

**Handbook for Graduate Study  
in Plant Pathology  
in the Department of Plant, Soil  
and Microbial Sciences**

**Michigan State University**



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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to acquaint both students and faculty with the operations of the graduate program in Plant Pathology.

The first section of the handbook provides information on departmental procedures, facilities, and services. The second part deals with specific and general policies of the MS and PhD programs for Plant Pathology. Also included are copies of all forms that you will need to file during your graduate program as well as a copy of the University Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities <https://grad.msu.edu/gsrr> document and the bylaws of the Graduate Student Organization, SPORE.

Please take the time to read over the policies outlined in this handbook. Understanding the process now will save you time later. Additional information on Graduate Policy is available in the Bulletin Graduate Student Rights & Responsibilities” available in the Plant Pathology Graduate office or within the text of another useful document “Spartan Life” that is online at <https://studentlife.msu.edu>.

Appeals concerning interpretation of this document may be referred to the CSS Director of Graduate Programs and, ultimately, to the Department Chairperson.

Your major professor plays a central role in planning your graduate education. The relationship between you and your major professor should be founded on mutual respect and an understanding of what constitutes graduate education. Soon after arrival, you should will meet with your major professor to establish program requirements such as including course scheduling, program planning and research. There should be an understanding of project responsibilities, vacation and sick leave, and a tentative timetable for program completion.

## OVERVIEW

The MS and PhD programs in Plant Pathology are designed to facilitate the development of graduate student’s ability to conduct original research and to provide the basic background for a career in plant pathology or related disciplines. By its nature, plant pathology is a multidisciplinary field of study as it is engaged in understanding of the interactions of microbial pathogens, host plants and the environment. The programs in the department are engaged in both understanding the fundamental biology of the host-pathogen interaction as well as using research to develop new approaches to disease management.

It is expected that all graduate students in plant pathology develop and demonstrate skills in independent research through thesis or dissertation research and that they be able to communicate their research findings in oral and written formats. All students are also required to participate in seminars as well as present department seminars on their own research. We also strongly support the attendance of students at

national and regional scientific meetings and to use these meetings as a means to communicate their research and develop networks with colleagues in the discipline.

The department places a high priority on graduate education and attempts to create an intellectual environment conducive to effective learning. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are important, interdependent components of everyday life and are critical to our pursuit of academic excellence. Our aim is to foster a culture where every member of PSM feels valued, supported and inspired to achieve individual and common goals. PSM has a standing Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) with two graduate students as members on a rotating basis. We hope you will consider participating. For statements of DEI values, please access the CANR DEI pages at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/diversity/dei-statement>. Graduate students who have DEI concerns will receive confidential support to address and assist in helping resolve those concerns. Please see <https://www.canr.msu.edu/diversity/resources/>. Michigan State University has implemented a telephone and web reporting Hotline to help maintain adherence to ethical practices. The purpose of the Hotline is to provide an anonymous method to report known or suspected misconduct for Michigan State University related to fiscal matters, conflicts of interest, employment, medical/HIPAA, research, safety, athletics, discrimination/harassment, privacy, retaliation, or any other area of legal, policy, or ethical concern not specifically listed. Please see <https://misconduct.msu.edu/>.

## **Section I**

### **GENERAL PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION**

#### **ADMISSION TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS**

Admission to the PLP masters and doctoral programs is open to students with master's or bachelor's degrees. It is usually desirable, but not mandatory, that a student earn a master's degree before proceeding to a doctoral program.

Students completing a master's degree in Plant Pathology at Michigan State University may apply for a doctoral program in PLP by requesting that the major professor submit a letter of recommendation/commitment to the Graduate Programs Committee. The request requires approval of the department and the College.

All graduate programs in Plant Pathology must include course work, a teaching/extension experience and general presentation skills requirement, written research proposal, research and dissertation, comprehensive examination, seminar, and final oral examination.

Each student working toward a Doctor of Philosophy degree or a Plan A Masters' degree must conduct original research upon which a dissertation or Masters' thesis which makes a significant contribution to knowledge is to be prepared and published.

Applicants with adequate academic backgrounds are admitted as regular status. Students with subject matter deficiencies will be admitted as provisional status and will be changed to regular status when the conditions of provisional admission have been met, e.g., collateral courses have been completed and/or specified grades have been attained.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Completion of the requirements for the Masters' and PhD's degrees is the responsibility of the candidate (student) and the major professor who is assigned to the student through mutual consent of the student and faculty member. The candidate will file and maintain correct records so the progress with his/her major professor and the departmental office.

It is the responsibility of the student to keep his/her file complete and up-to-date. Information in graduate student files is used as a basis for awarding and continuing assistantships and for deciding the recipients of various departmental and university awards. It is, therefore, in the best interest of both the student and the Graduate Committee that these files be as comprehensive and current as possible.

The major responsibility of executing a program of graduate studies is on you as a graduate student. If a Guidance Committee has not yet been appointed, your major professor is the key figure in your program. After your Guidance Committee is formed, your major professor and Guidance committee members are the key figures.

You have the responsibility of maintaining contact with your major professor and/or Guidance Committee. Your major professor cannot be expected to initiate contacts for conferences, discussions, and planning unless it is felt that you are not progressing normally. The major professor is expected to be available for such contacts.

The methods used to maintain contact with the major professor will vary with each individual. It is to your advantage to keep your major professor informed about your actions and plans. Let your major professor know you are around and anxious for various experiences. Frequent short conferences usually are better than one major conference. Remember, the most important person in your graduate program is your major professor who can significantly influence your progress and future.

Further information on graduate advising and mentoring can be found at [https://grad.msu.edu/Resources4Faculty\\_AdvisingMentoring](https://grad.msu.edu/Resources4Faculty_AdvisingMentoring).

### **1. Registration:**

Before registering for classes, confirm your plans with your major professor. Failure to follow the program of study as planned may cause a delay in completing your program. Also, your major professor may have plans for research that could affect your plans for courses.

Pre-registration may be used after your first semester. The dates for pre-registration are announced on the MSU web page. Pre-registration merely reserves a space in the courses you plan to take. Final registration, including payment of fees, must be completed at the announced time (also on the MSU web page).

### **Procedures for registration:**

1. Report to your major professor with your proposed schedule. If you have pre-registered, a copy of your schedule will be available.
2. Proceed as outlined in the instructions for registration on the web.

### **2. Graduate Assistants:**

**Most Plant Pathology** Graduate assistants are appointed as Research Assistants (RA), although some may be appointed as a Teaching Assistant while teaching (TA). Research assistantships are funded by research grants or contracts. Their assigned work is determined in consultation with the principal investigator on the grant (typically the major professor). Teaching assistantships are funded by the department to assist in specific courses. If you have been awarded a TA, you must decide if you want to join the Graduate Employees Union (GEU). At the beginning of the first semester in which you are appointed as a TA, you will be given a union card on which you must indicate your decision to join or not. TA's who elect to join the GEU ("Dues paying" TA's) need to sign the card only once. TA's who elect not to join the GEU ("Fees paying" TAs) sign the card once per year. RA's are not required to sign the card. It is very important to remember that if you are a TA, you must fill out a union card or run the risk of losing your teaching assistantship. A member of the GEU is invited to meet with new students during the PLP new graduate student orientation and can answer questions about the union at that time. Specific information can be found in the GEU contract at the GEU website at <https://www.geuatmsu.org>.

Graduate assistants (both RAs and TAs) may be appointed on 1/4 (10 hours per week), 1/2 (20 hours per week) or 3/4 (30 hours per week) time basis. Assistantship appointments may be for one semester, for one academic year or for one calendar year. The stipend, activities, and enrollment are proportional to the percent of time designated by the assistantship. Assistantships established by use of university or research contract funds are at three levels: Level-1 - Assistants with B.S. (Or equivalent degree) and no graduate experience; Level-2 - Assistants with M.S. (or equivalent degree), and/or one year of graduate experiences; Senior level - Assistants with M.S. (or equivalent degree), two years of graduate experiences, and passed his/her comprehensive exam. An increase in stipend accompanies an increase in level upon recommendation by your major professor. Out-of state tuition is waived for all assistants and in-state tuition is waived for the first nine credits (five credits in summer).

Credit load for graduate assistants varies with the time basis of appointment as follows (doctoral research credits are not limited):

	<u>Minimum Credits</u>	<u>Maximum Credits</u>
Quarter time appointment	6	9
Half-time appointment	6	9
Three-quarter time appointment	3	9
Summer appointment	3	5

The above table shows the minimum and maximum course credits required or permitted to retain an assistantship. A graduate student enrolled in seven or more credits for a semester may use the facilities of the Student Health Service and is eligible for university housing. Graduate assistants are eligible for health service and housing without regard to the number of credits for which they are enrolled. Ph.D. students who have passed the comprehensive exams may enroll for 1 credit and be considered full time. The department will notify the Registrar's Office if the comprehensive exams have been successfully completed.

Research Assistants are responsible to their major professors. Therefore, responsibilities for your assistantship will vary. Enrollment in courses, credit load per semester, training activity, etc. should have prior approval of your major professor before registering. Before you leave on a vacation you should clear your desires and plans with your major professor. All students, whether financially supported or not, should be actively engaged in research, literature reviews, or some other phase of your thesis program even during semester breaks. Keep in mind the fact that your graduate program is a full-time program.

Teaching Assistants are responsible to the instructors of the classes in which the student is assisting. Assignments are made, normally, at least two weeks before the beginning of the semester. As soon as you receive a teaching assignment, you should check with the instructor to learn what is expected of you. There is a University Orientation program offered prior to Fall semester. All TA's are expected to participate once prior to teaching in the department (whether on an RA or a TA). You are expected to be available during the entire semester of your appointment unless released by the Department Chairperson in consultation with the faculty member to whom you are assigned. Fall semester is defined as beginning August 16 and ending December 31; Spring semester, January 1 to May 15, Summer semester, May 16 to August 15. You may very well have to start preparing plans, etc., for the next semester before the end of the current semester. International students are responsible for meeting the University and Department standards for English speaking and understanding.

A student must meet the requirements for Academic Standards and Guidelines for Retention to hold their financial assistance.

### **3. Teaching and Extension Experience:**

The Plant Pathology graduate program requires all graduate students to participate in a meaningful teaching or extension experience and to exhibit proficiency in both writing and general presentation skills as a part of their graduate academic programs. The teaching/extension requirement is to be an experience that is beneficial and relevant to the education of each student.



**Teaching experience** is desirable for many students. Teaching, as well as research and coursework, is an important part of the graduate education process. This experience shall be structured to involve the student as much as possible in the problems and responsibilities of teaching and to help prepare them for future academic positions.

Students may gain teaching experience by participating in the teaching of at least one course at the 1/4 time level of effort (10 hours per week). This would include providing instruction for one laboratory section (preparation, lab lectures, grading).

Students in teaching roles should review information on classroom safety at (<https://edwp.educ.msu.edu/hale-happenings/2015/active-shooter-violence-prevention-workshop-for-msu-graduate-students-postdocs/>).

**Experience in Extension** is another option for students to gain experience in outreach an education. This requires working directly with one of the faculty Extension specialists to develop programmatic materials that can be used in presentations and well as written formats. Completion of three of the following is required to satisfy the Extension requirement.

- Presenting to grower or stakeholder groups: e.g., Field days
- Extension events (diagnostic day, research reporting session, etc.)
- Develop and teach an extension short course
- 4H or FFA event
- School/outreach event
- Presentations/organizing and running an outreach activity at one of the following
  - Fascination of plants
  - Math and Science days/events
  - Grandparents University
- Writing extension materials. For example:
  - Published extension bulletin
  - Published article in extension newsletter
  - Published article in grower magazine
  - Published pathogen profile for APS education site (this could count toward a teaching experience)

#### **4. Assistantships**

Any student who is accepted into the Department with financial support should expect that such support will continue until they have completed their degree. This expectation is, of course, contingent on the student making satisfactory progress towards completing all requirements. Providing financial support for graduate students is the joint responsibility of the faculty with whom the student research is conducted and the department.

By April 15, of each calendar year, the Department Chair will advise each graduate teaching assistant and each major professor will advise research assistants supported

on grants with one or more of the following:

- (A) that the assistantship will be renewed for the following academic year;
- (B) that the assistantship will be renewed provided the assistant is able to meet certain specific conditions;
- (C) that the assistantship will be renewed providing the Department is able to meet certain specified conditions;
- (D) that the assistantship will not be renewed.

If the assistantship is not renewed, the reasons shall be indicated. One condition of renewal is that the student indicates in writing (by April 15 or as indicated in the appointment letter) her/his intentions to return to accept the assistantship for the next fall.

An effort is made within the Department to provide equal opportunity and to impose equal requirements on all graduate students, regardless of the source of support. Thus, all graduate students are required to participate in research (except Plan B masters candidates), academic course work, and teaching as part of their degree requirements.

Financial assistance for graduate study is available to qualified applicants on a competitive basis in the form of various assistantships, traineeships, fellowships, and scholarships.

