

**Welcome! Here's some information to help you these first few weeks...**

## First Week at NSCL

- **When you first arrive**, talk with Associate Director for Education, Artemis Spyrou (room 2008, [spyrou@nscl.msu.edu](mailto:spyrou@nscl.msu.edu)). She will give a general introduction about the graduate program and discuss the steps one needs to take to initiate a research project with one of the faculty. You will set up meetings with several faculty members, which will help you gain a good perspective of the research options for your graduate thesis and decide which research group to start working in.
- You should also meet with Human Resources, where you will get a key, keycard, photo taken, cyclotron mailbox, and shown your office and computer. You should receive an email from HR, otherwise Tabitha Pinckney (office 2036, [pinckney@frib.msu.edu](mailto:pinckney@frib.msu.edu)) is your point of contact. They will also send you to the Graduate Student Secretary of the Physics Department, Kim Crosslan (her office is in the BPS building), who will take care of administrative matters related to enrollment and help you get started in physics.
- Make sure to learn how to make meeting requests in Microsoft Outlook, as this greatly simplifies making appointments with faculty. All scheduling in the lab is done through Outlook Calendar.
- The **qualifying exam** is extremely important. Usually a group of graduate students coordinate study groups and review practice exams together. Practice exams can be located on the Graduate Student Wiki (address at end of document) or the MSU Physics and Astronomy website under 'Resources.' Usually around mid-June a study group is formed; there may be a First Year group on Facebook that would be a good idea to join. Please contact the Associate Chair for Graduate Programs of the Dept. of Physics and Astronomy, Kirsten Tollefson (room 1312-B in BPS) if you have more questions or have not received information.
- There is a room in the BPS building (room 1308) that has been set aside as the graduate student lounge. This provides a quiet place for doing homework and preparing for exams.

## General Info

- To access the graduate student handbook, go to **INTRA Enterprise** [enterprise.nscl.msu.edu/](http://enterprise.nscl.msu.edu/). Click 'Employee Information.' Click 'Resources for Graduate Students.' This will bring you to the graduate student wiki page (link included below). Here you will find the graduate student handbook and a variety of other useful links and information.

- The private **NSCL website** [enterprise.nscl.msu.edu/](http://enterprise.nscl.msu.edu/) is your friend. Some links are only accessible after logging in once or twice with your NSCL username and password. One of the most helpful features is a map of office assignments, which shows the layout of the entire lab. It is found in 'Employee Information,' under 'Contact Information.'
- If you need **office supplies**, check room **1147**. Room **1601** is the **general stockroom**, containing cleaning supplies, paints, screws, nails, etc. However, getting to this room requires you to go through a maze due to construction, so ask around if you get lost. Room **1344** is the **electronics shop**. The **Vacuum Lab** is located in Room **1344A**, along the main hallway.
- **Radiation safety training** is required for anyone at the lab. Theorists need at least Level 1, and experimentalists / accelerator physicists need Level 2. Once set up with a group, talk to your advisor about training.
- **Other training** programs are required, but they can be taken online. They are accessible through INTRA enterprise under training. You'll be told what training modules you need to complete and receive reminders/links through email.
- After listening to student feedback, the lab recently hired an in house therapist for free **counseling services**. Contact Marsha Carolan (carolan@frib.msu.edu) for an appointment or schedule a meeting with her on Outlook Calendar.
- There are several major **meetings** every week. Your advisor may require some of them, and it's best to go even if you don't have any prior experience with the topic. During the fall and spring semesters, here are a few of the talks you may be expected to attend:
  - The Joint Institute for Nuclear Astrophysics (JINA) holds a pizza lunch once a month on Mondays at 12:30PM (BPS 1400).
  - Cyclotron **grad student seminars** are generally held on Mondays in the NSCL lecture hall. Grad students present to other grad students. This is a good place to practice your talks.
  - Nuclear Theory seminars are held on Tuesdays at 11:00AM (NSCL Lecture Hall 1200).
  - Nuclear science seminars are Wednesdays at 4:10PM in the NSCL lecture hall; these are usually by visiting scientists. Accelerator Physics Seminars are held less frequently
  - Research discussions are held Thursdays at 11:00AM in the NSCL lecture hall, which are generally given by people (including students) from the lab about current and ongoing topics.
  - The Physics Department weekly **colloquiums** are Thursdays at 4:10PM (BPS 1415).
  - There are Physics grad student seminars (PGO Seminars) once a week where grad students present on interesting topics to fellow students in an informal setting (BPS 1400). Plus, there's pizza!
  - WaMPS (Women and Minorities in the Physical Sciences) meetings are held once a month. WaMPS also hosts a BYO lunch on Tuesdays in the courtyard between BPS and NSCL. This is a great way to meet other grad students – new students are very welcome! More information on this group at the end.

