Dear Marine Biology FIG student,

Welcome to the University of Oregon! My name is Daniel Gardner, and I’m entering my fourth year at UO. I’m the FA for the Marine Biology FIG. Attending school here has been an awesome experience so far, and I am excited to share my final year with you.

I grew up in Roseburg, but moved to Eugene at a young age. I am majoring in biology, but also taking classes in a large number of other subjects. I have worked in several labs on campus and I volunteer at a local medical clinic. I love the ocean; I swim, sail, and dive whenever I get the chance, and I am fascinated by underwater environments. If all goes according to plan, I will be returning this fall from swimming with great white sharks.

Carl Stiefbold is your college connections faculty. He has nursed a lifelong love for biology and currently teaches the honors biology lab series. His passion for biology has led him to go exploring the Galapagos Islands in Darwin’s footsteps, mushroom hunting in local festivals, and redesigning the biology program at UO to make it more accessible to freshman students. He also sails (much better than I do) and is recently married to his partner of more than twenty years. He is totally committed to the success of his students and enjoys designing fun projects to help them engage with science.

The FIG itself consists of General Chemistry, General Chemistry lab. Through these courses we will begin to establish the foundational knowledge necessary to understand molecular biology, as well as some of the (awesome) processes that guide life on earth. In addition to those two classes, you will be registering for a college connections course taught by Carl and me. In this course we will be tying your new chemistry knowledge into marine biology, discussing interesting subjects in marine biology, and field tripping over to the Oregon Institute of Marine Biology for a day exploring tide-pools and learning from graduate students and faculty– there may be a beach bonfire in it for you as well. We’ve also arranged with a local dive shop for a chance to try SCUBA, and if there is sufficient interest, we may take a dive trip together in the spring.

We will also be living together. Fall term, we will all move in to one of the residence halls on campus (I’ll be there for a little while before you). Living with so many people who all share a common interest is a great way to form friendships and find adventuring buddies. It is also a really great way to study; We will be having regular chemistry nights together and Carl and I are happy to help you with any academic or personal questions we can answer.

When you arrive for Week of Welcome, there are a couple things to be aware of. First, we have a summer reading assignment: Please find a copy of Rachel Carson’s The Sea Around Us and read it in preparation for the beginning of term. It may be difficult to get, so start looking now. We will be discussing it on one of our first few meetings together. Please also bring your student handbook; it has information that will assist you in navigating the university registration process. We have our first meeting together at 11 a.m. on Friday, September 21st In Columbia 150. The following Sunday (September 23) we will attend University Convocation together where TBA will be speaking.
If you have questions at any time, you can reach me at danielg@uoregon.edu. Feel free to contact me for any reason (and please do so at least once before the upcoming year so that I know you received this and have your email address).

Thank you for your time, and we are excited to meet you face to face in just a couple months.

Welcome!

Carl and Daniel