



## **301 Admissions**

**Approved by Board of Trustees**

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2021

**Responsible Division:** Academic Affairs

**Responsible Office:** University Provost

**Responsible Officer:** Vice Provost for Academic Programs

### **I. Purpose**

The following policy and procedures are adopted, pursuant to the authority granted by T.C.A. § 49-7-101, as the consistent admission policy of Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU or the University). MTSU shall also develop specific criteria and procedures consistent with this policy for the admission of students. Admission decisions shall be made without regard to race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability status, age or status as a covered veteran and shall fully comply with Executive Order 11246, as amended; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended; the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Pregnancy Discrimination Act; applicable state statutes, and all regulations promulgated pursuant thereto.

### **II. Definitions**

- A. Adequate insurance coverage. The student's coverage meets or exceeds the level of coverage provided to participants under the University's Student/Scholar Health & Accident Insurance Plan.
- B. Audit. A student who audits a course enrolls without expectation of receiving academic credit for the course.
- C. Dual enrollment. The enrollment of a high school student in one or more specified college course(s), for which the student will be awarded both high school and college credit.
- D. Joint enrollment. The enrollment of a high school student in one or more college course(s), for which the student will earn only college credit.

### III. Policy Development

- A. Publication of policy, criteria, and procedures for admission. MTSU shall include its approved admission policy, along with specific criteria and procedures, in its catalog <http://www.mtsu.edu/ucat/index.php> and other appropriate publications.
- B. Policy Revision. Any subsequent change to the approved admission policy shall, prior to implementation, be submitted to the MTSU Board of Trustees (Board) for review and approval.

### IV. Medical or Health Information

- A. All applicants for admission shall provide health information that, at a minimum, establishes the applicant's compliance with rules promulgated by the Tennessee Department of Health regarding requirements for immunization against certain diseases prior to attendance at a higher education institution, and, compliance with the latest standards for immunization for meningococcal disease as set forth by the recommended immunization schedule issued by the Center for Disease Control Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.
- B. Prior to full-time attendance, all students must provide documentation that illustrates receipt of the required immunizations.
- C. New, incoming students who live in on-campus student housing must comply with the latest standards for immunization for meningococcal disease as set forth by the recommended immunization schedule issued by the Center for Disease Control Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.
- D. Once a student is enrolled full-time at any Tennessee Board of Regents institution, the student shall be deemed as satisfying the requirement for immunizations, and upon transfer to MTSU, will have the requirement for documentation of immunizations waived.

### V. Provisions for Admission at MTSU

- A. General Provisions
  - 1. MTSU shall, in the admission or readmission process, assign each student a residency classification. Minimum criteria for the admission of residents of states other than Tennessee may exceed the minimum criteria established for residents of the state. [Policy 501 Residency Classification](#).
  - 2. Admission of International Non-Immigrant Applicants

## a. Criteria for admission:

- (1) Educational Level. The educational level attained must be comparable to that required of U.S. applicants.
- (2) Proof of English Language Proficiency for Non-Native English Language Speakers. In order to determine an applicant's level of proficiency in the English language, MTSU shall require that applicants, whose native language is not English, to submit scores earned on the Test of English Language Proficiency (TOEFL), the academic version of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or one of the other recognized comparable standardized examinations. Courses completed at another U. S. institution may be used in lieu of standardized examination scores.
- (3) Financial Statement. In order to determine the international student's ability to pay registration fees, non-resident fees, living, and other expenses, MTSU shall require international applicants to supply evidence of financial capability.
- (4) Immigration Service Regulations. MTSU shall adhere to all U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service regulations in the admission, enrollment, and readmission of international non-immigrant applicants.
- (5) Certification of Freedom from Tuberculosis. All international non-immigrant students applying for admission pursuant to a student visa shall submit within thirty (30) days from the first day of classes a certificate from a licensed physician or other qualified medical authority verifying freedom from tuberculosis. Failure to submit such certification shall result in denial of admission or continued enrollment. In the event that a student has tuberculosis or has potential tuberculosis requiring medical treatment, continued enrollment will be conditioned upon the determination by a licensed physician that further enrollment is not a risk to others and upon the student's compliance with any prescribed medical treatment program.
- (6) Medical and Hospitalization Insurance. International non-immigrant applicants with J, F, or M visas must have and maintain medical and hospitalization insurance as a condition of admission and continued enrollment at the University. Applicants with J visas must also carry adequate medical and hospitalization insurance for spouses and dependents. MTSU may require similar insurance coverage of all other international non-immigrant applicants.

