

Graduate Handbook for the Ecology, Evolutionary Biology & Behavior Program

Last revised 1 May 2016

All students in the EEBB Graduate Program are appointed through a home MSU department. Therefore, this document serves as a supplement to the Graduate Handbook for each student's home department. There are more than a dozen departments that participate in the EEBB Program, and each department has specific requirements, expectations, and other guidelines for its students.

This document focuses primarily on the requirements, expectations, and other guidelines that are specific to the EEBB Program. In some cases, these requirements, expectations, and other guidelines may be similar or identical to those for home departments. In other cases, the requirements, expectations, and guidelines for EEBB may extend those that pertain to the student's home department.

All EEBB students must therefore be cognizant of the dual requirements, expectations, and guidelines pertaining to both the EEBB program and their home department. In addition to consulting the relevant graduate handbooks, every EEBB student should work closely with his or her advisor, guidance committee, and administrative staff to ensure that he or she is satisfying all of the relevant requirements, expectations, and guidelines.

I.	Program Overview	5
A.	Introduction	5
B.	Nature of a Dual Program	6
C.	EEBB Program Home Departments	6
D.	Administrative Organization of the EEBB Program	7
II.	Program Components/Plan Options	8
III.	Degree Requirements and Timeline	9
A.	Degree Requirements	9
1.	Academic Program	9

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

2. Teaching	10
3. Education Requirements.....	10
4. Application Procedures	10
5. Deadline for Applications	10
6. Course requirements for a dual-major Ph.D. in EEBB and student's home department.....	11
7. Course requirements for a Master's degree (Plan A or B) in the student's home department with a specialization in EEBB	12
8. Course Waivers and Substitutions.....	13
9. Typical Timeline for the Ph.D. Program.....	14
10. Typical Timeline for the Master's Certification.....	16
IV. Selection of Thesis/Dissertation Advisor	16
V. Formation of the Guidance Committee	17
VI. Thesis/Dissertation Defense and Final Oral Examination	18
VII. University Policies on Academic Performance, Integrity and Safety in Research and Creative Activities.....	19
A. Academic Standards	19
B. Ethical Standards.....	20
C. Time Limits	20
D. Research Involving Human or Animal Subjects or Hazardous Substances	21
E. Residence.....	22
F. Transfer Credits.....	22
G. Graduate Assistant Illness/Injury/Pregnancy Leave Policy.....	22
H. Work In Absentia	22
I. Student Travel Authorization	23
J. Foreign Travel	23
K. Miscellaneous EEBB Program Policies and Guidelines.....	23
1. Language Requirement.....	23
2. EEBB Student Travel Fellowships.....	24
3. EEBB Summer Fellowships	24
4. Grievance Procedures.....	25
VIII. Special Information for Foreign Students	26
IX. University Resources and Services for Graduate Students	26

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

A. Academic Facilities	26
1. Student Services	26
2. Michigan State University Library	26
3. Computer Center and Statistical Consulting	26
a. Computer Services	26
b. Programming Service.....	26
c. Computer Labs and Classrooms	27
d. Center for Statistical Training & Consulting	27
4. Bookstore.....	27
5. Learning Resources Center	27
6. Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Center.....	27
7. The Writing Center.....	27
8. Career Development & Placement Services	27
9. CIC Traveling Scholar Program.....	28
B. Health Facilities.....	28
1. Health Insurance.....	28
2. The Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD).....	28
3. Counseling Center	28
4. Olin Health Center.....	29
5. Women’s Resource Center	29
6. Intramural Sports Facilities	29
C. Transportation and Parking on Campus	29
1. Parking on Campus	29
2. Buses	29
3. Bikes.....	29
D. Graduate Student Organizations	30
1. EEBB Graduate Student Organization (EEBB GSO).....	30
2. MSU/Graduate Employees Union (GEU).....	30
3. Council of Graduate Students (COGS)	30
a. MSU Student Food Bank	30
b. Copy Center	30
c. Student Legal Services.....	31

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

d.	\$300 Short-Term Loans	31
e.	\$500 Short-Term Loans	31
f.	Endowment Fund	31
g.	City of East Lansing Parking Permits	31
4.	Faculty-Professional Women’s Association	31
E.	University Guides and References	32
1.	Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities	32
2.	Funding Guide	32
3.	Career and Professional Development	32
4.	Resource Guide	32
5.	Academic Programs	32
6.	COGS Publications	32
7.	Spartan Life	32
8.	The Schedule of Courses and Academic Handbook	32
9.	The Faculty and Staff Directory	32
10.	Guide to the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations	32
11.	The Graduate Post	33
12.	MSU Today	33
13.	The State News	33
F.	Directory of Frequently Contacted Offices	33
1.	EEBB Program	32
2.	College of Natural Science	33
3.	University	33
a.	Administration	33
b.	Student Services	33
c.	Computer Services	34
d.	International Center	34
e.	Library	34
f.	Student Health Services	34
G.	Selected MSU Websites	34
1.	MSU Homepage	34
2.	EEBB Program Site	34

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

3. Academic Programs	34
4. Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities.....	34
5. MSU/GEU Contract	34
6. Office for International Studies and Programs.....	34
7. Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships	34
8. Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities.....	34
9. Office of the Ombudsman	34

I. Program Overview

A. Introduction

The Ecology, Evolutionary Biology & Behavior (EEBB) Graduate Program offers a multidisciplinary program of study and research in the areas of ecology, evolutionary biology, and behavior. Through coursework and weekly seminars, EEBB students are exposed to scientific research on animals, plants, microorganisms and digital organisms in a variety of settings including natural ecosystems, managed landscapes, and laboratory microcosms. Although individual students will often focus on a particular group of organisms and habitats, EEBB students as a whole perform original research that encompasses all of these systems.

All EEBB students must be admitted to, and subsequently enrolled in, a home department. The EEBB program thus offers a supplemental program to its students, rather than functioning as a separate, free-standing alternative. In the case of students pursuing the Ph.D. degree, fulfillment of the EEBB requirements (in addition to those of a home department) leads to a dual-major degree that includes both EEBB and the discipline of the home department. In the case of students pursuing an M.S. degree, fulfillment of the corresponding requirements leads to certification of a specialization in EEBB along with the traditional degree from the home department.

The EEBB Program is designed to emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of these fields, and it allows its students considerable flexibility in choosing individual areas of study. Each student's course of study is planned with his or her particular interests, capabilities and professional goals in mind. EEBB students are expected to complete the EEBB core courses in addition to the requirements of their home departments, and to attend EEBB seminars throughout each semester in which they are in residence at MSU. Students are also encouraged to interact and share ideas with one another in the EEBB Graduate Colloquium.

A dual-major Ph.D. or M.S. certification in EEBB is awarded upon completion of all the requirements of both the student's home department and the EEBB Program. The

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

coursework, thesis, and final oral examination can usually be completed in two years for the M.S. degree, and in five years for the Ph.D. degree program.

B. Nature of a Dual Program

All students in the EEBB Graduate Program are appointed through a MSU department. **Therefore, this document serves as a supplement to the Graduate Handbook for each student's home department.** Each department has specific requirements, expectations, and other guidelines for its students.

This document focuses primarily on the requirements, expectations, and other guidelines that are specific to the EEBB Program. In some cases, these requirements, expectations, and other guidelines may be similar or identical to those for home departments. In other cases, the requirements, expectations, and guidelines for EEBB may extend those that pertain to the student's home department.

All EEBB students must therefore be cognizant of the dual requirements, expectations, and guidelines pertaining to both the EEBB program and their home department. In addition to consulting the relevant handbooks, every EEBB student should work closely with his or her advisor, guidance committee, and administrative staff to ensure that he or she is satisfying all of the relevant requirements, expectations, and guidelines.

