

APPLICATION AND ADMISSIONS

GRADUATE PROGRAM STUDENT HANDBOOK

2024-2025

ADMISSION SEMESTERS AND DEADLINES

Program	Admit Semester	Application Deadline
PhD	Fall Only	<p>October 31 ** Deadline for MSU funding consideration</p> <p>February 15 ** Final deadline (firm)</p>
MS Plan A: Thesis	Fall Only	
MS Plan B: Non-Thesis (Residential)	Fall Spring* Summer*	
MS Plan B: Non-Thesis (Online)	Fall Spring* Summer*	
<p>*Admission for the Spring and Summer sessions are only considered for Master's Plan B: Non-Thesis (Residential and Online) students, if the student holds a Packaging undergraduate degree.</p> <p>**The application deadline of October 31st is for the following Spring semester* and February 15th for the following Summer session.</p>		

Note: International students are encouraged to apply early and submit official test scores. Approval for international students can take longer if all official documents are not submitted, which can delay the visa process.

Applications will be valid for one year (measured from the first semester of chosen enrollment). Once granted, admission usually is good for one year. Admitted graduate students who wish to change their first semester of enrollment should contact the School of Packaging Graduate Program Coordinator to initiate the process for a change in admit date.

Readmission

A packaging graduate student seeking re-enrollment after an absence should follow the [Office of the Registrar](#) instructions for Graduate Education – Readmission to Original Program or Readmission with Change of Program, where an online application is available. Readmission is required if more than 12 months will elapse between enrollments. A student who has not been enrolled for less than 12 months is not required to request readmission and can simply enroll in classes. International students should contact the Office for International Students and Scholars, as special requirements may apply. PhD students should check with their former Faculty Advisor to be sure that the professor is still willing to serve as the student's Faculty Advisor and discuss funding if this was offered before the student left MSU.

A graduate student previously enrolled at MSU who wishes to pursue a degree or program other than the one originally sought, and **who has not been enrolled for three consecutive semesters** (including Summer) or who has completed prior courses of study, must file a new graduate application. Current graduate students at MSU are advised to contact the Graduate Program Director, School of Packaging, for discussion of the optimal procedure for their specific situations.

Note: Graduate students whose enrollment at MSU is interrupted for any reason and have not been enrolled for three consecutive semesters (including Summer), must apply for readmission at <https://reg.msu.edu/StuForms/ReAdmission/Readmission.aspx>

Student Residency

Michigan State University will not be offering certain online programs to students based on their residence at the time of application for admission to Michigan State University - see State-By-State Summary <https://esp.msu.edu/StateSummary.pdf>

Application Requirements

Requirements	Applicant	
	MS	PhD
Slate Student Portal https://explore.msu.edu/apply Applicants can submit and check on the status (completeness) of their applications by logging into their student portal.	MS	PhD
Online Application - Slate Complete the Online Application for Admission to Graduate Study, paying the application fee by credit card number, electronic check, or money order. International Students: Please print your name on the application exactly as it appears in your passport. The information will be used to complete the necessary visa documents, so matching your passport information is critical.	MS	PhD
Faculty Advisor A PhD applicant must find a faculty member willing to serve as their major advisor before admission can be offered. Faculty information can be found at https://www.canr.msu.edu/packaging/our-team .		PhD
Supplemental Questions Complete the School of Packaging Supplemental Questions as part of your MSU application.	MS	PhD
Transcripts Request the registrar of each college or university attended to send an official copy of any previous schooling (mark sheets, transcripts, diplomas, certificates, etc.) directly to the Graduate Program Coordinator, School of Packaging, in a sealed envelope that shows the school seal or stamp. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the college or university is using an electronic transcript service such as AVOW or eScrip-Safe, the transcripts must instead be sent <u>directly</u> to the MSU Office of Admissions. Electronic transcripts are not accepted by the School of Packaging from international institutions. • Official translations must be provided when originals are not in English. These will be recorded and forwarded to Admissions. • Documents must arrive in an envelope sealed by the university. • Documents issued to students and opened are not acceptable. • If the transcript does not indicate that the degree has been awarded, a copy of the diploma is also required. MSU Applicants: Must upload a copy of MSU transcripts.	MS	PhD

Requirements (continued)	MS	PhD
Letters of Recommendation Three (3) letters of recommendation in support of the application.	MS	PhD
GRE - Optional Take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and have official results sent to the University. MSU's code is 1465 and there is no subject code for Packaging; use the code for "other". Although optional, GREs are highly encouraged.	MS	PhD
Academic Statement: The Academic Statement should include interest areas and a brief plan of study, if possible. If a research-based program is planned the subject of the research must be within the capabilities of and consistent with the goals of the School at the time of application. (See application form for guidelines for Academic Statement, stating your plans for graduate study and your professional career. See also, the attached list of faculty and research interests in Appendix 2.) Personal Statement: The separate Personal Statement should include those aspects of your background and experiences that motivate your desire to pursue the degree, as well as any factors that you feel make you worthy of special consideration for admission.	MS	PhD

Additional Requirements for International Student

The MSU Office of Admissions has a mid-June deadline to admit international students. If we are unable to forward our recommendation of admission to the MSU Office of Admissions for lack of requirements, or if Admissions disapproves of the application for any reason, the offer of admission is automatically rescinded. If this happens, you may be able to defer to a future semester, but this is not always possible depending on the circumstances.

