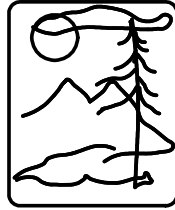


# STUDENT POLICY HANDBOOK

2013 - 2014



**GRADUATE PROGRAM ON THE ENVIRONMENT  
MASTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES  
THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE  
OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON**

September 2013

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PROGRAM CONTACTS.....	i
WELCOME.....	ii
ADMISSION.....	1
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS .....	1
REGISTRATION POLICIES.....	2
CANDIDACY.....	4
INDIVIDUAL LEARNING CONTRACTS.....	5
INTERNSHIPS .....	5
THESIS.....	7
GRADUATION.....	10
CREDIT POLICIES.....	10
ACADEMIC HONESTY.....	11
ACADEMIC ADVISING.....	11
COMMUNICATION.....	11
FINANCIAL AID POLICIES.....	12
LEAVE OF ABSENCE.....	13
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES.....	14
ACADEMIC APPEALS.....	14
THE SOCIAL CONTRACT.....	16
CIVIL RIGHTS POLICIES.....	18
STUDENT CONDUCT CODE.....	18
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW POLICY .....	19
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.....	20
MASTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES STUDENT ASSOC. (MESA).....	20
NEWSLETTER.....	20
INCLEMENT WEATHER CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY.....	20

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# THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE

*Graduate Program on the Environment - Master of Environmental Studies*

## **WELCOME!**

Congratulations on your enrollment in Evergreen's Graduate Program on the Environment and the Master of Environmental Studies (MES). The MES faculty and I look forward to working with you in realizing your academic and professional objectives. We hope you will find the program and its courses current with contemporary environmental critical thinking and problem solving.

This handbook is a guide to the policies and operational details of the program. Please keep it with your basic reference documents, as it will serve as the initial source for answers to your questions on these topics. The Assistant Director, Student Assistant, and Director may be consulted at any time regarding policies, choices and decision-making as you navigate through the program. Faculty and staff are committed to helping you successfully complete the program. The Director is the primary academic leader of the program, and the Assistant Director is responsible for administrative support for students.

As a member of an MES cohort, you are also a member of the Evergreen community. The entire community collaborates to create a learning environment and your participation is necessary to make the entire community function. All members of the community observe the Evergreen conduct code. Please refer to the code as a guide, a source of information, and a set of steps for interacting with others in the community. As Director, I am here to assist students and faculty within the program to meet their educational and employment goals. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you are in a difficult learning situation. Always act with the greatest amount of respect and professionalism.

A companion document, the Thesis Handbook, will help you when it comes time to initiate and complete the required thesis; students will receive the handbook in their second year. The 16 credit thesis project must be completed in the second year. Beginning in Fall Quarter Case Studies, students work with faculty to complete a thesis prospectus. Thesis work is done in conjunction with faculty during Winter and Spring Quarters in thesis workshop classes.

The Director and staff continually work to improve curricular offerings, procedures, and policies. Final decision-making on policy changes is done in consultation with MES faculty, staff and students. Revisions are clearly stated and published.

Again, welcome to the Graduate Program on the Environment. At this time of increasingly difficult environmental conditions, the expertise you gain through this program will enable you to join previous MES graduates in many walks of life dedicated to the protection and restoration of environmental quality, both here in the Pacific Northwest and around the world.

Martha L. Henderson, PhD.  
Director, Graduate Program on the Environment  
Member of the Faculty, Professor of Geography

## ADMISSION

Admission to the Graduate Program on the Environment is based upon demonstration of a sound academic and/or professional history, coupled with community involvement, and the Admission Committee's belief in the candidate's potential for academic success.

Candidates may be admitted **conditionally** or **provisionally** if they have not met all of the admission requirements. Students are accountable for satisfying those requirements, as specified in their letter of admission and within the specified time limits.

### Conditional Admission

Students admitted conditionally are notified of the terms of their admission in their admission letter. The conditions generally require completion of studies related to the admission course prerequisites. Documentation that the conditions have been satisfied, such as official transcripts of courses taken, should be sent to the MES office as soon as possible after the completion of the work and no later than the date(s) specified in the student's letter of admission. If the requirement is not fulfilled by the date(s) specified, then the student may not enroll in any future core classes until the requirement(s) are completed. Students may take MES electives during this time. Only prerequisites in which the student earned a "C" or better will be accepted.

### Provisional Admission

Students who are admitted provisionally with the requirement that they complete an undergraduate degree prior to entering the program must order an official transcript from the degree-granting institution immediately upon completion of the undergraduate degree. Official transcripts are due to the MES office no later than the date specified in the student's letter of admission.

Students who are admitted provisionally with the requirement that they submit official GRE scores prior to entering the program must submit test scores no later than the date specified in the student's letter of admission.

Provisionally admitted students will not have access to their financial aid offer nor will they be able to start Fall Quarter classes until the provision is lifted

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

### Overview

MES students are required to successfully complete a total of 72 quarter-hours of credit, including 32 core credits in sequence, 24 elective credits, and 16 thesis credits. The four core courses carry eight units of credit each and electives carry four units each. Courses are successfully completed when all credits are awarded by faculty via narrative evaluation. Students have four calendar years (16 quarters, including summers), starting with their first fall quarter, in which to complete all degree requirements. A one year extension may be available with director approval. If a student has an approved leave of absence (please see Leave of Absence section, page 13), the period of time the student was approved for leave will not be included in the four calendar years.

## Curriculum

The MES curriculum is divided between core requirements and a series of electives. A thesis completes a student's work in the program. The core classes are taught once each year. Students begin as a cohort in the first core class, graduate Conceptualizing Our Regional Environment (gCORE), and must progress through each class before taking the next core class. The second core program, Ecological and Social Sustainability (ESS), is taught during Winter Quarter and includes a Candidacy Paper requirement (see page 4). Year One students must successfully complete this requirement in order to be successfully admitted to the program and advance to candidacy and the remaining core curriculum. During Spring Quarter, students enroll in Research Design and Quantitative Methods (RDQM). This program introduces students to statistical options for investigating environmental problems. The last core class in Fall of the second year is Case Studies, which reviews significant examples in environmental research and decision-making. The final two quarters are dedicated to completing the thesis project.