Department resources/services available to graduate assistants can be found at the beginning of Section IV of this document.

#### **4a. Speak/Interview Guidelines**

1. If a student whose first language is not English plans to serve as a teaching assistant, he/she must pass the SPEAK test. If the student receives a score of less than 50 on SPEAK, he/she has not met the University's minimum standard for serving as an International Teaching Assistant. He/she must wait until the next semester to take SPEAK again. SPEAK is basically used as a screening process. If the SPEAK test is failed, the English Language Center (ELC) prefers that the student take the English Course (10 weeks in Spring/Fall semester) and then take the oral test called INTERVIEW, provided the student has successfully completed ENG 097. Once a student opts to take INTERVIEW, he/she does not go back and take SPEAK again. (first failure)
2. If the student fails SPEAK or INTERVIEW a second time, he/she can wait 3-4 weeks (end of the Spring or Fall semester) and take the test again. However, the student should get further English instruction during the 3-4-week period.
3. If the student fails SPEAK or INTERVIEW a third time, an ad-hoc committee will meet with the student to evaluate the student's speaking ability and design a course of action.

#### **4b. Termination of Appointment**

- A. The assistantship will terminate upon degree completion. A student who wishes to terminate an assistantship prior to that time should notify the assistantship supervisor and department office.
- B. **Substandard Performance:** The department may terminate a graduate assistantship for substandard performance (e.g., grade below 3.0 in more than three courses of three credits or more) or inability to perform expected duties. Substandard performance may be brought to the attention of the department chairperson by the assistantship supervisor or by the normal annual review of assistantship performance. Academic difficulty will result in a review of the student's overall situation by the department.
- C. **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 chairperson or by the student's major professor.
- D. **Budgetary Constraints:** The department may also terminate assistantships for budgetary reasons. Should this be necessary, continuing graduate assistants will be given some priority over new appointees depending on their qualifications to perform the required activities.

#### **4c. Graduate Assistant Leave Policy**

A graduate assistant unable to fulfill the duties of his/her appointment because of illness or injury shall notify an administrator of his/her major unit as soon as circumstances permit. Similarly, a graduate assistant unable to fulfill the duties of her appointment because of pregnancy shall notify the administrator of her major unit as soon as circumstances permit.

During the illness, injury, or pregnancy, the major unit shall adjust (reduce, waive, or reschedule) the graduate assistant's duties as those duties and the assistant's physical circumstances reasonably dictate. If total absence from duties becomes necessary, the major unit shall maintain the stipend of the appointment, provided the graduate assistant is still enrolled, for a period of two months, or to the end of the appointment period or of the semester, whichever should occur first.

The graduate assistant shall have the right to return to the assistantship, within the original terms of the appointment, at such time as he/she is able to reassume the duties of the position.

*Grief Absence Policy (as approved by University Council):*

For master's (Plan A), master's (Plan B) with research responsibilities, and doctoral students, it is the responsibility of the student to: a) notify their advisor/major professor and faculty of the courses in which they are enrolled of the need for a grief absence in a timely manner, but no later than one week from the student's initial knowledge of the situation, b) provide appropriate verification of the grief absence as specified by the advisor/major professor and faculty, and c) complete all missed work as determined in consultation with the advisor/major professor and faculty. It is the responsibility of the advisor/major professor to: a) determine with the student the expected period of absence – it is expected that some bereavement processes may be more extensive than others depending on individual circumstances, b) receive verification of the authenticity of a grief absence request upon the student's return, and c) make appropriate accommodations so that the student is not penalized due to a verified grief absence. If employed as a RA or TA, the graduate student must also notify their employer. Both employer and student will swiftly communicate to determine how the student's responsibilities will be covered during their absence. Graduate teaching assistants (TAs) should refer to the bereavement policy in the MSU GEU CBU Article 18. Students who believe their rights under this policy have been violated should contact the University Ombudsperson.

## **5. Annual Evaluations**

An evaluation of each student's progress will be conducted during the early part of each Spring semester. It is the responsibility of the student to complete an evaluation form and review it with his/her major advisor. The student is evaluated on both the completion of program requirements and the progress made on assistantship and research responsibilities. The evaluation form will be made available to students one month prior to Spring semester. The form must be completed by February 1st, signed by the major advisor, and returned to the PLP Graduate Office by February 1st. If the major professor is not available to review the student's evaluation, the major advisor must appoint a substitute in advance. Each year prior to Fall semester you will be provided an academic update to keep you updated on your academic progress.

All evaluation forms will be reviewed by the Director of Graduate Programs or by the GPC Chairperson if the Director is unavailable. Students will be notified in writing if they are not making normal academic progress. Evaluation forms, programs of study forms, application and admission materials, degree requirement completion forms, lists of honors and recognition, and other relevant student records, will be filed in the student's permanent file in the PLP Graduate Programs Office and a student may access her/his individual records by submitting a written request to the Graduate Programs secretary. Students have the right to challenge the accuracy of their files by writing a letter that is placed in the file.

## **6. Scholarly integrity and RCR Training**

Scholarship in research and teaching is an essential component to the graduate degree, and thus a high level of conduct is expected. Students are expected, among other

things, to respect to colleagues and their work, give proper credit to previous work and ideas, and to honestly propose and report on research. All graduate students are encouraged to participate in programs on the Responsible Conduct of Research sponsored by the Graduate School (for updates on presentations in this program see <https://grad.msu.edu/rcr>). The current plan for RCR training can be obtained through the PLP graduate secretary or your major professor. Documentation of training activities is coordinated by the PLP graduate secretary.

The Graduate School research and scholarly integrity webpage is: <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/definitions> and Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities can be found at: <https://grad.msu.edu/policies-and-procedures>.

Violation of the principles of scholarly integrity can result in disciplinary actions. Disciplinary action for ethical violations can include dismissal from your graduate program.

The University has process for hearing and adjudicating alleged violations. The first step in this process is informal and should begin with the two parties trying to resolve the problem in an appropriate way. If this fails, you should go to the Chairperson of the Department and enlist his/her help in resolving the problem. If all departmental resources to resolve the problem have been exhausted, you can request a formal hearing through the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The Research Integrity Office is an additional source of information: <https://rio.msu.edu/>

### **Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training**

The conduct of research and creative activities by faculty, staff, and students is central to the mission of Michigan State University and is an institutional priority. Integrity in research and creative activities is based not only on sound disciplinary practice but also on a commitment to basic personal values such as fairness, equity, honesty, and respect. The foundation underlying all research is uncompromising honesty in presenting one's own ideas in research proposals, in performing one's research, and in reporting one's data. Misconduct in research, such as falsification and plagiarism, is grounds for termination. The Research Integrity Office is an additional source of information: <http://www.rio.msu.edu>. The Graduate School research integrity webpage is: <http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/>.

The Department of Plant, Soil, and Microbial Sciences requires all students to meet the minimum. These requirements can be found at <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity> and [https://www.canr.msu.edu/psm/uploads/files/RCR\\_Requirement.pdf](https://www.canr.msu.edu/psm/uploads/files/RCR_Requirement.pdf)

Students should be logging into the ABILITY information management system at

<https://ora.msu.edu/train/> to complete their on-line RCR training. This is the system that must be used for proper documentation of training.

MSU requirements for Responsible Conduct of Research as follows:

#### Year 1

All graduate professional students will complete 3 CITI online modules within the first year of enrollment in their program. (<https://grad.msu.edu/rcr>)

- Authorship
- Plagiarism
- Research Misconduct

#### Discussion-Based Training

All graduate professional students must complete a minimum of 6 hours of discussion-based training prior to receiving their degrees. These hours must be completed prior to taking comprehensive examinations.

The following courses count towards 6 hours of discussion-based training:

- CSS 880: Scientific Communication and Professional Development (1 credit)
- ENT 890: Independent Study: Scientific Communication (2 credits)

#### Year 2

3 additional MSU online training modules must be completed within the first 2 years of enrollment. (<https://grad.msu.edu/rcr>) You may choose three from the following list:

- CITI Collaborative Research
- CITI Conflicts of Interest
- CITI Data Management
- CITI Financial Responsibility
- CITI Mentoring

### **7. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training and Relationship Violence & Sexual Misconduct (RVSM) Training:**

All students, faculty, and staff must complete MSU's online DEI and RVSM training. [Visit the Training page](#) from MSU's Office of Regulatory Affairs for FAQs and the link to take the trainings in the Ability system:

Other information is available at <https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/university-wide> and at <https://civilrights.msu.edu>.

### **8. Conflict Resolution**

At times there may be conflicts or confusion about policies that need to be resolved. If so, the first step is to discuss this with the major professor. If a solution to the problem cannot be attained, the student can then discuss the issue with the Department Chair or Graduate Program director to find solutions. Students may also seek other resources on

how to avoid and deal with problems that may arise. For example, see the “Guidelines for Graduate Student advisory and mentoring relationships” at <http://grad.msu.edu/Staff/mentorreport.pdf>.

## **9. Graduate Student Grievance Procedures**

If issues and disputes that relate to violation of student academic rights or an allegation of academic misconduct arise, the Department Chairperson and Graduate Program Director serve as resource persons for these issues. If an informal procedure does not settle the issue(s), the student or other parties may file a formal grievance with the Department Chair and the PLP Graduate Program Committee who form the PLP hearing board. The procedures are described in Section VII: Graduate Student Academic Grievance Hearing Procedures for the Plant Pathology Program

All graduate students and faculty should be familiar with the “Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities” document and the sections that deal with the issues of grievances. The office of the Ombudsperson (<https://ombud.msu.edu/>) is also available to help you resolve issues and disputes.

Michigan State University has implemented a hotline (1-800-763-0764) and web reporting portal (<https://misconduct.msu.edu/>) to help maintain adherence to ethical practices. Both methods are available 24/7/365 and enable one to report known or suspected misconduct at Michigan State University related to fiscal matters, conflicts of interest, employment, medical/HIPAA, research, safety, athletics, discrimination/harassment, privacy, retaliation, or any other area of legal, policy, or ethical concern not specifically listed. One can choose to remain anonymous or provide their name and contact information.

## **10. Student’s Department File**

The Department Office maintains three files for you. The first is your Academic File which contains a copy of your plan of study form (for the MS or PhD), grade reports, copies of seminar abstracts, examination notification and completion forms, a copy of the completed written PhD comprehensive exam, etc. You have the right to review the material in your Academic File. To do so, simply make a request to the Graduate Secretary. The second file is your Personnel File. This contains a copy of your annual progress report and evaluations of your performance as a Teaching Assistant. It also contains renewal notices for the academic year. The third file contains records of your employment. Graduate assistant Appointment forms. You also have the right to review these files. Again, simply make a request to the Graduate Secretary. According to the GEU contract this request must be in writing and you are limited to three viewings a year.

If you believe that there are inaccuracies in your file, you may document this in a letter that will be placed in your file.

## 11. Research Safety Policies and Procedures

In addition to maintaining high scholarly integrity, other research policies must be adhered to. These involve issues of safety and other regulations that must be conformed to.

All graduate students must be familiar with laboratory safety procedures. Each student must complete safety training appropriate to their research through EHS (<https://www.ehs.msu.edu>). The training courses can be accessed at <https://ora.msu.edu/train/>. The types of training will be covered at new student orientation. At a minimum, all students must take the EHS program on Chemical Hygiene and Laboratory Safety and the initial program on Hazardous Waste. Your major professor will indicate if other training is required. Lab specific training will be conducted by the major professor or his/her designee in the laboratory.

Plant pathology research requires the use of microbial pathogens. If there is a need to request an isolate of a pathogen from outside of Michigan, specific USDA/APHIS permits must be acquired by your major professor. Specific information on these permits can be obtained from your major professor or from the Department office. Two biosafety cabinets approved for plant pathogen use are also available for use in the department.

All research with human beings must be reviewed and approved by the University Committee for Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS). This applies to all Masters' and Doctoral research projects, as well as other research you may be involved with. For more information, please see the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) web site at: <https://hrpp.msu.edu/>

Research with non-human vertebrate animals must be reviewed and approved by the All University Committee on Animal Use and Care. For details the please see the IACUC website <https://animalcare.msu.edu/index.html>

Other safety related resources can be found at [www.hr.msu.edu](http://www.hr.msu.edu).

## 12. Readmission:

Graduate students whose enrollment at Michigan State University is interrupted for any reason so that they are not enrolled for three consecutive semesters, including the Summer Sessions, must reapply for admissions. The readmission application form is available from the Registrar's Office ([www.reg.msu.edu](http://www.reg.msu.edu)). Students must submit this form together with official transcripts of all work taken while not enrolled at MSU at least one month prior to the first day of registration for the semester in which the student expects to resume graduate studies.

## 13. Dual Enrollment by Undergraduates (Linked bachelor's-master's degree)

Dual enrollment provides an opportunity for academically talented undergraduate



students to enroll in graduate courses and conduct research towards a graduate degree while completing the last two years of their bachelor's degree(s) programs.