C. EEBB Program Home Departments

EEBB accepts students from any MSU department. Most EEBB students are from one of the following departments:

- Anthropology
- Computer Science and Engineering
- Entomology
- Fisheries and Wildlife
- Forestry
- Geography
- Geological Sciences
- Horticulture
- Integrative Biology
- Microbiology and Molecular Genetics
- Philosophy
- Plant Biology
- Plant Pathology
- Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences
- Psychology
- Statistics and Probability

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

D. Administrative Organization of the EEBB Program

The EEBB Program is administered by the College of Natural Science. However, the Program accepts students from other colleges. The chief administrator of the Program is the Director. The Director of the EEBB Program is responsible for the overall operational guidance of the Program, including long-range planning with respect to graduate-student training and budgetary matters. The Director may also serve as a liaison between the Program and MSU colleges and departments, and in this role is assisted by participating faculty including members of the EEBB Program Executive Committee. The Director also oversees supportive services and Program functions including but not limited to: graduate student recruitment and admission, graduate student requirements, progress of graduate students through their programs, support of graduate student research, EEBB core courses, seminars, retreats and any personnel issues within the realm of the EEBB Program.

Faculty in the EEBB Program include MSU tenured or tenure-track faculty with an active interest in the areas of ecology, evolutionary biology and behavior. EEBB faculty may supervise students in the Program and serve as major professor (advisor) on the student's guidance committee. A faculty member serving as a major professor should ensure that a student's program fulfills the requirements, expectations, and guidelines of the EEBB Program as well as those of the home department. The EEBB faculty also participate in teaching the required EEBB courses along with graduate seminars and other relevant courses. In addition, EEBB faculty serve on EEBB Program committees, attend EEBB Program faculty meetings, and participate in other EEBB activities.

Because the EEBB Program does not have its own separate faculty, teaching assignments and expectations depend on the cooperation of participating departments. The Director works with the EEBB faculty and departmental chairs to ensure that required and other relevant courses are available to EEBB students. The Director also works with the EEBB faculty and departmental chairs to identify program needs and opportunities, such that the recruitment of new faculty can fill important gaps created by the departure of faculty and, as appropriate, extend course offerings in new directions within the areas covered by EEBB.

The **EEBB Program Executive Committee** (EEBBPEC) consists of the Director, one faculty member from each department affiliated with the EEBB Program and two student representatives. EEBBPEC may advise the Director on such matters as appointment of new faculty, reappointment or termination of existing faculty, and other major policy matters relating to the EEBB Program. In addition to any meetings scheduled by the Director, a meeting may be initiated by an EEBBPEC member or at the request of any EEBB Program faculty member or graduate student for the purpose of discussing a specific matter of concern that he or she wants brought to the attention of the committee. If a suggested solution from the EEBBPEC or Director does not satisfy the concern, the individual raising the concern may request that the matter be brought before the EEBB Program faculty at a faculty meeting.

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

The **EEBB Graduate Committee** consists of two to four EEBB Program faculty selected by the Director in consultation with the EEBBPEC. The Graduate Committee evaluates each EEBB graduate student's record and recommends to the EEBB Director that the student be granted the EEBB dual-major Ph.D. or M.S. certification provided that all program requirements are satisfied. (Each home department will separately evaluate whether a student fulfills its own requirements.)

The **EEBB Seminar Committee** consists of at least three EEBB Program faculty members selected by the Director in consultation with the EEBBPEC and two EEBB Program graduate students elected by the graduate students. The Committee assists the Director in choosing a seminar or symposium format for the year, and in selecting appropriate topics and presenters. In doing so, the Seminar Committee solicits suggestions from the EEBB faculty and students. The Seminar Committee assumes responsibility for the organization and execution of the seminar series or symposium.

The **EEBB Graduate Student Colloquium** meets bi-weekly during the fall and spring semesters to hold informal talks, discuss graduate issues and research activities. The group serves as a friendly forum for students to discuss research plans, career goals, programmatic concerns, and other ideas. All EEBB members are welcome.

If current graduate students wish, the Director will attend a Graduate Student Colloquium during the academic year to discuss the EEBB Program and its expectations of graduate students, meet incoming graduate students, present any new program initiatives, and hear any programmatic concerns that the students wish to raise. The Director and other EEBB faculty may also occasionally attend meetings of the Graduate Student Colloquium, if the students want to discuss issues regarding the EEBB Program or other concerns.

II. Program Components/Plan Options

The EEBB Program offers a dual-major Ph.D. or a Master's (Plan A or B) certification. The specific EEBB programmatic requirements for these degrees are listed below in the Degree Requirements section.

Other requirements set forth by each student's home department will also apply, and these must also be met in order to obtain either the EEBB dual-major Ph.D. or Master's certification. In particular, the student should be aware that the format, requirements, and expectations for comprehensive and qualifying exams may vary among home departments, as may also the requirements for written or oral presentation of a research proposal. Also, the extent to which the EEBB Program's course requirements may fulfill some of the course requirements in the graduate student's home department varies considerably among departments.

EEBB-affiliated graduate students should therefore inquiry with their home departments about departmental requirements and expectations including information on the following topics: an official plan of study; selecting a thesis or dissertation advisor; formation of a guidance committee; the structure and content of comprehensive and qualifying exams,

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

including research proposals; periodic review of student academic performance; and the format of the thesis or dissertation defense and final oral exams.

The various sections in this EEBB Graduate Handbook that address these and other matters can provide only those requirements, expectations, or guidelines that are specific to the EEBB program. As such, they supplement but do not supplant the information in the Graduate Handbook for each student's home department.

III. Degree Requirements and Timelines

The graduate program for a student in the Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior Program varies with the home department in which he or she is enrolled. Because EEBB is a dual-major (Ph.D.) and certification (Masters) program, graduate students must also be accepted by and enrolled in a MSU department. Specific curriculum details can be obtained from the graduate office of each department.

Section A, as follows, lists the formal degree requirements for the EEBB Program, including course options and a typical schedule for taking those courses. Section B provides a typical timeline and milestones for students to achieve in completing a Ph.D. or Master's degree, and it discusses some of the factors that may cause delays relative to that typical timeline.

A. Degree Requirements

1. Academic Program

Doctoral and Master's degree programs are planned on an individual basis by the student, major professor (thesis advisor), and guidance committee. The guidance committee has four to five faculty members for the Ph.D. program, and two to three faculty members for the Master's program. The guidance committee must have two faculty members from the EEBB Program for Ph.D. candidates, one of whom must serve as the student's major professor, and one faculty member from EEBB for Master's candidates. The committee assists the student in designing an appropriate program of coursework and research leading to the preparation of a thesis that presents the results of original research. Formal training is supplemented by a broad spectrum of seminars and colloquia sponsored by the EEBB program and home departments.

Because entering graduate students have heterogeneous academic backgrounds, students are required to complete a series of graduate-level courses in their first two years in order to acquire a common base of knowledge. The EEBB program consists of a core of three required courses including ecology, evolution, and quantitative methods in biology. Additional coursework in an area of specialization should be undertaken in consultation with the student's major professor and guidance committee, and as needed to fulfill the student's home departmental requirements. The goal is to tailor each program to fit the needs and objectives of the student.

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

2. Teaching

The amount of teaching that is required of EEBB students depends on the source of their assistantships and their home department. However, all students should receive some experience in teaching because of its importance to the career development of all scientists. Teaching assistantships, if any, are administered through the student's home department.

3. Education Requirements

Applicants should have a minimum grade-point average of 3.0, grades of 3.0 or better in biological science courses, and should have taken the Graduate Record Examination. For admission to the program, students are expected to have had preparation in calculus, introductory genetics, chemistry, and basic biology. Deficiencies in one or more of these areas may be rectified by taking appropriate undergraduate or graduate courses for collateral credit concurrently with graduate courses in the EEBB program curriculum.

4. Application Procedures

Students must be admitted to both the EEBB Program and a home department. Applicants should **first contact the home department of their choice** for specific details of admission. This first contact with the home department is **crucial** to avoid delays in the application process. Generally the following items will need to be submitted:

- [University online Application](#) also includes:
 - Application Fee
 - 2 Official Copies of Transcripts
 - Departmental Application
 - Letters of Recommendation (usually 3)
 - Statement of Purpose or Professional Goals
 - GRE Scores
 - TOEFL Scores and Statement of Financial Proof (International Students only)
- The following items listed should be submitted to the EEBB Program via mail at eebb@msu.edu:
 - EEBB Application
 - Statement of Professional Goals (may be identical to the departmental statement)
 - Current CV

5. Deadline for Applications

The EEBB Program does not have an application deadline. However, all home departments have deadlines. Generally, applicants for fall semester should have all their application materials submitted by 1 December to be in the best position to compete for departmental assistantships and various University, College, and Department awards. Refer to the application instructions from the home department for their deadlines.

