

# Human Development and Family Studies Master's Handbook

Revised: June 30, 2021

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## Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>WELCOME.....</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>HDFS FACILITIES .....</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>DEPARTMENT AND STUDENT OBLIGATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS.....</b>                                    | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAMS .....</b>                         | <b>7</b>  |
| Child Development, M.S. ....   | 7         |
| <i>General and Special Education.....</i>  | <i>8</i>  |
| <i>Early Childhood-General and Special Education Endorsement (ZS).....</i>                         | <i>9</i>  |
| Human Development and Family Studies, M.S.....   | 9         |
| Youth Development, M.A. – Online program .....   | 10        |
| <i>Youth Development Specialist Certificate .....</i>  | <i>11</i> |
| <i>Youth Development Management and Evaluation Graduate Certificate.....</i>                       | <i>12</i> |
| Family and Community Services, M.A.-Online program.....  | 13        |
| Guidelines for Master’s Programs .....   | 13        |
| Thesis Guidelines .....  | 18        |
| Master's Orals.....  | 23        |
| Credit Allocations .....   | 24        |
| <b>ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS .....</b>                                   | <b>25</b> |
| <b>RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS.....</b>   | <b>27</b> |
| <b>MAJOR EVENTS IN COMPLETING THE MASTER'S PROGRAM .....</b>                                       | <b>28</b> |
| <b>GRADUATE MENTORING GUIDELINES: STUDENT AND FACULTY PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES .....</b> | <b>31</b> |
| <b>UNIVERSITY POLICIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS.....</b>  | <b>34</b> |
| <b>HDFS FELLOWSHIPS SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS.....</b>   | <b>40</b> |
| <b>TRAVEL FUNDING .....</b>  | <b>42</b> |
| <b>GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS.....</b>  | <b>42</b> |
| <b>ACADEMIC HEARING PROCEDURES FOR THE HDFS DEPARTMENT.....</b>                                    | <b>48</b> |
| <b>OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OMBUDSPERSON .....</b>   | <b>58</b> |
| <b>RESOURCES PROVIDED BY MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY.....</b>  | <b>59</b> |

## WELCOME

Welcome to the Department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) at Michigan State University. The faculty and staff look forward to meeting and working with you. Graduate programs in HDFS are designed to address contemporary needs of individuals and families in context. We have contributed significantly toward defining this University as the State of Michigan's land grant university - the people's university. Today, we are well-known for high quality, applied research throughout Michigan, as well as nationally and internationally.

You will find many different opportunities for learning and professional development in Human Development and Family Studies. You are expected to be involved in and acquaint yourself with our academic, research, and outreach programs, as well as with the exceptional cadre of faculty and staff who are interested in your well-being.

Some of the major resources available to you are described in this handbook. Your academic advisor is your primary resource person, and you should work closely with her/him. Other faculty members, graduate students, and the Graduate Program Directors also are invaluable sources of information.

As a graduate student, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the departmental requirements found within this handbook as well as those of the [MSU Academic Programs](#). On the Academic Programs website, refer to the general information section as well as the section on graduate education to become familiar with rules, regulations, and procedures. **You are responsible for knowing and acting on the information provided.** Take time to become involved in your own program planning. We hope this handbook will be helpful by providing a guide to what you must know and do during your time in our department.

## **HDFS FACILITIES**

**The Department Main Office** is in Room 7, Human Ecology Building (517) 355-7680.

**The HDFS Graduate Office** is in Room 7E, Human Ecology Building (517) 353-5248.

**The Child Development Laboratories** are located in Central School (325 West Grand River Ave., East Lansing, MI 48823) and in Haslett (5750 Academic Way, Haslett, MI 48840) and have a three-fold purpose: (a) to provide a setting for preparing students in child development; (b) to offer exemplary service to children and their families; (c) and to provide a research setting for faculty and graduate students. For more information, contact the Program Supervisor of the Child Development Laboratories (517) 355-1900.

**The Couple and Family Therapy Clinic** is located in The Clinical Center, (804 Service Road (between Hagadorn and Farm Lane)), Suite A233. This is the site of supervised practicum work for Couple and Family Therapy graduate students and provides services to the local community (517) 432-2272.

## DEPARTMENT AND STUDENT OBLIGATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

### ***The Department will provide for the student:***

- ▶ Responsiveness to academic needs and desires.
- ▶ Support and encouragement of creative original study and research.
- ▶ Periodic assessment of opportunities to improve graduate programs.

### ***Students have the following responsibilities:***

- ▶ To strive for superior performance in academic coursework.
- ▶ To fulfill the expectations for graduate teaching or research assistantships, when applicable. Assistantships are privileges and not entitlements.
- ▶ To participate in department seminars, brown bags and colloquia, which provide both intellectual challenge and opportunities for social networking.
- ▶ To participate in professional meetings and symposia, both as an observer and as presenter.

### ***Additional Student Responsibilities and Expectations:***

- ▶ To follow University and academic unit rules, procedures and policies, including those outlined in this Graduate Handbook, [Academic Programs](#), [Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), and [Academic Freedom](#) for Students at MSU. These publications are available on the University web sites.
- ▶ Meet University and Department requirements for degree completion in a timely manner.
- ▶ To form a Master's Guidance Committee that meets University and Department requirements, and keep the members of the Committee informed regarding academic activities and research progress.
- ▶ To follow disciplinary and MSU codes of ethics in course work, research, and professional activities. Intellectual integrity is extremely important in an academic community. Plagiarism and data falsification are serious offenses and can result in dismissal. See Research Integrity Office [website](#), and Graduate School Research integrity [website](#). The number of cases of scientific misconduct due apparently to unintentional plagiarism continues to be substantial. Consider using [Ithenticate](#), the anti-plagiarism software that is available on [Desire 2 Learn](#) as part of the "Turn-It-In" package. Ithenticate is set up so that faculty, postdocs, and graduate students can check their manuscripts for unintentional plagiarism before submitting them.
- ▶ To follow high ethical standards in accordance with University and Federal guidelines in collecting and maintaining data, including seeking regulatory approval for research before any research project begins. Unethical or dishonest behavior while engaged in research, scholarly and creative activities is grounds for severe disciplinary action, including dismissal and revocation of degree. After completion of the thesis, an oral examination in defense of the thesis is required. The committee members grant approval or require changes in the thesis to elaborate on or clarify findings.

Students also should consult the [Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities](#).

- ▶ To exhibit the highest standards of professionalism in teaching, research, and scholarship. This includes professional use of email and social media. Remember you represent MSU and HDFS in all interactions, particularly when using your msu.edu email account.
- ▶ To provide the department with copies of research-related documents (such as permits, approvals of grant proposals, research proposals) within the prescribed deadlines.

## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS

Currently, four master's degree programs are offered: Child Development, Human Development and Family Studies, Youth Development (online), and Family and Community Services (online). See [www.gpidea.org](http://www.gpidea.org) and GPIDEA-specific handbook for further information on online programs.

### ***Child Development, M.S.***

The program focuses on the behavioral, psychological, biological and contextual processes that promote positive developmental outcomes in infants and young children. Key contexts of development emphasized in the program include family, early childhood educational settings, and culture. Courses are available in areas such as development across cultures, infant development, language and literacy research and practices, social-emotional development, observational methods for home or the classroom, approaches to early education, intervention and prevention programs, and parenting. Laboratory experiences in early childhood education are available in the Child Development Laboratories, and research experiences are available through work with faculty mentors. Both a thesis (Plan A) and non-thesis (Plan B) option are offered. Those pursuing Plan A are prepared for doctoral study in a variety of related fields.

### **Requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Child Development**

The Master of Science Degree in Child Development is available under Plan A (with thesis) or Plan B (without thesis). A total of 30 credits is required for Plan A and a total of 32 credits is required for Plan B.

#### ***Requirements for Plan A***

- |   |  |        |
|---|--|--------|
| 1. All of the following courses (a minimum of 12 credits):                      |  |        |
| HDFS 810  | Theories of Human Development  | 3      |
| HDFS 811  | Child Development: Ecological Perspectives   | 3      |
| HDFS 821  | Prevention, Intervention and Educational Programs in Early Childhood                   | 3      |
| HDFS 892  | Seminar in Human Development and Family Studies  | 1 to 4 |
| 2. Both of the following courses approved by the student's advisor (6 credits): |  |        |
| A 3 credit research methodology course  |  |        |
| A 3 credit quantitative methods course  |  |        |
| 3. One of the following courses (3 credits):                                    |  |        |
| HDFS 826  | Social-Emotional Development Birth to Eight Years: Biology, Relationships, and Culture | 3      |
| HDFS 827  | Language and Literacy Development from Infancy to Formal Schooling                     | 3      |

4. An additional elective course approved by the student's advisor.
5. Complete 6 credits of HDFS 899 Master's Thesis Research.

