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MNSU Graduate Student Handbook

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MNSU Graduate Student Handbook

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Welcome to Graduate School

Adjusting to Graduate School

Graduate school is an exciting journey that brings with it new responsibilities, new roles, and new expectations. Graduate students take less semester credits than undergrads but are expected to produce higher quality and often a higher quantity of work. Graduate programs are compressed into 2- 3 years and your time will be spent solely focused on your content area. During your final year, you will need to balance your studies, your capstone projects, possibly an assistantship, and your life outside of the university. You may also want to spend time during your studies to prepare for an internship, a career, or future doctoral studies.

As a graduate student, you may also be in the unique position of being both a student and an instructor. This can create some challenges as you balance your studies, your personal life and your role as a teacher. It is important to remember several things:

Unless there is a special arrangement, you are to spend no more than 20 hours a week on work combined. This includes in-class teaching, grading, planning, service to your department and office hours.

Time management skills are vital to accomplishing everything. Your studies are just as important as your teaching. Don't blow off one for the other.

Help is available. If you are struggling to balance the work load, reach out to your mentor professor or someone in your department.

Mentoring

Mentoring is the process of offering a person or persons assistance, guidance, clarification, support, or resources to foster professional development and learning. In your role as a graduate student, you may find yourself both as a mentor and a mentee.

If you are interested in learning more about what a mentor relationship can do for you, check out this video: https://cdnapisec.kaltura.com/index.php/extwidget/openGraph/wid/0_5qi4styw

Campus Resources

Life Resources

Accessibility Resources

The Accessibility Resources Office helps students with disabilities get the accommodations they need to succeed at MSU. Academic Resources assists students with disabilities in getting academic, housing, and physical accommodations.

If you have a disability and would like accommodations, visit the Accessibility Resources webpage.

Student Health Services

Student Health Services has an on-campus accredited clinic with a full pharmacy. Students can be seen for illnesses, health-related concerns, and immunizations. The clinic treats students with and without insurance.

Additionally, Student Health Services provides health-related education. More information can be

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found [here](#).

Student Health Services is located in the lower-level of Carkoski Commons. Directions can be found [here](#).

Need recipes that are cheap and fast? Check out the [recipes](#) on the Student Health Services website!

To make an appointment for the medical clinic, call 507-389-6276

Student Counseling Services

The Counseling Center provides individual and group therapy to MSU students for free. Also, if you have general questions about mental health or want suggestions about a mental health issue you or a friend are experiencing, Student Counseling Services provides consultation sessions where these questions will be answered.

Additional resources and information: http://www.mnsu.edu/counseling/ The Counseling Center is on the second floor of the student union in CSU 285.

The Counseling Center phone number is 507-389-1455. The center's hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm.

Housing Options

Both on-campus and off-campus housing are available. Most graduate students choose to live off-campus. There are several apartment complexes within walking distance of MSU, and many have bus stops that will take you to campus.

On-campus housing: https://www.mnsu.edu/reslife/housing/

Off-campus housing: https://www.mnsu.edu/activities/housing/

Academic Resources

Registration and eServices

Students enroll in courses online through eServices. Instructions for registration can be found [here](#).

Books and Where to Get Them

To find what textbooks you need for your courses, [search by course number](#).

Textbooks can be purchased through the Barnes & Noble bookstore on-campus, the Maverick Bookstore off-campus, or through vendors online. Many students choose to rent or buy a used book from Amazon, Chegg, or Campus Book Rentals. This is usually the most affordable option.

Career Development Center

Do you need help formatting your resume and perfecting your cover letters for job applications? Anxious about an upcoming job interview? The Career Development Center (CDC) will help prepare you to apply and successfully interview for a job.

The CDC is located in 209 Wigley Administration Center. Call 507-389-6061 to set up an in-person or telephone appointment.

Sample resumes and guidelines

Interviewing tips

IT Solutions

Customer Services

IT Solution Center: Where faculty, staff, and students can go for one-stop assistance and triage for their technology requests and issues

Campus Technology Support: Provides services such as computer imaging, lab development and support, and classroom technology design, development and support

Academic Technology Services: provides instructional design, support, and production services for academic and research technologies

Phishing emails

Phishing is the term given to communications, usually email, where the attacker tries to fool the target into revealing private information about themselves or their organization. Often claiming to be IT Solutions, the attacker will usually include hyperlinks to malicious websites in the email that appear to be legitimate or include malicious attachments. Simply visiting the URL or downloading the attachment can be enough to compromise your machine. Learn more about phishing and what you can do to protect yourself here.

