

Dear Fall 2013 MES cohort member:

Welcome to the 30<sup>th</sup> cohort of the Graduate Program on the Environment at The Evergreen State College! This is your formal invitation to the **required MES orientation on Friday, September 20, 12:15pm-6pm and Saturday, September 21, 9am-12:30pm**. Please read below for further instructions about the day.

### **Read *Silent Spring***

For your first academic exercise as an MES student, you will be discussing the book *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson in small seminars with individual faculty. Please read the book prior to orientation. Any edition of the book, new or used, is acceptable.

Rachel Carson was a marine biologist, writer, and conservationist who wrote the ground-breaking *Silent Spring* in 1962, an analysis of chemical pesticides' harmful effects on birds and humans. The book's highly controversial message was widely read by the US public and led to US government investigation into her findings. These efforts resulted in a US-ban on DDT and other pesticides as well as the creation of the US Environmental Protection Agency (sadly, both happened after her death). Because of Ms. Carson's important role in the modern-day environmental protection movement, she is honored every year by the Master of Environmental Studies Association (MESA) through the Rachel Carson Forum, now entering its 25<sup>th</sup> year. The Graduate Program on the Environment and its more than 600 graduates owe a large debt to Ms. Carson's commitment to and concern of the world around us.

### **Where to Meet**

Meet in the Seminar II Building, Room E1107. Seminar II is Building #14 on the enclosed campus map. We will be in the "E" wing. Parking is \$2 on Friday and free on Saturdays. 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 and also a taste of the academic experience you will have over your two or more years with us. You will also get to meet most of the faculty and staff, and some returning students. Snacks, coffee, and tea will be provided on both days. please bring your own refillable water bottle and coffee mug. Finally, come prepared to get your individual picture taken on Friday.

We're putting a lot of work into the program, and are looking forward to meeting all of you. Should you find, due to unavoidable circumstances, that you are unable to attend orientation, 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 will have a folder of information for you in our office (Lab 1, Room 3019) to start you off, but because it will be a very busy part of the year, we will not be able to provide you with a personal orientation. Please remember that this is a professional program, and our expectation is that you treat its curriculum, your classmates, and MES staff and faculty as you would your employer and coworkers.

### **Preparing for gCORE**

Your first core class at Evergreen is entitled graduate Conceptualizing Our Regional Environment, or gCORE. This course is taught by three faculty: Carri LeRoy, Kevin Francis, and Dina Roberts. Please see the enclosed faculty biographies for more information on their backgrounds and interests. You will meet them at orientation, as well as the other core and adjunct faculty. At orientation, we will go over the gCORE syllabus with you. Please mark

your calendars for an overnight field trip on October 17-18. A shorter field trip on one of the Tuesday or Thursday afternoons earlier in the quarter will also be scheduled. There will be an additional course fee of \$100 for the overnight trip that will be assessed with your tuition. The first class meeting is Tuesday, October 1 at 6pm-10pm, Seminar 2, E1107. 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. More details to come.

### **Required Texts**

For all courses, including gCORE, faculty will let you know which books are required – they will usually announce them by email or you can check the Greener Store's website: [www.tescbookstore.com](http://www.tescbookstore.com). Books can be purchased from any bookstore, including the Greener Store. The Greener Store also rents books or you can check them out from the Evergreen Library through interlibrary loan.

### **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 40 students attends core classes together on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Classes are taught by teams of two or three faculty that then split into smaller seminar groups. Adjunct faculty typically have full-time jobs in the community for state agencies and teach one elective a year for MES. Electives are one night a week (Monday or Wednesday) and are 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 forums of approximately 15 students 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 Gail Wootan, Assistant Director, at 360-867-6225 or [wootang@evergreen.edu](mailto:wootang@evergreen.edu).

Sincerely,



Martha L Henderson, Ph.D.  
Director, Graduate Program on the Environment