



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

Michigan State University  
The Graduate School  
The College of Arts and Letters  
The Department of Linguistics, Languages, & Cultures

# APPLIED LINGUISTICS SLS Ph.D. & MA TESOL GRADUATE HANDBOOK 2023-2024

Review by the Applied Linguistics Faculty on August 22-24, 2023  
Revised and Distributed to 2023 Cohorts August 23, 2023, and  
version 2 on Sept. 12, 2023 (with minor edits).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
	LINKS TO SELECT UNIVERSITY POLICIES.....	4
<b>2</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION OF THE HANDBOOK .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>APPLIED LINGUISTICS PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>5</b>
	GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE APPLIED LINGUISTICS GRADUATE PROGRAMS .....	5
	OVERARCHING MISSION OF THE APPLIED LINGUISTICS PROGRAM .....	5
	THE “ROAD MAP” FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS.....	5
	OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN COMMITTEES.....	6
	3.1.1 Graduate Student Representative to the AL Faculty Meetings .....	6
	STATEMENT ON THE SUPPORT OF DIVERSITY .....	6
	PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS AND EXPECTATIONS.....	6
	SoSLAP .....	7
	LABS AND READING/RESEARCH GROUPS .....	7
	SHARED REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS ACROSS MA TESOL AND SLS PH.D. ....	8
	3.1.2 Apply for graduation at the start of your last semester.....	8
	3.1.3 Depositing the thesis or dissertation and defense information.....	8
	3.1.4 Take an MSU Exit Survey when you are graduating.....	9
<b>4</b>	<b>MA TESOL DEGREE PROGRAM OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>11</b>

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION .....	11
MA TESOL PROGRAM COMPONENT/PLAN OPTIONS .....	12
4.1.1 <i>Plan A</i> .....	12
4.1.2 <i>Plan B</i> .....	12
MA TESOL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS .....	12
4.1.3 <i>Requirements for Both Plan A and Plan B</i> .....	13
4.1.4 <i>Other Requirements for both Plan A and Plan B</i> .....	14
SPECIFIC DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR MA TESOL PLAN A.....	15
4.1.5 <i>Formation of the MA Thesis Committee</i> .....	15
4.1.6 <i>MA Thesis Process</i> .....	15
4.1.7 <i>MA Thesis Defense and Oral Exam</i> .....	15
SPECIFIC DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR MA TESOL PLAN B .....	16
SELECTION OF A MA TESOL ADVISOR.....	17
FORMATION OF THE MA THESIS COMMITTEE .....	17
THESIS DEFENSE AND ORAL EXAM .....	18
<b>5 LINKED LINGUISTICS BA/MA TESOL PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>6 SLS PH.D. DEGREE PROGRAM OVERVIEW.....</b>	<b>18</b>
SCOPE OF THE SLS PH.D. PROGRAM .....	19
SLS STUDENTS AND CERTIFICATES AND SPECIALIZATIONS AT MSU .....	20
SLS PROGRAM ADMISSIONS.....	20
SLS DEGREE REQUIREMENTS .....	21
6.1.1 <i>Residency Requirements</i> .....	21
6.1.2 <i>Required Courses</i> .....	21
SAMPLE SLS PROGRAM STUDENT SCHEDULE .....	25
SELECTION OF SLS COMMITTEE/DISSERTATION ADVISOR .....	25
FORMATION OF THE SLS GUIDANCE COMMITTEE/DISSERTATION COMMITTEE .....	26
SLS GUIDANCE/DISSERTATION COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES .....	26
QRPs (QUALIFYING RESEARCH PAPERS) AS THE SLS COMPREHENSIVE EXAM .....	27
6.1.3 <i>QRP Requirements</i> .....	27
6.1.4 <i>QRP intent-form URL and intent-form due dates</i> .....	27
6.1.5 <i>QRP Due Dates</i> .....	28
6.1.6 <i>Submitting your QRP</i> .....	28
6.1.7 <i>QRP Rubric and Feedback Process</i> .....	29
6.1.8 <i>QRP Completion</i> .....	29
DISSERTATION PROPOSAL.....	30
DISSERTATION DEFENSE AND ORAL EXAM .....	30
<b>7 DEPARTMENT/AL POLICIES .....</b>	<b>31</b>
ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE .....	31
GRADUATE STUDENT GRIEVANCES .....	31
MENTORING, SELECTING MENTORS, AND CHANGING MENTORS IN MA TESOL OR SLS .....	31
INTEGRITY AND SAFETY IN RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES.....	32
<b>8 UNIVERSITY/GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES AND RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>32</b>
RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES (RCRSCA, RCR FOR SHORT) .....	32
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL FOR RESEARCH.....	33
ACADEMIC AND ETHICAL INTEGRITY .....	33
8.1.1 <i>Falsification of data</i> .....	34
8.1.2 <i>Plagiarism</i> .....	34
COUNSELING SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE.....	35
8.1.3 <i>MSU Safe Place</i> .....	35

8.1.4	<i>Counseling &amp; Psychiatric Services (CAPS)</i> .....	35
8.1.5	<i>The MSU Student Food Bank</i> .....	35
8.1.6	<i>MSU Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)</i> .....	35
8.1.7	<i>The MSU Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance</i> .....	36
<b>9</b>	<b>WORK RELATED POLICIES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT</b> .....	<b>36</b>
	APPLIED LINGUISTICS GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS .....	36
	ACCOMMODATIONS AND DISABILITY .....	36
9.1.1	<i>Semesterly Applied Linguistics GAship Evaluations</i> .....	36
	ELC GASHIPS PREFERENTIALLY FOR MA TESOL .....	36
	SLS GASHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS (FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SLS STUDENTS) .....	37
	MSU INTERNATIONAL TA (ITA) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS .....	38
9.1.2	<i>Extra TA Tuition Credits</i> .....	38
9.1.3	<i>Other Possible Forms of GAship Support:</i> .....	38
9.1.4	<i>The definition of “good standing” or “satisfactory progress”</i> .....	39
9.1.5	<i>Deferred grades</i> .....	40
9.1.6	<i>Course load</i> .....	40
<b>10</b>	<b>RESEARCH AND CONFERENCE TRAVEL SUPPORT:</b> .....	<b>40</b>
	REQUESTS FOR RESEARCH AND TRAVEL FUNDING FROM AL .....	40
	RESEARCH AND TRAVEL FUNDING AMOUNTS FROM AL.....	40
	ADDITIONAL MSU INTERNAL GRAD STUDENT FUNDING SOURCES .....	41
10.1.1	<i>Student Summer Teaching as an Instructor</i> .....	42
10.1.2	<i>Fellowships (including SSFs and DCFs)</i> .....	42
	ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF FUNDS TO SUPPORT CONFERENCE TRAVEL .....	42
	CONDUCTING RESEARCH ABROAD .....	43
	UNIVERSITY RESOURCES.....	43

## 1 Introduction

### Links to Select University Policies

Below are select links to university policies that each graduate student should read. Links in yellow were added to or updated within this Handbook in 2023 by the Graduate School.

The Applied Linguistics faculty would like to note that the Law Student and Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities do not directly pertain to Arts and Letters students, but they are linked as a showcase, as a specific Arts and Letters Student Rights and Responsibilities document may appear in the future.

- [Academic Programs Catalog](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Policy \(ADP\)](#)
- [Code of Teaching Responsibilities](#)
- [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](#)

## 2 Organization of the Handbook

This Handbook addresses fundamental areas of graduate education within the Applied Linguistics Program within the Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures at Michigan State University. Each section includes information endorsed by the Graduate School and by the University Committee on Graduate Studies (UCGS). Information in this Handbook also reflects input from the Ombudsperson, the Office of International Students and Scholars, the Graduate Associate/Assistant Deans, and graduate students from several different colleges. When appropriate, “Policy Notes” provide additional links to current, approved policy descriptions. The sections on “Selection of Advisor” and “Formation of Guidance Committee” incorporate [the recommendations of the Task Force for Graduate Mentoring and Advising](#). Graduate students are advised to work with AL faculty, and in particular with their main advisor/mentor, on the Graduate School’s following three areas of support available both to students and their mentors at this site: <https://grad.msu.edu/optimizing-mentoring>

- MSU Guidelines for Graduate Student Mentoring & Advising
- Implementation Toolkit
- Workshops & Mentoring Training

In particular, this Handbook outlines the mentoring and advising areas identified as the essential responsibilities of students, faculty, and the units within which the Applied Linguistics Program and its graduate degree programs lie.

### **3 Applied Linguistics Program Overview**

Our graduates are employed throughout the US and the world in positions involving language teaching, teacher training, materials development, assessment, and program administration. Our core faculty is among the best in the nation and includes prolific researchers, journal editors, teacher educators, and people with a broad range of teaching and assessment experience.

