

MSU Philosophy Department Graduate Program Mentoring & Responsibilities Expectations

[updated: 11/28/2023]

General

- The longer version of MSU's mentoring guide and more documents are available here: <https://grad.msu.edu/msu-guidelines-graduate-student-mentoring-advising>
- The Mentoring Implementation Toolkit is available here: <https://grad.msu.edu/implementation-toolkit>.

Collective responsibilities of the academic unit include:

- Creating explicit expectations and transparent policies that are consistent with MSU policies (e.g., maintaining an updated, online Graduate Handbook that follows the Graduate School Handbook Template and academic unit requirements for degree completion)
- Enabling graduate students to make timely progress in their degree programs by ensuring that required courses and examinations are scheduled in a timely manner
- Creating opportunities for networking and expanding career and professional development (e.g., organizing speaker series, colloquia, and other formal and informal events)
- Creating opportunities for graduate students to become familiar with the various forms of scholarship in the field
- Sharing responsibility with guidance committees and faculty advisors for fostering the professional and career development of graduate students (e.g., providing venues for honing professional writing and presentation skills, grants writing, publishing)
- Ensuring that regular progress checks are provided for students (including annual written evaluations)
- Providing education in research ethics and integrity
- Recognizing and rewarding excellence in mentoring, and identifying opportunities for professional development so that faculty can improve their mentoring skills and abilities
- Connecting faculty to a broader community of support by sharing information about MSU and Graduate School resources that can support them in mentoring graduate students

Responsibilities of the director of the graduate program include:

- Helping new students transition to the program (e.g., providing orientation sessions, introducing students to the unit's Graduate Handbook, and creating opportunities for students working in different areas and in various cohorts to meet together)
- Ensuring that students have consistent advising by providing advice on matters such as course selection until a permanent faculty advisor and guidance committee are selected, or appointing a committee or temporary advisor to assume that role
- Helping students find appropriate guidance and support for their work by facilitating selection of a faculty advisor and guidance committee and facilitating changes of faculty advisor and/or guidance committee if necessary

- Ensuring a consistency of standards across the unit by monitoring the standards and fairness of components of the program (e.g., examinations, expectations for dissertation completion, timeliness to degree)
- Fostering shared values and the upholding of rights and responsibilities by working toward fair resolution of conflicts between graduate students and faculty
- Connecting graduate students to a broader community of support by sharing information about MSU and Graduate School professional development and mentoring resources

Collective responsibilities of the faculty advisor and guidance committee include:

- Advising graduate students on course work, research, or creative activities
- Providing regular and timely feedback and guidance concerning progress towards the degree
- Administering exams in a fair and professional manner
- Reviewing and providing feedback on research proposals and the thesis or dissertation in a timely, constructive and critical manner
- Providing guidance to help the student achieve their career goals

The responsibilities of the graduate student include:

- Meeting University and academic unit requirements for degree completion
- Exploring career options and pursuing professional development opportunities in support of them
- Forming a guidance committee that supports the thesis or dissertation research as well as career and professional development needs
- Practicing uncompromising honesty and integrity according to University and federal guidelines in collecting and maintaining data
- Seeking regulatory approval for research in the early stages of thesis or dissertation work where applicable
- Keeping the faculty advisor and guidance committee apprised on a regular basis of the progress toward completion of the thesis or dissertation