
GRADUATE HANDBOOK

Second Language Studies Program
Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures
College of Arts and Letters



Michigan State University

Updated March 25, 2022 for the 2021-2022 academic year

Note: This version of the handbook was originally compiled by the SLS faculty. The handbook is normally revised each year over the summer. This version of the handbook was revised by the Program Director and an ad hoc subgroup of the SLS faculty in mid August 2021, with small typos and errors fixed by November 2021. A correction to the definition of ABD in relation to the comprehensive exam was added March 25, 2022. Thank you to Leo Guedez for his assistance in helping the faculty audit the handbook in summer 2021.

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Introduction

Entering and completing graduate school is an exciting time, filled with new opportunities. The program's Graduate Handbook is a key source of information for guiding students through their degrees. The Graduate Handbook will inform students, faculty, and staff on course and program requirements, on standards for professional conduct in that field, on the timetable for the selection of a faculty advisor and the formation of a guidance committee, on examinations and graduation requirements, and on policy for dismissal. Informing students of these requirements is required by [Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities](#) (2.3.2). Timely, easy online access to the unit's Handbook and information about this access must be provided for all current students, and it should be available for prospective students. The Handbook is a crucial element for welcoming new students, supporting existing students, and ensuring the integrity and quality of the graduate program overall.

Scope of Program

The Second Language Studies (SLS) Program is in the Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures in the College of Arts and Letters (CAL) at Michigan State University. It is an academic home for researchers and practitioners who work in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and applied linguistics and their related subfields. The program is designed as an intellectual and academic workspace, with the goal to foster strong, innovative and diverse work that leads to pedagogical innovation and theory building. The space is for academics, practitioners, and graduate students. Specifically, the program awards a doctorate degree in SLS.

The SLS PhD. Program provides students with a deep understanding of how second and foreign languages are learned and ways of thinking about the application of this knowledge in a pedagogical context. The program is designed to prepare students for university-level faculty and administrative positions in the fields of language learning and/or teaching and for industry jobs in the same or related fields. Students will be prepared to conduct research and contribute to the future development of these fields at the institutions and agencies in which they work post graduation.

Because teaching and research are integral to this program, every effort will be made to provide students with research, teaching, and practical experience in the form of graduate assistantships. Teaching experience may include classroom teaching or related activities, such as program and curriculum development. Students will be oriented and advised on seeking internships, and will be mentored on community, national, and international outreach and service. Students will receive training in data management, program and project management, grant application writing, and where possible, on post-award grant administration.

The goals of the program are:

- To train students to conduct in-depth investigations into bilingual, multilingual, or non-primary or secondary language acquisition and use

- To develop students' understanding and appreciation of a wide array of research traditions in SLA, and to innovatively expand on those traditions by learning about and borrowing tools and methods from other fields
- To provide students with experience in conducting research in SLA and language pedagogy from a multitude of stances and cannons
- To provide students with the tools necessary for the collection, storage, maintenance, and analysis of second language data and related materials

Graduating with a Ph.D. in Second Language Studies means acquiring broad knowledge of the fields of SLA and applied linguistics, and being able to participate fully as an active professional researcher and language practitioner. There are expectations of Ph.D. students in our program that go beyond the formal requirements of the program. This includes, among other things, conducting original research, co-authoring and working in teams, participating in on-campus lecture series, participating in selected reading groups or labs, attending and presenting research at conferences, and participating in the many opportunities for professional development offered at Michigan State University.

Graduates of the program are expected to become specialists who will actively contribute to the general fields of Applied Linguistics, SLA, and language teaching, disseminating findings to future generations of language pedagogues, language and education policy makers, industry leaders, graduate students, and scholars. To this end, the SLS Program underscores the importance of attracting and retaining a diverse group of graduate students and of the importance of diversity among peers and faculty for the professional development of all graduate students in SLS and beyond.

Sample Schedule

Below is a sample timetable for courses. This is presented as a suggestion; given an individual student's background, this may or may not be applicable. The sample schedule assumes an M.A. upon entry to the SLS program. A student's actual schedule will vary depending on the number of courses actually offered and taken in a given semester.

Assuming an M.A. and background in SLA*

Year	Semester	Courses	Credits	Other
Year 1	Fall	LLT 861	3	
		LLT 873	3	
		LLT 874	3	
	Spring	LLT 808	3	
		LLT 862	3	
		LLT 864	3	
Year 2	Fall	LLT 807	3	Submit QRP 1
		LLT 864	3	
		Elective 1	3	

	Spring	Elective 2 Elective 3 Elective 4	3 3 3	
Year 3	Fall	Elective 5 LLT 999	3 6	Submit QRP 2
	Spring	LLT 999	9	Defend Dissertation Proposal
Year 4	Fall	LLT 999	9	
	Spring	LLT 999	9	Defend Dissertation

*In this sample, LLT 860 and LLT 872 were waived for the imaginary student. Please note the imaginary student was only able to graduate in four years because they had a M.A. that allowed for the two courses to be waived. Not having an MA before entering the program would extend the degree time.

Certificates and Specializations

SLS graduate students are eligible for various certificates and specializations. This is not an exhaustive list of those available to SLS graduate students at MSU, but rather is a list of a few that SLS students have been involved in in the past or that we are particularly aware of.

Cognitive Science Specialization

<https://www.cogsci.msu.edu/graduate.html>

Digital Humanities Certificate

<https://digitalhumanities.msu.edu/graduate-certificate/>

Global Studies Graduate Certificate

<https://globalstudies.msu.edu/degrees/graduate-certificate/>

MSU Graduate Certification in Community Engagement

<https://gradcert.engage.msu.edu/>

Admission and Support

Applicants are expected to hold a bachelor's or master's degree in a field closely related to SLS. Students may be admitted without this background, but they will be required to take all courses listed in section III below, unless a course or courses are (a) waived by the program, or (b) officially transferred in from another graduate program (no more than 9 credits may be transferred in). In the cases of waived courses, the student may substitute in other courses at MSU that the student's advisor, advisory committee, dissertation committee, and director agree are suitable given the student's research trajectory and post-graduate plans. Conditional admission is not granted. Please check the SLS website (<http://sls.msu.edu>) for application deadlines. Admission is granted only for the Fall Semester.

Procedure

A completed application packet includes:

1. Application and fee (major code 5642)
2. Three letters of reference from individuals who are familiar with your academic work
3. Statement of research interests
4. Curriculum Vitæ (CV) or resume
5. Academic writing sample (M.A. thesis or academic paper)
6. Transcripts from all institutions of higher education
7. GRE scores
8. *International students only* — TOEFL scores less than two years old. Minimum score is 600 on the paper and pencil test, 250 on the computer-based test and 100 on the internet-based TOEFL (iBT). *Please note during COVID-19, waivers may be applied for or other tests may be substituted with approval. Please email the program director for more information.*

NOTE: APPLICANTS FROM CHINESE UNIVERSITIES:

Chinese Students: Michigan State University requires all applicants pursuing degrees or who have earned degrees from universities in China to submit not only transcripts and graduation certificates from China, but also obtain verification of these documents from the China Academic Degrees and Graduate Education Development Center (CDGDC). Both of these reports must be sent electronically to the SLS Program Manager (currently Mr. Ben Lampe) during the first semester of enrollment.

More information is available here: [Verification of Transcripts and Degrees from China](#)

Financial Support

The SLS program has a limited number of highly competitive fellowships and/or research assistantships. All applicants are automatically considered for these fellowships and assistantships. Additionally, all applicants are considered for all appropriate university support. Because support is limited, all applicants are encouraged to seek outside funding for their graduate studies. Please see the SLS Program website on Grants to read a list of what outside funding students and faculty in the program have received in the past. Other sources of support (e.g. language teaching -- including English language teaching at the English Language Center) are available through the relevant language units. Applicants must contact these units directly, as there is no mechanism for applications to be passed from unit to unit.