#### **Goals and objectives of the Applied Linguistics Graduate Programs**

The overarching goal of the Applied Linguistics Graduate Programs (SLS Ph.D. and MA TESOL) is to promote the highest caliber research and teaching opportunities within the fields of TESOL, additional and multilingual language learning, second language acquisition (SLA), and applied linguistics.

The Program's goals in graduate-student education are to offer robust professionalization, varied and fulfilling employment pathways, and instruction in state-of-the-art methodological practices that adhere to modern, open-science initiatives. The Program's goals also include providing faculty researchers an academic home for creative and cutting-edge research in TESOL, applied linguistics, and SLA that centers around graduate education. We pride ourselves on mentoring our field's up and coming leaders, who will themselves guide TESOL, SLA, and applied linguistics research, teaching, service, and theory into a diverse, transparent, welcoming, and broad future.

#### **Overarching Mission of the Applied Linguistics Program**

The Mission of the Program is to train future leaders while promoting a biased-free environment that supports intellectual and professional growth, regardless of one's gender orientation, sexual orientation, race, economic situation, nationality, religion, or ethnicity. We treat each person in the Applied Linguistics Program with respect, and hold each person in high esteem. We view ourselves as an academic community of practice that promotes positive energy and good will. We champion each others' research agendas and support each other as we work, individually and collectively, on career goals and milestones.

Our Mission is to provide faculty and students with the space, time, and tools to train a diverse group of academics and pedagogues on the best practices in language teaching, learning, and research. We aim to prepare each graduate student for their career goals.

#### **The "Road Map" for graduate students in Applied Linguistics**

SLS and MA TESOL graduate students have opportunities to interact with each other and with undergraduate and graduate students in other world languages and linguistic programs within the College of Arts and Letters, many of which are housed within Wells Hall on the MSU campus, and within other Colleges across campus. In particular, the Applied Linguistics Program has the following features:

A large, graduate student office area within Wells Hall, where students with graduate assistantships have dedicated desk and storage space and where the students can share in multiple resources.

- Access to annual funding for research and travel.
- Workshops and brown bags on topics in applied linguistics and TESOL.
- Support in applying for grants and internships.
- Support in website design and technology for teaching and research.
- Mentoring in service area within the larger fields of applied linguistics, Second Language Acquisition (SLA), their subfields, and language teaching.

- Support in preparation for and while on the job market.

### **Opportunities for graduate student participation in committees**

In reference to Article 6 of the GSRR/MSRR, graduate student representatives shall participate in academic governance at the Applied Linguistics Program, LiLaC Department, College of Arts and Letters, and University levels. At the department level, graduate student participation in the policy-making process shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Graduate curriculum and degree requirements.
- Graduate financial aids and awards.
- Graduate admissions criteria.

Graduate student representatives shall participate as voting members on all policy-making committees at the departmental and program and college levels that are directly concerned with graduate student affairs.

#### ***3.1.1 Graduate Student Representative to the AL Faculty Meetings***

The Applied Linguistics faculty meetings are directly concerned with graduate student affairs. The Applied Linguistics Program will inform its graduate students of its AL Faculty Meeting committee position that graduate students may hold as soon as the dates and times of the annual meetings are set. The duties and length of the appointment, the processes by which an individual is selected for the appointment, and the location of the appointed representative's name are below.

- Duties and length of the appointment: Typically for the duration of the academic year.
- The processes by which an individual is selected for the appointment: By graduate student nomination and/or self-nomination. If more than one is nominated, a vote by the graduate students shall take place electronically to ensure all can participate.
- The location of the appointed representative's name: The name of the representative shall appear as a title on the SLS and MA TESOL websites under "Current Students" or "Students"

At the Department level, graduate students shall be selected and shall have voting memberships on several Department-level committees, as described by the LiLaC Department Bylaws.

At the College level, graduate students shall be selected and shall have voting memberships on several College-level committees, as described by the College Bylaws.

At the University level, graduate students shall be selected and shall have voting membership on the University Committee on Graduate Studies, University Council, and other such committees as may be specified by the Bylaws for Academic Governance.

### **Statement on the support of diversity**

The Applied Linguistics Program supports inclusion and diversity among peers and faculty for the professional development of all graduate students. Language teaching, research, and service is uniquely transdisciplinary, transnational, and multicultural. Thus, we pride ourselves in the Applied Linguistics Program in bringing in a diverse cohort of students from all over the world to participate in graduate education in applied linguistics and TESOL. We learn from each other and with each other to make language learning, teaching, and research a world-wide infused endeavor based on state-of-the-art theory, practice, and enterprise.

### **Program Highlights and Expectations**

The Applied Linguistics programs has expectations of the program, including attendance at workshops, “brown bags,” guest-speaker presentations and series, MA thesis and Ph.D. dissertation proposal and defense presentations, and professional meetings.

Highlights of the program include:

1. Annual orientations held by the Graduate School, Department, and the graduate program directors (also known as the Directors of Graduate Studies, or DGSs)
2. Annual welcome potluck or dinner, normally hosted by a Welcome Committee of diverse faculty and graduate students, and at times hosted jointly with neighboring units to promote team-building and cross-unit collaborations
3. Lecture series and guest presentations as hosted by faculty, faculty lab or reading groups, and/or other entities within the program
4. Annual Applied Linguistics Spring Symposium: An all-day affair the last Friday of February each year
5. Department and AL/SLS/TESOL Program awards ceremony, held in conjunction with the LiLaC Department and other LiLaC programs at the end of the year
6. End-of-year party or graduation celebration, normally hosted by a faculty member, faculty committee, or other

### **SoSLAP**

[SOSLAP](#) (Student Organization of Second Language Acquisition and Pedagogy) fosters community among students who are enrolled in the TESOL and SLS programs and other programs that center on language learning at MSU. This organization was founded by Dr. Amy Thompson, a MA TESOL and SLS Ph.D. Alum, when she was a graduate student at MSU. Several academic and social activities are scheduled each year.

### **Labs and Reading/Research Groups**

The Applied Linguistics Program supports a number of faculty labs and reading groups, as well as several student-run reading and special-interest groups. Graduate students are encouraged to join any of the labs or groups that they are interested in. The labs and special interest groups are listed on the MA TESOL and SLS Program websites.

Other units within CAL and the university also have labs and research groups which are also open to students. See the LiLaC website and the websites of other units for information on labs, reading groups, and research groups. They will post their open hours or talks, and how to join their organization if they have one, on their sites.

## **Shared Requirements and Expectations across MA TESOL and SLS Ph.D.**

The MA TESOL and SLS Ph.D. degrees are separate degree programs within AL. However, as Graduate Programs within AL and the university at large, they both have the following shared requirements and expectations.

### ***3.1.2 Apply for graduation at the start of your last semester***

Students must [apply for graduation](#) on or before the end of the first week of the semester in which they plan to complete their degree requirements. The program director will then review the application and, if approved, the department will certify the graduation. The Graduate Program Coordinator will then audit the student's academic record and, if the student has completed all requirements as stipulated in the student's GradPlan, the Department and College will certify the graduation.

If a certificate of graduation is needed quickly or quicker than normal (due to a job placement immediately after or right before the end of the semester, for example), the student may email the Registrar's Office to ask for an expedited conferral of the degree once the Department and the College have approved the graduation. You may ask your Graduate Program Coordinator and/or Director of Graduate Studies for help with this if you need an expedited conferral.

### ***3.1.3 Depositing the thesis or dissertation and defense information***

Electronic submission of thesis: Revisions may be necessary before the thesis can be accepted. Students who wish to graduate at the end of the semester in which the thesis was defended should take note of the deadline dates for final approval of the electronic thesis by the Graduate School and submit the revised version to the thesis director (or committee) well in advance of that time.

It is the student's responsibility to work with the thesis director to obtain permission from the MSU Institutional Review Board (IRB). Information can be obtained from the IRB website. The thesis director will be regarded by the IRB as the Responsible Project Investigator on the project. (See this Handbook section on Responsible Conduct of Research and Scholarship.)

The Graduate School accepts only electronic submission of theses and dissertations submitted via ProQuest.

See <http://grad.msu.edu/etd/> for detailed information on steps to be taken, including the instructions for formatting an electronic submission, deadline dates, and copyright information, etc. The Approval Form (fillable pdf on that site) must also be completed. Both the student and thesis director need to sign it. Note the directions concerning the submission of the completed form along with the IRB approval letter. A copy of the completed and signed Approval Form should also be sent to the TESOL program graduate secretary.

**NOTE:** If you intend to graduate in the current semester, your document must be accepted and delivered to the publisher, ProQuest, by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline date. This means that your document has been submitted via the ProQuest website, has been reviewed by a Graduate School ETD Administrator for formatting, has been deemed to be formatted correctly, and all necessary paperwork has been turned in to the Graduate School prior to the deadline date and time. The deadline date is not simply the last date to submit your document to the Graduate School via the ProQuest website. Make sure you are aware of the deadline dates. The review process is interactive and final approval can take from a few hours to weeks, depending upon the extent of the necessary revisions. Be sure to read the information carefully on the website.



