



CIRAL

HANDBOOK

To help introduce, maintain, and further the development of CIRAL @ The Evergreen State College and beyond

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Welcome

One of the things that I like so much about CIRAL is the sense of limitless possibility. — Mattea Kline

This handbook was originally suggested by students working within CIRAL. It, among other documents, is primarily intended for students at The Evergreen State College who are working in the Civic Intelligence Research and Action Laboratory (or CIRAL for short). CIRAL is an evolving initiative to provide institutional support for a wide range of student-led projects that transcend many of the constraints of traditional (and *non*traditional) undergraduate education. This includes working on CIRAL directly as well as developing and implementing projects, thus creating the institution through practice.

CIRAL is intended to help promote sustaining relationships between Evergreen (students, faculty, and programs) and organizations outside the classroom. We will be successful in this regard if we have made progress towards this objective, particularly if we've started working with outside groups using the perspectives and objectives we've developed.

We introduce CIRAL below and discuss its philosophy and motivation. Following that discussion are several sections that discuss the practical aspects of CIRAL. Finally, we discuss research issues and possible future directions.

Welcome to CIRAL, Evergreen's Civic Intelligence Research and Action Laboratory!

Introduction and Guidelines

The goal of the CIRAL is to create a sustaining enterprise at Evergreen (whether it be through programs, classes, organizations, research options, internships, contracts, or some combination) that engages in research and action through a focus on civic intelligence. Due to the nature of this focus students will necessarily become active leaders. The enterprise will encourage and teach social action for the betterment of not just our community, but those around the world. The work will not be restricted to working with local organizations, but — at least at the onset — there will probably be a focus on the local community. The hope is that CIRAL, which was initiated in the fall of 2011, will persist over time, perhaps somewhere between 5-10 years, although the ideal is an indefinite end.

Experimental School



Schools with unchanging assumptions can't meet society's changing needs. This is unfortunate now when the need for public problem-solving is most acute. An Experimental School attempts to accomplish positive aims while adopting experimentation as a guiding orientation. The key concepts are respect for learning, reflection, and faith in the importance of reasoning and, especially, reasoning together.

CIRAL is a type of experimental school within an experimental school.

The Evergreen State College is a progressive, experimental college in the Pacific Northwest. It strives to integrate theory and practice and to a large degree student-directed learning. Through its interdisciplinary programs and independent learning contracts — and its narrative approach to evaluation (no grades) and absence of required classes Evergreen stands nearly alone in terms of not embracing the standard format while not reducing disciplined thinking and learning. Evergreen has been remarkably successful in student engagement as well as in the percentage of students who find employment after leaving Evergreen.

CIRAL Mission Statement

Provide a new approach to education based on civic intelligence through student initiated and led collaborative and participative projects that link theory and practice and transcend the academy and the “real world” based on institutional, temporal, roles, or other boundaries. (still in work!)

We will address this by:

- Exploring and cultivating social innovation, social imagination, and civic intelligence;
- Envisioning, developing, evolving, and expanding the CIRAL approach;
- Building the leadership and other skills necessary to be effective citizens;
- Developing and maintaining collaborative relationships and projects;
- Integrating social theories with social practice; and
- Striving to be a testament to The Evergreen State College and help provide a good model for education at Evergreen while it explores how it will evolve in the twenty-first century.

To these ends we have identified four aspects that should characterize all our work within CIRAL.

1. Civic intelligence

CIRAL focuses on civic intelligence; *civic ends though civic means*. This means that all of our projects are intended to advance and practice civic intelligence. In other words, we don't begin with something that we'd like to do and assume that it fits this criterion. Sometimes this means that we don't do something just because it's a good thing to do.

2. Collaborative

Our projects are intended to be collaborative. We are trying to build on each other's work and develop and create projects that are not plausible without other help. What this means in practical terms is that students generally speaking will not be doing projects on their own.

3. Give Back

Unlike more traditional approaches to undergraduate education (at least), where every quarter is brand new, old students are replaced by new ones and all of their work is forgotten, we consciously try to contribute useful knowledge and insight on which future members can build.

4. Connection to CIRAL

We are consciously trying to build a new approach through CIRAL. This implies that our projects should assist with the development of CIRAL as well.

Advice

If you are new to CIRAL the most important goal for you at the onset is *internalizing* the idea of CIRAL, its objectives, history, processes and structure. When you “get it” you’ll be in a much better position to decide what to do and how to contribute in general. This will happen naturally through reading this Handbook and other writings, thinking, and discussing it with other people—especially your colleagues and faculty member(s). Try meeting before class in person or at other times via Skype, Google hangouts, Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/groups/CIRAL/>), Wiki (<http://wikis.evergreen.edu/civicingelligence>), or the CIRAL mailing list (ciral@googlegroups.com).

The structure of CIRAL at Evergreen can be a little confusing at first but it will become clear fairly quickly. For the time being the structure seems to work fairly well for students and faculty. It’s also flexible enough to accommodate other faculty, and as time goes on it can be tweaked. And if all possible, don’t get hung up on precise definitions or wasting too much time trying to redefine civic intelligence (discussed later in this handbook).

You’ll need to be working every week in a way that’s commensurate with your credit load — and you will need to be monitoring your work. You’ll need to be working towards the development of resources, a community partnership, or a project (which will generally mean integrating into work that is already in progress (via an established “cluster”), rather than starting something brand new). And, please, commit! Try not to bounce around!

Because this enterprise is somewhat autonomous you’ll need to be cognizant about evaluations and self-monitoring; this includes tasks, skills, areas of focus, products, research, collaboration, in relation to CIRAL goals. We’ll work on this during the quarter.

