
**PLANT SOIL
& MICROBIAL
SCIENCE
DEPARTMENT**



Retirement Announcement

Sandie Litchfield started working at MSU in December 2005 as a TOC in the Office Services pool and worked at the College for Nursing for 4 months from February through May 2006. She was hired by CSS and began in June 2006 and has been working in PSM ever since! Sandie said that this was the best place on campus that she could have landed and wishes she could have been here longer.

Congratulations Sandie on your upcoming retirement! Sandie's official retirement date is 2/1/21 and her last day in the office will be on Friday, January 29th.

Congratulations

Congratulations to CSS Ph.D. student, **Jaron Adkins** for his successful defense in December! Jaron will be moving to Utah at the end of January to begin a postdoctoral investigating microbial controls on soil carbon cycling in the arctic.

PSM Faculty Meetings - Spring Semester 2021

Faculty, please make sure that the following meetings are on your calendars. A calendar invite with Zoom login/password has been sent.

- January 28, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 PM
- March 4, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 PM
- April 15, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 PM
- May 26, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 PM

Announcements

Notice of Change of Monthly Reports: Please note that starting February 1, 2021, there will be a change to how you will receive accounting updates on your accounts. You will receive multiple reports that show current expenditures along with encumbered salaries and current spendable amounts. We have started sending these reports to a handful of faculty for the testing phase. We have included a guide on how to read the reports and will be available for support [see the attached PDF called Admin.ReadingReport.v1]. If you are interested in seeing these reports, please contact **Ashley Lathrop**. If you have any questions regarding the new process, contact Ashley on Teams or by email.

Announcements

Building Access

If building access is needed, please remember to have your PI email **AnnMarie Guldner** (guldner1@msu.edu) directly with this request. Requests cannot be accepted from anyone other than your PI.

PSM Office Coverage

We will be staffing the PSM office on Wednesdays for essential needs only (Ex: keys). An appointment needs to be made prior by contacting **AnnMarie Guldner** at either guldner1@msu.edu or 517-353-0120. No drop ins will be allowed.

PSSB Entry Doors

Please remember that you can only access PSSB through doors 9 & 10 which are on the East side across from Vet Med along Bogue Street and doors 31 & 32 which are on the South side of the corridor that connects Plant and Soil to MPS.

Upcoming Virtual Professional Development Courses

Communication

➤ Grammar Refresher - January 19: Strengthen your grammar and usage skills and present a more polished, professional image.

Customer Service

➤ Maximizing the Spartan Experience - February 3: This new and engaging training provides a foundational perspective related to enhanced customer service delivery.

Human Resources

➤ Certified Human Resources Specialist (CHRS) - February 2, 9, 16, 23, and March 2nd: In this five-session series, participants will receive fundamental knowledge to be a successful HR professional. Pass a take-home exam to achieve CHRS certification.

➤ Advanced CHRS - March 3 & 4: This course will help you, as a Certified Human Resources Specialist (CHRS), stay up to date on important employment and labor law changes, among other topics.

Leadership

➤ Engaging Teams for Maximum Performance - February 11: Methods of building trust, setting goals and providing feedback to help enhance employee engagement and working relationships will be shared.

Management

➤ Managing Employees Remotely - January 20: Shifting to remote work has required changes in our perspectives and approaches to work, and successfully managing employees in this environment means strengthening new and different skills. Learn more about how to do just that in this new, one-hour virtual course.

Operations

➤ Query Studio - January 27: Query Studio is an ad hoc reporting tool that can be used to produce queries against enterprise data (HR and Finance) as well as additional data that has been added to the dimensional models in MSU's enterprise data warehouse.

Announcements

Upcoming Virtual Professional Development Courses

Operations

➤ Records Management and Retention at MSU - February 25: Learn the rules, regulations, and strategies to help manage university records. Class will cover both electronic and print documents.

Professional Development

➤ Everything DiSC: Behavior Styles at Work - January 14: Everything DiSC helps you build more effective working relationships based on an understanding of different behavioral styles.

➤ The Power of Habit - February 23: In this course you will learn how habits are created and how to replace undesirable habits with productive ones. You will learn how to spot your habit loop, turn bad days into good data, and create habits that get the results you want.

You can find all of the current Organization and Professional Development courses on the HR website. Class enrollment is completed within the EBS Portal. Employees may use available educational assistance funds towards course fees (if any).

New MDARD Emergency Order Extends Pesticide Applicator Credentials Until June 2021

A new emergency rule filed on December 30, 2020 by Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) **Director Gary McDowell** extended pesticide applicator credential expiration dates as part of the state's continued COVID-19 response. Applicators whose credentials expired on December 31, 2019 or December 31, 2020 will have those credentials extended to June 30, 2021. In addition to extending the expiration date, the rule gives applicators six additional months to renew their credential via continuing education courses.

