

# Graduate Student's Bill of Rights

(Approved on 20 April 2022)

## 1 Preamble

The Graduate Students Bill of Rights serves as a guiding document committed to the positive facilitation of discussions among graduate students, their peers, the faculty and academic advisors, and the administrators to support Missouri University of Science and Technology's research and teaching mission, including students maintaining satisfactory academic and research performance. This document is an agreeable set of standards shaping a consistent expectation for graduate students' experiences at Missouri University of Science and Technology. It provides guidelines to faculty members, academic advisors, and graduate students. The statements below demonstrate the commitment of administration, faculty, and graduate students to set fundamental norms, thereby promoting a positive graduate education culture and ensuring enjoyable and efficient time at the university. Additionally, it fosters graduate student engagement with principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, inclusive education, and diverse offerings.

The Graduate Students Bill of Rights does not conflict with nor supersede University policies, UM System Collected Rules and Regulations (CRRs), professional codes, and/or ethical codes.

## 2 Graduate Student Rights

### A Academic Rights

The academic rights of graduate students include, but are not limited to, the following items. Graduate students have right to:

- A.1. Pursue activities, collaborations, research, and publications to increase academic and/or professional development.
- A.2. Work and study in an environment with others following professional conduct.
- A.3. Be allowed time to devoted to pursue research projects pertaining to their thesis or dissertation work outside of possible assistantship requirements.
- A.4. Refuse to participate in activities that are unrelated to academic pursuits or professional development, particularly those that do not directly or indirectly benefit the completion of the defined appointment, thesis/dissertation, or professional development, without adverse consequences from the advisor or department.
- A.5. Have specific and concrete requirements for achieving an advanced degree.
- A.6. Graduate upon successful fulfillment of the requirements as outlined by their department (including, if applicable, requirements set by the student's advisory committee).

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- A.7. Know the *normative time to degree* and the *average time to degree* within a specific graduate program (whether by communicating with the department or the academic advisor).
- A.8. Have clear and reasonable work expectations for assistantship hours (as identified in Chancellor's Policy II-26) per fair labor practices or department standards.
- A.9. Receive support from the university to attain alternative supervision (external to their program, if necessary) in case a graduate student's academic adviser departs (whether by choice, layoff, or an unforeseeable event) from the institution after the student's work is underway.
- A.10. Receive notification regarding graduate student academic performance and receive specific recommendations and requirements needed to correct deficiencies. After notification of poor performance, students should be provided with a reasonable time-frame and opportunity (preferably one semester) to improve their performance back to satisfactory levels. In addition to an opportunity to remedy their performance, and before beginning the process to remove a student from a graduate program for academic reasons, students must be given a specific, written performance evaluation in advance of actual dismissal, explaining the deficiencies. In the event of major examination failure or unsatisfactory performance, the reasoning for such assessment scores will be provided to the graduate student in writing and the process as outlined by the department should be followed.

### **B Information Rights**

The rights of graduate students regarding information release and receipt include, but are not limited to, the following items. Graduate students have the rights to:

- B.1. Be informed about their rights and responsibilities.
- B.2. Information about and inclusion in all decision-making regarding services and policies affecting their well-being.
- B.3. Clear, written, and easily accessible information about their degree program requirements, departmental requirements, student expectations, and the expected academic progress timeline.
- B.4. Know stipend amounts funded within their department before signing a contract. 2.5. Information preferably one semester in advance and in writing regarding any changes made to assistantship contracts, unless circumstances outside of the PI's control concerning the source of available funding change (e.g., funding agency changes, college TA budget changes). Students should be notified in their assistantship contract the process for determining future funding based on their performance in the assistantship and availability of funding.

