

Tia Neas-Gass
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Natural Science Prerequisite

Even though my application does not clearly reflect it, I have a plethora of experience in the natural sciences. Before I began undergrad, I did a year of undergraduate study via Running Start at Highline Community College. This is reflected on my undergraduate transcript as “Accepted Transfer Credit”. My “Accepted Transfer Credit” classes include: Biology 110 (Marine Biology), Cooperative Education (My internship at the MaST Center Aquarium), Biology 230 “Intro to Cell Biology”, Chem 121 “Inorganic Chemistry” and Ocean 101 “Survey of Oceanography”. I received all A’s and B’s in these classes. I did also take Biology and Chemistry in undergrad, however I did not do well in those classes. I attribute this more to being young (I was only 18-19 at the time), far away from home and struggling with some personal life issues. In Running Start, I also worked as a camp counselor at the MaST Center Aquarium and volunteered as an interpreter throughout the year. At the aquarium, I was taught the basic concepts of marine biology and oceanography and taught how to interpret that information to the general public. Though I had some struggles during my younger years that deterred me from pursuing a career in the natural sciences, I feel as though I am capable of completing the coursework in the Evergreen MES program without any issues. I do not feel as though mistakes that I made during my late teens should impact me as a polished professional in my thirties. I deserve a chance to move on from my past mistakes and pursue a professional career that pays more than minimum wage.

In 2022, I was hired on as a Contract Educator at the Puget Sound Estuarium. As a Contract Educator, I lead Pre-K through 8th grade lessons and outreach activities. I excelled in this role and my work was indistinguishable from those of people that had degrees in the field. I

was eventually promoted to a Lead Interpreter position on the weekends. I am technically a manager at the Puget Sound Estuarium even though I am only a part-time employee. I chose to switch to a Lead Interpreter position because I needed to work Monday through Friday in order to pay my bills. This setup allowed me to gain experience in the field while working a full-time job in order to pay my bills (I also am paid at the Esuarium, I just do not get full-time hours).

In order to teach content, you need to have mastered it yourself. I have been teaching topics related to marine biology and environmental science for over four years. In April, I will have taught marine biology and environmental education in some capacity for five years. Though I made some mistakes during undergrad, I am confident that I know the content well enough to pursue a graduate degree in the topic.