

STUDENT POLICY HANDBOOK

2021-2022

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

September 2021



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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 staff look forward to working with you in realizing your academic and professional objectives.

This handbook is a guide to the policies and operational details of the program. Consider it a key reference for answers or resources about Evergreen and the MES degree. Faculty and staff are committed to helping you successfully complete the program. You should consult the Director, Assistant Director, and Program Assistant if you have questions as you navigate through the program. The Director, along with other faculty, is responsible for developing and teaching the curriculum; the Assistant Director is responsible for administrative support for students.

Evergreen has a unique collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to learning. Our program embraces the guiding philosophy and educational practices of the institution and applies them to graduate studies. You are encouraged to explore documents like the [Social Contract](#) in order to learn more about Evergreen's core values and approach to education.

We try to make our degree requirements, procedures, and policies consistent and transparent by publishing them in a handbook. Whenever possible, substantive changes to the handbook are done in consultation with MES faculty, staff, and students. A companion document, the Thesis Handbook, will provide guidance as you initiate and complete the required thesis; students will receive the handbook in their second year.

Again, welcome to the Graduate Program on the Environment. At this time of increasingly urgent environmental problems, 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.

Kevin Francis, Ph.D.
Director, Graduate Program on the Environment

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 program 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.

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 (see 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 contains a sequence of four required 8-credit core classes, six 4-credit electives/internships/independent learning contracts, and a 16-credit research thesis. The core classes are taught once each year and students must take these classes in the following order. Students begin as a cohort in the first core class, graduate **Conceptualizing Our Regional Environment (gCORE)**, which provides a foundation for interdisciplinary approaches to environmental policy, graduate research and writing, and the ecology and environmental history of the Pacific Northwest. The second core program, **Ecological and Social Sustainability (ESS)**, focuses on climate change and sustainable development and includes a Candidacy Paper requirement (see page 4). Students must successfully complete this requirement in order to advance to candidacy and enroll in the remaining core classes. The third core program, **Research Design and Quantitative Methods (RDQM)**, improves proficiency in statistical approaches to environmental problems. The final core class, **Case Studies and Thesis Design**, is taught in the fall. The class focuses on case studies of successful environmental research and helps students develop and launch a major research project. The final two quarters, typically winter and spring of the second year, are devoted to thesis research and writing. All students must enroll for thesis credits during winter and spring quarter, even if they plan to extend their thesis work beyond these quarters.

This core curriculum provides a cohesive, integrated, and interdisciplinary approach to key environmental disciplines and methodologies. The cohort model fosters a strong collaborative learning community where students learn from each other as well as faculty. While the core curriculum provides a strong common experience for each cohort's learning community, students have many opportunities—through electives, internships, candidacy paper, grant proposal, and thesis research—to develop expertise and technical skills related to their academic and professional aspirations. Electives are taught by core faculty teaching in their area of expertise and by adjunct faculty with distinguished environmental careers outside academia. Students thus have many opportunities to tailor their studies to focus on their specific interests and passions.

REGISTRATION POLICIES

General Information

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) you may register for courses at my.evergreen.edu.

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 indicates. Electives often fill quickly – if this happens, you will be placed on a waitlist. Some faculty are able to accept additional students from the waitlist and it is advised that you contact them ahead of time about this possibility.

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 and make adjustments if needed. MES students may register for no more than 12 **course or ILC** credits per quarter. With written approval from the Director, students may register for up to 2 additional **course** or 4 additional **internship** credits per quarter beyond 12 credits. To request approval for registration above 12 credits, students must email the Director the specific courses and internship for which they intend to register no later than the last day of class of the previous quarter. More specific registration information is available from the [Office of Registration and Records](#), 360-867-6180.

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 in most cases financial aid will not be increased to cover the credits. However, exceptional circumstances might occur in which a graduate student enrolled in an advanced undergraduate course would complete, with faculty approval, the undergraduate course along with additional work in order to receive graduate credit. Special arrangements must be made with the Director before enrolling in any undergraduate course for graduate credit.