## b. MTSU shall establish a process for:

- (1) Informing applicants for admission of the insurance coverage required and of its approximate cost;
- (2) Informing applicants of the documents that will be acceptable as proof of medical and hospitalization coverage; and
- (3) Automatically enrolling applicants in a Student/Scholar Health and Accident Insurance Plan for those international non-immigrant students who do not otherwise have adequate coverage. Enrollment shall take place not later than at the time of class registration, and the cost of the coverage shall be added to the student's registration fees.

3. Admission to Specialized or Limited-Enrollment Programs

- a. MTSU shall develop specific criteria and procedures for admission of students to programs or courses with enrollment limitations and/or specialized curricula.
- b. Such limitations should be based upon selective criteria appropriate to the program or course which apply equally to all prospective students, provided that preference for admission be given to residents of the State of Tennessee. T.C.A. § 49-7-138.
- c. A number of factors such as accreditation and professional certification standards, limited clinical and classroom space, faculty availability, and a concern for appropriate student progress influence the selective admissions process to certain academic programs.
  - (1) Students must meet the application criteria, be reviewed and accepted for admission, and make satisfactory progress to be admitted and continue in these academic programs.
  - (2) MTSU may vary in its admission requirements based on analysis of student success characteristics.
  - (3) Admission and progression policies related to selective programs shall reflect the likelihood of being admitted to the major at the earliest possible point and may contain information on grade point average, standardized test scores, and grade expectations in specified high school courses indicative of success in the field.
- d. Admission and progression policies for specialized and limited enrollment programs shall be clearly displayed in all materials to prospective applicants.

4. Admission to Nursing and Allied Health Programs. MTSU shall require that all persons admitted to nursing or allied health programs:
  - a. Provide evidence through a health verification form, that at a minimum, establish the applicant's compliance with the rules promulgated by the Tennessee Department of Health regarding requirements for immunization against certain diseases, including the Hepatitis B vaccine, and other communicable diseases.
  - b. Be, with reasonable accommodation, physically and mentally capable of performing the essential functions of the program as defined in writing by the institution.
5. Advanced Standing and Placement. MTSU may develop criteria and procedures for granting admission with advanced placement or standing based on examination, experiential learning, and active duty in the armed services, credit earned in armed services schools, and credit earned through non-collegiate sponsored instruction consistent with [Policy 308 Awarding of Credits Earned Through Extra-Institutional Learning](#).
6. Readmission. MTSU shall develop criteria and procedures for the readmission of students. These criteria and procedures shall be consistent with [Policy 314 Undergraduate Academic Retention Standards](#).
7. Application Fee. MTSU may, with prior approval of the Board, charge a one-time, non-refundable application fee.

B. Undergraduate Degree Admission

1. Admission of First-Time Freshmen
  - a. Applicants for degree admission as first-time freshmen shall be admitted using the following criteria:
    - (1) High School Graduation. Except as provided for below, applicants for degree admission as first-time freshmen must provide an official transcript showing graduation from high school. The transcript of graduates of Tennessee public high schools must include a notation indicating that the student passed all required proficiency examinations.
    - (2) High School Diploma or Equivalency. Applicants for degree admission as first-time freshmen may present either the 2014 GED<sup>®</sup> test or the HiSET<sup>™</sup> in lieu of a high school diploma provided that their GED<sup>®</sup> test or the HiSET<sup>™</sup> score meets or exceeds the minimum score set by the University.

## (3) Standardized Examination Scores

- (a) Applicants for admission as first-time freshmen who are 20 years of age or younger must present Enhanced ACT or SAT scores.
- (b) MTSU will use the scores for admission in keeping with recommended best practices, advisement, and as a component in the placement decision.

