

**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**The Department of Romance and Classical  
Studies**

**SPANISH GRADUATE STUDENT  
HANDBOOK**

**2023 – 2024  
Edition**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contact Information	3
Administrative Staff and Academic Administrators	3
Spanish Faculty and Their Areas of Interest	4
Graduate Program Overview	5
Admission Requirements	6
Programs And Degree Requirements	
M.A. in Spanish as a Second or Bilingual Language (SSBL)	7
M.A. in Hispanic Literatures	9
Ph.D. in Hispanic Cultural Studies	16
Departmental Policies on Academic Performance	25
Departmental Policies on Research and Scholarly Integrity	26
Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution	28
Sexual Harassment Policy	30
Work Related Policies	32
Financial Aid and Financial Resources	44
University Resources for Graduate Students	48
Appendix 1 MSU Code of Teaching Responsibility	57
Appendix 2 Departmental Criteria for TA Levels	60
Appendix 3 Grad Info, GradPlan, Grad Audit, Degree Audit	61
Appendix 4 Responsible Conduct of Research	63

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## **Administrative Staff and Academic Administrators**

Anthony Grubbs, Chair  
Wells B-304, (517) 355-8352 ([grubbsa@msu.edu](mailto:grubbsa@msu.edu))

Gabriela Alfaraz, Associate Chair for Graduate Studies  
Wells B-350, (517) 884-6343 ([alfarazg@msu.edu](mailto:alfarazg@msu.edu))

Anne Violin-Wigent, Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies  
Wells B-352, (517) 884-6304 ([violinwi@msu.edu](mailto:violinwi@msu.edu))

Alejandra Márquez, Graduate Student Advisor (Hispanic Literature)  
Wells B-366, (517) 884-6351 ([amarquez@msu.edu](mailto:amarquez@msu.edu))

Adolfo Ausín, Graduate Student Advisor (SSBL)  
Wells B-480, (517) 884-6339 ([ausin@msu.edu](mailto:ausin@msu.edu))

Anne Violin-Wigent, Faculty Supervisor of Spanish Basic Language Instruction  
Wells B-352, (517) 884-6304 ([violinwi@msu.edu](mailto:violinwi@msu.edu))

Francisco Morales, Basic Language Instruction Coordinator for 100-level Spanish, Wells B480, (517) 884-6336 ([morale70@msu.edu](mailto:morale70@msu.edu))

Charles Moulding, Basic Language Instruction Coordinator for 200- level Spanish, Wells B480, (517) 884-4358 ([mouldin1@msu.edu](mailto:mouldin1@msu.edu))

Jennifer Gansler, Academic Specialist and Undergraduate Student Advisor  
Wells B-341, (517) 884-6318 ([gansler@msu.edu](mailto:gansler@msu.edu))

## ***Main Office Staff***

Ben Lampe, Academic Operations, Graduate Support Lead  
Wells B-306, (517) 884-1517  
([lampeben@msu.edu](mailto:lampeben@msu.edu))

Penny Shanks, Office Operations  
Wells B-301, (517) 353-0800  
([shankspe@msu.edu](mailto:shankspe@msu.edu))

General graduate inquiries: [grad@rcs.msu.edu](mailto:grad@rcs.msu.edu)

## Spanish Faculty and Their Areas of Interest

Gabriela Alfaraz, Ph.D. 2000, Michigan State University. Sociolinguistics, Dialectology, Language attitudes, Language contact, Bilingualism, Caribbean Spanish, Spanish in the US. [alfarazg@msu.edu](mailto:alfarazg@msu.edu)

Scott Boehm, Ph.D. 2012, University of California, San Diego. 20th- century Spanish Literature and Cultural Studies, Spain in a Global Context. [sboehm@msu.edu](mailto:sboehm@msu.edu)

Silvina Bongiovanni, Ph.D. 2018, Indiana University, Bloomington. Linguistics and Hispanic Linguistics, Phonetics and Phonology. [bongiov8@msu.edu](mailto:bongiov8@msu.edu)

Kristine Byron, Ph.D. 2001, University of Connecticut. 19th- and 20th-century Latin American Literature, Literary and Cultural Theory, Women's Studies. [byronk@msu.edu](mailto:byronk@msu.edu)

Miguel Cabañas, Ph.D. 2000, University of Connecticut. 19th- and 20th- century Latin-American and Spanish Literature, American Studies, Cultural Studies, Trans-Atlantic Studies. [mcabanas@msu.edu](mailto:mcabanas@msu.edu)

Meagan Driver, Ph.D. 2020 Georgetown University. Heritage Language Education, Second Language Acquisition, Bi-/multilingualism, Study Abroad, Language and Social Justice. [driverme@msu.edu](mailto:driverme@msu.edu)

Anthony Grubbs, Ph.D. 2005, Indiana University. Early Modern Spanish Literature, especially theater, Hagiography, Performance Studies. [grubbsa@msu.edu](mailto:grubbsa@msu.edu)

Alejandra Márquez, Ph.D. 2018, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Contemporary Latin American literature, contemporary Mexican chronicle, gendered narratives of northern Mexico, gender identity and transgressions, depictions of state-sponsored violence, Latinx literature and culture. [amarquez@msu.edu](mailto:amarquez@msu.edu)

Danny Méndez, Ph.D. 2008, University of Texas at Austin. Hispanic Caribbean Studies, Latino/a Studies, Gender and Sexuality in a Global Context, Migration Studies. [mendezda@msu.edu](mailto:mendezda@msu.edu)

María Eugenia Mudrovci, Ph.D. 1994, University of Southern California. 19th- and 20th-century Latin- American Literary and Cultural Studies, Literary Theory, Popular Cultural Studies. [mudrovci@msu.edu](mailto:mudrovci@msu.edu)

Rocío Quispe-Agnoli, Ph.D. 2000, Brown University. Colonial Latin American Studies, Postcolonial Studies, Subalternity and Coloniality, Women's Studies, Literary Theory, Visual Studies, Indigeneities. [quispeag@msu.edu](mailto:quispeag@msu.edu)

## GRADUATE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Spanish graduate program in the Department of Romance and Classical Studies at Michigan State University offers the following Graduate programs:

- Master of Arts in Spanish as a Second or Bilingual Language (formerly known as Applied Spanish Linguistics, see Appendix 3).
- Master of Arts in Hispanic Literatures
- Doctor of Philosophy in Hispanic Cultural Studies

The M.A. programs are designed primarily for students who plan to pursue a Ph.D. and join the faculties of colleges or universities as scholars and teachers. These programs prepare students in the language, literatures, and cultures of the Hispanic world, with an emphasis on literary, linguistic and cultural studies and scholarly investigation.

The Ph.D. degree program in Hispanic Cultural Studies prepares students in the literatures, languages, and cultures of the Hispanic world. Students enrolled in this program will select a primary and a secondary area of emphasis, and may elect an emphasis in interdisciplinary studies, Literature of the Americas, comparative literature, or Romance languages and literatures.

Students enrolled in the above-mentioned programs have access to a Spanish teaching experience at the college level, research-oriented activities, academic interdisciplinary emphasis and service to the University community such as:

- Tropos, the Spanish and French graduate student journal and academic events organized by Tropos/Graduate Student Association.
- University, College, and Departmental awards and fellowships to enhance students' professional development. These fellowships include the Graduate School Dissertation Completion fellowship; Special College Research Abroad Monies (SCRAM); Research Enhancement award; Annual Teaching awards; Foreign Language Studies fellowship; CLACS Tinker fellowship; among others.
- CLACS (Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies) Graduate Certificate Program
- Funding available for travel to professional conferences to present a research paper.
- Research assistantship in specific research projects led by a Spanish faculty member
- Teaching assistantship of Spanish Language and Cultures at the undergraduate level.
- Comprehensive Language Teaching Development Program, which includes language teaching orientation, Graduate Seminar in Language Teaching Methodology; supervised language teaching at various levels; and advanced teaching practice using the most current technological resources.

- Assistant to Study Abroad Programs Directors.
- Participation as Graduate Student Representative at all levels of university governance.
- Professional development workshops.

Additional information on funding resources is available through the College of Arts and Letters and the Graduate School.

- The College of Arts and Letters: <https://cal.msu.edu/current-students/graduate-students/graduate-resources>
- The Graduate School: <http://www.grad.msu.edu/funding/>

## **ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS**

### **General Admission Requirements**

To be considered for admission, an applicant must submit the following along with the application:

- Proof of a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish, Hispanic Studies, Spanish Philology, or equivalent, depending on the desired specialization.
- For minimum grade point averages, see admission information for the specific program below.
- Recommendation letters from three professionals who are familiar with their work and qualified to assess the applicant's ability to pursue graduate study.

### **Application for admission**

The online application system can be accessed at <https://grad.msu.edu/apply>

### **Information for International Applicants**

Refer to the MSU Graduate School for current information about Visas, Financial Documentation, and International Transcripts:

<https://grad.msu.edu/internationalapplicants>

### **English language proficiency**

Applicants who are not native speakers of English, must demonstrate proficiency in English for regular admission to the University by taking the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). Scores from the TOEFL must be entered in the admissions system. To see the scores for admission see the Graduate School's information for International Applicants <https://grad.msu.edu/english-language-competency>. Tests must be taken within two years of the date of application.

International applicants who have a Bachelor's degree from the U.S. or another English-speaking country with the majority of credits earned in those countries

will receive an automatic waiver. Applicants who have earned a Master's degree from an AAU institution on a U.S. campus will receive a waiver; however, it is suggested that the English proficiency test scores used for admission to that program, although they are no longer valid, be submitted with the current application. Applicants holding a Master's degree from a non-AAU institution may receive a waiver if English language proficiency is demonstrated with test scores.

## **PROGRAMS AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

### **M.A. IN SPANISH AS A SECOND OR BILINGUAL LANGUAGE (SSBL)**

The M.A. in Spanish as a Second or Bilingual Language (SSBL) is designed for students who wish to pursue advanced study in Spanish linguistics, with a focus on the psycholinguistic aspects of second language acquisition and the sociolinguistics of language contact. The program intends to meet the needs and goals of students who seek academic preparation to pursue advanced work in these fields.

In addition to meeting the requirements of the University and the College of Arts and Letters, students must meet the requirements specified below.

#### **Admissions Requirements**

The program is available to students from U.S. institutions with a B.A. in Spanish, or a B.A. in Linguistics with coursework in Spanish at the 400-level, and to students from other countries with B.A. equivalent degrees in Spanish philology or related fields. Students with a B.A. in Spanish, who have not taken an introductory linguistics survey course, LIN 401, or its equivalent, must take it during their first semester in the program, if admitted.

Candidates should submit all documents and forms listed under *II. Admissions Requirements, section II.A items 1- 6* of this handbook.

#### **Requirements for Completion of the Program**

The program is available under Plan A (Master's Thesis Research) and Plan B (written examinations, without a thesis). The graduate advisor must approve the student's program of study.

At least 30 credits must be completed at the 800 level under either Plan A or Plan B. The following courses are required:

Complete nine (9) credits in foundational courses. At least one must focus on Spanish. LIN 401 does not satisfy the requirement.

SPN 801 Spanish Syntax (3)

LIN 424	Introduction to Phonetics and Phonology (3)
LIN 431	Introduction to Morphology (3)
LIN 434	Introduction to Syntax (3)
LIN 436	Semantics and Pragmatics (3)
LIN 824	Phonological Theory (3)
LIN 834	Syntactic Theory (3)

Complete twelve (12) credits in areas of concentration as follows:

Six (6) credits in Second Language Acquisition. At least one course must focus on Spanish

SPN 804	Spanish as L2: Linguistic and Psycholinguistic Perspectives (3)
SPN 806	Topics in Spanish Linguistics (3)
LLT 860	Second Language Acquisition (3)
LLT 863	SLA of Morphosyntax (3)

Six (6) credits in Sociolinguistics and Bilingualism. At least one course must focus on Spanish

SPN 803	Language Variation and Change in Spanish (3)
SPN 806	Topics in Spanish Linguistics (3)
LIN 471	Sociolinguistics (3)
LIN 871	Advanced Studies in Sociolinguistics (3)

One of the following:

Plan A (Thesis): Six (6) credits of SPN 899 Master's Thesis Research, preparation of a thesis followed by an oral examination.

Plan B (Exam): Written examination based on coursework and the program reading list.

Nine (9) credits of elective courses, including:

Additional foundational courses from those in (1).

Additional concentrations courses from those in (2):

ROM 803 Approaches to Romance Language Instruction (3 cr.) SPN 805

Evolution of Spanish (3 cr.)

SPN 890 Independent Study (1-3 credits)

LLT 841 Topics in Second/Foreign Language Learning and Teaching (3 cr.)

Under Plan A (Thesis), six (6) credits SPN 899 may be applied towards electives.

## **M.A. Examination and M.A. Thesis**

### M.A. Examination

The qualifying exam in linguistics is given in the spring semester. Students are required to take the exam in the spring of their second year. Information about the exam will be made available to eligible students in fall semester of their second year. Students can take the M.A. exam, or any subsection of it, a maximum of two times.



## M.A. Thesis

The thesis must be organized and prepared according to the regulations prescribed in the Michigan State University Formatting Guide for Submission of Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertations: <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/formatting-guide>

The student should consult with the thesis advisor regarding an appropriate style manual (e.g., LSA, APA, Chicago) before beginning the thesis. Committee members must receive the final version of the thesis at least two weeks prior to an approved defense date.

## Time Frame

Graduate assistants enrolled full-time in the M.A. program (minimum of 6 credits, but 9 credits per semester is advised to finish all coursework in the required time) have two years of financial support to enable them to complete their degree.

The maximum time limit for completion of Master's degree is 5 calendar years from the date of enrollment in the first course required for the degree. However, financial assistance is not guaranteed beyond the second year.

