



Department of Social Sciences

Graduate Programs Handbook

Information for students and advisors of the following programs for the 2022-2023 academic year:*

MS & PhD in Environmental and Energy Policy

MS & PhD in Industrial Heritage and Archaeology

MS in Sustainable Communities (new in 2023)

Accelerated MS in Environmental and Energy Policy

Accelerated MS in Industrial Heritage and Archaeology

Online Public Policy Certificate (new in 2022)

**last update 5/2022*

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1. Introduction

The Graduate Program of the Department of Social Sciences at Michigan Technological University aims to produce leading scholars and practitioners who will make vital contributions through their scholarship. We approach this goal by creating an environment in which exceptional PhD and MA students can draw on the strengths of faculty and research centers to develop and sharpen their research interests, capabilities, and programs around critical social problems. The graduate curriculum is designed to promote a broad sense of the social science tradition in its evolving relationship with other sciences and humanities disciplines and to provide an interdisciplinary platform for more specialized scientific and scholarly investigation.

The Social Science Department's Graduate Committee has prepared this handbook to communicate our graduate programs' policies and procedures. Students and faculty should thoroughly familiarize themselves with this handbook's contents, departmental website (<https://www.mtu.edu/social-sciences/graduate/programs/>), and the Michigan Technological University Graduate School's policies (<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/>). Please refer to all three as questions arise.

For guidance on students' expectations as members of the broader Michigan Technological University community, review the student code of conduct, including information regarding academic misconduct, found online at the Department of Student Affairs (<https://www.mtu.edu/student-affairs/>).

Review the Statement on Professional Ethics for guidance on what is expected of faculty as members of the broader Michigan Technological University community; review the Statement on Professional Ethics (<https://www.mtu.edu/faculty-handbook/faculty/chapter3/s3-1/316/>) in the MTU Faculty Handbook.

2. General Information and Facilities

2.1 Department Structure

The Social Sciences Department is a community of scholars and professional staff. Major administrative responsibilities in the Department are handled by the Department Chair, staff, and several important faculty committees.

Department Chair: Dr. Don LaFreniere

Graduate Program Director: Dr. Melissa Baird (3-year term, 2021-2024)

Director of Student Programs/ Graduate Assistant: Dr. Kat Hannum

Social Sciences Graduate Program Committee (3-year rotating terms): Dr. Melissa Baird (Graduate Director), Dr. Kat Hannum (Director of Student Programs), Dr. Steve Walton (IHA Y3), Dr. Angie Carter (EEP Y2), Dr. Mark Rhodes (IHA, to replace Dr. S. Scarlett Y2-on sabbatical), Dr. Nancy Langston (EEP, to replace Dr. M. Rouleau Y2-on sabbatical fall semester only), Dr. Mark Rouleau (EEP, Y2-spring semester only)

Industrial Archaeology Lab Director: TBD

Department Staff: Amy Spahn (Department Administrator) and Chris Flood (Office Assistant)

Graduate Student Government Representative: TBD

Department Grad Student Representative: TBD

Key roles for the above, provided for clarification:

- The Graduate Director is the primary point of contact for graduate students regarding the graduate programs.
- The Director of Student Programs serves as the Graduate Assistant and works with the Graduate Director to facilitate the graduate team's work.
- The Graduate Program Committee is comprised of faculty and serves to coordinate the management of the department's graduate programs.
- The Department Administrator assists graduate students with financial paperwork, registration, and appointments.
- The Office Assistant assists with room reservations, mail, and access to keys and office spaces.
- Each graduate student will have one advisor or two co-advisors and a Graduate Committee supervising their thesis or dissertation work. Graduate students choose them and can change advisors. The composition and selection of graduate committees are in section 3.
- The Department's Graduate Student Representative attends Department meetings to report back to graduate students about Department activities.

2.2 Keys, Desk, Computer, and Research Space Assignments

We attempt to find graduate student office space for all graduate students requesting it. Existing space is prioritized for graduate students who are residents and have funding. Each resident, funded graduate student, is provided an office, desk, computer, and 24-hour access to that office. If you are a student without funding or a student who is on campus for only short periods, please let your advisor(s) know that you need office space, and we will work to find accommodations for you.

Students will be assigned offices in either the Annex or AOB second floor. The Office Assistant orders office keys. Students working on research projects may be issued keys to Annex facilities upon approval of the faculty member responsible for that work area. Requests for new keys, replacements for lost keys, or swipe-card access to restricted areas should be made to the Office Assistant. Keys must not be passed on to anyone else or duplicated under ANY circumstances. Lost keys need to be reported to supervisors as soon as they are noticed missing. A \$100 fee is assessed for any key lost/replaced or not returned to public safety when no longer needed.

Accessing your office after-hours: A student's MTU student identification card and assigned M-number grant after-hours admission to both the Academic Office Building (AOB) and the Annex. The AOB can be accessed after-hours using your student ID card via the west entrance that faces the main faculty parking lot. The Annex can be accessed after-hours using your student id card via the south-facing entrance.

On-campus computer access: All graduate students are provided computer access through the computer lab in the Annex, in graduate student offices, and multiple locations on campus (<https://www.mtu.edu/it/services/computer-labs/>). Questions and problems with computers should be directed to the Information Technology (IT) Help Desk, found on the first floor of the library, or via email at it-help@mtu.edu. The IT staff will supply you with your username and password; change your password when you log into your account. Please read the policies for using Social Sciences computers and any Michigan Tech computer facilities as soon as you begin using the computers. Computer use policies are available on our website at <http://www.mtu.edu/policy/policies/general/1-06/> and <http://www.mtu.edu/policy/policies/general/1-09/index.html>.

MTU Software Distribution: Students may download software for their personal computers via the MTU Software Distribution website (<https://downloads.it.mtu.edu/>).

Students should pay particular attention to Michigan Tech computer use policies regarding copyrights, privacy, passwords, and hacking. These can be found through the link at the above website or directly at <https://www.mtu.edu/it/security/policies-procedures-guidelines/standards-acceptable-use.pdf>.

2.3 E-Mail, Mail Service, Photocopier, Supplies, and Printers

E-mail: E-mail is the Department's primary communication tool with graduate students regarding financial support, graduate program obligations, responsibilities, and semester

timelines and deadlines, to name a few. The Department maintains several listservs, including an “ss-grad” listserv for graduate students; all students and faculty can send things to this list, and the Graduate Director is the only faculty member who sees the emails sent to this list. There is also an “ss-dept” list for faculty and staff, and graduate students can share announcements with the Department using this list.

You are expected to be responsive to any and all emails coming from the University and the Department. It is appropriate to respond to all emails within 24 hours unless it is the weekend.

Mail Service: Hard-copy mail is delivered daily to Social Sciences around 1:30 p.m. Student mailboxes are located in the main office, Academic Office Building 209. It is advisable to check your mailbox daily during the week for mail and messages.

Copying/Printing/Office Supplies: Photocopiers, laser printers, and office supplies are available for Social Sciences graduate students for research and teaching purposes only. Departmental resources are limited, so efficiencies such as double-sided printing and copying are appreciated. Please see one of the office assistants for office supplies & your photocopier access code. Also note that there are important national laws regarding photocopying copyrighted materials. If you have a question about copyright law, please inquire in the library or see <http://www.admin.mtu.edu/admin/procman/ch13/ch13p10.htm>.

2.4 Teaching and Research Assistant Expectations

Students who are supported in the Department are contractually obligated to work **20 hours a week**. Students and their supervisors should constantly communicate to develop and complete required tasks. Teaching assistants are required to be in residence locally and to attend class sessions in person unless accommodations are made.

2.5 Graduate Student Evaluation

Each semester, written feedback will be provided by the supervising faculty. This feedback is provided confidentially to the Graduate Director and shared with each student's advisor, who should, in turn, provide feedback about the evaluation to their student.

Suppose the student's performance is deemed unacceptable. In that case, the Graduate Director and student's advisor will communicate with the TA/RA supervisor, either in writing or via an in-person meeting, about the specific conditions warranting concern. The Graduate Director and the student's advisor will then meet with the student to discuss the concerns and develop an improvement plan. The **first semester** of concern warranting a meeting will result in a **probationary period**; the **second semester** of concern will terminate **funding support**. The same standards and requirements apply to a student given an assignment by the university or the department's hourly work assignment.

The same standards and requirements apply to a student who was given an assignment by the university or the department on an ad hoc basis. For example, if the student is paid hourly during the semester or the summer for a particular work assignment. The party who issued the

assignment shall assume the rights and responsibilities of this student's supervisor as outlined above.

If a student receives a second report of unsatisfactory performance as a TA/RA, the Graduate Director, student's advisor(s), and Department Chair will expect communication from the TA/RA supervisor, either in writing or via an in-person meeting, about the specific conditions warranting concern. The Graduate Director, student's advisor(s), and Department Chair will then meet with the student to discuss the deficiencies and the plan for improvement. Given the sustained evidence of unsatisfactory performance, the Chair may recommend revoking the student's funding.

2.6 Safety:

There are several safety policies and procedures at Michigan Tech that apply to graduate students, such as those concerning hazardous waste, housekeeping, and safety orientation. Copies of these policies are supplied separately; please read them carefully. Questions can also be directed to the safety coordinator or Department Chair.

For safety purposes, visitors are not permitted in research and instructional labs unless the Department Chair has granted written permission; this includes spouses and children. In other departments, there have been incidents where unauthorized visitors, including children, have had accidents causing themselves harm. This rule is designed to prevent this type of tragedy. For more information, refer to the Michigan Tech safety manual (<http://www.mtu.edu/ehs/documents/safety-manual/safetymanual.html>).

2.7 Absence Policy

Students receiving financial aid through the University (teaching assistantship, research assistantship, fellowship) are entitled to staff holidays. Please note that the breaks between academic terms and the winter break between the spring and fall semesters are not automatically considered as holidays or time off. In the case of GRAs, excused absences must be arranged with the faculty advisor(s), and approved by the Department Coordinator. GTAs follow a similar policy but require the approval of their advisor(s) and GTA supervisor before a planned absence or travel. GTAs are expected to remain on campus until grading is completed through finals week. All GRAs and GTAs must have supervisors' approval for a planned absence from duties.

In addition to being granted approval for an excused absence, written approval is required for international travel: <http://www.mtu.edu/fso/forms/travel/>.

2.8 Academic Integrity

The University and the Social Sciences Department expect all students to maintain the highest level of academic and scientific integrity in all aspects of their studies, from classwork to exams to research. If you are unsure of or have specific questions about assignments, projects, examinations, etc., please ASK your instructor. Michigan Tech's academic integrity policy and

procedures, including definitions of plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and facilitating academic dishonesty, is available at: <http://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/policies/p109-1.htm>. All graduate students should carefully read this policy.

Students must also view the orientation module on academic integrity at: <http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/admissions/admitted/online-orientation/>.

Further information on Misconduct in Research may be found at: <https://www.mtu.edu/research/administration/integrity-compliance/misconduct/>.

The academic integrity policy clearly states, “An academic exercise may not be submitted by a student for course credit in more than one course without the permission of all instructors.” Graduate students in MS and PhD programs in the Department of Social Sciences are encouraged to build on their work in more than one class to produce high-quality, publishable papers. Hence, students are allowed to build on their work, including course papers from previous courses, for this purpose, subject to their instructor’s permission. Terms and conditions of such reuse must be discussed with your instructor, and both the student and the instructor must agree on the terms and conditions of the use of previously written work. Students are encouraged to seek written permission from the course instructor to the extent that obtaining it is practicable.

2.9 International Students

Upon arrival on campus, all international students must register with the Office of International Programs and Services located in room 200 of the Administration Building. All matters concerning employment practice, visa renewals, and related matters are handled through this office. Changes in I-20 forms are handled in the Graduate School. All international students whose native language is not English must take an English Language Assessment. The assessment takes place in the Michigan Tech Testing Center, Center for Teaching and Learning, Van Pelt and Opie Library 226. Visit the Testing Center to schedule a time to take the assessment or contact them at 906-487-1001, techtesting-1@mtu.edu. More detail can be found at: <http://www.mtu.edu/ctl/for-graduate-teaching-assistants/language-assessment/>.