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### **C Professional Development Rights**

The rights of graduate students regarding professional development include, but are not limited to, the following items. Graduate students have the rights to:

- C.1. Representatives on all campus-wide administrative committees that affect graduate students (including but not limited to budgetary affairs, effective teaching, facilities planning, information technology computing, library and learning resources, public occasions, student affairs, student awards, financial aids, parking security and traffic, student conduct committee, student scholastic appeals, outstanding teaching awards, and Ex-Officio member of Faculty Senate and Graduate Council).
- C.2. Ownership and access to their intellectual property, in line with the UM System Copyright Regulations and Guidelines (CRR 100.030).
- C.3. Authorship of and acknowledgment for scholarly publications commensurate with their contribution to such works.
- C.4. Receive due credit and recognition for innovation(s) and intellectual ideas conceptualized by the student, in line with the UM System Copyright Regulations and Guidelines (CRR 100.030).
- C.5. Change their faculty advisor under the guidance of their department chair and/or Vice Provost and Dean.
- C.6. Information via website postings and/or emails about financial aid and resource allotment to support their academic career.

### **D Freedom from Discrimination and Adverse Conduct**

The rights of graduate students for freedom from discrimination and adverse conduct include but are not limited to the following items. Graduate students have the rights to:

- D.1. Conduct research, learn, teach, and participate in university programs and activities in environments free of discrimination based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, protected veteran status, and any other status protected by applicable state or federal law.
- D.2. Confidentiality and professional treatment by their academic colleagues.
- D.3. Academic free speech within the academic setting. Students will have the right to express their ideas without fear of penalty, including a right to critically evaluate ideas, questioning and challenging them from a position of knowledge rather than one of unexamined belief.
- D.4. Reasonable accommodations for any diagnosed disability that a graduate or professional student has upon receiving University status or that emerges after receiving University status.

D.5. Participate in an academic atmosphere that welcomes and encourages diversity.

D.6. Work and study in safe environments that protect their mental and physical well-being.

### **3 Postamble**

The graduate students shall be committed to duties related to their academic responsibilities in the classroom, in addition to the working hours as stated in their assistantship contract, if applicable. They are responsible for maintaining positive, open, and professional communication with the administration, the faculty, their academic advisors, and their peers. Graduate students with teaching and/or research appointments are accountable for maintaining the highest levels of academic integrity and professionalism in their teaching and research practices. Graduate students and faculty members are highly encouraged to draft and sign an agreement to ensure mutual understanding of expectations of duties in accordance with Missouri University of Science and Technology guidelines and policies.

The graduate student's bill of rights has been approved and supported by the following departments:

- Graduate Council (approved on April 6, 2022)
- Office of the Provost (received April 20, 2022)
- The Office of Graduate Education (received January 19, 2023)
- Vice Provost and Dean, College of Engineering and Computing (received March 26, 2023)
- Vice Provost and Dean, College of Arts, Sciences, and Education (received April 27, 2023)
- Vice Provost and Dean, Kummer College (received April 27, 2023)

The corresponding letters of support are provided in the following pages.

**Graduate Council Resolution to Support the Graduate Student Bill of Rights  
at Missouri University of Science & Technology**

Voted & Approved April 6, 2022

Whereas, in its role as the legislative and policy-making body of the Graduate Faculty, the Graduate Council of Missouri University of Science and Technology is responsible for supporting and leading graduate education and programs on campus; and,

Whereas, the Council of Graduate Students, along with input from the Ad Hoc Committee on the Graduate Student Bill of Rights, the Graduate Faculty and Graduate Council, have proposed a Graduate Student Bill of Rights to serve as a guiding document of an agreeable set of standards to shape a consistent expectation for graduate student experiences at Missouri S&T;

Whereas, the Graduate Student Bill of Rights promotes a positive graduate education culture at the University with the ultimate goal of facilitating productive conversations among graduate students, faculty, academic advisors, and administrators to support the University's research and teaching mission while also fostering graduate student engagement;


Whereas the Graduate Student Bill of Rights does not conflict with nor supersede University policies, UM System Collected Rules and Regulations (CRRs), professional codes, or ethical codes;


Be it resolved that the Graduate Council readily endorses the Graduate Student Bill of Rights in order to support graduate students and programs on campus as well as to model our university values of lifelong success, integrity, partnership, and inclusion;

Be it further resolved that the Graduate Council strongly recommends all university graduate programs adopt the guidelines put forth by the Graduate Student Bill of Rights as they continue to support graduate students within their programs.



