



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees
Academic Affairs, Student Life, and
Athletics Committee**

February 27, 2024
9:00 am

MEC Meeting Room – 2nd Floor
Miller Education Center
503 East Bell Street
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37130



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

February 27, 2024
9:00 am

AGENDA

Call to Order and Opening Remarks

Roll Call

Approval of Minutes (Action)[Tab 1](#)

Policy Revision and Related Rule Promulgation (Action)[Tab 2](#)

 Policy 312 Academic Misconduct

 Rule 0240-07-04 Academic Misconduct

Post-Approval Monitoring Report (Information).....[Tab 3](#)

Annual Report of Academic Program Actions (Information).....[Tab 4](#)

Athletics Report (Information).....[Tab 5](#)

Closing Remarks

Adjournment



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Action Item

DATE: February 27, 2024

SUBJECT: **Minutes of the November 14, 2023
Academic Affairs, Student Life, and
Athletics Committee Meeting**

PRESENTER: Pam Wright
Committee Chair

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met on November 14, 2023. Minutes from the meeting are provided for review and approval.

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT LIFE, AND ATHLETICS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

The Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, in the Miller Education Center Meeting Room at Middle Tennessee State University.

Call to Order

Committee Chair Pam Wright called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Roll Call

Board Secretary James Floyd called the roll. The following Committee members were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Tom Boyd, Pete DeLay, Bill Jones, Mary Martin, Steve Smith, Christine Vanek, Michael Wade, Pam Wright, Molly Mihm, Keith Huber, and Chris Massaro. A quorum was declared.

President Sidney A. McPhee; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Mark Byrnes, Provost; Yvette Clark, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Sarah Sudak, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; Alan Thomas, Vice President for Business and Finance; Leah Ladley, Chief Audit Executive; James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary; and Kim Edgar, Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes - Action

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes from the August 15, 2023, Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee meeting. Trustee DeLay moved to approve the minutes from the August 15, 2023, meeting, and Trustee Vanek seconded the motion.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Rule Promulgation and Related Policy Revision - Action

312 Academic Misconduct

Rule 0240-07-04 Academic Misconduct

Policy 312 Academic Misconduct was amended to make clear that the improper use of artificial intelligence (AI) is a type of academic misconduct. Also, sanctions for graduate students were modified to allow the program to remove a student from the program in addition to sanctions applied from the academic misconduct committee.

Trustee DeLay moved to approve the revisions, and Trustee Vanek seconded the motion.

During discussion, Trustee Vanek agreed with the policy revisions, but had questions about process. She asked if 10 business days after the semester ends is long enough for a faculty member to report misconduct. Provost Byrnes explained that for the student to plan the next semester, the instructor must act within 10 days. Trustee Vanek also inquired about Section 12 which allows both the student and faculty member to appeal the decision. Provost Byrnes agreed to look at this issue to ensure a fair process. Trustee Vanek then expressed concern over possible retribution related to Section 13 which allows the faculty member to assign the grade after the determination by the academic misconduct committee. Provost Byrnes responded that faculty are usually lenient, especially for first time offenses, and students can appeal the grade assigned in a separate appeal process.

Chairman Smith asked whether 15 days is long enough for the student to prepare for the institutional hearing. Provost Byrnes stated that typically the Director of Academic Integrity works with the faculty member and student to educate the student, and few cases go to institutional hearing. Provost Byrnes agreed to add a minimum number of days for a student to prepare for the hearing but asked for time to further evaluate the policy.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Associate University Counsel Jeff Farrar explained that certain university policies have to be promulgated formally to be accepted by the legislature as an official State of Tennessee rule.

Chairman Smith suggested delaying the rule promulgation since more changes will be made to the policy. He then moved to rescind the vote to approve the policy so that more revisions could be made prior to the rule promulgation. Trustee Vanek seconded. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to rescind passed unanimously.

Rule Promulgation and Related Policy Revision - Action

501 Residency Classification

Provost Byrnes reported that the State of Tennessee provides a 25% discount on tuition to dependents of Tennessee Public School Teachers. The Residency Classification policy and rule were amended to add dependent children of Licensed Tennessee Public School Teachers because in a few cases, the teacher lived in a contiguous state. The revision ensures that the discount would be applied to the in-state tuition rate.

Trustee Jones moved to approve revisions to Policy 501 and amendments to the Rule as presented. Trustee Baker seconded the motion.

During discussion, Chairman Smith asked how many students were affected by this revision. Vice President Alan Thomas said two students received in-state residency because their parent was a Licensed Tennessee Public School Teacher.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve revisions to Policy 501 and amendments to the Rule passed unanimously.

Approval of Expedited Tenure - Action

Provost Byrnes presented Dr. Sal Barbosa for expedited tenure in the Department of Computer Science. Trustee DeLay moved to approve expedited tenure for the candidate. Trustee Martin seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion to approve expedited tenure passed unanimously.

Performance Metrics - Information

Provost Byrnes presented the annual report on metrics highlighting an increase in enrollment, particularly for first-time freshmen. Trustee Boyd noted a decrease in debt for graduates. He suggested adding three-year performance data to the Application/Admission Activity section.

Trustee Wade asked what is driving freshman retention. President McPhee said a series of initiatives started 10 years ago with the Quest for Student Success and have culminated in increased retention and graduation rates.

Athletics Report - Information

Athletics Director Chris Massaro presented attendance data at MTSU athletics events and MTSU-hosted events in athletics facilities to demonstrate economic impact and exposure to the University.

Adjournment

Committee Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Action Item

DATE: February 27, 2024

SUBJECT: **Policy Revision and
Related Rule Promulgation
312 Academic Misconduct**

PRESENTER: Mark Byrnes, Provost
Jeff Farrar, Associate University Counsel

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Policy 312 Academic Misconduct was revised to incorporate provisions related to artificial intelligence and to streamline the review process for allegations of academic misconduct, particularly as it relates to integrating the review processes for both graduate and undergraduate students.

A parallel rule, Rule 0240-07-04 Academic Misconduct, is also presented for amendment and will capture the revised version of Policy 312. A Rulemaking Hearing is scheduled for the Board of Trustees meeting on March 19, 2024.



312 Academic Misconduct

Approved by Board of Trustees

Effective Date: ~~August 15, 2019~~ _____, 2023

Responsible Division: Academic Affairs

Responsible Office: University Provost

Responsible Officer: Vice Provost for Faculty ~~Affairs~~ Affairs and Strategic Initiatives

I. Purpose

This policy sets out the procedure to be followed when a Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU or University) faculty member believes a student has engaged in academic misconduct.

II. Scope

This policy applies only to situations where a faculty member alleges that a student has engaged in academic misconduct. Any allegations of misconduct related to research may also be evaluated under [Policy 211 Misconduct in Scholarly Activities and Research](#). Students wishing to appeal final course grades must do so through the process set out in [Policy 313 Student Grade Appeals](#).

III. Definitions

- A. Academic Exercise. All forms of work submitted by a student for academic credit or hours.
- B. Academic Misconduct. Acts of plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication.
 - 1. Plagiarism. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works ~~effrom~~ another ~~persen~~source as one's own without proper attribution. This includes self-plagiarism, which occurs when an author submits material or research from a previous academic exercise to satisfy the requirements of another academic exercise and uses it without proper citation of its reuse. [Plagiarism also includes the unauthorized use of paraphrasing tools or "text spinners" and artificial intelligence software.](#)
 - 2. Cheating. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or aids in any academic exercise or

- test/examination. Cheating also includes unapproved collaboration, which occurs when a student works with others on an individual academic exercise without the express permission of the faculty member. [Unapproved collaboration can also include, but is not limited to, sharing of any physical or electronic papers, exams/quizzes, assignments, and/or posting of same to unauthorized websites.](#)
3. Fabrication. Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- C. Academic Misconduct Committee (Committee) refers to the Committee established under [Policy 32 University Committees](#).
- D. Faculty ~~member~~[Member](#). For the purposes of this policy, a faculty member is the University employee teaching a course or serving in a supervisory, advisory, or evaluative capacity in relation to the student(s) accused of academic misconduct, including graduate teaching assistants who are instructors of record. Graduate teaching assistants or others who are not instructors of record should present documentation of suspected misconduct to the supervising faculty member.
- E. Director of Academic Integrity (Director). A designee of the Vice Provost for Faculty [Affairs and Strategic Initiatives](#) whose responsibilities are to manage and ensure fairness in the investigation and timely resolution of alleged academic misconduct. The Director does not vote in academic misconduct hearings.
- F
- F. [Student. Any person who is admitted and/or registered for study at MTSU for any academic period, either full-time or part-time, undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies.](#)
- G. Notice. For the purposes of this policy, a notice is a written communication sent to the student's official MTSU email account, or to the student's local address as indicated in the student information system, or both as specified in this policy. Students have the responsibility to check their University-issued email accounts regularly and to ensure that the local mailing address on file with MTSU is current. The requirement to provide notice will be satisfied and any period for response will begin on the date the notice is sent.

