

Pearl Tottenham  
Evergreen MiT Endorsement Checklist Essay

I did my undergraduate studies at The Evergreen State College, graduating in 2021. Because my undergraduate area of emphasis was music, the majority of my credits lie in the arts, though due to Evergreen's interdisciplinary approach I feel that I still engaged meaningfully with most of the subjects on the endorsement checklist regardless of credits earned. I also feel that I am capable of handling the workload of any additional courses I may need to take on the side during the Masters program.

Despite not meeting the math credit requirements on the checklist, I believe my life experience as a tutor for high school level algebra is equivalent to the disparity in credit. I have been in a unique situation, tutoring a student in his first year of high school after being homeschooled since the second grade. This student had not engaged with math learning since leaving public school, so I have had to introduce him to fundamental math skills while helping him to navigate more complex mathematics than he has ever been exposed to. I'm proud to say that he is on track to pass his algebra class this year.

My experience with sciences at Evergreen took place in two interdisciplinary courses. First was in Countertextual Ecologies: Eco Music, where we explored the intersections between environmental science and music. Second was Theme and Variations in Music and Biology, where we explored the ways in which musical patterns can reflect patterns of evolution and brain function. Music and Biology included a weekly lab where we studied a variety of topics from sound waves, to sheep's brains.

Some of my favorite programs at Evergreen were those that incorporated the humanities. I took courses exploring US history (Not a Melting Pot: American Identities, Migrations, and Places), and history outside of the US (Slavic and Celtic Folklore, Music and Mythology, and Dangerous Reading). I believe that my studies of global mythology and folklore have also given me a foundation in children's literature, as I have found many connections between the two in my work reading with preschool and elementary students. Though I have not taken a specific

language structure course, In the Evergreen program Dangerous Reading, we engaged deeply in study and discussion of both typical and unique language and writing structures.

Over the summer of 2024 I participated in the summer portion of Montessori lower elementary training at the Montessori Education Institute of the Pacific Northwest. I did not continue the program when the school year started, as I had decided to pivot to pursuing public education rather than private. Those summer courses did not use a credit based system, but I do feel that the courses in math, biology, geography, history, educational philosophy, curriculum design, and classroom management were very important learning experiences for me as an educator. I have used the things I learned in the MEIPN training program quite a bit through the 2024/25 school year, frequently leading lessons as a substitute teacher.