

# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2015-16

Policies and procedures for all  
students, including housing  
policies for residents and guests

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## 2015-16 Emergency Information for Students & Guests

**If you suspect criminal activity, a fire, or a medical emergency on campus:**

- Call: 911 from a cell phone (or 9-911, if calling from any campus telephone)
- Call an available Building Manager

### **Building Managers**

- Dewire Residence Hall: Sean McLeod, Apt. 107 & 109, ext. 3479, cell 330-294-8942
- Kleist Manor: Joel Wildermuth, Apt. A-7, ext. 3846, cell 937-638-7121
- Helen Werner Apartment Building: Jason Leighton, Apt. 104, ext. 3461, cell 910-358-7094

### **Maintenance**

For emergency facility repairs Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., contact Maintenance 740-362-3380 and the Building Manager for the housing unit in which the resident lives or where the concern is located. Email the concern to [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu).

During the weekend, contact the Building Manager assigned to the housing unit in which the problem has been reported.

### **Non-Emergency Numbers**

- Delaware Police Department: 740-203-1111
- Delaware Fire Department: 740-203-1300

### **Hospital Information**

The nearest hospital emergency room is at Grady Memorial Hospital, 561 W. Central Avenue, Delaware, OH 43015. <https://www.ohiohealth.com/grady/> (740-615-1165).

The most direct route from MTSO to Grady is:

- Turn right (North) onto U.S. 23 North to William Street exit
- Turn Left on W. William St.
- Right on S. Sandusky St.
- Left on W. Central Ave. (Rt. 37 West)
- The hospital is on the left about 1.2 miles after turning onto W. Central Ave.

## Helpful information about our campus

### Reception Desk

Internal callers, dial "0." External callers dial 740-363-1146.

### Business Office

Open Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.- 4:30 p.m. Postage stamps and postage for outgoing packages may be purchased at the Business Office window during its hours of operation.

### Mail Room

The mail room is located in the lower level of Werner Hall and is usually open Monday-Friday 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. -4 p.m. Mail is only delivered and picked up at the school Monday through Friday. The mail room is closed on MTSO and legal holidays. Mail room operating hours are posted on the mail room door. Students can access their mailbox at any time by entering through the Coffee Shop door using the swipe card given to them by the Facilities Manager when Werner Hall is locked.

Every student is assigned a mailbox and will keep this same mailbox throughout enrollment at MTSO. Students can send and receive both U.S. and campus mail through the mail room. Students will initially receive their mailbox number and combination during orientation, or may stop at the Business Office in Werner Hall to retrieve mailbox information. It is the responsibility of the student to know their mailbox number and combination and to remove the contents of the mailbox on a regular basis. Often, important notices (including academic work) are sent through campus mail.

To ensure that incoming mail reaches the intended person as promptly as possible, include the MTSO box number (**not** the apartment number, if a campus resident) as part of the MTSO mailing address.

### Phones

Local calls can be made from "house" phones located in the Coffee Shop, Reception area in Werner Hall, Dining Hall foyer, Gault Hall, Gallery next to Library, and in the Dewire Residence Hall Lounge. Call boxes are located outside the main entrances to the Helen Werner Apartment Building and the Dewire Residence Hall. Those using the campus telephones will need to dial "9" before dialing the local, off-campus number. Because campus residents are often contacted through their campus extensions, MTSO has installed a corded landline phone in each apartment.

## **Copy Machine**

The library offers its users a printer/copier that is connected to each student's account. It can be used by logging-in using one's MTSO email address and one's password for her/his email account. More information on print services can be found posted by the printer/copier in the library. Additional value for one's account can be extended at the school Business Office. The printer/copier can also be used to scan images to one's email account. There is no charge for this scanning service. Copying for students should only occur in the library. Student workers should not be using administration or faculty copiers for personal work.

## **Wildlife**

Various forms of wildlife including feral cats, skunks, moles, squirrels, geese, ducks, coyotes and deer may be found on campus. There may be times when these animals approach people on campus. For obvious reasons, *we ask people not to touch or feed these animals.* Notify Maintenance of any wildlife that is believed to represent a danger or a nuisance.

## **Food Service**

Dunn Dining Hall serves "farm-to-table" lunch on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during the academic year when classes are in session. Buffet style lunch (11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.) can be purchased for \$6. Additionally, boxed lunches can be pre-ordered to service faculty, staff and student meetings. Drinks are an additional charge. Each meal in our dining hall includes fresh fruits and vegetables grown on our own Seminary Hill Farm just steps outside Dunn Dining Hall. Menus and dining hall hours are posted in the News Feed on Populi and on social media. The Dining Hall staff will do their best to accommodate special dietary and scheduling needs. Contact [info.shf@mtso.edu](mailto:info.shf@mtso.edu) for ordering and scheduling. For questions, comments or concerns please contact Tadd Petersen, Manager of Farm and Food, at [tpetersen@mtso.edu](mailto:tpetersen@mtso.edu).

## **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited in all buildings on the MTSO campus, including all campus housing units. Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3794, smoking is prohibited within 30 feet of the doors and windows on campus. Smoking is restricted to the designated smoking areas located outside most buildings. Please only dispose of cigarette butts in the receptacles provided. Do not move the cigarette ash receptacles closer to the doors.

## Our aspiration, identity and purpose

### Our aspiration

In response to the grace and call of God in Jesus Christ, Methodist Theological School in Ohio will prepare and invigorate transformational leaders to engage the church and the world in leadership and service.

### Our identity and purpose

Methodist Theological School in Ohio is a center for rigorous theological inquiry, spiritual formation and professional development which is rooted in the scriptures and traditions of the Christian faith. We provide a vibrant learning environment for the preparation of skilled, passionate transformational leaders for churches, religious institutions, emerging faith communities and the wider world. Grounded in our Wesleyan tradition and influenced by our ecumenical and interfaith commitments, we attend to the theological, spiritual and vocational formation of a diverse group of students involved in a wide range of pursuits. Expecting active participation in our community of learning, we maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect and openness, teaching how to engage in conversation with the past and with others so that new and faithful perspectives may emerge. We strive for our graduates to demonstrate a deep understanding of the heritage disciplines of religious study, to be highly competent in areas of practical theology, and to show evidence of thoughtful reflection. We are committed to individual wholeness, social justice, inclusiveness and religious diversity. We take seriously our responsibility for stewardship of the intellectual life of the church and our commitment to a just and sustainable world.

## Declaration of inclusiveness

We recognize ourselves as a community of persons united under one God. Our scriptures, as they witness to the reality of God, speak of humankind as created in God's image; and human existence is described in the light of God's acceptance of all people. As persons called Christians we are guided and instructed by scriptures that portray the way in which our human existence was and is enlightened by the coming of Jesus Christ into the world.

Jesus lived and taught the all-inclusiveness of God's love, and calls each of us into an intimate relationship with God; a relationship in which every aspect of our humanity is affirmed by God. Jesus instructed us to share this affirmation with our sisters and brothers in the gathering of a community, that through this community we might achieve full actualization of our individual and corporate potential for a right relationship with God.

Inclusiveness is the freedom for total involvement and participation of all persons in the membership and leadership of the community, at any level and in every place. We believe this

freedom to be a mandate from God, not only as the basic right of every person, but also as a basic need for life, growth and the vitality of the community. Consequently, our task as members of this community is to see the realization of inclusiveness not as an onerous task or as a threat, but rather as an expression of the unity that gives us hope for our future as a community.

Where barriers of any kind prevent such inclusiveness from being a reality for any person or group of persons, the recognition of such barriers carries with it the responsibility for educating and raising the consciousness of all members to the community. The major responsibility for being aware of and eliminating those barriers rests with the group(s) who consciously or unconsciously placed them there. In order to enable our community and our world to reach its full potential for its relationship with God, we must risk giving up these barriers that prevent us from realizing our true unity in one God.

To this end, it is the intent of this document to set forth for the MTSO community, consideration of a variety of areas in our lives where barriers to inclusiveness are perceived to exist. We recognize that there are barriers to attitude, standing rules or procedures, lack of understanding or awareness, subtle maneuvering and reluctance to change. But we believe that if we are to justify reference to ourselves as God's people, these must change.

## **Theology**

We of the MTSO community hold a variety of theological positions. While we cannot claim all beliefs about God to be equally valid, we must accept those persons who hold beliefs different from our own.

As a community, we realize that we are only one microcosm in the world. We must constantly keep before us the need to keep our lives in a global perspective.

We affirm people's right to choose how they worship. We encourage ecumenism in our faculty and student body and through our participation in the Theological Consortium of Greater Columbus, Inc. It is our intention to encourage the continuation of pluralistic chapel services and our participation in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

We will foster our global and ecumenical perspective through our individual and corporate action and through our openness to differing perspectives.

Language holds a strong power over people, both consciously and unconsciously, subtly and blatantly. The function of language is not to duplicate reality, but to recall it, comment on it and to provide a means of access to learning and growth. Language not only reflects but also forms our attitudes and actions. Yet, by its very nature, as an imperfect tool of imperfect beings, language suffers many significant limitations. Our language is often inaccurate and insensitive,

even careless, as we fail to use words that will invite all people to hear and believe that which we call the good news.

Exclusive language, traditionally dominated in our culture by white male symbolism, has caused alienation of women, men, racial and ethnic minorities, the elderly, the very young, persons with handicapping conditions and persons from various socio-economic classes. The alienation caused by this often results in relationships broken and burdened by barriers of words. This is directly contrary to our Christian affirmation of the goodness and rightness of the development and nurture of relationships between persons and God, and between persons and persons.

Inclusive language is language carefully and deliberately chosen to break barriers of exclusivity. It is "for" everyone and "against" no one. It focuses on the message given by guarding against inaccuracy in the vocabulary of the sender. Inclusive language is an intentional attempt to communicate in a universal way.

### **Human Condition**

All persons are unique and precious to God. We affirm this personhood that God creates and enables in every individual. Therefore, those who exclude persons from any aspect of the life of the community on the basis of human condition claim special personal merit that is irreconcilable with Christian understanding.

God has been and is inclusive in the initiation of relationship with humanity. This is witnessed to by Scriptures, tradition, experience and reason. With this basic understanding of essential human worth in mind, the following affirmations are necessary for an inclusive community:

I. We shall be intentional in being fully inclusive regarding work, educational and social participatory responsibilities.

II. We shall be intentional in being fully inclusive regarding social leadership responsibility and participation in all aspects of the life of the church. This participation includes both administrative and worship leadership as well as other roles in the wholeness of the community that celebrates and proclaims God's love and authority.

III. We shall be intentional in proclaiming God's inclusiveness of all persons, guarding against any temptation or tendency toward classism, sexism, racism, ageism, or the exclusion of or discrimination against persons based on lifestyle or handicapping condition.

*The Declaration of Inclusiveness was drafted by the Campus Council and adopted by the faculty and the Board of Trustees as a covenant of the Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Fall, 1983*



As we continue our legacy of preparing people for leadership and service in the church and society, we will find ways to embody inclusion anew, guided by these Aspirations for an Inclusive Community:

**Aspirations for an inclusive community**

Methodist Theological School in Ohio has long pursued inclusion and justice, and seeks to continue this legacy as we find new expressions for inclusion and justice in our contemporary setting.

Methodist Theological School in Ohio seeks to be a community of learning in an environment of faith, in which inclusive thought, language, and action are valued, honored and encouraged.

Methodist Theological School in Ohio seeks to address the impact of race, gender, sexuality, difference, culture, and privilege on teaching and learning dynamics.

Methodist Theological School in Ohio seeks to provide an opportunity for individuals to explore their unique sense of self and their place in a larger community in preparation for a life of leadership and service.

*August 2009*

**A new statement regarding equality and justice is in process, with intent to circulate and adopt in the 2015-2016 academic year.**

# Academic information and services

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Please refer to the Academic Catalog as the main document for degree requirements and other academic policies.

## Enrollment requirements, registration and matriculation

The enrollment procedure at MTSO involves two steps: registration and matriculation.

New students register for courses via Academic Affairs and confirm their registration at New Student Orientation. Returning students register during the designated times listed on the Academic Calendar. All returning students are required to meet with their academic advisors before registering. Priority in enrollment for each course is based on seniority. Failure to observe registration deadlines may result in assessment of a late fee, as well as forfeiture of the enrollment priority associated with seniority.

For a student to be officially enrolled in each term, that student must be enrolled in courses for credit with registration documented in Academic Affairs. **Auditing participants are not considered to be enrolled students.**

Matriculation occurs when a student is properly registered for classes, cleared by the business office and begins to attend classes. Clearance from the Business Office comes when financial obligations have been paid or satisfactory arrangements for payment have been made. Students are expected to pay their bills before the beginning of classes each term or as soon thereafter as they receive their bills. If a student is blocked by the business office because of failure to meet financial obligations at the beginning of a term, their registration is cancelled. If students wait until after the first week of the term to apply for financial aid for the purpose of removing this block, they will not be permitted to register for the term.

## Enrollment limits and status

Master's degree or certificate students can enroll in a maximum of 14 credit hours in any Fall or Spring semester and a maximum of 3 credit hours in January Term. In the summer, students may complete 9 credit hours but are limited to enrollment in 3 credit hours in each of the two summer terms. The remaining 3 credit hours would normally consist of coursework from cross-registration, CPE or cross-cultural trips. Fifteen hours is permitted in Fall or Spring semester

when the student is enrolled in CC-601, Cross Cultural Pre-Immersion. Any exceptions to these enrollment limits must have the approval of the student's academic advisor and the dean.

Enrollment in January Term is combined with enrollment in Spring Semester in determining a student's enrollment status for all matters related to Title IV federal financial aid. Students enrolled in 9 or more credit hours in the Fall and the combined January/Spring terms are considered full-time students in those semesters. Half-time students are those enrolled in at least 4.5 credit hours but less than 9 credit hours in a semester. Enrollment in fewer than 4.5 credit hours in a semester is considered less-than-half-time. During the summer session, 6 credit hours is considered full-time and at least 3 credit hours is considered half-time.

Doctor of Ministry students are considered to be enrolled half-time during the coursework phase of their program.

## **Program length and individual course load**

All degrees and certificates must be completed within 10 years. According to the Association of Theological Schools, all course credits applied towards degree requirements should be earned within 10 years of the awarding of the degree.

Full-time study at MTSO involves full-time commitment. For each one credit hour there will be three hours of out-of-class homework time per week. Students who are working full-time and/or have significant church and family commitments may want to consider starting with 11 hours instead of 14. The remaining three credits would need to be planned for and scheduled into the summer or the second year.

If a maximal course load is pursued in both semesters and one intensive term each year, students can earn the Master of Divinity degree in three years of full-time study, or the Master of Arts in Practical Theology, Master of Arts in Theological Studies, or Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries (Track I) in two years of full-time study. Track II (Addiction Counseling) requires slightly more than two years of full-time study. Track III (Pastoral and Professional Counseling) requires three years of full-time study. The maximum amount of credit allowed for Fall and Spring semesters is 14 credit hours. Individual circumstances with respect to the demands of coursework, field education setting, church or secular employment, and family responsibilities may result in the decision to extend the length of time for completion. The Connections pathway in the M.Div. may help students plan their three year journey (see below).

The Doctor of Ministry program is a cohort program that requires at least four calendar years for completion of all requirements. Students attend intensive courses which are offered in January and Summer terms.

Certificate programs vary widely in the number of required credit hours and can be completed within one to two years if desired.

Students are responsible for ensuring that their graduation requirements are met. Academic Affairs maintains current records on all students and provides annual degree audits. MTSO is not responsible for calling attention to deficiencies in a student's program unless those deficiencies are the basis for disciplinary action.

## **The Connections pathway to the M.Div.**

In 2013, MTSO implemented the Connections path to the Master of Divinity degree. Connections is not a separate degree program but a scheduling plan that allows students to complete the degree in three years while benefiting from both on-campus and online learning.

Connections students primarily spend one full day each week on campus, during which they'll get to know their professors and fellow students, stay up-to-date with assignments, and participate in chapel and other community activities. On-campus time is augmented by hybrid online learning, through which students may engage at times that fit best with their individual schedules.

More information about Connections, including sample schedules, is available at [www.mtso.edu/connections](http://www.mtso.edu/connections).

## **Class levels**

Master's degree students are designated as first, second or third-year based on their program of study and the number of credit hours earned.

First year = 0-27 credit hours

Second year = 28-54 credit hours

Third year = 55 or more credit hours

## **Class attendance**

Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. In most cases, a student will not be allowed credit for a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions.

As it relates to blended courses, students may not be allowed credit if they are absent for 25% of class meetings or if 25% of online course work is not completed. Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance.

## Program changes

Those admitted to MTSO are admitted to a specific degree or certificate program. Adding, dropping or changing programs completely involves a process of careful consideration and dialogue with academic advisors, church officials, program directors and the dean. The application to make a program change can be obtained from Academic Affairs. Additional materials and a review of credentials may be necessary, since different degree programs have somewhat different admissions requirements.