MES Electives

MES offers three to four electives each fall, winter, and spring quarter that are four credits each. Students must take 24 elective credits, which can consist of MES or MPA electives, individual learning contracts, internships, or transfer courses. Please see pages 4-7 for more information about individual learning contracts and internships. 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). MES students can take up to 8 elective credits through the MPA program. Financial aid can be applied toward MPA courses.

Summer courses

Students may earn elective credits during summer quarter. Typically, MES and MPA offer several summer electives. Students are also highly encouraged to earn elective credits through

an individual learning contract or internship. Students may also take appropriate graduate courses on other campuses (with prior approval of the Director) during the summer.

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. Visit the [Study Abroad](#) office or see the Assistant Director if you have questions.

Special student credits

Special students are non-enrolled students who are allowed to take one MES elective per quarter with faculty permission. Should a special student apply and be admitted to MES, 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 may accept up to eight graduate credits in environmental studies at regionally-accredited institutions other than Evergreen. These eight credits also include transfer courses taken while enrolled as an MES student. Normally, graduate credit earned through extension or correspondence work will not be accepted toward the MES degree. Credit from a previously earned graduate degree will also not be accepted toward the MES degree. 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 course syllabus and transcript. 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 they 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 write a candidacy paper in Ecological and Social Sustainability. The written research paper should be analytical (not simply descriptive), well organized, present a thesis and supporting evidence, and demonstrate appropriate use of scholarship. Both the written and oral presentations must be in an appropriate scholarly form. The student’s overall strength of academic performance to date will be considered in the decision to grant candidacy.

At the end of the winter quarter, the candidacy committee, made up of the core faculty team, will review each student's entire record to that point and recommend to the Director which students should advance to candidacy. The Director will notify each student in writing of the decision. Candidacy is required to continue in the core sequence.

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 an 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 as a guide and mentor. Students who believe they will need and benefit from an individual learning contract should consult an MES faculty member or the Director for advice on the appropriateness of such an undertaking and for suggested faculty sponsors.

Individual Study Contract (ILC) Registration

To enroll in an individual learning contract, login to my.evergreen.edu and click on "Individual Study Contracts." Select a term and create a new contract by naming it. The system guides you through the process of drafting the contract. The contract is a formal document that must be electronically approved by all parties: faculty sponsor, Director, and student prior to registration. The student does not enter a CRN to register. Instead, once all signatures are obtained, the student is registered automatically. All approvals must be completed by the fifth day of the quarter to avoid late registration fees—make sure to leave extra time for the approval process!

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 in a future quarter 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. Typically, no more than eight hours of elective credit may be accumulated through internship and/or individual learning contracts. Under exceptional circumstances, the Director may 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:

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 they are employed. Evergreen has strict policies for these internships: a student must complete a [Verification of New Learning](#) form.

Students are encouraged to talk with the Assistant Director early in the planning process to ensure that credit being sought expands upon their existing knowledge and skills.

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, nonprofits or private sector organizations. If you are considering an internship, you should initiate discussions with a faculty member, the Director, or the Assistant Director to assess the type of internship in which you are interested and how it fits into your overall educational plan.

Find [Internship ideas](#) online through [MES Weekly](#) (the MES blog). Internships specifically targeted at MES students will be shared via email by the Assistant Director and cohort Facebook groups. Students may also find internships through their own networking and research.

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 and go to the "Individual Study Contracts." Select a term and create a new contract. The system guides you through the

process of drafting the contract. The contract is a formal document that must be electronically approved by all parties: field supervisor, faculty sponsor, Director, and student prior to registration. The student does not enter a CRN to register. Instead, 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-make sure to leave time for the approval process!

