

Admission Status Categories

Regular Admission

Any person granted regular admission for graduate study must hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution. However, an applicant with a bachelor's degree from a non-accredited institution may request consideration from the dean of the appropriate college before applying for admission. In either case, the graduate coordinator of the academic program may prescribe specific undergraduate level courses as prerequisites to admission.

In addition to the bachelor's degree, an applicant who receives regular admission status must satisfy one of the following graduate admissions requirements based on the level of work completed at the time of the application.

1. 2.75 GPA on the last two years (approximately 60-70 semester hours or 90-100 quarter hours) of bachelor's degree coursework
2. 2.75 GPA on 30 or more semester hours of undergraduate credit **after** earning a bachelor's degree
3. 2.75 GPA on the last two years (approximately 60-70 semester hours or 90-100 quarter hours) of undergraduate academic coursework **and** a 3.00 GPA on **fewer than** 24 hours graduate coursework
4. 3.00 GPA on **24 or more** graduate hours
5. An earned master's degree or higher-level degree

An applicant not satisfying the minimum grade point average for his/her level of work may be admitted to a degree program as a provisional student if recommended by the program's graduate coordinator. The minimum acceptable undergraduate grade point average for admission as a provisional student is 2.50 (see Provisional Admission).

Meeting minimum requirements for admission does not guarantee admission into a program. Each applicant competes with all other applicants for availability in each program. **Requests for exceptions to these requirements for either "regular" or "provisional" admission must be made by the appropriate academic dean who will notify the Office of the Graduate School in writing.**

Graduate programs may have requirements for regular admission in addition to the University requirements described above. For this information, see the specific program section in this publication.

Provisional Admission

An applicant who has not fully met the GPA requirement stipulated by the University may be admitted on a provisional basis. The provisionally-admitted student is eligible for a change to regular admission status after receiving a 3.00 GPA on the first 9 hours of graduate courses at Mississippi State University (with no grade lower than a C). These graduate courses must be within the student's program of study. Courses with an S grade, transfer credits, or credits earned while in Unclassified status cannot be used to satisfy this requirement. If a 3.00 is not attained, the provisional student **shall** be dismissed from the graduate program. Academic departments may set higher standards for students to fulfill provisional requirements; a student admitted with provisional status should contact the graduate coordinator for the program's specific requirements. **While in the provisional status, a student is not eligible to hold a graduate assistantship.**

Contingent Admission

A student may be admitted with a contingency, usually the final transcript recording the bachelor's degree. In this case, the applicant has met all admissions requirements, is in the final semester of bachelor's degree work, and is admitted contingent on degree completion. When the Office of the Graduate School receives the final transcript verifying the degree was awarded, the admission contingency is removed.

An applicant may also be admitted with one or more departmental contingencies, requirements the department expects the student to fulfill by a certain deadline. Departmental admissions contingencies are monitored by the department and typically are prerequisite courses, standardized tests, or another similar requirement. When this contingency information is included in the program's admission decision, the Graduate School verifies during the degree audit that the requirements were fulfilled.

Conditional Admission Policy

For International Applicants Who Do Not Meet English Language Test Score Requirements

A prospective international applicant who meets all requirements but has no TOEFL or IELTS score may be admitted conditionally into Graduate School if, after one year of ESL study at MSU, the student passes the required language test and attains full admission to the graduate program. Students accepted under this conditional admission policy would have been admitted by a department by virtue of meeting all other requirements for admission.

These students are initially allowed to take only ESL classes and are placed on hold to prevent registration for other courses. The applicant can only receive full admission to the Graduate School after completing the ESL requirements. **Conditionally-admitted students can be admitted only for a Fall semester to ensure completion of the required ESL within one academic year.**

Unclassified Admission

A non-degree-seeking applicant wishing to take graduate-level courses may be admitted as an unclassified graduate student. This process requires the unclassified graduate application, a statement of purpose, an official transcript verifying the applicant's bachelor's degree, and a \$60.00 application fee.

Once admitted unclassified, the student may not apply for a graduate degree program for the same semester. Up to 9 hours of graduate work earned while unclassified may be transferred to a degree program with the approval of the graduate program. Hours completed in unclassified status may not be used to satisfy provisional admission requirements if the student is later admitted to a degree program.

The College of Business does not allow unclassified graduate students to take courses. Students must be accepted to a degree program prior to registering for courses in that college.

There are limitations to Financial Aid for students in the unclassified status. Applicants seeking Financial Aid should contact Student Financial Aid at 662-325-2450.

In order to be admitted in unclassified status, an international student who does not meet criteria under English Language Requirements for International Students must submit an appropriate TOEFL score for admission.

Current and retired Mississippi State University faculty are not required to submit a transcript in order to enroll in a graduate course as an unclassified graduate student.

Application and registration requirements include:

1. The applicant submits electronically an Unclassified Graduate Application, a statement of purpose, an official transcript showing proof of an earned baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution (in native language along with translated copies if appropriate), and a non-refundable application fee to the Office of the Graduate School; site link is <http://www.grad.msstate.edu/>. When asked to choose a program, the unclassified applicant must select No Degree/Unclassified Grad.
2. The Office of the Graduate School will send a decision letter to the student by email.
3. Once admitted, an unclassified student must receive permission from the academic department of interest. The graduate coordinator or course instructor (or approved designate) signs the Unclassified Graduate Student Registration Approval Form (https://www.grad.msstate.edu/files/Unclassified_Registration_Form_2018.pdf), and a department representative enters a major override for each approved course. Only the department offering the course may approve.
4. The student submits the form to the Office of the Graduate School via email (gradregistration@grad.msstate.edu) to obtain a release for registration.
5. The student registers online. Detailed instructions found: https://www.grad.msstate.edu/files/online_regform_instructions.pdf.

