2018 PROPOSAL FOR A

PAUL D. COVERDELL FELLOWS PROGRAM

IN

Graduate Program on the Environment

Master of Environmental Studies

at THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

Submitted by

Kevin Francis, Director/Faculty, Graduate Program on the Environment

Lab 1, 3018

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April 30, 2018

**General Information**

1. The Evergreen State College
2. Olympia, Washington
3. Accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities in 2014: [supporting documentation](file:///C:\1.%09http\::www.evergreen.edu:provost:accreditation).

**Proposed Program**

1. Graduate Program on the Environment
2. Master of Environmental Studies (MES)
3. 72 credits
4. 6 quarters over 2 years
5. We have approximately 100 graduate students in our program from diverse educational and professional backgrounds. Here are some statistics from our current student cohorts:

Average age: 32

Median age: 29

Oldest student: 72

Percent non-resident: 23

Percent who identify as students of color: 23

Percent who identify as female: 66

Percent who identify as male: 33

1. We can provide up to 4 Coverdell Fellowships each year.
2. [MES Program Overview](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/program) / [MES Catalog](http://www.evergreen.edu/catalog/grad/mes)
3. This partnership would be an ideal fit for the MES program. We have many students and alumni working on environmental problems that are especially acute in the Global South, as well as climate mitigation and adaptation issues that cut across national boundaries. Coverdell Fellows would increase the number of students with international expertise and experience, which would benefit all students in our learning community. Many Evergreen undergraduates enter the Peace Corps every year.

At the same time, many Peace Corps volunteers would be well-served by our program. Our core curriculum includes *Ecological and Social Sustainability*—an interdisciplinary approach to systems thinking, sustainable development, and climate mitigation and adaptation. Our diverse electives examine ecological-social systems (e.g., *Urban Ecology*), equity issues (e.g., *Environmental Justice: Politics and Policy*), and non-western strategies (e.g., *Climate Solutions in a Diverse World*, *American Indian Solutions to Environmental Problems*).

In addition, many students refine their practical and technical skills through formal—usually paid—internships. We have long-standing partnerships with organizations that work with historically marginalized communities at the intersection of applied conservation/sustainability and environmental justice.

The [Sustainability in Prisons Project](http://www.sustainabilityinprisons.org) (SPP) provides educational workshops, professional training, and work experience for inmates in Washington State’s prisons. Each year SPP offers approximately eight fellowships to MES students, who manage specific programs and work directly with inmates. (See letter of support from Kelli Bush, SPP Co-Director.)

In addition, Coverdell Fellows might work with veterans on conservation work ([Joint Base Lewis-McCord](http://www.nwguardian.com/2018/01/11/v-print/29258/restoration-helps-fight-for-bottom.html)), low-income residents on food production ([Garden-Raised Bounty](https://www.goodgrub.org/)), or rural communities on revitalization projects ([Center for Sustainable Infrastructure](https://www.evergreen.edu/sustainableinfrastructure)). In each of these internships, students learn how to navigate and strengthen partnerships among diverse organizations. (See letter of support from Dennis Buckingham, JBLM Conservation Biologist and Internship Coordinator.)

The MES curriculum and pedagogy combine theory and practice, specialization and integration, and individual vision and collaborative learning. Six faculty members are dedicated full-time to the MES program; experts working outside academia teach many of our electives. We make a concerted effort to improve our model and to share it with other educational leaders in environmental studies: [Collaborative Teaching and Interdisciplinary Learning in Graduate Environmental Studies](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs13412-017-0467-0).

**Student Selection and Orientation**

1. RPCVs must submit their official Peace Corps Description of Service to be considered for this Fellowship.
2. Prospective Coverdell Fellows will be evaluated by the faculty Admissions Committee and recommended for fellowships based on the overall strength of their application.
3. Students will be notified of their admission status in mid-February. Scholarship announcements will be made in mid-March; Coverdell Fellows will notified at the same time. Specific internship placements will be determined during the summer following consultation with the students.
4. Fellows will be provided a detailed letter outlining the requirements of their fellowship when they are notified of selection in March. Orientation with the internship sponsor will happen in late summer or early fall prior to the beginning of the academic year.

**Financial Support**

1. Our program’s cost for a student who is *not* receiving a Coverdell Fellowship or other financial aid (based on 2017-18 tuition—subject to change):

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **With*out* a Coverdell Fellowship** | | | | |
|  | Tuition per quarter | Mandatory student fees | Total cost per year | Total estimated cost of degree |
| In-state student | $3193 | $729 | $10308 | $20616 |
| Out-of-state student | $7379 | $729 | $22866 | $45732 |

1. Financial support provided to Coverdell Fellows varies based on residency status.

* In-state Coverdell Fellows would be eligible for a $3000 tuition waiver; out-of-state Coverdell Fellows would be eligible for a $6000 tuition waiver.
* Both in-state and out-of-state Fellows are eligible for a paid internship (19 hours/week) with compensation averaging $13,000 per year.
  + Cost of program with a Coverdell Fellowship (discount must equal at least 25% of tuition and mandatory fees for both in- and out-of-state students):

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***With* a Coverdell Fellowship** | | | | | |
|  | Tuition per quarter | Mandatory student fees | Total cost per year | Total estimated cost of degree | Total financial value of Coverdell Fellowship (including all forms of financial support) |
| In-state student | $2193 | $729 | $7308 | $14616 | $16000 |
| Out-of-state student | $5379 | $729 | $16866 | $33732 | $19000 |

* + Coverdell Fellows are eligible for additional scholarship and assistantships. See our [Financial Aid page](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/costs) to see all available awards.

