

Middle Tennessee State University

Instructional Space Use Procedures

Revised and Approved 11/8/24

Introduction

Instructional spaces are a significant campus resource, and the availability of this space is finite. Accordingly, all are encouraged to use these resources wisely. Instructional space assignments are recommended by college Deans and approved by the Provost's Office, and their use is coordinated by the Registrar's Office (<http://mtsu.edu/usm/>).

In an effort to provide the most effective and efficient space utilization and allocation, the University has developed the following collection of procedures governing instructional space. The procedures were developed in the spirit of providing comprehensive guidance in the use of instructional space, including course scheduling that permits access to available offerings by the greatest number of students and that allows the best match between specific needs of the courses being offered and existing facilities. These procedures are defined to clearly delineate priorities in allocation and assignment. It is not intended to replace the detailed official communications from the Registrar's Office.

While most approval processes involve the department chairs, deans, and Registrar's Office, any issues that cannot be resolved between these parties will be presented to the Provost's Office for consideration and final approval.

Class Schedule Production

See the [Class Schedule Production website](#) for detailed information on the production of the class schedule, prerequisites, corequisites, and other applicable information to the space use policy. The Registrar's Office produces a document with details on the process of creating the schedule that is in line with the Instructional Space Use Procedures. A timeline for scheduling production is created for each term and must be adhered to in order to have schedules ready for Priority Registration. Missing deadlines for scheduling could result in the inability to use first priority standard classrooms.

Classroom Usage

Classrooms are classified as either **standard** or **restricted** access instructional spaces and are assigned to each department by the Provost's Office. Typically the standard instructional spaces are those classrooms that could be used to teach most lecture type courses. Most instructional spaces are considered standard access. Restricted spaces are determined through the appropriate dean and the Provost's Office. Restricted access instructional spaces are typically those spaces that have specialized equipment that would interfere with a lecture class. A few classrooms on campus are not able to be scheduled without permission from the Registrar's Office due to accessibility issues.

First Priority Rooms

First priority rooms may be used by the department to pre-assign their courses (and courses from other departments if desired) during the initial scheduling stage. Once the initial scheduling stage has ended and the departments have submitted their schedules to the Registrar's Office, they no longer have their first priority to standard rooms. First priority standard rooms not scheduled during the initial scheduling period will be used by the automatic scheduler program to place classes that were not able to be pre-assigned.

Standard classrooms are open for use by any department on campus after the initial scheduling phase for a term. Restricted classrooms are still used only by the department with first priority access and require department permission to be scheduled by another department. Some standard classrooms are also able to be used for events scheduling, and that typically opens up to campus a week before Priority Registration begins.

Sharing and Pre-assignment

Departments should coordinate the use of large classrooms, computer rooms, and shared space as needed with other departments in building the initial course schedule. Approximately 80% of courses are pre-assigned in a department's first priority space or pre-assigned through an arrangement with a partner department. Large rooms (100 seats or more) are scheduled early in the process by the Registrar's Office. THEC identifies utilization guidelines for the University and these are enforced as necessary to achieve course schedules.

Pre-assigning classroom space is preferred when possible, as that will allow departments the greatest amount of control over when and where instructors teach. It also allows the department to make sure the technology needs of each class is met. All labs and other courses for which equipment or other need dictates use of a particular space should be pre-assigned before other courses. Unassigned classes are put in rooms based on enrollment only, not instructor preference. After the initial scheduling phase and placement of unassigned classes there are no guarantees that instructors may be able to meet in a preferred classroom or building.

Course Related Events

Events are scheduled after all courses have space assignments. Departments must notify the Registrar's Office of any course related activity and/or event occurring in their first priority space. This list should be submitted with the initial schedule. Notification must include the CRN, subject, and course number affiliated with the event along with the type of activity to be scheduled and the appropriate dates/times for the event.