Master's degree students who wish to transfer into a certificate program must formally withdraw from their master's degree. They may only transfer into the Certificate in Deacon Studies and the Advanced Course of Student certificate programs.

Specializations and concentrations in the Master of Divinity, Master of Arts in Practical Theology, and Master of Theological Studies degree programs must be declared in Academic Affairs. Students who wish to drop a specialization must submit that request in writing. Prior to graduation, students in specializations must submit verification from specialization advisors that the specialization requirements have been met.

## Changes in registration

Changes in registration after the registration period and before the end of the fifth week of the term require the student to obtain the approval of the advisor and make the change online in the Populi system.

### **Adding a course**

Students may add a course within the first week of the semester, if there are open seats in the course, and if their advisor approves. The student is responsible for completing any missed assignments. Summer and January-term courses cannot be added after the first day of class.

### **Dropping a course**

Students may drop a Fall or Spring course with their advisor's approval within the first five weeks of the semester. January and Summer terms have different deadlines. There is a graduated refund policy. Please refer to the "Institutional Refund Policy" in the "Academic and Residential Fees for 2015-16" section of the catalog and the Student Handbook for details on refunds.

### **Withdrawal from a course**

To withdraw from a course after the five-week drop period, students must submit a "Petition to Withdraw from Course(s)" form to the dean. This form is available in Academic Affairs or

online. If approved, the course will be listed on the student's permanent transcript with a grade of "WP" (withdrawn passing) or "WF" (withdrawn failing). Grades of "WP" and "WF" will not affect the student's cumulative grade point average. The deadline for withdrawing from a course is on the last day the class meets.

**Students who receive Federal Stafford Loans should contact the Office of Financial Aid before withdrawal. Under current federal policies, dropping or withdrawing most likely will result in a student account balance owed to MTSO for which the student is responsible.**

## Leave of absence or withdrawal from school

Students who do not plan to enroll for courses during any Fall or Spring term are required to complete an Application for Leave of Absence. In addition, if the student is withdrawing during a term and after the drop period, she or he must formally withdraw from all courses in which he or she is enrolled by completing a Petition for Withdrawal in Courses form.

Those who intend to withdraw indefinitely must complete a Withdrawal from School form from Academic Affairs or the MTSO website. The student should also schedule an exit interview with the Office of Student Life. The withdrawal form requires approval signatures from the student's advisor, the dean, business office and other officials of the school. These procedures ensure the school that those who might be helpful in the student's planning for the future have been consulted. They also permit MTSO representatives to write subsequent letters of recommendation recording the fact of withdrawal in good standing or to permit the student's return at a later time without reapplication. Only when this form has been properly filed will the individual be considered to have withdrawn in good standing. The student will be contacted for a financial aid exit interview and may also be contacted by the dean or the director of student services for an exit interview.

Master's degree students who wish to withdraw and transfer into a certificate program may only transfer into the Certificate in Deacon Studies and the Advanced Course of Studies certificate programs.

Students who fail to complete either the leave of absence form or the withdrawal form and do not return will be administratively withdrawn which is not a good standing. Students who do not return after a one-year leave of absence and do not properly withdraw will also be administratively withdrawn.

Students who receive Federal Stafford Loans should contact the Office of Financial Aid before withdrawal. Under current federal policies, dropping or withdrawing most likely will result in a student account balance owed to MTSO for which the student is responsible.

## Reinstatement policy

A student, who has withdrawn in good standing and has been gone less than three years, may apply for reinstatement through Academic Affairs. The “Application for Reinstatement” requires the signed approval of various school offices to ensure that there are no outstanding obligations to MTSO.

If a student withdraws and then wants to return and transfer to a different program, they must be reinstated in the program previously enrolled in prior to any consideration of change of program or they must apply for readmission.

Former students who want to re-enroll after more than three years since their last date of attendance must contact the Admissions Office and reapply for admission. Those who separate from the school without following the regular procedure for leave of absence or withdrawal may be required to reapply for admission through the admissions office, even if the absence is less than three years.

Upon re-admission, any changes in requirements or academic policies since the time of initial application will apply to the student’s program.

# Grading and evaluation processes

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## Confidentiality

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is a federal law that protects a student’s educational record. Only designated school officials (academic advisors, staff who need access to information to perform their job duties, etc.) are given access to student records, within the limitations of their need to know. A list of those items that constitute “directory information” at MTSO (those items that it can publish or publicly release) is printed in the Student Handbook along with the complete policy for all student records. Only that information designated “directory information” will be published or publicly released. The seminary has chosen to keep all other student information confidential. Students have the right, under FERPA, to request that no information concerning their educational records is published or publicly released except with their written permission. To keep all information confidential, a student must present a written request to withhold information within the first two weeks of the semester. A request to withhold will stay on file until the student removes it.

# Student Records Policy

## Types of Student Records

There are several offices at MTSO that keep student records. These include both academic and administrative records.

**Academic records** may include, but are not limited to:

- Academic records including registration, grades, and evaluations that are kept by the Academic Affairs Office
- Doctor of Ministry records including project proposals and portfolios that are kept by the D.Min. program director's office;
- Field education records including placement information and supervisor's evaluations that are kept by the Field Education Office;
- Counseling practicum and internship records including evaluations that are kept by the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs' Office.

**Administrative records** may include, but are not limited to:

- Financial aid records such as scholarship applications that are kept by the Financial Aid Office;
- Student accounts records such as billing and payment information that are kept by the Business Office;
- Housing records such as housing applications that are kept by the Buildings & Grounds Office;
- Student Services records such as disability accommodations and documentation that are kept by the Student Services Office;
- Admission records that transfer to the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar after matriculation, such as the application and transcripts from other institutions the student attended.

## FERPA and Admissions Records

FERPA coverage begins as soon as a student matriculates, i.e. is properly registered for courses and begins attending. Soon after the student is enrolled in the school, this file shall be purged of all material related only to admission (except the application, acceptance letter and transcripts) and transferred from the Director of Admissions to the Office of the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar. If an applicant is accepted but never enrolls, FERPA does not apply and the records remain in the Admissions Office for a period of three years, after which time



reapplication is required if the applicant wishes to enroll. These applicants do not have a right to see their admissions records.

### **FERPA and Alumni Records**

If a student has a non-disclosure of information request in place at the time that he/she leaves or graduates, this request will be honored until that student requests its removal. Students who leave the institution have the same rights under FERPA regarding their educational records as students currently in attendance. However, information collected about an individual *after* he or she is no longer a student is not covered under FERPA. This may include records maintained by the offices of Alumni and Church Relations and Development in relation to activities that occurred after graduation.

### **Retention of Records**

MTSO maintains a records retention schedule which designates the minimum number of years to retain student records. The time period varies depending on the document and the office which holds the records. Some records, such as grades, are permanent. Others, such as the admissions application or degree audits, may be destroyed after ten years from the last date of attendance. A copy of this retention schedule is available from the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar' Office.

### **Annual Notification of Rights (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. Students are notified of these rights annually by the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar' Office.

Within the Methodist Theological School in Ohio community, only those members acting individually or collectively in the student's educational interest are allowed access to student education records. These members may include but are not limited to employees from the offices of the President, Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar, Admissions, Financial Aid, and Student Services. Also included are faculty members such as the student's advisor, faculty from Academic Affairs and Student Review Committees, and the faculty members of the Scholarship Selection Committee. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Education records are defined as those records which contain information that is directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or the institution, or by a party acting on behalf of the institution. Records may be in print, e-mail, handwriting, computer media, video or audio tape, film, microfilm or microfiche.

Student rights are as follows:

1. **The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day MTSO receives a request for access.** A student should submit to the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar, Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The MTSO official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
2. **The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.** A student who wishes to ask MTSO to amend a record should write the MTSO official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If MTSO decides not to amend the record as requested, MTSO will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. **The right to provide written consent before MTSO discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.** MTSO discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by MTSO in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom MTSO has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using MTSO employees or officials (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for MTSO.

4. **The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by MTSO to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:**

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-5901

### **Student Directory Information**

At its discretion, Methodist Theological School in Ohio may provide "directory information" in accordance with the provisions of the FERPA. Directory information is defined as including the following:

- student's name
- names of spouse/ children
- address & phone numbers
- MTSO mailbox number
- e-mail addresses
- photograph
- date of birth
- employer name & phone number
- current enrollment (yes or no)
- enrollment status (full-time, half-time or less than half-time)
- degree or non-degree program in which enrolled
- class level
- dates of attendance
- MTSO degrees or awards earned (with dates received)
- educational degrees received from other educational institutions

A student may withhold directory information by indicating this preference in writing to the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar within the first two weeks of the fall term, or the first term the student is in attendance. A request for such non-disclosure must be filed annually on the form provided by the Academic Affairs. Upon request, MTSO may disclose education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

### **MTSO FERPA Mandatory Training and Certification Statement**

FERPA is the federal law that governs the rights of student and institutional responsibilities with respect to student records. To ensure the MTSO community is compliant with FERPA regulations, all individuals who have access to student records are required to participate in a web-based FERPA training module within 60 days of

their employment at MTSO and every two years thereafter. Additionally, all employees must certify each January that they understand MTSO's confidentiality requirements, including FERPA. An annual certification statement will be sent on January 1st to employees who have completed the FERPA training (past and present) to remind them to attest to the MTSO Confidentiality Statement.

Student employees are under the same obligation to maintain the confidentiality of student records as any other employee. Student employees receive the same FERPA training as all other staff and faculty, and, in their student handbook and from their supervisors. MTSO student employees are required to sign the Confidentiality of Student Records statement before they can access student records. When working with student records, a student employee should work cooperatively with the supervisor to ensure FERPA compliance.

## **Academic advising**

Each student enrolled in a certificate or degree program is assigned an academic advisor who is a full-time member of the teaching faculty or the dean's office. The relationship between student and advisor is considered central to the educational experience at MTSO. Academic advisors assist students with planning their programs, identifying resources for further consultation and formally approving course selections. While students are required to meet their advisors on only a few occasions each year, faculty members are always willing to schedule additional appointments with students.

## **Mid-program review process**

Each enrolled degree student is required to complete a process of academic and professional reflection midway through their degree program. This process involves reviewing evaluations, grades, degree requirements and professional goals. The student is required to write an evaluative reflection and meet with their academic advisor. The academic advisor then submits a brief report to the dean for review. If concerns are raised by the academic advisor, the student may be asked to meet with the dean for a follow-up discussion.

## **Conditional admission, academic probation and procedures for academic dismissal**

Students conditionally admitted to MTSO, or who exhibit weak academic performance, are placed on academic probation. The academic probation status places certain

restrictions on enrollment. Returning students will be placed on academic probation when their cumulative grade point average falls below 2.50.

Conditionally admitted students or returning students on academic probation are limited to enrollment based on conditions in their admission letter, or if no conditions are specified, in 9 credit hours per semester (or 11 credit hours if two of the credit hours are ES-100, Educated Spirit). These conditions will be lifted upon the successful completion of at least 9 credit hours in the curriculum of MTSO with a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50. In some cases, conditionally admitted students are asked to take specific courses in addition to meeting the required GPA.

Students admitted conditionally who achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher after earning six or more credit hours at MTSO may petition the dean for early removal from conditional status. Once the criteria have been satisfied for removal of conditional admission or from academic probation, the registrar will notify the student in writing and make the appropriate status change.

Students who receive or wish to receive financial assistance and who are admitted conditionally or placed on academic probation should discuss their academic status with the Office of Financial Aid because eligibility for assistance may be affected.

Students who are placed on academic probation twice during enrolled semesters and students remaining on conditional admission after 9 credit hours are earned or two consecutive semesters (whichever time period is longer), will have their records reviewed by the dean. The dean may make recommendations including (but not limited to) a required leave of absence or academic dismissal. A recommendation for a required leave of absence or academic dismissal is voted upon by the faculty members of the Academic Affairs Committee. Students may appeal the committee's decision to the Executive Faculty by submitting a request in writing to the dean's office.

In the Doctor of Ministry program, the minimum passing grade for a course is B-minus. D.Min. students are placed on academic probation when they fail to earn a B-minus or above in a course. Students are removed from academic probation by earning a B-minus or above in the next class they take. Earning less than a B-minus in two consecutive classes is grounds for academic dismissal. A minimum cumulative D.Min. GPA of 3.0 is required for graduation.

# Academic Dishonesty

## General Statement of Expectations

The opportunity for free inquiry and free expression essential to the educational process exists effectively only within a system of order which supports it. Accordingly, academic misconduct in any form will not be tolerated and may result in failure of course work or other sanctions up to and including dismissal from the School.

## Expectations for Documenting Written Work at MTSO

The faculty has adopted the policy that all papers submitted for courses at MTSO must conform to a standard format for “footnotes” (which is taken to mean footnotes, endnotes, or in-line notes) and bibliography. The intent of a standardized format is that the readers have full and immediate information concerning works cited and consulted by the writer of the paper. In most instances, students may choose either one of two standard formats, which are here identified as 1) the Turabian format (sometimes called Chicago style), or 2) the Author-Date system (sometimes called the social science, or APA, format). Students may choose either format for any paper, but that format must be followed consistently throughout the paper. Mixing the two styles in the same paper is not permitted. Instructors may also designate one of the two formats as mandatory for assignments in a course. Papers not conforming to a proper and consistent style may be returned to the writer ungraded, for a re-write, or with a grade that reflects failure to follow the required format. If you have questions, please consult with the school’s Writing Instructor, the Academic Dean, or a faculty member.

## Academic Misconduct: Examples and Definitions

The faculty has identified the following as specific, but not all-inclusive, examples of academic misconduct:

- Cheating on examinations of any kind by whatever means, including preparation for an examination by means of obtaining copies of examination, past or present, and copying from other students.
- Utilization of the oral and/or written private research of a paid or voluntary person and representing this work as one’s own, whether within the classroom or in any context of the seminary’s academic program.
- Borrowing without attribution (plagiarism or misuse of sources) from published and unpublished works, including writings and media in any format taken from websites, apps, and other online sources. Plagiarism is defined for these purposes in a broad rather than a narrow sense and therefore is not limited to

definitions found in Civil Law which apply to Copyright Laws, the commercial reproduction of books, articles, images, and audio and video recordings.

Please see the Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL) website for a helpful discussion of how to avoid plagiarism:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>

This policy applies not only to the production of written assignments, but also to oral, electronic, and digital work presented in any format. Students are always expected to attribute clearly and explicitly work that is, properly speaking the intellectual and creative property of others.

### **Sanctions**

When academic misconduct has been established to a faculty member's satisfaction, the faculty member may assign the student a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and/or may recommend stronger sanctions to the Academic Dean.

Faculty members are required to report all incidences of plagiarism to the Academic Dean by way of a confidential written communication among the instructor, the Dean, and the student. The instructor must submit a copy of the plagiarized assignment with corresponding proof of plagiarism.

The Academic Dean will meet with the student to discuss the matter. If after review it is determined that a violation of the policy on academic honesty has been committed, the Dean has the option of imposing additional sanctions such as required meetings with the writing instructor, reprimand, probation, suspension or expulsion. Following this meeting, the Dean will summarize these findings and outline any sanctions. This information will then be communicated by the Dean to the student and to the student's Academic Advisor in written form. Copies of all communications and documentation will be kept on file in the Dean's office, for the duration of the student's enrollment in the school.

If a student is found to have violated the policy on academic honesty a second time, the Dean may impose the sanctions of suspension or expulsion. If the Academic Dean initiates this sanction, the Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Review Process will take effect.

## Policy on the use of electronic devices

MTSO, as an institution dedicated to the advancement of learning, is firmly committed to a philosophy of mutual respect. To that end we have established a policy regarding the use of cell phones, pagers, laptop computers, tablets, and other electronic devices. Instructors have the right to impose appropriate grading penalties for excessive classroom disruptions due to these devices.

Turn cell phones and/or pagers to silent or “vibrate only” during class. Unless there is an emergency requiring immediate attention, phone calls should be returned during classroom breaks in an area of the building that is not disruptive to other classes. The noise created by playing audio equipment so that others can hear it, or by using cell phones or pagers in areas of the library where others are attempting to study or to do research is disruptive. Cell phones are to be used in the lobby/gallery of the building. If the Centrum is in use, cell phones should be used outside the building.

Laptop computers have become commonplace in the classroom and a resource for students who prefer this method of data storage. However, the use of the laptop should be restricted to course related purposes only. General browsing of the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class time is inappropriate.

## Grade scale and deadlines

MTSO uses two grading options: letter grades (A, B, C, D and F, with plusses and minuses as appropriate) and a pass/fail grading option. Letter grades are the default option. Within certain limits, students have the option of taking some courses on a pass/fail basis, with the approval of their academic advisor. Grades of P (pass) earn credit but are not calculated in a student’s cumulative GPA. To earn a grade of P, performance in a course must be at a level that would have earned a grade of C-minus or higher in the letter grading system. Students may complete up to 9 semester credit hours on a pass/fail basis. However, there are certain core courses excluded from this option. Students who are seeking ordination are encouraged to check with annual conferences before exercising the pass/fail option in any courses, as conferences may have unique limitations on their own acceptance of pass/fail courses.