IV. Process

- A. Academic misconduct is prohibited. Whenever a faculty member believes that academic misconduct has occurred, he/she must provide notice to the student and submit [an Student Academic Integrity Incident Report Form](#) (Incident Report) to the Director within seven (7) business days from the time the faculty member ~~concludes~~[suspects](#)

that the alleged [academic](#) misconduct occurred. [If the semester has ended, the faculty member has ten \(10\) business days from the date the semester ended to submit the Academic Integrity Report Form. Work submitted prior to the alleged case should not be reviewed for a violation because the student has not been given the opportunity to change their behavior .](#)

The Incident Report will provide:

1. the name of the student;
 2. the course in which the academic misconduct is alleged to have occurred;
 3. a description of the [academic](#) misconduct; and,
 4. supporting documentary evidence (if available).
- B. A referred student is prohibited from dropping a course in which misconduct is alleged, pending final resolution of the case. Students should continue attending class, absent a disciplinary sanction to the contrary, while this procedure is ongoing. If found responsible for committing academic misconduct, a student will not be allowed to drop the course, though continued class attendance is neither prohibited nor required. (Students receiving federal financial aid who stop attending a course may incur significant financial penalties. Students are encouraged to consult the MT One Stop.) Failure to comply with this directive will result in referral to the Office of Student Conduct for violation of general rules and regulations and violation of imposed disciplinary sanctions under [Policy 540 Student Conduct](#).
- ~~A. The referring faculty member will assign neither a grade on the referred academic exercise, nor a final grade for the course, pending the resolution of the case (if the referred exercise will affect the final grade). If a grade needs to be submitted at the end of the semester, a referred student will receive a temporary grade of "Incomplete" (I) until the case is resolved.~~
- C. The Director will review the case within five (5) business days of receipt of the Incident Report. If, in the Director's opinion, the Incident Report lacks substance or is otherwise deficient, the Director may consult with the referring faculty member and indicate either that additional information is needed or encourage that the Incident Report be withdrawn. Such a consultation may take place before and/or after the Director has met with the student.
- D. For any Incident Report not withdrawn by mutual consent between the Director and the referring faculty member, the Director will send notice to the student and schedule [an in-person or virtual](#) meeting to discuss the alleged academic misconduct violation. During this meeting the student can accept responsibility or not accept responsibility for

the alleged academic misconduct. If the student accepts responsibility, the Director will decide on University sanctions (see Section V.) appropriate to the case, and the matter will be resolved at that point. The Director will note the resolution on the Incident Report -and provide copies to the [student, the](#) faculty member, and the [department chair-Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives](#). This notice will be sent to the student's official MTSU email account ~~with~~[and/or](#) a hard copy letter [will be](#) sent via first class United States Postal Service (USPS) mail to the student's local address as indicated in the student information system. [For graduate students found responsible of academic misconduct, the decision will also be provided to the student's graduate program director.](#)

- E. If a referred student fails to attend a scheduled meeting with the Director without a reasonable excuse, the Director may find the student responsible in absentia and determine appropriate sanctions. Cases heard in absentia may not be appealed.
- F. If the student does not accept responsibility, the case will be heard by the Committee. The Director will:
 - 1. Determine whether the matter warrants consideration of suspension or expulsion of the student should the Committee find academic misconduct. If so, the student must be given the option of a hearing held pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (UAPA) as set forth in Section VII, below. A waiver of this option must also be in writing.
 - 2. As the designee of the Vice Provost for Faculty ~~Affairs~~[and Strategic Initiatives](#), form the Committee from the pool of members for the purpose of the hearing according to [Policy 32 University Committees](#).
- G. Institutional Hearing
 - 1. If the sanction of suspension or expulsion will not be considered or if the student has waived a hearing under the UAPA, the Committee will set an institutional hearing for the matter ~~as soon as is feasible~~[in a manner that allows reasonable time for faculty and student preparation](#), ideally ~~withi~~[no fewer than three \(3\) and no more than fifteen \(15\) business days](#) ~~offrom~~ the student's request for a committee hearing, ~~allowing reasonable time for preparation~~. Both the faculty member and the student will be notified of the hearing.
 - 2. Outside of regular Fall and Spring semesters, hearings will be scheduled under only two (2) circumstances:
 - a. If lack of resolution affects the student's ability to graduate in the Spring or Summer; or

- b. If the Vice Provost for Faculty [Affairs and Strategic Initiatives](#) determines that there are extenuating circumstances to warrant a special hearing.
3. The Director will advise the student, in writing, of the following:
 - a. The type of [alleged](#) academic misconduct and the circumstances alleged by the faculty member to constitute academic misconduct;
 - b. The date, time, and place of the hearing;
 - c. That the student may appeal a grade given by the faculty member in response to academic misconduct;
 - d. The right to receive a list of the witnesses the University expects to present at the proceeding and those the University may present if the need arises;
 - e. The right to request a copy of the University's investigative file, redacted in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (20 U.S.C. § 1232(g), and the federal regulations implementing that statute, as amended; and, the portion of the state Public Records Act making certain student information confidential (T.C.A. § 10-7-504(a)(4)).
 - f. The right to request copies of all documents, copies of all electronically stored information, and access to tangible evidence the University has in its possession, custody, or control and may use to support claims or defenses, unless the use would be solely for impeachment; and
 - g. The rights the student will be afforded at the hearing as specified in Section IV.[HG.5](#).
4. The hearing will take place at the scheduled time, regardless of whether the student and/or the referring faculty member choose to attend. Failure to appear at a scheduled hearing abrogates the rights listed under Section IV.[HG.5](#) or 6., as applicable. A hearing may be rescheduled, under extraordinary circumstances, at the discretion of the Director.
5. The rights applicable to the referred student at the hearing include:
 - a. The right to present evidence pertinent to the case and to hear and respond to all testimony;
 - b. The right to be accompanied by an advisor. An advisor may not actively or directly participate in the hearing, but may only consult with the student;

- c. The right to call witnesses; and
 - d. The right to confront witnesses in support of the [academic](#) misconduct allegation.
6. The rights applicable to the referring faculty member at the hearing include:
 - a. The right to present evidence pertinent to the case and to hear and respond to all testimony;
 - b. The right to be accompanied by an advisor. An advisor may not actively or directly participate in the hearing, but may only consult with the faculty member;
 - c. The right to call witnesses; and
 - d. The right to confront witnesses against the misconduct allegation.
7. The hearing will not be open to the public.
8. The Committee may exclude evidence it deems immaterial, irrelevant, or unduly repetitious.
9. Decisions shall be by majority vote of the Committee members present and voting. The Director is a non-voting ex-officio member of the Committee. The Committee may ask the referred student, referring faculty member, and any advisors present to leave the hearing while they deliberate and vote. Votes of individual Committee members will not be reported. In the event of a tie vote, the charge of misconduct is dismissed.
10. The standard of proof required for a finding of academic misconduct shall be by a preponderance of the evidence.
11. The Director will, on behalf of the Committee, issue a written decision indicating its finding concerning the charge of academic misconduct. The decision must specify the factual basis for the determination, and, if academic misconduct is found, state whether disciplinary sanctions will be imposed. The decision will be provided to the student, the faculty member, and the Vice Provost for Faculty [Affairs and Strategic Initiatives](#). For graduate students found responsible of [academic](#) misconduct, the decision will also be provided to the student's [faculty advisor](#), graduate program director, ~~and department chair~~.
12. The student and the faculty member must be notified of the right to appeal the Committee's decision to the Provost.

13. Once it has been determined whether academic misconduct has occurred or not, the faculty member shall determine a grade for the exercise or examination and/or course.

V. University Sanctions for Academic Misconduct

- A. ~~For undergraduates, appropriate~~ Appropriate sanctions will be determined by majority vote of the Committee and reported to the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives for recording in the academic integrity software of record. Students will be provided notice of all sanctions. ~~Affairs.~~ For Graduate programs may impose separate, additional sanctions (up to and including removal from the program) for graduate students, sanctions will be determined by student academic misconduct. This requires a majority vote of the student's faculty advisor, graduate program director, and department chair (or academic dean, whichever is applicable) and reported for interdisciplinary programs). In these instances, program directors are responsible for calling this vote within seven (7) business days of the final disposition of the student's academic integrity case, promptly notifying the student of additional sanctions, and reporting sanctions to the Vice Provost for Faculty ~~Affairs and Strategic Initiatives.~~ ~~Students will be provided notice of all sanctions.~~
- B. Any finding against the student or admission of responsibility by the student will result in a record that will be maintained and referred to by the Committee Director in the event that a subsequent misconduct case arises against the student, regardless of the severity of sanctions imposed in those instances.
- C. Subsequent determinations of academic misconduct may result in more severe University sanctions. If a student has been found responsible for academic misconduct more than once, the Director will inform the sitting members of the Committee of the nature of prior offenses so that appropriate sanctions may be determined. These facts will not be revealed prior to the Committee's determination of responsibility in the present case in order to avoid prejudice.
- D. Sanctions may include suspension or expulsion from the University but only if the student was provided the option of a UAPA hearing. (See Section VII. for conducting the hearing required in such a case.)
- E. Sanctions include, but are not limited to:
 1. Reprimand. A written reprimand will be given to a student whose conduct violates any part of these policies, and warns a student that any further violation(s) may result in more serious consequences;
 2. Specified Educational Program. Requirement to participate in specified educational program(s) or project(s) relevant to the offense and overseen by the Director;

3. Restriction. A restriction upon a student's privileges for a period of time may be imposed. This restriction may include, but not be limited to, for example, denial of the ability to represent MTSU at any event, ability to participate in University travel, or use of facilities (including, but not limited to, labs, etc.).
4. Probation. Any student placed on probation will be notified of the terms and length of the probation. Any conduct in further violation of these policies while on probationary status or the failure to comply with the terms of the probationary period may result in the imposition of more severe disciplinary sanctions, up to and including suspension or expulsion following the hearing process described in this policy for any subsequent academic misconduct violation.
5. Suspension. Separation from the University for a specified period of time. This includes all instructional delivery methods (including, but not limited to, on ground, online, hybrid, etc.). Suspension may be accompanied by special conditions for readmission. Any student receiving a sanction of suspension shall be restricted from the campus of MTSU during the period of separation unless on official business with the University verified in writing by the Dean of Students ~~or, if a graduate student, by the Dean of the College of Graduate studies.~~ A suspended student must submit a written request to be on campus to the Dean of Students ~~or, if a graduate student, to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies,~~ a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the scheduled time of his/her business on campus. The request must specify the specific reason to be on campus and the location that the student wishes to visit. The Dean of Students ~~or the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies~~ will issue a written decision regarding the request to be on campus, and the student ~~is expected to~~ must carry that written decision with him/her during the time of the visit.
6. Expulsion. Permanent separation from the University. The imposition of this sanction is a permanent bar to the student's admission to MTSU. Any student receiving a sanction of expulsion shall be restricted from the campus of MTSU unless on official business with the University verified in writing by the Dean of Students ~~or, if a graduate student, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.~~ An expelled student must submit a written request to be on campus to the Dean of Students ~~or, if a graduate student, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies,~~ a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the scheduled time of his/her business on campus. The request must specify the specific reason to be on campus and the location that the student wishes to visit. The Dean of Students ~~or the Dean of College of Graduate Studies~~ will issue a written decision regarding the request to be on campus, and the student ~~is expected to~~ must carry that written decision ~~with him/her~~ during the time of their visit.
7. Revocation of Admission, Degree, or Credential. Under circumstances deemed appropriate, an offer of admission, a degree, or a credential awarded may be

revoked or rescinded [upon the recommendation of the Committee and with approval from the relevant department chair/school director and dean, the College of Graduate Studies dean \(for graduate cases\), the University Provost, and the President. Any final revocation of admission, degree, or credential shall be reported to the University Registrar by the Director.](#)

8. Other Sanctions. Additional or alternate sanctions may be created and designed as deemed appropriate to the offense and the student's individual need for education, growth, and reform.