## **M.A. IN HISPANIC LITERATURES**

The Master of Arts degree program in Hispanic Literatures is designed primarily for students who plan to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy degree, and to join the faculties of colleges or universities as scholars and teachers. The program prepares students in the language, literatures, and cultures of the Hispanic world, with an emphasis on literary, cultural studies and scholarly investigation.

In addition to meeting the requirements of the university and of the College of Arts and Letters, students must meet the requirements specified below.

### **Requirements for Admission**

To be admitted to the M.A. program in Hispanic Literatures, an applicant must have:

- A bachelor's degree (B.A.) in Spanish or Hispanic Studies, or have completed the courses in Spanish that are required for the Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish at Michigan State University or their equivalents.
- A grade point average of at least 3.0 in undergraduate Spanish language, literature, and culture courses.
- All documents required by General Admission Requirements and Graduate School's Office of Admissions:  
<https://grad.msu.edu/application-information>

## **Requirements for Completion of Program**

The program is available under Plan A (with thesis) or Plan B (without thesis). A minimum of 30 credit hours of course work is required for the degree.

The Graduate Advisor must approve the student's program of study. The student must meet these requirements specified below within 5 years:

Complete at least one course in each of the following fields of Spanish and Latin-American Literatures:

- Medieval Literature and Old Spanish language
- 16th and 17th-century Spanish literature
- 18th and 19th-century Spanish literature
- 20th-century Spanish literature
- Colonial Spanish American literature
- 19th-century Latin-American literature
- 20th-century Latin-American literature

Complete at least 21 credits of SPN courses at the 800 level. Courses used to satisfy requirement 2.1 (above), may also be used to satisfy this requirement (2.2) with advisor approval.

One of the following:

Plan A (Thesis): Six credits of SPN 899 Master's Thesis Research, preparation of a thesis, followed by an oral defense.

Plan B: Written examination based on coursework and department reading list. This examination is given only during the spring semester.

## **Thesis and Oral Examination (Plan A)**

Requirements for Plan A

- Complete 6 credits of SPN 899 Master's Thesis Research.
- Pass a final oral examination that covers the student's program of study, thesis, and reading list.

Thesis: The thesis, a formal research project undertaken by the candidate, is generally 50 pages in length (excluding bibliography) and represents intensive analysis of a topic relating to the student's major area of study (literary analysis, cultural studies, among others.)

Reading List: The thesis bibliography constitutes the reading list for Plan A.

Proposal: A 5-7-page thesis proposal and a schedule for completion are submitted to committee members during the semester prior to undertaking the project (i.e., prior to enrolling in SPN 899). Within two weeks of receipt of the proposal, the committee will

accept, suggest revisions, or reject the proposal. The proposal should include the following components:

- a) Statement of research questions and hypotheses.
- b) Brief overview of previous research on the topic.
- c) Theoretical/methodological approaches.
- d) Contribution of the proposed topic to the student's field of study.
- e) Preliminary outline.
- f) Working bibliography

Thesis credits: Students selecting the thesis option are required to enroll for 6 credits of SPN 899.

Formatting: The thesis must be written according to the academic conventions in the field (current MLA guidelines) and should include endnotes and bibliography. The thesis must be organized and prepared according to the regulations prescribed in the Michigan State University Formatting Guide for Submission of Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertations: <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/formatting-guide>.

Defense: After the M.A. thesis is submitted in final draft form, the defense will take place during an oral examination. The date for the examination is scheduled within two weeks of submission of the thesis. The committee will evaluate the examination and thesis and assign a numerical grade for SPN 899.

### ***Guidelines for the M.A. in Hispanic Literatures Thesis Option (Plan A)***

#### **M.A. Thesis Committee Formation (1st Year Spring Semester)**

Students should identify a faculty member to serve as the chair of the M.A. thesis committee during spring semester of their first year. The chair of the M.A. thesis committee must be drawn from the Spanish faculty listed in the graduate student handbook.

Working in conjunction with the chair, the student should identify and approach two more faculty members willing to serve on the committee. At least one of the committee members—in addition to the chair—must be drawn from faculty members listed in the graduate student handbook. One committee member can be drawn from a faculty member not listed in the graduate student handbook, which includes:

- a) Ph.D. holding faculty member from Spanish not listed in the graduate student handbook
- b) Ph.D. holding faculty member from the Department of Romance and Classical Studies
- c) Ph.D. holding faculty member from outside the Department of Romance and Classical Studies

In all cases, students should consult with their chair before approaching faculty members to join the committee to ensure agreement. Once the committee is formed, the chair of the committee should confirm the constitution of the committee with the graduate advisor.

NOTE: The graduate advisor may serve as a committee chair or committee member if there is a convergence between the student's chosen thesis topic and the graduate advisor's research areas of expertise, but the graduate advisor does not form part of the committee or participate in the thesis proposal meeting or the thesis defense by default.

### Thesis Proposal & Thesis Proposal Meeting (1st Year Spring Semester or 2nd Year Fall Semester)

The student should work closely with the committee chair during the proposal writing process to ensure agreement about the general direction the thesis is taking and to avoid the necessity of making major revisions to the thesis project after the proposal has been submitted to the committee for approval.

If the student wishes to take 3 credits of SPN 899 during fall semester of their second year and 3 credits of SPN 899 during spring semester of their second year, then the thesis proposal (that includes all the items listed in the graduate handbook) must be submitted to the committee by the end of spring semester of their first year no later than May 15.

If the student wishes to take all 6 credits of SPN 899 during spring semester of their second year, then the thesis proposal (that includes all the items listed in the graduate handbook) should be submitted to the committee during the first half of fall semester of their second year no later than October 15<sup>th</sup>, to ensure that there is enough time left in the semester to revise the thesis proposal based on feedback from the committee, if necessary.

Decisions about when to take SPN 899 credits during the second year will depend largely upon the necessity of fulfilling all course requirements for the MA degree as well as student interest in completing a graduate certificate or other coursework outside the department and the course offerings available. Students should consult with the graduate advisor when making decisions about SPN 899 distribution and coursework for their second year to ensure they will meet all of the degree requirements by the end of their second year.

Upon completion of the thesis proposal, the committee chair should send the thesis proposal to the other committee members and set-up a date for a thesis proposal meeting with the student and the committee members within 2 weeks of submission.

The chair and committee members will provide feedback during the thesis proposal meeting and decide if the student is ready to proceed with minor adjustments or if substantial changes are necessary before beginning to write the thesis. The

committee's decision will be communicated by the chair to the graduate advisor after the meeting, who will handle any administrative paperwork/procedures with the graduate secretary.

### Thesis Defense (2nd Year Spring Semester)

The thesis defense will typically take place towards the end of spring semester of the student's second year (usually in late April or early May, but no later than May 15).

Upon completion of the thesis, the committee chair should send the thesis to the other committee members and set-up a date for a thesis defense with the student and the committee members within 2 weeks of submission.

The chair and committee members will provide verbal feedback during the defense and decide if the student has passed the defense or if substantial changes are necessary before the student is eligible for graduation. The committee's decision will be communicated by the chair to the graduate advisor after the meeting, who will handle any administrative paperwork/procedures with the graduate secretary.

### **Written and Oral Examination (Plan B)**

#### Written Exam

The M.A. written exam is based on the literature reading list (a core list plus reading lists from courses taken) and a portfolio comprised of exams and research papers from M.A. coursework. The written portion of the exam will be take-home format as described below.

On two consecutive weeks, the student will pick up and answers questions on two major areas of Hispanic Literatures, (1) Peninsular and 2) Latin American.

The student will receive the questions for each area on Friday at 12:00 pm (noon) and will submit completed answers (as an electronic document) to the Graduate Secretary by 9:00 am the following Monday. The questions will be provided to the student by the Spanish Graduate Advisor and/or the Graduate Secretary. Failure to submit the completed exam by the deadline may result in penalizations, including failing the exam.

Each exam area (Peninsular and Latin American) will be graded by specialists in the corresponding field.

#### Oral Examination

Once the student receives his/her scores for the written portion of the exam, s/he will give an oral presentation, before a faculty committee, of their portfolio and, if necessary, defend the written exam.

- The faculty committee will consist of three members: (1) the Spanish graduate adviser, (2) a faculty member requested by the student, and (3) a faculty

- member assigned by the section (rotation system).
- In both parts (written exam and oral defense), a majority vote determines the pass or fail result.
- The M.A. exam in Hispanic Literatures will be offered only in the Spring semester.
- Students can take the M.A. exam a maximum of two times.

## **Additional Information**

### Policy on Independent Studies for Master's student

Graduate students at the M.A. level are not approved to take independent studies and earn IS credits. This alternative is offered only to Ph.D. students who are working on their dissertation prospectus (for example).

### Ph.D. Admission Procedures for Internal Candidates

Current M.A. in Hispanic Literatures students who wish to be considered for admission to the Ph.D. program will present an internal application by December 15 (i.e., prior to taking the M.A. exam) to receive full consideration for a graduate assistantship. The Department will accept applications after the deadline; however, applications submitted after the December deadline are not guaranteed to receive full consideration for financial support.

The student's internal application packet will include the following materials:

- A two-page statement of purpose, outlining the reasons for pursuing the doctorate areas of interest and possible study.
- An essay on a literary theme, which can be a paper turned in for a class.
- Three letters of recommendation from professionals in the field.

The Spanish faculty will review the student's grades and class performance, as well as the statement of purpose, the essay and the recommendation letters. Successful completion of the M.A. program is required for admission to the Ph.D. program.

### Accelerated Admission to the Ph.D. Program

Students in the MA in Hispanic Literatures students may continue to the Ph.D. in Hispanic Cultural Studies the department by applying either after completing the M.A. or at the end of the first year in the program, under the process for accelerated admission.

The graduate advisor, in consultation with the graduate committee and faculty members of the department involved in the Graduate Program in Hispanic Literatures, may nominate M.A. students for accelerated admission into the Ph.D. program (admission after 1 year of M.A. course work) if they have:

- Completed a minimum of five graduate courses in the department
- Have a 3.9 GPA.

If those nominated for accelerated admission decide to pursue the application process, they should apply no later than the last week of classes in their second full term of coursework.

The application will be submitted to the graduate advisor, and should include:

- A statement of purpose clearly describing the student's area(s) of interest, his/her doctoral goals, and project.
- A writing sample, which may be a paper written for a course during the first year of M.A. coursework
- Two letters of recommendation from faculty members in the department who support the student's application for accelerated admission.

Applications for accelerated admission to the Ph.D. program will be reviewed by all faculty members involved in the Graduate Program in Hispanic Literatures. This review will take place after grades for Spring Semester become available. Students will be notified shortly thereafter whether they are accepted to the Ph.D. program. Students who are denied accelerated admission can apply for regular admission after completion of the M.A. Courses completed during the first year of the M.A. cannot be used to satisfy the 24 credits required doctoral coursework.

After completing one year of graduate coursework at the doctoral level, students who decide not to pursue the Ph.D. may take the M.A. exam to be awarded an M.A. degree. The chair, in consultation with the graduate committee, will decide which courses can be used to meet M.A. requirements.

### Timeline

Graduate assistants enrolled full-time in the M.A. program have two years of financial support to enable them to complete their degree. A minimum of 6 credits can be taken per semester but 9 credits is advised to finish all coursework in the allotted time. The following study plan is recommended to M.A. students who are graduate assistants:

#### Study Plan

Semester 1: 6 credits

Semester 2: 9 credits

Semester 3: 9 credits, Submit thesis proposal (for Plan A)

Semester 4: 6 credits plus Exam and Thesis defense

The maximum time limit for completion of the Master's degree is 5 calendar years from the date of enrollment in the first course required for the degree. However, financial assistance is not guaranteed beyond the second year.

## **PH.D. IN HISPANIC CULTURAL STUDIES**

The Doctor of Philosophy degree program in Hispanic Cultural Studies prepares students in the study of literatures, languages, and cultures of the Hispanic world. Students who are enrolled in this program will select a primary and a secondary area of emphasis, and theoretical approaches relevant to these fields.

In addition to meeting the requirements of the University and the College of Arts and Letters, students must meet the requirements specified below.

### **Requirements for admission**

To be considered for admission to the Ph.D. program in Hispanic Cultural Studies, all applicants must:

- Possess an M.A. in Spanish or Hispanic Studies, or a total of 30 credit hours of satisfactorily approved coursework.
- A grade-point average of at least 3.25 in Spanish language, literature and culture course M.A. work.
- Submit an application that includes:
  - Transcripts of undergraduate and graduate work at the M.A. level.
  - 500-word statement of purpose.
  - Letters of recommendation from three academic professionals who are familiar with their work and qualified to assess applicant's ability to pursue advanced graduate study.
  - Writing sample of an academic essay in Spanish.
  - TOEFL scores for international and/or non-English speaking applicants.

### **Requirements for Completion of Program**

1. Complete at least 24 credits at the 800-level and above, beyond the M.A. degree. Cognates towards the replacement of a foreign language are NOT included within the 24 credits.
2. Complete SPN 807 Literary Theory, or its equivalent approved by the primary graduate advisor.
3. Demonstrate a reading proficiency in two languages other than Spanish that have a body of literature or criticism relevant to the student's area of specialization.
4. Teach at least one college-level course in Spanish.
5. Pass comprehensive examinations.
6. Submit a dissertation based on original research.
7. Successfully defend the dissertation to the dissertation

### **Guidance Committee and Comprehensive Examinations**

Each Ph.D. student should constitute a Guidance Committee to set up the examination areas for the Comprehensive Exams. Within one semester after admission to the Ph.D. program, the student should consult the chair of the department or the graduate advisor to choose a chair of the Guidance Committee



who then, in consultation with the student, selects the other three members of the committee. For specific advising functions and expectations of both the guidance committee chair and Ph.D. candidate, review Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/resources>

The Guidance Committee is constituted by four regular faculty members, from which at least three must be members of the RCS tenure- stream faculty. Students who request that a faculty member from a department other than the Department of Romance and Classical Studies serve on the committee administering their comprehensive exams must have completed one course with that individual before the exams are attempted.