**The following list describes the grades used at MTSO, and their meaning:**

Outstanding work

A-plus	4.0
A	4.0
A-minus	3.7

Substandard but passing work

D-plus	1.3
D	1.0
(D-minus is not used)	

Good work

B-plus	3.3
B	3.0
B-minus	2.7

Failing work

F	0.0
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Work meets minimum standards

C-plus	2.3
C	2.0
C-minus	1.7

Other grades

AU	Audit
CR/NC	Credit /No Credit
INC	Incomplete
IP	In Progress
P	Pass (grade would have been C-minus or higher)
WP	Withdrawn Passing
WF	Withdrawn Failing

Grades are available online at the end of each academic term. Academic Affairs will not disclose grades by phone or email, but official copies of grade reports are available upon request. Course instructors are responsible for submitting grades to Academic Affairs within one week following the last day of fall or spring semester. Grade submission deadlines for intensive terms are usually three weeks after the end of the term. Doctor of Ministry grades are due two months from the end of the course. Grades for graduating seniors are due one week early in the spring semester.

## Grade changes and appeals

Students who believe that they have not been graded fairly should first speak to the instructor who gave the grade. If, after this conversation, the student still believes that the grade is unfair, the student may file a written appeal with the dean, within 30 days of having received the grade, and set forth the reasons for the appeal. The dean will consult with both the student and the instructor. If the dean finds grounds to support the student's claim that the grade is unfair,

the dean may modify the grade. The dean will render the decision regarding the appeal in writing.

Faculty members may change grades within 30 days after the final grade deadline for the term in which the course was taken. After the 30-day period, no grades will be changed unless there is a petition because of extenuating circumstances.

## **Faculty comments on student performance**

In addition to giving a letter grade, students also receive an End of Course Student Evaluation for each course in which they are enrolled. This is an assessment of the student skills and abilities which MTSO considers important for students to acquire in our degree programs. MTSO recognizes that the full scope of professional development for ministry cannot be adequately captured in the final grade for the class, so this evaluation rubric is an attempt to reflect on that broader range of skills and abilities expected of persons educated at a graduate level. These comments will be kept on file, and each student will receive a copy of his or her evaluation. They will also be shared with the student's advisor and will be used for educational guidance.

A student who believes that all or part of an evaluation is inappropriate should speak first with the faculty member who wrote the evaluation. If there is still a problem after this consultation, the student may submit a written statement to the dean, to be included in the student's file.

The dean and a faculty or staff member acting under the dean's direction may review these comments. The comments may be reviewed by the Student Review Committee and by School committees charged with granting honors scholarships or awards. Members of the faculty who receive requests to write a letter of recommendation for a student also have access to the comments in the student's file.

## **Pass/fail grading option**

Within certain limits, a student may complete up to nine credit hours at MTSO on a pass/fail basis, rather than for a letter grade (A, B, C, D or F). Dual degree students may take three additional hours pass/fail. All students seeking ordination are encouraged to check with their annual conferences (or appropriate judicatory) before exercising the pass/fail option in any courses, since they may have limitations on pass/fail courses that are different from those prescribed by MTSO.

1. The following courses may **not** be taken on a pass/fail basis:

CE-501	DS-670	HM-600	ME-680
CH-501	ES-500	ME-570	NT-510
CT-549	ES-501	ME-580	PC-500
DS-660	FE-850	ME-590	PT-500
DS-665	HB-510	ME-670	WO-500

2. The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course, by completing the "Application for Pass/Fail Credit" and returning it to Academic Affairs. Emails with advisor approvals are also accepted. The deadline for pass/fail applications in weekend courses is prior to the second weekend; for intensive courses, the deadline is by the end of the second day of class. The application is available from Academic Affairs or on the MTSO Web site. Requests to change to pass/fail grading in a course received after the deadline for these requests will not be accepted.
3. When exercising the pass/fail option, to receive a grade of "pass" the student must do at least the equivalent of C-minus work in the course. (E.g. if the student opts for pass/fail grading and his or her performance in the course would have earned a D-plus grade – and would have earned the student credit for the course within the letter grade system – the student will fail the course and will not receive credit.)
4. Courses that are designated in the MTSO Academic Catalog description as "offered on a pass/fail basis" do not reduce the number of pass/fail hours or options available to a student.
5. A grade of "pass" will earn credit for a student, but does not affect the student's cumulative grade point average. A grade of "fail" in a pass/fail class is calculated as an F in calculating the cumulative grade point average.

## Incomplete

The grade of INC (incomplete) may be used under special circumstances on a temporary basis when a student needs additional time on course assignments. To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must petition the professor, their advisor and the dean. Students must complete the petition and obtain the appropriate signatures unless they are physically unable.

In Fall and Spring semesters, the signed petition is to be delivered to Academic Affairs before the last day of regularly scheduled classes, before finals week, as listed on the MTSO Academic Calendar.

In intensive terms, the signed petition is to be delivered to Academic Affairs at such time as to ensure approval by the dean by the deadline for the submission of grades (three weeks following the end of the intensive term for Master's level courses; two months following the end of the intensive term for Doctor of Ministry courses). (Note: It is strongly recommended that students deliver the petition to Academic Affairs for review at least one week prior to this deadline. Lack of sufficient lead time may result in the denial of the petition).

The dean may ask to confer directly with the student, advisor, and/or instructor before making a decision.

Any petition submitted without a "date by which all course work will be completed" will be denied. For Master's level courses in Fall and Spring semesters, the "date by which all course work will be completed" will not be later than four weeks after the last day of the term as listed on the Academic Calendar. For January and Summer Term Courses (Master's or D.Min.), the "date by which all course work will be completed" will be not later than four weeks following the deadline for the submission of grades in the course.

For any incomplete course in which a new letter grade had not been submitted after one week has passed from the "date by which all course work will be completed," the registrar will record the grade of F.

## Repeated courses

Students are permitted to repeat courses in which they have received a C or lower. Grades for both the original course and the repeated course are retained on the transcript and included in the calculation of the GPA.

Students may repeat courses in which they received previous credit with these conditions:

1. No additional credit will be counted toward the degree but credit will be recorded on the transcript.
2. Both course grades will be recorded independently on the transcript.
3. Both grades will be calculated into the GPA.
4. Students are not eligible to receive financial aid for repeating a course for which they have already received credit (e.g., completed and received a grade of D or higher).

## Conferral of degrees and participation in commencement

The Board of Trustees, upon recommendation by the faculty, confers academic degrees upon candidates during any regularly scheduled board meeting during the year. Generally, the board meets in November, February or March, and May of each year. Only those candidates who have completed all requirements, have met all financial obligations, have completed exit loan counseling if they borrowed a Federal Stafford loan during their attendance, returned all overdue items to the library and paid all library fines will be recommended to the Board for degrees, will be permitted to participate in commencement, and be listed as graduates. An exception is made for MACM students who have completed all of their coursework and two-thirds of their required internship hours. Those students will be permitted to walk through commencement and receive their diplomas at the end of the second summer session when all of the internship hours have been met.

The required cumulative GPA for graduation for all master's degrees and certificates is 2.5. D.Min. students must have a 3.0 cumulative GPA for graduation.

Graduating students must notify Academic Affairs of their intent to graduate by completing a graduation application by the end of the Fall Semester which coincides with or precedes completion of course requirements. The community looks forward to seeing all graduates participate in annual commencement exercises each May. Notification of intent to graduate does not guarantee participation in commencement.

Any student who is unable to attend commencement exercises must notify Academic Affairs, requesting permission to graduate in absentia.

## Transcripts

Those who wish to order an official transcript must submit a written request with a legal signature or may submit an electronic request via our transcript partner, Scrip-Safe. Advance notice of at least one week will enable MTSO to fulfill such requests in a timely manner. Students who have outstanding balances on their student account will not be permitted to have an official transcript without approval from the business office. Current students may request an unofficial transcript of MTSO coursework from Academic Affairs. Transcripts from other institutions contained in student files are the property of MTSO and as such are under the control of Academic Affairs. While federal law allows that students may review the contents of their academic files, transcripts from other institutions submitted to MTSO for admission or transfer credit evaluation will not be photocopied or forwarded elsewhere.

## Recommendation letters

### Permission to Write Letter of Recommendation form

Students requesting a recommendation letter from a faculty member at MTSO must obtain the form “Permission to Write a Letter of Recommendation” from Academic Affairs if they want the faculty member to have access to the student’s academic information for the purpose of writing the letter. This form gives the writer permission to include information in the letter about the student’s grades, GPA, or other personally identifiable information as appropriate, and also gives permission to the Office of the Registrar to provide this information to the writer. This request form will remain on file in the Office of the Registrar for one year. A separate request form must be filed for each instance in which a recommendation letter is requested.

If a person writing a recommendation letter makes reference only to personal observations and knowledge about the student, rather than relying on personally identifiable information from a student’s education record, then a written permission form from the student is not necessary.

### Recommendations for professional status (e.g. judicatories)

Students requesting a recommendation for professional status (e.g. probationary membership in an annual conference or licensure from an accrediting agency) should bring the request with any necessary forms to Academic Affairs. **Requests must be submitted to Academic Affairs at least one month before the deadline listed by the conference or requesting agency.** Formal recommendations for professional status are written by the Student Review Committee, which consists of four faculty members. The administrative assistant to the dean will refer the student’s request to the chair of the Student Review Committee. The committee will review the student's records, including transcript, field education reports and faculty comments on the student's performance in courses. Evidence of financial irresponsibility in relation to the school may also be considered. On the basis of this review, a statement of evaluation will be written and sent to the officials indicated by the student. If necessary, the committee may consult other members of the faculty, including the dean.

# Additional Program Information

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## Credit hours and contact hours

MTSO is on a semester system. Courses are taught in several different formats. The weekly schedule normally runs Monday night through Thursday night. Many courses will be taught once a week, in a three-hour time block. Biblical language courses meet in 75-minute blocks twice a week. Each Fall and Spring semester, some courses are scheduled in a Friday-Saturday format. The January Term is a three-week session during which courses are offered in an intensive format. In the summer there are two separate three-week intensive sessions.

MTSO also offers several courses in a blended format. Blended courses use a combination of online and face-to-face contact time, which will vary per course and instructor. These courses are designated in the course schedule with an “H” in the section column. Blended courses in the *Connections* pathway for the M.Div. degree meet for 90 minutes once a week, with 60 minutes of online work plus additional preparation time.

There are 35 contact hours for each three semester hour course. MTSO schedules each course at 170 minutes per week during the Fall and Spring semesters. This includes 150 minutes of class meeting time and 20 minutes of break. Contact hours are adjusted for courses that are less than three semester hours and courses taught during weekends or intensive sessions are scheduled accordingly. Students transferring credit from a quarter-hour school should be aware that for the transfer purposes, one quarter-hour is equivalent to 0.67 semester hours.

## Advanced standing and course exemption

Upon satisfactory completion of evaluative consultation and/or examination, students may be granted advanced standing and substitute a higher level for a required course in the same department. The examination/consultation will be administered by faculty members from the appropriate division of the school in consultation with the dean. Advanced standing will not be given for undergraduate work. Advanced standing will be noted on the transcript. This procedure does not entitle the student to academic credit, and no fees are charged.

## Degree completion, coursework and time limits

All degrees and certificates must be completed within 10 years. According to the Association of Theological Schools, all course credits applied towards degree requirements should be earned within 10 years of the awarding of the degree.

## Cross-cultural immersion requirement for Master of Divinity students

All students in the Master of Divinity program are required to complete CC-602, an immersion experience, in an approved cross-cultural setting. Completion requires participation in CC-601 and CC-603, both before and after the experience itself.

CC-601: Cross-Cultural Experience: Pre-Immersion Session (1 credit hour)

CC-602: Cross-Cultural Immersion Experience (2 credit hours)

CC-603: Cross-Cultural Experience: Post-Immersion Session (0 credit hours)

MTSO will coordinate at least two approved trips each year, usually in January or summer. Travel, lodging and additional expenses will apply, but can be offset via disbursement from a student's individual cross-cultural account. Consult the MTSO Business Office for more information on accessing these funds. There is also a separate handbook, the Cross-Cultural Immersion Course Student Handbook, which details specific policies related to the completion of the cross-cultural requirement. The handbook is updated regularly and the current version is available from Academic Affairs.

## Cross-registration and commitment to ecumenism

MTSO has a long-standing commitment to positive ecumenical relationships that provide opportunities for greater mutual understanding, collaboration and growth. Living this commitment is pursued through participation in the Theological Consortium of Greater Columbus (TCGC), special events addressing ecumenism, and cross-registration opportunities with other schools in the region. The TCGC is composed of MTSO, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Bexley Hall Seabury Western Theological Seminary Federation, and the Pontifical College Josephinum. *MTSO students are strongly encouraged to cross-register for at least one course at a TCGC school.*

Cross-registration opportunities also exist with three Ohio seminaries based in the Methodist tradition, United Theological Seminary (UTS) in Dayton, and Payne Theological Seminary in Wilberforce, as well as through the Interprofessional Commission of Ohio (via The Ohio State



University, Columbus). Please note: UTS excludes online coursework from the cross-registration arrangement with MTSO. Tuition for cross-registered courses is paid to MTSO.

International exchange for one semester can be arranged with Methodist Theological University in Seoul, Korea. See Academic Affairs for details.

The faculty has placed certain requirements and limitations on cross-registration:

1. MTSO students may cross-register for no more than 18 semester hours of academic credit. If a student wishes to exceed these limitations, he/she must show cause in a petition presented to the dean.
2. No more than 6 semester hours may be taken in each of the following areas of the MTSO curriculum: Biblical studies; Historical Studies, Theological Studies (including Christian Ethics/Theology); and Practical Theology Studies. This limit does not include Biblical languages. Students should consult with their advisors to determine whether or not proposed courses intended for cross-registration are appropriate and/or fulfill degree requirements. If a student wishes to exceed these limitations, he/she must show cause in a petition presented to the dean.
3. Following matriculation at MTSO, students are required to take foundational courses (i.e. required and normally introductory-level courses) in all divisions at MTSO. Foundational courses include the following: CE-501, CH-501, CT-549, HB-510, HM-600, NT-510, PC-500, PC-555, PT-500, WO-500, and any 600-level HB or NT course.
4. Within the 18 hour cross registration limit, there is no limit to the number of courses a student may complete under the auspices of the Interprofessional Commission of Ohio at The Ohio State University. However, the Commission has established enrollment limits, by profession, for all the participant professional schools and the Theological Consortium of Greater Columbus. Therefore, there are limitations to registration by course.

## Clinical Pastoral Education

MTSO students may elect to complete a basic unit (400 clock hours) of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) for academic credit at a facility accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE). A directory of facilities accredited by ACPE is available on the ACPE Web site, [www.acpe.edu](http://www.acpe.edu). More than 200 centers in North America are accredited by ACPE and available for CPE training. Several centers in the immediate area provide a rich variety of contexts and supervisory styles.

The 400-hour unit is completed through work as chaplains in hospitals, clinics, parishes or other institutions, under the close supervision of a trained chaplain/supervisor, with constant accountability to peers and other professionals in the institution. Past participants have found the CPE experience to be an intensive, sometimes emotionally challenging and frequently exhilarating occasion for learning. Here are only some of the powerful outcomes from CPE: honest feedback from fellow students and the chaplain or supervisor; increasing ability for self-disclosure; growing awareness of one's strengths as a person/pastor; and growing clarity about how one's faith as a pastor and as a person in crisis affects healing.

The clinical training movement has clearly proven itself to be in the mainstream of professional education for ministry. Independent of but in growing cooperation with seminaries, CPE is required of students by some denominations, judicatories and seminaries. CPE is not a requirement of MTSO for all programs but has strong faculty support as a vehicle through which many students may learn much about giving pastoral care. This support is evidenced by the school's policy of granting an amount of credit between 3 and 6 credit hours for the completion of a 400-hour unit of CPE with another 3 credit hours possible for an additional unit. This policy reflects respect for the academic and professional validity of CPE.

1. Students pursuing this opportunity must contact the facility directly and follow their procedures for application and admission. Once accepted, a copy of the acceptance letter must be provided to both the Office of the Registrar and the Business Office at MTSO.
2. Students register at MTSO for PC-510, Clinical Pastoral Education and pay tuition to MTSO. MTSO pays the fees charged by the facility, as long as they do not exceed the tuition charged by MTSO. The site's fees are paid upon receipt of an invoice in the MTSO Business Office. Students may apply for financial aid, following stated procedures and deadlines established by the Office of Admissions and Financial Aid.
3. MTSO will award between three and six credit hours for one basic unit of CPE. Credit is awarded once a copy of the final CPE evaluations are received in the Academic Affairs. Students must request both the supervisor's and their own final signed evaluations from their clinical site. Once credit has been awarded for CPE, a student cannot receive additional CPE credit for the same unit in a subsequent term. CPE is normally graded on a pass/fail basis, but in special circumstances it may be possible to receive a letter grade after making prior arrangements with the CPE supervisor.
4. Students who use a unit of CPE for their field education requirement may not also receive separate credit for the CPE unit. They should only register for field education.