VI. Appeal of Decision

- A. The student or faculty member may appeal the Committee's decision to the Provost within five (5) business days of receipt of the decision.
- B. An appeal must be submitted in writing and may only be filed based on one (1) or both of the following conditions:
 1. An error in procedural due process that prejudiced the Committee to the extent that the student was denied a fundamentally fair hearing as a result of the error; and/or
 2. The emergence of new evidence that could not have been previously discovered by the exercise of due diligence and which, had it been presented at the initial hearing, would have substantially affected the decision of the Committee.
- C. The Provost may:
 1. Affirm the decision;
 2. Reverse the decision in whole or in part; or
 3. Return the matter to the Director or Committee for reconsideration of the sanction.
- D. The decision of the Provost is final.

VII. UAPA Hearing

Any matter that may result in suspension or expulsion of a student from the University is subject to be heard pursuant to the contested case provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, T.C.A. § 4-5-301, et. seq., and shall be processed in accordance with [Policy 110 Cases Heard Pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act](#), unless the student waives the right to such a hearing in writing.

VIII. Records Maintenance

Whenever there is a finding or admission of responsibility under this policy, these records will be maintained by the Vice Provost for Faculty [Affairs and Strategic Initiatives](#) permanently.

Forms:

[Student Academic Integrity Incident Report](#)

Revisions: June 5, 2017 (original); August 15, 2019; [December 6, 2023](#).

Last Reviewed: ~~November 2020~~ [December 6, 2023](#).

References: T.C.A. § 4-5-301, et. seq., Policies 32 University Committees; 110 Cases Heard Pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act; 211 Misconduct in Scholarly Activities and Research; 313 Student Grade Appeals; 540 Student Conduct.



312 Academic Misconduct

Approved by Board of Trustees

Effective Date: _____, 2023

Responsible Division: Academic Affairs

Responsible Office: University Provost

Responsible Officer: Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives

I. Purpose

This policy sets out the procedure to be followed when a Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU or University) faculty member believes a student has engaged in academic misconduct.

II. Scope

This policy applies only to situations where a faculty member alleges that a student has engaged in academic misconduct. Any allegations of misconduct related to research may also be evaluated under [Policy 211 Misconduct in Scholarly Activities and Research](#). Students wishing to appeal final course grades must do so through the process set out in [Policy 313 Student Grade Appeals](#).

III. Definitions

- A. Academic Exercise. All forms of work submitted by a student for academic credit or hours.
- B. Academic Misconduct. Acts of plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication.
 - 1. Plagiarism. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works from another source as one's own without proper attribution. This includes self-plagiarism, which occurs when an author submits material or research from a previous academic exercise to satisfy the requirements of another academic exercise and uses it without proper citation of its reuse. Plagiarism also includes the unauthorized use of paraphrasing tools or “text spinners” and artificial intelligence software.
 - 2. Cheating. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or aids in any academic exercise or

- test/examination. Cheating also includes unapproved collaboration, which occurs when a student works with others on an individual academic exercise without the express permission of the faculty member. Unapproved collaboration can also include, but is not limited to, sharing of any physical or electronic papers, exams/quizzes, assignments, and/or posting of same to unauthorized websites.
3. Fabrication. Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- C. Academic Misconduct Committee (Committee) refers to the Committee established under [Policy 32 University Committees](#).
 - D. Faculty Member. For the purposes of this policy, a faculty member is the University employee teaching a course or serving in a supervisory, advisory, or evaluative capacity in relation to the student(s) accused of academic misconduct, including graduate teaching assistants who are instructors of record. Graduate teaching assistants or others who are not instructors of record should present documentation of suspected misconduct to the supervising faculty member.
 - E. Director of Academic Integrity (Director). A designee of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives whose responsibilities are to manage and ensure fairness in the investigation and timely resolution of alleged academic misconduct. The Director does not vote in academic misconduct hearings.
 - F. Student. Any person who is admitted and/or registered for study at MTSU for any academic period, either full-time or part-time, undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies.
 - G. Notice. For the purposes of this policy, a notice is a written communication sent to the student's official MTSU email account, or to the student's local address as indicated in the student information system, or both as specified in this policy. Students have the responsibility to check their University-issued email accounts regularly and to ensure that the local mailing address on file with MTSU is current. The requirement to provide notice will be satisfied and any period for response will begin on the date the notice is sent.

IV. Process

- A. Academic misconduct is prohibited. Whenever a faculty member believes that academic misconduct has occurred, he/she must provide notice to the student and submit an [Academic Integrity Incident Report Form](#) (Incident Report) to the Director within seven (7) business days from the time the faculty member suspects that the alleged academic misconduct occurred. If the semester has ended, the faculty member has ten (10)

business days from the date the semester ended to submit the Academic Integrity Report Form. Work submitted prior to the alleged case should not be reviewed for a violation because the student has not been given the opportunity to change their behavior .

The Incident Report will provide:

1. the name of the student;
 2. the course in which the academic misconduct is alleged to have occurred;
 3. a description of the academic misconduct; and,
 4. supporting documentary evidence (if available).
- B. A referred student is prohibited from dropping a course in which misconduct is alleged, pending final resolution of the case. Students should continue attending class, absent a disciplinary sanction to the contrary, while this procedure is ongoing. If found responsible for committing academic misconduct, a student will not be allowed to drop the course, though continued class attendance is neither prohibited nor required. (Students receiving federal financial aid who stop attending a course may incur significant financial penalties. Students are encouraged to consult the MT One Stop.) Failure to comply with this directive will result in referral to the Office of Student Conduct for violation of general rules and regulations and violation of imposed disciplinary sanctions under [Policy 540 Student Conduct](#).
- C. The Director will review the case within five (5) business days of receipt of the Incident Report. If, in the Director's opinion, the Incident Report lacks substance or is otherwise deficient, the Director may consult with the referring faculty member and indicate either that additional information is needed or encourage that the Incident Report be withdrawn. Such a consultation may take place before and/or after the Director has met with the student.
- D. For any Incident Report not withdrawn by mutual consent between the Director and the referring faculty member, the Director will send notice to the student and schedule an in-person or virtual meeting to discuss the alleged academic misconduct violation. During this meeting the student can accept responsibility or not accept responsibility for the alleged academic misconduct. If the student accepts responsibility, the Director will decide on University sanctions (see Section V.) appropriate to the case, and the matter will be resolved at that point. The Director will note the resolution on the Incident Report and provide copies to the student, the faculty member, and the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives. This notice will be sent to the student's official MTSU email account and/or a hard copy letter will be sent via first class United States Postal Service (USPS) mail to the student's local address as indicated in the student

information system. For graduate students found responsible of academic misconduct, the decision will also be provided to the student's graduate program director.

- E. If a referred student fails to attend a scheduled meeting with the Director without a reasonable excuse, the Director may find the student responsible in absentia and determine appropriate sanctions. Cases heard in absentia may not be appealed.
- F. If the student does not accept responsibility, the case will be heard by the Committee. The Director will:
 - 1. Determine whether the matter warrants consideration of suspension or expulsion of the student should the Committee find academic misconduct. If so, the student must be given the option of a hearing held pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (UAPA) as set forth in Section VII, below. A waiver of this option must also be in writing.
 - 2. As the designee of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives, form the Committee from the pool of members for the purpose of the hearing according to [Policy 32 University Committees](#).
- G. Institutional Hearing
 - 1. If the sanction of suspension or expulsion will not be considered or if the student has waived a hearing under the UAPA, the Committee will set an institutional hearing for the matter in a manner that allows reasonable time for faculty and student preparation, ideally no fewer than three (3) and no more than fifteen (15) business days from the student's request for a committee hearing. Both the faculty member and the student will be notified of the hearing.
 - 2. Outside of regular Fall and Spring semesters, hearings will be scheduled under only two (2) circumstances:
 - a. If lack of resolution affects the student's ability to graduate in the Spring or Summer; or
 - b. If the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives determines that there are extenuating circumstances to warrant a special hearing.
 - 3. The Director will advise the student, in writing, of the following:
 - a. The type of alleged academic misconduct and the circumstances alleged by the faculty member to constitute academic misconduct;

- b. The date, time, and place of the hearing;
 - c. That the student may appeal a grade given by the faculty member in response to academic misconduct;
 - d. The right to receive a list of the witnesses the University expects to present at the proceeding and those the University may present if the need arises;
 - e. The right to request a copy of the University's investigative file, redacted in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (20 U.S.C. § 1232(g), and the federal regulations implementing that statute, as amended; and, the portion of the state Public Records Act making certain student information confidential (T.C.A. § 10-7-504(a)(4)).
 - f. The right to request copies of all documents, copies of all electronically stored information, and access to tangible evidence the University has in its possession, custody, or control and may use to support claims or defenses, unless the use would be solely for impeachment; and
 - g. The rights the student will be afforded at the hearing as specified in Section IV.G.5.
4. The hearing will take place at the scheduled time, regardless of whether the student and/or the referring faculty member choose to attend. Failure to appear at a scheduled hearing abrogates the rights listed under Section IV.G.5. or 6., as applicable. A hearing may be rescheduled, under extraordinary circumstances, at the discretion of the Director.
5. The rights applicable to the referred student at the hearing include:
- a. The right to present evidence pertinent to the case and to hear and respond to all testimony;
 - b. The right to be accompanied by an advisor. An advisor may not actively or directly participate in the hearing, but may only consult with the student;
 - c. The right to call witnesses; and
 - d. The right to confront witnesses in support of the academic misconduct allegation.
6. The rights applicable to the referring faculty member at the hearing include:
- a. The right to present evidence pertinent to the case and to hear and respond to all testimony;

- b. The right to be accompanied by an advisor. An advisor may not actively or directly participate in the hearing, but may only consult with the faculty member;
 - c. The right to call witnesses; and
 - d. The right to confront witnesses against the misconduct allegation.
7. The hearing will not be open to the public.
8. The Committee may exclude evidence it deems immaterial, irrelevant, or unduly repetitious.
9. Decisions shall be by majority vote of the Committee members present and voting. The Director is a non-voting ex-officio member of the Committee. The Committee may ask the referred student, referring faculty member, and any advisors present to leave the hearing while they deliberate and vote. Votes of individual Committee members will not be reported. In the event of a tie vote, the charge of misconduct is dismissed.
10. The standard of proof required for a finding of academic misconduct shall be by a preponderance of the evidence.
11. The Director will, on behalf of the Committee, issue a written decision indicating its finding concerning the charge of academic misconduct. The decision must specify the factual basis for the determination, and, if academic misconduct is found, state whether disciplinary sanctions will be imposed. The decision will be provided to the student, the faculty member, and the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives. For graduate students found responsible of academic misconduct, the decision will also be provided to the student's graduate program director.
12. The student and the faculty member must be notified of the right to appeal the Committee's decision to the Provost.
13. Once it has been determined whether academic misconduct has occurred or not, the faculty member shall determine a grade for the exercise or examination and/or course.