The department Chairperson (or designated representative) must ratify the final composition of the Guidance Committee.

The role of the members of the Guidance Committee is to plan the student's program in detail and recommend course work and reading lists according to the student's research interests and dissertation project. A dissertation topic will be determined by the student in consultation with the guidance committee and recorded in the Guidance Committee Report to be placed in the student's file in the department and College offices. Once designated, the Guidance Committee has the responsibility to meet periodically to oversee the graduate student's progress if the graduate student continues in good standing.

Any desired or required changes in the membership of the Guidance Committee may be made by the graduate student with the concurrence of the unit Chairperson or designated representative or by the unit with the concurrence of the graduate student in accordance with University, College, and unit policy. Committee or dissertation chairpersons on leave shall provide for the necessary guidance of their advisees during their absence.

### **Communication Policy**

If changes are made to committee membership, or significant changes are made to the plan of study, the student is responsible for communicating the changes to the guidance or dissertation committee director, all committee members, and the departmental chair. Furthermore, students must copy their guidance or dissertation committee directors on all communications regarding academics, administrative issues, and teaching.

### **Comprehensive Exams**

In preparation for the Comprehensive Exams, a Ph.D. student will define two areas of concentration: (1) a primary area of specialization, (2) a secondary area of specialization, and theory relevant to these areas, all of which should be pertinent to

the dissertation topic.

A Ph.D. student must be registered as full-time student at the time they take their comprehensive exams. There is only a variance permitted for taking comprehensive exams in the summer when a student is enrolled either Spring prior and/or Fall afterwards. Doctoral students who have passed their comprehensive exams only need to register for one credit to be considered full-time students.

The Comprehensive Exams consist of:

1. Two take-home written exams based on the student's areas of concentration and theory relevant to the specific areas of concentration.
2. A dissertation proposal with bibliography
3. A two-hour oral defense of both written exams and dissertation proposal.

### Written Exams

The two take-home exams will focus on the primary and secondary areas of specialization respectively and will include the relevant theory to the area in question.

- Guidance committee members will be requested to submit 2 questions each.
- Based on this set of questions or problems, the chair of the committee will design two take home exams with 4 questions each. The student will select one question out of 4 in each exam.
- For each exam, the student will have two weeks to produce a professional- quality piece of analytical and critical work (15-20 pages plus notes and bibliography) that would be comparable to a publishable article after the committee's feedback is addressed.
- The student will write the two take-home exams. One will be written in English, and one in Spanish.

### Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal (maximum: 20 pages) that defines the corpus of analysis, the methodology, the existing critical literature, and the chapter structure of the dissertation.

### Oral Defense

The two-hour oral defense will be based on both written exams and dissertation proposal.

### Time Limit

All requirements (written exams, dissertation proposal and oral defense of both) must be completed over a period of a semester. A pass grade requires the favorable vote of three out of four committee members. A student who fails any of the requirements will be required to repeat that requirement. If two or more requirements are failed, the entire set of comprehensive examinations must be repeated and passed. A second failure of any requirement terminates the student's study in the Department.

## Eligibility

It is crucial that all deferred grades have been removed and the language requirements met before the Comprehensive Examinations are taken. In no case will a candidate be permitted to take the Comprehensive Examinations without having completed all other departmental and College requirements.

## **Foreign Language Requirement for the Ph.D.**

Doctoral candidates must demonstrate a reading proficiency of two languages other than English and the language of the major. These languages must be relevant to the student's dissertation project. The student's guidance committee, in consultation with the student, will choose them. With committee approval, a minimum of two graduate courses in another literature or discipline(s) (e.g. art, history, linguistics, philosophy, etc.) may be substituted for one of these two languages, provided they are related to the area of specialization. These courses (6 credit-hours) will be taken in addition to the minimum 24 credits of requirement.

## **Dissertation Committee, Dissertation Director and Thesis Preparation**

A doctoral dissertation is "original research upon which a dissertation which makes a significant contribution to knowledge is to be prepared and published"  
<https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Print.aspx?Section=399> The candidate must submit a book-length doctoral dissertation and an abstract based on original research that demonstrates sound critical judgment and mastery of subject matter.

All students must be registered for at least 1 credit during the semester they defend a thesis or dissertation. Students also need to be familiar with university regulations regarding minimum credit requirements.

All doctoral students must register for and successfully complete a minimum of 24 credits and no more than 36 credits of doctoral dissertation research (course number 999).

Within one month after successful completion of the comprehensive examination, the student should choose a tenure-stream faculty to be his/her dissertation director. The students may request guidance from the department chair or graduate advisor to select a permanent faculty advisor. The student, in consultation with the dissertation director, will choose the other members of the dissertation committee. The dissertation committee must consist of at least four regular members of MSU Faculty (one of whom shall be the chair of the department serving ex officio). The chairperson of the dissertation committee or dissertation director will closely supervise the writing of the dissertation to its completion.

For specific advising functions and expectations of both, dissertation director and Ph.D. candidate, review Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring

Relationships: <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/resources>

Dissertation chairs on leave shall provide for the necessary guidance of their advisees during their absence.

### **Dissertation defense and next steps**

The Ph.D. dissertation should be completed within the University time limits (see the MSU Publication Graduate Studies for specific information). Students are urged to complete the dissertation within two years of passing the Comprehensive Examinations.

Upon completion of the dissertation in a form acceptable to the chair of the dissertation committee, and not later than the date determined by the department the semester in which the graduation is anticipated, the student must submit copies of the dissertation and abstract for distribution to the dissertation committee members. The dissertation must be in a completed form, with finished diagrams and images. It must not, however, be bound.

The final oral examination must be scheduled for a date not earlier than two weeks after the dissertation and abstract have been submitted to the dissertation committee. The student must be registered during the semester in which the final oral examination is taken.

The final oral examination in defense of the dissertation is conducted and evaluated by the dissertation committee and, at the discretion of the dean of the college, by one appointed faculty member whose voting status is determined by the college (also known as the “dean’s representative.” Other interested faculty members and members of the public may attend the presentation portion of the examination without vote. Only dissertation committee members may attend the deliberation portion of the defense per individual unit guidelines. The dissertation and the student's performance on the final oral examination must be approved by a positive vote by at least three-fourths of the voting examiners and with not more than one dissenting vote from among the Michigan State University regular faculty members of the dissertation committee.

The dissertation, an abstract of the dissertation, and an abstract title page must be prepared in accordance to the specifications in the Graduate School's Formatting Guides, available at <https://grad.msu.edu/etd>.

Students must electronically submit to the Office of the Graduate School a copy of the dissertation, abstract, abstract title page, binding contract, and any other forms required. The step-by-step instructions for electronic submissions of a thesis or Doctoral dissertation are available at <https://grad.msu.edu/etd>.

The target date for the **final approval** of an electronic thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School for graduating the semester of that submission is FIVE working days

prior to the first day of classes for the next semester (see future target dates below). **Be aware that a submission via ProQuest does not mean that the document has been ACCEPTED.** The review process is interactive and final approval can take anywhere from a few hours to weeks, depending upon the extent of the necessary revisions and how diligent the author is when making the necessary revisions.

The deadlines for FINAL APPROVAL of an electronic Thesis or Dissertation to the Graduate School can be found at <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/etd-deadline-dates>. For 2023-2025, they are listed below:

---

Fall 2023

- Submission Deadline: November 30, 2023
- Final Deadline: December 14, 2023

Spring 2024

- Submission Deadline: April 17, 2024
- Final Deadline: May 1, 2024

Summer 2024

- Submission Deadline: July 31, 2024
- Final Deadline: August 14, 2024

Fall 2024

- Submission Deadline: November 25, 2024
- Final Deadline: December 11, 2024

Spring 2025

- Submission Deadline: April 9, 2025
  - Final Deadline: April 23, 2025
- 

## Dissertations Written in Languages Other than English

Theses and dissertation are normally written in English. They will be accepted in languages other than English when the following conditions are met:

- The major professor, committee and the department chair approve the language.
- The major professor agrees that the language is appropriate to the subject and target audience.
- The major professor in consultation with the student agrees it is in the best interest of the student's career goals.
- The committee is qualified to evaluate the thesis or dissertation in that language.
- The title page and abstract are submitted in English.

It is important that a letter confirming that the conditions have been met for writing a thesis/dissertation in a language other than English and signed by the major professor, student and department chair accompany the thesis/dissertation

when submitted to the Graduate School.

### **Application for Graduation at the University Level**

Submit a graduation application by the first week of the semester you expect to complete your degree requirements. The graduation application can be accessed through Grad Plan and the Registrar's Office. If you will complete your degree requirements during Summer, apply for Summer by the first week of Spring semester. Both Spring and Summer applicants will be included in the Spring Commencement ceremonies.

An exit survey for graduating MA and PhD students graduating can be accessed at <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/>

### **Advanced Degrees Commencement Ceremonies**

Please see the Commencement website <http://commencement.msu.edu/> for up-to-date and specific information regarding advanced degree commencement dates.

Note that if you intend to graduate in the current semester, your document must be accepted and delivered to the publisher, ProQuest, by 5:00 p.m. by the deadline. This means that your document has been submitted via the ProQuest website, reviewed by a Graduate School ETD Administrator for formatting, has been deemed to be formatted correctly and all necessary paperwork has been turned in to the Graduate School.

### **Time Frame for Graduate Students with Assistantship**

Graduate students who receive financial aid in the form of an assistantship must meet all possible requirements within four years of study. Financial support is not offered beyond the fourth year (8 semesters) of enrollment in the Ph.D. program.

The following study plans are recommended for Ph.D. students who receive an assistantship:

#### Plan 1

For Graduate Teaching Assistants fulfilling the two-foreign language requirement

Semester	Credits	Other
1	9	Selection of Guidance Committee Chair and possible areas of examination.
2	9	Guidance Committee is formally constituted.
3	6	Foreign language proficiency exams. Twenty-four (24) credits of coursework.

4	6	Comprehensive Examinations. Start taking 999 credits. Dissertation director is selected.
5	6	Dissertation proposal. Dissertation committee is formally constituted.
6	6	Dissertation.
7	3	Dissertation. Job market.
8	3	Dissertation defense and graduation.

## Plan 2

For Graduate Teaching Assistant fulfilling 1 foreign language requirement and 1 cognate (for example: HST, ENG, MUS, etc. = 6 extra credits, in addition to the 24 credits in SPN graduate coursework)

Semester	Credits	Other
1	9	Selection of Guidance Committee Chair and possible areas of examination.
2	9	Guidance Committee is formally constituted.
Summer	3	Independent Study.
3	9	Foreign language proficiency exam. Thirty (30) credits of coursework (24 SPN + 6 cognate).
4	3	Comprehensive Examinations. Start taking 999 credits. Dissertation director is selected.
5	6	Dissertation proposal. Dissertation committee is formally constituted.
6	6	Dissertation.
7	6	Dissertation. Job market/MLA convention.
8	3	Dissertation defense and Ph.D. graduation.

Graduate students may enroll in graduate coursework during any summer session if courses are available. Credits earned during the summer sessions count toward the completion of the degree.

Each graduate student may take up to and no more than two (2) Independent Studies during their Ph.D. program.

Graduate students must enroll in 999 credits the same semester they take the Comprehensive examinations.

Graduate students must be enrolled in, at least, 1 credit, the semester they defend the Ph.D. dissertation.

## **Making Satisfactory Progress toward the Degree**

In general, graduate students are making satisfactory progress toward the degree if they:

- are maintaining a cumulative grade point average of 3.25 or better (excluding SPN 999 credits)
- do not have more than 8 credits of outstanding Incomplete or Deferred grades (excluding SPN 999)
- are accumulating credits and satisfying requirements (see SPN Grad Handbook Minimum GPA and teaching assistantships) at a pace that accords with the goal of completing the degree within the university time limit.

## **Academic Probation and Termination**

A student will be placed on probation for one semester when:

- the student's record shows more than 6 credits of Incomplete or Deferred (excluding SPN 899); or
- the cumulative grade point average falls below 3.25 GPA; or
- the student is not making satisfactory progress toward the degree.

Students on probationary status are given one semester to remedy the problem. Probationary status may jeopardize a student's eligibility for financial support, whether by funding through the Department, the College or the University. A student who fails to meet good standing criteria during the one-semester probationary period may be required to withdraw from the program.

## **Eligibility for Graduate Assistantships**

Assistantship eligibility requires a 3.25 GPA. See also Departmental Policies on Academic Performance in this handbook. In every case, assistantship eligibility



depends upon the student making satisfactory progress toward the degree, and satisfactory performance in assistantships already held.

- M.A. students have 4 semesters (excluding summers) of assistantship eligibility.
- Ph.D. students have 8 semesters (excluding summers) of assistantship eligibility.

Considering programmatic needs, the chair of the Department may extend current time limits of eligibility for graduate assistantships to graduate students making satisfactory progress toward the degree.

Assistantships assigned by other units, inside or outside the College of Arts and Letters, do not count against these limits. Summer assistantships do not count in these eligibility limits.

### **University Time Limits**

The university time limit for the completion of the requirements for the Master's degree is five calendar years from the date of enrollment in the first course included for degree completion.

The university time limit for the completion of the Ph.D. is eight years from the date of enrollment in the first course included for degree completion.

Extensions of these limits can be granted only by the Graduate School and the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Letters on recommendation of the Department of Romance and Classical Studies.