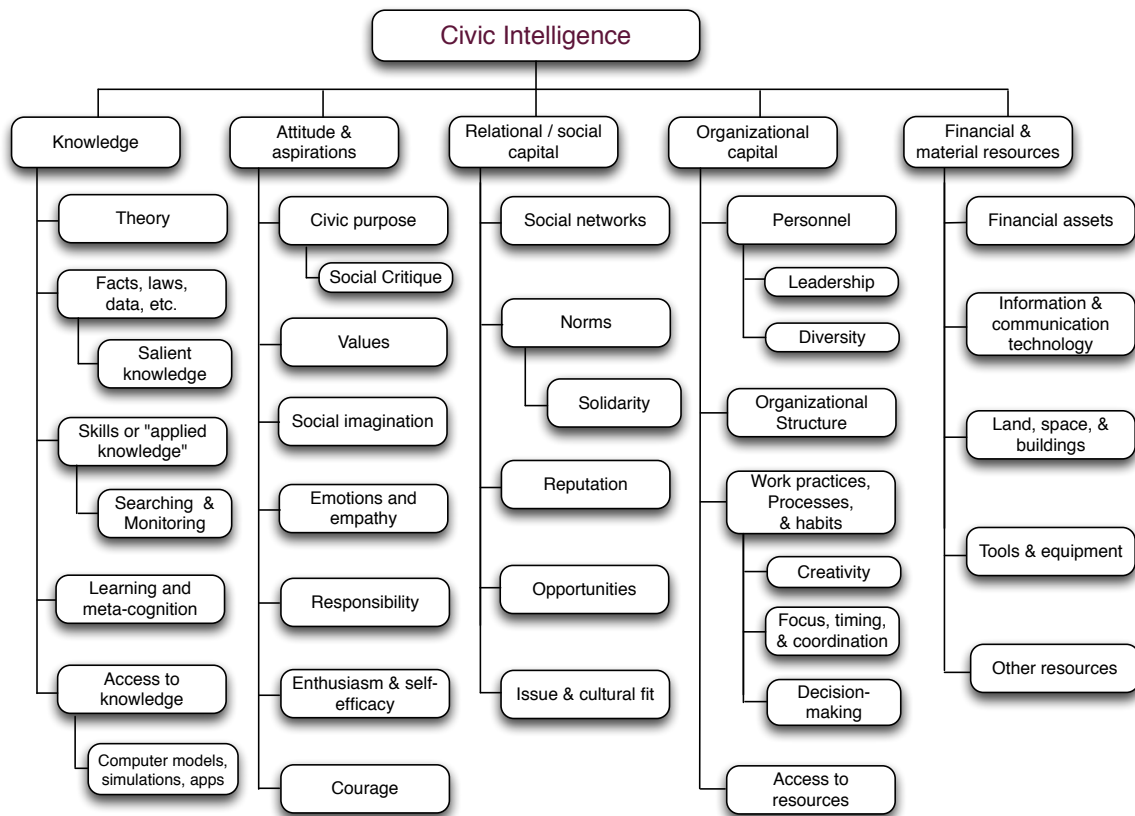
If you find yourself unable to identify work, feel free to ask your faculty member to give you an assignment or and be placed in a cluster or cluster development group.

Finally, you’ll need to assume leadership roles from time to time. These will probably be dynamic and flexible — no one is the boss *all* the time — but temporary leadership is still leadership! And remember that you should be assuming a variety of roles as the quarter(s) go on. Also, to be successful in this enterprise, it’s important to have a positive, *can-do*, attitude in which you give possible actions serious consideration — even if they’re ultimately not pursued. Also, as one of your colleagues suggested, you and the project teams you work with need to envision, describe, and define success. You will also have to live with some ambiguity — this is natural and to be expected. On the other hand, you must act: As Samuel Mockbee said, “*Proceed and be bold!*” Just say yes! *At least provisionally to yourself.*

What is Civic Intelligence?

Civic intelligence is a form of collective intelligence (Schuler, 2001) that is directed towards positive social change. It could be characterized as social learning, design, and engagement. It's inherently interdisciplinary as it brings together such disciplines as sociology, psychology, cognitive science, political economy, media studies, education, public policy and others. Perhaps most importantly, it helps us answer the question of whether *we will be smart enough soon enough*.

Thinking about the way one thinks — metacognition — is an important feature of expert knowledge on the individual level. We argue that civic intelligence with its focus on societal metacognition is crucial to thinking about and addressing modern social challenges. Yet, curiously, there is no mutually agreed upon word or expression with this meaning. Although there are many people who influenced this work (which is growing considerably), John Dewey, who focused on this concept throughout his career, is one of its most notable proponents.



Updated: August 27, 2013

One model of civic intelligence identifies five key components (above) that must be present to characterize effective civic intelligence. These include (1) knowledge; (2) attitude and aspirations; (3) relational / social capital; (4) organizational capital, and (5) financial and material resources. This is one model that we can use to help orient our work.

Climate change, for example, perhaps more than any other public challenge requires civic intelligence. One hopeful sign is that there are now a variety of studies that reveal that groups *can* be “smarter” than their “smartest” member. Unfortunately, according to professor of psychology and behavioral economics Dan Ariely, “if one wanted to create a problem that people would not care about, you’d probably end up with global warming.” Moreover, the problems that we have before us would be difficult enough without the professional propagation of climate change denying, which can be considered as a competing system of knowledge within the civic intelligence framework.

Why is CIRAL Needed?

Evergreen is home to an immense number of community-academia partnerships, ranging from longer-term projects (such Gateways project for incarcerated youth, <http://gateways.evergreen.edu/>) to relatively brief sessions lasting one quarter or even less. A high percentage of Evergreen students participate in community work as part of their academic work and a large number of Evergreen programs support this work as well.

So why is CIRAL needed? Simply stated we envision CIRAL as a way to help Evergreen do this work more effectively and more easily basically by building on what we're already doing.