V. University Sanctions for Academic Misconduct

- A. Appropriate sanctions will be determined by majority vote of the Committee and reported to the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives for recording in the academic integrity software of record. Students will be provided notice of all sanctions.

Graduate programs may impose separate, additional sanctions (up to and including removal from the program) for graduate student academic misconduct. This requires a majority vote of the student's faculty advisor, program director, and department chair (or academic dean, for interdisciplinary programs). In these instances, program directors are responsible for calling this vote within seven (7) business days of the final disposition of the student's academic integrity case, promptly notifying the student of additional sanctions, and reporting sanctions to the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives.

- B. Any finding against the student or admission of responsibility by the student will result in a record that will be maintained and referred to by the Director in the event that a subsequent misconduct case arises against the student, regardless of the severity of sanctions imposed in those instances.
- C. Subsequent determinations of academic misconduct may result in more severe University sanctions. If a student has been found responsible for academic misconduct more than once, the Director will inform the sitting members of the Committee of the nature of prior offenses so that appropriate sanctions may be determined. These facts will not be revealed prior to the Committee's determination of responsibility in the present case in order to avoid prejudice.
- D. Sanctions may include suspension or expulsion from the University but only if the student was provided the option of a UAPA hearing. (See Section VII. for conducting the hearing required in such a case.)
- E. Sanctions include, but are not limited to:
 1. Reprimand. A written reprimand will be given to a student whose conduct violates any part of these policies, and warns a student that any further violation(s) may result in more serious consequences;
 2. Specified Educational Program. Requirement to participate in specified educational program(s) or project(s) relevant to the offense and overseen by the Director;
 3. Restriction. A restriction upon a student's privileges for a period of time may be imposed. This restriction may include, but not be limited to, for example, denial of the ability to represent MTSU at any event, ability to participate in University travel, or use of facilities (including, but not limited to, labs, etc.).
 4. Probation. Any student placed on probation will be notified of the terms and length of the probation. Any conduct in further violation of these policies while on probationary status or the failure to comply with the terms of the probationary period may result in the imposition of more severe disciplinary sanctions, up to and

- including suspension or expulsion following the hearing process described in this policy for any subsequent academic misconduct violation.
5. **Suspension.** Separation from the University for a specified period of time. This includes all instructional delivery methods (including, but not limited to, on ground, online, hybrid, etc.). Suspension may be accompanied by special conditions for readmission. Any student receiving a sanction of suspension shall be restricted from the campus of MTSU during the period of separation unless on official business with the University verified in writing by the Dean of Students or, if a graduate student, by the Dean of the College of Graduate studies. A suspended student must submit a written request to be on campus to the Dean of Students or, if a graduate student, to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the scheduled time of his/her business on campus. The request must specify the specific reason to be on campus and the location that the student wishes to visit. The Dean of Students or the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies will issue a written decision regarding the request to be on campus, and the student must carry that written decision with him/her during the time of the visit.
 6. **Expulsion.** Permanent separation from the University. The imposition of this sanction is a permanent bar to the student's admission to MTSU. Any student receiving a sanction of expulsion shall be restricted from the campus of MTSU unless on official business with the University verified in writing by the Dean of Students or, if a graduate student, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. An expelled student must submit a written request to be on campus to the Dean of Students or, if a graduate student, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the scheduled time of his/her business on campus. The request must specify the specific reason to be on campus and the location that the student wishes to visit. The Dean of Students or the Dean of College of Graduate Studies will issue a written decision regarding the request to be on campus, and the student must carry that written decision with him/her during the time of their visit.
 7. **Revocation of Admission, Degree, or Credential.** Under circumstances deemed appropriate, an offer of admission, a degree, or a credential awarded may be revoked or rescinded upon the recommendation of the Committee and with approval from the relevant department chair/school director and dean, the College of Graduate Studies dean (for graduate cases), the University Provost, and the President. Any final revocation of admission, degree, or credential shall be reported to the University Registrar by the Director.
 8. **Other Sanctions.** Additional or alternate sanctions may be created and designed as deemed appropriate to the offense and the student's individual need for education, growth, and reform.

VI. Appeal of Decision

- A. The student or faculty member may appeal the Committee's decision to the Provost within five (5) business days of receipt of the decision.
- B. An appeal must be submitted in writing and may only be filed based on one (1) or both of the following conditions:
 - 1. An error in procedural due process that prejudiced the Committee to the extent that the student was denied a fundamentally fair hearing as a result of the error; and/or
 - 2. The emergence of new evidence that could not have been previously discovered by the exercise of due diligence and which, had it been presented at the initial hearing, would have substantially affected the decision of the Committee.
- C. The Provost may:
 - 1. Affirm the decision;
 - 2. Reverse the decision in whole or in part; or
 - 3. Return the matter to the Director or Committee for reconsideration of the sanction.
- D. The decision of the Provost is final.

VII. UAPA Hearing

Any matter that may result in suspension or expulsion of a student from the University is subject to be heard pursuant to the contested case provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, T.C.A. § 4-5-301, et. seq., and shall be processed in accordance with [Policy 110 Cases Heard Pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act](#), unless the student waives the right to such a hearing in writing.

VIII. Records Maintenance

Whenever there is a finding or admission of responsibility under this policy, these records will be maintained by the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives permanently.

Forms:

[Student Academic Integrity Incident Report](#)

Revisions: June 5, 2017 (original); August 15, 2019; December 6, 2023.

Last Reviewed: December 6, 2023.

References: T.C.A. § 4-5-301, et. seq., Policies 32 University Committees; 110 Cases Heard Pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act; 211 Misconduct in Scholarly Activities and Research; 313 Student Grade Appeals; 540 Student Conduct.

**Department of State
Division of Publications**

312 Rosa L. Parks Ave., 8th Floor, Snodgrass/TN Tower
Nashville, TN 37243
Phone: 615-741-2650
Email: publications.information@tn.gov

For Department of State Use Only

Sequence Number: 12-14-23
Notice ID(s): 3772
File Date: 12/15/2023

Notice of Rulemaking Hearing

Hearings will be conducted in the manner prescribed by the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, T.C.A. § 4-5-204. For questions and copies of the notice, contact the person listed below.

Agency/Board/Commission:	Middle Tennessee State University
Division:	
Contact Person:	James Floyd, University Counsel
Address:	1301E. Main Street, CAB 209, Murfreesboro, TN 37132
Phone:	615-898-2025
Email:	James.floyd@mtsu.edu

Any Individuals with disabilities who wish to participate in these proceedings (to review these filings) and may require aid to facilitate such participation should contact the following at least 10 days prior to the hearing:

ADA Contact:	Lance Alexis, Director of ADA Compliance
Address:	1301 E. Main Street, CAB 116, Murfreesboro, TN 37132
Phone:	615-898-2185
Email:	Lance.alexis@mtsu.edu

Hearing Location(s) (for additional locations, copy and paste table)

Address 1:	Miller Education Center, MEC Meeting Room	
Address 2:	503 E. Bell Street	
City:	Murfreesboro	
Zip:	37130	
Hearing Date:	03/19/2024	
Hearing Time:	1:00 p.m. Central	

Additional Hearing Information:

--

Revision Type (check all that apply):

- Amendment
 New
 Repeal

Rule(s) (ALL chapters and rules contained in filing must be listed. If needed, copy and paste additional tables to accommodate more than one chapter. Please enter only **ONE** Rule Number/Rule Title per row.)

Chapter Number	Chapter Title
0240-07-04	Academic Misconduct
Rule Number	Rule Title
0240-07-04-.03	Definitions
0240-07-04-.04	Process
0240-07-04-.05	University Sanctions for Academic Misconduct
0240-07-04-.07	UAPA Hearing

Rules of
Middle Tennessee State University

Chapter 0240-07-04
Academic Misconduct

Amendment

0240-07-04-.03 Definitions is amended by revising Paragraphs (2)(a)&(b) and (4) and adding Paragraph (6) so that, as amended, the amended rule in its entirety shall read:

0240-07-04-.03 Definitions

- (1) Academic Exercise. Academic Exercise may consist of all forms of work submitted by a student for academic credit or hours.
- (2) Academic Misconduct. Academic Misconduct may consist of acts of plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication.
 - (a) Plagiarism. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, statements, images, or works from another source as one's own without proper attribution. This includes self-plagiarism, which occurs when an author submits material or research from a previous academic exercise to satisfy the requirements of another academic exercise and uses it without proper citation of its reuse. Plagiarism also includes the unauthorized use of paraphrasing tools or "text spinners" and artificial intelligence software.
 - (b) Cheating. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or aids in any academic exercise or test/examination. Cheating also includes unapproved collaboration, which occurs when a student works with others on an individual academic exercise without the express permission of the faculty member. Unapproved collaboration can also include, but is not limited to, sharing of any physical or electronic papers, exams/quizzes, assignments, and/or posting of same to unauthorized websites.
 - (c) Fabrication. Fabrication includes, but is not limited to, unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- (3) Academic Misconduct Committee (Committee) refers to the Committee established under University policy.
- (4) Faculty Member. For the purposes of this rule, a faculty member is the University employee teaching a course or serving in a supervisory, advisory, or evaluative capacity in relation to the student(s) accused of academic misconduct, including graduate teaching assistants who are instructors of record. Graduate teaching assistants or others who are not instructors of record should present documentation of suspected misconduct to the supervising faculty member.
- (5) Director of Academic Integrity (Director). A designee of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs whose responsibilities are to manage and ensure fairness in the investigation and timely resolution of alleged academic misconduct. The Director does not vote in academic misconduct hearings.
- (6) Student. Any person who is admitted and/or registered for study at MTSU for any academic period, either full-time or part-time, undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies.
- (7) Notice. For the purposes of this rule, a notice is a written communication sent to the student's official MTSU email account, or to the student's local address as indicated in the student information system, or both as specified in this rule. Students have the responsibility to check their University-issued email accounts regularly and to ensure that the local mailing address on file with MTSU is current. The requirement to provide notice will be satisfied and any period for response will begin on the date the notice is sent.

Authority: T.C.A. § 49-8-203(a)(1)(D).

