

The Office of Graduate Studies

ACADEMIC CATALOG



2015-2016

Approved by A.A.C. 6/10/15

Approved by Faculty Senate 6/18/15

Updated 12/9/15 to reflect SACSCOC Approval

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Office of Graduate Studies Academic Catalog of MGA

Updated with University policy approved in July 2015 9/8/15; updated regarding SACSCOC status 12/9/15

History of the Office of Graduate Studies

In the spring of 2015, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia approved the mission change for Middle Georgia State College, which would allow it to begin offering select master's degrees in the 2015-2016 academic year. With its new mission, the name of the recently consolidated institution changed on July 1, 2015, to Middle Georgia State University. Consequently, in June 2015, the Office of Graduate Studies was established at the Warner Robins Campus as the institution's headquarters for all issues of graduate programing, admissions, and planning. Offered by the School of Information Technology, the first degree approved was the Master of Science in Information Technology with specialized areas of study that include digital forensics and health informatics. The second degree was the Master of Science in Nursing in Adult/Gerontology Acute Care. As a position newly created and funded by the 2015-2016 FY budget, the Dean of Graduate Studies was assigned to administer graduate programs.

Dr. Kevin Cantwell, Interim Dean
Office of Graduate Studies
221 Academic Services Building
100 University Boulevard
Warner Robins, Georgia 31093
Phone: (478) 929-6712
FAX: (478) 929-6714

Mission

The mission of the Office of Graduate Studies is to develop and offer graduate degrees suitable for working adults that address the needs of the region and anticipate a growing knowledge economy.

Philosophy

Graduate education at Middle Georgia State University represents one of the highest values an institution can promote for its students and the region. Founded on the belief that its citizens develop better and more fulfilling lives by furthering their education at the graduate level, graduate education will encourage a culture of knowledge and life-long learning, the values and practices of problem solving, the discipline of applied research, the goals of personal and professional development, and a broad participation in a knowledge economy. At its inception, faculty and students will collaborate to create a graduate studies culture marked by scholarship and academic excellence, individual integrity, service to the community, and intellectual reinvention.

Accreditation

Middle Georgia State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award associate, baccalaureate, and master's degrees. Contact the Commission on Colleges for questions about the accreditation of Middle Georgia State University.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/ Commission on Colleges (SACS/COC)
1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033, (404) 679-4500; Fax: (404) 679-4558

The M.S.N. program is in the process of obtaining candidacy status with the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Full accreditation of the Master of Science in Nursing Program is anticipated by spring, 2017. [Modified 12/9/15]

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)
3342 Peachtree Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30326, (404) 975-5000

Knowledge of the Catalog

It is the responsibility of all Middle Georgia State University students to read, understand, and observe the rules and regulations of the University as published in the Academic Catalog and in other official announcements. The University reserves the right to change at any time any regulations and requirements as necessitated by the University or by the University System of Georgia. Unless otherwise determined by the Graduate Studies Catalog, graduate students shall follow the same policies applied to all students in the most recent Catalog and the most updated version of the Student Handbook. [Notice 1]

Non-discrimination Policy

Middle Georgia State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Educational and Employment Opportunity institution.

Factors of race, national origin, color, sex, age, religion, or disability are not considered in the admission or treatment of students or in employment, in accordance with Federal and State laws and regulations. It is the intent of the institution to comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent executive orders as well as Title IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

For questions and issues concerning equal opportunity and compliance, please contact:

- 1) Nondiscrimination of Students, Employess, and Applicants (issues of discrimination generally)

Middle Georgia State University
100 University Parkway
Macon, Georgia 31206
nondiscrimination@mga.edu

- 2) Complaints of Sex or Gender Discrimination (including allegations of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct)

Title IX Coordinator
Frances Marine Davis, University Counsel
Middle Georgia State University
(478) 471-2472
titleix@mga.edu

Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

For a newly updated policy on Sexual Harassment and Misconduct, see section 1.3.6 in <http://policies.mga.edu/>

Effective August 7, 2015

Freedom of Expression

For a newly developed policy on Freedom of Expression, see section 1.3.3 in <http://policies.mga.edu/>

Effective August 7, 2015

Disability Services

Disability Services coordinates and provides a variety of services for students with documented physical and learning disabilities. The aim of this service is to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to all academic and student programs offered at Middle Georgia State University. Services may include:

- Access and orientation to campus
- Adaptations for exams such as extended time
- Assistance in obtaining textbooks and course materials in alternate format (large print, alternative testing, access to electronic texts, etc.)
- Assistive technology software and AT lab
- *Disability Student Handbook* available to students upon registration with the Disability Services Coordination of academic accommodations with Middle Georgia State University faculty

Disability Services is located within the Counseling Center, located in the Student Life Center on the Macon Campus (478) 471- 2985, in Sanford Hall on the Cochran Campus (478) 934-3023, and is available by appointment on the Dublin, Eastman, and Warner Robins Campuses. For more information, visit the Web site at: <http://www.mga.edu/disability-services>.

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

Middle Georgia State University is committed to intellectual pluralism and academic freedom. The college recognizes that there are rights and responsibilities that exist concomitant with the academic freedoms underpinning the professional work of its faculty.

Accordingly, Middle Georgia State University operates under the principles of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) articulated in the 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure (with 1970 Interpretive Comments), which can be found here on the AAUP website: <http://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure>.

Admissions and Notice on Calendars

All applicants, returning students, current students, prospective graduates, and any others should refer to the University site for the most up-to-date calendar for application, payment, registration, drop-add, start of classes, midterm, finals, holidays, and any other important dates for the academic and business calendars.
<http://www.mga.edu/academics/calendars/default.aspx>

Contact for Admissions

Ms. Melinda Rodgers
Enrollment Call Center
Room 220, Campus Support Services
Macon, Georgia 31206
Phone: 1 (877) 238-8664
FAX: (478) 471-2469
graduateadmissions@mga.edu

General Admissions Requirements for Graduate Study

1. A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university.
2. Evidence of aptitude for success in graduate-level studies.
3. Completion of all program admissions requirements.
4. For residents of Georgia, Documentation of Lawful Residence

Applicants should note that they are ultimately responsible for understanding and following all current admissions guidelines, which sometimes change to remain current and in compliance with University System of Georgia policies, Middle Georgia State University policies, individual program policies, or State and Federal regulations. Prospective students are urged to communicate directly with the Office of Graduate Studies if they have questions, to read their university-generated emails, and to follow those guidelines or directives.

Program Admissions Requirements Masters of Science in Information Technology

1. Graduation from a regionally accredited college or university.
2. A Bachelor of Science degree in Information Technology or closely related field.
3. A minimum overall GPA of 2.5

4. Graduate Record Exam (GRE) with scores of at least a 140 on the verbal portion, at least 140 on the quantitative portion, and at least 3.5 on the analytical portion.
5. **GRE waived if** undergraduate GPA 3.0 or higher.

Additional Required Materials (M.S.I.T.)

- a. Statement of applicant goals for graduate study.
- b. Two letters of recommendation from either academic or professional sources.
- c. Official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate institutions.
- d. A current résumé.

Priority Acceptance to the Program (M.S.I.T.)

Applicant satisfying all required criteria with at least three or more years of experience in an IT environment will be given priority admission.

Acceptance with Academic Requirements (M.S.I.T.)

Acceptance with Academic Requirements may be awarded to students who have not satisfied all of the criteria, but who have given evidence that they may succeed in the degree program. A “B” grade or better in the first three courses is required before a student can be converted to Full Acceptance Status. [See provisional admission status below]

Program Admissions Requirements M.S.N. Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

1. One (1) year experience as Registered Nurse with adult population (preferred).
2. Unrestricted license as a Registered Nurse in the State of Georgia.
3. Bachelor of Science in Nursing from either a Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) or Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) accredited program.
4. Overall undergraduate GPA of 3.0.
5. Grade of “C” or better in an undergraduate statistics course.
6. Grade of “C” or better in a 3000- or 4000-level physical/health assessment course.
7. Graduate Record Exam (GRE) score 50th percentile or higher in verbal and math and 40th percentile or higher in writing.
8. **GRE waived if:** a) Undergraduate GPA 3.75 or higher and b) earned graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution.
9. **Not eligible for admission** if applicant has earned a grade of “C,” “D,” “F,” or “WF” in any two or more graduate nursing courses.

Additional Required Materials (M.S.N. Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner)

- a. Criminal Background Check
- b. Urine Drug Screen
- c. Résumé
- d. Statement of personal and professional goals
- e. Three letters of recommendation attesting to aptitude for graduate study

- f. Meet Southern Regional Education Board Council (SREB) on Collegiate Education Nursing Practice Standards/Essential Abilities
- g. Interview*

*Further instructions on the Interview are part of the application form.

Regular Admissions Status (RAS)

Fully accepted to the program having met all General Admissions Requirements for Graduate Studies and all other requirements or materials for a particular program. Materials must be received by 11:59 p.m. on the priority admissions deadline.

[Admissions deadlines are maintained and updated via the Graduate Studies page.]

Provisional Admissions Status (PAS)

Accepted to the program having met most of the General Admission Requirements for Graduate Studies and having submitted most materials required by a particular program. PAS is determined by the judgment of the Dean and the Graduate Program Coordinator, who shall provide for the provisionally accepted student a checklist and timeline of what must be completed and by what date to determine Regular Admissions Status. Unless otherwise specified by a particular program* PAS may be approved for up to 15 hours of credit, with the requirement that the student may not get below a B in any enrolled classes during PAS. Materials must be received by 11:59 p.m. on the late admissions deadline.

[Students can be granted PAS for no longer than twelve (12) months from the date of acceptance. Please note that PAS may affect the amount of financial aid since this aid would come from a student's remaining undergraduate funds.]

**PAS with Academic Requirement (Masters of Science in I.T. Program)*

Acceptance with Academic Requirements may be awarded to students who have not satisfied all of the criteria, but who have given evidence that they may succeed in the degree program. A grade of "B" or better must be earned in the first three classes.

Immunization Requirements

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia requires all students attending Middle Georgia State University to submit acceptable proof of immunization against the following: MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) 1 & 2, Tetanus-Diphtheria (Td booster in the last 10 years or primary series with DtaP, DTP or Td), and Varicella (either history of chicken pox, positive Varicella antibody, or two doses of vaccine given at least 1 month apart if immunized after age 13) before being allowed to register for classes. It is important that all shots be given after the first birthday. For students born before January 1, 1957, only proof of immunization against tetanus is required.

All applicants per USG policy are required to submit proof of immunization prior to attending classes. Certain applicants applying for online only programs may select the distance learning exemption. Applicants applying for the MS in Information Technology are allowed to use the

waiver option, but applicants for the MS in Nursing will be required to submit a completed immunization form.