- **Ice cream socials** are held every Thursday at 2:30PM in the atrium. Assorted Dairy Store ice cream for only \$1!!
- Tuesday mornings at 9:30AM **coffee and bagels** are served in the atrium. Bagels are \$1 and coffee is \$0.50.
- The NSCL hosts first-year lunches, as well as a **grad student-faculty mixer** in September.
- Cyclotron grad student **mailboxes** are found in room 1072 (accessible off of the lobby, or hallway) or somewhere on your floor if you work in the towers. You can mail pre-stamped envelopes and recycle newspapers here as well.
- Cans and bottles can be **recycled** in the kitchen area, directly off the atrium, as well as other kitchen areas and hallways throughout the building. White and colored paper can be recycled in many places around the lab, and batteries can be deposited by Receiving (room 1406). There is a dumpster outside of Receiving.
- If you haven't yet, you should be given a **tour** of the laboratory. It is best to ask a fellow student from the group you'll start working in, but feel free to ask a student in your office, or Zach Constan, Outreach Coordinator (constan@nscl.msu.edu). Zach's office is accessible from the main lobby.
- There are **shower areas and locker rooms** for both men (near 1312) and women (1230).
- **Printers** can be found in the downstairs hallway (by room 1066 – Printer Names: West Color, West Print) and in room 2004 (Printer Names: Nuclear Color, Nuclear Print). Other printers are located throughout the building; ask your office mates for the nearest printer! There are two large poster printers, one in room 2040 and one in the design area (near elevator of 4100 wing).
- **Computer support** is available in room 2233 or by emailing [helpme@frib.msu.edu](mailto:helpme@frib.msu.edu). This is also where you can ask for extension cords and power strips.
- If you want a **parking pass**, you have to go to the campus police dept. Bring the title/registration for your car, your plate #, and proof of TA or RA support (letter from Kim/Kirsten). Be aware that during football games and other events on campus that parking may be restricted and use of the lots are not permitted with your parking pass.
- There is a university **bike store** on campus where one can buy or rent a bike, [bikes.msu.edu](http://bikes.msu.edu). They also repair bikes and have self-repair tools and pumps outside, as well as several other pumps located around campus.
- StuInfo ([stuinfo.msu.edu/](http://stuinfo.msu.edu/)) will give you access to **bills, past and present schedules, and grades**. Make sure to confirm your attendance once a semester, as well as pay a small fee <\$20 each semester!
- Office **fridges** are located in kitchen areas around the building. You're encouraged to keep lunches there, but don't store pizza boxes or large beverage containers. You are also welcome to bring your own mini fridge for your office, but please discuss with other people in your office.
- **Hot water** taps are found on the coffee makers in the atrium or in kitchens throughout the building. The kitchen also has a purified water tap to the left of the faucet, and there are filtered water fountains throughout the building.

- Regular **coffee** is found in the kitchens. There's an espresso machine in room 1216 and the JINA lounge area on the second floor. Each cup of coffee is 50 cents, and the espresso is a dollar.
- To **lookup courses and enroll in classes**, go to [reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Enrollment.aspx](http://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Enrollment.aspx). Kim will help you your first year, since you have to take your qualifying exam before you can register for classes.
- If you have a TA or RA, your **insurance** is already set up. You should get an insurance card in the mail, but sometimes it is sent to the home address from your application (contact the grad student union rep if this happens, listed below). You can change this information on StuInfo. If you're on a fellowship, you may need to purchase your own insurance plan. Please check with Kim concerning your particular fellowship.