Three thematic areas of study are available to students, as well as the option to select elective classes across the areas. The three thematic areas are: 1) Energy and Climate Change; 2) Sustainable Communities; and 3) Ecology. Electives offered in methodology and research techniques such as Geographic Information Systems are recommended in all of the thematic areas. These areas do not constitute a designation at graduation but do provide students with specialized areas of knowledge. When coupled with the thesis project, and linked to individual contracts or internships, these learning experiences can support student learning and are clarified in the student's transcript.

The three thematic areas have been developed based on adjunct faculty expertise, current environmental conditions, tribal, federal, state and local mandates, public resource management, environmental policy, environmental education, and research methods and techniques. Many electives are taught on a yearly basis. In some cases, a class such as Environmental Education is taught every other year. There are usually three to four electives taught each quarter.

Core faculty are encouraged to teach an elective (4 credit) class at least once during their two year commitment to the program. The majority of electives are taught by adjunct faculty who have distinguished themselves as leaders in their fields of study either through advanced degrees or employment. The program is highly dependent upon these adjunct faculty to provide professionally related education goals, internships and in some cases, thesis support.

## **REGISTRATION POLICIES**

### General Information

You may register for courses at [my.evergreen.edu](http://my.evergreen.edu) when registration opens for a particular quarter (week 10 of the prior quarter, except in the case of Summer and Fall quarters, which is week 8 of Spring quarter). Web registration ends the Friday before the quarter starts and paper registration ends on the fifth day of class each quarter. Late fees apply after that time. Students are encouraged to register as soon as possible after their Registration Time Ticket in [my.evergreen.edu](http://my.evergreen.edu) indicates. Electives often fill quickly – if this happens, you will be placed on a waitlist, and it is advised that you contact the professor ahead of time to ask for an override, if they are willing. Once you register for your Fall core class, you are automatically registered for the Winter and Spring section of core courses (not electives) for that particular year. It is your responsibility to double-check your registration status and current credit-load at [my.evergreen.edu](http://my.evergreen.edu) and make adjustments if needed. **MES students may register for no more than 12 credits per quarter.** Should you wish to register

for more, you will need approval from the Director. More specific registration information is available from the Office of Registration and Records, 360-867-6180, or online at <http://www.evergreen.edu/registration/>.

### International Students

In addition to the policies in this handbook, international students on an F-1 student visa must take at least eight credits per quarter and finish in two years in order to maintain their eligibility to be in the country. The only exception is during their final quarter, where they only need to take the number of credits required to graduate. International students should meet with the International Programs office on a regular basis by calling 360-867-6312.

### Undergraduate Courses

Graduate students who take undergraduate courses for undergraduate credit will be charged undergraduate tuition rates for those credits. These credits will not satisfy the MES elective requirements, and graduate tuition waiver awards cannot be used to pay for them. However, exceptional circumstances might occur in which a graduate student enrolled in an advanced undergraduate course would complete, with faculty approval, the undergraduate course and receive graduate credit. This includes transfer courses. A course is considered graduate-level when it is approached from a philosophical base, has theoretical arguments, uses primary data, supports critical data analysis and thinking and leads to advanced conclusions and decision-making. These are typically 400-level courses. Special arrangements must be made with the Director before enrolling in any undergraduate course for graduate credit.

### Electives

The MES program offers three to four electives each Fall, Winter and Spring quarter that are four credits each. Some repeat every year, and some repeat every other year. Students must take 24 elective credits, which can consist of MES electives, MPA electives, summer graduate-level courses, individual study contracts, internships, or transfer courses. Two-credit electives will not count toward the MES degree, unless they are in the form of an individual learning contract or internship. **To graduate from MES, at least eight credits must be from MES elective courses taken while the student is enrolled in the program.**

### MPA Electives

The Master of Public Administration program offers electives that may be appropriate for individual MES students (example: Grant Writing). Up to eight credits in MPA electives may be used toward the MES degree with MES Director approval. Two-credit MPA electives will not count toward the MES degree, although students may take these courses for their own personal enrichment. Financial aid can be applied toward MPA courses.

### Summer courses

Typically, MES offers at least one summer elective. Students are also highly encouraged to earn elective credits through an individual learning contract or internship. Students may also choose to take MPA courses or appropriate graduate courses on other campuses (with approval of the Director) during the summer. If a student anticipates doing a thesis project that involves summer field work, the student is highly advised to work with a faculty member to create a methodology for data collection during the summer prior to taking Case Studies.

### Studying Abroad/International Research

Some students may be interested in an internship, individual learning contract, class, or thesis work (data collection/field work) that involves international travel. Prior to travel, MES students are required to go through the same process as undergraduate students who study abroad. This entails filling out a Travel Waiver Form for liability reasons and getting signatures from the appropriate dean. Please see the Assistant Director for assistance if your studies involve international travel. For more information, please go to <http://www.evergreen.edu/studyabroad>.

### Special student credits

Special students are non-enrolled students who are allowed to take one MES elective per quarter with faculty permission. Credits earned as a special student are considered transfer credits and count toward the limit of eight hours of transfer credit as outlined below.

### Transfer credits

The Graduate Program on the Environment will accept up to eight hours of graduate credit earned within the past five years (from the year of admittance) at accredited institutions other than Evergreen and as an Evergreen special student. These eight hours also include transfer courses taken while enrolled as an MES student. Normally, graduate credit earned through extension or correspondence work and continuing education credits will not be considered. Additionally, graduate credit will not be awarded for life and/or work experience. Credit from a previously earned graduate degree will also not be considered. Students wishing to obtain transfer credit for course work completed elsewhere prior to their MES enrollment should make their intention known to the Director before or during the first quarter they begin their graduate studies at Evergreen. Students interested in obtaining transfer credit for course work taken elsewhere while enrolled in the MES program should consult with the Director before enrolling in such courses. Transfer credit is awarded by the Director following review of appropriate materials, including transcripts and course syllabi. Official transcripts must be submitted to the MES office before transfer credit can be awarded. Only courses in which the student earned a “C” or better will be accepted.