Background Check Policy Related to Admission

Applicants to Middle Georgia State University are required to answer accurately on the GA411 application for admission and on any paper applications questions related to prior or pending charges and convictions. An affirmative answer to the questions does not automatically mean an admissions denial but it does require further review before a decision will be made. Applicants who mark “yes” to any of the criminal questions will undergo further review through the following methods: A completed background questionnaire with requested documentation concerning the adjudication of the case(s) will be required to be returned to the Office of Admissions. A signature on the questionnaire form allowing the College to perform a background check and investigation. For out of state arrests or convictions, applicants will be required to pay for a national background check. (Specific information on how to proceed with a national background check will be sent to the applicant in a letter.) Upon receipt of the background check, the Director of Admissions and/or the Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs will review the report and determine whether an admission decision can proceed forward or whether an interview with the Admissions Review Committee is required. Depending on the nature of the offense, an interview with the Admission Review Committee may be required. The committee will consist of representatives from Campus Police, Enrollment Management, Residence Life, and the Student Affairs office. Once a decision concerning admission is made, the Director of Enrollment Services is notified. The applicant will be notified of final decision by letter. The decision of the Admission Review Committee will be final. Applicants may reapply after one year and are strongly encouraged to consider other educational opportunities, to think about more specific life lessons learned, and/or more specific educational/career goals. Admissions decisions are contingent upon the results of criminal history information provided by the applicant or obtained during a background investigation. Applicants that demonstrate a history of criminal activity or behavior will be considered based on the nature, number and gravity of crimes for which the applicant was convicted and the amount of time that has passed since the conviction. Applicants that fail to report criminal history information may be removed from further consideration in the admissions process. All statements made in admissions applications must be true and complete. Discrepancies, misstatements, omissions, and/or falsifications may be cause for denial. If an applicant is admitted and it is later determined that the information provided during the admissions process was not factual or complete, the applicant may be academically dismissed from the University.

Students Enrolled at Other Institutions/ Transient Admissions Status (TAS)

Upon completion of the Online Graduate Admissions Form and by approval of the Dean of the school that houses the program, a student may register for 3 hours if enrolled in another graduate program; as such that student shall be labeled **Transient Admissions Status (TAS)**. At the time of registration, such students shall additionally provide evidence from their home institution that they are in good standing with at least a 3.0 GPA. Materials must be received by 11:59 p.m. on the late admissions deadline.

Transfer Credit

Each program may approve 0-9 hours of transfer credit upon approval of the Dean of the school that houses the program as evidenced by Graduate Studies Petition for Course Substitution and Transfer Credit, which has complete guidelines and can be found online on the Graduate Studies site.

Residency Rule

Students shall take their last 15 hours of credit in residence (defined as enrolled in MGSU classes) unless a Graduate Studies Transient Permission Form is approved for no more than 9 hours by the Dean of the school that houses the program and as submitted to the Registrar's Office prior to registering for those courses taken as a transient; such courses shall be from a fully accredited institution. As such that student shall be labeled **Transient Admissions Status (TAS)**.

Readmission

Former students in academic good standing who have attended Middle Georgia State University within a 12-month period and who have not attended any other institution in the interim are not required to reapply. Former students in academic good standing who have not been in attendance for 12 months or more must reapply through the Office of Graduate Studies. Students who have attended another college or university since last attending Middle Georgia State University must furnish official transcripts from each institution attended and contact the Office of Graduate Studies to update their record.

Former students will be evaluated for readmission based on the current admission standards and be evaluated for graduation from the catalog in effect at the time of readmission.

International Applicant Admissions Requirements

Definition of an International Student:

1. You are not a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident and are currently in the United States on an F-1 student Visa.
2. You will require an F-1 visa to enter and study in the United States.
3. You are currently in the United States on some other class of visa. A copy of your visa from your passport must be submitted.

Middle Georgia State's Office of Graduate Studies welcomes applicants from other countries. International applicants interested in our graduate programs should complete the steps listed below.

Please note MGA offers degree programs online.* International Students who wish to pursue an online degree while remaining in their own country should follow steps 1-5 and notify the Office of Graduate Admissions that you wish to be a distance learner studying in your own country.

1. Complete the [Graduate Studies Application](#)
2. [\\$40 application fee paid online](#)
3. Get official transcripts of all non-U.S. colleges attended evaluated by an official U.S. Credential Evaluation Service. The results should be sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions directly from the evaluator. International applicants must have the equivalent of an U.S. Bachelor's Degree. A course-by-course and grade point average (GPA) evaluation is required for college/university records. World Education Services is our preferred credential evaluator and they can be reached at 212-966-6311 or www.wes.org.
4. Request that all U.S. colleges/universities that you have attended or are attending, send your official academic transcript to the Graduate Admissions Office.
5. Submit required documents for program of interest to the Graduate Admissions Office.
6. Applicants whose native language is not English must provide evidence of English language proficiency. Request that your official Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores be sent to the Graduate Admissions Office. For additional information regarding the TOEFL, please visit www.ets.org

Exceptions to the English (TOEFL) Requirement: Applicants holding a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university.

7. Submit an affidavit of financial support, **a letter from your family or sponsor** stating they will pay for your education, and **certified bank records showing three months of transactions with a balance of at least \$25,000 per year** available to you for your educational and living expenses in the United States. Please be advised that Middle Georgia State does not offer a financial aid program for International Students.

Once all required documents have been received, the completed application packet will be forwarded to the respective department for review.

If you are currently attending another college or university in the U.S. and wish to transfer to Middle Georgia State, please contact the Office of Graduate Admissions.

International students are required to submit proof of immunization for certain communicable diseases. Immunization certification must be submitted on the form supplied by the college. Health insurance is mandatory for international students.

Where to Send Select Documents

Required documents, other than official transcripts, test scores, and credential evaluation reports, may be imaged and emailed to graduateadmissions@mga.edu, faxed to 478.471.2469, or mailed to Graduate Admissions c/o Melinda Rodgers, 100 University Parkway, CSS 220, Macon, GA 31206 USA, 1.877.238.8664 (phone).

*MGA does not offer student visas for fully online programs.

Senior Citizen Admission (Persons Sixty-two Years of Age or Older)

Senior Citizen Admission Eligible persons (62 years of age or older) may audit or enroll in a course for resident credit on a space available basis without payment of fees except for application fees, supply fees, laboratory fees, and applied course fees. Applicants must provide evidence of immunization by completing the Immunization form provided by the Office of Graduate Admissions. To be eligible for admission and enrollment as a senior citizen, persons must:

1. Meet all requirements for admission as outlined elsewhere in this catalog.
2. Be a legal resident of the State of Georgia.
3. Be 62 years of age or older at the time of registration. (A birth certificate or other comparable written documentation of age must be submitted with the application for admission.)

Admission of Veterans

Veterans' Affairs

Middle Georgia State University is approved for the educational training of the following eligible persons:

1. Pre-approved veterans with service-connected disabilities.
2. Students with VA educational eligibility under the Montgomery/ GI Bill (Active Duty and Selected Reserve), the Post- 9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008 (New GI Bill), and the Reserve Educational Assistance Act (REAP).
3. Certain eligible spouses and dependents of veterans who are totally and permanently disabled as a result of military service, those who died while in the military, or those whose death resulted from a military-connected disability.

Veterans and other eligible persons interested in obtaining educational benefits must meet all applicable requirements for admission as outlined in this catalog; moreover, students who are certified to receive VA educational benefits will be governed by the same academic policies, rules, and regulations as stated in the Middle Georgia State University Catalog, and in the Middle Georgia State University Student Handbook. The Veterans' Certification Office provides the following services:

1. Certifying persons for the receipt of VA educational benefits.
2. Monitoring registration and withdrawal and academic progress with reporting as required to the Veterans' Administration.

Students who attend the University under the Montgomery GI Bill, REAP, and the New GI Bill are required to pay University tuition and fees as regular students since VA benefits are paid directly to recipients according to law. Students are certified according to VA rules separately for each term or mini-term as full time, 3/4 time, etc., depending on the length of the term and the hours taken. For more information, contact the Registrar's Office on the Macon Campus at (478) 757-2681 or the Registrar's Office on the Cochran campus at (478) 934-6406.

Vocational Rehabilitation Applicants

Vocational Rehabilitation Students who have fees paid by the Georgia Department of Human Resources, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, must request the Office of the Registrar to send copies of their grades to the Vocational Rehabilitation Office each semester. The University Bursar's Office must be in receipt of written authorization from the Vocational Rehabilitation Office prior to students' registration each semester.

Before Applying to a Graduate Program

1. Admission to Graduate Studies differs from undergraduate admission as admission decisions at the graduate level are made by the individual academic departments and requirements vary by program. Review the Program Checklist for all required materials.
2. Before you submit your application, scan unofficial transcripts, etc., and be prepared to send .pdf files to the Office of Graduate Admissions.
3. Request Official Transcripts at least a month before the deadline, which must be received either as a sealed document or accessed by the Office of Graduate Admissions through a secure access code. Official transcripts should be sent to the Office of Graduate Admissions.
4. The Letters of Recommendation are typed letters from academic or professional sources. Be sure to notify references that they will be asked to write a letter for you, and give them at least three weeks to complete the letter. Letters must be signed and then faxed, mailed, or scanned to the Office of Graduate Admissions by the reference.
5. Check the [GRE](#) site for test dates and locations. The institutional [GRE](#) code is **1602**. Note: The Office of Graduate Admissions accepts GRE scores taken within the past five years.

How to Apply:

- 1) Read all the information above in the [Before Applying to a Graduate Program](#)
- 2) Go to the University site.
- 3) Go to Academics.
- 4) Go to Graduate Studies on the navigation bar on the left.
- 5) Check Deadlines first!
- 6) Then go to Apply Now on the navigation bar on the left.
- 7) Follow all instructions on the site.
- 8) Once you've submitted all materials, return to Apply Now page and select Check

Student Email

Upon acceptance by the University and when assigned a 983##### student i.d. number, students must create an email account which they are responsible for accessing and through which the University disseminates all official notices and information. See the following site for instructions: <http://www.mga.edu/technology/email.aspx>

SWORDS (Student Web Organized Records and Data Systems) Accounts

Upon acceptance by the University and when assigned a 983##### student i.d. number, students must create a SWORDS account to access registration, grades, class schedules, transcripts, financial aid status, account balances, and much more. See the following site for instructions: <http://www.mga.edu/technology/banner.aspx>

Registering for Classes

During the published registration period on the academic calendar students may register online via their SWORDS account.