Application Deadline

It is vital that international students apply and submit all requirements at least by the application deadlines listed above. Applications submitted after these deadlines will not be reviewed.

- To ensure full consideration, all documentation must be received by the School by or before the Packaging application deadline. Admission decisions for completed applications will be made as soon as possible after the application deadline.
- Admitted students who do not enroll (arrive on campus) as scheduled will not be guaranteed admission at a later date. To ensure full consideration, the application for admission and all requirements listed above should be received by the School by or before the deadlines shown above.
- International students must apply before the deadlines. Supporting materials need not be submitted all at the same time; the application form may be submitted prior to other materials becoming available.

English Proficiency

International students whose native language is not English are also required to demonstrate proficiency in English before admission. For waiver consideration information, contact the Packaging Graduate Program Coordinator.

Financial Proof

The student must provide evidence of financial ability to pursue a graduate program at MSU before the letter of acceptance to the University will be mailed. Details of the procedures and amount required can be found at The Graduate School at <https://grad.msu.edu/internationalapplicants>. The Affidavit of Support is available through the Office for International Students and Scholars at <https://oiss.isp.msu.edu/forms>.

International Admit Deadline

- Applications from prospective international students must be received by or before the deadlines indicated in the earlier sections.
- If the application for admission is approved, a certificate of acceptance to the University will be emailed to the student with instructions on next steps, including accepting or denying the offer. Then, a U.S. Department of Justice I-20 form will be emailed by either the MSU Office of Admissions or the MSU OISS. The School of Packaging does not handle I-20s. **No prospective international student should plan to enter the United States before receiving both a certificate of acceptance and an I-20.** It will be necessary to present the certificate upon application for a student visa, and again upon arrival at the University. The Office for International Students and Scholars issues these documents, following recommendation by the Office of Admissions, and will remain in direct contact with each applicant. For students entering the online program, no visa documents are needed, and none will be issued.
- As of Spring 2017, if students are admitted on a provisional basis because of language proficiency requirements, they can be issued an I-20 for language studies only. This I-20 is limited to a maximum of two (2) years. The student would need to be tested at the English Language Center upon arrival and begin studying in the English level determined by that test. Once the student meets the departmental requirements for language, the student may be issued a degree-seeking I-20. If the student has not met the stated language proficiency requirement for department/program admission at the end of two years, the student cannot continue to enroll for courses.
- The international student must provide evidence of financial ability to pursue a graduate program at MSU before the certificate of acceptance to the University will be mailed. Details of the procedures and amount required, as well as the Affidavit of Support for Graduate International Students, can be found at The Graduate School website at <https://grad.msu.edu/internationalapplicants> under “financial proof”. For questions regarding the financial proof amount to show, contact the Packaging Graduate Program Coordinator. MS students should not expect financial aid from the University. Financial proof is not required for online students.
- International students who enroll in the University are required to buy the University student insurance, or to demonstrate that they have equivalent coverage. Details about requirements can be obtained from the Office for International Students and Scholars. Information about the student insurance program can be obtained from the [MSU Human Resources Office](https://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/students/health), or <https://www.hr.msu.edu/benefits/students/health>. This requirement does not apply to international students in the MS Plan B: Non-Thesis program who reside outside of the U.S. For those MS Plan B: Non-Thesis international students residing in the U.S., a waiver should be completed <https://oiss.isp.msu.edu/health-wellness-and-safety/us-health-care-insurance>.
- All applicants without full native fluency in English must demonstrate proficiency by submitting English Language scores. For information and testing agencies approved by MSU, go to <https://grad.msu.edu/internationalapplicants>.
- For up-to-date information on minimum scores for both regular and provisional admission, go to <https://grad.msu.edu/english-language-competency>.
- Applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements for provisional admission will not be admitted to academic programs. They may apply directly to the English Language Center for study of English only. Any questions about these requirements should be directed to the English Language Center at <http://elc.msu.edu>.

It is vital that international students apply and submit all requirements at least by the application deadlines listed above. Applications submitted after these deadlines will not be reviewed.

Complete the School of Packaging Supplemental Questions as part of your MSU application.