## **DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

### **Evaluation of academic performance**

Graduate students have a right to periodic evaluation as a measure of their academic progress, performance, and professional potential. For the purpose of providing information to students on their academic progress and professional potential and to the faculty for consideration in their decisions on awarding financial aid and in evaluating programs, the faculty reviews the progress of all students annually. In addition, written evaluations will be communicated to graduate students at least once a year, and a copy of such evaluations will be placed in the graduate students' files. (See sections 2.4.8 and 2.5.24 of the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities <https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/gsrr/GSRR.pdf>).

Annual evaluations take place before the end of the Spring Semester. The forms can be accessed at <https://grad.msu.edu/annual-evaluation-forms>.

- Program Academic Advisors will submit forms for MA students and PhD students without a Guidance Committee.
- Guidance Committee Chairs will submit forms for PhD students who have formed a Guidance Committee.
- Dissertation Directors will submit forms for PhD students with a Dissertation Committees.

### **Deferred and Incomplete Grades**

A student may not accumulate more than 9 credits of DF (deferred) or I (incomplete). These limits do not include credits in 999. If a deferred (DF) grade is given, the student has two years to complete the course work to receive a grade or the DF will automatically change to a U (unfinished).

If an incomplete (I) grade is given, the student has until mid-semester of the following semester to complete the course work and receive a grade or the I will automatically change to a 0.0.

### **Advising**

Graduate Students must meet each semester prior to enrollment with their Graduate Advisor (for M.A. students) or the Chair of the Guidance Committee (for doctoral students) to plan their course work for the following semester.

### **Minimum GPA and teaching assistantships**

Graduate Students who hold teaching assistantships and other forms of departmental or university financial aid should keep **an average GPA of 3.25** (see more in Guidelines for Teaching Assistants/ General Policies/E. Termination of Appointment) Academic difficulty will result in a review of the student's overall situation by the department.

**Graduate students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.25** for their Teaching Assistant status to be renewed.

## **DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES ON RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY INTEGRITY**

### **Scholarly Integrity**

Communities survive or die on the basis of shared values. Among the most important

of these in a scholarly community is respect for the intellectual enterprise of others. The behavioral reflection of this value is a readiness to acknowledge individuals for their original work, ideas, findings, and creative endeavors. Failure to provide such credit knowingly representing the work or ideas of another as one's own is plagiarism. Imitation may be "the sincerest form of flattery," but when it involves imitation of the work of another scholar, it is theft.

"Plagiarism" is defined as presenting another person's work or ideas as one's own. Students are expected to do their own work on all assignments. The instructor reserves the right to give a student who plagiarizes a 0.0 on the assignment or in the course. In some cases of academic dishonesty, a dean may call for a disciplinary hearing to impose sanctions up to and including dismissal.

The following document on plagiarism and its penalties includes information from the MSU Office of the Ombudsperson General Regulation states in part that "no student shall claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own." (For the complete regulation, see <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity>)

Students are expected to do their own, original work on each assignment in each class. A student who recycles his or her course work from one class to another may face an allegation of academic dishonesty. It is not acceptable to write and submit the same paper for two separate courses, whether these classes are offered in the same or different semesters. If the student submits the same paper, he or she will be subject to the rules governing academic dishonesty.

It is equally unacceptable for a student to submit a paper written in one language (Spanish or English) to an instructor and then submit the same paper translated into a different language to another instructor.

An instructor who believes a student has committed an act of plagiarism should take appropriate action, which includes the issuing of a "penalty grade" for academic dishonesty.

For a definition of "penalty grade," see Student Rights and Responsibilities (Spartan Life SSR article 11) and Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities

(GSRR) 8.1.8. A "penalty grade" is defined as "a grade assigned by an instructor who believes a student to have committed academic dishonesty." A penalty grade can include, but is not limited to, a failing grade on the assignment or in the course.

Each graduate student and faculty advisor must consult regularly the Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities and should note the most recent addendum to the Graduate School policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, Research Integrity and Research Misconduct <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity>

Graduate students who plan to integrate human subjects in their research (interviews, for example) should become familiar with the Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) handbook <https://hrpp.msu.edu/> and <http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/facacadhandbooks/facultyhandbook/protection.htm>

Graduate students in the Linguistics track may be asked to conduct research using human subjects. Please consult with your professor or advisor in such a case for the conditions requiring research protocol with the Institutional Review Board: <http://hrpp.msu.edu/>.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

The University has established a judicial structure and process for hearing and adjudicating alleged violations of recognized graduate student rights and responsibilities (GSRR, Article 5). The first venue to resolve such conflicts informally or formally rests within the academic unit.

Complaints filed by Graduate Students (See also “Graduate Student Academic Grievance Hearing Procedure-Romance and Classical Studies Department” in department’s ‘Graduate’ webpage).

1. To resolve conflicts between a graduate student and his or her supervisor, instructor, faculty advisor or guidance committee, the student should first speak with that person or committee. GSAGHP-RCS III)
2. If that effort fails, or if the student is uncomfortable during that discussion, an appointment should be made with the department chair. If the dispute is with the Assistant Director of French Language Instruction, the graduate student should first see the Director of Language Instruction.
3. At any time of his process, the student may consult the University Ombudsperson <https://ombud.msu.edu/> (GSAGHP-RCS III.B)
4. If one or both of these officials cannot mediate or resolve the issue, the Department’s Hearing Board may review the matter, as outlined in GSAGHP-RCS.
5. If this committee cannot mediate or resolve the issue, the grievant can seek redress outside the department, with the help and advice of the Ombudsperson (<https://ombud.msu.edu/>)
6. In cases of irreconcilable conflict, the chair shall reserve the right to replace a student’s graduate advisor or committee chair with another qualified person acceptable to both the graduate faculty and to the student, as ascertained through private discussions. Such replacement shall occur within one week of the meeting at which an irreconcilable conflict has been identified.
7. In cases of conflicts of interest between students and faculty, or between students, the chair shall decide on a solution in consultation with the

graduate faculty.

8. Students may be dismissed from the program if they fail to display professionally accepted behavior, by acting overtly violent, threatening, or abusive; committing felonies or destroying property; displaying proven gross incompetence and negligence in their teaching assignments; and other serious breaches as confirmed by the University grievance officers, University lawyer, or University police.
9. In any event, the department must check with the Ombudsperson's office to ensure that its grievance and dismissal policies and actions conform to MSU policy (<https://ombud.msu.edu/>).

If a graduate student feels their rights have been infringed upon or that s/he has been insulted and would like to lodge a formal complaint, the following is the departmentally approved procedure that must be followed for the protection of the rights of all concerned:

1. The student should first speak with the course instructor or administrator concerned.
2. If s/he is uncomfortable with this procedure, s/he should speak with the Chair. If necessary, steps 3 and 4 as described above will follow.
3. If the student believes that Step Two has not brought satisfactory results, he/she may file a formal complaint. The Chair refers the complaint to the Department Hearing Board within specified time limits. The student and the instructor are entitled to appear in person to present their cases to the judiciary. After hearing testimony, the judiciary will decide: "Not Proven" (there has been no proven infringement of the rights of the student), or "Proven" (there has been a violation of the student's rights). The student and instructor will be given the decision and reasons for it in writing. A copy of the decision will be filed with the department, the dean of the College, and the dean of the Graduate School, when appropriate.
4. If the student believes that the decision of the Hearing Board does not do justice to her/his rights, she/he has the right to appeal the decision. The Ombudsperson will attempt to mediate between parties to improve communication and resolve differences. A formal grievance is a last resort.

#### Office of the University Ombudsperson

##### Contact information

Office of the University Ombudsperson

<https://ombud.msu.edu/>

[ombud@msu.edu](mailto:ombud@msu.edu)

129 N. Kedzie Hall

(517) 353-8830

Conflicts, disagreements, and issues sometimes arise during the course of a graduate program. If you find yourself in this situation and have exhausted the internal resources for resolving the issue, you may contact the Office of the University Ombudsperson.

The Office of the University Ombudsperson provides assistance to students, faculty, and staff in resolving University-related concerns. Such concerns include: student-faculty conflicts; communication problems; concerns about the university climate; and questions about what options are available for handling a problem according to Michigan State University policy. The University Ombudsperson also provides information about available resources and student/faculty rights and responsibilities. The office operates as a confidential, independent, and neutral resource. It does not provide notice to the University – that is, it does not speak or hear for the University.

Contact the Ombudsperson at any point during an issue when a confidential conversation or source of information may be needed. The Ombudsperson will listen to your concerns, give you information about university policies, help you evaluate the situation, and assist you in making plans to resolve the conflict.

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

This all-university policy applies to university employees as well as students. Sexual harassment is reprehensible and will not be tolerated at Michigan State University. Such behavior subverts the mission of the University and threatens the careers, educational experience, and well-being of students, faculty, and staff.

The University prohibits sexually harassing behavior including that made unlawful by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. University policy and the law also prohibit retaliation against persons who report sexual harassment.

### **Confidentiality**

To the extent permitted by law, the confidentiality of each party involved in a sexual harassment investigation, complaint, or charge will be observed, provided it does not interfere with the University's ability to investigate the allegations or take corrective action.

### **Prohibited Acts**

No member of the University community shall engage in sexual harassment. Persons who engage in sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal for employees and/or suspension for students.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, or other behavior of a sexual nature when (a) submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or status in a course, program, or activity; (b) submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for a decision affecting an individual's employment or status in a course, program, or activity; (c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably

interfering with an individual's work or performance in a course, program, or activity, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment in which one engages in employment, a course, a program or an activity.

### **Examples of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment encompasses any unwanted sexual attention. Examples of behavior encompassed by the above definition include, but are not limited to a) physical assault; b) threats or insinuations which cause the victim to believe that sexual submission or rejection will affect his/her reputation, education, employment, advancement, or any conditions which concern the victim's standing at the University; c) direct propositions of a sexual nature; d) subtle pressure for sexual activity, an element of which may be conduct such as unwelcome sexual leering; e) conduct (not legitimately related to the subject matter of the work, course, program, or activity in which one is involved) intending to or having the effect of discomforting and/or humiliating a reasonable person at whom the conduct is directed. This may include, but is not limited to, comments of a sexual nature or sexually explicit statements, questions, jokes, or anecdotes, and unnecessary touching, patting, hugging or brushing against a person's body.

Depending on the circumstances, any of the above types of conduct may be considered sexual harassment and subject to disciplinary action, even if that conduct occurs only once.

### **Seeking Assistance or Filing a Complaint**

Students, faculty and staff who believe they are the victims of sexual harassment may seek information and assistance from:

- the chairperson, director, or dean of the relevant unit
- supervisory support personnel
- the Women's Resource Center
- the Ombudsman
- Student Life or Residence Life staff
- the MSU Counseling Center
- the Sexual Assault Crisis and Safety Education program
- Faculty or staff academic advisors
- the Faculty Grievance Official
- the Anti-discrimination Judicial Board Coordinator
- The Office of Student Employment

If a student, faculty member, or staff member wishes to file a complaint, s/he may take the following action (s):

- If the alleged harasser is a faculty or staff member, the affected individual(s) may make a written complaint to that employee's unit administrator.
- If the alleged harasser is the unit administrator, the affected individual(s)

may make a written complaint to the unit administrator's superior or another unit administrator within the Department. If the alleged harasser is a student, the affected individual may file a complaint with the Office of Judicial Affairs.

A student, faculty, or staff member also may elect to file a written complaint with the Anti-discrimination Judicial Board for non-disciplinary relief, or with another appropriate dispute resolution body. The filing of such a complaint does not prevent the University administration from taking independent disciplinary action.

### **Awareness**

Members of the University community are responsible for knowing and understanding the University's policy prohibiting sexual harassment. Students who do not understand the policy should contact the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs. Faculty and staff who do not understand the policy should contact Human Resources or the Assistant Provost for Academic Human Resources, whichever is appropriate.

### **Additional Information**

Refer to the following site for additional information: <https://civilrights.msu.edu/>

## **WORK RELATED POLICIES**

### **Guidelines and General Policies for Teaching Assistants [In agreement with MSU/GEU Contract]**

<https://hr.msu.edu/contracts/documents/GEU2015-2019.pdf>

All teaching assistants must comply with departmental and university policies regarding students with disabilities, cases of academic dishonesty, attendance, etc. TAs also must follow the Code of Teaching Responsibility. More detail can be found on the website: <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/selected/code-of-teaching-responsibility>

TAs are strongly encouraged to make an appointment with the Director of Language Instruction or the department chair to discuss questions on the material in these documents:

University policy requires teachers to schedule office hours for student conferences and to inform their students of these hours. The Romance and Classical Studies Department TAs are required to maintain two office hours per week. If a student cannot make it to the TA's office hours because of class conflict and does not feel comfortable seeing another TA, the TA has the responsibility to make time to see the



student by appointment outside their office hours. Each TA must announce these office hours to his/her students and post them on his/her office door. TAs must tell their students that a complete schedule with all TAs office hours is posted on their office door. TAs must hold office hours in their assigned offices ONLY.

According to MSU policy, all instructors must remind students to complete the online SIRS (Student Instructional Rating System) forms at the end of the semester.

All instructor contracts are from August 16 to May 15 each year. Except for official holidays, spring break, and other sanctioned events, TAs are required to be available for meetings during the contract period.

TAs are required to attend all meetings scheduled by the director of language instruction and/or the assistant director. They are required to follow the decisions, deadlines and guidelines set during these meetings.

As TAs, graduate students are not free to approach the 100-200 level classroom with their own unique perspectives and methods. Instead, they are expected to follow the guidelines and approach set by the Basic Language Coordinator and Faculty Supervisor of Basic Language Instruction, laid out during orientation, in the course syllabus, and elsewhere. For more information, see MSU/GEU contract, article 15 on Training and Professional Development.