- Build longer, sustaining relationships. This would benefit the community and the student experience.
- Continue year-round. Communities don't take the summers off.
- Be permanent. For one thing, students with more experience on a project would be able to help inform others with less experience;
- Incorporate the community work into academic / research work in a more regular and coherent way
- Maintain several community partnerships at a time. At any given point, some may be new, some maturing, and some in the process of stopping.

Some of the limits that we hope to at least potentially transcend are the following:

- engaged vs. “academic”
- ongoing vs. sporadic
- additive vs. amnesiac
- student- (and teacher-) led vs. teacher-led

In addition, the activity of actually designing an actual institution is an educational experience with far reaching implications that are rarely found in educational settings.

Evergreen is a natural home for such an enterprise. There is strong interest and motivation for this type of work as well as extensive experience. The world has changed considerably since Evergreen's founding 40 years ago. Perhaps there are ways in which Evergreen might need to change institutionally to better support this work now and for the future. Educating ourselves for 21st Century realities is a particularly important endeavor right now for many reasons including ongoing budget and employment crises; economic insecurity; corrosive political culture; environmental degradation and climate change; and globalization.

Research+Action Focus

Much of higher education is focused on theoretical endeavors. While we embrace theory as an important intellectual activity within CIRAL (and not reserved only for academics and students enrolled in universities) we believe that, in the social sciences at least, theory for its own sake or theory divorced from the “real world” tends to be unnecessarily inaccessible and non-useful. (The social processes that give rise to this situation within the academic world are fascinating and, actually, key to an enterprise like CIRAL).

The intellectual downgrading of *practice* in relation to *theory* impoverishes intellectual inquiry and, arguably, society as a whole. At any rate and for whatever reasons, keeping the research focus present can be difficult in the case where practice (or *action*) becomes the main focus. In other words, action—the carrying out of plans or the repeating of past actions can become “mere” labor.

Ideally, the work of the laboratory will contain equal parts research and action: *Action without reflection is incoherent, reflection without action is pointless.*

Hypothetical Example: Homelessness in Thurston County

Although CIRAL members as well as students and other members of the Evergreen community (in addition to the work of local government bodies and non-profit organizations) have worked in this area, the following list of research and action possibilities is being presented as a *hypothetical example* of work that could be conducted in an important area.

- * Conducting policy research and development work
- * Creating public service announcements & other public awareness work
- * Conducting research on economic impacts of homelessness
- * Helping to develop and support institutional memory of Evergreen’s involvement
- * Identifying, exploring, and advancing the potential the educational philosophy of the project and the potential for Evergreen support and integration
- * Institutionalizing projects, in general and at Evergreen
- * Exporting successful models (to other schools and other regions)
- * Researching relevant approaches (in other regions, countries, departments, etc.)
- * Helping to place homeless people in jobs, education
- * Conducting surveys and other approaches to understanding the problem and evaluation
- * Providing technical support to projects, e.g. logistics, computer, administration, planning, design
- * Mapping and community studies
- * Understanding problem domain, history, economic and political contexts
- * Maintaining relevant reference (etc.) library or other resources
- * Identifying resources and securing them
- * Facilitating conversations, conferences, working sessions, etc. about problems and possible solutions

Objectives and Indicators

The following is a draft list of goals and objectives related to CIRAL. Refining and augmenting this list can help us define and understand our mission. We can operationalize the goals and objectives that can help us evaluate—and improve—CIRAL and help us describe our findings in ways that help us participate in research and other academic conversations.

Objectives for Students

- Build self-empowered, optimistic, yet humble attitude
- Improve grasp of relevant theory and practice
- Improve skillset
- Improve leadership, autonomy, self-esteem
- Help create and join appropriate networks
- Find meaningful employment after Evergreen

Objectives for CIRAL

- Build capacity (resources of various kinds, e.g.)
- Successfully market the idea to stakeholders; Attract more students and faculty
- Integrate with other Evergreen people and groups (including administration and alums) and community at-large
- Improve our model / structure (e.g. how to sustain clusters over time)

Objectives for Evergreen

- Improve processes and institutions for students to do this work more easily, effectively, and with greater satisfaction
- Help build stronger community support and reputation
- Help retain students at Evergreen and attract students to Evergreen
- Help provide compelling progressive models to sustain and expand Evergreen's unique approach

Objectives for Society

- Promote and institutionalize civic intelligence in society (e.g. more informed views, more problem-solving abilities)

Objectives for Civic Intelligence Research and Action

- Use civic intelligence to analyze and diagnose situation in order to develop, implement, and evaluate courses of action
- Evaluate and critique existing models
- Document and share findings with appropriate individuals and groups

CIRAL Nuts & Bolts

New to CIRAL?

New students will receive at the beginning of the quarter a syllabus and schedule, covenant, and this handbook. There is also a presentation online that presents the motivation and other background information for CIRAL. The covenant will contain obligations to self / faculty / other (current & future) students, and, ultimately, community partners (actual and potential). Students will be evaluated on how well the learning objectives were met and how well they abided by the covenant.

There are currently three directly relevant options in support of CIRAL:

Civic Intelligence program (8 credits)

Doug has been—and is planning to continue—teaching a program that focuses on civic intelligence every quarter. (It's possible that another faculty member will join him as John Baldrige did in winter-spring 2012, or, even, temporarily take this on.) Currently this program is *Social Innovation and Civic Intelligence* (SI & CI) which is being offered from Fall 2013 to Spring 2014.

Civic Intelligence program (12 credits)

This option is identical to the program above but includes collaborating with students taking the undergraduate research option described below. They will meet with those students from 4:30 — 6:00 pm on Wednesdays before the regular SI& CI program meeting.

Undergraduate Research in Civic Intelligence (2-16 credits)

This option is open to students who have taken civic intelligence programs before or who are currently in one. It is also potentially open to students who petition to be admitted. New students will be expected to read several assigned texts and fill out a profile and entrance survey before the first day of class.