**Requirements for Plan B**

1. The following course (3 credits):
 

|   |   |
|---|---|
| HDFS 811 Child Development: Ecological Perspectives | 3 |
|---|---|
2. One of the following courses (3 credits):
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| HDFS 449 Special Needs Children and Their Families                       | 3 |
| HDFS 825 Families with Special Needs Children: An Ecological Perspective | 3 |
3. One of the following courses (3 credits):
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| HDFS 414 Parenting                                       | 3 |
| HDFS 892 Seminar in Human Development and Family Studies | 3 |

HDFS 892 must be approved by the student's advisor to assure appropriate content.
4. The following course (3 credits):
 

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| HDFS 847 Theories of the Family | 3 |
|---------------------------------|---|
5. All of the following courses (14 credits):
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| HDFS 817 Advanced Practice in Infant and Toddler Early Childhood Programming     | 3 |
| HDFS 818 Advanced Curricular Adaptations in Diverse Early Childhood Environments | 3 |
| HDFS 819 Advanced Teaching Practicum in an Early Childhood Setting               | 4 |
| HDFS 822 Assessment of the Young Child   | 3 |
| HDFS 894 Laboratory and Field Experience   | 1 |
6. Both of the following courses (6 credits):
 

|   |   |
|---|---|
| HDFS 473 Administration of Early Childhood Programs                                     | 3 |
| HDFS 821 Prevention, Intervention and Educational Programs in Early Childhood Education | 3 |

**Master's Degree in Child Development with an Endorsement in Early Childhood-General and Special Education**

Students holding an Elementary Education or Special Education teaching certification may be eligible to complete the 26 credits required for the Early Childhood-General and Special Education Endorsement or ZS and apply some credits to a Master's degree in Child Development.



### **Early Childhood-General and Special Education Endorsement (ZS)**

Experienced Elementary Education or Special Education Teachers can complete the Early Childhood-General and Special Education Endorsement or ZS through the Department. Evening courses and laboratory sections are scheduled to accommodate teaching schedules in the summer. For additional information, please contact the ZS Advisor, Laurie Linscott, [linscott@msu.edu](mailto:linscott@msu.edu). For more information, please visit: <http://hdfs.msu.edu/undergraduate/early-childhood-general-and-special-education-endorsement-zs>.

### ***Human Development and Family Studies, M.S.***

The Master of Science Degree in Human Development and Family Studies is designed to help students gain an understanding of increasingly diverse family units as well as individual family members as they develop across the life course.

Depending upon student interest and career goals, focus may be on human development (adolescence, aging), leadership, policy or diversity. Students are prepared to work with and advocate for families, children, youth and adults in a broad range of settings, including extension offices, community agencies, and policy-making contexts. Both a thesis (Plan A) and non-thesis (Plan B) option are offered. Those pursuing Plan A are prepared for doctoral study in a variety of related fields.

### **Requirements for the Master of Science Degree in Human Development and Family Studies**

The Master of Science Degree in Human Development and Family Studies is available under Plan A (with thesis) or Plan B (without thesis). A total of 30 credits is required for both Plan A and Plan B.

#### ***Requirements for Both Plan A and Plan B***

1. All of the following courses (12 credits):
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| HDFS 810 Theories of Human Development                   | 3 |
| HDFS 847 Theories of the Family                          | 3 |
| HDFS 880 Research Design and Measurement                 | 3 |
| HDFS 892 Seminar in Human Development and Family Studies | 3 |

Additional courses may be substituted for HDFS 892 with advisor approval.

#### ***Additional Requirements for Plan A***

1. The following course (3 credits):
 

|  |   |
|--|---|
| HDFS 881 Quantitative Methods in Human Development | 3 |
|--|---|
2. Complete 9 credits chosen in consultation with the student's advisor.
3. Complete 6 credits of HDFS 899 Master's Thesis Research.

#### ***Additional Requirements for Plan B***

1. Both of the following courses (6 credits):

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| HDFS 481  | Research and Quantitative Methods in Human Development and Family Studies | 3 |
| HDFS 845  | Foundations of Family Study   | 3 |
| 2. Complete 12 credits chosen in consultation with the student's advisor. |   |   |

### ***Youth Development, M.A. – Online program***

The Master of Arts in Youth Development, is a collaborative, multi-institutional program offered totally online. This degree is designed to promote an understanding of communities and families and to prepare students to have an impact on the development of youth in their homes, neighborhoods, and society. American youth born since the early 1980s are projected to be the largest, most ethnically diverse generation of adolescents in the history of the United States, and this program is designed to address that demographic shift.

The curriculum is focused on the promotion of positive development of all young people. It is designed for individuals who wish to work in a variety of youth-related professions, including youth-serving organizations and programs such as Boys and Girls Clubs, community recreation specialties, youth programs sponsored by faith-based institutions, correctional professions, or within U.S. Extension Programs.

The College of Social Science, in collaboration with The Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (GPIDEA), offers this program with all course work delivered via the Internet/World Wide Web by faculty from multiple land-grant universities: Michigan State University, Kansas State University, University of Missouri, North Dakota State University, Texas Tech University, and the University of Nebraska.

The Master's Degree in Youth Development prepares students to:

- ▶ Understand, integrate, and apply conceptual approaches to youth development (i.e., asset building, positive youth development, community youth development, and risk and resiliency);
- ▶ Understand normative pathways to development;
- ▶ Understand youth and family cultural issues/contexts and their micro- and macro-influences on positive youth outcomes;
- ▶ Understand and apply basic research and evaluation skills to youth development programming through an applied project that serves as a capstone experience under the direction of the candidate's home institution;
- ▶ Have developed skills in problem-solving with "stakeholders" including funding sources, boards, other agencies, families and other professionals;
- ▶ Demonstrate understanding of the development and impact of local, regional, state, federal, and global policies on youth and be able to advocate through policy development for optimal youth outcomes;

- ▶ Be able to develop and apply resources (e.g., agency budgeting, grant writing and processing, fund raising) for successful implementation and management of youth-serving organizations;
- ▶ Understand the history of the youth development area and advocate for the continued professionalization of the field.

An advanced degree or graduate certificate in youth development is ideal for professionals in a variety of youth-related fields. Areas include leaders in youth-serving organizations, 4-H and Boys and Girls Club, non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, such as community recreation facilities, correctional professions, judges, middle school and high school teachers and administrators, and extension educators.

The graduate program consists of 36 semester hours of course work: 28 hours required by the consortium, and the additional 8 hours consisting of either MSU degree requirements and/or master's thesis, project, or practicum or pre-approved electives. Research/project hours will be coordinated with your major professor. The courses are being offered on a rotating basis, with all courses offered at least once every other year (i.e., Fall, Spring, and Summer). Students are required to take at least 12 credits from classes taught by MSU instructors. The required courses offered within the program include nine 3 credit courses and a professional-development seminar (1 credit).

The Department of Human Development and Family Studies and the College of Social Science, in collaboration with the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (GPIDEA) offers this program with all coursework delivered online. For additional information, see [www.gpidea.org](http://www.gpidea.org).

Students will earn this degree from their home institution while also enrolling for courses at other participating universities.

### ***Youth Development – Certificate Programs***

There are two Graduate Certificates offered through the Youth Development program. The certificates require 13 credit hours of course work, including the 1 credit professional-development Seminar.

### **Youth Development Specialist Certificate**

The Youth Development Specialist Graduate Certificate is designed to assist youth professionals to train individuals in the second decade of life with the skills necessary for a successful transition into adulthood. The program addresses the need for advanced education in youth issues and does so through a strengths-based curriculum.

Upon completion of the Youth Development Specialist Graduate Certificate, students will have met two or more of the following objectives as a Practitioner I:

- ▶ Understand, integrate and be able to apply conceptual approaches to youth development (e.g. asset building, positive youth development, community youth development, risk and resiliency);
- ▶ Understand normative pathways to development;
- ▶ Understand youth and family cultural issues/contexts and their micro- and macro- influences on positive youth outcomes;
- ▶ Understand the history of the youth development area and advocate for the continued professionalization of the field.

### ***Youth Development Management and Evaluation Graduate Certificate***

The Youth Program Management and Evaluation Graduate Certificate is designed to assist youth professionals to develop and apply resources for successful implementation and management of youth-serving organizations. The program addresses the need for advanced education based on research and policy for optimal youth outcomes through a strengths-based curriculum.

Upon completion of the Youth Program Management and Evaluation Graduate Certificate, students will have met two or more of the following objectives as a Practitioner II:

- ▶ Understand and apply basic research and evaluation skills to youth development programming;
- ▶ Be able to develop and apply resources (e.g. agency budgeting, grant writing and processing, fund raising) for successful implementation and management of youth-serving organizations;
- ▶ Develops skills in problem-solving with stakeholders including funding sources, boards, other agencies, families and other professionals;
- ▶ Demonstrate understanding of the development and impact of local regional, state, deferral and global policies on youth and be able to advocate through policy development for optimal youth outcomes and;
- ▶ Understand the history of the youth development area and advocate for the continued professionalization of the field.

### **Requirements for Master of Arts Degree and Certificate Programs in Youth Development:**

Youth Development majors Academic Policies and Procedures vary from on campus HDFS major programs. Consult with your advisor for Youth Development policies.

Youth Development MA course listing available at:

<https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/ProgramDetail.aspx?Program=7645>

YD-Specialist Certificate course listing available at:

<https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/ProgramDetail.aspx?Program=7694>

YD-Management Certificate course listing available at:

<https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/ProgramDetail.aspx?Program=7693>

### ***Family and Community Services, M.A.-Online program***

The Master of Arts in Family and Community Services, a totally online program, is a collaborative, multi-institutional program offered totally online. This degree is designed to provide a research-based perspective to understand individual, family, interpersonal and community dynamics across the lifespan. Students will acquire knowledge and skills related to the design, implementation, sustainability, and leadership and management of family and community services programs. Designed to serve special populations such as those working with military service families, a resilience approach is taken. The Department of Human Development and Family Studies and the College of Social Science, in collaboration with the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (GPIDEA) offers this program with all coursework delivered online.

Students will earn this degree from their home institution while also enrolling for courses at other participating universities.

