

GRADUATE HANDBOOK

MASTER OF SCIENCE

MERCHANDISING AND CONSUMER STUDIES

SCHOOL OF FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY-SAN MARCOS

2013-2014

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This document provides information specific to the Merchandising and Consumer Studies (MCS) master's program. It should be viewed as a supplement to the university graduate catalog, which gives more information regarding the requirements for all Texas State University graduate students. It should be noted that this is a School of FCS document; therefore, all the policies of the Graduate College and Texas State (if different) have precedence.

Students are strongly advised to use the graduate college catalog and web site (www.gradcollege.txstate.edu) for information related to university policies and procedures for students (e.g., graduation requirements). The Graduate College office is located in room 280 in the J.C. Kellam building. A student can also reach the Graduate College by calling 512-245-2581 or e-mailing gradcollege@txstate.edu.

I. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Master of Science (MS) degree in MCS will provide graduate level study for the next generation of product developers, retail and merchandising managers, as well as consumer studies professionals, who will make pivotal and transformative decisions vital to economic, social, and environmental resource management.

Our program seeks to significantly strengthen and advance the body of knowledge in the merchandising discipline by enabling students to study and conduct research relevant and applicable to the field. By conducting primary research, and disseminating the results, students gain necessary skills, in addition to enhancing verbal, written and problem-solving abilities. As such, the program requires a research component in both the thesis and non-thesis degree options. Students choosing the **non-thesis option** complete a 21 credit hour core that includes a directed study course. Working under the guidance of a faculty member, this directed study may include participation in research, professional practice and/or critical review of literature related to the field. Those who choose the **thesis option** will complete a 24 credit hour core that includes six credit hours of thesis. Students pursuing either the thesis or non-thesis option will also complete 9 credit hours of recommended elective coursework and 6 hours of free electives which is selected based on professional interests and goals.

II. CORE COURSES AND RECOMMENDED ELECTIVES

The MCS master's degree requires a minimum of 36 hours of coursework. Please see [Appendix A](#) for a Suggested Course Rotation. The core courses for students pursuing a master's degree in **Merchandising and Consumer Studies** are as follows:

MCS 5301	Research Methods	3
MCS 5330	Merchandising and Consumer Theory	3
MCS 5341	Ethics and the Consumer Science Professional	3
MCS 5342	Sustainable Consumer Economy	3
MCS 5391	Seminar in Merchandising and Consumer Studies	3
PSY 5320	Statistics	3
MCS 5398	Directed Study in Merchandising and Consumer Studies (non-thesis option)	3
MCS 5399A and 5399B	Thesis (thesis option)	3-6

Depending on the track, students will take 9 hours of recommended elective coursework and 6 hours of free electives, which should be selected to complement a student's professional interests. Please refer to the student degree outline for a list of recommended electives. *Note: Electives can differ from those listed on the student degree outline; however, prior approval must be obtained from the graduate advisor.* Lists of recommended electives and descriptions can be found at http://www.fcs.txstate.edu/degrees-programs/fm/fm_grad.html.

After 70% of all course work is completed, the student will take a comprehensive exam.

Please note: Students whose undergraduate major is not MCS maybe required to take a leveling class (MCS) by the end of their first year as a degree-seeking student (failure to do so will result in a student's inability to register for future courses). Although this course is required, it does NOT count for credit toward the completion of the student's degree.

Graduate students may NOT take a stacked course (i.e., one offered simultaneously as graduate and undergraduate-level course) as a graduate course if they have previously taken the course at the undergraduate level.

III. THESIS/NON-THESIS OPTION

THESIS OPTION

The thesis option represents an appropriate path for certain students. The thesis option can be beneficial to students for the following reasons or under certain circumstances:

1. Student may pursue a doctoral program in the future.
2. Student can gain research experience and knowledge.
3. Student can become an “expert” in an area of study.
4. Student gains the opportunity to work closely with faculty members via research.

Students who choose to pursue the thesis option will complete 24 hours of core curriculum, which includes 6 hours of thesis work, 9 hours of recommended electives, and 6 hours of free electives. If the student chooses the thesis option, the core research methods course MCS 5301, MCS 5330 and PSY 5320 should be completed as soon as possible in the student’s program. These research-related courses should be taken within the first year of enrollment if at all possible.