## Field education

Field education is a two-semester course (FE-850), beginning in the fall of each year designed to prepare effective leaders for ministry through the integration of academic learning with practical work in fields of ministry.

Students enrolled in field education can contact the Field Education Office for assistance in finding an approved field education position when they have completed one-third of their degree credit hours. Visit [www.mtso.edu/academics/field-education](http://www.mtso.edu/academics/field-education) for more information about field education and opportunities that are available.

## Individual study

Students in their final year may petition the dean to register for an individual study. Students requesting permission for an individual study must have at least a 3.0 GPA, both overall and in courses from the division in which the individual study is proposed. Other students seeking permission for an individual study must have at least a 3.3 GPA, both overall and in courses from the division in which the individual study is proposed. First year students are not normally eligible to request permission for individual studies. Students are limited to only one individual study per term. Petitions for individual study are not usually permitted during the January or Summer terms, nor when they duplicate courses listed in the current catalog.

A student may register for an individual study course with a credit value between one and three credit hours, to be supervised by an MTSO faculty member under the following conditions:

The petition form for an individual study may be obtained in the Office of the Registrar or from [www.mtso.edu](http://www.mtso.edu). The student must plan the individual study with the faculty member who agrees to supervise the study. (Faculty members are not required to supervise individual studies and are not permitted to supervise more than two per term.) The student must complete the petition, and the supervising faculty member and the student's academic advisor must sign it. The petition must be accompanied by a timeline for work on the project. It must include a proposed schedule of meetings with the faculty supervisor, and a rationale for the number of credit hours requested (normally, one credit hour requires 45 hours of work). The petition must be presented to the dean for approval no later than one week following the registration period in the term preceding the proposed term of study, except for Fall Semester when petitions must be submitted by the Wednesday prior to the beginning of Fall term.

## Master's thesis proposals

Students in the Master of Theological Studies and Master of Divinity degree program may elect to complete a thesis. MTS students are required to choose between writing a thesis or taking a comprehensive exam. The thesis course (TH-800) is three or six semester hours and may count as three hours in the MTS area of concentration. Students must complete the "Proposal for Master's Thesis Project" in conjunction with their advisor. Students may not register for thesis until it has been approved by the dean.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the thesis project is to provide an opportunity for the student to engage in serious research in a focused area: to develop, in consultation with a faculty advisor, a research strategy, to demonstrate a mastery of some of the major sources and of significant issues in that area of study, and to articulate a coherent summary of that work with reasoned conclusions drawn from the study. It assumes previous concentrated study in the area of specialization. The student will work with a primary faculty supervisor in the course of the study. In addition, the completed thesis will be reviewed by a second reader. The thesis is graded pass/fail. A cumulative GPA of at least 3.3 is required for participation in this program.

**Proposal:** The general topic for the thesis should normally be identified in the second semester (MTS) or early in the second year (M.Div.) thereby allowing the student to structure future classes around that topic (whenever possible). In any case, the topic must be identified early in the semester prior to enrolling for the thesis course. The form for the thesis proposal can be obtained from the Office of the Registrar. Proposals are normally 600-900 words in length. A significant part of the proposal is the proposed bibliography (not included in the word count). A thesis proposal must be approved by the faculty thesis supervisor, the student's faculty advisor, and the dean, and submitted to the registrar one week before the beginning of the term during which the student is enrolled for the thesis. At the time of approval the dean will assign a secondary reader, list that person on the form, and notify the student and the thesis supervisor of the selection. Copies of the approved proposal will be sent to the student, the supervisor and the secondary reader.

**Length and format:** A three credit hour thesis will normally be 12,000 to 15,000 words in length (double-spaced), including citations and bibliography. If the thesis is being done for six credit hours, the word count will be 24,000 to 30,000. The thesis is to be presented in Arial or Times New Roman font, 12 point, with the left margin 1.5 inches and all other margins 1 inch. Page numbers should be placed top right. Footnotes are to be used (not endnotes or in-text notes). The formatting of footnotes and bibliography should conform to the latest *Chicago Manual of Style*. The thesis should include a title page, an approval page for the signatures of the primary

and secondary readers and the dean, table of contents, at least section headings, and full bibliography of works cited. A signature page template is available from the registrar.

**Timeline and consultation with the thesis supervisor:** The thesis supervisor will provide the student with a timeline to follow. If the thesis work is confined to one semester, the process of defining the topic and developing the proposal usually occurs in the fall, with actual thesis registration in the following spring semester. If the thesis work is designated for 6 credit hours (normally 2 semesters), registration should occur in the spring for the following fall. Normally the student will consult with the supervisor at least four times in the process of research and writing. Additional meetings may be scheduled, as well as conversations with the secondary reader or other faculty--as faculty are able and willing.

**Thesis colloquium:** Approximately two weeks after submitting a finished draft of the thesis the student will schedule a colloquium with the two readers. (Others may be invited by the students, at his/her choice.) This is not to be understood as a "defense" of the thesis, since the assumption is not that original work will have been produced. It is intended to provide an opportunity for the student to discuss the work of the term and the thesis itself with faculty (and others), as a way to provide a fitting closure to the process.

**Completion dates:** A penultimate draft (i.e., a finished project, though still open to minor additions and/or changes) must be in the hands of the readers no later than three weeks before the end of the term in which the student anticipates graduation. The thesis colloquium will be scheduled by the student with the two readers normally during the last week of the term.

Following approval by the primary and secondary readers and the dean, the student will present an unbound and signed copy of the thesis to the director of the MTSO Library, along with payment for binding services.

## Transfer of credit and residency requirement

To obtain a degree from MTSO, no less than 50% of the required hours for the degree must be completed at MTSO. This 50% should only include courses taken at MTSO, and not courses taken via cross-registration.

Course credit earned at other seminaries accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and other graduate work from regionally accredited institutions can be transferred (with some limitations) if it is appropriate to the student's program at MTSO. An exception to this policy is that Doctor of Ministry students may not normally receive transfer credit for courses completed prior to matriculation at MTSO. Receipt of an official transcript is an absolute requirement before transfer credit will be evaluated.

The amount of credit transferred will not exceed 50% of the number of credit hours required for completion of the student's academic program at MTSO. Students who enter a master's degree program at MTSO with an earned master's degree from an accredited theological school or approved graduate school (MTSO or elsewhere) may transfer a maximum of 28 credit hours of appropriate credit from the earned degree to the MTSO program. Similarly, students enrolled in a dual degree program at MTSO can overlap a maximum of 28 credit hours between two programs. Triple degrees are not permitted.

MTS students who have previously attended a non-theological graduate school may transfer up to 6 credit hours for courses which clearly and rationally relate to their declared area of concentration.

Students who have completed a MTSO certificate program in Basic Theological Education, Deacon Studies, or Advanced Course of Study, may apply all of the credits from the certificate to their master's degree program at MTSO. Students may not be enrolled in a certificate and a degree program at the same time.

Credits transferred to MTSO will be listed on the student's transcripts as earned credit, with no letter grade assigned, and do not affect the grade point average at MTSO. A grade of "TR" will indicate transfer credit for each course. However, the student must have earned a grade of C or higher in order for a course to be transferred. Courses graded pass/fail may be transferred upon documentation that the passing grade is equivalent to C or higher.

According to the degree standards of the Association of Theological Schools, all course credits applied towards degree requirements should be earned within ten years of the awarding of the degree. MTSO coursework of former MTSO students who return will also be subject to this ten year timeline. Please note that if graduation is delayed beyond the normal full-time completion

rate, aging transfer work may have to be retracted. Exceptions to normal transfer rules can be made by appealing to the dean.

Degree entering	Normal full-time completion	Oldest transfer work considered
M.Div.	3 years	7 years prior to matriculation at MTSO
MACM – Track III	3 years	7 years prior to matriculation at MTSO
MACM – Tracks I & II; MTS; MAPT	2 years	8 years prior to matriculation at MTSO

Transfer credit should be requested from the Office of the Registrar prior to matriculation at MTSO. While scheduling classes, students should use the registrar’s transfer credit evaluation in tandem with the guidance of the academic advisor. Once a student matriculates at MTSO, the following introductory courses must be completed at MTSO: CE-501, CH-501, CT-549, ES-500, HB-510, HM-600, NT-510, PC-500, PC-555, PT-500, WO-500, and a 600-level HB or NT course.

As stated above, Doctor of Ministry students cannot normally receive transfer credit for courses completed prior to matriculation at MTSO. However, after a D.Min. student matriculates, a maximum of 6 credit hours of doctoral level course work from other accredited institutions may be considered by the D.Min. committee. Students must present a petition describing how the alternative courses will clearly and rationally substitute for MTSO’s prescribed requirements and/or supplement an area of interest within the D.Min. specialization area that no course at MTSO will address. More information on D.Min. transfer policies is available in the Doctor of Ministry Handbook.

## Credit from United Methodist Course of Study School or Advanced Course of Study

MTSO will award a maximum of 12 credit hours as a combined total for courses completed as part of the United Methodist Course of Study School or Advanced Course of Study. All other applicable standards for transfer of credit to MTSO remain in effect. Courses from the Course of Study School receive 0.75 credit hours in transfer for each course in which a grade B+ or higher was earned. Official COS and/or ACOS transcripts from Nashville must be provided to verify information. Courses from COS can only be used to fulfill electives in the student’s academic program, and cannot replace required courses. ACOS courses that are recorded on a transcript

by an accredited seminary can be considered separately under the normal standards for acceptance of transfer credit.

## Auditing courses

Pastors and others are invited to audit master's level courses at a reduced cost from regular tuition. Full-time students, spouses of degree-seeking students, members of Parish Partner churches, all farm workers, current and retired employees of MTSO may audit one course per term at no charge. Full-time students must be enrolled full-time during the term in which they wish to audit. Senior citizens may audit at a discounted rate.

Auditors must fulfill the requirements for auditors as stated by the instructor of any course audited. These requirements may include readings, class attendance and other appropriate forms of participation. Auditors are neither required nor permitted to submit written work for evaluation, or to take examinations. If any assessment or evaluation is required, auditors must register, pay for full credit and be admitted by the school. Auditors cannot request at a later date to receive academic credit for courses audited. Credit is awarded once a copy of the final CPE evaluations are received in the Academic Affairs. Students must request both the supervisor's and their own final signed evaluations from their clinical site. Availability to audit individual courses is subject to change based on the enrollment of credit-seeking students. Course instructors reserve the right to limit or prohibit auditor participation in their courses. In accordance with the standards of accrediting organizations, the school places limits (no more than 20% of the total class enrollment) in each course on the number of auditors whose educational background would not qualify them for regular admission to graduate study.

Doctor of Ministry courses may be audited under certain conditions. First, the student should have already completed a theological degree. Second, permission to audit is up to the discretion of the instructor who also sets the conditions for class participation. Third, there is a limit of auditing two courses. Regular audit fees apply.

For information about auditing courses, please contact the Office of the Registrar. Currently enrolled students will follow normal registration procedures for auditing courses; others will be asked to complete a brief application. See the "Academic and residential fees for 2015-16" section of this catalog for the current auditing fees.



# Grievance Processes

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## Harassment grievance process

Harassment is generally understood to mean conduct or the use of prejudicial words with intent to inflict physical, psychological, or other form of harm, or that seeks to diminish or demean another on the basis of differentiation (e.g., race, disability, appearance, age, sexual orientation, or, religious affiliation). Discrimination on the basis of sex, or gender-based misconduct, is a unique form of harassment which MTSO addresses with a separate grievance process that is compliant with Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972.

Harassment (harmful ridicule or conduct) is contrary to Methodist Theological School in Ohio's spirit of inclusiveness, and the School will neither condone nor tolerate harassment. Frivolous or spurious accusations of harassment are also viewed as destructive and equally unacceptable.

Members of the MTSO community are expected to discipline their publically written (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, or other avenues of social media), verbal and physical expression in interpersonal relationships to avoid even the appearance of questionable motivation or disregard for individual sensitivities. Intimidation and coercion of persons on the basis of sex, race or other differentiation is cause for serious concern and, if clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of school authorities, will result in disciplinary action.

MTSO seeks to establish an environment in which persons can engage in their tasks free from fear of, or subjection to, harassment. Providing the opportunity to defend one's personhood is central to the process. Christian justice and reconciliation are the goals of the process.

1. Calling the responsible person's attention to the problem, either in person or in writing, can solve many problems involving the perception of harassment by members of the campus community. If the harassment continues, or if dealing directly with the offending person is inappropriate, the alleged harassment may be reported to the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs. An advocate, other than an attorney, who is a member of the MTSO community, may accompany the aggrieved person.
2. The Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs may investigate the complaint and seek to determine the facts, hearing both the aggrieved person and the person who is the alleged cause of the grievance. The Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs may also contract with an appropriate, qualified, neutral, external person to conduct a

thorough, impartial investigation, resulting in findings of fact and recommendations for mediation and/or resolution of any allegation of harassment.

3. This process may result in a solution to the problem satisfactory to both parties involved. If this is not the case and there is sufficient evidence, the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs will take disciplinary action. If the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs decides there is not sufficient evidence, the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs will inform both parties of this decision. Either party may appeal the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs' decision to the President.

It is a violation of MTSO policy for any employee or student to retaliate against any person exercising their rights under this process. However, it is also a violation of MTSO policy for an individual to accuse another of discriminatory or assaultive conduct without having a good-faith basis for doing so. All inquiries, complaints, and investigations will be treated with as much discretion as possible. However, MTSO is legally obligated to remedy known discrimination in its programs, and therefore cannot keep allegations of discrimination, or other forms of assault or abuse, confidential. Additionally, employees who have knowledge that a felony has been committed or who have reasonable cause to believe that a minor or a disabled individual has been abused are expected to immediately report that fact to the Title IX coordinator and to the proper authorities.

## Title IX Policy

Adopted by Administrative Council August 2012

Revised August 2014 and Reviewed by Legal Counsel and Administrative Council

**Updated July 2015 by Title IX Coordinator and Reviewed by EIIA Legal Counsel**

### Notice of Nondiscrimination

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 provides that **"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."**

By its own ethos and in compliance with the requirements of Title IX, Methodist Theological School in Ohio does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, age, ancestry, physical or mental disabilities, military status, veteran status, marital status, pregnancy and parenting status, creed or any other protected class, or other non-merit reasons, in admissions, educational

programs or activities and employment, housing, including employment of disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam Era, as required by applicable laws and regulations.

### **Title IX Coordinator/Compliance Officer**

The Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management has been designated as the Title IX Coordinator for Methodist Theological School in Ohio. In addition to being responsible for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Director/Coordinator also has responsibility for coordination of compliance efforts and receipt of inquiries for the following acts:

- Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Age Discrimination Act of 1975
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Jeanne Clery Act
- Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, Campus Sexual Violence Act (“SaVE Act”) provision (Section 304)

Inquiries concerning any of these acts should be addressed to:

**Grace S. Welch**

**Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management**

**Methodist Theological School in Ohio**

**3081 Columbus Pike**

**Delaware, Ohio 43015**

Office location: Werner Hall 102 (just beyond the Business Office window)

Phone: **740-362-3366**

E-mail: **gwelch@mtso.edu**

Questions regarding Title IX may also be referred to the United States Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights.

### **Overview**

Methodist Theological School in Ohio is committed to fostering an environment free from all forms of sex discrimination and/or harassment and/or misconduct through clear and effective policies, coordinated education and prevention programs, and prompt and equitable procedures for resolution of complaints.

MTSO's primary prevention program, known as *Sexual Molestation and Abuse Prevention* program has three (3) components: required background checks, mandatory training upon new hire and every two years thereafter, and availability of a confidential misconduct reporting procedure. Program participants include: all staff, faculty, adjunct faculty, Course of Study faculty, students enrolled in Field Education and/or Counseling Ministries Practicum and/or Internships, students working as Building Managers, and student workers, on or off campus.

This Title IX policy defines community expectations regarding sex and gender-based misconduct and establishes mechanisms for determining when those expectations have been violated. This policy applies to all students, employees and third parties, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, and it refers to all forms of sex discrimination, including but not limited to sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking, occurring on or off campus. Such acts are contrary to the values and standards of the Methodist Theological School community and are serious violations of School policy. They may also constitute criminal conduct under local, state, or federal laws.

#### **Academic Success of Pregnant and Parenting Students Notice**

MTSO does not discriminate on the basis of sex which includes a student's pregnancy, childbirth, and related conditions, or recovery. Students are provided equal access in all of the academic, educational, curricular and extra-curricular, and other programs and activities of the school due to medical conditions related to pregnancy or parenting for as long as the student's physician deems the absences medically necessary.