0240-07-04-.04 Process is amended by revising current Paragraphs (1), (2), (5) (amended Paragraph (4)), (7) (amended Paragraph (6)) and (8) (amended Paragraph (7)) and deleting Paragraph (3) so that, as amended, the amended rule in its entirety shall read:

0240-07-04-.04 Process

- (1) Academic misconduct is prohibited. Whenever a faculty member believes that academic misconduct has occurred, he/she must provide notice to the student and submit an Academic Integrity Incident Report Form (Incident Report) to the Director within seven (7) business days from the time the faculty member suspects that the alleged academic misconduct occurred. If the semester has ended, the faculty member has ten (10) business days from the date the semester ended to submit the Academic Integrity Incident Report Form.

The Incident Report will provide:

- (a) the name of the student;
 - (b) the course in which the academic misconduct is alleged to have occurred;
 - (c) a description of the academic misconduct; and,
 - (d) supporting documentary evidence (if available).
- (2) A student who has been referred by a faculty member pursuant to this rule is prohibited from dropping a course in which academic misconduct is alleged, pending final resolution of the case. Students should continue attending class, absent a disciplinary sanction to the contrary, while this procedure is ongoing. If found responsible for committing academic misconduct, a student will not be allowed to drop the course, though continued class attendance is neither prohibited nor required. (Students receiving federal financial aid who stop attending a course may incur significant financial penalties. Students are encouraged to consult the MT One Stop.) Failure to comply with this directive will result in referral to the Office of Student Conduct for violation of general rules and regulations and violation of imposed disciplinary sanctions under University policy and rule.
 - (3) The Director will review the case within five (5) business days of receipt of the Incident Report. If, in the Director's opinion, the Incident Report lacks substance or is otherwise deficient, the Director may consult with the referring faculty member and indicate either that additional information is needed or encourage that the Incident Report be withdrawn. Such a consultation may take place before and/or after the Director has met with the student.
 - (4) For any Incident Report not withdrawn by mutual consent between the Director and the referring faculty member, the Director will send notice to the student and schedule an in-person or virtual meeting to discuss the alleged academic misconduct violation. During this meeting the student can accept responsibility or not accept responsibility for the alleged academic misconduct. If the student accepts responsibility, the Director will decide on University sanctions (see Rule 0240-07-04-.05) appropriate to the case, and the matter will be resolved at that point. The Director will note the resolution on the Incident Report and provide copies to the student, the faculty member, and the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives. This notice will be sent to the student's official MTSU email account and/or a hard copy letter will be sent via first class United States Postal Service (USPS) mail to the student's local address as indicated in the student information system. For graduate students found responsible of academic misconduct, the decision will also be provided to the student's graduate program director.
 - (5) If a referred student fails to attend a scheduled meeting with the Director without a reasonable excuse, the Director may find the student responsible in absentia and determine appropriate sanctions. Cases heard in absentia may not be appealed.
 - (6) If the student does not accept responsibility, the case will be heard by the Committee. The Director will:
 - (a) Determine whether the matter warrants consideration of suspension or expulsion of the student should the Committee find academic misconduct. If so, the student must be given the option of a

hearing held pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act (UAPA) as set forth in Rule 0240-07-04-.07, below. A waiver of this option must also be in writing.

- (b) As the designee of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, form the Committee from the pool of members for the purpose of the hearing.

(7) Institutional Hearing

- (a) If the sanction of suspension or expulsion will not be considered or if the student has waived a hearing under the UAPA, the Committee will set an institutional hearing for the matter in a manner that allows reasonable time for faculty and student preparation, ideally no fewer than three (3) and no more than fifteen (15) business days from the student's request for a committee hearing. Both the faculty member and the student will be notified of the hearing.
- (b) Outside of regular Fall and Spring semesters, hearings will be scheduled under only two (2) circumstances:
 - 1. If lack of resolution affects the student's ability to graduate in the Spring or Summer; or
 - 2. If the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs determines that there are extenuating circumstances to warrant a special hearing.
- (c) The Director will advise the student, in writing, of the following:
 - 1. The type of alleged academic misconduct and the circumstances alleged by the faculty member to constitute academic misconduct;
 - 2. The date, time, and place of the hearing;
 - 3. That the student may appeal a grade given by the faculty member in response to academic misconduct;
 - 4. The right to receive a list of the witnesses the University expects to present at the proceeding and those the University may present if the need arises;
 - 5. The right to request a copy of the University's investigative file, redacted in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, (20 U.S.C. § 1232g), and the federal regulations implementing that statute, as amended; and, the portion of the state Public Records Act making certain student information confidential (T.C.A. § 10-7-504(a)(4)).
 - 6. The right to request copies of all documents, copies of all electronically stored information, and access to tangible evidence the University has in its possession, custody, or control and may use to support claims or defenses, unless the use would be solely for impeachment; and
 - 7. The rights the student will be afforded at the hearing as specified in Rule 0240-07-04-.04(7)(e).
- (d) The hearing will take place at the scheduled time, regardless of whether the student and/or the referring faculty member choose to attend. Failure to appear at a scheduled hearing abrogates the rights listed under Rule 0240-07-04-.04(7)(e) or (f), as applicable. A hearing may be rescheduled, under extraordinary circumstances, at the discretion of the Director.
- (e) The rights applicable to the referred student at the hearing include:
 - 1. The right to present evidence pertinent to the case and to hear and respond to all testimony;
 - 2. The right to be accompanied by an advisor. An advisor may not actively or directly participate in the hearing, but may only consult with the student;
 - 3. The right to call witnesses; and
 - 4. The right to confront witnesses in support of the academic misconduct allegation.

- (f) The rights applicable to the referring faculty member at the hearing include:
 - 1. The right to present evidence pertinent to the case and to hear and respond to all testimony;
 - 2. The right to be accompanied by an advisor. An advisor may not actively or directly participate in the hearing, but may only consult with the faculty member;
 - 3. The right to call witnesses; and
 - 4. The right to confront witnesses against the academic misconduct allegation.
- (g) The hearing will not be open to the public.
- (h) The Committee may exclude evidence it deems immaterial, irrelevant, or unduly repetitious.
- (i) Decisions shall be by majority vote of the Committee members present and voting. The Director is a non-voting ex-officio member of the Committee. The Committee may ask the referred student, referring faculty member, and any advisors present to leave the hearing while they deliberate and vote. Votes of individual Committee members will not be reported. In the event of a tie vote, the charge of misconduct is dismissed.
- (j) The standard of proof required for a finding of academic misconduct shall be by a preponderance of the evidence.
- (k) The Director will, on behalf of the Committee, issue a written decision indicating its finding concerning the charge of academic misconduct. The decision must specify the factual basis for the determination, and, if academic misconduct is found, state whether disciplinary sanctions will be imposed. The decision will be provided to the student, the faculty member, and the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs. For graduate students found responsible of academic misconduct, the decision will also be provided to the student's graduate program director.
- (l) The student and the faculty member must be notified of the right to appeal the Committee's decision to the Provost.
- (m) Once it has been determined whether academic misconduct has occurred or not, the faculty member shall determine a grade for the academic exercise or examination and/or course.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-8-203(a)(1)(D) and 10-7-504(a)(4).

0240-07-04-.05 University Sanctions for Academic Misconduct is amended by revising Paragraphs (1), (2), and (5)(e)-(g) so that, as amended, the amended rule in its entirety shall read:

0240-07-04-.05 University Sanctions for Academic Misconduct

- (1) Appropriate sanctions will be determined by majority vote of the Committee and reported to the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs for recording in the academic integrity software of record. Students will be provided notice of all sanctions. Graduate programs may impose separate, additional sanctions (up to and including removal from the program) for graduate student academic misconduct. This requires a majority vote of the student's faculty advisor, program director, and department chair (or academic dean, for interdisciplinary programs). In these instances, program directors are responsible for calling this vote within seven (7) business days of the final disposition of the student's academic integrity case, promptly notifying the student of additional sanctions, and reporting sanctions to the Vice Provost for Faculty and Strategic Initiatives.
- (2) Any finding against the student or admission of responsibility by the student will result in a record that will be maintained and referred to by the Director in the event that a subsequent misconduct case arises against the student, regardless of the severity of sanctions imposed in those instances.
- (3) Subsequent determinations of academic misconduct may result in more severe University sanctions. If a student has been found responsible for academic misconduct more than once, the Director will inform the

sitting members of the Committee of the nature of prior offenses so that appropriate sanctions may be determined. These facts will not be revealed prior to the Committee's determination of responsibility in the present case in order to avoid prejudice.

- (4) Sanctions may include suspension or expulsion from the University but only if the student was provided the option of a UAPA hearing. (See Rule 0240-07-04-.07 for conducting the hearing required in such a case.)
- (5) Sanctions include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Reprimand. A written reprimand will be given to a student whose conduct violates any part of these rules, and warns a student that any further violation(s) may result in more serious consequences;
 - (b) Specified Educational Program. Requirement to participate in specified educational program(s) or project(s) relevant to the offense and overseen by the Director;
 - (c) Restriction. A restriction upon a student's privileges for a period of time may be imposed. This restriction may include, but not be limited to denial of the ability to represent MTSU at any event, ability to participate in University travel, or use of facilities (including, but not limited to, labs, etc.).
 - (d) Probation. Any student placed on probation will be notified of the terms and length of the probation. Any conduct in further violation of this rule while on probationary status or the failure to comply with the terms of the probationary period may result in the imposition of more severe disciplinary sanctions, up to and including suspension or expulsion following the hearing process described in these rules for any subsequent academic misconduct violation.
 - (e) Suspension. Separation from the University for a specified period of time. This includes all instructional delivery methods (including, but not limited to, on ground, online, hybrid, etc.). Suspension may be accompanied by special conditions for readmission. Any student receiving a sanction of suspension shall be restricted from the campus of MTSU during the period of separation unless on official business with the University verified in writing by the Dean of Students or, if a graduate student, by the Dean of the College of Graduate studies. A suspended student must submit a written request to be on campus to the Dean of Students or, if a graduate student, to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the scheduled time of his/her business on campus. The request must specify the specific reason to be on campus and the location that the student wishes to visit. The Dean of Students or the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies will issue a written decision regarding the request to be on campus, and the student must carry that written decision with him/her during the time of the visit.
 - (f) Expulsion. Permanent separation from the University. The imposition of this sanction is a permanent bar to the student's admission to MTSU. Any student receiving a sanction of expulsion shall be restricted from the campus of MTSU unless on official business with the University verified in writing by the Dean of Students or, if a graduate student, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. An expelled student must submit a written request to be on campus to the Dean of Students or, if a graduate student, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the scheduled time of his/her business on campus. The request must specify the specific reason to be on campus and the location that the student wishes to visit. The Dean of Students or the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies will issue a written decision regarding the request to be on campus, and the student must carry that written decision with him/her during the time of their visit.
 - (g) Revocation of Admission, Degree, or Credential. Under circumstances deemed appropriate, an offer of admission, a degree, or a credential awarded may be revoked or rescinded upon the recommendation of the Committee and with approval from the relevant department chair/school director and dean, the College of Graduate Studies dean (for graduate cases), the University Provost, and the President. Any final revocation of admission, degree, or credential shall be reported to the University Registrar by the Director.
 - (h) Other Sanctions. Additional or alternate sanctions may be created and designed as deemed appropriate to the offense and the student's individual need for education, growth, and reform.