THESIS ADVISOR AND PROCEDURES

Thesis track students will conduct a research project with data collection, resulting in a publishable manuscript. Graduate faculty who are subject experts mentor students throughout this process. If students elect to follow the thesis option degree option, a student will choose a thesis advisor and, subsequently, a thesis committee. The thesis advisor should also be a faculty member is knowledgeable about the research topic.

Creating a Thesis Committee

A thesis student first obtains the consent of a Graduate Faculty member in the major program area to serve as research advisor (Committee Chair). Co-chairs are allowable.

Next, in consultation with the thesis advisor, the student establishes a thesis committee of at least two other faculty members. Besides the Advisor, at least one other committee member must be from FCS. A student may have more than three members on his/her committee, however all members must be approved as Graduate Faculty by the Graduate College.

The thesis committee is officially formed by:

- Submitting one copy of the Proposed Thesis Research form (http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/docs/Proposed_Thesis_Research.doc) and thesis proposal to the Dean of the Graduate College for approval.

It is recommended this be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College by the *beginning* of a student’s enrollment in MCS 5399B.

Before collecting any thesis data, a student must complete the Human Subjects training offered through the Office of Sponsored Programs (<http://www.txstate.edu/research/orc/humans-in->

[research/training.html](http://www.txstate.edu/research/training.html)) and submit a proposal for the student's research to the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This requirement applies to all students who collect data on human subjects. It is recommended that the IRB proposal be submitted the semester prior to beginning data collection. To obtain more information regarding the IRB process, please visit the following web site <http://www.txstate.edu/research/orc/humans-in-research.html> for additional information.

THESIS PROPOSAL AND COMMITTEE

Students are responsible for developing a thesis proposal with the guidance of the thesis advisor. The thesis proposal should consist of the student's first three chapters (Introduction, Literature Review, and Method). The thesis proposal will be presented to the student's thesis committee for approval.

THESIS ENROLLMENT AND CREDIT

Enrollment for the thesis will be recorded as MCS 5399A for initial thesis enrollment and MCS 5399B for subsequent semesters of thesis enrollment. The comprehensive exam must be completed before the student signs up for thesis courses. If the thesis is not completed during the summer or in a regular semester in which the student is enrolled for MCS 5399B, a grade of "PR," meaning "in progress" is assigned. The student can repeat enrollment in the thesis courses. Students can change from thesis to non-thesis option or vice versa through the completion of appropriate paperwork. This should be done in consultation with the graduate advisor.

THESIS DEADLINES AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The student must submit the final thesis, approved by the committee, to the graduate college for review by the posted deadline (http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/Thes-Diss_Info/T-D_Deadlines.html). There are two options for submission: 1) The on-line submission option or 2) The hard-copy submission deadline. The student is responsible for submitting one signature page to the Graduate College if the thesis is submitted on-line and two signature pages if the thesis is submitted in hard-copy format. Both of these options are detailed in a thesis guide prepared by the graduate college. **Students are strongly encouraged to read the entire thesis guide found at http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/docs/Thesis_Diss_Guide.pdf.**

Regardless of which submission option the student chooses, the student will be notified of any required revisions. Once the student makes the required revisions and the committee approves, the Graduate College will verify the revisions have been made. If the thesis was submitted on-line, the Graduate College will forward the revised thesis to the Alkek Library. If the thesis was submitted in the hard-copy format, the student is responsible for submitting the revised thesis directly to the Alkek Library.

REMEMBER, IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE THAT ALL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS HAVE BEEN MET. For additional information, including up-to-date due dates, please visit: http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/Thes-Diss_Info/Thes_Info.html.

NON-THESIS OPTION

Students who choose to pursue the non-thesis option will complete 21 hours of core curriculum and 9 hours of recommended electives and 6 hours of free electives. Students in this option must take MCS 5398 Directed Study in Merchandising and Consumer Studies.

