General Orientation for New Grad Program Directors and Grad Secretaries 2013

Items will also be covered in an orientation program Thursday, October 10, 8:30AM Big Ten C, Kellogg Center

** marks all NEW information this year

Admissions:

Online applications are completed by students logging on to the GRAD APPLICATION page http://grad.msu.edu/apply/ from the Graduate School homepage (grad.msu.edu). All graduate programs have a link from the application page.

**GAMS—Graduate Admissions Management System** is in development with many functions in place for this application cycle. Many graduate programs are using GAMS for this cycle of admissions. This is the only way to have access to electronic letters of recommendation and all recommended action forms will be submitted to Admissions via GAMS.

**Ph.D. public data are on the application website.** http://grad.msu.edu/apply/PHDdata.aspx. Updated information for Fall 2012 was posted over the summer. Last year 1000 individuals viewed these pages.

Academic Integrity and Criminal Conduct question (#24): Office of Admissions screens this question. For academic integrity answers of “yes”, departments with college approval may accept the student. For criminal conduct answers of “yes”, departments and colleges may request a meeting of the Director of Admissions, appropriate other MSU personnel as needed, the Dean of the Graduate School, and representatives from the dept and college for possible admission.

Minimum TOEFL / IELTS scores are required to help ensure student success. These minimum standards are set by the faculty and graduate students on the University Committee on Graduate Studies with expert knowledge contributed by the staff and faculty of the English Language Center. Waivers are possible: http://grad.msu.edu/forms/docs/EngLangWaiver.pdf

The Grad School, Admissions, and Int’l Studies and Programs partnered to provide a recruiter for sponsored international students. Julie Sinclair now holds the position that Anne Schneller held in the past. Julie will recruit around the globe in strategic areas that have sponsored grad students programs. Depts/programs often have some level of financial support required for these students. http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/students/sponsored/

Student data:

GradInfo is the web-app that has data on all M and D students in the past 10 years, plus current students. It also has dynamic data generated for completion rates, time-to-degree, demographics, enrollment counts, median GRE scores (if applicable), degree award counts, and initial placement (and subsequent placement for Ph.D. students as the GS has an ongoing project using
social media to find current placements). These data are useful in academic program review and are data that comprise part of the metrics used by the Office of the Provost.

https://login.msu.edu/?App=J3200  Access is controlled by your college security administrator and requires updated FERPA training offered through the Office of the Registrar:
http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.asp

GradInfo is the source of the PUBLIC Ph.D. data on the Grad Applications page:
http://grad.msu.edu/apply/PHDdata.aspx, along with data your programs provide.

Protecting student data: FERPA:
http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.asp

GradPlan is the web-interactive system for Ph.D. students to create and store their Ph.D. Degree Plans and subsequent graduate program activities. Students can link to the log-in page: https://gradplan.msu.edu. User guides for staff and faculty are also on this page. Eventually, this will replace all Reports of the Guidance Committees and will be the pathway for final degree certification for Ph.D. students.

Graduate Assistants:

All MSU employees, including graduate assistants, are pre-screened by HireRight:
http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/facacadpolproc/CriminalCheckFAQ.htm . The University will rely on the background check conducted by the U.S. DHS in lieu of a University background check for individuals coming to MSU directly from residence outside the US. However, these students will still need to complete the HireRight information in order for us to determine whether they are coming to the University directly from residence outside the United States.

*** (revised) Unit Procedure for Graduate Assistant (GA) background check:

1. Use the Teaching Assistant (TA) appointment/re-appointment and Research Assistant (RA) appointment/re-appointment letters available on the Graduate School’s website for all offers of employment to Graduate Assistants, and include the "Consumer Disclosure And Authorization Form."

2. The Graduate Assistant must sign and date the "Consumer Disclosure And Authorization Form". Completed consent forms should be attached to the GA appointment paperwork in the EBS system. Completed consent forms may also be sent to Human Resources, Attn: Katrina Hawley, Graduate Assistants, 110 Nisbet, via e-mail to GraduateAssistants@hr.msu.edu, or via fax to 517-432-3862.

3. Communicate to the Graduate Assistant that the background check will take three to seven days to process. Once the background check has been completed, the GA appointment paperwork will be processed if all other necessary documents have been received.
MSU is improving its record for federal I-9 requirements. GAs appointed must be on campus to provide I-9 information within 3 days or the appointment will be cancelled and a new start date established when the student arrives. Stipend pay, of course, is recalculated based on a new appointment period.

Other policies (credit load, etc) governing GAs at MSU may be found in the Academic Programs catalog: [http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111#s354](http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111#s354)

**Teaching Assistants:**

TAs are covered by a collective bargaining agreement with the Graduate Employees Union. This contract covers all graduate students who are TEACHING assistants. Find the collective bargaining agreement here: [http://grad.msu.edu/2011-2015GEUContract.pdf](http://grad.msu.edu/2011-2015GEUContract.pdf)

QUESTIONS? Call Kathie Elliott in Employee Relations: 884-0103. Please talk with Kathie prior to any grievance hearing with a TA and his/her union rep. There is a defined process!

There are required template letters to use for appointment, reappointment and non-appointment. Find them on the “forms” page [http://grad.msu.edu/forms/](http://grad.msu.edu/forms/)

TAs must have a minimum score of 50 on the SPEAK test to be eligible to teach. SPEAK is given by the English Language Center at the beginning of each semester. Students with a 45 are eligible for an appeal. Appeals must be requested by the department. A dept rep, a Grad School rep and ELC rep(s) will determine the level at which the student may participate in teaching. ELC sets up the appeals. Tony Nunez coordinates for the Grad School. **NEW** each dept may request an appeal for one student/semester with a score of 40.