1. How to check your registration status
 - a. Go to www.mga.edu
 - b. Click on SWORDS
 - c. Enter your username (student id or SS#) and password
 - d. Click on the student tab
 - e. Click Registration
 - f. Click registration status
2. How to register for classes
 - a. Go to www.mga.edu
 - b. Click on SWORDS
 - c. Enter your username (student id or SS#) and password
 - d. Click on the student tab
 - e. Click registration
 - f. Click Select Term
 - g. Choose Registration Term and click submit
 - h. Click on Add or Drop Classes
 - i. Type CRNs into Add Classes Worksheet
 - j. Click on Submit Changes
 - k. Verify Course Schedule by viewing student detail schedule
NOTE: You may not register for a class unless you meet prerequisite requirements.
3. How to view your student detail schedule
 - a. Go to www.mga.edu

- b. Click on SWORDS
 - c. Enter your username (student i.d. or S.S.#) and password
 - d. Click on the student tab
 - e. Click Registration
 - f. Click Student Detail Schedule
4. How to drop a class
- a. Go to www.mga.edu
 - b. Click on SWORDS
 - c. Enter your username (student i.d. or S.S.#) and password
 - d. Click on the student tab
 - e. Click registration
 - f. Click Select Term
 - g. Choose Registration Term
 - h. Click on Add or Drop Classes
 - i. On the add classes worksheet locate the **action** column
 - j. Select **dropped on web** from the drop-down menu next to the class you wish to drop
 - k. Click submit changes
 - l. Verify that the change is accurate and completed before logging out of SWORDS.

Brightspace/D2L/Student Learning/Course Delivery Platform

Brightspace (formerly D2L) is the Learning Management System of Middle Georgia State University. It's a relatively easy way to create a course web site. A Brightspace course site allows "anytime, anywhere" access to syllabi, readings, multi-media files, electronic drop boxes, online quizzes, communication, grading, student progress reports, etc. See the following site for instructions: <http://www.mga.edu/d2l/default.aspx>

Educational Support

Academic Advising

Academic advising is provided by the School and program that houses a degree. Each program will have a designated program advisor, and advising hours and locations will be posted electronically on online course platforms; on the information page of the Graduate Studies Office; and on the information page of the School that houses the program. Except for part-time instructors, all full-time faculty will be trained in advising and shall be assigned advisees under the direction of the Dean and/or the Graduate Program Coordinator. Faculty will be available for advising at certain hours during early, regular, and late registration. All full-time faculty will make themselves available for advising by appointment, which may be conducted in-person, by phone, or by Skype or similar programs.

Technical Support

Technical support is provided by the Office of Technology Resources and its Help Desk, which is headquartered in Campus Support Services, 100 University Boulevard, Macon, GA 31206 or at helpdesk@mga.edu. Students may call (478) 471-2773 in Macon; (478) 934-3319 or (478) 934-3039 in Cochran. Technical Support offices are located at TAC in the Macon Campus Library; in Jackson Hall on the Cochran Campus; in L7 in the Library of the Dublin Campus; in room 1147 in the Terry L. Coleman Center for Aviation and Technology on the Eastman Campus; or room 118 Thomas Hall in Warner Robins, (478) 929-6730. D2L/Brightspace help is provided through the above offices or through the D2L/Brightspace link on its homepage <http://www.mga.edu/d2l/help.aspx>.

Student Fees and Financial Policies

Bursar's Office Website for Current Tuition and Fee Amounts:

<http://www.mga.edu/bursar/tuition-and-fees.aspx>

Tuition and fee* payments may be made at physical campus locations *by cash, check or money order only*. No credit cards are accepted for tuition at the campus locations.

*Excluding the graduate studies application fee, which must be made through the link on the Admissions page.

Payments may be made online by logging into the SWORDS account on the MGA website. Online payment options are as follows:

- Credit Cards – a 2.9% convenience fee will be added for using a credit card. VISA, Mastercard, Discover, and American Express will be accepted for online payment.
- HigherOne One Account – no convenience fee will be added when using your HigherOne One Account.
- E-check (electronic check) – no convenience fee will be added when paying by e-check, but you will need your bank routing number and your account number.

Important Note: *Payments for miscellaneous fines or fees (library fines, parking fines, graduation applications, etc.) can still be made at the Macon, Cochran, Dublin, Eastman and Warner Robins campus payment locations with a credit card (MasterCard, Discover, American Express or VISA will be accepted and no convenience fee will be added), as well as with a check or cash. Cash, check or money order only will be accepted at the Robins Resident Center.*

A student attending classes who has not completed registration with the Bursar's Office through payment of tuition and fees will be held liable for the total due plus any service fees assessed, applicable collection costs, court costs, and legal fees associated with collection efforts. A "hold" will be placed on the record of any student who has a financial obligation to the University and will remain on the student's record until the obligation is settled. This "hold"

prevents a student from registering for additional classes, from graduating, and from obtaining grades and transcripts.

Persons who have checks returned by a bank for any reason must promptly settle that obligation with the University, along with a \$30 returned item fee that is assessed. Failure to do so will be considered nonpayment of tuition and fees. The University reserves the right to void a student's registration for nonpayment of tuition and fees at any time during the academic term. The University also reserves the right to place students on "cash only" status for writing checks that are not honored by a bank.

It is the responsibility of all MGA students to be informed of, and to observe all regulations and procedures regarding the payment of tuition and fees and the entitlement of refunds. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because a student pleads ignorance of the regulation or asserts that he/she was not informed of the regulation by an advisor or other authority. Verbal misinformation is not grounds for waiver of a regulation. All questions concerning tuition and fees and refunds should be directed to the Bursar's Office.

Payment of Tuition and Fees

Payment deadlines are listed on the University's website under the Bursar's Office webpage. Registration is not complete until all tuition and fees have been paid. All tuition, fees, and other charges are subject to change at the end of any semester.

Tuition Rates

Base Rate: This rate applies to all currently enrolled graduate students at Middle Georgia State.

eTuition rate: This rate applies to all totally online courses and is applied as a per credit hour add-on to the Base Rate. Please see the Bursar's Office webpage for the applicable rate.

Program	Base Rate	Online add-on	Total Per Credit Hour
MSIT	\$195 per credit hr	\$60	\$255 PCH
MSN	\$195 per credit hr	\$60	\$255 PCH

These rates apply to tuition only and are subject to increase each year. New rates are automatically calculated on students' schedule bills. Any questions may be directed to one of the cashiers in the Bursar's Office by calling (478) 471-2705.

Fees

In addition to tuition, Middle Georgia State imposes certain fees. Current fee amounts are listed on the University's website under the Bursar's Office page. For graduate students taking classes on one of the five campuses, all fees charged to undergraduate students would apply. For students taking only online graduate courses, the following fees apply:

- **Technology Fee (\$46):** All students enrolled at Middle Georgia State are assessed a technology fee each semester. This fee is used to support technology improvements directly benefitting students.
- **Special Institution Fee (up to 4 credit hours, \$125; 5 or more credit hours, \$250):** All USG students are required to pay a mandatory special institution fee imposed by the Board of Regents.
- **Student Health Insurance:** Students enrolled in graduate nursing programs, or international students holding F or J visas at Middle Georgia State, are required to have health insurance that meets minimum standards as mandated by the University System of Georgia. More information can be found on the University's website under Student Health Insurance.
- **Liability Insurance (\$16 per semester):** Nursing students enrolled in clinical programs require professional liability insurance. This fee is nonrefundable.
- **Graduation Fee (\$35):** Fee required when applying for graduation.
- **Online Course Proctoring Fee:** Some online courses require proctored exams for which there is a fee. Currently not required in master's level classes for AY 2016.
- **Transcript Fee (\$5):** Waived for graduates of Middle Georgia State College/Middle Georgia State University who apply to Middle Georgia State University graduate programs but required for all if sent to other institutions.

Additional Costs of Attendance

Students may incur additional costs of attendance while attending Middle Georgia State graduate programs. These costs include, but are not limited to, textbooks, course supplies, nursing uniforms, and instruments.

Refund Policy (Non-Financial Aid)

A full refund will be given to students who officially withdraw prior to the last the drop/add period. The refund amount for students completely withdrawing from the University after the last day of the drop/add period will be based on a pro rata percentage determined by dividing the total number of calendar days in the semester the student has completed by the total number of calendar days in the semester. The total number of calendar days in the semester will include weekends. Scheduled breaks of five or more days and days that a student was on an approved leave of absence are excluded. No refunds will be issued once a student has completed 60% or more of a semester. However, a refund of all nonresident fees, matriculation fees, and other mandatory fees will be made in the event of the death of a student at any time during the academic session.

NO refunds will be made for the following:

- Withdrawal after 60% of the semester is completed
- Failure to withdraw officially
- Suspension or forced withdrawal for disciplinary reasons
- Reduction in hours after the "drop/add" period ends

Financial Aid

Applying for financial aid is a complex and time-consuming step for prospective students. For the most up-to-date information, please see the following link:

<http://www.mga.edu/financial-aid/default.aspx>

Contact the Financial Aid Office: Toll-Free at 1-877-238-8664 or fainfo@mga.edu

Graduate Assistantship Programs

As a way of fostering a strong graduate studies culture and encouraging mentoring as an essential practice of graduate education, a select number of students may receive financial aid in the form of assistantships while pursuing a master's degree. To be eligible for appointment as a graduate assistant, the student must be fully admitted to a program with Regular Admission Status as identified by the Office of Graduate Studies in the initial acceptance letter or in the first stage of the program fall 2016.

A graduate assistantship is an honor based on merit, and for this aid, students are required to complete specific services to the University as spelled out in the letter or email that communicates the award of an assistantship. The Graduate Program Coordinator will assign the graduate assistant to a faculty mentor, who will be that student's immediate supervisor. The Office of Graduate Studies will provide orientation and continuing education for all graduate assistants and their faculty mentors. For each semester of an assistantship, a student must provide proof of insurance and register for and earn credit for six to twelve hours of graduate course work leading to a degree. A graduate assistant must also maintain at least a 3.0 GPA and may not have received less than a "B" in any previous graduate course prior to an application for an assistantship. Applicants must also pass a background check prior to the start of their duties. They must additionally provide two letters of reference, which may be the same letters provided in the general admissions process if an applicant has yet to take a graduate course at any institution.

Note: Graduate teaching assistants will need 18 hours of 5000-level credit in the area of instruction.

Complete guidelines for Graduate Assistantships, which may include Research Assistants or Teaching Assistants, will be announced on the Office of Graduate Studies page and the Office of Financial Aid page in May of 2016.

Financial Aid Priority Deadlines

Students applying for financial aid should adhere to these deadline dates to allow for appropriate processing and review time to ensure that their financial aid is available for use prior to the start of a semester. The following deadlines are 'priority' deadlines. Students meeting these deadlines should have ample notice of their awards prior to the start of the semester.

All other applicants will be processed in date order. The Office of Financial Aid will still process the student's award package even if the deadline is missed; however, we make no guarantee that the funds will be available for payment if students apply late. If students miss the deadline and must pay upfront, they generally can be reimbursed for any aid for which they are deemed eligible.

March 15	Fall semester priority deadline for submitting the completed and signed FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA to the federal processor.
April 20	Fall semester deadline for submitting all supporting documentation requested by the Office of Financial Aid.
September 1	Spring semester priority deadline for submitting the completed and signed FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA to the federal processor.
October 1	Spring semester deadline for submitting all supporting documentation requested by the Office of Financial Aid
March 1	Summer semester priority deadline for submitting the completed and signed FAFSA or Renewal FAFSA to the federal processor.
April 5	Summer semester deadline for submitting all supporting documentation requested by the Office of Financial Aid.