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

#### **Requirements for Master of Arts degree in Family Community Services**

The program is available only online and only under Plan B (without thesis). Each student's course of study must be developed and approved in consultation with the academic adviser. The student must complete 36 credit hours, 30 of which are required of the Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance (GPIDEA) consortium, with 6 elective credits. Students are required to take at least 12 credits from classes taught by MSU instructors.

Family Community Services MA course listing available at:

<https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/ProgramDetail.aspx?Program=7722>

### ***Guidelines for Master's Programs***

#### **Responsible Conduct of Research**

##### **Plan A Master's Students**

In order to satisfy federal regulations MSU requires that all graduate students complete training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). The following describes the HDFS plan for insuring RCR training for all Plan A (thesis) Master's Students. Note that in addition to the departmental requirements, certain funding agencies may require researchers to obtain additional RCR training. This is the responsibility of the PI. Important topics for all RCR training include:

- ▶ Responsible data acquisition, management, and sharing
- ▶ Conflict of interest
- ▶ Protection of human subjects
- ▶ Research misconduct
- ▶ Mentor/trainee responsibilities
- ▶ Publication practices, authorship, and peer review

### **First year of graduate program:**

**On-line training:** All new Plan A Master's students will complete 4 CITI online modules within their first year of enrollment in their program. Courses include:

1. Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
2. Authorship
3. Plagiarism
4. Research Misconduct

**Discussion-based Training:** All Plan A Master's Students must complete a minimum of 6 hours of discussion-based training prior to receiving their degrees. Student should gain RCR training from multiple sources during their graduate programs. The following may be used to complete this requirement:

- HDFS Research Seminar Series
- HDFS 901, HDFS 865, or HDFS 880 RCR discussion (2 hour credit per class)
- Discussion with advisor/PI in research meeting settings (use readings from RCR website: <http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/resources/>).
- Other MSU, Graduate School, CSS, and HDFS seminars specifically designated for RCR

HRPP Initial Training (2-3 hr. tutorial) <https://hrpp.msu.edu/training/index.html>

- Other relevant CITI Modules (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative)
- MSU Graduate School's RCR Workshop Certificate. Enrollment is limited. (<http://grad.msu.edu/rcr/>).
- HDFS RCR Online Modules

### **Additional Requirement for Master's Plan A Students**

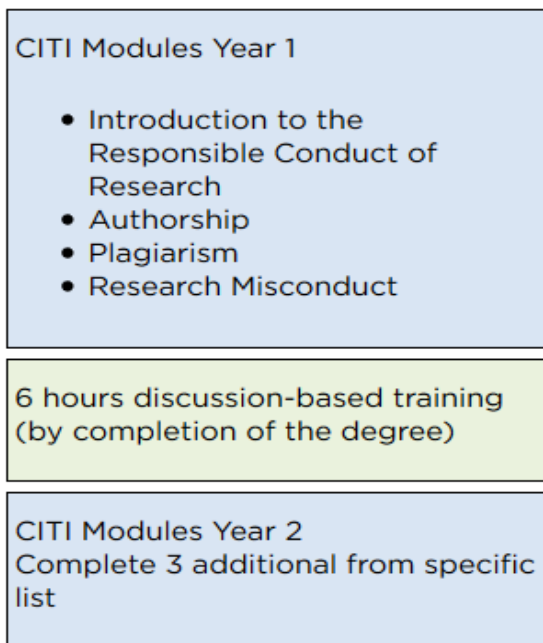
**Online training:** Within the first 2 years of enrollment in their program, Master's Plan A student will complete 3 additional MSU online training modules, to be selected from the following list. Completion will be tracked in SABA. CITI modules can be found at <https://ora.msu.edu/CITI-RCR-registration>.

### **RCR Documentation**

Completion of the required online training courses (7 for Plan A; 4 for Plan B) will be tracked in SABA. Additional online and discussion-based training will be documented on the Master's Annual Review Form with the student being

responsible for record-keeping and the advisor responsible for monitoring/approving; the department will record completion in GradInfo.

### Master's Plan A students



### Documenting Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training:

Students should be logging into the ABILITY information management system at <http://ora.msu.edu/train/> to complete their on-line RCR training. This is the system that must be used for proper documentation of training. This system has replaced SABA effective December 2018.

### Plan B Master's Students

In order to satisfy federal regulations MSU requires that all graduate students complete training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). The following describes the HDFS plan for insuring RCR training for all Plan B Master's Students. Note that in addition to the departmental requirements, certain funding agencies may require researchers to obtain additional RCR training. This is the responsibility of the PI. Important topics for all RCR training include:

- ▶ Responsible data acquisition, management and sharing
- ▶ Conflict of interest
- ▶ Protection of human subjects
- ▶ Research misconduct
- ▶ Mentor/trainee responsibilities
- ▶ Publication practices, authorship, peer review



**First year of graduate program:**

**On-line training:** All new Plan B Master's Students will complete four CITI online modules within their first year of enrollment in their program. Courses include:

1. Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
2. Authorship
3. Plagiarism
4. Research Misconduct

**Discussion-based Training:** All Plan B Master's Students must complete a minimum of 6 hours of discussion-based training prior to receiving their degrees. Student should gain RCR training from multiple sources during their graduate programs. The following may be used to complete this requirement:

- HDFS Research Seminar Series
- HDFS 901, HDFS 865, or HDFS 880 RCR discussion (2 hour credit per class)
- Discussion with advisor/PI in research meeting settings (use readings from RCR website: <http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/resources/>).
- Other MSU, Graduate School, CSS, and HDFS seminars specifically designated for RCR
- HRPP Initial Training (2-3 hr. tutorial)
- Other relevant CITI Modules (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative)
- MSU Graduate School's RCR Workshop Certificate. Enrollment is limited. (<http://grad.msu.edu/rcr/>).
- HDFS RCR Online Modules

**RCR Minimum Plan requirements****Master's plan B and grad professional**

## CITI Modules Year 1

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

6 hours discussion-based training  
(by completion of the degree)

**RCR Documentation**

Completion of the required online training courses (7 for Plan A; 4 for Plan B) will be tracked in SABA. Additional online and discussion-based training will be documented on the Master's Annual Review Form with the student being



responsible for record-keeping and the advisor responsible for monitoring/approving; the department will record completion in GradInfo.

Approved by Graduate Education Committee on 9.19.13 and HDFS Department faculty on 9.27.13. Language updated per University policy 10/2017.

## Advisor and Committee

When you are admitted to the master's program, a first-year advisor is assigned to you. Once you complete 12 credits (or at the end of the first year), you should select a permanent advisor (major professor) and committee member(s) who will assist you in planning your program. Your first-year advisor may serve in the permanent role, or you may choose another faculty member. A relative may not be a member of your guidance committee, nor may a relative directly assign you a grade in a course.

Your committee should consist of a minimum of three HDFS faculty members for Plan A and two for Plan B, including your academic advisor. As defined in the Faculty Handbook: "The 'regular faculty' of Michigan State University shall consist of all persons appointed under the rules of tenure and holding the rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor, or instructor, and persons appointed as librarians". Adjunct faculty and others can participate on a graduate committee as long as the number does not exceed the number of regular Michigan State University faculty. If you wish to have a faculty member who is not "regular tenure stream" either as your major professor or an advisor, submit to the Graduate Program Director the faculty member's vita and a letter as to how he/she is essential to your committee. Letter and vita will be sent to the College of Social Science and the Graduate School for approval. For more information, see the Graduate School's [procedure for approving non-regular committee members](#).

Guidance committees should be formed within the first two semesters of graduate study. However, according to article [GSRR 2.4.2.2](#), the composition of the graduate committee may change with concurrence of the student and unit, and the committee may establish a distinct dissertation committee to guide dissertation research specifically. While guidance committees are essential from early in the student's career, their composition may change with the student's developing needs.

**NOTE:** To ensure fairness in the examination procedure and maintenance of academic standards, the dean of the college (on their own or at the request of the student, committee member, program director, or unit chairperson) may appoint an outside member to the examining committee, who would have voting rights as per college policy. The outside member of the committee will read and

critique the thesis/dissertation, will participate in the oral part of the exam, and will submit a report to the dean of the college. See Academic Programs policy on [doctoral examinations](#).

The committee assists you in program planning by providing direction while allowing for flexibility of course selection. A program planning meeting is required and is considered an important session during which the committee members work with you to formulate a program to meet your written goals. Your program plan should be prepared in accordance with committee recommendations and submitted to the committee members and graduate program director for final approval.

Students may consult the [Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationship](#) for a description of an effective and supportive faculty-graduate student relationship. Additionally, MSU encourages the practice of collaborating with the advisor to generate individual development plans (IDPs) that take into account the strengths and challenges of the student as well as the students' career goals. For templates, see [ImaginePhD \(Humanities & Social Science fields\)](#).

### **Changing Advisor or Committee Members**

There are circumstances in which students want or need to change advisors or committee members. This may include faculty retirements or relocations, change in research focus, or simply finding a better fit. Students should discuss this openly and honestly with the current advisor, confirm the new advisor, inform the Graduate Program Director, and complete the [Master's Change of Guidance Committee form](#).

For more information on selecting committees, see <http://grad.msu.edu/gsrr/>.

### ***Thesis Guidelines***

All Plan A students conduct research and write a thesis. Six credits in HDFS 899 are taken while the thesis is in progress. Thesis credits are applied to the major. Plan A is expected if you are considering a doctoral program in the future or have a professional goal of an academic career. This plan also offers an opportunity to develop research competence through direct experience with the research process.

