

July 28, 2015

Dear Fall 2015 MES cohort member:

Welcome to the 32nd 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 22, 12pm-6:30pm**. Please read below for further instructions about the day.

Where to Meet

Meet in the Seminar II Building, Room A1105. Seminar II is to the right of the “Bus Loop” on the enclosed campus map. We will be in the “A” wing, which is the first building on the left if coming from the Bus Loop. Parking is \$2. 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 on Tuesday (for internal purposes only so faculty know who you are). The final two sessions (MESA and Student Panel) are optional, particularly for those of you observing Yom Kippur.

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.

Preparing for gCORE

Your first core class at Evergreen is entitled graduate Conceptualizing Our Regional Environment (gCORE) taught by Shangrila Wynn, Dina Roberts, and Kevin Francis. At orientation, we will go over the gCORE syllabus and schedule. At this point, please mark your calendars for a required **three-day field trip to the Olympic Peninsula** from the morning of Oct. 8 to the early evening of Oct. 10. There will be an additional course fee of \$150 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 29, 6pm-10pm, in Seminar 2, A1105. 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 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. 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 a seminar on *The Hidden Forest* (a great summer read—hint, hint) the first day of class.

1. John R. Luoma, *The Hidden Forest: The Biography of an Ecosystem*, (Oregon State University Press, 2006).
2. William Dietrich, *The Final Forest: Big Trees, Forks, and the Pacific NW* (University of Washington Press, 2010).
3. Wayne C. Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, Third Edition (University of Chicago Press, 2008).
4. F. Stuart Chapin et al., *Principles of Terrestrial Ecosystem Ecology*, Second Edition (Springer, 2012).
5. Jim Lichatowich, *Salmon, People, and Place* (Oregon State University Press, 2013).
6. Donald Fixico, *Indian Resilience and Rebuilding: Indigenous Nations in the Modern American West* (University of Arizona Press, 2013).
7. Matthew Klinge, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle*, (Yale University Press, 2009).

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. (Note that we will be using the Booth and Chapin books for both gCORE and the second core class, Ecological and Social Sustainability).

Additional Recommended Summer Reading

Students enter MES with diverse academic backgrounds and experiences, which is both an advantage of the program and a challenge in teaching graduate-level material. We will expect all students to have foundational understanding of material in a few key disciplines prior to the beginning of each quarter: ecology (fall quarter), chemistry and economics (winter quarter), and statistics (spring quarter). We are asking you, individually, to assess your familiarity with the following areas: If these subjects have not been part of your undergraduate experience (or if it's been a long time), we would like you to review this material prior to the quarter. Please see the enclosed sheet for particular sources that we recommend.

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, Elaine Scarry's *Thinking in an Emergency*, may be of interest to many MES students, especially those who are interested in strategies for democratic approaches for preparing and responding to disasters, from earthquakes to climate change. You are encouraged (but not required) to read Scarry's 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 Monday, September 21 at 10am 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.

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. We included faculty biographies for your information.

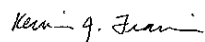
You'll also grow accustomed to the word "seminar." Seminars are integral to the Evergreen teaching philosophy. They are forums of approximately 15 students in which issues are raised and explored, but not necessarily resolved; they require you to think and to practice the skills of analysis and synthesis. 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 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