The publishing agreement for theses/dissertations with ProQuest provides an “Open Access Publishing PLUS” option as an alternative to the traditional publishing option available to 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 accessibility to the work via search engines. A student selecting the Open Access option will not be eligible to receive royalties. In addition, there is a fee for this option. The pros and cons of selecting this option differ significantly across disciplines. For more information, visit ProQuest Publishing, Open Access Publishing, and Why Copyright?

In addition to the main body of a thesis, the Graduate School permits the submission of supplementary materials to ProQuest. These materials will not be reviewed by the Graduate School for formatting requirements but must be acceptable by ProQuest and comply with ProQuest’s criteria and storage limits. All supplementary materials need the written approval of the thesis director.

Students submitting a thesis/dissertation to ProQuest now can request a hold/embargo of publication by ProQuest by contacting the Graduate School at [msuetds.approval@grd.msu.edu](mailto:msuetds.approval@grd.msu.edu) or by calling 517-353-3220. In response to the request, the Graduate School will send directly to the student a form that needs to be completed and turned to the Graduate School prior to the document submission to ProQuest. The form needs to be signed by the student’s major professor and by the Associate Dean of the student’s college. The request for the hold/embargo may be for six months, one year or two years. Requests for a period longer than six months must include a brief justification for the length of the requested hold/embargo.

At the time of submission to ProQuest, authors should use their ORCID. Note that ORCIDs are required of all students and faculty in the AL Program, and you will be instructed to use it at all opportunities. To learn more about ORCID go to: <https://vimeo.com/237730655>

A public or lay audience abstract to precede the conventional disciplinary/technical one is strongly recommended. The formatting requirements for this additional abstract are identical to those for the conventional one.

Doctoral defenses are open to the public. Doctoral defenses will be advertised on the SLS, LiLaC, and College websites. MA defenses are optionally open. If a MA TESOL student chooses an open defense, this public abstract may be distributed to the TESOL program’s faculty and students and posted on the program’s website.

Graduate students in Applied Linguistics are strongly encouraged to attend open defenses in the AP Program and in the other language programs at MSU for peer support and to learn about the diverse research in the program(s) and in the field(s) at large.

### ***3.1.4 Take an MSU Exit Survey when you are graduating***

A short online exit survey was introduced at MSU in May of 2011 for students graduating with a Plan A or Plan B master’s degree or a doctoral degree. Only students who have applied for graduation will have access to the online survey. It asks questions about the students’ educational experiences in MSU graduate programs and immediate professional plans. The Graduate School uses the 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. Only group data will be made available to faculty and administrators.

Students who are eligible to take the survey will receive an email message from the Graduate School with a link to the survey; however, students may take the online survey earlier after they apply for graduation. It takes about 5-10 minutes to complete. The survey should be

here: <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 have difficulty locating the exit survey, contact MSU Career Services at [CareerServices@csp.msu.edu](mailto:CareerServices@csp.msu.edu)

## 4 MA TESOL Degree Program Overview

Administered through the Michigan State University Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures (henceforth LiLaC), and held within the Applied Linguistics Program, the Master of Arts degree program in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (MA TESOL) prepares individuals for professional careers in language teaching with an emphasis on the teaching of English. Through the program, students gain knowledge of and experience in general areas of language teaching, language learning, materials development, and assessment. It is believed that professionals in the field of TESOL should have a combination of theory and practical experience. The MA TESOL program at Michigan State University seeks to maintain that balance by providing coursework that focuses on the link between theory and practice. In this way, students gain an understanding of the principles of the field as they prepare to develop their careers in the field of language learning and teaching.

Requirements for the degree stress many facets of language study. Students are given a strong foundation in the current theory and practice in the field and are given opportunities to put their knowledge to use. At the end of the program, students will be able to:

- understand the nature of second language learning
- understand and interpret current research as it applies to language teaching
- examine and evaluate current language teaching materials and practices
- think creatively about language teaching issues and challenges
- understand and apply principles of language teaching in a variety of contexts
- critically examine their own teaching
- develop a coherent statement of teaching philosophy
- provide leadership in their educational settings and to the field of language teaching.

For many students, the MA TESOL is a terminal degree; thus, the ability to do independent research is not a primary goal. However, students will have the opportunity to conduct independent research as part of class projects that they can expand into research to be disseminated at conferences or through refereed journals. For students who want to continue their studies in a Ph.D. program, independent research, including a thesis, is an option, and students will be given the guidance they need to complete an MA thesis if they show initiative in developing a research topic.

It is important to understand that being a TESOL professional means going beyond completing the required classes. Students are encouraged to take advantage of the many opportunities available at MSU. This includes, but is not limited to, attending lectures and workshops, presenting at local and national conferences, publishing newsletter articles and textbook reviews, developing language teaching materials, and for some, conducting research that will contribute to the fields of language teaching and second language acquisition. A list of lectures, workshops, and conferences is maintained on the MA TESOL website, and students will be told of any publishing opportunities in their classes.

### Requirements for Admission

To be considered for admission to the MA TESOL degree program, each applicant must:

- include in the application a 500-700 word statement providing the applicants academic background and reasons for pursuing the advanced degree for which application has been made.
- have three persons who are qualified to comment on the applicants ability to pursue

- graduate study forward letters of recommendation to the department.
- have the results of the Graduate Record Examination General Test forwarded to the university if the applicant is a native speaker of English.
- take one of the tests of English language proficiency described in the Graduate Education section of this catalog if the applicants native language is not English.

To be admitted to the program on regular status, an applicant must have:

- a baccalaureate degree in English or another language-oriented field.
- a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.25 for the baccalaureate degree program.

In addition, an international applicant is required to have fulfilled the university's English language proficiency requirement as described in the MA TESOL Graduate Education section of MSU Registrar Office's Academic Program Catalogue in one of the following three ways:

- have a total score of 600 (paper version) or 100 (internet version) or above on the Test of English as a Foreign Language with no subscore below 55 (paper version) or 22 (internet version), or a minimum total score of 7.0 on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with no subscore below 6.5.
- have an average score of 85 or higher on the Michigan English Language Assessment Battery with no subscore below 83 and have the approval of the English Language Center.
- have an average score of 85 or higher on the English Language Center Test with no subscore below 83 and have the approval of the English Language Center.

Students are admitted for fall semester only.

## **MA TESOL Program Component/Plan Options**

### **4.1.1 Plan A**

Plan A is the thesis track within the MA TESOL program. Students who apply to conduct a thesis do so toward the end of their first year in the program. The general goal for MA TESOL thesis writers is to continue on to further education in TESOL and/or applied linguistics, although that is not the main goal for all Plan A students. Students in Plan A may apply for a Ph.D. program during their second year in the program, or wait and gain more experience in the field post-graduation, and then apply for a Ph.D. at a later time.

### **4.1.2 Plan B**

Plan B is the pedagogy and education track within the MA TESOL program. Students who focus on teaching and instruction, curricular design, program administration, and advocacy do not write a thesis. Plan B is considered a terminal degree. The general goal for MA TESOL Plan B students is to focus on education and administration in TESOL and/or applied linguistics and to enter the educational, private sector, and/or industry job market during their second year in the MA TESOL Program.

## **MA TESOL Degree Requirements**

Most students complete the MA TESOL Degree Program under Plan B (without thesis), although Plan A (with thesis) is also available. A total of 37 credits is required for the degree under Plan A, and a total of 36 credits is required for the degree under Plan B. The student's program of

study must be approved by the student's advisor. The student must meet the requirements specified below:

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

1. English as a Second Language and Second Language Acquisition.  
All of the following courses (21 credits):

- LLT 807 Language Teaching Methods, 3 credits
- LLT 808 Assessment for Language Teaching and Research, 3 credits
- LLT 809 Teaching Second Language Reading and Writing, 3 credits
- LLT 860 Second Language Acquisition, 3 credits
- LLT 872 Research Meth. for Lang. Teaching & Foreign/L2 Learning, 3 credits
- LLT 895 English as a Second Language: Classroom Practices, 3 credits
- LLT 896 Practicum in Teaching English as a Second Language, 3 credits

2. The Analysis of Language.

Both of the following courses (6 credits):

- LLT 822 Interlanguage Analysis, 3 credits
- LLT 846 English Structures and Functions, 3 credits

3. Language in its Social Contexts.

One course dealing with language and culture, sociolinguistics, or language socialization and second language acquisition (3 credits).

This requirement can be fulfilled by successful completion of one of the following **or another course**, with the approval of the student's advisor and the MA TESOL Program Director.

