

Middle Tennessee State University - Instructional Space Use Procedures

(Revised 3/31/2022)

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 through the Academic Scheduling Committee and approved by the vice presidents, 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 chair, college dean, and Registrar's Office, any issues that cannot be resolved between these parties will be presented to the Provost 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 Class Schedule Production Guidelines:

http://mtsu.edu/resources/staff/docs/Schedule_Production_Guidelines.pdf.

Priority Classrooms

First priority rooms are classified as either standard or restricted access instructional spaces and are assigned to each department by the Provost Office. Typically, the standard access instructional spaces are those classrooms that could be used to teach most lecture type courses (for example, general education English courses). Most instructional spaces are considered standard access. Restricted access spaces are determined through the appropriate dean and the Provost Office.

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, the departments have submitted their schedules to the Registrar's Office, and the scheduler has run, they no longer have first priority access to these rooms.

First priority rooms not scheduled during the initial scheduling period will be used by the scheduler program to place classes that were not able to be pre-assigned.

Standard access classrooms are open for use by any department on campus after priority scheduling. Restricted access classrooms are rooms used only by the department with first priority access and require department permission to be scheduled by another department. Restricted access instructional spaces are typically those spaces having specialized equipment that would interfere with a lecture class. Classrooms marked as scheduling restricted are classrooms restricted due to accessibility or suitability due to technology or configuration.

Sharing and Pre-assignment

Departments coordinate use of large classrooms, computer rooms, and shared space as needed with other departments in building the course schedule. Approximately 80% of courses are pre-assigned in a department's priority space or space 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. Unassigned classes are put in rooms based on enrollment only.

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 schedule copy. Notification must include the course number(s) affiliated with the event, the type of activity to be scheduled, and the appropriate dates/times for the event.

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. These approvals will be kept on file.

Non-Standard Class Meeting Start Dates (Short Courses)

The first class meeting of a course should be scheduled to coincide with the first week of the semester. This requirement may be satisfied by having a brief meeting with students enrolled in the course either in person or online during the first week for the semester. Prior to the first class meeting, faculty should communicate the schedule of class meetings and the syllabus. The class meeting dates and other expectations can be listed with the course information in the online course schedule.

Departments with weekend courses may need to coordinate more closely to eliminate any conflicting class meeting times for those students wishing to take more than one weekend course.

To obtain an exception from the required standard class meeting start date, the department must email a request to the appropriate dean. If approved by the dean, the request is sent to the Registrar's Office for approval. The request should include the term(s), room assignment, course number and section, proposed meeting schedule (days and hours), and reason for exception. The Registrar's Office will consider the type of course and the effects on students in determining the approval. The Registrar's Office will forward a response to the academic department, college dean, and scheduler. **Most requests not associated with weekend courses will not be approved due to the additions of multiple accelerated terms and additional summer sessions to accommodate classes that do not want to meet the entire full term.**

Non-Standard Meeting Times

Departments are encouraged to offer course offerings across all standard meeting times. Adherence to the standard meeting time periods also provides final examination scheduling without time conflicts. Three credit hour courses **MUST** meet on standard meeting times unless an exception is approved.

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

- Course meets for 1, 2, or 4 credit hours or more and begins on a standard meeting time or ends on a standard meeting time, or
- Course is 1, 2, or 4 credit hours or more and meets within a standard meeting time, or
- Course is 1, 2, or 4 credit hours or more and meets on a non-standard time but is scheduled back to back in the same room all day, or
- Course is offered on a Friday afternoon or off-campus, or
- Course meets specific weekends (F/S), or
- Course is offered one day a week and fits within a standard meeting time.

Laboratory 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.

Exceptions will not be made during most peak times. One-day per week, 3-credit hour courses may not meet before the standard 2:40 PM start time Monday through Thursday or 12:40 PM on Friday. Exceptions have a better chance to be approved for requests if using first priority space only or restricted rooms.

To obtain an approval for a non-laboratory class, the department must submit an approval email from the chair, who then submits a request on to the college dean. If approved by the dean, the request is emailed to the Registrar’s Office for 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 forward a response to the academic department, college dean, and scheduler. **Classes with non-standard meeting times will not be scheduled until approved.**

Standard Class Meeting Times – Fall & Spring Terms

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

Meeting Times are shown in 24-hour clock time (military time). These times are converted into standard clock (am/pm) times in the online schedule (PipelineMT).

<p>Monday/Wednesday/Friday (55 minutes)</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Tuesday/Thursday (85 minutes)</p> <p>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</p>
<p>Monday/Wednesday (85 minutes)</p> <p>8:40 – 10:05 12:40 - 14:05 14:20 - 15:45 16:10 - 17:35 18:00 - 19:25 19:40 - 21:05</p>	<p>AFTERNOON TIMES - ONE AFTERNOON WEEKLY (180 minutes)</p> <p>Monday or Tuesday or Wednesday or Thursday</p> <p>14:40 - 17:40 16:30 - 19:30</p>

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
---	--

Summer Standard Meeting Times

Times indicated are standard for 3-credit hour courses. Courses offered for more or less than 3-credit 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	7:30 – 9:30
MTWR	10:00 – 12:00
MTWR	12:30 – 14:30
MTWR	15:00 – 17:00
MTWR	18:00 – 20:00
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

Changes to Course Schedule Type/Instructional Method

The department determines how a course is taught. However, to change from one schedule type or instructional method to another at the catalog level, the department must submit a request to the Vice Provost for Academic Programs for approval.