***Students who miss these deadlines must be prepared to pay their own fees. Students must apply for financial aid each academic year. Awards are made only for the current year.**

Financial Aid Program Descriptions

Federal Grants

Graduate students and students holding baccalaureate degrees are not eligible for the Federal Pell Grant or Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG).

Federal Loans

Federal Direct (Unsubsidized) Student Loans: A federal loan program available to graduate students; there is no requirement to demonstrate financial need. The loan amount that may be borrowed is based on the student's cost of attendance minus any other financial aid the student receives.

Interest Payment: The federal government does not pay the interest on student's behalf. Students must pay all interest that accrues on unsubsidized loans during the time of enrollment in school, during the grace period, and during any periods of deferment or repayment. There are two ways students may pay the required interest:

- Make monthly or quarterly payments to the lender,

OR

- Reach an agreement with the lender to add interest to the principal of the loan, but no more frequently than quarterly; this is called capitalization. If students do not make interest payments as scheduled while in school, in grace period, or during a period of authorized deferment, the lender may automatically capitalize the interest every three months. During other periods, students must pay this interest to the lender, unless the lender agrees to grant forbearance, as explained in the promissory note.

Federal Direct PLUS Loans for Graduate Students: The federal government sponsors PLUS loans for students needing additional loan assistance. The maximum PLUS loan amount that may be borrowed is the student's cost of attendance minus any other financial aid the student receives.

Alternative Loans

Alternative education loans are created and offered by private lenders. They are credit-based loans that help students "bridge the gap" between the financial aid they have been awarded and any additional amount they feel may be needed to help achieve their educational goals. The lender sets the terms and conditions of the loan. Unlike Federal Direct loans which are created and guaranteed by the federal government, alternative education loan terms vary from lender to lender. All students are advised to utilize all federal financial aid, including Federal Direct loans, before borrowing an Alternative Education Loan.

Federal Work Study

This program is designed to provide students with an opportunity to pay part of their educational expenses by working at a part time job. To be employed under this program, students must enroll for at least a half-time course load, show evidence of financial need each semester, and maintain good academic standing while employed under this program. Preference will be given to students with exceptional financial need. Under the Federal Work Study Program students are given the opportunity to work approximately 16 hours per week depending on the award. These funds must be earned. Students must arrange their employment schedule with their assigned supervisors.

Student Assistant Program

This program, sponsored entirely by Middle Georgia State University, employs students on a part-time basis on campus. Financial need is not a determinant. Students must be enrolled for at least six hours to be employed as a student assistant. Under the Student Assistance programs, students are given the opportunity to work approximately 15 to 19.5 hours per week depending on the award. These funds must be earned. Students must arrange their employment schedule with their assigned supervisors.

Financial Aid Policies Governing the Administration of Awards

- Applicants must be accepted for admissions to Middle Georgia State University before financial aid funds can be awarded.
- Applicants for financial aid must be enrolled at the University before financial aid funds can be applied to institutional charges. Applicants must take courses applicable to their program of study.
- Enrollment hours at the University are locked at a designated census date each semester to insure proper reporting of enrollment and accuracy of aid awarded. Students must register for all courses in that semester before the census date to have pro-rated aid adjusted. Coursework added after this date will not be eligible for an adjustment/increase of the student's award.
- Federal Student Loan recipients in graduate programs must enroll and maintain an enrollment of at least 4.5 or more semester hours to be considered half-time. Full time has been designated as 9 semester hours.
- Payment of Awards: Eligible financial aid awards are authorized to the student's Middle Georgia State University account each semester after registering. Students may use these funds to pay institutional charges, i.e. tuition, fees, room, board, and book charges. Student financial aid funds which remain after all MGA obligations have been satisfied are disbursed through Higher One by means chosen by the student. Generally, funds are disbursed three weeks after the end of drop-add and weekly thereafter. The initial refund date will be published each semester.
- Federal Financial Aid regulations require students to begin attendance to be eligible. Therefore, students reported as "no shows" will have their aid adjusted accordingly.
- Ordinarily, financial assistance is awarded for two semesters of the regular academic year. Summer semester will be treated separately from the regular academic year. Students may be required to complete a Summer Application for Aid to advise the Financial Office of their intent to attend.
- Financial Aid awards are made for Fall and Spring semesters. If a student intends to begin in Spring or Summer semesters, they should notify the Office of Financial Aid so that their award may be adjusted to complement their enrollment.
- Students in default or overpayment on Federal or State Student aid Programs or Scholarship program will not be considered for any financial aid program at Middle Georgia State University unless the default or overpayment has been satisfied.
- Students enrolled as transient students at Middle Georgia State University from a University of Georgia System School only can receive aid through a consortium agreement. All other students should check with their home institution.

Refund/Repayment Policy for Financial Aid Recipients

When financial aid recipients withdraw during a semester, the amount of federal assistance that students have earned up to that point is determined by a formula specified by the Department of Education. If students were disbursed less assistance than the amount earned up to the point of withdrawal, they are eligible to receive the additional funds. If students received more assistance than earned, then they and the institution will share in returning excess funds to the appropriate federal agency. A percentage of book charges must also be returned, which will cause debt to Middle Georgia State University. To avoid these charges, students should contact the Bookstore to see if the books can be returned for credit. The Office of Financial Aid follows the published institutional refund policy.

The amount of assistance earned is determined on a pro-rata basis. That is, if students completed 30 percent of the period of enrollment, they have earned 30 percent of the assistance originally scheduled. Once students complete more than 60 percent of the enrollment period, all assistance originally scheduled has been earned.

If students received excess funds based on this formula, the University must return a portion of the excess equal to the lesser of:

- The institutional charges multiplied by the unearned percentage of student funds, or
- The entire amount of the excess funds.

If the University is not required to return all of the excess funds, students must return the remaining amount. Any loan funds that students must return must be repaid by the students in accordance with the terms of the promissory note.

Per federal regulations, schools are required to review students who received federal financial aid and failed to earn a passing grade in any of the classes. An assessment must be made to determine whether the students earned the non-passing grades while attending classes or stopped attending classes but did not officially withdraw. Students who stopped attending prior to the 60% mark will be subject to a return calculation of their aid.

Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy

It is each individual student's responsibility to read and adhere to the Standards of Academic Progress Policy. The policy is in place because the Higher Education Act of 1965 was amended with Program Integrity regulations passed on October 29, 2010 that mandates institutions of higher education to establish a standard of satisfactory academic progress for a student who receives any financial aid. A student's entire academic history at all schools attended including transferrable hours is reviewed at the time of entry and each semester thereafter whether or not Title IV funded aid was received to ensure compliance with the policy. **The financial aid**

satisfactory academic progress policy should not be confused with Probation or Good Standing as defined by Middle Georgia State University (MGA) academic policies.

Components

The MGA definition of satisfactory academic progress for receiving financial aid includes the following components:

1. **Grade Point Average Standards**-Graduate students are required to maintain at least a 3.0 cumulative **financial aid** grade point average (GPA). Financial aid GPA includes all credit hours **attempted** at MGA and all other previously attended institutions, including learning support and repeat coursework. **NOTE:** Financial aid GPA may differ from your academic GPA. Also, grades not associated with quality points cannot be used to calculate GPA. They do, however, count as attempted hours.

- I. **PACE Standard (Quantitative)** - Students enrolled at MGA must show measurable progress toward earning a degree by successfully completing a minimum of 67% of cumulative credit hours **attempted**. Grades of A, B, C, D, P and S count as the successful completion of a course. Grades of F, W, WF, FA, I, IP, NR and U **do not** count as the successful completion of a course. Transfer consortium, repeated, and learning support count as attempted hours.

- II. **PACE Standard (Maximum Time-Frame)** - In addition to previously stated standards, student financial aid is available for up to 150% of the number of hours required to complete the specific program of study. Students who change majors or degree programs may reach eligibility limits before obtaining a degree. Students who change majors or degree programs should do so early so as not to jeopardize eligibility for student financial aid. **Major changes are not considered mitigating circumstances for financial aid appeal purposes.**
Students Seeking Subsequent Degrees- Students who already have a degree and are seeking another degree will be given additional time for completion of their new program. Students may not exceed 150% timeframe for both programs. Students exceeding these hours or pursuing a 3rd degree will be placed on Suspension and must appeal to have their eligibility determined (students with this circumstance should contact the Office of Financial Aid directly).

PROGRAM	MAXIMUM ATTEMPTED HOURS ALLOWED
Graduate Degree	150% of the program’s required hours
All Other Program of Studies	Determined based on prior credentials and current program requirements

*** THE MAXIMUM LENGTH OF STUDY CANNOT EXTEND BEYOND COMPLETION OF COURSES REQUIRED FOR THE DEGREE OR CERTIFICATE PROGRAM***

Review Process

At the beginning of your academic career at MGA and each subsequent semester the Office of Financial Aid will determine whether the student has successfully completed the minimum expected number of hours with the required G.P.A. and shown progression toward their current program of study. This review will include all hours attempted during the students' attendance period at MGA, as well as transfer hours. SAP status is calculated at the end of each semester after grades are posted to academic history. If after this review a student is not making SAP according to Grade Point Average (qualitative) or PACE (quantitative) standards, their status will be changed to **Warning** and they will be allowed to receive financial aid the following term(Note: *Transfer exception below). Continued eligibility will be determined after this term. Students who become ineligible due to **PACE- max-time frame component will have their aid suspended** and they will not be eligible to receive additional financial aid unless an appeal is submitted and approved.

***Transfer Students-** Transfer students are **ineligible** for financial aid until all required transcripts from prior college attendance have been received and reviewed to determine SAP eligibility status. Transfer students not compliant with MGA's Standards of Academic Progress at their time of entry will be placed on financial aid suspension. Students may appeal this determination.

Financial Aid Appeal Approval

Students may be approved to have financial aid reinstated by either becoming compliant with the SAP standards or submitting a financial aid appeal. Financial aid approval may result in the student being eligible for aid one term with the expectation that the student will be compliant at the end of that term or student may be placed on an academic plan. Academic plans are prescribed by the Financial Aid appeals committee to ensure the student is making progress towards degree completion and compliance with the SAP policy. Students will be notified in writing of the terms and conditions of their academic plan approval. Students who are unable to fulfill the academic plan prescribed must contact the Office of Financial Aid upon notification of the requirements. Students who have been granted probationary approval must successfully complete all coursework attempted. Students who fail to successfully complete all coursework while on probationary approval will have all financial aid suspended.

Appeals Process

Students who have experienced mitigating circumstances and as a result have lost eligibility for financial aid may appeal by completing the applicable financial aid appeal form and submitting it

to the financial aid office along with supporting documentation. The appeal will be reviewed by the financial Aid appeals committee. Notification to the student of the decision will be provided via written notification and BANNERWEB message, along with any special conditions which must be met if approved. If an appeal is denied or student chooses not to appeal, student can regain eligibility by reaching required standards per SAP Policy at his/her own expense.

IMPORTANT: Only one appeal may be submitted per academic year. A student may appeal their SAP Suspension **only three times** during their academic career at MGA. Decisions made by the SAP Committee are **final** and there is no further appeal the student may submit to the Office of Financial Aid, The Department of Education or any other department at MGA.