## (4) High School Course Requirements. MTSU accepts the curriculum requirements as set by the Tennessee Department of Education with the implementation of the Tennessee Diploma Project of 2009. Admission will be granted to freshmen applicants who hold a recognized high school diploma that includes a distribution of college preparatory courses, such as those required in the core elements of the Tennessee High School Diploma. These courses include the following:

- (a) four (4) Credits of English.
- (b) four (4) Credits of Math, including Algebra I and II, Geometry, and a fourth higher level math class.
- (c) three (3) Credits of Science, including Biology, Chemistry or Physics, and a third Lab Course.
- (d) three (3) Credits of Social Studies, including United States History\* and Geography, World History and Geography, U.S. Government and Civics, and Economics.

\*T.C.A. § 49-7-110 requires the completion of six (6) semester credit hours of American History by any individual in any non-exempted area of study to be granted a baccalaureate degree of any kind from any institution of higher learning or community college supported or maintained by the State. Persons in exempted fields of study need not fulfill this requirement if they successfully completed a course in American History in high school. Any student has the option, at the student's request, to substitute three (3) semester hours of Tennessee History for the American History requirement.

- (e) 1.5 Credits of Physical Education and Wellness.
- (f) two (2) Credits of a Single Foreign Language.
- (g) 0.5 Credits of Personal Finance.
- (h) one (1) Credit of Fine Arts.
- (i) three (3) Credits of Electives consisting of Math and Science, Career and Technical Education, Fine Arts, Humanities, Advanced Placement (AP), or International Baccalaureate (IB).

Applicants who graduated prior to the adoption of the Tennessee Diploma Project curriculum who hold a high school diploma are exempt from the diploma requirements.

- (5) Associate Degree. Applicants for first time admission who have received an associate degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education are not required to submit a high school transcript or GED certificate.
- (6) Out-of-State Applicants. Applicants who are residents of states other than Tennessee are subject to the same admission requirements as in-state applicants.

2. Early Admission of First-Time Freshmen

- a. MTSU shall develop procedures for the admission of applicants who have completed their junior year in high school.
- b. The minimum requirements for admission of applicants in this category shall be the following:
  - (1) High School GPA. Applicants must have completed the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades with a minimum grade point average of 3.2 based on a 4.0 scale or the equivalent.
  - (2) Standardized Examination Score. Applicants must have an Enhanced ACT composite score of at least 22 or a comparable score on Accuplacer or other diagnostic tests that the University may adopt in the future.
  - (3) Prescribed Courses. Applicants must provide a written statement from their high school principal specifying the college courses that will be substituted for the remaining high school courses needed for high school graduation.
  - (4) Endorsements. Applicants shall provide written endorsements from their high school counselors and from their parents or guardians.

3. Admission of Transfer Students. MTSU shall establish criteria and procedures for the admission of transfer students that are consistent with the following criteria:

- a. The applicant must provide official transcripts of credits attempted from all institutions of higher education previously attended.
- b. The applicant's grade point average on transferable courses must be at least equal to that which MTSU requires for the readmission of its own students.

Applicants who do not meet MTSU's standards may be admitted on scholastic probation or other appropriate condition.

- c. MTSU shall develop and publish criteria and procedures regarding the awarding of transfer credit from collegiate and non-collegiate institutions, credit by examination, military and other formal training, experiential learning, and academic fresh start. Such criteria and procedures must, at a minimum, be consistent with national standards of good practice, and the requirements of appropriate accrediting bodies, and consistent with [Policy 308 Awarding of Credits Earned through Extra-Institutional Learning](#) and [Policy 314 Undergraduate Academic Retention Standards](#).
4. Admission of Non-Degree Students to Degree Admission Status
    - a. MTSU shall develop criteria and procedures for granting degree admission to non-degree students.
    - b. To be eligible for Degree Admission status, non-degree students, as defined below, must meet all the applicable provisions of Section II.B. above.
- C. Graduate and Professional Degree Admission
1. MTSU shall develop procedures and specific criteria for admitting applicants to graduate and professional degree programs. Such criteria and procedures shall, as a minimum, be consistent with national standards of good practice and the requirements of appropriate accrediting bodies.
  2. Admission
    - a. MTSU shall set a minimum undergraduate grade point average (GPA) that an applicant should have earned in order to be considered for admission.
      - (1) Departments may set higher minimum standards for admission.
      - (2) Departments may also stipulate a minimum GPA to be achieved in the desired major during the final year or two (2) of the undergraduate studies.
    - b. MTSU may determine to offer varying degrees of admission, i.e., full, conditional, or provisional.
    - c. Official Transcripts