For additional information, please see the notice attached to this newsletter.

WACSS Anti-Racism Insight Series

January 20: **Shondra L. Marshall, Ph.D.** - Getting Underneath the Dynamics of Power and Privilege

Registration: <https://wacss.msu.edu/events/index.html>

Hosted by: MSU Woman's Advisory Committee for Support Staff (WACSS)

Co-Sponsors: MSU College of Agriculture & Natural Resources, MSU Inclusion & Intercultural Initiatives

PO Administrative Fee

12/21/2020 Update: A message was communicated last week regarding the implementation of a 1.75% Purchase Order Administrative Fee, scheduled to become effective January 1, 2021. Based on your concerns, we are delaying the rollout of the PO Administrative Fee until March 1, 2021, while we take time to consider all options. No additional information is available at this time.

Announcements

Where: Biomedical Physical Science, Administration Building, Alumni Chapel, Auditorium, Baker Hall, Beaumont Tower, Bessey Hall, Biochemistry, Center for Integrated Plant Studies (CIPS), Chemistry, Communication Arts, Computer Center, Cowles House, Dairy Complex, Farm Lane Feeder, Buildings 209 & 210, Farrall Hall, Food Safety and Toxicology, Food Science, Geography, Giltner Hall, IM Sports Circle, Kedzie Hall (N&S), Kresge Art, Library, Mason Abbot Hall, MSU College of Law, MSU Surplus & Recycling, Museum, Music Building, Music Practice, Natural Resources, Natural Science, NCSS House Service, Olds Hall, Oyer Speech & Hearing, Packaging, Parking Lot 89, Parking Ramp 2 (Auditorium), Pathological Incinerator, Plant & Soil Science, Molecular Plant Science, Plant & Soil Science, Plant Biology, Plant Science Greenhouse/West Range, Prototype Assembly Building, Psychology, Public Safety, Pump Stations 1 & 2 (Farm Lane Underpass), Radio Tower, Regional Chilled Water Plant, Reservoir, Signal Light @ Farm Lane & Circle, Signal light @ Service Road & Farm Lane, Signal Light @ Shaw & Farm Lane, Snyder and Phillips Hall, Transportation Services Fuel Station and Car Wash, Turfgrass Field Lab, Veterinary Medical Center - Oncology, Veterinary Medical Center, Wells #17 & #19

When: Beginning 6 a.m., Monday, Jan. 11, and lasting through 4:30 p.m., Friday, Jan. 15

What is being done: Infrastructure Planning and Facilities High Voltage Crew will be performing work at the T.B. Simon Power Plant.

Why this is being done: This work is necessary to allow for upgrades to campus electrical distribution equipment.

How this will impact building occupants: While we do not expect any interruptions in electrical service, the buildings listed at the top of the page will be served by their alternate circuit while this work takes place.

Who to contact for more information: Dan Bell, Electrical Utilities supervisor, at (517) 432-0566 or belldani@msu.edu, or John Nurenberg, manager of electrical services, at (517) 432-0509 or nurenbe5@msu.edu.

Travel

2021 Mileage Reimbursement Rate

The Internal Revenue Service this week issued their 2021 standard mileage rate used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. Beginning on January 1, 2021, the standard mileage rate for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) will be:

- 56 cents per mile driven for business use, down 1 cent from the rate for 2020 mileage reimbursement.
- Concur database has been updated with this information

Concur Profile Update

With travel planning and expense report activity mostly on hold this past year, you may not have spent time in Concur. Want to reacquaint yourself? Log into EBS, click on the Travel and Expense tile located on the home page and, we suggest, review your profile to add affinity program information, passport expiration updates, address/phone/emergency contact information changes, etc. And, if a Concur refresher would help, check out the education corner at Travel@State.

Assistance Resources

Travel policy and travel program support: travel@ctrl.msu.edu or 517-355-5000
Concur: concurhelp@msu.edu

DEI Events and Opportunities

MSU Department of Entomology Spring Seminar Series - Zoom Webinar

When: Monday, January 11, 2021 at 12 PM

Presenters: Ash Zemenick - Postdoc, Auburn University and Michigan State University
Alex Webster - Research Professor, University of New Mexico
Sarah Jones - Education Manager, Chicago Botanic Garden

Host: Andrea Glassmire, MSU Entomology Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

Title: Project BioDiversify: Methods for diverse, inclusive, and effective teaching in biology

To register for the MSU Entomology Spring 2021 Seminar Series, please use the following link: https://msu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_JOJH1ZEvQQ2lat3AX4XB0A
After registration, look for a confirmation email containing information about joining the seminar.

The goal of Project Biodiversify is simple: to humanize biology as a field, and to increase the visibility of role models from underrepresented groups in introductory biology courses. Project Biodiversify is a repository of materials that provide examples from primary research and personal experiences from scientists that identify with underrepresented groups in biology.