## **CANDIDACY**

In order to earn the MES degree, a student must first be approved as a degree candidate. Candidacy is automatically reviewed upon completion of the first two quarters of core courses. Advancement to MES candidacy is based in part upon demonstration by the student that she or he can design and execute a scholarly research paper and effectively communicate the research results in an oral presentation. In order to provide the candidacy committee with positive evidence, each student will be required to execute such a project as part of the course work in the first-year winter-quarter core program. The written research paper should be analytical (not simply descriptive), well organized, present a thesis and supporting evidence for it, and demonstrate appropriate use of bibliographic resources. Both the written and oral presentations must be in an appropriate scholarly form. The student's overall strength of academic performance to date, as evidenced through a student-designed portfolio, will also be considered in the decision to grant candidacy.

At the end of the Winter quarter, the candidacy committee, made up of the faculty teaching in the first-year core sequence in that year, will review each student's entire record to that point and recommend to the Director which students should be advanced to candidacy. The Director will notify each student in writing of the decision. Students denied candidacy will not be permitted to continue in the program.

## INDIVIDUAL LEARNING CONTRACTS

When a student's academic program design cannot be satisfactorily completed through the available elective courses and internships, the student may arrange an individual learning contract with an MES core faculty member. This is a negotiated agreement between the student and faculty for the student to pursue independent, individualized study. In most cases, due to limitations of faculty time, the burden of the academic design and undertaking is on the student, and the faculty acts more as a guide and mentor than as a "teacher," *per se*. Students who believe they will need and benefit from an individual learning contract should consult a trusted MES faculty member or the Director for advice on the appropriateness of such an undertaking and for suggested faculty sponsors. Sponsors may only be MES core faculty members.

### Individual Study Contract Registration

To enroll in an individual learning contract, login to my.evergreen.edu and go to the "Individual Study Contracts" section under "Students." At the top of that page, select "Create New Contract," then select the individual learning contract form, the graduate level of study, and create a name for the contract. You will then be prompted to select the number of credits. The system guides you through drafting the contract by asking you for learning objectives and activities, which should be determined in consultation with your faculty sponsor. The contract is a formal document that must be electronically approved by all parties: student, faculty sponsor, and Director, in order for the student to register. Once all signatures are obtained, the student is registered. All approvals must be completed by the fifth day of the quarter to avoid late registration fees.

### Academic Credit for Individual Learning Contracts

Depending on the amount of time spent on the contract, the student may choose a two-credit or four-credit contract. A second contract will be approved only if it is significantly different from the first, and a student will be approved to register for more than a total of four credits of contract in any given quarter only under exceptional circumstances. No more than eight hours of elective credit can be accumulated through internship and/or individual learning contracts. Only the Director can approve contracts beyond this limit.

## INTERNSHIPS

### General Information

An internship is a learning experience designed to aid students in achieving specific academic and professional objectives. Students are strongly encouraged to complete an internship after their first year in core classes in conjunction with their thesis, especially if they do not have prior professional-level experience in environmental work.

Two internship options are available to MES students:

1. **A credit-generating internship** is one in which the student, faculty sponsor, and field supervisor formally agree upon a student's academic objectives for the quarter and a plan for achieving those objectives. It must include new academic learning and not be developed only to obtain work experience or entry-level employment. Occasionally, a student may be allowed to undertake a credit-generating internship with the organization with whom she/he is employed. Evergreen has strict policies for these internships: a student who wishes to do an employment-related internship



must work with the Assistant Director early in the planning process to ensure that the credit being sought is for a project that is not a part of his/her regular work.

2. **A non-credit-generating internship** is often a compensated internship that does not include formal academic components or earn academic credit. Students who have reached their internship credit limit or do not want to pay for internship credits may consider this option. While it is important to discuss such internship opportunities with an advisor, taking an internship that does not include academic credit is ultimately an individual arrangement between the student and the internship organization and does not require the formal procedures described below.

Internships may be with government agencies, nonprofit or private sector organizations. If you are considering an internship, you should initiate discussions with a faculty member, the Director, or the Assistant Director. In doing so, you will assess the type of internship in which you are interested (credit-generating or non-credit-generating, paid or voluntary, type of agency or organization, etc.), the extent to which you will benefit from an internship, and how it fits into your overall educational plan.

Internship ideas are found online at [www.evergreen.edu/mes/internships](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/internships). Students may also find internships through their own research or thesis interests.

#### Internship Learning Contract Registration

A credit-generating internship is planned, arranged and conducted to meet the needs of the host organization and the academic and professional objectives of the student. These objectives, needs and all other internship-related matters are agreed upon before the internship begins, and are formalized in the Graduate Internship Learning Contract. Graduate Internship Learning Contracts require a faculty sponsor (MES core faculty only), who will guide and review the academic components of the internship, and an internship field supervisor, who will work more directly with the student.

#### *Signing up for internship credits*

To enroll in a credit-generating internship, login to [my.evergreen.edu](http://my.evergreen.edu) and go to the “Individual Study Contracts” section under “Students.” At the top of that page, select “Create New Contract,” then select the internship form, the graduate level of study, and create a name for the contract. You will then be prompted to select the number of credits. The system guides you through drafting the contract by asking you for learning objectives and activities, which should be determined in consultation with your faculty sponsor and field supervisor. In order to register for credits, the contract is a formal document that must be approved by all parties: student (electronic), faculty sponsor (electronic), and field supervisor (hard copy) before finally being approved by the Director. Before the Director electronically approves, the field supervisor must sign a hard copy and the hard copy must be given to the Assistant Director. Once all signatures are obtained, the student is registered. The hard copy and all approvals must be submitted by the fifth day of the quarter to avoid late registration fees.

#### *Evaluations*

At the completion of a credit-generating internship, it is the responsibility of the student to write a narrative self-evaluation. It is also the field supervisor’s responsibility to write an evaluation that assesses the intern’s job performance. The field supervisor and student intern should meet to

discuss the evaluation at the end of the internship. The student's and field supervisor's evaluations are then sent to the faculty sponsor, who will meet with the student for an internship evaluation conference. The faculty sponsor is responsible for drafting the final internship evaluation, which will include all or significant portions of the field supervisor's evaluation. The faculty evaluation becomes part of the student's official transcript. Whether or not the student's self-evaluation becomes part of the transcript is optional but strongly encouraged.

### *Compensation*

While the host organization is encouraged to provide a stipend or salary to the intern, volunteer internships of equivalent learning and professional value are often more readily available. The intern will need to make a decision regarding compensation based on her/his learning objectives and financial condition. The availability of compensation should in no way impinge on the academic validity and quality of the internship experience.