Academic Computer Center

The Academic Computer Center Main Lab is home to approximately 300 hundred public access computers, as well as the IT Solutions Center, the main location for IT Services for our campus.

The Academic Computer Center is located on the first floor of Wissink Hall, 301 Maywood Ave. The center encompasses almost the entire first floor.

There are satellite computer labs located throughout campus that are available for students to use.

Center for Academic Success

The Center for Academic Success provides tutoring services, writing assistance, and assistance in how to prepare for an exam.

The Center for Academic Success main office is located in the basement of Memorial Library in ML 125.

Tutoring takes place in the basement of Memorial Library in ML 116. Please enter the tutoring center through ML 116, not through the main office.

Center for Excellence in Scholarship and Research (CESR)

CESR staff help faculty and graduate students with the following:

- Research Idea Development

- Research Design and Consultations

- Data Analysis

- Manuscript Editing

- Authorship Issues

- Responding to Reviewers

- Academic Journal Searches

For CESR services, please contact:

Dr. Daniel Houlihan, CESR director
507-389-6278
daniel.houlihan@mnsu.edu
Research and Editorial Consultant's direct line: 507-389-1093
CESR is located in the lower level of the library in ML 88.

Library

The Memorial Library is a great resource to any student. In addition to research journals, books, and other materials, the library is home to a wide collection of DVDs, audiobooks, games, and maps. There is a vast digital collection that includes books and streaming educational videos. The educational resource center can check out computers, cameras, and other electronic devices such as mice, chargers, and adapters. There are study carrels and group meeting rooms that you can reserve in addition to computers to use. The librarians can help you with your own research or help your students if you are teaching. Find more information about the library here.

SONA

SONA Systems is an online database of currently available research studies being conducted at Minnesota State University, Mankato. The SONA website can be found here.
Graduate students who are teaching classes for either a graduate assistantship or as an adjunct instructor can implement SONA studies into their courses for extra credit opportunities. A class list must be submitted to the SONA Systems administrator after the drop/add deadline, as well as a specified amount of possible extra credit earned for participating in studies. Once this is completed, students will receive an email from SONA Systems with their username and password and will be able to see available studies. Students who participate in SONA studies and are in multiple classes which

utilize SONA Systems for extra credit will have the option of choosing which class to apply their extra credit towards.

A FAQ for SONA Systems can be found here.

INFORMATION GATHERED FROM http://sbs.mnsu.edu/psych/respart/research.html

Scholarly Travel Funds

The College of Graduate Studies and Research has funding available for students who wish to travel to a conference to present their research. There is a limited number of awards, and the maximum amount a student can get is $200. The application for funding can be found here.

Graduate Assistantships/Grants/Scholarships

General information about financial aid for graduate students can be found here.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate students have the opportunity to work as a graduate assistant (GA). These positions are competitive, so it is recommended that you apply to several jobs. There is no guarantee you will get a GA position. Graduate assistantships can be 10 or 20 hours a week. These positions are very desirable because they come with partial tuition remission and a stipend.

A GA that works 20 hours a week usually get a stipend of $10,000 for the year, and the cost of 18 credits waived. These waived credits are equally applied per semester and max out at 9 credits waived at one time.

A GA that works 10 hours a week usually get a stipend of $5,000 for the year, and the cost of 9 credits waived. These waived credits are equally applied per semester and max out at 4.5 credits waived at one time.

GA job postings can be found at here.

Policies and Payroll information for GAs can be found here.

Setting up Direct Deposit

If you are a GA or receiving financial aid and would like the money deposited directly into your bank account, you need to set up direct deposit on eServices. Instructions for setting up direct deposit can be found here.

Teaching Help

Faculty E-Services can be accessed here.

For teaching-related issues, contact your program director or department chair. Many professors are willing to offer advice regarding issues commonly encountered in the classroom.

D2L Help

Desire2Learn Support, desire2learn@mnsu.edu, 507-389 3295. For assistance with StarID: https://starid.minnstate.edu/

For IT Services assistance, submit a ticket here.

For Minnesota State IT Services: https://servicedesk.minnstate.edu/CherwellPortal/MNSO/#0

Capstone Projects

Thesis Process

Formatting, Paper, Deadlines
(TAKEN FROM: https://grad.mnsu.edu/capstone/guidelines.html)

Formatting Style
Formatting style is recommended by the appropriate academic department. Frequently used styles include: Chicago Manual of Style, MLA, and APA.

While font is dependent upon the formatting style, 12-point size in Times New Roman style is commonly used. Regardless of formatting style, text should be double-spaced and on one side of the paper only. Formatting and font style should remain consistent throughout the entirety of the paper.