Admission Criteria

Criteria	Applicant	
	MS	PhD
<p>Acceptance to MSU Acceptance of an applicant is determined by the University Admissions Office, on recommendation of the School of Packaging, with the approval of the Dean of the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, after consideration of the applicant's academic record, GRE scores (optional), experience, personal qualifications, and objectives.</p>	MS	PhD
<p>General MS Plan A and Plan B Admission General admission criteria are the same for the MS Plan A: Thesis and MS Plan B: Non-Thesis (residential or online). However, enrollment in the MS Plan A: Thesis is limited, and not all qualified students can be accepted.</p> <p>Applicants to the MS Plan A: Thesis and Plan B: Non-Thesis graduate programs are expected to have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a year of college level chemistry (including introductory organic chemistry). • a year of college level physics. • a semester of calculus. <p>Prospective students who do not have this background are encouraged to take equivalent courses at a community college or university in their locale prior to coming to Michigan State University, as completion of these courses is ordinarily required before admission to the program.</p> <p>MS Plan B: Non-Thesis (online) program application requirements are the same as the MS Plan B: Non-Thesis (residential) program with the following exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial proof is not required. • An I-20 will not be sent. • International students can request Health Insurance waivers under certain circumstances at https://oiss.isp.msu.edu/health-wellness-and-safety/us-health-care-insurance for the full instructions and information. 	MS	
<p>Regular/Provisional Status Applicants who are admitted are classified as regular, for students who are fully qualified to undertake the degree program; or provisional, for students who have not met the English proficiency requirements.</p>	MS	PhD
<p>Grade Point Average - PhD A grade-point average of at least 3.40 (4-point scale) is required. (Admission may be granted to an applicant who does not meet the above requirements but shows outstanding potential.) Admission is contingent on acceptance of the applicant by a faculty member willing to serve as the applicant's Faculty Advisor. The Faculty Advisor will do an assessment of the applicants' credentials, research experience, publications from their previous degrees, work experience, and any other credential that the Faculty Advisor chooses. Applicants are encouraged to correspond with faculty working in their areas of interest who they would like to have as their Faculty Advisor, to let faculty know of their interest and qualifications. The Graduate Program Director can assist applicants in identifying appropriate faculty members.</p>		PhD
<p>Grade Point Average – MS For the last two years of the undergraduate program (approximately 85-90 term hours or 60 semester hours), an average of 3.0 (B) or higher is normally required.</p>	MS	

Criteria <i>(continued)</i>	Applicant	
	MS	PhD
<p>Faculty Advisor Acceptance by a Faculty Advisor does not guarantee admission. A limited number of students are admitted each year. Thus, unfortunately, the School may be unable to offer admission to several highly qualified students.</p>		PhD
<p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Bachelor's degree in packaging or a related undergraduate field (e.g., food science, engineering, business, physics, chemistry, agriculture, etc.) is required for admission to the Master of Science program. • Students lacking the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in packaging will be required to complete collateral courses to make up any deficiencies, in addition to the normal program requirements. 	MS	PhD
<p>PhD Background Consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A master's degree in packaging or in a related science or engineering area, for which a thesis was required, or; • A bachelor's degree in packaging or in a related science or engineering area with significant intensive research experience such as having a peer-review publications as main author, and/or demonstrating the outcome of any research work carried and completed by the candidate. • Students lacking the equivalent of the above will be required to complete collateral courses to make up any deficiencies, in addition to the normal program requirements. 		PhD
<p>Financial Aid Students in need of financial assistance should go to the Office of Financial Aid for information, http://www.finaid.msu.edu/grad.asp. Note that international students are not eligible for funding through the Office of Financial Aid.</p> <p>Financial Aid from the University is not available for students in the online MS program.</p>	MS	PhD

Transfer Credits

On the recommendation of the Guidance Committee, up to 9 graduate credits can be transferred from other recognized graduate education institutions, provided at least a 3.0 grade using a 4-point scale is earned in each course transferred, and the courses were completed within the time limits for the degree.

Shared Programs Undergraduate to Graduate-UG2G *(Formerly Dual Enrollment)*

Guidelines for the new Shared Program are pending. Please consult Aaron Tucker, Undergraduate Packaging Advisor for guidance.

1. Students must complete their first bachelor's degree prior to beginning any graduate degree program.
2. Students initiate interest in a Shared Program by completing the Shared Programs-UG2G Request Form that will soon be available on the Graduate School website through the Forms link.
3. Students must submit the form before beginning any shared course work.
4. At most 30% of the total number of credits required for the graduate degree taken at the undergraduate level can be used to satisfy graduate degree program requirements. That is, for a 30 credit Master's degree program, at most 9 credits taken at the undergraduate level may be used towards the Master's degree.
5. Full details will be available soon in the Academic Programs catalog.