**Sample Academic Specialist Continuing System Offer Letter**

Last updated: 5/24/2023

*(Italicized notes are advisory; they are not to be included in the letter)*

Dear Employee Name,

On behalf of the faculty and academic staff in the department of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the College of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I am pleased to offer you a full time appointment in the Continuing System as Academic Specialist- (*type of specialist category – teacher, outreach, advisor, research or curriculum development)* effective\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The appointment will be on an academic year (nine months) basis with the salary paid in ten installments on the last working day of each month during the academic year duty period (August 16 – May 15). The salary rate for the initial academic year will be $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  Following the initial year, annual merit-based salary adjustments are normally effective on the first day of October. Faculty and academic staff appointed on an academic year basis are to be available for university duties from August 16 through May 15. (See note #1 at end of letter for AN appointments).

This position is a continuing system position. According to University policy, "an academic specialist who has not served previously at the University is appointed initially in the Academic Specialist Appointment System for a probationary period of three years and may be reappointed for an additional probationary period of three years. If an academic specialist is appointed beyond the two probationary periods, continuing appointment status is granted. Probationary appointment periods are calculated from August 16 of the calendar year in which the appointment is effective." Due to the impacts associated with the COVID 19 pandemic, your first probationary appointment will be automatically extended by one year. Information on the automatic extension of the probationary period can be found in the continuing system reappointment extension FAQs on the [Human Resources](https://hr.msu.edu/ua/promotion/faculty-academic-staff/coronavirus-extend-reappointment-review-faqs.html) website. This and other relevant information are contained in the Academic Specialist Handbook, which may be accessed at: [https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies­procedures/faculty-academic-staff/academic-specialist-handbook/index.html](https://www.hr.msu.edu/policies%C2%ADprocedures/faculty-academic-staff/academic-specialist-handbook/index.html). Your first probationary period concludes August 15, XXXX. Several months prior to that time, you will be requested to assemble a dossier of your accomplishments and will be reviewed by your unit and the Office of the Provost, for a determination on reappointment. *(See note #2 for those with waived probationary periods*)

*(Exclude this section if they are already an MSU Faculty/Academic Staff member) A* criminal background check is a prerequisite for all faculty and academic staff appointments at Michigan State University. This offer of appointment is contingent on satisfactory criminal background check results, including degree verification. You will be contacted by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to initiate the background check process.  (See note #3 at end of letter for foreign nationals who come to MSU directly from residence outside the U.S., for whom the Department of Homeland Security provides the necessary clearance)

(Include the following for ***all***foreign nationals) This offer is also contingent on your securing valid immigration status and work authorization before your expected start date and maintaining your valid immigration status and work authorization throughout your employment. For the limited purpose of compliance with federal export control regulations, you may be required to provide information about your citizenship status depending on the nature of your scholarly endeavors. If subject to federal export control regulations, you may also be required to maintain full-time employment status at MSU, confirm that your permanent abode throughout the period of employment is in the U.S., and sign a confidentiality agreement concerning transfer of certain technical data.

(*Include only if the position duties involve teaching*) While general expectations about your duties and responsibilities are indicated below and will be further clarified when you arrive on campus, I call to your attention the University’s general expectations regarding instruction as specified in the [Code of Teaching Responsibility](https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/fas-policies-procedures/academic_responsibilities.html).

Your assigned duties will be \_\_\_\_% research, \_\_\_\_\_\_% teaching \_\_\_\_\_% outreach/service \_\_\_\_\_% advising \_\_\_\_\_% Curriculum Development \_\_\_\_\_% administrative/other.

(Add statement regarding teaching, research and/or outreach/service responsibilities and expectations for position.)

*(Exclude this section if they are already an MSU Faculty/Academic Staff member)* Michigan State University provides its faculty and academic staff with a variety of benefits, which are among the best in academia. Among the most important are a retirement program, health, prescription drug, dental, and life coverages. You can access benefit program information and enroll in selected benefits on the web once your MSU NetID is activated. See Attachment B for additional benefit program information.

*(Exclude this section if they are already an MSU Faculty/Academic Staff member)* In order to assist you in your transition to Michigan State University, you are expected to attend a new faculty and academic staff orientation program. The orientation program provides an overview of the University, identifies expectations of the University community, and covers many important issues that will assist you as you begin your career at Michigan State University. An introduction to University facilities and services, employee benefits, and information on cultural activities, both on and off campus, is also provided. The next orientation program is on August XX, 202\_.

The attachments to this letter describe important issues pertaining to faculty and academic staff appointments at Michigan State University. Please read them carefully and note the signature requirement on each attachment.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact me by phone at my office (517-\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_) or by email at \_\_\_\_@msu.edu.

Enclosed are two signed originals of this offer letter. Please indicate your acceptance of this offer by signing one of the copies where indicated below and returning it, along with signed copies of attachments A-E to me by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. On behalf of the faculty and academic staff of the Department of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I look forward to welcoming you as a colleague at Michigan State University and a member of our community.

Please indicate your acceptance of this offer by signing one of the copies where indicated below and returning it to me by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Professor and Chairperson (or appropriate title)

cc:

Attachments

I accept the appointment at Michigan State University as described in this letter and the attachment.

 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name                                                      Date

NOTES:

1. Substitute for annual (AN) appointments: This appointment will be on an annual year (12 month) basis with the salary paid in twelve installments on the last working day of each month. The salary for the initial year will be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Following the initial year, annual merit based salary adjustments are normally effective on the first day of October. Although your appointment is on an annual year basis, the University’s basic appointment commitment is to an academic year (9-month) appointment. Your annual appointment is justified by the mission of the Department and your specific duties and responsibilities. Although changes in your appointment status are not foreseen, in the event that either the Department’s mission changes and/or your specific duties and responsibilities are modified so that an annual appointment is not appropriate, your appointment status will revert to an academic year appointment.
2. Add the following statement if approval has been received for a waived probationary period: We have obtained approval to waive the first three years because of your previous employment as a Specialist at MSU.
3. Substitute for foreign nationals who come to MSU directly from residence outside the U.S., for whom the Department of Homeland Security provides the necessary clearance: Degree verification is a prerequisite for all faculty appointments at Michigan State University. This offer of appointment is contingent on satisfactory degree verification. You will be contacted by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to initiate the degree verification process.