IV. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

A limited number of graduate assistantships (GAs) are available each year. To be eligible for an assistantship, the student must be enrolled in nine credit hours (this can include leveling coursework) and be in good standing with the university. Assistantships can be awarded for either 50% time (20 hours per week) or 25% time (10 hours per week). Those who receive a half-time assistantship might be eligible to receive university benefits. Contact the Human Resources website for further information regarding benefits.

Assistantships may be classified as either a graduate research assistantship, teaching assistantship, or instructional assistantship. The assistantship most often awarded in the MCS program is the graduate instructional assistantship. The student awarded this type of assistantship is assigned to work with a FM program faculty member within the School of FCS. The type of work that will be expected includes, but is not limited to, course management and content development, as well as library research.

A sample position description and the application procedure are included in Appendix A. Students desiring a GA position must apply each year. This includes students who have held a GA position the previous year. All students enrolled in the MCS graduate program, who meet eligibility requirements, can apply for a position as a GA. By June 1 of each year, GA applications will be e-mailed to all currently active graduate students who are in good standing with the university. Interested students are required to complete the application and return it to the graduate advisor by the stated deadline. This includes students who have held a GA position in the previous academic year. Notification of awards will be made to applicants by August 1st. Prior to the beginning of fall semester, all GAs will meet with the MCS faculty to discuss roles and responsibilities of the assistants. Graduate assistant positions are typically funded for the fall and spring semesters only.

GAs must maintain a 3.0 GPA in coursework to retain their eligibility. Students are eligible to remain in a GA position for two full academic years. GAs will be evaluated at the ending of each semester by their supervising faculty member and provided feedback structured to enhance the quality of their work.

Effective Fall 2006, all graduate teaching and instructional assistants are required by the university to take a teaching-related course at no additional cost to the student. This will be offered through each graduate program. The purpose is to strengthen the quality of instruction provided directly/indirectly by the GA.

V. COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge of the field. All candidates for graduate degrees at Texas State University are required to pass a comprehensive examination, either written, oral, or a combination of the two. Students with a double major must take a comprehensive examination for each major. The format for students on the Merchandising and Consumer Studies track is as follows:

The master's degree candidate should take the comprehensive exam after completing 70% semester hours of graduate work. To complete the Comprehensive Examination form, students should obtain a signature from the faculty advisor and file the form with the Graduate Faculty Advisor. The comprehensive examination covers 3 subject areas determined by the student's advisory committee. The advisory committee, under the leadership of the major professor, will develop the exam. Students must notify the Graduate Faculty Advisor and major professor before the semester in which they desire to take the exam.

Comprehensive exams will be held on the first Saturday of March, July, and October on campus at a time and location to be determined. Students will be given one hour to complete each section. There are a total of three sections. The sections are as follows: 1. Research and Evaluation, 2. Theories, 3. Consumer Behavior and Merchandising Management.

Comprehensive exam questions are evaluated on both the quality and breadth of knowledge of the response. Committee members evaluate the student's response to comprehensive exam questions. Appeals can be made to the Committee Chair.

- P = Pass all components of the exam.
- CP = Conditional pass (Faculty will provide comments to the student and the student must respond to those comments. The student's response will be evaluated by the Committee Chair and a grade of P or F will then be determined).
- F = Fail (student must retake the portion of the exam he/she failed the following semester). Students have two additional attempts to "retake" a portion of the exam. A student has three opportunities to pass the exam in its entirety.

The results of the comprehensive examination must be filed in the Graduate College at least ten days before the commencement at which the graduating student's degree is to be conferred. The department is responsible for submitting the report to the Graduate College.

VI. SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

There are a number of scholarships available to graduate students at Texas State University. In particular, students who have a high GPA and/or can demonstrate need are in a good position to pursue scholarship opportunities. There are also scholarships available according to specific criteria, e.g., for study abroad programs (Benjamin A. Gillman) or for Hispanic students (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities). A number of scholarship grantors are listed below. Students planning to apply for a scholarship should first check the organizations website

as information often changes and pay particular attention to the application deadlines. **Most Texas State scholarships have a deadline of March 1.**

American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists grant for original research in textile design, materials, processing, and testing. Awarded to AATCC student members.