Authority: T.C.A. § 49-8-203(a)(1)(D).

0240-07-04-.07 UAPA Hearing is amended so that, as amended, the amended rule in its entirety shall read:


0240-07-04-.07 UAPA Hearing

Any matter that may result in suspension or expulsion of a student from the University is subject to be heard pursuant to the contested case provisions of the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, T.C.A. § 4-5-301, et. seq., and shall be processed in accordance with Chapter 0240-07-08, unless the student waives the right to such a hearing in writing.

Authority: T.C.A. §§ 49-8-203(a)(1)(D) and 4-5-301, et. seq.

I certify that the information included in this filing is an accurate and complete representation of the intent and scope of rulemaking proposed by the agency.

Date: December 15, 2023

Signature: 

Name of Officer: James Floyd

Title of Officer: University Counsel

Department of State Use Only

Filed with the Department of State on: 12/15/2023



Tre Hargett
Secretary of State

RECEIVED

Dec 15 2023, 3:04 pm

Secretary of State
Division of Publications



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Information Item

DATE: February 27, 2024

SUBJECT: **Post-Approval Monitoring Report**

PRESENTER: Mark Byrnes
Provost

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As part of a reconceptualization of THEC’s Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM), and in consultation with a THEC taskforce comprised of institutional stakeholders, the 2022-23 PAM reporting cycle required submissions from academic programs in the final year of monitoring and those in productivity monitoring. Institutions were given the option to submit a traditional report or to pilot new metrics proposed by the task force. For the 2022-23 reporting cycle, MTSU submitted *traditional* reports for the following three majors: B.A./B.S. Africana Studies, B.A./B.S. Religious Studies, and B.S. Dance. A fourth program, B.S. Fermentation Studies, participated in *pilot* reporting. All of MTSU’s programs are in productivity monitoring.

With traditional reporting, THEC measures satisfactory progress as 80% attainment of the University’s annual projected enrollment and graduation goals. Two MTSU programs – Religious Studies and Dance – are near or exceeding those goals and are trending upward. The third program – Africana Studies – is falling dramatically short of the goals and trending downward. As a result, MTSU is in the process of phasing out the B.A. and B.S. degrees in Africana Studies. Unlike traditional reporting, *pilot* reporting allows for both

quantitative and qualitative measures. THEC staff, who are still meeting with the taskforce, have not provided measures of satisfactory progress for pilot reporting. Fermentation Science aligns well with the state and institutional missions, provides support to other campus degree programs, produces millions of dollars in external funding, and has a 100% job placement rate.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Africana Studies, Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS)

Enrollment				Graduation			
Year	Projected	Actual	% Attainment	Year	Projected	Actual	% Attainment
Fall 2017	9	9	100%	2017-18	0	0	--
Fall 2018	17	11	65%	2018-19	0	6	--
Fall 2019	28	8	29%	2019-20	4	3	75%
Fall 2020	38	16	42%	2020-21	7	6	86%
Fall 2021	46	9	20%	2021-22	10	4	40%
Fall 2022	46	3	7%	2022-23	10	1	10%
Fall 2023	46			2023-24	10		
Fall 2024	46			2024-25	10		

2023 Program Productivity Report

It is understood that the total number of majors and graduates is an indicator of a program's viability; however, looking at the number of majors/graduates does not tell the full story of how the Africana Studies program is doing. While the number of majors and graduates are below projected expectations, class enrollment is healthy and increasing.

In the fall of 2022, eighteen sections of our most popular classes were taught with a total enrollment of 461 students. In the current fall of 2023 semester, twenty-one sections of our most popular classes are being taught and our enrollment has grown by 102 students, or 22%. Enrollment numbers are an important factor for several reasons. First, they highlight that students are interested in AST course offerings. Second, most students enrolled in AST lower division courses (AST 2100, AST 2020, AST 2040/50) are first- and second-year students, some of whom have not declared a major/minor. Thus, they are potential AST majors. Over the past year, we have increased recruitment efforts targeting these students.

Recruitment efforts have also been aimed at local high schools that have African-American history classes and clubs. As an example, fifty students from Warren County High School are visiting campus next month to attend an AST class and meet AST students and faculty. We believe these and similar recruitment efforts will bear fruit in another year.

One of the recommendations made by the AST external program reviewer (which took place in spring of 2023) was to increase our visibility on campus. We are doing this by displaying yard signs and setting up tables around campus staffed by majors and minors to publicize the program and we have developed a lecture series, which will discuss critical topics within the field of African American life and history.

Dance, Bachelor of Science (BS)

Enrollment				Graduation			
Year	Projected	Actual	% Attainment	Year	Projected	Actual	% Attainment
Fall 2017	13	21	162%	2017-18	0	4	--
Fall 2018	27	33	122%	2018-19	0	5	--
Fall 2019	43	40	93%	2019-20	5	10	200%
Fall 2020	52	39*	75%	2020-21	9	9	100%
Fall 2021	59	42*	71%	2021-22	11	6	55%
Fall 2022	59	46*	78%	2022-23	11	9	82%
Fall 2023	59			2023-24	11		
Fall 2024	59			2024-25	11		

*Note: This number includes students that have declared Dance as a second major.

2023 Program Productivity Report

For Fall 2022, we welcomed 9 new students to the major. We had 46 dance majors enrolled, including 10 double majors. Our program also engaged 32 dance minors through technique and theoretical dance course content as well as 34% (11/32) who have engaged in our Dance Theatre performance series showcasing faculty and guest artist choreographic developments.

The Dance Major program exceeded graduation benchmarks in the first four years of program implementation. The pandemic prompted (a) early graduations, and (b) delayed entry to college for prospective students for the 2021-2022 AY. We observed a restoration in post-COVID graduation attainment at 82% for 2022-2023 academic year. With 13 seniors preparing to graduate in 2023-2024, we expect to exceed graduation goals for the dance major.

To address the shortfall in enrollment, the dance program faculty and leadership have developed a strategic recruitment plan with the following outlined events:

- Governor's School for the Arts: our dance program faculty regularly instructs for the school. Our administration is actively extending program acceptance to the 23 prospective students from the summer 2023 intensive.
- Ignite! Tennessee Youth Dance Festival – College Panel Discussion, College Dance Audition
- Alabama Dance Festival – Recruitment Audition for Dance Program Acceptance, Summer Intensives, and Scholarships
- Dance Major Program Auditions: Fall, Spring, and Video Auditions accepted year round
- Open House: Sample Technique Classes, Major Q & A
- Greenway Arts Festival: Program Brochure Distribution & Performance
- Franklin HS Dance Dept. Campus Dance Day: this involved a visit of 14 prospective students from the Dance Department to experience technique classes with our dance faculty and students. A spring campus visit is being planned for MTSU dance students and faculty to engage on-site at Franklin HS.
- MTSU True Blue Preview Days (Fall & Spring dates)
- Rutherford County School Dance Educator Classroom Connections: Through a professional development workshop with dance educators in Rutherford County Schools, the Dance Program Director established opportunities to visit as a guest for prospective students on-site at their schools as well as extend the opportunity

for them to attend dance program productions, auditions, and student choreographic showcases.

Our strategic recruiting plan includes engaging in university-wide initiatives for connecting with prospective students. We have continued to foster connections with local dance studios and schools for invitations to our program productions, auditions, and Open House annual event in which we open the doors of our program classes for prospective students to experience the opportunity to major in dance at MTSU. We have continued to be dynamically engaged in the dance community of our region through attending dance festivals and conferences for enhanced visibility as a program. These dance specific recruiting engagements serve as the most enriching opportunities where we source interested prospective students with a desire to pursue an education, specialized training, and a career in dance and dance related professions.

It is important to note that the Dance program has seen a significant turnover in full-time faculty as well as program and departmental leadership. In fact, no full-time faculty or leadership remains from the period in which the program was proposed or initially implemented. This has impacted the effective implementation of the recruiting plan for the program, and undoubtedly explains some challenges with meeting enrollment and graduation projections. It is also important to consider that current dance leadership and faculty believe it will be challenging to attain the proposed goal of 59 enrolled students because of limitations compared to regional competitors; these other programs often include summer intensive programs (which are ideal for recruiting new students) and dance student scholarships at a more robust level than we are currently able to offer. Additionally, facilities and studio space in comparison to other schools within our region has continued to be a point of concern for prospective students and their families that have visited our campus.

Religious Studies, Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS)

Enrollment				Graduation			
Year	Projected	Actual	% Attainment	Year	Projected	Actual	% Attainment
Fall 2017	9	11	122%	2017-18	0	4	--
Fall 2018	17	24	141%	2018-19	0	4	--
Fall 2019	28	32	114%	2019-20	4	7	175%
Fall 2020	38	33*	87%	2020-21	7	10	143%
Fall 2021	46	28*	61%	2021-22	10	8	80%
Fall 2022	46	32*	70%	2022-23	10	10	100%
Fall 2023	46			2023-24	10		
Fall 2024	46			2024-25	10		

2023 Program Productivity Report

As indicated in enrollment data above, Religious Studies exceeded enrollment projections in its first three years of implementation. After a downturn in fall 2021, the major saw an increase in enrollment during fall 2022 (and enrollment appears stable for fall 2023). Likewise, MTSU’s B.A. and B.S. program in Religious Studies has routinely met or exceeded its graduation benchmarks. Indeed, MTSU’s Religious Studies program’s graduation rate outstrips the University of Tennessee’s flagship campus. UTK, with fourteen faculty, has graduated 6-8 students per year over the past ten years; MTSU, with three faculty, has graduated 8-10 per year over the past three years.

We anticipate increasing the size of our major cohort to pre-pandemic levels by implementing the plan described below.

