

SECTION II

Graduate Policies and Procedures

UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS PERTINENT TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

The following university publications and brochures contain policies and procedures for graduate study. Graduate students should obtain copies from the sources indicated and become familiar with the contents.

Academic Programs. Current years. (Available in 204 HE)

See especially:

- *Graduate Education*
- *General Information*
- *College of Human Ecology*
- *Research and Services*
- *Appendix A - Financial Aid*

The Graduate School Home Page. (<http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/>)

See links under these headings, especially:

- *Graduate School Special Programs*
- *Graduate Study Resources*
- *Research Facilities*
- *Job Placement*

Spartan Life. (Current copies available from the Office of Student Affairs and Services, and on the web at: <http://www.msu.edu/students/splife/index.htm>)

See especially:

- *Legislative and Judicial Systems*
- *Academic Freedom for Students at MSU*
- *Graduate Rights and Responsibilities*
- *General Student Regulations*
- *Alphabetical Listing of Other Regulations*
 - *Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures*
 - *Code of Teaching Responsibility*

MSU Faculty and Staff Directory & MSU Student Directory. (Current copies available from MSU Bookstore)

- *Academic and Administrative Calendar, current year*
- *Faculty, Staff and Students - Searchable via MSU Home Page (www.msu.edu)*

Formatting Guide: Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations. (Current copy available from the Graduate School or at <http://grad.msu.edu/format.htm>.)

SUMMARY OF SELECTED UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

HED Ph.D. Student Admissions Policies and Procedures

Deadlines:

- Fall admission - January 31, domestic and international
- Spring admission - September 1, domestic and international

Application Materials Needed:

- Completed Application Form
- GRE Scores - Verbal & Quantitative
- Three Letters of Recommendation
- TOEFL Scores (international students)
- Goals Statement
- All Higher Education Transcripts (sent by the registrar of the colleges and universities attended). Academic Programs, 2000-2002, pp. 24-25, 322-323.
- Scholarly Writing Sample

The graduate secretary reviews the application materials, calculates GPA for the last two years of the applicant's undergraduate program and GPA for the completed master's program, and corresponds with the applicant if items are missing. Current admission grade equivalencies are used for international applicants. GPAs and GREs are scored using the college point system to determine if college requirements have been met. The file is then reviewed by the Doctoral Application Review Committee.

Admission decisions are based on a majority vote of the Doctoral Application Review Committee. If consensus cannot be reached, the department chairperson makes a final decision. When awarding assistantships, the chairperson reviews faculty comments concerning departmental needs. The applicant is notified in writing of the decision.

English Language Proficiency for International Graduate Students

The Department of Human Environment and Design's (HED) policy on English language proficiency for international graduate students is outlined below.

Regardless of a student's TOEFL score, all international graduate students (who do not have degrees from U.S. or English-language international educational institutions¹) admitted into the doctoral program in HED must take the English Language Proficiency Test, administered by the English Language Center (ELC) at MSU and must meet the English language requirements as established by MSU. The minimum acceptable TOEFL score is 550 with no subscore below 52; TOEFL computer exam - 213 minimum with no subscore <19.

The ELC test and all English language requirements must be completed prior to the semester in which an international graduate student plans to enroll in program-required or collateral courses. An average score of 80 to 85 with no subscores below 80, or an average score above 85 with no subscores below 78, is required. A student who fails to achieve the required average score of 80, but attains an average score of 75 on the ELC test **may**, with the approval of the Director of the ELC and the student's major professor, be permitted to enroll in one program-required or collateral course per semester, with simultaneous English language study in the ELC until he/she meets all MSU English language requirements. This requirement depends upon a student's individual scores on the ELC test (listening, reading, writing and grammar).

¹ The student must have completed a degree in a U.S. or English language international educational institution in order for this test to be waived. Students having completed non-degree courses are not eligible to waive the ELC test.

Residence

One year of residence on the campus after first enrollment for doctoral degree credit is required to permit the student to work with and under the direction of the faculty, and to engage in independent and cooperative research utilizing university facilities. A year of residence constitutes two consecutive semesters, involving the completion of at least six credits of graduate work each semester.