DEADLINE: Incomplete appeals may result in automatic denial. Students must appeal by the end of term in which they expect to receive aid.

Academic Circumstances that Affect Status

- Failing grades, withdrawals and incompletes all reduce your completion ratio as well as counting against maximum hours.
- Repeated courses count as attempted hours each time you register for them. Also, each course is counted in your financial aid GPA requirement.
- Academic renewal hours count toward all components of the SAP policy.
- Students who are suspended academically or choose not to attend because of SAP Suspension will not be automatically eligible for financial aid upon their return. **Absence does not restore eligibility for financial aid.** It remains the responsibility of the student to be knowledgeable of their SAP standard when returning to school after dismissal or choosing not to return because of SAP Suspension.
- Grade changes require students to submit a written request to have SAP recalculated after confirmation has been received that grade change has been posted to academic history.
- Summer Term Courses – all hours attempted and completed in the summer term are treated as any other semester hours in determining SAP status. SAP will be checked following the summer term as well.
- Audit Courses – students are not eligible to receive financial aid for audit courses. Audited courses are not included in hours attempted or earned for SAP determination.

General Academic Policies

Knowledge of the Catalog

It is the responsibility of all Middle Georgia State University students to read, understand, and observe the rules and regulations of the University as published in the Academic Catalog and in other official announcements. The University reserves the right to change at any time any regulations and requirements as necessitated by the University or by the University System of Georgia. Unless otherwise determined by the Graduate Studies Catalog, graduate students shall follow the same policies applied to all students in the most recent Catalog and the most updated version of the Student Handbook. [Notice 2]

Exceptions Rule: The following sections provide guidelines that apply to all graduate students. If there is a question about the interpretation of a policy, the University officer charged with the decision or step shall uphold due process, fairness, and academic standards for all students but shall provide documentation, in the form of a cover memo or the Graduate Studies General Petition Form, if an exception is made, which shall be signed by the Graduate Program Coordinator/Chair, the Dean of the School, the Dean of Graduate Studies, and submitted for formal approval to either the Provost, the Registrar, the Vice President for Student Affairs, or other officer as needed.

A complete record of all Exceptions/Graduate Studies General Petition Forms shall be kept for seven (7) years in the Office of Graduate Studies and in the individual student file.

Syllabi and University Policy

Individual class syllabi determine the individual policies of the classroom and/or the online learning environment, which graduate students are obligated to read and follow.

College, Department, or Program-Specific Academic Standards

General Academic Standards apply to all graduate programs, which include both degree and certification programs. Some colleges/school, departments, or programs have additional and/or different academic standards, which govern a student's progress toward program completion. Students should be aware of the academic regulations that apply to their programs of study and to the process and requirements for readmission.

Post-baccalaureate and Master's Level Rigor

Undergraduate courses cannot be used for graduate credit.

Master's-level courses provide a level of knowledge and demand a degree of expertise beyond the baccalaureate level. Master's study prepares graduates for even more advanced study in the discipline and/or prepares them to be expert practitioners in their field. The fundamental concepts of the discipline should be mastered; the exposure to the literature of the discipline should demonstrate depth and scope beyond undergraduate education; and the level of theoretical understanding and its integration into a framework of practice should be pronounced. A student

in the master's program will be 1) a highly experienced practitioner, problem solver, and project or site manager; and/or 2 will be an active participant in the scholarship of the discipline and should conduct that research as having the potential for publication and/or presentation at professional meetings.

5000-level classes should include a comprehensive exposure to the foundations and definitions that distinguish the discipline; an exposure to the current literature and/or practices of the discipline; and the conceptual frameworks of the field.

6000-level classes should demonstrate a depth of scholarly exposure above the foundations of the 5000-level class. The emphasis on the precise explication of theory, research, and critical thinking should approximate the pre-requisites for doctoral study; and the course and program requirements should provide evidence that the student learning outcomes have a higher threshold for meeting the course standards than lower-level courses.

Completion of Degree

Students must complete their degrees within five years of their first semester and must graduate under the requirements of a catalog no earlier than the previous academic year. All students must complete 30 credit hours for graduation, *unless otherwise specified by program requirements*,* which shall be verified by the Registrar's Office no later than midterm of the semester of graduation. *Indicates correction proposed to Academic Affairs Committee

Progression and Academic Standing

Students enrolled in a degree program must maintain a minimum graduate program grade point average of 3.0 for the master's. Students must be in Good Academic Standing to be eligible for graduation.

Courses earned with grades of "C" or lower may not be used toward a nursing graduate degree, but will be calculated in the overall grade point average.

Graduate students are expected to maintain Good Academic Standing as they progress toward completing their programs. Students will be evaluated each term on the basis of the program GPA. The academic standing of graduate students is classified as follows:

1. Good Academic Standing
2. Academic Probation
3. Academic Dismissal

Good Academic Standing. Good Academic Standing is defined for graduate students as a program GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Academic Probation. A student whose program grade point average falls below 3.0 after the completion of at least nine (9) hours of graduate work in their program begins the next term on

academic probation. A student must earn a term GPA of 3.0 or higher each term while on Academic Probation.

One of three possible actions will be implemented for a student on Academic Probation at the end of each term of enrollment:

- 1) A student who earns a term GPA of 3.0 or higher and raises his or her program GPA to 3.0 or higher will return to Good Academic Standing.
- 2) A student whose term GPA is 3.0 or higher, but whose program GPA remains below 3.0, will remain on Academic Probation.
- 3) A student who earns a term GPA below 3.0 while on Academic Probation, regardless of the program GPA, will be on Academic Dismissal for one term.

Removal from Probation: Occurs when, at the end of a probationary term a student's graduate program grade point average equals or exceeds 3.0.

Academic Dismissal: Occurs when a student on academic probation earns a term GPA below 3.0, regardless of the program GPA.

The length of Academic Dismissal will be a minimum of one term. One term is defined as the Fall, Spring, or Summer term. The Summer term includes all sessions; thus, a student on Dismissal is required to sit out all sessions that comprise the Summer term. The student must apply to be reinstated by the program and University.

Reinstatement to Master's Degree: After the mandatory period of Academic Dismissal, a student on Academic Dismissal must apply for reinstatement to the appropriate program, either to a degree program or to non-degree status, in order to continue graduate study.

The student on Academic Dismissal is not guaranteed the opportunity to return to the University. The student on Academic Dismissal must apply, in writing, for reinstatement to the University and program after the one term absence. Reinstatement criteria are established by the University or School that houses the student's graduate program.

If a student's request for reinstatement is approved by the program that placed the student on Academic Dismissal, the student returns to the University on Academic Probation. One of three possible actions will be implemented for a Reinstated student on Academic Probation at the end of each term of enrollment:

1. A Reinstated student who earns a term GPA of 3.0 or higher and raises his or her program GPA to 3.0 or higher will return to Good Academic Standing.
2. A Reinstated student who earns a term GPA is 3.0 or higher, but whose program GPA remains below 3.0, will remain on Academic Probation.
3. A Reinstated student who earns a term GPA below 3.0 while on Academic Probation, regardless of the program GPA, will be academically Dismissed from the University.

If a student seeks admission to and is reinstated by a program other than the program from which the student was Dismissed, the student returns to the University on Academic Probation. One of two possible actions will be implemented at the end of the next term of enrollment:

1. A reinstated student who earns a GPA of 3.0 or higher is removed from Academic Probation and returns to Good Academic Standing.
2. A reinstated student who earns a GPA below 3.0 will be academically Dismissed from the University.

Process for Reinstatement: To request Reinstatement, the Dismissed student shall send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator and the Graduate Admissions officer, who shall then review the student's record to approve or deny Reinstatement. Their decision shall be communicated to the student via email. As with other student records all communication regarding Reinstatement shall remain in the student's permanent file.

Drop/Add

Students are allowed to drop or add classes during the published drop/add period in the academic calendar without penalty (without receiving a grade of "W" or "WF" in the course). If students drop a class during the drop/add period, the course is not entered on the student's record. Students without HOLDS may drop or add a class online through their SWORDS account. Otherwise they should see their advisor to make a change or submit a Change of Schedule (Drop/Add Form) in person or by fax to the Registrar's Office on the Macon Campus or the administrative offices at other campuses.

Definition of Full- and Half-time

For financial aid and other purposes, **9 credit hours is defined as full-time**, and **4.5 hours is defined as half-time**.

Course Load and Limitation

Graduate students may take up to 12 credit hours per semester unless they have the permission of the Coordinator of their program of study for 15 credit hours. For over 15 hours, students must have permission of the Dean of the School that houses the program of study. The Office of Graduate Studies discourages students from taking more than 12 hours, as excessive credit hours often lead to low grades and withdrawal from classes, which can affect progression, financial aid, eligibility for graduate assistantships, and timely graduation.

Withdrawal

Academic Withdrawal

Students may initiate withdrawal from classes through the Student Web Organized Records & Data System (SWORDS) or by submitting a Withdrawal Form to the Office of the Registrar at the Macon campus or the administrative offices at other campuses.

Withdrawal before Midterm

After the Drop/Add period up to and including the mid-term date (as designated in the Academic Calendar), students may withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" (withdrawal without penalty) by correctly following the withdrawal procedure.

Withdrawal after Midterm

If students withdraw from classes after mid-term, a grade of “WF” (withdrawal with penalty) is assigned. A grade of “WF” is computed the same as an “F” in the Grade Point Average. Following the same procedures outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog, students may petition to have a “WF” converted to a “W.” Graduate students must notify the instructor of record in writing that they are withdrawing from a class after Midterm; lack of notification may affect an appeal to convert the “WF” to a “W.”

Limitation and Grade Consequences of Withdrawal

Middle Georgia State University limits the total number of courses from which students may withdraw over the course of their matriculation. Students may withdraw from a maximum of 5 courses. Once students reach the 5-course limit, all subsequent withdrawals will be assigned grades of “F.” Students will not be allowed to withdraw from classes during the last two weeks of class. The official date of withdrawal is the date on which the student properly executes the withdrawal.

Faculty Initiated Withdrawal

Graduate students may be withdrawn from a class by the instructor for lack of attendance, online activity, participation, virtual contact/response, or the timely completion of assignments. The instructor’s policy must be clearly stated on the course syllabus. Before withdrawing a student, the instructor must email the student at least a week in advance but no sooner than the third full week of class. The date of withdrawal shall be entered when final grades are submitted

Attendance Policy

All graduate classes must have an attendance policy, which must be clearly stated on the course syllabus. Graduate-level attendance policies may vary from undergraduate policies. If the class meets face to face, the instructor is encouraged to follow the rule that no penalty may be applied for absences less than or equaling two weeks of class, except that penalties can be applied for missed assignments at any time, including the first day. If the class is completely online, penalties for not logging in, not responding to the instructor’s queries, or not submitting quizzes, daily assignments, tests, papers, or other assessments can trigger failure for the class and/or Faculty Initiated Withdrawal after three weeks (see above).

