

June 28, 2019

Dear Fall 2019 MES cohort member:

Welcome to the 36th cohort of the Master of Environmental Studies Program at The Evergreen State College!

This letter outlines many important details to help you get started as a MES student at Evergreen. Please read it through carefully.

### **New Student Orientation**

First, this is your formal invitation to the **required MES orientation on Monday, September 23, 9:30am – 4:00pm** (optional campus tour to follow).

### **Where to Meet**

Meet in the Seminar 2 Building, Room E1105. Seminar 2 is to the right of the “Bus Loop” on the enclosed campus map. We will be in the “E” wing. Parking is \$3. The parking booth takes cash or check only.

### **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 preview 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 and lunch will be provided. Please come prepared with your caffeine needs met, and bring your own refillable water bottle. Finally, come prepared to get your individual picture taken (for internal purposes only).

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 (graduate) Conceptualizing Our Regional Environment (gCORE) taught by Kevin Francis, Shawn Hazboun, and EJ Zita. The class will use an ecological-social systems perspective to understand the creation and implementation of environmental policy. We will examine several case studies in the Pacific Northwest through this lens, including salmon recovery and urban gentrification. Students will also work in interdisciplinary teams to understand a regional environmental problem and develop a feasible policy solution. **We will go over the gCORE syllabus and schedule at orientation.**

Please mark your calendars for a **required three-day field trip to the Olympic Peninsula** from the morning of Thursday, October 10 to the early evening of Saturday, October 12. There will be an additional course fee of \$200 for the overnight trip that will cover all transportation, lodging, and food expenses and will be assessed with your tuition. Although we recognize 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 will be provided at orientation.

The first gCORE meeting is Tuesday, October 1, 6pm-10pm, in Seminar 2, E1105. Prior to class, you are invited to a “Welcome/Welcome Back” potluck for all MES students at 5pm in the next-door classroom, E1107. 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](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. Our first seminar book will be Donella Meadows, *Thinking in Systems*, (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2008). **We plan to hit the ground running with a seminar on Meadows’ *Thinking in Systems* the first day of class, so please arrive prepared.** We will provide a complete book list by August 15.

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.

### **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](http://www.evergreen.edu/health).

### **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 usually 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 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 capped at 15 students.

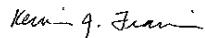
You'll also grow accustomed to the word "seminar." Seminars are integral to the Evergreen teaching philosophy. They are forums of approximately 15 students in which issues are raised and explored, but not necessarily resolved; they require you to think and to practice the skills of analysis and synthesis. 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 Andrea Martin, Assistant Director, at 360-867-6225 or [martina@evergreen.edu](mailto:martina@evergreen.edu) for questions about orientation and other administrative issues.

Please contact Kevin Francis, Faculty/Director, at 360-867-5831 or [francisk@evergreen.edu](mailto: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,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin Francis".

Kevin Francis, Ph.D.

Faculty/Director, Graduate Program on the Environment