Transfer Credits

A student planning to include off-campus courses as a part of a degree program must obtain approval from the academic advisor, the department chairperson and the academic dean of the college before enrolling in such a course. (Academic Programs, 2000-02, p. 36)

Academic Standards

A 3.0 cumulative grade-point average in the degree program is the minimum university standard. However, attainment of the minimum grade-point average is in itself an insufficient indicator of potential for success in other aspects of the program and in the field. The guidance committee and academic unit are jointly responsible for evaluating the student's competency (as

indicated by grades in core and other courses, for example, research performance, and development of professional skills) and rate of progress (as indicated by the number of courses taken per semester, for example, and the number of courses for which grades have been deferred). Written evaluations are communicated to the student at least once a year, and a copy of the evaluations are placed in the student's file. A student whose performance does not meet the standards of competence will not be permitted to continue to enroll in the degree program, and appropriate action will be taken by the department or college.

If the student fails to attain the minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 by the end of 15 credits of work for the doctoral program, the student may be withdrawn from the program. The student may not have: 1) more than two grades below 3.0 in major course work, and/or 2) more than three deferred grades (excluding dissertation credits) at any one time in his/her program to continue work towards the degree.

Collateral Courses

A student admitted with deficiencies in his/her academic background may be required to take collateral courses in addition to the prescribed courses of a program. Credits earned in collateral courses do not count toward the minimum credit requirements for a degree nor toward the removal of provisional status where a minimum grade point average is a requisite for regular status. (Academic Programs, 2000-02 p. 27)

The decision as to whether a student should take collateral courses is at the discretion of his/her graduate guidance committee, or the Doctoral Application Review Committee.

Time Limit

For the Doctor of Philosophy degree, the comprehensive examination must be passed within five (5) years and all remaining requirements for the degree must be completed within eight (8) years from the time of a student's first enrollment as a doctoral student. Should the degree requirements not be completed within this eight-year period, the doctoral comprehensive examination must be passed again.

Academic Freedom for Students at MSU/Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities

All graduate students at MSU are expected to obtain and familiarize themselves with the following documents: (1) Academic Freedom for Students at MSU, and (2) Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities, and to conduct themselves in accordance with procedures outlined in them. The documents are printed in annual issues of Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide. Copies are available in the Office of Student Affairs and Services in the Student Services Building or on the web at <http://www.msu.edu/students/splife/>. (Academic Programs, 2000-02, p. 74)

Protection of Scholarship and Grades

The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the university; therefore, no student shall:

- claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own.
- procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.
- complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.
- allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.
- alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.
- fabricate or falsify data or results.

(Spartan Life, <http://www.msu.edu/SpLIFE/index.htm>)

Grievance Procedures

To protect graduate student rights and promote acceptance of responsibilities, an appropriate judicial structure and process has been established for hearing and adjudicating all cases brought by and against graduate students in the following areas: 1) academic rights and responsibilities; 2) professional rights and duties of graduate assistants; 3) professional rights and duties of other graduate students; and 4) university regulations. To determine judiciary procedures to be followed in a grievance, contact the graduate secretary in 204 Human Ecology.

Adjudication necessitated at the department level may be handled informally or, at the request of a party or parties, formally through the Department Grievance Committee. The hearing board is composed of the department chairperson or designee and members of the Graduate Education Committee, as well as a graduate student from each of the three areas of specialization (apparel and textiles, interior design and facilities management, and merchandising management). If the department chairperson is involved in the case, neither the chairperson nor the designee may serve on the hearing board. The judiciary shall notify the Department Advisory Council when it has completed its deliberations.

Note: These grievance procedures comply with Article 4 of Academic Freedom for Students and Article 5 of Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities in Spartan Life. Copies are available in the Office of Student Affairs and Services or at <http://www.msu.edu/students/splife/>.

