



# The Insider:

The source for graduate student news & events at MSU

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## Upcoming Events:

March:

3/21: Workshop

3/22: Coffee Hours

3/23: Workshop

3/25: COGS Conference

3/26: Workshop

3/29: Coffee Hours

4/1: Workshop

4/2: Queer & Career  
Conference

Stop by our office in  
room 110 Student  
Services Building or visit  
our NEW website at  
[careersuccess.msu.edu/  
wellness](http://careersuccess.msu.edu/wellness)

MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY



Graduate  
Student  
Life & Wellness

## Welcome!

Welcome to the seventh issue of *The Insider* newsletter! As part of the Graduate Student Life & Wellness program at Michigan State University, this newsletter is your resource for graduate student news and events.

## Graduate Student Events:

### Grad Student Coffee Hours:

Every Tuesday from 11am-1pm in 110 Student Services. [More.](#)



## Financial Aid for Graduate Students

The Office of Financial Aid (OFA) has a web page specifically for graduate students. If you're interested in available financial aid, you will find information at [www.finaid.msu.edu/grad.asp](http://www.finaid.msu.edu/grad.asp).

This information covers special graduate statuses, such as dual or provisional admission, and discusses sources of financial aid outside of our office. For information on aid you can receive from OFA, see also [www.finaid.msu.edu/types.asp](http://www.finaid.msu.edu/types.asp).

Contact information for the Office of Financial Aid is online here: <http://www.finaid.msu.edu/contact.asp>



Have you seen our Bite of the Week post on our blog? It's a weekly recipe that's quick, inexpensive, and delicious—perfect for graduate students. Have one you think would be great to share? Send it to us at [gradwellness@vps.msu.edu](mailto:gradwellness@vps.msu.edu). Check it out [here](#).

## Upcoming Workshops

### Facilitating Discussions That Work

Monday, March 21, 2011  
5:30pm  
115 International Center

Workshop attendees will work through some of their most pressing disciplinary questions, transforming them into means for spurring students' increased participation. They'll also leave with guidelines for employing sophisticated questioning techniques and useful recommendations for designing and facilitating group work. This workshop fulfills the MSU CCTP competency: Adult Students as Learners/Creating Learning Environments. Find out more information [HERE](#).

Presenter: Kevin Johnston, Director, Teaching Assistant Programs.

Registration is **required**. To register, email [kmj@msu.edu](mailto:kmj@msu.edu) with the following: Name, Department, Email Address, Name of Workshop and Date you would like to attend.

### Time Management for Graduate Students, Post-docs and Faculty

Friday, April 1, 2011  
8:30am-12:30pm  
115 International Center

This workshop will evaluate some of the most typical issues affecting productivity, including procrastination, motivation and perfectionism. It will also examine the way that academic workplaces are structured and how this frequently contributes to productivity-related problems. The hands-on workshop will offer several exercises related to goal-setting, time management and accountability to assist participants in developing practical strategies for meeting their goals.

Find out more [HERE](#)

Registration is **Required**. To register, email the Graduate School at [gradwrsp@msu.edu](mailto:gradwrsp@msu.edu) and please include the following: Name, Department, Email Address, Name of Workshop and Date you would like to attend.

### Navigating the PhD: Managing Time and Academic Relationships and Writing Processes & Strategies for Academic Writing

Wednesday, March 23rd, 2011  
9:00am-Noon and 1:00pm-4:00pm  
300 Bessey Hall

These two interactive workshops are designed to help you develop an individualized plan for graduate writing.

Space is limited to 25 Doctoral Students

Find out more information [HERE](#).

### Planning, Managing, and Funding the Research Project

Saturday, March 26th, 2011  
8:30am, Big Ten B, Kellogg Center

How do you manage a research project from proposal to completion, and how does the process vary by discipline? This workshop will focus on how to break down the various components and tasks of a research project, identify strategies for organization and project management, and understand the process of identifying and securing funding. Find out more [HERE](#).

**REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.** To register, please send an email to [gradwrsp@msu.edu](mailto:gradwrsp@msu.edu) with the following 5 pieces of information: your name, department, email address, name of the workshop (Planning, Managing and Funding the Research Project), and the breakout session (1 or 2) you would like to attend.

## Want more updates from Graduate Student Life & Wellness?

Join our Listerv and stay up-to-date with the latest events, newsletters and workshops. Just email [gradwellness@vps.msu.edu](mailto:gradwellness@vps.msu.edu) with your name and you will be added.





## Council of Graduate Students (COGS) News:

### 3rd Annual Graduate Academic Conference, Sponsored by COGS— March 25th, 2011

The Graduate Academic Conference (GAC) is a forum for MSU graduate and professional students to present their academic work to the larger MSU community. Organized and implemented by the MSU Council of Graduate Students (COGS) with the support of MSU colleges and stakeholders, the GAC provides a way for graduate and professional students from different disciplines to share ideas and practice presentation skills. The goal of the GAC is to showcase both completed and ongoing research conducted at MSU and several monetary prizes (a total of \$5,000) will be awarded to the top participants, as rated by faculty and student judges.