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

Graduate students may also be admitted to the EEBB Program after they have enrolled in a home department, provided they (i) meet all of the requirements for admission to the EEBB Program, and (ii) are making satisfactory progress toward their intended degree. An enrolled student interested in admission to the EEBB program should submit an ***EEBB application for current MSU students, and should include a supporting letter from his or her major professor.***

6. Course requirements for a dual-major Ph.D. in EEBB and the student's home department

The EEBB Program requirements for the Ph.D. include 800-level courses in three areas: ecology, evolution, and quantitative methods in biology. Several approved courses are listed, as follows, that can fulfill these requirements.

The majority of EEBB doctoral students take Population and Community Ecology (IBIO896) to fulfill the ecology course requirement, Evolutionary Biology (IBIO849) or (PLB849) to fulfill the evolution course requirement, and Statistical Methods for Ecology and Evolution (IBIO851) to fulfill the quantitative methods course requirement.

Most EEBB students take the ecology and evolution courses in their first year of graduate study, along with the preparatory statistics courses they will need to enroll in IBIO851. Most students will take the quantitative methods course in their second year. The extent to which EEBB course requirements also fulfill some of the requirements in a student's home department varies considerably among departments. Fulfilling additional course requirements in a home department may cause some delay in completing the course requirements for EEBB.

All EEBB students are expected to regularly attend the EEBB seminars each semester. Ph.D. candidates must also have at least two EEBB faculty members on their guidance committee. One EEBB faculty member must serve as the student's Ph.D. advisor.

The courses that fulfill the ecology, evolution, and quantitative methods requirements are listed below:

Graduate Ecology Course (800 Level - 1 course)

PLB826	Tropical Biology: An Ecological Approach (OTS)
ENT844	Insect Ecology and Evolution
FW824	Analysis of Wildlife Population
FW840	Landscape Ecology
FW877	Fish Population Dynamics
FOR804	Forest Ecology
IBIO822	Topics in Ethology and Behavioral Ecology
IBIO896	Population and Community Ecology
IBIO897	Ecosystem Ecology and Global Change

Graduate Evolution Course (800 Level - 1 course)

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

- IBIO/PLB849 Evolutionary Biology
- * FW828 Conservation Genetics
- * FOR842 Population Genetics
- * IBIO855 Molecular Evolution

*These are advanced courses and require broad evolutionary biology background.

Most EEBB students will prefer to take the more general broadly based Evolutionary Biology course (cross-listed as PLB849 and IBIO849). Those students who already have a strong background in evolutionary biology may elect to take one of the more advanced courses listed above (*), but must receive approval of the instructor. Of course, more than one evolution course may be taken upon suggestion by a student's guidance committee.

Quantitative Methods Course (800 Level - 1 course)

EEBB doctoral candidates are required to complete **one** course from the following list.

- ANS870/943 Techniques of Analyzing Unbalanced Research Data
- CSS921 Contemporary Statistical Models in Biology
- FW850 Applied Multivariate Statistical Methods
- FW857 Theoretical Ecology
- IBIO851 Statistical Methods for Ecology and Evolution

In preparation for the selected class from the list above, many EEBB students (particularly those who do not enter MSU with a strong background in statistical analysis of data) currently elect first to take STT464 (Statistics for Biologists) and STT814 (Advanced Statistics for Biologists), or courses that are equivalent to these in topical coverage.

7. Course requirements for a Master's degree (Plan A or B) in the student's home department with a specialization in EEBB

The EEBB Program requires courses in ecology, evolution, and quantitative methods for a specialization in association with a Master's degree through the student's home department. Several approved 800-level courses are listed that can fulfill the ecology and evolution requirements. All EEBB Master's students are also required to complete two courses in statistics, STT464 and STT814. An 800-level quantitative methods course is optional for the Master's Program

All EEBB students are expected to regularly attend the EEBB seminars each semester. Also, EEBB Master's candidates must have at least one EEBB faculty member on their guidance committee.

The courses that fulfill the ecology, evolution, and quantitative methods requirements are listed as follows:

Graduate Ecology Course (800 Level - 1 course)

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

PLB826	Tropical Biology: An Ecological Approach (OTS)
ENT844	Insect Ecology and Evolution
FW824	Analysis of Wildlife Population
FW840	Landscape Ecology
FW877	Fish Population Dynamics
FOR804	Forest Ecology
IBIO822	Topics in Ethology and Behavioral Ecology
IBIO896	Population and Community Ecology
IBIO897	Ecosystem Ecology and Global Change

Graduate Evolution Course (800 Level - 1 course)

IBIO/PLB849	Evolutionary Biology
* FW828	Conservation Genetics
* FOR842	Population Genetics
* IBIO855	Molecular Evolution

*These are advanced courses and require broad evolutionary biology background.

Most EEBB students will prefer to take the more general broadly based Evolutionary Biology course (cross-listed as PLB849 and IBIO849). Those students who already have a strong background in evolutionary biology may elect to take one of the more advanced courses listed above (*), but must receive approval of the instructor. Of course, more than one evolution course may be taken upon suggestion by a student's guidance committee.

Quantitative Methods Course

An 800-level quantitative methods course is optional for the Master's Program. **However, EEBB Master's degree candidates are required to complete STT 464 and STT814,** unless one of the below more advanced courses is taken.

ANS870/943	Techniques of Analyzing Unbalanced Research Data
CSS921	Contemporary Statistical Models in Biology
FW850	Applied Multivariate Statistical Methods
FW857	Theoretical Ecology
IBIO851	Statistical Methods for Ecology and Evolution

8. Course Waivers and Substitutions

EEBB core course waivers and substitutions of any non-MSU courses must be approved by the EEBB Academic Programs Committee. Any MSU course with which an EEBB student wishes to replace one of the courses listed must have been previously approved, via application by the instructor, as an alternative core class by the Academic Programs Committee. MSU faculty can propose to have their courses listed as alternatives to those in the list by way of the EEBB Office (103 Giltner Hall or email to eebb@msu.edu). The faculty instructor must explain why he/she believes the substitution would be appropriate, and submit a course description, a detailed course syllabus and reading list. The Academic

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

Programs Committee also needs to approve any substitution of an EEBB core course with a class taken at an institution other than MSU. Any student interested in this possibility should submit a detailed syllabus from the class he/she hopes to use as a substitute for an EEBB core course.

9. Typical Timeline for the Ph.D. Program

This section is meant to give a rough outline of the progression of a typical EEBB student towards completion of his or her Ph.D. and some of the important challenges faced along the way.

The typical student will devote most of his or her first year toward required and elective coursework in order to begin mastering the relevant subject areas. An important aspect of graduate coursework, and one that is unfamiliar to many students, is delving into the primary scientific literature, learning how to summarize this information both in speaking and in writing, and engaging in open discussion and good-natured debate about the strengths and limitations of that literature. Many graduate students also serve as teaching assistants in their first year (and often in subsequent years as well). This experience presents the additional challenge of developing effective teaching skills. (Those students serving as teaching assistants should also become familiar with the Graduate Employees Union and the [GEO Contract](#). Most students will identify their major professor in their first year, and they should begin to meet regularly with that individual to discuss possible ideas for research, suggestions for scientific literature to read, the composition of their guidance committee, required and recommended courses, and so on.

In the second year, most students will continue with their coursework, and they will usually also assemble their guidance committee. Most students should also begin hands-on research in their first or second year of graduate school, even if that research does not become their dissertation project. As the second year progresses, students will typically begin preparing for comprehensive and/or qualifying exams, although the timing and the format vary among home departments. In some departments, one component of these exams is developing a written proposal for the student's dissertation research. Most departmental exams also include an oral phase in which the student is challenged to display his or her general knowledge of the field, defend his or her proposed research, or both by the guidance committee. While these exams sometimes generate anxiety, they also serve to sharpen a student's understanding of the nature of scientific discussion and debate, while also helping to identify deficiencies that can be remedied by additional coursework or revising the proposed research plan.