**continuing** There is a pool of 200 credits (each year) for TAs (not RAs or TEs) to apply to receive (paid for by the Provost). These are required credits beyond the 9-9-5 tuition package. [http://grad.msu.edu/tatuitionpool/](http://grad.msu.edu/tatuitionpool/)

**Research Assistants:**

RAs are covered by policies in the Academic Programs catalog: [http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111#s354](http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111#s354)

RAs are also covered by the Grad Student Rights and Responsibilities document, Article 4: [http://grad.msu.edu/gsrr/](http://grad.msu.edu/gsrr/)

**Health insurance benefits associated with grad assistant appointments:** [http://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/studenthealth/](http://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/studenthealth/)

**Health insurance benefits associated with graduate FELLOWSHIP appointments:**
As of July 1, 2013, units are no longer able to directly enroll a graduate student in the health insurance plan. Students must enroll themselves in the base plan. Units may provide a fellowship to the student to cover the cost of the plan.

Important information for you to share with STUDENTS:

Responsible Conduct of Research education is required. Find out more: http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/

Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities: http://grad.msu.edu/gsrr/

Academic Programs catalog chapter on graduate education: http://www.reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/Text.asp?Section=111

Doctoral students now have access to GRADPLAN: an entirely web-based application that permits a student to prepare the (required) Report of the Guidance Committee and other documents that circulate to faculty electronically. ALL data on doctoral students and their programs will be kept in GradPlan, including waiver requests, GS acceptance of the final document, and the final degree certification from the Registrar’s Office. https://gradplan.msu.edu/gradPlanHome.action

**Career Success http://careersuccess.msu.edu is the comprehensive source of information for planning for careers and professional development. The GS also has 2 Ph.D.-level career specialists to work with your students on using Career Success and receiving individualized assistance. You can link to Career Services and Graduate Student Life and Wellness via Career Success.

Graduate Office Fellowships:

This pool of MSU general fund dollars is allocated by the Graduate School to support M and D students.

ALL of these funds are awarded using a fellowship form and provided directly to the student’s account. The account number may not be used for any other reason, including travel vouchers. Klomparens and Melissa del Rio coordinate for the Grad School.

Categories: http://grad.msu.edu/funding/

General allocations are made to each college based on the number of graduate students enrolled the previous fall semester and weighted 3:1 D:M students. An additional factor is the number of degrees granted across the college the previous year. The final factor is the Average GPA of the entering class of students the previous fall semester. ALL funds must be spent by mid-end of April each year. Colleges (and units) decide how the funds are spent.
Also allocated similarly are funds to support students during the SUMMER, which must also be spent by mid-April each year.

Dissertation completion fellowships are allocated by the colleges based on the number of Ph.D. students and on the past record of completions by students awarded those funds. The typical award is $6,000 in a semester, but colleges may decide to increase or decrease that amount. The goal is WRITING the dissertation, so students should not have any more than a ¼ GA to occupy his/her time.

“egradfellows” is the system of automatic routing using FTU for the more than 7,000 fellowship forms annually.

University Distinguished and Enrichment Fellowship program is also fully-funded from this account. [http://grad.msu.edu/universityfellowships/](http://grad.msu.edu/universityfellowships/) Judith Stoddart coordinates.

UDF/UEF supplementary funds are provided to each college depending on the number of UDF and UEF students enrolled each FALL semester. For some colleges, the GS awards the additional amounts directly to the students and in others, the college itself awards these amounts. One obligation of departments with University Fellows is to provide the same stipend amount for the years in which the unit is funding the student that the Graduate School provided in year 1.

Educational Opportunity Fellowships are available for students with documented undergraduate indebtedness. Applications come to the Graduate School and are awarded by the MSU Office of Financial Aid. [http://grad.msu.edu/fellowships/eof.aspx](http://grad.msu.edu/fellowships/eof.aspx)

Travel fellowships: [http://grad.msu.edu/fellowships/travel.aspx](http://grad.msu.edu/fellowships/travel.aspx) (Nunez)

Emergency fellowships: [http://grad.msu.edu/fellowships/emergency.aspx](http://grad.msu.edu/fellowships/emergency.aspx) (Jackson)

TOP UP awards for students receiving competitive, national/international fellowships from proposals written by the individual student: [http://grad.msu.edu/funding/docs/externallyfundedgraduatefellowships.pdf](http://grad.msu.edu/funding/docs/externallyfundedgraduatefellowships.pdf) (Klomparens)

MORE! See the funding website: [http://grad.msu.edu/funding/](http://grad.msu.edu/funding/)

The GS has a single source of GAs to support an inclusive graduate student population: Academic Achievement Graduate Assistantships (AAGAs). [http://grad.msu.edu/aaga/](http://grad.msu.edu/aaga/) Some of these are offered to students who participated in the Summer Research Opportunities Program (a CIC program) [http://grad.msu.edu/srop/](http://grad.msu.edu/srop/) and accepted into MSU programs.

**Thesis and dissertation processing:**

In 2010 the Graduate School moved to a completely electronic system of checking documents and forwarding them to the ProQuest document depository. [http://grad.msu.edu/etd/](http://grad.msu.edu/etd/). ALL documents come electronically. NO paper has been accepted since early 2011.