

The Department of Student Life

Student Life Mission Statement

The Department of Student Life, within the Division of Student Affairs and Services, is a partner in the educational process and mission of Michigan State University, a pioneer land grant institution.

Student Life:

- engages students in active learning and encourages scholarship;
- prepares students for leadership roles within the University and future work/ community settings;
- enhances the educational environment by promoting, educating, and facilitating campus-wide understanding of students' rights, responsibilities, and freedoms; and
- conducts research studies to further knowledge of current and future college students for dissemination through outreach relationships.

Student Life creates opportunities for students to clarify and challenge their values, potentials, roles, and relationships within the University, the greater community, and the global society.

Student Life Values

Education. The Department of Student Life shares responsibilities in teaching, research, and public service to nurture intellectual inquiry and lifelong learning. Student Life enhances holistic student learning and personal development through the integration of the in-class and out-of-class experiences.

Civic Responsibility. The Department of Student Life supports the students' and community's rights and responsibilities related to: freedom of expression; free exchange of ideas; and making meaning of dissent and conflict; through dialogue, intervention/mediation, and appropriate action. Student Life educates students to be knowledgeable of, responsible to, and actively engaged in the MSU and greater communities. Student Life advocates for and strives to include students in decisions that impact their communities.

Uniqueness. The Department of Student Life promotes full participation of MSU students, faculty, staff and the greater community in the creation of an inclusive community. Student Life supports and encourages an environment in which the dignity and unique characteristics of the individual are recognized and respected.

Partnership. The Department of Student Life seeks to establish symbiotic and cooperative partnerships with students, faculty, and other administrative units. Student Life's enhances the student experience through our partnerships with local, national, and international.

Professionalism. The Department of Student Life is committed to being a dynamic learning organization that pursues quality and innovation to creatively fulfill our mission. As reflective student affairs professionals, we are accountable for: upholding ethical standards; generating new knowledge; analyzing daily practice; and enhancing skills.

GRADUATE STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

Because of the broad range of program areas within the Department of Student Life, graduate students have a number of opportunities within the department to expand their experiences, gain a broader perspective of student affairs and services, and further refine their professional skills.

Assistantships – no openings at this time.

Graduate Administrative Professionals are expected to be immersed in the assistantship experiences. Although students have a halftime appointment, it is important for applicants to know that an expectation exists that graduate assistants will maintain daily office hours as well as attend evening and weekend events.

These positions are designed to reflect a professional experience in student affairs. As a result of this experience, students can expect to gain skills, knowledge, and competencies.

Candidates are encouraged to indicate the reason for their interest in the department in their cover letters as well their interest from the following: judicial affairs, campus life orientation, Greek affairs, leadership development, event planning, student organizations, advisement, and/or special events and/or programs.

Practica –opportunities typically are available in most areas each year

A practicum experience is typically a combination of reading/research on the particular program area, observation and interaction with students, participation in staff meetings, and at least one hands-on project. Each practicum experience is different, as the graduate student and supervisor will determine set work experiences and criteria on a case-by-case basis. Practicum experiences typically require at least 10-hours/week, in a combination of office hours and evening/weekend work as necessary for the observation and completion of hands-on projects. When meeting with the Practicum supervisor, students should be ready to discuss time commitments for the semester!

Functional Areas

Below is a brief summary of potential assistantship and/or practica experiences available within the Department. Unless otherwise noted, each area offers both assistantship and practicum opportunities. Not every experience or position is available every semester, while other more focused or specific experiences that meets the graduate student's professional needs may be developed as well.

Leadership Development: Students in leadership development can expect to gain exposure to current leadership literature and best practices in leadership development and will be considered a member of the leadership development team. Students will have opportunities to create and facilitate leadership training workshops; select, train, and advise student leaders; create accessible resources on the web for all students leaders; and assist in the planning and implementation of campus-wide leadership conferences and participate in departmental activities.

Student Organization Advisor Development: The student(s) in this area will identify and develop an array of accessible resource files for use by the advisors of the 500+ registered student organizations. These resources will be made available on the web for easy access. The full project experience will begin with a review of the latest advising research information, survey and focus group research efforts seeking feedback in the kinds of resources that are needed, and identification of relevant resources. Power Point presentations, handouts, web page links, and an advisor's manual will ultimately be the outcome of this practicum experience.

Student Activities and Organizations: The student in this area will be part of a team that is creating and implementing a new on-line registration and events approval process for student-sponsored activities. The student also will gain general experience in working with University policies and guidelines, facility management personnel, and in monitoring student groups' self-regulation during major events on campus. The full project experience will include assisting with staff coverage for Student Life sponsored activities and, assisting with the articulation and facilitation of educational sessions for leaders of student organizations.

Judicial Affairs: Students in Judicial Affairs can expect to gain a broad understanding of the campus judicial system, and will be considered members of the Student Life team. Students will have opportunities to administer conduct meetings, train and advise judiciary boards, manage student records and the judicial database, oversee the judiciary member selection process (spring semester only), and participate in departmental activities.

Campus Life Orientation (practicum only): The Campus Life Orientation practicum experience will allow the student to design, facilitate, and evaluate informational programs for entering commuter students. Additional opportunities exist for aiding in the design, implementation, and evaluation of Michigan State's undergraduate fall orientation program, Fall Welcome. Resulting experiences will include: application of commuter student-related literature to the creation of programs, interaction with academic and student affairs professionals across campus, presentation skills, and program evaluation design.

Greek Affairs: Experiences in Greek Affairs will lead to exposure to "Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs;" an understanding of Student Life as a whole; opportunities to apply student development theory in a practical work setting; experience with program planning, implementation, and evaluation consistent with mission and goals; advising student activities, program development, and Greek governing board groups; facilitate leadership development programs; and collaborate with other on and off campus departments, organizations, service agencies, and community and city leaders.

Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Prevention:

The student in this position will become an important part of the continued development and training for the Sexual Assault and relationship Violence (SARV) Prevention Program. This program trains and educates upperclassmen to become peer educators who provide mandated workshops to incoming freshmen. They can expect to gain experience in recruiting of peer educators, training development and implementation, program development, sexual assault and relationship violence education and coordinating with related programs on campus.

Housing Fair Liaison (practicum only): The student in this position will assist in coordinating the Fourth Annual MSU Housing Fair as a departmental representative on the Housing Fair Committee. This self-sustaining educational event attracts 3,000 to 4,000 students and 40 to 50 property owners and service providers. The graduate student will work in collaboration with representatives of student groups, Community Relations Coalition, University Housing, City of East Lansing, area landlords and service providers, tenant resource groups, and others in sponsoring a highly successful campus-wide event for students who are considering off-campus living options. The experience will include involvement in program planning, implementation and evaluation, and the student's understanding of town/gown issues will be enhanced. Additional activities may include development and implementation of the marketing plan, registration process, volunteer recruitment, training and assessment, and educational components of the event.

PROJECT BASED PRACTICA MAY ALSO BE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST