



Master's Student Handbook

**Carnegie Mellon University
Entertainment Technology Center
Master of Entertainment Technology Student Handbook
For the ETC class starting in August 2025**

Carnegie Mellon University
Entertainment Technology Center

Table of Contents

SECTION 1: Welcome & Introduction.....	5
SECTION 2: Program Vision, Mission, and Values.....	6
2.1: Vision.....	6
2.2: Mission.....	6
2.3: Values.....	6
Mutual Respect.....	7
Improper/Illegal Communications.....	7
Incidents of Discrimination or Harassment.....	7
SECTION 3: Degrees Offered.....	8
SECTION 4: ETC and CMU Contacts.....	8
SECTION 5: Departmental Resources.....	9
5.1 Mailboxes:.....	10
5.2 Keys.....	10
5.3 Project Offices.....	10
5.4 Computers.....	10
5.5 Software.....	11
5.6 Remote Computing.....	12
5.7 Servers.....	12
5.8 ETC Equipment and Resources.....	13
5.9 Library Checkout System.....	13
5.10 Equipment and Media Checkout System.....	13
5.11 Purchasing and Reimbursement Procedures and Policies:.....	14
Project Purchasing.....	14
Reimbursement:.....	15
5.12 Facility Hours.....	15
5.13 Facility Rooms / Meeting Rooms.....	15
Trash and recyclables.....	15
5.14 Etiquette for Facilities, Rooms, and Project Conference Areas.....	16
5.15 Department Office/Building Security, Repairs and Services.....	16
5.16 Departmental/College Graduate Student Organizations/Advisory Committee/Graduate Representatives:.....	16
5.17 ETC Communication.....	17
Email Policy.....	17
Mailing Lists (d-lists).....	17
5.18 Department Approach to Press and Media Relations.....	17
Social Media Release Form.....	17
5.19 Department/College/University Brands and Logos.....	18
5.20 Trademarks and licensing policies.....	18
SECTION 6: Advising.....	18

6.1: Role of an Advisor and Advisor Assignments.....	18
6.2: Advisor/Advisee Collaboration.....	19
Professional Development.....	19
6.3: Review/Redress of Academic Conflicts.....	20
Final Grade Appeal.....	20
Co-op Appeal.....	20
Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures.....	20
SECTION 7: Master's Degree Requirements.....	21
7.1: Residency Requirements.....	21
Full-time status.....	21
7.2: Registration Process.....	21
7.3: Required Units for Degree Attainment.....	22
First Semester (i.e., Immersion Semester) Courses.....	22
7.4: Core Courses.....	22
Core Courses include:.....	23
Project Courses.....	23
ETC Project Course Structure.....	23
Year-Long Projects.....	24
7.5: Electives.....	24
7.6: Final Semester.....	25
7.7: Department Policy on Double Counting Courses.....	25
7.8: Department Policy for Courses Outside the Department/College.....	26
7.9: Course Exemptions.....	26
7.10: Protocol for Evaluation of Transfer Credit.....	26
7.11: Graduate Assistant Requirements/Teaching Requirements/Opportunities.....	26
7.12: Co-op Requirements and Opportunities.....	27
Co-op Requirements.....	27
Criteria for a co-op.....	27
Approval process.....	28
Student Eligibility.....	28
Co-op Semester.....	29
Expectations:.....	29
7.13 Internship Requirements and Opportunities.....	30
Criteria.....	30
Expectations.....	31
7.14: Thesis Requirement.....	31
SECTION 8: Department Policies & Protocols.....	31
8.1: Petition Procedures.....	31

8.2: Department Policy for Withdrawing from a Course.....	31
8.3: Requirements for Those Without a Bachelor's Degree in the Discipline.....	31
8.4: New Policies / "Grandfather" Policy.....	32
8.5: Time Away from Academic Responsibilities.....	32
8.6 Guidance for University Breaks and Holidays.....	32
8.7 Course Overload Policy (Extra Elective course).....	33
8.7: Other Policies and Protocols / Inclusion of Any Variations to University Policies and Protocols.....	34
Statute of Limitations.....	34
Intellectual Property.....	34
SECTION 9: Grading & Evaluation.....	35
9.1: Grading Scale/System.....	35
9.2: Department Policy on Grades for Retaking a Course.....	35
9.3: Department Policy on Pass/Fail, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.....	35
9.4: Department Policy for Incompletes.....	36
9.5: Independent Study/Directed Reading.....	36
9.6: GPA Requirements and QPA Requirements for Graduation.....	37
9.7: Satisfactory Academic Standing.....	37
Good Standing:.....	37
Not in Good Standing (Midterm Academic Notice):.....	38
Not in Good Standing (Academic Probation):.....	38
Not in Good Standing (Academic Suspension):.....	39
Not in Good Standing (Dropped from the Program):.....	40
9.8 Appeal Process.....	40
Final Grade Appeal.....	40
Co-op Appeal.....	41
9.9: Regular Reviews and Evaluations by Department.....	41
Semester Academic Review.....	41
Midterm Academic Notice.....	42
SECTION 10: Funding & Financial Support.....	43
10.1: Statement of Department Financial Support.....	43
10.3: Travel/Conference and Research Funding.....	43
10.5: Funding Payment Schedule.....	45
Reimbursement:.....	45
10.6 Additional Sources of Internal & External Financial Support.....	45
10.7: Availability of Summer Employment.....	46
10.8 Department Policy on Outside Employment.....	46
10.9 Requirements for the Continuation of Funding.....	46
SECTION 11: ADDITIONAL DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION.....	47

11.1 Career Services Code of Ethics.....	47
11.2 Child Protection Clearances.....	48
Student Acknowledgement.....	50

SECTION 1: Welcome & Introduction

Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center (ETC) is the premier professional graduate program for interactive entertainment as it is applied across various fields. The ETC offers a unique two-year Master of Entertainment Technology (MET), currently considered a terminal degree. At the ETC, interdisciplinary project work focuses on a range of areas, spanning learning, health, training, social impact, civics, entertainment, and more. Project teams develop a range of projects, including games, animation, location-based installations, augmented reality, mobile devices, robotics, interactive performances, and transmedia storytelling. This breadth of interests is one of the most vital components of the ETC experience.

The core of the ETC is the MET degree. As a professional graduate program, our focus is on providing students with an educational experience that fosters their career development through applied research on interdisciplinary projects. Founded in 1998, the ETC's curriculum balances educational goals, professional development, engaging experiences, and learning, working, and playing. The heart of the program focuses on communication and collaboration, challenging students to learn about leadership, teamwork, innovation, and positive social impact. Carnegie Mellon is rare among US universities in offering this degree, as there are top-quality fine arts and design programs and premier science and engineering programs here. Also, Carnegie Mellon's business and management programs offer entrepreneurial expertise. This allows the entire university to serve as a resource for ETC students.

The "high concept" behind both the Center and the Master's program is the principle of having interdisciplinary groups work together on projects to produce artifacts that are intended to entertain, inform, inspire, or otherwise impact an audience/guest/player/participant. The master's degree is focused on project courses because students' more significant challenge in authoring interactive media is bringing together different disciplines. The Master of Entertainment Technology degree program is driven by a research and development agenda that effectively showcases the ETC's range of expertise and experience. Projects and courses explore transformational games, interactive storytelling, innovation by design, and learning and media. The emphasis is on leadership, innovation, and communication by creating challenging experiences through which students learn how to collaborate, experiment, and iterate solutions.

The ETC does not intend to take artists and turn them into engineers, nor vice versa. While some students can achieve mastery in multiple areas, we do not want to have students

master “the other side” or “all sides.” Instead, it is the intent for a typical student in this program to enter with mastery/training in a specific area and spend their two years at Carnegie Mellon learning the vocabulary, values, and working patterns of the other culture. This learning will be evidenced by their ability to work effectively with those from different backgrounds and varying levels of expertise.

While this handbook is specific to your academic experience in the department, it is just one element of the Graduate Student Handbook Suite. There are several other resources within the suite that you should consult when needed:

- Your Program Handbook
- [University-Wide Graduate Student Handbook \(Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs\)](#)
- [The Word Student Handbook](#)

SECTION 2: Program Vision, Mission, and Values

2.1: Vision

The ETC VISION is to shape students into creative leaders who imagine and build exemplary experiences to entertain, educate, transform, and inspire.

2.2: Mission

The ETC MISSION is to create inclusive and interdisciplinary educational opportunities that prepare students for professional careers through project-centric learning, conservatory instruction, community engagement, and industry collaboration.

2.3: Values

Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center (ETC) excels at the intersection of technology, art, and design. Here, creative individuals are challenged to explore, experiment, and collaborate to create games, designs, and stories using the latest technologies.

At the ETC, we excel by creating an educational environment where interdisciplinary students acquire collaboration, creativity, and communication expertise while applying their artistic and technical skills through design-based research projects.

At the ETC, we balance educational goals, professional development, and engaging experiences – or what we refer to as “learn, work, play.” With an emphasis on leadership, innovation, and communication, we create challenging experiences through which students learn how to collaborate, experiment, and iterate solutions.

The ETC is simply different, and we strive to design experiences that educate, engage, and inspire.

Mutual Respect

An essential aspect of our culture is mutual respect among students, faculty, and staff who are highly diverse, not only in terms of professional and research interests, but also in terms of gender, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, and other demographic characteristics. Words or actions that express discrimination, disrespect, intimidation, or harassment based on race, color, national origin, birth sex, gender identity, handicap or disability, age, sexual orientation, religion, creed, ancestry, belief, veteran status, or genetic information are not acceptable within our community. Any violations of these standards should be brought to the ETC program director, Derek Ham, your faculty mentor, any of the ETC staff, or the Office of Student Affairs.

Improper/Illegal Communications

Any communications that would be improper or illegal on any other medium are equally so on the computer: libelous material, obscene messages, harassment, forgery, threats, etc.

Incidents of Discrimination or Harassment

Our community places great value on mutual respect. However, if you witness an incident of discrimination based on gender, race, religion, or similar characteristics, it is essential to know what to do about it. If you feel comfortable and safe responding to the discriminatory behavior in the moment, we encourage you to do that; such responses, especially from bystanders, reinforce our community standards and can start an educational dialog that leads to reconciliation and prevents similar incidents from occurring in the future. We encourage you to talk with the program director, any faculty member, any of the ETC staff, or someone in the Office of Student Affairs about any incidents you witness or hear about secondhand. Faculty members and the ETC staff are responsible for forwarding such incidents to the program director (or, when the director has a conflict, to the faculty ombudsperson) for follow-up. There is a wide range of behaviors that may be concerning; we can help you discuss them and then investigate to determine if there is a violation of community standards. If there is a violation, we will take it seriously and will take action according to the severity of the incident. One-time incidents that are not very severe may be handled by a conversation with the individual engaged in the problematic behavior. Here, the primary goal is to educate about our community expectations, discuss how to mitigate the damage caused by the discriminatory incident, and understand the consequences of continued violations of community standards. Individual or repeated incidents that are severe enough to have a significant negative impact on an individual or our community will be reported to the Office of Student Affairs or the Office of Title IX Initiatives, which has a processor dealing with them. These more serious incidents, when

perpetrated by a student, will also be discussed at the Student Review meeting, where consequences may be imposed, such as required amelioration actions, a probation semester, or dismissal from the program.

