

**The Evergreen State College**  
**Evening and Weekend Studies Program**  
**Communicating Performance Data, Winter 2009**  
**Jan 9-11, '09: Friday, 5-9pm, and Saturday and Sunday, 9am-5pm**

*Our students, faculty and staff create learning communities to explore and implement socially just, democratic public service.*

<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Email</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Office hours</u>
T. S. (Steve) Marshall, Ph.D.	<a href="mailto:steve@tsmarshallassoc.com">steve@tsmarshallassoc.com</a>	(360) 413-5755	By Appointment.

**Overview:** The course will explore both applications and theory, and provide a solid foundation of the purpose, use and limitations of graphical displays (simple tables and charts). As a result, the course will enable students to become better *producers* and *users* of meaningful graphical displays. The course uses a computer classroom and involves a lot of research and hands-on work actually creating spreadsheets, tables and charts using real-world data.

**Learning Objectives:** Our task – and it is an important task – is to learn how to develop, analyze and interpret graphical displays sensibly and in context, and communicate the results to others using effective graphical displays. In this course, students will:

- 1) Gain familiarity with the language of variation and numerical data to communicate results, and gain understanding of graphical methods to display performance.
  - a. Understand how to use measures and charts to analyze data and communicate results.
  - b. Know what questions to ask regarding data, the techniques to use to ask the “right” questions, and how to interpret the findings.
- 2) Develop an ability to interpret data used by others, be able to understand when the methods are applied appropriately, and what the results do and do not tell us.
- 3) Make meaning of the results of measurements and charts – the output of analysis methods.
- 4) Increase proficiency in Excel to generate meaningful graphical displays.
- 5) If time allows, increase proficiency with other measurement and graphical methods – sampling, secondary data analysis and statistical process control.

**Assignments:** Credit will be awarded on the following:

- 1) Attendance/active participation: The majority of the work and learning will take place during class – hands-on computer lab collaboration, development and research. Students are expected to attend and be actively engaged in every session.
- 2) Evidence of learning: Students must: (1) individually prepare one critique (4-5 pages, double-spaced) of an organization’s use of graphical displays to analyze data and communicate performance, and (2) in small groups, prepare an outline (1 page, double-spaced) and class PowerPoint presentation (10-15 minutes) of an organization’s performance using numerical data and graphical displays to communicate performance.

**Text:** A variety of texts and recourses will be made available during class days.

**Credit:** Students will receive 2 credits based upon satisfactory and on-time completion of all course requirements and assignments. The faculty member makes credit denial decisions. No partial credit will be awarded. Plagiarism, failing to complete one or more assignments, completing one or more assignments late (without having made special arrangements in advance of the due date) or a non-excused absence may constitute automatic denial of credit.

**Evaluation:** Students are expected to provide a written evaluation of their faculty member. Your evaluation of the faculty can be given to the program secretary. All students will receive a written evaluation of their academic performance by their faculty.

**Covenants:** In furtherance of our learning community, we expect students and faculty to:

- 1) Act in accordance with the Evergreen Contract and Student Conduct code.
- 2) Promote a cooperative, supportive atmosphere within the community; give everyone opportunity for self-reflection and expression.
- 3) Use high standards in reading the text and preparing papers, lectures, and comments in seminar.
- 4) Handle all disputes in a spirit of goodwill.

**Learning Environment:** Both students and faculty agree to discuss any problems involving others in the learning community directly with the individuals involved, with the right to support from other program members during those discussions, if that seems helpful. For example, students must first discuss any problems involving a faculty member directly with the person in question; other faculty will refrain from discussing details of any such problem except in the above format.

**Schedule:**

Day, Date	Topic	Homework
Friday, Jan 9 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction, Syllabus and Lab Orientation Overview of the Basics – Intro to Visual Language Foundations of data and charts as language. Communicating with data. Enumerative data and charts. Bar Chars, Pie Charts, Histograms, etc.	None
Saturday, Jan 10 <sup>th</sup>	Enumerative data and charts (Continued) Analytical data and charts. Line Charts and RUN Charts	None
Sunday, Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	Analytical data and charts (Continued) Presentations Forecasting performance Other Visual Displays	None
Friday, Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup>	None	Critique Due