These are the active course schedule type codes and instructional method codes with their descriptions. Each course section has one of each. The schedule type is defined at the catalog level and cannot be changed without approval from the Vice Provost for Academic Programs. The Instructional Method may be changed at the section level depending on how the course is delivered.

The schedule types with asterisks* are those that may be able to follow the LAB exemption for non-standard time. For MUP and PEA, they 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 without approval to be a distance learning course.**

Schedule Type

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

The instructional methods in bold must have a meeting space on campus since they should also have a meeting pattern line. You can't have a meeting pattern line without space assigned.

Classes with meeting patterns cannot be listed as TBA for the building and location without approval.

Instructional Method

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
WAST	Web-Assisted (Ends Spring 2022)
WEB	Distance Learning: Online*
WEBAS	Distance Learning: Online-Asynchronous-Synchronous*

**Classes with an asterisk are assigned this instructional method at the section level only and must have approval from Distance Learning in advance*

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 Registrar's Office cannot accommodate disabled instructor's needs, the department should contact the ADA Campus Coordinator.

Students with disabilities must request accommodation such as room changes through the Disability and Access Center, and not through the individual faculty member or department.

Moving Classes After Registration

The optimal time to make a class change for instructional preference reasons is before priority registration. When changes occur late, students are not notified of the room change through normal communications. Faculty and departments are expected to notify students if a last-minute change is requested.

Many students, including students with disabilities, determine their schedule based on times and location. Students with disabilities register early so we may move these courses to accessible spaces if necessary. Once early registration is completed, any requests for room changes are reviewed to

determine if any students with disabilities are affected. 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.

Changing room assignments after enrollment affects the schedules of disabled students. Additionally, the appropriately sized classroom and the technology needed for instructional purposes may not be available at the last minute.

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, 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.

Zero and Low Enrollment Courses

Courses should typically not be scheduled with zero enrollments. Exceptions must be approved by the college dean to be listed as a reserve course with the attribute ARES. Courses cannot have space assigned if there is zero enrollment for the purpose of holding space.

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 =	10 students enrolled
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.

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.

Cancellation of Classes

The department chair determines if classes need to be cancelled and then seeks approval from his or her dean. Prior approval from the Director of General Education is not needed. However, the Director of General Education should be informed of general education offerings and cancellations.

The Office of the University Provost provides resources as needed to avoid cancelling general education classes.

- If a possible cancellation is due to space concerns, please contact the Registrar's Office.
- If a possible cancellation is due to staffing concerns, please contact the Provost Office for guidance and assistance.

Enrollment Equals Room Capacity

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 lottery and scholarships.

Expected enrollment on each course section (including joint undergraduate/graduate and cross-listed courses) should not exceed room capacity to ensure all code standards are maintained.

Exceptions (including overbooking) 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 room capacity in your request to the Dean and Registrar's Office. If there is a specific student that needs to be enrolled, please provide the student name and rationale so the Registrar's Office will increase course enrollment only for the specific student.

There are three primary reasons that overbooking be approved through the department, college, and the Registrar's Office.

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.

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.

Students Expect to Have a Seat When They Enroll in a Course.

When course enrollments exceed room capacities, students and/or faculty borrow furniture from nearby instructional spaces, creating unexpected shortages in those classrooms. If the request to overbook is approved, the University delivers chairs.

To assist departments and faculty in not overbooking classrooms, the Registrar's Office has placed the following links in PipelineMT under the Faculty Services tab.

CRN Enrollment/Location Outstanding Permits

To quickly view the meeting times/days/room, instructor, actual enrollment/maximum enrollment/room capacity, and unused permits. Before issuing the ENRL override, 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.

Student Schedule Time Conflicts

Although we prefer standard meeting times so students do not experience time conflicts with their schedule, departments can override a student's time conflict. 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 instructor or instructors are willing to work with the student, then the department secretary enters a time conflict override on SFASRPO. If a time conflict would result from a change in meeting patterns after registration begins, the Registrar's Office will not make a meeting pattern change.

Assignment Priorities

Scheduling instructional spaces will be based on the following priorities:

- Instructional functions
- 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
- 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.

Prior Assignments

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.

Other Scheduling Considerations

All labs and other courses for which equipment or other need dictates use of a particular space will be pre-assigned before other courses.

Faculty teaching in consecutive time periods will only be scheduled in the same room or building if the department coordinates it on their own using first priority space. Otherwise space will be assigned without consideration for the instructor's schedule.

For reasons of efficiency, small classes may be moved so larger classes can occupy larger rooms. After the final run of the scheduling algorithm, 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 for time changes.

Departmental meetings, club meetings, etc., which often utilize academic classrooms, will be scheduled after the schedule of classes has been finalized. Faculty meetings are typically assigned before other activities. Departments should carefully schedule all possible courses for a term in the

first effort at building a term schedule.

All academic departments must 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 partitions is given first to the classes with the largest expected enrollment, and next to general studies courses. Final assignment responsibility resides with Registrar's Office personnel.

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.