Additionally, all first-time international students must visit the International Graduate Student Communication and Cultural Center (IGSC3). Students’ language skills and their cultural competency will be assessed, and students will be provided with services on an as-needed basis so they can provide better service to our undergraduates and faculty while serving as graduate teaching assistants. Additional information is found here: <https://www.mtu.edu/ctl/for-graduate-teaching-assistants/igsc3/>.

In order to be visa compliant, international students must register as full time students. Questions regarding I-20 forms, visa status, and full-time student status should be directed to the Graduate School.

2.10 Stipend, Tuition, and Student Status

Graduate teaching assistants and graduate research assistants are paid a stipend set by the Graduate School and, in some cases, their research advisor(s). Stipend levels generally increase as you progress toward your degree (i.e. complete program milestones such as those required to become ABD) and submit the required forms (see the Graduate School website for details). Stipend payments provided by MTU are issued bi-weekly; some external funding sources may provide monthly payments. Supported graduate students must be enrolled for 9 credits each semester during the academic year and 1 credit in the summer, with tuition paid directly by the Department or research grant. Tuition charges in excess of these values will be your responsibility, along with student voted fees and late registration fees. Limited summer appointments and hourly work may be available to graduate students making satisfactory progress toward their degree, but these are dependent on need and availability of funds. If you are in need of summer funding, you should discuss your options with the Graduate Director and the Department Chair as soon as possible.

International students and students receiving financial support from the department as an RA or TA must maintain full-time status. Part-time students are accepted on a case-by-case basis. Students seeking part-time student status should consult with the Graduate Director. Students entering the program or transitioning to part-time status are not eligible for RA/TA funding support and are also encouraged to consult with the Student Financial Services Center (<https://www.mtu.edu/finaid/>) and loan lenders to inquire about implications for student loan repayment. Further information can be obtained from the Graduate School.

2.10.1 PhD Student Residency Requirements

University policy requires that doctoral students spend at *least four semesters* (including summer) on campus at Michigan Tech beyond the attainment of a bachelor's degree or two semesters at Michigan Tech beyond attainment of a Master's degree in a formal program of study and research under direct supervision. Continuous enrollment in the fall and spring semesters is also required. This requirement may be waived under special circumstances with pre-approval.

The Graduate School requires that the qualifying examination must be taken within five years, and all requirements must be completed within eight years from the time of a student's first enrollment in the doctoral program.

2.10.2 Research Only Mode

All MS and PhD students are eligible to register for full-time credits at a reduced tuition rate once they meet specific requirements. MS students must complete all required coursework for their degree plus the required number of credits. PhD students must complete their qualifying exams and dissertation proposal defense successfully. The Graduate School has details about entering Candidacy status:

<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/academic/candidacy/>.

2.11 Travel and Research Funding

Students in the department have successfully obtained external funding to support their graduate work, such as foundations, federal and state agencies, and various consortiums. Various academic professional societies also have paper award competitions, travel grants, and thesis/dissertation research awards.

In addition, there are several opportunities for MTU-based funding:

Departmental awards: Graduate students in good standing can apply for departmental funds of up to \$500 per academic year to support their research or travel to present at a conference. Applications for this funding are available once per semester and reviewed by the Graduate Committee. The process is competitive. Applicants are expected to submit a formal budget and abide by all university expense procedures (<https://www.mtu.edu/fso/financial/accounts-payable/>).

MTU research center awards: Additionally, research centers on campus (Great Lakes Research Center, Ecosystem Science Center, etc.) have semester and annual funding available for graduate students. Check with your advisor(s) to see if they are members and refer to the research centers' websites to join their email listservs.

MTU Graduate School awards: The Graduate School also offers several awards open to MS and PhD students. Refer to their website for the most up-to-date information (<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/about/dean/awards-honors/>). The Doctoral Finishing Fellowship requires nominations; students should reach out to faculty regarding potential nominations before the deadline.

It is best to talk to faculty early to identify potential funding sources to support your work.

2.12 Health Insurance and Health Care

Graduate students must enroll in the Michigan Tech graduate student health insurance program or provide proof of comparable insurance coverage. Financially supported students (GRA, GTA) receive partial support toward their health insurance costs. More information about health insurance and health care can be found at: <https://www.mtu.edu/hr/students/insurance/>

2.13 Communities of Support and Self-Care

Cultivate a community of support, be it other students or people from beyond academia. Others in your life may not understand higher education or the graduate student experience, and so it is helpful to have a group of friends who can listen and rally for you through the many hoops that may not be well understood by people outside of academia.

Your needs may change throughout your graduate education. Writing groups can be very helpful for students in thesis-writing or dissertation mode, or sharing monthly meals with students in your cohort can help create more community throughout your program together.

It's also helpful to have people outside of academia to spend time with or share space with, whether it is at a fitness class, volunteer opportunity, or something similar. Academia can be an isolating space. It's important to remember we are whole people and treat ourselves as such.

2.14 Additional Support Resources

2.14.1 Husky Food Access Network (HuskyFAN)

MTU has a food pantry for staff, students, and faculty that features a number of shelf-stable foods in addition to personal items (menstruation supplies, personal care products, etc.) and fresh foods (butter, milk, cheese, eggs, etc.). They are glad to purchase additional foods to accommodate restricted or specific diets. This is a free resource; no proof of need is required. More information: <https://www.mtu.edu/huskyfan/>

2.14.2 Center for Diversity and Inclusion

Located across campus in the Hamar House, the Center for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) offers a safe space for studying, meeting with other students, and programs: <https://www.mtu.edu/diversity-center/>

2.14.3 Dial Help

Dial Help is a local support and outreach center that is not connected to MTU. They can connect you to emergency housing, shelters, mental health, and various other services. They are available 24/7: <https://dialhelp.org/>

2.14.4 Canterbury House

The Canterbury House is the yellow house across from the Administration Building. It is a non-denominational organization offering English as Second Language courses, cultural exchange, study space, community meals, and a food pantry. More information: <https://www.involvement.mtu.edu/organization/canterbury-house-council>

3. Advising

Choosing advisors or co-advisors and committee members is an important process that takes time. Advisors or co-advisors help students structure a program of study that addresses their needs and satisfies degree requirements. Advisors or co-advisors also oversee the student's research for the completion of their degree.

Advisor(s) will be the person or people who will be the most engaged in your work. Committee members assist in mentoring students in different aspects of their research; they will likely be less involved in your work but will still be important resources and sources of support. Together, advisors or co-advisors and committee members provide important feedback for the student's

progress toward completing their research. You should expect to meet with your advisor or co-advisors regularly. You should arrange to meet with or update your committee members at least once per semester about your research progress.

The Graduate Program Director assigns all incoming MS students a temporary advisor. Students must have a permanent advisor before the end of their second semester. PhD students are accepted into the program on the condition that a faculty member has agreed to be their advisor. Different faculty have different expectations of the students with whom they work, so ask early about expectations regarding communications and work. Students have the right to change advisors and committee members (see below).

Beyond your advisor or co-advisors and committee, you can and should seek mentorship from others in the department, on campus, and in your disciplinary field. They will not devote as much time to your research process as your advisor or co-advisors and committee members will, but they may have opportunities of interest to you that help you expand your research training. See subsequent section and resources in the appendix for more information.

3.1 Expectations of Advisors

Faculty advisor(s) provide students with their primary advising for graduate program success.

Faculty appointments cover the 9-month academic calendar year. Comprehensive exams and MS or PhD defenses should be scheduled when faculty are on contract (beginning one week before the start of classes in the fall semester and ending two weeks after the end of classes in the spring semester). While some faculty may have summer research funds to cover the cost of their labor over the summer, faculty should not be expected to be available over the summer.

3.2 Course Work Advising

A first-year student with a Graduate Teaching Assistantship typically takes three 3-credit courses each semester. After three semesters of full-time course work, students typically shift to taking more research credits, as their time is devoted to research. The University requires that full-time graduate students receiving stipends register for 9 credit hours per semester. To be considered full-time during the summer semester, students must register for a minimum of 1 credit. Please consult with your advisor(s) and the Graduate Program Director for updates regarding rules for support and full-time status, especially during the summer and in the semesters approaching graduation. Once students finish required courses and examinations, they may submit the petition to the Graduate School to enter research mode (<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/forms-deadlines/>). Students who have reached “candidacy” or research mode must maintain student status but are eligible for a lower full-time research tuition rate. Check with the Graduate School in advance for the most up-to-date requirements.

3.3 Selecting Graduate Advisor(s)

Students may select an advisor or co-advisors to supervise their graduate research. Students should set up meetings with faculty they are potentially interested in as advisors or co-advisors to learn more about the faculty members' research and advising style and share their research interests. Faculty understand that this is an important decision and appreciate meeting to talk with students to learn more about their research interests. For most students, selecting a permanent faculty research advisor or co-advisor should begin during the fall semester of the first year of residence. First-year students unable to find a research advisor must notify the Graduate Program Director to assist in facilitating this process.

Students must submit a form to identify the advisor or co-advisors formally. It is up to the student and their advisor to fill out, get signed, and submit the appropriate forms to the Graduate School at the appropriate times (see this link for current forms and instructions):

<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/forms-deadlines/>

3.4 Selecting an Advisory Committee

Each student accepted into the graduate program in the Department of Social Sciences should work with their advisor or co-advisors to select an Advisory Committee by the end of their second semester in residence, and no later than the beginning of their third semester.

For MS students, three members from the Department are required. MS students should have their committee in place and have met with the student by the end of the second semester.

For PhD students, three members from the Department are required, as well as one external committee member. The Advisory Committee should be in place by the end of their third semester in residence. For this committee to satisfy the requirements of a dissertation committee, there must be one member from outside the Department; this member may be external to the Department or external to the University.

PhD students will also form a Comprehensive Exam committee that must be comprised of three members; a fourth external member may serve on the committee for the exam, but is not required. The Comprehensive Exam Committee may continue to operate as the Advisory Committee, or the student may choose to change the members and form a different Advisory Committee. All students must file a form for their advisory committee by the end of their third semester in residence. If a student changes the advisory committee's composition, a new form must be filed with the Graduate School.

3.5 Changing Advisors, Co-Advisors, or Committee Members

Students can change advisors or co-advisors as well as committee members during their graduate program. Changing advisors, co-advisors, or committee members may reflect evolving research interests and needs. Changing advisors, co-advisors, or committee members may also reflect changes in faculty availability due to sabbatical or other obligations. In some cases, changing advisors, co-advisors, or committee members may reflect differing expectations among those

concerned. In instances where expectations are not met, this process can be initiated by the student or the advisor, co-advisor, or committee member.

Please note that changing advisors, co-advisors, and committee members will not result in any punitive consequences. Consult with the Department of Social Sciences Graduate Program Director if you are considering changing advisors and do not feel comfortable discussing this with your current advisor or co-advisor.

An example of a student-initiated advisor or co-advisor change: The student may initiate a change when they identify that their interest area or research topic shifts. The student wishes to have an advisor with specific expertise. An example of a student and an advisor initiating a mutually agreed-upon change: The advisor may be going on sabbatical and may work with the student to select another faculty member to serve as a co-advisor.

3.5.1 Process of Advisor or Co-Advisor Changes

Before initiating the process to change your Graduate Advisor, please consider all the options listed on the Graduate School's website to address difficulties in the student-advisor relationship (see <https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/resources-for/students/academic/succeeding/index.html>).