Basic Student Responsibilities

Although the responsibilities are described in more detail in the covenant, it's worthwhile to say a few words here. In general, there is more responsibility towards the rest of the people working than in a standard course or program. One of the core assumptions and expectations is that people working together will be able to create better outcomes than people working alone. Everybody has a responsibility to share relevant information with each other and complete the tasks that they've agreed to work on. These include completing the online Weekly Activity Reports, the end of quarter Cluster Review forms, and contributing to the "Fresh Sheet", our informal weekly newsletter. There is also an expectation that unless other plans have been made students will attend all of these sessions. In the winter quarter of 2013 we have two students working in Africa — one in Kenya and one in South Africa — so attending our onsite meetings will be impossible. It will also be difficult for them (or other offsite CIRAL students) to work closely on projects with a local focus. Nevertheless they are also part of this effort and they are encouraged to think about how they can participate and onsite members should also think about how onsite and offsite members could collaborate.

Effort and Credits

Because we are still working within institutional guidelines the faculty member(s) must help ensure and verify that the students in the program are working at a sufficient level to obtain credit. However, since there is some unavoidable ambiguity in the program (and we're not always—if *ever*—certain which task is best to tackle first) we will use the following approach: (1) Do the tasks that are assigned by the faculty; (2) when possible do tasks that are approved by the people in the Cluster you're involved with; (3) when not possible or when you are pursuing autonomous work, select a task from the generic task list. And (4) when in doubt ask for suggestions or (better) *make* suggestions. Although you won't be in danger of losing credit if you are working in good faith according to the guidelines, please keep in mind that integrating your work into existing activity or into acknowledged CIRAL needs is almost always preferred to starting off on an individual project.

Since students working on these projects are registered for varying amounts of credits, students need to be thinking about managing their own work load — and also be cognizant of the work load of other students. On the average, students should be investing *at least* 2.5 hours of time *per week* per credit hour. This would be about 8.5 hours of work outside class for people earning 4 credits (2.5 hours x 4 credits - 1.5 hours time spent in class).



CIRAL Assemblies

All CIRAL students will meet every Wednesday afternoon during the 10 weeks of the quarter (fall-spring) from 4:30-5:50. The agenda will vary but will often include a quick status session in which each team ("task cluster") will give a brief report on their tasks. There will also be some time for teams to discuss their issues with each other. We will adjourn at 5:50. Here is the default Schedule:

- 5-15 minutes — faculty introduction (optional)
- 10-20 minutes — cluster reports
- 30-60 minutes — cluster meetings or group activities
- 15-30 minutes — session debrief / future plans

The cluster meetings are established for student team collaboration. Please don't use the time to speak to me individually if it can be avoided or if you're wondering what cluster to caucus with.

There will often be some assigned readings, primarily in the first few weeks of the quarter. These will probably not be required for every class session. These have not been determined for the entire quarter as we assume some themes will emerge as time goes on. Online participation will be required sporadically during the quarter. This will likely take place on the class Moodle, wiki (or blog?) or on the Public Sphere Project (<http://www.publicsphereproject.org>) website.

The first three weeks will focus primarily on learning about civic intelligence, CIRAL (its motivation, purpose, etc.) and its current and future work and collaborating with other students and faculty. This initial collaboration will consist of learning about each other's interests and skills and developing ideas about future clusters and projects. During this time people in existing clusters will in most cases continue working on tasks they have already begun. Other people should plan to be associated with one or more cluster areas by the third or fourth week and be working on specific directed tasks by the fourth or fifth week.

CIRAL participants will have a range of tools and support available to help with their tasks and to interact with stakeholders, including their colleagues, the CCBLA, the *e-Liberate* online system (soon — we hope), materials developed in previous Civic Intelligence programs, and direct faculty feedback. In addition there are several current and former Evergreen students are interested in some type of collaboration with CIRAL — at least for the short-term. We'll talk with them in-person and online to see how this can be done best.

The focus of much of our work will be on the production of useful information and documentation (although this doesn't preclude research and study!). Because of the fact that our current work is intended to make our future work more effective it will be important to consider what form the documentation takes.

Students in the CIRAL project present their work informally to the civic intelligence program in the 4th week. There is also a presentation the last day of the quarter. Unless you are in another program or have work or financial obligations, there is an expectation that you attend these.