To be considered for dual enrollment, the student must first file an Application for Admission to Graduate Study, as indicated under Application Procedure in this section of the catalog and be admitted into a graduate program. Subsequent to admission to a graduate program, in regular status, the student must complete a Request for Dual Enrollment Status form, available from the Office of the Registrar. A student who is accepted for dual enrollment can be admitted to both the undergraduate and graduate degree program upon reaching junior standing.

Within the first semester of dual enrollment, the student's graduate degree program adviser must be identified, and the appropriate graduate degree guidance committee established. The adviser and committee assist the student in developing a program of study for the graduate degree. Admission to graduate study must be approved before work to apply toward a graduate degree program is undertaken. Credits completed prior to admission to graduate study *cannot* be applied toward a graduate degree program.

A student will be classified as an undergraduate until the minimum number of credits required for a first bachelor's degree is completed. When the student is classified as a graduate student, eligibility begins for graduate assistantships, other forms of graduate student financial aid, or those services and prerogatives normally reserved for graduate students.

A student pays undergraduate tuition up to the total number of credits required for a first bachelor's degree(s) in his/her major(s), at which point graduate tuition is applicable and students are eligible for graduate fellowships and assistantships. If approved by the graduate program, a maximum of nine credits, at the 400-level or higher, from the undergraduate degree program can be applied toward the requirements for the graduate degree program for credits completed after admission to graduate study.

Applicants with adequate academic backgrounds are admitted as regular status. Students with subject matter deficiencies will be admitted as provisional status and will be changed to regular status when the conditions of provisional admission have been met, e.g., collateral courses have been completed and/or specified grades have been attained.

See other details at [Linked bachelor's-master's degrees](#).

#### **14. Exit Interview and Surveys**

Students will complete an in-person exit survey with the PSM department chairperson following their thesis or dissertation defense. This is an informal meeting and provides each graduate student the opportunity to discuss their graduate student experience in

PSM at Michigan State University. Once the defense date is scheduled, the PSM administrative assistant will schedule the meeting with the PSM department chairperson.

A short online exit survey for all students graduating with a Plan A or Plan B masters or with a Doctoral degree was introduced in May 2011. This becomes available to graduate students when they have applied for graduation. will have access to the survey. The survey asks questions about educational experiences in MSU graduate programs, as well as professional plans. The Graduate School uses data from this survey when reviewing graduate programs and to guide decisions about services and initiatives for graduate students.

The identity of all respondents will be kept confidential and only aggregate (group) information will be made available to faculty and administrators. The students will receive an e-mail message from the dean of the graduate school with a link to the survey. However, students do not need to wait for that e-mail message to complete the survey after applying for graduation. It takes 5-10 minutes to complete the online survey. Below are the instructions for completing the survey and they are also available from [exitsurvey@grd.msu.edu](mailto:exitsurvey@grd.msu.edu).

Beginning Spring 2021, graduating master's students will receive their exit survey from MSU's license with 12Twenty, not from [egr.msu.edu](mailto:egr.msu.edu).

- For master's exit surveys, direct questions to [CareerServices@csp.msu.edu](mailto:CareerServices@csp.msu.edu)
- For doctoral exit surveys, direct questions to [ExitSurvey@grd.msu.edu](mailto:ExitSurvey@grd.msu.edu)

## SECTION II

### Program Components/Plan Options

#### I. General Information

##### 1. The Major Professor

The major professor is selected by mutual consent between the student and the tenure system (or approved adjunct) faculty member at the time of admission. Your Major Professor serves as the most important person in your graduate program. The major professor is responsible for your academic program, guidance, training and supervision of your research. The major professor meets regularly with the graduate students to discuss research and academic progress. Much of the research discussion may also come through meetings of the entire laboratory. The major professor is also responsible for providing background on department policies as well as providing research and desk space. The major professor also works with the student in the development of the program of study, the area of research, and in an annual assessment of progress.

If you desire a different major professor for any reason, the change should be requested as early as possible in the graduate training program. Any plans for changing to a different major professor should be discussed with the Department Chairperson, Graduate Program Director, your current major professor and your prospective major professor prior to initiation. Before relations with your major professor are severed, you should be sure that another faculty member will serve in that capacity. Research assistantships are normally associated with specific program grant funds, and this means that they are not transferable from one faculty member to another. The Graduate Director and/or the Graduate Program Committee, on request, will assist students with this transition, but it should not be expected to identify a new major professor.

##### 2. Guidance Committees

Each student's Guidance Committee is selected by the major professor together with the student subject to approval by the Department Chairperson (approval by the College of Ag and Natural Resources or the Graduate School is not needed). The Guidance Committee must be established within the student's first year of residence. Changes in committee members must be reported by CANR form and filed with the original report.

Guidance committee composition differs between the MS and PhD degrees. These are described later in this section. However, in all cases the major professor chairs the committee. The guidance committee also serves as final examination committee. The major professor must be a regular faculty member of the Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences. The committee must be formed within the first two semesters of beginning the program. The chair of the guidance committee shall file a guidance committee report with the department, listing all program requirements. Any changes or amendments to this report will be done with the full consultation of the guidance committee and the student. Any changes in membership on the committee may be

made by the student in concurrence with the major professor and Department Chairperson or by the unit in concurrence with the major professor and graduate student.

Graduate students may continue in the same area of interest through M.S. and Ph.D. programs. In fact, there are some distinct advantages in doing this. Sometimes, however, there is a change in interest between the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees that may make a change in major professor desirable. In such instances, the procedure outline above should be followed.

Functions of the Guidance Committee include: 1) assistance in planning the program of study and research, 2) approve the final program of study (sign and file the Report of the Guidance Committee), 3) participation in comprehensive and final examinations, 4) aid in research; 5) evaluation of progress.

You should work closely with your Graduate Committee. Frequent consultation with all members is essential as is an annual meeting of you with the full committee to discuss progress and future plans. The committee can provide you with valuable aid regarding your selection of courses, planning, conduct and interpretation of research. You will find that frequent consultation with your committee members will return excellent dividends. A written set of minutes should be taken by the student or major professor. A copy of these minutes should go to the full committee and to the student file.

Should the student's major professor leave the university, or become unable to serve, the PSM Department Chairperson and PLP Graduate Program Director will work with the student and the remaining committee members to resolve the situation, perhaps by appointing a new major professor.

## **II. Master of Science Degree Program**

Master of Science degree is offered under two programs, Plan A and Plan B (see also the Plant Pathology Department Section in the Academic Programs Bulletin):

1. Plan A: This consists of coursework, research, writing of a thesis and final examination over coursework (as required by the guidance committee) and the thesis.
2. Plan B: This consists of coursework, an optional research project without thesis, and a final certifying examination based on coursework.

### **Guidance Committee:**

The guidance committee for the MS usually consists of three regular faculty, of which one member may be from outside of the Plant Pathology Program. The major professor must be a tenure system faculty member (or approved adjunct) of the Department. See the current issue of the Graduate Studies section of the Academic programs Bulletin for current University Regulations. In certain cases, and with the approval of the College and the Graduate School, one member of the committee may be from another institution or

may be a non-tenure stream faculty member at MSU.

## **Program of Study**

**M.S. Program of Study.** The M.S. degree obtained under either Plan A (with a thesis) or Plan B (without a thesis) has a minimum requirement of 30 credit hours including thesis or research credits. You must have a minimum of 16 credits of 800-900 level courses, including research (Plan A). A maximum of 9 credits earned elsewhere in a graduate program within the time limit approved by the Guidance Committee are applicable toward the degree. For students originally admitted on a non-degree status, at least 30 credits must be earned after admission to the degree program.

Although 300-level courses are not acceptable for graduate credit, the Guidance Committee may occasionally recommend that they be taken to remove certain academic deficiencies. Required courses not applying to the degree will be designated as collateral. The program of study is recorded on the Report of the Guidance Committee – Masters' Program within one semester of the formation of the Guidance Committee. Changes in the program will be reported by letter and filed with the original report. PLP 899 and PLP 999 cannot be interchanged but limited inter-changes between PLP 899 and PLP 80X are permitted. Students must enroll at least twice in PLP 894 (Seminar in Plant Pathology).

During the MS Degree, the student will meet all department, college and university requirements including:

1. Completing courses in major and related fields as prescribed by a Graduate Committee
2. Fulfilling PLP department required courses
3. Meeting academic standards, including maintaining a 3.00 grade point average.
4. Preparing a thesis (Plan A, MS, only) that is acceptable to the Major Professor, the Guidance Committee, and the Department that is based on ordinal research which makes a significant contribution to knowledge.
5. Passing a final examination in defense of the thesis (Plan A) or course work (Plan B)

**Plan A:** The program of study consists of courses (including transfer credits and collateral courses), the Language requirements (if any), and a tentative thesis topic as agreed to by the Guidance Committee. A maximum of 10 credits in research (PLP 899) are allowed. Students must enroll at least twice in PLP 894 (Seminar in Plant Pathology). An original thesis must be approved by the Guidance Committee.

**Plan B:** The program of study consists entirely of courses (including transfer credits) and the language requirement (if any) as agreed to by the Guidance Committee. A majority of

these courses should be selected in specialized fields of plant science at the 800-level to provide the candidate with advanced training in Plant Pathology and supporting biological and quantitative sciences. At least nine credits of course work approved for graduate credit should be selected from outside the department to provide a broader background in biology as well as in the physical sciences. While no thesis is required under Plan B, research experience is desirable. The way to obtain this experience is to arrange a Special Problems (PLP 80X) course with some faculty member with appropriate interests. In this manner, at least, some exposure to research can be acquired. Two enrollments in seminar courses, PLP 894, is required. The Plan B Masters is considered a terminal degree and is not intended as suitable preparation for the Ph.D. program.

### **Course Credit Requirements:**

For both Plan A and B Masters degree, a minimum of 30 credits beyond the Bachelors degree is required. Of these credits, 16 must be at the 800 or 900 level. For plan A, a minimum of 6 credits of 899 (thesis research) is required.

### **Residency Credits:**

At least 13 credits must be accrued in residency on campus.

### **Courses**

PLP 894 - Seminar in Plant Pathology (minimum of 2 enrollments)

PLP 805 - Principles in Plant Pathology

Two of the following courses:

PLP 885 - Plant Diseases in the Field

PLP 847 - Advanced Mycology or PLB 402 -Biology of Fungi

PLP 884 - Prokaryotic Diseases of Plants

One of the following

PLP 812 - Epidemiology of Plant Diseases

PLP 850 – Physiological Plant Pathology

PLP 881 - Molecular and Biochemical Plant Pathology

### **Program of Study:**

Course work requirements are left to the decision of the Guidance Committee with the approval of the Department Chairperson and the Dean. The program should be filed within the first academic year.

### **Academic Standards:**

The grade point average is only one measure of academic standing in a graduate program. The overall academic standards for graduate study include the grade point average, research, knowledge of field and suitable progress toward completing the

degree. The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources requires a minimum 3.0 grade point average. The accumulation of grades below 3.0 in more than three courses of three or more credits each, or deferred in more than three courses of three or more credits each, or a combination of the above in excess of four courses automatically removes the student from candidacy for the degree. You will receive a warning letter from the Department if your academic performance is unsatisfactory.

To assist in evaluation of progress, each student is required to file an annual progress report each spring semester. Copies of the report should be distributed to your committee members. A committee meeting once a year is recommended. In addition, your advisor will sign your progress report and will provide written comments at that time. A copy of the progress report and evaluation will be kept in your department file. A student whose performance does not meet standards of quality as described above will not be permitted to enroll in the degree program.

MSU grading policy for “Deferred” grades: Except for PLP 899, students who receive a DF (Deferred) grade in course must complete the required work and a grade must be reported within 6 months with the option of a single six-month extension. If the required work is not completed within the time limit, the DF will become U-Unfinished, and the student’s grade will be changed to DF/U under the numerical system. Again, this rule does not apply to graduate thesis or dissertation work

It is a disservice to permit a student to continue toward an advanced degree without demonstration of the necessary qualifications for retention. Judgment regarding retention is made by your major professor and guidance committee. The factors involved in this decision are grades as well as progress in research. Students are provided feedback on progress during the annual evaluation and major professor as well as formal guidance committee meetings. To facilitate a decision, the committee may consult the Department Chairperson. If it is decided that a student lacks such standards, he/she may be asked to withdraw according to the procedures as defined in the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities Document which can be obtained at <https://grad.msu.edu/gsrr>

### **Transfer Credits:**

As many as 9 semester credits of graduate work (excluding thesis/research credits) may be transferred into a 30-credit Masters program from other institutions that are accredited within their respective geographic region upon approval of Dean and Department. Only courses in which a grade of 3.0 or its equivalent (e.g. a grade of “B”) was achieved are acceptable for transfer.

### **Time Limit:**

The time limit for completion of the Masters degree is five calendar years from the date of enrollment in the program. The normal duration of an M.S. program is 2-3 years.