In this plan, you prepare a proposal for the thesis research and present it to your committee for approval before the thesis is begun. In addition to approval from their committee, students must receive approval of their proposal from the IRB **before they collect their data**. Students should plan for this review in their degree completion timetable. Further information can be obtained at

(<http://hrrp.msu.edu/>).

In addition to the standard format for theses, the Graduate School allows for the use of an alternative format. The manuscript format refers to the use of articles to replace the standard chapters. Publication of the manuscripts is not a requirement for graduation.

The manuscript format for theses consists of one-two manuscripts that report on original research conducted by the candidate while a student at Michigan State University. It must be formatted to comply with all MSU guidelines.

### **Choosing a Thesis Format**

*The decision about which format (traditional or manuscript) is most appropriate is made jointly by the student, the major advisor and the guidance committee.*

Factors to consider include:

- ▶ Major professor, student and committee must agree on format
- ▶ The fit/appropriateness of research topic to the format
- ▶ Practical considerations regarding the student's future goals

### **Pros and cons of the manuscript format include:**

- ▶ The relative untested nature of the format and lack of extensive experience in its use.
- ▶ Traditional format may be more appropriate for some research questions. Social science research tends to be very complex and may need more lengthy explication.
- ▶ Traditional theses are rarely published as complete documents. Following completion, candidates must use a 100+ page document to create 1 to 2 shorter manuscripts. This can be very time consuming. The manuscript format forces planning for publication early in the process, facilitates faculty mentoring during the manuscript writing process, provides candidates with potential publications upon graduation and interviewing, and insures that information is disseminated more quickly through professional journals.
- ▶ The manuscript format is used at many leading institutions.

### **Faculty and Student Roles**

Format will be determined by mutual agreement of the student, major advisor and guidance committee. All students will do an independent research study, regardless of format.

All students must take primary responsibility for writing and editing of the Thesis. Faculty provides guidance regarding substantive issues such as literature review, theoretical framework, and methodology. *They are not responsible for line-by-line editing.* Students using a manuscript format are responsible for identifying a target journal for each article and formatting the chapters accordingly. Students

also should read existing papers published in the target journals to gain better insight into readership, topics/methods preferred, and writing styles. Students will be first author on manuscripts, but major professor and committee members (if they made substantial contributions and will be involved in the editing/revision process) will be co-authors. Students completing traditional format theses also should have a publishing plan, but this may come later in the process.

### **Suggested format: Proposal**

#### **Traditional Proposal:**

- ▶ Introduction: purpose, rationale, theoretical underpinnings
- ▶ Literature review
- ▶ Methods

#### **Manuscript Proposal:**

- ▶ Include first three sections for traditional proposal, addressing the whole body of work
- ▶ Provide:
  - ▶ Brief description of article #1
  - ▶ Brief description of article #2 (optional at Master's level)

### ***Suggested format: Theses***

- ▶ The traditional Thesis generally has the following format:
- ▶ Introduction: purpose, rationale, theoretical underpinnings
- ▶ Literature review
- ▶ Methods
- ▶ Findings
- ▶ Summary and implications
- ▶ References
- ▶ Appendices

#### **The manuscript Thesis format is flexible depending upon individual research, but may include:**

- ▶ Introduction: purpose of overall research, theoretical underpinnings, references
- ▶ Article #1 with references
- ▶ Article #2 with references (optional at thesis level)
- ▶ Conclusions: integration and importance of entire body of research, relationship to existing research, implications for practice, research and policy, and future considerations. Include any additional references.

Credit to: HDFS Graduate Education Committee, MSU School of Social Work, Virginia Tech Graduate School, Texas A&M College of Education and Human Development

## Electronic Submissions of Theses & Dissertations

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

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

When submitting an electronic thesis or dissertation to ProQuest, a student has now the option to open the document to searches using Google, Google Scholar and Google Books. The option to block such searches continues to be available.

The policy for embargos of thesis and dissertations has been changed, **but continues to be restricted to requests involving potential patents.** What is different is that the period of the embargo is restricted to six months and the holding of the document is now done by ProQuest after the electronic thesis/dissertation is submitted after the approval of the Graduate School.

### Electronic Submission's Approval Dates:

- ▶ **Deadline Date for all semesters**  
The deadline date for **FINAL APPROVAL** of an electronic Dissertation to the Graduate School is **FIVE** working days prior to the first day of classes for the 'next' semester. For updates, please check <https://grad.msu.edu/etd/etd-deadline-dates>.
- ▶ Summer 2020 – August 19, 2020
- ▶ Fall 2020 – December 18, 2020
- ▶ Spring 2021 – May 12, 2021
- ▶ Summer 2021 – August 25, 2021
- ▶ Fall 2021 – December 20, 2021
- ▶ Spring 2022 – May 11, 2022

**Graduation on the semester of the electronic submission is only guaranteed if the document is APPROVED on or before the approval dates above for that semester.**

## Other Notes on Theses

- ▶ In addition to the main body of a thesis or dissertation, **the Graduate School now permits the submission of supplementary materials to ProQuest**. These supplemental materials will not be reviewed by the Graduate School for formatting requirements, but they must be acceptable by ProQuest and comply with ProQuest's criteria and storage limits. All supplementary materials need the written approval of the thesis/dissertation committee chair.

**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)).

**Requests for 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) or calling 517 353 3220. 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 the document submission 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 brief justification for the length of the requested hold/embargo.

- ▶ **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>

## ***Master's Orals***

An oral examination conducted at the end of your course of study is required under both Plans A and B. These examinations must be administered by a committee of three "regular faculty" for Plan A and two for Plan B. **You must be enrolled at the time of the oral examination.**

### **Plan A**

The purpose of the Plan A oral examination is to defend the thesis research. You will make a presentation similar to a research presentation at a professional conference (e.g. NCFR, SRCD). Following the presentation, committee members will ask questions for clarification and/or elaboration and determine what revisions, if any, are necessary.

### **Plan B**

Usually during the last semester of study it is your responsibility to schedule an oral examination with your committee and invited administrators. The focus of this examination is on your grasp of critical concepts and issues in the field as they relate to your program of study. The objective of the Plan B oral examination is to have a final capstone session framed by the student's presentation of an appropriate project experience and/or written paper involving integrative discussion of theory, research, course work taken and application. Since this is a non-thesis option, the student and advisor will determine, well in advance of the oral examination, the type of project or experience necessary to complete the program. The length and detail of the project will be agreed upon, in advance, by the advisor and the student, and may include materials developed in master's coursework. A number of presentation options are possible, including the following:

- ▶ **An applied project or research-based experience** that is prepared for presentation and discussion at the oral exam. Student presentation of applied projects or research-based experiences should incorporate, and demonstrate relevance to, appropriate theories and research integral to the project. In turn, it is assumed that such theory and research are reflective of course work taken in the department and disciplinary areas within the department. For applied projects or experiences, the student will be asked to prepare appropriate materials for presentation to the committee.
- ▶ **A written paper project** (e.g., literature review, annotated bibliography, program review, analysis comparison) which demonstrates acquired skills and development.

The student presentation, including written materials shared with the committee, will provide necessary evidence of satisfactory completion of the applied project/research-based experience or written paper project. While the bulk of the Plan B oral exam session will focus on the presentation and discussion of the



student presentation, faculty also may ask questions about student program content, its relevance to their present and future goals, and student recommendations for improving the program for future students. Plan B oral examinations for off-campus or on-line programs should be consistent with the objectives and expected outcomes for on-campus students.

### ***Process for Orals***

Guests may be present during the presentation. They will be excused during questions from the committee. After questions are complete the candidate will be excused while the committee discusses the student's performance. The student then rejoins the committee for feedback.

### ***Credit Allocations***

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b><u>Plan A</u></b><br/>Major.....30 credit hours</p> <p><b>Includes:</b><br/>A. 6 hours thesis credits<br/>B. One course in research design (HDFS 880*)<br/>C. One course in quantitative methods<br/>D. Specific requirements in particular major</p> | <p><b><u>Plan B</u></b><br/>HDFS Major.....30 credit hours<br/>Child Development.....32 credit hours<br/>YD.....36 credit hours**<br/>FCS .....36 credit hours**</p> <p><b>Includes:</b><br/>A. Specific requirements in particular major<br/>B. For GPIDEA students: 3 credit<br/>HDFS 865</p> |
|---|---|

*\*The faculty strongly recommends that the research methods and statistics requirements be met in the first 15 credits of the program.*

*\*\*Twelve credits must come from classes taught by MSU faculty.*

### **NOTE: BEFORE FILLING OUT THE MASTER'S PROGRAM PLAN FORM, PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS:**

- ▶ At least 20 credit hours must be earned within the Department of Human Development and Family Studies. At least 16 credit hours must be taken at the 800-900 level.
- ▶ A maximum of nine semester graduate credits with 3.0 or better may be transferred from other accredited institutions if approved by the student's committee.
- ▶ A maximum of nine credits taken in Lifelong Education may be accepted into the program if approved by the student's committee.



## ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND STANDARDS

In the College of Social Science, Master's students may have only two grades below 3.0 in courses listed on their Master's Plan of Study. (This does not apply to 1-2 credit courses or courses below the 400 level not on the plan of study). In addition, students must maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 to remain in the program. Three grades below 3.0 or an overall GPA below 3.0 will result in dismissal from the program. Students should not take 100, 200, and 300 level courses.