### Academic Credit for Internships

In general, two credits per quarter will be awarded for successful completion of a part-time internship (10 hours per week). Four credits will be awarded for completion of an internship of 20 hours or more per week. A second internship will be approved only if it is significantly different from the first, and a student will be approved to register for more than a total of four credits of internship in any given quarter only under exceptional circumstances. No more than eight hours of elective credit can be accumulated through internship and/or individual learning contracts. Only the Director can approve contracts beyond this limit. The evaluations from the field supervisor and student are due at the end of the quarter in which the student registered for internship credits.

## **THESIS**

Students will complete a 16-credit thesis in their final year. A companion document, the Thesis Handbook, will be distributed to students in Case Studies. The handbook and other thesis information can be found at: [www.evergreen.edu/mes/thesisresources](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/thesisresources).

### Thesis Basics

Students must successfully finish all four core classes as well as 12 credits of electives before enrolling in thesis credits. A major requirement for satisfactory work on the thesis is timely completion. Students must evaluate, with their reader, if they can realistically complete their work in their second year, or choose to attend part-time and complete their thesis in their third year. Failure to complete on time will result in a filing of No Credit by the reader. No Credit may also be filed if the student's quality of work is not at the graduate thesis level. Earning No Credit for the thesis will lead to the student being withdrawn from the program for not completing the thesis requirement.

Students are required to work on their thesis in the Winter and Spring Quarters, including attending the thesis workshop, of their final year with completion in the Spring Quarter. Thesis presentations are scheduled for the end of Spring quarter. In rare cases, with permission from the student's reader and the Director, a student may extend thesis work through the following Summer Quarter of the same academic year. Students who are allowed by their reader to continue work on their thesis project after registering for the required 16 thesis credits are required to take an additional four credits each quarter that involves faculty effort until completion; this includes the quarter in which the thesis is submitted and the final public presentation is made. The extra thesis credits taken do not count toward the student's degree.

### *Thesis Prospectus*

A final, approved prospectus (signed by the student, the student's reader, and the Director) outlining the student's thesis research plan is due in the MES office by the beginning of the winter quarter in which the thesis is started.

### *Thesis Workshop*

Students are required to attend a thesis workshop led by an MES faculty member. The workshop is typically scheduled for Tuesday evenings during winter and spring quarters, and provides a structured environment for thesis preparation, research, and writing. The workshop is intended to help you prepare and finish your thesis by the end of spring quarter. It provides a chance to meet regularly with the workshop faculty for advice. Students should also meet with their reader on a regular basis during Winter and Spring quarters. The thesis evaluation by the student's reader includes reference to student attendance and participation in the workshop.

### Critical Initial Choices

#### *Choosing a Reader*

A key decision regarding thesis work is your choice of faculty advisor, or "reader." The reader is selected for (1) her/his expertise on the topic you wish to explore, (2) personal compatibility with you as a student, and (3) availability during the time you are working on your thesis. Your reader will advise on content and methodology, and will also read and critique your drafts. The reader also writes your thesis evaluation and awards final credit. This person will become your most important faculty colleague in this process, and you should meet regularly.

During the Case Studies core class, you will indicate preferences for a reader. Your reader will be a member of the core MES faculty unless otherwise arranged by the Director. Once students have indicated their preferences, MES faculty members work collaboratively to decide on reader assignments. In this process, every effort is made to match you with your first choice for reader, while also balancing faculty workload. To assist with making your decision, you are encouraged to begin talking about your project at any time with potential readers.

#### *The Research Question or "Thesis"*

One of the most difficult but important aspects of thesis work is taking a great idea and turning it into a focused project that can be completed within acceptable time constraints. During your studies prior to thesis, you have examined a broad array of environmental issues from a number of perspectives. Now it's time to get specific.

Your goal should be to develop a concise research question, or thesis statement, that defines as precisely as possible what your thesis will be about. Your reader will be able to help you to decide when your research question is focused enough and likely to lead to a completed thesis.

The research question or thesis statement will need to be specified in your Thesis Prospectus, which will be given to you during Case Studies.

Your thesis requires that you engage in research on a topic of real-world interest and consider its political, economic, and scientific aspects. The topic may be one that you first identify when you

prepare to register for thesis, or may be a topic of long-standing interest to you that you have already begun to research.

For your thesis, you can choose to engage in fieldwork, data collection, and analysis, or you can choose to analyze an existing body of information from a new perspective. The new perspective might derive from integration of information not previously recognized as relevant to that topic, reassessment of some existing controversy or topic in the light of new data, evaluation of the success (or lack thereof) of some environmental policy or action, or other thoughtful consideration of an environmental problem or solution presented in a new light.

This research is conducted independently by you with the support and guidance of your reader, and requires a scope of work that can be completed in two quarters. The thesis is written in a structured workshop setting during winter and spring quarters of your final year.

You should consult with faculty members and/or the Director about your thesis options as you approach completion of sufficient credits for beginning thesis work, normally in the fall of your second year. A lot of this consultation occurs during the fourth core class – Case Studies.

It may help you in your thesis search to look at past MES theses. Completed theses of MES graduates are on the shelves (before 2006) in the library or online (2006 and after). To view a list of their titles and authors, go to [www.evergreen.edu/mes/thesisresources.htm](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/thesisresources.htm) and click on “Past MES Theses.” You will find a wide variety of interesting environmental topics covered, and it is likely that you will find past theses inspiring and potentially useful in your own work.

#### *Writing with Outside Clients in Mind*

Ideally, your thesis will be of value to an external client or organization and not just an academic exercise. Here, we use the term client to mean an organization with a specific interest in your thesis topic and who could provide continuous contact with you during the project.

A benefit of Evergreen's location in Olympia is an abundance of federal state, regional and local government agencies within close proximity to the college. Many of these agencies are environmental in nature, and can be considered potential clients for thesis research. Such agencies are excellent sources of ideas for research projects with real world significance.

Students are encouraged to work with government agencies or other environmental organizations (such as consulting firms or non-profits) to develop pertinent research projects. These are often done through internships. For students working on research related to their job, they need to make sure the scope of the thesis is open to a wider audience.

#### *Funding Your Thesis*

Students are encouraged to find grants or fellowships to fund their research. There are several resources offered by the program to help you do so. Please see the Research Funding section of our Financial Aid page for more information: [www.evergreen.edu/mes/financial.htm#research](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/financial.htm#research).

