Gibbs House Fellowship Agreement

The Gibbs House Fellowship is a program of Western Michigan University’s Office for Sustainability (OfS). The Gibbs House Fellowship provides WMU students with the unique opportunity to live in a sustainability-focused cooperative living arrangement at WMU’s historic Gibbs House. Gibbs House Fellows are employed in paid student researcher jobs at the OfS and are integrated into current office programs and projects.

Cooperative Living Expectations

Gibbs House Fellows are responsible for allocating 3-7 hours per week to the cooperative living expectations outlined below. These responsibilities are considered volunteer hours for the Fellowship. Fellows are expected to manage their time appropriately to contribute to their daily and weekly activities. The items below are intended to provide a general structure to encourage a healthy and cooperative living environment.

Meetings:
- Fellows will meet for one hour at a scheduled time on a weekday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. to discuss weekly responsibilities in the house, as well as upcoming events. This will also serve as a time for Fellows to address any issues or concerns with one another. **Attendance is mandatory.** Following the meeting, the designated Gibbs House Leader will submit a weekly meeting form to the Gibbs House Coordinator via email. **Please refer to the Gibbs House Fellowship Weekly Meeting Form.**
- Once a semester, the Gibbs House Fellows will host an OfS staff event at the Gibbs House. This will be an opportunity for OfS staff to socialize with the Gibbs House Fellows.

Gibbs House Leader:
- The Gibbs House Leader will rotate biweekly so that all Gibbs House Fellows are given this responsibility throughout their fellowship.
- Expectations of the House Leader include: running house meetings, creating a weekly dinner menu and shopping list, overseeing completion of the chore list, and submitting the Gibbs House Weekly Meeting Form to the Gibbs House Coordinator.

Community Events:
- A **minimum of two** community potlucks along with one other community event per semester are part of the Gibbs House Fellowship co-curricular requirements. All public events hosted at Gibbs House must be discussed and pre-approved by the Gibbs House Fellows and Coordinator.
  **Please refer to the Gibbs House Event Guide.**

Recruitment of Future Gibbs House Fellows:
- Gibbs House Fellows will assist in recruiting new candidates to apply for the Gibbs House Fellowship. Outreach may include: tabling at events, participating in informational gatherings, hanging posters, in-class recruitment, handing out flyers, posting on social media, and other activities as needed.
- Applications are due the second Thursday in January.
- The Gibbs House Coordinator will provide promotional materials for recruitment and assist as needed.
Reflection:
• Each week, Fellows will submit one page reflections on their progress regarding sustainability-focused cooperative living.
• At the end of the fellowship year, Fellows will write a two page report about their time as Gibbs Fellows. Guidelines for this report will be given to the Fellows a month prior to move-out.

**Household Expectations**

Safety:
• Fellows will follow the Western Michigan University Student Code of Conduct. [https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u492/2017/WMU_studentcode.pdf](https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u492/2017/WMU_studentcode.pdf)
• In case of severe weather, please refer to the Gibbs House Manual.
• In case of a fire, leave the Gibbs House through the nearest available exit. Reassemble at the end of the parking lot and call WMU’s Department of Public Safety (DPS) (269) 387-5555.
• Per Michigan law, Gibbs House Fellows and their guests are not allowed to possess or consume alcohol, unless they are 21 years of age or older.
• Use, possession, exchange, manufacturing, or distribution of marijuana (including medical marijuana), heroin, narcotics, other controlled substances or paraphernalia is illegal, except as permitted by law.
• Other than aquarium fish (whose tanks may not exceed 20 gallons) no pets are allowed. (This policy does not apply to service animals approved by Disability Services for Students.)
• Gibbs House is smoke free. The use of tobacco products is not permitted indoors or outdoors on any University property. Please refer to WMU Tobacco Free Policy.
• The possession, use, or storage of any type of weapon is prohibited on campus. For more detailed information, please review the WMU weapons policy.
• In the case of other emergencies, please notify WMU’s Department of Public Safety (DPS) (269) 387-5555, the Gibbs House Coordinator and OfS Senior Leadership. Please refer to the Gibbs House Manual Emergency Contact List.

Cleaning:
• Fellows will maintain and agree upon an equitable division and distribution of labor as related to event planning, chores, and other related tasks. This includes maintaining the appropriate exterior and interior house presentation.
• Fellows must maintain hygienic and clean personal areas.
• Fellows must also remain respectful of shared areas, consistently cleaning shared spaces after use, and not using common areas as storage for personal belongings. Please refer to the Gibbs House Chores Checklist.