# Office of the Provost

TO: Faculty and Staff, Missouri University of Science Technology 

FROM: Colin Potts, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs  
Richard Wlezien, Vice Provost and Dean, College of Engineering and Computing  
Kate Drowne, Interim Vice Provost and Dean, College of Arts, Sciences, and  
Business 

DATE: April 20, 2022

RE: Support for the Graduate Student Bill of Rights

The Graduate Student Bill of Rights serves as a guiding document of an agreeable set of standards that shape consistent expectations for graduate student experiences at Missouri S&T. In doing so, this document promotes a positive graduate education culture at the University. Its goal is to help facilitate productive conversations among graduate students, faculty, academic advisors, and administrators to support the University's research and teaching mission while also fostering graduate student engagement with principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, inclusive education, and diverse offerings.

We note that the Graduate Student Bill of Rights neither conflicts with nor supersedes University policies, UM System Collected Rules and Regulations (CRRs), professional codes, and/or ethical codes. We also note that the Graduate Council passed a resolution in favor of this Graduate Student Bill of Rights on April 6, 2022.

As academic leaders on campus, we support the Graduate Student Bill of Rights and the guidelines it espouses. Further, we encourage graduate programs to adopt the guidelines put forth. We believe support for this document indicates our commitment to ensuring a healthy and productive environment for graduate students to learn, teach, and complete research during their time at Missouri S&T, which directly contributes to S&T's teaching and research mission as well as our values of lifelong success, integrity, partnership, and inclusion.



January 19, 2023

**To:** Gaurav Khairnar, President, Council of Graduate Students (CGS), Missouri S&T  
**Re:** Support by *Graduate Education* for the Graduate Student Bill of Rights (GSBoR)

**Dear Gaurav and Members of CGS:**

The Graduate Student Bill of Rights (<https://cgs.mst.edu/billofrights/>) was presented to the Graduate Council and on April 6, 2022, Council passed a resolution of support. Shortly thereafter, on April 20, 2022, the GSBoR was endorsed as a guiding document by Dr. Colin Potts, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Dr. Richard Wlezien, Vice Provost and Dean, College of Engineering and Computing, and Dr. Kate Drowne, Interim Vice Provost and Dean, College of Arts, Sciences, and Business.

My predecessor, Dr. Costas Tsatsoulis, Vice Provost of Graduate Education was enthusiastically in support of the GSBoR and the support by *Graduate Education* for the Graduate Student Bill of Rights “goes without saying”. Nevertheless, it is my pleasure and an honor to write this letter today to add my name and *Graduate Education* formally, explicitly, and demonstratively to the list of supporters.

Making the Graduate Student Bill of Rights part of the common fabric of Missouri S&T will require broad acceptance and support by the faculty and implementation also will require significant adjustments to procedures and practices. I can assure our graduate students that efforts have been ongoing to facilitate the implementation of the goals across the three colleges and some aspects will require engagement by Human Resources (HR), the Office of Technology Transfer and Economic Development (TTED), and others.

It is the stated mission of *Graduate Education* (<https://grad.mst.edu/about/>) to implement the values of Missouri S&T (<https://www.mst.edu/about/#ourvalues>) and *Graduate Education* recognizes that quality advising and mentorship enhance the adventure and the success of graduate education. Everyone in *Graduate Education* takes pride in serving our exceptional, diverse, and determined student body and campus community.