TAs are expected to be prepared and organized for each class hour they teach, following guidelines laid out during orientation and elsewhere.

TAs are required to meet every scheduled class period for the course to which they have been assigned. They are also required to start and finish class at the scheduled time. TAs do not have the authority to cancel a class for any reason. Should a TA be unable to meet a class because of illness, injury, pregnancy, death in the family, parental leave or jury duty, the TA must (1) find a replacement for the class period(s), (2) submit the appropriate documentation to the Assistant Director informing him/her of the absence, its duration, and the substitute's name. For other approved absences such as job interviews and presentations at conferences, the TA is responsible for finding a replacement AFTER receiving approval from the assistant director for the absence.

TAs are required to follow deadlines and policies (including grading instructions for compositions, exams and other tests) outlined in the syllabus. This allows for equality between all the sections of the same level. In particular, TAs are required to give a test during the normally scheduled class on the scheduled day only. Make-up exams can only be given after having received authorization from the Assistant Director.

TAs must meet all deadlines for turning in exams and grades.

TAs must keep track of students' grades in the electronic worksheet for grade calculation as well as keep track of students' attendance. Attendance must be taken every class period and recorded in the online learning system.

During the first week of class, TAs are required to write attendance on a sheet and leave the names of students attending but not registered or registered but not attending (without having given notice), to the secretary in the RCS main office (B-331 Wells Hall) at the end of the first week of class. TAs must also verify their class lists at <http://www.reg.msu.edu> and report any discrepancy to the main office (B-331 Wells Hall) no later than Friday on the first week of class. After that, lists need to be verified every other week.

New TAs will be observed during the first semester of their teaching by a designated supervisor in the language program. Each Spring Semester, TAs and fixed-term instructors will be required to videotape at least one class as well as conduct a self-assessment using guidelines created by the director of language instruction.

At the end of the semester, all TAs must meet with the assistant director. During this meeting, the TA must turn in the completed worksheet for grade calculation for every student, and the final grade form.

TAs will receive communications from the director or assistant director throughout the academic year. These may be delivered by e-mail, in print, or both.

TAs are encouraged to check their e-mail and departmental mailboxes daily. TAs should encourage students to attend activities outside of class that will further their knowledge and use of the language.

## **General Policies for Teaching Assistants**

Teaching Assistant appointments in the Department of Romance and Classical Studies are awarded to graduate students who are actively pursuing graduate degree programs, who are making satisfactory progress toward their degrees, and who are in good academic standing. The professional responsibility of a TA is to maintain a high standard of instruction for undergraduate students. All TA appointments are subject to the TA conforming to University policies, including policies stated in Spartan Life, the Campus Teaching Assistant Orientation handbook, and the MSU TA handbook. TAs may be subject to discipline, including termination, for the violation of University policies bearing on performance and/or responsibilities.

## **Responsibilities Associated with the Appointment**

Teaching Assistants on ½ time appointment in the department normally teach in the 100 and 200 level language program. The teaching load of 1/2- time TAs will consist of twelve contact hours per year or equivalent, and two office hours per week. The normal workload for 1/2 time assistantships is twenty hours (or ten hours for a 1/4-

time assistantship) per week, averaged over the length of the appointment. See MSU/GEU contract, article 13, on workload.<sup>1</sup>

## **All TAs are responsible for following the MSU Code of Teaching Responsibility**

### Job Security (See also GEU contract, article 12)

The University requires that all graduate assistants (teaching assistants) must be registered each semester in which they hold assistantships. The minimum and maximum credit loads are as follows: For a half-time assistant minimum enrollment is 6 credits for master's degree students and 3 credits for doctoral students (including credits in courses numbered 899 or 999); maximum enrollment is 12 credits (excluding credits in courses numbered 899 or 999).

Minimum enrollment for doctoral students who have successfully completed all comprehensive exams is one (1) credit. Deviation from the minimum enrollment requirements listed above is permitted only during: (1) summer session, when a 3-credit minimum enrollment is allowed for all types of assistants (2) the semester in which the degree is granted, when all assistants must enroll for at least the number of credits required to complete the degree or meet the University minimum registration requirement.

Any deviation from the maximum enrollment requirements listed above must have the approval of the dean of the college prior to enrollment. In meeting the credit requirements, graduate assistants should be enrolled in courses that are recognized as being of graduate level unless the student's department or school has granted written permission for course work constituting an exception to this rule. Visitor credits may count as part of a graduate assistant's credit load, if approved in writing by the student's department chair or unit director and the dean of the Graduate School.

The University requires that all teaching assistants who are M.A. students be enrolled for at least six credits (this is considered a full-time load) per semester. TAs who are Ph.D. students must be enrolled for at least three

---

<sup>1</sup> (A) Employee appointments shall average ten (10) hours (1/4 time), twenty (20) hours (1/2 time) or thirty (30) hours (3/4 time) per week over the length of a semester appointment. The specific number of hours in any week may vary from the average according to the needs of the employing unit. However, over the course of the semester appointment, the average number of hours worked per week shall not unreasonably exceed the above. (B) Supervisors shall discuss the scope and pattern of duties with the employees at the outset of the appointment and as questions arise during the appointment. Should supervisors become aware of potential workload fluctuations of a substantial nature, they will notify affected employees as soon as practicable. (C) If, during the course of an appointment, it is determined that an employee is expected to work more than the average specified in Paragraph I., above, the employing unit will increase the appointment or reduce the workload appropriately. (D) Employees appointed for a special limited purpose may be appointed at a level less than ten (10) hours (1/4 time).

credits (this is considered a full-time load) per semester. The department expects that all TAs will normally be enrolled in nine credits (M.A. students) and six to nine credits (Ph.D. students) per semester. The graduate advisor, in consultation with the director of graduate studies, may approve exceptions.

The maximum courses load without special approval for a half-time assistant is twelve credits. If an assistant's studies and teaching are satisfactory, reappointment for a second year will be granted, but requirements for a master's program should be completed by the end of the second year.

Continuation of financial support beyond that stage depends on the student's progress toward the doctorate. Unsatisfactory performance in course work or in teaching responsibilities will result in termination of an assistantship.

### Dates You Must Be In Residence

Teaching assistants are required to be in residence from August 16 until May 15. Exceptions include official holidays, winter and spring breaks, and other sanctioned events. TAs should not make travel plans that cause them not to be in residence, unless approved by the director of language instruction.

### Departmental Meetings

Teaching assistants are required to attend all staff meetings called by the director, the assistant director, the director of graduate studies, the graduate advisor or the chair. When a TA cannot attend a meeting called by a faculty member, that TA must notify the faculty member in advance of the meeting.

### Policy on Religious Holidays

It has always been the policy of the University to permit students and faculty to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith. The faculty and staff should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who absent themselves from classes on these days are not seriously disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those students who wish to be absent to make arrangements in advance with their instructors.

### W-4 Forms

Graduate students can link to the ePayroll system to complete their W-4 through the following web sites:

- Web address: [www.epayroll.msu.edu](http://www.epayroll.msu.edu)
- MSU homepage ([www.msu.edu](http://www.msu.edu)) and typing ePayroll in "search".
- STUINFO, under "Online StudentServices" with a heading of "Payroll Forms."
- Controller's Office home page ([www.ctrl.msu.edu](http://www.ctrl.msu.edu))

W-4 cards may be picked up in the Payroll Office, Room 350 Administration Building between 8am and 5pm. Those who do not have a social security card or whose card

is lost, stolen or destroyed must apply for a card from the Social Security Administration. Their local office is:

5015 S. Cedar, Room 150, Lansing, MI 48910

Phone: (517) 377-1942 or (517) 377-1935

If you have further questions, call the Payroll Office at (517) 355-5010

### Student IDs (Identification Cards)

Student ID's can be obtained in ICC during new student orientation week (mid-August) or at the MSU ID Office, International Center, Room

170:<http://idoffice.msu.edu/>

### Mail

Please check mailboxes and e-mail messages every day. No personal mail is allowed to be sent from or delivered to the department. Please use your home address.

### Change of Address

All teaching employees must inform immediately the Graduate Secretary or the Main Office Supervisor any change of address or telephone number during the year.

### Administrative Policies and Procedures

Class-related problems (complaints, grades, etc.) that cannot be resolved by a discussion between the student and the TA are to be referred to the appropriate assistant director – for Spanish:

Mr. Francisco Morales. B480 Wells Hall, phone: 884-6336

([morale70@msu.edu](mailto:morale70@msu.edu))

This information is included in all 100- and 200-level syllabi.

### Room Changes

All classes must meet in the assigned classroom and at the time announced in the Schedule of Courses or any of its official revised forms. Should there be a serious reason for desiring to change the room or the hour, TAs are to confer with the assistant director prior to making any change. If the room is too small for the number of students enrolled, inform the RCS office. Any change in classroom will be made by the department.

### Class Lists

According to University regulations, "No person is allowed to attend a class unless officially enrolled on a credit or non-credit basis with the appropriate fees paid."

Please be sure that your class list of students is accurate and includes the names of all students attending your class. Any student auditing a class must have the chair approve a guest form and pay all necessary fees.

### Tutoring and Translation

Some of our TAs tutor students for a fee. TAs may not charge the students enrolled in their own section(s) a fee for supplemental instruction. Refer students in need of tutoring to the advisor. If you are interested in being a tutor or doing translation work, please let the academic advisor know immediately.

### Signing Documents or Forms

Teaching assistants are not authorized to sign documents such as Foreign Language Proficiency forms, Administrative Action Forms, and so on. Refer students to the Director of Language Instruction.

### Placement of Students

Undergraduate students who have taken Spanish or French before coming to MSU and who wish to continue with the same language here must be examined by the Testing Office. At times, however, the results of the placement test may not accurately reflect a student's ability. During the first week of the semester, each TA should try to identify any students inappropriately placed by the Testing Office and should also inform the students of the possibility of advancing to subsequent courses if they feel incorrectly placed. TAs should remind students that 101 is for those who have had no previous experience with the language and refer the students to the assistant director.

### Final Exams and Grading Procedures

All required class work must be submitted prior to the last class day of the semester. It is the TA's responsibility to state the requirement.

For an explanation of the MSU grading system, read the section "Grading Systems" in the Schedule of Courses and Academic Handbook. TAs are not allowed to assign a grade of "I" or tell students that they are entitled to a grade of "I." Such determinations can be made only by the director or assistant director. Grading criteria are provided in the syllabi for the 100 and 200 level courses. TAs may not deviate from these criteria.

### Posting Grades

Instructors are barred from posting grades, communicating grades through email, or using any other system for the discussion of a student's progress or final grade. All such communication must take place face to face.

### Student Complaints (Undergraduate Students)

If a student feels her/his rights have been infringed upon or that s/he has been insulted and would like to lodge a formal complaint, the following is the departmentally approved procedure that must be followed for the protection of the rights of all concerned:

- a) The complaint should first be made to the instructor. If the complaint is

unresolved or is such that the student cannot take it to the instructor, the student should be referred to the Basic Language Coordinator. If there is still no resolution, the student should proceed directly to Step Two. (Note that the assistant director regularly refers cases to the director or associate chair as necessary.)

- b) If the issue remains unresolved, the student may make a complaint in writing to the Associate Chairperson of the department. The Associate Chairperson must have 48 hours after receipt of the written complaint in order to interview the instructor concerned, before interviewing the student.
- c) If the issue remains unresolved, the student may make a complaint in writing to the Chairperson of the department. The Chairperson must have 48 hours after receipt of the written complaint in order to interview the instructor concerned, before interviewing the student.
- d) If the student believes that Step Three (c) has not brought satisfactory results, he/she may file a formal complaint to be heard by a judiciary. The chairperson refers the complaint to the Department or College Undergraduate Judiciary or Hearing Board within specified time limits. The student and the instructor are entitled to appear in person to present their cases to the judiciary. After hearing testimony, the judiciary will decide: "Not Proven" (there has been no proven infringement of the rights of the student), or "Proven" (there has been a violation of the student's rights). The student and instructor will be given the decision and reasons for it in writing. A copy of the decision will be filed with the department, the dean of
- e) the College, and the dean of the Graduate School, when appropriate.
- f) The student has the further right to appeal the judiciary decision to the university Ombudsman. The Ombudsman, Robert Caldwell (129
- g) N. Kedzie, Phone: 353-8830), will attempt to mediate between parties to improve communication and resolve differences. Visit [www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/](http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/) A formal grievance is a last resort.

### Students Traveling Abroad

Students traveling abroad should visit the "Travel Smart" website (<http://grad.msu.edu/travel/>) before their trip. When students appointed as TAs or RAs travel outside the U.S. to conduct required thesis or dissertation research or to collaborate with investigators conducting research abroad, the department or research grant supporting the work will be required to pay for all needed vaccinations and or medications (e.g., anti-malarials) as determined by the MSU Travel Clinic. Students may include those costs in applications for funds from the Research Enhancement or Travel Grant programs administered by the Graduate School.

### Supplies and Services

Supplies: Supplies needed for the preparation of instructional materials are to be obtained from the main office. Supplies are not available for personal use (this restriction includes courses in which TAs are enrolled); supplies are issued only for use in the preparation of materials for the class(es) that you teach.

Photocopies: The language program is largely digital in nature and requires very little use of paper. However, for the occasional use of paper, 300 photocopies per class per term are allowed for each TA.

Telephone: Students may leave a message for you at the main office (355- 8350), although we recommend that you tell your students to e-mail you with messages. Personal long-distance telephone calls are NOT to be placed on departmental phones.

