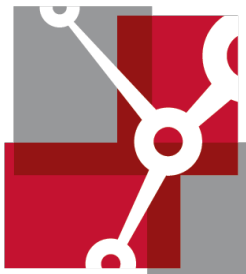


**Carnegie
Mellon
University**

Academic Year 2024-2025

**Carnegie Mellon University
Entertainment Technology Center
Master of Entertainment Technology Student Handbook
For the ETC class starting August 2024**



Carnegie Mellon University
Entertainment Technology Center

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SECTION 1: Welcome & Introduction

Carnegie Mellon University's Entertainment Technology Center (ETC) is the premiere 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 games, animation, location-based installations, augmented reality, mobile devices, robotics, interactive performances, transmedia storytelling, etc. 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, the focus is on our students and providing them with an educational experience that helps 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 trying to do this as effectively as possible through a research and development agenda that illustrates 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.

SECTION 3: Degrees Offered

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

considered a terminal degree.

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 and Marketing, ETC	PTC 5101	rl3j@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

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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 individual 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 make sure the Administrative Coordinator has a phone number to notify them of incoming FedEx, UPS, Priority Mail, or other overnight package deliveries that may be delivered. The department will empty mailboxes at the end of each semester.

5.2 Keys

The Operations Administrator 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 ensure a little extra security measure on their part. All common ETC areas (the mailroom, library, lounge, etc.) have combination locks and security cameras. The combinations will be changed regularly for the security of these areas.

5.3 Project Offices

Teams will be assigned a workstation. The rooms should not 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, as well as CMU policies and procedures supersede 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 "un-do" 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 anything that goes wrong, but the staff cannot be held responsible for any problems that may result 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, make *sure you read it*. 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 work with the advisors to determine if the department can and should get 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 required, 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, but if a team feels necessary, they must discuss it 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.

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. Currently, there are two main Checkout Systems (to access them, you need to be on campus or CMU VPN).

5.9 Library Checkout System

The checkout system is self-governed, as there is no “librarian” to facilitate the lending process. Books and DVD’s are housed in several rooms at the ETC. Students are on their honor to return the borrowed items in a timely manner 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/>

To sign out an item, go to the listed location and ask for it from the staff member there. Students must return the item in person to the exact location where they initially signed it out. Students cannot leave it in front of the staff member’s door or give it to someone else. Until students see the item's manager sign the item back in upon returning it, they are responsible for it.

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/).

<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. Still, the presumption is that ETC projects do not have intrinsic budgets, but rather the project's needs will drive and justify the purchase of goods and services. 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 mostly likely to be approved.

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

A request to purchase goods and services for an ETC project should be made directly through the project course instructor(s) of the specified ETC Project. If there is a severe time constraint involved, the petition can be made directly to the Director. All purchase requests for ETC project course material must check with the Operations Administrator to see if the ETC already has the item(s), and the Director must authorize all requests through written confirmation.

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 mean that reimbursement will happen 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 from 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 in the evening 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 go into a room without reserving it, you may be asked to leave if someone with a reservation comes in. We recommend you reserve rooms in advance.

Trash and recyclables are to be thrown out in the proper receptacles. There are two types of recycling receptacles: paper and aluminum, glass, and plastic. CMU is a green university, and the ETC wants to keep it that way and make it better. 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 or they may get thrown out.

Public refrigerators are in the kitchen area on each floor, and the Student Break Room is on the fifth floor. 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.

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 because of hygiene. Therefore, students are responsible for bringing in their headphones.

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 by-laws as the ETC GSA representatives. These by-laws 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 email at least once every 24 hours during the work week. 24 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 address. 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 (dlists)

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

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 or 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.

5.19 Department/College/University Brands and Logos

There is only one official ETC logo, which can be found on the shared Google Drive: ETC

Common/ resources/Branding

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 conforming to proper licensing procedures. Do not infringe on other copyrights. Be careful not to allow the use of other 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/interest. 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 current semester experience and following semester plans. 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 case-by-case.
- 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 important 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 and participating in workshops. Our students experience plays, gallery exhibits, and 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.
- GSA and the Provost's Office provide additional professional development funding for students, student work groups, and 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).
- 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.

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. If there is room for an elective in the semester for which the student wishes to register, she or he 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 B, 3.0, or higher grade.

- 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 makes 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 take the course again 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 take the course again upon return to the program.

Core Courses include:

Fundamentals of the ETC (53-700)

Improvisational 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 makes 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).
- If 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, they must petition to graduate (following the appeal process below).

It is also not possible to take more than one project course in a semester or combine the project course with any of the other core courses, so 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 go through the ETC pitch process and get 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 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 in order 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.
- If 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), 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 have them dropped from the program or placed on academic probation. 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 complete 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 and ETC graduate elective offerings, in general, CMU students won't be able to 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 same 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 students need to be approved by the instructor of the course. 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 must have a certain English fluency level before they can instruct in Pennsylvania, as required by the English Fluency in Higher Education Act of 1990. Through this Act, all higher education institutions in the state must evaluate and certify the English fluency of all instructional personnel, including teaching assistants and interns. The full university policy can be reviewed at:

<https://www.cmu.edu/policies/faculty/evaluation-certification-english-fluency-instructors.html>

Language Support in the Student Academic Success Center will rate the fluency of all instructional personnel to determine at what level of responsibility the student can 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 master's students studying entertainment technology
- At the employer's location, not remote work unless:

- The company confirms in writing that it is their policy to only do remote work in the co-ops/internships. It can't be a student request; it must be company policy.
- 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 get written academic approval from the ETC Co-op Course Instructor before they sign and accept 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 determines eligibility for a co-op for the spring semester. Their grades, QPA, and academic standing at the end of the previous spring semester determine eligibility for a co-op for the coming fall semester.