<http://www.aatcc.org/foundation/grants/RESEARCH.htm>

AAFCS-Texas Affiliate Student-Scholarship -Award for academic achievement, a positive solid character, appropriate professional goals, appropriate pre-professional involvement, and financial need.

http://www.tafcs.org/TAFCS_STUDENT_SCHOLARSHIP_APPLICATION.pdf

American Association of University Women (AAUW) – Career Development Grants support women who hold a bachelor's degree and are preparing to advance or change careers or re-enter the work force. http://www.aauw.org/learn/fellows_directory/cd.cfm

Benjamin A. Gilman (study abroad opportunities) – This program offers awards for study abroad, for U.S. citizen students who are receiving federal Pell Grant funding at a 2-year or 4-year college or university. <http://www.iie.org/gilman>

DAR American Indian Scholarship-The American Indians Committee of the DAR awards this scholarship to Native Americans and is intended to help Native American students of any age, any tribe and in any state striving to get an education. All awards are judged based on financial need and academic achievement. <http://members.dar.org/darnet/forms/AI-1001.PDF>

Racial/Ethnic Minority Graduate Scholarship-The Society for the Study of Social Problems to helps develop minority scholars. <http://www.ssspl.org/index.cfm/m/261>

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities – The scholarship programs administered by HACU are made possible due to generous contributions from corporate and federal organizations. <http://www.hacu.net>

HSF General College Scholarship– The HSF seeks to increase the number of Hispanic college graduates by providing scholarships. <https://apply.hsf.net/applications/>

Marjorie Joseph Scholarship for beginning graduate students awarded by the International Textile and Apparel Association (ITAA)

http://itaa.affiniscape.com/associations/12469/files/Marjorie_Joseph_Scholarship_for_Beginning_Doctoral_Students.pdf

Texas State Celebrity Classics Scholarship and the Texas State Graduate College Scholars Program – The Classics and Scholars scholarships are to encourage students with intellectual/creative promise and leadership to complete a master's degree at Texas State.

<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu>

The Winch Fund – The Winch Fund offers scholarships based on achievement, need, purpose, and recommendations of college/university personnel. The Winch Fund offers scholarships to

students who have sophomore, junior, and senior and graduate standing at their respective college or university. The intent of the Winch Fund is to supplement the increasing expenses of higher education. <http://www.scholarshipsite.org>

Phi Upsilon Omicron is a national honor society in family and consumer sciences. The organization offers numerous scholarship, fellowship and award opportunities, which are available only to Phi Upsilon Omicron Members. More information about these opportunities can be found at <http://phiu.org/scholarships.htm>

Sara Douglas Fellowship – This fellowship fund is named in honor of Sara Douglas, former professor at the University of Illinois and outstanding mentor, leader, and individual. http://itaa.affiniscap.com/associations/12469/files/Sara_Douglas_Professional_Promise.pdf

The Costume Society of America – The CSA offers awards for a student presenter and a student researcher, who are members of the Costume Society of America. For information about these awards visit, <http://www.costumesocietyamerica.com/awards.htm>

Please visit the following web sites for information regarding additional scholarship monies: http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/Prospect_Students/Fin_Grad_Ed/Scholarships/GC_Scholarships.html (We are in the College of Applied Arts) <http://www.appliedarts.txstate.edu/Graduate-Studies/Financial-Opportunities.html>

A listing of state scholarship programs can be obtained from:

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
P.O. Box 12788 Capitol Station
Austin, TX 78711
1-800-242-3062
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/>

Texas State Financial Aid Office:
J.C. Kellam Building
Room 240 (Second Floor)
601 University Drive
San Marcos, TX 78666
512-245-2315
<http://www.finaid.txstate.edu>

VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are the advantages of obtaining a graduate degree?

A graduate degree provides the opportunity to gain expertise in a student's r chosen field. Career change or career advancement, specialized training, and intellectual curiosity are a few of the reasons students choose to pursue a graduate degree.

2. Is the Merchandising & Consumer Studies program flexible for students who are currently working?

Yes. At this time, most of the core courses are offered during the late afternoon and evening.

3. Are any courses offered via the internet?

No.