Assignment Priorities

Scheduling instructional spaces will be based on the following priorities:

- Instructional classes
- Continuing education classes
- Course related events
- University sponsored functions
- Special events such as lectures, concerts, debates, etc. sponsored by university departments
- Extra-instructional programs
- Approved university athletic program
- Campus recreation
- Recognized university organizations
- Non-affiliated university organizations

All non-course-related events must be scheduled through the Event Coordination Department. The Registrar's Office will schedule the following events only:

- Course-related events: where specific course number and/or CRN are provided (may include guest speakers, study/review sessions, film showings, etc.)
- Distance Learning orientations, meetings and exams
- Major field exams
- Faculty, college and departmental staff meetings
- Departmental research
- Graduate thesis and dissertation proposals/defense
- Graduate oral and comprehensive exams
- Program specific testing which originates with and is administered by the department

Any event request that does not fall into one of these categories will be returned to the department with the recommendation to contact Event Coordination. The Application for Use of Facilities Form is not required for course-related events. In order to submit an event request, contact your assigned scheduler in the Registrar's Office. Please submit any request for course related or department events at least 48 hours in advance. Note that Event Coordination requires at least 7 days notice to schedule their events.

Meeting Times

Standard Class Meeting Times – Fall & Spring Terms

Departments should offer course offerings across all standard meeting times. Adherence to the standard meeting time patterns allow the university to have efficient use of classroom space, cuts down on overlapping meet times in student schedules, and provides final examination scheduling without time conflicts. Three credit/contact hour courses **MUST** meet on standard meeting times unless an exception is approved.

The following times are standard class meeting times for 3-credit/contact hour lecture-type courses during Fall and Spring terms. Courses offered for more or less than 3- credit/contact hours should begin or end on a standard meet time. Review the section on non-standard meeting times for the process to request an exception.

Meeting times below are shown in 24-hour clock time (military time).

Monday/Wednesday/Friday (55 minutes) 6:50 - 7:45 8:00 - 8:55 9:10 - 10:05 10:20 - 11:15 11:30 - 12:25 12:40 - 13:35 13:50- 14:45 15:00 - 15:55 16:10 - 17:05	Tuesday/Thursday (85 minutes) 6:20 - 7:45 8:00 - 9:25 9:40 - 11:05 11:20 - 12:45 13:00 - 14:25 14:40 - 16:05 16:20 - 17:45 18:00 - 19:25 19:40 - 21:05
Monday/Wednesday (85 minutes) 8:40 – 10:05 12:40 - 14:05 14:20 - 15:45 16:10 - 17:35 18:00 - 19:25 19:40 - 21:05	AFTERNOON TIMES - ONE AFTERNOON WEEKLY (180 minutes) Monday or Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday 14:40 - 17:40 16:30 - 19:30
EVENING TIMES - ONE NIGHT WEEKLY (180 minutes) 16:30 - 19:30 17:15 - 20:15 18:00 - 21:00 19:45 - 22:45	Saturday (180 minutes) 7:30 - 10:30 9:00 - 12:00 13:00 - 16:00

Standard Class Meeting Times – Summer Term

Times indicated are standard for 3- credit/contact hour courses. Courses offered for more or less than 3- credit/contact hours should begin on a standard meet time. Final exams should be given on the last day of the class, regardless of the part of term. Flexibility is offered for late afternoon/evening courses.

5-Week Courses	
Terms: S5A, S5B	
MTWR	7:15 – 9:30
MTWR	9:45 – 12:00
MTWR	12:30 – 14:45
MTWR	15:00 – 17:15
MTWR	18:00 – 20:15
MW or TR	16:00 – 19:45
MW or TR	18:00 – 21:45
Blended On-ground Courses Only	
One day a week	
M, T, W or R	16:00 – 19:45
M, T, W or R	18:00 – 21:45

3-Week Courses	
Terms: S3A, S3B, S3C, S3D	
MTWRF	9:00 – 12:00
MTWRF	12:30 – 15:30
MTWRF	17:00 – 20:00

12 - Week Courses	
Term: 1-Full Term	
MW or TR	7:30 – 9:15
MW or TR	10:00 – 11:45
MW or TR	12:30 – 14:15
MW or TR	15:00 – 16:45
MW or TR	18:00 – 19:45
One day a week - Traditional	
M, T, W or R	16:00 – 19:30
M, T, W or R	18:00 – 21:30
Blended On-Ground Courses Only	
One day a week	
M, T, W or R	16:00 – 17:45
M, T, W or R	18:00 – 19:45