Anti-Discrimination Policy

Michigan State University is committed to an active policy of non-discrimination on the basis

of race, creed, ethnic origin or sex. All graduate students should familiarize themselves with the university Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures, and conduct themselves accordingly. The policy and procedures are contained in Spartan Life. Copies are available in the Office of Student Affairs and Services or at <http://www.msu.edu/students/splife/>. (Spartan Life, 2001, pp. 93-99)

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available in a number of forms for graduate students admitted to degree programs. There are opportunities for academic staff appointments as graduate assistants for teaching and/or research. Information about forms of financial aid is given in Academic Programs catalog (Academic Programs, 2000-02, p. 46-47). It includes background on graduate assistantships, the Affirmative Action Graduate Financial Assistance Program, scholarships, and fellowships. Information on student loans and student employment is also included. Copies are available in the department and the content is available on the web at <http://grad.msu.edu/funding.htm>.

University Resources Pertinent to Financial Aid

The most current information available regarding financial aid resources and information will be available on the web:

- **MSU Home Page:** <http://www.msu.edu/>
- **The Graduate School:** <http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/#gradstudy>

See these links especially:

Funding Opportunities:

<http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/res.htm#fund>

Graduate Assistantships: <http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/#gradasst.htm>

- **MSU Office of Financial Aid:** <http://www.finaid.msu.edu>
- **The Office of Admissions and Scholarships:**
<http://www.esp.msu.edu/aos/default.asp>
- **Funding Guide for Graduate Students, Graduate Professional Students and Postdoctoral:** (copy available from the Graduate School and also available on the web at <http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/res.htm#FUND>)

- **Spartan Life**, section on Financial Aid (current copies available from Division of Student Affairs and Services and on the web at:
<http://www.VPS.msu.edu/SLIFE/index.htm>)
- **College of Human Ecology:**
<http://www.he.msu.edu>

See this link especially:

Financial Awards and Assistance

The following also offer help:

- **Graduate Student Resource Guide** - 2nd Edition (current copies available from the Graduate School; see the section “Financing Graduate Education”)
- **Graduate Assistantships at MSU** (Office of the Provost)
<http://www.msu.edu/~provost/index.html>
- **Overview of Financial Assistance** (current copies available from the Graduate School)
<http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/funding.htm>

POLICIES FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Credit Loads

Graduate Assistants must be registered each semester in which they hold an assistantship. The maximum and minimum credit load per semester for **graduate assistants** is:

Quarter-time position:	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>6 credits per semester</i>
	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>12 credits per semester</i>
Half-time position:	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>6 credits per semester</i>
	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>12 credits per semester</i>
Three-quarter time position:	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>3 credits per semester</i>
	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>8 credits per semester</i>

No deviation from the minimum requirements is permitted. *However, the minimum registration credits for the last semester of enrollment required of a graduate assistant will be limited to no more than the number of credits the student needs to complete the degree program.* A 3-credit minimum registration is allowed for all types of graduate assistants during summer semester. Any deviation from the maximum requirements must have the written approval of the dean of the college prior to registration. (Academic Programs, 2000-02, pp. 28-30)

Selection and Stipends

Criteria for the selection of new graduate assistants is based on grade point, the ability to serve the department with stipulated skills or subject matter background, the department budget, and personal needs of students. The dollar amounts of stipends are determined by the university. Stipend advancement and promotion are also determined by the university.

Research-funded assistantships are no longer tax exempt.

University Policy on English Testing and Instruction for International TAs

All international graduate teaching assistants (TAs) must meet the university English language requirements. See <http://grad.msu.edu/gradasst/testing.htm>.

- **Basic Policy:** At MSU, international teaching assistants (ITA) who are not native speakers of English are required to demonstrate that they meet a minimum standard of fluency in spoken English before they can be assigned any teaching work that involves oral communication with undergraduate students. TAs may meet this requirement by:
 - a) getting a score of 50 or higher on the Test of Spoken English (TSE), given by the Educational Testing Service, or
 - b) getting a score of 50 or higher on SPEAK, given by the English Language Center (ELC), or
 - c) getting a score of 80 or higher on the English Language Center Test, given by the ELC, or
 - d) getting a score of 50 or higher on the TA Oral interview, given by the ELC.
- **Test of Spoken English:** Any person who signs up and pays a fee to the Educational Testing Service is eligible to take the TSE. The TSE is given monthly on campus and internationally. Provided they pay all fees, students can take the TSE as many times as they wish. Further information about the TSE is available from the Educational Testing Service (<http://etc.org>) or at <http://ployglot.cal.msu.edu/elc>.
- **SPEAK:** Both SPEAK and the TA Oral Interview are given free of charge to eligible students at MSU by the ELC. Students have four opportunities to pass SPEAK or the TA Oral Interview. To be eligible to take SPEAK on campus, students must be regularly admitted and must have proof of TA status or (for those students who are being considered for a teaching assistantship) must submit a SPEAK request form to the ELC signed by their department. SPEAK is offered twice a semester. Students who do not receive a sufficient score on the test in a given semester may retest the following semester.
- **The TA Oral Interview and English 097:** To be eligible to take the TA Oral Interview, students must have completed English 097 (the TA Speaking and Listening Class). To enroll in the class, students must have a SPEAK score of 45 or higher. (In special cases,

