Dear Fall 2016 MES cohort member:

Welcome to the 33nd cohort of the Graduate Program on the Environment at The Evergreen State College! This is your formal invitation to the **required MES orientation on Tuesday, September 20, 12pm-6:30pm.**Please read below for further instructions about the day.

**Where to Meet**

Meet in the Seminar II Building, Room A1107. Seminar II is to the right of the “Bus Loop” on the enclosed campus map—head that way and look for our signs! Parking is $3. Intercity Transit buses #41 and #48 go to Evergreen, and there is plenty of bike parking.

**Agenda**

The tentative schedule is included in this packet. Orientation is a mandatory event—it is a “one-stop-shop” for all your MES questions. You will also get to meet most of the faculty and staff, and some returning students. Lunch and afternoon coffee/tea and snacks will be provided. Please bring your own refillable water bottle and coffee mug. Finally, come prepared to get your individual picture taken (for internal purposes only so faculty know who you are).

We’re putting a lot of work into the program, and are looking forward to meeting all of you. If you are unable to attend orientation due to unavoidable circumstances, it will be your responsibility to let us know you won’t be there and to obtain the information on your own after orientation.

We would also like to encourage everyone to attend the morning session of the South Sound Science Symposium which takes place at the Squaxin Island Tribe’s Events Center and highlights the latest regional scientific research. Check out the upcoming agenda and registration at their website <http://southsoundscience.org/>

**Preparing for gCORE**

Your first core class at Evergreen is entitled graduate Conceptualizing Our Regional Environment (gCORE) taught by Kevin Francis, Miranda Mellis, and John Withey. At orientation, we will go over the gCORE syllabus and schedule. At this point, please mark your calendars for a required **two-day field trip to Pack Experimental Forest and Mount Rainier National Park** from the morning of Oct. 6 to the early evening of Oct. 7. There will be an additional course fee of $100 for the overnight trip that will cover all transportation, lodging, and food expenses and will be assessed with your tuition. Although we recognized that field trips require a significant investment of money and time, the consistent feedback from previous MES cohorts is that these field trips are an invaluable opportunity to explore the Pacific Northwest, understand key ecosystems and environmental issues in our region, and build a strong learning community. More details about this field trip will be provided at orientation.

The first class meeting is Tuesday, September 27, 6pm-10pm, in Seminar 2, E1105. Prior to class, you are invited to a “Welcome Back” reception for all MES students at 5pm in the student lounge near the MES office. This will be a potluck, a chance to meet members of your cohort, and see the resources available in the student lounge.

**Required Texts for gCORE**

For all courses, faculty will let you know which books are required ahead of time via email. You can also check the Greener Store’s website: [www.tescbookstore.com](http://www.tescbookstore.com). Books can be purchased from any bookstore--but make sure to get the appropriate edition. You can also rent books from the Greener Store or check them out from the Evergreen Library through interlibrary loan. Below are the required gCORE books (in approximate order of appearance). Note that we plan to hit the ground running with seminars on *Salmon, People, and Place* and *The Hidden Forest* during the first two weeks*.* (Both are great books for summer reading.)

1. Jim Lichatowich, *Salmon, People, and Place* (Oregon State University Press, 2013).
2. Jon R. Luoma, *The Hidden Forest: The Biography of an Ecosystem,* (Oregon State University Press, 2006).
3. Timothy Allen and Thomas Hoekstra, *Toward a Unified Ecology*, Second Edition (Columbia University Press, 2015).
4. Thalia Field, *Bird Lovers, Backyard* (New Directions, 2001)
5. Carolyn Finney, *Black Faces, White Spaces* (University of North Carolina Press, 2014).
6. Wayne C. Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, Third Edition (University of Chicago Press, 2008).

Additional readings, as assigned, will be posted on our Canvas site, which is an online course management system. We will email the class when this site is available.

**All College Convocation and Common Reading**

Every year incoming first-year undergraduate students read a common book and attend a convocation that features a lecture by its author. This year’s book, *The Collapse of Western Civilization* by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway*,* may be of interest to many MES students. Oreskes and Conway are two prominent historians of science who also wrote *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tabacco Smoke to Global Warming*. You are encouraged (but not required) to read their book and/or attend the convocation. For those of you who are new to Evergreen, it’s a great way to learn more about the college, including its mascot and fight song! Convocation is on Wednesday, September 21, 10am-12 pm in the College Recreation Center Gym.

**Immunizations**

You should have received information regarding Evergreen’s policy requiring proof of Measles (Rubeola) immunity for all new students. Students who do not submit proof (to the Health Center or Registration and Records) by the end of Fall quarter will not be able to enroll for Winter quarter courses. Please see [www.evergreen.edu/health/health/immunizations](http://www.evergreen.edu/health/health/immunizations).

**Explanation of Terms**

You may notice that in some places we say “Master of Environmental Studies” and in others we say “Graduate Program on the Environment.” The Graduate Program on the Environment grants students a Master of Environmental Studies (MES) degree upon graduation. We often refer to the program as “MES.”

We also have “core” faculty and “adjunct” faculty. Core faculty teach in core classes and some electives and adjunct faculty teach electives only. Core faculty are typically full-time Evergreen faculty who teach only in MES. The entire cohort of 45 students attends core classes together on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Classes are taught by teams of two or three faculty who often lead smaller seminar and workshop groups. Adjunct faculty typically have full-time jobs in the community and teach one elective a year for MES. Electives are one night a week (Monday or Wednesday) and taught by one faculty member. Electives are usually 15 students.

You’ll also grow accustomed to the word “seminar.” Seminars are integral to the Evergreen teaching philosophy. They are discussions in which issues are raised and explored, but not necessarily resolved; they require you to think and to practice the skills of analysis and synthesis. In each core class, you will be assigned a smaller seminar group with one individual faculty. Please see the enclosed “What are Seminars?” handout for more information.

**Questions?**

Please contact Heather May, Assistant Director, at 360-867-6225 or mayh@evergreen.edu for questions about orientation and other administrative issues.

Please contact Kevin Francis, Faculty/Director, at 360-867-5831 or francisk@evergreen.edu for questions about gCORE or other classes. (Note that email is a more reliable way to contact me during the summer.)

Sincerely,



Kevin Francis, Ph.D.

Faculty/Director, Graduate Program on the Environment