AOP 12.29 –Undergraduate Entrance Requirements

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Academic Operating Policy and Procedure (AOP) is to establish an understanding of the undergraduate entrance requirements at Mississippi State University, as defined by the Board of Trustees of the State Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL), and to define the role of the Undergraduate Admissions Policy Committee.

REVIEW

This AOP will be reviewed every four years or earlier if circumstances require a review by the Undergraduate Admissions Policy Committee with recommendations for revision presented to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

The Undergraduate Admissions Policy Committee (UAPC) will provide institution-wide coordination for all new program admissions policies and procedures that are different than those of general admissions and conduct periodic reviews of university admissions policies. The UAPC advises on awarding AP, CLEP, and other types of requested credit.

The Office of Admissions and Scholarships administers general admission requirements. Applicants who meet general admission requirements to the University may not meet the admission requirements for a specific program, department, and/or college.

I. Freshman Admission Requirements

1. Regular Admission. Freshman applicants for regular admission may be admitted to Mississippi State University provided the following requirements are met:

   a. The applicant must have graduated from an approved secondary school.
   b. The applicant must submit an official American College Test (ACT) score or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score.

   c. To enroll as a freshman in any of the programs of study at MSU, a student, during grades 9-12, must have satisfactorily completed, at minimum, the number of units shown below:

Subject:	Units:		
English	4	-	All must have substantial writing requirements.
Mathematics	3	-	Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry or a higher level mathematics (Algebra I taken in the 8th grade will be accepted for admission provided the course content is the same as the high school course.)

Science	3	-	Physical Science, Biology, Advanced Biology, Chemistry, Advanced Chemistry, Physics, Advanced Physics, Anatomy and Physiology, Botany, Marine Biology, or another science of comparable rigor. (Two units must be lab based.)
Social Science	3	-	United States History 1 unit, World History 1 unit; Government ½ unit; and Economics ½ unit **or** Geography ½ unit.
Advanced Electives	2	-	Elect 2 units from Foreign Language, World Geography, 4th year laboratory-based Science, or 4th year Mathematics. One unit must be a Foreign Language **or** World Geography.
Computer	1/2	-	Computer as a productivity tool, not as a keyboarding device.

Full admission to Mississippi State University for Mississippi residents will be granted to high school graduates who complete the required high school courses with one of the following:

- A minimum 3.20 grade-point average on the required high school courses; or,
- A minimum 2.50 grade-point average on the required high school courses or standing in the top 50 percent of the class and a composite score of 16 or higher on the ACT or a combined score of 760 or higher on the SAT; or,
- A minimum 2.0 grade-point average on the required high school courses and a composite score of 18 or higher on the ACT or a combined score of 860 or higher on the SAT; or
- Satisfy the National Collegiate Athletic Association standards for student athletes who are full or partial qualifiers under Division I guidelines.

Full admission to Mississippi State University for nonresidents of Mississippi will be granted to high school graduates who complete the required high school courses with one of the following:

- A minimum 2.50 grade-point average, composite score of 20 or higher on the ACT, or combined score of 940 or higher on the SAT; or
- Student-athletes who satisfy the National Collegiate Athletic Association standards and who are full or partial qualifiers under Division I guidelines are exempt from the above requirement.

2. Contingent Admission Applicants who fail to meet the full admission standards as listed above may, as a result of a review, be admitted to the fall semester. The review will be conducted by an admissions committee, who will consider the student's high school performance, ACT/SAT scores, placement testing, and special interests and skills.

   If the review indicates inadequate readiness for college, students will be required to participate in counseling and testing, which will be held on campus (and other designated locations) prior to the beginning of the summer session. Students who successfully complete the counseling and testing program will be admitted to the university, with the requirement that they participate in a yearlong support level class.

   Students who fail to successfully complete the counseling and testing program may be given admission with the requirement that they enroll in the Summer Development Program. This is an intensive program that concentrates on those high school subject areas (i.e., writing, reading, and mathematics) essential to success in first-year college courses. Students who successfully complete this summer program will be allowed to continue in the fall term, with mandatory participation in an academic support lab during their freshman year. Developmental courses taken during the Summer Developmental Program neither count toward a degree nor are computed in a student's grade point average.

   Students who fail to successfully exit the Summer Development Program will be counseled to explore other post-secondary opportunities.