For more information on the conference, check it out [here](#).

## Graduate Employees Union (GEU) News:

Negotiations between the University and the Graduate Employees Union for a new teaching assistant contract are progressing. The parties have essentially come to agreement on non-economic issues such as working conditions, leave time, and TA evaluation, and have begun discussions of economic issues, which include stipend levels, tuition waivers, and healthcare benefits.

You may stay up-to-date on the negotiations by visiting [www.geuatmsu.org](http://www.geuatmsu.org) or by following the GEU on Facebook and Twitter. Furthermore, any graduate student may give input on the process by becoming a GEU member and attending the GEU Member Meeting on March 23, 6:00pm in 11 Old Horticulture.

## Grad Resources:

Gradresources.org is a website that offers helpful articles, resources and news and events for graduate students. Check out the website [HERE](#).

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## Make Serendipity Work For You

Serendipity has been voted one of the most popular words in the English language. It is also one of the hardest to translate. Conversationally, it is used as tantamount to luck, providence or chance. To equate serendipity to luck or chance is naïve, as well as unhelpful, particularly considering that serendipity is a distinct (even if rare) skill that can be traded much like any commodity. So how might serendipity help us refine our understanding of innovation? 1. Serendipity is a close relative of creativity, which means that it is a capability that can be cultivated, bought and sold. 2. Serendipity benefits not just from scarcity (forcing people to be creative) but from a degree of sloppiness, tenacity, and dissent. Attempts to dictate serendipity are stifling and impractical. 3. History matters. Innovation is as much about looking at the past as it is about anticipating the future. It can mean pairing today's observation with those made previously, and often in quite different contexts, as did Pfizer scientists in linking side-effects from clinical trials to a PhD dissertation completed at the University of California, as well as two medical articles published several years before. 4. Socializing matters. It is very unlikely that James Watson and Francis Crick would have been as efficient in elucidating the structure of DNA without the benefit of those they shared their offices and interest with. 5. Diversity matters. As John Stuart Mill foresaw: "It is hardly possible to overrate the value...of placing human beings in contact with persons dissimilar to themselves, and with modes of thought and action unlike those with which they are familiar...Such communication has always been, and is peculiarly in the present age, one of the primary sources of progress". 6. Tinkering matters. Occasionally, it pays to turn a blind eye when seeing co-workers tinker with company resources for things they care about personally. Watson and Crick did. The DNA molecule was never their "official" project.

To see our full blog and the article, click [HERE](#)

## Queer & Career Conference:

On April 2, 2011 The MSU LGBT Resource Center in collaboration with the Career Services Network is proud to announce the first Queer and Career Conference, a half-day conference focusing employment issues for LGBT people. Advance conference registration is required and will be available after March 14; there is no cost. The event is open to the public with priority given to MSU students. Priorities of the conference include: empower LGBT persons to make informed decisions about their education and career, explore the intersections between identities and career interests, define personal strategies for career development, explore legal issues related to employment for LGBT people and more.

Find out more information [HERE](#).

Follow Graduate Student Life & Wellness for  
upcoming events,  
programs and resources for MSU  
Graduate Students!



Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Wordpress](#), or check out our [Google Calendar](#)

## Brought to you by:

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at Michigan State University

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## Dissertation Support Group

Room 6 Student Services Building

*Wednesdays at Noon- 1pm on 2/23, 3/2, 3/9, 3/23, 3/30, 4/6 (Please note that we will not meet on 3/16 due to a previously scheduled conflict.)*

This group is designed to be a six-week workshop for graduate students who are experiencing difficulty in the writing or completion of their dissertation. ***This group is open only to those students who are actively working on and writing their dissertation full time.*** The group follows a brief, solution-focused model that utilizes short-term goal-setting in order to facilitate and maintain progress in the writing of the dissertation. It is intended to help students stay on track to meet an expected defense/graduation date. In addition, the group seeks to provide participants a supportive environment in which the presence of peers helps to mitigate the sense of isolation, frustration and anxiety that often accompanies the dissertation writing process. The group is facilitated by a member of the Counseling Center staff. For more information about the group please contact Aislinn at: [aislinns@cc.msu.edu](mailto:aislinns@cc.msu.edu) or 355-8270.

## Time Management Group

Room 13 Student Services Building

*Thursdays 12pm-2pm on 4/7, 4/14, 4/21, 4/28*

This is a four week intensive workshop that is designed to help graduate students acquire the time management skills that are necessary for success in completing an advanced degree. The volume of work that characterizes many graduate programs combined with a relative lack of external structure make it necessary that graduate students possess the ability to effectively manage their time. In order to ensure that participants acquire skills they will be able to implement after the workshop, this group does not attempt to provide a "one-size-fits-all" approach to time management. Rather it will attempt to help students design and implement a time management style that compliments his or her individual personality. The group will run for four 2-hour sessions on consecutive weeks. ***Attendance at all four sessions is mandatory for participation in the group.*** For more information about the group contact Aislinn at: [aislinns@cc.msu.edu](mailto:aislinns@cc.msu.edu) or 355-8270.

These groups are brought to you by [The Counseling Center at MSU](#)

