

Dear Geography and Environmental Studies Students,

Welcome back to CMU, online or in person. Geography and Environmental Studies at Central offers a diversity of educational opportunities, and I encourage you to explore our course offerings. The Department has a tradition of offering meaningful student research opportunities leading to publications and conference presentations – ask your professors for more information. The Geography and Environmental Club plans fun activities, and I encourage you to get involved.

I've been impressed with the amount of effort your professors have been putting into thinking about their classes this semester, which includes testing out different instructional technologies. We're each going to have a learning curve with this new technology, and every one of our classrooms varies. Just be aware that both your classmates and professors will have minor tech issues from time to time. The department is a community; your flexibility and understanding help to enhance this community.

Your advisor will have the best advice for you regarding your courses – I recommend that you contact your advisor to “check in” once a semester, even if you're registered for the entire year.

Students are being enrolled in a Microsoft Teams page to learn more about these opportunities. Additionally, I am having office hours dedicated to your general questions. Tuesdays from 2-4 you can find me on Webex for a virtual meeting – email me for the direct link. Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30, I'll be setting up a lawn chair and having “outside office hours” for you in the space between Dow and Brooks as long as the weather is favorable. In case of inclement weather, I'll be available on Webex instead.

Last but definitely not least, given that Geography and Environmental Studies is a community: show care for your classmates, friends, and others in Geography and Environmental Studies by wearing a mask around Dow Science Building. More information on campus health and safety is here: <https://www.cmich.edu/firedupforfall/Pages/Health-Safety-Protocols.aspx>

Have a great start to your semester.

Prof. Matt Liesch
Department Chair, Geography and Environmental Studies