Once you have decided to change your advisor or co-advisor, follow the steps listed below:

1. Meet with the Department of Social Sciences Graduate Program Director to initiate the process of changing advisor or co-advisor.
2. Discuss the following with the Graduate Program Director and, if appropriate, the current advisor:
 - The impact of the change of advisor on your time to complete the degree. Coursework, qualifying exam(s), and the research proposal examination are all factors that a change in advisor could impact.
 - Your current and future funding.
 - Research has already been conducted. Whether this will be incorporated into the dissertation, thesis, or report, and if so, how.
 - Impact on immigration status (if any). Consult International Programs and Services (IPS), if necessary.
 - Whether additional resources within or outside the Department (such as the Ombuds Office - <https://www.mtu.edu/ombuds/>) could help resolve the situation.
3. Please create and preserve the record of all communications regarding the matter in writing, including communications with all affected faculty advisors. Make sure to provide the record to the Graduate Program Director and all affected faculty advisors.
4. File an updated Advisor and Committee Recommendation Form for approval by the Graduate School (<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/documents/policies-procedures/forms/advisor-committee.pdf>).
5. If the student and the Graduate Program Director are unable to reach an agreement on the advisor change, contact the Assistant Dean of the Graduate School

(<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/about/staff/>) to determine additional steps to resolve the situation.

3.5.2 Process for Committee Member Changes

It is good to first consult your advisor or co-advisors before changing your committee members. You should identify an alternative committee member. While you are not required to notify the person you are removing from your committee, it is good to let them know. Faculty understand that research interests evolve and realize you need different committee support than you had originally planned.

To add your new committee member, first schedule a time to meet with the potential faculty member about potentially serving on your committee. Once they agree, you will need to file an updated Advisor and Committee Recommendation Form for approval by the Graduate School (<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/documents/policies-procedures/forms/advisor-committee.pdf>).

3.6 Mentorship

Mentorship happens through formal and informal means. Every student needs multiple mentors to benefit from diverse experiences and perspectives. Keep in mind that no one mentor will have all the answers or be able to address all your needs. Consider early what sorts of mentorship will best help you in your graduate education.

In addition to a student's advisors or co-advisors and committee, students should look for mentorship from other faculty in or beyond the department, faculty met at conferences or other professional networks, community members, and/or professionals in non-academic fields. Especially for non-traditional, first-generation, LGBTQIA, and BIPOC students, finding a mentor who shares some of the same experiences can help to better support you through your graduate education and beyond.

Many professional societies offer mentoring opportunities. The Graduate Program Director, your advisor or co-advisors, other graduate students, and acquaintances within professional societies can help you identify potential mentors and understand the importance of developing this mentorship community early.

When reaching out to a potential mentor, articulate why you've chosen them, what you hope to learn from them, and your goals through the mentorship. Do not feel badly if they say they do not have time; likely, they know mentorship requires a lot of time and wish to honor your needs by being honest. It's good to do advance research about people you're considering working with as a mentor or advisor.

4. Grievance Policies and Conflict Resolution Procedures

The Department of Social Sciences strives to ensure that all students, staff, and faculty are treated equitably following university policies. Students have the right to fair and equal treatment

by faculty, MTU administrators and staff, and fellow students. Students should also expect professional behavior from all MTU faculty. Professional behavior includes such matters as respect for expertise, individual beliefs, and personal privacy.

The following informal and formal procedures are designed to protect the rights and privacy of both students and faculty's rights and privacy and adjudicate conflicts among faculty and students equitably.

Grievance and conflict resolution procedures vary based on the nature of the grievance or conflict. Students with general concerns or complaints about the behavior of faculty or other students in professional situations or interpersonal relationships should follow the General Guidelines for Student-Initiated Grievances described below.

Note that discrimination and sexual assault cases follow a different grievance procedure described below under "Title IX Reporting Procedures."

4.1 General Guidelines for Student-Initiated Grievances

Interpersonal conflicts may arise during your time as graduate students. For general grievances, when an issue arises, students should follow the steps described below:

1. **Discuss your issue with the person(s) it concerns:** Wherever possible, students who have a concern or complaint about faculty, administrators, staff, faculty, or another student should first discuss the issue with the person or persons concerned. If a resolution is not possible using this route, the complaint will be referred to the student's academic advisor.
2. **Seek help from the academic advisor:** If the complaint cannot be resolved informally amongst concerned parties, the student should discuss their complaint with their academic advisor and seek advice and/or assistance in resolving the matter. The academic advisor will attempt to resolve the problem through discussions with relevant parties. If a resolution is not possible using this route, the complaint will be referred to the Director of Graduate Studies.

NOTE: If the complaint concerns the student's academic advisor, they should seek help from the Director of Graduate Studies. If the student's concern is related to the Director of Graduate Studies, students should seek help from the Department Chair.

3. **Seek help from the Social Sciences Graduate Director:** The Graduate Director will attempt to resolve the problem through discussions with relevant parties. Please note that not all communications with the Director of Graduate Studies are confidential. All faculty are Mandatory Reporters. If resolution is not possible using this route, the complaint will be referred to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will determine a procedure for balancing discussion with the relevant parties while maintaining confidentiality and will provide a written response summarizing issues and providing recommendations for action.

NOTE: If the issue raised by the students cannot be resolved by the Graduate Director and Department Chair or in the case of a conflict of interest (e.g., the complaint concerns one or more of these individuals), the student can consult the campus Ombudsperson (<http://www.mtu.edu/ombuds/>). See 4.2.1 below for more details on Ombuds Office resources.

4.2 Additional Resources for Students

MTU provides several informal and formal conflict resolution and grievance filing and resolution procedures. These resources are available to all MTU students in addition to the within-department procedures described above. Complaints that involve faculty actions or classroom occurrences that cannot be resolved within the Department are handled under the Academic Grievance Policy (see <https://www.mtu.edu/deanofstudents/academic-policies/grievance/>).

The Graduate School Grievance procedure is an option if all other means have not resolved the grievance/conflict (<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/academic/grievance/>).

4.2.1 Ombuds Office

The Ombuds Office (<https://www.mtu.edu/ombuds/>) provides members of the MTU community with independent, neutral, and confidential informal conflict mediation services. This includes helping individuals resolve concerns fairly and informally as a precursor to any formal grievance procedures.

4.2.2 Graduate School Grievance Procedure

The Graduate School at Michigan Tech has established formal procedures for students to file grievances <http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/academic/grievance/>. If within-department conflict resolution procedures prove unsatisfactory, students may file a formal grievance with the Graduate School to seek resolution.

4.2.3 Institutional Equity Office and Title IX Reporting Procedures

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a Federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities that receive Federal Funds. Under Title IX, discrimination on the basis of sex can include gender discrimination, pregnancy and parenting discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual violence, such as rape, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion, and intimate partner violence (including dating and domestic violence), and nonconsensual sexual contact or intercourse (including sexual assault).

Students who have been subjected to discrimination based on sex or gender or subjected to sexual harassment should notify Title IX staff (<https://www.mtu.edu/title-ix/>) within the Institutional Equity Office (<https://www.mtu.edu/equity/>) as soon as possible.

To complete a Title IX/Sexual Misconduct Report and access other resources, see <https://www.mtu.edu/title-ix/report/report/>. You can also contact the MTU Title IX Coordinator directly at titleix@mtu.edu, 906-487-3310, 306 Administration Building. MTU Public Safety and Police Services (<https://www.mtu.edu/publicsafety/>) can be contacted at 906-487-2216, 206 Macinnes Drive.

See Institutional Equity Office Policies and Procedures website (<https://www.mtu.edu/equity/policies-procedures/complaint/>) for instructions on how to File a Complaint or Report a Concern. You can also report your concern or grievance to the Office of Academic and Community Conduct (<https://www.mtu.edu/deanofstudents/students/concern/>).

Be aware that all MTU employees are mandatory reporters – this means that if you share a Title IX concern with your advisor or another faculty member, they will be obligated by federal law to report this concern to the Title IX office.

5. Certificates

5.1 Public Policy Certificate (Online)

Graduate students have the option to earn a Public Policy certificate by completing three online courses (SS 5301 The Policy Process, SS 5318 Public Management, and SS 5350 Policy Analysis). Current MTU graduate students enrolled in a degree program do not need to apply to enroll in this certificate program. Current students must still submit the appropriate degree schedule in order to complete the certificate. Interested students can learn more online (<https://www.mtu.edu/social-sciences/graduate/programs/public-policy-certificate/>) or by contacting the Public Policy Certificate Program Director.

6. Graduate Degree Requirements: Overview

The department offers three MS degrees in *Environment and Energy Policy*, *Industrial Heritage and Archaeology*, and – new in 2023 – *Sustainable Communities*. Additionally, the department offers accelerated MS degrees in *Environment and Energy Policy* and *Industrial Heritage and Archaeology*. There are two options for each MS degree program: thesis option or report option.

The department offers two PhD programs in *Environmental and Energy Policy* and in *Industrial Heritage and Archaeology*.

Since the 2019 academic year, all graduate students have utilized current curriculum requirements for all MS and PhD programs. MS students who started in Fall 2017 may opt to graduate under the 2018-2019 curriculum, or they may decide to remain in the older 2017-2018 curriculum. PhD students who began in Fall 2016 and Fall 2017 may choose to graduate under their program's older or newer curriculum. Consult with the Graduate Director for details and to confirm your choice.

There are Coursework Only options available for the SEEP and SIHA masters. Please consult with the Director of Graduate Studies for more information.

6.1 Specific Degree Program Overview Statements

Environmental and Energy Policy program students conduct research helping frame and support our society's environmental and energy policy goals, strategies, decisions, and programs. They use tools from multiple disciplines for integrated, interdisciplinary assessment in sociology, geography, anthropology, political science, economics, history, sustainability science, and ecology.

Industrial Heritage and Archaeology program students draw from interdisciplinary concepts and tools in history, archaeology, and anthropology. Students work with communities to interpret, document, educate citizens, and answer important social, historical, environmental, and economic questions about the impacts and legacies of industrialization on communities.

Sustainable Community program students prepare to engage in sustainability-related professions in the public, private, and non-profit sectors that require applied tools for research, investigation, and inquiry and a holistic understanding of the root causes and potential pathways to address the most pressing sustainability problems in contemporary society.

6.2 Accelerated MS in Environmental and Energy Policy

[in progress]

The Accelerated MS Degree program allows students to apply up to 6 approved credits earned while an undergraduate to both a bachelor's and master's degree. A maximum of three of the double-counted credits may be undergraduate research credits. Any research credits earned by an undergraduate and applied toward a research-based (thesis or report option) master's degree must be earned after the student has attained senior-level standing. Up to 7 credits can be taken using "Senior Rule." Please consult with the Undergraduate and Graduate directors and your advisor(s) to develop your individualized plan.

6.2.1 Thesis Option

The thesis option requires a research thesis prepared under the advisor's supervision. The thesis describes a research investigation and its results. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

6.2.2 Report Option

The Report option requires a report describing the results of an independent study project.. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

6.3 Accelerated MS in Industrial Heritage and Archeology

The Accelerated MS Degree program allows students to apply up to a maximum of 6 approved credits earned while an undergraduate to both a bachelor's and master's degree. A maximum of three of the double-counted credits may be undergraduate research credits. Any research credits earned by an undergraduate and applied toward a research-based (thesis or report option) master's degree must be earned after the student has attained senior-level standing. Up to 7 credits can be taken using "Senior Rule." Please consult with the Graduate Director and your advisor(s) to develop your individualized plan.

