (now **LinkedIn** learning, created by Greener grad Lynda Weinman), the marine mammal research center, **Cascadia Research Collective** (led by Greener grad John Calambokidis), to scores of Greener-run businesses, to educational institutions and non-profits that support communities throughout Washington.

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***FOOTNOTE for Advocates Only:***

Yes, abbreviations or acronyms are annoying but helpful in communicating with legislators. Here are some translations for terms you may here or read about:

**FY = Fiscal Year**

The Washington State fiscal year (FY) runs from **July 1 to June 30** of the following year, named for the calendar year it ends in (e.g., FY25 or FY 2025 is July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025), with budgets enacted on a biennial (two-year) cycle beginning in odd-numbered years.

**Biennial Budget**

The Washington State biennial budget is a two-year financial plan (operating, capital, transportation) adopted in odd-numbered years, covering a fiscal biennium from July 1 of one odd-numbered year to June 30 of the next. It sets state spending authority for the full period, often revised by supplemental budgets in even-numbered years.