Page margins should be:
> Left margin: 1.5 inches
> Right and bottom margins: 1 inch
> Top margin: Page numbers should be 1 inch from the top and right of the page, with text beginning two spaces below the page number
> Tables and figures should fit within the specified page margins. Smaller font is acceptable, however should remain readable.

Title Page and Abstract
A title page and endorsement page are required for all theses and dissertations. The title page must include: complete title, author, identifying legend, location of the University, and month and year of graduation. A formatting example can be found here: http://grad.mnsu.edu/capstone/Format%20of%20Title%20Page.docx

The endorsement page must include the approval date of the thesis or dissertation, title, student's name, statement of approval, and signatures of all members on the student's examining committee. Committee member names and titles should be included below their signature lines. A formatting example can be found here: http://grad.mnsu.edu/capstone/newsigpage.docx

Abstracts are required and should appear immediately before the table of contents. A page number is not required, and the page is not counted when numbering pages.

Abstracts should be 350 words or less and include: title, author's name, degree program involved,

name and location of the University, year, and statement of problem, methods, and conclusions found.

Submission

The paper should be proofread and ensured that it meets relevant style guidelines before submission to the Graduate Office. Theses and dissertations can be submitted online at http://www.etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/home for no fee. An online submission guide can be found at: http://libguides.mnsu.edu/c.php?g=76783&p=3095890. A bound copy of the paper is not required if the paper is submitted electronically.

Papers can also be submitted in printed form. A minimum of four copies of the thesis/dissertation should be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies Office for review and binding. Deadlines for submission can be found on the College of Graduate Studies website. There is a fee of $20 per copy for binding, which is paid when copies are submitted to the Graduate Office.

For paper copies, all copies must be printed with a laser printer and printed on opaque, white 20# or 24# paper with a visible watermark to indicate archival quality. The paper must be unbound when submitted, with no punch holes or other mutilations. In addition, no pen or pencil corrections on the paper will be acceptable.

Binding of the paper is arranged by the College of Graduate Studies after the submission is approved. The four copies of the paper will be distributed amongst 1) the University library, 2) the University archives, 3) the major advisor, and 4) the student.

Copyright

If you select to submit your thesis online, you will be asked to select a Creative Commons copyright license. This allows you to decide what you want people to be able to do (or not do) with your work. The most "open" license is "Attribution CC BY" which allows others to distribute, remix, tweak, and build upon your work, even commercially, as long as they credit you for the original creation. The most restrictive license only allows others to download your works and share them with others as long as they credit you, but they can't change them in any way or use them commercially.

APA/MLA Templates

	APA (American Psychological Association)	MLA (Modern Language Association)
In which subjects is this citation style used?	Nursing, business, social sciences (sociology, psychology, social work, etc.)	Literature and the humanities (art, film, music, etc.)
Sample in-text citation: one author	(Jones, 2011, p. 68)	(Jones 68)
Sample in-text citation: two authors	(Amani & Mader, 2011, p. 68)	(Amani and Mader 68)
Sample in-text citation: three to five authors	(Amani, Li, & Mader, 2011) 1st time (Amani et al., 2011) subsequent times	(Amani et al. 68)
Sample in-text citation: no author or page #	(United Nations, 2013) or ("Study Finds," 2014, para. 5)	(United Nations) or ("Study Finds")
Sample in-text citation: an indirect quotation (i.e. quoting someone who was quoted within a source)	Give credit to the original speaker in your signal phrase, but cite the source where you found the direct quotation:	
	As lawyer Sara Gomez notes, "...." (**as cited in** Jones, 2012, p. 45).	As lawyer Sara Gomez notes, "...." (**qtd. in** Jones 45).
Formatting long/block quotations:	Indent the quotation **½ an inch,**	
	if the passage is **40 words or longer.**	if the passage **will take up more than four lines.**
Book	Author, A. A. (Year). *Title of book: Subtitle of book*. City, State: Publisher.	Last name, first name. *Title of the Book*. Publisher, Date.
Article from library database	Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of article: Subtitle of article. *Title of Periodical Volume*(Issue), page numbers. doi:#	Last name, First name and First name Last name. "Title of the Article." *Title of the Periodical*, vol. #, no. #, year, pages. *Database Name*, doi:#.

Purdue Owl provides additional information on APA and MLA formatting.

Alternate Plan Papers (APP)

Alternate plan papers require students to synthesize research on a topic into a paper. Students may find the strengths and limitations of in the current literature and make suggestions for future research in that field. More information on APP can be found [here](#).

Portfolios

Some graduate programs require students to create a professional portfolio of their work (e.g., papers, research, reports) and progress through the program as a prerequisite to graduation. Refer to your advisor for the requirements of your program.