SECTION 3: Degrees Offered

The ETC offers a unique two-year Master of Entertainment Technology (MET), currently considered a terminal degree.

Integrated Bachelors & Master's Program: students accepted into the ETC through an IBM program from an ETC and CMU-approved undergraduate program complete the semester 1 curriculum, followed by two project course semesters. Currently, the ETC has an integrated program with the School of Computer Science.

Note: Students in an IBM program are not eligible for co-ops

SECTION 4: ETC and CMU Contacts

Name	Title	Office location	Contact information
Amanda Anderson	Associate Director of Career Services, ETC	PTC 5315	amandaan@andrew.cmu.edu
<u>Steve Audia</u>	Director of Information Technology	PTC 3216	saudia@andrew.cmu.edu for ETC Help Desk Issues: etc-support@andrew.cmu.edu
<u>Dave Culyba</u>	Director of Curriculum, ETC	PTC 5305	dculyba@andrew.cmu.edu
MaryCatherine Dieterle	Director of Student Services, ETC	PTC 5313	mb8f@andrew.cmu.edu
Rebecca Lombardi	Director of Admissions, ETC	PTC 5101	r13j@andrew.cmu.edu
Derek Ham	ETC Director	PTC 5327	derekham@andrew.cmu.edu

Keith Webster	The Helen and Henry Posner, Jr. Dean of the University Libraries and Director of Emerging and Integrative Media Initiatives	Hunt Library	kwebster@andrew.cmu.edu
Caitlin A Zunic	Operations Administrator - ETC	PTC 5107	caz@andrew.cmu.edu
Liz Vaughn	Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Director of Student Leadership, Involvement and Civic Engagement	Cohon University Center 103 412-268-8704	eav@andrew.cmu.edu
Charlie Forster	Administrative Coordinator - ETC	PTC 5107 412-268-1129	cforster@andrew.cmu.edu

A complete listing of ETC faculty and staff can be found on the website:
<https://www.etc.cmu.edu/learn/faculty-staff/>

SECTION 5: Departmental Resources

The ETC seeks to create an inclusive and mutually respectful community amongst its students, staff, and faculty. Students are expected to share the responsibility of ensuring that ETC spaces are welcoming, accessible, and usable for the entire community. Hostile or unwelcoming behavior, language, or actions (in addition to any other behavior, language, or action incongruent with the University's Statement of Assurance) will not be tolerated.

Listed below are the ETC policies on using and distributing resources within the department. All of the policies are designed with a few key ideas in mind:

- 1) The ETC faculty and staff make the decisions on how resources are distributed.
- 2) Decisions are based on the needs of a project or, in some cases, a course, not personal needs.

- 3) Mutual respect, personal responsibility, teamwork, and effective sharing.

5.1 Mailboxes:

Students have mailboxes in the fifth-floor ETC mailroom (5202) for professional use. These mailboxes should not be used for personal mail. Please check your mailboxes daily. If students want something mailed or delivered to this address, please use the complete address: **First Name and Family Name, Entertainment Technology Center, Carnegie Mellon University, 700 Technology Drive, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15219**. Students should also ensure the Administrative Coordinator has a phone number to notify them of incoming FedEx, UPS, Priority Mail, or other overnight package deliveries. The department will empty mailboxes at the end of each semester.

5.2 Keys

The Administrative Coordinator will assign keys. Every student will receive at least one key according to need. Keys must be signed out and in, and the loss of a key will result in a \$30 charge against the student's account per key. If the entire space must be re-keyed, the ETC reserves the right to charge the student for the modifications. The ETC is not responsible for the loss of anything of value that may be left unattended in the project rooms. However, students should consider locking their project rooms, as this will provide an additional security measure. All common ETC areas (the mailroom, library, lounge, etc.) have combination locks.

5.3 Project Offices

Teams will be assigned a workstation. The rooms including desks, furniture, wiring and technology are not to be rearranged. Any issues with the room should be directed to the Operations Administrator.

5.4 Computers

The computing environment at the ETC is unique, and its design is continually being re-evaluated based on the needs of the ever-changing industry in which the ETC educates students to thrive.

All of the policies and guidelines set forth by the Computing Services group at Carnegie Mellon apply here at the ETC. In addition to those rules, the ETC has its policies and guidelines, none of which supersede Computing Services' guidelines. Please refer to the following URL for Computing Services' policies and guidelines: <https://www.cmu.edu/computing/>. Students are responsible for following the policies and guidelines of both the ETC and Carnegie Mellon, with Carnegie Mellon policies and procedures superseding those of the ETC.

Each student will be assigned a computer preloaded with all the software needed for the course and project work assigned here. The computer, monitor, keyboard, and mouse all belong to the ETC but will be considered a student's personal space during their study here, subject to all University policies governing the use of computer equipment. Students should not personalize or deface the equipment (e.g., adding stickers and carving); they may be fined if they do. Proper use of the desktop computer is the student's responsibility.

ETC students are given Administrator Rights to their computers. They are free to install software or make configuration changes that they feel are necessary to complete their project and coursework. However, because of this privilege, a student can also "undo" configurations (such as uninstalling programs, disabling the local firewall, or removing the anti-virus application) that can negatively impact the intended function of the computer. As such, a student's computer's overall security and health is ultimately that student's responsibility. The ETC technical staff is here to help with any issues that may arise, but they cannot be held responsible for problems resulting from the abuse or neglect of the computer.

It is vital to reiterate CMU's policies on respecting US copyright law. If you use any CMU network to download, upload, or stream something copyrighted and don't have explicit permission from the copyright owner to copy or distribute, your computer and all devices registered to you may be taken off CMU's networks.

If you receive an email from abuse@andrew.cmu.edu, please *read it carefully*. Look here for more information: <https://www.cmu.edu/iso/aware/dmca/>

Support is only provided for computers that the ETC owns and maintains. The ETC cannot offer support for computers that students own, such as personal laptops, even if they choose to use them for their coursework or project work here. Cloud-based software (SaaS or remotely rendered) is only supported when used on department-owned hardware.

5.5 Software

Besides the software that is pre-loaded onto ETC student PCs, other software can be requested. Again, requests can only be made for the pursuit of the goals of a student project (or, in some rare cases, an ETC course). If a team feels they need new software, that request can be made by the team's producer to the ETC Computing Helpdesk (etc-support@andrew.cmu.edu), and the team must CC their project advisors. The support staff will collaborate with advisors to assess whether the department should acquire the software.

Free and open-source software can be installed without making a request, but faculty and staff are still advised to consult. In some cases, certain F/OSS can have onerous terms or paint a team in a corner regarding tech standards, availability, or hidden licensing encumbrances.

5.6 Remote Computing

Students can access their ETC desktop PCs remotely. By default, Microsoft Remote Desktop (RDP) is enabled. If a student wants to access their ETC desktop PC remotely, they can initiate a connection to RDP on their machine from any remote location, as long as they are connected to the CMU VPN.

Some graphically intensive or latency-sensitive apps may perform less than ideally over RDP, through the VPN, and/or from the student's remote location. If a student thinks their remote access experience is hindering their project work, they can request access via Parsec for Teams through their project instructors.

Although ETC student desktop PCs are meant to be stationary and "always on," they are physically located in shared spaces. Someone in the room could accidentally interrupt their power or network connectivity. Having the PC maintain power and network connectivity is the student's responsibility, as PCs will not be located in a managed server closet.

Students' ETC desktop PCs will not be set up for students not actively participating in an ETC semester (either a project team or the Immersion semester). Students on Co-Op will have their computers stored. Requests can be made for temporary access to copy files, etc.

5.7 Servers

There are four types of servers at the ETC:

- 1) Class I - Production Servers for General Infrastructure
- 2) Class II - Production Servers for Projects
- 3) Class III - Non-production Servers for Projects
- 4) Class IV - Testing Servers

It's common for a project team to require a server on which to host the deliverable the team is creating, such as a web-based game or dynamic website. If this is needed, student teams should consult with their project course instructor(s) and, if approved, then contact the IT department to request the server: etc-support@lists.andrew.cmu.edu

A virtual server, either GNU/Linux or Windows, can be provisioned, and control can be delegated to a designated project team member. The server will be maintained for the project's duration, after which it will be decommissioned and archived. Free cloud servers and services are discouraged; however, if a team believes they are necessary, they must discuss this with their project advisors. The main reason is that once the project concludes and the team members move on, access to the cloud server/service may be lost in the transition if not adequately documented.

The main thing to note about using ETC servers is that they are solely for ETC class and project use. Personal use of ETC servers, services, or storage is not permitted, including storing personal files on ETC servers or the processing of data that is not related to the ETC, such as mining cryptocurrency.

5.8 ETC Equipment and Resources

The ETC has a wide variety of items that can be signed out to students, faculty, and staff for periods ranging from brief to semester-long, including physical media libraries and equipment sign-out systems.

5.9 Library Checkout System

The checkout system is self-governed, as there is no “librarian” to facilitate the lending process. Books and DVDs are housed in 5105 (The DVD Room) and 5321 (The library). Students are on their honor to return the borrowed items on time and by the end of each semester.

5.10 Equipment and Media Checkout System

Several of the ETC staff members manage this checkout system. A list of items, as well as the policy of borrowing items, can be found on our [ETC help pages](https://help.etc.cmu.edu/xwiki/bin/Administration/Checkout%20System/).

