Dear Future FIG Student,

Congratulations on your decision to attend the University of Oregon! We are looking forward to having you in our Cultural Encounters FIG this coming fall. This is a Sociology FIG that will combine and reinforce concepts learned in your Introduction to Sociology and Human Geography classes. In your College Connections class, we hope to not only share our excitement and passion for Sociology with you, but introduce you to resources that can help your transition to the UO be as smooth and seamless a process as it can possibly be. This class will be less like a purely academic class, as our main goals are to prepare you to succeed in this new environment and to create a space which promotes personal growth. There will be at least one field trip, study groups before exams, and a small class size to help create the experience one can only enjoy as a FIG student.

Michael Dreiling will be your Introduction to Sociology and College Connections teacher. My classroom experience with him was excellent. He challenges all of his students to engage old ideas with new perspectives and a critical attitude. His research on NAFTA was published in the book *Solidarity and Contention: The Politics of Class and Sustainability in the NAFTA Conflict*. He often tells stories of his rambunctious and inquisitive toddler, Hana, and of the pond in his front yard—a recent addition to his home.

Mark Yorke will be your FIG Assistant this fall. He is a senior here at the UO and is majoring in psychology and sociology. As a wily-veteran of UO college life, his main purpose is to inform you and your fellow students about the many resources and opportunities available so that you have all the tools necessary to succeed as a college student. He enjoys hiking, traveling, and attempting to comprehend theories of the universe. He also plays Ultimate Frisbee on the UO club team, which, contrary to popular belief, is an intense and awesome sport.

Well that’s enough about us, let’s hear about you! Please send Mark an email introducing yourself. Where are you from? What are your passions? What are you most looking forward to about school? Also, feel free to bombard him with any questions that may be plaguing you.

Now here are some necessary details concerning this coming fall. 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. After meeting up with Professor Dreiling, we will go do some sort of activity in hopes of facilitating some good, old-fashioned group bonding (perhaps exploring campus, getting ice cream, or throwing a frisbee). Our FIG will also be attending the University Convocation on Sunday, September 23rd in the afternoon. Again we will be going together as a FIG! 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.

Also, there is a short required reading to be completed over summer. I know, who assigns homework over the summer? It shouldn’t take you any time at all. It is an excerpt from
Stanley Milgram's Perils of Obedience (1974). You can find this online at here. Please have this read before our first class.

Have a glorious summer! We look forward to getting to know you this fall.

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