

Master of Public Administration

2700 Evergreen Parkway NW

Lab 1 Room 3024

Olympia, Washington 98505

July \_\_, 2012

Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Congratulations on your acceptance into The Evergreen State College’s Master of Public Administration (MPA) program! We, the faculty of the First Year Core, are writing to welcome you to your initial year of public administration study and to give you a preview of your fall course.

The First Year Core is a year-long series of courses designed to explore the fundamentals of administering the public good. In the fall, we will focus on the foundations of democracy and public administration, while our study during the winter will examine the knowledge and skills needed to practice public administration in organizations. In the spring, we will concentrate on public policy, fiscal foundations, and budgets. In sum, First Year Core provides students with the fundamental knowledge for their entire MPA study, the skills to apply their learning to their public service work, and the abilities necessary to create positive change beyond the college classroom.

Some students were admitted to the MPA program, but still need to complete their statistics course requirement. This summer, a course entitled *“Statistics for Public Administration”* will be offered for those who still need to fulfill this requirement and anyone else who may be interested in refreshing these skills.

The remainder of this letter: 1) introduces ourselves as faculty members; 2) directs students to the MPA course and schedule pages, including the location of the fall class syllabus; 3) provides some instructions for the first weekend of class; and 4) introduces a small guide on critical thinking*.*

Faculty Introductions:

Your faculty members for the First Year Core are Lee Lyttle (MPA Director and Faculty Member of the Faculty), Amy Gould (Faculty Member), and Tim Winchell (Adjunct Faculty Member). Each of us possesses unique academic credentials and practical public service experiences, as highlighted below:

* Lee has been a member of faculty of the college for over 20 years and is currently serving as the Director of the Masters in Public Administration program.  He has earned his bachelors degree in Fine Arts: Architecture and master degrees in Public Administration, Urban Planning, and Library and Information Sciences. Besides general administration, he has a background in city/community planning, international development, and regional environmental planning. Lee also has a particular interest and experience in public arts policy.
* Amy has been teaching at TESC since 2005. She earned her B.A. in Public Policy and Management from the University of Oregon in 1997; M.S. in Public Affairs from the University of Oregon in 2000; Ph.D. in Political Science from Northern Arizona University in 2005. As a former practitioner of public administration, her research interests include management and leadership, trust within public service, public policy, organizational theory and behavior, constitutions, international relations and development, social science research methods, and gender studies.
* Tim has served as an adjunct faculty member since 2008. He earned his doctoral degree in Public Administration and Policy from Portland State University and his MPA from the University of Washington. He continues his two decades of public service to the citizens of the state of Washington as a lieutenant with the Washington State Patrol. His scholar-practitioner interests include transformational leadership and their ability to influence positive, measureable, organizational change and development in service of the public good.

We have heard wonderful things about the incoming cohort of students this fall and we are looking forward to working with what we believe to be an exceptional group. We consider it an honor to help prepare the next generation of public servants by assisting students connect their academic study to the daily complexities of public administration in the 21st century.

MPA Website:

Some of you have already taken MPA elective courses before your MPA admission, as a non-admitted “graduate special student,” and are familiar with our faculty expectations and electronic course resources. For those of you who have not yet enrolled in an MPA course, preparing for the first class meeting is the norm and almost all faculty members require this work from students.

Course syllabi, instructions, and book lists, to include our fall syllabus, are posted on the MPA website so students can be prepared for the first class meeting. Please review the relevant course resources before our first meeting. You can access this information on the MPA Course Syllabi page, located on the left nav of the MPA home page under the “For Current Students” title.

<http://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/coursesyllabi.htm>

By the time you receive this correspondence, we will expect you all to have activated your Evergreen email account and faculty and administration will communicate exclusively with you via this email address from now on. Any course announcements will be sent to these accounts as well.

Fall Preview:

As you know, we are meeting on the weekend of September 21 (Friday 6-9 pm) and September 22 (Saturday 9-5). The readings for the first weekend are as follows:

* Kidder, T. (2009). *Mountains Beyond Mountains: The Quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, A Man Who Would Cure the World.* Random House. ISBN: 978-0812980554, $4 used
* Paul & Elder (2009). *Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools.*  The Foundation for Critical Thinking. **ISBN:** 0-944583-10-5 [www.criticalthinking.org](http://www.criticalthinking.org) (Copy included in this mailing)
* Evergreen’s *Social Contract*. <http://www.evergreen.edu/about/social.htm>

Critical Thinking:

Students’ abilities with respect to their critical reading, thinking, and writing are the hallmarks of an excellent graduate education. As a means to begin the discussion about what we believe this work entails, we have enclosed the *Critical Thinking: Concepts & Tools*. We think this guide provides transformative advice about practical tools we hope each of you will use throughout your entire graduate education at Evergreen- beginning on day one.

Once again, we look forward to working with each of you. Until then, have a great summer and we will see all of you in September.

Sincerely,

Lee Lyttle, Amy Gould, and Tim Winchell

Enclosure: The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking

Cc: Randee Gibbons