Other awards such as dissertation research or completion grants are available, although not administered by the SLS program. Each student is encouraged to investigate these opportunities. Chairs of guidance committees may be able to direct students to various

funding sources. The graduate program director maintains a database of SLS grant application materials released voluntarily from the authors. These documents are examples of successful grant applications, which the SLS Ph.D. students will be able to access with permission from the director. These materials, however, are not shared outside of the SLS program.

Receipt of externally-funded fellowships by students who have written their own grant applications, and that are worth at least \$20,000 (direct costs), make a student eligible for the 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 process by a US institution/agency/foundation. Funds obtained through non-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 the Graduate School in 110 Linton Hall.

Disability Accommodations for Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistants (RAs, TAs, and TEs) are both students and employees. They are thus eligible for disability accommodations in both of these roles, and these accommodations are provided through distinct documents coordinated by RCPD: Students receive VISAs (Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations) or VISTAs (Verified Individualized Services and Temporary Accommodations) and employees receive SEADs (Statements of Employee Accommodation Determination). Graduate assistants can register for both situations using [RCPD's MyProfile portal](#).

Time Limits

SLS support is offered for a maximum of 4.5 years (excluding summer) if a student begins the program with an M.A., and potentially more if a student does not have an M.A. upon entry into the program. Funding assumes that satisfactory progress is being made toward the degree (See section VII), and that the student will apply for a DCF (Dissertation Completion Fellowship) from the MSU College of Arts and Letters (CAL) and Graduate School (the funding is provided to CAL from the Graduate School) to cover a semester of study during the final year of support, which rounds the entire support package out at **5 years total** for most students. Students with support from the SLS program are expected to seek support elsewhere should their studies take longer than five years (or more for those entering without an M.A.). Funding is dependent on satisfactory progress (meaning the student is in good standing) in the program and the availability of funds.

Degree Requirements

All requirements of the University and of the College of Arts and Letters must be met. (See Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (<https://grad.msu.edu/gsrr>) for

residency requirements and residency fees). It is expected that students will complete all requirements for a degree in 4-5 years.

The SLS Ph.D. Graduate Degree is outlined in the official MSU Academic Programs Catalog. The location of the SLS excerpt from the official Catalog is here: <https://reg.msu.edu/AcademicPrograms/ProgramDetail.aspx?Program=5642>.

The following are requirements of the Ph.D. in Second Language Studies:

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 of Arts and Letters.

Courses

All students must complete a minimum of **24** credits at MSU. Depending on a person's background or specific emphasis, a student's advisors, the program director, and/or the Guidance Committee (see Section IV) may require additional coursework. The student's program of study must be developed in cooperation with and approved by the student's guidance committee. The following courses are required for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Second Language Studies (meaning that they must be taken at MSU, waived through advisory and program director permission, or transferred in from a graduate program at another university, with a limit of 9 transfer credits):

Required Courses

Complete, have waived, or officially transfer in (maximum 9 transfer credits) the following 27 **required** credits:

Course Code	Course Name	Credits
LLT 807	Language Teaching Methods	3
LLT 808	Assessment for Language Teaching and Research	3
LLT 860 ^a	Introduction to Second Language Acquisition	3
LLT 872 ^a	Research Methods for Language Teaching and Foreign/Second Language Learning	3
LLT 873 ^b	Quantitative Research in Second Language Studies	3
LLT 874	Qualitative Research in Second Language Studies	3
LLT 861	Advanced topics in Second Language Acquisition	3
LLT 862	Advanced research in Second Language Acquisition (861-862 constitute a 2-semester seminar)	3
LLT 864	Second Language Psycholinguistics	3

27 required credits total

^a. LLT 860 and 872 courses are commonly waived (or, less commonly, transferred in) for students who have taken equivalent courses in a SLS-field-related graduate program prior to enrolling in the SLS Ph.D. Program. Please speak first with your academic advisor if you think you would like to seek to waive or transfer in coursework for one or more of these classes, or seek to waive or transfer any of the classes on the required list. Please ask the program director for information on the differences between having a course waived versus having a course transferred in. In brief, transferred credits appear on your academic record. Transferring credits into MSU, however, is a formal university-level process that requires external, Registrar Office transcript and syllabi-equivalency review. Waiving can be done in-house with SLS faculty and the SLS graduate program director, but waived courses will not appear on your academic record. Transferring courses in could potentially shorten your time to degree or free up credits for other elective courses.

^b. LLT 873 has a prerequisite: LLT 872. This means that a student will not be able to independently enroll in LLT 873 if the student's academic record does not officially indicate that they have taken and successfully passed LLT 872, either by having taken it at MSU with a satisfactory grade, or by having officially transferred it in from another graduate program. If you have LLT 872 waived, or if your transfer-in request is not completed, you will need to request a manual override from the LLT 873 course instructor and graduate program manager to enroll in LLT 873. Please note that this is just a technical enrollment formality. The override request will be granted if you have LLT 872 waived or if you are in the process of transferring it in after having received approval to apply for a transfer-in.

Elective Courses

Complete at least five courses (15 credits) selected from the following **elective** course list, or from any graduate-level courses at MSU that have been approved to serve as electives for you by your guidance committee:

CEP ^c 920	Construction of Psychoeducational Instruments	3
CEP 921	Psychometric Theory I	3
CEP 922	Psychometric Theory II	3
CEP 923	Item Response Theory	3
CEP 934	Multivariate Data Analysis I	3
CEP 935	Multivariate Data Analysis II	3
EAD 907	Educational Policy for Immigrant and English Language Learner Students	3
HDFS 892	Seminar in Human Development & Family Studies	3
LIN 824	Phonological Theory I	3
LIN 825	Phonological Theory II	3
LIN 834	Syntactic Theory I	3
LIN 835	Syntactic Theory II	3
LIN 837	Advanced Studies in Semantics and Pragmatics	3
LIN 850	Advanced Studies in Child Language Acquisition	3
LIN 855	Advanced Studies in Neurolinguistics	3
LIN 871	Advanced Studies in Sociolinguistics	3
LLT 809	Teaching Second Language Reading and Writing	3
LLT 813	Computer-assisted Language Learning	3
LLT 818	Eye tracking in SLA and Bilingualism	3
LLT 821	Individual Differences in SLA	3
LLT 822	Interlanguage Analysis	3
LLT 823	Corpus Linguistics in SLA	3
LLT 841 ^d	Topics in Learning & Teaching (variable topics year to year)	3
LLT 842	Vocabulary Learning and Teaching	3
LLT 856	Language Identity and Ideology in Multilingual Settings	3
LLT 863	The Second Language Acquisition of Morphosyntax	3
LLT 870	Instructed Second Language Acquisition	3
LLT 890 ^d	Independent Study	3
LLT 992	Seminar in English as a Second Language	3
LLT 895	English as a Second Language: Classroom Practices	3
SOC 852	Migration and Social Change	3
TE 904	ELL/ESL Research and Practice: K-12	3
TE 908	Sociohistorical Perspectives on English Language Learners and Second Language Education in the U.S.	3
TE 909	English Language Learners in Content Areas: Constructing Research Communities and Resources	3

15 elective credits total

c. No more than 2 CEP courses will count toward completion of this requirement. This does not mean you cannot take more than 2 CEP courses. It only means that beyond 2, the additional CEP courses would not count toward your degree (they would be extra courses on your academic record).

d. No more than 6 credits can be satisfied through independent studies (LLT 890) or through LLT 841, respectively. That is, at MSU, you can take no more than 6 credits of independent study, and no more than 6 credits of LLT 841.

Dissertation Completion Credits (LLT 899)

LLT 899	Doctoral Dissertation Research	24
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24 LLT 999 dissertation credits total

In addition, all doctoral students must complete a minimum of 24 credits and **no more than 36 credits** of **doctoral dissertation research** (LLT 999). Contact your graduate secretary to request an override for these credits directly. Ideally, students begin taking these credits during the last semester of their coursework, but in individual cases, students may want to or need to enroll in LLT as early as their first semester at MSU. This could happen if the student plans to graduate in less than 4 years, for example. For such exceptions, please work with the program director, your advisor, or your guidance committee.