Field Supervisor

The Field Supervisor can view, give feedback, and approve the contract and agree to their role in it online without the need for a formal signature. In addition to the internship content, the field supervisor also agrees to inform the student of risks, maintain a safe work environment, and follow anti-discrimination and sexual harassment laws. The field supervisor is also responsible for sending an evaluation of the student's work to the faculty sponsor. Students should make this clear in their contract. If the field supervisor is not able to give their approval online, the student can make a printed copy for the field supervisor to sign and deliver the signed copy to the MES Assistant Director.

Student Waiver

The student is required to complete a waiver ("Program: Assumption of Risk-Informed Consent and Release" form) indicating that they are voluntarily participating in the internship and releasing the college from liability. They need to deliver a signed copy of this waiver to the MES Assistant Director before their contract can be approved. The waiver becomes available within the contract registration portal once you have started the registration process.

Internship Site Agreement

For internships where the sponsoring sites/organizations are not official government agencies of the State of Washington, students will need to make sure that an internship site agreement exists between the site and the college before a student can do an internship. If the organization appears on this list, you do not need to submit a new site agreement for your internship. If the organization does not appear on this list, you will need to have the field supervisor, or a designated authority at the organization, sign this agreement and submit it with your other materials to the MES Assistant Director. Access the [Internship Site Agreement](#), as well as a link to Internship Organizations that shows the list of existing site agreements here.

After all of the forms and signatures have been submitted, the Director or Assistant Director will approve the internship. Your final step before you are registered for the internship is to accept the terms and conditions yourself. You will be prompted by a reminder in the "to do list" on my.evergreen.edu—follow the link to complete this final step. You will be automatically registered for your contract or internship by the Registration Office.

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. You should encourage your field supervisor to consult the [guidelines for writing evaluations](#).

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. The student may submit their self-evaluation for inclusion in their transcript; this submission is optional but strongly encouraged after consulting with the faculty. The evaluations from the field supervisor and student are due by the last week of the quarter in which the student registered for internship credits.

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 graduate credits per quarter will be awarded for successful completion of a part-time internship of 10 hours per week. Four graduate credits will be awarded for completion of an internship of 20 hours or more per week. A second internship in a future quarter must include additional or different learning goals. No more than eight hours of elective credit can be accumulated through internship and/or individual learning contracts.

THESIS

Students complete a 16-credit thesis in their final year. A companion document, the [Thesis Handbook](#), is distributed to students in Case Studies and Thesis Design and also lives online along with other [Thesis Resources](#). Most students begin substantial work on their thesis during Case Studies. If a student plans to complete or begin research during the summer, she or he must consult with a faculty member to create a methodology prior to collecting data. The student must submit a preliminary thesis prospectus signed by a core faculty member and approved by the Director by week 10 of spring quarter.

Students enroll in thesis credits during winter and spring quarters of their final year. Visit the "Thesis Process" page on the MES website for valuable resources, including the thesis handbook, prospectus, mini-prospectus, timeline, and an archive of all digitized theses. This work is supported by required thesis workshops, with completion of the written thesis by the end of in the spring quarter. Thesis presentations are scheduled for spring quarter. With permission from the student's reader and the Director, a student may extend thesis work through either the summer quarter of the same academic year or the fall quarter of the next academic year. Students who are approved to continue work on their thesis project after

registering for the required 16 thesis credits must register for a no-credit thesis extension and pay the required extension fee for each quarter they extend that involves faculty work.

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.

Working with Your Thesis Reader

We encourage you to consult with multiple MES faculty in the course of developing your ideas for thesis research. In considering potential thesis readers, you are encouraged to consider 1) their 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 to discuss your progress and review drafts.

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. Students who plan to complete thesis work and are not in Case Studies (e.g. students on the three-year track) should consult with the Case Studies faculty early in fall quarter to make sure that they are assigned a reader.

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 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. Your thesis requires that you engage in research on a topic of real-world interest and consider its political, economic, and scientific dimensions.

