

**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.

Summer Hours are in effect from May 10-August 2. Updated hours noted below.

AnnMarie Guldner [guldner1@msu.edu] Monday-Friday from 7 AM-3 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 7 AM-12 PM & 1-4 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-12:30 PM & 1-4:30 PM,
Fridays from 8 AM-12 PM

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

Mackenzie Graham [colon@msu.edu] Friday from 8 AM-12 PM & 1-5 PM

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>

CANR Response to Novel Coronavirus

<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/>

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

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>

Announcements

PSM Staff Employee of the Year Award Nominations (Due July 17th)

PSM Support Staff:

Each year the Staff Enhancement Endowment Fund offers the opportunity to nominate a Non-Academic support staff member for “Employee of the Year”. The Staff Employee of the Year will be selected by a four-member committee [all faculty members] appointed by **Dr. Horgan**. They will receive an employee of the year plaque with their name on it... and, the employee’s name/photo will be placed on the Department award plaque located in A286 PSSB.

The following guidelines will be used: • The recipient must be a staff employee of the Department for at least one full year and must have been nominated by a PSM staff member. • Must demonstrate a positive attitude with regards to their job responsibilities and towards fellow employees. • Additionally, the recipient must provide outstanding service to the Department above and beyond the functional responsibilities of his/her job requirements.

Please complete the nomination form (attached to newsletter email) and send to **Dr. Horgan** by Wednesday, July 17, 2020. We will be announcing the employee chosen for the award at the PSM Annual Faculty meeting on Thursday, August 27, 2020. If you have questions, please contact **Debbie Williams** at williade@msu.edu

Please show your support and appreciation and send in your nomination for your colleague[s]!

PSM Staff Enhancement/Development Requests (Due June 30)

All PSM non-academic staff are encouraged to participate and utilize the ‘PSM Staff Enhancement/Development Endowment Fund’.

Please find the attached (included with the newsletter email) award guidelines and a request form. Funds can be awarded for either staff development or workplace enhancement. To apply for these funds, fill out the request form and submit to **Debbie Williams** by Tuesday, June 30, 2020. Requests are reviewed and awarded by the PSM Staff Enhancement/Development Committee.

We are very proud that this concept was established for the benefit of our non-academic staff. If you have questions, please feel free to contact **Debbie Williams** at williade@msu.edu.

Michigan Wheat Proposal Timeline

Please email your ‘intent to submit’ to **Debbie Williams** at williade@msu.edu before July 23, 2020.

Please forward your draft budget to **Debbie Williams** before August 6, 2020.

Please forward your final proposal to **Debbie Williams** before August 13, 2020 at 5 PM so your proposal document can be submitted for approval.

Each PI will need to email **Jody Pollok-Newsom** at jody@miwheat.org their final proposal package before August 14, 2020 at 5 PM.

(Please see attachments emailed out with newsletter.)

Announcements

Graduating students - please fill out a survey so we can recognize you during this time on our website and social media. Complete the correct Qualtrics for us to celebrate you!

➤ Master's & Ph.D. Degrees

https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_00bUBkNjMwb8A1D

➤ Bachelor Degrees

https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8cOXILekZ6csoWp

➤ Certificate Degrees

https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9MOatKDV6cYuLEF

2020 Clerical-Technical Recognition Award Nominations (Due June 30th)

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2020 Clerical-Technical Recognition Award through Monday, June 30, 2020.

This award recognizes outstanding MSU clerical-technical employees who have been nominated by their peers. Individuals may be nominated by any member of the MSU community. Selection criteria includes respect and concern for all members of the campus community, diligence in daily work, significant contributions to the community or public service and innovative thinking.

To nominate an employee:

1) Complete a nomination form.

<https://hr.msu.edu/recognition/support-staff/documents/CTNominationForm.pdf>

2) Collect a minimum of 2 support letters (maximum of 5) by MSU colleagues

Please note: Nominees must be part of the CT Union

You may include additional information if it supports the applicant's nomination.

Nominations are **due by 5 PM, Monday, June 30th**. Email the PDF nomination with a minimum of 2 support letters to bracamontes@hr.msu.edu with the subject line: CT Recognition Award Selection Committee.