6- Week Courses	
Terms: S6A, S6B	
MTWR	7:30 – 9:15
MTWR	10:00 – 11:45
MTWR	12:30 – 14:15
MTWR	15:00 – 16:45
MTWR	18:00 – 19:45
MW or TR	18:00 – 21:10
Blended On-Ground Courses Only	
One day a week	
M, T, W or R	18:00 – 21:10

Mandatory and Optional Additional Class Meetings

To schedule additional meeting times for either traditional or distance learning classes, the request should be initiated with the department. If the request is received prior to registration, the meeting can be scheduled as mandatory or optional without going through an approval process. A mandatory meeting will not allow students to register for another class at the same time. An optional meeting will not stop a student from scheduling another class at the same time. After registration has begun only optional meetings may be scheduled. The requests for optional additional meeting times are emailed to the department and Registrar’s Office for approval.

Non-Standard Class Meeting Dates (Short Courses)

In general classes should be for the entirety of the part of term it is scheduled in for the semester. Classes should not meet for only partial amounts of the semester as that can create issues with withdrawal deadlines, financial aid, and grading requirements. If there is a request to have a course meet for a partial amount of a term, the department chair should contact the Associate Registrar for Records, Registration, and Scheduling to discuss in advance.

Non-Standard Meeting Times

Exceptions to meeting on a standard meeting time may be requested by the department, approved by their college dean, and sent to the Registrar's Office for consideration (see process below).

Exceptions have a better chance to be approved if using restricted rooms. Course contact hours dictate how many hours the course should be scheduled for weekly.

Non-standard meeting times may be approved by request if:

- Course meets for 1, 2, or 4+ contact hours and begins on a standard meeting time or ends on a standard meeting time, or
- Course is 1 or 2 contact hours and meets within a standard meeting time, or
- Course is offered on a Friday afternoon or off-campus, or
- Course meets specific weekends (F/S)

Non-standard meeting times may not be approved if:

- The request is during peak scheduling times, or
- The course is requesting to meet one-day per week for a 3+ contact hour class starting before 2:40 Monday through Thursday and 12:40 on Friday

Laboratory (LAB schedule type) classes may be scheduled in the department's restricted access rooms at non- standard meeting times without approval. All other types of classes must have approval. Laboratory classes should try to start and/or end on standard meeting times to assist with student scheduling.

To obtain an approval for a non-standard meeting time the department must submit a request online that goes to the college dean. If approved by the dean, the request is sent to the Registrar's Office for consideration and approval. The request should include the term(s), room assignment, course number and section, proposed meeting time (days and hours), and reason for exception. The Registrar's Office will consider the type of course and the effects on student course schedules (including final exams) in determining approval. The Registrar's Office will send a response to the academic department, college dean, and scheduler.

Classes with non-standard meeting times will not be scheduled or will be canceled before Priority Registration unless approved.

Schedule Types and Instructional Methods

The department determines how a course is taught during the curriculum approval process. To change a course from one schedule type or instructional method to another at the catalog level, the department must submit a new request through Curriculog for approval. The schedule type and instructional method indicate if the class needs a meeting pattern, space assignment, or other needs in the course scheduling process.

Schedule Types

These are the active course schedule type codes with their descriptions. The schedule type is defined at the catalog level and cannot be changed at the section level. The schedule types with asterisks* are those that may be able to follow the LAB exemption for non-standard time. For MUP and PEA types, these courses should start on a standard time but can run longer/shorter than the standard end time. Those in **bold** are not eligible to have a TBA meeting pattern line unless they have the appropriate instructional method attached or have approval to be a distance learning course.

CLN	Clinical
CLR	Clerkship
DSR	Dissertation
FLD	Field Experience
IND	Independent Study
LAB*	Laboratory*
LEC	Lecture
LLB*	Combined Lecture/Lab*
MST	Masters Thesis
MUP	Musical Group Performance
PEA	Physical Education Activity
PRA	Practicum
PRL	Private Lesson
RES	Research
SEM	Seminar
STU	Studio
WSP	Workshop

Instructional Methods

These are the active instructional method codes with their descriptions. The instructional method is set at the catalog level but may be changed at the section level depending on how the course is delivered. The instructional methods in **bold** must have a meeting space on campus since they should also have a meeting pattern line. You cannot have a meeting pattern line without space assigned. Classes with meeting patterns cannot be listed as TBA for the building and location without approval.