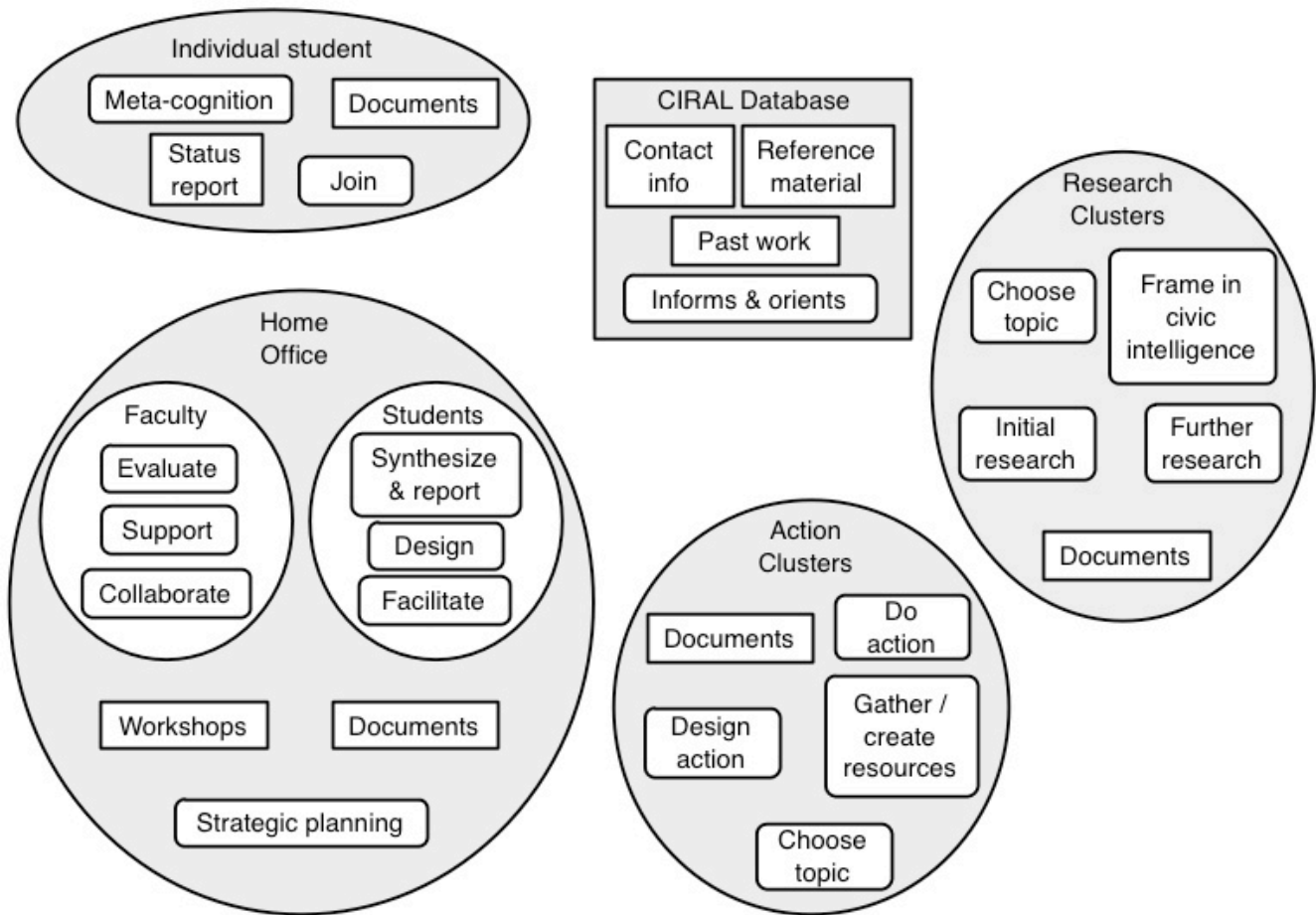
Organic Growth

An online “animation” (<http://www.scn.org/commnet/CIRAL/state-1.html>) roughly charts the evolution of CIRAL entities through spring quarter 2012. While they don't necessarily reflect the state we're in now, they illustrate several important features of CIRAL. The first is that practice can help us determine and define structure. That is, the decisions and the ideas that emerged at various stages can become formally or informally institutionalized in a way that helps proposed future projects. The second is that by tracing the evolution of clusters, projects, etc. we can visualize a life-cycle that can be useful in thinking about what we'll do in future development. Thirdly, recording our own activities (including graphically representing them) allows us to more easily reflect on our own process (technically called metacognition—thinking about thinking—a critical element of social learning and, of course, civic intelligence. Finally, as with all of our work, it is essentially becomes research when we have captured the important elements of the process.

Organization

The figure below shows a potential organizational structure that was developed by Michael O'Neil, one of the original CIRAL students who has now graduated and is working in the field. While it is a proposal, and doesn't necessarily portray the actual structure of CIRAL (notably because we don't separate the work into distinct *research* and *action* clusters), it does draw together most or all of the pertinent elements into one clear graphic presentation.

Potential CIRAL Structure



Courtesy: Michael O'Neil, Student Club and Home Office Cluster

Clusters

A major goal of the current CIRAL effort is to establish an intellectual, organizational, and technological infrastructure for ongoing community engagement and to initiate pilot and other projects that test and inform the utility of that infrastructure.

Every student will work on a team (or more than one) with at least two other students within a focused organizational entity that we call a *cluster* (and could be called a team). Although all students will work in clusters, each student, for evaluation purposes, will be responsible for articulating the work that they individually engaged in and the products that they developed. It is possible for students in the same cluster to be evaluated by different faculty members. At any given time each cluster will be in one of these states: *proposed*, *active*, *suspended*, *stopped*, or *completed*.

Note that the cluster concept evolved and is still evolving. In the future, for example, we may develop the idea of sub-clusters or cluster *types* (e.g. action or research).

Home Office Cluster

This work should improve the civic intelligence of CIRAL; it generally includes how we develop, manage, and improve CIRAL itself. This task cluster will concentrate on support and institutionalization — basically what can be done at Evergreen to support this work and how to develop the concept so that it survives (and thrives!) within Evergreen. Goals include developing durable, lasting institutions, materials, and other tools to establish and maintain the CIRAL. Conduct research and produce “white papers” and other resources for informing CIRAL students, partner organizations, and the general public. It includes governance, resource development (infrastructure and documents), skill building, marketing, and miscellaneous (such as writing articles for journals). Some possible home office clusters include e-liberate and online deliberation, theory, integration and institutionalization, curricular development, or resource development, including online information and applications. One potentially rich approach is to develop tools for viewing and envisioning our collective skills, interests, knowledge, and objectives and how they can be integrated to help us develop our own civic intelligence!

Priority jobs within this cluster include:

- Reviewing this handbook! There are plenty of incomplete sections.
- Developing plans for increased student management of CIRAL.

Community / Issue Clusters

These clusters are intended to bring people together around a community or issue. The objective of these clusters is to explore, develop, implement, and evaluate community relationships and community projects. One basic activity is identifying and contacting community organizations that would be good candidates for long term, ongoing partnership with the CIRAL. Possible clusters include public health, poverty, homelessness, violence, education, or many others.