## **Teaching or Extension Experience:**

Each Master's student must gain teaching experience as a TA participating in the teaching of at least one course at the 1/4-time level of effort, or by the development and delivery of material suitable for Extension programming or teaching. Students are expected to participate in the University TA orientation program prior to teaching. Refer to page 8 for more details on this requirement.

## **Seminars:**

In addition to routine attendance of Department and other seminars, MS students are expected to enroll in two seminars courses (PLP 894). The second seminar is given as part of the thesis defense (Plan A) or on the Plan B project.

## **Graduate Thesis Research**

Graduate research for the Plan A: M.S. is related to the research interests of your major professor. A discussion with your major professor will often uncover unanswered problems of immediate interest. From these, the area of research develops. The general area of the research program is determined when the program of study is developed. Details regarding the execution of research are planned and approved in consultation with your major professor and Guidance Committee. Insofar as possible, these plans should be completed prior to commencing the actual research program. However, the nature of the research program may require a stepwise progression to the final program what culminates in the thesis or dissertation. Planning the research program should involve all staff members who may have an active role in conducting the research. Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships can be found at <https://grad.msu.edu>

See page 14 for a discussion of specific policies and other research-related issues.

The procedure for thesis preparation is to develop a draft that meets the approval of your major professor. This approved draft is duplicated by the student and given to committee members. An abstract, not exceeding 150 words, is also prepared. After review and approval (final oral examination) by your Guidance Committee, the final draft is prepared. The formatting guidelines are available from <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/>. These guides should be consulted. They contain information regarding distribution of your thesis, fee and copyrighting.

## **ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS OF THESES**

**Please note:** MSU only accepts electronic theses submitted via ProQuest. The instructions for electronic submissions are available from <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/>.



The MSU library may accept supplementary materials approved by the thesis/dissertation committee chair per their collection criteria. The Graduate School does not review these materials for formatting requirements. Questions about submission of these materials to the MSU library should be directed to the Assistant Director for Digital Information, currently Shawn Nicholson (nichol147@msu.edu).

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.

**Graduation on the semester of the electronic submission is only guaranteed if the document is APPROVED on or before the target date for that semester**

Fall 2021 – December 20, 2021  
Spring 2022 – May 11, 2022  
Summer 2022 – August 24, 2022  
Fall 2022 – December 19, 2022

PLEASE NOTE: If you intend to graduate in the current semester, your document must be accepted and delivered to the publisher, ProQuest, by 5:00 pm on the deadline date. This means that your document has been submitted via the ProQuest website, has been 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 prior to the deadline date and time. **The deadline date is not simply the last date to submit your document to the Graduate School via the ProQuest website. Make sure you are aware of the deadline dates above.**

**University Policy About Dissemination of Graduate Students' Research.**

In keeping with MSU's public mission, the University requires that theses, dissertations and abstracts will become public after the conferral of the degree; embargoes can only be pursued for a limited period (see [1] below). Results that are subject to restrictions for dissemination by funding agencies (see [2] below) cannot be part of any document submitted as a thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School.

**1) Requests for hold/embargo on publication of documents submitted to ProQuest: Hold/embargo on publication of documents submitted to ProQuest:**

Students submitting a thesis/dissertation to ProQuest now can request a hold/embargo of publication by ProQuest by contacting the Graduate School at

[msuetds.approval@grd.msu.edu](mailto:msuetds.approval@grd.msu.edu). In response to the request, the Graduate School will send directly to the student a form that needs to be completed and turned to the Graduate School prior to submission of the document to ProQuest. The form needs to be signed by the student's major professor and by the Associate Dean of the student's college. The request for the hold/embargo may be for six months, one year or two years. Requests for a period longer than six months must include a written justification for the length of the hold/embargo. 2) Graduate students' participating in University Research Organization (URO; <https://uro.egr.msu.edu/>):

2). Graduate students involved in a URO project will receive both written documentation and a verbal explanation of any limitations or implications to their current or future academic progress prior to participating on the project. Students engaging in work for a URO project undergo a 2-step approval process before hiring: a consultation with a representative of the URO's office to explain the restrictions on the project, and an interview with the Graduate School Dean or Dean's designee to discuss the relationship, if any, between their work as graduate students and their participation in the project. Students must be informed that results that are subject to restrictions for dissemination cannot be part of any document submitted as a thesis or dissertation. As part of their degree program, all graduate students must have research options to ensure the generation of appropriate results to fulfill the degree requirements, and to have data for professional development activities that are integral to their graduate education (e.g., presentations at conferences and research seminars).

### **3) Creating an Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) at the time of submission of electronic documents to ProQuest:**

At the time of submission to ProQuest, authors now have the opportunity to create an ORCID that provides researchers with a unique identifier for linking their research outputs and activities. An ORCID:

- Improves recognition of research contributions
- Reduces form-filling (enter data once, re-use it often)
- Works with many institutions, funders, and publishers
- Is a requirement of many journal manuscript submission systems and grant application forms.

To learn more about ORCID go to: <https://vimeo.com/237730655>.

Any student wishing to bypass the M.S. degree and become a Ph.D. candidate shall petition in writing his/her Guidance Committee and the Graduate Program Director for permission to do so. The student shall be given an oral exam by the Guidance Committee to determine his/her academic progress and suitability for entrance into the Ph.D. program. Students (M.S. and Ph.D.) must present the results of their thesis in an announced open seminar upon completion of thesis research.

## **Final Examination and Examination Committee:**

The Guidance Committee plus an additional faculty observer selected by the Graduate Program Director serves as the examination committee for both Plan A and Plan B examinations. Students in Plan A are required to pass an oral examination in defense of the thesis and coursework (as required by guidance committee). The examination should be scheduled no later than the tenth Friday of the semester in which graduation is anticipated. At the discretion of the committee, the examination may be open to members of the academic community. The thesis and the examination must be approved by a majority of the examining committee. For students in Plan B, examination format is decided by the Department and usually covers course work. A majority affirmative vote of the examining committee constitutes a pass. If the student fails the exam, the exam may be re-taken in three months. The exam may be re-taken one time.

All examinations must be scheduled with the department graduate secretary at least two weeks prior to the examination date. A copy of the thesis, previously approved by the major professor, must be distributed to the examining committee no later than two weeks prior to the date of the examination. The department must be notified of the date and place of the examination at least two weeks before the exam. The department chair will appoint a faculty observer for the examination who may participate in the exam but has no vote. The faculty observer notes the fairness and appropriateness of the exam and reports to the Department Chairperson. If you are completing the M.S. degree on Plan B (without thesis), the final oral examination will be principally on subjects covered occurs work. The decision of the Guidance Committee will be recorded for the M.S. degree on the Record of Completion of Requirements for the Master's Degree.

## **Oral Examinations: Suggestions for Preparation**

The following suggestions are offered to assist you in preparing for oral exams (comprehensive or final).

The objectives of the oral examinations are (i) to enable you to learn more about yourself and your abilities, (ii) to guide you toward the goals and high standards demanded of everyone in your proposed profession, and (iii) to measure your progress toward these goals and to determine whether the program is satisfactory.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that preparation for these examinations must be thorough. There are many ways to prepare for this exam. Your major professor and members of your committee have been through the experience and can offer advice on preparation and what to expect. This is true also of some of your fellow graduate students. Through review of course subject matter and synthesis of this information to construct total concepts, you should arrive at the proper level of competence and confidence. At the same time, you will gain new insights and understanding of your major discipline. Remember the committee wants to help you!  
For final examination on your thesis be prepared to review briefly:

1. Reasons for the study.
2. Methods used.
3. Important findings and their significance.
4. Unanswered problems suggested by your research.

### **Final Certification**

The Final Certification form is used to report completion of all requirements for the degree. The form is sent to the departmental office by the Degree Certification Office during the semester you indicate that you will complete the requirements. This indication is made through the website: <https://reg.msu.edu/>, you can fill out the Graduation Application on-line or at the Degree Certification Office, Room 150, Administration Building, early in the final semester.

The graduate secretary verifies your completion of the requirements, completes the form, and returns it to the appropriate office. The Final Certification form lists the following: Guidance Committee members, date of passing final examination, dates language requirement passed, and all courses with grades used for the degree. Thus, it is important that you make certain that all information is placed in your file maintained in the departmental office.

All course credits listed on the Final Certification form are considered as requirements for the degree program. If they are not used, they should not be listed.

Before leaving MSU, you should check with the Degree Certification Office to make certain that your credentials are in order. Their records are used to determine completion of the degree requirements. Discrepancies may delay your degree.

### **III. Doctor of Philosophy Degree Program:**

**Ph.D. Program of Study.** The program of study consists of all courses (including transfer of credits), language requirements (if any), and a tentative thesis topic as approved by the Guidance Committee and the student. Since there is no required minimum of graduate credits for the doctoral program, no courses need be listed as collateral. The courses which will be counted toward the degree will be decided upon by the student and the Guidance Committee. 24 credits are required for graduation; students can enroll for a maximum of 36. Requests for overrides to exceed the maximum of 36 credits of 999 must be directed to the graduate secretary. She will "Request for RNR Override" to the Associate Deans' office, from there they will contact the Office of the Registrar. Should the total number of credits go above 45 the RO will confer with the Graduate School before considering the request for an override. The program of study is recorded on the Report of the Guidance Committee: Doctoral Program within one semester of the formation of the Guidance Committee. The approved program is filed and thereafter considered as a requirement for the degree. Deviations from the outline of courses may be necessary because of changes in areas of interest, course offerings, or conflicts in schedule. Any change in program must be approved by your major professor, members of the committee, the Department Chairperson and the Dean. There is a form for making these changes in the department office.

If a Guidance Committee plans a program essentially different from that indicated by general policy, a statement outlining the reasons for such a decision should be appended to the Guidance Committee Report. This statement is not to be considered a petition for approval or a request for a waiver of requirements. The responsibility for the decision rests with the Guidance Committee and the statement is solely for the permanent record. The program of study must, of course, conform to College or University requirements.

#### **Doctoral Student Program Planning and Final Degree Certification**

All students completing doctoral degrees must use GradPlan.

(<https://login.msu.edu/?App=J3205>).

GradPlan was developed for Ph.D. students to lay out their Ph.D. program of study, record faculty approval, and make notes on all the degree requirements as they are completed. GradPlan will be the only way final degree certification/degree audit will be conducted beginning. GradPlan replaces the Report of the Guidance Committee, Record of Comprehensive Exam, and the Dissertation Final Defense form and the final certification form, the Graduate School will certify the acceptance of each dissertation final format using GradAudit. The Graduate Secretary or other department or college level designee has the final GradAudit sign off. The Office of the Registrar and the departments will access Degree Audit to complete degree certification once a student completes an application for graduation and all degree requirements are met. GradPlan, GradInfo and GradAudit help guides may be found at: <https://gradinfo.msu.edu/help.asp>.

Departments and graduate programs can lay out their own detailed instructions as part of the Guidebooks (a version is available in Word in GradInfo so they can add program specific information).

### **Guidance Committee:**

The Guidance committee shall be formed no later than the second semester of doctoral study, or within two semesters beyond the master's degree or its equivalent. The guidance committee will consist of at least four MSU regular faculty, at least three of whom, including the committee chairperson (major professor), possess an earned doctoral degree, preferably of the same type the student is seeking (for example, Ph.D.). An exception may be made by Dean of the Graduate School to allow a non-tenure stream faculty member to serve on a doctoral student's Guidance committee as one of the four required faculty members or as chairperson of the doctoral student's Guidance Committee. With the approval of the chairperson or director of the department or school, an exception may be granted to allow an Emeritus faculty member to serve as one of the four required faculty members on a doctoral student's Guidance committee; in addition, an Emeritus faculty member may continue to serve as chairperson of a Guidance Committee.

Persons who are not regular MSU faculty members may serve as members of the Guidance Committee providing the number of such persons does not exceed the number of regular faculty on the committee. In consultation with the student, the committee plans the entire program, including examinations, and thereafter supervises it, making modifications as needed until the degree is completed. One or more members may be from outside the department.

The Guidance Committee report includes a statement of the students proposed program, with a tentative dissertation topic. Once designated, the committee has the responsibility to meet periodically with the student to review progress as long as the student remains in good standing. Any changes in membership on the committee may be made by the student in concurrence with the major professor and Department Chairperson or by the unit in concurrence with the major professor and graduate student.

Graduate students may continue in the same area of interest through M.S. and Ph.D. programs. In fact, there are some distinct advantages in doing this. Sometimes, however, there is a change in interest between the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees that may make a change in major professor desirable. In such instances, the procedure outlined above should be followed.

### **Program of Study:**

During the course of study leading to the doctorate, the student will meet all University, College and Department requirements including:

1. Completing courses in major and related fields as prescribed by a Guidance Committee.

2. Completing three credits of seminar (PLP 894)
3. Meeting academic standards, including maintaining a 3.00 grade point Average.
4. Passing doctoral comprehensive examinations covering the major and related fields.
5. Preparing a dissertation that is acceptable to the Major Professor, Guidance Committee and Department and is based on ordinal research which makes a significant contribution to knowledge.
6. Passing a final examination in defense of the dissertation.