- (1) MTSU shall require official transcripts (undergraduate and graduate) issued directly by all institutions attended to be submitted either upon application or acceptance.
- (2) MTSU may determine whether or not to accept three (3) year undergraduate degrees in keeping with the international education reform, i.e., Bologna process or to make exception for students seeking political or social asylum prior to the completion of undergraduate work.

d. Standardized Examination Scores

- (1) MTSU may request dates and scores for one or more assessment tests such as the GRE, GMAT, the MAT, the IELTS and/or TOEFL.
- (2) Scores should be submitted directly from the testing organization and not the student within the time limitations of use set by the testing organizations.

e. Proof of English Competency

- (1) All students for whom English is not the first language, with the possible exception of individuals who have completed a prior degree at an accredited institution in an English-speaking nation, must provide proof of English proficiency.
- (2) MTSU may administer additional assessments for oral and written competencies for applicants and accepted students for whom English is not the first language if they have been offered graduate assistantships where they will be required to teach.
- (3) Departments shall provide assistance to those students awarded assistantships to improve their English language proficiency if the assessment shows deficiencies prior to placing those applicants or students in the classroom.

f. Required Materials for Graduate Degree Application. Regardless of the standards set by the individual academic units, all applications should include at a minimum the following components:

- (1) An application form.
- (2) Transcripts of all previous academic work from which an undergraduate GPA may be calculated (certified translations for non-English transcripts may be required).

- (3) Proof of English competency for international students for whom English is not their first language, with the possible exception of those who have completed a degree at an accredited institution in an English-speaking country.
3. Admission of Undergraduates to Graduate Courses. MTSU may grant permission to undergraduate students with exceptional academic backgrounds to undertake graduate coursework as part of their undergraduate experience.
4. Admission of Transfer Graduate Students
  - a. Students applying for transfer from another graduate institution should submit the same admission materials as the typical first-time graduate applicant. If granted admission, the student should be informed of the number of hours which will be transferrable.
  - b. MTSU shall establish criteria and procedures for the admission of transfer graduate students that are consistent with the following criteria:
    - (1) The applicant must provide transcripts of credits attempted from all institutions of higher learning previously attended.
    - (2) The applicant's grade point average (GPA) on transferrable courses must be at least equal to that which MTSU requires for the readmission of its own students. Applicants who do not meet the institution's standards may be admitted on scholastic probation or other appropriate conditions.
    - (3) MTSU shall develop procedures and publish criteria regarding the awarding of transfer credit from other universities or colleges, credit by examination, military and other formal training, and experiential learning as well as criteria for Academic Fresh Start. Such policies and procedures must, as a minimum, be consistent with national standards of good practice and the requirements of appropriate accrediting bodies.

D. Non-Degree Admission for Undergraduate and Graduate Applicants

1. MTSU shall develop criteria and procedures for admitting undergraduate and graduate applicants who wish to take credit courses, but who either do not qualify for or do not wish to apply for degree admission.
2. Criteria and procedures shall include any conditions of enrollment and any term or overall credit-hour limitations.