We want to take this opportunity to point out that Missouri S&T has well established paths for students to address concerns that might arise in their graduate careers. Students having concerns or complaints regarding their academic experience should first discuss the matter with the faculty member(s) and/or advisor(s) involved and perhaps in consultation with the chair of the department. At the next level, students may bring their issues to the attention of the respective Dean’s Office, i.e., the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education (CASE, email: [case@mst.edu](mailto:case@mst.edu)), the College of Engineering and Computing (CEC, email: [cec@mst.edu](mailto:cec@mst.edu)), or the Kummer College of Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development (KI, email: [kummercollege@mst.edu](mailto:kummercollege@mst.edu)). At the campus level, graduate students may contact *Graduate Education* (email: [gradsupport@mst.edu](mailto:gradsupport@mst.edu), [grad@mst.edu](mailto:grad@mst.edu)) and/or the Department of Student Support and Community Standards (email: [studentsupport@mst.edu](mailto:studentsupport@mst.edu), <https://studentsupport.mst.edu/communitystandards/studentcomplaintprocess/>) for guidance on filing complaints and grievances.

For *Graduate Education*,



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Dr. Rainer Glaser, Interim Vice Provost of Graduate Education



## College of Engineering and Computing

Date: March 26, 2023

To: Faculty and Staff, Missouri University of Science Technology

From: David Borrok, Vice Provost and Dean, College of Engineering and Computing

Subject: Support for the Graduate Student Bill of Rights

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Borrok".

I am writing to express my support of the Graduate Student Bill of Rights. The purpose of the bill is to identify a shared set of expectations for the graduate student experience and to facilitate conversations about those expectations among graduate students, faculty, academic advisors, and administrators.

The Graduate Student Bill of Rights can neither conflict with nor supersede University policies, UM System Collected Rules, and Regulations (CRRs), professional codes, and/or ethical codes. It can, however, provide perspectives and clarifications that help foster graduate student engagement while highlighting the principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, inclusive education, and diverse offerings.

Recruiting and successfully advising and mentoring graduate students is a foundational part of our mission to further increase research and scholarly productivity at Missouri S&T. Developing a shared understanding of expectations, as outlined in the Graduate Student Bill of Rights, is a great step in this direction. Therefore, I encourage graduate programs to adopt the principles outlined in the bill and to have productive conversations with your graduate students on these topics.







# College of Arts, Sciences, and Education

April 27, 2023

To: Faculty and Staff, Missouri University of Science Technology

From: Mehrzad Boroujerdi, Vice Provost and Dean, College of Arts, Sciences, and Education

*Mehrzad Boroujerdi*

Subject: Support for the Graduate Student Bill of Rights

I am writing to express my strong support of the Graduate Student Bill of Rights (<https://cgs.mst.edu/billofrights/>). This document helps us adhere to a decent set of shared expectations regarding the graduate student experience on campus encompassing such issues as academic freedom, equal opportunity, and inclusive education. The purpose of the bill is to identify a shared set of expectations for the graduate student experience and to facilitate conversations about those expectations among graduate students, faculty, academic advisors, and administrators.

It goes without saying that the Graduate Student Bill of Rights cannot conflict nor supersede University policies, UM System Collected Rules, and Regulations (CRRs), professional codes, and/or ethical codes.

This document has so far been endorsed by the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, the Graduate Council, and the Dean of the College of Engineering and Computing. It is my pleasure to add my name and that of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Education to the list of supporters.





**Kummer College of Innovation,  
Entrepreneurship, and  
Economic Development**

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April 27, 2023

To: Faculty and Staff  
Missouri University of Science and Technology

From: Tim Faley   
Interim Vice Provost and Dean of the Kummer College

Subject: Support for the Graduate Student Bill of Rights

Successfully recruiting, advising, and mentoring graduate students is a foundational part of Missouri S&T's mission of research, teaching, and scholarship. Developing a shared understanding of the responsibilities and expectations for all involved can only serve to enhance that mission. I am writing to express my support of the Graduate Student Bill of Rights (<https://cgs.mst.edu/billofrights>), a document created specifically to articulate a shared set of expectations for the graduate student experience and to facilitate conversations about those expectations among graduate students, faculty, academic advisors, and administrators.

While this Graduate Student Bill of Rights is not meant to, nor can it, conflict with or supersede University policies, UM System Collected Rules and Regulations (CRRs), professional codes, and/or ethical codes, it can provide clarification and foster graduate student engagement.

I am pleased to add my name and that of the Kummer College of Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Economic Development to the list of endorsees of the Graduate Bill of Rights.