<https://help.etc.cmu.edu/xwiki/bin/Administration/Checkout%20System/>

If available, these items can be signed out at any time during a semester. The following rules apply when signing out items:

- The person who signs out an item is financially responsible for that item during its lease. If the item is lost, stolen, or damaged, the person must pay for its replacement or repair.
- Items cannot be signed out while a student is on a Co-op, internship, or otherwise not actively participating in a school semester.
- Items cannot be signed out to alumni, former staff and faculty, or affiliates.
- The ETC reserves the right to decide who is allowed to sign out an item if that item is needed for ETC-related purposes and has been requested by more than one person during the same period. This includes asking for the return of an item before its lease is up.
- Some items contain multiple pieces (cables, adapters, pens, controllers, cases). The item must be returned with all the pieces that accompanied it when it was signed out. Any such pieces are documented in the comments section of an item's entry in the equipment database.
- Items must be returned at the end of the specified lease, which is usually two weeks, but differs for some items. After two weeks, the item's lease can be renewed if no one else requests it.
- When returning items, they must be brought back to the place where they were signed out, in person. Items cannot be left outside an office, in a mailbox, or with another person. Until the person who signed the item out to you has signed it back in, the person who signed it out is still responsible for it. This is particularly important to understand in the typical scenario where one person gives the item to

another person when they are finished using it. Since this transaction cannot be tracked, the first person to sign the item out is still responsible.

- No more than five items total can be signed out at a time.
- The ETC reserves the right to grant exceptions to, alter definitions of, and exempt persons from any of the above rules for extenuating circumstances.

Please read carefully the complete list of rules and policies regarding equipment and media loaning on the [ETC help pages](https://help.etc.cmu.edu/xwiki/bin/Administration/Checkout%20System) for it here:

<https://help.etc.cmu.edu/xwiki/bin/Administration/Checkout%20System>.

5.11 Purchasing and Reimbursement Procedures and Policies:

Students should be supplied with everything they need to complete their coursework while at the ETC. That said, the nature of coursework for individual students and projects can significantly vary, and often additional software or hardware is required.

Project Purchasing

ETC projects will periodically need additional software, props, and other materials or services requiring purchase from outside companies, ranging from standard retail outlets to online vendors. Purchases must fall within the submitted team budget which is approved by the Project Advisors and the ETC Director. As a general rule of thumb, requests made with reasonable lead time and requests for equipment that will also be helpful in other current or future ETC projects are likely to be approved.

- NOTE: All purchases are the property of the ETC.
- Services take time to approve as vendors do have to be cleared by CMU.

All purchase requests for the ETC project course material must be checked with the Operations Administrator to see if the ETC already has the item(s), and the Director must authorize all requests through written confirmation.

If the ETC staff are unable to make the purchase, students can work with ETC staff to make tax-exempt purchases. If students make a purchase for which tax is added to the overall purchase price, the university will not reimburse the tax, and students will be held accountable for it. Also, purchases made by students that are not approved prior will not be refunded, even if a student feels confident that it will be approved after the fact.

Note: Before making any purchases for ETC elective courses, the instructor of record and the Director need to approve them in writing.

Reimbursement:

- Students will only be reimbursed with prior approval.
- Signed forms do not guarantee reimbursement if the requests don't follow policy. If you're not sure, ask before spending money.
- All receipts need to be submitted within one month of the date of purchase.
- Proper business justification and supporting documentation (e.g., receipts) must be provided.
- Payment will be made to the person who makes the approved purchase.
- All reimbursements must follow CMU's Business and Travel Expense Policy.
- Printed reimbursement forms can be found in the mailroom.
- Digital reimbursement forms are on the shared drive (Google Drive > Shared Drives > ETC Common > Resources > Reimbursement Forms).

5.12 Facility Hours

The ETC is open to ETC students, staff, and faculty during the day and is closed overnight and during some holidays. Signs will be posted, and emails will be sent in advance of any such closings. The building is closed on weekday evenings (Monday through Friday) from 11 pm to 7 am and weekend evenings (Saturday and Sunday) from 7 pm to 9 am. The building security guard will walk the building one hour before closing to inform everyone each evening.

5.13 Facility Rooms / Meeting Rooms

There are three types of meeting rooms

1. Project Conference Areas
2. Department Conference Rooms
3. Classroom and Cluster

Meeting room locations and instructions on how to reserve spaces can be found on the [department help pages](#).

Note: If you enter a room without a reservation, you may be asked to leave if someone with a reservation arrives. We recommend you reserve rooms in advance.

Trash and recyclables

Trash and recyclables are to be thrown out in the proper receptacles. There are two types of recycling receptacles: ones that take paper, and ones that take aluminum, glass, and plastic. CMU is a green university, and the ETC aims to maintain this status and improve it. Recycling is taken very seriously, though it takes effort and individual responsibility. Everyone in the ETC needs to police this policy. If students see the need for a recycling container in a designated ETC area, please let the staff know.

No personal items will be kept beside computers or on tables in the fifth-floor computer lab (the “Cluster”). Students cannot attempt to “establish ownership” of the public terminals or work areas. Personal items must be kept in a project room; otherwise, they may be discarded.

Public refrigerators are in the kitchen area on the third and fifth floors, and the Student Break Rooms on the third and fifth floors. Students are responsible for helping keep the kitchen areas clean.

No ETC room will be used by any person or group not affiliated with the ETC unless the Director approves such use in advance.

More info is here:

(<https://help.etc.cmu.edu/xwiki/bin/view/Administration/Trash%20and%20Recycling/>).

5.14 Etiquette for Facilities, Rooms, and Project Conference Areas

Basic etiquette and mutual respect apply, but one special note regarding noise in shared rooms. Computer speakers are not distributed with student workstations. In a shared space, students must respect others by not playing audio out loud. Students will often need to listen to audio to do their work, but when doing so, they must use headphones. The ETC doesn't stock headphones for general use due to hygiene concerns. Therefore, students are responsible for bringing in their own headphones for work at their desks. Certain headphones are available for playtesting sessions and some are permanently set up in the Sound Studio, but are for intermittent use, are not to be removed, and are cleaned regularly.

5.15 Department Office/Building Security, Repairs and Services

Students can report damages and needed repairs, along with security concerns (for immediate or routine items), to the building security guard or the Operations Administrator.

5.16 Departmental/College Graduate Student Organizations/Advisory Committee/Graduate Representatives:

Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) <https://www.cmu.edu/stugov/gsa/>

Each year, two ETC student representatives are elected from the class to participate in GSA meetings at the Pittsburgh campus and host GSA events for ETC students. Selected representatives will receive a copy of the complete bylaws as the ETC GSA representatives. These bylaws will include detailed instructions for finances, budget management, and event organization as a GSA rep.

CMU-wide Organizations:

Tartan Connect Student organizations on the Pittsburgh campus can be found by searching Tartan Connect: https://tartanconnect.cmu.edu/home_login

5.17 ETC Communication

Email Policy

- The culture of the ETC relies heavily on email and mailing list communication. Official communications are often made only through email.
- Students are required to check their email at least once every 24 hours during the work week. Twenty-four hours after an email is sent, students are responsible for reading and understanding it. Forwarding problems, spam filtering, and false positives cannot be used as excuses.
- Official emails are sent to students' CMU (Andrew) email addresses. If students use a different email address, they must either check both accounts or set up forwarding from their CMU address to that address. For more information on Email at CMU, please see: <https://www.cmu.edu/computing/services/comm-collab/email-calendar/index.html>.

Mailing Lists (d-lists)

The ETC uses many mailing lists, including ones for each class of students, faculty, and staff, each BVW team, each class taught, and each project. Membership in some lists is mandatory; for others, it is optional. For instance, each student is put on a "base list" along with all the other students who arrive in the Fall when starting here. This is their Class List, and is a Base List (as in, not a Super List). Students are required to subscribe to their Class List base list using their CMU Andrew email address. More information about the mailing list, including optional mailing lists can be found on the ETC help pages: <https://help.etc.cmu.edu/xwiki/bin/view/Technology/Mailing%20Lists/>

5.18 Department Approach to Press and Media Relations

If you are contacted by a press member regarding your work at the ETC, please make sure to speak to your faculty mentor and the UEIS External Relations team regarding how best to communicate with the press. Use the [ETC Marketing and Communications Support Form](#) to share news and information.

Social Media Release Form

You will be asked to give authorization to photograph, record and use recordings via the [ETC Social Media Release Form](#) during your first year. If you at anytime want to update

your approval, please send an email to MaryCatherine Dieterle (mb8f@andrew.cmu.edu) or Hannah Kinney-Kobre (hkinneyk@andrew.cmu.edu) Communications Coordinator, UEIS, with your updated authorization.

5.19 Department/College/University Brands and Logos

Official logos can be found on the shared [Google Drive](#).

Project teams will have a review of their project branding and use of the ETC logo by ETC faculty at the beginning of the semester. Please refrain from using older versions and unofficial versions of the ETC logo.

University guidelines and style guides can be found on the Marketing & Communication website: <https://www.cmu.edu/marcom/brand-standards/index.html>

5.20 Trademarks and licensing policies

Refer to the [Policy for Use of Carnegie Mellon Trademarks](#) for assistance in conforming to proper licensing procedures. Do not infringe on other copyrights. Be careful not to allow the use of different trademarks, licensed images, or treatments.

SECTION 6: Advising

6.1: Role of an Advisor and Advisor Assignments

The ETC is a two-year professional graduate program with defined curriculum choices and no thesis. To that end, the role of academic advisor is a shared endeavor. While the Director of Student Services and the ETC Director approve all matters dealing with the academic program, students should feel free to seek academic guidance from any member of the ETC faculty.

- Students are assigned ETC Faculty Mentors during the first semester after a meeting with the Director to match the student's academic goals with a faculty member's background/interests. Mentors work with students to advise them on their educational goals and professional development. Working with the Director of Student Services, they help advise students on types of projects, roles to consider, and elective options. Mentors meet with students to discuss their current semester experience and plans for the following semester. Mentors work to get to know students' goals and expectations to help inform decisions when the faculty form project teams. Mentors also sign off on expense requests and reimbursements.
- Requests to change a faculty mentor can be made to the ETC Director and considered on a case-by-case basis.

- Students will receive a written notification at the end of each semester of inadequate progress towards degree requirements. Students can discuss their degree requirements with their academic advisor or faculty mentor at any time during the semester.

6.2: Advisor/Advisee Collaboration

Students should feel free to meet with any of the faculty and staff to ask questions and discuss academic and non-academic issues. The faculty and staff can help refer a student to department, university, or community resources whenever necessary. Overall, students are responsible for meeting their educational requirements to graduate; mentors are there to provide a point of contact for general advice.

