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 to expand their experiences, gain a broader perspective of student affairs and services, and further refine their professional skills.

Assistantships

Graduate Administrative Professionals (GAPs) are expected to be immersed in the assistantship experience. In order to reflect a professional experience in student affairs, GAPs will maintain regular office hours in addition and will attend evening and weekend events. As a result of these experience, GAPs can expect to gain relevant skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to be successful beyond graduate school. Positions marked with an asterisk are anticipated to be open for the 2013-2014 school year.

Practica – opportunities typically are available in most areas each year

A practicum experience may include 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 student and supervisor will determine work experiences and criteria on a case-by-case basis. Practicum experiences typically require 8-10 hours/week, in a combination of office hours and evening/weekend work.

Functional Areas

Below is a brief summary of potential assistantship and/or practica experiences available within Student Life. Each area offers both assistantship and practicum opportunities. Not every experience or position is available every semester, while the possibility remains to develop a focused or tailored experience not listed here.

Leadership Development*: Graduate students in this area will be exposed to current leadership literature and best practices, and have the opportunity to work with faculty, staff and students from across the campus. The graduate student may also; create and facilitate leadership training workshops; select, train, and advise student leaders; create accessible resources on the web for all student leaders; and, assist in the planning and implementation of campus-wide leadership conferences such as LeaderShape.

Student Organizations and Activities*: Graduate students in this area will focus on supporting and developing student organizations, and supporting their campus activities. Through a review of existing leadership and advising research, and survey/focus group research, graduate students will develop an array of resources for advisors and leaders of the 600+ registered student organizations. Students will also conduct workshops for student leaders on financial management, effective communication, and organizational structure, and facilitate their understanding of issues relevant to approved student activities (e.g., University regulations, facility management, self monitoring). Graduate students will also provide coverage for Student Life and approved organization events.

Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution: Graduate students in this area will gain a broad understanding of various conflict resolution tools designed to promote campus wide understanding of student rights and responsibilities in a learning community. To this end,
graduate students will receive training and gain experience with the student disciplinary process, restorative practices, and other relevant areas. Day to day work will include meeting with students accused of violating University policy, advising a hearing board, facilitating a variety conflict resolution strategies, and providing educational opportunities for students.

**Campus Life Orientation (practicum only):** Graduate students in this area will help 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:** Graduate students in this area will gain 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 Program:** Graduate students in this position will participate in 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. Graduate students 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.

**Campus and Community Programs:** Graduate students in this area will be assigned as the department representative to campus-wide and community committee(s) and advise an Undergraduate Student Government board or committee. The graduate student will coordinate and facilitate University wide programs and events and recruit and supervise interns as needed. The experience will include assisting with the student tax collecting groups’ annual referenda process, maintaining the housing and resources listing services and assisting with other areas of Student Life as appropriate.

**APPLICATION PROCESS**

**Assistantships:** Submit a resume and a cover letter to Trace Camacho, Assistant Director of Student Life. Address specific areas of interest in your cover letters. To receive priority consideration, applications should be to at camacho3@msu.edu by February 15, 2013. However, applications will be accepted until the positions are filled.

**Practica:** Call Student Life at 355-8286 and ask for the associate/assistant director responsible for the functional area(s) of interest.