### **Course Requirements:**

Courses are as specified by the Major Professor and Guidance Committee. Some programs may require reading knowledge of a foreign language. In addition, all PhD students must follow this list of recommendations:

Doctoral students in Plant Pathology must also fulfill the following requirements.

1. All the following courses:
  - PLP 894 - Seminar in Plant Pathology (minimum of 3 enrollments)
  - PLP 805 - Principles in Plant Pathology
  - PLP 812 - Epidemiology of Plant Diseases
  - PLP 850 – Physiological Plant Pathology
  - PLP 881 - Molecular and Biochemical Plant Pathology
  - PLP 885 - Plant Diseases in the Field
  - PLP 847 - Advanced Mycology or PLB 402 -Biology of Fungi
  - PLP 884 - Prokaryotic Diseases of Plants

### **Seminar Requirement:**

Each Ph.D. student must present three seminars by enrollment in PLP 894.

In addition to meeting course requirements, all graduate students are expected to attend a seminar in Plant Pathology and other seminars as recommended by major professor. Each candidate for the Ph.D. degree is required to present a departmental seminar concerning his/her research prior to defense of the dissertation (this seminar is typically the third enrollment in PLP 894 and is usually presented in the hour preceding the defense and is considered to be part of the final dissertation defense).

**Residency:** One year of residence (made up of two consecutive semesters, involving the completion of at least six credits of graduate work each semester) after first enrollment for the doctoral degree is required to permit the student to work with and under the direction of the faculty.

### **Academic Standards:**

A 3.0 cumulative grade point average is the minimum University standard. Research

credits are not considered in determining the grade point average. Attainment of the minimum GPA, however, is an insufficient indicator of potential for success in other aspects of the program and in the field. The Guidance Committee is responsible for evaluation the student's competency and rate of progress.

To assist in evaluation of progress, each student is required to file an annual progress report each spring semester. Copies of the report should be distributed to your committee members. A committee meeting once a year is recommended. In addition, your advisor will sign your progress report and will provide written comments at that time. A copy of the progress report and evaluation will be kept in your department file. A student whose performance does not meet standards as described above will not be permitted to enroll in the degree program.

In addition, the accumulation of grades below 3.0 in more than three courses of three or more credits or deferred in more than three courses of three or more credits at any given time, or a combination of the above in excess of four courses automatically removes the student from candidacy for the degree. Until the official program of study is filed, all courses on the student's record are considered part of the required program.

MSU grading policy for "Deferred" grades: Except for PLP 999, students who receive a DF (Deferred) grade in course must complete the required work and a grade must be reported within 6 months with the option of a single six-month extension. If the required work is not completed within the time limit, the DF will become U-Unfinished, and the student's grade will be changed to DF/U under the numerical system. Again, this rule does not apply to graduate thesis or dissertation work

You will receive a warning letter from the Department if your academic performance is unsatisfactory.

It is a disservice to permit a student to continue toward an advanced degree without demonstration of the necessary qualifications for retention. Judgment regarding retention is made by your major professor and guidance committee. The factors used in assessing for retention are grades and progress in research. Students are provided feedback on progress during the annual evaluation are major professor as well as formal guidance committee meetings. To facilitate a decision, the committee may consult the Department Chairperson. If it is decided that a student lacks such standards, he/she may be asked to withdraw according to the procedures as defined in the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities Document in the Spartan Life booklet that which can be obtained in the department office or at <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/graduate-student-rights-and-responsibilities>.

### **Time Limits:**

All comprehensive examinations must be passed within five years and all remaining requirements for the degree passed within eight years from the time of a student's first enrollment as a doctoral student. Should the degree requirements not be completed within eight years, all of the doctoral comprehensive examinations must be passed again.



### **Teaching or Extension Experience:**

Each Doctoral student must gain teaching experience as a TA by participating in the teaching of at least one course at the 1/4-time level of effort or by the development and delivery of material suitable for teaching or Extension programming. Students are expected to participate in the University TA orientation program prior to teaching. Refer to page 8 for more details on this requirement.

### **Doctoral Comprehensive Examination:**

The comprehensive exams should be taken after the coursework is substantially completed as defined by the Guidance committee. (This is typically during the fifth semester of enrollment or after as 80% of the course work is complete). Students must be registered during the semester in which the exam is administered. In the case where the exam consists of more than one part, the date that the last portion of the exam is passed is the date on which the student officially passed the comprehensive exam. The comprehensive exam must be completed before an oral defense of the dissertation can be scheduled. The comprehensive exam must be passed within five years and all requirements for the degree with eight years. If the degree requirements are not completed within this eight-year period, the comprehensive exam must be passed again.

The comprehensive exam is required to determine your competency for continuing towards the Ph.D. The comprehensive exam is both written and oral. The written examination questions will be supplied equally by members of the Guidance Committee. The duration of the written exam from each committee member is to be no less than four hours but less than one working day. The exam should be coursework-oriented and will encompass areas indicated in the Report of the Guidance Committee form. The committee will correct and grade the written exam within one week. If the student passes the written portion of the exam, the oral examination will be administered by the same committee within two weeks to three weeks. The oral examination will be approximately three hours in length. A student who fails either the written or oral examination will be given one opportunity to repeat it within three months.

For students in continuous residence, the comprehensive exam should be passed within three years of the M.S. degree; within four years of the B.S. degree if the M.S. degree is waived. If these limits are exceeded, a representative of the Department Chairperson will consult with the student's Guidance Committee to investigate the circumstances. This committee may file a letter justifying the continuation of the student.

If no letter is filed, or a majority of the committee, together with the Department Chairperson's representative, declines to sign the letter, the Chairperson of the Department shall inform the candidate by letter that the facilities of the Department will no longer be available for research or study and the program will be terminated. The comprehensive exam must, in any case, be completed within five years, and all requirements within eight years.

Notice of the examination should be posted by the graduate secretary at least two weeks in advance so that interested faculty may attend. A designee of the Department Chairperson shall be present as an observer at all examinations conducted by the Guidance Committee. The Department Chairperson shall be informed at least two weeks before the exam of its date so that his/her representative can be named in good time. The chairperson or his/her representative may ask for a copy of the dissertation before the exam. The observer and other members of the departmental faculty attending may enter into the examination but they will not enter into the final decision of performance.

Evaluation of your performance will be somewhat subjective. Evaluation will be either pass or fail. To pass the written or oral portion of the exam, there may be no more than one "fail" grade from a committee member.

### **Graduate Dissertation Research**

Graduate research is usually related to the research interests of your major professor. A discussion with your major professor will often uncover unanswered problems of immediate interest. From these, the area of research develops.

The general area of the research program is determined when the program of study is developed. Details regarding the research are planned and approved in consultation with your major professor and Guidance Committee. Insofar as possible, these plans should be completed prior to commencing the actual research program. However, the nature of the research program may require a stepwise progression to the final program that culminates in the dissertation. Planning the research program should involve all staff members who may have an active role in conducting the research. Along these lines, a useful document is "Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships" (<https://grad.msu.edu/msu-guidelines-graduate-student-mentoring-advising>).

See page 14 for a discussion of specific policies and other research-related issues.

### **Credits**

All students must complete a minimum of 24 and no more than 36 credits of doctoral dissertation research (PLP 999)

## **Dissertation and Abstract:**

The MSU Academic Programs Catalog, <https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/>, is the listing of academic program, policies and related information. Course Description is the course listing. Together, they comprise the Michigan State University catalog.

The dissertation must be prepared in accordance with the specifications in The Graduate School Guide to the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations Submissions. The formatting guidelines are available from <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/>. The Electronic Submission to ProQuest website is: [www.etdadmin.com/grad.msu](http://www.etdadmin.com/grad.msu) and follow the directions for submitting your thesis/dissertation to Michigan State University via ProQuest.

An abstract not exceeding 350 words, must be prepared as described in the handbook. After the Guidance committee chairperson indicates that the dissertation is acceptable for examination (no later than the fourth Friday of the semester in which graduation is anticipated), the student may distribute the dissertation and abstract to the Guidance committee. The dissertation must be in final form, but it must not be bound.

After the Guidance committee has reviewed and approved the dissertation and the student has passed the final oral examination in defense of the dissertation, the student must incorporate any agreed-upon changes or corrections before presenting it to the major professor for final review and signature of the bookplate.

Please note: MSU only accepts electronic theses submitted via ProQuest. The instructions for electronic submissions are available from <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/>.

The MSU library may accept supplementary materials approved by the thesis/dissertation committee chair per their collection criteria. The Graduate School does not review these materials for formatting requirements. Questions about submission of these materials to the MSU library should be directed to the Assistant Director for Digital Information, currently Shawn Nicholson ([nicho147@mail.lib.msu.edu](mailto:nicho147@mail.lib.msu.edu)).

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.

Graduation on the semester of the electronic submission is only guaranteed if the document is APPROVED on or before the target date for that semester

Fall 2021 – December 20, 2021

Spring 2022 – May 11, 2022

Summer 2022 – August 24, 2022

Fall 2022 – December 19, 2022

### **University Policy About Dissemination of Graduate Students' Research.**

In keeping with MSU's public mission, the University requires that theses, dissertations and abstracts will become public after the conferral of the degree; embargoes can only be pursued for a limited period (see [1] below). Results that are subject to restrictions for dissemination by funding agencies (see [2] below) cannot be part of any document submitted as a thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School.

#### **1) Requests for hold/embargo on publication of documents submitted to ProQuest: [1] Hold/embargo on publication of documents submitted to ProQuest:**

Students submitting a thesis/dissertation to ProQuest now can request a hold/embargo of publication by ProQuest by contacting the Graduate School at [msuetds.approval@grd.msu.edu](mailto:msuetds.approval@grd.msu.edu). In response to the request, the Graduate School will send directly to the student a form that needs to be completed and turned to the Graduate School prior to submission of the document to ProQuest. The form needs to be signed by the student's major professor and by the Associate Dean of the student's college. The request for the hold/embargo may be for six months, one year or two years. Requests for a period longer than six months must include a written justification for the length of the hold/embargo.

#### **2) Graduate students' participating in University Research Organization (URO; <https://uro.egr.msu.edu/>)**

Graduate students involved in a URO project will receive both written documentation and a verbal explanation of any limitations or implications to their current or future academic progress prior to participating on the project. Students engaging in work for a URO project undergo a 2-step approval process before hiring: a consultation with a representative of the URO's office to explain the restrictions on the project, and an interview with the Graduate School Dean or Dean's designee to discuss the relationship, if any, between their work as graduate students and their participation in the project. Students must be informed that results that are subject to restrictions for dissemination cannot be part of any document submitted as a thesis or dissertation. As part of their degree program, all graduate students must have research options to ensure the generation of appropriate results to fulfill the degree requirements, and to have data for professional development activities that are integral to their graduate education (e.g., presentations at conferences and research seminars).

### **3) Creating an Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID) at the time of submission of electronic documents to ProQuest:**

At the time of submission to ProQuest, authors now have the opportunity to create an ORCID that provides researchers with a unique identifier for linking their research outputs and activities. An ORCID:

- Improves recognition of research contributions
- Reduces form-filling (enter data once, re-use it often)
- Works with many institutions, funders, and publishers
- Is a requirement of many journal manuscript submission systems and grant application forms.

To learn more about ORCID go to: <https://vimeo.com/237730655>

### **Final Oral Examination (Dissertation Defense):**

The final oral examination in defense of the dissertation is conducted by and evaluated by the Guidance Committee. The final oral examination will be primarily in defense of the dissertation, but may include general knowledge as well.

For dissertations, the final oral defense/examination must consist of two parts described in the Graduate Handbook. The first is a presentation that must be open to faculty members and members of the public without a vote. Only dissertation committee members may attend the second part, which is the examination portion of the defense per individual department/program/school's guidelines (see <http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms>).

The final oral examination will be scheduled by your major professor after you have established a time (usually 3 hours) when all members of the examining committee can be present during the entire period. Notice of the examination should be distributed by the graduate secretary at two weeks in advance so that interested faculty may attend. The final examination is given, basically, by the members of your Guidance Committee. A designee of the Department Chairperson shall be present as an observer. The observer and other faculty members of the department who attend may enter into the examination but will not enter into the final decision of performance. To pass, the student must be recommended for the degree by a positive vote by at least three fourths of the voting members of the voting examiners and with not more than one dissenting vote from among the MSU regular faculty members on the committee. The decision of the Guidance Committee will be recorded on the Record of Completion of Requirements for the Doctoral Degree.

The final examination must be scheduled not earlier than two weeks after the dissertation and abstract has been submitted to the Guidance Committee and any appointed examiner, but not later than the ninth Friday of the semester in which graduation is anticipated. The student must be registered during the semester in which the final oral examination is taken.

## **Oral Examinations - Suggestions for Preparation**

The following suggestions are offered to assist you in preparing for oral exams (comprehensive or final).

