Graduate Student Desk Assignment Policy

Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics

Amended Summer 1980, Spring 1984, 1987, Fall 1993, Spring 1999

Last Amended September 18, 2015

The office and desks in Cook Hall are the property of the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics. Desk use is a privilege granted by the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics to help students complete their assistantship work and studies. Each student who applies for and uses a desk in Cook Hall must abide by the Desk Policy as specified in this document.

**Section I: Definition**

* Graduate status is defined as admission to a graduate degree, non-degree, or special program as specified by university policy in conjunction with the policy of the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics (AFRE). Graduates students in AFRE consist of those students with graduate status.
* Seniority for a graduate student in AFRE is defined as the total number of semesters, excluding summers, for which the student has (and is currently) registered and taken with at least the minimum number of credits required by the university and AFRE to maintain graduate student status at Michigan State University.

**Section II: Priorities**

* Seniority shall be the only criterion for the assignment of a desk, provided the total number of desks available is sufficient.
* In conformity with AFRE department policy, a student holding an assistantship or equivalent as certified by the department office shall be guaranteed a desk, provided space is available.
* If due to space limitations it becomes necessary to remove students not holding assistantships, such students will be removed according to the lowest seniority.
* Incoming PhD students have priority over incoming Masters students in their application for a desk, and students with assistantships (or equivalent, as certified by the department office) have priority over students without assistantships.
* When students with equal seniority apply for the same desk, the desk will be assigned by random selection.
* The Cook Hall Building Representative will be granted three extra semesters of seniority upon entering office. This will be relinquished upon leaving office, though any desk assignment may be maintained.
* In order to ensure that the Cook Hall Building Representative has access to the building facilities, s/he is guaranteed a desk regardless of assistantship status and seniority, subject to departmental policy.

**Section III: Desk Applications and Assignments**

* Upon first applying for a desk, each student must read the Desk Policy. By applying for a desk, s/he agrees to abide by the Desk Policy. If a student fails to do so, the Cook Hall Building Representative can turn the matter over to the Judiciary Committee. After deliberation, the Judiciary Committee can decide to turn the matter over to the Department Chairperson.
* Assignments in any area will be made by the Cook Hall Building Representative based on availability of desks and desk applications submitted. Any student who is dissatisfied with the decision made by the Cook Hall Building Representative may appeal the decision to the Judiciary Committee. The Judiciary Committee must decide whether or not to uphold the assignee’s appeal. If the appeal is successful, the assignee will be allowed to keep his/her desk assignment. The Judiciary Committee’s decision is final and not subject to further appeal.
* When desks become vacant, their availability will be announced by email to all the students. Applications will be accepted by email or in writing by the Cook Hall Building Representative for 3 subsequent days. At 5 pm on the 3rd day, applications will no longer be accepted and vacancies will be assigned.
* In the event of a desk vacancy, any interested student must submit an application by email or in writing to the Cook Hall Building Representative indicating his/her seniority and desk preference. A student must also have paid all past and current GSO dues required by the GSO Constitution. The student with the highest seniority shall receive his/her preferred desk indicated in his/her application. If students of equal seniority apply for the same desk, see Section II above.
* **After a one month dues delinquency, incumbent desks will be offered up to all grad students as a vacancy.**

**Section IV: Vacating Desks**

* When a student vacates a desk, s/he must notify the Cook Hall Building Representative and return his/her office keys to the main department office. If the student leaves AFRE, s/he must also return his/her Cook Hall building key to the main department office.
* Retention of a desk assignment shall be subject to the assignee using the desk by the last day of each semester. Another student who believes the desk to be unused and wishes to apply for the desk must submit an application to the Cook Hall Building Representative, who will notify the assignee whose desk is in question in writing. Failure to respond within two weeks will result in forfeiture of the desk. Once the assignee’s response is received, or once the two week period is over (whichever is shorter), the Cook Hall Building Representative will determine whether the desk is being used reasonably. The Cook Hall Building Representative is not required to identify the new applicant when addressing issues of use. As specified above, the decision made by the Cook Hall Building Representative may be appealed to the Judiciary Committee.
* In situations where a student will be absent for ***more*** than 9 months or is leaving for purposes other than work related to AFRE, assistantship work, or an internship, the student must notify the Cook Hall Building Representative. The student’s desk assignment privilege is not retained during his/her absence, and s/he must vacate the desk so that it may be reassigned. If the student would like to retain the assignment or apply for another desk assignment, this may be done at the discretion of the Cook Hall Building Representative. As above, if the student retains the desk assignment during his/her absence, it is done with the understanding that the desk may be temporarily occupied by others in his/her absence.