- ANP 420 Language and Culture
- COM 828 Cross-cultural Communication
- LIN 471 Sociolinguistics
- LIN 871 Sociolinguistics
- LLT 856 Identity and Ideology in Multilingual Settings

4. Additional Requirements

##### A. Additional Requirements for **Plan A** (Thesis track)

1. Four credits of LLT 899 Master's Thesis Research.
2. Pass an oral examination in defense of the thesis.
3. One TESOL related elective (3 credits).

Students who are writing a thesis will use thesis credits (LLT 899, 4 cr.) as their elective and complete a program of 37 credits.

TAs should see the Section **Work-related Policies and Financial Support** for information on possible funding for the additional credit hour.

##### B. Additional Requirements for **Plan B** (Pedagogy and education)

1. Two TESOL related electives (6 credits).
2. Pass a **final certifying examination**.

The two TESOL related electives for the Plan B students can be fulfilled by successful completion of one of the following **or another course**, with the approval of the student's advisor and the MA TESOL Program Director.

- LLT 813: CALL: Technology-mediated Language Learning and Teaching
- LLT 818: Eye Tracking in Second Language Acquisition and Bilingualism (recommended only for students continuing for a Ph.D.)
- LLT 821: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition
- LLT 823: Introduction to Corpus Linguistics for Second Language Studies
- LLT 841: Special topics
- LLT 842: Teaching and Learning Vocabulary in Another Language
- LLT 870: Instructed Second Language Acquisition

One course outside of the LLT courses may be chosen with the approval of your advisor. It is also possible to take LLT 896 a second time for credit as an elective.

#### **4.1.4 Other Requirements for both Plan A and Plan B**

A minimum of 16 credits of the MA must be at the 800 level or above. If courses are waived due to similar content at other institutions, additional electives will be required to complete the 36 credit hours necessary for graduation. These additional electives must also be chosen from LiLaC (LLT or LIN courses) unless a course outside of LiLaC is warranted due to the nature of a student's research and is pre-approved by the student's advisor and the MA TESOL Director via GradPlan. Any course waivers must be discussed with the MA TESOL Program Director. To request a waiver based on a course taken at another institution, students must provide the Program Director with the syllabus for that course when it was taken and an official report of the grade received.

The practicum, LLT 896, is a course in which MA students work in teams to prepare lessons and materials for, and then teach a six-week ESL program for adult ESL learners from the MSU and Greater Lansing Area communities (see EPIC: English Partners in Communication). Waivers are rarely granted for LLT 896. In order to waive LLT 896, students must meet all of the following requirements: Two years of full-time supervised experience as the responsible teacher of English as a second language in an approved context within five years of the first enrollment semester in the MA TESOL program. The focus of the teaching must be in a traditional classroom format (not online or hybrid). The courses must involve the teaching of listening and speaking, and/or content that includes a focus on oral communication to adult nonnative speakers of English. Test-preparation courses do not meet the requirement. Documentation of the supervision of the teaching experience must be provided including the contact information for the supervisor(s). Students who believe that they meet all of these requirements and wish to request a waiver must submit the request to the program director in writing along with the documentation of the teaching experience. LLT 896 is required for students who are TAs unless they have the required experience noted above. All students, regardless of whether or not they are TAs, are required to complete 36 credits for graduation.

## **Specific Degree Requirements for MA TESOL Plan A**

Students who write a thesis (Plan A) must enroll in LLT 899 (master's thesis research) for a total of four credits after the MA thesis proposal has been approved (usually by the fall of the final year). Writing a thesis requires a commitment to working independently to find a topic of interest and following the procedures noted below upon the completion of the first year of study. Students should consult the thesis director on how to adapt the dates below for their individual circumstances, including, for example, the collection of data beyond MSU during the summer between the first and second years of study. The dates below are intended as guidelines and assume thesis completion at the end of the spring semester of the final year.

### **4.1.5 Formation of the MA Thesis Committee**

- **August 15:** Students should select a professor from one of the core MA TESOL faculty (see the MA TESOL website for a current list of MA TESOL faculty) whose research interests most closely match the proposed topic, and give them a five-page (double-spaced) summary that includes the statement of the research question(s), a possible method of data collection, and timeline for conducting the research. This summary need not include a comprehensive literature review, but it must include the rationale for wanting to conduct the research. If the first professor approves the project and will serve as the thesis director, approval must be obtained from a second professor from LiLaC, or with approval from the thesis director, a professor from outside the department. The Thesis Committee is then documented by the student using GradPlan.

### **4.1.6 MA Thesis Process**

- **October 1:** Students should submit to both professors a comprehensive proposal that includes the literature review and complete research methodology including all instruments and potential participants. As soon as both professors approve the project, the student must request approval from the MSU Institutional Review Board (IRB), if applicable. The thesis director will be the responsible project investigator. Data collection involving human participants must not begin until IRB approval has been received.
- The MA TESOL thesis, a formal research project undertaken by the candidate, is generally at least 50-75 pages in length. The thesis may, with the approval of the thesis director, be a substantive expansion of a paper written for a course. It should represent the student's ability to do independent work involving original research that is directly related to the academic content of the MA TESOL program.
- **April 1:** Students should submit to both professors a draft of the thesis, conforming to the current edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). Allow at least two weeks for a review of the thesis before the defense is scheduled. Note that revisions may be needed before a defense can take place.

### **4.1.7 MA Thesis Defense and Oral Exam**

- **April 15:** A defense of the thesis is scheduled with both professors. This defense is a meeting in which students present their results and answer questions from the

committee. Although attendees are permitted at the defense, it does not have to be a public defense. **Students must be enrolled at MSU for at least one credit at the time of the defense.**

- **After the defense, the Thesis Advisor must email the MA TESOL Program Director and the MA TESOL Graduate Program Coordinator letting them know the outcome of the defense and the date of the defense.** The date and decision is logged in the student's file and a successful defense date must be information in the file for the student to graduate.

### **Specific Degree Requirements for MA TESOL Plan B**

The following TWO tasks will serve as the MA comprehensive exam. It is due via email to the MA TESOL Director by March 15, at midnight. Each exam will be assigned to two TESOL faculty members for evaluation and graded within two weeks. Grades are pass/fail. A pass represents satisfactory completion of the required components. Students who receive a failing grade may revise the exam based on faculty feedback one time during the semester in which it was originally submitted. If a student still does not earn a passing grade, the exam must be resubmitted the following semester. If a student fails a second time, she or he is dismissed from the program.

Task 1: A teaching philosophy statement of no more than 500 words with specific examples to illustrate your philosophy.

- References to sources are not expected but may be included.
- This can include any information you want, but think about it as something you might use for a job application.
- You may follow any format you wish or include any content you wish.
- The goal is to write something that will get you a job.
- You may revise a statement that you wrote for another class, and you are welcome to get feedback from others with the exception of the TESOL faculty.

Task 2: A reflection on how your views of language learning and teaching have changed since you started the program.

Specifically, include at least the following information with specific supporting examples:

- What were your thoughts and beliefs about language learning and teaching when you started the program? How did you develop those ideas?
- What are your thoughts and beliefs now about language learning and teaching? What influenced you during the program (e.g., courses, class activities, assignments, workshops, talk, professors, classmates)?
- In what areas (e.g., skills, learner populations, classroom management) do you feel that you still need improvement? How can we help future students do better in these areas?

(Note: Task 2 is not something that you would include with a job application.)

The reflection can be done in any format, multimodal or otherwise, and creativity is encouraged but not required. For example, you can do:

- A blog entry or page on an electronic teaching portfolio
- A narrated PowerPoint
- A videoed staged job interview



- A letter to a potential applicant to the program
- A videoed play
- A poster
- A podcast
- A rap song
- Or anything else you can think of. If you don't feel creative, you can write an essay in any format you wish.

**Important Notes:**

- a) The above timeline will be adjusted as needed for linked program and part-time students. These students should keep in touch with the program director concerning an appropriate schedule.
- b) Students who decide to follow Plan A (thesis) by the fall of the second year and have an accepted thesis proposal may use the online portfolio components that were assembled in the first year for professional development purposes, but do not need to continue the workshops, prepare the offline element (i.e., the written reflection on the portfolio), or submit the portfolio for evaluation.

**Selection of a MA TESOL Advisor**

The advising process in the MA TESOL program is designed to assist graduate students in completing their programs in a timely manner. However, while the faculty will assist in this process, it is the responsibility of each student to be aware of and understand University regulations as published (See MSU Graduate Rights and Responsibilities section 2.3).

All new students will be assigned an academic advisor from among the core faculty associated with the MA TESOL program. This information is provided to students following the orientation meeting, which is usually held during the week prior to the first week of classes. The MA TESOL Director advises all incoming students regarding the courses to take in the first semester. After orientation, each student should contact the assigned advisor to make an appointment to work out a tentative schedule for the two years of coursework and to officially enter the Advisor into the student's GradPlan. For students in the linked BA/MA program, the TESOL program director will continue as the advisor unless the thesis option is chosen as described below, and at that point, the student must work with the advisor to enter the advisor into the student's GradPlan.