The objectives of the oral examinations are (i) to enable you to learn more about yourself and your abilities, (ii) to guide you toward the goals and high standards demanded of everyone in your proposed profession, and (iii) to measure your progress toward these goals and to determine whether the program is satisfactory.

It cannot be emphasized too strongly that preparation for these examinations must be thorough. There are many ways to prepare for this exam. Your major professor and members of your committee have been through the experience and can offer advice on preparation and what to expect. This is true also of some of your fellow graduate students. Through review of course subject matter and synthesis of this information to construct total concepts, you should arrive at the proper level of competence and confidence. At the same time, you will gain new insights and understanding of your major discipline.

Remember the committee wants to help you!

For final examination on your thesis be prepared to review briefly:

1. Reasons for the study.
2. Methods used.
3. Important findings and their significance.
4. Unanswered problems suggested by your research.

### **Final Degree Certification:**

In Spring 2017, "GradPlan" will become the official website for all doctoral student program planning, guidance committee reports and changes, comprehensive and final defense reports, submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School, and the final University degree certification. It provides electronic circulation for checking/approvals and generates automatic email when needed. GradPlan is now open for use at: all students completing doctoral degrees must use GradPlan. For assistance, students may contact the University System Support Help Desk at (517)884-3000 or e-mail [ais311@msu.edu](mailto:ais311@msu.edu).

After students have entered their program plan into GradPlan, the plan is reviewed and approved electronically at several levels via the Forms Tracking Utility. The approval begins at the program level & usually a graduate secretary/coordinator), then committee members, next by the department, and lastly by college personnel.

Discrepancies may delay your degree.

## Examples of other Courses taken by PLP Graduate Students

BMB 801 Molecular Biology

BMB 864 Plant Specialized Metabolism

CSS 451 Biotechnology Applications for Plant Breeding and Genetics

CSS/STT 464 Statistics for Biologists

CSS 480 Soil Fertility and Management

CSS 485 Advanced Physiology of Plant Nutrition

CSS 829 Computational and Applied Plant Breeding

CSS 893 Molecular Resistance Evolution (Patterson)

ENT 477 Pesticides in Pest Management

ENT 479 Organic Pest Management

ENT 802 : Nature and Practice of Science

HRT 819 Advanced Plant Breeding

HRT 841 Foundation in Computational and Plant Sciences

HRT 860 Scientific Writing: Workshop

HRT 892 Plant Breeding and Genetics Seminar

MMG 425 Microbial Ecology

MMG 431 Microbial Genetics

MMG 433 Microbial Genomics

MMG 801 Integrative Microbial Biology

MMG 810 Theories and Practices in Bioinformatics

MMG 833 Microbial Genetics

NSC 810 Biological Science Transmission Electron Microscopy Laboratory

NSC 820 Scanning Electron Microscopy; Energy Dispersive X-ray Microanalysis

NSC 837 Confocal Microscopy

PLB 801 Foundations of Plant Biology

PLB 812 Plant Genomics

PLB 843 Forum in Computational Plant Sciences

PLB 856 Plant Molecular and Omic Biology

PLB 863 Environmental Plant Physiology

PLB/BMB 864 Plant Specialized Metabolism

PLB/BMB 866 Molecular Plant Physiology

**Statistics** (most take STT 464 and 814)

STT 464 Statistics for Biologists  
STT 814 Advanced Statistics for Biologists  
IBIO 896 Population and Community Ecology  
IBIO 898 Pop and Comm Eco Theory Lab  
IBIO 845 Multi-disciplinary research methods for the Study of Evolution  
HRT 841 Foundation in Computational and Plant Sciences R and Python  
CMSE 801 Introduction to Computational Modeling and Data Analysis  
CMSE 802 Methods in Computational Modeling  
CMSE 820 Mathematical Foundations of Data Science  
CMSE 890 Gaps, Errors and Missteps in Statistical Data Analysis  
FW 849 Applied Bayesian Inference Monte Carlo Methods Quant. Biologists  
FOR 875 R Programming for Data Sciences - summer semester  
FOR 859 Gender, Justice, and Environmental Change: Methods and Application



## **MENTORING OF GRADUATE STUDENTS**

The graduate programs in the Plant Pathology Program by the Graduate Programs Committee. The Committee consists of three Department Faculty (one of whom serves as the Chair) and an ex-officio Graduate Programs Director. In addition to admission decisions, this committee implements policies established by the PLP program Faculty, including oversight of academic progress of students and the appropriate mentoring of students by faculty. Toward that end, students and faculty have shared roles as outlined below. Other resources at: <https://grad.msu.edu/msu-guidelines-graduate-student-mentoring-advising>

### **A. Responsibilities of the Major Professor include:**

Advising the student on planning the program of study, including selection of academic courses.

Ensuring that the student receives and understands information about requirements and policies of the graduate program.

Advising the student on selection of a thesis or dissertation topic with realistic prospects for completion within an appropriate time frame.

Conducting written annual evaluations on the student's progress.

Completing and approving the final certification for the degree.

### **B. Responsibilities of the Student's Guidance Committee include:**

To review and approve a student's Program of Study, and to see that the student completes all requirements for the degree.

To meet with the student and review his/her proposed thesis/dissertation research or Plan B research problem.

To approve the student's thesis or dissertation.

To administer the required qualifying and final examinations.

### **C. Responsibilities of the Graduate Student include:**

Learning and adhering to University and academic unit procedures and policies, including those related to use of equipment, space, telephones, office equipment and other policies stated in the STAFF & BUILDING RESOURCES document provided to all new graduate students at the department orientation; Meeting

University and Departmental requirements for degree completion; Forming a guidance committee, in consultation with the student's major professor, that meets University, College and Department requirements and policies.

Following disciplinary and scholarly codes of ethics in coursework, thesis or dissertation research

Practicing uncompromising honesty and integrity according to University and federal guidelines in collecting and maintaining data

Seeking regulatory approval for research where appropriate

Keeping the major professor and guidance committee apprised on a regular basis of the progress toward completion of the thesis or dissertation.

### Summary Timetable for the MS and PhD Degrees\*

DATE	MS	PhD
Before research can be initiated	Complete required safety training programs through EHS; receive approval for use of human subjects or animals, if appropriate	Complete required safety training programs through EHS; receive approval for use of human subjects or animals, if appropriate
Formation of Guidance Committee	Before end of second semester	Before end of second semester
First committee meeting	Before end of second semester	Before end of second semester
Filing graduate program report	Before the end of second semester	By middle of third semester
Comprehensive exam	(none)	Usually by the end of fifth semester of program or when 80% of course work is completed; inform graduate secretary no less than two weeks prior to the exam
Defense	Inform graduate secretary no less than two weeks prior to the exam	Inform graduate secretary no less than two weeks prior to the exam

In addition to RCR, DEI and RVSM trainings (see page 9)

### SECTION III Forms

Copies of the following forms can be obtained in the Department Office for the Masters' program only. All Doctoral students will fill out the appropriate information in GradPlan. In addition, a set of forms are distributed with this document to all new Plant Pathology graduate students during department orientation.

#### **Requirements – MS Degree**

MS Degree Proposed Academic Program  
SPEAK/INTERVIEW test – International Student

Responsible Conduct of Research training  
Application to Graduate (Form Required)  
MS Degree Record of Program,  
Thesis & Oral Examination

Final Draft of Thesis to Graduate School

[\\*https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Calendar/Academic.aspx](https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Calendar/Academic.aspx)

#### **Due Date**

Prior to completion of second semester  
Prior to teaching (Check schedule with English Testing Office)

In Year 1 and Year 2 (see pg. 9)

See the University Calendar\*

See the University Calendar\*

See the University Calendar\*

#### **Other forms available**

MS Academic Program Plan Change  
MS Graduate Committee Change  
Notice of Student Exam for MS students

See Graduate Secretary

#### **Requirements – PhD Degree**

Report of the Guidance Committee  
(now completed on GradPlan)

SPEAK/INTERVIEW test – International Student

Responsible Conduct of Research training  
Record of Comprehensive Examinations

Record of Dissertation and Oral  
Examination Requirements

Final Draft of Dissertation to Graduate School

Doctoral Degree program Change form (now completed on GradPlan)

[\\*https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Calendar/Academic.aspx](https://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Calendar/Academic.aspx)

#### **Due Date**

Prior to completion of second semester

Prior to teaching (Check schedule with English Testing Office)

In Year 1 and Year 2 (see pg. 9)

Can be taken when 80% or more of course program is completed

See the University Calendar\*

#### **Other forms available for MS & PhD students**

MS and PhD Student Exam form

Notice of Student Exam for Doctoral students

Evaluation of Graduate Teaching Assistants

Change of Graduate Major for Masters' and Doctoral students

Annual Graduate Student Evaluation for Masters' and Doctoral students

Extension Request for Masters' and Doctoral students

Graduate Student Leave of Absence Checklist for Masters' and Doctoral students

## SECTION IV

### GENERAL INFORMATION AND HOW TO OBTAIN IT

Mailboxes and bulletin boards are on the first floor of the Plant Biology Building, and the Center for Integrated Plant Systems and the Plant & Soil Science building. They should be checked daily. The students' residential telephone number and address should be kept current with the graduate secretary. A departmental directory, which lists names, addresses, and telephone numbers of faculty, staff, and students is available to each student early in the fall semester. The State News, published daily, includes a list of on and off campus activities. The graduate secretary is in room 107 CIPS Bldg., she is also a valuable resource person, too.

### GENERAL MSU POLICIES AND INFORMATION

MSU Graduate School: <https://grad.msu.edu/>

Academic Programs <http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Default.asp>

Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR) <https://grad.msu.edu/gsrr>

MSU/GEU Contract <http://geuatmsu.org/>

Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities

<https://grad.msu.edu/policies-and-procedures> or

<https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/researchintegrity/guidelines.pdf>

Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct:

[http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/uwidepolproc/RVSM\\_Policy.htm](http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/uwidepolproc/RVSM_Policy.htm)

Anti-Discrimination Policy (ADP):

[https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/university-wide/ADP\\_policy.html](https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/university-wide/ADP_policy.html)

MSU Guidelines on Authorship <http://vprgs.msu.edu/michigan-state-university-guidelines-authorship> and include information on authorship norms related to the discipline.

MSU's Institutional Data Policy <https://tech.msu.edu/about/guidelines-policies/msu-institutional-data-policy/>

MSU's Procedures Concerning Allegations of Misconduct in Research and Creative Activities

[https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/faculty-handbook/misconduct\\_procedures.html](https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/faculty-handbook/misconduct_procedures.html)

Office of the University Ombudsperson <https://ombud.msu.edu/>

## RESOURCES AND SERVICES IN THE DEPARTMENT

**Secretarial** - Departmental secretarial service is available for typing publication manuscripts and official business of the department and departmental organizations. Graduate students should secure the permission of their major professor before requesting secretarial assistance. All typing uses the current version of WordPerfect or MS Word.

**Copier** - Copiers are located in room 142 Plant Biology and outside room 107 Center for Integrated Plant Systems. Material duplicated must have the approval of the student's major professor and may be charged to the professor's account. A copy service is located in the main library and can be paid in cash or charged to a university account. The Council of Graduate Students (COGS) also offers a photocopy service, payable by either cash or check.

**Photo Board** - A photo board is located outside room 107 Center for Integrated Plant Systems. There is also a photo board outside of A286 PSS Bldg. It serves to identify all departmental personnel. New students are asked to cooperate so their photo can be included.

**Travel** - Financial support for travel of graduate students will be considered in categories of internal and external support. External support is from grants and contracts and will be at the discretion of the principal investigator. Internal support will be from the University General and Experiment Station funds, and requires approval of the Department Chairperson. See the bookkeeper for details about travel advances. All official travel requires a Travel Authorization filled out prior to traveling through EBS.

### Use of University Vehicles

1. Graduate students may use departmental vehicles with permission from their major professor. This assumes that an account # is available to cover costs.
2. Graduate students are not covered by University automobile insurance. (No personal liability).

## LIST OF IMPORTANT PUBLICATIONS AND WEB SITES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The following documents are available in the Department of Plant Pathology Office

1. Description of Courses and Academic programs for Graduate Study - available on the web.
2. Departmental By-laws
3. College By-laws

4. University By-laws
5. Travel Regulations
6. Graduate Assistantships at MSU
7. Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities
8. Constitution for the SPORE

## **ORGANIZATIONS**

**The Student Phytopathological Organization for Research & Education (SPORE)** - The objectives of SPORE are to promote communication to foster an understanding of departmental policies and procedures, and to define the role of graduate students in the department. All graduate students in the Department of Plant Pathology are members of SPORE. The organization is in charge of the election of graduate student members on the departmental committees.

The SPORE also provides academic and social interaction among students and faculty within our Department and with other departments and universities. The club sponsors guest speaker, field trips, social events and other activities.

**Council of Graduate Students (COGS)** - is the official graduate student organization at MSU. The primary objective of COGS 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.