### Employee Rights

According to the MSU/GEU contract, article 9, the following are TAs/employee's rights:

- a) Library borrowing privileges shall be provided to employees for not less than 180 days, subject to library recall policies.
- b) Appropriate technology, technological support and training that are necessary for the performance of an employee's duties, as determined by the employing unit, will be provided at no cost to the employee.
- c) Employees with University parking permits shall have access to campus parking in all Faculty/Staff lots south of the Red Cedar River.
- d) Employees shall have access, as permitted by the University parking authority, to building loading zones and, if available, handcarts for the purposes of loading and unloading materials related to the performance of employment duties.
- e) materials required for the performance of an employee's duties, including materials required of students in the course to which the employee is assigned, shall be provided to the employee at no cost for the semester. Employing units may give such materials permanently to the employee.
- f) Each employing unit or department, whichever is appropriate, shall make arrangements for employees' access to their assigned buildings, including office keys. Employing units or departments that provide building keys to employees on the date of this Agreement shall continue to do so for the term of this Agreement.
- g) Access to supplies, duplicating, collating and other office machinery (including but not limited to photocopiers, computers and computer printers) shall be available without charge to an employee at least to the extent required by his/her employment obligations, as determined by the employing unit.
- h) Employees will be provided access to telephones, the internet and a desk or work surface for the performance of employment duties.
- i) An employee who teaches a discussion, lab or lecture course will be consulted by the chairperson/director or designee prior to any change in
- j) Each employing unit shall make appropriate arrangements for safe storage of final exams and grading records.
- k) Employees shall have the right to take reasoned exception to information and views offered in courses in which they are employed and to make



- suggestions for improvement.
- l) Policies regarding employee priority in the purchase of athletic tickets and passes shall apply to employees.
  - m) Each employing unit shall make available a convenient receptacle at a designated location for employees to receive University business correspondence and work-related domestic and international mail. Employing units that provide individual employee mail receptacles on the execution date of this Agreement shall continue to provide such individual receptacles.

### Termination of Appointment.

The assistantship will terminate upon degree completion. A student who wishes to terminate an assistantship prior to that time shall notify the chair and the language coordinator in a timely, professional manner. See MSU/GEU contract, article 11, on appointments and article 10, on employment period.<sup>2</sup>

Substandard Performance: The department may terminate a graduate assistantship for substandard performance or inability to perform expected duties. Substandard performance may be brought to the attention of the department chair by the director of language instruction. Academic difficulty will result in a review of the student's overall situation by the department.

Violations: The department may also terminate an assistantship in cases of violation of the general Student Regulations contained in the Spartan Life handbook, or of the provisions concerning graduate student responsibilities contained in the document "Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities." This action may be initiated by the department chair or by the language coordinator.

Academic Difficulty: Academic difficulty will result in a review of the student's overall situation by the department. Graduate students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.25 in order for their teaching assistant status to be renewed.

Other Violations: The department may also terminate an assistantship in cases of violation of the general Student Regulations contained in the Spartan Life handbook, or of the provisions concerning graduate student responsibilities contained in the document "Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities." This action may be initiated by department chair or language coordinator.

---

<sup>2</sup> A) Appointments of employees shall be for a specific period up to one year. However, nothing within the terms of this Agreement precludes the Employer from making appointments of employees for periods longer than one year. Appointments and assignments shall be at the discretion of the employing unit. (B) All newly appointed and re-appointed employees shall receive a letter of appointment that specifies the appointment title and the appointment time fraction. Such appointment letter shall also include the effective dates, salary, teaching or work schedule and, if known, the employing unit representative to contact for information regarding the appointment and applicable benefits.

## **Summer Teaching/Assistantships**

The following conditions and provisos govern summer teaching assignments and assistantships:

- a) Any summer classes can be cancelled if they do not meet minimum enrollment requirements (15 students for on-campus offerings and 10 students for off-campus offerings). If the class you are assigned to teach is cancelled, no reassignment to another course can be expected.
- b) Off-campus courses are not teaching assistant assignments and thus do not carry tuition remission. The instructor will receive a set amount of compensation and be reimbursed for mileage (at 50 cents per mile) to and from the teaching site.
- c) The department faculty has established the following criteria for deciding assignments to summer courses or Study Abroad offerings. These criteria are not weighted in ranked order but are considered holistically:
  - GPA (including any Is or DFs) and consistent progress toward degree.
  - Continuation in the departmental graduate program in the academic year following the summer assignment.
  - Ability to work independently in the summer (there is no formal supervision) in regular courses on or off campus or to work in coordination with the Study Abroad Program director and personnel.

## **Other Information: GEU and GTAs Union Dues (GEU article 8)**

Each employee, on or before the 60th day after the effective date of this Agreement or on or before the 60th day after employment, whichever is later, and monthly thereafter, shall tender to the Union either periodic and uniformly required membership dues or, in the alternative, representation fees.

### Stipends (GEU article 19.II):

By the execution date of this Agreement, all employees shall be paid a minimum monthly stipend for each particular appointment status and for the duration of that employment period as prescribed below.

Levels in all units are determined as follows:

- Level 1: Employees with less than one year of experience as a graduate assistant or full support fellow.
- Level 2: Employees with a master's degree or equivalent and/or two semesters' experience as a graduate assistant or full-support fellow in the employing unit.
- Employees shall be appointed at a level 3 when they have completed a minimum number of semesters as a graduate assistant, provided that they have also attained a master's degree or equivalent. The graduate assistant experience must be in the employing unit or in a department considered

relevant by the chairperson or employing unit. The minimum number shall be four (4), five (5) or six (6) but in any case no greater than the practice stipulated in 2004. If by August 16, 2015 a department or hiring unit has not clearly stipulated the number of semesters for appointment level 3 in their graduate handbooks, the number of semesters shall be four (4). [See Appendix 2 in this handbook for department 's stipulation of number of semesters for appointment at Level 3]

- Employees will be compensated for employment at the highest level for which they are eligible. Changes in levels will be instituted for the semester of employment following attainment of the qualifications for the new level.

Stipend increases from Level 1 to Level 2 and from Level 2 to Level 3 shall continue according to current practice. (GEU article 19.III)

Annual Raise: Employing units shall increase stipends each year of the Agreement as defined below (GEU article 19.IV, A, B, C, D). Employees hired during the Agreement period shall be paid at appointment level rates consistent with continuing employees in the same employing unit.

#### Personnel Records (GEU article 22):

1. The Employer will maintain a personnel record for each employee. Only documents that pertain to employment and/or job performance will be included in an employee's personnel record.
2. An employee, upon written request, will have the right up to three (3) times annually to review her/his personnel record at a reasonable time and place as scheduled by the employing unit.
3. An employee shall have the right to receive a copy of part or all of her/his personnel record. The employee will be assessed the cost of duplicating the information.
4. An employee shall have the right to place a written response to any evaluation contained in her/his personnel record. (See also items V and VI of this article in GEU contract).

#### Grievance Procedure (GEU article 26.I):

A grievance is defined as, and limited to, a written complaint involving an alleged violation of a specific provision(s) of the Agreement and remedy sought. Grievances may be filed by either an employee(s) or the Union. The primary purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest level possible, equitable solutions to the grievance(s).

Only one (1) issue shall be the subject of any one (1) grievance. If there is a disagreement on whether the grievance involves more than one (1) issue, the parties will attempt to resolve the dispute. If the dispute is not resolved, expedited arbitration will be invoked. A grievance shall contain a clear and concise statement of the grievance and indicate the issue involved, the relief sought, the date the alleged incident(s) or violation(s) which is/are the basis for the grievance took place and the

specific section or sections of the Agreement involved. The grievance must be signed and dated by the employee(s) or Union representative, if any. Except as otherwise provided for in this Agreement, the grievance shall be presented at Step One to the employing unit designee. Any ambiguity in written grievances shall be clarified at the first grievance meeting.

An employee(s) may choose to have a Union representative represent him/her at any step of the Grievance Procedure. If an employee(s) brings a written grievance to the employing unit's attention without first having notified the Union, the employing unit to which such grievance is brought shall promptly notify the Union and no further discussion shall be had on the matter until a Union representative has been given an opportunity to be present.

Individual employees or groups of employees shall have the right to present grievances through Step Two of the Grievance Procedure, provided that a Union representative has been afforded the opportunity to be present at any discussions, and that any settlement reached is not inconsistent with the provisions of this Agreement.

If the grievance is filed with Union representation, the Employer will provide copies of written decisions to the employee and the Union. If the grievance is filed without Union representation, the employee will be given an opportunity either to release written decisions to the Union or to assert the confidentiality of the decision under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA").

Step One of the Grievance Procedure may be waived by mutual written agreement. In addition, where the same employing unit representative hears more than one (1) step of a grievance, those steps shall be consolidated.

If the Employer requests that an aggrieved employee be present in any step of the Grievance Procedure, he/she will be required to do so, except in extenuating circumstances.

For Grievances Steps, see GEU article 26.II. For Time limits on appeals, see GEU article 26.III

## **FINANCIAL AID AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

### **Department**

Every year the department is able to provide support for graduate students traveling to conferences to present papers. Amounts vary year-to-year depending on the budget.

Graduate students must apply to the chair of the department at least a month before departure.

Receipt of externally funded fellowships by students who have written their own grant applications that are worth at least \$20,000 (direct costs) make the students eligible for in-state tuition rate. The in-state tuition rate applies only to the semesters during which students are supported by the fellowship. This policy applies only to grants funded through a competitive process by a US institution/agency/foundation. Funds obtained through non-competitive processes (e.g., need-based fellowships) or from international sources do not qualify students for in-state tuition rates. For more information contact Melissa Del Rio ([mdelrio@msu.edu](mailto:mdelrio@msu.edu)) in Chittenden Hall, 466 W Circle Drive, 2nd floor.

## College

**Dean's Graduate Recruitment Fellowship.** This fellowship carries a six- credit tuition waiver during each of the two semesters it is held, and will give fellows the opportunity to work closely with a faculty member of the College during their first year of tenure. In the second and third years of the fellow's tenure, candidates can expect a half-time teaching assistantship under the requirements outlined above including a nine- credit tuition waiver and will be doing an important part of his or her teaching in the Center for Integrative studies in the Arts and Humanities. Fellows entering an M.A. program must complete the degree within the first two years and be admitted to a Ph.D. to be eligible for third-year support. College application deadline: Mid-February.

**Arts and Letters Research Fellowship Competition.** This competition awards up to six fellowships. This award will permit individuals to work unhindered to conduct research for their dissertation project or recital. During the semester a student holds a Research Fellowship, the candidate must be free from all duties associated with an assistantship. College application deadline: March 1.

## University

**MSU Distinguished Fellowship Program** (for doctoral and MFA students only. This is a recruiting fellowship: current students are not eligible to apply).

**University Distinguished Fellowships and University Enrichments Fellowships:** (for information visit <http://grad.msu.edu/ufellows.htm> )

MSU Graduate School – Funding Opportunities for GS  
<https://grad.msu.edu/funding>

The deadlines are announced by the Graduate School, but is usually during the Fall Semester.

MSU Graduate School Incentive Fellowships

<https://grad.msu.edu/external-funding>

One Incentive Fellowship will be funded during Fall Semester and one during Spring

Semester at \$9,000 each. In addition, \$100 will be awarded for each viable proposal submitted (restrictions apply, contact the graduate School for details or see website).

**Dissertation Fellowship Competition.** The dissertation fellowships are intended to aid College of Arts and Letters graduate students who are in the final stages of writing a doctoral dissertation and who expect to defend the dissertation by the end of Summer session, as well as M.F.A. and D.M.A. students completing their final project, exhibitions and recitals. Those who receive these awards should plan to spend the entire spring working full-time on the dissertation, project, exhibition or recital. Awardees may not hold a graduate assistantship. College application deadline: November 1.

**Martin Luther King, Jr.-Cesar Chavez-Rosa Parks Fellowships** typically provide \$8,000 per academic year with a maximum of \$25,000 over a four-year period for ALANA doctoral students who are U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Interested students can contact the Graduate School, 116 Linton Hall.

**CLACS Tinker fellowships for Graduate Students, and Foreign Language Area Studies fellowships (see CLACS website):**<http://latinamerica.isp.msu.edu/funding/tinker.htm>

[MSU Funding Guide for GS, Graduate Professional and Postdoctoral Fellows](#)

<https://grad.msu.edu/funding-resources>

For identifying funding sources, such as grants, fellowships, scholarships and awards, and lists hundreds out of thousands of funding opportunities.

[MSU Guide for Career Success](#)

Gateway to resources, programs, events, and planning tools for graduate students, postdocs, and faculty mentors: <http://careersuccess.msu.edu/>

**MSU Library Electronic Resources in Grants**

<http://er.lib.msu.edu><http://staff.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/3gradinf.htm>

Includes RSP Funding for Graduate Students, Proposal Writing, and many other resources assembled by MSU Library's Jon Harrison ([harris23@msu.edu](mailto:harris23@msu.edu))

**MSU Office of International Students and Scholars: Scholarship and Grant Information** <http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/students/financial.htm>

MSU Vice President for Research – Resources for Finding Funding

<https://vprgs.msu.edu/>

**Minority Competitive Doctoral Fellowship (MCDF)** Three or four racial/ethnic minority doctoral candidates are nominated by the College of Arts and Letters and its departments and brought to campus to take part in an expense-paid visit. The award provides support for three years. The first year award includes a fellowship stipend

and a six-credit tuition waiver. The assistantship provides in-state fee costs. College application deadline: Mid-January: <http://scholarships.kachinatech.com/scholarships/scholar3.html>

**Equal Opportunity Graduate Fellowships** provide awards based on need. Students interested in applying should contact the Urban Affairs Office, W-114 Owen Hall.

Minority Competitive Doctoral Fellowships provide racial/ethnic minority students \$12,000 plus compensation for out-of-state tuition charges during their first year of study. In their second and third years of study, students receive a half-time graduate assistantship paying at least the same amount. Students must be recommended by their departments, which provide the assistantship in the second and third years. Department nominations must typically be received by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (134 Erickson), by mid-February. Providing funds are available for awards later in the year.

