

**PLANT SOIL
& MICROBIAL
SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT**

Effective March 24, 2020 the PSM Administration Offices are closed.

During this time of uncertainty, please be patient with any request you may have placed with a PSM support staff member. Know that PSM support staff will get to your request as quickly as possible.

AnnMarie Guldner [guldner1@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM

Ashley Lathrop [danas@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM

Brian Horgan [horganb@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 8 AM-12PM & 1-5 PM

Christiina Donley [tymoszew@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM-12:00 PM & 12:30-5:00 PM

Debbie Williams [williade@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 7 AM-3 PM

Dominic Colosimo [colosi14@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM

Gina Centeno [centeno@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 8:15 AM-2:45 PM

Lee Duynslager [duynslag@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 8 AM-12:30 PM & 1-4:30 PM

Linda Colon [colon@msu.edu] Monday-Thursday from 8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM, Fridays from 8 AM-12 PM

Lisa Bowen [bowenli1@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 8 AM-4 PM

Mackenzie Graham - On maternity leave until June 5, 2020
Linda Colon will be able to assist with grad secretary needs during Mackenzie's leave.
[colon@msu.edu]

Rachel Esch [eschrach@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 7 AM-3 PM

Sandie Litchfield [litchfi9@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 7:30 AM-12 PM & 1-4:30 PM

Resources

MSU latest coronavirus updates

<https://msu.edu/coronavirus/latest-updates/>

MSU Coronavirus response website

msu.edu/coronavirus

CANR Coronavirus response website

canr.msu.edu/coronavirus

Employment related questions

<https://hr.msu.edu/news/coronavirus-faqs.html>

MSU WorkLife Programs

<https://worklife.msu.edu/campusflex>

MSU travel guide

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/coronavirus/travel>

MSU events updates

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/coronavirus/events>

Messages from President Stanley

<https://president.msu.edu/communications/messages-statements/index.html>

Messages from Dean Ron Hendrick & from Extension Director Jeff Dwyer

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/coronavirus/index>

MSU Guide to remote teaching

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/coronavirus/teaching-working>

MSU Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities

<https://www.rcpd.msu.edu/>

Because of technology gaps or different abilities, some students, faculty and staff may have difficulty learning or working remotely. Please use the MSU resources at the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities and our local administrators, chairs and faculty members to assist in getting word to the right group for help with these issues.

A Resource to Help to Learn How to Work Remotely

<https://michiganstate.sharepoint.com/sites/Spartan-365-Help-FAQ>

Guide to web accessibility

https://webaccess.msu.edu/Help_and_Resources/checklist.html

Student Resources

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/coronavirus/student-resources>

How to cancel or postpone events

Cancel: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/how-to-cancel-an-event-in-dotcms-due-to-novel-coronavirus>

Postpone: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/how-to-postpone-an-event-in-dotcms-due-to-novel-coronavirus>

MSU fireside chats and teaching services

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/coronavirus/teaching-working>

Career Fairs

The Career Services Network has transitioned all career advising appointments to virtual format, and they have also launched a new **Virtual Career Center** (<https://careernetwork.msu.edu/resources-tools/virtual-career-center/index.html>) for students to access many other key resources to support their needs.

There are 2 remaining **Virtual Career Fairs** (<https://careernetwork.msu.edu/jobs-internships/Career-Fairs/index.html>) scheduled that replace two previously scheduled on-campus career fairs: Spring Career Fair and Teacher and Administrator Fair. These career fairs will now be online using a virtual career fair technology, and the new dates are as follows:

April 24: Spring Career Fair - Small Employers and Non-Profits

May 11: Teacher and Administrator Fair (a collaboration among all Michigan public universities and led by MSU Career Services)

We are continuing to promote **MSU Connect** (<https://msuconnect.msu.edu/>), the new online career mentoring and alumni networking community for students. More campaigns are planned for yet this week to increase awareness and participation. At the same time, we are in the process of adding 10 more college-level sites that will go live on the system in the coming weeks. These secondary hubs will help drive additional alumni support for students seeking jobs and internships and needing guidance or advice related to their career goals.