To ensure access for pregnant and parenting students, when necessary, students are encouraged to work together and directly with their Professor and the Director of Student Services to make adjustments or provide accommodations to the regular program that are reasonable and responsive to the student's temporary status. Students who require assistance in requesting accommodations or believe that they have been improperly denied a reasonable accommodation may of course contact the Compliance Officer.

#### **Non-Retaliation**

It is a violation of School policy to retaliate in any way against a student or employee for engaging in legally protected activity by raising allegations of sexual harassment and/or sexual misconduct of any form. The School recognizes that reprisal can take many forms, may be committed by or against an individual or group, and that the Respondent or third party may also be the subject of retaliation by other individual, including the Complainant.

An individual reporting sexual harassment and misconduct of all forms is entitled to protection from any form of retaliation following a report that is made in good faith, even if the report is not later substantiated. Similarly, individuals accused of sexual harassment or those who participate in an investigation related to a complaint are entitled to protection from any form of retaliation. Complaints of retaliation should be filed with the Title IX Coordinator or her/his designee, or the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

### **Consensual sexual activity**

For individuals to engage in sexual activity of any type with each other, there must be clear, knowing and voluntary consent prior to and during sexual activity. Consent is sexual permission. Consent can be granted by word or action, but verbal consent adds clarity to the expectations of sexual partners. Consent to some form of sexual activity does not imply consent to any other form of sexual activity, and prior consent to sexual activity does not imply consent to future sexual activity. Silence cannot be assumed to show consent, and **consent can be withdrawn at any time**. A more detailed definition of consent can be found on pages 13-14 of this policy.

### **Prohibition of Relationships Involving Power Differentials**

There are inherent risks in any romantic or sexual relationship between individuals in unequal positions

(e.g., teacher and student, supervisor and employee). These relationships may be perceived as less consensual than perceived by the individual whose position confers power. Each of the parties, particularly in retrospect, may also view the relationship in different ways. Additionally, circumstances may change, and conduct that was once welcome may become unwelcome.

Consensual romantic or sexual relationships in which one party maintains a direct supervisory or evaluative role over the other party are unethical and prohibited.

**For the personal protection of members of the MTSO community, romantic or sexual relationships in which power differentials are inherent (faculty-student, staff-student, administrator-student, supervisor-employee) ARE PROHIBITED.**

### **Confidentiality and Privacy**

The School is required by law to protect the safety of its campus and its campus community. When the School receives a report of sexual harassment or sexual misconduct, it has a legal obligation to respond in a timely and appropriate manner. At the same time, the School is

committed to protecting the privacy of all individuals involved in a report of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct of all forms. In any report, investigation, or resolution of a report under this policy, every effort will be made to retain and protect the privacy interests of all individuals involved in a manner consistent with the need for a thorough review of the allegation (s).

The privacy of all parties will be respected and safeguarded. Information related to the report under this policy will only be shared with those School employees who “need to know” in order to assist in the review, investigation, or resolution of report. Moreover, all School employees who are involved in the School’s Title IX response do receive specific training and guidance about safeguarding private information.

When a Complainant requests that his/her name and/or other identifiable information not be shared with the Respondent or that no formal procedure be taken, the School will balance the request with its dual obligation to provide a safe and non-discriminatory environment for all MTSO community members and to remain true to values of fundamental fairness that require notice and an opportunity to respond before action is taken against a Respondent. The School will take all responsible and careful steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the request for confidentiality or request not to pursue an investigation, except in cases of sexual violence, assault, and battery which must be investigated, but the ability to do so may be limited based on the nature of the request by the Complainant. The School may weigh the request for confidentiality or no investigation against the following factors: the ability to conduct an investigation without revealing identifiable information, the seriousness of the alleged conduct, whether there have been other discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, or retaliation complaints about the same individual, and the extent of any threat to the School community. Although the School cannot guarantee confidentiality, it will strive to accommodate a Complainant’s requests to the extent possible consistent with the legal obligations of the School to investigate and respond effectively to reports and complaints, and to report campus crimes in accordance with applicable law. Where the School is unable to take action consistent with the request of the Complainant, the Title IX Coordinator and/or the Coordinator’s designee will communicate with the Complainant concerning the chosen course.

If a report of alleged misconduct discloses a serious and/or immediate threat to the School campus community, the School may issue a timely notice (Clery Act) to the MTSO community to protect the health and safety of its members. The timely notice will not include any identifiable information about the Complainant. The School may also share non-identifying information about reports received in aggregate form, including data about educational outcomes (sanctions).

All School proceedings are conducted in compliance with the requirements of FERPA, the Clery Act, Title IX, and MTSO policy. No information shall be released from such proceedings except as required or permitted by law and School policy.

### **Determining Responsibility for an Incident of Sex Discrimination/Penalties**

The standard used to determine accountability will be whether it is more likely than not that the accused has committed a violation of this policy. All members of the MTSO community found to have violated this policy will be disciplined, up to dismissal from MTSO. Possible sanctions are detailed later in this policy.

### **Guidance on Taking Immediate Action in the event of Sexual Violence/Assault**

In the event that sexual assault or violence has occurred, the survivor's first response is to get to a safe place, and call 911 (9-911 from campus phones) if necessary. A decision to press charges does not have to be made at this time. However, observance of the procedures that follow will help preserve this option for the future:

- Do not bathe, douche, brush your teeth, use the restroom, or drink liquids.
- Clothes should not be changed, but if they are bring all original clothing to the hospital in a paper bag. (Plastic bags damage evidence.)
- Go to a hospital. You may have serious injuries that you are not aware of, and you can receive medication to prevent pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Bring a full change of clothing with you to the hospital, including shoes, for use after a medical examination.
- A SARN advocate may offer support at the hospital, if you request to speak to an advocate at the hospital.
- Survivors may choose at the hospital whether or not to speak to the police. If they do, the option to choose whether to file charges still exists.
- Private physicians are not required to notify the police. If a survivor desires police involvement, he or she may request this contact. Also, survivors treated by a private physician may have to ask for a rape kit to be completed. Having a rape exam does not mean that survivors must press charges; it only keeps the survivor's options open.

Tell a trusted person about the incident. Should you choose to contact a campus official, options, and confidentiality questions are discussed below.

The Delaware Police Department (740-203-1111) holds the law enforcement authority for the campus. The campus is also under the jurisdiction of the Delaware County Sheriff's Office (740-

833-2810). The School is available to assist victims of a crime with contacting the authorities, reporting claims, and pursuing restraining orders.

The Campus Conduct Hotline at 1-800-9HELPUS (1-800-943-5787) is available for students, employees, or others who prefer to contact a resource outside of the institution confidentially or anonymously.

Another helpful resource is the HelpLine of Delaware and Morrow Counties, which can be reached by dialing 211 (9-211 from campus phones) or 1-800-684-2324. (If you are hearing impaired, call HelpLine at 711 or 1-800-750-0750.) HelpLine is a 24-hour local, toll-free crisis support and, information and referral hotline for people living in Delaware and Morrow Counties. HelpLine is part of Delaware County's Sexual Assault Response Network (SARN), a network of volunteer advocates who have been specially trained to do crisis intervention, offer emotional support, make referrals, and answer questions for survivors of sexual assault who present to the emergency department of Grady Memorial Hospital, the Delaware City Police Department or the Delaware County Sheriff's Office.

### **Timely Reporting of Incidents**

All incidents of sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct or retaliation, should be reported as soon as possible after they occur by Complainants and third party witnesses in order to maximize the School's ability to respond promptly and effectively. MTSO encourages all students and employees who believe they have experienced any form of sex discrimination to: notify a School official promptly; seek all available assistance; and, as appropriate, pursue School misconduct charges and criminal prosecution of the alleged offender.

In order to pursue action through MTSO's grievance procedure, an aggrieved student, or employee should meet with a School official of his/her choosing or the Title IX Coordinator as soon as possible after the alleged act of sex discrimination, harassment, or retaliation occurs, to discuss the complaint.

In any case, MTSO does not limit the timeframe for student reporting. To that end, if the Respondent is no longer a student or employee, the School will seek to meet its Title IX obligations by taking steps to end the harassment, prevent its reoccurrence, and address its effects.

Employees who have experienced conduct they believe is contrary to this policy have an obligation to make a report. An employee's failure to fulfill this obligation may affect his or her rights in pursuing legal action. **Timely reporting is necessary for employees.**



## **Options for Reporting and Confidentially Disclosing Sexual Discrimination, including Sexual Violence, to MTSO officials**

The purpose of this section is to make victims aware of the various reporting and confidential disclosure options available to them so they can make informed choices about where to turn should they become a victim of sexual violence. Different employees on campus have different abilities to maintain a victim's confidentiality.

### ***a. "Responsible Employees"***

Some employees are required to report all the details of an incident (including the identities of both the victim and alleged perpetrator) to the Title IX Coordinator. A report to these employees (called "responsible employees") constitutes a formal report to the School, and generally obligates the School to investigate the incident and take appropriate steps to address the situation.

A "responsible employee" is a School employee who has the authority to redress sexual violence, who has the duty to report incidents of sexual violence or other student misconduct, or who a student could reasonably believe has this authority or duty.

At MTSO, "responsible employees" under Title IX include the following persons:

- Title IX Coordinator, Grace Welch, Office: 740-362.3366, Email: [gwelch@mtso.edu](mailto:gwelch@mtso.edu)
- *And any faculty and administrative staff member with supervisory responsibilities.*

Students and employees who wish to make formal reports of incidents are encouraged to speak to one of these MTSO officials. Notice to them is formal notice to the institution. Students and employees have the right to expect incidents of sexual misconduct to be taken seriously by the institution when formally reported, and to have those incidents properly investigated and resolved through administrative procedures. Formal reporting means that only people who need to know will be told and information will only be shared as necessary with investigators, witnesses, and the accused individual.

Before a victim reveals any information to a responsible employee, the employee should ensure that the victim understands the employee's reporting obligations and, if the victim wants to maintain confidentiality, direct the victim to confidential resources.

If the victim wants to tell the responsible employee what happened but also maintain confidentiality, the employee should tell the victim that the School will consider the request, but cannot guarantee that it will be able to honor it. In reporting the details of the incident to the

Title IX Coordinator, the responsible employee will also inform the Coordinator of the victim's request for confidentiality.

Responsible employees will not pressure a victim to request confidentiality, but will honor and support the victim's wishes, including for the School to fully investigate an incident. By the same token, responsible employees will not pressure a victim to make a full report if the victim is not ready or does not wish to do so.

If a victim discloses an incident to a responsible employee but wishes to maintain confidentiality or requests that no investigation into a particular incident be conducted or disciplinary action taken, the School will take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the request for confidentiality or request not to pursue an investigation. If a Complainant insists that his or her name or other identifiable information not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator, the School should inform the complainant that its ability to respond may be limited. If the School cannot take disciplinary action against the alleged harasser because the Complainant insists on confidentiality, it will take any available steps to limit the effects of the alleged harassment and prevent its recurrence.

Those who have experienced sex discrimination should know that all MTSO employees, including faculty, administrative staff, support staff, and students working as building managers in campus residences, **must report known felonies to the police, unless the communication is protected by law.**

*b. Employees with "Privileged communication" credentials*

Some employees are permitted to maintain near complete confidentiality. MTSO employees who are licensed counselors and/or credentialed clergy fall into this category **PROVIDED THAT** the victim and the employee share an explicit understanding that the report is being made to the employee as a practicing counselor or clergy member, and not in their capacity as an employee of MTSO. Under those conditions only, the employee is not required to report any information about an incident to the Title IX Coordinator without a victim's permission. A victim who speaks under these conditions must understand that, if they want to maintain confidentiality, the School will be unable to conduct an investigation into the particular incident, pursue disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator, or include the incident in the School's Clery Report, an annual reporting of statistics for various criminal offenses that is submitted to the federal government. The counselor or clergyperson may be able to assist the victim in receiving other necessary protection and support, such as victim advocacy, academic support or accommodations, disability, health or mental health services, and changes to living, working, or course schedules. A victim who at first requests confidentiality may later decide to

file a complaint with the School or report the incident to local law enforcement, and thus have the incident fully investigated.

Note: While these employees may maintain a victim's confidentiality vis-à-vis the School, they may have reporting or other obligations under state law. Also, if the School determines that the alleged perpetrator(s) pose a serious and immediate threat to the campus community, it will be necessary to issue a timely warning to the community. Any such warning will not include any information that identifies the victim.

*c. A third option*

Employees who neither are "responsible employees" nor entitled to "privileged communication" may talk to a victim in confidence. Although the employee must report to their supervisor and to the Title IX Coordinator that an incident occurred, they may do so without revealing any personally identifying information. Disclosures to these employees will not trigger a School investigation into an incident against the victim's wishes, but will ensure that the incident will be included in the School's Clery Report, the annual reporting of statistics for various criminal offenses that is submitted to the federal government.

*d. Anonymous Reporting*

Although the School encourages victims to talk to a School employee about any incident of sexual discrimination, the School also provides for the anonymous reporting of incidents through the confidential, anonymous hotline (Campus Conduct Hotline) at 1-866-9HELPUS (1-866-943-5787) and through the School's ombudsperson, an independent counsel who serves as an impartial dispute resolution practitioner. Procedures for contacting the ombud are available by contacting the Title IX Coordinator or the President's Office.

*e. Reporting to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights*

At any time, victims of sex discrimination are free to file a complaint with the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the federal agency charged with interpreting and enforcing Title IX. For more information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>.

**Coordination with Law Enforcement**

The School fully supports Complainants who wish to pursue criminal action for incidents of alleged sexual harassment and/or misconduct that may also be considered crimes under Ohio criminal statutes. The Responsible Employee will assist the Complainant in making a criminal report and will cooperate with law enforcement agencies if the Complainant decides to pursue

the criminal process to the extent permitted by law. **In a case of suspected child abuse, the School and its members have a responsibility and duty to report the concern.**

A Complainant may seek resolution through the School's conduct and corrective action process, may pursue criminal action, may choose one but not the other, or may choose both. Neither law enforcement's determination whether or not to prosecute a Respondent, nor the outcomes of any criminal prosecution, are determinative of whether sexual discrimination, of any kind, exists under this policy.

### **Bystander Intervention**

The School is concerned for the welfare of students, faculty, and staff. It recognizes that at times people, on and off campus, may need help. The School urges all community members to offer grace and assistance to others in need and take reasonable and prudent steps to prevent or stop an action of sexual misconduct. Taking actions may include indirect or direct interventions WHEN SAFE TO DO SO, enlisting the assistance of friends, contacting law enforcement, and/or seeking assistance from a person in authority, such as faculty members, senior officers, campus steward, administrative supervisor, the Title IX Coordinator, or police.

### **False Reporting/Frivolous Allegations**

The School takes the validity of information extremely seriously, as a charge of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct (of any kind) may have severe consequences. A Complainant who makes a report that is later found to be intentionally false or made maliciously without regard for truth may be subject to misconduct action. This provision does not apply to reports made in good faith, even if the allegations in the report are not substantiated through an investigation.

### **Additional reporting obligation**

In addition to direct notification/complaints by victims, employees are expected to report known acts of sex discrimination they have witnessed or of which they have knowledge. Employees can make an initial report directly to the Title IX Coordinator or to their immediate supervisor, who will notify the Title IX Coordinator. **Employees who have knowledge that a felony has been committed or who have reasonable cause to believe that a minor or a disabled individual has been abused are expected to immediately report that fact to the Title IX Coordinator and to the proper authorities.**

## **Off Campus Incidents**

An incident does not have to occur on campus to be reported to the School. Off-campus conduct that is likely to have a substantial effect on the Complainant's campus life and activities or poses a threat or danger to members of the MTSO community can also be addressed under this policy.

Because sexual misconduct frequently involves interactions between people that are not witnessed by others, reports of sexual harassment cannot always be substantiated by additional evidence. Lack of corroborating evidence or "proof" SHOULD NOT discourage individual from reporting sexual harassment under this policy.

## **Responding to Reports of Sex Discrimination**

The Title IX Coordinator will provide for the adequate, reliable, and impartial review and/or investigation of all formal complaints of sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, and will maintain all information pertaining to a complaint or investigation in secure files.

As soon as the Title IX Coordinator is made aware of a report of sex discrimination, the Coordinator will work with the Complainant both to ensure his/her safety and to remedy the situation. To minimize the reach of whatever pain and disruption is caused by misconduct, and to protect the privacy of all persons, MTSO regards all allegations of personal and professional misconduct as matters to be handled with the greatest possible degree of confidentiality. In some instances, however, (e.g., when there is a threat to the safety of the victim or others), it may not be possible to withhold names of individuals.

MTSO has developed both an informal and formal complaint resolution procedure to respond to reports of sex discrimination. Within seven (7) working days of receiving a report of sex discrimination, the Title IX Coordinator will make a determination of whether the informal resolution procedure is appropriate.

- ***Informal Procedures***

The Informal procedures are optional except in cases involving violence or non-consensual sexual intercourse, when they are never applied. An informal procedure is also not applied if the victim does not wish to engage it, or if MTSO determines it is not appropriate.