### **Miscellaneous**

**Campus mail service** - designed to expedite the delivery of items pertaining to university business. It is not to be used for personal items.

**Keys and Building Access**- Keys and building access (which is provided through your MSU ID card) is arranged by AnnMarie in A286 Plant & Soil Science building (main office).

**Parking permits** - Information for motor vehicles can be found in the Student Motor Vehicle Regulation No. 23 which is available at the Department of Public Safety. Graduate assistants may obtain parking permits by presenting a copy of their current appointment form. Students on fellowships of \$1,000 or more may also obtain a parking permit.

**Cold and prep rooms** - these rooms are for departmental use. Students should use the room located on their floor. All material should be labeled with name and date.

**Reserving Meeting Rooms in CIPS Building** – The calendar has been moved to MSU's Office 365 Accessible through Outlook or Outlook Web App (OWA). If you work in the CIPS Building and are unable to add events to the calendar please contact Lee Duynslager @ [duynslag@msu.edu](mailto:duynslag@msu.edu).

**Telephones calls** - For on-campus calls there is no charge. Campus phones are charged for each off-campus call. For long distance calls, permission of your major professor should be secured first.

**Financial Aid** - Recent information on scholarships and other financial aid can be obtained in the Financial Aid Office in the Administration Building). Graduate assistants can use the services of the MSU Federal Credit Union to obtain loans to pay for tuition. COGS, in conjunction with the Financial Aids Office, offers loans to graduate students. Information can be obtained in the Financial Aid Office.

The Department does have a small fund (the Paul Taylor fund) to be used to support student travel for research. Disbursement of these funds are at the discretion of the Chairperson.

**E-mail** - E-mail is available to all enrolled student via the MSU.Mail System.

## SECTION V

### DIRECTORY OF FREQUENTLY CONTACTED OFFICES

#### Department

Department Chair: Dr. Brian Horgan-----	353-0103
Director, PLP Graduate Programs: Dr. Ray Hammerschmidt-----	432-0948
Graduate Secretary: Mackenzie Graham-----	353-0111
Student and On-Call Employees: Christiina Donley -----	353-0139

#### College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Dean: Dr Kelly Millenbagh-----	355-0232
Academic and Student Affairs-----	355-0234

#### University Administration

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. Bldg-----	355-3300
Payroll (direct deposit), 350 Admin. Bldg-----	355-5010
Degree & Certification, 160 Admin. Bldg-----	353-3880
Transcripts, 50 Admin. Bldg-----	355-5150

Graduate School, Chittenden Hall, 446 W. Circle Drive-----	355-0300
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#### Student Services

Graduate Record Examination Sign-Up, 207 Student Services-----	355-8385
Financial Aid/Student Loan, 259 Student Services-----	353-5940
ASMSU/COGS Legal Services, 329 Student Services-----	353-3716
Council of Graduate Students (COGS) -----	353-5940
Div. of Student Affairs & Services, 101 Student Services Bldg-----	355-8303
Career Services & Placement Center, 113 Student Services Bldg-----	355-9510
Counseling Center, 207 Student Services Bldg-----	355-8270
Department of Married Student Housing, 1205 S. Harrison Rd-----	355-9550
Employee Assistance Program, 205 Olds Hall-----	355-4506
Owen Hall	
Urban Affairs Assistant Dean, 130 W. Owen-----	353-9506
Minority Competitive Doctoral Fellowships - Affirmative Action/Graduate Financial Asst. Program 112 W Owen-----	353-1803
Computer Center	
Computing Resource Center -----	355-4500 (ext. 122)
Store, 305 Computer Center-----	355-4500 (ext 204)
Scoring Office-----	355-1819
International Center	



English Language Center - 1 International Center-----	353-0800
Director, Office for International Students & Scholars	
103 International Center-----	353-1720
Office of Study Abroad, 109 International Center-----	353-8920
International Studies & Programs, Deans' office 209 International Center-----	355-2350
Library	
Information Desk-----	353-8700
Library Hours-----	355-8981
Student Health Services	
Olin Health Center Information Desk-----	355-4510
Olin Health Center Appointments-----	353-4660
Olin Pharmacy-----	353-9153
Student Insurance Questions	
Benefits Administration, 140 Nisbet Bldg-----	353-4434

## SECTION VI RESOURCES AND SERVICES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The University provides a wide array of services to students to assist them in adjusting to the rigors and inevitable stresses that go with a rigorous academic life.

**MSU Graduate School Resources** <https://grad.msu.edu/>

[Diversity, equity, & inclusion programs](#)

[Events](#)

[Forms](#)

[Funding](#)

[Graduate life & wellness](#)

[Mentoring](#)

[Policy information](#)

[Professional development](#)

[Research integrity](#)

[Traveling scholar opportunities](#)

[University Committee on Graduate Studies](#)

### Other MSU Resources

[OISS](#)

[RCPD](#)

[Student Affairs](#)

[the Libraries](#)

[the Olin Health Center](#)

[Inclusion & Intercultural Initiatives](#)

[the Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation](#)

[the Writing Center](#)

[University Outreach & Engagement](#)

Academic Programs (<https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Default.aspx>)

Vice President for Research (<https://vp.research.msu.edu/>)

Office of Environmental Health and Safety (<https://ehs.msu.edu/>)

Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships

<https://grad.msu.edu/msu-guidelines-graduate-student-mentoring-advising>

Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities

(<https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity>)

Guide to Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations

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

Ombudsperson's Office (<https://ombud.msu.edu/>)

### Student Services

Michigan State University provides extensive student personnel services to assist students and enhance the educational experience. Michigan State University recognizes

that the total development of the individual-personal, social, and physical, as well as intellectual-is of equal importance.

Details can be found at <https://studentaffairs.msu.edu/>

## **Computer Center**

User Services, telephone:

353-1800 Computing Information Center

353-1800 Mainframe/Host Access Support Services

353-4599 Microcomputer Support Services/Store

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 student 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 on an appointment basis about ten hours a week. They consult about design problems, appropriate statistical design, etc. There is no charge for this service. A number of short courses are offered through User Services, including a basic introduction to the computer, and discussion of collection and coding of data, offered at the beginning of the term.

**Programming Service**, telephone 355-4684. This is a professional group that charges professional fees for computer work. They can offer some statistical help although they are limited in this area. They can-do just about any computer programming work. Student is given an estimate of charges which student must approve before job is performed.

## **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. The OISS is located in room 103 in the International Center and can be contacted by phone at 353-1720, email: [oiex@msu.edu](mailto:oiex@msu.edu).

## **Center for Community Engaged Learning**

556 East Circle Drive, Suite 113. 353-4400. A volunteer program that gives students the opportunity to learn more about different work environments while providing community service. Staff are available to assist students in choosing a placement that meets their interests. More information at <https://communityengagedlearning.msu.edu/>.

## **The Writing Center ([the Writing Center](#) )**

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 like research and conference papers, and even theses and dissertations. The center also has a library with books on resumes, vitas and cover letters, and examples of all of the above. Call 432-3610 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://www.msu.edu/user/writing>) for more information. The Center is located at 310 Bessey Hall

## **Career Development & Placement Services**

113 Student Services Bldg. 355-9510 The Career Development and Placement Services 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 at <https://careernetwork.msu.edu/>.

The Career Information Center, located 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.**

## **Office of Handicapper Students**

### **Resource center for Persons with Disabilities**

120 Bessey Hall. 353-9642. Staff specialists available to respond to mobility, visual, hearing, alternative learner, and other handicapper populations to enable their involvement in University activities. Other resources are available to students with special needs. See <https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/> for more information

## **Counseling Center**

207 Student Service Building 355-8270

Students should feel free to contact the Counseling Center for personal concerns and crisis. 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.

More information at <https://caps.msu.edu/>

### **Women’s Student Services**

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. More information at <https://wss.msu.edu/>.

### **Intramural Sports Facilities ..... 355-5250**

Intramural Sports & Recreational Services, 205 IM 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 in 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.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

Michigan State University and the Council of Graduate Students worked together to offer graduate assistants coverage beginning Fall Semester 1994. "Student only" coverage will be automatically provided, at no cost to graduate assistants. Michigan State University will provide a full twelve months of coverage if your appointment is at least nine months. If you wish to enroll your legal spouse and/or dependent children, please contact the MSU Benefits office. Questions may be directed to the MSU Benefits office at 1407 South Harrison Road, Room 140 Nisbet Building at 517-353-4434, ext. 536.

### **COGS**

The Council of Graduate Students offers the following services to MSU graduate and professional students:

#### **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, and hours are 5:30- to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday evenings. Students may visit bi-monthly. For more information, or to volunteer, stop by the office (320 Student Services) or call 353-2898.

## Copy Center

Open to all members of the MSU community, the COGS copy center features the lowest rates available. All 8.5 x 11 copies are 4 cents each. Transparencies are also available for 25 cents.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Parking on Campus

Any vehicle you bring on campus must be registered through the Department of Public Safety. Required student registration of motor vehicles can be done through the Department of Public Safety's Office for Parking and Permits (517) 355-8440 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Generally, students with assistantships are eligible to obtain parking permits which allow parking at several lots throughout the campus. Graduate students without assistantships have permits allowing them to park in commuter lots on the outer edge of the campus. To obtain a parking permit the applicant must present their vehicle registration, student ID, driver license.

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 DPS and fill out a Special Request form for a parking permit. A member of the staff of DPS 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 Public Safety, Parking Division, can be contacted at 355-8440 to answer any further questions.

### Buses

Capital Area Transit Authority buses (CATA) 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 from the Department of Public Safety.

## **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. The Funding Guide, which is updated annually, is also available on the World Wide Web, 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)

These are the primary sources for university regulations, policies, procedures, costs, and academic program requirements.

(<https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Default.aspx>)

### **The COGS Graduate Student Handbook**

This is published annually by the Council of Graduate Students and is available in Room 316 Student Services. <https://cogs.msu.edu/>

### **Spartan Life**

This is produced by the Office of Student Affairs and Services and is available in Room 101 Student Services or on line (<http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/>)

### **The Graduate School Guide to the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations** (<https://grad.msu.edu/etd>).

Describes the final procedures for degree completion and manuscript requirements for your thesis or dissertation. Its table of contents is not copied here. It is available from the Office of the Graduate School, 118 Linton Hall.

### **MSU News Bulletin**

A weekly newspaper geared to University and faculty interest.

### **The State News**

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

## **SECTION VII: Graduate Student Academic Grievance Hearing Procedures For the PLANT PATHOLOGY Program**

Each right of an individual places a reciprocal duty upon others: the duty to permit the individual to exercise the right. The student, as a member of the academic community, has both rights and duties. Within that community, the student's most essential right is the right to learn. The University has a duty to provide for the student those privileges, opportunities, and protections which best promote the learning process in all its aspects. The student also has duties to other members of the academic community, the most important of which is to refrain from interference with those rights of others which are equally essential to the purposes and processes of the University. (GSRR Article 1.2)

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The Michigan State University Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) and the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR) documents establish the rights and responsibilities of MSU students and prescribe procedures to resolve allegations of violations of those rights through formal grievance hearings. In accordance with the SRR and the GSRR, the PLANT PATHOLOGY Program has established the following Hearing Board procedures for adjudicating graduate student academic grievances and complaints. (See GSRR 5.4.)

### **I. JURISDICTION OF THE PLANT PATHOLOGY PROGRAM HEARING BOARD:**

A. The Hearing Board serves as the initial Hearing Board for academic grievance hearings involving graduate students who allege violations of academic rights or seek to contest an allegation of academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards or falsifying admission and academic records). (See GSRR 2.3 and 5.1.1.)

B. Students may not request an academic grievance hearing based on an allegation of incompetent instruction. (See GSRR 2.2.2)

### **II. COMPOSITION OF THE HEARING BOARD:**

A. The Program shall constitute a Hearing Board pool no later than the end of the tenth week of the spring semester according to established Program procedures. Hearing Board members serve one year terms with reappointment possible. The Hearing Board pool should include both faculty and graduate students. (See GSRR 5.1.2 and 5.1.6.)

B. The Chair of the Hearing Board shall be the faculty member with rank who shall vote only in the event of a tie. In addition to the Chair, the Hearing Board shall include an equal number of voting graduate students and faculty. (See GSRR 5.1.2, and 5.1.5.)

C. The Program will train hearing board members about these procedures and



the applicable sections of the GSRR. (See GSRR 5.1.3.)

### III. REFERRAL TO THE HEARING BOARD:

A. After consulting with the instructor and appropriate unit administrator, graduate students who remain dissatisfied with their attempt to resolve an allegation of a violation of student academic rights or an allegation of academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, violations of professional standards or falsifying admission and academic records) may request an academic grievance hearing. When appropriate, the Department Chair, in consultation with the Dean, may waive jurisdiction and refer the request for an initial hearing to the College Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.3.6.2.)