## **GRADUATION**

Students must submit an application for graduation along with the proper fee to the Office of Registration and Records and the Cashier's Office to finalize the degree. Students are eligible and are encouraged to participate in the June commencement exercises if completing their degree requirements in that academic year, which includes the Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters prior to June and the Summer quarter immediately following. Students are regularly informed of the application procedures and deadlines by Registration and Records. For graduation in a quarter prior to the June ceremony, the application is due before evaluation week of that quarter. The date on the diploma will reflect the final month of the last quarter in which the student was formally enrolled. If you change your graduation date after applying to graduate, please inform Registration and Records as soon as possible to avoid incurring a fee.

Approval for graduation and participation in the ceremony will be granted by the Director. To be granted permission to graduate, you must have completed all degree requirements, presented your thesis, had your faculty reader submit your thesis evaluation, submitted your thesis with signature page to the MES office, and paid all fees.

Students who have not completed all graduate degree requirements by the end of Spring quarter will be allowed to participate in commencement exercises PROVIDED the student will have no more than 8 credits of elective course work left to complete and plans to complete the thesis and the remaining elective credits by the following December 31st.

If you have questions about your eligibility, please contact the Assistant Director.

## **CREDIT POLICIES**

Completion of all four core programs, in the established sequence, is a requirement of the graduate program. Much of the learning in the programs occurs through the interactions with the faculty team and with classmates. This interaction would be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve in separate courses or an individual learning contract. Furthermore, each core program is designed to build upon previous core programs and/or lay a foundation for subsequent core programs. All graduate students are expected to perform at a high academic level.

In the event that a student does not satisfactorily complete all the requirements in an elective, the student may be given an Incomplete at the discretion of the faculty member and Director with the understanding that the unfinished work must be submitted within one quarter of the term in which the Incomplete was given. Incompletes not removed by the deadline will be reported as No Credit. Partial credit will not be awarded. There are no incompletes awarded for core classes.

If a student does not meet a substantial portion of a course's requirements the faculty (in consultation with the Director) may choose to assign No Credit at the conclusion of the class. In the case that No Credit is reported for a core class, the student will be required to reregister for and complete the entire core class the following year (in sequence).

Students who fail to earn credit for all their academic work in two successive quarters will be placed on academic probation and must earn credit in all academic work for the next quarter in which they are enrolled in order to be in good standing. In the event that a student does not meet this

requirement, he or she may be asked to leave the program or required to take a year's leave of absence. Additionally, if a student fails to receive credit for any two quarters of core course work, including the repetition of any core course, the student will be asked to leave the program.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is a necessity in a learning community. It makes coherent discourse possible, and is a necessary condition for all sharing, dialogue and evaluation. All forms of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication are violations of Evergreen's Social Contract (see Social Contract section, page 14).

Plagiarism is defined as *the conscious appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author or authors, and the representation of them as one's own original work*. In graduate student papers, case studies, and theses, the language, ideas and thoughts of another author or authors must always be acknowledged and properly cited. It is the responsibility of each student in the graduate programs of The Evergreen State College to confer with the faculty and/or an appropriate style manual about the accepted scholarly methods of citing the language, ideas, and thoughts of others. A proven case of plagiarism by a graduate student will result in the loss of credit and possible dismissal from the graduate program. A variety of excellent sources of advice about avoiding plagiarism can be found through the college Writing Center ([www.evergreen.edu/writingcenter](http://www.evergreen.edu/writingcenter)).

## ACADEMIC ADVISING

In keeping with Evergreen's philosophy of student-initiated learning, graduate students are encouraged to develop a relationship with one of the MES faculty for advice and consultation appropriate to their interests and needs. The first core class offers introductory advising information about the program, graduate-level environmental learning, and procedures for an Evergreen education (basically, how to be a "Greener"). A good source of information is normally a student's core seminar leader. Students may also approach any other MES faculty member for advice. The Director is also available for general academic advice.

**Students are encouraged to work with faculty on the following topics in order to develop an educational plan:**

- The student's academic, professional and personal development goals, considering both specialization and breadth.
- How program offerings will aid the student in meeting her/his goals.
- Selection of electives that incorporate the student's goals.
- Identifying thesis topics.
- Identifying potential independent learning contracts and internships.

## COMMUNICATION

### Online System

Students are given a "MyEvergreen" account at [my.evergreen.edu](http://my.evergreen.edu) when they are admitted. This site is the official mode of communication between students and the college. It includes:

- Course registration (including individual study contracts and internship contracts)

- Student jobs database
- Financial aid
- Evaluations
- Webmail
- Web payments
- Student account information
- Transcript orders

### E-Mail

Students must use their evergreen.edu webmail, as all official communication from the college and the Graduate Program on the Environment is dispersed this way. The college is not responsible for any communications you do not receive from your evergreen.edu email, found at [www.evergreen.edu/webmail](http://www.evergreen.edu/webmail). This email account is a primary mechanism for official college communications to students, including registration and student account information, announcements of official college policies and general announcements and information. MES students' Evergreen emails are also placed on two listservs: one for current students, and one for current students and alumni. As part of their responsibility to work with the college to manage their business and enrollment issues, students are expected to check their college email account on a regular basis. From the e-mail settings page on my.evergreen.edu, you can forward your Evergreen e-mail account to another preferred e-mail provider that you may already be using (e.g., hotmail, gmail), thereby receiving college correspondence through another e-mail address. If you choose to forward your Evergreen e-mail to another provider, you will be responsible for maintaining the ongoing viability of that third party address.

### Mailboxes

All actively enrolled students have their own mail file-folders, which are located in the Graduate Student Lounge, Room 3023, Lab I. Faculty and staff use these folders for distributing information to individual students. Students should get in the habit of checking their folders periodically.

### Contact Information

It is very important that students keep their residential mailing address and phone listings up-to-date with the Office of Registration and Records or through my.evergreen.edu, so that the program and the college can communicate with them.

### Computer Labs

The College provides access to the Internet on the networked computers in the Computer Center (first floor of Library) and the Computer Applications Lab (CAL B LAB 2, room 1223).