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 three quarters. You should consult with faculty members 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 – as you develop the thesis prospectus.

It may help you in your thesis search to look at 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.

Thesis Prospectus

The research question or thesis statement will need to be specified in your thesis prospectus, which contains key elements of your research plan. A final, approved prospectus (signed by the student and the student's reader) is due to the Director by the end of Case Studies.

Thesis Workshop

The primary source of guidance and support on thesis work is the faculty advisor or "reader." In addition, students are required to attend a thesis workshop during winter and spring quarters that provides additional support for thesis preparation, research, and writing.

Writing with Outside Clients in Mind

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.

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. The program sponsors a Thesis Idea Fair each fall in which local environmental government agencies and organizations share their research needs and opportunities with MES students.

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 [Thesis Funding](#) section of our Thesis Process page for more information.

GRADUATION

Students must submit an application for graduation along with a required 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.

Under unusual circumstances where a student does not satisfactorily complete all course requirements, the student may be given an Incomplete at the discretion of the faculty member and Director. 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. Students must receive full credit for each core class before proceeding to the next core class; thus an incomplete prevents a student from continuing with the core sequence until they have completed all missing work.

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 re-register 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 be 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 withdrawn from the program.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is essential 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 cheating, fabricating, facilitating academic dishonesty and plagiarism, are violations of the [Social Contract](#). Cheating is defined as using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise. Fabrication is defined as faking data, footnotes or other evidence. Plagiarism is defined as representing the works or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. It includes, but is not limited to, copying materials directly, failure to cite sources of arguments and data, and failure to explicitly acknowledge joint work or authorship of assignments.

In all graduate academic work, 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. An overview of plagiarism and best practices for avoiding it can be found at [Purdue Owl](#).

ACADEMIC ADVISING

In keeping with Evergreen's philosophy of student-initiated learning, you are encouraged to reach out to any MES faculty for advice. All MES core faculty are full-time graduate faculty in the program and key resources in your educational and professional development. The Director and Assistant Director are also available for academic and career advice.

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

- Your academic, professional and personal development goals, considering both specialization and breadth.
- How program offerings will aid you in meeting your goals.
- Selection of electives that incorporate your goals.
- Identifying thesis topics.
- Identifying potential independent learning contracts and internships.

COMMUNICATION

Online System

Students are given a “MyEvergreen” account at my.evergreen.edu when they are admitted. This site, as well as your evergreen.edu email, is the official mode of communication between students and the college. MyEvergreen includes:

- Course registration (including individual study contracts and internship contracts)
- Schedule Evergreen (see your class schedules and locations)
- Academic progress and credits earned
- Transcript orders
- Evaluation creation for self-evaluations and faculty evaluations
- Evaluations of you by faculty
- Financial aid information
- Greener Commons (Evergreen’s online resource for campus announcements)
- Student account information and web payments
- Student jobs database (CODA)

E-Mail

Students must use their [evergreen email](#) to receive information from the college and MES faculty and staff. This email account is used 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 email lists managed by MES staff: one for current students, and one for current students and alumni. You should check your 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 the ongoing viability of that third party address.

Contact Information

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.

BLOGS

MES Weekly

[MES Weekly](https://sites.evergreen.edu/mesweekly) (sites.evergreen.edu/mesweekly) is a blog that lists jobs, internships, events, and volunteer opportunities that may be of interest to MES students and alumni. Students are encouraged to subscribe to the blog so they can receive a weekly email with the most recent postings. This is an especially helpful resource for students looking for jobs or internships. Please submit any postings to the MES Program Assistant.

MES Program Blog

MES maintains a blog (evergreen.edu/mes/blog) on our main website pages that is maintained and edited by the MES Student Assistant and Student Ambassadors who works with the program's faculty, students, and staff to cover program events and share student stories. The blog also reports items of general interest, such as conferences, student research and campus events. Please submit blog ideas to the MES Student Assistant or Assistant Director.