6.3.1 Thesis Option

The thesis option requires a research thesis prepared under the advisor's supervision. The thesis describes a research investigation and its results. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

6.3.2 Report Option

The Report option requires a report describing the results of an independent study project.. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

6.4 MS in Environmental and Energy Policy

6.4.1 Thesis Option

The thesis option requires a research thesis prepared under the advisor's supervision. The thesis describes a research investigation and its results. The scope of the research topic for the thesis should be defined in such a way that a full-time student could complete the requirements for a master's degree in twelve months or three semesters following the completion of course work by regularly scheduling graduate research credits. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

The minimum requirements are as follows:

Course work (minimum)	20 credits
Thesis research	6-10 credits
Total (minimum)	30 credits
Distribution of course work credit	
5000-6000 series (minimum)	12 credits
3000-4000 level (maximum)	12 credits

6.4.2 Report Option

The Report option requires a report describing the results of an independent study project. The scope of the research topic should be defined in such a way that a full-time student could complete the requirements for a master's degree in twelve months or three semesters following

the completion of course work by regularly scheduling graduate research credits. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

Of the minimum total of 30 credits, at least 24 must be earned in course work other than the project:

Course work	24 credits
Report	2-6 credits
Total (minimum)	30 credits
Distribution of course work credit	
5000-6000 series (minimum)	12 credits
3000-4000 level (maximum)	12 credits

6.5 MS in Industrial Heritage and Archaeology

6.5.1 Thesis option

This option requires a research thesis prepared under the supervision of the advisor. The thesis describes a research investigation and its results. The scope of the research topic for the thesis should be defined in such a way that a full-time student could complete the requirements for a master's degree in twelve months or three semesters following the completion of course work by regularly scheduling graduate research credits. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

The minimum requirements are as follows:

Course work (minimum)	20 credits
Thesis research	6-10 credits
Total (minimum)	30 credits
Distribution of course work credit	
5000-6000 series (minimum)	12 credits
3000-4000 level (maximum)	12 credits

6.5.2 Report option

This option requires a report describing the results of an independent study project. The scope of the research topic should be defined in such a way that a full-time student could complete the requirements for a master's degree in twelve months or three semesters following the completion of course work by regularly scheduling graduate research credits. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

Of the minimum total of 30 credits, at least 24 must be earned in course work other than the project:

Course work	24 credits
Report	2-6 credits
Total (minimum)	30 credits
Distribution of course work credit	
5000-6000 series (minimum)	12 credits
3000-4000 level (maximum)	12 credits

6.6 PhD in Environmental and Energy Policy

Completion of a PhD requires a research dissertation prepared under the supervision of the advisor. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

The minimum requirements are as follows:

Required credits:	
Department courses	15 credits
Required electives	15 credits
Electives possible	6-18 credits
Required research	0-6 credits
Total credits required with a master's	30 credits

6.7 PhD in Industrial Heritage and Archaeology

Completion of a PhD requires a research dissertation prepared under the supervision of the advisor. See Appendix for more details regarding the specific courses required in this curriculum.

The minimum requirements are as follows:

Required credits:	
Department courses	15 credits
Required electives	15 credits
Electives possible	15 credits
Required research	15 credits
Total credits required with a master's	30 credits

6.8 MS in Sustainable Communities

[this section of the handbook is under construction]

6.9 Satisfactory Progress in Graduate School

The Graduate School limits the amount of time any student can take for each step along the road to degree completion (Master’s degree must be completed within five (5) calendar years, PhD must be completed within eight (8) calendar years; PhD students must complete their Qualifying Exam no later than the end of the 5th year and their Research Proposal Exam no later than the end of the 6th year). Students who are within one academic year of these deadlines must keep the Graduate Director informed of their plans for completion.

Note for International Students: Visa requirements for international students often change. International students should stay well informed of current visa requirements through the offices of International Programs or Graduate School related to timelines and possible changes of status after graduation.

6.9.1 MS Student Required Forms

Current versions of all MS degree forms, including a more detailed submission schedule, are available online: <http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/timelines/thesis/>

Form	Term Due
Advisor & Committee Recommendation Form	Second term
Degree Schedule Form	Term prior to defense term
Pre-Defense Form	Two weeks prior to event
Verification of Final Degree Requirements	Two weeks after the oral exam or at the end of final exam week of final semester
Report on Final Oral Examination Form	After the oral exam is complete and before submitting the final draft of dissertation, thesis, or report.
Degree Completion Form	See deadlines on the Graduate School website.

6.9.2 MS Degree Milestones – Sample Timeline

The following table outlines a typical timeline for completion of an MS degree in the Department of Social Sciences.

Program Objectives	Summer Year 0	Fall Year 1	Spring Year 1	Summer Year 1	Fall Year 2	Spring Year 2
Orientation	X					
Diagnostic Meetings		X			X	
Courses		X	X	X	X	
Field School (if applicable)	X			X		
Proposal			X	X	X	
Thesis Research/Writing			X	X	X	X
Department Presentation			X			X

Conference Presentation			X	X	X	X
Thesis Submission						X
Defense						X

All students are required to attend the Department graduate student orientation held at the start of the academic year. Students should discuss their academic performance and progress toward degree completion with their advisor at least once per year. These diagnostic meetings are in addition to regular (weekly or bi-weekly) meetings with the advisor(s) that students should schedule and attend throughout the program. Formal coursework is typically completed in the first three semesters of the four-semester MS program. Field School is required for some IHA students; please work with the Graduate Director and your advisor to ensure you meet this requirement if it applies to you.

MS students must defend a thesis or report proposal, typically at the beginning of their second year. Thesis research and writing is typically the focus of the second year of the MS program. Students are expected to present within the Department and at an external professional conference at least once per year. A public thesis defense is required prior to thesis submission, and both are typically completed by the end of the second year in the MS program.

6.9.3 PhD Student Required Forms

Current versions of all PhD degree forms, including a more detailed submission schedule, are available online: <https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/timelines/dissertation/>

Form	Term Due
Advisor & Committee Recommendation Form	Second term
Degree Schedule Form	Semester prior to oral defense semester. Prior to moving to research only mode.
Petition to Enter Candidacy Form	One week before the target semester chosen for Research Mode. At least 30 credits need to be completed and all required courses must be completed.
Pre-Defense Form	Two weeks before the defense.
Report on Final Oral Examination Form	Day of oral defense
Verification of Final Degree Requirements	Two weeks after the oral exam or at the end of final exam week of final semester.
Approval of a Dissertation, Thesis, or Report Form	Submit a final/revised dissertation within one week of submitting this form.
Graduate Student Workspace Cleanout Form	Semester of graduation

6.9.4 PhD Degree Milestones – Sample Timeline

The following table outlines a typical timeline for completing an MS degree in the Department of Social Sciences.

Program Objectives	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4			
Orientation	X															
Diagnostic Meetings			X		X				X				X			
Courses	X	X	X	X	X	X	X									
Field School				X												
Comprehensive Exams				X	X	X	X	X	X							
Proposal						X	X	X	X	X						
Dissertation Research/Writing						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Department Presentation(s)						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Conference Presentation(s)						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dissertation Submission															X	X
Defense															X	X

New students must attend the Department of Social Sciences Graduate Student Orientation at the start of the academic year. Students should also expect to have diagnostic meetings with their advisor at least once per year to discuss academic performance and progress toward degree completion. These diagnostic meetings are in addition to regular meetings with the advisor(s) that students should schedule and attend throughout the program. Formal coursework is typically completed in the first three semesters of the PhD program. Field School is required for some IHA students; please work with the Graduate Director and your advisor to ensure you are meeting this requirement if it applies to you.

PhD students in the Department typically prepare for and complete comprehensive exams by the end of the second year or the beginning of their third year in the program. PhD students are required to hold a public proposal defense, which is typically completed before the end of the third year in the program. Dissertation research and writing are typically the focus of the PhD program's third and/or fourth year. Students are expected to present within the Department and at an external professional conference at least once per year, starting in the second year of the PhD program. A public dissertation defense is required prior to dissertation submission, and both are typically completed by the end of the fourth year in the PhD program.

6.9.5 Grades and Maintaining a Status of Good Standing

The MTU Graduate School provides a formal policy detailing 'good standing,' including an overview of the probation, suspension, and dismissal processes if the student does not make satisfactory progress in their degree program:

<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/academic/good-standing/>.

The Department of Social Sciences also has expectations related to satisfactory progress that include three areas: grades, teaching, and timeliness toward the degree.

1. Students are permitted to include up to 6 credits of BC/C grades in their graduate degree schedule toward degree completion. However, if a student is earning these grades, the Department views these as a serious indication of deficiency in the student's progress in the graduate program. Thus, in receiving a grade of BC/C, the following actions may be followed.
2. If a student earns below a B in a course, the Graduate Director and student's advisor will communicate with the faculty member teaching the course, either in writing or via an in-person meeting, about the specific conditions warranting the student's earned grade. The Graduate Director and the student's advisor will meet with the student to discuss the deficiencies and provide an improvement plan (e.g., time management, professional development, etc.).
3. If a student earns below a B in another course in a subsequent semester, the Graduate Director, student's advisor, and Department Chair will communicate with the faculty member teaching the course, either in writing or via an in-person meeting, about the specific conditions warranting the student's earned grade. The Graduate Director, student advisor, and Department Chair will then meet with the student to discuss the deficiencies and the improvement plan. The student's funding may be revoked for one semester so that the student can focus on improving coursework and performance. If the poor performance in coursework results in academic probation via the Graduate School (which is based on GPA), student support via TA/RA and access to Department funding for travel and research funds will be revoked so that students can focus solely on improvement in coursework performance.

6.9.6 Conference Attendance and Presentations

Students are expected to attend the weekly brown bag series in the Department. Students should plan to present in the Department of Social Sciences and at an external professional conference at least once per year. Students in the MS program present a public thesis or report defense; students in the PhD program present a public dissertation proposal defense and a public dissertation defense. All students have the opportunity to present at the Department brown bag lecture series.

7. Student Feedback

The Department of Social Sciences has several different means for providing timely written feedback for graduate students.

7.1 End of Semester Feedback

All faculty review the strengths and areas for potential improvement for all graduate students with whom they interact as an advisor, instructor, or co-author at the end of every semester. This feedback is shared with student advisors and is available to students upon request. This feedback will be discussed with the student at a meeting with the advisor(s).

7.2 Annual Student Progress Evaluation

There is a yearly evaluation of student progress that each graduate student in the Department completes. This formal process ensures that both students and advisors are aware of the student's academic progress and plans for the future. The copies are provided to the student, advisor, and Graduate Program Director when completed by the student and advisor. Suppose deficiencies are identified in a student's performance. In that case, written feedback will be provided, specifically addressing the area(s) of deficiency, a timeline for making up for the deficiency, and the consequences for continued unsatisfactory performance.

7.3 Student-Advisor / Co-Advisor Meetings

Student-advisor meetings are the most important place for feedback. Students are encouraged to schedule and attend regular (weekly or bi-weekly) meetings with their advisor(s) to ensure satisfactory progress. If satisfactory progress is not being met, several processes are involved in providing opportunities to discuss areas for improvement (in course grades and/or TA/RA duties, as outlined above) with the student advisor, Graduate Director, and Department Chair.

8. Responsible Conduct of Research Requirements

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) Training is an important aspect of being an effective scholar and is mandatory for both Masters's and Doctoral degree candidates. Graduate students are responsible for fulfilling two training requirements:

1. Basic training must be completed within the first two semesters at MTU, or a registration hold will be placed on the student's account.
2. Advanced training must be completed by the third semester. Students may not graduate or enter candidacy if RCR training is not complete:
<http://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/administration/academics/resources/rcr/>.

The Department's Research Design and Ethnographic Methods courses meet Advanced RCR requirements. If students do not complete these courses, they will need to complete the Advanced RCR requirements by another means no later than the end of their third semester.

9. Graduate Curriculum Planning and Degree Milestones

The Department offers a variety of courses designed to fill the requirements for each degree. Students must be aware that certain courses are required as core courses and considered foundational for all students seeking an M.S. or PhD degree in any of our programs, irrespective of their intended research specialty. Each student should have the approval of their advisor(s) and committee and consult with their Advisory Committee members on a choice of non-core courses.