Face Coverings Updated 01/04/2021

Face coverings should:

1. be non-medical grade to maintain supplies for health care use,
2. fit snugly against the side of your face,
3. cover your nose and mouth,
4. be secured with ties or ear loops **and**
5. allow for breathing without restriction.

Cloth face coverings should only be worn for one day at a time, and they must be properly hand washed or laundered with soap/detergent before subsequent use. Face coverings may vary (for example, disposable non-medical masks or neck gaiters are acceptable).

In addition to wearing face coverings, whether you are on- or off-campus, you also must adhere to the guidelines and recommendations from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) as well as federal and [state government](#) authorities, in order to protect your own health and the health of the entire MSU community.

Protocol - MSU COVID 19 Testing and Reporting

Please see this link <https://msu.edu/together-we-will/students-parents/> and <https://msu.edu/together-we-will/faculty-staff/> for current COVID-19 testing and reporting protocol.

Vehicle Use Policy

Please see the attached COVID-19 Vehicle Occupancy Guidance. (September 2020)

Together We Will

msu.edu/together-we-will

Faculty and Staff

What you need to know

- While the spring semester will start Jan. 11, the state's extension and broadening of its COVID-19 public health order mean [MSU will not resume classes until Jan. 19](#). All classes will begin online, and in-person instruction begins Jan. 25.
- The undergraduate semester begins Jan. 11 with a “Reading, Reviewing and Reflection” period that does not include any online or in-person class instruction. Faculty are being asked to provide students with syllabi and course schedules to allow students to have this week to prepare for the semester. More information on academic planning for the spring semester [can be found here](#).
- Employees who are working remotely should continue to do so for the spring semester, in accordance with direction from their supervisors.
- Faculty and staff are strongly urged to receive a flu vaccine.
- If you are on campus, [face coverings must be worn](#) (including all faculty, staff, students, vendors and visitors) indoors and outdoors while you are on property owned or governed by MSU and while participating in MSU-related or MSU-sponsored activities.
- All employees must fill out a [health-screening form](#) each day they come to campus to work. A [guide has been created for supervisors and administrators](#) so they can access screening reports for employees in their units.
- Human Resources keeps [an updated FAQ website](#) for employees, and information on resources for faculty, staff and researchers operating in a virtual setting can be found at remote.msu.edu.
- For those administrative and academic functions that are deemed necessary to return to campus, [a template has been created](#) to help guide them through that process, along with a [decision making guide](#) and [supporting documents](#).
- MSU also has prepared a [Building Safety Information Plan](#) that serves as the principal safety plan for all buildings on campus. It will be important for each building to share and review the plan with its occupants so that everyone can work together to promote building safety.
- Expedited processes for requesting [temporary accommodations, flexible work arrangements](#) and [teaching adjustments](#) have been created.
- There is updated [guidance on university vehicle occupancy](#) to minimize the potential for transmission of the virus while traveling with a group or other individuals.

COVID Directives

Updated 01/04/2021

To slow the spread of COVID-19, Michigan State University is directing everyone to take personal responsibility to protect their own health and safety, as well as the health and safety of MSU faculty, staff, students, visitors and loved ones.

Face coverings

Individuals with COVID-19 are highly infectious for up to two days before the onset of symptoms. Thus, face coverings are a crucial public health measure and help protect others by reducing exposure to droplets if someone is unknowingly infected with COVID-19. Wearing a face covering, whether you feel ill or have been diagnosed with COVID-19, is critical to maintaining everyone's health and safety.

Face coverings must be worn by everyone (including all faculty, staff, students, vendors and visitors) indoors and outdoors while you are on property owned or governed by MSU and while participating in MSU-related or MSU-sponsored activities. If you have a medical condition that may prevent you from safely wearing a face covering, you should contact [MSU's Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities](#) to begin the accommodation process.

Exceptions to the requirement for face coverings will be limited. For example, if you are indoors, exceptions are limited to when:

1. you are in your own place of residence and can therefore properly physically distance (at least six feet of physical separation between yourself and others);
2. you are in a private, single-occupancy office or lab space with a closed door and can reasonably expect other individuals not to enter (but if you leave your private, single-occupancy office or lab space and proceed into a common area or hallway - even if there are no other individuals present - you must wear a face covering); **or**
3. you are eating or drinking but still maintaining physical distance (at least six feet of physical separation between yourself and others).

If you are outdoors, exceptions are limited to when:

1. you are working outdoors and can maintain physical distance from others (but you will need to wear a face covering outdoors when interacting with others or when unable to maintain physical distance); **or**
2. you are exercising or engaging in high-intensity activities outdoors (for example, jogging, running, bicycling or golfing) and can maintain physical distance from others.