Other Capstone Projects

There are a variety of other capstone projects that certain programs may require you to complete prior to graduation. More details on capstone projects can be found [here](#).

Applying for Graduation

To find out all the information on graduation and what needs to be done before the commencement ceremony a detailed checklist can be found at this website: https://grad.mnsu.edu/programrequirements.html

Two forms are required of all graduate students before graduation. The first form, "Application for Graduation" is due midway through the final semester and requires all committee members and the program advisor to sign. This form can be found here: https://grad.mnsu.edu/forms/appforgraduation.pdf

Once the first form has been submitted, and accepted, to the College of Graduate Studies and Research, currently located at 115 Alumni Foundation Center, there will be a $25 application fee charged to your eServices account.

The second form that is required is completed and submitted after the thesis/capstone and all other academic requirements are complete. This form titled "Recommendation for awarding the master's degree" can be found here: https://grad.mnsu.edu/forms/recommendcertificatedegree.pdf

Registering for theCeremony

Registering for the commencement ceremony is optional. Students do not need to partake in this if they do not want to. If a student does wish to apply for commencement the website to register is found [here](#).

Students complete the form that takes approximately 10 minutes, and when complete a verification email with the date, time, location, and specific instructions will be sent to the individual. There are no fees associated with registering for commencement.

Cap and Gown

If a student wishes to purchase graduate degree apparel, the website that lists individual item costs can be found [here](#).

When purchasing any graduation apparel, these items cannot be charged to a student's bill, so

make sure to have a debit/credit ready, or access to a Paypal or bank account.
In order to purchase these items, a student must register for the commencement ceremony. During the survey that a student fills out for the registration, buying apparel is located at the end of the survey, and the only method to purchase these items. Items can be purchased in a bundle, or they can be individually selected if a student does not need to purchase a cap or gown. Once purchased they will arrive at the location designated a few weeks prior to graduation.

Preparing for Doctoral Programs

Depending on your career goals, you may be considering pursuing a doctoral degree after completing a master's degree at MSU. Doctoral programs can have application deadlines as early as the November before the fall semester that you wish to enroll in.

It is important to plan in advance. Most doctoral programs require three letters of recommendations, a personal statement, test scores (e.g., GRE), and transcripts to be sent by the application deadline.

Letters of recommendation

Select people who you know will speak highly of you in a letter of recommendation. Some programs only want academic references (e.g., professors) while others are interested in academic and professional references. Ask potential letter writers if they would be willing to write a letter for you at least a month in advance of your first deadline.

Test scores

The majority of doctoral programs require GRE scores. If you have not taken the GRE or wish to retake the GRE, you will need to register for a test day months in advance, as they often fill up. The GRE is a long test and requires you to study in advance. Take practice tests if you wish to do your best.

Once you register for a test date, you will have access to two free practice tests. There are a variety of books you can purchase designed to prepare students for the GRE.

STUDY TIP: Studying for the GRE can be frustrating and dry. If you want your studying experience to be more interactive, check out an online study site like Magoosh or many others on the web.

SENDING SCORES: On test day, you will have the option to send your scores to five schools for free. After that, there is a fee of $28 for every school you want you scores to be sent to. You can send more test scores after test day by logging on to your ETS account (the website where you registered to take the test).

Personal Statement/Statement of Purpose

Some programs will ask for you to specifically address certain topics in your personal statement, while some provide no direction. Be certain to address all topics that a program asks for. Although it is called a "personal" statement, you should primarily discuss your academic and professional successes, as well as how the specific program will help you to meet your goals. Each personal statement should be tweaked for each school. Identify faculty with whom you wish to work with and why. Sell yourself as a good "fit" for the program.

Transcripts: Most programs will require you to send all official transcripts to be

considered, while others allow "unofficial transcripts." You will need to send all transcripts from schools where you earned college credit. Information on how to acquire official and unofficial transcripts from MSU, Mankato can be found here.

Becoming an Alumni

Email, Office 365, One Drive Access

After graduating, you will still have access to Office 365, which includes your email (MavMail). More information on this can be found here.

To continue having access to OneDrive and your email, you must continue to update your password when notified to do so, which you have had to do while attending MSU.

Alumni Association

There are benefits of being an alumnus of MSU, Mankato! MSU has partnered with various local businesses to provide discounts to alumni. Many hotels in the area provide discounts to alumni, so be sure to identify yourself as alumni when planning to visit! There are various other benefits, such as reduced insurance rates and discounted travel opportunities.

As an alumnus, you will continue to have access to the Memorial Library and the services the library provides.