9.1 Curriculum Planning Forms

The Graduate Degree Requirements are translated into Curriculum Planning forms that enable the student and their advisor to plan. All required courses are completed within the first two years. These forms are available in the Appendix. Each Fall semester, students will be provided a list of the Graduate Courses offered for the subsequent two years (by course number and year/semester offered) available so that students can plan and complete their requirements on time. The Appendix also contains the list of specific courses required for each degree.

9.2 Curriculum and Coursework

A minimum of 30 course and/or research credit hours beyond the MS degree or a minimum of 60 course and/or research credit hours beyond the Bachelor's degree are required for the PhD degree. The core course and elective disciplinary requirements are detailed above under Graduate Degree Requirements. The student's Advisory Committee determines additional coursework, and early discussions with the committee in this regard are recommended. Once students have an advisor, they may enroll in Directed Reading and/or Research courses. After all required courses are completed, and no later than the semester before the final oral examination, the M5 (MS students) or the D5 (PhD students) form should be completed, reviewed by the Graduate Director, and filed with the Graduate School. The student must provide a copy to the

Graduate Assistant for Department files. For more information, see <https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/timelines/>.

9.3 Course Waivers and Exemptions

Course waivers and exemptions will follow an approved protocol to ensure fairness, protect standards and the integrity of the degree, and record-keeping.

Waivers are cases where a student has taken a similar course at a comparable level and satisfied the requirements, such as, but not limited to, a statistics, social theory, or microeconomics course.

Exemptions are requests to replace an approved or required course with another course.

In all cases, must meet degree credit requirements. If a course is waived, the student will not receive credit for the course. Both exemptions and waivers do not reduce the total number of credit hours required to satisfy program requirements.

9.3.1 Requesting a Course Waiver or Course Exemption

The student's advisor will submit the request to the Director of Student Programs (dostudentprograms-ss@mtu.edu). The request should describe the course the student requests to **waive** or **exempt**. Include the course title and course number.

Requesting Waivers

Submit evidence of prior work (i.e., course) that meets the program course requirement. Evidence could include course transcripts or course descriptions from the catalog that show the pre-requisite was satisfied at another institution. Ideally, a course syllabus or other evidence to demonstrate the content of the course.

Requesting Exemptions

Provide a detailed request demonstrating how the proposed course satisfies the program requirements. The substituted course must be similar or provide similar content.

Deadlines - November 15 and March 15 (to allow Grad Committee to review).

9.3.2 Review Process for Waivers and Exemptions

The Graduate Director and Grad Committee will review the request for conformance to the policy and decide. The Graduate Director may seek clarity from the advisor or student and/or consult with the Chair. A decision will be sent and recorded in the student's file.

10. MS Thesis or MS Report Planning

The Social Sciences Department requires students in the MS programs to submit a research or report proposal to their committee before completing their thesis or report. The purpose of the research proposal is for students to demonstrate that they have envisioned and planned a feasible project and are prepared to conduct the project. The proposal allows the student's committee to provide detailed feedback and suggestions.

There are two related components of a thesis or report completion: (1) the final oral examination and (2) the written thesis or report. They are outlined in the next section. Guidance for how each function in the Social Sciences Department is covered here. Please also see the MTU Graduate School webpage for specific details on additional degree completion forms that are required (<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/forms-deadlines/>).

The proposal describes the central elements of the proposed thesis or report. The thesis proposal will vary in length. Students should consult with their advisor for style guidelines, which vary by discipline and approach. Examples of past proposals and faculty templates are available - check with the Graduate Director for access. Students may draft the proposal in the Research Design course, but this is not required.

10.1 Proposal Requirements

The proposal should:

- a) Identify a research problem and state the research or practical significance
- b) Place the research problem within the literature or case context
- c) Describe methods to be used in data collection and analysis
- d) Provide a list of references
- e) Specify a timeline
- f) Summarize the structure and purpose- report or thesis

For students in the EEP program, their proposal should also identify the environmental/energy policy issue/area to which their research will contribute and how it will advance policy solutions.

NOTE: If the proposed research involves human subjects, before students may begin collecting data for their research project, the student and her/his advisor must submit a research protocol to the Michigan Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. This protocol must be approved (or exempted) before data collection.

10.1.1 Timeline and Oral Presentation

Students will generally submit their thesis proposal early in their 3rd semester. In their second year, all MS students are expected to share their research plans/progress in a short (5-10 minutes) public presentation in the MS Research Colloquium held annually in the fall semester as part of the Social Sciences Department Brown Bag series. The Graduate Director organizes this colloquium and works with the Brown Bag series coordinator to schedule the event. The

presentation is not a formal defense but rather a chance to share ideas, receive feedback, and learn from others.

10.1.2 Committee Approval Process

The committee reviews the proposal and decides. The student may proceed with the thesis work if the proposal is approved. If the proposal is not accepted, the student will revise it based on the committee's comments; then, the student will re-submit the proposal for another review. Upon acceptance of the proposal, the student may proceed with conducting research. If the proposed research involves human subjects, before students may begin collecting data for their research project, the student and their advisor must receive formal approval from the Michigan Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. The plan for and status of the IRB approval process should be clearly stated in the proposal

10.2 MS Thesis/Report and Defense

Once the Advisory Committee approves the proposal, the MS student prepares a written thesis or report that will be publicly defended.

10.2.1 Written Thesis or Report

Students present their Master's degree research in a monograph, a report, or an academic article. Students work with the committee to determine which style is most appropriate. Regardless of style, the written document must be prepared to adhere to the Graduate School guidelines (*The Guide* published by the MTU Graduate School). The final document must be submitted to the Graduate School, along with forms required by the Graduate School. The final version will become a permanent acquisition of the MTU library and will be publicly available via Digital Commons (<https://digitalcommons.mtu.edu/>).

Students will work with the committee to determine the length and other expectations. Typically, the monograph is structured with an introduction, comprehensive review of relevant literature, research methods, conclusion and summary, and bibliography. The candidate is the sole author.

The product will typically have an applied purpose for students writing a report. The format of the product may vary depending on the audience and purpose. It may include, for example, a policy brief/agency report, a professional white paper, an original database with documentation, film, a National Register nomination, and so on. The student should work with their committee to evaluate acceptable products and formats. The Graduate School requires that students submit reports and an overview text document describing the work.

Students writing an academic article should follow manuscript guidelines published by a peer-reviewed journal where they plan to submit the work. Students must follow their guidelines for submitting a thesis when submitting to the Graduate School. For co-authored papers, the student should be the lead author and undertake the majority of the work. In these cases, students should include an introductory section that describes their role in the research and writing compared to co-authors.

For students in the EEP program, their project should identify the environmental/energy policy issue/area to which their research will contribute and how it will advance policy solutions.

10.2.2 Scheduling the Public Defense

Students are expected to work with the committee before the thesis or report defense to seek feedback on drafts to ensure a defensible project that is well-written and in a professional writing style.

Students must let their committee know they plan to graduate by the start of the semester of planned graduation. By the first week of the semester, the student should work with their committee to develop a completion plan. This planning process includes sharing drafts and setting deadlines for completion. The committee will provide feedback and direction for revisions. The committee and student will determine if the thesis is defensible based on these. Four weeks before the defense, the student must schedule the defense with the committee.

Students work with the Office Assistant to schedule a room, reserve any necessary technology, and announce the defense to the Department of Social Sciences and the broader MTU community.

At least two weeks before the scheduled defense, students must (1) distribute the completed final draft of the thesis or report to the committee; (2) submit the pre-defense form with the graduate school, found here:

<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/documents/policies-procedures/forms/pre-defense.pdf>; and (3) submit the complete defense draft of the thesis/report to the Graduate School (via Canvas) for formatting review (it should already be formatted to graduate school specifications).

10.2.3 Oral Examination

Students present their thesis research in a public oral examination at the defense. They should prepare a formal public presentation lasting 25-35 minutes explaining the project. Students should be prepared to take questions from the audience after the presentation.

After the public defense, the student meets with the examining committee. The student is expected to defend and support the entirety of the research included in the written thesis/report. This discussion examines whether the student has a good command of the topic under investigation, the related broader literature, and the methods employed. The student may also be asked to respond to broader questions to demonstrate expertise in the field of degree. This meeting might also include a discussion of suggested revisions that committee members would like to see made to the written document. Students need to bring a copy of the Report on Final Oral Examination (see Graduate School) to the defense.

After the examination, the student will be asked to leave the room to allow the committee to confer. The committee will decide: (1) whether the student has passed the Final Oral Examination, and (2) if and what revisions to the written document are required before graduation. The student's oral examination results (pass or fail) must be reported to the Graduate

School on the Report on Final Oral Examination Form:

<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/documents/policies-procedures/forms/report-final-oral-exam.pdf>. This form is meant to capture the oral exam results and should be submitted to the graduate school following the oral defense and before submitting the final thesis or report. A student may pass the oral examination but still have extensive revisions to the written document required.

If revisions are required, the student should work with the full committee to document what specific revisions are required before final submission to the Graduate School and granting the degree. The student and committee should complete this document as soon as is reasonable so that the student has an opportunity to make revisions before the final degree deadlines at the end of the semester.

If the student fails to pass the oral examination, they may be recommended to the Graduate School to be dismissed from the program. Alternatively, the student and their committee can make the case that a second attempt should be allowed. To request a second attempt, the student should submit to their committee a one-page document justifying why they believe a second chance is warranted. The committee will comment, sign, and share the document with the committee and the Graduate Director. If the committee and the Graduate Director agree to a second attempt, it will be granted. The second attempt may not be scheduled in the same semester as the original. Failure to pass a second attempt will result in a recommendation of dismissal from the program.

10.2.4 Post-Defense Requirements

Following the successful oral defense, the student makes all required revisions (as directed by the committee) and all formatting revisions (as required by the Graduate School). When the advisor and committee have approved the final document, the student must file the Approval of a Dissertation, Thesis, or Report Form to the Graduate School along with a copy of the final thesis/report by the deadline for the semester they wish to complete the degree (the Monday of Week 13). Please note: Students who do not meet the Graduate School deadline will not graduate and will be required to maintain continuous enrollment (1 credit) until they complete their degree.

The Graduate School conducts a final formatting review (TDR review), which may take two weeks. The Graduate School will notify the student if there are formatting corrections that need to be made. If so, the student must complete these by the Friday of Final Exams Week to avoid additional fees.

Students should also check with the Graduate School and file any other additional completion of degree forms or exit surveys.

11. PhD Program Qualifying Exams

PhD students are required by the Michigan Technological University Graduate School to pass both a written and an oral qualifying exam before advancing to candidacy or entering “Research Only Mode,” and “ABD” status.

There is a typical structure for the PhD qualifying exam process in the Social Sciences Department for the *Environmental and Energy Policy* and *Industrial Heritage and Archaeology* programs. There may be deviations from this typical structure when it meets the needs of the advisor, student, and committee. Structures that deviate from what is described below should be described in a written document, signed by the student and exam committee (with all agreeing to the structure), and submitted to the Graduate Director.

11.1 Purpose

Students build competence and demonstrate expertise in professional fields of scholarship. After successfully defending their exam, students will be able to teach and conduct research in their chosen fields.

11.2 Exam Committee

The comprehensive exam committee consists of at least 3 graduate faculty members. The committee will include the student’s Dissertation Committee Chair (advisor) and at least one faculty member with expertise in each chosen field of study. These may or may not be the same people as serving on the dissertation committee. Each committee member suggests questions for inclusion in the exam and provides these to the Committee Chair. The committee then reviews the questions and works together to determine the exam content.

11.3 Exam Topics and Content

Students select three field areas to take exams. The areas correspond to recognized professional fields of scholarship and/or courses that we regularly offer. This allows students to engage with base material in a classroom format and then more fully develop the areas in which they want to concentrate. Courses provide the starting point for learning material. Still, students are expected to take ownership of the process of more fully developing their expertise well beyond what is presented in class.