1. We waive the application fee for all RPCV who request a waiver and provide appropriate documentation of their service.

**The Internship**

1. Kevin Francis and Andrea Martin will consult with individual Fellows about internship opportunities. We will send them specific opportunities with the Sustainability in Prisons Project and other organizations. Individual Fellows will need to consult and apply for these positions. As part of the interview process, SPP staff will consult with each Fellow about the most appropriate position given their educational and professional experience and career goals.
2. Coverdell Fellows will work approximately half-time while in the program. For example, SPP Fellows work 19 hours/week.
3. Kelli Bush, SPP Co-Director, will supervise and track completion of SPP Fellows. Field supervisors in other organizations will play a similar role. Students who earn credit for an internship complete a contract that specifies learning objectives, activities, time commitment, mentorship responsibilities, and feedback.
4. In the event that students are not able to complete the internship portion of their program, we would discuss the best strategy for the student and the organization. We have experience navigating such circumstances in a way that provides good learning outcomes for students and maintains a collaborative partnership with the organization. We would handle each situation on a case-by-case basis.

**Administrative Support**

1. Andrea Martin, Assistant Director, Master of Environmental Studies Program, will serve as Coverdell Fellows coordinator: Lab 1020, The Evergreen State College, 2700 Evergreen Parkway, Olympia, WA 98505; 360-867-6225; [martina@evergreen.edu](mailto:martina@evergreen.edu)
2. The coordinator will assume the following responsibilities related to the Fellows program:
   * Communicate with prospective Fellows during the application process for the MES program and the Coverdell Fellowship
   * Notify prospective Fellows of their admission status and receipt of any program support and financial aid (including Coverdell Fellowship)
   * Manage orientation process, including supporting students in finding housing, registering for classes, and navigating Evergreen’s resource areas.
   * Lead and facilitate Orientation event for new students
   * Liaise with internship sponsors to help Fellow find best project fit
   * Meet regularly with Fellow
3. The coordinator will communicate with the Fellow regularly via email, and in person on a quarterly basis, and more frequently if requested.
4. Kevin Francis, MES Program Director, will assume responsibilities of the coordinator if the named coordinator leaves or transitions out of the position. The incoming Assistant Director will take on coordinator responsibilities, and will be trained by Andrea Martin and Kevin Francis.
5. We have discussed The Memorandum of Agreement with the provost, who has agreed to sign it if Evergreen is selected for this program. (See letter of support from Jennifer Drake.)

**Recruitment and Promotion**

1. The Coverdell Fellowship will be advertised on our [Costs and Financial Aid](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/costs) webpage. We will also promote this new opportunity through our [program blog](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/blog) and social media channels. Last, we will reach out to MES alumni who are also RPCVs for their support in sharing this opportunity.
2. We will reach out to our closest recruiter, Tamorie Mayweather, to help us spread the word about our opportunity, and provide her with program information (brochures, stickers, examples of student work) to share with prospective Fellows.
3. Fellows will have program schedules and syllabi far in advance, so should be able to plan accordingly if Peace Corps requires support. Accommodation can be given for late assignments or missed internship days with some notice.

**Appendices**

* Please include one letter of support from the school’s provost, dean or department chair confirming the ability to offer the proposed scholarships. See letter from Jennifer Drake.
* Please include two letters of support from community-based organizations working with impoverished and/or socially disadvantaged Americans that are interested in hosting Coverdell Fellows as interns. See letters from Kelli Bush and Dennis Buckingham.

**PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**

As you prepare your proposal for submission, use this checklist to assure that your proposal is as strong as possible:

* Did you answer all 30 proposal questions fully, concisely and accurately?
* Does the proposal adhere to the required format?
* Considering [other current Fellows programs](https://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/university-programs/graduate-school-partners/) in similar disciplines, does the proposal present a financial package that will be clear and compelling to prospective Fellows?
* Does the proposal depict a robust infrastructure for program management, with the coordinator’s responsibilities identified and the position embedded within a supportive department?
* Have you confirmed that your anticipated signatory will be willing to sign the MOA without unauthorized edits?
* Have you included a letter of support from the school’s department chair or dean confirming the capacity to offer the discussed scholarships?
* Have you included two letters of support from community-based organizations working with underserved communities in the U.S. that are interested in hosting Coverdell Fellows as interns?

Be sure not to miss the submission deadline! **5:00 p.m. (PST) on Tuesday, May 1, 2018**. One electronic copy of the proposal in PDF format must be submitted to the Peace Corps online at [this link](http://pcrmweb.peacecorps.gov/cn/aflq5/coverdellfellows) (http://pcrmweb.peacecorps.gov/cn/aflq5/coverdellfellows).