As of June 1, 2013, the active community / issue clusters are:

- Changing Climate Change Portal
- Centralia Chehalis Ambassador Program
- Deliberation
- Evergreen Revival
- Food Systems
- Games
- Pattern Languages
- StoryWorks

The output of issue-based teams will probably include: description of the problem; proposed diagnoses; organizations working on the problem, possible evergreen roles; recommendations; curricular and other references. Ultimately the cluster would develop a detailed proposal for how to form that partnership, achieve goals, and maintain the working relationship between the organization and future CIRAL participants. This proposal could be used to help establish fruitful partnerships and to launch projects.

Individual Work

Students can optionally spend their time (up to 20%) on work that's relevant to CIRAL but hasn't been incorporated into a cluster. This work should still be proposed to the faculty member(s) and some output to be shared will generally be required.

Available Tasks

includes intermittent tasks as well as perennial work such as reading the CIRAL introductory material (for new members), conversing with people about CIRAL activities; and writing, reviewing CIRAL documents, and posting CIRAL reviews of films, books, or other artifacts or events. Developing guides to relevant theory or skill-building or other workshops could fall into this cluster. Participating on a writing project for, say, a journal is a possibility — and we've even started an article on CIRAL! We can add more to this category as it becomes necessary.

More About Clusters

Generally speaking, the bulk of your work will fall into either Home Office or one or more other clusters.. Home Office activities support the institutionalization of CIRAL at Evergreen (and, possibly, beyond) while Community Partnership activities are activities that are related to working with community projects. Here are some provisional guidelines on how we should we be directing our attention:

Home Office

25% — 50% of total student focus (in number of hours)

Community Partnerships

50% — 75% of total student focus (in number of hours)

Working on group projects (on tasks sanctioned by group or faculty): 80% - 100% of your time.

Working on individual projects (on tasks not necessarily sanctioned by group or faculty): up to 20% of your time.

Cluster Viability

Target of 2-5 students with substantial involvement per cluster. A cluster with one student can be provisionally approved by the faculty.

Policies

This section ultimately will include guidelines as to how we actually will *govern* CIRAL. These policies will become more relevant as we learn more about our practices and the requirements that we know about and the ones that will emerge over time. Currently we have a provisional set of bylaws and an established procedure for running our weekly assemblies.

The questions below are generally there to prompt our thinking about issues that we're now facing or will likely face in the future.

- What would a community / CIRAL agreement look like?
- How would CIRAL partner with CCBLA and other Evergreen groups?
- How should decisions be made within CIRAL? When should they be made?
- What are the guidelines for former or non-student involvement?
- How do we document / formalize our work?
- What methods of communication do we rely on?
- What organizational structures do we maintain – and how to we change them?
- What roles do we need and how are they established and how do they change over time?
- What restrictions to various institutions and governments place on CRAL?



Roles

Our concept of role is also evolving. The idea of course is that the particular role a person assumes at a given time helps establish their rights and responsibilities and by extension what their relationship is to other people working with CIRAL.

Possible roles include faculty members, community partners, advisors, or friends. People in these roles can take on other roles as well. For example, CIRAL members (students, usually) can assume other roles, such as a

member of a cluster, or liaison to Home Office or to a community group. And these roles can take on other important distinctions. A faculty member, for example, may be a professor at another institution besides Evergreen.

Faculty Members

The duties of a faculty member include:

- Developing overall framework and goals for individual quarters
- Liaison with administration
- Guide overall intellectual and practical tasks
- Intervening when necessary on projects
- Organizing and managing tasks and resources
- Inviting and hosting outside speakers
- Oversight
- Evaluating student progress

And a faculty member can play a role in any of the clusters. Evergreen members (students) and Evergreen faculty members are also governed by the covenant that they sign.

CIRAL Members

CIRAL members are students who are currently enrolled at Evergreen to work with CIRAL. They are expected to work with other members within clusters to develop, implement, and evaluate projects with community members and with people

Community Partners

Community Partners are people who are not on the CIRAL team but are actively engaged in the project. The community partner is also likely to be the person who is working on the community project and the CIRAL role is likely to be subsidiary. The relationship, however, is not intended to be that of employer and employee. Community projects within CIRAL are intended to be partnerships with the goals and activities to be developed jointly. Both community and CIRAL partners are obliged to live up to the terms of their agreement.

Advisor

Advisors are expected (not bound) to provide advice and ideas to faculty and student members, particularly when asked.

Friends

Friends are those people who are interested in CIRAL but do not have any of the formal roles discussed above. They could be people who have graduated from Evergreen or who aren't formally working with CIRAL. They generally will have access to CIRAL documents on the Public Sphere Project web site. They can be invited in to CIRAL projects.

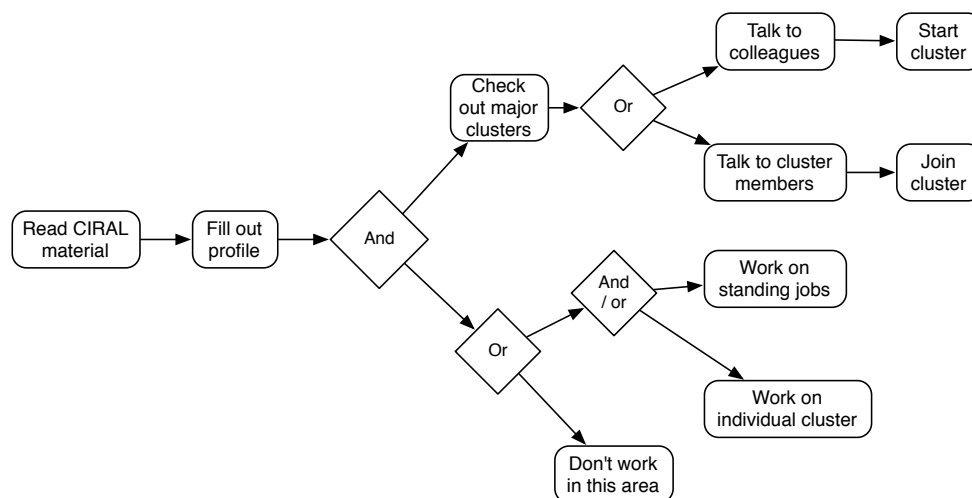
Note that as the number of people working within the CIRAL framework increases the nature of the roles and perhaps the types of roles themselves is likely to change.