For a student choosing Plan B, the faculty member who is assigned as the advisor will generally remain the advisor during the student's time in the TESOL program. Students wishing to change advisors discuss this with their current and prospective advisor and/or with the MA TESOL Program Director, and then do the formal request within GradPlan. If the advisor leaves MSU, the student will be assigned a new one with the assistance of the MA TESOL Director. Students following Plan A should begin to talk with the advisor as early as possible about this option to determine who should supervise the MA thesis: The current advisor, or a new advisor. Any advisor changes must be made official in GradPlan. The thesis supervisor must be one of the core MA TESOL faculty from LiLaC, but the second member may be from any department.

The procedure for establishing and changing advisors is the same for Plan A and for Plan B and is done using GradPlan.

**Formation of the MA Thesis Committee**

## **Thesis Defense and Oral Exam**

### **5 Linked Linguistics BA/MA TESOL Program**

The dual-enrollment BA-MA is an integrated program in which some credits taken to fulfill your undergraduate requirements can be counted toward fulfilling the requirements for an M.A. as well. Undergraduate majors at MSU may qualify for the dual BA/MA (TESOL) program.

Admission requirements are the same as described above for the MA TESOL program. Undergraduates should have a minimum GPA of 3.25. Students may count nine credits of 400-level coursework toward the completion of the MA TESOL degree. These nine credits would need to be approved by the MATESOL director and chosen in consultation with the student's undergraduate advisor.

Students must be admitted to the MA TESOL program before taking the courses that are to be used for the Dual BA/MA (TESOL) program. Therefore, students interested in this linked program should consult the TESOL program director as early as possible. Once admitted, students will then complete the following graduate courses (each 3 credits).

- LLT 895 ESL Classroom Practices, 3 credits
- LLT 807 Language Teaching Methods, 3 credits
- LLT 808 Assessment for Language Teaching and Research , 3 credits
- LLT 809 Teaching Second-language Reading and Writing, 3 credits
- LLT 846 English Structures and Functions, 3 credits
  
- LLT 860 Second Language Acquisition, 3 credits
- LLT 872 Research Methods for Language Teaching and Learning, 3 credits
- LLT 896 Practicum in TESOL, 3 credits

There are several possibilities for the ninth course. Linked program students will be advised by the TESOL program director and should consult the director regarding course selection.

Linked Linguistics BA/MA TESOL students are allowed to be Plan A or Plan B students, as described in the MA TESOL degree program section. A general timeline for the Plan A thesis option is provided in the MA TESOL degree program section, and is based on a full-time, four-semester sequence of courses; therefore, students in the linked program should discuss the feasibility of TA funding and/or the Plan A thesis option with the MA TESOL program director as early as possible.

Linked Linguistics BA/MA TESOL students should be sure to read “Other Requirements for both Plan A and Plan B” in the MA TESOL degree program section, as those requirements pertain to the Linked Program as well.

### **6 SLS Ph.D. Degree Program Overview**

The Doctor of Philosophy in Second Language Studies seeks to provide 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, as well as private and public sector positions, in the fields of language learning and/or teaching. Students will be prepared to conduct research and contribute to the future development of these fields.

Because teaching and research are integral to this program, every effort will be made to provide students with research and teaching experience in the form of graduate assistantships. Teaching experience may include classroom teaching or related activities, such as program and curriculum development.

### **Scope of the SLS Ph.D. 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 Ph.D. 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 ethical practices, with orientation toward diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to complete research and materials dissemination within a transparent, Open Science framework
- To provide students with the tools necessary for the collection, storage, maintenance,, analysis, and publication (deposit) of second language data, data analysis code, 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, managing projects and data, 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.

### **SLS Students and Certificates and Specializations at MSU**

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/>

### **SLS Program Admissions**

Preference for admission will be given to those with a Master of Arts degree in a related field. Students may be admitted without this background, but they will be required to take all required courses listed 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. Transferred-in courses appear on the student's transcript and count toward the degree.

Conditional admission is not granted. Please check the SLS website (<http://sls.msu.edu>) for application deadlines. Admission is normally granted only for the Fall Semester, with occasional (very rare) January or May entrances for international students who have special extenuating circumstances.

All admission decisions will be made by the Advisory Committee in consultation with other relevant faculty. To be considered for admission to the Doctor of Philosophy degree in

Second Language Studies, an applicant must submit the following along with an application.

- The results of the Graduate Record Examination General Test.
- An Academic Statement of Purpose (ASOP).
- A writing sample, preferably a research paper or other product that reflects the degree of the applicant's familiarity with applied linguistics.
- Three academic references from faculty who are able to address the applicant's academic background and/or professional experiences.
- For international applicants and applicants whose first language is not English, English language test scores, with the test being an approved one from the Michigan State University Graduate School's list of English language tests for international students. The list and information about this requirement is here: <https://admissions.msu.edu/apply/international/language-requirements>

Starting Spring 2019, MSU requires admitted Chinese students who earned bachelor's degrees in mainland China to submit a bachelor's degree conferral verification report from the CDGDC as well as a transcript verification report from CHESICC. Both of these reports must be made available electronically to MSU's Office of Admissions. This information is supplied in full [here](#).

## **SLS Degree Requirements**

### **6.1.1 Residency 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 9 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>

### **6.1.2 Required Courses**

SLS Ph.D. students must complete 24 to 44 credits of course work. The student's program of study must be developed in cooperation with and approved by the student's guidance committee and the SLS Director, and must include the requirements specified below.

1. Complete the following courses (27 credits):

LLT	807	Language Teaching Methods, 3 credits
LLT	808	Assessment for Language Teaching and Research, 3 credits
LLT	860*	Second Language Acquisition, 3 credits
LLT	872*	Research Meth. for Language Teaching & Foreign/L2 Learning, 3 credits
LLT	873**	Quantitative Research in Second Language Studies, 3 credits
LLT	874	Qualitative Research in Second Language Studies, 3 credits
LLT	861	Advanced Topics in Second Language Acquisition, 3 credits
LLT	862	Advanced Research in Second Language Acquisition, 3 credits
LLT	864	Second Language Psycholinguistics, 3 credits

\*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.

\*\*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.

2. Complete five courses for a minimum of 15 credits selected from courses listed below as elective options or as approved by your advisor, guidance committee and SLS Program Director through discussion and, formally, through GradPlan. For some of these courses outside of Applied Linguistics you may need instructor permission and/or a course override as provided by the instructor.
  - CEP\* 920 Construction of Psychoeducational Instruments
  - CEP\* 921 Psychometric Theory I
  - CEP\* 922 Psychometric Theory II
  - CEP\* 923 Item Response Theory
  - CEP\* 934 Multivariate Data Analysis I
  - CEP\* 935 Multivariate Data Analysis II
  - EAD 907 Educational Policy for Immigrant and English Language Learner Students
  - HDFS 892 Seminar in Human Development & Family Studies
  - LIN 824 Phonological Theory I
  - LIN 825 Phonological Theory II
  - LIN 834 Syntactic Theory I
  - LIN 835 Syntactic Theory II
  - LIN 837 Advanced Studies in Semantics and Pragmatics
  - LIN 850 Advanced Studies in Child Language Acquisition
  - LIN 855 Advanced Studies in Neurolinguistics
  - LIN 871 Advanced Studies in Sociolinguistics
  - LLT 809 Teaching Second Language Reading and Writing
  - LLT 813 Computer-assisted Language Learning
  - LLT 818 Eye tracking in SLA and Bilingualism

- LLT 821 Individual Differences in SLA
- LLT 822 Interlanguage Analysis
- LLT 823 Corpus Linguistics in SLA
- LLT 841\*\* Topics in Learning & Teaching (variable topics year to year)
- LLT 842 Vocabulary Learning and Teaching
- LLT 856 Language Identity and Ideology in Multilingual Settings
- LLT 863 The Second Language Acquisition of Morphosyntax
- LLT 870 Instructed Second Language Acquisition
- LLT\*\* 890 Independent Study
- LLT 992 Seminar in English as a Second Language
- LLT 895 English as a Second Language: Classroom Practices
- SOC 852 Migration and Social Change
- TE 904 ELL/ESL Research and Practice: K-12
- TE 908 Sociohistorical Perspectives on English Language Learners and Second Language Education in the U.S.
- TE 909 English Language Learners in Content Areas: Constructing Research Communities and Resources

Notes on electives:

\*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).

\*\*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.

3. 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 program secretary or coordinator 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. Talk to your advisor or the SLS Program director if you have questions about this or if you plan to take fewer than 9 credits.

