

Committee: **Environmental and Ecological Planning Advisory Committee**

Organization/Sector represented: **University of Western Ontario (Biology)**

Name: **Spencer Heuchan**

Occupation: **Researcher/Teaching Assistant/PhD Student**

Work experience: **As a researcher I work in a team based environment that requires cooperation and communication on a daily basis. Many aspects of my work require high levels of planning and methodology to successfully complete project plans. As such I learned to be very engaged in the process of project management considering many variables and outcomes. As a researcher I am used to having meetings in groups and discussions. I also have to publicly speak at conferences and convey information to other researchers and members of the public. I typically have university level undergraduate students working under my leadership. A lot of my research occurs in a lab, and field environment. As such I coordinate and educate students to perform various tasks related to my area of study (data collection, or interpretation). As a teacher I work alongside students providing them with knowledge, encouragement, and assessments. In labs I educate students about proper techniques along with safety procedures. In the class room I lecture about particular topics and assess them through quizzes, tests, and essays.**

Education: **I have a bachelors of science of in biology (Bsc). I studied areas of ecology and cell biology though the courses that I took. I have a master's of science in biology (Msc). I did research on developing new types of fertilizer coatings for slow release of nutrients. Slow release fertilizers reduce the downstream effects of nitrate leaching into water systems. This degree focused on areas of ecology and agriculture (reducing the carbon footprint of fertilizers for agricultural purposes). I am working on my PhD in biology. I am studying methods of improving agricultural techniques with a focus on cover crops. I am assessing the benefits and costs associated with implementing cover crop mixtures (in terms of nitrogen retention).**

Skills: **I have knowledge of how ecosystems work, and function on the community level. I also bring an agricultural prospective through my work with designing fertilizer coatings, and research on cover crops. Being a researcher I have academic and environmental knowledge that is specialized (the function of systems between soil, plants, and organisms). I am very critical of how ecosystems work and function. Due to the complex nature of many environmental and ecological systems the whole system needs to be considered when making decisions. My knowledge also expands to soil ecology, and agroecosystems.**

Interest reason: **I want to be informed of environmental and ecological discussions that can affect our community. As a London resident my entire life I want to bring my academic background, knowledge and research back to the city.**

Contributions: **can bring an academic mindset to this committee. As researcher that focuses on the study of ecology I can connect the scientific community to the public community. Most of my work has had an emphasis on the improvement of agricultural techniques and as such I have learned to think environmentally, ecologically, and economically on the outcomes of certain decisions.**

Past contributions: **I have not had opportunity to be part of many other committees or organizations. However despite this I have attended many conferences and seminars that support ecology and environmental sustainability. At these conferences I had public presentations, and discussions on certain ecological topics.**

Interpersonal: **I attend conferences, and seminars that regularly have people presenting their work or ideas. After these presentations there are question periods in which I participate in. During these conferences/seminar I hear different perspectives and engage in discussions about particular topics. These discussions provide opportunities to promote my ideas and views while also hearing the outputs of others. Additionally, as a teacher I also assess, and evaluate students on presentations and essays. I get to observe and comment of their prospective and ideas.**

Interview interest: **Yes**