4. How do I register for my classes?

Registration occurs online. Further registration instructions can be found by contacting the Office of the Registrar at <http://www.registrar.txstate.edu/> Please note: Courses marked with an @ require prior approval from the department. To request approval for MCS courses, please send the graduate advisor an e-mail with the student id number and the course number for which a student requests approval.

5. Where can I buy textbooks?

The Texas State Bookstore and Colloquium have graduate level textbooks available for purchase. In some instances, commercial venues such as Amazon.com or allbookstores.com might be appropriate for use.

VIII. MERCHANDISING & CONSUMER STUDIES FACULTY DIRECTORY

Pauline Sullivan, Ph.D. MCS Graduate Advisor

Family & Consumer Sciences 144; 512-245-2448; ps48@txstate.edu

Research Interest: Consumer behavior related to the retail sector, in particular out-of-town and cross-border shopping; influence of sustainability on consumption, supply chains and economic development, and entrepreneurship; diffusion of innovation

Current Research Activity: International retail out-shopping, the role of place in retail patronage, sustainable consumption, influence of regulatory focus theory and innovativeness on buying intentions

Ann DuPont, Ph.D.

Family & Consumer Sciences 146; 512-245-2444; ad23@txstate.edu

Research Interest: Textiles involvement in the 18th Century slave trade; development of the plantocracy system in the Caribbean basin, Meso-American crafts and textiles from prior to the Spanish invasion; the art, fantasy, and spirituality of the Mardi Gras Indians; fashion as an indicator of social change in wartime or periods of national emergency; cross-border shopping

Current Research Activity: Mexican national cross-border shopping with implications for retail tourism and regional economic development; the challenges to folk art traditions and cultural significance of artifacts posed by media exposure

Gwendolyn Hustvedt, Ph.D.

Family & Consumer Sciences 126A; 512-245-4689; gh21@txstate.edu

Research Interest: Product development; Sustainable supply chains; consumers and resources consumption; willingness to pay for information; textile labeling

Current Research Activity: Climate change and STEM education in apparel and textile curriculums; sustainable household behavior and the drought; marketing of wool-based compost; animal welfare and fiber production; wool and pediatric sleep enhancement; mislabeling of rayon

Jiyun Kang, Ph.D.

Family and Consumer Sciences 126C; 512-245-2534; jkang@txstate.edu

Research Interest: Environmentally sustainable and socially responsible consumption; consumer leadership, new product adoption and diffusion, social shopping, hedonic shopping motivations; cross border shopping; consumer psychological well-being; research methods (Scaling and Modeling)

Current Research Activity: Consumer social responsibility; consumer leadership in the adoption of sustainable products; sustainable brands; international retail out-shopping

Bobbie Moore, M.B.A.

Family & Consumer Sciences 145; 512-245-2445; bm26@txstate.edu

Research Interest: Merchandising and retail industry executive experience and leadership, industry partnerships, and merchandising career development

Current Research Activity: Merchandising retail operations and career development

Rodney C. Runyan, Ph.D.

Director, Family & Consumer Sciences 104; 512-245-2155; rcr56@txstate.edu

Research Interest: Small retail entrepreneurship; downtown branding; social capital and communities; research methods; international retailing

Current Research Activity: Branding of destination marketing organizations; small business orientation theory development

Jay Sang Ryu, Ph.D.

Family & Consumer Sciences 148; 512-245-4620; jr81@txstate.edu

Research Interest: Industry-specific city branding; consumer-centric retail strategy and innovation; marketing communications in retail, retail internationalization; community development

Current Research Activity: Place branding in tourism; consumer adoption of digital marketing communications in retailing; store atmosphere as a retail strategy

Keila Tyner, Ph.D.

Family & Consumer Sciences 126B; 512-245-4652; kt19@txstate.edu

Research Interest: Social/psychological aspects of dress, appearance, and the body; qualitative research methods

Current Research Activity: Exploring the consumption of surgical and nonsurgical cosmetic procedures, qualitatively and quantitatively; examining various socio-cultural aspects of *Vogue* magazine from 1900-1920 using the *Vogue Archive*.