students with SPEAK scores of 40 may enroll by permission of the instructor.) English 097 is offered Fall and Spring only. Priority in enrollment is given to students who already have TA appointments. To enroll, eligible students must sign up with the instructor at the TA Program Office (9 International Center) before the first day of class. The class starts Monday of the third week in the semester.

Work load and duties

Graduate assistant's workload expectations are as follows:

- a) 10 hours per week for a quarter-time stipend.
- b) 20 hours per week for a half-time stipend.
- c) 30 hours per week for a three-quarter time stipend.

(Academic Programs, 2000-02, p. 28)

Information on graduate assistantship levels is available in Academic Programs. In general, graduate assistants' duties include both academically challenging pursuits and more routine activities. A balance is planned between the two types of duties over the entire period of responsibility, not weekly. Graduate assistants are assigned to faculty members who direct and evaluate their contributions. The assignments to faculty are made by the department chairperson on the basis of job assignments of faculty, not rank.

Faculty have the responsibility of planning with the student the work that is to be done and of training the student, if necessary. It is the responsibility of the graduate assistant to determine the quality of work expected and the time line of each individual task before it is begun.

The academic year encompasses two appointment periods: August 16 - December 31 and January 1 - May 15. Graduate assistants are expected to check at the beginning and end of each semester with the department chairperson or with the faculty member to whom they are assigned for any special duties connected with the beginning and ending of each semester.

(Academic Programs, 2000-02)

Evaluation

The Graduate Assistant Evaluation forms provide the basis for evaluating graduate assistant performance. Both the graduate assistant and the faculty member independently complete copies of the evaluation form, determining the quality of the graduate assistant's performance. They will then review the separate forms in a joint meeting and, after arriving at consensus, will turn a newly completed and signed form in to the department chairperson.

The Student Instructional Rating System Forms (SIRS) are used to evaluate teaching performance. Graduate teaching assistants must use the SIRS rating report system. The forms are provided by the department and completed forms should be gathered by a class member and turned in to 204 Human Ecology. Results of the evaluation will be shared with the supervising instructor and department chairperson.

Length of Term

Graduate assistants will be allowed to continue on an assistantship for *no more than four (4) years*. Renewal or non-renewal decisions concerning graduate assistantships are made during spring semester of the academic year, and each graduate assistant is advised in writing of their status for the following academic year.

The following conditions are used to determine the renewal of graduate assistantships:

A student's assistantship is renewed, provided:

- a) the department notifies the student of its plans to renew his/her appointment and the student accepts the appointment in writing by the date specified by the department, and
- b) the department has sufficient funds allocated to meet the student's salary at the appropriate assistantship level and the specific assistantship is considered by the department chairperson to be among the most helpful to the department.

A student's assistantship is not renewed, if:

- a) the student has had an assistantship for three years, or
- b) the student's average grade point is below 3.0 and/or the student has not made satisfactory progress toward his/her degree, or
- c) the student's work is considered unsatisfactory by the supervising faculty member, and other faculty and/or the chairperson of the department concur.

Graduate Assistant Maternity and Sick Leave Policy

A graduate assistant who is absent from duties because of pregnancy, illness, or injury shall notify his/her major professor and supervisor as soon as circumstances permit.

Following such notification, the department shall maintain the terms and the stipend of the appointment for a minimum of two months or to the end of the appointment, whichever should expire first, provided the graduate assistant is still enrolled. However, the graduate assistant shall have the right to the assistantship at such time as he/she is able to return to the position within the period of the appointment.