FINANCIAL AID POLICIES

Satisfactory Academic Progress

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, defined as fall, winter, spring, and summer quarters. Students must also complete a minimum of 4 credits per quarter and 18 credits per academic year. Satisfactory progress will be reviewed at the end of each summer. Should a student not maintain satisfactory progress as defined above, their future financial aid eligibility will be suspended. Please see the entire [Graduate Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy](#).

Categories of Financial Aid

MES students receive several forms of financial support:

1. **Loans, grants, and tuition waivers.** These are distributed by the Office of Financial Aid based on financial need and require the FAFSA, but no other application
2. **MES scholarships, 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. Veterans may also be eligible for a 50% tuition waiver from Evergreen. Please contact the [Veterans Resource Center](#) for more information, (360) 867-6254

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be completed before any need-based financial aid decision can be made. In order to receive full consideration of aid from

the program or from the Office of Financial Aid, Evergreen needs to have received your FAFSA by the priority filing date of February 1.

The Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) is the application which eligible undocumented students may complete to be reviewed for Washington State financial aid funding resources. WASFA eligible students would not be eligible for Federal funding resources such as Unsubsidized student loans, but can be considered for Washington State grants, scholarships, tuition waivers, and fellowships. Evergreen must receive your WASFA by the priority application date of February 1, to review you for priority application eligibility. Complete your WASFA at readyssetgrad.wa.gov.

If you missed the priority filing date, FAFSA eligible students can still qualify for loan aid. The Office of Financial Aid will review later applications in order of the date it was received, 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 or WASFA, keep an eye on your my.evergreen account and submit any requested documents right away..

MES scholarships and fellowships are awarded to both incoming and continuing students. To qualify for aid from the program, students must submit an online MES Financial Aid application, as well as an on-time FAFSA (for most awards). The application will be made available to current students each December for the following academic year.

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 Change of Status Form to be turned in to Registration and Records. See more about this process at evergreen.edu/advising/leavewithdraw. 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.

A student who fails to register for credit in the quarter following the end of a leave will be withdrawn from the program. If a student who is withdrawn for this reason 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.

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT AND STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

When you make the decision to come to Evergreen, you are also making the decision to become closely associated with its values. A central focus of those values is freedom—freedom to explore ideas and to discuss those ideas in both speech and print; freedom from reprisal for voicing concerns and beliefs, no matter how unpopular. Such freedom that is necessary in a vibrant, dynamic learning community.

As members of the Evergreen community, we acknowledge our mutual responsibility for openness, honesty, civility and fairness to ensure a productive learning environment for everyone. These conditions carry with them certain rights expressed in [Evergreen's Social Contract](#), a document that has defined and guided the college's values since its very beginning. The Social Contract is an agreement about civility and tolerance toward others that provides our framework for teaching and learning. In addition to the Social Contract, most courses may have a covenant that describes specific expectations and responsibilities of faculty and students.

Students must also adhere to the [Student Conduct Code](#), which articulates specific procedures and standards for upholding the values and aspirations expressed in the Social Contract. Specifically, the code strives to afford opportunities for informal resolution and to support students to be accountable for their decisions and actions. The code has been crafted in the spirit of education and compassion, with the aim of healing individuals, preserving our common interests, and protecting each other from harm.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

(Taken from www.evergreen.edu/studentaffairs/rightsandresponsibilities)

Direct communication

Many of Evergreen's core values and aspirations are described in the Social Contract. The authors of the Social Contract described a college that protects the right of individuals to express unpopular and controversial points of view and that values intellectual freedom and honesty. In such an environment, conflicts inevitably arise. The Social Contract says that "All must share alike in prizing academic and interpersonal honesty, in responsibly obtaining and providing full and accurate information, and in resolving their differences through due process and with a strong will to collaboration." This means that, as a general rule, most conflicts should be addressed through direct and honest communication among the people involved. Like most general rules, this one requires some qualification (for instance, in cases involving discrimination, including sexual harassment).