   A student athlete must meet the requirements of the Southeastern Conference and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

3. Early Admission. A secondary school student may be admitted under EARLY ADMISSION if he or she (a) has earned a minimum of fifteen (15) acceptable credits, (b) has earned a standard composite ACT score of 25 or an SAT combined score of 1130, (c) ranks in the upper twenty-five (25) percent of his or her high school class, and (d) is recommended for early admission in a letter from his or her high school principal.

4. Special Program for Academically Talented Students (SPATS). Academically talented students who (a) have finished their junior year in high school, as judged by their high school officials, (b) in the judgment of parents and high school administrators are mature enough to profit from a summer's work in college, and (c) have a standard composite minimum score of 24 on the ACT or equivalent SAT score, may apply for admission as a SPATS student to earn regular college credit.

   SPATS students may take courses during the spring, summer, or fall term. Courses taken must not be equivalent to those taken in the senior year of high school. Students are expected to return to high school and finish a normal senior year. The courses may not be substituted for high school credits to meet college admission requirements. Credit is reserved until the student has graduated from high school. Information concerning the program and application forms may be obtained at www.admissions.msstate.edu/freshman/special.php or by writing to: SPATS, Office of Admissions and Scholarships, P.O. Box 6334, Mississippi State, MS 39762.

   SPATS students will be contingently admitted as a fulltime student for the next requested term following their date of high school graduation. The contingency will be based on completion of high school courses in progress and graduation from high school. A final high school transcript will be required before final acceptance. No application fee will be required other than the initial fee that must accompany the SPATS application. Students will also be given an application priority date of August 1 for housing placement purposes.

5. Admission by Examination. An applicant who has not graduated from high school may substitute the General Educational Development Test (high school level) for the requirement of high school graduation. The GED will substitute for the requirement of high school graduation only, and not for the other requirements for freshman admission. Therefore, applicants who took the GED must submit an acceptable ACT/SAT score. Applicants who hold the GED and who cannot meet other requirements for freshman admission may enroll at Mississippi State as transfers after meeting the normal requirements for transfer admission from another regionally accredited institution.

6. Home Schooled. Home School applicants are required to meet the same requirements as other freshman applicants. Official ACT/SAT scores and transcripts (or portfolios) are required.

7. Special Non-Degree Classification. An applicant who is at least twenty-one (21) years old and who does not meet the regular freshman admission requirements, may apply to the Admissions Office for acceptance into the Special Non-Degree (SND) student category. Students in this category will be advised by and will schedule classes through the University Academic Advising Center. Applicants must demonstrate adequate preparation for the classes they plan to schedule. SND students may schedule a maximum of twelve (12) semester hours during a regular term and three (3) semester hours during a five-week summer term. To move from the SND status, students must satisfactorily complete twelve (12) semester hours with a C or better average in core courses that are applicable to a degree at MSU. Students wishing to gain reclassification to a traditional major should discuss this during their initial meeting with one of the professional advisors in the University Academic Advising Center. For students admitted to a degree program, a maximum of eighteen (18) semester hours of credit earned while in the SND classification may be counted toward a baccalaureate degree, pending approval by the dean of the college or school from which the degree is sought.

   Degree seeking adult applicants with previous college attendance must meet regular transfer student requirements and, therefore, may not apply for admission under the Special Non-Degree option.

   Non-degree seeking adult applicants with previous college attendance who do not meet regular transfer requirements may be allowed to schedule courses for self improvement and/or job enhancement. Applicants must file a letter of intent with the Director of Admissions to enroll under this option.

8. Students who are enrolled fulltime at a 2-year or 4-year institution and wish to enroll at MSU for course-work to be transferred to their home institution may be admitted in transient status for one term (spring, summer, or fall) with the expectation of returning to their previous institution. Applicants must submit an application for admission along with the required application fee and a letter of good standing, or a transcript showing good standing, from their current institution. If a student in transient status wishes to remain at MSU in a degree seeking status, he or she must apply and meet the requirements of a transfer applicant. Students may apply for subsequent terms in transient status. However, an updated application for admission, application fee and letter of good standing will be required.

9. International Baccalaureate and University of Cambridge International Examinations. International Baccalaureate and University of Cambridge International Examinations graduates follow the same procedures as applicants holding a regular high school diploma. Graduates scoring 5 and above on the higher level IB External Examination or the University of Cambridge International Examinations A levels may be considered for advanced standing credit. Academic colleges and departments approve all advance standing credit.

II. Transfer Student Admission Requirements

Students who attend another institution before applying to MSU must meet one of the following criteria for admission.

