

Application Related Information

Application: Application Not Verified
Grad Program Applying To: MES

Iteration Name: 202610_GR_G
Program Name: MES

Recommendation Information

Recommended By: Berry Brosi
Recommenders Institution: University of Washington
Waive Access to Recommendation Ltrs: I choose to waive my right to review this recommendation.
Recommendation Form Submitted: ✓

Recommenders Title: Professor
Contact Name: Lauren Greenleaf
Recommendation Waiver Choice:
Recommendation Status: Received

Received Date: 12/13/2024 10:50 AM
Recommendation Type: General
Recommendation Entity ID: 1024000121419544

Recommender Assessment: I recommend this applicant.
Recommender Form: Letter of Recommendation
Recommendation Owner: Josephine Bernier

Recommender Form Questions

How long have you known applicant:	Applicant ability as self-directed learner:
Time since last contact with applicant:	Applicant as productive member of group:
Relationship with Applicant:	Applicant most significant strengths:
Ability to complete rigorous grad program:	Responsibility/reliability:
Communication Skills - Oral:	Communication skills - written:
Service Orientation-sensitivity/empathy:	Ability to work independently:
Ability to handle stress:	Ability to think critically:
Ability to analyze/problem solve:	Ability to think creatively:
Openness to feedback:	Potential for leadership:
Ability to work in a team:	Personal/professional reflection:

Description Information

Description:

Form URL: <https://evergreenstatecollege.radiu>

Other Information

Created Time: 12/12/2024 08:35 AM
Modified Time: 12/13/2024 10:50 AM

Created By: Josephine Bernier
Modified By: Josephine Bernier



DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

Berry J. Brosi, Professor

13 December 2024

To the Admissions Committee:

I am writing to recommend Lauren Greenleaf for admission to your Master's Degree program at the Evergreen State College. I was Lauren's instructor in two courses during her time as an undergraduate at UW: my 400-level Conservation Biology and Community Ecology courses. Both courses include a final project (group project in Conservation Biology; individual project in Community Ecology) and both courses at the time Lauren took them were quite small for UW Biology (~25 students; the Conservation Biology course has grown substantially in the meanwhile), which gives me better-than-typical insight into Lauren as a student.

Lauren has several qualities that make her a promising candidate for your Master's program: in particular, 1) she is highly engaged and passionate about conservation; and 2) she is tenacious and proactive. I detail those qualities in the next two paragraphs. Overall I very much enjoyed having her in my courses and I believe she would be a valuable addition to your program.

First, in terms of her engagement and passion, In both of my courses, Lauren was a very engaged student, who always came to class and was always prepared and focused during class time. Like many courses at UW Biology, my courses incorporate a lot of active learning and discussion, and she always participated fully in these activities and was great at getting her less-engaged peers to be more involved. She did take a while to warm up to making comments in whole-class sessions, but eventually contributed a little in that way. Though I would have like to have heard more from her in that context, I also recognize that especially at the undergraduate life stage that it isn't always the easiest thing for every student and I also appreciate the growth she demonstrated in that setting.

In addition to class participation, she also engaged fully in the final projects for both courses. It's always a little tough to tell with a group project like the one we have in Conservation Biology how much a student is contributing, but I have students fill out a evaluation of their group members and it was clear that Lauren played a key leadership role in her group, not necessarily by guiding or dominating the conversation, but more as a background mediator among what were perhaps some strong personalities. But the point is—she got very positive marks from her fellow students, which is certainly not always the case with these evaluations. For her Community Ecology final project, she wrote a proposal for a three-year study on the regeneration of pollinator and flora diversity after fires of varying severity. She took quite a risk in this topic because I work on plant-pollinator interactions and thus know this literature quite well! Her project overall was strong and showed an ability to identify research questions and how to design a basic study to address those questions. While her initial writing in this project was not amazing, this was another area that she demonstrated growth in and there was marked improvement in the quality of the writing from her initial draft to the final submission.

Lauren has a strong interest in marine conservation and restoration, particularly focused on kelp forest ecosystems in the Puget Sound. That makes your Master's program a good fit for her. Her long-term vision of integrating scientific research with community engagement aligns well with the

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DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

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Berry J. Brosi, Professor

goals of many graduate programs in marine science. Her proposed research on community structure changes in restored kelp forests shows promise and aligns well with current conservation priorities in the Pacific Northwest. Given what I have seen from her, she'll approach this topic with that same kind of strong engagement and passion and she'll give it her all.

Second, I want to showcase is Lauren's tenacity and proactive nature. In my Community Ecology course, we do a *lot* of coding in R. For many students this is a challenge out of the gate, especially since we don't have a prerequisite. Lauren was in this category and she definitely had a difficult time learning how to code. Still, she addressed the challenge head-on. She attended all or nearly all of the TA office hours and spent considerable time outside of class identifying resources to help her. She improved notably and substantially over the course of the short 10-week quarter and I was very impressed with her persistence. This kind of tenacity and taking ownership over one's learning is of course an attribute that serves any graduate student well.

In sum, I recommend Lauren Greenleaf for the Evergreen State Master's degree program in Environmental Studies as an individual who has the potential to contribute meaningfully to the field of marine conservation and restoration. Her enthusiasm, dedication, and persistence to learning make her a very promising candidate for your program. Thank you for your fullest consideration of her application.

Sincerely,

Berry J. Brosi, PhD
Professor
Department of Biology
University of Washington