APPENDIX A

SUGGESTED COURSE ROTATION

(Students take Core Courses, 9 hours suggested electives and 6 hours free electives)

Merchandising and Consumer Studies

Fall #1

MCS 5301 Research Methods in Merchandising and Consumer Studies
MCS 5302A Merchandising in the Experience Economy
MCS 5330 Merchandising and Consumer Theory
Recommended Elective

Spring #1

PSY 5320 – Statistics
MCS 5341 – Ethics and Consumer Science Professionals
MCS 5342 Sustainable Consumer Economy
MCS 5331 Strategic Merchandise Planning

Summer #1

Recommended Elective
Free Elective

Fall #2

MCS 5391 Seminar in Merchandising and Consumer Studies
MCS 5399A Thesis
Recommended Elective or Free Elective
Recommended Elective or Free Elective

Spring #4

MCS 5399B Thesis
MCS 5398 Directed Study in Merchandising and Consumer Studies
Recommended Elective or Free Elective
Recommended Elective or Free Elective

APPENDIX B
SUGGESTED ELECTIVE COURSES (Select Three)

MCS 5302A Merchandising in the Experience Economy (3-0). Students will use an interdisciplinary approach and applicable theories to understand consumer demand and the impact on product and service development and transformation.

MCS 5302B Merchandising Strategies in Domestic and International Markets (3-0). This course will emphasize strategic planning as a result of analysis of current trends in domestic and global markets.

MCS 5331 Strategic Merchandise Planning (3-0). Students will synthesize past and present trends to forecast demand for value-added merchandise that satisfies the needs of individuals, families, and communities. Students will strategically analyze and evaluate consumer feedback in the planning process for profitable merchandising enterprises.

MCS 5332 Innovation in the Global Market (3-0). This course addresses how to create value and growth through innovation in new and existing markets with a focus on identification of theories and models to understand the innovation and consumer adoption process.

MCS 5333 Global Sourcing and Distribution (3-0). The critical evaluation and integration of opportunities and challenges encountered in the manufacturing, distribution, and final acquisition of textile and apparel products in the global environment will be examined in this course.

MCS 5336 Culture, Society & Dress (3-0). This course will examine social science theories and concepts as they relate to dress, appearance, and the body. Fashion trends and consumer adoption patterns will also be explored using social science theories to analyze consumer behavior and predict future market directions.

MCS 5390 Merchandising and Consumer Studies Practicum (3-0). This course will provide an opportunity for students to obtain professional knowledge and skills in a site that is associated with merchandising and consumer studies. This is a field-based experience. Requires approval of the Practicum Coordinator. This course is graded on a CR/NR basis.

APPENDIX C

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

To be selected as a graduate assistant (GA) is generally regarded as an honor. Graduate assistantships are awarded to those students who demonstrate qualities indicating their potential for future professional growth and contribution to a field of study. An assistantship provides opportunities for graduate students to work closely with graduate faculty. This working relationship provides the GA with additional growth experiences related to teaching, research, and professional networking.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All students enrolled in the Merchandising and Consumer Studies (MCS) graduate program who meet eligibility requirements can apply for a MCS Graduate Assistantship. Applications will be e-mailed to all current and accepted students by June 1 of each year. Students who are interested in a GA position will be required to complete the application and return it to the graduate program coordinator by the stated deadline.

MCS graduate faculty will then review applications and select GAs for the upcoming academic year. Students who are not selected for a GA position with the MCS program area will be considered for a GA position in one of the other program areas (e.g., Fashion Merchandising, Interior Design).

ELIGIBILITY OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

To be eligible to serve as a GA, the student must be unconditionally admitted to the graduate college and must maintain a 3.0 GPA. In addition, GAs must be enrolled in a minimum of nine hours of course work during each full (Fall, Spring) semester of employment. Required leveling coursework can count as a part of the nine hour requirement. There is one exception to the nine-hour rule. In the last semester of taking coursework prior to graduation, GAs do not have to take nine hours if, for example, they only lack six hours in order to graduate. In this case, they would be eligible for an assistantship while enrolled in only six hours of coursework. However, this request has to be made to the Graduate College by the Graduate Program Coordinator.