If you are working, an exception may be allowed in the following situations:

1. you are working in a setting where a face covering may increase the risk of a hazard (for example, the face covering could become wet, the face covering could get caught in machinery, or the face covering could become contaminated with chemicals used in the work environment);
2. you can maintain physical distance from others; **and**
3. you have previously consulted with your supervisor to determine the appropriate face covering for your setting.

In addition, if you are working, an exception may be allowed if you need a fresh-air break outdoors **and**

1. you can maintain physical distance from others,
2. you will not interact with others **and**
3. you have previously consulted with your supervisor.

Food and Drink Policy

Food and Drink Policy - Addendum to the PSSB Reopening Plan 7/23/2020

Based on the changing Executive Orders and needs of the MSU community, food consumption will be allowed in PSSB in posted designated areas. Please keep in mind that this change in policy may pose an increased risk of exposure and it is important to observe physical distancing, follow disinfecting protocols and spend minimal time in the room.

To meet these goals and maximize safety, the PSSB building SOP plan has been modified to:

- Note that it is always preferable to eat outside of the building when possible
- Conference and break rooms on the second floor will be open for food consumption. Please limit your time to 30-min to accommodate colleagues/other building occupants.
 - A279 - Horticulture conference room - maximum occupancy is 5
 - A271 - PSM conference room - maximum occupancy is 6
 - A246 - Break room - maximum occupancy is 5
- Maximum occupancy signs will be posted on each door. If the room is fully occupied, please check another designated space. If all conference and break rooms are fully occupied, check back later.
- Masks must be worn in each room unless actually consuming food.
- Kitchenettes will continue to be closed. There is no microwave or refrigerator usage allowed.
- Everyone should bring and remove all personal supplies for eating.
- The user is required to disinfect the space before and after each use following EPA approved guidelines (70% alcohol for 5-min; Sani-wipes for 3-min). Disinfectants will be present in the room.
- Snacks and community food to share should not be brought to work.

MSU Academic Calendar

Spring 2021

January 11	Undergraduate Semester Begins with a “Reading, Reviewing and Reflection” period (no online or in person instruction). Faculty are being asked to provide students with syllabi and course schedules to allow students to have this week to prepare for the semester. Students do not need to be on or near campus for this week.
January 19	Classes Begin (Online)
January 25	In-Person Instruction Begins
January 18	Holiday - University Open, Classes Cancelled
March 2-3	Break Days
March 10	Middle of Semester
April 21	Classes End
April 22-23	Study Days
April 26-30	Final Exams
May 1-8	Commencements

Spring 2021 Commencement Dates

Due to COVID-19, ceremony specific information is not available at this time.

For additional information go to <https://commencement.msu.edu/>

PSM Office Contact Information / Hours

Effective March 24, 2020 the PSM Administration Offices are closed. During this time of uncertainty, please be patient with any request that 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	7 AM-3 PM
Ashley Lathrop	danas@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Brian Horgan	horganb@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Christiina Donley	tymoszew@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Debbie Williams	williade@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	7 AM-3 PM
Dominic Colosimo	colosi14@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Gina Centeno	centeno@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8:15 AM-2:45 PM
Hannah O'Mara	omarahan@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM
Lee Duynslager	duynslag@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12:30 PM & 1-4:30 PM
Lisa Bowen	bowenli1@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-4 PM
Mackenzie Graham	graham2@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	8 AM-12 PM & 12:30-4:30 PM
Rachel Jorgensen	eschrach@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	6:30 AM-3:00 PM
Sandie Litchfield	litchfi9@msu.edu	Monday-Friday	7:30 AM-12 PM & 1-4:30 PM

New Version Fillable PSMS PDF Time Sheet

Attached to this newsletter is the new fillable version of the PSMS PDF time sheet, this version replaces all other copies. The new time sheet has required fill-in areas (i.e. dates and signatures) and all areas are now fillable or a check box.

2021 PSM Payroll Schedule

Attached to this newsletter is the PSM 2021 Payroll Schedule

Entering Hours Into EBS: Temp-On-Calls & Undergrad Students

Effective January 3, 2021 we will start the process for temp on-calls and undergrad students to enter their own hours into EBS with their direct supervisor approving these hours on a bi-weekly basis. Attached are the general instructions on this process. We will be forwarding a more detailed process to all PSM in the very near future.

PSM Payroll Time Reporting

Due Date Reminders for **biweekly payroll** (includes labor and student)

Reminder: If your employee's time is not submitted, they will not be paid.

- For the January 15th pay date (for time worked from December 20th to January 2nd) your time is due by 5 PM on Monday, January 4th.
- For the January 29th pay date (for time worked from January 3-16) your time is due by 5 PM on Tuesday, January 19th.

Newsletter Submissions

Send newsletter submissions to AnnMarie Guldner at guldner1@msu.edu
Deadline: Thursdays by 10:00 AM