3. Applicants who are eligible for non-degree admission include:
  - a. Persons Not Previously Enrolled in College
    - (1) High School Graduates
    - (2) Persons twenty-one (21) years of age or older who have not earned a high school diploma and are not currently enrolled in high school.
    - (3) Persons eighteen (18) years of age or older who have not earned a high school diploma or are not currently enrolled in high school and wish to enroll in HSE preparatory courses only.
    - (4) High school students who meet the following criteria as specified in T.C.A. § 49-6-3111:
      - (a) Academically talented/gifted students enrolled in 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade in public or private high schools in Tennessee may, with the recommendation and approval of the high school principal and appropriate higher education institution personnel, enroll in and receive regular college degree credit from a Tennessee postsecondary institution if such a student has a grade point average equivalent to 3.2 on a 4.0 maximum basis and if such placement is a part of the student's planned Individual Education Program (IEP) as established by the multi-disciplinary team process.
      - (b) High school students who are in their freshman year of high school. Such students may be admitted for either joint enrollment or dual enrollment or both. For the purposes of this policy, the terms joint and dual enrollment are defined in the Definitions section. Dual Enrollment students must meet the following eligibility criteria:
        - The student must be enrolled as a 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade student in a Tennessee public or nonpublic secondary school or in a home education program.
        - The student may enroll in a specific course based on the course's specific placement requirements as determined by the University.
        - The student must enroll in dual enrollment courses in the general education core, Tennessee Pathways leading to a degree, Career and Technical Program of study leading to an academic award, or middle college or equivalent program.
        - The student must provide secondary institution permission/approval. Additionally, a minor (under eighteen [18] years of age) must provide parental/guardian permission/approval.
  - b. Persons with College Credit but Not a Degree

- (1) Persons who earned credits but not a degree at another college and are eligible for readmission to the last institution attended.
  - (2) Those who do not meet the readmission standards of the last institution attended may be admitted on scholastic probation or other established condition.
- c. Persons with a College Degree or Certificate
  - (1) Persons who have a degree or certificate equivalent to the highest degree or certificate offered by the University in a particular field but who wish to take additional courses.
  - (2) Persons who do not qualify for or do not wish to apply for graduate degree admission.
- E. Audit Admission. MTSU shall develop criteria and procedures for the admission of persons wishing only to audit courses. The same registration procedure applies as for credit courses and, unless Provision F. below applies, the same fees will be charged as for credit courses. Admission may be limited or denied based on the availability of space in the individual classroom.
- F. Admission of Disabled, Elderly, and State Retirees Pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-7-113. In accordance with T.C.A. § 49-7-113, certain disabled, elderly persons, and state service retirees are eligible to enroll in courses at MTSU on an audit or for-credit basis without paying tuition charges, maintenance fees, student activity fees, or registration fees. Eligibility criteria and applicable fees are provided in [Policy 643 Educational Assistance: Veterans' Dependents, State Retirees, Disabled, and Elderly Persons Programs](#). Admission may be limited or denied based on the availability of space in the individual classroom.
- G. Admission of Non-Degree Students to Degree Admission Status. MTSU shall develop criteria and procedures for granting degree seeking admission status to non-degree students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- H. Continuous Enrollment and Residency Requirements Upon Admission for Graduate Programs
  1. MTSU may require continuous enrollment within select or all graduate programs.
  2. MTSU may establish periods of required residency for students seeking admission and enrolling in select graduate programs. Residency requirements should be clearly described in application materials and on the institutional program website.
- I. Admission to Select Graduate Programs

1. Accreditation and professional certification standards, limited clinical and classroom space, faculty availability, and a concern for appropriate student progress influence the selective admission process to MTSU graduate programs.
2. Students must meet the application criteria, be reviewed and accepted for admission, and make satisfactory progress to be continued in all graduate programs.
3. MTSU and individual graduate programs may vary in the defined requirements for satisfactory progress as based on their analysis of student success characteristics.

Forms: none.

Revisions: June 5, 2017 (original); March 31, 2020; \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

Last Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

References: Policies 308 Awarding of Credits Earned through Extra-Institutional Learning; 314 Undergraduate Academic Retention Standards; 501 Residency Classification; 643 Educational Assistance: Veterans' Dependents, State Retirees, Disabled, and Elderly Persons Programs; T.C.A. §§ 49-6-3111; 49-7-101; 49-7-110; 49-7-113; 49-7-138; Executive Order 11246; Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Act of 1974; Age Discrimination Act of 1975; Pregnancy Discrimination Act; Tennessee Diploma Project of 2009.