GAs are appointed for the Fall-Spring academic year. Summer appointments will be based upon availability of money; however, there are typically no university funded positions available in the summer. Should summer GA funds become available, GAs employed during the regular academic year will be offered summer GA positions first. If no currently employed GAs are interested in summer employment, then an application will be e-mailed to all graduate students.

At the end of each regular semester, the graduate faculty will meet to assess the performance of each GA for the preceding semester. The graduate faculty can vote to reappoint a GA unconditionally, reappoint conditionally if there are performance problems, or terminate. A conditional reappointment will be based on performance issues and the GA will be evaluated monthly by the graduate faculty. If a GA is terminated, another GA will be selected.

Students are eligible to remain in a GA position for two full academic years, exclusive of summer employment. Each academic year the student must reapply for a GA position. The awarding of a GA position for one year does not automatically entitle the student to a second year's appointment. Also, the level of appointment for an individual student (1/2 vs. 1/4 time) may change from semester to semester.

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The general responsibilities described below apply to GAs hired to work with MCS faculty.

1. GAs will work 20 hours per week on a half-time GA appointment, 10 hours per week on a quarter-time appointment.
2. GAs will be assigned to work primarily with one specific faculty member.
3. Students may also be assigned tasks from other faculty members on an "as needed" basis.
4. The assigned faculty member's schedule is paramount in determining the GA's schedule.
5. GAs are generally expected to complete their work during regular business hours (Monday – Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.).
6. GAs are expected to work starting the week before classes begin and should plan to work until the end of the semester. This expectation includes working during finals week.

PERSONAL/PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES

The qualities described here will constitute the basis for a student's annual evaluation by Merchandising and Consumer Studies graduate faculty.

1. Adaptable: Accepts suggestions and constructive suggestions, accepts change, handles simultaneous assignments.
2. Dependable: Industrious, fulfills assigned responsibilities, produces high quality work, in work place at scheduled time.
3. Ethical: Handles confidential information sensitively.
4. Professional: Supports program, good representative of program, tactful, takes advantage of professional opportunities.
5. Communicative: Responds to verbal and written communication, maintains open communication with faculty/students.
6. Cooperative: Flexible in regard to assignments, works well with faculty, other graduate students, and undergraduate students.
7. Uses good judgment: Evaluates situation and makes sound decisions.
8. Takes initiative: Works on own, resourceful in completing assignments, seeks additional work when primary tasks are completed.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Graduate assistants may assist faculty with both teaching and research activities as needed. Responsibilities of GA may include the following:

1. Assist faculty members with teaching. These activities may include:
 - a. Grading student assignments and recording grades.
 - b. Proctoring exams.
 - c. Preparing teaching materials.
 - d. Assisting with teaching classes.

2. Assist faculty members with research. These activities may include:
 - a. Contributing to research proposals.
 - b. Conducting literature searches.
 - c. Writing literature reviews.
 - d. Collecting research data.
 - e. Collating and analyzing data. This includes conducting appropriate statistical tests, interpreting data, and assisting in other analysis procedures.
 - f. Writing results. This includes preparing drafts of research reports (including proofreading) and preparation of manuscripts.

NOTE: The assignment of GA co-authorship will be judged by the faculty based on the relative contributions of the GA. Refer to APA's Graduate Student's Guide to Determining Authorship Credit and Authorship Order (2006), <http://www.apa.org/science/leadership/students/authorship-paper.pdf>.

SALARY AND BENEFITS

Half-time GAs (who work 20 hours per week) are paid at a base rate of \$1,278.00 per month for the 2011 academic year. Half-time GAs are also eligible for health benefits through the university. However, the GA must pay a portion of the costs of the health care plan. More information regarding health benefits is available from Human Resources at 512-245-2557 or at <http://www.hr.txstate.edu/benefits.html>.

APPENDIX D
INTERNATIONAL STUDY OPPORTUNITY

STUDY ABROAD

Texas State University-San Marcos offers a variety of study abroad programs. Additional information is available at <http://www.studyabroad.txstate.edu/>. Their office is located at:

Thornton International House
344 W. Woods Street
San Marcos, TX 78666-4616