### ***Annual Progress Report (APR)***

Written evaluations are completed jointly by students and academic advisors each year. Students initiate this process after receiving a reminder from the department (usually early spring semester), and the advisor is jointly responsible for completion of the evaluation. It is required that this document be filed annually for students to remain in good academic standing in the master's program, and this assessment of student's professionalism and scholarly integrity will be included in evaluation will be considered when selecting students for assistantships and other awards. Additionally, requests for time extensions will not be considered if annual evaluations have not been completed. It also is recommended that active students meet regularly with their advisors. The MSU Annual Progress Report for Master's students ([Plan A](#) or [Plan B](#)) shall be used for this evaluation.

### ***Academic Progress Review***

An Academic Progress Review may take place if:

- ▶ A master's student has **acquired two grades lower than 3.0** in coursework on the Master's Plan of Study. Students in this situation are on **probation**.
- ▶ A master's student has **passed the time limit of six years** for completion of the degree.
- ▶ Professionalism and scholarly integrity is not maintained.
- ▶ **Miscellaneous** circumstances at the request of the student, major professor, or graduate director.
- ▶ The Academic Progress Review will consist of:
  - ▶ A meeting attended by the student, the major professor, the Graduate Director, other relevant faculty members (e.g. faculty member for a class the student did not complete successfully). Additionally, the student may invite a representative. Generally the meeting is called by the Graduate Director, but may be initiated by major professor, student or other. *If a campus meeting is not feasible (e.g. online degrees) a letter will be sent to address the concerns, to be followed by a conference call if needed.*

- ▶ The circumstances will be discussed and a plan for remediation will be made. A report, in the form of a memorandum, will be filed. This report will include:
  - ▶ Purpose of the meeting
  - ▶ Description of the student's situation
  - ▶ Actions to be taken to address the situation
  - ▶ Timeline for actions
  - ▶ Consequence of non-action (e.g. 2<sup>nd</sup> and final meeting or dismissal)
- ▶ This report will be sent to the student, the Graduate Administrative Assistant for filing, the advisor, the master's committee, and the College of Social Science Graduate Dean. The major professor and Graduate Director will monitor student progress.
- ▶ **It is the responsibility of the student to complete all actions specified in the remediation plan, consistent with the timeline specified. Failure to do so will result in termination from the graduate program.**

## **RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

As specified in the MSU Academic Catalog, a minimum of 12 credits in the degree program must be earned in residence (as opposed to online courses) on campus (1 semester), but many programs require more. Requests for waivers of this requirement must be submitted by the department or school responsible for the degree program to the appropriate college and then to the Dean of The Graduate School. Youth Development and Family Community Services majors are exempt from this policy.

Certain off-campus and online master's programs do not require the minimum residence. Contact the department, school, or college offering a specific program for additional information.

## MAJOR EVENTS IN COMPLETING THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

The following outline is intended to provide general guidelines for your program of study.

*The time limit for a master's degree is six years. If serious circumstances prevent completion of the program in this time frame, students are strongly urged to plan ahead and request an extension prior to the end of the six-year limit. Students whose enrollment at MSU is interrupted for more than three consecutive semesters (including summer) must reapply for admission.*

**Please also note: the majority of HDFFS faculty are on academic appointments, which means their official responsibilities fall between August 16-May 15. PLAN ACCORDINGLY, as you schedule meetings, exams and thesis preparations.**

| ACTION TO BE TAKEN   | WHEN  |
|--|---|
| First-year advisor appointed.  |   |
| If admitted regular status, student selects a permanent advisor. Student may retain first year advisor or select another faculty member whose interests more closely parallel his or her own interests. If change is made, permission from new major professor goes to the Graduate Administrative Assistant who will file a Change of Status. | By 9-12 credits hours.  |
| If admitted on provisional status, the first-year advisor and student monitor the student's progress. The advisor notifies the Graduate Administrative Assistant in writing or e-mail that either (a) the provisional requirements have been met, or (b) provisional requirements have not been met within the timeframe noted on admissions.  | The time frame for completing provisional status requirements varies by student and is determined by the Graduate Director upon admission. Generally, it is one calendar year. Provisional admits are rare. |
| If requirements are met, the Graduate Administrative Assistant prepares and files a Change of Status. When this has been completed, the student selects a permanent advisor as described above.  |   |

| ACTION TO BE TAKEN  | WHEN  |
|---|---|
| If requirements are not met, the student will be dropped from graduate study at conclusion of the specified provisional admission period.   |   |
| Student selects a guidance committee with the help of the permanent advisor.  | By the end of the second semester or 12 credit hours, whichever comes last  |
| Student plans program of study with guidance committee members.   | By the end of the second semester or 12 credit hours, whichever comes last  |
| Student submits program of study to the Graduate Administrative Assistant for approval by the Graduate Program Director and the Associate Dean.   | <b>(Note: Submission for administrative signatures must be made within 30 days of committee signatures.)</b>  |
| Student and advisor complete MSU Annual Progress Report.  | Annually – Spring Semester  |
| <b>Plan A</b>   |   |
| Student plans program of study with guidance committee members.   | By the end of the second semester or 12 credit hours, whichever comes last.   |
| Student selects thesis topic, prepares proposal, submits thesis proposal to guidance committee and IRB <a href="#">Human Research Protection Program (HRPP)</a> , carries out research, and writes thesis.  | When student completes course work, except HDFS 899 credits which will be taken during research and writes thesis. Must take at least 6 credits of HDFS 899.  |
| Student arranges the oral exam with the guidance committee and distributes copies of the "Announcement of Orals" form to the appropriate parties. <b><u>Student must be enrolled for at least one credit during the semester of the oral examination. Due to college deadlines orals must be scheduled before November 15 for Fall Semester and April 15 for Spring Semester.</u></b> | When final draft of thesis has been completed. Submit draft to committee two weeks prior to date of oral exam. Note: Most HDFS faculty have academic year appointments. Therefore, orals must be conducted during fall or spring semesters. |
| Student submits <a href="#">Thesis Electronically</a> and completes "Approval Form" (paper copy) and returns form to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Chittenden Hall.  | Before graduation clearance; by the deadline provided by the Graduate School.   |
| Complete exit survey.   | After completion of all program requirements, when the Graduate School sends an invitation email.   |

| ACTION TO BE TAKEN   | WHEN   |
|--|--|
| <b>Plan B</b>  |  |
| Student arranges the oral exam with the guidance committee and distributes copies of the "Announcement of Orals" form to the appropriate parties. <u>Student must be enrolled for at least one credit during the semester of the oral examination.</u> | When at least 80 percent of course work has been completed. Note: Most HDFS faculty have academic year appointments. Therefore, orals must be conducted during fall or spring semesters  |
| Student completes planned course of study.   | By the end of six years from date of enrollment in the first course included in degree certification in the master's program.  |
| ACTION TO BE TAKEN   | WHEN   |
| Student completes application for diploma.   | At registration of your final semester apply on line for graduation: <a href="#">Application for Graduation</a> . If you do not meet the requirements to graduate at the end of your final semester, you must reapply for graduation the following semester or when you are ready to graduate. |
| Complete exit survey.  | After completion of all program requirements, when the Graduate School sends an invitation email.  |

**[Forms Relevant to Master's Students](#) – Forms are on the HDFS website.**

For Master's and Ph.D. students who wish to graduate spring term, ORALS AND ALL PAPERWORK MUST BE APPROVED BY THE LAST DAY OF THE SEMESTER. The Graduate School posts relevant [EDT deadlines](#) for each semester, and the College of Social Science may communicate additional deadlines via email. Stay alert to deadlines, and plan accordingly.

## **GRADUATE MENTORING GUIDELINES: STUDENT AND FACULTY PARTICIPATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***MSU Guidelines for Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising***

The MSU Graduate School has published [guidelines for graduate mentoring and advising](#) relationships between students and faculty. The guidelines align with and reinforce MSU's foundational values. They define responsibilities of the community that supports graduate students, the University, the MSU Graduate School, academic departments, graduate program directors, graduate students, faculty mentors/ advisers, and guidance committees.

MSU encourages the practice of collaborating with the advisor to generate individual development plans (IDPs) that take into account the strengths and challenges of the student as well as the students' career goals. For templates, see [ImaginePhD \(Humanities & Social Science fields\)](#).

### ***HDFS Guidelines for Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising***

HDFS has described the mentoring responsibilities of students, faculty advisors, and guidance committees with respect to the specific departmental processes involved in HDFS graduate degrees.

### **Graduate Student's Responsibilities**

1. Review the Graduate Student Handbook and the MSU Academic Programs and become familiar with policies and procedures pertaining to the process of obtaining the degree. In particular, keep track of dates and deadlines for each step of the process including choosing a major professor and establishing a committee, filing an approved program, and completing the thesis (as applicable) and oral exams.
2. If admitted on a provisional basis, keep the major professor and Graduate Administrative Assistant informed of progress toward meeting requirements for regular status.
3. Develop a written statement of goals to be used in selecting courses in accordance with the chosen program.
4. Work with the major professor in selecting guidance committee members.
5. Keep up-to-date with current University, College, and Department policies, procedures and requirements pertaining to all aspects of the program.
6. Initiate the required Annual Progress Report and complete it in collaboration with advisor.
7. Submit any changes to program or committee structure on the proper forms with appropriate signatures.
8. Prepare a program plan of study with advice from the major professor and guidance committee.
9. Work with the major professor concerning program adjustments and completing proper forms.

10. Schedule guidance committee meetings for purposes of program planning, review of research proposal, and final oral examination.