Professional Development

- The ETC has found that hands-on learning, interacting with industry professionals, and behind-the-scenes experiences are among the most essential steps in the educational process. The ETC provides opportunities for experiences that cannot be read about but require and build from firsthand student participation.
- To that end, ETC students and project teams spend time during the program having professional development experiences with entertainment venues, conferences, and festivals, as well as participating in workshops. Our students experience a range of activities, including plays, gallery exhibits, and interactions with companies, venues, and clients throughout the academic year.
- These experiences usually include behind-the-scenes information for our students. ETC students receive an insider's look at the entertainment, creative, and tech industries. This access makes our program unique.
- After the first Immersion semester, ETC students can receive support for professional development opportunities during their second, third, and fourth semesters. The ETC student guidelines are emailed out every semester for student reference.
- No professional development opportunities can be taken until students have completed and submitted their Act 153 clearances to the Operations Administrator to be filed with CMU's Act 153 Office.
- All field research experiences and professional development opportunities must be approved by the Project Team ETC project course instructor(s) and the ETC Director. Field research is not an entitlement but a significant educational opportunity.
- More detailed information can be found in the ETC Help pages, [Professional Development Guidelines](#).
- GSA and the Provost's Office provide additional professional development funding for students, student work groups, and other groups. The Graduate Education Office manages the process. Students can find more information about the application

process and deadlines at
<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/professional-development/index.html> (login required).

6.3: Review/Redress of Academic Conflicts

Final Grade Appeal

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/appeal-grievance-procedures.html>

Final grades will be changed only in exceptional circumstances and only with the approval of the instructor and the department, unit, or program. Grading is a matter of sound discretion of the instructor, and final grades are rarely changed without the consent of the instructor who assigned the grade. The following circumstances are the unusual exceptions that may warrant a grade appeal: (a) the final grade assigned for a course is based on manifest error (e.g., a clear error such as arithmetic error in computing a grade or failure to grade one of the answers on an exam), or (b) the faculty or staff member who assigned the grade did so in violation of a University policy.

Co-op Appeal

Students denied their request for a co-op should submit a formal, written appeal, with appropriate documentation, to the ETC Director. The ETC Director will issue a written decision on the appeal within seven (7) days or as soon after that as practical.

Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/appeal-grievance-procedures.html>

Graduate students will find the Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures on the Graduate Education Resource webpage. This document summarizes processes available to graduate students who seek review of academic and non-academic issues. Generally, graduate students are expected to seek informal resolution of all concerns within the applicable department, unit, or program before invoking formal processes. However, when an informal resolution cannot be reached, a graduate student who seeks further review of the matter must follow the formal procedures outlined on the site. These appeal and grievance procedures shall apply to students in all university graduate programs. Students should refer to the department-specific information in this handbook for department and college information about the administration and academic policies of the program.

SECTION 7: Master's Degree Requirements

7.1: Residency Requirements

Full-time status

At Carnegie Mellon University, a minimum of 36 units is required for full-time status. All international students are required to be full-time students. A student's schedule is overloaded when it exceeds 48 units per semester. During the first semester, ETC students take 57 units; after this, students must receive approval for a course overload from the Director.

Because the ETC's curriculum is specific and chronologically tight, students may only begin working towards their MET in an "Immersion" 1st semester. 1st semester starts in the Fall in Pittsburgh. All students have to start with the 1st-semester curriculum. ETC core courses, which include Fundamentals of the ETC, Improvisational Acting, Visual Storytelling, Building Virtual Worlds, and the Project courses, have an in-person expectation for coursework.

There are various seminars, meetings, lectures, presentations, and demonstrations throughout the semester. These events will be announced in advance and posted on ETC calendars. Punctuality is expected.

Note: Students must be present at all their team presentations (this includes Quarters Walkarounds, Halves Presentations, Soft Opening Week, and Final Presentations). Team presentations will be recorded so students and faculty can view past sessions. Recordings are made available after presentations. Team presentations and other student showcases (the Fall Festival) are live-streamed to the public (primarily for ETC alums, creative industry connections, and family and friends). On the day of their Halves and Finals presentations, teams must attend the whole session to support their colleagues during their presentations.

7.2: Registration Process

Registration is handled through Student Information Online (SIO). Students are responsible for enrolling themselves in required courses and electives. <http://www.cmu.edu/hub/sio>

The first step in the registration process is to review the appropriate ETC curriculum in this handbook. Suppose there is room for an elective in the semester for which the student wishes to register. In that case, they must confer with the Director of Student Services or their faculty mentor to determine an appropriate course. Students should use the Plan Course Schedule feature in Student Information Online (SIO). Using this tool, students can plan schedules for upcoming semesters once the Schedule of Classes is posted. This tool also allows students to send more than one planned schedule to their advisor/mentor for

feedback and suggestions. More information about course registration at Carnegie Mellon can be found on the [HUB's website](#).

The Director of Student Services will grant exceptions to the curriculum only after consultation with the Director.

7.3: Required Units for Degree Attainment

Depending on their path of study, students must attain the minimum required number of total academic units to graduate.

- Standard Curriculum: 189 - 198
- Integrated Co-Op: 180 - 198
- Integrated Bachelor & Master's Program: 144 - 150

First Semester (i.e., Immersion Semester) Courses

All ETC students must successfully pass all the first semester courses with a grade of B, 3.0, or higher.

- An ETC student who makes a B- in any of the first-semester courses will be placed on academic probation for the following semester.
- An ETC student who makes below a B- in one of the first semester courses will not be eligible for study in the program the following spring semester. They will be suspended until the following fall semester, and they must petition to remain in the program (following the appeal process below). The student will have to retake and pass the course in which they received a grade of lower than a B-.
- An ETC student who makes a B- in two or more of the first semester courses will not be eligible for study in the program the following spring semester and will be suspended until the following fall semester.

7.4: Core Courses

All core courses listed below must be passed with a B, 3.0, or higher grade to remain in good academic standing.

- An ETC student who makes a B- in one core course will be placed on academic probation for the following semester.
- If a student earns a grade below a B- in a core course (or drops a core course without also taking a Leave of Absence), they will be suspended for a semester. They will have to petition to remain in the program (following the appeal process below) and then retake the course upon return to the program.
- A student who earns a B- on more than one core course (even if the multiple courses all occur within their first semester) will be suspended for a semester. The student must petition to remain in the program (following the appeal process below) and then retake the course upon return to the program.

Core Courses include:

Fundamentals of the ETC (53-700)

Improviseational Acting (53-711)

Visual Storytelling (53-608)

Building Virtual Worlds (53-831)

Project Courses (53-605, 53-607, 53-610)

Co-op Course (53-600, for Integrated Co-op Curriculum)

Project Courses

Project courses must be passed with a minimum grade of B to remain in good academic standing.

- It is only possible to take a first project course after earning a B or higher in at least three of the four first-semester courses and not making below a B- in the fourth course.
- To matriculate to a new project course semester, you must earn a B- or higher in the previous project course.
- Students who make a B- in a project course will be placed on academic probation for the following semester.
- If a student earns a grade below a B in a project course during their final semester of study, they will be suspended and not graduate. They will have to petition to remain in the program (following the appeal process below).
- Suppose a student who has previously received a B—in a project course earns a B—in the project course during their final semester of study. In that case, they must petition to graduate (following the appeal process below).

Additionally, it is not possible to take more than one project course in a semester or combine the project course with any of the other core courses. Therefore, retaking a failed project course will require staying more than four semesters in the program.

- NOTE: International students cannot extend their stay due to failing courses. All students must pass at least two project courses.

ETC Project Course Structure

In the project course, students are in small, interdisciplinary teams, creating artifacts under direct faculty supervision. An artifact may be a website, a piece of software, a piece of hardware, a design document, or several other things. Artifacts are typically intended to be working prototypes or playable proofs of concept, not production models. Each project team, working with guidance from their project course instructor(s), must design what they will create and the mechanisms by which they will build it, and then actually create it.

ETC Projects occur in 3 ways:

- 1) Client Sponsored – in which an external group supports a project on which an ETC team will work.

- 2) ETC Research – in which a faculty member has a research idea on which an ETC team can work.
- 3) Student Pitch – in which a group of students goes through the ETC pitch process and gets approved.

The structure of the project course is intended to balance several issues:

- 1) The creation of an environment where all students can receive individual guidance and feedback on how they are doing in the context of a group project where the group's success is a paramount value.
- 2) The focus on process (learning how to work effectively), product (successfully creating an artifact/prototype), and production (the team's deliverables throughout the semester).

A Project Course syllabus will be shared with all ETC students during their semesters of study. For many students, this kind of project course may be a new experience, so please feel free to ask questions of the project course instructor(s), any other ETC faculty members, or the Director at any time. The goal is to help all ETC students learn how to do this kind of interdisciplinary work effectively and professionally.

Year-Long Projects

The ETC often offers year-long projects for students to consider across the fall and spring semesters of the 2nd year of study. This enables larger-scale studio projects that engage professional pipeline strategies from ideation to completion. The ETC faculty works to balance teams across both semesters and ensure continuity for the project. If a project isn't meeting expectations in the fall semester, it may be decided not to continue into the spring.

7.5: Electives

- Students beyond their first semester must take one elective (9-12 units) each semester they are taking a project course. Generally, during a project course semester, a student can only take one elective with no additional audits, i.e., just one elective course (or multiple mini-courses, but at most 12 units total). Students in a project semester can take Improv 2, which is offered as a pass/fail course, in addition to their one elective. StuCo courses (98), Physical Education courses (69), audited courses, and pass/fail courses do not satisfy elective/degree requirements towards the degree.
- NOTE: As a pass/fail course, Improv 2 will be on your transcripts, but will not count toward a student's graduation requirements, so students will need to pass their other elective to maintain good academic standing.
- Students on a co-op semester have their elective requirement waived so that they can entirely focus on the professional co-op experience.
- Depending on which of the three ways students are taking through the program

(standard or one of the two variations listed above), they must complete two to three electives during studies at the ETC. ETC students can take one or two electives (3-24 units) during the summer semester that count toward their graduation requirements if they make the minimum required grades. ETC electives are only offered in the summer if at least 10 ETC students are enrolled in the course. Students will not be full-time and will be charged tuition based on the ETC per unit rate.

- If an elective course earns a grade of C—or lower (or an elective is dropped so there are no elective units earned during a project semester), it cannot be counted towards the degree, and the student will be placed on probation. They must either retake the course and earn a B or better or take another course (12 units) in its place.
- Also, the student must seek approval to take a probationary 6-9-unit independent study course the following semester along with their normal 12-unit elective.
- Suppose a student makes a C- or lower on two electives (or two electives are dropped so no elective units are earned during two project semesters). In that case, they will be suspended for a semester and must petition to remain in the program (following the appeal process below).

7.6: Final Semester

For the final semester, students graduate by meeting all the requirements listed in their handbook. If a student receives a grade that could result in them being dropped from the program or placed on academic probation, they will be notified accordingly. In that case, they must successfully appeal (following the appeal process below) to complete their degree requirements and graduate. Otherwise, they will have to petition to remain in the program and return on probation for a final semester in which they have to pass the courses to complete the degree and graduate. If a student receives a grade that could have them dropped from the program or placed on academic probation, but their overall QPA and total number of academic units earned meet degree requirements. In that case, they have completed the degree and do not have to appeal to graduate.