Additionally, students should make sure that they have a total of 9 credits each semester if they have a graduate assistantship that covers 9 credits of tuition. If they plan to only take one or two classes, they should register for additional dissertation credits to reach a total of 9 credits in a given semester.

Advanced students with all requirements completed or planned for completion, yet who still have support for a total of 9 credits per semester, can consider taking elective courses that may not pertain to the student’s academic degree, but may be of personal intellectual or health interest. This so far has been extremely rare in the program, but students should know it is possible. For example, a prior ABD student who had completed all requirements, yet had an assistantship that would cover one more (non-needed) 3-credit class, took a swimming course (pass/fail) from Kinesiology (KIN) while dissertating during her last semester. The course needed advisor approval.

If a student takes 36 LLT 999 credits, MSU will block the student from taking more. In such a case, to remain enrolled as an ABD student, the student must enroll in at least one non-999 graduate credit, which could be an independent study credit, but the no-more-than-6 independent study credit rule may still apply. The student should see the director if this occurs.

Courses will be tracked in GradPlan; they are supplied by the Registrar's Office so you shouldn't need to manually enter the courses, but you may need to select them or load them in GradPlan. Please see the program director if you have questions.

Comprehensive Exams

The comprehensive exam consists of two qualifying research papers (QRPs). The following requirements apply:

- Within one year of completion of coursework, students must pass the written portion of Comprehensive Examination. The written portion of the Comprehensive Examination consists of two qualifying research papers in two separate areas, as confirmed by the student and their Guidance Committee. The expectation is that these papers are of publishable quality.
- Either two or three months prior to submission of each QRP (and longer for the fall submission date—see exact dates below), each student will select two readers from within the SLS core faculty (any exceptions are to be cleared through the program director). After the student has confirmations (via email) from two readers and the student's advisor or guidance committee chair, then the student must fill out, online, the QRP intent form, which is online in Teams in the channel "How to do things, forms."

QRP intent-form URL and submission due dates

- Fill out the QRP intent form available in Teams by...
 - **October 15** for January 15 submission
 - **February 15** for April 15 submission
 - **May 15** for September 15 submission

If these intent-due-dates fall on a weekend, the intent form is due the following Monday. Please note the intent-form deadline for the September 15 submission is May 15 because most SLS faculty are on 9-month, academic year appointments, and technically do not work for the university in the summers.

Please note that these due dates are subject to change, and the April 15 submission may not be available each year or may not be available to the student if the student cannot identify faculty to read over the summer. *The faculty have the right to not read QRPs over the summer.* Please contact the SLS Director if you have questions.

Note: in the online QRP intent form, you will be asked the following:

To demonstrate that you have approval from Reader 1, Reader 2, and your advisor/guidance committee chair, please upload copies of the email correspondences you had with these three individuals. Please note that if your advisor/guidance committee chair is a reader, you can combine the "reader" and "advisor" approval in one upload (and please upload this as the advisor/guidance committee chair approval

proof), but you must ensure you demonstrate you informed your advisor/guidance committee chair as to who the other reader will be.

The email correspondence chain from each reader must clearly demonstrate that you asked the reader to read your QRP, and that the reader approved, after having been informed of the following pieces of information:

- The name of the paper
- The paper's abstract or short description
- The type of QRP (1 or 2)
- The intended submission date

The email correspondence chain from your advisor/guidance committee chair must clearly demonstrate that you asked them to approve of your QRP intent, and that the advisor/guidance committee chair approved, after having been informed of the following pieces of information:

- The name of the paper
- The paper's abstract or short description
- The type of QRP (1 or 2)
- The names of the two readers
- The intended submission date

QRP submission form (in the SLS Ph.D Community D2L site) and due dates

- QRPs will be accepted as “Assignments” within the SLS Ph.D. Community D2L site on three dates each year (which are subject to change depending on faculty availability):
 - **January 15**
 - **April 15**
 - **September 15**If these dates fall on a weekend, the papers are due the following Monday. All papers are to be submitted by 5:00 PM on the date due or they will not be considered in that round.
- No QRP can be submitted until after the formation and initial meeting of a student’s guidance committee.
- The paper should follow APA formatting guidelines and should be of a length appropriate for a journal submission. The author will be asked on the QRP intent form to which journal they intend to send the paper after the QRP process is over.
- Faculty members will provide no feedback on the written versions of the QRP before the first submission. Assistance with data analysis or general assistance with a literature review is acceptable.
- All students are encouraged to proofread their work carefully; proofreading by someone other than a faculty member is acceptable.

Please follow these steps to upload your submission.

1. Go to the SLS D2L Community Page.
2. Upload your QRP1 or QRP2 to the appropriate submission form in the SLS D2L Community Page "Assignments" area.
3. You may submit or resubmit your QRP, up to midnight U.S. Eastern time on your deadline date. All submissions are time and date stamped. Thus, if you submit more than once, your most recent will be used for the review.

Once the deadline has passed, you will not receive results until all first-round QRP decisions are in. Once that has occurred, you will receive an email via D2L letting you know the decision of your readers. Your readers' comments will be in your assignment's folder for the QRP submission in D2L.

- Within three weeks of submission, readers are to determine if the paper receives a *pass*, a *resubmit*, or an *unsatisfactory*. In the case of a *resubmit*, readers will make suggestions for revision. Two resubmissions will be allowed. All revisions are to be completed within four months of the original submission (i.e., May 15 for the January 15 submission, August 15 for the April 15 submission, and January 15 for the September 15 submission). SLS faculty strongly encourage an early resubmission to allow enough time for faculty to read the resubmission and provide feedback so that you can revise another time and submit a second revision prior to the four-month deadline. After resubmission, the faculty are allowed three weeks to read the paper and provide feedback and a decision. Resubmission requirements remain the same as the original QRP submission. If these dates fall on a weekend, the papers are due the following Monday. All papers are to be submitted by midnight Eastern on the date due or they will not be considered in that round. If there is disagreement between the two readers, the Director will ask a third reader to evaluate the paper, or shall serve as a third reader.
- If either QRP is found unsatisfactory by the readers following the two allowable resubmits, a new paper may be written, submitted, and evaluated according to the same process as outlined above. If this second attempt also proves to be unsatisfactory, the student will not be allowed to continue in the program. This procedure will be allowed only once. Thus, if this procedure is followed on QRP 1, an initial *unsatisfactory* on QRP 2 will result in a student's dismissal from the program.
- QRP Readers/Reviewers use the following form to upload their reviews of SLS student QRP1s and QRP2s: <https://forms.gle/bobZxG3GrACmhY1a9> The SLS Program director moves the Readers/Reviewers reviews, decisions, and documentation to the students' QRP submission locations in D2L.

QRP Completion

Once both QRPs are completed successfully, the program director will send the student, the readers, and the graduate secretary an acknowledgement of passage of the Comprehensive Exam stage. The graduate secretary is responsible for entering the date of Comprehensive Exam completion into the student's GradPlan. This date-entry into GradPlan can be seen as **crucial** for international students, and **important** for domestic students. See the GradPlan section for more information. Finishing the QRPs successfully moves the candidate to candidacy at MSU, meaning that technically at MSU (and for international student visa purposes), the student is All-But-Dissertation (ABD) after having passed both QRPs. For students, this means that they may drop down to 1 credit per semester to still be considered a full-time student at MSU and for visa purposes. Students who are not yet ABD must technically be enrolled for at least 6 credits per semester to be a full-time student.

It is generally expected that both comprehensive examinations (QRPs) will be successfully completed before students are able to defend their dissertation proposal.

DEI Training

As of Fall 2020, all students, faculty, and staff must complete MSU's online DEI training. If it was completed in Fall 2020, they will not likely have to take it again in 2021-2022. [Visit the Training page](#) from MSU's Office of Regulatory Affairs for FAQs and the link to take the training in the Ability system, and watch for updates as this requirement evolves.