A reminder, good academic standing is defined by:

- They have made a B, 3.0, or higher on their core courses
- They have made a C, 2.0, or higher on 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, and 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 on the professional co-op experience entirely.
- Students on 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 full 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 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 full 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 protocols 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 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 certain 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 discussed. *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 serious implications for your team and project outcomes, with very little 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 attendance policies that 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 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 important part of the process and 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 he or she has seen, observed, or worked on to a competing company. The intent of the NDA, in fact, is to essentially swear the individual to secrecy, though they are entered into in good faith. It is very rare that the legal impact of NDAs is 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 tremendously impact the entertainment industry. The benefit here is in students being able to work on the next generation of entertainment technology, in having a company become familiar with their talent, dedication, and work ethic to offer students a summer internship and employment, and for enhanced resume and portfolio purposes. 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 often 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 successfully 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 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 3-12 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 things. The learning goals will also relate to the purpose of the independent study.
 - The metrics for success is how your study will be judged to be successful. They should be concrete ways of measuring your work.
 - The schedule should be meeting partial milestones or assignments every week. The more concrete the schedule, the better; this allows you to spread the work over the term. If you wish to attend any conferences during the semester, that information should be allowed 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 made a B, 3.0, or higher in their core courses.
- They have made 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 program's academic and community expectations.

For fall semesters, Good academic standing eligibility for co-ops 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 below 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 below 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 a 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 put 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 grade 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 then must petition, following the appeal process below, to remain in the program. A student may be suspended if any of the below 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 a 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:
 - they make a B- on a core course at midterms or finals;
 - they receive a negative academic review (or two remedial academic reviews);
 - 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 on 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, and 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 suggested 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.
- If the faculty determines that a student's performance is not satisfactory, 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 his or her 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. If their midterm grades are so low that it is not mathematically possible to be in good academic standing by the end of the semester, students will be academically suspended from the program. If a student receives a negative academic review at midterms, they will be on academic notice and 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. 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 in relation to 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 only eligible to win this fellowship once, and it's only available for students returning for the next 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.

10.2: 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. NOTE: 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 in order to be reimbursed. Signed forms do not mean that reimbursement will happen if the requests don't follow policy. If you're not sure, ask before spending money.
- Sometimes professional opportunities occur during 1/4s or 1/2s, students need to discuss with their project instructor(s) and teams to determine if they can do this without hurting the team.
 - NOTE: students cannot do any professional development opportunities during the days of soft opening or the week of finals. Students also cannot 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 actually 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.
- The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs provides additional professional development funding for students, student work groups, and 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 offer graduate students some support for attending a conference or other professional engagement opportunity to network, perform, deepen knowledge, or compete within their field of study.
 - GuSH Research grants provide small grants of \$750 to graduate students for forwarding 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. GuSH grants are 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>

Reimbursement:

Students will only be reimbursed with prior approval.

Signed forms do not mean that reimbursement will happen 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 from 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

10.3: Funding Payment Schedule

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

10.4: 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's Office does keep a webpage with a listing of outside scholarship databases that may aid a graduate student's search in finding outside scholarships. Below is a list of a few scholarships that may be helpful.

- [AAUW International Fellowship](#)– 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 a significant service within the underserved community.

- [Hispanic Scholarship Fund](#)– designed to assist students of Hispanic heritage to obtain 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.

10.5: 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. If outside employment of more than 10 hours per week is desired (no more than 20 hours per week), 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 or co-op or signing an offer or contract.

Note: students who are receiving a financial stipend to be a graduate assistant cannot also work outside of the department during the same semester. Students on academic probation are not eligible for outside work.

10.6: Requirements for the Continuation of Funding (if applicable)

Students need to remain in good academic standing for a continuation of tuition scholarships.

10.7: Procedure for Written Notification of Change in Financial Support

Students will receive notification of loss of scholarship prior to 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 conducted 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 important 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 his or her time is being wasted and takes 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. Not showing 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.

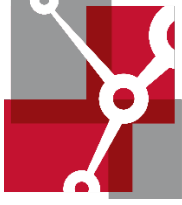
Candidates should expect offers to be confirmed in writing and notify the company of accepted or rejected offers by telephone, followed by a letter or email. Requests for extensions of decision deadlines should be made as early as possible, not at the last minute.

Honor an accepted offer as a contractual agreement.

Upon accepting a position, candidates should withdraw from interviewing and notify Career Services of a decision. Continuing to interview after receiving an offer or renegeing 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.



Student Acknowledgement

The ETC Student Handbook has been prepared for your information and understanding of 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 information (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.

_____ [L] [SEP]

(Student Signature)

(Date)

_____ [L] [SEP]

(Printed Name)

Please return by: Friday August 30, 2024.

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