## **FINANCIAL AID POLICIES**

In most cases, graduate enrollment of four or more credits per quarter is a requirement to receive aid, specifically for federal and state loans, grants, and work-study. Students must also maintain satisfactory progress toward the degree to continue to receive financial aid. To maintain satisfactory progress, MES students must complete at least 75% of the total attempted credits in an academic year. Students must also complete an average of at least 4 credits per quarter and at least 18 completed credits for the academic year. In addition, students generally will not be eligible for



federal financial aid if they attempt more than 90 credits. Please see the Graduate Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy at [www.evergreen.edu/financialaid/sappolicy-graduate](http://www.evergreen.edu/financialaid/sappolicy-graduate).

There are several forms of aid that MES students receive. The primary types are:

1. **Loans and/or grants** – these are distributed by the Office of Financial Aid and require the FAFSA, but no other application
2. **MES scholarships, tuition waivers, grants or fellowships** – these are distributed by the MES office, all require an application, and many require the FAFSA
3. **Non-MES or Evergreen scholarships** – these are administered by outside organizations and you apply on your own for them
4. **Employer or Military** – these are distributed by your employer or the Veterans Administration

***The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be completed before any financial aid decision can be made. In order to receive full consideration of aid from the program or from the Office of Financial Aid, students should file the FAFSA by March 1.***

If you missed the priority filing date, you can still qualify for loans. The Office of Financial Aid will review later applications in date order after the on-time files have been reviewed – this can often stretch into the summer or fall, so it is highly advised to not be late! After you file your FAFSA, keep an eye on your [my.evergreen](http://my.evergreen) account and submit any requested documents right away. FAFSA application packets are available at the Financial Aid Office, Library 1200J, (360) 867-6205 or online at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

Limited financial aid is also awarded by the Graduate Program on the Environment each spring for the following academic year in the form of scholarships, fellowships, tuition waivers, and work-study. To qualify for aid from the program, students must turn in an MES Financial Aid application packet to the Assistant Director, as well as a FAFSA (for most awards). The application will be made available to current students each spring. Please see <http://www.evergreen.edu/mes/financial.htm> for more ideas on funding your MES studies.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A student who plans not to enroll in course work or thesis work for any quarter(s) should petition the MES Program Director in writing for an official leave of absence and complete the Leave of Absence Form to be turned in to Registration and Records. The Leave of Absence Form can be found at [www.evergreen.edu/registration/forms/loa.pdf](http://www.evergreen.edu/registration/forms/loa.pdf). Official leaves will normally be approved for a length of no more than one year. Students who do not register for credit in any quarter without notifying the program are automatically given unofficial on-leave status by the Registrar. This status is valid for one year. The advantage of official leave is that your four year graduation deadline is extended by the amount of time you take leave. If you go on leave unofficially, you will still be required to finish in four calendar years. Students are reminded that core curriculum classes must be taken in sequence and a leave of absence indicates where a student will return to the program.

A student who fails to register for credit in the quarter following the end of a leave will be withdrawn from the program. If the student wishes to return to the program, the student must petition the Director in writing for reinstatement, including a proposed schedule for completing the



requirements for the degree. The student will be able to register again only after (1) she/he petitions the Director to be reinstated as an active student and the Director permits reinstatement, and (2) the Director has notified the Office of Registration and Records that the student should be allowed to register.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

The following grievance procedures are to be used by MES students, faculty, and staff when disagreements arise outside of disputes about the evaluation of work or award of credit:

1. An individual with a significant, uncomfortable, interpersonal conflict with a classmate, faculty, or staff is encouraged to resolve the concern directly with the other person. In instances when an individual experiences excessive discomfort or the potential of threat, perhaps due to the other party's power differential, the issue may first be taken up with the Director.
2. At any point during the resolution process, a student involved in the process may seek a third party to assist in achieving resolution. Contact Evergreen's CARE Network at 360-867-5291 for mediation help. The Director may also be contacted for assistance.
3. If resolution cannot be achieved as a result of the above, the grievance may be filed in accordance with the formal campus grievance procedures. For grievances against students, contact the College Grievance Officer at (360) 867-5113. Grievances against faculty or staff should be referred to the Director. If the grievance is against the Director, the Director will forward the grievance to the MES Grievance Committee (made up of one or more MES faculty). Grievances based on perceived or suspected discrimination should be directed to the Evergreen Civil Rights Officer at (360) 867-5371.

## **ACADEMIC APPEALS**

Every quarter faculty write evaluations of students. The evaluation is a statement of the quality and quantity of student work as perceived by the faculty member based on her/his professional judgment. **A student does not have a right to a hearing with the Director regarding a disagreement with the faculty member's professional academic judgment about the quality of work or award of credit.**

If a student has a disagreement about something non-academic in a faculty evaluation of a student, the student is expected to first talk with, or write to, the faculty member who signed the evaluation within 30 calendar days from the date the final evaluation was received by the student. (The exception to this time limit is when an evaluation is received at the end of spring quarter and either the student or faculty member will be absent from the institution during the summer, in which case the student needs to contact the faculty member within 30 calendar days from the date classes begin the subsequent fall quarter.) The *only* exception to the requirement to contact the faculty member directly is when the case may involve issues of discrimination. In such cases, while students are still strongly encouraged to talk directly with the faculty member involved, they are not required to do so. Students should consult the college's Civil Rights Officer in any case which may involve illegal discrimination, including sexual harassment, as defined by state and federal statutes.

If resolution cannot be reached with the faculty member responsible for the evaluation, then, in cases of a team-taught program, the student is expected to talk with, or write to, the faculty team for the program. The faculty team must respond to the student within 20 calendar days. If the faculty team decides to not amend the evaluation as requested by the student, the team shall inform the student in writing of their decision and the student has 30 calendar days to request a hearing from the Director. In the case of a program taught by one faculty, the student is expected to talk with, or write to, the Director. The Director must respond to the student within 20 calendar days as to whether or not a hearing is in order. If the faculty in question is the Director, the Director will forward the request to the MES Grievance Committee.

When the Director (or Grievance Committee) receives a request for a hearing, it will require the Director to determine: 1) that the student's request is not based merely on a disagreement with a faculty member's professional judgment; 2) that the student's basis for requesting an amendment addresses factual errors, misleading statements of a factual nature, or statements which violate individual privacy or other rights as related to FERPA; and, 3) that the request is being made on a timely basis (within 30 calendar days from the date the faculty member or the faculty team sent the student notice of their decision).