The basic education plan consists of (i) 4 on-line CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) training modules, (ii) a minimum of 6 hours of face-to-face discussion-based workshops (4 workshops, 1.5 h each), and (iii) 4 additional on-line CITI modules. The additional CITI modules could be on new topics or the refresher modules for the topics covered in (i). All basic RCRSA education requirements are to be completed by the end of the spring semester of Year Two.

Completion of all CITI modules and workshops will be documented by the Office of Regulatory Affairs at MSU (ABILITY). Students will need to use their MSU NetID and password to log-in at <https://ora.msu.edu/train/> in order to complete the CITI modules and to register ahead of time for the workshops.

In addition to the basic education requirements, all doctoral students must also complete 3 h per year of supplemental education. This requirement could be met by (i) completing additional CITI modules (new or refresher modules, each module counts 45 min), (ii) attending additional face-to-face workshops, (iii) specific unit RCRSA activities, (iv) one-on-one discussions with the Ph.D. preceptor and or (v) other activities. Completion of the annual supplemental education will be verified by the

Graduate Program Director and documented by the student in GradPlan (or the new student information system coming on-line in 2020).

Year One:

- Introduction to the Responsible Conduct of Research
- Authorship
- Plagiarism
- Research Misconduct
- At least two hours discussion-based training (six hours completed by end of Spring semester, Year Two)

Year Two:

- Complete three additional modules from specific list (<https://grad.msu.edu/rcr>)
- At least two hours discussion-based training (six hours completed by end of degree)

Year Three and Every Year Thereafter:

- Complete 3 hours of annual refresher training (<https://grad.msu.edu/rcr>)

Dissertation

The SLS Ph.D. is a research degree. Students are expected to conduct significant and original research, the culmination of which is a dissertation that makes a significant contribution to knowledge. It is anticipated that the dissertation will be of sufficient quality to be publishable. Already published research is not acceptable as part of a dissertation.

A defense consisting of two parts is required. The first is a presentation that must be open to faculty members and members of the public. The second part involves an examination by the committee members followed by questions from the general audience. The committee members make the final decision as to the acceptability of the dissertation.

Proposal

All proposals (and dissertations) are expected to conform to APA (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, current edition) guidelines. The proposal is to be submitted to each committee member. During the academic year, committee members have two weeks in which to read the proposal. The Chair will determine if all committee members find the proposal acceptable. If so, a formal meeting will take place with the student in order to further refine the research project. If the proposal is rejected, the student may rewrite the proposal (or write a new proposal) within one semester and submit it to the committee. If the committee rejects this proposal, the student is not able to continue in the program (see section IX on conflict resolution). A dissertation proposal

is to be successfully defended within one year after passing qualifying research paper (QRP) 2. Once the committee has approved the proposal, the student may proceed with the dissertation.

The proposal (generally no more than 30 pages in length, excluding references, tables, figures, appendices) includes:

- A statement of the theoretical problem to be investigated (including the research questions and hypotheses)
- A literature review in which the questions are situated
- A statement of the predicted results and the theoretical significance
- Methodology and means of analysis
- A tentative bibliography
- A tentative outline of the dissertation and a tentative timeline for completion.

Consult with the Chair of your committee for further guidelines or restrictions.

No proposals will be defended during summers (May 15-August 15) and only on rare occasions will dissertation defenses occur during the summer. Thus, students are to plan accordingly. Students who want to graduate in the summer should plan on defending their dissertation no later than the preceding May 15th and should plan on defending their proposal no later than May 1st one year earlier.

It is imperative that any original data that is to be collected receive approval of the Human Research Protection Program's Institutional Review Boards (IRBs) before beginning data collection (<http://hrpp.msu.edu/>). The Graduate School requires IRB permission, and failure to gain prior approval can mean that your dissertation (even a final version) will not be accepted by MSU.

The dissertation is to be submitted to the Dissertation Committee (generally the same as the Guidance Committee) at least **three** weeks prior to a scheduled defense. The dissertation defense is open to the public. In order to complete your graduation requirements, your dissertation must be accepted not only by your committee but also successfully submitted and ACCEPTED via ProQuest. *Do not wait until the last day of your stay at MSU; you may find that your dissertation needs some major reformatting.* Please note that your research advisor cannot advise you on formatting. Be sure to check the Graduate School website regarding deadlines for filing the dissertation.

All students must be enrolled for at least one credit during the semester in which they are defending their dissertation. This includes summer semester.

There are times when graduate students may wish to conduct research abroad, perhaps for their dissertation. If this is the case:

- Check with the MSU Travel Clinic! They will let you know of any health risks or immunizations (<http://www.travelclinic.msu.edu/>)

- Check the International Studies and Programs website for issues related to safety around the world (<http://www.isp.msu.edu/information-resources/international-travel/>)
- Apply for assistance with travel funding via the Graduate School. If the Graduate School provides funding, they will also provide a MEDEX emergency card
- Students traveling abroad should visit the “Travel Smart” website (<http://grad.msu.edu/travel>) before their trip. When students appointed as TAs or RAs travel outside the U.S. to conduct required thesis or dissertation research or to collaborate with investigators conducting research abroad, the department or research grant supporting the work will be required to pay for all needed vaccinations and or medications (e.g., anti-malarials) as determined by the MSU Travel Clinic. Students may include those costs in applications for funds from the Research Enhancement or Travel Grant programs administered by the Graduate School.

Submission

MSU **only accepts** electronic theses and dissertations submitted via ProQuest. The instructions for electronic submissions are available from <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/>. When submitting an electronic thesis or dissertation to ProQuest, a student has 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 new publishing agreement for thesis/dissertations with ProQuest now provides an “Open Access Publishing Option” as an alternative to the traditional publishing option available to our students. The Open Access option gives ProQuest the authorization to make the electronic version of the document accessible to all via the internet, including the selling of the document by commercial retailers and the accessibility to the work via search engines. A student selecting the Open Access option will not be eligible to receive royalties. For more information visit: <http://www.proquest.com/products-services/dissertations/>

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).

In addition to a conventional disciplinary abstract, a lay audience abstract is to be included. The formatting requirements for this additional abstract are identical to those for the conventional abstract.

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. In response to the request, the Graduate School will send directly to the student a form that needs to be completed and turned in 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).

Approval for Graduation

The student must complete all program, college, and university requirements to receive the degree. An application for graduation can be obtained from the Registrar's website (<https://reg.msu.edu/StuForms/GradApp/GradApp.aspx>) and is to be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the first week of the semester students expect to complete their degree requirements. Students completing requirements during summer should apply for approval by the first week of spring semester.

Graduation

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.

Electronic Submission's Approval Target Dates (see <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/> for detailed information on steps to be taken):

Graduation on the semester of the electronic submission is only guaranteed if the document is APPROVED on or before the target date for that semester. See the <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/> website.

Graduate Advanced Degree Ceremonies will be on Friday of finals week at 3:30pm in the Breslin Center. You should arrive one hour early to put on gowns and be properly ordered for the procession.

Exit Survey

A short online exit survey exists for students graduating with a Doctoral degree. Only students who have applied for graduation will have access to the survey. The survey asks questions about educational experiences in MSU graduate programs, as well as about immediate professional plans. The Graduate School uses data from this survey when reviewing graduate programs and to guide decisions about services and initiatives for graduate students.

The identity of all respondents will be kept confidential and only aggregate (group) information will be made available to faculty and administrators. The students will receive an e-mail message from the dean of the graduate school with a link to the survey. However, students do not need to wait for that e-mail message to complete the

survey after applying for graduation. It takes about 5-10 minutes to complete the online survey. Below are the instructions for completing the survey and they are also available from <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/>

Instructions for students:

- Access the following website:
- Doctoral Students: <https://www.egr.msu.edu/doctoral/survey/>
- Enter your MSU NetID (Login Name) and Password
- Complete all the items on the survey. When finished, click **Submit**.

If you cannot open this survey, please contact Katey Smagur by email at smagurka@msu.edu or direct your questions to ExitSurvey@grd.msu.edu. include your name, student ID #, degree level (PhD, MA/MS) and semester of graduation. You will then be notified when you are able to complete the survey.