Grade Reports

Grades reports are available to students in SWORDS at the end of each semester.

A	Excellent	4.0	90-100
B	Good	3.0	80-89
C	Unacceptable	2.0	70-79
D	Unacceptable	1.0	60-69
F	Failure	0	50-59
I	Incomplete	0	0

Repeated Courses

A graduate student may repeat/retake only one Middle Georgia State University course for credit only with the permission of the Dean of the program that houses the degree and the Dean of Graduate Studies. In such cases the student does not have an option of an independent study or of requesting a different instructor nor of repeating the class as a session class added to the schedule of classes solely for that purpose. A student may not take the same or similar class as a transient student and then petition to have it replace the course in which a grade of “C” or lower was earned. A finding of academic dishonesty cannot be a condition for petitioning to repeat a graduate-level class. A student who repeats a course will have the cumulative Grade Point Average calculated using the grade from the last attempt. The grade of the first and subsequent attempts that are excluded from the GPA will remain on the student's official permanent record. A course taken to replace a “W” does not count as a “repeated” course.

Student Records

The academic records of students are maintained in the Registrar's Office under strict regulations as mandated by FERPA regulations. The records include a chronological listing of all courses taken and the cumulative GPA.

Incompletes

Graduate students may request an Incomplete for non-academic reasons, which shall be entered by the instructor of record, or another officer of the University with the instructor's permission, when Final Grades are submitted. The student must be passing the class at the time of the request to be granted an Incomplete. The last date of attendance must be recorded when Final Grades are entered. Students must complete the Incomplete by either midterm of the next semester if they are enrolled for that semester or within 12 months if they are not enrolled before the expiration of that 12-month period. It is the student's responsibility to complete the course and to contact the instructor of record to plan the completion of course work and to have the Incomplete removed from his or her permanent record. An Incomplete will revert to an “F” if not completed, although in this case the course (s) may be repeated if approved by the process outlined in Repeated Courses.

Graduation

Graduate students must follow the same calendar, process, and fee payment as outlined elsewhere in the Catalog for Graduation. Graduate students may not apply for graduation with Incompletes on their transcripts unless the graduation audit indicates that the instructor of record anticipates successful completion of the coursework during the semester of graduation. Students must be able to complete all course requirements by the end of spring semester to be eligible for spring graduation.

Graduate Student Responsibilities, Rights, and Expectations

Graduate students retain the same rights as any other students, including the protections provided by all State and Federal laws and those enumerated by the University System of Georgia and the Middle Georgia State University Student Handbook. The essential responsibilities of all students are integrity and civility, but the standards for graduate students are higher than those of undergraduates for whom the University encourages a greater learning curve. The privilege of graduate studies has been awarded to students in a merit-based culture of academic excellence and campus citizenship. Therefore, the standards for graduate students are higher and will be maintained as such by the faculty of graduate studies, who have been charged with defining the expectations it has of graduate students. It is incumbent upon all students that they follow the Student Code of Conduct and that they read, understand, and follow all policies listed on course syllabi or those identified by any academic program pertaining to on-campus, off-campus, or online activity, including, but not limited to, clinical training, internships, or academic related travel.

For questions about rights and responsibilities, the classroom instructor should be the first step, with the Program Coordinator or the Dean of the School as the next step; students should contact the Dean of Graduate Studies and/or the Office of Student Affairs if questions or problems persist that cannot be addressed at the initial stages. It is incumbent upon students to be knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities, which are subject to change without notice. Before any formal process of appeal or complaint (see the steps Student Appeals outlined below), it is the belief of the Office of Graduate Studies that dialogue based on fairness and mutual respect can solve many misunderstandings. The Dean of Graduate Studies welcomes the opportunity to host any discussions between students and faculty to avoid the potential escalation of disagreement; to promote understanding and compromise; and to advise all parties on process and record keeping as it pertains to these rights and responsibilities

Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC)

The mission of GSAC (the Council) is to act as an advocate for graduate students in any matter concerning academics, the general welfare of graduate students, communication with the Office of Graduate Studies and any other office of the University, including the President, the Provost, and the Vice President for Student Affairs. All graduate students enrolled full-time are eligible to serve as members of GSAC, yet any graduate student may send proposals to GSAC, which shall consist of at least three graduate students (or any odd number up to seven) as nominated by graduate faculty, appointed by the Dean of Graduate Studies, and approved by the President. The Council shall meet at least once a year, virtually or in person, and shall elect among its members a chair and a recorder. A student may serve as many one-year terms as nominated and approved. Minutes shall be kept, and meetings shall follow *Robert's Rules of Order* (Newly Revised, in brief), 2004. All members are voting members. The first meeting of the year shall be called by the Dean of Graduate Studies, or his or her designee, who may be a graduate assistant or a member of the graduate faculty.

Student Code of Conduct

All students are expected to read, understand and abide by the Student Code of Conduct by following this link: <http://www.mga.edu/student-conduct/code-of-conduct.aspx>.

Note: A graduate student who has been found to have violated the academic integrity or ethical standards of a class, a program, its activities, or partnerships with outside organizations may be permanently barred from the program or any other graduate degree offered by the University. Violations include, but are not limited to, falsification of documents, plagiarism, false swearing, falsification of research, cheating, or violations of records or other documents. All students are afforded due process before such a finding and are encouraged to consult the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs as to their rights.

Overview of Grievances/Complaints

All students should familiarize themselves with general guidelines for appeals by following this link: <http://www.mga.edu/student-affairs/complaints.aspx>

Student Appeals

Students adjudicated under the Student Code of Conduct have the right to appeal decisions of the Student Conduct Officer and Student Conduct Board panel, and the Vice President of Student Affairs provided specific relevant grounds for appeal are cited. In cases of sexual harassment/assault only, either party (the complainant or the accused student) may appeal a decision on those same grounds (see 2b below).

Appeal Procedures Not Involving Suspension/Expulsion

Steps for filing an appeal in cases not involving suspension/expulsion are outlined below:

Written notification of the decision to appeal and the grounds for the appeal (see 2b below) must be received by the Student Conduct Officer within two University business days after the original decision is communicated to the adjudicated student. The Student Conduct Officer will convene an Appeals Panel comprised of Student Conduct Board members who were not involved with the original hearing.

Appeal proceedings will begin within five (5) University business days of the receipt of the written notification from the student. The Student Conduct Officer will be responsible for notifying the adjudicated student of the outcome of the appeal within two University business days of the conclusion of the appeal proceedings. This is the final appeal at the institutional level.

Appeal Procedures for Suspension/Expulsion

Steps for filing an appeal in cases involving suspension/expulsion are outlined below:

1. Students who are appealing suspension or expulsion and feel that further action is warranted following a decision may appeal to the Vice President of Student Affairs of the College. The appeal must be submitted to the Student Conduct Officer in writing within

two (2) University business days after the finding and sanction are communicated to the adjudicated student. The Student Conduct Officer is responsible for submitting the student's written appeal, along with other appropriate documentation to the Vice President of Student Affairs. At the discretion of the Student Conduct Officer, an extension of no more than one (1) University business day may be granted after notification of suspension or expulsion has been communicated to the student. Students appealing decisions involving suspension or expulsion may have their movements on campus restricted to academic endeavors or other restrictions deemed appropriate during the period of appeal. Otherwise, no sanction will be enforced until a final decision is reached.

2. With the Vice President of Student Affairs' approval, the Student Conduct Officer will convene an Appeals Panel to review the case. No panel member will be from the adjudicated student's school or department of academic major. A different panel may be appointed for each case.

After reviewing the case, the panel will prepare a written recommendation for the Vice President of Student Affairs' consideration. The Vice President of Student Affairs will review the recommendations submitted by the panel and render a decision. He/she will communicate his or her decision to the student within ten (10) University business days after an appeal is filed with the Student Conduct Officer. This is the final appeal at the institutional level. Therefore, the sanction imposed will be in effect immediately. However, the President may, at his or her discretion, review any student conduct case and take such action, as he or she deems appropriate.

a. Purpose of the Appeals Panel

The purpose of an appeal is to review the procedures and findings of the body of original jurisdiction and to determine if there is a basis for error in a student conduct hearing.

b. Grounds

A student may appeal a student conduct decision on the following grounds:

- 1) A violation of due process.
- 2) Evidence of prejudicial treatment by the original hearing body.
- 3) Evidence becomes available during the review process that was not previously available during the original hearing.
- 4) Mercy appeal for review of an imposed sanction considered too harsh/lenient.

c. Procedure

The Appeals Panel:

- 1) Will review all material related to the case including
 - a) the record made before the original hearing body convened;
 - b) all pertinent documents, including hearing minutes, witness statements, and incident reports;
 - c) prior violations and sanctions against the student.
- 2) May, at its discretion, hear oral argument from either party or their representatives.

d. Findings

The Appeals Panel may:

- 1) Affirm the original decision and deny the appeal
- 2) Affirm the findings of guilt and modify the sanction. The Appeals Panel may, at its discretion, change, increase or reduce the sanction imposed. If the sanction is modified, the Appeals Panel must state in writing the justification for such modification.
- 3) Find evidence of prejudice on the part of the original hearing body and refer the case for rehearing before another hearing body.
- 4) Refer the case to the original hearing body for reconsideration of specific points deemed important by the Appeals Panel.
- 5) Reverse the finding of guilt and affirm the appeal.

REGENTS' APPEAL

Any student aggrieved by a final decision of the Vice President of Student Affairs or the College President may apply to the Board of Regents, without prejudice to his or her position, for a review of the decision, as provided in the Policies of the Board. Visit the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia at: <http://www.usg.edu/regents/bylaws/#VIII>

Final Course Grade Appeal Process

The evaluation of student performance is recorded on the student's University transcript as part of the student's permanent record. The grade is determined by the faculty member responsible for the course and is based on the terms of the instructor's syllabus. The course grade is considered final unless an appropriate appeal is filed by the student.

Grounds for Filing a Final Grade Appeal:

The grade appeal procedure is not to be used to review the judgment of an instructor in assessing the quality of a student's work. Possible grounds for an appeal include the following:

- a. An obvious error in the calculation of the grade.
- b. The assignment of a grade to a particular student by application of more exacting requirements than were applied to other students in the course.
- c. The assignment of a grade to a particular student on some basis other than the performance in the course.
- d. The assignment of a grade by a substantial departure from the instructor's previously identified standards as outlined on the syllabus or as posted electronically.

For the student who is dissatisfied with a grade and with reason to believe the grade issued is incorrect, the following appeal procedure is provided by the Office of Graduate Studies and the University.

Note: In terms of documentation, process, and the burden of proof, the burden is on the student to present evidence and to follow through with the steps in a timely way. Email shall be the official means of notification, documenting dates, and presenting evidence. It may also be the means by which a signed and scanned letter is attached and transmitted. Failure to check email or having technical issues related to email are not regarded as acceptable interruptions in the

calendar of the Grade Appeal process as identified by the number of working days noted in bold and by the University officials to whom these processes have been assigned for review. For any of these steps, a graduate student may be asked to print out an email or other document, then sign it, scan it, and mail it by either attachment, regular mail, or certified mail.