All students must submit a ~1,000-word synthetic statement to their committee defining the exam areas, justifying or explaining the focus or scope, and specifying the relationship between the exam areas and the dissertation plan. That statement will be reviewed and signed by the exam committee and submitted to the Graduate Director for inclusion in the student’s file.

Exams are an analytical task beyond describing what other scholars have found. This means that students are expected to be able to synthesize material from multiple, different sources, critically engage in debates within the fields and make arguments, and identify gaps in the fields. Students

are expected to present evidence in the form of citations to scholarly work and sometimes to present empirical examples to support their claims.

The exam may include material presented in related courses. Still, students are expected to read beyond what is covered in class (as agreed on by the committee), especially in the parts of that field directly related to the student's dissertation topic. For example, a student with a dissertation topic related to mining in the Keweenaw who chooses to take the Environmental History exam should know the core ways of thinking, topics, and debates in environmental history as presented in courses and recommended readings. They should also expand that knowledge, focusing specifically on the environmental histories of mining regions. Think of the courses as a starting point. Students meet with their exam committee the semester before defining the agreed-upon exam content and developing their synthetic statement. The exact content, length, and depth are at the committee's discretion but should not include more than students should reasonably be expected to know within four semesters of graduate school.

11.3.1 Reading Lists

Students will develop a reading list for each field area in consultation with their advisor and members of the examination committees. Students sign these lists and then provide copies to the advisor and each committee member within the first three weeks of the semester when the exam will be taken. For exams that build on the course material, reading lists should include both a list of courses for which material on the syllabus (and recommended readings) are included *and* additional materials expanding the student's knowledge in that area. The lists developed should be broader than the specialized research pursued in the dissertation and extend beyond what is covered in courses. Reading lists may also include a summary statement/cover sheet (~1000-4000 words) that describes and justifies the scope and breadth of each exam. Whether or not this summary is required is at the committee's discretion.

11.4 Exam Timing

Students typically take the qualifying exam after completing coursework and before the dissertation proposal. The committee Chair (advisor) and student together determine the exact timing. Students should typically choose their field areas by their third semester in residence and plan to take the exam in their fourth or fifth semester. Students should meet with each exam committee member during the semester before the exam to define the exam content, refine reading lists, and develop the synthetic statement. The Graduate School requires that students pass the qualifying exam successfully and submit the Report on Qualifying Examination form within five years of enrollment. This report is submitted to the Department only, and the Department records the completion in an online system accessible to the Graduate School.

Example Comprehensive Exams Schedule:

Semesters 1-2	Take courses and consider field areas
Semester 2	Initial meeting with committee members
Semesters 2-3	Confirm field areas
Semesters 3-4	Finalize and meet with exam committee; Develop reading lists and synthetic statement; Submit statements/lists to Graduate Director before 4 th week of the semester the exam will be taken
Semester 4-5	Determine exam structure; Obtain signatures on exam plan 4 weeks prior to exam Take exam

11.5 Written Exam Structure

The written exam should be taken over no more than one week (M-F, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). It will be composed of three sets of questions that evenly represent all field areas. The sections may be taken as: 1) four-hour sit-down exams; 2) eight-hour take-home exams (each must be completed within an eight-hour time frame); 3) five-day take-home exams (given question on Monday and submitted by Friday); or 4) a combination of the above. Whichever option is chosen must be made in consultation with the advisor and be approved by all examination committee members. The committee will decide on an open or closed book format. The plan should be determined at least four weeks before the exam begins and signed by the student and committee.

Format Examples:

- 5-day take home: 5 days to write well-developed response(s) (~7,500-10,000 words)
- 1-day take home: 8 hours to write a response(s) (~ 4,000 words)
- 4-hour exam: 4-hours to write response(s), may be closed book (~2,000-3,000 words)

The committee will work collaboratively to develop the exam from questions submitted by each committee member, making sure that each of the student's chosen fields are adequately and fairly represented. The committee Chair will administer the exam as per the committee's recommendation. After the exam, the Chair will collate and distribute the questions and the student's answers to the entire committee.

11.5.1 Evaluating Written Exams

Students should make sure their answers respond to the questions and present coherently developed arguments and detailed treatments of the texts chosen to discuss as evidence. Students may introduce texts that do not appear on the reading lists, but the questions and responses are expected to prioritize the agreed-upon content developed in the synthetic statement and reading lists.

Quality of writing is a factor in evaluating exams. Still, the exam committee will not penalize students for superficial blunders or stringent writing style standards, particularly if the exams are

taken in the four-hour sit-down format. Take-home (especially 5-day) exams will be held to a higher standard.

Regardless of how the exams are done, they are read by the full examination committee, which then by consensus decision-making, confers whether or not the student has passed. It is possible that students would pass one field area and fail another. Students will be notified of the results within two weeks of the end of the exam. Committees may record a result of pass conditional pass, or fail. Decisions are made by committee consensus rather than pass/fail a particular section given by a particular faculty member. Regardless of the results, examination committees should communicate clearly to students about the strengths and weaknesses of the exam.

Pass- The exam critically engages with the fields of study, synthesizes material from diverse sources, is written well enough, makes good arguments citing relevant evidence, and identifies gaps in the fields as asked. All questions (except one in some cases) are answered completely and appropriately. Up to one question may be questionable. Above all, the student demonstrates they know and understand the core scholarship in these fields, can think about it critically and can make solid arguments.

Conditional Pass- The exam demonstrates that the student generally knows and understands the core scholarship in the fields, can engage in debates and makes arguments. However, one or two questions may be incomplete, contain inappropriate responses, illogical thinking, or lack evidence. The committee feels the student probably knows the material and is generally prepared to move on to candidacy. Still, some important questions remain, and the committee would like to offer the student the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in an oral exam. A conditional pass says that passing the written exam is conditional on the student's performance in the oral exam and suggests that supplementary work may be required.

Fail- The exam fails to demonstrate core competency and analytical thinking in the chosen fields. Responses to two or more questions are incomplete, contain inappropriate responses or illogical thinking, or lack evidence. Students who fail the written exam do not move on to the oral exam, but they may retake the written exam after at least 30 days have passed from the end of the initial exam. Students may take the written exam up to two times. After two failures of the written exam, students will be reported as unsatisfactory progress.

11.6 Oral Exam

The oral exam is held after the written exam has been passed and within 30 days of the end of the written exam. It should be no more than three hours in length. The oral exam is an opportunity for the committee and student to discuss core arguments/debates in the fields and hear the student's opinions on these. It may cover the same material/topics agreed on for the written exam. The examination committee can structure the oral questions according to its determination of what is necessary for the student to pass the examination. Students should expect that if portions of the written exam are insufficient or underdeveloped, these are topic areas that will likely be stressed in the oral exam. This can be an opportunity for students who scored a "conditional pass" to demonstrate that they know the material and achieve a passing grade on the examination.

Evaluation of the oral exam will be by consensus decision of the committee. Possible results are pass with distinction, pass, conditional pass, or fail (described above). Receiving a conditional pass indicates that the student must undertake supplemental work. The exact nature of supplemental work required is at the committee's discretion, but it should be reviewed and approved by the full committee before an official passing grade on the full exam will be conferred.

Ultimately, a pass or fail grade will be reported to the Graduate School for the exam, not separately for the written and oral components or by field area, on the Report on Qualifying Examination form. If a student fails one field area, the committee decides whether the issues are serious enough to give an overall fail and, if so, how to administer a retake. If a student fails the qualifying exam twice, it cannot be retaken. The student will be dismissed from the program or transferred into the M.S. degree program if this is acceptable to the advisory committee.

11.7 Required Exam Forms

Upon successful qualifying exam completion, **Advisor(s) and the committee must fill out appropriate evaluation forms for internal recording.** These are used in program assessments by the Graduate Director.

Advisors and committee members must also complete the required [graduate school form \(https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/forms-deadlines/\)](https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/policies-procedures/forms-deadlines/) and submit it to the department administrator for internal record keeping.

When the student has a) passed the oral defense and b) completed revisions of their proposal (with a pass), they should submit the [Petition to enter Candidacy](#) form with the Graduate School. Please have the student [check the eligibility requirements](#) before submitting this form.

11.8 Environment and Energy Policy Exam Specifics

The Department requires EEP PhD students to complete exam questions in three field areas. Students choose at least one area in Core Policy (Group A) and at least one Substantive/Disciplinary Area (Group B). The third area could be from either list or it could be focused on one or more research methods. Whether or not students choose a methods field area in the qualifying exam, they will be expected to answer both broad and specific questions about the methods they propose to use for dissertation research at their dissertation proposal defense.

The courses listed below are starting points- they are not required but suggestions. Students develop reading lists for each Field Area (in consultation with the examination committee) which may be based on associated coursework but then go deeper into a specific area of student interest beyond that which was required for the courses.

11.8.1 Core Policy (Group A) - Choose at least one:

Policy Theory - deep focus on the theory and practice of doing policy: SS 5301 The Policy Process; SS 3621 Introduction to Public Policy and Public Management; SS 3636 Perceptions of The Modern State and Governance

Environmental and Natural Resource Policy - focus on knowing basic environmental and natural resource policies in US and/or international context, as well as foundational material on policy theory and application: SS 5300 Environmental and Natural Resource Policy; SS 5313 Sustainability Science, Policy, and Assessment; SS 5325 Water, Policy History and Governance; EC 5640 Natural Resource Economics; 5301 The Policy Process; SS 5635 International Environmental Policy. *Other potential courses:* SS 3300 Environmental Problems; FW5400 Advanced Conservation Biology; FW5376 Advanced Forest and Environmental Resource Management

Energy and Climate Policy - focus on knowing basic energy policies in US and/or international context, as well as foundational material on policy theory and application: SS6100 Energy and Climate Policy; SS 5330 Special Topics in Energy Policy; 5301 The Policy Process; UN 5990 Climate Science and Policy; EC 5620 Energy Economics; SS 3800 Energy Technology and Policy; SS 3635 Climate Change Adaptation; SS 38XX Energy and Society; SS 3521 Energy in American History

11.8.2 Field Areas (Group B) - Choose at least one:

Open Topic: Field of choice determined by student and advisor.

Community Engagement & Planning: SS 4700 Communities & Research; SS 4380 Landscape Ecology and Planning; SS 3XXX Applied Anthropology; SS 5501 Industrial Communities

Environmental Anthropology: SS 4200 Environmental Anthropology; SS 5201 Cultural Dimensions of International Immersion and Research; SS 4210 Global Change in Culture and Society since 1400; SS 3410 World Resources and Development

Environmental Governance: SS 5302 Environmental Governance and Decision making; SS 5325 Water, Policy History and Governance

Environmental History: SS 5550 Global Environmental History; SS 5325 Water, Policy History and Governance; SS 3520 US Environmental History

Environmental/Energy Justice: SS 3810 Energy Security & Justice; SS 3750 Social Inequality; SS 5530 Deindustrialization and Urban Environments; SS 4100 Native American and Indigenous Communities; SS 5315 Population and Environment; SS5400 Environmental Sociology

Environmental Sociology: SS 5400 Sociology of the Environment; SSFW 3760 Human Dimensions of Natural Resources

Methodological Focus: SS 6001 Research Design; any additional courses offered in the method of choice, such as Environmental Policy Analysis, Ethnographic Methods, GIS for Social Science, Statistics for Social Science, Survey Methods, Computational Social Science, Historiography, etc. and may include methods-related courses offered outside the Social Sciences Department.

Science and Technology Studies: SS 3581 History of Science; SS 3801 Science, Technology & Society; SS 3820 Ethical, Legal, and Societal Implications of Nanotechnology; SS 5340 Principles of Interdisciplinary Team Science

11.9 Industrial Heritage and Archaeology Exam Specifics

The Department requires the student to complete exam questions from three areas of expertise, which can be topical, theoretical, geographic or methodological in focus. Students develop a synthetic statement that defines the exam areas, justifies or explains the scope, and specifies the relationship to the dissertation prospectus. At the committee's discretion, they may be asked to develop a ~1,000-word summary statement for each exam area. Students also develop reading lists for each exam area in consultation with the examination committee. The exams should support and be broader than the specialized research pursued in the dissertation.