Outstanding Supervisor Award Nominations (Due July 31st)

This year has been exceptionally challenging for all of us. We know there are supervisors who demonstrated leadership despite the adversity and honored employees' work and personal lives even in the shifting landscape of a pandemic. Tell us how your supervisor pulled your team together, modified workloads or scheduled to fit the changing times, created transparent and honest communication or shouldered the responsibility of safety and care for your teams reporting to campus. How did your supervisor handle transparent and honest communication, empathy, motivation tools, gratitude, acknowledgment and general care and support for you and your colleagues? Outstanding supervisors are all across this campus managing teams both large and small, working in research, education, communication, development, housing, technology, infrastructure, administration, and senior leadership.

Nominate your supervisor and help us celebrate their leadership through the years and/or recent challenging times.

<https://worklife.msu.edu/supervisor-award>

Announcements

Cloth Face Mask Information

In compliance with current State of Michigan Executive Orders, all MSU Employees are required to wear a non-medical cloth mask when entering enclosed public spaces. This applies to MSU facilities and non-MSU facilities. When traveling, you are required to have a mask in your possession and use it when in enclosed public spaces. Masks have been distributed to PIs, who will in turn distribute these masks those within their groups. If you are in need of your cloth face mask, please contact your PI directly.

International Conversation with Zichen from China - June 5, 2020

Our sixth international conversation will be Friday, June 5, 2020 at 9 AM EST. These have been very interesting and educational. The first 30 minutes starting with a geography lesson then our panelist will share about her culture and the last 15 minutes is about COVID-19 and how it is affecting her community and daily life. Our guest will be **Zichen** from China, who was in Michigan through the YFU exchange program in 2014-2015. For additional information:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/international_exchange_programs/events

International Graduate Students Town Hall - June 9, 2020

June 9th from 10 AM - 12 PM

International Students Association in close association with COGS and OISS is hosting a Q&A on the impact of COVID-19 on International graduate students.

RSVP Link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfwqmTamluMPcUN1_W7gLSYQcWcqGkhJkLEBbzO8YSHRH72A/viewform

Attending graduates can submit their questions in the RSVP which you can view here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1bBitPB-zSuWWEB0rVHvlBE5JB5pnXqHEmCrUE4ej1Ps/edit?usp=sharing>

Essential Skills for Navigating Difficult Times Webinar - June 9, 2020

Throughout the past few months, life has drastically changed for many due to the effects from the recent public health crisis. For those MSU employees who may have been furloughed or laid off, the MSU Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and MSU Health4U Program are offering a special session of their **Essential Skills for Navigating Difficult Times** webinar series. **Lisa Laughman**, MSU's Lead Emotional Wellness Consultant, will facilitate an eight-week basic resilience training course designed to help employees experiencing furlough to process emotions and effectively navigate both personal and professional challenges.

The purpose of this course is to provide basic emotional resilience skill building to help individuals navigate all the challenges that their temporary employment status, the COVID-19 pandemic, national protests, and other life circumstances may be creating for them. It is also offered to provide support and connection to the campus community as the furlough period unfolds.

The online training program will begin on Tuesday, June 9th from 1:00-2:30 PM and will run for eight consecutive weeks.

Registration: <https://web.cvent.com/event/8a065727-0909-4656-a66a-375d33862897/summary?rp=00000000-0000-0000-0000-000000000000>

Questions: **Lisa Laughman** at lisa.laughman@hs.msu.edu

Announcements

Are you a graduate student dealing with academic or dissertation distress? Make Your Experience ACT: Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Graduate Students

Mindfulness and Values Based Therapy

ACT is an action-oriented approach that uses mindfulness to help you live in ways consistent with your values and manage stress, anxiety, depression, and other concerns. This therapy group aims to help graduate students learn mindfulness skills, connect to their values and strengthen psychological flexibility in their relationship with self and others. The group offers a mixture of support, experiential learning, and action-oriented work. Please see the attached flyer for more information on options offered by CAPS (<https://caps.msu.edu/>).

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>

Human Resources

On March 24, **Governor Whitmer** issued the first “Stay Home, Stay Safe” Executive Order, directing the people of Michigan to remain at home due to COVID-19. The university has been operating under these executive orders since that time. As you may recall, the university issued directions prior to the executive order that employees should work remotely unless their job duties were such that they must be present physically.