If the Director (or Grievance Committee) determines that the case is not appropriate for review, s/he will notify the involved parties in writing, stating the specific reasons for the determination, within 20 calendar days. Since the record would remain unchanged the student would retain the right to place a statement in his/her self-evaluation commenting on the contested information and/or stating why the student disagrees with the final decision.

If the Director (or Grievance Committee) determines that the case is appropriate for review, a hearing will be scheduled within a reasonable time, not to exceed 45 calendar days. The Director will serve as the hearings officer. The Director will give the student and faculty member notice of the date, time, and place, reasonably in advance of the hearing. Minimally, the hearing will include: 1) an opportunity for the student to present her/his case, including the submittal of any supporting evidence; and, 2) an opportunity for the faculty member to submit evidence to support his/her decision. The student may, at his/her own expense, be assisted or represented by one or more individuals of his/her own choice, including an attorney, at the hearing. Either party to the contested record must give advance notice if it is their intent to be represented by counsel at the hearing. In cases where the student exercises this option, the college will also have an attorney present.

The Director (or Grievance Committee) will make a timely decision based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. This decision will include appropriate action to be taken with the evaluation, which may include amending the evaluation. The Director must write a summary of the evidence and the reasons (based solely on evidence presented at the hearing), for the final decision to the involved parties. If the faculty member responsible for the evaluation still disagrees to amending the evaluation, the Director will write and sign the amended evaluation of the student.

If the Director (or Grievance Committee) does not find the information in the faculty evaluation of the student to be factually inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student as related to FERPA, and the record of the student remains unchanged, the student has the right to place a statement in his/her self-evaluation commenting on the contested information and/or stating why the student disagrees with the final decisions

**THE SOCIAL CONTRACT AND COLLEGE PHILOSOPHY**  
**Excerpts from WAC 174-120-020**

(1) General: Evergreen is an institution and a community that continues to organize itself so that it can clear away obstacles to learning. In order that both creative and routine work can be focused on education, and so that the mutual and reciprocal roles of campus community members can best reflect the goals and purposes of the College, a system of governance and decision-making consonant with those goals and purposes is required.

(2) Purpose:

(a) Evergreen can thrive only if members respect the rights of others while enjoying their own rights. Students, faculty, administrators, and staff members may differ widely in their specific interests, in the degrees and kinds of experiences they bring to Evergreen, and in the functions that they have agreed to perform. All must share alike in prizing academic and interpersonal honesty, in responsibly obtaining and in providing full and accurate information, and in resolving their differences through due process and with a strong will to collaboration.

(b) The Evergreen community should support experimentation with new and better ways to achieve Evergreen's goals. Specifically, it must attempt to emphasize the sense of community and require members of the campus community to play multiple, reciprocal, and reinforcing roles in both the teaching/learning process and in the governance process.

(3) Freedom and Civility: The individual members of the Evergreen community are responsible for protecting each other and visitors on campus from physical harm, from personal threats, and from uncivil abuse. Civility is not just a word; it must be present in all our interactions. Similarly, the institution is obligated, both by principle and by the general law, to protect its property from damage and unauthorized use and its operating processes from interruption. Members of the community must exercise the rights accorded them to voice their opinions with respect to basic matters of policy and other issues. The Evergreen community will support the right of its members, individually or in groups, to express ideas, judgments, and opinions in speech or writing. The members of the community, however, are obligated to make statements in their own names and not as expressions on behalf of the College. The Board of Trustees or the President speak on behalf of the College and may at times share or delegate the responsibility to others within the College. Among the basic rights of individuals are freedom of speech, freedom of peaceful assembly and association, freedom of belief, and freedom from intimidation, violence, and abuse.

(4) Individual and Institutional Rights: Each member of the community must protect:

(a) The fundamental rights of others in the community as citizens.

(b) The right of each member in the community to pursue different learning objectives within the limits defined by Evergreens' curriculum **or** resources of people, materials, equipment and money;

(c) The rights and obligations of Evergreen as an institution established by the state of Washington; and

(d) Individual rights to fair and equitable procedures when the institution acts to protect the safety of its members.

(5) Society and the College:

(a) Members of the Evergreen community recognize that the college is part of the larger society as represented by the state of Washington, which funds it, and by the community of greater Olympia, in which it is located. Because the Evergreen community is part of the larger society, the campus is not a sanctuary from the general law or invulnerable to general public opinion.

(b) All members of the Evergreen community should strive to prevent the financial, political, or other exploitation of the campus by any individual or group.

(c) Evergreen has the right to prohibit individuals and groups from using its name, its financial or other resources, and its facilities for commercial or political activities.

(6) Prohibition Against Discrimination: There may be no discrimination at Evergreen with respect to race, sex, age, handicap, sexual orientation, religious or political belief, or national origin in considering individuals' admission, employment, or promotion. To this end the college has adopted an affirmative action policy approved by the state Human Rights Commission and the Higher Education Personnel Board.

(7) Right to Privacy:

(a) All members of the college community have the right to organize their personal lives and conduct according to their own values and preferences, with an appropriate respect for the rights of others to organize their lives differently.

(b) All members of the Evergreen community are entitled to privacy in the college's offices, facilities devoted to educational programs, and housing. The same right of privacy extends to personal papers, confidential records, and personal effects, whether maintained by the individual or by the institution.

(c) Evergreen does not stand *in loco parentis* for its members.

(8) Intellectual Freedom and Honesty:

(a) Evergreen's members live under a special set of rights and responsibilities, foremost among which is that of enjoying the freedom to explore ideas and to discuss their explorations in both speech and print. Both institutional and individual censorship are at variance with this basic freedom. Research or other intellectual efforts, the results of which must be kept secret or may be used only for the benefit of a special interest group, violate the principle of free inquiry.

(b) An essential condition for learning is the freedom and right on the part of an individual or group to express minority, unpopular, or controversial points of view. Only if minority and unpopular points of view are listened to, and are given opportunity for expression, will Evergreen provide bona fide opportunities for significant learning.

(c) Honesty is an essential condition of learning, teaching or working. It includes the presentation of one's own work in one's own name, the necessity to claim only those honors earned, and the recognition of one's own biases and prejudices.