NIFA Virtual Career Expo - April 28, 2020

<https://workforusdakc.com/>

Announcements

PSM Summer Hours

PSM summer hours will be in effect from May 11th through August 3rd. During that time, the PSM office will be open from 8:00 AM-4:00 PM.

University Stores Modified Business Operations

Distribution and Delivery

Service updates are listed at <https://usd.msu.edu/university-stores/>

Temporary Exception Mobile Communications and Residential Internet Connectivity Policies

We recognize that some of you have had increased expenses associated with working remotely in order to continue normal operations. Those incremental cost increases should not be your responsibility. Therefore, if you have had to increase your internet speed or change your data plan on your cell phone, please contact **Debbie Williams** at williade@msu.edu with your intent to seek reimbursement.

Announcements

April 5-May 17, 2020

Red Water Alert

Hydrant flushing across the entire campus. Flushing will take place from 9 PM to 5:30 AM on weekdays. During this work, some discoloration of the water supply may occur throughout campus. However this discoloration is harmless in terms of sanitation and safety. Contact **Sam Fortino**, skilled trades supervisor, at 517-432-0505 or fortin17@msu.edu, or IPF at 517-353-1760 for additional information.

May 16, 2020

MSU Virtual Commencement Ceremony

MSU will hold a virtual commencement ceremony on May 16th. The virtual ceremony will be held via MSU's Facebook page ([facebook.com/spartans.msu/](https://www.facebook.com/spartans.msu/)) beginning at 10 AM EDT (7 AM PDT). Members of the 2020 class, their friends, families and Spartans everywhere are invited to gather online and make this the largest MSU commencement ever, as university leadership recognizes graduates and confers their degrees. The ceremony will feature remarks from **President Stanley** and the interim provost as well as musical performances from students in the College of Music.

Additional information: <https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2020/msu-will-hold-virtual-commencement-ceremony-on-may-16/>

Please monitor our official websites for updates, recommendations and support:

<https://msu.edu/coronavirus/>

<https://grad.msu.edu/cv19>

<https://remote.msu.edu/index.html>

Spring 2020 Satisfactory (S)/Not Satisfactory (NS) grades

MSU has introduced an option of a binary grade recording system for Spring 2020's grades. If you are taking courses this semester, you will have the option to have your final grade for any given course recorded on your transcript on an S/NS (satisfactory/not satisfactory) scale. For graduates, the threshold between S and NS is 2.0. Faculty will submit their grades as usual to the Registrar's Office at the end of the semester, and you will have two weeks beginning May 6 to view your grades and decide on a class-by-class basis if you would prefer to have your grade for each of your courses recorded on your transcripts with the numerical 0.0-4.0 grade or with S/NS. More information including an FAQ page can be found at <https://remote.msu.edu/grading-option/index.html>.

To access the S/NS grade selection form **beginning May 6**, please click on one of the two links below.

StuInfo Grades page: <https://reg.msu.edu/StuForms/StuInfo/Transcript.aspx>

StuInfo - Spring 2020 Semester - Satisfactory/Not Satisfactory (S/NS) Grade Selection:

https://reg.msu.edu/StuForms/StuInfo/SS20_GradesSelection.aspx

Fall Semester 2020 International Graduate Admissions Deadline

OISS is currently processing immigration documents for F-1 and J-1 international students for Fall 2020. Per **Dean Jeitschko's** message, please keep in mind there may be significant delays surrounding visa processing. Additionally, the Department of State has temporarily suspended routine visa services to the U.S. Embassies and Consulates. The **deadline for international graduate admissions will be Friday, June 12 for Fall 2020.**

More information at <https://grad.msu.edu/fs20-international-graduate-admissions-deadline>.

Announcements

KFS Project Code for Coronavirus Expenses

This message is for all persons involved in accounting transactions in the MSU financial system (including Fiscal Officers, Fiscal Officer Delegates, and Accounting Document Preparers).