Military Deferment of Admission

A military student who has been admitted to a degree program but has not yet registered and who subsequently receives deployment orders may request deferment of admission. The new date of admission may be up to two years from the date of release from active duty. If the student takes classes from another university or college during the deferment period, an official transcript must be submitted.

Readmission

Once enrolled in graduate study, a student who subsequently fails to enroll for three consecutive semesters (excluding summer) must complete an Application for Readmission to register again. The student must submit a non-refundable application fee with the readmission application.¹ If the student has attended another college or university during the absence, the student must submit an official transcript from that institution. Readmission to a program requires departmental recommendation only if the student is not in good standing or if the student requires an extension of time to complete the program. However, academic departments may set higher standards for readmission to specific programs. A student seeking readmission to an academic program should contact the graduate coordinator for specific departmental requirements prior to completing a readmission application.

The following departments have more stringent readmission requirements.

- **Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology (College of Education)** requires that a student who has not been enrolled at MSU for two semesters (fall and spring) must submit a new application and statement of purpose to be considered for readmission. A student who has not been enrolled for more than two semesters (fall or spring) must complete a new application packet including new recommendation letters.
- **Department of Instructional Systems and Workforce Development (College of Education)** requires that a student who has not been enrolled for three consecutive semesters must submit a readmission application that includes new GRE scores (if the GRE is older than five years), three letters of recommendation (if they are older than three years since the last application), and a revised statement of purpose that (1) describes the purpose of reapplying, (2) discusses the applicant's career goals, (3) explains how circumstances have changed making academic improvement a realistic goal, and (4) identifies the applicant's research interest (Ph.D. students only).
- **Department of Political Science and Public Administration (College of Arts and Sciences)** requires that a student who has not been enrolled for one regular semester (fall or spring) must submit a readmission application and statement of purpose to be approved by the graduate coordinator. A student who has not been enrolled at MSU for two semesters (fall and spring) must submit a new application and statement of purpose to be considered for readmission. Letters from the original application will also be reviewed.

¹ **The readmission process does not negate the continuous enrollment requirement.** Refer to the Continuous Enrollment section under General Requirements of the Graduate School.

Faculty Admission

An MSU faculty member who holds an academic rank beyond that of an instructor or the equivalent normally will not be permitted to earn an advanced degree at this institution. This means that assistant professors, associate professors, and professors normally cannot become candidates for an advanced degree at Mississippi State. An instructor who enrolls in an advanced degree program at MSU should not expect promotion beyond that rank as long as he/she is working for the advanced degree.

Senior Citizen

Legal residents of the State of Mississippi age 60 or older may enroll tuition-free in a maximum of 6 hours per semester (fall, spring, or combined summer term) with a maximum of 18 credit hours per calendar year. Course registration is available to senior citizens on a space-available, first-come, first-serve basis. Enrollment in courses offered for the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree is not permitted. The non-refundable application fee is required with the graduate application.

Obtaining a Registration Release following Non-Registration Semester(s)

An admitted student who began a graduate program but later did not enroll for a fall or spring semester will not automatically have a Registration Release. The student's major professor must contact the admissions staff in the Office of the Graduate School by email to request the release for the student. A student who has not enrolled must know and follow Readmission requirements, being aware that some programs have more stringent readmission policies than the Graduate School.

Undergraduate Enrollment in Graduate Courses

An undergraduate student at Mississippi State University or any university with which Mississippi State University has agreements, who lacks 12 or fewer credit hours to complete the undergraduate degree requirements may seek approval to enroll in courses for graduate credit in the final undergraduate semester or term. The student should meet the grade point average requirement for regular admission to the particular graduate program. An undergraduate student may take up to 9 graduate credit hours; the combination of undergraduate and graduate credit hours may not exceed 13. Any exception to the stated criteria must be approved by the Provost.

In order to register for the course(s), the MSU student must submit the Undergraduate Request to Enroll in Graduate Courses form (<http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/>) signed by the student's undergraduate department head, dean of the student's college, and instructor(s) of the graduate course(s). The completed form is taken or sent to the Office of the Graduate School where an override is entered, enabling the student to register for the course(s).

An undergraduate at another university must submit the completed Transient Undergraduate Request to Enroll in Graduate Courses form to the Office of the Graduate School. When the request is approved, the student will apply online to the Graduate School as an unclassified graduate student and submit an official transcript, a letter of good standing, and a non-refundable application fee. Upon admission, the student may then register through the appropriate campus.

Alcorn State Workforce Education Leadership Registration at MSU

An Alcorn State University (ASU) graduate student enrolled in the Workforce Education Leadership (WEL) master's degree program is permitted to enroll in MSU WEL program course(s) offered for graduate credit. In order to register, the Alcorn student must submit the completed Transient Request to Enroll in Graduate Course(s) Workforce Education Leadership--Alcorn State University (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/Alcorn_Workforce_Education_Leadership_Transient_Request.pdf) form approved with required Alcorn signatures to the Office of the Graduate School. When the request is approved by MSU, the student will apply online to the Graduate School as an unclassified graduate student. A statement of purpose, official transcripts (bachelor's degree and current ASU graduate transcript), and a Letter of Good Standing are required. The application fee is waived. A maximum of 9 graduate credit hours of enrollment is allowed. Any exception to the stated criteria must be approved by the Provost.