Curricular Changes

Commencing in 2024, TBR will offer a Tennessee Transfer Pathway in Religious Studies. This will allow students in the TBR system to have the opportunity to complete an AA or AS degree in Religious Studies, which will be easily transferrable to MTSU. This initiative was spearheaded by Dr. Jenna Gray-Hildenbrand, MTSU Professor of Religious Studies. We will recruit at community colleges following the launch of the TTP. In addition, since most Religious Studies majors are recruited from the ranks of general education students and Religious Studies minors, we have expanded our Religious Studies online course offerings. Beginning in Spring 2024, students will be able to complete the Religious Studies minor entirely online. This also means that Religious Studies majors can complete fifty percent of their degree online. Finally, the department has hired a third tenure-track faculty member who has developed new courses that are attracting a diverse cohort of students to the major.

Student Recruitment and Retention

Our Religious Studies program received a \$100,000 gift to award scholarships to Religious Studies majors over the past three years. The donors have agreed to continue supporting the Religious Studies program, and we will continue to promote the scholarship on our website and other recruiting materials. Our recruiting activities include personalized letters, phone calls, emails, and faculty attendance at CUSTOMS new student orientation and MTSU

recruiting events such as Preview Days. With the resumption of on-campus events, the Religious Studies program at MTSU has been able to reestablish in-person faculty mentorship both in and outside the classroom, which students routinely identify in their Senior Exit Survey as being instrumental in their choice to major in Religious Studies. In Fall 2023, we are relaunching our well-attended Religious Studies Colloquium series. We have also been able to return to our in-person visits to religious sites in Middle Tennessee, which are consistently praised as a high-impact learning experience.

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Fermentation Science, Bachelor of Science (BS)

Programmatic Alignment				
Metric	Possible Ways to Measure	Type of Measure	Parameters	Mark with an "x" the metrics you are reporting on.
Alignment with state master plan for higher education	Alignment Statement	qualitative	Campuses should provide information demonstrating how the program aligns with institutional mission and strategy, but also with state, national, and global priorities. At least two (2) metrics must be addressed and both metrics in bold must be addressed.	x
Alignment with institutional mission and strategic plan	Alignment Statement	qualitative		x
Program is central to the identity of the university	Alignment Statement	qualitative		
Program is needed to support another program	Alignment Statement	qualitative		x
Other				
Provide responses to selected metrics in the box below. Make sure to address every metric selected above and provide an explanation of any data referenced.				
<p>Alignment with the State master plan: The Tennessee Higher Education Commission’s (THEC) 2020 master plan “Enabling the Competitive Edge: Tennessee Higher Education in the New Economy, 2015-2025” includes in its beginning statement: “This document is about the role higher education will play in the future of Tennessee’s economy. As emerging technologies have created a pace of change faster than at any time in history, navigating this challenge requires the full commitment of our colleges and universities.” The B.S. in Fermentation Science is fully committed to helping new students and working adults increase their educational level and quality of life while simultaneously building the state’s economic prosperity by providing a better educated and trained work force. This plan was published at the same time that Tennessee was launching the Drive to 55 with a goal of 55% of Tennesseans would hold a postsecondary degree by 2025. The B.S. in Fermentation Science is contributing to all three areas of the THEC Master Plan that focus on critical constituencies served by public higher education in Tennessee: Student Success: All Fermentation Science majors are assigned an academic advisor as well as a faculty mentor and are encouraged to meet with their advisors and mentors regularly to help the students be successful academically and prepared for their career choiced. The Fermentation Science degree program includes several chemistry, biology, and applied science courses for completion of the degree program. The MTSU College of Basic & Applied Sciences offers free tutoring to students enrolled in most of the science courses that are completed by the Fermentation Science majors. Since the beginning of the program, MTSU has graduated a total of 27 students and retention rates are currently above 75%. Fermentation Science majors are required to complete an internship course and research course for credit as part of the program degree requirements. These requirements have helped students gain practical experience in the workforce and also have exposure to research in the discipline. Students have presented research posters on</p>				

campus during Scholar's Week and at the Tennessee Academy of Science. In addition, MTSU Fermentation Science graduates are successfully hired upon graduation into discipline specific jobs – often with multiple job offers.

Family Prosperity: The B.S. in Fermentation Science is fostering the growth of existing businesses and attracting new high paying industries to the state. Graduates of this program are being hired into companies such as Lallemand, Inc. that had previously not recruited from MTSU and faculty members are being consulted on a regular basis to advise new companies (example: House of Mustaine, LLC) moving into Tennessee. The B.S. in Fermentation Science addresses both the current, pressing needs of local industry and creates new opportunities for industry. Recently, the program director completed a 2-year research project funded by an international company with physical locations in Memphis and Clarksville. The project was directed to MTSU solely based on the existence of the Fermentation Science degree program. The Fermentation Science program requires extensive hands-on training as well as a significant internship with a commercial operation. This is accomplished by utilizing local, national, and international industrial facilities, at no cost to Tennessee.

The Future Workforce: MTSU's School of Agriculture has a long-standing relationship with Tennessee's Department of Agriculture as well as the state's food industry, particularly the food processing industry. Courses in Fermentation Science are taught in partnership with local industry, and hands-on training sessions at industry sites as well as internships with industry are scheduled to accommodate working professionals as well as traditional students. In addition, MTSU has established articulation agreements with Motlow State and Columbia State Community Colleges that allows students graduating from these community colleges with an Associate's of Applied Science degree to attend MTSU and pursue a B.S. in Fermentation Science degree without additional prerequisites for admission to junior and senior level courses. Finally, to date, two graduates have been hired by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to work at the state-level.

Alignment with the institutional mission and strategic plan:

The MTSU mission states, "...the university is committed to preparing students to thrive in their chosen professions and a changing global society." The B.S. in Fermentation Science is a direct reflection of that "changing global society," especially as exhibited in the United States and Tennessee, specifically. Fermented foods have been and continue to be staple commodities in almost every society, but understanding of the nutritional and long-term health value of fermented foods is now being translated into increasing demand for custom and specialized fermented foods. Fermentation is now understood to be an ideal vehicle for the production of highly nutritious and long-term stable foods with unique flavors, textures and aromas. Tennessee is home to a large and diverse community of food processors; the most significant growth over the last 10–15 years has been in the fermented foods segment of this vitally important industry. Fermented food manufacturers of every type need college graduates with specialized training who can enter the workforce ready to sustain and advance the industry.

Further, this proposed program achieves many of the purposes listed as part of the mission of the College of Basic and Applied Sciences (CBAS) and the School of Agriculture (AGRI):

CBAS Mission: Provide "hands-on" experience with state-of-the-art materials and equipment.

The School of Agriculture incorporates hands-on teaching and learning opportunities into almost every course offered. Industry advisors, in the form of an advisory board, have repeatedly reiterated the value of the hands-on education practices employed by the MTSU School of Agriculture. Students have enjoyed the opportunity to learn with, practice on and apply their skills with the latest technologies and perhaps most importantly, to participate in research being conducted by the faculty.

AGRI Mission:

The School of Agriculture mission statement: "Teaching, research, and public service are fundamental to the mission of the School of Agriculture (AGRI). We provide a student-centered, experiential education to all students in AGRI through integration of academic rigor, research, laboratory, and real-world experiences. We use our collective experience, knowledge, and resources to address challenges and serve agriculture industries locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally".

The Fermentation Science program includes all components listed in the AGRI mission statement. The undergraduate program is rigorous (8 biology and chemistry courses required; 7 fermentation science specialized courses required). Students complete a research project and an internship as part of their degree requirements. Students use the fermentation science teaching and research labs to gain real-world experience working with modern equipment. The fermentation science program has worked with local industries as well as industries in other states and countries for student internships, research projects, and full-time jobs.

Support needed by other programs:

The B.S. Fermentation Science program provides graduates who wish to pursue graduate education via the M.S. in Professional Science (MSPS) degree program at MTSU. Most graduates choose to pursue the Fermentation Science emphasis within the MSPS but some have chosen to pursue other emphases (e.g., Biotechnology). Students majoring in Nutrition and Food Science, Leisure and Sport Management, and Tourism and Hospitality Management also take selected courses offered through the School of Agriculture and Fermentation Science degree program as required elective courses in their selected majors. Specific examples include:

Tourism and Hospitality Management majors: FERM 2500 Wine Appreciation is an elective course.

Nutrition and Food Science, Food Industry Concentration majors: AGRI 3810 Milk Processing and Marketing, AGRI 4200 Fruit and Vegetable Marketing, AGRI 4810 The Food Industry, AGRI 4820 Principles of Food Processing, AGRI 4830 Food Quality Control, FERM 1000 Introduction to Fermentation Science, and FERM 3700 Consumer Motivation and Sensory Evaluation of Fermented Foods are elective courses for this major.

Student Success and Outcomes

Metric	Possible Ways to Measure	Type of Measure	Parameters	Mark with an "x" the metrics you are reporting on.
Job placement or enrollment in the next academic program	employment data	quantitative	Campuses must present quantitative and/or qualitative data from three (3) metrics, including at least two (2) from the metrics in bold .	x
Assessment and program evaluation measures	dependent on institutional assessment plan; likely major field test, CCTST, etc.	both		x
Student/graduate satisfaction	NSSE, surveying, etc.	both		x
Licensure/certification pass rate	passage rates: certifications, licensures, major field tests	quantitative		

Foundational skills	programmatic assessment of general education and/or major	both		
Transfer outcomes	Transfer rate; grad rate/time to completion after transfer	both		
Other				X

Provide responses to selected metrics in the box below. Make sure to address every metric selected above and provide an explanation of any data referenced.

Job placement/enrollment in the next academic program:

Since its founding, 100% of graduates of the BS Fermentation Science degree program have landed jobs upon graduation and to date, only 2 of 28 (7.1%) have taken positions outside Tennessee. One graduate elected to pursue watchmaking as a career after completing his degree, another entered active military service, and a third entered a PhD program at Clemson University. To date, 5 BS graduates (17.9%) have entered the MTSU MSPS Fermentation Science degree program upon graduation.

Assessment and program evaluation measures:

There is no standard field test for the Fermentation Science degree, as noted in the external evaluation of the program, which was conducted in the spring, 2023 term. However, program success can be measured by the ability of graduates to secure employment in the field upon graduation, comments received from companies who offer students internships, and reflections from companies which have employed MTSU graduates. During the external review, a reviewer interviewed several current students and reported, "It was clear during the site visit that students are engaging and excelling at fermentation research. This is a gem of the program." and "The student experience appears to be a positive aspect of the program." In addition, it was noted, "The program has enjoyed moderately strong enrolments from its inception and was not as negatively affected during the pandemic as might have been expected. It is not a large program and based on enrollments in other universities probably should not be expected to be a large program." Comments and feedback received from employers and internship sponsors have been consistently positive. The most commonly cited attribute mentioned by these employers is the level of preparation of the students and graduates when they arrive at their place of employment or internship site. Equally important, many of the students are offered positions upon graduation by the companies they intern with. Willingness to employ a student after successful completion of an internship is a highly valued measure of program success.