In any case, students should develop a concrete plan or proposal for their research by the start of their third year of graduate school, or earlier if possible, in consultation with the major professor, guidance committee, and home department. However, every Ph.D. student should realize that there are no guarantees that a scientific project, however interesting or clever, will succeed. Hence, students should remain flexible by considering changes to their original research plan or even the development of a new project to replace their original one. All of this planning should, of course, involve deliberation and consultation with the major professor and guidance committee. Other faculty and one's

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

graduate peers in the EEBB Program will also often be excellent sounding boards to discuss research challenges and opportunities.

The typical EEBB doctoral student is thoroughly immersed in his or her research in the third, fourth, and fifth years. Many students will also avail themselves of occasional courses, seminars, and reading groups to further master the knowledge base in their areas of interest and even to look ahead toward areas they might want to pursue later in their scientific careers. Consultation, discussion, and even good-spirited debate with one's major professor, guidance committee, and peers should occur while the research is in progress. EEBB students in these years should also avail themselves of opportunities to attend scientific meetings and, once they are ready, present the results of their own on-going research via posters and talks.

In the fifth year or so, most EEBB students will face the triple challenge of wrapping up their research project, writing their dissertation, and seeking a postdoctoral position or other employment. The difficulty of writing a dissertation can be greatly reduced if the student makes a concerted effort to write portions along the way, including background reviews of the relevant literature, methods and materials used in the research, and the results of component parts of the dissertation research as they are completed. Moreover, by writing and submitting for publication those parts of the research as they are completed, a student is positioning himself or herself much better in terms of obtaining a postdoctoral position and other subsequent employment. In essence, a student becomes a Ph.D. by mastering a body of knowledge, performing original research that extends that body of knowledge, and disseminating that new knowledge via a dissertation and related publications.

Throughout an EEBB student's career, it is expected that he or she will take advantage of the weekly seminars by experts from across MSU and around the nation and world.

A number of factors can prolong the time required for a Ph.D. For example, the course requirements for the EEBB Program and some home departments have little overlap, which means that some students may require an extra semester or even an extra year to complete their coursework. Some students may struggle more than others at various stages including completing required coursework, passing qualifying exams, developing a research proposal, successfully performing the doctoral research, and preparing a written dissertation on this research that satisfies the student, major professor, and guidance committee. Also, some students may serve more terms as teaching assistants to satisfy departmental requirements or obtain financial support, which may slow their progress relative to students who have obtained fellowships that allow them to devote all their time to studies and research. And, of course, different students have different levels of outside responsibilities such as family obligations. Hence, it is impossible to provide a precise timeline for obtaining the Ph.D. degree. Any prospective or current student should keep in mind the considerable intellectual challenges imposed by the requirements for mastering a subject area, performing original research, and writing up the results of that research.

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

Formal time limits are imposed by the student's home department and by MSU on completing examinations and the dissertation. See Section VII. C. for general MSU time limits.

10. Typical Timeline for the Master's Certification

The typical time required for an EEBB Master's degree candidate is two to three years, with the timeline depending on the requirements of the student's home department as well as the type of program that is pursued. The EEBB-required coursework can be reasonably completed in a single year, although more time may be required if the home department requires many additional courses. Prospective EEBB Master's students should consult their prospective department. Formal time limits are imposed by the home department and MSU (see section VII.C.) for completing examinations and other requirements for the Master's degree.

IV. Selection of Thesis/Dissertation Advisor

The choice of the major professor, who will mentor a student and help guide his or her research, is one of the most important decisions that a graduate student will make. The process behind this choice, as well as its timing, depends on many factors and varies among the student's home department. Many students begin graduate school already knowing who they intend to work with, whereas in some departments students are admitted at large and then undertake a series of rotations in their first year to experience different research projects and potential advisors. Owing to these differences, prospective and current graduate students in EEBB are urged to consult the handbook for their home department, and to discuss this issue with the graduate director for their home department.

For any EEBB graduate students who have not yet chosen a major professor, their home departments are responsible for providing appropriate advising, supervision, and mentoring. A student's home department is also responsible for approving the choice of major professor. [Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships](#) can be found on the Graduate School website. Each department may also establish additional guidelines and expectations for successful advising and mentoring that are specifically relevant to the disciplines represented in the department. EEBB students are encouraged to consult all these materials and discuss them with their major professor.

Regardless of the student's home department, there are some general issues to consider in choosing a major professor. These include identifying a faculty member with similar research interests to those of the student. Also, the student should consider the facilities that the professor has to support the research, including equipment, laboratory space, and the like. Another important factor for some students is whether the major professor can provide financial support in the form of research assistantships, or whether the student is expected to serve as a teaching assistant, or even provide his or her own financial support during the graduate program. Even when the professor offers a research assistantship, students should be aware that research funding to the professor has a limited time frame, and so the duration of any assistantship should be discussed, as well as the expectations of the professor for the student and his or her research activities. Finally, a graduate student

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

should consider his or her personal compatibility with the potential major professor. A clear understanding between the student and the major professor about their individual and mutual expectations will help to promote the development of the student's academic and scientific potential.

Most graduate students have the same major professor throughout their degree program, but students should also understand that it is sometimes possible to change to another major professor. Such a shift might be desirable, for example, if the student determines that his or her research interests are much more closely aligned with those of another faculty member than with those of the current major professor. A change may sometimes also be appropriate if a student and faculty member find that their styles of discussion and mentoring are not mutually compatible. Any such change must involve discussions with the graduate director in the student's home department, and a change should be pursued as early as possible in the graduate student's training program.

A professional relationship is expected between the graduate student and his or her major professor, as well as other members of the student's guidance committee. If irresolvable disagreements arise between the student, professor, and/or guidance committee, the initial task of conflict resolution rests with the home department of the student and major professor. If the parties involved are from different departments, then the grievance procedures of the College of Natural Sciences will be followed since it serves as the lead college for the EEBB Program. In some cases, the student and faculty member may be advised to seek further assistance from the Office of the Ombudsperson, the MSU Counseling Center, or the Dean of the Graduate School.

MSU policies on [Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities](#), including procedures for adjudication of cases involving these rights and responsibilities, are available at the [Office of the Ombudsperson](#).

V. Formation of the Guidance Committee

Graduate students in the EEBB Program who are Ph.D. candidates must have at least two EEBB faculty members on their guidance committee. One EEBB faculty member must serve as the student's Ph.D. advisor. Master's candidates pursuing a certification from EEBB must have at least one EEBB faculty member on their guidance committee. The EEBB program is a multidisciplinary program, and it encourages its students to form guidance committees that offer a diversity of perspectives, with faculty members chosen from two or more departments.

The procedures and expected timeline for formation of the guidance committee for an EEBB graduate student are set by the student's home department. Each department also sets out the requirements and expectations with respect to the frequency and reporting of student meetings with the guidance committee, the role of the committee in exams, and so on. Every EEBB student is encouraged to consult with the Graduate Handbook for their home department on these matters. In general, it is good practice that the committee be

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

formed as early as feasible in the student's career, and that the student meet with his or her committee on an annual basis.

VI. Thesis/Dissertation Defense and Final Oral Examination

The Master's thesis or Ph.D. dissertation must be prepared in accordance with the specifications described in [The Graduate School Formatting Guide](#), is available from the MSU Graduate School Office. This guide should be consulted during preparation. Information about [electronic submission of theses and dissertations](#) can be found on their website. EEBB student should consult his or her home department about the requirements and expectations for submitting drafts of the student's thesis or dissertation to the major professor and the guidance committee. As discussed in Section III.A.9, graduate students will benefit by writing portions of their thesis or dissertation along the way, as parts of their research are completed, rather than leaving all writing to the end. These written components should be shared with the major professor, then discussed and revised as needed. Most major professors will want to read, and will suggest one or more rounds of revision to the various chapters of a thesis or dissertation, prior to their distribution to the guidance committee as a whole. The student must allow ample time for review of the thesis or dissertation by the major professor and guidance committee prior to the final oral presentation and examination.