Level 1: **Within ten (10) working days** after the Registrar has posted the final grade, the student shall confer with the instructor who issued the grade and shall outline the reasons why he or she believes the grade is incorrect. (If the faculty member is unavailable, the student shall contact the Graduate Program Coordinator, the Department Chairperson, or the Dean of Graduate Studies within this same time period.) Following the student-faculty conference and with **ten (10) working days** the instructor shall advise the student by email of the outcome of the course grade review and shall process a grade change if appropriate.

Level 2: If the student still considers the grade to be incorrect, the student may formally appeal the grade **within ten (10) working days** after the email date of the faculty response letter from Level 1. The student may request by email that the Graduate Program Coordinator and Department Chairperson review all the data from Level 1 and any additional information deemed pertinent by the student and/or faculty member and make a decision regarding the appeal. The Graduate Program Coordinator and Department Chairperson must respond by email to the student involved, the faculty member, and the Dean of Graduate Studies **within ten (10) working days** regarding the chair's decision on the appeal.

Level 3: The student may continue the appeals process by requesting by email that the Dean of Graduate Studies review all data from Levels 1 and 2 and any additional information received from the student, faculty member, Graduate Program Coordinator, and Department Chairperson and make a decision on the appeal. This level of appeal must be initiated by the student **within ten (10) working days** of the date of the chair's decision from Level 2, which shall be communicated by email. **Within ten (10) working days** from the initiation of Level 3, the Dean of Graduate Studies must inform by email the student, faculty member, Graduate Program Coordinator, and Department Chairperson of the decision regarding the appeal.

Level 4: If the student is still dissatisfied, he or she may continue the appeals process from Level 3 **within ten (10) working days** of receiving the decision from the Dean of Graduate Studies by requesting of the Dean that he or she appoint a Hearing Panel of a non-voting chair from the faculty membership of the **Graduate Studies Council** and, in consultation with the Student Conduct Officer, three students who may or may not be graduate students. The chair shall convene the panel and issue its report in the form of a signed letter. The Hearing Panel shall call a hearing **within ten (10) working days** of receiving the written request from the Dean. The student, faculty member, Graduate Program Coordinator, Department Chairperson, and the Dean of Graduate Studies **shall be informed by letter within five (5) working days** of the decision of the Hearing Panel.

Level 5: If the student is not satisfied by the decision of the Hearing Panel, the student may appeal **within ten (10) working days of the date of the letter in Level 4** to the Office of the Provost, who shall appoint a representative to ascertain that all steps have been followed. The Provost, or representative thereof, shall prepare a summary for the President's review, who shall issue a final decision within thirty (30) working days, which shall be considered final.

Master of Science in Information Technology

Dean: Dr. Alex Koohang
Graduate Coordinator IT Programs: Dr. Kevin S. Floyd

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School of Information Technology
Middle Georgia State University
School of Information Technology
100 University Parkway
Macon, Georgia 31206

School of Information Technology Mission

The mission of the School of Information Technology (IT) is to educate students in information technology in ways that lead to fulfilling careers and enhance the economic vitality of Central Georgia. The School prepares its graduates to solve problems and apply new technologies within an increasingly interconnected and changing global environment. The School pursues this mission as an educational leader in teaching excellence, scholarship, professional service, and community outreach.

Master of Science in Information Technology Program Mission

The Master of Science in Information Technology is a unique collegiate program in the Middle Georgia region that fulfills MGA's mission to provide "high quality programs connected to community needs." It will also help establish MGA as a leader for the "economic" life of central Georgia.

The program aligns with and is complementary to Middle Georgia State College's ABET accredited Bachelor of Science in information Technology housed in the School of Information Technology.

This program will be uniquely positioned in Central Georgia to address the mission and to meet the needs of both 21st century student and employer. It will fuel the regional economy by producing top-quality graduates who will be successful in 21st century careers. Many baccalaureate programs at Middle Georgia State College focus on careers in the greatest demand regionally and nationally: business, information technology, nursing, health care and teacher education. The Masters of Science in Information Technology will enable IT professionals with baccalaureate degrees to pursue advanced specialized training in the areas of information security and digital forensics and health informatics.

Master of Science in Information Technology Degree Requirements

The MS in IT program requires students to complete 30 hours of graduate coursework. The first 15 hours provide students with knowledge in core information technologies in leadership, strategic planning, and research. Students can then focus on one area of study to enhance their set of skills and knowledge. These areas of study are Information Security and Digital Forensics and Health Informatics. The courses in the program emphasize leadership abilities, critical thinking, problem solving, decision-making, and interpersonal and communication skills. Career success through lifelong learning, professional development, and research is stressed at all levels of the curriculum. The program is designed to produce graduates prepared to take on leadership duties in the field of Information Technology in general as well as in specific work settings such as healthcare and information security.

Program Format

All courses in the program are offered in an eight-week session format. Students can complete the Master of Science in Information Technology either in an accelerated (1 year) format or a regular (2 year) format. In the accelerated format, a student can take a total of 4 courses per semester divided up over two 8-week sessions. In the regular format, a student can take a total of 2 courses per semester divided up over two 8-week sessions.

Information Technology (MSIT)

Master of Science in Information Technology

Core Courses (15 hours)

- ITEC 5100 – Current and Emerging Issues in Information Technology **Credit: 3 hours**
- ITEC 5110 – IT Leadership and Strategic Planning **Credit: 3 hours**
- ITEC 5120 – IT Project Management **Credit: 3 hours**
- ITEC 5130 – Data Analytics **Credit: 3 hours**
- ITEC 5140 – Research Methods in Information Technology **Credit: 3 hours**

Choose one of the following tracks:

Information Security and Digital Forensic (15 hours)

Required:

ITEC 6200 – Digital Forensics **Credit: 3 hours**

ITEC 6210 – Network and Cyber Security **Credit: 3 hours**

ITEC 6240 – Security Policy, Ethics, and the Legal Environment **Credit: 3 hours**

ITEC 6250 – Disaster Recovery, Planning, and Response **Credit: 3 hours**

Choose one of the following:

ITEC 6220 – Ethical Hacking **Credit: 3 hours**

ITEC 6230 – Digital Evidence & Cybercrime **Credit: 3 hours**

Health Informatics (15 hours)

- ITEC 6240 – Security Policy, Ethics, and the Legal Environment **Credit: 3 hours**
- ITEC 6250 – Disaster Recovery, Planning, and Response **Credit: 3 hours**
- ITEC 6300 – Advanced Health Information Technology **Credit: 3 hours**
- ITEC 6320 – Advanced Electronic Health Records **Credit: 3 hours**
- ITEC 6340 – Public Health Informatics **Credit: 3 hours**

Total Hours: 30

Course Descriptions (MSIT)

ITEC 5100 – Current and Emerging Issues in Information Technology 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: Admission to the MSIT program

Description: This course includes an overview of current and emerging issue in the field of Information Technology, technology forecasting and analysis; overview of emerging issues and leading technologies in IT and how they impact information systems, users, the IT labor force and society.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 5110 – IT Leadership and Strategic Planning 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 5100

Description: This course explores various theories and approaches to organizational leadership as well as the role of the leader in the strategic alignment of people, resources and processes to the vision; mission and purpose of the IT organization are addressed. Students study the principles of strategic management and link these principles to both sound theory and best practices.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 5120–IT Project Management 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 5110

Description: This course will provide a graduate level comprehensive foundation for project management as it applies to information systems development. Students will be introduced to the theory and concepts of project management, and the tools to manage projects with a specific focus on information technology. At the end of this course, students should be able to develop, execute, and control a basic project plan capable of supporting organizational objectives linked to measures of success for a single project.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 5130– Data Analytics 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 5100

Description: This course will focus on current, critical issues in database systems that support the processes of decision-making and management of informational issues. The following issues will be central to student learning: distributed database management; business intelligence framework; data warehouse management; online analytical processing; data-mining tools; database security policies and procedures.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 5140 – Research Methods in Information Technology 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: Admission to the MSIT program

Description: This course will introduce basic ideas about conducting research in the field of information technology. Students will learn methods for reading empirical research articles, selecting research topics, research strategy and tactics, statistical methods, devising research questions, planning research, analyzing experimental results, modeling and simulating computational phenomena, and synthesizing broader theories.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6200 – Digital Forensics 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 5100

Description: An introduction to the fundamental concepts behind the collection and analysis of the digital evidence left behind in a digital crime scene. Topics include the identification, preservation, collection, examination, analysis, and presentation of evidence for prosecution purposes. Discussion also covers the laws and ethics related to computer forensics and challenges in computer forensics. Network forensics is briefly explored.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6210 – Network and Cyber Security 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 5100

Description: An introduction to the security concepts needed for the design, use, and implementation of secure voice and data communications networks, including the Internet. A brief review of networking technology and standards (including an introduction to Internet communication protocols) is provided. Security subjects addressed include defense models, security policy development, authentication and authorization controls, firewalls, packet filtering virtual private networks (VPNs) and wireless network security.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6220 - Ethical Hacking 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 6210

Description: This course provides comprehensive ethical hacking and network security knowledge. Students will learn how to gather information for IT security purposes, secure information systems, launch and prevent attacks, and perform investigations. Ethical hacking topics covered also include exploiting systems, vulnerability assessments, network intrusion, and penetration testing.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6230 - Digital Evidence & Cybercrime 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 6210

Description: An introduction to the fundamental concepts behind the collection and analysis of digital evidence. Students will learn the processes and procedures required to conduct an investigation including; identification, preservation, collection, examination, analysis, and presentation of evidence for civil and criminal cases. Students will learn to provide written reports that meet the standards required for courtroom presentation. Discussion will include legal and ethical issues related to being a digital forensics examiner.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6240 – Security Policy, Ethics, and the Legal Environment 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 5100

Description: An overview of laws and ethics related to information assurance. The information security responsibilities of major domestic and international agencies (such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Security Agency, and National Institute of Standards and Technology) are reviewed. Topics include issues involving information security management within an enterprise, such as suitable organizational policy, plans, and implementation strategies. Discussion also covers ethical issues, such as monitoring employee computer use and proper limitations on the use of customer data.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6250 – Disaster Recovery, Planning, and Response 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisites: “B” in ITEC 5100, ITEC 5110, ITEC 5120, ITEC 5130, ITEC 5140, and any two (2) courses in the concentration.