**Affirmative Action Graduate Assistantships** encourage departments to recruit and enroll students by paying the first-year assistantship from a central graduate assistantship fund. The department agrees to continue funding in accordance with unit procedures for evaluating graduate assistants. Students must be recommended by their departments to the assistant dean for Student Affairs, who coordinates recommendations to the Urban Affairs Office.

### **Short-Term Loans from The Council of Graduate Students.**

ASMSU administers a \$75 loan program for The Council of Graduate Students (COGS). To obtain a loan, bring a valid MSU ID and a picture ID to 307 Student Services. The loan is interest free for 30 days. Since the loan fund is a limited resource, money may not always be available. Loans are never available during the last 3 weeks of any term.

The Office of Financial Aids administers a COGS-funded \$250 loan program. Applications for the \$250 loan are available in 259 Student Services, and take 2-3 business days to process. Make sure you write "COGS LOAN" clearly at the top of the application form.

This loan is interest free for up to 60 days.

### **Financial Aid Resources**

The College of Arts and Letters annually awards a number of fellowships (worth between \$2,000 and \$10,000 each). Nominations for these awards are made by the departmental Graduate Committee. The latter also provides small departmental fellowships or tuition grants. Usually these awards are given only to students well along in their graduate work. The procedures and criteria for awarding departmental fellowships are much the same as those for awarding assistantships. The College of Arts and Letters also annually provides the department with a modest sum to be used,

at the discretion of the Graduate Committee for Recruitment Fellowships.

For more information on student employment and loans at MSU, consult the Graduate School website or the "**Financial Aid**" section of the Academic Programs Book.

The Graduate School publishes an annual guide to funding sources such as grants, fellowships, scholarships and awards, called The Funding Guide, which lists a few hundred out of thousands of funding opportunities, and gives information on how to access additional resources on-line and in CDROM databases.

## UNIVERSITY RESOURCES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

For supplemental information, see links to the appropriate documents in the appendix below. These include:

- Academic Programs – current edition
- Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR)
- MSU/GEU Contract
- Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships
- Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities.

### Directory of Frequently Contacted Offices

<b>1. Department</b>	
Department Chairperson	354-6338
Office Supervisor	355-8352
Department Graduate Secretary	355-8351
Graduate Advisor	884-
Undergraduate Advisor	884-6318
Language Coordinator	884-
<b>2. College</b>	
Dean's office	355-4597
CAL Associate Dean, Graduate Affairs	355-5360
<b>3. University Administration</b>	
Admissions and Scholarships-250 Admin. Bldg	355-8332
Enrollment Services-176 Admin. Bldg	355-3330
Telephone Enrollment	432-3000
Billing Statements-142 Admin. Bldg	355-3343
PAN Numbers-Office of the Registrar, 150 Admin.	355-3300
Bldg Payroll (direct deposit) - 350 Admin. Bldg	355-5010
Degree & Certification - 160 Admin. Bldg.	353-3880



Transcripts - 50 Admin. Bldg.	355-5150
Graduate School - 118 Linton Hall	355-0300
<b>4. Student Services</b>	
Financial Aid/Student Loan - 259 Student Services	353-5940
ASMSU/COGS Legal Services - 329 Student Services	353-3716
Council of Graduate Students (COGS)	353-9189
Office of Financial Aid-252 Student Services Bldg	353-5940
Div. of Student Affairs & Services	355-8303
Career Services & Placement Center	355-9510
Counseling Center	355-8270
Department of Married Student Housing	355-9550
Employee Assistance Program	355-4506
<u>Computer Center</u>	
Computing Resource Center	355-4500 ext. 122
Store-305 Computer Center	355-4500 ext. 204
Scoring Office	355-1819
<u>International Center</u>	
English Language Center	353-0800
Director, Office for International Students	353-1720
Office of Study Abroad	353-8920
International Studies, Deans Office	355-2350
<u>Library</u>	
Information Desk	353-8700
Library Hours	355-8981
<u>Student Health Services</u>	
Olin Health Center Information Desk	355-4510
Olin Health Center Appointments	353-4660
Olin Pharmacy	353-9153
Student Insurance Questions, Benefits Administration	353-4434
The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (formerly ORCBS)	
<a href="http://www.ehs.msu.edu">http://www.ehs.msu.edu</a>	

## Resources and Services for Graduate Students

The University provides many services to help students adjust to the rigors and inevitable stresses that go with a rigorous academic life.

### Student Services

Michigan State University provides extensive student personnel services to assist students and enhance the educational experience. The Vice President for Student Affairs and Services has general administrative responsibility for all student personnel matters, through the offices of Coordinated Minority Student Programs, Counseling, Financial Aids,

Intramural Sports, Recreative Services, Placement Services (including Student Employment and the Career Information Center), Student Life, and University Housing Programs.

The Student Life area includes Campus Life Orientation, Health and Alcohol Education, Judicial Affairs, Off-Campus Housing and Commuter Programs, Service Learning, Student Activities, Student and Leadership Development, and Student Withdrawals and Records.

### Michigan State University Library

A self-guided tour is available at the Information Desk. Study cubicles and a few lockers are available on the 4th floor of the West Wing. Ask for a key and a place on the waiting list for a locker at the Library Administrative Services Office, Room 102 West. An escort service is provided to take students safely to their car or dormitory at night. Inquire at the State Walk office, on the west side of the rear entrance area.

You have the right and the responsibility to order books to help build up the library's collection. You may leave order requests in a suggestion box in the entrance area, or contact the Main Library to learn the name and office of the bibliographer who concentrates in your area. You may also request books, off prints of scholarly articles, and copies of doctoral dissertations for your research by applying to Interlibrary Loan (part of the Circulation Services at the center of the main floor, between the two entrances).

### Computer Center

Computing Information Center	353-1800
Mainframe/Host Access Support Services	353-1800
Microcomputer Support Services/Store	353-4599

User Services offers consulting help on canned statistical programs and "helps students help themselves". It refers students elsewhere if User Services cannot offer enough assistance. User Services will help students short of doing the job for them. There is no charge for the consulting service. Graduate student consultants from the Department of Statistics and Probability are available by appointment for about ten hours a week. They consult about design problems, appropriate statistical design, etc. There is no charge for this service at the beginning of the semester. A

number of short courses are offered through User Services, including a basic introduction to the computer, and collection and coding of data.

### Other Computer Facilities

Computer facilities are available on campus, including laboratories Wells Hall-B, and in the Human Ecology and Union Buildings. Policies regarding use of equipment should be obtained from individual facilities.

### Bookstore

The MSU Bookstore is located in the International Center on Shaw Lane. Off-campus bookstores are located in the East Lansing area.

### Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS)

The Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS) serves international students and foreign faculty. OISS is a resource center for information and consultation on matters related to the international student and faculty/scholars. The staff is prepared to help in any of the various areas of concern, including academic problems, immigration questions, social health, employment or financial matters. The office also organizes seminars and workshops on topics of interest to the broad university community. These have included immigration regulations, cross-cultural communication, pre-departure programs for graduating students and various training programs. They also publish a very informative handbook called Welcome to Our Community. It answers questions you may have about living and going to school in our community. A copy of this handbook can be picked up in the OISS. The OISS is located in room 103 in the International Center and can be contacted by phone (353-1720) or email: oiex@msu.edu. Before leaving the country for holidays or vacations, you must stop at OISS to check your immigration status.

### Learning Resources Center, 209 Bessey Hall, 355-2363

This self-paced, individualized learning center offers free assistance to students who want to improve their study skills. Workshops on specific study skills are offered throughout the year.

### Service Learning Center, 26 Student Services Bldg., 353-4400

This volunteer program allows students to learn more about different work environments while providing community service. Staff assists students in choosing a placement that meets their interests.

### The Writing Center, 300 Bessey Hall, 432-3610

This center offers writing consultation to graduate as well as undergraduate students. One on one consultations are best for small papers or projects like vitas, abstracts and cover letters, while peer response writing groups offer help developing drafts of larger projects such as research and conference papers, and even theses and dissertations. The center also has a library with books on preparing resumes, vitas and cover letters, and examples of all of the above. Call to make an appointment, or

email [grammar@msu.edu](mailto:grammar@msu.edu) for grammatical questions. You can also see their web site at <http://writing.msu.edu/> more information.

#### Career Development & Placement Services, 113 Student Services, 355- 9510

This office assists students in career advising and seeking employment upon graduation. Their office is located in 113 Student Services Building and can be contacted at 355-9510. Their staff does workshops, classes and individual advising on topics such as how to interview successfully and steps to creating a well-written resume. You may also interview for internships or full-time employment through the Career Placement office. More information can be found in 113 Student Services Building. This is also where you will initiate your Placement File.

The Career Information Center, in room 6 Student Services Bldg (353- 6474), provides up-to-date information on career possibilities, self- evaluation tools, and resource material on career choice, planning and strategy.

For more information of Career and Professional Development is available at <http://grad.msu.edu/cpd.htm>

#### Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities, 101 Bessey Hall, 353- 9642

Staff specialists available to respond to mobility, visual, hearing, alternative learner, and other such populations to enable their involvement in University activities. Other resources are available to students with special needs. Counseling Center Main Office, 207 Student Service Building, 355- 8270  
Off-Campus Students - 344 Olin Health Center, 355-2310  
Multi-Ethnic Counseling - 207 Student Services Building, 355-8270

Students should feel free to contact the Counseling Center with personal concerns and crises. Professional counseling and psychological services are offered to assist with personal as well as career concerns. All services are confidential. Initial consultations are free of charge; all services are free to students carrying 7 or more credits. In addition to professional counseling, a self- management laboratory and workshops are offered.

#### Olin Health Center, 355-7573

The Student Health Service is located in Olin Health Center. In an emergency, no matter what time of day, go directly to Sparrow Hospital, St. Lawrence or MacLaren Medical Center if possible. Otherwise go to the nearest emergency center.

#### Women's Resource Center, 353-1635

Coordinates contacts relating to concerns of women and advocates women's issues by developing and implementing programs targeted for women faculty staff and students. They sponsor many workshops on campus.

### Intramural Sports Facilities, 355-5250

Intramural Sports & Recreational Services-205 1M Sports West. Students have access to equipment and facilities in the intramural facilities located in the IM- West, IM-East, and IM-Circle. Students must present a current MSU student ID and a picture ID order to be admitted to these facilities and borrow the equipment. Use of most of the facilities is free to currently enrolled students, although there are a few exceptions, such as a small charge for the use of the weight room in the IM-East.

### COGS: Council of Graduate Students

MSU's graduate student major governing group, COGS, has an enormous responsibility serving the MSU graduate community in many different aspects. In addition to the many free and discounted services COGS provides, COGS also has the great task of appointing graduate students to nearly 100 university committees, ranging from the MSU Student Foodbank to the graduate liaison to the Board of Trustees, just to name a few. <http://www.msu.edu/-cogs/>

MSU Student Food Bank: COGS and ASMSU jointly established a Student Food Bank to address the problems of students and their families with financial hardship. The SFB is located at Olin Health Center: <http://foodbank.msu.edu/> Students may visit bi-monthly. For more information, or to volunteer, stop by the office (320 Student Services) or call 353-2898.

### Thesis and Dissertation Copying

Bring the final copy of your document to the COGS office. Copies are 5 cents per page and must be paid in advance. It is copied on 25% rag-bond (the requirement) and takes 2-3 business days for processing.

## **Students/Faculty Organizations at MSU**

**The Council of Graduate Students (COGS)** is the official graduate student organization at Michigan State University. Officers and departmental representatives (one representative per department for the entire University) are voting members. The primary objective is improvement of the academic, social, and economic position of graduate students at MSU. The organization has official delegates to the Graduate Council, the Academic Council and standing committees thereof, and several all- university and presidential committees. Through membership in these and other bodies, COGS participates in decisions on such matters as tuition and fees, the grading system, traffic regulations, academic and extracurricular programs of the university, graduate assistant stipends, improvements in, on and off campus student living conditions, academic freedom and responsibilities, student representation in university government, and the selection of principal administrative officers. Meetings are open to all graduate students. For further information, contact the department for the name of your representative.

**Comunidad Latinoamericana.** Graduate Student Association mainly (but not exclusively) addressed to Hispanic and Latin American Graduate and Undergraduate Students and their families or relatives who live on campus. Their meetings and most activities are held in Spartan Village Community Center. Contact: comunida@msu.edu Web page: <http://lacmsu.wix.com/home>

**Faculty-Professional Women's Association** provides a forum for and support of the various interests of the present and future professional women at Michigan State University. Graduate students are eligible to join the association as non-voting members. The dues for MSU graduate students is about 25% of the full dues. Non-voting members cannot vote in elections or on issues, nor can they hold a regular board position or office. Other than that, they have all the other rights and privileges of regular members. For information contact Etta Abrahams, at 353-3863.

## **Transportation**

### Parking on Campus

If you own a motor vehicle or a bicycle and want to use it on campus, you must register it with the Department of Police and Public Safety, 87 S. Red Cedar Road, between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. To register a vehicle you need the vehicle registration, proof of insurance, driver's license, a copy of your signed appointment form which is given to you by the Graduate Secretary, and, if appropriate, last year's gate card.

If you do not have a graduate assistantship, you may, under special circumstances, qualify for a parking permit. For example, if your vehicle is necessary in performing the duties for a job you hold on campus, you may wish to apply for a parking permit. You will need to go to DPPS and fill out a Special Request form for a parking permit. A member of the staff of DPPS will review your request and if they feel you need a parking permit for campus they will give you the opportunity to buy one. The Department of Police and Public Safety, Parking Division, can be contacted at 355-8440 to answer any further questions.

### Buses

CATA buses serve all parts of the campus and connect with CATA routes serving the Lansing and East Lansing area.