The requirements and expectations for the public presentation of research and final exam are set by the EEBB student's home department, and consistent with requirements of the MSU Graduate School. All EEBB students should submit an announcement to the EEBB Program Office giving the time, location, title of their thesis or dissertation presentation, home department, major professor, and guidance committee members at least one week prior to its scheduled time. EEBB Program faculty and graduate students are encouraged to attend these presentations.

Graduate students must be registered for at least one credit during the semester in which the final examination is taken. Students should consult the University Calendar in the *MSU Schedule of Courses and Academic Handbook* for relevant deadlines the semester before graduation is anticipated.

MSU only accepts electronic theses and dissertations submitted via ProQuest. The [instructions for electronic submissions](#) are available on The Graduate School's website. The target date for the FINAL APPROVAL of an electronic Thesis or Dissertation to The Graduate School for graduating the semester of that submission is FIVE working days prior to the first day of classes for the next semester. Be aware that a submission via ProQuest does not mean that the document has been ACCEPTED. The review process is interactive and final approval can take anywhere from a few hours to weeks, depending upon the extent of the necessary revisions and how diligent the author is when making the necessary revisions.

VII. University Policies on Academic Performance, Integrity and Safety in Research and Creative Activities

Policies regarding graduate studies at Michigan State University are established at three levels of academic administration: University, College, and Department or Program. This system tends to separate policies into three categories, and may result in no single reference from which a complete statement of policy can be found. This section is intended to bring all of these policies into focus and to clarify those that may appear to be contradictory.

In general, University policies override College policies, College policies override Department or Program policies, and Department policies override Committee policies. Program policies have been established, as necessary, to resolve issues not specifically covered by College or University policies.

All EEBB graduate students have a home Department that is affiliated with the EEBB Program. All EEBB graduate students are therefore subject to the policies of their home Department, as well as those of the EEBB Program, the College, and the University. Those policies specific to a student's Department can be found in the Graduate Handbook of that Department. This section provides an overview of the general University policies that pertain to MSU graduate students, including those in the EEBB Program, as well as certain items that are of particular relevance to the EEBB Program.

A. Academic Standards

Michigan State University is committed to high academic standards and expects all doctoral students to excel in their programs of study. A 3.00 cumulative grade point average must be maintained. The program of study cannot include more than three grades of less than a 3.0. Credits will not be awarded for courses in which a grade below a 2.0 is earned. If the student receives a grade below a 2.0 in any course during his/her program of study, he/she will be required to repeat the course.

A grade point average is one measure of academic standing. However, academic standards also include consideration of the student's suitability for conducting research, competency in his/her major field and rate of progress toward completion of the degree. It is a disservice to permit a student to continue toward the degree without the necessary qualifications for retention. Judgment regarding retention is made by the student's major professor and/or Guidance Committee members. If it is decided that a student lacks such standards, he/she may be asked to withdraw according to the procedures as defined in the publication [Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) which is part of the COGS Graduate Student [Handbook](#) is available annually from the Council of Graduate Students Office, 120 Chittenden Hall.

Research credits are not considered in determining the grade-point average. Justification for retention must be furnished to The Graduate School Office for any graduate students whose GPA is below a 3.0 for 14 or more credits. If a graduate student's grade point average is below a 3.0, exclusive of research, the major professor and Guidance Committee

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

must decide whether or not the student will be permitted to continue. The results of their decision will be filed in writing with the student's home Department.

The Guidance Committee and student's home Department are jointly responsible for evaluating the student's competence as indicated by grades in core and other courses, research performance and development of professional skills and rate of progress as indicated by the number of courses for which grades have been assigned or deferred. Written evaluations will be communicated to the graduate student at least once a year and a copy of such evaluations must be given to the student's home Department office to be placed in the graduate student's file. A student whose performance does not meet the standards of quality, will not be permitted to continue to enroll in the degree program, and appropriate action will be taken by the student's home Department.

B. Ethical Standards

Dishonesty in academics or unethical conduct in presentation of research are grounds for dismissal of a graduate student from the University. Such determinations will be made by a student's home department following procedures of the Department and University. Specific judicial procedures to which a graduate student has access will be those defined by his or her home department. General MSU policies on [Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities](#), including procedures for adjudication of cases involving these rights and responsibilities, are available at their website.

EEBB Program students and faculty are encouraged to think deeply and carefully about ethical issues that are relevant to the scientific research, mentoring, and communication in which they are engaged. All EEBB students and faculty should read the "[Guidelines for Graduate Student Advising and Mentoring Relationships](#)" and the "[Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities](#)" that were originally published in the MSU Research Integrity Newsletter (Volume 7, No. 2, Spring 2004, pp. 9-14). An interview with University Distinguished Professor Hans Kende, who chaired the task force that prepared these guidelines, is in the same issue (pp. 15-18) and should be read for additional perspective.

C. Time Limits

The oral and written comprehensive examinations must be passed within five years and all remaining requirements for the degree must be completed within eight years from the time of a student's first enrollment as a doctoral student. A Master's degree must be completed within six years from the time of first enrollment as a graduate student. In all cases, the relevant period commences at the time that a student takes the first course that is used to apply to degree requirements, which is not necessarily the semester they were admitted to the University.

It is anticipated that most doctoral students in the EEBB Program will complete their Ph.D. in about 5 years. However, there is considerable variation in this timeline owing to differences among home departments in course requirements, variation in the rate of research progress depending on the dissertation project, and different circumstances among

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

graduate students with respect to funding, family obligations, and so forth. The maximum time allowed between initial matriculation in a MS or PhD program and completion of the degree is 8 years. Section III.A.9 of this Handbook provides a typical timeline for the Ph.D. Program and discusses some of the factors that can cause delays along the way.

D. Research Involving Human or Animal Subjects or Hazardous Substances

Federal and University regulations require that all research projects involving human subjects and materials of human origin be reviewed and approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) before initiation. [Human Research Protection Program](#) (HRPP) is an IRB. Under the regulations, a human subject of research is an individual (1) from whom an investigator obtains data by interaction or intervention or (2) about whom the research obtains confidential information.

Michigan State University policy requires that use within the institution of living vertebrate animals (includes laboratory rats and mice, etc.) be reviewed for appropriateness by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) before use of these animals commences. This pertains to all university-owned animals, including client-owned animals used in research, and animals studied undisturbed in their natural habitat. For general reference, the publication that details the standards to which the university conforms is the *NIH Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. Departure from this published guideline requires written scientific justification in the animal use form. Principal investigators and course directors must obtain approval from the [IACUC](#) before initiating any research, testing, or instructional project involving the use of vertebrate animals.

The Graduate School will not accept theses or dissertations containing research on human subjects that have not been reviewed and approved previously by HRPP or research involving animal use without previous review and approval from IACUC. The Graduate School will verify HRPP Log numbers and AUF numbers before granting degrees.

The University acts through its advisory committees and academic governance bodies to insure that individual research and scholarly projects incorporate appropriate safeguards when dealing with radiation, biological and chemical hazards. All individuals performing work with hazardous substances must accept a shared responsibility for operating in a safe manner once they have been informed about the extent of risk and safe procedures for their activities. Individuals are responsible for safely performing activities associated with hazardous substances.

All persons who handle hazardous substances are required to attend initial and annual training sessions sponsored by the Office of Environmental Health & Safety (EHS). Information regarding these sessions can be obtained at the [EHS website](#). In most cases, after initial classroom training session, the required annual training can be updated online. EHS will provide up-to-date information on that process for those who qualify.

If a graduate student has a question regarding safety, he/she should ask the major professor. Most Departments also have a designated faculty or staff person who can serve as a

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

resource. If the question of safety is not resolved at these levels, the student should contact EHS for a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) and other relevant information.

E. Residence

Two consecutive semesters of enrollment with at least six credits of graduate work each semester are required to obtain a doctoral degree from Michigan State University. A minimum of six credits in the degree program must be earned in residence on campus for a Master's degree.