Many units are incurring extraordinary expenses for things related to the Coronavirus. It is important that we keep track of these expenses in the event that there may be emergency funds available from the federal or state government in the future.

To facilitate this tracking, a new accounting strip Project Code has been created in the MSU financial system (KFS) to track expenses related to addressing the Coronavirus. The Project Code is COVID19. This new Project Code COVID19 should be used university-wide on the accounting string of all expenses related to the Coronavirus on any MSU account.

Please use the COVID19 Project Code for expense related to the Coronavirus so that MSU can accurately track and report on these costs. Use of the Project Code will not preclude units from reporting on other accounting string attributes (e.g., sub-account) as may be the routine.

If you have any questions about how to use this Project Code, please contact your MAU Budget Officer/Fiscal Officer.

Important Updates Regarding Flexible Spending Accounts

Due to the COVID-19 situation, if you have flexible spending accounts (FSAs) for the 2019 and/or 2020 plan years, there are important updates regarding FSAs you need to be aware of.

Claims deadline extended

- The date for submitting claims for the 2019 plan year has been extended from April 20, 2020 to June 30, 2020.
- Please note: you still must have incurred claims prior to March 15, 2020; this extension only applies to submitting claims for eligible expenses incurred from 1/1/2019-3/15/2020.

Expanded eligibility list for Health Care FSAs

- If you have a Health Care FSA for the 2020 plan year, the IRS has expanded the list of eligible items you can use this account for. This includes items such as over-the-counter drugs without a doctor's prescription.
- Review the full list of eligible items on the WageWorks website (<https://www.wageworks.com/employees/support-center/healthcare-fsa-eligible-expenses-table/>) and don't forget to visit the FSA Store ([fsastore.com](https://www.fsastore.com)).

For additional updates regarding flexible spending accounts please see https://hr.msu.edu/news_feeds/covid19-fsa-updates.html for additional information.

Announcements

The **Families First Coronavirus Response Act** enacted by the Department of Labor goes into effect April 1, 2020. The act is meant to assist you during COVID-19 by providing additional leave options. These new options are available through Dec. 31, 2020. To view your employee rights under the act, please go to this website https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/WHD/posters/FFCRA_Poster_WH1422_Non-Federal.pdf

New leave options include:

- Emergency Family and Medical Leave Act (EFMLA)
- Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)

EFMLA

The federal government has expanded this option to provide up to 12 weeks of partially paid coronavirus-related family leave. Eligible employees may take this leave if they are unable to work or telework due to the need to care for a minor child whose school or daycare is closed, or daycare is unavailable, due to COVID-19.

EPSL

This new act provides eligible employees up to 80 hours of fully or partially paid leave for the following reasons:

- you are subject to a government-ordered quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19
- you have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19
- you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking medical diagnosis
- you are caring for an individual who is subject to a government-ordered quarantine or a health care provider's recommendation to self-quarantine
- you are caring for a child whose school or place of care has been closed due to COVID-19
- you are "experiencing any other substantially similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services in consultation with the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Labor."

Effective Apr. 2, 2020, the EPSL will now replace the University's up to 80 hours of sick time against future sick accruals for those whose sick, vacation, and personal time was insufficient to cover their absence.

Who Qualifies and How to Apply

You can view more detailed information on who qualifies for these leave options, as well as information about what is covered, pay, etc. on the MSU HR website at <https://hr.msu.edu/time-off-leave/ffcra.html>. Please note that due to the nature of their jobs, MSU PD staff and MSU Health Team staff and providers are excluded from both the EFMLA and EPSL leave programs.

To apply for EFMLA, contact the MSU HR Leaves Team at HR.EPSL-EFMLA@hr.msu.edu.

To apply for EPSLA, complete and submit the form located at <https://hr.msu.edu/time-off-leave/documents/epsl-form.pdf> (Instructions are included on the form.)

During this fluid pandemic, please know that university leadership is continuing to evaluate how best to care for employees while also providing fair workplace options that follow federal and state guidelines. More information will be available in the coming weeks regarding any additional changes.

