Michigan State University
Ecological Community Psychology
Welcome Guide
Fun Fact:

MSU’s community psych program is the oldest in the country!
The Basics

Congrats again on joining us in the Ecological Community Psychology Department at MSU! We're very much looking forward to having you. Before we dive into the things you need to know, here are some facts about the new place you'll call home!

Lansing

- Lansing is the capital of the state of Michigan
- The population is 114,297
- In 2010 it was named one of the 10 Great Cities for Young Adults
- Dwayne Johnson’s character in *Tooth Fairy* is a minor league hockey player for the fictitious Lansing Ice Wolves.

East Lansing

- The population is 48,579
- The median age of the city is 21.6 years old
- East Lansing was the major junction of two important Native American trails
- In 1963, a visiting 3,000 lb. elephant escaped from its trainer in East Lansing. She led police on a 2 mile rampage, causing thousands of dollars in damage. The elephant was tragically killed by local police.

Michigan State University

- MSU was founded in 1855 and now has a 5,200-acre campus
- MSU is a member of the Big Ten Conference and won the Rose Bowl last year
- There are 37,988 undergraduates and 11,355 graduate and professional students
- Homogenization of milk was discovered at MSU
Getting Your Student ID

You will need an MSU Student ID soon after you arrive at MSU. The information on the card will be necessary to set up your insurance, make doctor’s appointments, get student discounts, etc.

You can get your Student ID at:

The International Center
427 N. Shaw Lane, Room 170
East Lansing, MI 48824
(517) 355-4500

The office is open M-F, 8 am-5 pm

For more information, visit: http://idoffice.msu.edu/requirements.html#students
Parking

There are a couple different options for parking near or on campus. These range in price and accessibility. They include:

1. UNIVERSITY PARKING PASS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS
   
   You can park on campus for $121 per semester. Those with valid parking permits affixed to their windshield may park in faculty/staff spaces south of the Red Cedar River and in the Brody Complex. Parking is not allowed north of the Red Cedar River (where the Psychology Building is) unless at a paid meter or when the posted employee restriction is no longer in effect. Parking with a graduate assistant parking permit is allowed in pay lots 79 and 62 West; in any other pay lots you must pay the hourly fee. For more information, please visit [http://police.msu.edu/permits.asp](http://police.msu.edu/permits.asp)
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**DISCOUNT CITY PARKING PERMIT**

You can park at the Division Street ramp (Lot 10 – Colorful Parking Garage at Division & Albert Streets – The Hamster Cage) for $150. This lot is owned by the City of East Lansing but the discounted price is only available through the Council of Graduate Students (COGS). For more information, please visit [http://cogs.msu.edu/services.html](http://cogs.msu.edu/services.html)

See next page for more parking options.
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**FREE NEIGHBORHOOD PARKING**

Most of us choose to park in the neighborhood north of campus close to the psychology building. While spaces are always open, the availability of closer spaces fluctuates depending on how busy the time of day is. Walks to campus can range from 5-15 minutes. On the map below, **GREEN** indicates 2-hour parking, while **RED** indicates all day parking.
Riding the Bus

Taking the bus can be an easy and inexpensive alternative to driving to campus. Depending on the neighborhood you’re living in, this option might actually be faster than driving. Some lines run every 10 minutes, while others run every 45 minutes. A number of bus lines stop right outside of the psychology building. Lansing and East Lansing use the CATA system.

Students receive a discounted rate when riding CATA. To get a student fare on the bus ($.60 as opposed to $1.20), you just have to show your student ID. You can pay for this right on the bus.

Another option is to get a student bus pass. Each semester costs $50 for an unlimited number of rides. To buy the pass in person requires cash or a check and your student ID. This may be done at the following locations:
You can also buy passes online here:
http://www.cata.org/fares/buyapass/buypassesonline/entity/tabid/313/c-7-fixed-route-passes.aspx
Building Access

The psychology building is open from 6am-9pm. As long as you are inside the building, you can stay in as long as you want. If you want to come in between 9pm and 6am you must send an email to Kathy Bennington (kathyb@msu.edu) requesting that you get your MSU ID set up to gain electronic access to the psychology building after hours and provide her with your PID and the six digit number following the asterisk on the back of your student ID.

Once you figure out where your office is, you will need to contact your temporary advisor and request that they put in an office services request for you to get your keys. You will need to get a key to your office and a key that opens room 134C. After your advisor submits an office services request you will receive an email and be instructed to pick up your keys from Leslie Baldwin (lbaldwin@msu.edu) in room 262.