F. Transfer Credits

In some cases, graduate credits may be transferred from other accredited institutions or foreign institutions of similar quality.

EEBB students must check with their home Department for their guidelines on transferring credits that may be applied to the Department's requirements. Additional permission is required if an EEBB student wants to use transfer credits to satisfy any of the EEBB Program course requirements that are outlined in Sections III.A.6 (Ph.D.) and III.A.7 (Master's degree). That request should follow the procedures in Section III.A.8 for Course Waivers and Substitutions.

G. Graduate Assistant Illness/Injury/Pregnancy Leave Policy

The following information is from the [Graduate School Guide to Graduate Assistantships](#).

A graduate assistant unable to fulfill the duties of his/her appointment because of illness or injury shall notify the administrator of his/her appointing unit as soon as circumstances permit. Similarly, a graduate assistant unable to fulfill the duties of her appointment because of pregnancy shall notify the administrator of her major unit as soon as circumstances permit.

During the illness, injury, or pregnancy, the appointing unit shall adjust (reduce, waive, or reschedule) the graduate assistant's duties as those duties and the assistant's physical circumstances reasonably dictate. If total absence from duties becomes necessary and the graduate assistant is still enrolled, the appointing unit shall maintain the stipend of the appointment, provided for a period of two months or to the end of the appointment period or the semester, whichever occurs first.

The graduate assistant shall have the right to return to the assistantship, within the original terms of the appointment, at such time as he or she is able to resume their duties.

H. Work in Absentia

Candidates for the doctoral degree may, with the approval of the major professor and Guidance Committee members, conduct some work in absentia. Arrangements for registration may be made by applying at the Office of the Dean of the College of the student's home Department.

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

I. Student Travel Authorization

Graduate students who engage in travel related to their research, training, or any other University business are required to obtain travel authorization in advance. Authorization requires the completion of specific travel authorization forms, which will be processed through the student's home Department. Students should also inquire about availability of Automobile Liability Insurance and Travel Accident Insurance through their home Department.

J. Foreign Travel

Students who plan to travel to a foreign country on Michigan State University activities should visit [Travel at State](#) and complete the following:

- (1) Through [Travel at State](#), work with your home Department in order to make your travel reservations with an MSU account number.
- (2) Complete MSU's [Pre-Trip Authorization](#) from your home Department.
- (3) Work with your home Department in order to be registered in the [traveler's database](#).
- (4) Verify entry/exit requirements and purchase passport and visas through [CIBT](#).
- (5) Contact the [Olin Health Center Travel Clinic](#) at least two months in advance of your date of departure. Travel to particular countries may require one or more vaccinations or boosters. In addition, the travel clinic nurse will review potential health hazards, travel problems, and restrictions for each country. If you are traveling for pleasure, you are welcome to use the Olin Travel Clinic.
- (6) Check the [US State Department](#) to learn about your destination and specific health and safety issues there.
- (7) If you intend to pursue a research project in another country, you should have permission from the appropriate governmental agency in that country. For some countries it may take up to one year to obtain approval.
- (8) If you intend to bring plant or animal tissue samples or DNA/RNA back to the United States you are likely to need approval from the Agriculture Department or from the Center for Disease Control. Be sure to obtain proper letters of authorization to bring biological samples back to the United States.
- (9) Obtain the proper pharmaceuticals to take with you in case of an emergency. These might include, for example, small packets of dehydration salts if you have experienced excessive fluid loss, appropriate antibiotics in case of food-poisoning or an infected wound, and anti-malarial/preventative medication. Be aware that certain legal drugs in the US are considered illegal in other countries, and in some countries possession of illegal drugs is punishable by a long prison term or even a death sentence.
- (10) Work with your home Department to determine eligibility to access [international health insurance](#) from Michigan State University. It is also helpful to talk with other people who have spent time in the country you intend to visit to get a sense of the customs, food related problems, medical care, travel arrangements, and safe and unsafe personal activities.

K. Miscellaneous EEBB Program Policies and Guidelines

1. Language Requirement

The EEBB Program does not have a foreign language requirement.

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

2. EEBB Student Travel Fellowships

From time to time, the EEBB Program may have funds available to provide partial travel support to attend professional meetings or other scientific activities involving travel. The latter might include a special course, learning some technique in another laboratory, and so on. However, these funds cannot be used to support travel to field sites, whether local or distant, that are part of a student's regular research activities. The expectation for travel support to a meeting is that a student will present his or her research as a poster or contributed talk.

The availability of funds to support EEBB Student Travel Fellowships will be announced via email to graduate students in the EEBB Program. Both doctoral and master's students are eligible for this support, but priority will be given to doctoral students. Priority will also be given to students near completion of their degrees, and to students who have actively participated in EEBB seminars and related Program activities.

Subject to limitations on EEBB funds available for this purpose, the Program will make a number of small awards in partial support of professional travel each year. (The current award maximum is \$400.) Any student who requests this funding must also seek funds from three other sources: the graduate school, his/her home department, and his/her major professor (research grants). If the travel is international, the student should request funds from the Office of International Studies and Programs as well. The MSU Graduate School has forms that are specifically designed for requesting travel funds and indicating the contributions from the various sources.

To apply for these funds, upon solicitation from the EEBB Office, students must submit the EEBB Travel Funding Support Application and the MSU Graduate School Funding Request Form. Electronic links to these materials can be obtained by sending an email to the EEBB Program Office at eebb@msu.edu

Prior to undertaking the travel (however, not prior to requesting funds), the student must also obtain a Travel Authorization from his or her home Department, as described in section VII.I.

3. EEBB Summer Fellowships

The student's home Department, home College, the University, and outside agencies and foundations provide the main sources of financial support for most EEBB graduate students. From time to time, however, the EEBB Program may have funds to provide partial summer fellowships to some graduate students. The funds will be in the form of a fellowship paid directly to the student. These awards will not include any benefits or tuition waiver. Only doctoral students will be eligible for these fellowships. Priority will be given to students who are near completion of their degrees, have actively participated in EEBB activities, and show evidence of scholarly accomplishments; such accomplishments may include prior presentations at scientific meetings, papers published and submitted, and grants and fellowships obtained. Accordingly, these fellowships will be made on a competitive basis, although constraints on other available support may also be considered in the decision process. If EEBB Summer Fellowships will be available in a particular

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

year, then an email will be sent to EEBB graduate students notifying them of the opportunity and providing instructions for their applications.

The fellowship application has four required parts. **Part I** is a cover sheet available from the EEBB Office. **Part II** is a one-page summary (max. 500 words) of the student's dissertation research, including objectives and progress to date. **Part III** is one-page resume or bio-sketch for the student, including evidence of scholarly accomplishments such as presentations at scientific meetings, papers published or submitted, and grants and fellowships awarded. **Part IV** is a brief letter from the major professor, which can be attached to the rest of the application or sent separately. The letter should comment on the student's qualifications and progress, including evidence of merit such as talks presented or papers submitted. Also, if the professor lacks sufficient funds to provide summer support for this student from research grants or other sources, that fact should be noted in this letter. To apply for these funds, upon solicitation from the EEBB Office, students must submit the required documents to the EEBB Office.

4. Grievance Procedures

The EEBB Program is not the home department for any graduate student or faculty appointments. Therefore, most grievances will be pursued through the procedures set by the involved departments, colleges, or other administrative units. In the event that a grievance specifically addresses the EEBB Program, the Program Bylaws stipulate the following procedures:

Any EEBB Program faculty member or EEBB graduate student may initiate a grievance, alleging violation of existing policies or established practices by an administrator, pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Michigan State University Faculty Grievance Procedure or Michigan State University Graduate Student Grievance Procedure.

The EEBB Program Director or EEBBPEC shall meet with the parties involved in an effort to resolve the grievance informally.

In the event that the grievance is not resolved by the parties, a grievance hearing will be arranged by the Faculty Grievance Official (FGO) or Graduate Student Grievance Official pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Faculty Grievance Procedure or Graduate Student Grievance Procedure.