7.7: Department Policy on Double Counting Courses

While there is some course overlap between the Ideate courses, ETC graduate elective offerings, CMU students generally cannot count the same course for their Bachelor's, Undergraduate minor, and Master's studies. No course that has been counted towards another degree can be counted toward fulfilling course requirements in graduate programs unless explicitly authorized for a particular program, as set from the specified requirements for the program or by the department head(s) of the primary department(s) or the graduate student. Similarly, a student in another CMU graduate program cannot have the exact course count for both graduate degrees.

7.8: Department Policy for Courses Outside the Department/College

When a course is taken outside the ETC to fulfill a curriculum requirement, the policies and procedures of the instructor, department, and school in which the course is taken must be adhered to fully. The grade assigned by the course professor shall stand. Carnegie Mellon University offers students the opportunity to take elective courses for credit through a cross-registration program. The Carnegie Mellon University transcript will include information on such courses: Carnegie Mellon courses and courses taken through the university's cross-registration program will have grades recorded on the transcript and be factored into the QPA.

<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/transfer-credit-evaluation-and-assignment.html>

7.9: Course Exemptions

Given the nature of the program, a student can't use undergraduate or previously earned master's work, previous research, or previous work experience to waive one or more of the core courses or elective requirements

7.10: Protocol for Evaluation of Transfer Credit

The ETC does not accept transfer credit.

7.11: Graduate Assistant Requirements/Teaching Requirements/Opportunities

After their first semester, students can apply for Graduate Assistant (GA) positions. Most GAs are related to ETC MET (<https://www.etc.cmu.edu/learn/curriculum>), ETC Ideate (<https://ideate.cmu.edu/undergraduate-programs/game-design/index.html>) courses, where instructor approval is required for students. There are also some departmental GA positions related to the library, labs, and workshops around the ETC, where students will need to be approved by the faculty or staff member in charge of the position. Emails will be sent out each semester about GA opportunities for the following semester, but the student must apply. Students on academic probation are not eligible for GA positions. Students cannot be a GA for two positions in one semester. Note: ETC courses only have a GA if 20 (or more) students are enrolled in the course.

Graduate students are required to have a certain level of fluency in English before they can instruct in Pennsylvania, as required by the English Fluency in Higher Education Act of 1990. Through this Act, all institutions of higher education in the state are required to evaluate

and certify the English fluency of all instructional personnel, including teaching assistants (TAs) and interns. The whole University policy can be reviewed at: <https://www.cmu.edu/policies/faculty/evaluation-certification-english-fluency-instructors.html>

The fluency of all instructional personnel will be rated by Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center to determine at what level of responsibility the student can serve as a TA. In addition to administering the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Test (a mandatory screening test for any non-native speaker of English), Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center helps teaching assistants who are non-native English speakers develop fluency and cultural understanding to teach successfully at Carnegie Mellon. Visit the Student Academic Success Center website for additional information: www.cmu.edu/student-success

7.12: Co-op Requirements and Opportunities

Co-op Requirements

Co-ops are an opportunity for students to apply active industry experience to the progression of their degree.

All ETC students must complete two-semester projects to graduate, and eligible students can request co-ops at the start of their second year of study (third semester) with the ETC. If approved, students will enroll in the ETC Co-op Course for the coming semester. If denied, students will receive written feedback from the faculty stating the reasons for the denial. NOTE: Students in an accelerated master's program are not eligible for co-ops.

Students on a co-op semester have the elective requirement waived so that they can fully focus on the professional co-op experience. Students also cannot take other core courses during a co-op semester. The student will be considered a full-time, registered Carnegie Mellon student and pay full tuition during the semester.

Criteria for a co-op

For a job to be eligible for a co-op, it must meet the following criteria:

- 14 weeks in length in the fall and spring, with a start and end date that mirrors the academic calendar
- Full-time employment (37.5 - 40 hours per week)
- Paid (unpaid can be considered, provided the work does not violate the Fair Labor Standards Act, and is a precious learning experience for the student)
- Work that is fitting for master's students studying entertainment technology
- At the employer's location, not remote work unless:

- o The company confirms in writing that it is their policy only to do remote work in the co-ops/internships. It can't be a student request; it must be company policy.
 - o Students must remain local in Pittsburgh (i.e., you can't move home) to be local to CMU, where they will be enrolled for the semester.
- International students who plan to intern or work in the United States must contact OIE for eligibility and requirements before making arrangements for outside work and accepting an offer.

Students cannot co-op at a company where another student has a supervisory or financial role.

Approval process

An ETC Co-op requires the approval of the ETC Co-op Course Instructor by the announced deadline (generally the 3rd Sunday in December and the 4th Sunday in July - the actual deadline will be emailed each semester). Students need to email their requests to the Co-op Course Instructor, which will include:

- A copy of the job offer
- A description of the position being offered and what they hope to learn, contribute, and achieve on the co-op

Students must obtain written academic approval from the ETC Co-op Course Instructor before signing and accepting their offer letter.

Student Eligibility

Students in good academic standing can request a co-op for one semester of study during the 2nd year with the ETC (for their 3rd or 4th semester, but not both). The grades, QPA, and academic standing at the midterm of the previous fall semester determine eligibility for a co-op for the spring semester. Their grades, QPA, and academic standing at the end of the last spring semester assess eligibility for a co-op for the coming fall semester.

A reminder, good academic standing is defined by:

- They have earned a B, 3.0, or higher in their core courses
- They have earned a C, 2.0, or higher in their elective courses
- They maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher
- They have not received a negative academic review (nor two remedial academic reviews) during either of the semesters of their first year of study
- They are making good progress toward their degree, as evidenced by meeting the academic and community expectations of the program.

For co-ops in the spring semester, a student's project midterm grade will be used to determine eligibility. This means a B- at midterm is cause for a denial of a co-op application. Since midterm grades are just a progress check, not an official academic action, students can discuss with the ETC Co-op Course Instructor to be considered eligible for a co-op.

Decisions will be made based on the faculty's academic evaluation of the student's performance to date and the assessment of the best learning opportunity for the student. Denied students can appeal to the Director.

Co-op Semester

- For an approved co-op, a contact person at the company must agree to act as the local representative to the ETC faculty. The representative, the student, and the ETC Co-op Course Instructor must establish what activities the student will participate in during the co-op (during which time the student may be paid by the company, as well). The student must be able to discuss some portion of their work with the ETC faculty and community (this will be affected by company NDAs). When co-op permission is granted, the student will have the elective course requirement waived to focus entirely on the professional co-op experience.
- Students on a Co-op semester will work with the ETC Co-op Course Instructor as their ETC faculty advisor for the co-op course. The faculty and Career Services staff member will contact the student's supervisor to set expectations for the co-op. The supervisor will evaluate the student's performance twice during the semester. Students are also required to send regular emails to the faculty advisor. At the end of the semester, students must turn in a final report summarizing their experience. These reports will be added to the cumulative ETC co-op archive.
- Due to the team nature of project courses, students must request to go on a co-op before the start of the semester. Co-ops must be requested and reported to the ETC Co-op Course Instructor by the date specified in the co-op application deadline. This is necessary to allow time for an alternative course of action to be undertaken for project teams.
- Students who request a co-op offer after this date must consider an official Leave-of-Absence for the semester if they wish to accept the job offer.
- In addition, co-op offers may arise during a semester. This is not allowed, and companies will be advised to have the students start after the semester ends. Also, students cannot be on a co-op semester where a fellow student has a supervisory or financial role in the company.
- Furthermore, all student-pitched projects are subject to cancellation if a member of the original student-pitch team abandons the project for a co-op after the project has been selected for inclusion in the semester listing.

Expectations:

Students must complete the requirements of the Co-op Course, which generally includes

responding to weekly topics through emails sent to the faculty advisor and the ETC Co-op Course d-list, and submitting a final report summarizing their experience. The complete requirements are outlined in the Co-op Course syllabus.

International students are required to consult with the Office of International Education for eligibility for work authorization before starting or seeking an internship/co-op or consulting opportunity. International students will benefit from proactively reviewing OIE guidance regarding off-campus work authorization. Off-campus work authorization processing times can take several weeks or months, and international students will benefit from starting the off-campus work authorization process as early as possible.

7.13 Internship Requirements and Opportunities

In the intervening summer between the two years of academic study, the ETC strongly encourages students to obtain an internship. The ETC finds that students who receive an internship have a valuable learning experience and improved chances for success after they graduate.

Students on an internship during the summer semester will be enrolled in the no-fee 3-unit ETC practicum training course (53-998) for a Pass/Fail evaluation that counts toward their graduation requirements. International students must consult the Office of International Education (OIE) for eligibility before seeking an internship/co-op or signing an offer/contract.

Criteria

The ETC practicum training course requires the approval of the ETC Director. Criteria for this course include:

- Job description and offer letter submitted to the Director of Student Services at least six business days before the start of the internship
- at least ten weeks in length with a start and end date that align with the University's Academic Calendar for the summer semester
- at least part-time employment (20+ hours per week)
- work that is fitting for master's students studying entertainment technology
- Faculty oversight will be provided for this course

Note: The course and guidelines are not in effect for post-graduation internships.

While the ETC faculty and Associate Director of Career Services will assist students in their efforts to obtain a summer internship and may develop relationships with some companies to help place summer interns, obtaining an internship is the student's responsibility. The Director of Career Services may contact the student's internship supervisor during the summer to check the student's performance.

Expectations

A written report submitted by the last day of the summer semester reflecting on the practical and professional skills developed during the internship. The complete report requirements will be outlined in the internship course syllabus.

International students are required to consult with the Office of International Education for eligibility for work authorization before starting or seeking an internship/co-op or consulting opportunity. International students will benefit from proactively reviewing OIE guidance regarding off-campus work authorization. Off-campus work authorization processing times can take several weeks or months, and international students will benefit from starting the off-campus work authorization process as early as possible

7.14: Thesis Requirement

No qualifying examinations or master's thesis are required for the MET degree.

SECTION 8: Department Policies & Protocols

8.1: Petition Procedures

Students wishing to file a petition on a department policy or protocol must speak with their faculty mentor first. All petitions will be made in writing to the ETC Director and will be considered on an individual basis while still considering departmental procedures and university policy.

8.2: Department Policy for Withdrawing from a Course

Students taking undergraduate and master's level courses must follow the procedures and deadlines for adding, dropping, or withdrawing from courses as identified on the academic calendar.