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 their last semester. Another student took Tennis while dissertating. The course would need advisor approval and director 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.

4. Within one year of completion of the course work, students must write two qualifying research papers in two separate areas. Each qualifying research paper must be read and approved by two core Second Language Studies faculty members, with any exceptions approved by the Second Language Studies Director.
5. Write and successfully defend a dissertation proposal including a literature review, the research questions, the methodology, including the participants, materials, and analysis plans, the reference list, the timeline, and the budget.
6. Pass a final oral examination in defense of the dissertation.



## Sample SLS Program Student Schedule

Below is a sample timetable for SLS 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 MA 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.

Year	Semester	Courses	Credits	Other
0	Within the MA	LLT 807, 860, and 872 equivalents	9 transfer total (or waived)	
1	Fall	LLT 861 LLT 873 LLT 809* as elective 1	9 total	
1	Spring	LLT 808 LLT 862 LLT 864	9 total	Submit QRP1 at end of Spring Semester
2	Fall	LLT 818* as elective 2 LLT 874 LLT 821* as elective 3	9 total	
2	Spring	LLT 841* as elective 4 LLT 823* as elective 5 LIN 871* as elective 6	9 total	Submit QRP2 at end of Spring Semester
3	Fall	LLT 999 (for 9 credits)	9 total	Defend Dissertation Proposal at end of Fall Semester
3	Spring	LLT 999 (for 9 credits)	9 total	
4	Fall	LLT 999 (for 3 credits)	3 total	
4	Spring	LLT 999 (for 3 credits)	3 total	Defend Dissertation in March; Graduate in May

In this sample, the student took the 27 required credits. The student took 6 (even though only 5 were required) elective courses for 18 elective credits. LLT 807, LLT 860, and LLT 872 were waived or transferred in for the imaginary student. Also, the student took the minimum number of required LLT 999 credits, which is 24. Please note the imaginary student was able to graduate in four years because they had a MA that allowed at least one course to be waived or transferred in. Not having an MA before entering the program would extend the degree time.

### Selection of SLS Committee/Dissertation 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 SLS graduate program, the student will be advised by their forthcoming academic advisor, and by the Director of the Program, with the academic advisor becoming the student's primary and official academic advisor of record as soon as the student logs the guidance committee and Chair in MSU's GradPlan and the committee members and Chair approve this officially through the GradPlan system. SLS students must form their guidance committee within the first two semesters of doctoral study because after the middle of the second semester, the student will work with their advisor on the student's annual report form, which is due to the Program Director toward the end of each year in the program. 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. In sum, by the midpoint of the second semester, the student will select a guidance committee with a chair through discussion with faculty members, and then in GradPlan. The student should ask a prospective chair and committee members if they would be willing to join the student's committee, and then, after confirmations of agreement, the student should officially formalize the requests using GradPlan. Co-advisors are informally possible within the SLS Program. Co-advisors would be listed as such on the SLS Alumni website, and SLS graduates may list co-advisors on their CVs. However, officially, at MSU and within GradPlan, there is only one Chair for the smooth running of the student's degree administration.

### **Formation of the SLS Guidance Committee/Dissertation Committee**

This committee will be comprised of four members, including two core second language studies faculty members. The student may initiate changes to their committee officially through GradPlan. It is recommended that a student wishing to change a committee member or the chair discuss that or their plan with their Chair, the SLS Program Director, and/or the other committee members. It is easier to change guidance committee members rather than dissertation committee members, as it is expected that dissertation committee members will have approved of the dissertation proposal as part of the committee at the time of the dissertation defense.

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. 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.

### **SLS Guidance/Dissertation Committee Responsibilities**

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
- Advising on the job market, internships
- Introducing the student to appropriate individuals and/or research tools/skills/opportunities
- Providing letters of recommendation for funding and/or positions

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 this Handbook's section on conflict resolution). Such changes are not normally interpreted as an indication that a conflict with a faculty member has occurred.

There can be many reasons for committee member changes. The SLS Program Director, the faculty, and the LiLaC Department Director of Graduate Studies are available to help graduate students seeking advice on their committee compositions.

### **QRPs (Qualifying Research Papers) as the SLS Comprehensive Exam**

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

#### **6.1.3 QRP Requirements**

- Students must submit their first QRP1 before the end of their first year within the SLS Graduate Program.
- Within one year of completion of coursework, students must pass both QRPs. The two qualifying research papers must be 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) to be their QRP reviewers.

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."

#### **6.1.4 QRP intent-form URL and intent-form 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 14 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:

- a) --The name of the paper
- b) --The paper's abstract or short description
- c) --The type of QRP (1 or 2)
- d) --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:

- a) --The name of the paper
- b) --The paper's abstract or short description
- c) --The type of QRP (1 or 2) --The names of the two readers
- d) --The intended submission date QRP submission form (in the SLS Ph.D Community D2L site) and due dates

### **6.1.5 QRP 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.

### **6.1.6 Submitting your QRP**

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.

### **6.1.7 QRP Rubric and Feedback Process**

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.

### **6.1.8 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.

## **Dissertation Proposal**

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 unless pre-approved by the advisor, committee, and director.

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 the section on conflict resolution). A dissertation proposal is to be successfully defended within one year after passing qualifying research paper (QRP). 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.

## **Dissertation Defense and Oral Exam**

A public defense is required. The defense 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.

The dissertation is to be submitted to the Dissertation Committee at least three weeks prior to a scheduled defense. All students must be enrolled for at least one credit during the semester in which they are defending their dissertation. This includes summer semester.

## **7 Department/AL Policies**

### **Academic and Professional Performance**

Graduate students have a right to periodic, written evaluation of their academic progress, performance, and professional expectations (GSRR 2.4.8; LSRR 2.4.1; MSRR 2.4.1). Therefore, the Applied Linguistics Program has procedures to review the performance and professional conduct of each graduate student at least once a year. The AL Program has a two-tier review system; namely, a review by the faculty advisor and a review by the Program Director or Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).

Each AL graduate program has its own evaluation procedures and policies for dismissal due to academic deficiencies. Each program has explicit expectations of professional behavior and the consequences of failure to meet those professional standards aligning with Graduate School and MSU standards (GSRR 2.3.2 and 2.4.7; LSRR 2.3.2 and 2.3.15 and 2.4.1.1; MSRR 2.3.2 and 2.3.15 and 2.4.1.1).

Please read the specific degree program information for more on each program's academic and professional performance expectations and review procedures. However, shared professional performance expectations and review procedures are outlined below.

### **Graduate Student Grievances**

Units must have adopted a grievance procedure by January 1, 2016 that conforms at least to [the template provided by the Ombudsperson](#), and it must be approved by the Ombudsperson's office. If no specific grievance procedure is adopted, after January 1, 2016, the Ombudsperson's template will default become the unit's procedure. The AL Program is a unit within the large Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures (unit), which has a Grievance Procedures section (Appendix B) in the Department Bylaws. Thus, the AL Programs (TESOL and SLS) default to the LiLaC Department's Grievance Procedures, which are in the LiLaC Department Bylaws on the LiLaC website.

### **Mentoring, Selecting Mentors, and Changing Mentors in MA TESOL or SLS**

The AL Program has guidelines and expectations for successful faculty advising consistent with the [MSU Guidelines for Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising](#).

The AL Program has procedures for the timely change of the faculty advisor when such a change would best serve the continued progress of the graduate student in the program. Overall, it is the responsibility of the student to ask professors to be on their committees and to identify a chair using GradPlan. That is, the mechanisms available to change advisors are in GradPlan. Generally, the student may initiate changes through GradPlan, but it is strongly recommended (and part of collegial culture in the programs) for the student to discuss possible changes with

their major professor, the committee, the prospective addition, and/or the director before requesting changes through GradPlan.

If a new advisor is needed and the student needs help, the Graduate Program Director or Director of Graduate Studies will work to help the student identify a new advisor at least before the start of the next academic year when it is determined that the best interest of the student is in remaining in the program. When the advisor is the GPD or Director, the graduate student may ask the Associate Chair of Graduate Studies for assistance. In case of the need for higher-level help, the student may ask the Chair of the Department for assistance.

If the major professor leaves MSU before the student completes their degree program, the student may ask the Graduate Program Director or the LiLaC Associate Chair for Graduate Studies to help them identify a new major professor.

The SLS Program Director has used the Graduate School's [procedure for approving committee members from outside the "regular" faculty](#) to create SLS-Program specific guidelines for onboarding outside committee members to SLS dissertation committees. Please see the MSU SLS Program Teams site for the directions, or ask the SLS Program Director on how to on-board a dissertation committee member from outside SLS or the LiLaC Department, or to on-board a Ph.D. dissertation committee member who is not at MSU. The general basic requirement is that the person has a Ph.D. in the field, and passes the on-boarding requirements.