In the event a grievance is initiated at the EEBB Program level, the Model Academic Unit Grievance Procedure will apply.

In general, any grievance that involves graduate students or faculty in the Program, and which cannot be resolved informally, will be referred to the appropriate Department and College, and their respective judicial process will then be followed. MSU policies on [Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities](#), including procedures for adjudicating cases that involve graduate student rights and responsibilities, are available on their website.

VIII. Special Information for Foreign Students

International Students interested in joining the EEBB Program should work through their prospective or current home department to make sure that they understand and fulfill the requirements for foreign students. The [Office for International Students and Scholars](#) (OISS) is a resource center for information on matters related to international students and scholars, and their website provides additional information.

IX. University Resources and Services for Graduate Students

The University provides a wide array of services to students to assist them in adjusting to the rigors and inevitable stresses that go with a rigorous academic life

A. Academic Facilities

1. Student Services

Michigan State University provides extensive student personnel services to assist students and enhance the educational experience. Michigan State University recognizes that the total development of the individual-personal, social, and physical, as well as intellectual, is of equal importance.

The Vice President for [Student Affairs and Services](#) has general administrative responsibility for all student personnel matters. The multiple services and responsibilities are carried out through the offices of Coordinated Minority Student Programs, Counseling, Financial Aid, Recreational Sports and Fitness Services, Placement Services (including Student Employment and the Career Information Center), Student Life, and University Housing Programs.

The Student Life area includes Campus Life Orientation, Health and Alcohol Education, Judicial Affairs, Off-Campus Housing and Commuter Programs, Service Learning, Student Activities, Student and Leadership Development, and Student Withdrawals and Records.

2. Michigan State University Library

It is strongly suggested that you take advantage of the library tours in order to more thoroughly familiarize yourself with all the available resources. There are many branch libraries on campus. Consult [Spartan Life](#) or the [MSU Libraries](#) websites for additional information.

3. Computer Center and Statistical Consulting

a. Computer Services

[The Institute for Cyber-Enabled Research](#) (iCER): Get an account with ICER if you plan to manipulate or analyze “big data.”

[Technology at MSU](#)

[Tech Support](#)

[Computer Store](#)

b. Programming Service

This is a professional group that charges professional fees for computer work. They can

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

offer some statistical help although they are limited in this area. They can do just about any computer programming work. The student will be given an estimate of charges which student must approve before the job is performed.

c. [Computer Labs and Classrooms](#)

Computer facilities are available on campus. Policies regarding use of equipment should be obtained from individual facilities. Location of computer labs can be found at the Computer Labs and Classroom website.

d. [Center for Statistical Training & Consulting](#)

MSU has a Center for Statistical Training & Consulting. Additional information on this service can be found at their website.

4. [Spartan Bookstore](#)

The Spartan Bookstore is located in the International Center on Shaw Lane. Off-campus bookstores are located in the East Lansing area.

5. [Learning Resources Center](#)

This is a self-paced, individualized learning center that offers free assistance to students who want to improve their study skills. Its goal is to help you develop the strategies and techniques you need to be successful student. Workshops on specific study skills are offered throughout the year.

6. [Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Center](#)

This is a volunteer program that provides students the opportunity to learn more about different work environments while providing community service. Staff is available to assist students in choosing a placement that meets their interests.

7. [The Writing Center](#)

This center offers writing consultation to graduate as well as undergraduate students. One on one consultations are best for small papers or projects like vitas, abstracts and cover letters, while peer response writing groups offer help developing drafts of larger projects like research and conference papers, and even theses and dissertations. The center also has a library with books on resumes, vitas and cover letters, and examples of all of the above. Call 432-3610 to make an appointment or email grammar@msu.edu for answers to questions about grammar, etc.

8. [Career Development & Placement Services](#)

The Career Development and Placement Services office assists students in career advising and seeking employment upon graduation. Their staff does workshops, classes and individual advising on topics such as how to interview successfully and steps to creating a well-written resume. You may also interview for internships or full-time employment through the Career Placement office.

EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior) Graduate Handbook

The Career Information Center provides up-to-date information on career possibilities, self-evaluation tools, and resource material on career choice, planning and strategy.

The MSU College of Natural Sciences ([CNS](#)) has a [career website](#) for graduate students. Also, the MSU Graduate School provides [Career Services](#) advising.

9. [CIC Traveling Scholar Program](#)

MSU is a member of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation. Through this committee's traveling scholar program, a doctoral student can pursue a limited amount of coursework at any Big Ten University or the University of Chicago. Participants in this program normally pay tuition at MSU at MSU rates for courses taken at other participating institutions. A doctoral student interested in this program should contact the [Office of the Graduate School](#) for instructions and formal processing.

B. Health Facilities

1. [Health Insurance](#)

Michigan State University and the Council of Graduate Students worked together to offer graduate assistants coverage beginning Fall Semester 1994. "Student only" coverage will be automatically provided, at no cost to graduate assistants. Michigan State University will provide a full twelve months of coverage if your appointment is at least nine months. Those with a Fall Semester assistantship are provided six months of coverage, beginning August 15. A Spring Semester reappointment extends health insurance benefits for an additional six months. Spring Semester only appointments include health insurance coverage beginning January 1 through Summer Semester (August 14). If you wish to enroll your legal spouse and/or dependent children, please contact the MSU Benefits office. Questions regarding enrollment, premium payment and coverage should be directed to the [AETNA Student Health](#) at 800-859-8452. Questions or issues that cannot be resolved by AETNA may be directed to the [MSU Benefits Office](#) at 1407 South Harrison Road, Room 140 Nisbet Building,

2. [The Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities \(RCPD\)](#)

Staff specialists are available to respond to mobility, visual, hearing, alternative learner, and other handicapper populations to enable their involvement in University activities. Other resources are available to students with special needs.

3. [Counseling Center](#)

Students should feel free to contact the Counseling Center for personal concerns and crisis assistance. Professional counseling and psychological services are offered to assist with personal, as well as career concerns. All services are confidential. Initial consultations are free of charge; all services are free to students carrying 7 or more credits. In addition to professional counseling, a self-management laboratory and workshops are offered.

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

4. [Olin Health Center](#)

The Student Health Service is located in Olin Health Center. In the event of an emergency, no matter what time of day, go directly to Sparrow Hospital or the nearest emergency center.

5. [Women's Resource Center](#)

The Women's Resource Center serves as a referral service and advocate of women's issues for women faculty, staff and students. They sponsor many campus programs and workshops on women's issues.

6. [Intramural Sports Facilities](#)

Students have access to equipment and facilities in the intramural facilities located in the IM-West, IM-East, and IM-Circle. Students must present a current MSU student ID and a picture ID in order to be admitted to these facilities and borrow the equipment. Use of most of the facilities is free to currently enrolled students, although there are a few exceptions, such as a small charge for the use of the weight room in the IM-East.

C. Transportation and Parking on Campus

1. [Parking on Campus](#)

Any vehicle you bring on campus must be registered through the Department of Public Safety (DPS). Required student registration of motor vehicles can be done through the DPS Office for Parking and Permits. Generally, students with assistantships are eligible to obtain parking permits which allow parking at several lots throughout the campus. Graduate students without assistantships have permits allowing them to park in commuter lots on the outer edge of the campus. To obtain a parking permit the applicant must present their vehicle registration, student ID, driver's license and, if appropriate, last year's gate card.

If you do not have a graduate assistantship, you may, under special circumstances, qualify for a parking permit. For example, if your vehicle is necessary in performing the duties for a job you hold on campus, you may wish to apply for a parking permit. You will need to go to DPS and fill out a Special Request form for a parking permit. A member of the staff of DPS will review your request and if they feel you need a parking permit for campus they will give you the opportunity to buy one.

2. [Buses](#)

The Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) provides bus service to all parts of the campus and connections with CATA routes serving the Lansing and East Lansing area.

3. [Bikes](#)

The University maintains bicycle racks throughout the campus. Bikes should be locked to these racks when parked. Bikes are not permitted in campus buildings. Improperly parked bikes are subject to impoundment by the Department of Public Safety. Bicycle registration through the MSU Department of Public Safety or the cities of East Lansing or Lansing is required.