CIRAL Processes

This section contains our current thinking on the processes that undergird CIRAL. Our hope is to formalize them in a way that helps make involvement with CIRAL more enriching, effective, and influential. Ultimately this section will describe what we believe are the most useful ways to go about the various CIRAL activities and tasks.

Becoming Involved With CIRAL

The (draft) figure below shows the major activities involved in becoming engaged in CIRAL work. Note that some of the elements of this figure (“Start cluster” for example) are themselves other CIRAL processes.



Starting a Community / Issue Cluster

To start a new cluster CIRAL members need to work together to:

- Identify issues of common interest
- Identify possible work and projects
- Identify stakeholders
- Identify research and other academic connections
- Develop and submit a proposal

The proposal must include: Date, proposer names, names of 3 (or more) people who will spend time this quarter (and beyond), project name, how might this cultivate civic intelligence (include social as well as research / academic significance)? What projects or project types might be undertaken by this cluster? (list 1 to 3+, and prioritize them)

Criteria for approval: 3 people (or fewer pending faculty approval), relevance, need, synergy with existing work, impact, interest, resources, research worthiness

The proposal for a new cluster should be reviewed by members of the Home Office cluster and a faculty member.

After the proposal is approved the members of the cluster should develop a mission statement (which can be considered a draft) and one or more project proposals. The mission statement should ...

Project Development

This is a draft of what a project proposal might include: (it's incomplete!)

- Title or name:
- Description:
- Current issues / relevance to CIRAL:
- Possible internal projects:
- Selected relevant books, articles, web sites, media: (list them in order of significance and say why they're significant.)
- Possible workshops:
- Relevant (local and non-local) community groups

It's important to remember that each project must satisfy four important criteria.

1. Civic intelligence

CIRAL focuses on civic intelligence; *civic ends though civic means*. This means that all of our projects are intended to advance and practice civic intelligence. In other words, we don't begin with something that we'd like to do and assume that it fits this criterion. Sometimes this means that we don't do something just because it's a good thing to do.

2. Collaborative

Our projects are intended to be collaborative. We are trying to build on each other's work and develop and create projects that are not plausible without other help. What this means in practical terms is that students generally speaking will not be doing projects on their own.

3. Give Back

Unlike more traditional approaches to undergraduate education (at least), every quarter is brand new. The old students are replaced by new ones.

4. Connection to CIRAL

We are consciously trying to build a new approach through CIRAL. This implies that our projects should assist with this as well. This, unlike the other criteria above, seems to be less cut and dried.

Developing and Managing a Home Office Project

A Home Office project should help improve CIRAL's capacity. In other words, it should help us be able to create better results more effectively in the future. One project, for example, might be to identify all of the CIRAL processes and modify them to make them easier to understand and use.

Developing and Managing a Community Project

A project that works with the community would be collaboratively implemented by CIRAL and community members. When we are simultaneously (1) working with the community on real projects and (2) trying to prove the validity of the CIRAL concept, the stakes are higher than if we were in a traditional classroom where students turn in papers that the teacher alone sees and grades.

Developing a Working Community Relationship

This process needs refinement. And although it's not ready for review, this section will ultimately need to be reviewed by Ellen Short-Sanchez, Russ Fox, or other Evergreen staff or faculty with substantial expertise in this area.

This process is intended to help build working community relationships. This is an important and somewhat tricky aspect of CIRAL since there are so many potential pitfalls. We don't want to promise things that we can't deliver or otherwise cause ill will within the community.

For now, it's important to be mindful not to make any commitments to a community group without prior approval from your cluster members and the faculty member.

Other Processes

The following list (which needs to be broken into categories) includes existing and potential processes that may or may not need to be formalized They not prioritized below ... but maybe they should be.

- Joining CIRAL contingently (prior or current civic intelligence program, petition to get in via form, faculty permission)
- Developing study modules, information resources
- Developing / convening / evaluating / recording workshops
- Working on online resources
- Working with community collaboration development, implementation evaluation, etc.
- Improving CIRAL processes
- Marketing CIRAL
- Establishing research / action partnerships
- research question lifecycle (plan for evaluation)
- module development
- Changing our processes
- Working with Evergreen administration
- Obtaining a Human Subject Review approval
- Project processes

Projects

A project is an organized effort to create some type of deliverable. This can be an actual artifact or it can be a campaign or other less tangible thing. Generally a project is carried out by more than one person and will have a number of “moving parts” (also known as subtasks) that must be worked on by various people and sequenced in a particular way for the project to be completed by a certain time and meet several criteria for quality.

All CIRAL projects should have a plan, however minimal, that establishes deliverables, milestones (times when something should be completed, activities begin or end, and other important events), resources needed, evaluation criteria, and responsibilities. All projects must be regularly monitored and evaluated by cluster members, faculty, and, probably, by Home Office members.