When a student and/or faculty advisor can no longer work together, the student and/or faculty advisor may discuss this with the Graduate Program Director, the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, and/or the Chair of the Department.

### **Integrity and Safety in Research and Creative Activities**

Integrity in research and creative activities is based on sound disciplinary practices as well as on a commitment to basic values such as fairness, equity, honesty and respect. Students learn to value professional integrity and high standards of ethical behavior through interaction with members of their academic unit and their faculty advisor and by emulating exemplary behavior. The program's expectations for the responsible conduct of research and creative activities of graduate students align with [GSRR 2.4.7](#) and should present explicit criteria for dismissal for reasons other than academic deficiencies, including research misconduct, dishonesty with respect to grades or academic records and scholarship, and violations of professional standards.

## **8 University/Graduate School Policies and Resources**

Below are pertinent and important policies that pertain to both SLS and TESOL graduate programs (and all graduate programs at MSU). Where appropriate, we mention specific tailoring for the implementation of the policies or acquisition or use of the resources for SLS and MATESOL students.

### **Responsible Conduct of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities (RCRSCA, RCR for short)**

Research integrity is foundational to our scholarship, creative work, and core identity as



MSU Spartans. It is not only required by rules (including federal, state, research sponsors, and MSU's **research** and **training** policies), integrity is essential for our research to have legitimacy and impact. Research integrity is so important to our development as scholars and creators that the Graduate School has developed minimum education requirements for all graduate students regarding the Responsible Conduct of Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activities (RCRSCA, RCR for short). The Graduate School's RCRSCA program requires (a) initial, basic education, and (b) supplemental, refresher training.

Importantly, see the MA Plan A and Plan B, and Doctoral Student RCR Basic Education Program Requirement Outlines here, as well as up-to-date information on MSU RCR Requirements: <https://grad.msu.edu/researchintegrity>

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 hours 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 RCRSCA activities, (iv) one-on-one discussions with the Ph.D. preceptor and or (v) other activities.

**Within the SLS Ph.D. Program**, LLT 861 and LLT 862 provide 6 hours of discussion-based training (which is required by the University to be completed before finishing the program's comprehensive examination and entering candidacy status).

**With the MA TESOL Program**, LLT 872 includes 6 hours of discussion-based training (which is required to be completed before graduation from the program).

Completion of the annual supplemental education will be verified by the Graduate Program Director and documented by the student in GradPlan. Courses online that can fulfill the other RCR requirements include the following:

- Authorship
- Plagiarism
- Research Ethics

### **Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval for Research**

It is imperative that any MSU research or original data that is to be collected for MSU research 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 for any graduate student research, and failure to gain prior approval can mean that your research project, QRP, thesis, or dissertation (even a final version) will not be accepted by MSU. You apply for IRB approval with your advisor or with the faculty member with whom you are conducting the research. Graduate students may not apply for an MSU IRB approval on their own. If you have questions about MSU's IRB, contact your advisor and/or your program director.

### **Academic and Ethical Integrity**

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](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.

### **8.1.1 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. 29 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 their judgment of the particular case, they 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-stateuniversity/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/>.

### **8.1.2 Plagiarism**

Any graduate student in the AL programs 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 AL programs, 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 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.

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.

## **Counseling services and assistance**

### **8.1.3 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/>

### **8.1.4 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/> Graduate Assistants are university employees, and thus can also contact the MSU Employee Assistance Program (<https://eap.msu.edu>) free of charge. They are also sometimes faster, we have heard. Dr. Jon Ritz is the CAL's Director of Student Wellness and can meet with you confidentially anytime. Email him for an appointment at [ritz@msu.edu](mailto:ritz@msu.edu)

### **8.1.5 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/>

### **8.1.6 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/>

### **8.1.7 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/>

## **9 Work Related Policies and Financial Support**

This section's information that is specifically on "Work Related Policies" is intended for graduate students employed with GASHips from the Applied Linguistics Program. When a graduate student is employed in another unit, the policies of that unit apply. In all cases, units must follow contractual rules and University policies.

### **Applied Linguistics Graduate Assistantships**

An application to the MA TESOL Program or to the SLS Program is a simultaneous application for a Graduate Research Assistantship through the Applied Linguistics Program. Some AL GASHips are preferential for MA TESOL students. Some are preferential for SLS Ph.D. Students. Applicants to MA TESOL or SLS Ph.D. degree programs may apply for other Assistantships and Fellowships offered at MSU as well.

### **Accommodations and Disability**

Graduate assistants (RAs, TAs, and teaching exclusive GA or "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 MSU "Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD's) MyProfile portal. <https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/get-started>

### **9.1.1 Semesterly Applied Linguistics GAship Evaluations**

Within the Department of Linguistics, Languages, and Cultures (LiLaC), the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies provides the infrastructure for a one-a-semester evaluation of GAs within the department, including Applied Linguistics GAs. Each GA and faculty supervisor within AL must participate in the LiLaC GA review program. GAs hired by other units (outside of LiLaC) must undergo the GA evaluations managed by those units.

### **ELC GASHips preferentially for MA TESOL**

A limited number of teaching assistantships (TAships) is available through the English Language Center (ELC). A stipend plus nine credits of tuition per semester are provided. This application process is separate from the admission process. All applications are due February 1st for assistantships beginning in the fall semester. Because support is not guaranteed, candidates for admission are encouraged to seek outside funding for their graduate studies. ELC assistantships are awarded on a year-by-year basis. The maximum funding allowed for MA candidates is two years. Students who are employed by the ELC should contact that unit

for information on work-related policies.

ELC assistantships are not administered through the Department of LiLaC; therefore, questions about assistantships should be directed to the Director or Associate Director of the ELC. Information, including requirements for international students, and a link to the application form is available on the [ELC website](#). Note that the English language proficiency requirements are different from those for admission to the MA TESOL program.

### **SLS GShips & Fellowships (Financial Support for SLS Students)**

The SLS program has a limited number of highly competitive fellowships and/or research assistantships. All SLS applicants are automatically considered for these fellowships and assistantships. Additionally, all applicants are considered for all appropriate university support, including University and MSU Graduate School Recruitment Fellowships, such as the following University Distinguished Fellowships, Rasmussen Doctoral Recruitment Awards, and Academic Achievement Graduate Assistantships (AAGSs):

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

<https://grad.msu.edu/rasmussen-doctoral-recruitment-awards>

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

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.

Because support is limited, all SLS 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; however, SLS faculty will help nominate you and help you apply for such awards. 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, including Fulbright Fellowships, by students who have written their own grant applications, and that are worth at least \$24,000 (direct costs) a year, 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 (which includes Fulbright). 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.

Note also that Returned Peace Corps Volunteers who enter graduate programs at MSU are eligible for in-state tuition. The Registrar's Office will need your PC completion certificate to assign you an in-state tuition rate. The PC office in Washington DC may be able to issue you a new certificate if you do not have yours.

### **MSU International TA (ITA) eligibility requirements**

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 international teaching assistants (ITAs) may meet this requirement in one of the following ways:

- 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 \(ITAOT\)](#).

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 the three options listed above.

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.

#### **9.1.2 Extra TA Tuition Credits**

Students who are appointed as teaching assistants (TAs) at MSU may apply for additional funds to cover tuition beyond the nine credit hours per fall and spring semester. Students who pursue the thesis option will encounter the need to cover an additional credit hour because LLT 899 (thesis credits) involves 4 credit hours compared to 3 hours for other courses in the program; therefore, the student following Plan A completes a total of 37 (vs. 36) credits. Additional credit hours for the degree may also occur if the student writing a thesis wishes to take a regular course as the elective but still must enroll in LLT 899. The pool of funds for these extra tuition credits is known as the TA Tuition Pool and is negotiated by the [MSU/Graduate Employees Union \(GEU\)](#). Applications are made per semester. A notice will be sent by email from the program director to eligible students when applications can be submitted.

#### **9.1.3 Other Possible Forms of GAship Support:**

CeLTA (the Center for Language Teaching Advancement) at MSU may also have available a graduate assistantship for a student to work on various projects related to language teaching and technology. CeLTA coordinates and assists with language-related activities at MSU and in the community, with the ultimate goal of improving the instructional environment for all languages. If such a position is available, the information will be distributed to TESOL students.

**Eligibility:** Regardless of the source of a student's support (e.g., the ELC or another unit), students pursuing a single master's degree may generally receive no more than four semesters of an assistantship (excluding summer semesters) and doctoral students may generally receive no more support than outlined in their Admissions Letters. A student who has exhausted her or his eligibility may be given an assistantship if any are available after assistantships have been given to all other qualified candidates who are eligible according to the above guideline. Appointment pay and stipend levels at MSU are informed by the GEU contract, which is binding for TAships at MSU.

A student who is not making satisfactory progress toward the degree is not eligible for an assistantship.