Information can be found at

<https://www.cmu.edu/hub/registrar/course-changes/index.html>.

8.3: Requirements for Those Without a Bachelor's Degree in the Discipline

ETC applicants are required to have a bachelor's degree for admission into the program.

8.4: New Policies / “Grandfather” Policy

When policies are changed, it is because the department believes the new rules offer an improvement; any such changes will be discussed at a meeting with ETC students.

However, currently enrolled students whose degree program is affected by a change in policy may choose to be governed by the older policy that was in place at the time of their enrollment. In case degree requirements are changed and specific courses are no longer offered, the department will try to find some compromise that allows students to satisfy the original requirements.

8.5: Time Away from Academic Responsibilities

The program requires attending various seminars, meetings, lectures, presentations, and demonstrations related to the project and immersion semester courses. These events will be announced in advance as mandatory meetings. Exceptions to this policy are at the sole discretion of the ETC Director. Punctuality is expected. If students must be late or absent for any reason, please contact the ETC Director in advance to discuss their situation, and a reasonable solution will be addressed. *After two unexcused absences, each additional unexcused absence will reduce the student's grade in that semester's project course by 1/3 of a letter grade.*

For the project course, missing more than thirty core hours of project work and falling behind will have profound implications for your team and project outcomes, with minimal opportunity to catch up due to the shared workload. It is the student's responsibility to contact their project instructors and team to discuss plans for fulfilling their project responsibilities if they are going to be absent, whether for travel or foreseeable medical reasons. Any absences, whether contiguous or intermittent, should be discussed in advance with project instructors and team, and a written agreement should be reached for how the student will accomplish project benchmarks if they must be absent. Any accommodations need to be documented (the student should initiate disability accommodations through the Office of Disability Resources), shared in advance, and cannot be applied retroactively. Missing more than thirty core hours of project work can result in a lowering of the final grade or possible failure of the course.

Note: All individual courses have their own attendance policies, which will be stated in their syllabi.

8.6 Guidance for University Breaks and Holidays

Students are encouraged to consult the academic calendar and course syllabi before making travel plans for university breaks and holidays. Finals and final project/presentation schedules are specific to each course. The students must confirm the schedule with the

faculty each semester and plan to stay on campus until the last day of finals unless they confirm otherwise. Likewise, students are expected to attend all classes and presentations as scheduled, leading up to fall and spring break. University Holidays are considered student holidays as well.

8.7 Course Overload Policy (Extra Elective course)

The ETC expects and encourages a broad and diverse co-curricular college experience and has set limits on how many courses a student should be allowed to take each semester. This policy on overloading is designed to allow students the time for course content mastery and the personal reflection on and integration of knowledge that make for successful intellectuals, professionals, and citizens. A student's schedule is overloaded when it exceeds 48 units per semester during a project semester and 57 units for the immersion semester. Students beyond their first semester must take one elective (9-12 units) each semester they are taking a project course. Generally, during a project course semester, a student can only take one elective with no additional audits, i.e., just one elective course (or multiple mini-courses, but no more than 12 units total). Students in a project semester can take Improvisational Acting II (53-712), which is offered as a pass/fail course, in addition to their one elective. Students do not need to appeal the course overload policy for 53-712, Improvisational Acting II.

Overloading is taking more than the maximum units in a single semester as defined by the student's degree program. If eligible, students may overload (up to 60 units) with approval from their academic advisor, faculty mentor, and program director.

Eligibility for overloading is defined by a specific QPA per degree of 3.0 in the last completed semester, current cumulative QPA, and a student in good academic standing. Overloading is not permitted in the first year of enrollment. Eligibility does not automatically allow the student to register for more elective courses. Note that overloading is an exception rather than an expectation. It is only granted in exceptional cases after careful review. The workload of the ETC requires a degree of flexibility that an overloaded schedule often conflicts with. Discussions with your academic advisor and faculty mentor are an essential part of the process and should be undertaken before any other steps are made.

All petitions approved before final grades are posted for the semester preceding the overload semester are subject to revocation if the student does not achieve the required semester QPA (or higher). It is the student's responsibility to discuss this matter with their primary academic advisor. An extra elective will not be approved past the course add deadline.

8.7: Other Policies and Protocols / Inclusion of Any Variations to University Policies and Protocols

Statute of Limitations

Our curriculum focuses on teamwork, and MET students need to complete all requirements for the MET degree within a maximum of three years from their original matriculation as master's students. Once this time-to-degree limit has lapsed, the student may resume work towards a MET degree only if newly admitted to the program. Under extraordinary circumstances, such as leave of absence, military or public service, family or parental leave, or temporary disability, a school or college may, upon the relevant department's recommendation and with the written approval of the dean (or designate), defer the lapse for a period commensurate with the duration of that interruption. For more information, visit:

<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/student-and-student-life/masters-students-statute-of-limitations.html>

Intellectual Property

<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/administrative-and-governance/intellectual-property.html>

Carnegie Mellon University's intellectual property rights regarding coursework are very straightforward: students own all work created for a registered CMU course for which tuition has been paid, and no internal or external sponsored research funds are used.

As coursework, however, the fruits of this labor can be shown publicly via presentations, demonstrations, and on the websites of the CMU Entertainment Technology Center without the student's written permission. In certain instances, however, companies will want ETC students to work on and review software or other products under NDAs or some other agreement. These are defined below:

Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)

NDAs are Non-Disclosure Agreements. They are designed to safeguard a company's intellectual property by having individuals sign a legally binding document wherein the individual agrees not to disclose what they have seen, observed, or worked on to a competing company. The NDA intends to essentially swear the individual to secrecy, though they are entered into in good faith. The legal impact of NDAs is rarely an issue unless an individual willfully violates the terms of the NDA and intends to compromise the competitive advantage of one company by divulging secrets to a competitor. That said, companies requiring NDAs take the exercise seriously. Significant friction has been generated between companies and students over perceived violations of NDA principles.

Grant of Rights and Licenses Student Form

Instances will arise wherein ETC students are allowed to work with dynamic, potentially

revolutionary technology, which may have a tremendous impact on the entertainment industry. The benefit here is that students can work on the next generation of entertainment technology, allowing a company to become familiar with their talent, dedication, and work ethic. The experience of working with the next generation of technology can lead to a summer internship and employment, as well as an enhanced resume and portfolio. It is often the case that even in instances where a *Grant of Rights and Licenses Student Form* is signed, the student can reference the work done and frequently include a demonstration of the work for portfolio review.

SECTION 9: Grading & Evaluation

9.1: Grading Scale/System

The ETC follows CMU policy in giving letter grades for all courses. Course grades are available online. Graduate students at Carnegie Mellon are graded on a letter grade system, augmented by a plus or minus as appropriate. The letter grades at the ETC are representative of the following:

- A – Excellent work that exceeds expectations
- B – Acceptable work for an ETC student
- C – Unacceptable work for an ETC student
- F – Egregiously unacceptable work

9.2: Department Policy on Grades for Retaking a Course

ETC Core Course units with a grade of C+ or lower are unacceptable toward MET degree requirements and prevent a student from matriculating. Elective courses with a grade of C- or lower are not acceptable toward MET degree requirements, and the student must either retake the course and earn a B or better or take another course (12 units) in its place. Also, the student must seek approval to take a probationary 6-9-unit independent study course the following semester to maintain academic units to matriculate.

9.3: Department Policy on Pass/Fail, Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Pass/Fail courses do not count toward MET degree requirements outside the Summer Internship Practicum.

9.4: Department Policy for Incompletes

The ETC does not grant incompletes. The only exceptions are when serious, extenuating circumstances prevent a student from completing assigned work for a class. These circumstances include, but are not limited to, personal illness (physical or mental), family distress, or some other major obstacle to completing coursework. An incomplete grade is granted exclusively at the discretion of the course instructor. Once the decision has been made to grant an incomplete grade, the student must arrange a deadline for work completion with the instructor.

In awarding an 'I' grade, an instructor must specify the requirements for completing the work and designate a default letter grade where no further work is submitted. Students must complete the required coursework by the end of the following academic semester or sooner if required by prior agreement.

There must be a written agreement between the student and instructor (Incomplete Grade Agreement) that outlines the specific work that needs to be completed and the deadline by which that work will be submitted for the instructor to have the time to assess it and change the grade before the system triggers the default grade. The instructor must record the permanent grade by the last day of the examination period of that following semester, or Enrollment Services will administratively assign the default grade.

University policy is that if work is not completed and a new grade is not submitted, any incomplete grade will automatically be changed to the grade that the faculty member designated as a default at the end of the following semester.

9.5: Independent Study/Directed Reading

An Independent Study is available for students who are in good academic standing. Independent study allows the student, with the support of faculty, to develop a self-generated project or body of work outside the classroom or project course setting. To register for an independent study, the student must first propose their idea to a faculty member (who does not have to be from our department) who agrees to oversee their project, and finally fill out the appropriate paperwork available from the Director of Student Services.

- Before you approach a faculty member for independent study, it is best to have a written plan of what you will study for the semester. Each faculty member will manage and structure their independent study differently and in their own way. The faculty member's schedule may not allow for additional responsibilities, so do not assume the faculty member will be available.
- After a student finds a faculty advisor for their independent study, they must create a course of study (in writing) that covers in detail the work they propose to do for

the semester. Then, they submit this to their faculty advisor for feedback and final approval. The faculty advisor will articulate evaluation metrics and performance expectations for grading based on the proposed course of study, and based on CMU Academic Credit Guidelines, the faculty advisor will determine the number of units covered in the independent study (ranging from 3 to 12 units).

- When writing a course of study for an independent study, students should present four things to the faculty advisor: the purpose of the independent study, learning goals, metrics for success, a schedule, and semester procedure.
 - The purpose of the independent study should be a short statement of what you want to learn for the semester and why. The purpose of the study will lead to the study's goals and metrics.
 - The learning goals should include what you want to learn during the semester and should be specific. The learning goals will also relate to the purpose of the independent study.
 - The metrics for success are how your study will be judged to be successful. There should be concrete ways of measuring your work.
 - The schedule should include meeting partial milestones or assignments every week. The more concrete the schedule, the better, as it allows you to spread the work over the term. If you wish to attend any conferences during the semester, that information should be included in your schedule.
 - The semester procedure should include how often you meet with your faculty advisor, whether you will present your study at the end of the semester, and whether you will receive peer feedback on your work.
- The final written document, including the detailed course of study, evaluation metrics, and number of units, will serve as the syllabus for the independent study.
- The Director of Student Services will then enroll the student in independent study for these units of credit for the semester. Independent study outlines are due no later than the 10th day of classes for the semester in which the credits are earned.