Some CIRAL projects have included:

- “What Food Systems are Hatching on Campus?” ‘Zine, Food Systems Cluster, December 2012
- Homelessness on Campus Survey, Homelessness Cluster, June, 2012
- Homelessness Forum, Homelessness Cluster, June 2012
- Boma Design, Prateek Trivedi, March 2012
- CIRALCasts, Tim Chen, Ali Suntay, others? Spring 2013
- Civic intelligence assessment of Games, Games Clusters, Spring 2013
- Civic Intelligence Activist Road Trip, February, 2013 (see photograph below)



Issues, Challenges, and Future Directions

The idea of *internalizing* CIRAL's objectives and approaches was introduced early on in the Advice section of this document. This section should also be read in that light: people who *understand* what we are trying to do and *commit* to it are much more likely to be successful. Moreover, the more people who have *internalized* CIRAL on this level, the better chance we all have. This section raises many issues and challenges — more than we can possibly address at once. But, as we know, putting this issues before us, increases the chances that we'll ultimately address them in a satisfactory way.

Although this list of questions and responses is still a draft, the hope is that it will help make the issues facing the CIRAL enterprise more visible and, hence, more amenable to cooperative and collaborative problem-solving. In other words, we need your help addressing them!

In our planning for CIRAL and in our implementing we've encountered several challenges that seem to be inherent in this work.

In Class

- Limited Co-presence**
- Integrating Theory and Practice**
- Role Fuzziness and Authority**

Engagement

- Working with the Community**
- Integration with Evergreen and Other Governing Institutions**

Support and Institutionalization

- Continuity**
- Resource Development**
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Support**

Nature of Education

Issues of community research

Issues of interdisciplinary research

How do we evaluate our own civic intelligence?

Pushing the Limits

CIRAL is intended to push the limits of institutionalized education. It is pushing the boundaries on what a student does, what's the focus of our education, who's involved with the educational process, and what's the nature of the educational process. Pushing the limits raises a number of questions — and these will have to be added in as CIRAL and this Handbook change.

Some questions that almost immediately come to the fore include: What are the guidelines for former or non-student involvement? and Can we expand beyond Evergreen and involve other schools in Washington State and beyond?

It would be great — and appropriate — to be involved in the creation of a journal or a conference on experimental education or !?!!

The Twenty-First Century provides unprecedented challenges and opportunities. One of the foundation assertions of this project is that education probably needs to change as well if it is to remain relevant. Pushing the limit by seeing if and how CIRAL can be expanded is a research project. We also need to gather information about our own enterprise and ascertain how well we address our own objectives. The challenges we face call for new models. The opportunities we now have theoretically can be used for building them.

We make the future by creating it.

Evergreen Resources

CCBLA

The Center for Community-Based Learning and Action (<http://www.evergreen.edu/communitybasedlearning/>), established in 2004 links students and faculty at Evergreen with organizations working on a wide range of community issues.

“The engaged campus, like the community-based learning student, recognizes that knowledge cannot be separated from the purposes to which it is directed. The engaged campus is not just located within the community, it is intimately connected to the public purposes and aspirations of community life itself “

–The Engaged Campus DTF 1999

The Center for Community-Based Learning & Action (CCBLA) promotes student learning that responds to our communities' critical needs by connecting academic programs, students, and faculty with community organizations.

Mission

The CCBLA facilitates students' access to knowledge in the community while supporting the community-based organizations. We collaborate with faculty, organizations and students in order to build and connect community-based learning models and academic programs and maintain campus-community partnerships. We chronicle the history of community-based learning and action at Evergreen for incoming students and collaborators.

History

The CCBLA is one of 4 Public Service Centers at the Evergreen State College. It traces its roots to Evergreen's five foci, which form the core of the college's nationally acclaimed educational approach. These include: interdisciplinary education; personal engagement in learning; linking theory to practice; collaborative learning and teaching and learning across significant differences.

With those focus areas in mind, the CCBLA provides a valuable resource for community groups striving to address unmet needs, a critical learning opportunity for students and an avenue for Evergreen to fulfill its service role as a public institution of higher education.

Evergreen has always integrated community-based work into academic programs. The CCBLA is committed to preserving and sharing campus community connections.

Resources

To Students We offer work-study in community organizations from tutoring in local schools to Community Action Coordination at non-profits. Come plan your academic program projects at our center. Join our monthly Action Days and learn how your time and talents can make a difference in local communities.

To Community Organizations & Groups We support community initiatives, help mobilize students to contribute to social justice and community needs. We seek collaborative opportunities to establish community-to-campus connections.

To Faculty We are a hub and resource center for community-based learning and for students doing community projects. WE showcase Evergreen contributions to the community. Invite us to speak in your program.

To CIRAL Aside from the obvious crossover in philosophical approach and applicable resources shared above, the CCBLA provides CIRAL students with valuable input each quarter on the relevant unmet needs in our local community and potential connections for cluster work and projects. The CCBLA wishes to support and sustain the CIRAL project and with the help of dedicated student liaisons create continuity between quarters and school years. Come to us for assistance with cluster project ideas and/or get involved in an already established community-based project that needs your support. Take advantage of our trainings prior to your doing your community work so that we might ensure successful outcomes for all involved.

Faculty Members

Faculty members who regularly include working with community organizations in their programs include Anne Fischel, Zoltan Grossman, Lin Nelson, Tony Zaragoza. This list is incomplete!

Internships

Every year, Evergreen students spend thousands of hours working in internships with community and other groups. Check the Evergreen web site for more information.

References

Fundamental CIRAL Readings

Addams, J. Twenty Years at Hull House

Briggs, J. Democracy as Problem Solving

Corburn, Jason. Street Science, MIT Press

Dewey, J.

Ganz, M. Why David Sometimes Wins

McKnight, J. Communities from the Inside Out

Nelson & Fischel

Schuler, D. Civic Intelligence readings

“incubator” literature

Social Innovation

LOKA reading — Cheadle, Sclove

qualitative social science chapters

CIRAL Documents & References

CIRAL Bylaws

CIRAL Handbook

Fresh Sheets (newsletters)

A variety of white papers, reviews, etc. by CIRAL students (these will be listed in next version of the Handbook)