## The Surrounding Area

- The largest local **grocery store** is Meijer. There's one at the corner of Grand River Avenue and Okemos Rd, one on Lake Lansing Rd, one on South Pennsylvania, and one on West Saginaw. There is also Kroger (one in Frandor Shopping Center, one in Okemos), Whole Foods (down Grand River, East of Hagadorn), and ALDI (Okemos).
- If you want to **eat on campus**, there is a Sparty's in BPS. The Dairy Store sells soup and grilled cheese and is conveniently located across the street from BPS. Nearby dining halls are Owen, Shaw, and Snyder-Phillips. The International Center houses a number of fast-food outlets.
- **Eating off-campus** is also easy, there are many of good places for lunch on Grand River just north of campus (about a 20 min walk from NSCL/BPS). Also, there is Hanna Plaza (on Hagadorn, just south of Shaw lane). I would recommend Sindhu (cheap Indian lunch buffet), Sansu (pricier Japanese, but student discounts some days!), and Hanna's Koney Island (diner-style). If you're driving, check out the Eastwood Towne Center (Lake Lansing Rd and I127) or Marsh Rd (in Okemos).
- There is a **physics choir**, the Grand Canonical Ensemble. They rehearse twice a week and perform once a semester. Contact Chris Izzo ([izzo@nscl.msu.edu](mailto:izzo@nscl.msu.edu)) or Ben Hall ([hallb@frib.msu.edu](mailto:hallb@frib.msu.edu)) if interested.
- Keep an eye out for physics **happy hour** emails on Friday afternoons. It's a great way to meet older grad students and find out more about the area. Non-drinkers and non-physicists welcome! If you are not getting the weekly Happy Hour email, contact Isaac Yandow ([yandow@nscl.msu.edu](mailto:yandow@nscl.msu.edu)) to be added to the email list.
- During the semester, there are several weekly group fitness classes that are free to and only for graduate students. IM East is the closest MSU fitness facility – only a 5 minute walk from the NSCL. Gym memberships are reasonably affordable and many physics grad students form workout groups, so ask around if you are interested.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me (Caley Harris, [harrisc@nscl.msu.edu](mailto:harrisc@nscl.msu.edu)), the current Space Committee Officer.

## For Further Information

- Graduate student wiki: [wikihost.nscl.msu.edu/gradwiki/doku.php?id=start](http://wikihost.nscl.msu.edu/gradwiki/doku.php?id=start)
- Physics and Astronomy: [www.pa.msu.edu/academics/graduate-program/current-graduate-students/practice-exams/](http://www.pa.msu.edu/academics/graduate-program/current-graduate-students/practice-exams/)
- PGO (Physics Grad Organization): [web.pa.msu.edu/PGO/](http://web.pa.msu.edu/PGO/)
- StuInfo: [stuinfo.msu.edu/](http://stuinfo.msu.edu/)
- INTRA Enterprise: [enterprise.nscl.msu.edu/](http://enterprise.nscl.msu.edu/)
- Courses/Enrollment: [reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Enrollment.aspx](http://reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Enrollment.aspx)
- Group Fitness Schedule: [recsports.msu.edu/Fitness/group-ex-schedules.html](http://recsports.msu.edu/Fitness/group-ex-schedules.html)
  
- The NSCL grad student officers are:
  - President: Jason Surbrook
  - Space Committee: Caley Harris
  - Webmaster: Adam Anthony
  - Electronics Committee: Andrew Miller
  - Social Committee: Jeremy Lantis
  - Seminars: Jason Surbrook
  - Grad Recruitment: Daniel Puentes
  - The VOICE: Rob Elder
  - Outreach Committee: Jeremy Lantis
  - Diversity Committee: Terri Poxon-Pearson
  - WaMPS Lecture Series Committee: Ahmed Yousif
  - Safety Committee: Ahmed Yousif
  - Curriculum Committee (Physics): Jaclyn Schmitt
  - Curriculum Committee (Chemistry): Katie Childers
  
- The PGO (physics graduate organization) officers are:
  - President: Brenden Longfellow
  - Vice President: Nick Valverde
  - Seminar Organizer: Tamas Budner
  - Social Chair: Isaac Yandow
  - Inclusivity Director: Terri Poxon-Pearson
  - Treasurer: John Ash
  - Grad Curriculum Committee: Adam Anthony, Thomas Chuna, and Brean Prefontaine
  - Shop and Space: Andrew Miller
  - Dean's Student Advisory Council: Corey Cooling
  - Graduate Recruitment Committee: Adam Anthony
  - Computer Committee: Dan Douglas
  - GEU Steward: Corey Cooling, Joe Lundeen, Alex Madden
  - COGS Representative: Daniel Puentes
  - Colloquium Committee: Brenden Longfellow and Isaac Yandow

- Women and Minorities in the Physical Sciences (WaMPS): works to promote diversity in the physical sciences, especially physics, by supporting current grad students and encouraging more women and minorities to enter the field.
  - Facebook: [www.facebook.com/msuwamps/](http://www.facebook.com/msuwamps/)
  - President: Jessie Micallef
  - Vice President: Adam Anthony
  - Treasurer: Caley Harris
  - Secretary: Ahmed Yousif
  - Mentoring Co-Chairs: Alison Peisker, Isaac Yandow
  - Outreach Co-Chairs: Brean Prefontaine, Ben Hall
  - Webmaster: Alex Madden