Guidance Committee and Advisor

The Program Director will serve as the initial advisor. The Director will be responsible for working with each student to help them determine which courses they are to take during the first year of the program. Thus during the first year in the graduate program, the student will be advised by their forthcoming academic advisor, and by the Director of the Program, with the academic advisor being the student's primary and official academic advisor of record as soon as the student logs the guidance committee in MSU's GradPlan and the committee members approve officially through the system. SLS students must form their guidance committee within the first two semesters of doctoral study because at the end of the second semester, the student will work with their advisor on the student's annual report form, which is due to D2L toward the end of each year in the program.

The student's committee must have at least four members, at least two of whom are SLS core faculty members. The Chair must be from those who are part of the SLS core faculty. When asking faculty to serve on a Dissertation/Guidance Committee, the student should have an idea of the type of research they want to conduct so that faculty members can evaluate the appropriateness of their participation and/or leadership on the committee. Once the committee has agreed informally to serve, it is the student's responsibility to enter the committee membership into their GradPlan. Faculty formalize their agreement to participate through the GradPlan Form Tracking Utility. Changes to the Committee in GradPlan require committee and Program Director approval.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule a committee meeting to obtain approval of the remainder of the courses for his/her program of study. Committee and coursework changes should be discussed with the student's Chair and submitted through GradPlan when appropriate. Please see the GradPlan section on page 24 for more information about who is responsible for what stage of a completed GradPlan.

It is to the student's advantage that this committee be established in the second semester of study. A committee must be established no later than the student's second semester so that the members can suitably advise the student about courses that will be relevant to his/her dissertation research and so that the Chair can perform the steps required for the student's annual review. Delaying the selection process could result in a student being not in good standing, which can result in the loss of a student's SLS GAship.

No QRP can be submitted until after the formation and initial meeting of a student's guidance committee.

The Dissertation/Guidance Committee responsibilities include:

- Advising the student about the requirements of the program
- Advising the student about future coursework in light of the student's dissertation topic
- Supervising and guiding the student in the preparation of a dissertation proposal
- Supervising the preparation of the dissertation
- Conducting and evaluating the finished product and the student's dissertation defense

In most instances, the Guidance Committee will also be the same as the Dissertation Committee. However, it is normal for students to change their research directions, as a Ph.D. is a time to explore. Changes in the membership of the guidance committee accordingly can be readily carried out in GradPlan, upon consultation with faculty members involved. That is, membership changes may be initiated by the student at any time. Changes to a student's committee by the student requires committee and Program Director approval and must be submitted through GradPlan.

Changes in committees for any reason (including a committee member's departure from the university or an inability to work with a committee member) should be discussed with the Program Director (see also section IX on conflict resolution).

Such changes are not normally interpreted as an indication that a conflict with a faculty member has occurred.

Grievances and Conflict Resolution

When a conflict with a faculty member arises, a student should first try to resolve the issue with that faculty member. When that is not possible, the student should consult with the SLS Program Director, who may meet with one or both of the parties involved.

If there is a conflict of interest (for example, the Director is also your main advisor), you are encouraged to take your concern to the next level in the sequence below. At any

time of this process, you may consult the University Ombudsperson <https://ombud.msu.edu/>.

- a. In case of a conflict with a faculty member, including the Director, a student should consult with the department's Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, who may meet with one or both of the individuals involved.
- b. Following that, the Department Chair should be consulted if necessary. The Department Chair shall reserve the right to replace a student's graduate main advisor or Committee Chair with another qualified person acceptable to both the graduate faculty and to the student if need be, and as ascertained through private discussions. Such replacement shall occur within one week of the meeting at which an *irreconcilable* conflict has been identified.
- c. If a student is dissatisfied with the outcome of discussions with the (Associate) Chair, the student can request a department grievance hearing: <https://ombud.msu.edu/Academic%20Grievance-procedures/index.html>. A Department Grievance Board will be convened.
- d. Conflicts which cannot be resolved at the department level should be reported to the Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Education in the College of Arts and Letters.

Policy Recommendations

The SLS Program 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 and the students' career goals. For templates, see [myIDP \(Biological & Physical Science fields\)](#) and [ImaginePhD \(Humanities & Social Science fields\)](#). See also the Graduate School document *Guidelines for Student Advising and Research Mentoring* (<https://grad.msu.edu/fsresources/FacultyAdvisors>).

Graduate committees and advisors should increasingly rely upon [MSU's Guidelines for Mentoring & Advising Graduate Students](#) in many aspects of their work. The Graduate School's website, "[Optimizing Mentoring](#)," contains ideas and resources for implementing the Guidelines plus mentoring trainings and workshops.

It is anticipated that students will complete all degree requirements within four to five years of entering the program. If a student is not able to complete a degree within nine years, a request for an extension must be filed. In such cases, the following steps are to be taken:

1. The student should meet with the Committee Chair and come up with a plan for completion that meets the needs of the student and approval of all faculty on the committee.

2. The student should write a letter requesting the extension (include PID). The letter should clarify the reason(s) for the extension and propose a request for a new degree completion date.
3. The Committee Chair should endorse the request, affirming the viability of the plan proposed by the student. Any other relevant details or explanations should be included (e.g., a change in committee makeup).
4. The Graduate Program Director should endorse the request, expressing confidence in the proposed plan. This can come in the form of an email with the Advisor copied and the student letter attached.

SLS's policy on who can serve as the dissertation advisor is simply that the advisor must be from within the SLS core faculty. A committee must have four members. Two members of the committee must be SLS core faculty members. The other two can be from the faculty almost anywhere, but they must be a Ph.D. and must be accepted (if they are outside the SLS core faculty or outside of the LiLaC Department) through an application process outlined in the "How to" channel of the SLS Teams site.

If the major professor leaves MSU before the student completes their degree program, the student is responsible for finding a new advisor. The student can meet with the Program Director to come up with a plan for finding a replacement.

Forms To Be Filed

SLS Forms	Complete By Date
SLS Qualifying Research Paper Intent Form (Online in SLS Teams)	Submission dates of form January 15 (for 4/15 paper submission), June 15 (9/15 submission), October 15 (1/15 submission)
SLS Selection of Guidance Committee (GradPlan)	By middle of the 2nd semester
SLS Change in Guidance Committee Membership (GradPlan)	When necessary
SLS Dissertation Proposal Approval (GradPlan)	Following Proposal Defense
Exit Survey https://www.egr.msu.edu/doctoral/survey/	Following Dissertation Deposit

Policies on Academic Performance

In order to be considered a student in good standing, the following standards must be met:

- Students must enroll for a minimum of 6 credits each Fall and Spring semester (unless all requirements have been met and the student is ABD).
- Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.50
- Only courses with grades of at least 3.00 will count toward satisfaction of any requirement
- Any of the required examinations (pre-dissertation or dissertation defenses) can be repeated only once and must be completed the semester following initial failure. After the second failure, students are dismissed from the program.

Each Spring Semester, an SLS student will submit an annual progress report form to their Guidance Committee Chair. Subsequently, Guidance Committee Chairs will meet individually with their student to discuss the student's progress in the program. The meeting should consist minimally of the Committee Chair; other committee members can be included if so desired. The Committee Chair will write fill out the spaces on the

annual progress report form that the Chair is meant to complete. Subsequently, the Program Director will sign the form. Each student's entire file will be considered. The file includes grade reports, the Graduate Committee report, and any other official documents relating to academic work asked for that given year. Each student will be evaluated on a number of factors: 1) Grade point average (GPA), 2) number of deferred grades, 3) progress toward degree completion, 4) course load, and 5) additional activities related to their academic work. The student will receive a written report from Program Director outlining the results of the meeting. A student will be placed on probation following an "unsatisfactory" in any of the five categories. If the following semester, a student still has an "unsatisfactory" evaluation in the category "progress", she or he will not be allowed to continue in the program.

