This 2005–2007 edition of Academic Programs presents the curriculum as it is offered in 2005, the Sesquicentennial year of Michigan State University.

Although individual academic programs in departments, schools, and colleges change periodically, the faculty role and responsibility for shaping the curriculum to meet the knowledge and skill needs of students remains constant.

From its beginning, the Agricultural College of the State of Michigan “linked together science, practicality, and liberal studies to create a curriculum that prepared young people to live successfully in their ever-changing world.” “One hundred and fifty years later, Michigan State University stands as living proof that the work begun in a wooded swamp three miles east of Lansing has made a difference to the lives of millions of people.”

Theophilus Abbot, who served as Michigan State’s third president from 1862 to 1885, had a “vision for the college.” It was to be “a vital, forward-looking, institution focused on preparing students to make a difference in the world.” This vision still lives as Michigan State University’s ongoing commitment to advancing knowledge and transforming lives.


Founding Date February 12, 1855
Dedication Date May 13, 1857
Classes Began May 14, 1857

Name Changes
1855 Agricultural College of the State of Michigan
1861 State Agricultural College
1909 Michigan Agricultural College
1925 Michigan State College of Agriculture and Applied Science
1955 Michigan State University of Agriculture and Applied Science
1964 Michigan State University

Students, Faculty, Departments, Colleges
1857 124 students, 5 faculty
1907 950 students, 90 faculty and other officers, 34 departments
1955 15,500 students, 1,973 faculty and other officers, 8 colleges, 110 departments
2005 44,836 students, 4,500 faculty and academic staff, 6,000 support staff, 14 colleges, 100 departments