B. At any time in the grievance process, either party may consult with the University Ombudsperson. (See GSRR 5.3.2.)

C. In cases of ambiguous jurisdiction, the Dean of The Graduate School will select the appropriate Hearing Board for cases involving graduate students. (See GSRR 5.3.5.)

D. Generally, the deadline for submitting the written request for a hearing is the middle of the next semester in which the student is enrolled (including Summer). In cases in which a student seeks to contest an allegation of academic misconduct and the student's dean has called for an academic disciplinary hearing, the student has 10 class days to request an academic grievance to contest the allegation. (See GSRR 5.3.6.1 and 5.5.2.2.)

E. If either the student (the complainant) or the respondent (usually, the instructor or an administrator) is absent from the university during that semester, or if other appropriate reasons emerge, the Hearing Board may grant an extension of this deadline. If the university no longer employs the respondent before the grievance hearing commences, the hearing may proceed. (See GSRR 5.4.9.)

F. A written request for an academic grievance hearing must (1) specify the specific bases for the grievance, including the alleged violation(s), (2) identify the individual against whom the grievance is filed (the respondent) and (3) state the desired redress. Anonymous grievances will not be accepted. (See GSRR 5.1 and 5.3.6.)

### IV. PRE-HEARING PROCEDURES

A. After receiving a graduate student's written request for a hearing, the Chair of the Department will promptly refer the grievance to the Chair of the Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.3.2, 5.4.3.)

B. Within 5 class days, the Chair of the Hearing Board will:

1. Forward the request for a hearing to the respondent and ask for a

written response;

2. Send the names of the Hearing Board members to both parties and, to avoid conflicts of interest between the two parties and the Hearing Board members, request written challenges, if any, within 3 class days of this notification. In addition to conflict of interest challenges, either party can challenge two hearing board members without cause (GSRR 5.1.7.c);

3. Rule promptly on any challenges, impanel a Hearing Board and send each party the names of the Hearing Board members. If the Chair of the Hearing Board is the subject of a challenge, the challenge shall be filed with the Dean of the College, or designee (See GSRR 5.1.7.). Decisions by the Hearing Board chair or the College Dean (or designee) on conflict of interest challenges are final;

4. Send the Hearing Board members a copy of the request for a hearing and the respondent's written response, and send all parties a copy of these procedures.

C. Within 5 class days of being established, the Hearing Board shall review the request, and, after considering all requested and submitted information:

1. Accept the request, in full or in part, and promptly schedule a hearing.

2. Reject the request and provide a written explanation to appropriate parties; e.g., lack of jurisdiction. (The student may appeal this decision.)

3. The GSRR allows the hearing board to invite the two parties to meet with the Hearing Board in an informal session to try to resolve the matter. Such a meeting does not preclude a later hearing. However, by the time a grievance is requested all informal methods of conflict resolution should have been exhausted so this option is rarely used. (See GSRR 5.4.6.)

D. If the Hearing Board calls for a hearing, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall promptly negotiate a hearing date, schedule an additional meeting only for the Hearing Board should additional deliberations on the findings become necessary, and request a written response to the grievance from the respondent.

E. At least 5 class days before the scheduled hearing, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall notify the respondent and the complainant in writing of the (1) time, date, and place of the hearing; (2) the names of the parties to the grievance; (3) a copy of the hearing request and the respondent's reply; and (4) the names of the Hearing Board members after any challenges. (See GSRR 5.4.7.)

F. At least 3 class days before the scheduled hearing, the parties must notify

the Chair of the Hearing Board the names of their witnesses and advisor, if any, and request permission for the advisor to have voice at the hearing. The chair may grant or deny this request. The Chair will promptly forward the names given by the complainant to the respondent and visa versa. (See GSRR 5.4.7.1.)

G. The Chair of the Hearing Board may accept written statements from either party's witnesses at least 3 class days before the hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.9.)

H. In unusual circumstances and in lieu of a personal appearance, either party may request permission to submit a written statement to the Hearing Board or request permission to participate in the hearing through an electronic communication channel. Written statements must be submitted to the Hearing Board at least 3 class days before the scheduled hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.9c.)

I. Either party to the grievance hearing may request a postponement of the hearing. The Hearing Board may either grant or deny the request. (See GSRR 5.4.8.)

J. At its discretion, the Hearing Board may set a reasonable time limit for each party to present its case, and the Chair of the Hearing Board must inform the parties of such a time limit in the written notification of the hearing.

K. Hearings are closed unless the student requests an open hearing, which would be open to all members of the MSU community. The Hearing Board may close an open hearing to protect the confidentiality of information or to maintain order. (See GSRR 5.4.10.4.)

L. Members of the Hearing Board are expected to respect the confidentiality of the hearing process. (See GSRR 5.4.10.4.and 5.4.11.)

## V. HEARING PROCEDURES:

A. The Hearing will proceed as follows:

1. Introductory remarks by the Chair of the Hearing Board: The Chair of the Hearing Board introduces hearing panel members, the complainant, the respondent and advisors, if any. The Chair reviews the hearing procedures, including announced time restraints for presentations by each party and the witnesses, and informs the parties if their advisors may have a voice in the hearings and if the proceedings are being recorded. Witnesses shall be excluded from the proceedings except when testifying. The Chair also explains:

- In academic grievance hearings in which a graduate student alleges a violation of academic rights, the student bears the burden of proof.
- In hearings in which a graduate students seeks to contest allegations of academic

misconduct, the instructor bears the burden of proof.

- All Hearing Board decisions must be reached by a majority of the Hearing Board, based on a "clear and convincing evidence." (See GSRR 8.1.18.)

(See GSRR 5.4.10.1 and 8.1.18.) For various other definitions, see GSRR Article 8.)

2. If the complainant fails to appear in person or via an electronic channel at a scheduled hearing, the Hearing Board may either postpone the hearing or dismiss the case for demonstrated cause. (See GSRR 5.4.9a.)

3. If the respondent fails to appear in person or via an electronic channel at a scheduled hearing, the Hearing Board may postpone the hearing or, only in unusual circumstances, hear the case in his or her absence. (See GSRR 5.4.9-b.)

4. If the respondent is absent from the University during the semester of the grievance hearing or no longer employed by the University before the grievance procedure concludes, the hearing process may still proceed. (See GSRR 5.3.6.1.)

5. To assure orderly questioning, the Chair of the Hearing Board will recognize individuals before they speak. All parties have a right to speak without interruption. Each party has a right to question the other party and to rebut any oral or written statements submitted to the Hearing Board. (See GSRR 5.4.10.2.)

6. Presentation by the Complainant: The Chair recognizes the complainant to present without interruption any statements relevant to the complainant's case, including the redress sought. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the complainant by the Hearing Board, the respondent and the respondent's advisor, if any.

7. Presentation by the Complainant's Witnesses: The Chair recognizes the complainant's witnesses, if any, to present, without interruption, any statement directly relevant to the complainant's case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the witnesses by the Hearing Board, the respondent, and the respondent's advisor, if any.

8. Presentation by the Respondent: The Chair recognizes the respondent to present without interruption any statements relevant to the respondent's case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the respondent by the Hearing Board, the complainant, and the complainant's advisor, if any.

9. Presentation by the Respondent's Witnesses: The Chair recognizes the respondent's witnesses, if any, to present, without interruption, and statement directly relevant to the respondent's case. The Chair then recognizes questions directed at the witnesses by the Hearing Board, the complainant, and the complainant's advisor, if any.

10. Rebuttal and Closing Statement by Complainant: The complainant refutes statements by the respondent, the respondent's witnesses and advisor, if any, and presents a final summary statement.

11. Rebuttal and Closing Statement by Respondent: The respondent refutes statements by the complainant, the complainant's witnesses and advisor, if any, and presents a final summary statement.

12. Final questions by the Hearing Board: The Hearing Board asks questions of any of the participants in the hearing.

## VI. POST-HEARING PROCEDURES

### A. Deliberation:

After all evidence has been presented, with full opportunity for explanations, questions and rebuttal, the Chair of the Hearing Board shall excuse all parties to the grievance and convene the Hearing Board to determine its findings in executive session. When possible, deliberations should take place directly following the hearing and/or at the previously scheduled follow-up meeting. (See Section IV.D above.)

### B. Decision:

1. In grievance (non-disciplinary) hearings involving graduate students in which a majority of the Hearing Board finds, based on "clear and convincing evidence," that a violation of the student's academic rights has occurred and that redress is possible, it shall recommend an appropriate remedy to the Department Chair or School Director. Upon receiving the Hearing Board's recommendation, the Department Chair or School Director shall implement an appropriate remedy, in consultation with the Hearing Board, within 3 class days. If the Hearing Board finds that no violation of academic rights has occurred, it shall so inform the Chair or Director. The Chair of the Hearing Board shall promptly forward copies of the final decision to parties and the University Ombudsperson. (See GSRR 5.4.11.)

2. In grievance (non-disciplinary) hearings involving graduate students in which the Hearing Board serves as the initial hearing body to adjudicate an allegation of academic dishonesty and, based on "clear and convincing evidence," the Hearing Board finds for the student, the Hearing Board shall recommend to the Department Chair or School Director that the penalty grade be removed, the Academic Dishonesty Report be removed from the student's records and a "good faith judgment" of the student's academic performance in the course take place. If the Hearing Board finds for the instructor, the penalty grade shall stand and the Academic Dishonesty Report regarding the allegation will remain on file, pending an appeal, if any to the College Hearing Board within 5 class days of the Hearing Board's decision. If an academic disciplinary hearing is pending, and the Hearing Board decides for the instructor, the graduate student's

disciplinary hearing before either the College Hearing Board or the Dean of The Graduate School would promptly follow, pending an appeal, if any, within 5 class days. (See GSRR 5.5.2.2 and 5.4.12.3)

C. Written Report:

The Chair of the Hearing Board shall prepare a written report of the Hearing Board's findings, including recommended redress or sanctions for the complainant, if applicable, and forward a copy of the decision to the appropriate unit administrator within 3 class days of the hearing. The report shall indicate the rationale for the decision and the major elements of evidence, or lack thereof, that support the Hearing Board's decision. The administrator, in consultation with the Hearing Board, shall then implement an appropriate remedy. The report also should inform the parties of the right to appeal within 5 class days following notice of the decision, or 5 class days if an academic disciplinary hearing is pending. The Chair shall forward copies of the Hearing Board's report and the administrator's redress, if applicable, to the parties involved, the responsible administrators, the University Ombudsperson and the Dean of The Graduate School. All recipients must respect the confidentiality of the report and of the hearing board's deliberations resulting in a decision. (See GSRR 5.4.12 and 5.5.2.2)

VII. APPEAL OF THE HEARING BOARD DECISION:

A. Either party may appeal a decision by the Hearing Board to the College Hearing Board for cases involving (1) academic grievances alleging violations of student rights and (2) alleged violations of regulations involving academic misconduct (academic dishonesty, professional standards or falsification of admission and academic records.) (See GSRR 5.4.12.)

B. All appeals must be in writing, signed and submitted to the Chair of the College Hearing Board within 5 class days following notification of the Hearing Board's decision. While under appeal, the original decision of the Hearing Board will be held in abeyance. (See GSRR 5.4.12, 5.4.12.2 and 5.4.12.3.)

C. A request for an appeal of a Hearing Board decision to the College Hearing Board must allege, in sufficient particularity to justify a hearing that the initial Hearing Board failed to follow applicable procedures for adjudicating the hearing or that findings of the Hearing Board were not supported by "clear and convincing evidence." The request also must include the redress sought. Presentation of new evidence normally will be inappropriate. (See GSRR 5.4.12.1, 5.4.12.2 and 5.4.12.4.)

VIII. RECONSIDERATION:

If new evidence should arise, either party to a hearing may request the appropriate Hearing Board to reconsider the case within 30 days upon receipt of the hearing outcome. The written request for reconsideration is to be sent to the Chair of the

Hearing Board, who shall promptly convene the Hearing Board to review the new material and render a decision on a new hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.13.)

IX. FILE COPY:

The Chair of the Department shall file a copy of these procedures with the Office of the Ombudsperson and with the Dean of The Graduate School. (See GSRR 5.4.1.)

All graduate teaching assistants should pursue the following policy with respect to the use of Student Instructional Rating Reports (SIRS):

Student Instructional Rating Reports, Pursuant to University Policy, will be used by all members of the faculty and by Graduate Teaching Assistants. These will be given to the Department Chairperson who will use them to assist him/her in determining tenure and promotion actions, and salary adjustments. The computer summaries of the reports will be placed in each employee's file: for a full professor for a two-year period; for all other faculty members until the rank of professor is achieved. Both the computer summaries and the original reports will be held in the file of each Graduate Teaching Assistant for as long as an assistantship is held. Final disposition of the Student Instructional Rating Reports remains at the discretion of the individual faculty member and teaching assistant concerned. Faculty members and teaching assistants shall have the privilege to submit accompanying statements with the Student Instructional Rating Report. The accompanying statement shall become an integral part of the official record and will be maintained in the files as prescribed above.