GPA

- Below 3.5 unsatisfactory
- 3.5 – 3.8 satisfactory
- Above 3.8 highly satisfactory

Deferred grades

- These are highly discouraged by the program unless extenuating circumstances exist. However, deferred grading exists for real and legitimate reasons.
 - More than two in previous two semesters unsatisfactory
 - Any not removed in more than 12 months unsatisfactory
 - No current deferred grades satisfactory
 - No deferred grade in program highly satisfactory

According to university policies, 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 (deferred) 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 or dissertation work. (*Academic Programs 2007-2009. pg. 90*)

Progress

Students are expected to complete the degree within 4 to 5 years. Taking 6 or more years is unsatisfactory unless arrangements have been made with the SLS Program Director.

Course-load

Being enrolled in fewer than 6 credits is unsatisfactory unless arrangements have been made with the SLS Program Director. Students are not encouraged to take more than 9 credits.

Additional activities

Participation in unit activities is expected. These include attendance at lectures, conference practice talks of other students, pre-professional activities (e.g., workshops sponsored by the unit).

An additional activity is defined and evaluated as follows:

- Any activity within the preceding year, such as paper accepted for publication or conference presentation at a refereed conference, is considered “highly satisfactory”
- Any activity while a student is enrolled in the program (but not in the past year) is “satisfactory”

N.B.) A student may view his/her academic records (see GSRR 3.2.3) by asking the Graduate Secretary. The file, however, may not be removed from the Graduate Secretary’s office.

A student has the right to challenge the accuracy of information in his/her academic file.

Academic and Ethical Integrity

Preparation for entry into the academic world involves an understanding of ethical practices. The SLS program takes this requirement seriously and students may be dismissed from the program for violations. For additional information, please refer to https://www.msu.edu/~acadgov/documents/ISGACapproved2_24_09final_polished_edit_edversion3_3_09.pdf and <https://msu.edu/unit/ombud/academic-integrity/index.html>

Students are expected to abide by the Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities (see <https://grad.msu.edu/sites/default/files/content/researchintegrity/guidelines.pdf>).

Two notable kinds of academic dishonesty are *falsification of data* and *plagiarism*.

Falsification of data

This includes changing or making up data and presenting these data as though they were the result of an experiment, questionnaire, or fieldwork collection project.

Plagiarism

This is the use of another's work, ideas, or writings (including things found on the internet) without proper attribution. If you are in doubt as to when you need to cite a source, and the form your citation should take, you can check the Harvard guide *Writing with sources* (<http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu/home>).

Michigan State University's various policies on academic honesty state:

"If any instance of academic dishonesty is discovered by an instructor, it is his or her responsibility to take appropriate action. Depending on his or her judgment of the particular case, he or she may give a failing grade to the student on the assignment or for the course." (*Academic Programs 2007-2009. pg. 92*)

"In instances where a failing grade in a course is given only for academic dishonesty, the instructor will notify the student's academic dean in writing of the circumstances. (*Academic Programs 2007-2009. pg. 93*)"

"A student who receives a penalty grade based upon a charge of academic dishonesty, even if not referred for disciplinary action, may seek a hearing according to the procedures in this Article. In such a hearing, the burden of proof shall rest upon the instructor whose prior assignment of the penalty grade will constitute a charge of academic dishonesty. The hearing board shall proceed in compliance with applicable academic legislation on the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards, and the procedural and appeal provisions of this document shall apply." (Refer to *Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University* article 6 [<http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/academic-freedom-for-students-at-michigan-state-university/article-6-academic-hearing-board-structures>].

You can find additional information about academic dishonesty, including official MSU policies, at: <http://www.rio.msu.edu> and <http://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity/>. Any graduate student in the SLS program at MSU who is discovered to have plagiarized or falsified data will be dismissed from the program. Also, a relevant article is: "The Roots of Research Misconduct" (<http://www.nature.com/naturejobs/science/articles/10.1038/nj7409-121a>).

A student may not submit the same paper for two different courses. According to MSU policy: "Unless authorized by their instructors, students are expected to do their own, original work on each assignment in each class. A student who recycles his or her course work from one class to another may face an allegation of academic dishonesty." Check with your professors if there is any question.

Within the SLS program, the procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty are as follows:

- Any suspected instance of a violation of academic integrity by a graduate student will be reported to the SLS Program Director before any action is taken

- If it is established that a violation has in fact occurred, and if it is the first violation, the student will be given a written warning. In this warning it will also be stipulated that any further violations of academic integrity may result in dismissal from the program.

Students conducting research with human subjects will need approval from the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects. Failure to complete this form prior to research or any evidence of forgery or backdating will be viewed as academic dishonesty and could result in dismissal from the program. Details on the application process can be found at: <http://hrpp.msu.edu/>.

All students in the College of Arts and Letters will need to follow the training protocol described on the College website: <http://www.cal.msu.edu/faculty/office-research-administration/responsible-conduct-research>.

The number of cases of scientific misconduct due apparently to unintentional plagiarism continues to be substantial. To avoid any unintentional difficulties, students are encouraged to check manuscripts for unintentional plagiarism before submission for a class, QRP, or dissertation. "Ithenticate", an anti-plagiarism software, is available on Desire 2 Learn (<https://d2l.msu.edu/>) 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. Read more at: <http://tech.msu.edu/ithenticate/>

Authorship

Issues related to authorship will be covered in RCR training. The following MSU website provides further information: <http://vprgs.msu.edu/michigan-state-university-guidelines-authorship>.

Work-Related Policies

For concerns relating to possible SLS funding support, please refer to *Section II, Financial Support*

Students with research assistantships (RAs) will be assigned to a faculty member (or group of faculty members) who will serve as their supervisor. Half-time research assistantships require an average of 20 hours per week for the 18 weeks of the semester (10 hours if a quarter-time appointment).

Information and materials needed to perform one's RA duties will be provided by the supervising faculty member(s) to RAs in a timely manner.

Limited teaching assistantships (TAs) are available through the SLS program and through other units. The employing unit will provide TAs with information regarding the MSU-GEU contract (<https://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/contracts/GEU2015-2019.pdf>).

For those with TAs, there are online workshops about teaching (<https://grad.msu.edu/tap/orientations>). You are encouraged to work your way through these modules.

SLS students are housed in the B-wing of Wells, with research rooms nearby. To the extent possible, each SLS GA will be provided with an individual desk and computer. Unfortunately, there may be times when sharing of space and computers will be necessary.

University Resources

There are numerous resources on campus that relate to the goals of the SLS program and that might be of relevance to SLS students. The list below is intended only as suggestive; there are undoubtedly many other relevant resources available.

English Language Center (ELC)

The English Language Center (ELC) provides English language instruction to international students. The English Language Center offers teaching assistantships to qualified students in the SLS program. In addition, the ELC sponsors a number of “brown bag” discussions, in-service sessions, and lectures. These are open to everyone, regardless of whether or not they hold a teaching assistantship.

Conducting Research at the MSU English Language Center (ELC)

If you plan to conduct research involving students at the ELC for a class project, a QRP, thesis, dissertation, or other solo/collaborative research, you will need to contact the English Language Center to get permission to invite ELC students to participate.

MSU-affiliated students and faculty members who want to do research in the ELC must contact Dr. Daniel Reed (reeddan@msu.edu) and Dr. Debra Hardison (hardiso2@msu.edu) before recruiting participants. Drs. Reed and Hardison will document the requests by specifying levels/sections involved, amount of class time taken up, number of students affected, and verifying approval by IRB or course instructor.

Once approval is received from Drs. Reed and Hardison, the researcher may proceed with the recruiting plan that was approved by the IRB. Please note that teachers can refuse the request even if the project has been approved by the IRB and the ELC. Similarly, students can refuse to participate or opt out of the project at any time.

Outside researchers (non-MSU-affiliated) must submit their requests by mid-October for Fall access and by mid-March for Spring. Recruiting and data collection by outside researchers when approved is limited to the latter part of the semester. Researchers will be notified on November 1 for fall semester data collections and by April 1 for research in the spring.