Transfer credits used to satisfy admissions requirements to the University are not automatically applied to the student's degree program of choice. The application of transfer credit to a degree program is determined by that degree program's academic department.

Admission Option 1:

1. Submit a high school transcript and ACT or SAT scores showing that the applicant qualified initially as a freshman enrollee (see Freshman Entrance Requirements), and
2. Earn an overall 2.0 GPA (as computed by MSU) on all courses attempted at a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.

Admission Option 2:

Any applicant who does not meet freshman requirements may attend a regionally accredited institution of higher learning and complete the core courses listed below and earn an overall 2.0 GPA (as computed by Mississippi State University) on all hours attempted. Official transcripts from each institution attended must be submitted; faxed transcripts will not be accepted.

The applicant must successfully complete the following 30 semester hours of college work at a regionally accredited college:

6 semester hours English Composition
3 semester hours College Algebra, Quantitative Reasoning, or higher level mathematics
6 semester hours Natural Science
9 semester hours Humanities or Fine Arts
6 semester hours Social or Behavioral Sciences

Admission Option 3:

Any applicant who does not meet freshman requirements may attend a regionally accredited institution of higher learning and earn an A.A., B.S. or equivalent from the regionally accredited institution with a 2.0 GPA (as computed by Mississippi State University). Official transcripts from each institution attended must be submitted.

A transfer applicant who meets general admissions requirements to the University, may not meet the requirements for a specific department. Applicants should contact the academic department for additional requirements. Transfer work earned from a non-regionally-accredited institution is not acceptable at Mississippi State University and applicants from these institutions must meet the admission requirements as an entering freshman.

III. International Student Admission Requirements

International students who wish to gain admission as an undergraduate student at Mississippi State must follow the admission procedures described for international students as described at http://admissions.msstate.edu/international/. Requirements for admission are as follows:

English Language Proficiency Requirement - International undergraduate students admitted to Mississippi State University must demonstrate English language proficiency to register for academic courses offered through the colleges. Any of the following scores are acceptable to demonstrate English language proficiency:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS): minimum band score of 6.0.
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): minimum 525 for paper-based test; 197 for computer-based test, and 71 for Internet-based test.

Although applicants may meet general language requirements for admission to the university, some departments have established higher English language proficiency requirements. For a complete listing, please visit the Web site at www.admissions.msstate.edu/international.

Exemption from English Language Proficiency Requirement
Completion of intensive English training or English composition courses at a U.S. college does not waive the English language proficiency requirement. Only international students who list English as the primary language of instruction may be exempt from proficiency requirements.

Admission with English Language Deficiency
International students who are admitted and wish to enroll in academic courses but fail to demonstrate English language proficiency using one of the approved methods will be required to enroll in English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. Students who successfully complete the English as a Second Language program will be considered to have demonstrated English language proficiency and allowed to register in academic courses offered through the colleges.

International students seeking admission as freshman must have:

- Diploma from secondary school or secondary leaving examination, and
- Appropriate TOEFL score.

International students seeking admission as transfer students must satisfy one of the following options:

Admission Option 1: One year of successful study at a foreign university and appropriate TOEFL score.

Admission Option 2: Meet freshman admission requirements and maintain a quality point average of 2.00/4.00 or higher (as evaluated by Mississippi State University) on all college level work attempted.

Admission Option 3: Thirty (30) semester hours of transferable credit from a regionally accredited U.S. college, with a grade-point average of 2.00 or higher on a 4.0 scale, as evaluated by Mississippi State University, including all of the following credits:
6 semester hours English Composition
3 semester hours College Algebra, Quantitative Reasoning, or higher level mathematics
6 semester hours Natural Science
9 semester hours Humanities or Fine Arts
6 semester hours Social or Behavioral Sciences

NOTE: Students who meet Option 3 requirements do not need to submit English language proficiency test scores.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Position	Section	Year
Undergraduate Admissions Policy Committee	Review	2019

APPROVED:

/s/ Peter L. Ryan	05/15/2015
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs	Date
/s/ Jerome A Gilbert	05/19/2015
Provost and Executive Vice President	Date
/s/ Randolph F. Follett	05/22/2015
President, Robert Holland Faculty Senate	Date

REVIEWED BY:

/s/ Timothy N. Chamblee	06/01/2015
Assistant Vice President and Director, Institutional Research and Effectiveness	Date
/s/ Joan Lucas	06/12/2015
General Counsel	Date

APPROVED:

/s/ Mark Keenum	06/22/2015
President	Date