Most laboratory and lecture style courses are assigned as Conventional Methodology. Instructional methods with an asterisk* must have approval from MTSU Online to be offered in those ways.

CIM	Computer Based Interactive Media
CLN	Clinicals
CON	Conventional Methodology
DIS	Dissertation
DVC	Online - Synchronous (Remote)*
HYB	Distance Learning: Blended*
HYBAC	Blended – Asynchronous and Conventional
HYBSC	Blended – Synchronous and Conventional
IND	Independent Study
NCM	Other Non-conventional Media
PRA	Student teaching/field super/co-op
THS	Thesis
TWY	Distance Learning: Video Conference
TWYBF	Two-Way - Blend Flexible*
TWYFS	Two-Way - Flexible Sync*
WEB	Distance Learning: Online*
WEBAS	Distance Learning: Online-Asynchronous-Synchronous*

Note: If a course is not required to have a meeting pattern but opts to have one, it must meet the standard meeting pattern guidelines or receive an exception for a non-standard time like all other courses.

Moving and Canceling Classes

Moving Classes

The optimal time to move a class to a different room than assigned is before Priority Registration. Faculty and departments are required to notify students if a class is moved once Priority Registration begins and approval is needed to move a class from the Registrar's Office. Faculty should never move a class to a room that is unoccupied without officially moving the class through the Registrar's Office as that could cause conflicts with events, final exams, and other room change requests.

Many students, including students with disabilities, determine their schedule based on times and location. Students with disabilities register early specifically to tailor their schedule around their individual needs. Once Priority Registration begins any requests for room changes are reviewed to determine if any students are impacted. If a student with a disability is registered for the class, the request for a room change will likely be denied. Disabilities are both physical and non-physical, and all types must be considered when requesting changes to a student's schedule.

Once registration begins requests for room changes are by exception only. The department chair must email a request to the Registrar's Office for approval. The request should include the term, room assignment, CRN, subject, course number, and section, and reason for exception. The Registrar's Office will forward a response to the academic department and appropriate scheduler. The college deans will be consulted in the event an agreement on a room change cannot be met. Room changes should not be requested because a preferred room has opened or to accommodate an instructor's preference, all changes based on preference should be made prior to registration starting.

ADA Compliance

Instructors with disabilities must complete appropriate forms through the ADA Campus Coordinator prior to receiving accommodations. Departments notify the Registrar's Office of instructors with disabilities or equipment needs during the initial scheduling stage. If the department cannot accommodate the instructor's needs they should contact the ADA Campus Coordinator. Students with disabilities must request accommodations such as room changes through the Disability and Access Center, and not through the individual faculty member or department.

Canceling Classes

The department chair determines if classes need to be canceled. The Director of True Blue Core should be informed regarding cancelations to True Blue Core classes. Any time a course is canceled the department is **required** to notify the enrolled students of the cancelation and alternate course options.

In general classes should be canceled at least two weeks prior to the start of the semester. However, please keep in mind that late cancelations can cause scheduling problems for students who may have chosen their classes months ahead of time. Cancelations should be done as early as possible, and departments should work with impacted student to find other sections or alternatives. If a possible cancelation is due to space concerns, contact the Registrar's Office for help. If a possible cancelation is due to staffing or enrollment concerns, contact the Provost's Office for assistance.

If a course is canceled for any reason after the semester has begun, departments must contact the Registrar's Office **before** notifying students of the cancelation. Strategic steps must be taken to make sure students are not negatively impacted by the cancelation. Classes should not be canceled once the semester has begun unless there are no other options.

Zero and Low Enrollment Courses

The right is reserved to cancel any class when the number of students enrolled is deemed insufficient per minimums. All sections must meet the normal minimum number of students per class as follows:

1000 / 2000 = 15 students enrolled
3000 / 4000 = 10 students enrolled
5000 / 6000 = 8 students enrolled
7000 = 6 students enrolled

The minimums for 6000/7000 level courses are determined by the majority enrollment (i.e., if the majority of students are registered for the 6000 section, the minimum combined enrollment is set at 8; and if the majority of students are registered for the 7000 section; the minimum combined enrollment is set at 6. Low enrolled courses are approved by the college dean and are not automatically canceled by the Registrar's Office.