Informal resolutions may be appropriate if the conduct is isolated and does not involve sexual assault or other forms of violence. The means for seeking an informal resolution will vary from case to case, but could include the following:

1. The *Direct approach* may be appropriate when the Complainant is comfortable confronting the Respondent and chooses to take personal action after a discussion with the Title IX Coordinator. The goal is to stop the behavior rather than sanction the person accused of sexual misconduct or harassment.
2. The *Third party approach* involves having the Title IX Coordinator intermediate between the Complainant and Respondent informally to resolve the matter.
3. The *Indirect approach* taken by the Title IX Coordinator is intended to alter the Respondent's inappropriate behavior in such a way that the behavior stops without the Complainant having to take any action other than talking to the Title IX Coordinator. This option has advantage of maintaining anonymity of the Complainant and Respondent. This option has the disadvantage that the desired message may not be "heard" by the Respondent.

If an informal process is pursued, the Title IX Coordinator (or her/his designee) will attempt to facilitate a resolution that is agreeable to all parties. Under the informal process, the School will only conduct such fact-finding as is useful to resolve the conflict and as is necessary to protect the interests of all the parties, the School, and the School community.

Any party to the complaint has the option to discontinue the information process and request a formal investigation at any point. The School always has the discretion to initiate a formal investigation.

**Once the informal resolution procedure is complete**, the Title IX Coordinator shall, within seven (7) business days (unless unusual or complex circumstances exist in which case this process will take place as soon as practicable), issue written notification of the determination of findings to all parties. If all parties to the complaint and the School agree in writing to the terms and conditions of a recommended resolution within seven (7) business days, the case will be resolved without further process under this procedure. If not all parties to the complaint agree in writing to the terms and conditions of the recommended resolution within seven (7) business days, the complaint will be referred to the formal resolution procedure.

- ***Formal Procedure***

As soon as it is determined that the informal procedure will not be applied, or its outcome is appealed, the Title IX Coordinator will open a formal investigation of the complaint.

The School will strive to complete a thorough, fair, impartial, and timely investigation.

To ensure a prompt and thorough investigation, the Complainant should provide as much of the following information as possible:

- The name (and, if applicable, the department, and position) of the person or persons allegedly causing the sex discrimination (which includes sexual misconduct, sexual violence, and harassment) or retaliation.
- A description of the incident(s), including the date(s), location(s), and the presence of any witnesses. If the Complainant is an employee: the alleged effect of the incident(s) on the Complainant's position, salary, benefits, promotional opportunities, or other terms or conditions of employment.
- The names of other students or employees who might have been subject to the same or similar sex discrimination or retaliation.
- Any steps the Complainant has taken to try to stop the sex discrimination or retaliation.
- Any other information the Complainant believes to be relevant to the sex discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.
- A description of the desired solution sought by the Complainant.

If upon receipt of the complaint the Title IX Coordinator determines that the allegation outlined is the complaint does not meet the definition of discrimination or sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice to the Complainant that he/she does not intend to investigate the complaint. The written notice will clarify the reason the complaint has been rejected for investigation. The Complainant, within seven (7) business days of the date of notice, may ask to meet with the President to discuss the decision of the Title IX Coordinator. If the Complainant provides the President new or additional information regarding his or her complaint, the matter will be referred to the Title IX Coordinator who will reconsider the case. The President may accept the decision of the Title IX Coordinator, or request an investigation by a specially designated official. The President will provide written notice of his/her decision to the Complainant and to the Title IX Coordinator and/or her/his designee.

When the Title IX Coordinator or her/his designee, conducts an investigation, the investigation shall be concluded as quickly as possible, and no later than 60 days after receipt of the initial report. The investigation will be conducted in a manner that is adequate, reliable, and impartial.

The investigation may include interviews of the parties involved, including witnesses, and the gathering of other relevant information. Parties to the complaint may present witnesses and other evidence.

At any time during the investigation, the investigator may recommend that appropriate MTSO officials provide interim protections or remedies for the parties involved or witnesses. Failure to comply with the terms of interim protections may be considered a separate violation of standards of conduct. Additionally, the Respondent will be advised that any retaliatory action taken against the Complainant during or after the investigation will subject the Respondent to corrective action. Likewise, the Complainant will be advised that any retaliatory action taken against the Respondent during or after the investigation will subject the Complainant to corrective action.

MTSO will comply with a law enforcement request for cooperation, and such cooperation may require MTSO to temporarily suspend the fact-finding aspect of a Title IX investigation while a law enforcement agency is in the process of gathering evidence. MTSO will promptly resume its Title IX investigation as soon as notified by the law enforcement agency that it has completed the evidence gathering process. MTSO will implement interim steps during the law enforcement agency's investigation period to provide for the safety of victim(s) and the campus community and the avoidance of retaliation.

A resolution shall be determined at the conclusion of the investigation. The Title IX Coordinator will give parties involved simultaneous written notice of the outcome of the complaint within seven (7) business days.

Following the communication of the decision, parties to the complaint may request an appeal of the decision. The request for an appeal must be submitted in writing to the Title IX Coordinator within seven (7) business days of receiving the notice of outcome. Failure to file a timely appeal constitutes a waiver of any right to an appeal.

All grounds for appeal shall be based on the emergence of new evidence that was previously unavailable, or based on the grounds that some aspect of this policy or procedure was not adequately followed which substantially affected the outcome of the adjudication. All appeals will be conducted in an impartial manner by an MTSO official or external investigator who did not conduct the initial investigation. Typically, this will be the President of MTSO or a senior administrative official designated by the President.

Appeals should not be requested frivolously. An appeal represents a procedural safeguard for the parties. In an appeal, the burden of proof is on the appealing party to show by a preponderance of evidence that one or more of the above grounds for appeal are satisfied.



If the Title IX Coordinator, or his or her designee, determines that the appealing party has demonstrated that it is more likely than not that one of the above grounds for appeal is satisfied, the matter will be returned for further review of the investigation file by a new investigator(s). If the grounds for appeal relate to the investigation, or warrant additional investigation, the new investigator(s) may refer the matter to further investigation before proceeding. Upon further review, the new investigator(s) shall utilize the same process as required for adjudication under this policy.

If there is not adequate reason to believe that one or more grounds for appeal have been satisfied, the Title IX Coordinator may dismiss the appeal. This decision is final and is not appealable.

### **Possible Title IX Sanctions**

Sanctions imposed upon students who are determined to have violated this policy may include a variety of institutional responses or requirements, including, but not limited to, the following; warning, removal from campus housing, not being allowed to represent the school in volunteer or paid work, restitution, required attendance at educational programs, required assessments or counseling, restriction of privileges, probation, suspension and/or expulsion, and any other sanctions deemed appropriate under the circumstances.

Sanctions against an employee found to have violated this policy may include, but are not limited to, verbal or written warnings, suspension, or termination from employment with MTSO. If termination of a faculty member is contemplated, the applicable rules set forth in the Faculty Handbook governing dismissal for serious cause will be followed.

A student returning to school after a suspension for misconduct under this policy may be subject to certain class scheduling and residential arrangements so that the offender and complainant avoid, to the greatest extent possible, contact, unless the complainant agrees otherwise.

### ***Rights of the Complainant***

A person bringing forward a complaint of sex discrimination or sexual misconduct has the right to request and/or expect the following:

- an explanation of the available options for redress;
- freedom from harassment and retaliation;
- use of all available internal and external support services in dealing with the aftermath of the offense;
- the ability to speak on one's own behalf;

- the presence of an advisor of their choosing, who may confer with the person they are advising but who may not actively participate in the process;
- the opportunity to present witnesses who can speak about the charges, character witnesses excluded;
- freedom from having irrelevant sexual history discussed during the proceedings;
- information about the outcome of the decision;
- to have the process take no longer than 60 days, under ordinary circumstances; and
- the opportunity to appeal the outcome of the decision.

A person bringing forward a complaint of sex discrimination or sexual misconduct also has the right to file a criminal or administrative complaint simultaneously.

### *Rights of the Respondent*

MTSO will treat an accused person with fairness throughout the proceedings. Accused persons are entitled to:

- an explanation of the allegations;
- freedom from harassment by the Complainant (or supporters of the Complainant);
- an explanation of the process and possible outcomes;
- the presence of an advisor of their choosing, who may confer with the person they are advising but who may not actively participate in the process;
- the ability to speak on one's own behalf;
- the opportunity to present witnesses who can speak about the charges, character witnesses excluded;
- freedom from having irrelevant sexual history discussed during the proceedings;
- information about the outcome of the decision; and
- the opportunity to appeal the outcome of the decision.

### *Rights of the Institution*

With respect to allegations, reviews, investigations, decisions and findings in instances of sex discrimination and sexual misconduct, MTSO reserves its right to:

- take whatever measures it deems necessary in response to an allegation of sex discrimination in order to protect students' rights, employees' rights, and/or the personal safety of students or employees;

- impose differing sanctions depending on its judgment of the severity of the offense, ranging from oral warning to expulsion or dismissal;
- treat attempts to commit any of the violations listed in this policy as if those attempts had been completed;
- initiate a complaint, or serve as Complainant, and initiate proceedings without a formal complaint by the victim or Complainant;
- dismiss unsubstantiated allegations, and take appropriate action against any party found to engage in intentionally false reporting of incidents. Making an intentionally false report of sexual misconduct may also violate state criminal statutes and civil defamation laws.

### **Remedies and Interim Measures:**

MTSO reserves the right to take any steps it deems necessary to remedy the discriminatory effects on the victim and others. Remedies and accommodations may be applied to the Complainant and/or the Respondent or others at the discretion of the Title IX Coordinator and include but are not limited to:

- imposition of campus No-Contact order
- rescheduling of exams and assignments
- providing alternative course completion options
- a change in work schedule or job assignment
- access to counseling services and assistance in setting up initial appointment
- a change in student's assigned housing
- limiting an individual or group access to certain School facilities or activities pending resolution of the matter
- a voluntary leave of absence
- an interim suspension pending the outcome
- a change of office space
- providing an escort to ensure safe movement between classes and activities
- providing academic support service, such as tutoring
- any other remedy which can be tailored to the involved individuals to achieve the goals of this policy

## **Information Regarding Advisers**

- **Rights to an Adviser**

Both parties to a dispute may have an adviser attend the appeal hearing. The adviser's role is to help the complainant or respondent prepare, advise on the procedural aspects of the hearing, and to be a non-participating supporter at the hearing. The Complainant and Respondent are expected to speak for themselves, to present their own case, and to ask and answer questions.

There are some individuals who are prohibited from serving as advisers to complainants and/or respondents: the President of the Seminary, the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs, and any staff member of Student Services and Academic Affairs.

- **Advisors in Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Disputes**

Advisors in appeal hearings for sexual harassment and misconduct disputes may be a support person, an attorney, or an advocate. The adviser may accompany the student to any meeting with a School employee and/or official, external investigator, and to the hearing. The adviser may not address the panel during the hearing or otherwise delay, disrupt, or interfere with any meeting or proceeding. If a Complainant or Respondent chooses to have an attorney as his/her advisor, they do so at his/her own expense. The attorney must meet with the President (or designee) in advance of any participation in the proceedings to understand the expectations of the role, privacy and appropriate decorum. Attorneys serving as advisors must adhere to the expectation of the role described in this policy. The School will not recognize or enforce agreements between the parties made outside of these procedures.

Absent extenuating circumstances, witnesses and others involved in an investigation or hearing are not entitled to have a support person. However, if the support person is to act as a witness, the support person testifies before the Complainant testifies.

## **Records**

The Title IX Coordinator will retain records of all reports, allegations, and complaints, regardless of whether the matter is resolved by means of Title IX applicability, informal procedures, or formal procedures. Complaints resolved by means of the Title IX applicability or informal procedures are not part of a student's conduct file and/or academic record.

Affirmative findings of responsibility in matters resolved by means of formal resolution are part of a student's conduct record. Such records shall be used in reviewing any further misconduct or developing educational outcomes and shall remain a part of the student's conduct record.

Generally, dismissals are permanently noted on a student's transcript. Suspensions and withdrawal pending disciplinary action are removed from a student's transcript after the student successfully completes one semester upon his/her return with no further incident. The conduct files of students who have been suspended or dismissed from the School are permanently maintained in the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs Office. Conduct files of students who have not been suspended or dismissed are maintained for a period of seven years after the end of the academic year of said violation (s).

Student conduct records may be released to School officials on a "need-to-know" basis. Records may be released to persons and agencies external to the School with the student's permission, or in compliance with the law (FERPA). Records that are lawfully subpoenaed or ordered by a judge may be released in connection with a health and/or safety emergency. Further questions about student conduct record retention should be directed to the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs.

The Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management, in accordance with the School's record-retention policy, maintains employee records.

### **Reoccurrence**

MTSO shall take reasonable steps to prevent the recurrence of sex discrimination or retaliation in any form. If such recurrence takes place, those responsible for such behavior may be subject to a variety of actions under the Student Handbook or MTSO Personnel Policies manual, up to and including expulsion from School or dismissal from employment.

### **Definitions and Examples**

#### Coercion

Coercion is unreasonable pressure for sexual activity. Coercive behavior differs from seductive behavior based on the type of pressure someone uses to get consent from another. When someone makes clear that he or she does not want sex, wants to stop an encounter, or does not want to proceed past a certain point of interaction, continued pressure beyond that point can be coercive.

### Consent

Effective consent is the basis of the analysis applied to unwelcome sexual contact. Lack of consent is the critical factor in any incident of sexual misconduct.

- Consent is informed, freely and actively given, and requires clear communication between all persons involved in the sexual encounter.
- Consent is active, not passive. Consent can be communicated verbally or by actions. But in whatever way consent is communicated, it must be mutually understandable. Silence or lack of resistance, in and of themselves, cannot be interpreted as consent.
- It is the responsibility of the initiator of sexual contact to make sure he or she fully understands what the person(s) with whom they are involved want(s) or do(es) not want sexually.
- Consent to one form of sexual activity does not imply consent to other forms of sexual activity.
- Previous relationships or consent does not imply consent to future sexual acts.
- Consent cannot be procured by use of physical force, compelling threats, intimidating behavior, or coercion.
- Minors, mentally disabled individuals, or persons incapacitated as a result of drugs or alcohol, cannot give effective consent.
- If you have sexual activity with someone you know to be, or should know to be, mentally or physical incapacitated (by alcohol or drug use, unconsciousness or blackout), you are in violation of this policy.
- This policy also covers someone whose incapacity results from mental disability, sleep, involuntary physical restraint, or from the taking of a so-called “date-rape” drug. Possession, use and/or distribution of any such substances, including Rohypnol, Ketamine, GHB, Burundanga, etc. is prohibited, and administering one of these drugs to another person for the purpose of inducing incapacity is a violation of this policy. More information on these drugs can be found at <http://www.911rape.org>.

**Use of alcohol or drugs will never function to excuse behavior that violates this policy.**

### Dating violence

Dating violence means violence by a person who has been in a romantic or intimate relationship with the victim. Whether there was such relationship will be gauged by its length, type and frequency of interaction. Dating violence can encompass a broad range of behavior, including but not limited to physical violence, sexual violence, emotional violence, and economic abuse.

It may also take the form of threats, assaults, property damage, violence, or threat of violence to one's self, one's sexual or romantic partner, and or to the family members or friends of the sexual or romantic partner. Dating violence affects individual of all genders, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientation, and racial, ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds.

#### Domestic violence

Domestic violence includes asserted violent misdemeanor and felony offenses committed by the victim's current or former spouse, current or former cohabitant, person similarly situated under domestic or family violence law, or anyone else protected under domestic or family violence law.

#### Force

Force is the use or threat of physical violence or intimidation and/or imposing on someone physically to gain sexual access. Force also includes threats, intimidation (implied threats), and coercion that overcome an individual's freedom to choose whether to participate in sexual activity, resist or produce consent.

#### Hostile environment

A hostile environment exists when a reasonable person is rendered unable to function for fear of ridicule, threats, derogatory comments, unwelcome jokes, insults, slurs, and other similar conduct. A variety of related factors are considered in determining if a hostile environment has been created, with subjective and objective perspectives taken into account. Conduct is evaluated from the perspective of a reasonable person in the alleged victim's position, considering all the circumstances. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to prove a hostile environment, particularly if the conduct is physical. Indeed, a single or isolated incident of sexual violence may create a hostile environment.

#### Incapacitation

Incapacitation is a state where one cannot make a rational, reasonable decision because he or she lacks the ability to give knowing consent, or to understand the "who, what, when, where, why, or how" of his or her sexual interaction because an individual is mentally and/or physical helpless, unconscious, or unaware that the sexual activity is occurring. Where alcohol and other substances, including prescription drugs, are involved, incapacitation is a state beyond drunkenness or intoxication. Warning signs that a person may be nearing incapacitation may include vomiting, slurred speech, unsteady gait, odor of alcohol or other drugs, combativeness, and/or emotional volatility.