While the latest “Stay Home, Stay Safe” executive order is officially ending, the university’s directive to MSU employees remains in effect as it did before the issuance of the first executive order. **Employees who are working remotely should continue to do so in accordance with direction from their supervisors.**

As **President Stanley** has mentioned in several of his recent communications to campus, the COVID Reopening Task Force continues to meet to determine the safest return to campus for everyone. We will continue to provide updates and expectations to you, as well as to your departments and supervisors.

As the governor continues to move the state through her reopening phases and in adherence to her executive orders, all faculty, staff, students, contractors, suppliers, vendors and visitors are required to continue wearing face coverings over the nose and mouth – such as a homemade mask, scarf, bandana or handkerchief – when in any enclosed public space, unless the individual is unable medically to tolerate a face covering.

People on campus also must continue to practice physical distancing at all times (at least six feet of physical separation between yourself and others), practice good personal hygiene and routinely clean and sanitize your workspace and shared equipment. In addition, MSU is still requiring screenings be conducted every day for employees coming to campus, per the Governor’s executive order.

Please continue to refer to the HR website for the latest resources to assist employees, supervisors, and HR professionals during this time. Continue to check the Keep MSU Working site for the latest updates and information regarding the University’s response to the coronavirus.

Additional Information:

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

Apple Computers:

Your Mac computer should be updated automatically, for security issues, provided you have 10.13 High Sierra, 10.14 Mojave or 10.15 Catalina (see your version listed under “About this Mac” as in annotation 1 below).



If you have a version of the Mac Operating System lower than 10.13 (High Sierra), you need to bring your computer into PSM I.T. and have it examined to ensure it will run a currently supported Mac Operating System. Because any Operating System after 10.13 (High Sierra) is no longer supported by Apple, this means it is not being updated and is insecure. This leaves your system vulnerable to attacks and more easily compromised.

You can see the most recent versions (updates) for Mac OS X 10.13-15 here: <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT201260>.

You can check to ensure your computer is being updated by checking it manually. To run this command, press the software update button (annotation 2 above).

You should exercise caution, if you are going to upgrade from 10.13 or 10.14 to 10.15 Catalina, please contact PSM I.T. before upgrading. Because, unfortunately, some users upgrading to Catalina on their own have lost access to some critical software that worked in 10.13 and 10.14. This is because support of 32bit programs was removed in Catalina and in some cases, there are no 64bit versions of the software available.

Microsoft Office Applications on Apple Computers

You should ensure you have a supported version of Office on your Mac by:

Clicking on the program name (when the program is running)
Then selecting About Outlook, Word or Excel.

The supported versions are 2016 and Office 365.

If you have an unsupported version of Office you can download Office 365 for your Mac from <https://portal.office.com> which will be licensed to your NetID. If you need further assistance please contact PSM I.T., we will be happy to help you install Office.

Office applications typically update automatically on Apple computers, but you can check manually as well by:

Opening an Office application such as Word or Excel and clicking Help
Then select, Check for updates.

Tech (Continued)

If you do not see check for updates, then download the latest version of the Microsoft Auto Update tool and retry checking for updates.

Symantec Endpoint Protection (SEP) on Apple Computers

Users of Mac computers should have Symantec Endpoint Protection (SEP) Installed. SEP will protect you from Malware. It will also log and stop attacks on your computer from any network you are on. This can prove valuable in helping MSU I.T. to diagnose problems, even find computers that are compromised and attacking other computers.

If you do not have SEP on your Mac, you should schedule an appointment with PSM I.T. to have it installed on your computer.

If the software is installed on your Mac, that would be indicated by a Yellow Shield in the Menu Bar.

Checking the Status of SEP and updating

SEP indicates its status on the yellow shield see below:

If you see a red dot or red circle with a red slash on the Yellow shield that means the Antivirus is not functional.

Yellow dot means that a single component of SEP is not updating or operational.

If you see these indicators you should call PSM I.T. for further assistance or to request the software be installed on your computer.

You can check the status of updates to SEP, its signatures and modules by:

Clicking on the yellow shield in the Menu Bar.
Selecting Live update
Then hit, Run Live updates.