9.6: GPA Requirements and QPA Requirements for Graduation

Overall Grade Requirements:

- Maintain an overall QPA of 3.0 or above each semester to stay in good academic standing.
- A final QPA of at least 3.0 is required to graduate.

9.7: Satisfactory Academic Standing

Good Standing:

A student is in good standing if:

- They have achieved a grade of B, 3.0, or higher in their core courses.
- They have earned a grade of C, 2.0, or higher in their elective courses.
- They maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- They have not received a negative academic review (nor two remedial academic reviews) during either of the semesters of their first year of study.
- They are making good progress toward their degree, as evidenced by meeting the program's academic and community expectations.

For fall semesters, eligibility for co-ops with good academic standing is determined by course grades and QPA at the end of the previous spring semester.

For spring semesters, good academic standing eligibility for co-ops* is determined by course grades and QPA at the midterm of the previous fall semester.

*Note: midterm grades are just a progress check, not an official academic action, so students can discuss with the ETC Director to be considered eligible for a co-op.

For graduate assistant positions, good academic standing eligibility is determined by course grades and QPA at the end of the previous semester.

Not in Good Standing (Midterm Academic Notice):

A student is not in good standing if any of the following conditions hold at midterm grades during a semester:

- They have earned a B- in any of their core courses.
- They have earned a C- or lower in an elective course (or dropped an elective, so no elective units are earned during a project semester).
- They receive a negative academic review.
- They violate CMU's academic integrity policies.
- Their overall midterm QPA is below 3.0.
- Students will be notified of their standing after mid-term grades have been reported via email by the Department Head.

Not in Good Standing (Academic Probation):

A student is not in good standing if any of the following conditions hold for final grades at the end of a semester:

- They have earned a B- in any of their core courses.
- They have made a C- or lower on an elective course (or dropped an elective, so no elective units are earned during a project semester).
- They receive a negative academic review in one semester.
- They receive two remedial academic reviews in one semester.
- They receive an incomplete grade.
- Their overall QPA is below 3.0.
- Students not in good standing are placed on Academic Probation for the following ETC academic semester. If put on probation following the Fall semester, they would

be on probation for the upcoming Spring semester. If placed on probation following the Spring semester, they would be on probation for the upcoming Fall semester.

During the probationary semester, a student on Academic Probation must:

- Maintain a B or above in all their courses.
- Have an overall QPA of 3.0 or above.
- Refrain from receiving a negative academic review.
- Not receiving two remedial academic reviews.
- A student who has earned a C- or lower on an elective will have to seek approval to take a probationary 6-unit independent study course the following semester, along with their normal 12-unit elective.
- Students who maintain these minimum grades and performance requirements during this semester are released from probation.
- Students who don't maintain these minimum grades and performance requirements will be suspended from the program.
- Students on Academic Probation in the final semester of the program can only graduate if they meet the academic requirements listed above and below and the graduation requirement of having a QPA of at least 3.0.
- NOTE: International students cannot extend their stay due to failing courses.
- Students will be notified of the 'Not in Good Academic Standing, Academic Probation' status after final grades for the semester via email from the program director.

Not in Good Standing (Academic Suspension):

A suspended student will not be eligible to take any courses for a semester, not participate in any ETC activities, and must petition, following the appeal process below, to remain in the program. A student may be suspended if any of the following conditions hold:

- They make below a B- on a core course (or drop a core course without also taking a Leave of Absence)
- They make a B- on more than one core course (even if the multiple courses all occur within their first semester)
- They make a C- or lower on two electives (or two electives are dropped, so there are no elective units earned during two project semesters)
- Their QPA is below 3.0 for two semesters
- They receive a negative academic review twice during their first year of study (even if the multiple academic reviews occur within one semester).
- They receive a remedial academic review four times during their first year of study.
- They are on academic probation and don't maintain a B or above in all their courses, don't have an overall QPA of 3.0 or above, or receive a negative academic review (or two remedial academic reviews) during that semester.
- Two of the following three conditions occur during a semester:
 - o they make a B- on a core course at midterms or finals;
 - o they receive a negative academic review (or two remedial academic reviews);

- o Their overall QPA is below a 3.0.
- Students will be informed of the Academic Suspension via email from the program director after semester grades are final.

If reinstated, students will return to Academic Probation.

Not in Good Standing (Dropped from the Program):

A student will be dropped from the program if:

- They get placed on academic probation for a third time.
- Their overall QPA is so low that obtaining the 3.0 QPA required to graduate is mathematically impossible.
- After final decisions on all grade appeals, their overall QPA at the end of their final semester of study is below a 3.0.
- They were suspended and then reinstated upon approval of their petition to remain in the program. While on Academic Probation, they do not.
 - Maintain a B or above in all their courses.
 - Have an overall QPA of 3.0 or above.
 - Avoid receiving a negative academic review.
 - Avoid receiving two remedial academic reviews.
 - The program director will email students to notify them of the drop from the program after the semester grades are final.

ETC students' academic progress is reviewed at the end of each grading period. Any student who is not in good academic standing will be sent a written notification of their inadequate progress towards the MET degree. Students are also encouraged to use the academic audit system, Stellic, for degree progress and to create long-term course plans.

9.8 Appeal Process

Final Grade Appeal

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/appeal-grievance-procedures.html>

Final grades will be changed only in exceptional circumstances and only with the approval of the instructor and the department, unit, or program. Grading is a matter of sound discretion of the instructor, and final grades are rarely changed without the consent of the instructor who assigned the grade. The following circumstances are the unusual exceptions that may warrant a grade appeal: (a) the final grade assigned for a course is based on manifest error (e.g., a clear error such as arithmetic error in computing a grade or failure to grade one of the answers on an exam), or (b) the faculty or staff member who assigned the grade did so in violation of a University policy.

Co-op Appeal

Students denied their request for a co-op should submit a formal, written appeal, with appropriate documentation, to the ETC Director. The ETC Director will issue a written decision on the appeal within seven (7) days or as soon after that as practical.

Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures

<https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/policies/appeal-grievance-procedures.html>

Graduate students will find the Summary of Graduate Student Appeal and Grievance Procedures on the Graduate Education Resource webpage. This document summarizes processes available to graduate students who seek review of academic and non-academic issues. Generally, graduate students are expected to seek informal resolution of all concerns within the applicable department, unit, or program before invoking formal processes. However, when an informal resolution cannot be reached, a graduate student who seeks further review of the matter must follow the formal procedures outlined on the site. These appeal and grievance procedures shall apply to students in all university graduate programs. Students should refer to the department-specific information in this handbook for department and college information about the administration and academic policies of the program.

9.9: Regular Reviews and Evaluations by Department

Semester Academic Review

The ETC evaluates students above and beyond the routine grading procedures. Around midterm and finals of the first Immersion semester, the faculty meets to review each student's overall performance for their first semester. This assessment is led by faculty members who teach the core Immersion courses, but all faculty participate.

- If the faculty determines that a student's performance merits extra feedback, they will receive a remedial academic review and input from the faculty.
- Suppose the faculty determines that a student's performance is not satisfactory. In that case, the student will receive a negative academic review and must meet with the Director to discuss the perceived issues with their performance. Recommendations for corrective action will be made.

This process is then repeated around the second semester's midterm and finals. Across these four reviews:

- Students who receive two remedial academic reviews in one semester will be placed on academic probation.

- Students who receive one negative academic review in one semester will be placed on academic probation.
- Students who receive a remedial academic review for all four reviews in both the first and second semesters will be suspended for a semester. Then, they will have to petition to remain in the program (following the appeal process below).
- Students who receive a negative academic review twice during their first year of study will be suspended for a semester (even if the multiple negative academic reviews occur within their first semester), and then will have to petition to remain in the program (following the appeal process below).

This is not a grading evaluation but an academic review used to assess the overall performance of the student during their first year at the ETC. This assessment aims to identify individuals who are performing poorly and provide additional advice on how to improve their performance as creative professionals and succeed in their studies. Students who receive either a remedial or negative academic review are expected to improve their performance by the following review.

This individual assessment is not directly related solely to a student's grades, though it could be. It is possible, however, that a student could pass their courses or projects but still be assessed as needing further advice and academic action regarding their performance.

This academic performance assessment is a subjective process based on the faculty's shared perceptions of a student's performance. It is meant to provide students with essential feedback and an opportunity for improvement. This review process is intended to help students correct their academic and professional performance to remain and succeed at the ETC.

Midterm Academic Notice

To be in good academic standing, students must maintain the grade standards listed above and below for core and elective courses at semester midterms. If they are not in good standing at midterms, students will be on academic notice and placed on academic probation for the following semester unless they raise their grades by the end of the semester. Suppose their midterm grades are so low that it is not mathematically possible to be in good academic standing by the end of the semester. In that case, students will be academically suspended from the program. Suppose a student receives a negative academic review at midterms. In that case, they will be on academic notice. They will be placed on academic probation for the following semester unless they pass the final academic review of the semester without a remedial or negative review.

SECTION 10: Funding & Financial Support

10.1: Statement of Department Financial Support

ETC Fellowship Fund – The ETC Fellowship Fund is available to students who apply to the ETC program. The fund aims to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in the ETC by providing fellowship support to a graduate student enrolled at the University at the ETC. The Fund has been established to support students who are underrepresented at the university, including, but not limited to, those of under-privileged socioeconomic status, from underrepresented geographic areas, who grew up in single-parent households, who were first in their families to attend college, or who attended historically black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions. An application for the scholarship will be made available during the admission process. The recipient will receive a full tuition scholarship for the first year of study, and the award will be renewed for the second year of study if the student remains in good academic standing.

E.A. Fellowship – Current ETC students (currently enrolled for the spring semester) can apply for the E.A. Fellowship, which is awarded each spring for the following academic year. To apply, students must be in good academic standing and submit an application letter outlining career goals and aspirations with the video game industry. The ETC faculty will select recipients based on the quality of thought and intent in the application letters. Note: Students are eligible to win this fellowship only once, and it is available to students returning for the following fall semester of study. The E.A. ETC Fellowship has been established to support students who are underrepresented at the university, including, but not limited to, those of under-privileged socioeconomic status, from underrepresented geographic areas, who grew up in single-parent households, who were first in their families to attend college, or who attended historically black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions.