### Retaliation

It is unlawful to retaliate against an individual for interfering with any right or privilege secured by Federal civil rights laws, including Title IX. Any individual or group of individuals, not just a Respondent or Complainant, can commit retaliation. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, intimidating, threatening, coercing or in any way discriminating against the individual because of the individual's complaint of sexual discrimination or violence.

### Sex Discrimination

Sex discrimination consists of behaviors and actions that deny or limit a person's ability to benefit from and/or fully participate in the educational programs or activities or employment opportunities because of a person's sex. Examples of sex discrimination under Title IX include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment, sexual violence, failure to provide equal opportunity in education programs and co-curricular programs, discrimination based on pregnancy, and employment discrimination.

### Sexual Activity

Sexual activity is defined as intentional contact with the breasts, buttock, groin or genitals, or touching another with any of these body parts, or making another touch you or themselves with or on any of these body parts; or any intentional bodily contact in a sexual manner, though not involving contact with/of/by breasts, buttocks, groin, genitals, mouth or other orifice; or intercourse however slight, meaning vaginal penetration by a penis, object, tongue or finger, anal penetration by a penis, object, tongue or finger, and oral copulation (mouth to genital contact or genital to mouth contact).

### Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is defined as having or attempting to have sexual intercourse or sexual contact with another individual without consent. This includes sexual intercourse or sexual contact achieved by the use or threat of force or coercion, where an individual does not consent to the sexual act, or where an individual is incapacitated. Sexual assault includes the following two acts:

- **Related to Non-consensual Sexual Intercourse:** Having or attempting to have sexual intercourse with another individual without consent. Sexual intercourse includes vaginal or anal penetration, however slight, with a body part or object, or oral copulation by mouth-to-genital contact.



- **Related to Non-consensual Sexual Contact:** Having or attempting to have sexual contact with another individual without consent. Sexual contact includes kissing, touching the intimate parts of another, causing the other to touch one's intimate parts, or disrobing or exposure of another without permission. Intimate parts may include the breasts, genitals, buttocks, mouth, or any other part of the body that is touched in a sexual manner.

### Sexual Battery

Sexual Battery is a felony. No person shall engage in sexual conduct with another when any of the following applies: 1) the offender knowingly coerces the other person to submit by any means that would prevent resistance by a person of ordinary resolution, or 2) the offender knows that the other person's ability to appraise the nature of, or control, his or her own conduct is substantially impaired, or 3) the offender knows that the other person submits because he or she is unaware that the act is being committed, or 4) the offender has supervisory or disciplinary authority over such person. A victim need not prove physical resistance to the offender.

### Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation occurs when a person takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for his or her own advantage or benefit, or to benefit or advantage anyone other than the one being exploited, and that behavior does not otherwise constitute one of the other sexual misconduct offenses. Examples of sexual exploitation include, but are not limited to: prostituting another person; non-consensual video or audio taping of sexual activity; going beyond the boundaries of consent (i.e., allowing others to watch you have consensual sex unbeknownst to your sexual partner); engaging in voyeurism; knowingly transmitting an STD or HIV to another; inducing incapacitation for the purpose of making another person vulnerable to non-consensual sexual activity; and exposing one's genitals in non-consensual circumstances, or inducing such exposure in another person. Sexually-based stalking or bullying may also be forms of sexual exploitation.

### Sexual Imposition

Sexual imposition is a misdemeanor. No person shall have sexual contact with another, cause another to have sexual contact with the offender, or cause two or more other persons to have sexual contact when any of the following applies: 1) the offender knows that the sexual contact is offensive to the other person, or one of the other persons, or is reckless in that regard; or 2) the offender knows that the other person's, or one of the other person's, ability to appraise the nature of or control the offender's or touching person's conduct is substantially impaired; or 3)

the offender knows the other person, or one of the other persons, submits because of being unaware of the sexual contact. [ORC 2907.06] Gross sexual imposition is a felony.

### Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is distinguished from a voluntary sexual relationship by the introduction of the element of coercion, threat, hostility, or unwanted attention of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment consists of unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- submission to such conduct is made a term or condition of employment or the educational relationship;
- submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for employment or education decisions affecting the individual; or
- such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it has the effect of unreasonably interfering with, denying or limiting a student's or employee's work performance, ability to participate or benefit from the School's educational program or activities, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, educational, or living environment.

While sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of conduct, some examples of specifically prohibited conduct include:

- promising, directly or indirectly, a student or employee a reward if the student or employee complies with a sexually-oriented request (*quid pro quo*);
- threatening, directly or indirectly, retaliation against a student or employee if the student or employee refuses to comply with a sexually-oriented request;
- denying, directly or indirectly, a student or employee an employment or education-related opportunity if the student or employee refuses to comply with a sexually-oriented request;
- engaging in sexually suggestive conversation or physical contact or touching another student or employee;
- displaying pornographic or sexually-oriented materials;
- engaging in indecent exposure;
- making sexual or romantic advances toward a student or employee and persisting despite the student's or employee's rejection of the advances;
- physical conduct such as assault, touching, or blocking normal movement;
- retaliation for making harassment reports or threatening to report harassment.

Sexual harassment can involve males or females being harassed by members of either sex. Although sexual harassment sometimes involves a person in a greater position of authority as the harasser, individuals in positions of lesser or equal authority can also be found responsible for engaging in prohibited harassment.

Sexual harassment can be physical and/or psychological in nature. An aggregation of a series of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered separately would not rise to the level of harassment.

### Sexual Misconduct

Sexual misconduct is a broad term encompassing any sexual behaviors that violate MTSO standards of conduct or policies governing work expectations. In general, any non-consensual physical contact of a sexual nature may constitute sexual misconduct. Sexual harassment and sexual exploitation are also forms of sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct may vary in its severity and consists of a range of behaviors or attempted behaviors that may be grounds for action under MTSO policies.

Prohibited conduct under this policy includes, but is not limited to:

- *non-consensual sexual contact*: any intentional sexual touching, however slight, with any object or body part, by a man or woman upon a man or woman, without consent and/or by force;
- *non-consensual sexual intercourse*: any sexual intercourse (anal, oral, or vaginal) however slight, with any object or body part, by a man or woman upon a man or woman, without consent and/or by force;
- *forced sexual intercourse*: unwilling non-consensual sexual penetration (anal, oral, or vaginal) with any object or body part that is committed either by force, threat, intimidation, or through exploitation of another's mental or physical condition of which the assailant was aware or should have been aware.

### Sexual Violence

Sexual violence refers to physical acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to age, use of alcohol or drugs, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the person from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. School employees or third parties can carry out

sexual violence. All such acts of sexual violence are forms of sex discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

### Stalking

Stalking means a course of unwelcomed conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for her, his or others' safety, or to suffer emotional distress.

### **Federal Statistical Reporting Obligations**

Certain campus officials have a duty to report violations of this policy for federal statistical reporting purposes (Clery Act). All personally identifiable information is kept confidential, but statistical information must be gathered and disseminated regarding the type of incident and its general location (on or off campus, or in the surrounding area, but with no addresses given) for publication in the annual Campus Crime Statistics report. This report helps to provide the community with a clear picture of the extent and nature of campus crime, to ensure greater community safety.

### **Federal Timely Warning Obligations**

MTSO may publicly release the name, nature of the violation, and the sanction for any student who is found to have committed a violation of standards of conduct that is a "crime of violence," including arson, burglary, robbery, criminal homicide, sex offenses, assault, destruction/damage/vandalism of property, and kidnapping/abduction. MTSO will release this information to the Complainant in any of these offenses regardless of the outcome.

### **Policy Review**

This Policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Title IX Coordinator in consultation with appropriate internal and external officials. Substantive revisions will be approved by Administrative Council and reported to the Board of Trustees.

## Office for Civil Rights

The OCR office for Ohio is located at:

Cleveland Office  
Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education  
1350 Euclid Avenue, Suite 325  
Cleveland, OH 44115-1812

Telephone: 216-522-4970

FAX: 216-522-2573; TDD: 800-877-8339

Email: [OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov)

The OCR National Headquarters is located at:

U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
Lyndon Baines Johnson Department of  
Education Bldg.  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-1100

Telephone: 800-421-3481

FAX: 202-453-6012; TDD: 800-877-8339

Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

## Substance Abuse Policy

The primary objective of this policy is to promote good health practices as part of the educational mission of MTSO. In so doing, we strive to provide and maintain an alcohol-free and drug-free academic environment.

MTSO prohibits the unlawful use, possession or distribution of alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs. MTSO, through the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs' office will work with any student suspected of violating this policy.

A first sanction for unlawful use or possession of alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs would generally require, as a minimum, drug and alcohol assessment and, if needed, counseling and rehabilitation. Other disciplinary sanctions could be imposed through the personal/professional misconduct disciplinary processes. Repeated instances of substance abuse will absolutely constitute grounds for suspension or expulsion. Suspected unlawful distribution of alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs will be referred to legal authorities. The student would also be subject to disciplinary action by the school, including expulsion.

## Student Complaints

Processes for addressing certain student concerns are outlined in following sections of the Student Handbook:

- Redress of issues related to student performance, see **Faculty Comments on Student Performance**;
- Redress of unfair course grading, see **Grade Changes and Appeals**;
- Redress of harassment concerns, see **Harassment Grievance Process**;
- Redress of dismissal or suspension for reasons of academic misconduct, see **Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Review Process**.
- Amendment of Student Records, see **Student Records Policy**.

If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved through these processes, or for matters not addressed through processes outlined elsewhere in the Student Handbook, students may avail themselves of this Policy on Student Complaints.

Any written expression of dissatisfaction from a currently enrolled student, regardless of content (see above paragraph for some specific concerns), that is addressed and delivered to one of the following agents of Methodist Theological School in Ohio: President, Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management, or Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs, shall be considered a formal complaint and logged accordingly. The complaint must be signed by the complaining party, and must include a return address for the complaining party. While the complaint can be delivered to any of the agents listed above, the final, official log of student complaints will be housed in the office of the Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management.

Information about lodged complaints must be shared with an evaluation team from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools at the time of a regularly scheduled comprehensive visit. However, individual identities will be shielded unless prior approval has been obtained from the individual(s) involved.

## Whistleblower Policy

This policy was established to communicate the standards and procedures for members of the MTSO community to report alleged unethical, fraudulent, or illegal acts. The MTSO community, for the purposes of this policy, is defined as board members, employees, volunteers, students, vendors, alumnae of MTSO and to applicants for jobs at MTSO. MTSO has

responsibility for the stewardship of its resources and the private support that enables it to pursue its mission and is therefore committed to the highest standards of moral and ethical behavior.

**Whistleblower:** A person or entity making a protected disclosure about an act that they consider unethical, fraudulent, or illegal is commonly referred to as a whistleblower. Whistleblowers may be board members, employees, volunteers, students, vendors, alumnae of MTSO, applicants for jobs at MTSO, or the general public. The whistleblower's role is as a reporting party. He or she is not an investigator or finder of fact, nor does a whistleblower determine the appropriate corrective or remedial action that may be warranted.

### **Duties and responsibilities**

It is the policy of MTSO that board members, employees, volunteers, students, vendors, alumnae and applicants shall be free without fear of retaliation to make known allegations of alleged misconduct existing within MTSO that he or she reasonably believes constitutes the following: wire fraud, mail fraud, bank fraud, securities fraud or questionable accounting, internal controls, and auditing matters. It is further the policy of the institution that board members, employees, volunteers, students, vendors, alumnae and applicants shall be free without fear of retaliation to make known allegations of alleged misconduct existing within MTSO that he or she reasonably believes constitutes a violation of MTSO's stated policies, procedures or legal obligations.

A board member, employee, volunteer, student, vendor, alumni or applicant shall not take or refuse to take any employment or other action in retaliation against any individual(s) or organization who discloses information regarding misconduct under this policy or who, following such disclosure, seeks a remedy provided under this policy or any law or other MTSO policy. Retaliation for disclosures made under this policy may result in suspension, termination, cancellation of the applicable vendor contract, removal from campus or any other action the Institution deems necessary.

Administrators and faculty are accountable for setting the appropriate tone of intolerance for fraudulent acts by displaying the proper attitude toward complying with laws, rules, regulations, and policies, including ethics policies. In addition, administrators should be cognizant of the risks and exposures inherent in their area of responsibility and should establish and maintain proper internal controls, which will provide for the security and accountability of the resources entrusted to them.

All suspected unethical, fraudulent, or illegal activity can be reported through MTSO's confidential, anonymous hotline (Campus Conduct Hotline) at 1-866-9HELPUS (1-866-943-5787).

Supervisors and administrators at all levels of management who become aware of suspected fraudulent activity are to respond in a consistent and appropriate manner and shall report the suspected activity to the designated intake officer stated above, the Director of Compliance or the President. In the event that the individual to be reported is the Director of Compliance or President, the report shall be made to the President or the Chair of the Audit Subcommittee of the Board of Trustees, respectively.

### Procedures

Employees are encouraged to first report their concerns to their immediate supervisor. Other members of the MTSO community may disclose all relevant information regarding evidenced misconduct to the following designated intake officers, in accordance with the subject matter of the disclosure:

Subject Matter	Intake Officer
Disability violations concerning students	Director of Student Services
Disability violations concerning employees	Director of Compliance
Discrimination/harassment/retaliation	Director of Compliance
Environmental hazards/unsafe working conditions	Facilities Manager
Faculty handbook violation	Dean and Vice Pres. of Academic Affairs
Staff personnel policies violation	Director of Compliance
Financial improprieties/fraudulent accounting (including but not limited to: wire, mail, bank, or securities fraud or questionable accounting, internal controls and auditing matters)	Controller
Illegal/unethical business practices	Director of Compliance
Safety/security issues	Facilities Manager
Student handbook violations	Director of Student Services
Wrongful termination	Director of Compliance
Other conduct	Director of Compliance or President

Any disclosure shall be made in a signed written document within 90 days of the day on which the complainant knew or should have known of the misconduct. If the board member, employee, volunteer, student, vendor, alumni or applicant would rather contact a source outside of the institution, he or she may contact MTSO's confidential, anonymous hotline



(Campus Conduct Hotline) at 1-800-9HELPUS (1-800-943-5787) within 90 days of the day on which the complainant knew or should have known of the misconduct.

The intake officer shall consider the disclosure and take whatever action he or she determines to be appropriate under the law and circumstances of the disclosure. In the case of disclosure of misconduct involving the designated intake officer, the disclosure shall be directed to the Director of Compliance or designee. The Director of Compliance or designee shall consider the disclosure and take whatever action he or she determines to be appropriate under the law and circumstances of the disclosure.

In the case of disclosure of misconduct involving the Director of Compliance, the disclosure shall be directed to the President. The President shall consider the disclosure and take whatever action he or she determines to be appropriate under the law and the circumstances of the disclosure.

In the case of disclosure involving financial misconduct, the intake officer or the Campus Conduct Hotline shall also provide the disclosure to the Audit Committee for their review and consideration. The Audit Committee shall have the authority to resolve the matter.

In the case of disclosure the Campus Conduct Hotline, that does not involve financial misconduct; the Audit Committee shall be entitled to receive a summary of the disclosure from the Campus Conduct Hotline. At its discretion, the Audit Committee shall have the authority to resolve the matter.

If the disclosure involves the President, the disclosure may be directed to the Chair of the Board of Trustees or his or her designee.

If the disclosure involves a member of the Board of Trustees, the disclosure may be directed to the President or the Chair of the Board of Trustees or his or her designee.

If the disclosure is by a Board member it shall be made to the Chair of the Board, unless the complaint involves the Chair of the Board, in which case the complaint shall be to the Vice Chair of the Board.

The Director of Compliance and the President, or the Chair of the Audit Subcommittee if appropriate, has the primary responsibility to review every hotline and supervisor report. An investigation will be conducted if a review establishes that the illegal allegation constitutes unethical or fraudulent activity, and if supported by specific information or corroborating evidence. Other departments or individuals may become involved in investigations based on their areas of oversight responsibility or expertise.

All affected departments and/or individuals shall cooperate fully with those performing a review or investigation, including the President, the Director of Compliance, MTSO Counsel, MTSO Auditors, law enforcement officials, regulators and any other parties involved.

If an investigation substantiates that fraudulent activities have occurred, the Director of Compliance or President shall issue reports to appropriate designated personnel and, if appropriate, to the Board of Trustees through its Executive Committee.

Any decisions to prosecute or refer the examination results to the appropriate law enforcement and/or regulatory agencies for independent investigation will be made by the President (or Board Chair) in conjunction with MTSO Counsel, as will final decisions on disposition of the situation.

Efforts will be made to perform investigations discreetly. The details of the investigation will be kept confidential, to the extent feasible, and consistent with MTSO policies and applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Persons found to be making false or frivolous claims under this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination of employment or expulsion from MTSO.