For updates on this policy, go to: <https://elc.msu.edu/2020/10/14/research-in-the-elc/>

CeLTA (Center for Language Teaching Advancement)

CeLTA (celta.msu.edu) was formed in 2008 to support language teaching and learning at MSU and to provide outreach to the community through the Community Language School (cls.celta.msu.edu).

Given the mission of collaboration across languages in all areas of foreign/second language education, CLEAR funds a number of projects in which specific links will be made between and among language settings, and between theory and practice.

Varia

Forms from the Graduate School

Graduate students are responsible for initiating many of the forms required by the college and university. MSU and the Graduate School are moving toward web-based form completion and submission systems. All forms from the Graduate School are on the Graduate School's website. [Many of the forms are transitioning](#) from sets of instructions or fillable PDFs to digital forms with automated routing. New forms to date include the [ETD approval form](#) and the [DCF progress report](#). See the Graduate School's form page here: <https://grad.msu.edu/forms>

Travel support

To the extent possible, the SLS program will provide some funding for conference travel to students who are presenting papers. There are other sources of support for conference presentations (e.g., the College of Arts & Letters, the Graduate School) <https://grad.msu.edu/travel> that are available on a competitive basis. The office of International Studies and Programs (ISP) also provides support for international travel. Please use the following link to determine meal per diem rates based on the city of the conference: <http://www.ctrl.msu.edu/COTravel/PlanYourTrip.aspx>.

The College of Arts and Letters also has specific guidelines to follow when submitting travel funding requests. All documents must be attached to your original request.

Guidelines can be found at: <http://www.cal.msu.edu/students/graduate/current-graduate-students/grad-funding/>

SLS conference travel guidelines

All requests for funding for travel from the SLS Program should be submitted to the Director of the SLS Program. The Director will put out calls for funding requests.

Travel funding will be disbursed in the form of an electronic fellowship. Fellowships are deposited directly into your Student Account, once it is configured for direct deposit; otherwise, it is issued as a check and will be delivered to your mailbox once it is processed. It is your responsibility to ensure that the funds appear and are withdrawn as necessary. Be mindful that Student Accounts work in the form of expenses and credits, and so if there are outstanding expenses you must pay to the university, the fellowship will be subtracted from these outstanding expenses. Fellowships also have the potential to impact any financial aid you may be awarded, as well as potentially impact your yearly taxes.

When travel funding is available, a travel funding request form is to be completed and returned by the due date to the Graduate Secretary or SLS Program Director. If you are late with your submission, we will not be able to include you in our calculations for available funding and you will only be provided funding if there are leftover funds, even if you have not had previous funding.

Additionally, as with faculty travel, students must submit a pre-trip authorization form (ask the Program Director or Graduate Secretary for access to it; it most likely will be on Teams) to the SLS Graduate Secretary within two weeks before domestic travel or four weeks before international travel, you may not be eligible for travel funds for your intended conference.

Participant Funding Support

Because a large amount of SLS research requires the use of 'human subjects', the SLS program makes limited support available to pay participants in research projects. Requests are made at least twice a year, the deadline for which will be reported to you by the Director of the SLS Program. Whenever possible, funds up to \$350 for QRP research and up to \$700 for dissertation research are made available, but this is subject to change, depending on availability of funding. Please contact the Program Director or the Graduate Secretary if you have questions.

External Research Funding

Students are encouraged to apply for external funding for their research. The College of Arts and Letters has set aside funding (which has been \$500 in years past, but this amount is subject to change) for students who apply for large external grants (i.e., those

that will be sufficient to cover at least one semester's worth of funding for the student). Please ask the SLS Director if you would like to apply for this funding.

Summer Teaching

Limited summer teaching possibilities are available. Applications for these positions are generally solicited in the preceding Fall or in the early Spring.

Fellowships

The College of Arts and Letters, the Graduate School, and other offices on campus will make fellowship opportunities available for graduate students, information for which will be advertised throughout the year. The most common award is the Summer Support Fellowship, which offers a financial award for around \$4500 that would allow students to work ahead in their respective programs during the summer semester when classes might not be available, and assistantships are not generally available. The Dissertation Completion Fellowship is a more substantial monetary award that allows students a semester break from a GAsip in the latter stages of their programs in order to focus entirely on developing or completing their dissertation.

Communications

Email

The most efficient way of communicating with faculty and with fellow students is through email or through Teams. All graduate students are required to obtain an MSU email address as soon as possible after registration, and the login and password for email is the same for Teams. If you have not received information about how to get an email address, you should go to <https://netid.msu.edu/>. Please make sure that you either check your MSU email account regularly or have your MSU email forwarded to an account that you check. Instructors will often send emails to an entire class through D2L and these will be sent to your MSU account. Please become familiar with Teams, and also the MSU Microsoft 365 calendar system and software suite. Currently, students are given access to Microsoft software for up to five devices. Students also have a MSU Google site, with all Google applications except gmail.

Mailboxes

All SLS students have mailboxes in Wells Hall. Please contact the office to register your security badge for access to the mailroom. The mailing address for SLS students is:

[*Student's Name*]
Second Language Studies
Michigan State University
619 Red Cedar Road
B331 Wells Hall
East Lansing, MI 48824

Lab Space

There is research space within faculty member's labs. Information is available about the SLS faculty members' labs, and the contact person for each lab is identified within the information. See <http://sls.msu.edu/research/labs/>

Meeting Space

There are numerous conference rooms in Wells Hall that can be booked for meetings. Please contact the office staff in B331 to reserve a room, or email your advisor to ask for them to reserve a room for you.

Summer Courses

Normally, there are very few summer courses offered at MSU that students can use toward the completion of their degree. In some cases, students may take courses at other universities or summer institutes. If you decide to do this, you must *talk to your advisor beforehand* in order to ensure that the courses will count toward your degree. Remember that you can transfer no more than 9 credits into the SLS program.

Conferences and Organizations

Professional development is an important part of graduate training. Several SLA and applied linguistics conferences are held throughout the year at various locations. Even if you are not presenting a paper, you are encouraged to attend these conferences, particularly if they are nearby. There are two important annual conferences that SLS students should attend and at which they should present (when possible): the Second Language Research Forum (SLRF) and the American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL).

Second Language Research Forum (SLRF)

This conference moves from university to university and is usually held in the fall of each year. This is the main conference in the U.S. devoted to second language acquisition. There are others in other places in the world (e.g., EuroSLA in Europe). The SLS program director or your advisor will help you locate other conferences should you be interested.

American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL)

This conference is held each year, generally in the spring. Abstracts are due in the summer. Check the AAAL website (<http://www.aaal.org>) for further information.

Other Conferences and Opportunities

Information on other conferences is available on the SLS web site (<http://sls.msu.edu>).

There are periodic workshops relating to issues of professional development. In addition, please refer to the PREP program for graduate students' professional development (<https://grad.msu.edu/prep>).

GradPlan

GradPlan was developed for Ph.D. students to lay out their Ph.D. program of study and make notes on how they are meeting their program and university requirements as they are completed (<https://grad.msu.edu/etd/grad-plan>). You are required to complete a GradPlan in order to graduate. Your advisor and the SLS graduate secretary can help you work through your program.

It is the web-interactive system for Ph.D. students to create and store their Ph.D. Degree Plans and subsequent graduate program activities. Link to the log-in page: <https://sis.msu.edu/> Final acceptance of the dissertation by the Graduate School and the final degree certification by the department, college and Office of the Registrar are all set up for final approval and stored electronically in GradPlan. The following is the stakeholder responsibilities for GradPlan operations:

Only accessible to staff: Graduate Secretary/Graduate Program Director responsibilities for GradPlan include:

- Approving committee members
- RCR information
- Placement information once student has graduated
- Completion date of comprehensive exam
- Date defense exam was successfully completed
- Request comp exam extension (if applicable)
- Request program extension (if applicable)
- Approve\Deny language requirement (not required for SLS program)

Only accessible to the student: Student responsibilities for GradPlan:

- Committee members
- Ph.D. degree plan courses (should auto-populate)
- Tentative dissertation subject
- Subject of comprehensive exam
- Information regarding use of human or animal subjects
- Information about using hazardous substances in research
- Additional notes regarding research (if applicable)
- Language requirement (not required for SLS program)
- Specialization or Certification information (if applicable)
- Additional notes regarding other requirements (if applicable)
- IRB # (if applicable) (Added after plan is official)
- Dissertation title for official transcript (Added after plan is official)

Graduate School signs off if a student has successfully submitted their dissertation. If all department requirements are met, the graduate secretary and GPD signs off on the student's GradPlan.