Supplies for the Permaculture Team:
• Supplies located in the garage are for the Permaculture Team. They are for the sole use of the Permaculture Team for permaculture related projects. Fellows may not use these or any other Permaculture Team supplies unless they are directed to do so.
Shared Spaces:
• Certain areas of the house are considered shared space between Gibbs House Fellows and the Permaculture Team. This includes the downstairs bathroom, kitchen, library/dining room, mudroom, and basement. It is each party’s responsibility to clean up these shared spaces after each use.
• Office Hours for the Permaculture Team: 9-5 p.m. M-F in the library/dining room.

Alterations to Property:
• There are to be absolutely no alterations to the Gibbs House or surrounding University property. This includes no painting, landscaping, drilling holes, erecting new structures on property, or other renovations. Please refer to the Gibbs House Lease.

Student Employment Expectations
• Gibbs House Fellows are expected to work a minimum of 10 hours per week for the Office for Sustainability. These hours will be split between the Permaculture Team and a student researcher position. The amount of time spent at the Gibbs Site as a Permaculture Team member versus at the Office for Sustainability as a student researcher will vary depending on the season.
• Student researcher positions are assigned according to preference, best fit for each Gibbs House Fellow, and the needs of the Office for Sustainability.
• If Fellows are able to handle the workload without conflict and deliver on their responsibilities they may be offered a maximum of 12 hours.
• Gibbs House Fellows are expected to work throughout the duration of the Fellowship in their designated job.

Academic Standards:
• Grades will be checked after mid-terms each semester. Fellows are expected to maintain the academic standards set by Western Michigan University. https://wmich.edu/registrar/policies/standards
• Failure to maintain a 2.0 (undergraduate) or 3.0 (graduate) may result in reduced work hours or loss of student researcher job.

Other

Communication between Gibbs House Coordinator and Fellows:
• Seamless communication among Gibbs House Fellows and the Gibbs House Coordinator is critical. To accomplish this, Fellows are expected to contact the Coordinator via email or phone if issues arise, as well as reply to emails from Coordinator in a timely fashion. Effective communication (responding within 48 hours) with the Coordinator is considered a Fellowship requirement. The Coordinator will be held to the same standard.
Parking:
- One parking space per Fellow is provided on the Gibbs House site. Fellows are responsible for purchasing all other parking passes related to WMU campus or any additional parking.
- Asylum Lake is not a designated parking area for Gibbs House Fellows and any cars located on the lot will be subject to WMU Parking Services restrictions.
- In the past, issues have arisen with individuals using Asylum Lake parking and cutting across Gibbs’ property. If this is observed, Fellows should notify the Gibbs House Coordinator.

Social Media:
- The only approved social media platforms are the OfS Facebook page and Instagram.
- Prior to posting, all posts must be approved by the OfS Communications Team. Posting requests received with less than two weeks’ notice subsequently may not be approved. Please refer to the Communications Request Form.

Failure to Meet Expectations Disclaimer:
- Fellows who fail to meet work responsibilities as assigned by the OfS, cause significant disruptions to the cooperative living dynamic, or fail to meet any other expectations outlined in this agreement may have their Fellowship revoked. Gibbs House Fellowship revocation will result in loss of the OfS student researcher job and loss of the Gibbs House Fellowship residency.
- A Fellow or Fellow(s) will first be given a written warning from the Gibbs House Coordinator if a problem should occur.
- If the problem persists, the Fellow(s) will meet with the Coordinator and Project Manager to create a plan for improvement.
- If the Fellow(s) does not follow through with the plan, their Fellowship will be revoked.

End of Lease:
- At the end of the lease, Fellows must have their mail forwarded and include their new address.
- https://moversguide.usps.com/icoa/home/icoa-main-flow.do?execution=e1s3&flowId=icoa-main-flow&referral=UMOVE

Gibbs House Fellowship Coordinator:
Grace McElhone
grace.m.mcelhone@wmich.edu
(517) 883-1117

Project Manager:
Justin Gish
justin.gish@wmich.edu
(269) 387-0941
I have read and understand the contents and expectations of the Gibbs House Fellowship as described in this handbook. I will do my best to honor my commitments to the Office for Sustainability and the Gibbs House Fellowship for the duration of my tenure as a ________ year Gibbs House Fellow. If I have any concerns about my role or expectations, I will seek guidance from my fellow housemates and/or the Gibbs House Coordinator. I understand that if I do not actively participate in my role as a Gibbs House Fellow and adhere to the Cooperative Living Expectations at the Gibbs House, I may be asked to forfeit my role as a Gibbs House Fellow.

Sign: __________________________________________________

Date: __________________________________________________