



Advising FAQs

How do I identify my advisor and when should we meet?

An Academic Advisor is assigned to students by school or program. Academic Advisors are listed on MSU's website under the Quick Links for Advising. Health program students, social work, and culinary arts students are advised by their respective program directors. Students should meet with Academic Advisors anytime that they have questions about program requirements, course selection, or for scheduling. While an advisor's signature is not required for registration, students are encouraged to meet with an advisor to ensure that degree requirements are being met.

What should I do if I'm failing a course?

If you are failing a course, you are encouraged to first speak with the instructor for recommendations for improvement. Students are also encouraged to contact the Tutoring Center to enlist the services of a tutor. If that option does not improve your grade, you may withdraw from the course. To withdraw, complete a withdrawal form from the Student Services office or mail a request for withdrawal to the Registrar's Office. The request must be received by the withdrawal date published in the academic calendar for you to receive a grade of "W". Otherwise, you will receive a grade of "F". If you receive financial aid, talk to a financial aid staff member before withdrawing.

How will I know how many credits will transfer to MSU and how many more I will need to complete?

To have transfer credit evaluated and applied toward your degree plan, you must submit official transcripts from all colleges and universities you have attended. Transfer credits are evaluated by Student Services, except in the case of international students. Credit for courses completed with a grade of "C" or better is considered for equivalence to Mountain State University courses and applicability to University and program requirements. Once your transfer evaluation is complete, you should speak with your academic advisor to determine how the transfer credits will apply toward your program of study.

As a transfer student, how many credits must I take at MSU?

All students are required to complete at least 30 hours of coursework through MSU for a Bachelor's degree, 18 hours for an associate degree, or 6 hours for a certificate. Different requirements may apply to students who receive credit for prior learning through a collaborative arrangement between MSU and another school or organization.

Do developmental courses count as credits toward graduation?

Generally, developmental courses do not count as credits toward graduation.

How many classes do I have to take to be "full-time"?

For University purposes, a full-time undergraduate student is one who is enrolled in 12 or more hours for a semester or 6 hours for a five-week summer session.

How do I contact an instructor?

The best way for students to contact instructors is by using the contact information provided on the instructor's syllabus. A directory of faculty and staff is also provided on MSU's website. In addition, students may also contact secretaries for schools or departments and leave a message for the instructor.

What should I do if I miss a class?

If you miss a class, your first step should be to contact the instructor prior to the next class to inquire about missed assignments. If you are unable to contact the instructor prior to the next class, you may want to contact a classmate. If both of those options are ineffective or not possible, then be sure to speak to the instructor regarding the absence and missing assignments at the next class meeting.

MAIN CAMPUS

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How do I add a class if it's full?

If a class is full, then there are no longer seats available in that class. You will not be permitted to register for that class unless someone drops the class. Continue to check the enrollment of full classes to see if any seats are open. If a seat opens, registration for that course opens on a first-come, first-serve basis.

How do I drop and add classes?

To drop a class, you will need to obtain an Add-Drop form from Student Services or the Student Forms web page. The form can be presented in person, mailed, or faxed in order to drop a class. To add a class, you may register online through Cougar Web or by submitting an Add-Drop form listing the new class either in person at the registration desk in Student Services, by faxing the form, or mailing the form. The last day to drop and add classes for traditional courses is the last day of late registration. For independent study courses, you have 10 business days from the time that you register to add and drop classes.

What is academic probation?

Academic sanctions result when your semester or cumulative GPA falls below 2.0. Sanctions are determined at the end of the fall and spring semester. You will be notified by mail if you are placed under an academic sanction; sanctions may affect your financial aid eligibility. Students on academic warning are placed on academic probation if their semester GPA falls below 2.0. During the semester spent on academic probation, students are not allowed to carry more than 12 credit hours and must attain a 2.0 semester average to avoid academic suspension.

Can I earn credit for life experience?

Prior Learning Assessment allows students to receive college credit for knowledge, skills, and abilities they have gained through work, training, hobbies, and other life experiences. Qualified students may apply for credit in one or more courses after developing a portfolio that describes and documents such learning. They may then receive credit for a particular course if they demonstrate a level of knowledge and learning to that of traditional students.

Can I take courses at the community college close to my hometown over the summer and transfer credit to MSU?

Mountain State University students who wish to take courses at other institutions for transfer credit must complete a transient student permit, available from Student Services, to ensure that the courses will be accepted toward their program of study. Student Services must receive official transcripts for transient coursework completed elsewhere before credit can be accepted. The transient permit should be faxed or emailed to the advisor for further processing.

What is a Grad Report?

A Grad Report is a listing of the requirements for each degree. As you complete courses, the grad report reflects the completed courses and your grade in each course. Grad Reports may be obtained from Cougar Web under the student tab. Grad reports can also be obtained from the student's advisor.

Where do I go to get a student ID?

ID cards are made in the Library located in the Robert C. Byrd Learning Resource Center. All new students are required to obtain an identification card, and returning students must validate their ID for the current term. You must have a valid ID card to check out materials from the library and to use the computer lab and other University services.

Where do I go to get my textbooks?

Textbooks can be obtained from the MSU Bookstore. The Bookstore is located near the main campus, at 410 Neville Street in uptown Beckley. Bookstore hours when the University is in session are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with extended hours during regular and late registration periods. Bookstore services are also available online or by phone.

Where can I apply for a parking permit?

Parking permits are available at the registration desk in Benedum Center. A separate permit for Housing and Residence Life is required to park in the Hogan Hall and University Hall parking lots.

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Are there tutors available?

Students who need academic assistance may benefit from peer tutoring services, which are available to currently enrolled students and to the community at no charge on a walk-in basis or by appointment. Contact the Tutoring Center in Wiseman Hall for more information on tutoring services or for working as a tutor.

Also, click on [Tutor.com](https://www.tutor.com) from our website to connect to an online tutor. This free service connects MSU students to expert tutors in mathematics, science, social studies, and English.

Which courses count as electives for the general education areas (humanities and fine arts, social science, natural science, communication skills, computer proficiency, and mathematics)?

MSU's general education requirements and a list of approved electives for each area are available from the Undergraduate Catalog available online.

Why do I have to take ENGL 100 and MATH 100?

Students who do not have sufficient ACT, SAT, or ACT Residual test scores are required to begin with ENGL 100 and MATH 100. A complete listing of placement score standards can be found in the MSU Catalog.

How do I change my major?

In order for a student to change his/her major, he/she must complete the Student Change of Major form and submit it to the Advising Center for processing. Student Change of Major forms can be obtained from the Advising Center, Registration, Enrollment Management, faculty advisors, or by accessing the Academic Advising page or Student Forms web page on MSU's website.

Am I required to take the ACT or SAT?

MSU does not require ACT or SAT scores for general admission. ACT and SAT scores are used for placement purposes for English and math courses. Students who do not have ACT or SAT scores and who opt not to take other placement exams will be placed in ENGL 100 College Writing and MATH 100 General Mathematics. Additionally, some selective enrollment programs require the submission of appropriate ACT or SAT scores. Please reference program specific requirements under that program's section in the MSU Catalog.

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