Description: An in-depth examination of managerial and technical strategies for maintaining enterprise resiliency in the face of man-made or natural disruptions to business operations. Emphasis is on the importance of advanced planning. Techniques for performing business risk assessment and potential incident impact analysis are explored. Discussion covers alternative models for supporting contingency operations, including the use of service-level agreements. Key activities and processes involved in post event business resumption, including the recovery of key information assets, are reviewed. Actual and hypothetical cases are analyzed

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6300 - Advanced Health Information Technology 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 5100

Description: This course will introduce essential topics of health informatics including concepts, theory, EHR, information systems and technologies used in the health IT field and organizations. This course will help students learn the trends and current situations of health IT and provide the fundamental knowledge for other specialized courses.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6320 - Advanced Electronic Health Records 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 6300

Description: This course will prepare students to work in an electronic health record environment. Topics include an in-depth study of the electronic health record. The course will cover e-health, health information exchange, regional health information organizations, security, contingency planning, admissibility, functionality, interoperability, supporting technologies, liability, EHR data, and other current issues. This course will also serve to educate participants on the gaps and needs of the consumer upon using e-health systems to provide benefits throughout society.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

ITEC 6340 - Public Health Informatics 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Prerequisite: “B” in ITEC 6300

Description: Public Health informatics is an emerging interdisciplinary field that uses information technology and informatics methods to meet public health goals. To meet these goals, public health practitioners need to develop skills and knowledge to optimize their contribution to improvements in public health informatics; similarly, informaticians need to understand the unique public health environment and opportunities for the application of informatics methods and tools. This course provides foundational knowledge relevant to public health informatics, and introduces students to skills, resources, and concepts that will allow them to be a life-long learner and work in this evolving field.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week

Master of Nursing Adult/Gerontology Nurse Practitioner

Dean, School of Health Sciences: Dr. Rebecca Corvey
Chair, Department of Nursing: Dr. Donna Ingram
Coordinator of Nursing Graduate Programs: Dr. Darrell Thompson

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School of Health Sciences
100 University Parkway
Macon, Georgia 31206

Mission Statement

The mission of the Middle Georgia State University Master of Science in Nursing Program is to prepare advanced practice nurses to provide care to the entire adult to older adult age population and across the continuum of care, particularly those with acute care needs.

Program Format

The Master of Science in Nursing program is a 43 credit hour program designed to be completed in five consecutive semesters. The graduate will be eligible to sit for Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner certification exam offered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's (ANCC). Instruction will be delivered online with students expected to complete a minimum of 630 clinical practice hours. Attendance at a minimum of two full day intensive sessions will be required per semester. Admission to the program occurs fall semester of each academic year.

Student Expectations

Middle Georgia State University students are responsible for fulfilling their academic responsibilities in an honest and forthright manner and for conducting themselves with civility in interpersonal interactions. The Middle Georgia State University Student Code of Conduct contains a full description of student rights and responsibilities and the disciplinary procedures which will guide the action of the faculty and administration should a student allegedly violate the code. Nursing is a profession governed by a code of ethics and standards of practice. Students who are charged with a violation of the Middle Georgia State University Student Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary procedures by the School of Health Sciences and Middle Georgia State University. Any violation of the Middle Georgia State University Student Code of Conduct, whether the violation is related to a lack of integrity or civility, may result in dismissal from the Nursing Program without consideration for re-entry.

Academic Standards

In addition to the other academic regulations of the University, the following requirements apply to the nursing program:

1. All clinical nursing courses require a satisfactory level of performance in theory and in clinical, including campus labs. All graduate nursing courses require a minimum grade of at least a "B" (80%). Nursing Grading Scale: A=100-90, B=89-80, C=79-75, D=74-65, F=64 and below.
2. There will be no rounding of nursing grades.
3. Grades for the clinical component of nursing courses are determined on a competency basis and designated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. A satisfactory level of clinical competence is required in order to earn a passing grade ("B" or higher) in graduate nursing courses. An unsatisfactory level of competence results in failure in that course. A course grade of "F" will be assigned if a student fails clinical.
4. Graduate nursing course credits are valid for 60 (5 years) months. All graduate nursing courses must be completed within 60 months of the date of entry into the first graduate nursing course.
6. Nursing Student Policies in effect at the time of admission to a nursing cohort apply throughout the program unless due notification of change is provided to the student.

Clinical Requirements

Accepted students must meet the clinical requirements of all affiliating clinical sites by established deadlines, to include, but limited to:

1. Completed health history and physical form;
2. Immunization form;
3. TB screening;
4. Criminal Background Check;
5. Urine Drug Screen; and
6. Mandatory Health Professional CPR certification through the American Heart Association (CPR classes are provided to students at Middle Georgia State University at a nominal fee.)
7. Professional malpractice liability insurance

Note: a) Students must maintain ability to meet requirements of Nursing Practice Performance Standards/Essential Abilities. Students experiencing a change in health status may be required to resubmit health forms. b) Students who enter the program must have a Criminal Background Check and Urine Drug Screen performed by a company approved by the Nursing Program. Clinical agencies will review Criminal Background Check and Urine Drug Screen results. The student must be approved by the affiliating clinical agencies in order to participate in clinical experiences and progress in the program. Students denied acceptance by any clinical affiliates will not be able to attend clinical experiences and, therefore, will not be enrolled in the Nursing Program. c) Random Criminal Background Checks or Urine Drug Screen may be required while in the Nursing Program. This testing, if required, will be at the student's expense.

Nursing (MSN)

Master of Nursing Adult/Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

Year One (24 hours)

- NURS 5000 Advanced Pathophysiology **Credit 3 hours**
- NURS 5100 Professional Concepts **Credit 2 hours**
- NURS 5200 Advanced Health Assessment/Diagnostic Reasoning **Credit 4 hours**
- NURS 5300 Advanced Pharmacology/Therapeutic Interventions **Credit 3 hours**
- NURS 5400 Adult/Gero Acute Care I **Credit 6 hours**
- NURS 5500 Research and Evidence Based Practice **Credit 3 hours**
- NURS 5600 Quality/Safety/Improvement Processes **Credit 3 hours**

Year Two (19 hours)

- NURS 6200 Leadership/Management & Healthcare Policy **Credit 3 hours**
- NURS 6400 Adult/Gero Acute Care II **Credit 6 hours**
- NURS 6500 Adult/Gero Acute Care III **Credit 7 hours**
- NURS 6600 Project Management in Healthcare **Credit 3 hours**

Total Hours: 43

Course Descriptions (MSN)

NURS 5000- Advanced Pathophysiology 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Description: This course will build upon the students' previous knowledge of anatomy and physiology. Pathophysiology of various disease conditions including the genomics of disease will be presented as a basis for advanced practice nursing. This course will focus on the causation and manifestation of common acute and chronic diseases of adults and older adults, and will provide the basis for advanced practice clinical coursework.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week.

NURS 5100 - Professional Concepts 2-0-2

Credit: 2 hours

Description: This course focuses on the major concepts incorporated into the role of the advanced practice nurses working with adult and elderly clients and families. Emphasis is on health care delivery, patient outcomes, legal and ethical considerations, and professional standards for advanced practice nurses.

Lecture/Lab: 2 hours lecture each week.

NURS 5200 - Advanced Health Assessment/Diagnostic Reasoning 3-3-4

Credit: 4 hours

Co-requisite: NURS 5200L

Description: The course is designed to assist students to refine history taking, psychosocial, cultural, and physical assessment skills acquired during their baccalaureate education. Content focuses on assessment of individuals throughout adulthood and into older adulthood with attention to common conditions encountered in primary care practice. Emphasis is placed on detailed health history taking including ethnic variations, and differentiation, interpretation, and documentation of normal and abnormal findings. Additional course content will incorporate interpreting diagnostic study results, and using clinical reasoning to formulate diagnoses and appropriate diagnostic codes.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture and 3 hours lab each week.

NURS 5300 - Advanced Pharmacology/Therapeutic Interventions 3-0-3

Credit: 3 hours

Description: This course will focus on classifications of pharmacologic agents as well as herbal and natural substances used in treating and preventing disease. Pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, mechanism and transport will be discussed with particular emphasis on the adult and elderly adult populations. The mechanism of action, therapeutic effects, clinical applications, contraindications, and adverse effects as well as a description of current drug development and approval will be included. Special consideration will be given to the unique medication considerations for the elderly adult. Non-pharmacologic as well as pharmacologic therapeutic interventions will be addressed.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week.

NURS 5400 - Adult/Gero Acute Care I 3-9-6

Prerequisites: NURS 5000, 5100, 5200

Co-requisite: NURS 5400L

Description: Novice adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner students, under the supervision of Certified Nurse Practitioners, will focus on the diagnosis and management of acute and chronic conditions of adult and elderly clients in a variety of healthcare settings. The course incorporates therapeutic, diagnostic and pharmacological interventions into the plan of care.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture and 9 hours lab each week.

NURS 5500 - Research and Evidence Based Practice 3-0-3

Description: This course addresses research design, data analysis, and clinical/ethical issues associated with health services research. The course focuses on clinical outcomes research in advanced practice nursing and related disciplines with an emphasis on clinical trial design and testing of theory driven interventions and application of evidenced based practice.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week.

NURS 5600 - Quality/Safety/Improvement Processes 3-0-3

Description: This course is designed to provide students with knowledge and skills in managing the care of patients with particular attention to delivery of care and patient outcomes. The course will incorporate theory, evidence based practice and strategic management to meet the demands of the evolving healthcare system. Students will use quality improvement concepts to develop and implement processes that will maximize patient outcomes and satisfaction. Considering the dynamics of the healthcare environment,

this course focuses on effective and efficient management strategies from various sectors to ensure delivery of safe quality care.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week.

NURS 6200 - Leadership/Management & Healthcare Policy 3-0-3

Description: This course examines leadership and change from various historical, theoretical, and practical perspectives. Core competencies, environmental dynamics, culture, quality improvement, systems thinking are the foundations for this course.

Lecture/Lab: 3 hours lecture each week.

NURS 6400 - Adult/Gerontology Acute Care II 2-12-6

Prerequisites: NURS 5400

Co-requisite: NURS 6400L

Description: Intermediate adult-gerontology acute care nurse practitioner students, under the supervision of Certified Nurse Practitioners, will focus on the wellness promotion, health maintenance, diagnosis, and management of acute and chronic health conditions for adults and elderly clients in acute and critical healthcare settings. Students will develop algorithms for use in critical reasoning.

Lecture/Lab: 2 hours lecture and 12 hours lab each week.

NURS 6500 - Adult/Gero Acute Care III 2-15-7

Prerequisite: NURS 6400

Co-requisite: NURS 6500L

Description: This course focuses on the incorporation of previous knowledge and integration of the adult/gerontology nurse practitioner role in acute care as students move from novice to expert. Students will integrate the knowledge from previous clinical and didactic experiences to care for persons with acute and chronic health conditions. Students will be expected to incorporate wellness promotion and maintenance, and diagnosis and management for a variety of acute and chronic health concerns for adults and elderly clients.

Lecture/Lab: 2 hours lecture and 15 hours lab each week.

NURS 6600 - Project Management in Healthcare 2- 3- 3

Co-requisite: NURS 6600L

Description: This course introduces the concepts of efficiency, error, risks, process improvement, and production of healthcare services with an emphasis on quality assurance. Through reflective leadership, organizational analysis and strategic planning students will evaluate the impact of professional norms, policy and competition on organizational strategies.

Lecture/Lab: 2 hours lecture and 3 hours lab each week.