### **Major Professor's (Advisor) Responsibilities**

1. Advise the student in selection of courses in accordance with stated program direction before a guidance committee has been formed.
2. Assist the student in selection of guidance committee members and assume responsibility for clarifying their roles.
3. Help the student keep up-to-date with current University and Department policies, procedures and requirements pertaining to all aspects of the program.
4. Initiate, review and approve all necessary graduate forms.
5. Advise the student in preparing a draft of the program plan for discussion and approval of guidance committee.
6. Chair guidance committee meetings for purposes of program planning, review of research proposal (Plan A students) and final oral examination.
7. Provide guidance in developing the student's research proposal, conducting the research and preparing the thesis (Plan A students).
8. Determine when the thesis is satisfactory for distribution to the guidance committee for final review preceding the defense of the thesis. In cases where the research director is not the major professor, this responsibility will be shared (Plan A students).
9. Academic and Professional Standards - Require that the MSU Annual Progress Report be completed, reviewed by the graduate director, and retained in the student file. In the case of a student not progressing satisfactorily, notification will go to the College Academic Affairs office from the student's Committee Chairperson.
10. Students who have not completed the program within six years will be dropped from the program. See the MSU Academic Handbook.

### **Guidance Committee's Responsibilities**

1. Advise the student in program planning, research proposal development, and other aspects of the program as input is needed.
2. Review and approve all necessary graduate forms.
3. Review and evaluate drafts of the thesis preceding the final defense; provide recommendations for improving the quality of the final research report.
4. Participate in the final oral examination (Plan B students) or oral thesis defense (Plan A students) and evaluate student performance.

### ***HDFS Faculty Eligible for Graduate Advising and Committee Positions***

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Tenure System Faculty</b><br>Adrian Blow | <b>Fixed Term Faculty**</b><br>Laurie Bullock |
|---|---|



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>Amy Bonomi<br/>Ryan Bowles<br/>Holly Brophy Herb<br/>Sarah Douglas<br/>Hope Gerde<br/>Kendal Holtrop<br/>Deborah Johnson<br/>Megan Maas<br/>Amy Nuttall<br/>Desiree Qin<br/>Le Anne Silvey<br/>Lori Skibbe<br/>Emilie Smith<br/>Claire Vallotton<br/>Francisco Villarruel<br/>Yijie Wang<br/>Andrea Wittenborn<br/>June Youatt</p> | <p>Amanda Guinot-Talbot<br/>Tamesha Harewood<br/>Brian Johnson<br/>Yuya Kiuchi<br/>Temple Odom<br/>Saila Subramanian<br/>Erica Tobe</p> <p><i>** Fixed Term Faculty may serve on committees with special permission.</i></p> |
|---|--|

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

### ***Schedule and Deadline Dates***

Current, detailed information is included each semester in the Schedule of Courses provided by the MSU Registrar. It is important that the student consult this schedule for the semester in which she/he expects to complete her/his degree for deadline dates to hold oral examinations and submit thesis drafts. A student must be enrolled for MSU credits (on campus or off-campus) during the semester in which the master's oral examination is held. University regulations are very strict on this point.

### ***Independent Study Contracts***

There are many opportunities for independent study by students who wish to pursue a special area in some depth. The variety of backgrounds, disciplines, and experiences represented among the faculty provides rich opportunities for independent study. Course numbers HDFS 490, 490H, 890, and 894 may be used for independent studies or special studies or practice. A maximum of 9 credits may be taken in these independent and special studies courses or a combination thereof. Fill out the [Independent Study form](#) with the faculty who will sponsor the course credits, and submit them to the Administrative Assistant for Graduate Studies.

**IMPORTANT:** *Students MUST consult with and obtain agreement from an individual faculty member before enrolling in an independent study course in order to be ensured of having a staff member with whom to work.*

Permission forms for variable credit course enrollment may be obtained in online from the HDFS website. These must be filed with the HDFS Office of Graduate Studies secretary before the student registers for a course and must be signed at least two days before late fees or other University deadlines are imposed.

### ***Maximum and Minimum Credits***

**Maximum.** Graduate students may carry up to 16 credits each semester. The department or school, however, determines the maximum number of credits. A student load above 16 credits requires approval by the student's dean.

**Minimum.** All students using University services (faculty consultation included) for graduate work must be registered each semester. Minimum registration consists of one course of 1 credit.

**Full Time Students.** In order to be considered full time for academic purposes, students must carry the minimum number of credits per semester as defined below:

|                                   |            |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Master's level .....              | 9 credits  |
| Graduate–Professional level ..... | 12 credits |

### ***DF-Deferred Grades***

Students who need more time to complete course requirements may use the deferred grade option. The required work must be completed and a grade 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 will be changed to DF/U under the numerical and Pass-No Grade (P-N) grading systems, and to DF/NC under the Credit-No Credit (CR-NC) system. This rule does not apply to graduate thesis work.

### ***Master's Residence Requirements***

A minimum of 6 credits in the degree program must be earned in residence on campus. Request for waivers of this requirement must be submitted by the department or school responsible for the degree program to the appropriate college and then to The Dean of the Graduate School. Youth Development and Family Community Services majors are exempt from this policy.

### ***Transfer Credits-Master's***

As many as 9 semester credits of graduate course work (excluding research and thesis credits) may be transferred into a 30 credit master's degree program from other accredited institutions or international institutions of similar quality, if they are considered by the student's committee as appropriate to the planned program and provided they were completed within the time limits approved for the earning of the degree desired at Michigan State University. Only graduate-level courses in which at least a 3.0 (B) grade was received will be considered for transfer. Approval for transfer of courses must be given by the student's guidance committee and filed with the Graduate Administrative Assistant in the HDFS Graduate office in Room 7E Human Ecology Bldg. The department Graduate Program Director and College of Social Science Associate Dean must grant approval.

### ***Lifelong Education Credits***

No more than 9 Lifelong Education credits may be applied to a master's degree program. Only graduate-level courses in which at least a 3.0 (B) grade was received will be considered for transfer. Approval for transfer of courses must be given by the student's guidance committee and filed with the Graduate Administrative Assistant in the HDFS Graduate office in Room 7E Human Ecology Bldg. The department Graduate Program Director and College of Social Science Associate Dean must grant approval.

### ***Credit-sharing Policy***

The University Committee for Graduate Studies revised the credit-sharing policy for Master's programs: "If your program includes more than 30 credits, then you may share up to 30% of the total with another Master's program."

### ***Collateral Courses***

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

### ***Time Limit***

The time limit for completion of the master's degree is six years from the beginning of the first semester in which credit was earned toward the degree.

### ***International Travel***

Graduate students traveling internationally for MSU-related work (research data collection, international professional conferences, courses, or other academic business) must sign up using the [International Travelers Database](#) (even if they are not being reimbursed for travel). This is the best way for MSU to stay in touch with our students if there is an emergency.

### ***Academic Freedom and Student Rights and Responsibilities***

All graduate students at MSU are expected to obtain and familiarize themselves with two major documents: (1) Academic Freedom for Students at MSU, and (2) [Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), and conduct themselves in accordance with procedures outlined in the documents. The documents are printed in each current issue of [Spartan Life](#) online.

### ***Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy***

Michigan State University is committed to providing a safe and supportive climate for all students, faculty, and staff. All graduate students should familiarize themselves with the Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct [Policy](#) and procedures.

### ***Anti-Discrimination Policy***

Michigan State University is committed to an active policy of no discrimination on the basis of race, creed, ethnic origin, sexual orientation or gender. All graduate students should familiarize themselves with the [Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures](#), and conduct themselves in accordance with the policy and procedures.

## ***Evaluation of the Faculty***

Student confidential instructional rating reports shall be used in each graduate course to aid the faculty in its responsibility for ensuring the quality of graduate education. At the discretion of the teacher, supplementary means such as open-ended questions may also be used to evaluate the course. Student confidential instructional rating reports must be made available to the HDFS Chairperson for review.

## ***Grief Absence Policy***

MSU has defined a [grief absence policy](#) to accommodate students' bereavement needs. 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 reasonable accommodations so that the student is not penalized due to a verified grief absence.

***If employed as an 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 Contract](#). Students in the graduate professional colleges (CHM, COM, CVM, LAW) with their own grief absence policies are excluded from the above and should follow their own policies. Students who believe their rights under this policy have been violated should contact the University Ombudsperson.

## ***MSU Guidelines on Authorship***

MSU has defined [guidelines on authorship](#). Further, all MSU researchers are encouraged to share their work in the form accepted within their specific discipline.

## **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] 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).

### ***MSU's Institutional Data Policy***

Michigan State University has defined an [Institutional Data Policy](#) to protect the security and integrity of its Institutional Data without hindering the effective and efficient use of those Data. To achieve this objective, the best efforts of every member of the University community are required.

### ***Professionalism Policy***

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and to exhibit characteristics of a professional student. If a student engages in conduct that is deemed unprofessional, the department will generally treat such conduct as an additional place where students need to be taught appropriate skills to succeed in the profession, with such information generally relayed by the advisor or Graduate Director.

If the conduct persists or if it is particularly egregious, the conduct may be noted in the student's academic file and specific guidelines may be provided to guide future conduct. Repeated or egregious unprofessional conduct can be used as grounds for termination from the program. Such decisions will be handled by the Graduate Director and the Department Chair, in consultation with the Associate Dean in the College of Social Science. (Adapted from the Department of Economics Program Handbook.)