10.3: Travel/Conference and Research Funding

- After the first Immersion semester, ETC students can receive support for professional development opportunities for their 2nd, 3rd, and 4th semesters.
- Only students who have fully completed their ACT153 clearances during the immersion semester are eligible to receive ETC support for professional development.
- Students will work with their faculty mentors to develop a plan in advance, to make the most of an opportunity (i.e. what you propose to do, what companies you want

to visit at the job fair, how you hope to network) so the mentors can help advise students on improving their plan, and then approve the professional development form. Students will then need to get this form signed by Caitlin before making any purchases.

- NOTE: Requests must follow all ETC and CMU policies to be reimbursed. Signed forms do not guarantee reimbursement if the requests don't follow policy. If you're not sure, ask before spending money.
- Sometimes professional opportunities arise during quarter walk-around or ½ presentations. In such cases, students should consult with their project instructor(s) and team to assess whether pursuing these opportunities would compromise the team's progress.
 - NOTE: Students cannot take advantage of any professional development opportunities during the soft opening days or the week of finals. Students are also not allowed to miss more than one week of study during a semester.
- After their professional development opportunity, students will write up a short report on the value of the experience (based on what they planned and what they did). This report is due to your mentor and Caitlin within one month of the opportunity. If you fail to submit this report, you will not be reimbursed, the funds will be forfeited, and your student account will be charged for any funds already received.
- More details on the ETC help pages, Professional Development Guidelines
- The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs provides additional professional development funding for students, student work groups, and other groups.
 - Graduate Student Conference Funding is provided by the Graduate Student Assembly and the Office of the Provost, and is managed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. The goal of the funding is to enable more CMU graduate students to make presentations at key conferences/exhibitions in their fields.
 - Professional Engagement Funding is provided by the Office of the Provost and is managed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. The goal of the funding is to support graduate students in attending conferences or other professional engagement opportunities, enabling them to network, perform, deepen their knowledge, or compete within their field of study.
 - Scholarly Project Funding provides small grants of \$750 to graduate students for advancing their research at CMU. Grants are provided by the Graduate Student Assembly and the Provost's Office, and are managed by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. Scholarly Project Funding is intended to be used against costs incurred in the completion of research required for a graduate degree at CMU.

Students can find more information about the application process and deadlines at <https://www.cmu.edu/graduate/funding/index.html>.

10.5: Funding Payment Schedule

Tuition scholarships awarded by the ETC will be credited to the student's account on SIO.

Reimbursement:

- Students will only be reimbursed with prior approval.
- Signed forms do not guarantee reimbursement if the requests don't follow policy. If you're not sure, ask before spending money.
- All receipts need to be submitted within one month of the date of purchase.
- Proper business justification and supporting documentation (e.g., receipts) must be provided.
- Payment will be made to the person who makes the approved purchase.
- All reimbursements must follow CMU's Business and Travel Expense Policy
- Printed reimbursement forms can be found in the mailroom.
- Digital reimbursement forms are on the shared drive (Google Drive > Shared Drives > ETC Common > Resources > Reimbursement Forms)

10.6 Additional Sources of Internal & External Financial Support

In the past few years, ETC students have been awarded outside scholarships, including the AIAS Foundation, WomenIn, and Girls for Gaming Scholarship, to help defray the costs. Applications for the WomenIn, Randy Pausch, and Girls for Gaming scholarships are open now, with a deadline of the end of May. <https://www.aiasfoundation.org/programs/scholarships.asp>

Carnegie Mellon's Fellowship and Scholarship Office maintains a webpage listing outside scholarship databases to aid graduate students in their search for additional scholarships. Below is a list of a few scholarships that may be helpful.

- AAUW International Fellowship– a fellowship awarded for full-time study or research in the United States to women who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
- American Indian Graduate Center– provides a variety of funding opportunities for tribal students to assist with graduate studies in STEM fields.
- Great Minds in STEM – provides fellowship opportunities for graduate students of Hispanic heritage or individuals who have demonstrated significant service within the underserved community.
- Hispanic Scholarship Fund– designed to assist students of Hispanic heritage in obtaining a university degree, including graduate students with a primary focus on STEM fields of study.
- International Peace Scholarship – scholarship for international female students to pursue graduate study in the United States.

- National GEM Consortium– opportunities for fellowships for individuals from underrepresented communities to pursue graduate education in applied science and engineering
- Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowships for New Americans– graduate school fellowships for immigrants and children of immigrants.

10.7: Availability of Summer Employment

While the ETC faculty and Associate Director of Career Services will assist students in their efforts to obtain a summer internship and may develop relationships with some companies to help place summer interns, obtaining an internship is the student's responsibility. ETC students can be offered positions in the CMU pre-college program, the National High School Gaming Academy (NHSGA). Emails will be sent out each spring about summer employment opportunities, but the student must apply to the faculty member.

10.8 Department Policy on Outside Employment

Due to the time commitment necessary to complete the program, the ETC only allows students to work outside the department for up to 10 hours per week. Suppose outside employment of more than 10 hours per week is desired (no more than 20 hours per week). In that case, the student must obtain written permission from the ETC Director and Director of Student Services to take a practicum and independent study focused on their professional work for their required elective that semester. Once approved, students must notify their project course instructors and faculty mentors. Outside employment of any kind does not constitute an excused absence from ETC classes or the completion of any project assignments.

International students must check their eligibility with the Office of International Education (OIE) before seeking an internship, co-op, or signing an offer or contract.

Note: Students receiving a financial stipend as a graduate assistant cannot work outside the department during the same semester. Students on academic probation are not eligible for outside work.

10.9 Requirements for the Continuation of Funding

Students need to remain in good academic standing for the continuation of tuition scholarships. Students will receive notification of loss of scholarship before the tuition payment deadline.

SECTION 11: ADDITIONAL DEPARTMENTAL INFORMATION

11.1 Career Services Code of Ethics

The ETC provides career service support and professional development advice. Still, it is ultimately the responsibility of students to apply and interview for opportunities while professionally conducting themselves. This Code of Ethics applies to students searching for employment (internship, co-op, and full-time) as performed through the Entertainment Technology Center Career Services and CMU's Career and Professional Development Center. By adhering to this code, students will project a positive image of themselves, their class, the ETC, and CMU.

If students plan to utilize Career Services or any of its resources, they must follow this code. Due to the potential harm that the violation of this Code of Ethics could cause to other students and meaningful employer relationships, students should understand that violations can result in severe sanctions (e.g., termination of some or all career services, referral to the Associate Director of Career Services, or referral to the Director).

Present qualifications and interests accurately.

Falsifying data, such as GPA, date of graduation, degrees obtained, institutions attended, prior work experience, and eligibility to work in the United States, is unethical and grounds for immediate dismissal with most employing organizations.

Learn about the employers and their positions.

Employers expect that candidates will make an effort to learn about their companies. Failure indicates a lack of interest and reflects poorly on the candidate and the school.

Interview only when genuinely interested in the advertised positions.

Refrain from interviewing for practice; this will cause the recruiter to feel their time is being wasted and take away valuable interview time from fellow students who may have a sincere interest in the organization. If students are concerned about their interviewing skills, mock interviews are available. When signing up to attend an employer-sponsored event/information session or Career Services event, *students are expected to be on time and remain until the event's conclusion.*

Participate in the interview.

Employers take the interview process seriously and expect students to honor their agreement to arrive on time and participate in the interview. Failing to show up or canceling late (defined as canceling less than 24 hours before an interview or 72 hours if the interview is scheduled on a Monday) reflects poorly on the candidate and the ETC.

Notify organizations of a student's acceptance or rejection of offers as soon as that decision is made and by the deadline prescribed by the employer.

Candidates should expect offers to be confirmed in writing and notify the company of accepted or rejected offers by telephone, followed by a letter or email. Requests for extensions of decision deadlines should be made as early as possible, not at the last minute.

Honor an accepted offer as a contractual agreement.

Upon accepting a position, candidates should withdraw from interviewing and notify Career Services of their decision. Continuing to interview after receiving an offer or reneging on an accepted offer is considered unethical.

Be fully engaged when attending information sessions, workshops, and site visits.

- RSVPs are required for many events. Students should RSVP through the given website for the events they are attending and then honor that RSVP by coming to the event. Students who can no longer attend the event must cancel their RSVP.
- Be on time and stay for the duration of the event. If students need to leave early, let the employer or Career Service professional know.
- Turn off cell phones and close laptops.
- Students should give their full attention to the presenter.

11.2 Child Protection Clearances

Due to the nature of the ETC curriculum and the need for frequent play-testing and interactions with minors, to comply with Pennsylvania state law, all enrolled ETC students must obtain three different clearances known as Child Protection Clearances when they begin their studies in our program. These clearances need to be renewed every 60 months (five years).

The Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) requires employees, volunteers, and other individuals who interact with minors to obtain three different clearances, together known as the Child Protection Clearances:

- Pennsylvania Access to Criminal History (PATCH) through the Pennsylvania State Police
- Pennsylvania Child Abuse History (PACA) through the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
- FBI Criminal History Background Check (FBI Fingerprint); requires the individual to submit their fingerprints to the FBI and have the background check run through the PA State Police's designated agencies

During orientation, CMU Human Resources staff will be present to assist in completing the PATCH and PACA clearances. The third clearance, fingerprinting, can either be completed at the ETC during a scheduled time or will have to be completed at an IndentoGo location offsite. Before interacting with minors, all three Child Protection Clearances must be completed and submitted to the Operations Administrator and act153@andrew.cmu.edu. Students are expected to have all three clearances completed no later than the fall semester break of their first semester. **Individuals who do not have Child Protection Clearances on file with the Office of Human Resources are not permitted to interact with minors in person or remotely for any CMU operations or programs.** This can include ETC playtesting days and ETC events, such as the fall festival. Students with outstanding clearances will not receive approval for project-related or professional development travel.

Student Acknowledgement

The ETC Student Handbook has been prepared to provide information and help you understand the policies, philosophies, and practices of the Entertainment Technology Center at Carnegie Mellon University. Please read it carefully. Upon completion of your review of the handbook, digitally sign the statement below, and email it to the ETC Director of Student Services by the due date. A copy of this acknowledgment appears at the back of the handbook for your records.

By signing, you are stating that you have read a copy of the ETC Student Handbook and that you acknowledge, understand, accept, and agree to comply with the information and guidelines contained therein, including the Career Services Code of Ethics, and all references to external data (i.e., links to webpages with additional information).

You understand this handbook is not intended to cover every situation that may arise during your course of study, but is simply a general guide to the goals, policies, practices, and expectations of the ETC. You understand that the ETC Student Handbook is not a contract and should not be deemed as such.

(Student Signature)

(Date)

(Printed Name)

Please return by: Friday, August 29, 2025.

Entertainment Technology Center
Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh Technology Center
700 Technology Drive
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219
(412) 268-5791
etc.cmu.edu