NOTE: all sections in your plan ABOVE the Graduate School Sign off should be completed BEFORE you submit your dissertation to ProQuest.

Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities

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

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 SLS Program follows Hearing Board procedures for adjudicating graduate student academic grievances and complaints. (See GSRR 5.4.) Please read the SRR and GSRR at these locations:

Michigan State University Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR):

<http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/student-rights-and-responsibilities-at-michigan-state-university>

Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR):

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

Please also see the Michigan State University Student Life Information and Fall Welcome Letter

<http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu/>

Requesting conference funding from the SLS Program

When funds are available, you may request funding from the SLS Program to cover travel or virtual conference/workshop registrations. Presenters are prioritized for funding.

The form and information about how to receive the funding or use the funding is in a SLS Program Teams channel “How to do things, forms.” (The SLS Program will also soon be moving all forms specific to the SLS Program to Teams, and the forms will be linked to a program website page.)

Normally, during non-COVID-19 times, the Graduate School or International Studies and Programs supports conference attendance and travel. Most of these funding streams appear to be in hiatus during COVID-19, but please note that these funding streams may reappear or appear in a different form at any time. The SLS Faculty and the Wells Hall Office staff will inform you of updates as they are made available. If you have travel or workshops to pay for and are not sure if SLS has coverage for the fees, please email the Program Director.

MSU TRAVEL PRE-TRIP AUTHORIZATION FORM must be completed prior to travel and before funds will be released if actual travel is involved. Please ask the Graduate Program Secretary or the Graduate Program Director for information on this form.

Participant Funds Request

You may request funding from the SLS Program to assist you in paying research participants who take part in your QRP or dissertation research.

The SLS program has limited funds to assist with payment to research participants. Before making a request for funds, you should discuss the reasonableness of your request with your advisor (whose signature must be obtained). Often it is better to talk to instructors of the classes from which you are drawing participants to see if they are willing to grant extra credit for participation; students are often more interested in extra credit than cash. The office is very eager to help you reconcile and request funding support; please talk to the office once you receive notice of approval for your research participant funding.

The form and information about how to receive the funding or use the funding is in the SLS Teams channel on “How to do things, forms.”

The form outlines different ways to receive the funding:

- (A) Advance – Direct Deposit into your account (for those who are employees at MSU)
- (B) Reimbursement
- (C) Personnel (worker) hiring

The SLS Program may at time decide to issue you a fellowship for your funding if the program believes that is the correct way to process the funding. You will be provided information about the fellowship funding if you receive a fellowship.

When the funding is awarded, you will receive an award notice from the SLS Director indicating your award amount and outlining any specific information needed about using the funding for your specific project.

Important information on Research Participants versus Hiring Student Workers

There are two categories for payment of those who assist in a research project: 1) research participants or 2) actual personnel (worker) hiring.

In the first case, research participants are those who provide data and who sign consent forms to allow their data to be used. Participants should remain anonymous to the office, but please keep track of your anonymized participants. Advances can be obtained for this purpose. Participants sign a receipt or (during COVID-19), you keep track of their participation and the payments you make to them.

In the second case [(C) Personnel (worker) hiring], the following instructions apply.

In order to comply with MSU and federal guidelines regarding employed labor, prospective workers on a research project are required to be employed by the Department of Linguistics & Germanic, Slavic, Asian and African Languages (B331 Wells Hall) **before they can start working for you** (Note that this does not apply to research *participants*, as defined above). This means that several qualifications for employment must be met.:

- They must be eligible to work in the United States (depending on their visa status, work hours eligibility, etc.)
- They will need to have a social security number, or be in the process of obtaining one, in order to start working. Tax reporting by MSU requires a SSN for each employee.
- They must have submitted for verification, or have on file, an I9, both Section 1 **and** Section 2 completed.
- They must have completed their current I9 process within six months before, or *within 3 days after* their intended start date.

If you are a Ph.D. student who wants to hire a worker, your PI on the project must be involved, as that person would be the legal supervisor of the worker. Discuss the hiring request with your PI. Please consider what date you wish for the worker to start working. Once this date is determined, work backwards to ensure all of the conditions listed above are put in place before the first work day. On the first work day, the person must have access to their e-time sheet to record hours worked down to 6-minute (1/10 of an hour) increments. The worker's appointment must be processed through the MSU payroll process system before the first work day to ensure the e-time sheet is established and available. **Once the hiring process is complete, and the office has notified you as such, then the student may begin working. Please check with the office staff if you have not heard within one week of submitting names. Remember that names do not need to be submitted for *research participants*.**

Worker timesheets are to be submitted electronically by 5:00 pm on the Monday after each pay period (see Helpful Links). The PI (the faculty supervisor on the research project) approves each time sheet. Be mindful that international students are only

allowed to work a total of 20 hours per week from all combined MSU jobs, but can work extra hours during MSU breaks (Thanksgiving, Winter, and Spring breaks) and in the summer. Domestic students can work up to 40 hours per week in the summer.

If you have any questions about hiring workers, please contact your graduate secretary, or speak with the SLS Director.

Helpful Links

International Students and SSN: <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10181.pdf>

OISS Student Employment page: <http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/students/employ/>

Payroll Schedule: <http://www.ctrl.msu.edu/COPayroll/payrollSchedules.aspx>

MSU Manual of Business Procedures:

<http://www.ctrl.msu.edu/COMBP/mbp55EBS.aspx>

Links to Select University Policies

[Academic Programs Catalog](#)

[Anti-Discrimination Policy \(ADP\)](#)

[Code of Teaching Responsibility](#)

[Disability and Reasonable Accommodation Policy](#)

[General Student Regulations](#)

[Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities \(GSRR\)](#)

[Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities](#)

[Integrity of Scholarship & Grades](#)

[Law Student Rights and Responsibilities \(LSRR\)](#)

[Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities \(MSRR\)](#)

[MSU Guidelines for Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising](#)

[MSU-GEU Contract](#)

[Policy on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct](#)

Counseling services and assistance

MSU Safe Place

MSU Safe Place is a program that addresses relationship violence and stalking. The unit is located on the campus of Michigan State University and serves students, faculty, staff, their spouses/partners and non-affiliated members in the Greater Lansing Area. The unit provides shelter and other services in an environment that is safe and supportive to all identities, including persons in same-sex relationships, identifying as non-binary or trans, with disabilities, and from various racial and ethnic backgrounds. The unit provides counseling, support groups, safety planning, information and referrals to survivors of violence and their minor children. All support services are free and confidential. Additionally, the unit works to increase awareness about relationship violence and stalking through community education, outreach efforts, expert witness training, professional trainings and consultation. <https://safeplace.msu.edu/>

Counseling & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

CAPS is available free of charge to MSU students. CAPS connects students with the most appropriate and available care and services that optimize their health, wellbeing and success. Services are confidential and include a wide arrange of support. See the CAPS website for more information. <https://caps.msu.edu/>

The MSU Student Food Bank

The MSU Student Food Bank serves MSU students experiencing food insecurity by providing free food and related items. <https://foodbank.msu.edu/>

MSU Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities are guaranteed certain protections and rights of equal access to programs and services. The Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities helps students establish accommodations, find and obtain disabilities services, and find programs matched to the student's needs. <https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/>

The MSU Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance

The Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance helps ensure the health and safety of MSU students, staff, and faculty. At the site, you may file a report if you have been discriminated against or if you see discrimination. You can and should report any discrimination, assault, abuse, stalking, or intimidation that you see or feel within our campus community. <https://civilrights.msu.edu/>