## **HDFS FELLOWSHIPS SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS APPLICATIONS DUE February 15, 5:00 P.M.**

One application process is used for all scholarships. Students will be considered for all awards for which they fit criteria; a scholarship form completed on line is used to assess student eligibility for all awards. Students must submit a current resume or CV, and a statement describing: their research, educational, and /or professional goals and accomplishments, and their fit with the criteria that make the eligible the scholarships (see below for the criteria of each scholarship).

All application materials should be submitted electronically. HDFS Graduate Education Committee reviews most scholarships. Awards are made in accordance with the criteria for each fellowship or scholarship.

There are ten different scholarships available HDFS Graduate Students; one or more awards are made for each scholarship each year, depending on availability of funds.

### ***Jeanette Lee Scholarship***

Eligibility: This award is for educational emphasis that will benefit families/children. Preference is to a returning student. How to apply: (1) a 500 word statement describing how this award will help you have achieved your educational and professional goals towards your degree; (2) A current vita; and (3) a letter of support from your major professor (should address academic progress and professional goals).

### ***Eugene O. Peisner Scholarship***

Eligibility: (a) must be a Human Development and Family Studies graduate student (if there are no qualified graduate students the award may be made to a senior within the Department); (b) have demonstrated financial need, to be determined by the MSU Office of Financial Aid; (c) have demonstrated high academic achievement and (d) have the capacity and motivation to achieve educational professional goals.

### ***Paolucci Scholarship***

Eligibility: must be admitted to a Human Development and Family Studies graduate program. Must have demonstrated: professional service, public service, or volunteer activity; professional organization membership and activity; research and publication potential; high academic achievement with exemplary performance in Human Development and Family Studies program.

### ***Helen Takken Brink Scholarship***

Eligibility: This award is intended to encourage students who have demonstrated the capacity to achieve educational and professional goals, the motivation to achieve these goals and the initiative to seek opportunities to further their progress in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies.



### ***Knorr/Metzer/Byers Scholarship***

Eligibility: This award is for students majoring in Human Development and Family Studies.

### ***Tom Luster Endowed Scholarship***

Eligibility: The fellowship is for Human Development and Family Studies graduate students who are studying diversity or low-income communities. If no qualified HDFS major applies, the Department of Human Development and Studies may at its discretion, award the scholarship to other qualified students.

### ***Jean Davis Schlater Dissertation Fellowship Endowment***

Eligibility: (a) Must be a Human Development and Family Studies major graduate student; (b) must have an approved research proposal for the doctoral dissertation concentration in study of the family with preference given to the following foci: human values, family decision making, family resource management, or family quality of life.

### ***Verna Lee and John Hildebrand Dissertation Fellowship***

Eligibility: The fellowships shall be for Human Development and Family Studies doctoral students who plan to conduct research and have an approved program plan with a focus on women or minority issues. In addition, with the approval of the Human Development and Family Studies Department Chairperson or the Graduate Program Director, income from the endowed fund may also be allocated for: (1) Support of publications based on dissertations completed under item 3(b); (2) Support of lectures, symposia, or individual activities concerning issues specific to women and minority populations.

### ***Human Ecology Legacy Endowment Fund Scholarship***

Eligibility: Students who have demonstrated leadership in areas that provide a direct impact on the community through programs and research related to traditional home economics (such as family, parenting and nutrition).

### ***Human Development and Family Studies Opportunity Fund***

Eligibility: must be admitted to an HDFS graduate program. Preference for the award of scholarships and fellowships to nontraditional graduate (Master's or PhD) students in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies.

### ***Additional Information for Scholarships and Awards***

Receipt of externally funded fellowships by students who have written their own grant applications and worth at least \$25,000 (direct Costs) now makes the students eligible for in-state tuition rate. The in-state tuition rate applies only to the semesters during which the student is supported by the fellowship. This policy applies only to grants funded through a competitive processes (e.g., need-based fellowships) or from international sources do not qualify the students for in-

state tuition rates. For more information contact Associate Dean Judith Stoddart at [stoddart@msu.edu](mailto:stoddart@msu.edu).

## TRAVEL FUNDING

When University-related travel is permitted, limited travel funding is available for student travel to national and international conferences. Generally there is an early September deadline for fall semester travel and an early December deadline for spring semester.

These are the steps you need to take:

- ▶ Go to Graduate School website: and access [Graduate Student Travel Funding](#).
- ▶ Prepare a letter that indicates: a) name of conference, dates, location; 2) title and brief abstract of paper or poster presentation (ONLY THOSE WHO ARE FIRST AUTHOR WILL BE SENT ON TO GRADUATE SCHOOL; provide proof of authorship); 3) itemization of cost; and 4) emergency contact information.
- ▶ Have your advisor commit funding if possible, and sign the form; advisors must sign regardless of funding commitment.
- ▶ Submit your form to the Administrative Assistant for Graduate Studies by fall or spring deadline as stated (usually early September and December). Based on funds available, HDFFS will commit some funding and then forward to the College of Social Science and The Graduate School for those who are first author.
- ▶ Priority given to students presenting at conferences.

Other Notes:

- ▶ Students should submit only one request an academic year. Further requests will be considered if budget permits.
- ▶ There will be a second call for applications in November to cover spring/summer meeting requests.
- ▶ Those presenting will be given priority and the meeting should be at the national or international level.

## GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

### *Purpose and Principles*

There are three purposes for assistantships in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies:

- ▶ To provide graduate students with opportunities to expand their academic and professional skills and increase their breadth of scholarly experience.
- ▶ To provide support for faculty engaged in activities that further the mission of the Department.
- ▶ To provide financial assistance to graduate students as they pursue their advanced degrees.

Graduate teaching and research assistantships are available to qualified graduate students based on availability of funds, and Ph.D. students have priority. Assistantships may include the following types of assignments: assisting in the Child Development Laboratories and/or Family and Child Clinic, assisting with ongoing research, and assisting with undergraduate courses in HDFS. Further information can be obtained from HDFS faculty members and administrators.

Assistantships are awarded based on the funding package committed to students in their initial offer of admission, financial need, academic progress, past support, and fit with specific needs of the department. Faculty in each content area (e.g. HDFS, CFT, SEDE) makes recommendations to the Department Chair and Director of Graduate Studies regarding funding priorities and fit of students with available positions.

All assistantships are contingent upon availability of resources. Assistantships are assigned for a specific period of time, with some opportunity for renewal. Under normal circumstances, half-time assistantships will be assigned for two (2) semesters.

### ***Applying For a Graduate Assistantship in HDFS***

1. A link to an online application/questionnaire regarding TA/RA positions will be distributed early in the Spring semester. Submitting this will provide the department with information about your availability, preferences, and schedule, but is not a guarantee that all requests can be granted. **If you wish to have an assistantship, this response is mandatory.**
2. Complete the application on line by the due date (typically in February or March).
3. Appointments are based on available funds, departmental needs, student learning goals, and students' prior experience and performance. Content area faculty make recommendations to the Department Chair and Director of Graduate Studies regarding specific student placements.
4. Most assistantships are committed before the beginning of fall semester. However, some openings may occur during the academic year.
5. An initial letter is sent in April for fall appointments. Further appointments may be made, or appointments adjusted in late spring and summer as needs and budget allocations are confirmed.
6. Students may advocate for specific positions in which they are interested, and may contact a particular course instructor, research investigator, or administrator with whom they would be interested in working. Doing so will

not exclude you from being considered for another position nor assure you of the position about which you inquired.

7. Reappointments to previous positions are possible, but are not guaranteed.

### ***Normal Employment Requirements for Graduate Assistants***

- ▶ There are three employment periods each year: August 16-December 31, January 1-May 15, and May 16-August 15. *Stipends are compensation for completion of the entire body of work associated with a TA appointment, including through the submission of grades even if that date falls outside the employment period.*
- ▶ Quarter-time appointment=10 hours per week on average each semester
- ▶ Half-time appointment = 20 hours per week on average each semester.
- ▶ Three-quarter time appointment = 30 hours per week on average each semester.

### ***Pay Dates***

Paychecks issued every other Friday. For more information on specific dates, see the MSU [Biweekly Payroll Schedules](#).

### ***Tuition Waiver***

A tuition waiver will be provided during the period of the assistantship. The tuition waiver is in the amount of **nine credits for Fall Semester, nine credits for Spring Semester and five credits for Summer Semester**. Visitor credits may count as part of a graduate assistant's credit load and be covered by the waiver. If a graduate assistant resigns an assistantship during a semester, such that the appointment does not meet minimum duration standards (53 calendar days in Fall and Spring; 46 calendar days in Summer) he/she will be assessed tuition for all credits carried, and those who are not Michigan (in-state) residents will be assessed out-of-state tuition. For any changes in courses made after the End of 100% Refund Period (see the [Academic Calendar](#)). No refund will be made for credits dropped, nor may courses be exchanged, even when such courses are covered by tuition waiver. Any additional tuition required by a particular program or college are not covered.

***Exemption from Out-of-State Tuition:*** This exemption also applies to Summer Semesters preceding or following a full academic year appointment (consecutive Fall and Spring appointments).

***Fees:*** Matriculation and energy fees are waived. Any additional fees required by a particular program or college or by status as an international student are not covered.

### ***Health Benefits***

Learn more about health benefits provided to students holding graduate assistantships [here](#).