#### ***9.1.4 The definition of "good standing" or "satisfactory progress"***

College units that assign GAships will normally appoint only those who are eligible for GAship because they are in good standing or making satisfactory progress in their degree programs, which are the same. Good standing or satisfactory progress in Applied Linguistics is defined according to the rules below. GAships within AL are depending on the student being in good standing or in making satisfactory progress. Outside units will normally ask the AL unit to confirm the prospective GA's eligibility status at the time they apply for a position in that unit. External grant and award programs often ask for the faculty advisor or program director to confirm whether the student is in good standing as a condition for eligibility for the grant or award.

#### **MA TESOL**

Within the MA TESOL Program, satisfactory progress or being in good standing within the degree program is defined as the completion of at least six credits per semester, a GPA of at least 3.25, and no more than six credits below 3.0.

#### **SLS Ph.D.**

Within the SLS Ph.D. Program, in order for the student to be considered in good standing, the student must:

1. Maintain a cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 in all courses.
2. Receive a grade of at least 3.0 in courses to be considered as satisfying any requirement.
3. Not obtain more than 3 credits with a grade below 3.0.
4. Submit the first qualifying research paper by the final submission date within the fourth semester in the program.

Within the SLS Ph.D. Program, any required examination, pre-dissertation or dissertation defenses, can be repeated only once and must be completed the semester following initial failure. No more than one required examination, pre-dissertation or dissertation defenses, can be failed.

### **9.1.5 Deferred grades**

Deferred grades are highly discouraged by the AL program unless extenuating circumstances exist. However, deferred grading exists for real and legitimate reasons. Below are outlines regarding deferred grades and standing in an AL graduate program.

- 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.

### **9.1.6 Course load**

Being enrolled in fewer than 6 credits in an AL graduate program is considered part-time and unsatisfactory, unless the student is an ABD doctoral student in SLS, or arrangements have been made with the Program Director. Regular graduate students are not encouraged to take more than 9 credits.

## **10 Research and Conference Travel Support:**

The Applied Linguistics Program, the College of Arts and Letters, and the Graduate School have sources of funds to support graduate student research and travel. You may additionally apply for funding from other university and external resources. You should discuss your funding plans and resources with your graduate advisor, with other faculty members, and through attendance at funding information sessions within the program, the university, government and private agencies, and through field associations.

### **Requests for Research and Travel Funding from AL**

All requests for AL Program-level funding for research or travel from the AL Program should be submitted to the Chair of the AL Financial Committee or the SLS Director, whichever one is in charge of awarding funding that year. The Chair of the AL Financial Committee or SLS Director will put out calls for funding requests each semester.

### **Research and Travel Funding Amounts from AL**

Whenever possible, funds up to \$350 for MA TESOL Thesis or SLS QRP research and up to \$700 for SLS dissertation research are made available, but this is subject to change, depending on availability of funding. Please contact your Program Director or the Chair of the AL Financial Committee if you have questions.

Travel funding is awarded secondary to research funding. But, if research or travel funding is awarded, it 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. Keep your mailbox address up to date with MSU. 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 Chair of the AL Financial Committee. If you are late with your submission, the committee may not be able to include you in the calculations for available funding and you may 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) within two weeks before domestic travel or four weeks before international travel.

### **Additional MSU Internal Grad Student Funding Sources**

Funding sources to which past Applied Linguistics students have applied and from which students and faculty have obtained funding are on the “Grants” page within the SLS Program website. Below are research and travel support programs that Applied Linguistics students commonly apply.

- a) [SCRAM](#) (Summer College Research Abroad Monies): College of Arts & Letters
  - Funds are for research requiring significant use of facilities, sources, or resources abroad.
  - Support is for travel during the summer semester.
  - Candidates are nominated by the program.
  - Applications in 2019 will be due February 1st.
- b) [Summer Support Fellowships](#): College of Arts and Letters
  - Fellowships are designed to facilitate completion of degree.
  - Applications are usually due by early March. More information about this is provided below.
- c) Graduate Office Fellowships (GOF), Provost Office funding, and Discretionary funds: Applied Linguistics Program
  - Limited funds are usually available each academic year.
  - The total amount available to the AL Program is determined at the beginning of each academic year.
  - Thesis and dissertation research expenses take priority.
  - Travel funding is second priority.
  - As mentioned above, the AL Financial Committee Chair or SLS Director will send out an email inviting applications for these funds when they become available.

Students are encouraged to apply for external funding for their research. The College of Arts and Letters has in the past 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 your program director or the LiLaC Dept. Associate Chair for Graduate Studies if you would like to apply for this funding.

### ***10.1.1 Student Summer Teaching as an Instructor***

Limited summer teaching possibilities are available to SLS graduate students to teach LLT undergraduate courses in the summer, and sometimes to MA TESOL students who have significant teaching experience and/or qualifications for such a position. Applications for these positions are generally solicited in the preceding Fall or in the early Spring by the SLS Program Director or the AL Program's Schedule Committee Chair.

### ***10.1.2 Fellowships (including SSFs and DCFs)***

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 on research in their respective programs during the summer semester when classes might not be available, and assistantships are not generally available. In years past, the SSF was available to be applied for by SLS Ph.D. students and by MA TESOL Plan A (thesis) students working on their thesis in the summer.

The **Degree Completion Fellowship** is a more substantial monetary award for SLS Ph.D. students (and other Ph.D. students across campus) 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. The funding for a DCF is currently 10K from the MSU Graduate School, and 3K from the College of Arts and Letters, but these amounts are susceptible to change. Students receive the funding as Fellowships, pay taxes (at their current tax rate) on the Fellowships (certain exclusions can apply, but it is your responsibility to understand those), and then pay for their own tuition (at least one credit) and health insurance fees using the Fellowship funding. Graduate students are encouraged to investigate the payments to ensure a DCF can cover one's cost of living, especially if the student has dependents.

### **Additional Sources of funds to Support Conference Travel**

Limited funds may also be available through the following:

- [Graduate School](#)
- [Council of Graduate Students](#) (COGS): Check the website for the application due date for travel in the fall and spring.
- College of Arts & Letters [Graduate Student Travel Awards](#)
- Your Major Professor (from their Research Account, if they have one) or from a Lab or Reading group in which you participate (Ask the professor or lab/group director if funds are available)
- For English Language Center TAs: The ELC may offer limited travel assistance to present papers or posters at conferences. Please contact the ELC Director.

## Conducting Research Abroad

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

- Check with the [MSU Travel Clinic](http://www.travelclinic.msu.edu/) for information on 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/informationresources/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.

## University Resources

Entering and completing graduate school is an exciting time, filled with new opportunities. The AL program’s Graduate Handbook is a key source of information for guiding students through their degrees. Each academic unit offering a graduate degree must develop a Graduate Handbook containing the essential features of graduate programming at MSU, as well as information particular to the respective academic unit and/or college. 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/Medical/Law](#) 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.

All entering graduate students will participate in an orientation session(s) organized by the academic unit and/or college that will include an introduction to the program’s Handbook. Students entering “off-cycle” will be introduced by the appropriate faculty member or administrator to the Handbook at the time of entry and will be required to participate in the next scheduled orientation. Units will ensure that a faculty member, designated to act for the unit, will advise entering students who have not chosen a faculty advisor on course selection and degree requirements.

Presentation and discussion of the Handbook should also be an integral part of new faculty and

staff orientation programs at the unit level.

To ensure the accuracy of the information provided to students and faculty, units must review their Handbook annually and **confirm this review as part of MSU's Strategic Program Assessment process for reviewing all graduate programs.** An out-of-date Handbook might violate University policy and students' rights and add to the stress of entering students and the faculty and staff advising them. In contrast, an accurate Handbook can help uphold University policy, secure students' rights and responsibilities, minimize stress, and ensure successful degree completion.

If a revision of the unit's Handbook makes changes to the degree requirements or any aspect of the evaluation of students, returning students should be accommodated under the rules and guidelines of the version of the Handbook that was active when they were admitted to the program to the largest extent possible. Excluded from this policy are program changes adopted to comply with external accreditation demands. The degree requirements listed in this Handbook must match those printed in the [MSU Academic Programs](#) document. If they do not match, faculty must change either the Handbook or the Academic Programs entry. When faculty want or need to change the Academic Programs entry, they must submit changes to the [curricular academic governance process](#).

Units developing or revising their Handbook may wish to consult Handbooks from units with a similar mission and/or within the same college. The Graduate School can also provide advice and review drafts of Handbooks if requested. Annually, the Graduate School will notify the units about policy updates that impact graduate education at Michigan State University and will update this Handbook Template.

Graduate Handbooks must be consistent with University and college policies. Units should consult current versions of the following documents and may reference them in the different sections of the Handbook or in an appendix with links to the appropriate document. Graduate Handbooks must make explicit that University policies override all inconsistent provisions of the departmental Handbooks.