Developing the synthetic statement allows the student to describe the content and boundaries of the exam areas. For this reason, students must work with their advisor and examination committee early in the process. It is expected that students demonstrate proficiency in the exam areas. Note that the exam areas could be based on associated coursework, but it is expected that the student goes well beyond what was required for the courses.

Whether or not students choose a methods field area in the qualifying exam, they will be expected to answer both broad and specific questions about the methods they propose to use for dissertation research at their dissertation proposal defense.

12. PhD Dissertation Research Proposal Examination and Dissertation Defense

The structure for a Ph.D. student dissertation research proposal exam process in the Social Sciences Department is similar for both the Environmental and Energy Policy and Industrial Heritage and Archaeology programs.

The Michigan Technological University Graduate School requires Ph.D. students to pass a research proposal examination before advancing to candidacy or entering “research only mode.”

The research proposal aims for students to demonstrate that they are prepared to conduct a research project independently. The oral defense provides an opportunity to present research plans publicly and solicit feedback. It also allows the dissertation committee to collectively discuss the student’s proposal to facilitate the implementation of the research project.

12.1 Written Proposal

The dissertation proposal should be academically rigorous and defensible. Students might use the proposal assignment from the Research Design class as an example of the type of structure and style required. Students should also consult their committee for style guidelines, which may vary by discipline and approach. Examples of past proposals and faculty templates are available-check with the Graduate Director for access. Students may generate a proposal similar in content and style to those submitted to a major, student-based research grant (e.g., National Science Foundation (NSF) doctoral dissertation improvement grant or SSHRC dissertation proposal).

The proposal should:

- a) Define the research problem and state the research significance
- b) Place the research problem within the literature and its broader context
- c) Describe detailed methods to be used in data collection and analysis
- d) Provide a list of references
- e) Specify a timeline
- f) Summarize the structure that the dissertation will take (book-style dissertation, set of peer-reviewed papers, etc.)

For students in the EEP program, their proposal should also identify the environmental/energy policy issue/area to which their research will contribute and how it will advance policy solutions.

12.2 Proposal Defense

This section describes completing the dissertation in the Social Sciences Department for both the Environmental and Energy Policy and Industrial Heritage and Archaeology programs. There are two related components of dissertation completion: (1) the final oral examination (public defense) and (2) the written dissertation document. Please also see the [MTU Graduate School webpage](#) for specific details on additional degree completion forms that are required. Students

should recognize that multiple drafts of dissertation articles/chapters are almost always written and revised before the dissertation defense. Significant revisions often occur even after the dissertation defense.

When the dissertation proposal is near completion and the student feels it is appropriate, the student will schedule their proposal defense. Students should work with the Office Assistant to reserve a room for the presentation and announce the Department's proposal defense.

Students must submit the full research proposal to the committee for review at least two weeks prior to the public presentation.

The defense includes a formal public oral presentation of the proposal lasting approximately 30 minutes, followed by time for questions, feedback, and audience discussion. The student then meets privately with the examination committee, who will provide feedback and suggestions. During this discussion, the student will be asked to demonstrate methodological expertise in areas pertinent to their proposed research. Ultimately, the committee determines whether to pass the student on to candidacy status.

Upon passing the proposal defense, the student may proceed with conducting dissertation research. The student is also eligible to advance to candidacy and for “research only mode” if they have already passed the qualifying exams. However, if the committee determines that the student has not successfully defended their proposed research, they may require the student to revise and resubmit the written proposal. If revisions are required, the committee withholds signatures on the graduate school proposal defense form until a revised version is approved.

Graduate School Deadlines and Forms: The Graduate School requires a Report on Research Proposal Examination form to be signed by the committee and submitted to the Graduate School at the successful completion of the dissertation proposal defense.

It is the responsibility of the student and Chair to consider Graduate School deadlines for passing the research proposal examination and submitting the required Report on Research Proposal Examination. The Graduate School website provides guidelines.

Timeline: Students will generally defend their dissertation proposal in their 5th or 6th semester.

12.3 Completing the Dissertation and Defense

This document describes completing the dissertation in the Social Sciences Department for both the *Environmental and Energy Policy* and *Industrial Heritage and Archaeology* programs. A dissertation is the culmination of a research project and a professional representation of the student's work and the advisor, program, and Michigan Tech. Dissertations must be prepared professionally in order best to reflect the quality and intellectual merit of the work.

There are two related components of dissertation completion: (1) the final oral examination (public defense) and (2) the written dissertation document. Guidance for how each function in the Social Sciences Department is covered here. Please also see the MTU Graduate School webpage for specific details on additional degree completion forms required.

Students should recognize that multiple drafts of dissertation articles/chapters are almost always written and revised before the dissertation defense. Significant revisions often occur even after the dissertation defense. If you are writing the first version in one semester, that will rarely be the semester of defense.

12.4 Timeline

This table summarizes steps and timelines. The first section lays out a general timeline for meeting key PhD milestones. The second section on the semester of defense includes deadlines that must be met to graduate on time. These deadlines are the absolute last minute, and students should be aware that if they are waiting until these deadlines, it is unlikely that everything will go perfectly and that they will graduate in that semester. Students defending on the last possible date, often do not have sufficient time to complete revisions in time to graduate that semester.

Students are advised to anticipate the deadlines in the semester before their planned graduation and to have a very near-complete draft of the full dissertation by the very beginning of the semester of planned graduation. Students should consider scheduling their defense for earlier in the semester.

12.4.1 PhD Milestones Example Timeline:

Semester 4 or 5	Qualifying Exam
Semester 5 or 6	Dissertation Proposal Defense
Semesters 6-9	Dissertation Defense/Complete Degree
Semester of Defense/Degree Completion (dates listed are the last possible-plan to do sooner)	
Week 1	Develop a plan for degree completion with advisor and committee
Week 2-Week 7	Schedule defense & reserve room
Two weeks prior to defense (Tuesday of Week 10 is last possible if you are defending on last possible day)	Submit final dissertation draft to the committee and Graduate School; File the pre-defense form with Graduate School
Tuesday of Week 12	Hold public defense
Soon after the defense	File Oral Examination Form with Graduate School
Thursday of Week 12	Make revisions and submit to advisor/committee for approval
Monday of Week 14	Submit final, committee-approved version of dissertation to Graduate School; Submit Approval of Dissertation form to Graduate School

12.5 Scheduling the Defense

According to the MTU Graduate School, students may schedule their dissertation defense at least two academic-year semesters after successful completion of the qualifying examination and at least one academic-year semester following successful completion of the research proposal examination. The exact semester of defense will vary depending on the type of research and speed of progress. While in “research mode,” students should remain in close communication with their advisor and committee about progress and plans for degree completion. Please do not assume that advisors or committee members will be available for summer defenses.

Students are expected to work with the Committee Chair (advisor) and other committee members (as necessary), sharing drafts of written work for several months before the dissertation defense. Advisors (and other committee members) read and provide feedback on early drafts to ensure a defensible research project that is well-written and in a professional and publishable writing style.

Students must let their advisor know they plan to graduate by the start of the semester of planned graduation. By the first week of the semester, the student should work with their advisor and committee to develop a completion plan. This planning process includes sharing segments that are already completed, sharing work in progress, and setting deadlines for completion. The committee will review, comment, and suggest revisions to the current versions. Based on this feedback, the student confers with the advisor to determine if the dissertation is defensible that semester.

Five to seven weeks prior to the defense, the student schedules a time to conduct the defense with the advisor and committee. Students need to work with the Administrative Assistant to schedule a room, reserve any necessary technology, and to announce the defense to the Department and MTU community.

At least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense, students must (1) distribute the completed final draft of the dissertation to the full advisory committee; (2) submit the pre-defense form with the graduate school, found here:

<https://www.mtu.edu/gradschool/documents/policies-procedures/forms/pre-defense.pdf>; and (3) submit the complete defense draft of the dissertation to the Graduate School (via Canvas) for formatting review (it should already be formatted to graduate school specifications).

12.6 Written Dissertation

Students present the research they undertake as the culmination of the doctoral degree program in the form of either a monograph or a collection of academic articles. Students work together with their advisor and committee to determine which style is most appropriate. Regardless of style, the written document must be prepared to adhere to the Graduate School guidelines (*The Guide* published by the MTU Graduate School), and the final document must be submitted to the Graduate School, along with forms required by the Graduate School. The final version will become a permanent acquisition of the MTU library and will be publicly available via Digital Commons (<https://digitalcommons.mtu.edu/>).

Students writing a monograph will work with the committee to determine the length and other expectations. Typically, the monograph is structured with chapters that include an introduction, comprehensive review of relevant literature, research methods, conclusion and summary, and bibliography. The candidate is the sole author.

Students writing a collection of academic articles will typically write 3 to 4 articles about a related topic/policy or following a consistent theme. Each article should typically be prepared for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. Suppose different audiences or formats are expected for one or more articles (i.e., a magazine article, policy brief, white paper, blog, website, database, video, National Register nomination, agency report, etc.). In that case, the student should work with their committee to evaluate those possibilities.

Students taking the collection of articles approach are required to write an overview chapter that introduces the collection, describes how the multiple pieces fit together to address overarching research and/or policy goal, explains how the collection fits within the larger body of scholarship on the topic/policy or in the field/sub-field, summarizes the findings and interprets what they (together) mean and their joint implications, and describes the overall research process/methods. If the collection includes co-authored papers, the overview chapter should also include a description of the broader research project of which the dissertation is a part and clarify the student's specific role(s) in designing, conducting, and writing the included research. For co-authored papers to be included, the student should be the first author and clearly explain the student's role in co-authored papers compared to co-authors.

12.7 Oral Examination

Students present their doctoral dissertation research in a public oral examination at the defense. They should prepare a formal public presentation lasting 30-40 minutes explaining the dissertation research. Due to time constraints, the presentation may not cover all aspects of the work conducted. For instance, a student who has written 3 articles may choose to briefly review two of the articles and focus the public presentation on the third article. In the presentation, the candidate should justify the validity of the methods and conclusions contained in the dissertation and should demonstrate familiarity with the significance of the study concerning the existing body of knowledge. Students should be prepared to take questions from the audience after the presentation.

After the public meeting, the student meets privately with the examining committee. The student is expected to defend and support the entirety of the research included in the written dissertation. This discussion examines whether the student has a good command of the topic under investigation, the related broader literature, and the methods employed. The student may also be asked to respond to broader questions to demonstrate expertise in the field of degree. This meeting might also include a discussion of suggested revisions that committee members would like to see made to the written document. Students need to bring a copy of the Report on Final Oral Examination (see Graduate School) to the defense.

After the examination, the student will be asked to leave the room to allow the committee to confer in private. The committee will decide: (1) whether the student has passed the Final Oral

Examination and (2) if and what revisions to the written document are required before graduation. The student's oral examination results (pass or fail) must be reported to the Graduate School on the Report on Final Oral Examination Form. This form is meant to capture the results of the oral exam and should be submitted to the graduate school following the oral defense and before submitting the final dissertation. A student may pass the oral examination but still have extensive revisions to the written document required.

If revisions are required, the student's should work with the full committee to document what specific revisions are required before final submission to the Graduate School and granting the degree. The advisor and committee should complete this document as soon as is reasonable so that the student has an opportunity to make revisions before the final degree deadlines at the end of the semester.

If the student fails to pass the oral examination, they may be recommended to be dismissed from the program. Alternatively, the student and their advisor can make the case that a second attempt should be allowed. To request a second attempt, the student should submit to their advisor a one-page document justifying why they believe a second chance is warranted. The committee will comment, sign, and share the document with the committee and the Graduate Director. If at least three committee members (including the advisor) and the Graduate Director agree to a second attempt, it will be granted. The second attempt may not be scheduled in the same semester as the original. Failure to pass a second attempt will result in dismissal from the program.