Courses cannot be scheduled with zero enrollment. Exceptions must be approved by the college dean to be listed as a reserve course holding space. Courses cannot have space assigned if there is zero enrollment without approval.

Courses may be hidden if approved for special circumstances and no space is assigned. These are typically only independent study, practicum, dissertation, and cohort courses. The Registrar's Office will make those determinations in consultation with the department.

Scheduling Practices

Enrollment Equals Room Capacity

The enrollment on a course should equal or be near the capacity of room in which it is scheduled. The expected enrollment of the course may not fall below 67% of the scheduled room's capacity. Exceptions to the minimum percentage are requested via email through the college dean and the Registrar's Office. Please include the term, classroom, course number and section, and reason for exceeding or not meeting room capacity in your request to the Dean and Registrar's Office.

Student Schedule Time Conflicts

Although MTSU prefers standard meeting times so students do not experience time conflicts with their schedule, departments can override a student's time conflict if an agreement is made between all impacted parties. For instance, a time conflict could occur if the meeting patterns of the courses have not changed, but due to non-standard meeting times, the two classes overlap by a few minutes. If the instructors are willing to work with the student, then the department enters a time conflict override on SFASRPO for the course making the exception.

Overbooked Classrooms

Do not overbook classrooms. If a classroom is overbooked there may not be another room available. Students would need to be dropped from the section to bring the class into fire code compliance.

This is unfair to the students and could cause eligibility problems for financial aid. Students expect to have a seat when they register for a course. When course enrollments exceed room capacities there are not enough physical seats for all enrolled students and MTSU is in violation of fire codes. If a request to overbook a room that is at capacity is approved by the Provost's Office, the University will provide additional furniture for the extra students.

To assist departments and faculty in not overbooking classrooms, the Registrar's Office has placed the following links in PipelineMT under the Faculty menu and Class List Options section:

CRN Enrollment/Location/Outstanding Permits: Allows you to view the meeting times/days/room, instructor, actual enrollment/maximum enrollment/room capacity, and unused permits. Before issuing an ENRL override for a course at capacity, use this link to ensure you are not overbooking a classroom. View the room capacity to see if the room may hold more students in case you need to increase maximum enrollment for the course section. To identify students who have not used a given ENRL override, review the email addresses displayed. These email address can also be used to notify students that the permit will be dropped if not used by a specified deadline.

Class List with Permits/Overrides: This link provides a list of students with permits/overrides including those not registered. The display includes the student's name, class, college, program, email address, status, and the permit/override issued.

The University has an understanding with the fire marshal that as rooms are renovated, the square feet per student will be at least 20 square feet (30 square feet in laboratory space). ADA federal laws require the University to provide adequate aisle space for wheelchair access. If maximum room capacities are not maintained, the University cannot guarantee the spaces are accessible.

Other Scheduling Considerations

Classroom scheduling is a dynamic process, responsive each semester to both curricular and non-curricular changes and requirements. The assignment of a specific classroom at a particular time and location during the previous corresponding semester will not automatically result in the continuing assignment of the same room at the same time.

After the final run of the automatic scheduler, the Registrar's Office will attempt to schedule requested classes that are left unassigned into available rooms at the time requested by the department. If unsuccessful, these sections are returned to the department and must be altered in order to be scheduled. This may mean changing the time on the course to an earlier or later time when a room is available.

All academic departments should make a commitment to an equitable distribution of course offerings across all standard meeting times, including early morning, late afternoon and evening times. When it is necessary to assign rooms needed by several departments, departmental scheduling patterns will be considered. Departments should make every effort to spread course offerings across the standard meeting times.

Maximum seats requested for a class will not be adjusted downward after room assignment. Priority assignment for classes not placed in their first priority space is given first to the classes with the largest expected enrollment and next to True Blue Core courses. Final assignment responsibility resides with Registrar's Office.

Some room adjustments may be required during the semester to meet unforeseen circumstances. Departments may be asked to shift rooms to accommodate this need for adjustment. Every effort is made to keep adjustments to a minimum. If an adjustment is made, the department is responsible for notifying the students of the change.