

## **Middle Tennessee State University Overview of Financial Aid Information**

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**THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION.** It is an overview of standard policies and practices governing student financial aid; please read carefully. For more detailed information, you may visit our Web site at [www.mtsu.edu/financialaid](http://www.mtsu.edu/financialaid). If you have questions, contact the Financial Aid Office at (615) 898-2830.

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### **Correspondence**

- Students' MTSU email accounts will be the primary method used by the MTSU Financial Aid Office to communicate about financial aid. **It is important for students to check their email account frequently.**

### **Federal Eligibility Requirements**

- Students must submit a completed Federal Aid Authorization Form to the Financial Aid Office. The Federal Authorization Form indicates which charges students authorize federal financial aid funds to pay. Please refer to the Form for details. Students may access the form at <http://www.mtsu.edu/financialaid/forms/Authorizationfedaid.pdf>.
- Students must be in a degree-seeking program, an approved certification program, or seeking initial teacher certification.
- A Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be completed annually, and the results must be on file in the Financial Aid Office. We recommend the FAFSA be completed as soon as possible after January 1.
- The federal government randomly chooses students for verification, which is the process of verifying the accuracy of the data submitted on the FAFSA. Federal Tax returns, W-2 Forms and other documents may be requested. Federal/campus-based aid cannot be awarded until all documents are received and analyzed. Please allow 3-5 weeks for processing. The priority deadline for awarding campus-based aid (SEOG, Campus Work Study, or Perkins Loans) is May 15.
- Class attendance is required. Failure to attend classes may result in students owing funds to the U.S. Department of Education and/or MTSU.
- Financial aid can pay up to 30 attempted credit hours for remedial courses.

### **Federal Direct Student Loans**

- To be eligible for a Federal Direct Student Loan, students must be officially enrolled and attending at least half-time (6 hours for undergraduates and 5 hours for graduates) at the time of disbursement.
- All first-time borrowers at MTSU must complete an Entrance Interview before receiving loan funds.
- All borrowers must complete a Direct Loan Master Promissory Note (MPN) at <https://dlenote.ed.gov/empn/StudentLoanSelector.jsp>. Students are required to sign and submit one MPN.

### **Federal Direct Student Loans (Prerequisites, Additional Bachelor's Degree, Teacher Certification)**

- Graduate students who are required to enroll in undergraduate courses to be accepted into a graduate program may qualify for Federal Direct Student Loans at the undergraduate level, provided they have not reached their aggregate undergraduate loan limits. If eligible, students may receive undergraduate Federal Direct Student Loans for their prerequisites for up to a maximum of 12 consecutive months. A letter from the academic department or graduate analyst indicating which courses are required as prerequisites must be submitted to the Financial Aid Office before a loan can be processed.
- Students enrolled for an additional bachelor's degree may qualify for a Federal Direct Student Loan provided they have not reached their aggregate limit. Before a loan can be processed, students must provide the Financial Aid Office with a signed copy of the upper division form detailing the courses required for the additional degree.
- Students who have completed an undergraduate degree and are enrolled for the sole purpose of attaining teacher licensure may be eligible for Federal Direct Student Loans at the undergraduate level. To receive aid, students must be enrolled at least half-time in required teacher certification coursework. Students must submit a signed copy of their Program of Study.

## Satisfactory Academic Progress / Financial Aid Probations and Suspensions

- To maintain aid eligibility, federal regulations require that all federal financial aid recipients maintain satisfactory academic progress toward a degree. MTSU complies with this requirement by monitoring each aid recipient's cumulative GPA, completion rate, and maximum time limits for the completion of a degree.

### Cumulative GPA

- To be eligible for financial aid, undergraduate and graduate students' cumulative GPA must meet at least the minimum requirements indicated in the undergraduate and graduate catalog, respectively.

### Completion Rate

- Students must earn 66% of cumulative attempted credit hours, including withdrawals, incompletes, courses repeated, and courses receiving non-passing grades, i.e., "N," "U," "W," "I," or "F."

### Time Limits

- The maximum time for the completion of a first undergraduate degree is limited to 150% of the program's published length, usually 180 credit hours. Maximum hours include all hours from MTSU and transfer hours from other universities/colleges attended, even if financial aid was not awarded for those courses. Students who change majors during their junior or senior year may be allowed 24 additional attempted credit hours to obtain a degree.

## FINANCIAL AID PROBATIONS

- Students are placed on financial aid probation if their completion rate is less than the required 66%. While on probation, students must pass 75% of their attempted credit hours for each semester enrolled.
- Students who do not earn any credit hours for one semester are automatically placed on financial aid probation.

## FINANCIAL AID SUSPENSIONS

- Students who were previously placed on financial aid probation and did not pass 75% of their attempted credit hours will be **suspended** from eligibility for federal grants, loans, federal work-study employment, and Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarships.
- Students who do not earn any credit hours for two consecutive semesters will be suspended from federal financial aid.
- Students whose completion rate is less than 50% may be placed on financial aid suspension without having a probationary period.
- Students may appeal financial aid suspensions if sufficient documentation can be provided to justify why satisfactory progress was not made. Please refer to the Satisfactory Academic Progress section on our Web site for more details.

## Withdrawals (Title IV Return Policy)

- Students who officially withdraw during the first four days of class will have all of their financial aid cancelled.
- Students who officially withdraw after the first four days but prior to completing 60% of the term will have their financial aid prorated. Students may owe funds to the U.S. Department of Education and/or MTSU.
- The official last date of attendance for students who unofficially withdraw will be determined by the instructor. Pell, Lottery, and other aid may be adjusted or canceled if students are reported as not attending class.
- Students are advised to contact the Financial Aid Office before withdrawing.

## Attendance

- Class attendance will be verified for disbursements that occur during the semester. If students are reported as not attending class on at least a half-time basis, financial aid may be reduced or canceled. If the University cancels a class, the student may be required to register for additional hours to be eligible for federal financial aid.
- Class participation must be verified for students who are enrolled in correspondence courses, online courses, telecourses, the Regents Online Degree Program (RODP), or courses via the Internet. Because attendance is not required for these courses, instructors document participation according to completed homework

assignments. Students should complete their homework assignments in a timely manner so their participation can be documented. If students wish to withdraw or drop from these courses, it is recommended they contact their instructor(s). Students' financial aid may be adjusted or canceled if instructors are unable to verify participation.

### **Award Adjustments**

- Financial aid will be adjusted for enrollment status as of the census date (generally 14 days after classes begin).
- Financial aid may be adjusted when other assistance is received (e.g., discounts, third-party payments, stipends, Vocational Rehabilitation, private scholarships, etc.).

### **Scholarships**

- Scholarship deadlines for priority consideration:
  - December 1 for Incoming freshmen
  - February 1 for transfer students
- Incoming freshmen and transfer students are not required to submit a separate scholarship application for academic scholarships.
- Currently enrolled students may complete the online scholarship application at <https://mtsu.scholarships.ngwebsolutions.com> by December 1, to be considered for scholarships for the upcoming year.
- Scholarship award letters will be mailed only to students who have been awarded a scholarship.
- Students may apply for Foundation Scholarships through the Foundation Scholarship Web site. Information and applications will be available at <https://mtsu.scholarships.ngwebsolutions.com> in October of each year for the following year.

### **Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Program**

- Students must submit a completed Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship Statement of Understanding to the Financial Aid Office before Lottery awards will be credited to students' accounts. Students may access the form at [http://www.mtsu.edu/financialaid/forms\\_finaid.shtml](http://www.mtsu.edu/financialaid/forms_finaid.shtml).