Online Service Request Forms

This resource and its utility will be explained during your orientation, but as a helpful reminder, to put in a request:

1) Go to psychology.msu.edu
2) Login using the small lock at the upper right of the screen
3) Select Office Services Request, Tech Support Request, or Maintenance and Building Request from the left column
4) Fill out the corresponding form
To gain access to the MSU network, email your temporary advisor and request that they put in a tech support request. After this is done, you will be able to log in to any computer in the psychology building using your NET ID.

Software

For PSY 815, SPSS will be necessary. Department computers should have the most recent version of SPSS on them, but most people also want to have the program on their personal computers. If you don’t already have it on your personal computer, the department has a subscription that you may use. To access this subscription and its installation instructions, sign out a copy from Gary Schrock in office 314.

Printing

Depending on where your office is, you may be able to use its printing facilities. You may also print in room 231 and make copies in room 262. The copy code is 3763. Room 262 is open from 8-12 and 1-5 M-F.

Room 262 really strict about their lunch hour so don’t chance being in there after noon!
BUYING BOOKS
For all book purchases, we recommend using **bigwords.com**
This site compares book prices across multiple sites and has been very useful.

WHICH BOOKS TO BUY
You will not have to buy very many books your first year of grad school. While the books for your Methods course will be necessary, the books for Statistics (PSY 815) are NOT necessary. If you ever feel like you need them (some of us never did) see if you can borrow a copy from another student in your class or in the eco-community department.

TO PRINT OR NOT TO PRINT
Instead of textbooks, most of your courses will have readings posted online. These vary in length, but most are relatively long. While some people like to print these readings, most do not find it necessary and are comfortable reading off of their computer screens. If you do choose to print, know that the readings will likely fill multiple large binders.

ALTERNATIVES TO PRINTING
If you don't already use a reference manager, now might be the time to start! Some students might recommend EndNote or Zotero, but our cohort has become fond of Mendeley. This free program allows you to store all of your articles in one place (on your desktop but accessible online, like Dropbox). There are functions for highlighting, commenting on, and taking notes within each article. It makes organizing and citing all of your resources pretty simple!
Thinking Ahead

You might already be wondering about funding for coming semester or what you should be doing for your thesis. Don’t stress! Here’s what you need to know:

**IRB TRAINING**
You will need to be IRB certified sometime soon.
If you have never been certified, do your training here: [http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu/requiredtraining.html](http://www.humanresearch.msu.edu/requiredtraining.html)
If you have been certified, but need to renew, complete this training: [https://www.citiprogram.org/](https://www.citiprogram.org/)

**SUMMER FUNDING 2015**
You will receive an email fairly early in the fall semester about summer TA positions. TRY YOUR BEST TO RESPOND TO THIS THE SAME DAY! Slots can go rather quickly and the department does not guarantee summer funding. Other opportunities can be found at: [http://grad.msu.edu/funding/](http://grad.msu.edu/funding/)

**MASTERS PLAN OF STUDY**
You will not have to complete this until the end of spring semester. In order to get a jump start though, you can fill out all of the classes you will be taking for your first year on your Master’s Plan of Study form, which is accessible here: [http://psychology.msu.edu/GraduateProgram/Forms.aspx](http://psychology.msu.edu/GraduateProgram/Forms.aspx)

Essentially the plan of study is the paperwork that outline the 30 credits you will take in order to qualify for your masters. It can be amended as you go and you will need 3 faculty to sign off as committee members. You will talk about this at your Annual Review (which happens in April and is not a big deal for first year students) and your professors will help you prepare as well.
Helpful Tips from Our Cohort

What did we wish we knew before we started our first year? Well, let us tell you!

CORTNEY
The first semester of practicum should be a time to explore! Don’t feel pressured to find a site and/or project right away. You have the entire semester to meet a ton of different stakeholders in the area. The more immersed you can become in the community the better!

JAMIE
Practice self-care!!! First year is hard and overwhelming and it’s important to process, talk about it, complain, and realize your cohort is going through the same thing! Grad school can suck so make sure to take time to do things that make you happy.

NORDIA
Don’t focus too narrowly on one practicum site during your first semester. Investigate all possibilities in order to make your practicum experience something that will not only enhance your knowledge and skill set, but something you will enjoy!

HANNAH
Your first PSY 815 class is probably going to be REALLY overwhelming, but not every stats class is going to be like that! PSY 815 is never fun, but it definitely isn’t as bad as the first day makes it seem. Also, if you’re new to the area, travel around Michigan; this state has many amazing things for you to take advantage of!

Welcome again! We can’t wait to have you!