Mediation

Sometimes people in conflict may need the assistance of a third person to communicate directly with each other. Evergreen's Conflict Resolution Center (360-867-5113) provides a

group of trained volunteers with the skills to help parties in conflict examine their individual needs, identify common interests, and begin to craft a mutually beneficial agreement.

Safety

Direct communication would not be wise if it would compromise personal safety. Students who believe that their personal safety or the safety of the community is at risk should contact the Police Services Office (Emergency: 360-867-6140; Non-Emergency: 6830). The office is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to receiving the training necessary to become commissioned police officers, Evergreen's police officers receive additional training in areas such as conflict resolution, assisting survivors of sexual assault, and other topics that will better enable them to serve the college community. Police Services is located at Seminar I 2150. It is highly advised that you sign up for [e2Campus alerts](#) – Evergreen will use this to text you if there are weather or emergency events that have closed the campus.

Sexual Assault

Trained advocates are available to survivors of sexual assault. [Police Services](#) (360-867-6140), the Campus Grievance officers (360-867-5113), or the Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator (360-867-5221) can help students get in touch with advocates.

Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Evergreen is committed to creating a discrimination-free environment and has developed policies and practices for addressing allegations of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Students who believe they may have been victims of discrimination or sexual harassment may also use State and Federal systems for pursuing their complaints. The Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Office is available to assist students in understanding the options available and can be contacted at 360-867-6368 or in Library Building 3200. Please see <https://www.evergreen.edu/equalopportunity/non-discrimination> for more information about your options to report and resolve discrimination.

INCLEMENT WEATHER CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY

In the event of bad weather or emergencies, students should check for announcements of campus closures. Students can call the main campus line 360-867-6000 to get the latest news regarding a campus closure or delay. Faculty may decide to cancel a class meeting even if campus is open and, if they decide to cancel the class, will send an all-class email prior to 3:00 pm the day of class. Students are responsible for checking email and ensuring viable transportation options are available to them <https://evergreen.edu/emergencyresponse>. Students are ultimately responsible for making a decision about whether they can travel safely during bad weather.

Your faculty may ask you to join online seminars through Canvas, if campus is closed. In the event of campus closure, do your best to check your email for program and course updates and please participate in online learning if you have access to a networked device.

ACADEMIC APPEALS

Faculty write formal evaluations of student work at the end of every quarter. The evaluation is a statement of the quality and quantity of student work based on the faculty member's professional judgment. All appeals of evaluation wording and credit are governed by the college's policy on [Amending Student Records](#) and the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW POLICY

The [Human Subjects Review](#) policy at Evergreen took effect in January, 1979 to protect the rights of humans who are participants in research activities. If you are conducting a study using information from people or if you are recording them in some way for that study, you must complete a Use of [Human Subjects Application](#) with the collaboration of your faculty sponsor.

ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability, you are encouraged to talk both with your faculty and the office of Access Services for Students with Disabilities (867-6348 or 6364). Reasonable Accommodations will be provided for any student who qualifies for them through a working relationship with Access Services. After a student consults the office of Access Services and submits the necessary forms, the faculty will receive a letter clearly indicating the student has a disability that requires academic accommodations. Information about a disability or health condition will be regarded as confidential. Please refer to TESC's Students with Disabilities Policy. [LINK](#)

If you do not have a documented disability but have concerns about your ability to complete specific course components (e.g. fieldwork) please contact the faculty directly to share your concerns.

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 to three coordinators to help our students organize unique activities and events of particular interest to their constituents. Most events are tailored to graduate students, but may also be open to the Evergreen community. Some events, like the annual Rachel Carson Forum, are developed both for MES students and the broader Evergreen and Olympia community. Events are 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 several activities per quarter. These have included lectures, workshops, films, panel discussions, social events, and the Rachel Carson 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.