Dear From NASA to Avatar Students,

Greetings from your University of Oregon FIG Assistant! My name is Teresa Chan and I’m excited to meet you this fall. My hometown is Corvallis, OR and I have lived in Oregon my entire life. I am going to be a Senior next year and will also be living in the Residence Halls with you.

The FIG is a great way for you to get to know your peers and develop a close academic connection with a professor. This classroom environment will help you get acclimated to college life and prepare you for the next four years and beyond. Your FIG consists of three classes: ASTR 121 (The Solar System), BI 130 (Introduction to Ecology), and BI 199 (College Connections). This College Connections class will focus on advanced life support for space travel. The biology and astronomy combination is brought together by the concept of start to end recycling that we will learn about in the College Connections class.

Professor Cramer specialized in recycling organic components during space travel – from composting plants to recovering the sodium from urination for plant growth. To start exploring these concepts, check out the "Kennedy Space Center" link on NASA.gov. Not only will we learn about these principles in class, but we will also take several out of class trips to further explore. This may include a trip to Alton Baker Park for stargazing and a hike up Spencer’s Butte. There will also be a behind the scenes tour of the UO’s sustainability/recycling program. In addition, we will take a trip to the library to get insider information on how to best use the resources that are offered.

I am majoring in planning, public policy, and management (PPPM) with minors in biology and economics. This is my second year being a FIG Assistant. As a freshman, I served as the Vice President of Administration of the Residence Hall Association and have spent the past year serving as the organization’s President. Through this position I have been able to connect with many other different part of campus, including the Office of the President, the Associated Students of the University of Oregon, and the Office of the Dean of Students. Please always feel free to talk to me about getting involved with different organizations on campus!

The professor who will be teaching your College Connections class is Dr. Audrey Cramer. We are very fortunate to have her as the faculty member for our FIG with all the experience and knowledge she has to offer! Professor Cramer completed her undergraduate degree in zoology with a minor in anthropology at Central Washington University. She has a Ph.D in Biology from UCLA where she taught this class as a seminar. Professor Cramer was also Director of the Undergraduate Research Center at UCLA. Her research consisted of primate cognition and advanced life support systems for space travel.
While at UCLA, Professor Cramer worked for NASA. In addition to teaching the FIG, Professor Cramer is the director of the Office of Multicultural and Academic success here on campus.

The weekend before classes is going to be very exciting. On **Friday, September 21st, we will have a Week of Welcome meeting in Columbia 150 at 10:00 a.m.** After the meeting we will be re-locating to another room to meet your FIG professors! In addition, on **Sunday, September 25th we will meet and then go as group to University Convocation.**

Make sure you bring your student handbook to school! It would also be extremely helpful if you could send me an email saying that you have received this letter (and also so I can get your email address). Please feel free to email me anytime if you have questions or comments at tsc@uoregon.edu. I will try to get back to you as soon as possible!

Sincerely,

Teresa Chan  
Audrey Cramer