Hello,

Once again, congratulations on being admitted into the University of Oregon, you’re now a Duck! My name is Drew Ashley Davidson and I will be your FIG Assistant (FA) for the Freshmen Interest Group Characters of East Asia. This FIG’s purpose is to make connections between two classes. You will also get to know other students with similar interests.

Here is some information about me. My home town is Medford, Oregon, which is about a two and half hour drive south from Eugene. I have adopted Eugene as my home away from home, because of how great a town it is. I am currently a senior with a major in Japanese. In fact, I spent 11 months in Sapporo, Japan during my junior year. School is extremely important to me, but so is relaxing. When I’m not doing homework or studying, you can find me on my longboard scooting around campus. Another activity that I really enjoy is playing video games. If you ever want to go on a longboarding expedition or play a few rounds of Super Smash Brothers, let me know!

A few years ago I was a freshmen here at the University of Oregon and participated in a Residential FIG. This was one of the best choices I could have made because it helped relieve some of the pressure from entering college. Also I made many friends by participating in a FIG, and the FIG made it easier for me to get connected with campus activities. My sophomore year I was a FIG Assistant. It was truly a wonderful experience to be a part of this community as a FA. I am looking forward to participating as a FA again in my senior year. A FIG is a group of classes that you take with 24 other freshmen. In the Characters of East Asia FIG you will be in the classes HIST 190: Foundations of East Asian Civilizations, EALL 209: Languages and Societies in East Asia, and HIST 199: College Connections.

Another benefit of being in a FIG is that you will get to work alongside a professor. Professor Andrew Goble is an outstanding professor here at the University of Oregon. You are bound to have a great time when you are with Goble. Professor Goble is a Professor of History and Religious Studies at the University of Oregon. He has lived in Japan for over nine years, and has been at UO since 1990. His specialty is in premodern Japan, and in the history of cultural exchange in East Asia. His most recent publication is "Confluences of Medicine in in Medieval Japan: Buddhist Healing, Chinese Knowledge, Islamic Formulas, and Wounds of War" (University of Hawaii Press, 2011). He loves teaching HIST 190, and is your go-to teacher for samurai and medieval Japan (HIST 396 Samurai in Film, HIST 498 Medieval Japan)."

The overall goal of the Characters of East Asia FIG is to help make sense of the material presented in both classes. Also, in the FIG class we will participate in exercises to help you get familiar with many of the services the University offers. For example we will learn how to use the library. Field trips and other FIG related activities are also a possibility.

Both Professor Goble and I are looking forward to meeting and getting to know you. The overall experience will be full of enjoyment. I would like to get to know you more, my email is drewd@uoregon.edu. Please email me after reading this, I would like inform you of a summer reading that is required. It will be a joy to read, I promise. Also, please feel free to send me emails if you have any other questions.

We will be meeting for the first time during Week of Welcome on Friday, September 21st. We will meet at Columbia 150 at 10:00 am and will be relocating after meeting here, so please be on time. We will also be attending the University Convocation on Sunday, September 23rd in the afternoon. Please save these dates on your calendar. Be sure to bring your Student Handbook with you to school, this will be a helpful resource during your time here.

Professor Goble and I look forward to this experience with you. Enjoy the rest of your summer!

See you soon,

Drew Davidson