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

D. EEBB Graduate Student Organizations

1. The EEBB Graduate Student Organization (GSO)

The EEBB GSO serves to organize the graduate student body of the EEBB program. The GSO coordinates student involvement with program-level initiatives, social events, and any other realm in which student voices should be heard. All graduate students in the EEBB Program are members of GSO. Officers are elected by popular vote of EEBB students, annually. Involvement in the GSO and GSO-sponsored activities is encouraged for all students who are a part of EEBB, and serving in the GSO is considered to be an important and beneficial professional development activity that augments student experiences while at MSU.

2. [MSU/Graduate Employees Union](#) (GEU) and the [MSU/GEU contract](#)

3. [Council of Graduate Students \(COGS\)](#)

COGS is the official graduate student organization at Michigan State University. Officers and departmental representatives (one representative per department for the entire University) are voting members. The primary objective is improvement of the academic, social, and economic position of graduate students at MSU. The organization has official delegates to the Graduate Council, the Academic Council and standing committees thereof, and several all-university and presidential committees. Through membership in these and other bodies, COGS participates in decisions on such matters as tuition and fees, the grading system, traffic regulations, academic and extracurricular programs of the university, graduate assistant stipends, improvements in on- and off-campus student living conditions, academic freedom and responsibilities, student representation in university government, and the selection of principal administrative officers. Meetings are open to all graduate students. For further information, contact the department for the name of your representative.

COGS offers a wide range of services and programs to graduate level students including the following:

a. [MSU Student Food Bank](#)

COGS and ASMSU jointly established a Student Food Bank to address the problems of students and their families with financial hardship. The SFB is located at Olin Health Center, and hours are 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday evenings. Students may visit bi-monthly. For more information, or to volunteer, stop by the office (Olin Health Center, 463 E. Circle Drive Rm. 151).

b. **Copy Center**

COG maintains a copy center in its office (120 Chittenden Hall). Open to all graduate/professional students, the COGS copy center features a high quality Canon copier for use at the lowest rates available. This center charges \$0.04 per 8 ½ x 11 copy (black and white). We also offer 8 ½ x 14 copies at \$0.05 per page, 11 x 17 at \$0.06 per copy, and color copies printed starting at \$0.20 per page. Fax can be sent for \$.25/fax. Cash or check only.

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

c. Student Legal Services

COGS and ASMSU have joined together to provide a wide range of legal services to MSU students. This service is free to all graduate students. The plan enables students to consult a staff attorney on many legal matters such as landlord/tenant problems, small claims, traffic offenses, and minor criminal/civil matters. For more specialized needs, students are referred to other area attorneys. The Students Defender Division of legal services provides students with advice concerning University regulations, judiciary programs, and any other type of paralegal help necessary to resolve intra-university problems. Students Legal Services is located in Room 329, Student Services Building. Due to the large number of phone calls and potential problems, no legal advice of any kind will be given over the phone. Call 353-3716 or stop by the office to make an appointment.

d. \$300 Short-Term Loans

ASMSU administers a \$300 loan program for COGS. To obtain a loan, bring a valid MSU ID and a picture ID to 307 Student Services. The loan is interest-free for 8 weeks. Since the loan fund is a limited resource, money may not always be available. Loans are only available during the first 6 weeks of classes.

e. \$500 Short-Term Loans

The Office of Financial Aid administers a COGS-funded \$500 loan program. Applications for the \$500 loan are available in 252 Student Services, and take 2-3 business days to process. Make sure you write "COGS LOAN" clearly at the top of the application form! This loan is interest-free for up to 60 days.

f. Endowment Fund

COGS offers conference and degree completion grants. Please visit the [COGS website](#) for an application and guidelines.

g. City of East Lansing Parking Permits

The Council of Graduate Students has teamed up with the City of East Lansing to sell reduced cost graduate student permits in the Downtown East Lansing Division Street ramp (Lot 10 - Colorful Parking Garage at Division & Albert Streets). Permit holders can park in the designated permit area in the upper levels using an access card purchased at the COGS Office.

4. Faculty-Professional Women's Association

The purpose of the Faculty-Professional Women's Association is to provide a forum for and support of the various interests of the present and future professional women at Michigan State University. Graduate students are eligible to join the association as non-voting members. The dues for MSU graduate students are about 25% of the full dues. Non-voting members cannot vote in elections or on issues, nor can they hold a regular board position or office. Other than that, they have all the other rights and privileges of regular members.

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

E. University Guides and References

1. [Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

This document contains University policies concerning graduate education and is published in Spartan Life.

2. [Funding Guide](#)

The Graduate School has produced a Guide for Graduate Students, Graduate Professional Students and Postdoctoral Fellows, to assist students in identifying funding sources such as grants, fellowships, scholarships and awards.

3. [Career and Professional Development](#)

The Graduate School at MSU offers a variety of workshops and other resources that can assist students in their career and professional development. The “PREP” program focuses on four skills that are key to career and professional development: planning, resilience, engagement and professionalism.

4. [Resource Guide](#)

A helpful resource guide to campus programs and services, and also includes rules, regulations, rights and responsibilities that have been established in the interest of intellectual and personal development while protecting individual freedoms. It is published annually by the Department of Student Life in the Division of Student Affairs and Services.

5. [Academic Programs](#)

Academic Programs (University catalogs) are the primary sources for university regulations, policies, procedures, costs, and academic program requirements.

6. [COGS Publications](#)

7. [Spartan Life](#)

Spartan Life Student Handbook and Resource Guide is produced by the Office of Student Affairs and Services.

8. [The Schedule of Courses and Academic Handbook](#)

The Schedule of Courses and Academic Handbook, published each semester, provide selected information on courses, university regulations, policies, procedures, costs, and the academic calendar.

9. The Faculty and Staff Directory

The Faculty and Staff Directory is published by the Office of the Registrar. Copies for personal use may be purchased at the MSU Union Central Store or the MSU Bookstore.

10. [Guide to the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations](#)

The Graduate School Guide to the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations describes the final procedures for degree completion and manuscript requirements for your thesis or dissertation.

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

11. [The Graduate Post](#)

A newsletter published every semester by The Graduate School. Its purpose is to highlight activities in graduate education at MSU and elsewhere, to publish opportunities available for professional enrichment through fellowships, scholarships and study programs, to announce important deadline dates and announce upcoming colloquia and symposia.

12. [MSU Today](#)

A weekly newspaper geared to University and faculty interests.

13. [The State News](#)

The State News is the MSU daily newspaper that contains news and a listing of events of interest.

F. Directory of Frequently Contacted Offices

1. [EEBB Program](#)

517-432-1359

eebb@msu.edu

EEBB Program Director, Dr. Kay E. Holekamp

EEBB Program Office, 103 Giltner Hall, Ms. Barbara Bloemers

2. [College of Natural Science](#)

EEBB is administered by the College of Natural Science

3. **Michigan State University**

a. Administration

[Office of Admissions](#)

[Office of the Registrar](#)

[Controller's Office](#)

[The Graduate School](#)

b. Student Services

[ASMSU/COGS Legal Services](#)

[Career Services Network](#)

[Center for Community and Economic Development](#)

[Counseling Center](#)

[Employee Assistance Program](#)

[Office of Financial Aid](#)

[Council of Graduate Students \(COGS\)](#)

[Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives](#)

[Student Affairs & Services](#)

**EEBB (Ecology, Evolutionary Biology and Behavior)
Graduate Handbook**

c. Computer Services

[Technology at MSU](#)

[Tech Support](#)

[Computer Store](#)

d. International Center

[English Language Center](#)

[Office for International Students & Scholars](#)

[Office of Study Abroad](#)

[International Studies & Programs](#)

e. Library

f. Student Health Services

[Olin Health Center](#)

[Student Health Insurance](#)

G. Selected MSU Websites

[MSU Home Page](#)

[EEBB Program Site](#)

[Academic Programs](#)

[Graduate Students Rights and Responsibilities](#)

[MSU/GEU Contract](#)

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

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

[Office of the Ombudsperson](#)