



# MSU SLS Ph.D. Program Admissions Procedures

The Ph.D. Program in Second Language Studies at Michigan State University - <https://sls.msu.edu/admissions/>

## Basic Requirements to be Considered for Admission

To be admitted to the SLS Program, you must have at least a baccalaureate degree or its equivalent from a recognized educational institution in a field related to applied linguistics (linguistics, a foreign language, teaching English as a second language, language education, etc.). Most students entering the program have a Master's Degree in a similar field, prior language-teaching experience, and experience conducting research in applied linguistics, foreign language education, or SLA. MSU MA Programs (with a thesis) in TESOL, German, Spanish, French, and other related linguistic areas are considered pipelines to the SLS Program, so if you do not meet SLS requirements, consider applying to a MSU MA program.

## Application Deadline

The SLS Program only allows students to enter the program in the fall of each academic year. To apply for entrance in the Fall of 2021, your application must be **complete** and **received in full** by the following date:

- **December 11, 2020** (for Fall 2021 enrollment)

**Financial Aid:** The SLS Program awards a select number of graduate research and teaching assistantships each year. These awards include a stipend, health insurance, and a tuition waiver of 9 credits per semester. All applicants whose application files are submitted and complete by December 11, 2020, will be considered for these awards. In addition, teaching or research assistantships may be available through other language programs at MSU. Please see the SLS Program "Admissions" site for more information. <https://sls.msu.edu/admissions/>

## Steps in the Application Process

- ▶ **(1) Submit a Graduate School application:** <http://grad.msu.edu/apply/online.aspx>. Select "Fall 2021" as your "First Semester to Enroll." Under "Major Preference," under "College of Arts and Letters" select the code **5642**. In addition to answering all questions, prepare to submit these:
  - Personal statement:** Your personal statement should include information about how your background and life experiences, including social, economic, cultural, familial, educational, or other opportunities or challenges motivate you to pursue a doctorate in Second Language Studies. Write in first person. Enter it in the text box. If you are applying for a specific GAsip as listed on the SLS Admissions website, list that at the top. This year additional space is provided in a second text box for explaining anything you would like, including ways COVID-19 has affected you.
  - Academic statement:** Please provide a concise academic statement, in first person, of your plans for graduate study, your career goals, and how MSU's SLS Ph.D. graduate program will help you meet your career and academic objectives. Discuss specifically with whom you would like to study in the SLS Program and how your research interests align with that person's current work and research agenda. Enter it in the text box; do not mail it.
- ▶ **(2) Test scores:** (i) Enter your GRE test score information, but also officially submit your GRE test scores to MSU (MSU institution code=1465) through ETS, [as described here](#). (ii) Also you can submit official English-language-proficiency test scores (TOEFL or IELTS). Please email the Program Director, Dr. Paula Winke, if you think you may need, or have a right to, a waiver from the GRE or the English competency test scores. Due to COVID-19, special waivers or substitute tests are possible ([winke@msu.edu](mailto:winke@msu.edu)).  
*Normally, the SLS Program expects a TOEFL score of 600 on the paper TOEFL, 250 on the CBT, or 100 on the iBT or higher, or an IELTS score of 7.5 or higher (MSU institution code=1465). Email Dr. Winke with questions.*
- ▶ **(3) References:** In the application, you will be directed to the "[graduate education](#)" student portal to register names and email addresses for three recommenders who are familiar with your academic and professional accomplishments and potential for success. At least one recommendation letter must be from a former professor, academic advisor, or other individual familiar with your academic background and abilities. The letters of recommendation must be current and specifically for the MSU SLS Ph.D. Program. After you submit your online application, the system will send an email to each reference containing a link so they can upload their letter of recommendation directly into your application file. Note that *all recommendation letters are due by the application deadline*. At this same "[graduate education](#)" portal, you should upload the following SLS required files, as described below. Note: international applicants have to additionally upload a completed "**Affidavit of Support**" if (and only if) they are not seeking support or a Graduate Assistantship from the SLS Program and/or MSU. Click on "[Financial Proof](#)" here for info. (The Affidavit form will appear for international applicants on the "File Uploads" page of the "[graduate education](#)" portal. But you actually do not need to submit it unless you are not seeking funding from MSU.)
- ▶ **(4) Resume:** Under "File Uploads" in the "[graduate education](#)" portal, select "File Uploads." Document Type "Resume" and upload your required Resume (or CV, which is a *curriculum vitae*).
- ▶ **(5) Academic Writing Sample:** Under "File Uploads" in the "[graduate education](#)" portal, select Document Type "Writing Sample," and upload your MA thesis, a class paper, or a publication. — You may *optionally* submit under "File Uploads" copies of your personal and academic statements (as PDFs, please), copies of your transcripts (these will be considered unofficial; your institutions still must send them in), and one or more "**Supplemental Application**" materials that you believe will help the admissions committee understand your unique strengths or promise as a graduate student, such as these:
  - A diversity statement; foreign or second-language teaching materials; course evaluations; syllabi; or examples of your prior work with technology (e.g., website link(s); link to an electronic portfolio, etc.). You may submit more than one "Supplemental Application" material. International applicants, only upload a completed [financial proof](#) "Affidavit of Support" and "Official Bank Statement" if you are not applying for MSU/SLS Program support. (The SLS Admissions Committee will tell you if you need this.)
- ▶ **(6) You can uploaded copies of your transcripts in the "[graduate education](#)" panel/portal, but you still **must** request **Official Transcripts** from places where you got a higher education degree. Because MSU has a decentralized graduate admissions process, have these institutions send them directly to Mr. Ben Lampe (address below). If your transcript is from China, you must submit [transcript verification](#), as described here: <https://sls.msu.edu/admissions/>**

## QUESTIONS? SLS Admissions Contact Information:

Mr. Ben Lampe, SLS Graduate Secretary and SLS Program Application Coordinator  
Michigan State University, B-331 Wells Hall, 619 Red Cedar Road, East Lansing, MI  
48824, USA — [lampeben@msu.edu](mailto:lampeben@msu.edu) — Phone: 517-884-1517 — Fax: 517-432-2736

Check your application status! <https://admissions.msu.edu/gradportal>