12.8 Post Defense

Following the successful oral defense, the student makes all required revisions (as directed by the committee) and all formatting revisions (as required by the Graduate School). All revisions need to be approved by the committee and potentially by other committee members. When the committee has approved the final document, the student must file the Approval of a Dissertation, Thesis, or Report Form to the Graduate School along with a copy of the final dissertation by the deadline for the semester they wish to complete the degree (the Monday of Week 13). Please note: Students who do not meet the Graduate School deadline will not graduate and will be required to maintain continuous enrolment (1 credit) until they complete their degree.

The Graduate School conducts a final formatting review (TDR review), which may take two weeks. Students will be notified by the Graduate School if there are formatting corrections that need to be made. If so, these will have to be completed by the Friday of Finals Week to avoid any additional fees.

Students should also check with the Graduate School and file any other additional completion of degree forms or exit surveys.

13. Appendices

13.1 Environmental and Energy Policy - MS

Prerequisites: Environmental Sciences, Microeconomics, and Statistics

Credit and Coursework Requirements

Description	Number of credits	Graduate School requirements
Coursework selected and approved by the advisor (specified in student's degree schedule)	0	NA
Core requirements	9	NA
Required electives group 1	3	NA
Required electives group 2	3	NA
Required electives group 3	3	NA
Required electives group 4	6	NA
Coursework credits total (total of above rows)	24	20 - 24
Research courses credit total	6	6 - 10
Total Coursework and Research Credits	30	30 (minimum)

Core requirements

Course number	Credits
SS 5300 Environmental & Energy Policy OR SS 6100 Energy & Climate Policy	3
SS 5350 Environmental Policy Analysis	3
SS 5950 Professional Development	3

Required Electives Group 1

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS 4211 Ethnographic Methods	3
SS 5003 Survey Methods	3

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS 5004 Social Statistics	3
SS 5049 GIS for Graduate Researchers	3
SS 5050 Advanced GIS Methods and Projects	3

Required Electives Group 2

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS 4200 Environmental Anthropology	3
SS 4400 Environmental Sociology	3
SS 4700 Communities and Research	3
SS 5550 Global Environmental History	3
EC 5640 Natural Resource Economics	3
EC 5650 Environmental Economics	3
FW 4111 Indigenous Natural Resource Management	3

Required Electives Group 3

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS 5300 Environmental and Natural Resource Policy OR SS 6100 Energy and Climate Policy	3
SS 5301 Policy Process	3
SS 5325 Water Policy, History & Governance	3
UN 5400 Climate Science and Policy	3

Required Electives Group 4

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
Any approved electives	6

Research Courses

SS5990 Graduate Research

13.2 Environmental and Energy Policy - PhD (with Masters)

Prerequisites: Environmental Sciences, Microeconomics, and Statistics

Credit and Coursework Requirements

Description	Number of credits	Graduate School requirements
Coursework selected and approved by the advisor (specified in student's degree schedule)	0	NA
Core requirements	15	NA
Required electives group 1	3	NA
Required electives group 2	3	NA
Required electives group 3	3	NA
Required electives group 4	6	NA
Coursework credits total (total of above rows)	30	NA
Research courses credit total	0	NA
Total Coursework and Research Credits	30	30 (minimum)

Core requirements

Course number	Credits
SS 5300 Environmental and Natural Resource Policy OR SS 6100 Energy and Climate Policy SS5301 The Policy Process	3
SS 5301 The Policy Process	3
SS 5720 Social Thought, Contemporary Issues	3
SS 5950 Professional Development	3
SS 6002 Research Design	3

Required Electives Group 1

Course numbers	Credits
SS 4211 Ethnographic Methods	3
SS 5003 Survey Methods	3
SS 5004 Social Statistics	3

SS 5049 GIS for Graduate Researchers	3
SS 5050 Advanced Methods and Projects	3

Required Electives Group 2

Course numbers	Credits
SS 4200 Environmental Anthropology	3
SS 4400 Environmental Sociology	3
SS 4700 Communities and Research	3
SS 5550 Global Environmental History	3
EC 5640 Natural Resource Economics	3
EC 5650 Environmental Economics	3
FW 4111 Indigenous Natural Resource Management	3

Required Electives Group 3

Course numbers	Credits
SS 5300 Environmental and Natural Resource Policy OR SS 6100 Energy and Climate Policy	3
SS 5325 Water Policy, History & Governance	3
SS 5350 Environmental Policy Analysis	3
UN 5400 Climate Science and Policy	3

Required Electives Group 4

Course numbers	Credits
Any approved electives	6

Research Courses

SS 6600 PhD Dissertation Research
SS 6500 Directed Readings

13.3 Environmental and Energy Policy - PhD (without Masters)

Prerequisites: Environmental Sciences, Microeconomics, and Statistics

Credit and Coursework Requirements

Description	Number of credits	Graduate School requirements
Coursework selected and approved by the advisor (specified in student's degree schedule)	0	NA
Core requirements	15	NA
Required electives group 1	3	NA
Required electives group 2	3	NA
Required electives group 3	3	NA
Required electives group 4	6	NA
Coursework credits total (total of above rows)	30	NA
Research courses credit total	30	NA
Total Coursework and Research Credits	60	60 (minimum)

Core requirements

Course numbers	Credits
SS 5300 Environmental and Natural Resource Policy OR SS 6100 Energy and Climate Policy SS5301 The Policy Process	3
SS 5301 The Policy Process	3
SS 5720 Social Thought, Contemporary Issues	3
SS 5950 Professional Development	3
SS 6002 Research Design	3

Required Electives Group 1

Course Numbers	Credits
SS 4211 Ethnographic Methods	3

Course Numbers	Credits
SS 5003 Survey Methods	3
SS 5004 Social Statistics	3
SS 5049 GIS for Graduate Researchers	3
SS 5050 Advanced Methods and Projects	3

Required Electives Group 2

Course Numbers	Credits
SS 4200 Environmental Anthropology	3
SS 4400 Environmental Sociology	3
SS 4700 Communities and Research	3
SS 5550 Global Environmental History	3
EC 5640 Natural Resource Economics	3
EC 5650 Environmental Economics	3
FW 4111 Indigenous Natural Resource Management	3

Required Electives Group 3

Course Numbers	Credits
SS 5300 Environmental and Natural Resource Policy OR SS 6100 Energy and Climate Policy	3
SS 5325 Water Policy, History & Governance	3
SS 5350 Environmental Policy Analysis	3
UN 5400 Climate Science and Policy	3

Required Electives Group 4

Any approved electives	6
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Research Courses

SS 6600 PhD Dissertation Research
SS 6500 Directed Readings

13.4 Industrial Heritage and Archaeology - MS - Thesis

Credit and Coursework Requirements

Description	Number of credits	Graduate School requirements
Coursework selected and approved by the advisor (specified in student's degree schedule)	0	NA
Core requirements	12	NA
Required electives group 1	6	NA
Required electives group 2	6	NA
Required electives group 3		NA
Required electives group 4		NA
Coursework credits total (total of above rows)	24	20 - 24
Research courses credit total	8	6 - 10
Total Coursework and Research Credits	32	30 (minimum)

Core requirements

Course number	Credits
SS 5551 Global Industrial History	3
SS 5720 Social Thought	3
SS 6002 Research Design	3
SS 5950 Professional Development	3

Required Electives Group 1

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS4211 Ethnographic Methods	3
SS5049 GIS for Graduate Researchers	3
SS5050 Advanced GIS Methods and Projects	3
SS5230 Arch Analysis and Interpretation	3
SS5503 Material Culture Studies	3

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS5700 Archaeological Field Methods	3
SS5800 Documenting Buildings	3

Required Electives Group 2

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS5500 History of Technology	3
SS5501 Industrial Communities	3
SS5502 Historical Archaeology	3
SS5530 Deindustrialization and Urban Environments	3
SS5550 Global Environmental History	3
SS5600 Industrial Archaeology	3
SS5900 Heritage Management	3
SS5010 Directed Study	3

Research Courses

SS5990 Graduate Research

13.5 Industrial Heritage and Archaeology - MS (Report)

Credit and Coursework Requirements

Description	Number of credits	Graduate School requirements
Coursework selected and approved by the advisor (specified in student's degree schedule)	0	NA
Core requirements	12	NA
Required electives group 1	6	NA
Required electives group 2	6	NA
Required electives group 3	3	NA
Required electives group 4		NA
Coursework credits total (total of above rows)	27	24 - 28
Research courses credit total	5	2-6
Total Coursework and Research Credits	32	30 (minimum)

Core requirements

Course number	Credits
SS 5551 Global Industrial History	3
SS 5720 Social Thought	3
SS 6002 Research Design	3
SS 5950 Professional Development	3

Required Electives Group 1

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS4211 Ethnographic Methods	3
SS5049 GIS for Graduate Researchers	3
SS5050 Advanced GIS Methods and Projects	3
SS5230 Arch Analysis and Interpretation	3

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS5503 Material Culture Studies	3
SS5700 Archaeological Field Methods	3
SS5800 Documenting Buildings	3

Required Electives Group 2

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS5500 History of Technology	3
SS5501 Industrial Communities	3
SS5502 Historical Archaeology	3
SS5530 Deindustrialization and Urban Environments	3
SS5550 Global Environmental History	3
SS5600 Industrial Archaeology	3
SS5900 Heritage Management	3
SS5010 Directed Study	3

Required Electives Group 3

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
Any approved courses	3

Research Courses

SS5990 Graduate Research

13.6 Industrial Heritage and Archaeology - PhD (with Masters)

Credit and Coursework Requirements

Description	Number of credits	Graduate School requirements
Coursework selected and approved by the advisor (specified in student's degree schedule)	0	NA
Core requirements	15	NA
Required electives group 1	9	NA
Required electives group 2	6	NA
Required electives group 3		NA
Required electives group 4		NA
Coursework credits total (total of above rows)	30	NA
Research courses credit total	0	NA
Total Coursework and Research Credits	30	30 (minimum)

Core requirements

Course number	Credits
SS 5551 Global Industrial History	3
SS 5720 Social Thought	3
SS 6002 Research Design	3
SS 5950 Professional Development	3

Required Electives Group 1

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS6500 Directed Readings (qualifying exams preparation)	9

Required Electives Group 2

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits

Any approved electives	6
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Research Courses

SS 6600 PhD Dissertation Research
SS 6500 Directed Readings

13.6 Industrial Heritage and Archaeology - PhD (without Masters)

Credit and Coursework Requirements

Description	Number of credits	Graduate School requirements
Coursework selected and approved by the advisor (specified in student's degree schedule)	0	NA
Core requirements	15	NA
Required electives group 1	9	NA
Required electives group 2	6	NA
Required electives group 3		NA
Required electives group 4		NA
Coursework credits total (total of above rows)	30	NA
Research courses credit total	35	NA
Total Coursework and Research Credits	65	60 (minimum)

Core requirements

Course number	Credits
SS 5551 Global Industrial History	3
SS 5720 Social Thought	3
SS 6002 Research Design	3
SS 5950 Professional Development	3
SS5900 Heritage Management	3

Required Electives Group 1

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
SS6500 Directed Readings (qualifying exams preparation)	9

Required Electives Group 2

List course numbers OR Describe course requirements (ex: Any level of MEEM courses)	Credits
Any approved electives	6

Research Courses

SS 6600 PhD Dissertation Research
SS 6500 Directed Readings

13.7 Sustainable Communities - MS

[This section of the handbook is in-progress]

13.8 Accelerated MS - EEP

[This section of the handbook is in-progress]

13.9 Accelerated MS - IHA

[This section of the handbook is in-progress]

13.10 Coursework Options - IHA and EEP

Contact Graduate Director for details