Travel

Good news was received relating to the hundreds of airline tickets canceled since early March. As you may be aware, any ticket that had a refundable airfare, was refunded. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Transportation advised airlines that when flights were canceled or delayed by greater than 90 minutes, airlines had to offer refunds.

Specifically addressing MSU Agency Card (direct billed) transactions, all three of Michigan State University's Preferred Travel Agencies have been working to identify applicable tickets and seeking refunds from the airlines. To date, Conlin Travel has identified 551 tickets totaling \$279,844.25 that have been refunded. As we continue to be in a state of travel suspension, there will be more.

What should you do if you have a credit/refund? In Concur, create an Expense Report (from the applicable Request) and allocate to the original account charged. If the Request is closed, please email concurhelp@msu.edu with the Request ID and we will be happy to reopen for you.

If you're not sure where to start, please visit the Reference Library on Travel@State to access Reconciling and Allocating MSU Agency Card Transactions.

Travel

It's time to update your State of Michigan blanket travel requests for the upcoming fiscal year, which begins on July 1, 2020. Please submit your request at your earliest convenience.

Below are step-by-step instructions on creating your State of Michigan blanket travel request.

In EBS, click on the "Travel and Expense SAP Concur" tile

Requests Create New

- New Event Request (if setting up requests for you and your group)
- New Request (if setting up for yourself only)

Request/Trip Name: Various Michigan Travel

Start Date: 7/1/2020

End Date: 6/30/2021

Request/Trip Purpose: (choose primary, secondary if needed)

- Administrative
- Advancement
- Conference or Meeting Attendance
- Consulting
- For Credit Learning
- International Capacity Building
- Not for Credit Learning
- Recruitment
- Research and Creative Endeavors
- Site Visit
- Teaching
- Team

Trip Description: Various Michigan Travel

Destination City: East Lansing, MI

Travel Funding Source (choose one)

- MSU Grants and Research
- Non-MSU Funds
- Other MSU (Non-Grant and Research)
- Self-Funded

Account #

Sub Account (if needed)

Under attendees, add in email (or look up by name). Once all emails have been entered, click on the "Generate & Notify" button. This will send an email out to whomever is in your group to review and submit their blanket request.

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 June 19th pay date (for time worked between May 24-June 6) your time is due by 5 PM on Tuesday, June 9th
- For the July 2nd pay date (for time worked between June 7-20) your time is due by 5 PM on Tuesday, June 23rd

City of East Lansing Income Tax Withholding Update

Currently, MSU is only able to withhold a full 0.5% for employees working in East Lansing, even for employees who only work part-time in the city. Effective, May 29, 2020, employees will have the option to withhold a prorated percentage based on the amount of time worked in East Lansing. Employees may select any prorated amount, to two decimal points in EBS. If you have any questions, please refer to the 'City of East Lansing Income Tax Withholding Update' on the Controller's website at

<http://www.ctrl.msu.edu/download/Payroll/CityOfEastLansingIncomeTaxWithholdingUpdate.pdf> or the East Lansing Prorated Tax Instructions on the Controller's website at <http://www.ctrl.msu.edu/download/Payroll/EastLansingProratedTaxInstructions.pdf>. You may also call payroll at 517-355-5010 for additional assistance.

MSU Academic Calendar

Summer 2020 - Full Session

June 26	Middle of Semester
July 3	Holiday - University Closed
August 13	Classes End
	Final Exams are scheduled for the last class day

Summer 2020 - Session One

June 25	Classes End
	Final Exams are scheduled for the last class day

Summer 2020 - Session Two

June 29	Classes Begin
July 3	Holiday - University Closed
July 22	Middle of Semester
August 13	Classes End
	Final Exams are scheduled for the last class day

Fall 2020

We will begin classes on Wednesday, September 2nd, as previously scheduled. There will be both in-person and online components to instruction in the Fall semester. We plan to end all in-person instruction on Wednesday, November 25th, with remaining instruction, study sessions and final examinations moving remotely for the remaining 3 weeks of the semester. Students will have the option of returning to their permanent residences for the Thanksgiving holiday and not returning to campus or remaining on campus until the semester ends.

Additional Information: https://president.msu.edu/communications/messages-statements/2020_community_letters/2020_05_27_message_campus.html