(9) Open Forum and Access to Information:

(a) All members of the Evergreen community enjoy the right to hold and to participate in public meetings, to post notices on the campus, and to engage in peaceful demonstrations. Reasonable and impartially applied rules may be set with respect to time, place and use of Evergreen facilities in these activities.

(b) As an institution, Evergreen has the obligation to provide open forum for the members of its community to present and to debate public issues, to consider the problems of the college, and to serve as a mechanism of widespread involvement in the life of the larger community.

(c) The governance system must rest on open and ready access to information by all members of the community as well as on the effective keeping of necessary records.

(d) In the Evergreen community, individuals should not feel intimidated or be subject to reprisal for voicing their concerns or for participating in governance or policy making.

(e) Decision-making processes must provide equal opportunity to initiate and participate in policy making, and Evergreen policies apply equally regardless of job description, status or role in the community. However, College policies and rules shall not conflict with state law or statutory, regulatory and/or contractual commitments to college employees.

(10) Political Activities: The college is obligated not to take a position, as an institution, in electoral politics or on public policy issues except for those matters which directly affect its integrity, the freedom of the members of its community, its financial support, and its educational programs. At the same time, Evergreen has the obligation to recognize and support its community members' rights to engage, as citizens of the larger society, in political affairs, in any way that they may elect within the provision of the general law.

## **CIVIL RIGHTS POLICIES**

The Evergreen State College expressly prohibits sexual harassment as well as discrimination against any person on the basis of race, sex, age, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual preference, or the presence of any sensory, physical or mental disability. These policies may be accessed online at <http://www.evergreen.edu/policies/policy/nondiscriminationpolicyandprocedure>.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT CODE**

Students at The Evergreen State College enjoy the basic rights of all members of society. At the same time, students have an obligation to fulfill the responsibilities incumbent upon all citizens as well as the responsibilities of their particular roles within the academic community. Students may be accountable to civil and criminal authorities and to the college for acts occurring on or off campus that constitute violations of law. Students may be accountable to civil and criminal authorities and to the college for acts occurring on college premises and at college sponsored events. (WAC 174-120-015)

Currently enrolled students, faculty and staff may initiate the student conduct code grievance process. If the person wishing to file a grievance against a student is not an enrolled student, staff or faculty but is here at the invitation of the college, they may contact the campus grievance officer at (360) 867-5113, who will decide whether or not to take on the case on behalf of the college.

Copies of the Student Conduct Code are available in the Vice President for Student Affairs Office (Library 3009) or at <http://www.evergreen.edu/committee/studentconduct/docs/OTS-4388.3finalOctober282011.pdf>.

## **HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW POLICY**

### **Excerpts from WAC 174-126**

#### General Policy

This policy regarding the use of human subjects recognizes the responsibility to protect the rights, well-being and personal privacy of individuals, to assure a favorable climate for the conduct of academic-oriented inquiry and to protect the interests of The Evergreen State College. The following practices and procedures have been established for the conduct of activities involving human subjects.

#### Practices and Procedures

1. No activity involving human subjects shall be undertaken unless a Human Subjects Review Board has reviewed and approved such activity. This review shall determine whether these subjects will be placed at risk and, if so, whether:
  - a. the risks to the subject are so outweighed by the sum of the benefit to the subject and the importance of the knowledge to be gained as to warrant a decision to allow the subject to accept these risks;
  - b. the rights and welfare of any such subjects will be adequately protected; and
  - c. legally effective, informed consent will be obtained by adequate and appropriate methods.
2. Activities subject to review:
  - a. all activities supported by non-college funds in which such action is required by the grantor;
  - b. other activities which involve the likelihood of risk or substantial stress or discomfort to the subject;
  - c. activities which include the administration of personality tests, inventories or questionnaires of a personal and sensitive nature;
  - d. activities involving health care procedures of any kind which are not principally for the benefit of the subject, or which include diagnostic or therapeutic measures that are not yet standard; and
  - e. other activities in which the subject is not fully informed as to the procedure to be followed.

Copies of the entire policy and Human Subjects Review Forms are available online at [www.evergreen.edu/deans/humansubjectsreviewapplication.htm](http://www.evergreen.edu/deans/humansubjectsreviewapplication.htm).

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with documented disabilities may arrange for support through Evergreen's Access Services in Library 2129, or call 360-867-6348.

## **MASTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES STUDENT ASSOCIATION (MESA)**

The Master of Environmental Studies Student Association (MESA) exists to generate solidarity, to provide a voice for the students, and to provide students with professional development opportunities not readily available through the regular academic program. The MES students select one or two coordinators to develop unique activities and events of particular interest to their constituents. These events are tailored to graduate students, open to the Evergreen and sometimes local communities, and aimed at personal, professional or intellectual development.

The MESA coordinators are selected in the Spring or early Fall and serve for a year. Compensation may be available. Students interested in serving as coordinator should speak to the current MESA coordinator or contact the Assistant Director.

Historically, MESA has organized or participated in over 20 events and activities per year. These have included lectures, workshops, films, panel discussions, social events such as the MES/MPA holiday reception, new student orientation and the Rachel Carson Environmental Forum. In addition, the organization has used its resources to publish thesis abstracts, sponsor student participation in conferences, join environmental organizations, and volunteer in the community.

## **NEWSLETTER, "MESsages"**

MES publishes a quarterly newsletter, which is distributed electronically to all graduate students and faculty. The newsletter editor is an MES student who works with the program's faculty, students, and staff to cover program events. The newsletter also reports items of general interest, such as conferences, student research, and campus events. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged to submit items for publication to the newsletter editor via the Assistant Director.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY**

As a rule, the College stays open regardless of weather conditions, but the Vice President for Student Affairs may close the campus due to bad weather. A decision to close the college is made by 6 A.M. The most effective way to determine whether or not campus is open is to call the campus operator at (360) 867-6000 or check the college website at [www.evergreen.edu](http://www.evergreen.edu). Notices of campus closure will be aired on local radio stations. In addition, the Director may determine that evening classes should be canceled, even if no campus-wide determination has been made. Such a decision will be made by 3 P.M. Information regarding MES class cancellations will be available through the MES student listserv or at [www.evergreen.edu/mes](http://www.evergreen.edu/mes).

We urge students to carefully evaluate their own driving conditions, whether or not classes are canceled. If conditions are not safe, students should inform their faculty as soon as possible of their inability to attend class.