### Bikes

The University maintains bicycle racks throughout the campus. Bikes should be locked to these racks when parked. Bikes are not permitted in campus buildings. Improperly parked bikes are subject to impoundment by the Department of Public Safety. Bicycle registration through the MSU Department of Public Safety or the cities of East Lansing or Lansing is required. A 4-year MSU bike or moped registration may be purchased for \$2.00 from the Department of Public Safety. It will help protect you from theft.

## Publications

### Funding Guide

The Graduate School has produced a Guide for Graduate Students, Graduate Professional Students and Postdoctoral Fellows, to assist students in identifying funding sources such as grants, fellowships, scholarships and awards. Updated annually, the Funding Guide is also available online, and can be accessed through the Graduate School's home page.

### Resource Guide

The Graduate Student Resource Guide is published by the Graduate School, and contains useful information on networking, transportation, housing, and campus and community resources. It is available in 118 Linton Hall.

**Academic Programs** (University catalogs) are the primary sources for university regulations, policies, procedures, costs, and academic program requirements. The most recent edition is available online

**The COGS Graduate Student Handbook** is published annually by the Council of Graduate Students and is available in Room 316 Student Services.

**Spartan Life** is produced by the Office of Student Affairs and Services and is available in Room 101 Student Services.

**Schedule of Courses and Academic Handbook**, published each semester, provides selected updated information on courses, university regulations, policies, procedures, costs, and the academic calendar. It is available prior to enrollment periods.

**The Faculty and Staff Directory** is published by the Office of the Registrar. Copies for personal use may be purchased at the MSU Union Central Store or the MSU Bookstore.

**The Graduate School Guide to the Preparation of Master's Theses And Doctoral Dissertations** describes the final procedures for degree completion and manuscript requirements for your thesis or dissertation. It is available from the Office of the Graduate School, 118 Linton Hall.

**The Graduate Post** is a newsletter published every semester by The Graduate School. It highlights activities in graduate education at MSU and elsewhere, to publish opportunities available for professional enrichment through fellowships, scholarships and study programs, to announce important deadline dates, and announce upcoming colloquia and symposia.

## COGS-NIZANCE

A general information newsletter published at least once a year by the Council of Graduate Student (COGS).

## MSU Today

Online reference made available on Fridays.

## The State News

A free daily newspaper that contains news and a listing of events of interest.

## Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities

This document is published in Spartan Life, and can also be accessed via Michigan State University's Web page at <https://grad.msu.edu/gsrr> It contains University policies.



# APPENDIX 1

## MSU CODE OF TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY

<http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/regulations/selected/code-of-teaching-responsibility>

Satisfaction of teaching responsibilities by instructional staff members (herein referred to as instructors) is essential to the successful functioning of a university. This University conceives these responsibilities to be so important that performance by instructors in meeting the provisions of this Code shall be taken into consideration in determining salary increases, tenure, and promotion. TAs are strongly encouraged to make an appointment with the director of language instruction or the department chair to discuss questions regarding the material in these documents.

**Course content:** Instructors shall be responsible for ensuring that the content of the courses they teach is consistent with the course descriptions approved by the University Committee on Curriculum and the Academic Council. Instructors shall direct class activities toward the fulfillment of course objectives and shall evaluate student performance in a manner consistent with these objectives.

**Course syllabi:** Instructors shall be responsible for distributing a course syllabus (either in print or electronic form) at the beginning of the semester. The syllabus shall minimally include:

- Instructional objectives;
- Instructor contact information and office hours;
- Grading criteria and methods used to determine final course grades;
- Date of the final examination and tentative dates of required assignments, quizzes, and tests, if applicable;
- Attendance policy, if different from the University attendance policy and especially when that attendance policy affects student grades; and
- Required and recommended course materials to be purchased, including textbooks and supplies.

**Student Assessment and Final Grades:** Instructors shall be responsible for informing students, in a timely manner so as to enhance learning, of the grading criteria and methods used to determine grades on individual assignments. Instructors shall be responsible for assessing a student's performance based on announced criteria and on standards of academic achievement. Instructors shall submit final course grades in accordance with University deadlines.

**Testing Documents:** Instructors shall be responsible for returning student answers to quizzes, tests, and examinations with such promptness to enhance the learning experience. Instructors shall retain final examination answers for at least one semester to allow students to review or to retrieve them. All testing questions (whether on quizzes, tests, or mid-semester or final examinations) are an integral part of course materials, and the decision whether to allow students to retain them is left to the discretion of the instructor.

**Term Papers and Comparable Projects:** Instructors shall be responsible for returning student term papers and other comparable projects with sufficient promptness to enhance the learning experience. Term papers and other comparable projects are the property of students who prepare them. Instructors shall retain such unclaimed course work for at least one semester to allow students to retrieve such work. Instructors have a right to retain a copy of student course work for their own files.

**Class Meetings:** Instructors shall be responsible for meeting their classes regularly and at scheduled times. To allow units to take appropriate action, instructors shall notify their units if they are to be absent and have not made suitable arrangements regarding their classes.

**Applicability of the Code of Teaching Responsibility to Student Assistants:** Instructors of courses in which assistants are authorized to perform teaching, grading, or other instructional functions shall be responsible for acquainting such individuals with the provisions of this Code and for monitoring their compliance.

**Instructor Accessibility to Students:** Instructors shall be responsible for being accessible to students outside of class time and therefore shall schedule and keep office hours for student conferences. Office hours should be scheduled at times convenient to both students and instructors with the additional option of mutually convenient prearranged appointments for students whose schedules conflict with announced office hours. Each teaching unit shall determine the minimum number of office hours for instructors in that unit. Instructors who serve as academic advisors also shall be responsible for maintaining appropriate office hours before and during enrollment periods. In addition to office hours, instructor accessibility through e-mail and other means is encouraged.

**Commercialization of Course Notes and Materials:** The University prohibits students from commercializing their notes of lectures and University-provided class materials without the written consent of the instructor. Instructors may allow commercialization by including permission in the course syllabus or other written statement distributed to all students in the class.

## **Hearing Procedures**

Students may register complaints regarding an instructor's failure to comply with the provisions of the Code of Teaching Responsibility directly with that instructor. For more information see:

<https://ombud.msu.edu/Complaint%20and%20Grievance%20Systems.html>

Students may also take complaints directly to teaching units' chief administrators or their designates. If those persons are unable to resolve matters to the student's satisfaction, they are obligated to transmit written complaints to unit committees charged with hearing such complaints. A copy of any complaint transmitted shall be sent to the instructor. A written report of the action or recommendation of such groups will be forwarded to the student and to the instructor, normally within ten working days of the receipt of the complaint.

Complaints coming to the University Ombudsman will be reported, in writing, to chief administrators of the teaching units involved when in the Ombudsman's opinion a hearing appears necessary. It will be the responsibility of chief administrators or their designates to inform the instructor and to refer such unresolved complaints to the unit committees charged with hearing such complaints. A written report of the action or recommendation of such groups will be forwarded to the University Ombudsman, to the student, and to the instructor, normally within ten working days of the receipt of the complaint.

Students wishing to appeal a teaching unit action or recommendation may do so as outlined in Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University, Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities, or Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities. Such complaints must normally be initiated no later than the middle of the semester following the one wherein alleged violation occurred. Exceptions shall be made in cases where the involved instructor or student is absent from the University during the semester following the one wherein alleged violation occurred.

## APPENDIX 2

### DEPARTMENT OF ROMANCE AND CLASSICAL STUDIES CRITERIA FOR TA'S LEVELS 1, 2, 3

**Level 1:** MA student with less than one-year experience as a graduate assistant/ TA.

**Level 2:** MA student with one (1) year (or more) experience as a graduate assistant/TA.

**Level 3:** PhD student with successful completion of doctoral comprehensive exams, as defined by the department in which the student is enrolled, and at least six (6) semesters of experience as a graduate RA/TE at Michigan State University, or equivalent.

The definition of equivalent experience as an RA/TE is left to the discretion of the chairperson of the appointing unit, but it is expected that only experience in research-oriented assignments will count toward the six semesters of experience as an RA. (Consistent with current practice,  $\frac{1}{4}$  time and  $\frac{3}{4}$  time appointments count the same as  $\frac{1}{2}$  time appointments, and Summer Semesters count the same as Fall and Spring Semesters.)

# APPENDIX 3

## GRAD INFO/ GRADPLAN / GRAD AUDIT/ DEGREE AUDIT

Approver Roles:

- **Form Checker** – this is often the graduate secretary(s) in the student's major.
- **Committee** – this is the student's selected committee members.
- **Program Signer** – this is often the student's major department, school or program's chair/director based on the student's 4-digit GradInfo program code.
- **College Signer** – this is a signer representing the major's college dean's office.

### GRADINFO

Only accessible to staff. Graduate Secretary/GPD enter the following info:

- Committee members (for both PhD and Master's students)
- RCR information
- Placement information once student has graduated

GradInfo can be used to retrieve general data on a graduate program (completion statistics, demographics, etc.) GradInfo is the portal through which GradAudit can be accessed

### GRADPLAN

- Student enters the following info:
- Committee members
- Ph.D. degree plan courses
- Tentative dissertation subject
- Subject of comprehensive exam
- Information regarding use of human or animal subjects
- Information about using hazardous substances in research
- Additional notes regarding research (if applicable)
- Language requirement (if applicable)
- Specialization or Certification information (if applicable)
- Additional notes regarding other requirements (if applicable)
- IRB # (if applicable) (Added after plan is official)
- Dissertation title for official transcript (Added after plan is official)

### GRAD AUDIT

Only accessible to staff. Graduate Secretary/GPD enter the following info:

- Completion date of comprehensive exam

- Date defense exam was successfully completed
- Request comp exam extension (if applicable)
- Request program extension (if applicable)
- Approve\Deny language requirement (if applicable)

Graduate School signs off if student has successfully submitted dissertation. If all department requirements are met graduate secretary/GPD signs off on the student's GradPlan.

## **DEGREE AUDIT**

Only accessible to staff. The degree is conferred in Degree Audit (recommended to have more than 1 level of approval) –

- Program-level or Department-level individual enters a conferral decision in Degree Audit.
- College-level individual (optional level) reviews previous entries &/or makes the first entry on a student.

College with FINAL approval-level reviews previous entries &/or makes the first entry on a student.

# APPENDIX 4

## RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

*The attached model plan for RCR training was worked out between the Graduate School and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies, in consultation with the college associate deans for graduate education. It will provide the template for all academic units at MSU, replacing the template developed by the Graduate School and OVPRGS in 2009. As in the past, departments, programs, and/or colleges will be expected to provide their own more specific plans building from this template.*

### MSU Responsible Conduct of Research Plans

Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research is essential in the preparation of future scholars and professionals. An understanding of the issues concerning the conduct of research in an increasingly complex world has become critical in successfully navigating the research landscape. To help prepare Michigan State University graduate students for their future scholarly work, a plan for providing the foundation of responsible conduct has been developed in coordination with the Graduate School, the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies Office, and college associate deans for graduate education. The plan is predicated on the principles that a basic understanding of issues is necessary through didactic training and a periodic reinforcement of the principles through discussion. It is the belief that this plan will provide a foundation for all graduate students as well as others pursuing a career in research and will offer the basic information to meet most, if not all, federal agency granting requirements.

The plan below represents the basic university plan. Each department/program or college will develop a plan that at a minimum incorporates these university-level requirements.

The Graduate School RCR Workshop series may be used to help fulfill both the annual refresher and discussion-based training requirements.

\*Students who are supported by NSF, NIH, or USDA grants may be required to complete additional specific training; they must meet the timeline and content requirements of training for that grant.

\*Students engaged in research involving human subjects or animal use must complete the Michigan State University training modules for those subjects before submitting IRB or IACUC approvals. These modules may be completed as part of

the training requirements below, or in addition to them, depending on the department/program or college plan.

## **All graduate professional, master's and doctoral students**

### **Year 1**

All new graduate and graduate professional students will complete 4 CITI online modules within the first year of enrollment in their program: Completion of this requirement will be tracked in SABA

- Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
- Authorship
- Plagiarism
- Research Misconduct

### **Discussion-Based Training**

All graduate and graduate professional students must complete a minimum of 6 hours of discussion-based training prior to receiving their degrees. These hours can be completed at any point in the graduate program, including during the first 2 years (e.g., as part of a course), or as part of the ongoing training requirement (for doctoral students). Specifics about the number of hours required, the content, and the timing of this training will be defined in the individual department/program or college plan. For master's Plan A and PhD students, completion of this requirement will be recorded by the department in GradInfo as "Initial" training.

### **Master's plan A and doctoral students**

**In addition to 1 and 2 above, master's plan A and doctoral students will complete:  
Year 2**

Within the first 2 years of enrollment in their program, master's plan A and doctoral students will complete 3 additional MSU online training modules, to be selected from the following list. Specific requirements for course selection may be defined in the individual department/program or college plan.

*Completion of this requirement will be tracked in SABA.*

- CITI Collaborative Research
- CITI Conflicts of Interest
- CITI Data Management
- CITI Financial Responsibility
- CITI Mentoring
- CITI Peer Review
- IACUC Tutorial for Animal Care Training (in <http://Train.ORA.msu.edu>)
- Human Research Protection/ IRB Certification (in <http://Train.ORA.msu.edu>)
- Rigor and Reproducibility Course (in production)



In addition to 1, 2 and 3 above, doctoral students will complete:

**Annual Refresher Training**

Starting in year 3, all doctoral students must complete 3 hours of annual refresher training; this can include discussion-based training and online courses beyond the 7 required in basic training. Specifics about the number of hours required, the content, and the timing of this training will be defined in the individual department/program or college plan. Completion of this requirement will be recorded by the department in GradInfo as “Annual” training.