Student/graduate satisfaction:

All graduating students are interviewed by the program director prior to graduation to assess their satisfaction with the program. To date, no negative comments have been received. Most comments made reflect significant satisfaction with the program and recognition that the program taught them much more than they expected to learn. Many reflect on their disinterest in research upon arrival and their reversal of attitude after completion of the program. An additional indicator of student interest and satisfaction is the number of students who have chosen to pursue the degree who reside out of state. Thus far, students from Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Georgia and South Carolina have come to MTSU to enroll in the program. Six out of 8 graduating seniors completed the "Graduating Senior Survey" during the 2022-23 academic year (75% response rate) and data was reported on the Power BI dashboard. There were 2 questions asked:

If you could start college again would you enroll at MTSU? 83.3% of these students said YES.
 If you could change your major again, would ? 100% of the Fermentation Science graduates said "Yes".

Other - Study Abroad:

Study abroad courses have been offered for undergraduate students enrolled in the Fermentation Science program. To date, 3 courses have been offered and 18 students have completed study abroad Fermentation Science courses:
 AGRI 4190 International Agriculture: Argentina will be offered in the Summer 2024 FERM 4800 (EXL) International Fermented Foods: Italy, 7 students, Summer 2022 FERM 3200 (EXL) International Wine Industry: Argentina, 4 students, Spring 2019
 FERM 4800 International Fermented Foods: Germany, France, and Switzerland, 7 students, Summer 2018

Program Efficiency

Metric	Possible Ways to Measure	Type of Measure	Parameters	Mark with an "x" the metrics you are reporting on.
Cost per degree		quantitative	Campuses should present data sets representing at least four (4) areas, including at least two (2) of the metrics in bold .	x
Costs/revenue		quantitative		
Enrollment		quantitative		
Retention rates		quantitative		x
Graduates		quantitative		x
Student credit hour production		quantitative		
Student credits to faculty FTE ratio		quantitative		
Amount of external funding produced		both		x
Faculty productivity		both		x
Other				

Provide responses to selected metrics in the box below. Make sure to address every metric selected above and provide an explanation of any data referenced.

Cost per degree:

Cost of attendance at MTSU for an undergraduate degree program is comparable to other state funded universities in Tennessee and is often the most affordable. The average tuition cost for the 2022-23 academic year was \$9,592 (<https://www.mtsu.edu/tuition/>). The national average cost of in-state tuition is \$11,560, according to USNews.com. This rate is calculated based on a full-time schedule with 14 credit hours. Most students enrolling in the

undergraduate degree program are classified as “in-state” residents. A few out-of-state students have been attracted to MTSU due to the Academic Common Market program, which currently allows students from Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, and South Carolina to enroll in the Fermentation Science program at a reduced tuition rate that’s only slightly higher than in-state tuition rates. Previously, students have enrolled from Maryland, Georgia, and Ohio.

Retention Rates:

Retention rates for the Fermentation Science program compared to School of Agriculture data (5 undergraduate programs: animal science, agribusiness, plant & soil science, horse science, and fermentation science) are listed below. Fermentation Science retention rates were very good in 2018-19 and dropped during the COVID-19 pandemic; they are currently in the 70th percentile. Retention rates have improved during the past 2 years based on available data presented below. Data were obtained from MTSU Power BI Dashboard.

Fall-to-fall retention	AGRI	FERM
Fall 2021	82%	75.90%
Fall 2020	81.2	69.70%
fall 2019	86.3	88%
Fall 2018	80.7	85.20%
Fall 2017	69.2	69.20%

Graduates:

27 students have graduated from MTSU with a B.S. in Fermentation Science (7 graduates in 2018-19, 1 in 2019-2020, 8 in 2020-2021, 3 in 2021-22 and 8 in 2022-23).

External funding produced:

Since fall, 2017, MTSU Fermentation Science faculty have secured more than \$4 million in external grant funds. Examples of funding sources include USDA-NIFA, USDA Capacity Building Grant, Tennessee Department of Agriculture, Tennessee Wine and Grape Board, and private companies. External grant funds have helped improve facilities and purchase equipment for the Fermentation Science research and teaching laboratories.

Faculty productivity:

Since fall, 2017, MTSU Fermentation Science faculty members have published 40 peer reviewed research articles, 2 book chapters, and 12 research posters. Faculty members served on 8 Honors student thesis committees and have been engaged in peer reviewing of research articles (30+), university and public service, service to industry, and student research. One faculty member currently serves as a member of a doctoral committee for an MTSU student and another served as a doctoral committee member for two students at universities in South Korea.

Workforce Alignment and Demand

Metric	Possible Ways to Measure	Type of Measure	Parameters	Mark with an "x" the metrics you are reporting on.
Student demand	student surveying, other metrics	both	Campuses should include data from three (3) categories, including two (2) of the metrics in bold .	
Employer demand		both		x
Future career prospects	skills mapping/CIP to SOC alignment and outcomes	qualitative		
Percentage of graduates working in the field		quantitative		x
Community outreach	partnerships, etc.	both		
Employment rate upon graduation		quantitative		x
Other				

Provide responses to selected metrics in the box below. Make sure to address every metric selected above and provide an explanation of any data referenced.

Employer demand:

The program director is notified of employment opportunities for graduates via phone calls and emails on a regular basis. Roughly once per month since August 2017, the program director has received notice of a full or part time job available for current students or graduates of the program. At present, several regional breweries and a local winery are looking for employees and there are no students or graduates of the program available to offer them; all are employed! Full time post-graduation employment opportunities have been received from companies as far away as New Jersey and Texas and part time opportunities abound in the immediate middle Tennessee region. Program interaction with the Tennessee Brewer’s Guild, the Tennessee Distiller’s Guild, and the Tennessee wine industry alone has resulted in demand for graduates we cannot meet.

Percentage of graduates working in the field:

Of the 28 graduates produced to date, only 2 do not currently work in the field (7.1%).

Employment rate upon graduation:

The employment rate upon graduation since program establishment is 100%.

Are there other considerations not outlined above?

The Covid pandemic had a significant impact on this program (as well as all of higher education) but in spite of it, enrollment remained steady or declined less than the overall MTSU rate. Marketing of this program has been minimal, which has not helped enrollment. The external reviewer noted, "It was understood during the site visit that administration would like to see the program exceed 40 students, which seems an attainable goal with an effective and appropriate marketing push. Conversations with administrators during the site visit and personal experience confirm that effective marketing of the fermentation science degree takes a careful and targeted approach due to the general populations lack of familiarity with fermentation." Forty majors is most likely a more attainable goal, considering that is no more than 4 more than the maximum enrollment seen since inception. A change of enrollment expectations is most likely due.

Industry interest in graduates of the program is significant and is national and international in scope. Officials at companies in Sioux Falls, South Dakota (Prairie Aquatech) and Totawa, New Jersey (Advanced Biotech) have reached out directly in search of graduates to hire, and graduates of the program have been hired to work coast to coast (Oregon, Kentucky, and North Carolina) as well as across all of Tennessee. One international company (Lallemand, Inc.) has already extended an employment offer to one a projected Fall 2024 graduates and they also created a position that did not previously exist to employ one of the MSPS graduates. Brown-Forman (Jack Daniels) reached out this semester to recruit students for their internship program, and students have completed internships as far away as California and Italy. With a very limited number of similar programs in existence in the United States, the growing demand for trained fermentation scientists, and the high quality of MTSU graduates, demand for graduates will only increase.



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Information Item

DATE: February 27, 2024

SUBJECT: **Annual Report of Academic Program Actions**

PRESENTER: Mark Byrnes
Provost

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Summary of academic program actions and approvals of bureaus, centers, and institutes from January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.

**Annual Report of Academic Program Actions and
Approvals of Bureaus, Centers, and Institutes
January 1, 2023—December 31, 2023**

Elevation from Concentration to Major

- B.S. in Emergency Management and Homeland Security (May 2023)
- B.S. in Law Enforcement (May 2023)

New Concentrations

Undergraduate

- Cybersecurity Concentration within the B.S. in Computer Science (May 2023)
- Entertainment Journalism within the B.S. in Journalism (May 2023)
- Environmental Journalism and Communication within the B.S. in Journalism (May 2023)
- Family and Consumer Sciences Secondary Education within the B.S. in Nutrition and Food Science (May 2023)
- Social Justice Journalism within the B.S. in Journalism (May 2023)

Graduate

- Dual MLS-MSW Degree Program within the M.L.S. in Library Science (May 2023)
- Dual MLS-MSW Degree Program within the M.S.W. in Social Work (May 2023)
- History Education within the M.A. in History (May 2023)

New Undergraduate Minors

- Financial Planning (May 2023)

New Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's

- Audio Production, B.S. / Recording Arts and Technologies, M.F.A. (May 2023)
- Computer Science, B.S. / Computer Science, M.S. (May 2023)

Termination or Inactivation of an Existing Academic Program or Concentration

- Child Development and Family Studies concentration within the B.S. in Family and Consumer Studies (May 2023)
- Pre-graduate School concentration within the B.S. in Psychology (May 2023)
- Sociology concentration with the B.A. in Sociology (May 2023)

Change in Instructional Delivery Mode

- B.S. in Leisure and Sport Management from traditional to traditional and fully online (May 2023)

Program Name Changes

- B.S. in Criminal Justice Administration to B.S. in Criminal Justice (May 2023)

Program Credit Hour Changes

- M.A. in International Affairs from 30 to 30-33 (May 2023)
- M.S. in Data Science from 36 to 36-39 (May 2023)
- M.S. in Professional Science from 36 to 36-37 (May 2023)
- Graduate Certificate in Women's and Gender Studies from 18 to 15 (May 2023)

Bureaus, Centers, and Institutes

- Center of Methodology, Evaluation, and Applied Statistics for University Research and Education (March 2023)
- Family Business Institute (March 2023)

Implementation date in parentheses



**Middle Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees**

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee

Information Item

DATE: February 27, 2024

SUBJECT: **Athletics Report**

PRESENTER: Chris Massaro
Athletics Director

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Athletics Director Chris Massaro will provide an update on the Department of Athletics.