## ***Graduate Assistant Illness/Injury/Pregnancy/Adoption Leave Policy***

According to [University Policy](#), a Graduate Assistant who becomes unable to fulfill duties of his/her appointment because of illness or injury shall notify the administrator of his/her major unit as soon as circumstances permit. Similarly, a graduate assistant unable to fulfill the duties of his/her appointment because of pregnancy shall notify the administrator of his/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.

A graduate assistant who adopts a child shall be entitled to adoption leave of up to two (2) months, the first week of which will be paid by the major unit and the balance of which will be unpaid, to commence on or before the date of adoption as determined by the graduate assistant.

A graduate assistant who becomes a parent by birth and is not otherwise covered by the pregnancy leave policy, shall be entitled to parental leave of up to two (2) months, the first week of which will be paid by the major unit and the balance of which will be unpaid to commence on or before the date of birth as determined by the graduate assistant. Additional unpaid leave may be arranged on an ad hoc basis, as mutually agreed with the major unit.

Eligibility for adoption leave or parental leave is determined under the following conditions: (1) It must be completed within six (6) weeks of the birth or adoption of a child under the age of six (6); (2) It may not extend beyond the graduate assistant's previously scheduled appointment end date; and (3) It must be requested in writing no less than four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled start of the leave.

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

### ***Termination from Graduate Assistantships***

When a graduate student is unable to fulfill the responsibilities of a graduate assistantship, HFDS follows the procedures set out by the GEU for review and potential dismissal of the student from the position. If a graduate assistant resigns an assistantship or the assistantship is terminated early during a

semester, such that the appointment does not meet minimum duration standards (53 calendar days in Fall and Spring; 46 calendar days in Summer), he/she will be assessed tuition for all credits carried, and those who are not Michigan (in-state) residents will be assessed out-of-state tuition. More information on the procedures can be found in the [GEU contract](#); the relevant sections are provided below.

### **Procedure for Unsatisfactory Performance**

When employment performance is unsatisfactory, the employment duties may be reduced and employment fraction and pay may be reduced correspondingly, or employment may be terminated. In cases of unsatisfactory employment performance, the matter will first be discussed with the Employee prior to any action being taken. If the Employer determines that the existing situation can be corrected by the Employee and is of such a nature that correction is appropriate, the Employee will be given not less than one calendar week from date of discussion to make the correction. A written summary of such a discussion will be available at the written request of the Employee provided the request is received within forty-eight (48) hours of the discussion. When allowed by law, a copy of this summary will be provided to the Union.

### **Discipline**

The parties recognize the authority of the Employer to suspend, discharge, or take other appropriate disciplinary action against Employees for just cause. Discharge may result from an accumulation of minor infractions as well as for a single serious infraction. Whenever it is appropriate, the Employer shall give the Employee advance notice of its intent to hold an investigatory interview. An Employee shall be entitled to the presence of a Union Representative at an investigatory interview if he/she has reasonable grounds to believe that the interview may be used to support disciplinary action against him/her, and he/she requests representation. If any discipline is taken against an Employee, the Employee will receive a copy of the disciplinary action. In the event that an Employee is discharged, the Employee will receive a copy of the notice of discharge, including a summary of the reasons for the discharge. When allowed by law, the Union will be provided a copy of any notice of discharge. An Employee may appeal a suspension or discharge beginning at Step Two of the Grievance Procedure.

### ***GEU Contract***

Graduate teaching assistants are eligible to join the Graduate Employee Union. The current [contract](#) between the GEU and the University lays out the rights and responsibilities of Union members. Graduate students who have a graduate assistantship should become familiar with this document. The current contract is in effect through May 15, 2023.

Policies regarding outside work-for-pay are addressed in Article 17 of the GEU. States.

- ▶ An employee whose primary employment is with Michigan State University may appropriately maintain additional employment either within or outside of MSU.
- ▶ Such employees will ensure that additional employment does not interfere with their employment responsibilities at MSU.

Additionally, the Department strongly emphasizes that graduate assistants are students first and should monitor their academic and professional progress to ensure scholarly success during their term of employment.

### ***Responsibilities and Evaluation***

Graduate assistants are expected to meet with their faculty supervisor to discuss their responsibilities before the semester begins. An evaluation of each student's work is completed each semester. That evaluation should take place in a meeting between the student and the faculty supervisor with whom he or she has been working. An [evaluation form](#) for this purpose has been approved by the Department of Human Development and Family Studies and is available online under Resources.

Graduate students who teach also need yearly evaluations of their teaching (Article 2.5.2.4); see website <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/graduate-student-rights-and-responsibilities/article-2-academic-rights-and-responsibilities-for-graduate-students> for more information.

Teaching Assistants also are required to attend TA professional development sessions provided by the department. D2L is the main instructional tool available at MSU. Online tutorials and [help desk](#) information is available on D2L.

### ***Mandatory Training***

All TAs and RAs must complete the on-line training about the [Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct Policy](#).

***You will want to reserve approximately 30 minutes to complete all assignments.*** *If you need assistance, contact the Help Desk at 517-884-4600 or [empower@msu.edu](mailto:empower@msu.edu).*

### ***English Language Testing: MSU Policy Affecting International Teaching Assistants (ITAs)***

MSU candidates for TA appointments who were required to demonstrate English proficiency as a condition for regular admission to Michigan State University must also demonstrate that they meet a minimum standard of proficiency in spoken English before they can be assigned teaching work that involves oral communication with undergraduate students. Those ITAs who received a waiver of the TOEFL or of other accepted tests of English proficiency for admission,

must also meet the requirement of proficiency in spoken English before they are assigned to teaching work that involves oral communication with undergraduate students. To meet this requirement, those ITAs may use any of three options listed below:

- Presenting a TOEFL iBT speaking section score of 27 or higher.
- Receiving a score of 50 or higher on the [MSU Speaking Test](#)
- Taking [AAE 451 or AAE 452](#) (ITA language support courses) and receiving a score of 50 or higher on the [ITA Oral Interaction Test \(ITAOI\)](#).

Individual exceptions from these requirements (on a case-by-case basis in rare circumstances) will be considered by the Graduate School in consultation with the ELC upon the request of the department and with the endorsement of the Associate Dean of the College

### **Updates about English language proficiency for Teaching Assistants**

The policy changes (indicated in bold print) are reflected in the description that follows. The policy is also available from: <https://grad.msu.edu/tap/speak> or <https://grad.msu.edu/tap/first-time-tas-international>

### ***MSU TA Program***

The MSU Graduate School provides trainings, resources, and fellowship programs for teaching assistants, including new TAs and those continuing to build their teaching and mentoring skills. Learn more about the [MSU TA Program here](#).

## **ACADEMIC HEARING PROCEDURES FOR THE HDFS DEPARTMENT**

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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 that 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 Department of Human



Development and Family Studies has established the following Hearing Board procedures for adjudicating graduate student academic grievances and complaints. (See GSRR 5.4.)

### ***JURISDICTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES 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)

### ***COMPOSITION OF THE HEARING BOARD***

- A. The Department of Human Development and Family Studies 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 Department of Human Development and Family Studies will train hearing board members about these procedures and the applicable sections of the GSRR. (See GSRR 5.1.3.)

### ***REFERRAL TO THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY STUDIES 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 Associate Dean for Graduate Studies, 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. <https://ombud.msu.edu/> (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.)

## ***PRE-HEARING PROCEDURES***

- A. After receiving a graduate student's written request for a hearing, the Chair of the Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 vice 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 Human Development and Family Studies Hearing Board or request permission to participate in the hearing through an electronic communication channel. Written statements must be submitted to the Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies Hearing Board may either grant or deny the request. (See GSRR 5.4.8.)
- J. At its discretion, the Human Development and Family Studies Hearing Board may set a reasonable time limit for each party to present its case, and the Chair of the Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies Hearing Board are expected to respect the confidentiality of the hearing process. (See GSRR 5.4.10.4. and 5.4.11.)

## **HEARING PROCEDURES**

- A. The Hearing will proceed as follows:
1. Introductory remarks by the Human Development and Family Studies 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 student 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies Hearing Board asks questions of any of the participants in the hearing.

## ***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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 the 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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)

## ***APPEAL OF THE HEARING BOARD DECISION***

- A. Either party may appeal a decision by the Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies Hearing Board decision to the College Hearing Board must allege, in sufficient particularity to justify a hearing, that the initial Human Development and Family Studies Hearing Board failed to follow applicable procedures for adjudicating the hearing or that findings of the Human Development and Family Studies 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.)

## **RECONSIDERATION**

If new evidence should arise, either party to a hearing may request the appropriate Human Development and Family Studies 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 Human Development and Family Studies Hearing Board to review the new material and render a decision on a new hearing. (See GSRR 5.4.13.)

## **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.)

**Approved by the Faculty of the Department of Human Development and Family Studies on February 24, 2012.**

## OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY OMBUDSPERSON

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

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

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

Contact information:

Office of the University Ombudsperson  
129 N. Kedzie Hall  
(517) 353-8830  
[ombud@msu.edu](mailto:ombud@msu.edu)  
<https://ombud.msu.edu>

## RESOURCES PROVIDED BY MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Resources provided by the Graduate School:

- ▶ [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](#)

Resources provided by University-level units:

- ▶ [OISS](#)
- ▶ [RCPD](#)
- ▶ [Student Affairs](#)
- ▶ [Libraries](#)
- ▶ [Olin Health Center](#)
- ▶ [Inclusion & Intercultural Initiatives](#)
- ▶ [Burgess Institute for Entrepreneurship & Innovation](#)
- ▶ [The Writing Center](#)
- ▶ [University Outreach & Engagement](#)