## Financial policies and procedures

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### Federal refund policy

The federal government has a mandated “Return of Title IV Funds” policy. This policy affects those students who have withdrawn from all classes and receive federal financial aid. Students, who receive federal financial aid, should contact the Office of Financial Aid before withdrawing from classes. Withdrawing under this policy most likely will result in a balance being owed to Methodist Theological School in Ohio.

**Withdrawal Date:** A.) The date the student notifies the institution, in writing, of his/her intent to withdraw. B.) If the student drops out of the institution without notifying the institution (does not withdraw officially), the last day of the term that the student attended that we are aware of will be the date used.

## Institutional Refund Policy

Students who drop classes from their schedule within the designated drop period are entitled to certain refunds as indicated in the tables below. Students must notify the Office of the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar in writing of their intent to drop classes at MTSO by submitting the Permission to Drop/Add Courses form, which requires the signature of the student's academic advisor. Requests to add or drop courses can only be recorded once the paperwork is submitted to the Office of the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar. The School defines the end of a class week to be Friday at 4:30 p.m. Students who are deployed by the military in the middle of a semester will receive tuition credit for the courses in which they were enrolled at the time of deployment.

This policy applies to all courses, regardless of structure or delivery method. Weekend and intensive courses that meet on irregular schedules are also subject to refunds as indicated below. After the fifth week of the semester, or the fifth day of intensive terms, there is no refund. Students who are taking intensive or weekend courses should review course materials prior to the start of the term so that a decision to drop can still be made within the 100% time frame. In some cases, the courses may have not met yet, but the refund policy will still apply as indicated. (Doctor of Ministry refunds are handled by a separate process.)

Refunds will be granted on the following scale if the student withdraws from Methodist Theological School in Ohio:

Fall and Spring Semester classes:

- Before the start of the semester, or by the end of the first week of the semester 100%
- By the end of the second week of the semester 75%
- By the end of the third week of the semester 50%
- By the end of the fifth week of the semester 25%
- After the fifth week of the semester 0%

January Term and Summer Term:

- Before the start of the term, or by the end of the first weekday of the term 100%
- By the end of the second weekday of the term 75%
- By the end of the third weekday of the term 50%
- By the end of the fifth weekday of the term 25%
- After the fifth weekday of the term 0%

### **Reimbursement priority under federal and institutional refund policies**

Necessary refunds to student financial aid programs will be made prior to release of any refund to a student.

The following priority listing will be used (subject to change without notice):

- Federal Stafford Loans, Grad PLUS Loans,
- Institutional financial assistance (MTSO Grants and/or Scholarships),
- Private sources of financial assistance, and
- the student

Balances due to the school as a result of other obligations (i.e., emergency loans, telephone charges, dining hall charges, guest room charges, late registration fees, interest charges, etc.) are not subject to refund. The student must pay these obligations in full.

### **Student account balances (credit)**

It is the policy of Methodist Theological School in Ohio not to carry balances on student accounts after one year of inactivity on the student account. The following process and approach will be used with regard to such balances, excluding Federal Student Loan funds secured by the student:

1. The MTSO Business Office will make attempts throughout each academic year to notify those students who have balances in their student accounts and will provide these students the instructions and forms necessary for the students to withdraw these balances. Students will also be provided a deadline for the school's receipt of completed forms for such withdrawal. The MTSO Business Office will determine the deadline for the school's receipt of the completed forms.
2. Student account balances will become general revenue to the school if all the following conditions are met:
  - a. The student account has been inactive for one calendar year; and
  - b. The student has been notified of a balance in the student account and provided the necessary information to withdraw this balance; and
  - c. The established deadline date has passed; and
  - d. The student has not requested a withdrawal of the balance in their account.

3. Students who are on a documented leave of absence with the school will have their student account balances maintained at the school unless their status changes to withdrawn.
4. Any balance in a student's cross-cultural account will be subject to the policy pertaining to the Cross-Cultural Program and not to this policy. Refer to the Cross-Cultural Handbook for more information about policies related to the Cross-Cultural Program.
5. In cases where a student account balance moves to collection status or has been discharged due to bankruptcy, and the student later wishes to return to school, the Controller of MTSO reserves the right to require payment in full of the term's tuition and fees no later than the 100% refund deadline date of the term.

## Satisfactory academic progress policy for financial aid recipients

Federal financial aid funds are awarded with the understanding that students will make progress toward their chosen degree. MTSO, as directed by the U.S. Department of Education, has established guidelines (Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress) to follow in order to meet this goal.

Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress apply for the following types of federal financial aid: Federal Work-Study, Direct Unsubsidized Loan, and Graduate PLUS Loan.

### Policy standards

The Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress measures three components. Students must meet all three components to maintain their financial aid eligibility.

1. **Grade Point Average:** 2.5 cumulative GPA
2. **Maximum Timeframe:** Students are required to complete their degree within one-and-a-half times the length of their program's published hour requirement (150%)
3. **Pace of Progress:** To ensure that students earn a degree within the maximum timeframe allowed, students must show a *minimum* completion rate of 67% of classes attempted.

### Notes:

- WP or WF (withdrawal), and F (failing grade) do not count toward meeting completion percentage, therefore take away from the student's pace. Examples: A) register for 12 hours, drop 3 hours after add/drop deadline, completing 9 credit hours. Nine completed hours/12 attempted hours = 75% completion or pace...acceptable. B) Register for 12 hours, drop 6 hours after add/drop deadline, completing 6 credit hours. Six completed hours/12 attempted hours = 50% completion or pace...not acceptable.
- All terms of attendance are reviewed including terms no federal financial aid was received.
- All hours are counted cumulatively including when changing degrees and repeating coursework.
- All hours accepted in as transfer credit will be used to calculate timeframe and pace measures.

### Appeal Procedures

At the end of spring term each year, the academic records of all students who are receiving or applying for federal financial aid will be reviewed. Those students who fail to meet the Standards of Satisfactory Academic Progress will be notified that they are no longer eligible to receive financial aid funds.

Students have the following options available to restore their eligibility:

1. Make up any deficient hours by raising their overall completion rate to at least 67% and/or bring up GPA to a 2.5 without the use of federal funds or through grade changes.  
-or-
2. Complete a full-time equivalent term with a 2.5 GPA without the use of federal funds. A student may complete multiple part-time terms with a 2.5 GPA to total the full-time equivalency in credit hours.  
-or-
3. Submit a written appeal if the failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress was due to extenuating circumstances (including how the situation has changed to allow progress).

Written notification of completing options 1 or 2 or an appeal based on option 3 should be submitted to the Financial Aid Office at [finaid@mtso.edu](mailto:finaid@mtso.edu). Submissions should detail efforts in achieving options above, the extenuating circumstance and a specific plan to enhance future academic performance.

Questions regarding SAP should be directed to the Office of Financial Aid. Decisions regarding satisfactory academic progress appeals are reviewed by the Financial Assistance Committee on Academic Progress, which consists of the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Director of Financial Aid and Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar. Appeals may be granted if there are extenuating circumstances.

If aid eligibility is reinstated, the student's record will then be reviewed each term to ensure specified requirements for retaining aid eligibility are being met or until the student has once again established eligibility in meeting all three components of the policy.

If a student fails to re-establish eligibility in an appeal, eligibility can be sought through options 1 and 2 above unless aid eligibility has been denied due to exceeding maximum timeframe for the academic program.

### **Scholarship eligibility**

Students on special scholarship from MTSO may have additional requirements in order to retain that scholarship. Refer to the specific scholarship criteria in each program as documented in the Financial Aid award letter.

### **Writing an appeal letter to the financial aid appeal committee**

If a student seeks to appeal the decision of the Financial Aid, he or she should develop a well-written explanation to the committee. The student must respond to the following questions.

1. What mitigating circumstances have caused you to lose your eligibility for financial aid? Be honest in your letter. If you made some mistakes, let the committee know you recognize this. That is the first step toward change.
2. What steps have you taken to overcome these circumstances? How have they been resolved?
  - Detail what you plan to do differently if your appeal is granted.
  - How will you prevent yourself from being in the same situation in the future?
  - Include steps you have taken to seek out tutoring or other support services.

- If you have taken some time off from MTSO, what have you been doing (i.e. attending another school, working)?
- Submit copies of your grades if you have attended another school.

3. What are your specific goals for the future? What is your anticipated graduation date?

4. Provide a copy of the necessary documentation that supports your mitigating circumstances.

- You must submit official documentation that supports your mitigating circumstance. Examples would be a statement from your doctor if you have had medical problems, a statement from a counselor if you have had personal problems or a copy of your grades if you have gone to another school since attending MTSO. If you are reporting a death in the family, you should submit documentation that names the deceased and lists you as a survivor, such as an obituary, news article or funeral program.

5. Include the following if your appeal is due to being over 150% of your program of study credits:

- Why you have not been able to complete your degree within the 150% rule.
- Why you need an extension.
- How many credits you need to complete in order to graduate along with your anticipated graduation date.

## Student worker policy

Student employees (including work-study) are those whose major efforts are directed toward receiving a formal education, and who are employed part-time to help meet the needs of the school, furnish students with financial support in pursuit of their academic goals and provide valuable opportunities for academic and administrative job experience. The job duties and responsibilities of student employees vary greatly and may or may not be related to their field of study.

A student employee is defined as an individual who is enrolled at the school on a full-time or part-time basis in the pursuit of an academic degree, and selected to a position designated as student employment.

Employment of international students is subject to federal regulations and special restrictions may apply. Contact the Director of Student Services for more information.



No student shall be discriminated against on the basis on race, color, religion, gender, age, disability, national origin, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or any other extraneous considerations not directly and substantially related to effective performance.

Student employees are employed at will and serve at the discretion of the employing department.

## **I. Recruitment & Selection**

- A. The Director of Financial Aid manages recruitment for position filled by student employees. Hiring decisions are delegated to the department level. The department level must coordinate all hiring decision with the Financial Aid Director before extending employment to the student. The Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management reviews, approves, certifies, and authorizes all hires and maintains student employee files.
- B. Students who meet federal work-study program eligibility requirements may be referred for employment opportunities from the Student Financial Aid Office, which oversees the work-study program. Questions related to work-study status should be directed to the Director of Financial Aid.
- C. Departments may impose priority or additional requirements when filling positions. For instance, Buildings & Grounds gives priority to residents, both in residence halls and family housing.

## **II. Classification and Wage Rates**

- A. An approved position description (by the Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management) should be given to the student employee for reporting purposes and to give the student employee clear job expectations.
- B. Student employees are assigned on a temporary, part-time basis.
- C. Student wage rates are revised periodically (\$8.60 as of July 2014).
- D. Most student employees are non-exempt and thus paid an hourly rate. Non-exempt employees are subject to minimum wage and overtime regulations.
- E. Student employees can hold multiple assignments. The appointment must be the same status (non-exempt or exempt) and must not total more than 30 hours in a seven-day period.

### **III. Terms of Employment**

#### **A. Employment Eligibility**

Hiring departments must comply with school policy and procedures regarding the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Students must provide evidence of their identity and employment eligibility and complete an I-9 Form as part of the hiring process. Departments shall send completed I-9 Forms to the Controller for filing. The Financial Aid office ensures completion of all student payroll paperwork.

#### **B. Confidentiality**

Student employees are expected to maintain the confidentiality of student records as are all other affected MTSO employees. Student employees are required to sign the Confidentiality of Student Records statement before they can access student records.

#### **C. FERPA**

Student employees receive FERPA training on-line, in their student handbooks and from their supervisors. When working with student records, a student employee must work cooperatively with the supervisor to ensure FERPA compliance.

#### **D. Title IX Policy Training: Sexual Molestation and Abuse Prevention Program**

All student workers are expected to be knowledgeable in and adhere to MTSO's Title IX policy. They will also receive written material describing MTSO's Sexual Molestation and Abuse Prevention Program and will be required to successfully complete the most current on-line video training program prior to and as a condition of continued employment. Students employed for two years or longer are required to complete subsequent Title IX MTSO training programs.

### **IV. Payroll Guidelines**

#### **A. Maximum Hours of Work**

Student workers are restricted to working 20 hours per week during academic terms in which they are enrolled and no more than 30 hours per week during their off academic term and official school breaks.

## **B. Attendance Timesheet**

Student timekeeping sheets are required to report hours of work for payment purposes. These records satisfy federal and state regulations. Forms are available at the Business Office. Completed forms are signed by the student employee and supervisor, and are submitted to the Director of Financial Aid for processing on the stated due date.

## **C. Student Paychecks**

MTSO strongly recommends that all students participate in Direct Deposit. Instructions for setting up a Direct Deposit Account can be obtained from the Business Office. Student pay dates are the 15<sup>th</sup> and last day of the month.

## **D. Overtime**

The Department of Labor requires that non-exempt employees be paid overtime at a rate of one-half times the regular rate of pay worked in excess of 40 hours in one week.

**Overtime without prior approval is restricted.** Student employees are not eligible to earn comp time.

## **E. Breaks and Meals**

Students are permitted to take a 10-minute break for every four-hour period of work. Meal periods are permitted to student employees who work six hours or more in a shift. Meal periods must be 30 minutes without interruption to be unpaid time.

## **F. Vacation and Leave**

Student employees do not accrue paid vacation or sick leave. In the event of illness, a student employee must notify his/her supervisor as soon as possible each day of absence. Arrangements for time off (without pay) are negotiated and approved at the employment department level.

## **G. Holidays**

Student employees are not eligible for holiday benefit pay. Where the school provides services on holidays and students are scheduled to work, the rate of pay is at the regular hourly rate of pay.

## **H. Jury Duty**

In the performance of jury duty or when summoned to as a witnesses, student's time is treated as an excused absence and without pay.

## **I. Military Duty**

A student employee who is a member of any reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, who is voluntarily or involuntarily ordered to extend U.S. military service, must be granted time off without pay.

The student employee should provide advance written or verbal notice of call for impending training or active duty to the department supervisor.

Upon completion of training or discharged under honorable condition and upon re-registration as a student, the student must be returned to her or his former or comparable position in a timely manner, based on the availability of a student position.

## **V. General Rules of Conduct**

To assist with the efficient operation of the school and to ensure the safety and well-being of those at the school, the following rules of conduct are in force. The rules of conduct are not for the purpose of restricting the rights and activities of employees, but are intended to help employees by defining and protecting the rights and safety of all persons. Employees are expected to acquaint themselves with these rules and other work rules specific to their department. It is for conduct such as that defined below that employees will be subject to corrective action including suspension or termination depending upon the severity of the violation. These rules include, but are not limited to:

1. Unauthorized use and/or possession of intoxicating beverages, narcotics or dangerous drugs on school premises; or reporting to work under the influence of intoxicating beverages, narcotics or dangerous drugs.
2. Misrepresenting hours, falsification or unauthorized altering of timesheets.
3. Fighting, gambling, use of profane, obscene, or abusive language while at work.
4. No weapons.
5. No smoking, only in designated areas.
6. Behaving in a discourteous or disrespectful manner toward a supervisor.
7. Refusal to carry out the instructions of a supervisor (insubordination).
8. Leaving the job without permission during regularly assigned working hours.
9. Sleeping while on duty.
10. Creating unsafe conditions.
11. Stealing or unauthorized removal or use of property belonging to the school, to employees, students or visitors of the school.
12. Loss, damage, or destruction of property belonging to the school or to employees, students or visitors to the school.

13. Unwillingness or inability to work in harmony with others, discourtesy or conduct creating discord.
14. Mailing or posting any notice, circular, or display on school premises without permission.
15. Failure to comply with policies and procedures of MTSO and those specific to a department.
16. Student workers who are issued keys and/or key cards are expected to use them in the manner directed and to keep them in a secure area. Keys may not be copied, loaned, or otherwise misused. When a student worker leaves the school, the key/key card should not be passed down to other employees. Keys must be returned to the student worker's supervisor or to Maintenance, who will return the key/key card to the Maintenance Department where it will be deleted and/or destroyed.

## **VI. Accidents and Injuries**

If a student employee is injured on the job, the accident reporting procedures are the same as for regular full-time and part-time employees. The employing department must immediately send a completed Safety Incident or Accident Report and Workers' Compensation Claim Form to Maintenance or the Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management for proper handling.

## **VII. Conflict Resolution**

Students must bring concerns about their employment to the attention of their supervisor as soon as possible. Supervisors are expected to make good faith effort at fair and equitable resolution, which includes informing the student of their decision. Student employees involved in a dispute should seek resolution at the department employing level.

### **Termination**

Students may be terminated if their performance is deficient or if their behavior does not merit continued employment. Supervisors are encouraged to give the student opportunity to correct his/her deficiencies prior to termination. No written notification is required, but is strongly recommended. A student, who wishes to grieve any employment related issue, may use the relevant school grievance procedures.

# Communication and information technology

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## Technology capabilities

A minimum level of technology capacities and resources are needed by students to meet effectively course expectations at MTSO.

### Computer hardware and software requirements

- PCs: Office 2010 or newer; Windows 7 or newer;
  - Internet Explorer 11 or newer and/or Google Chrome;
  - PDF reader;
  - Intel i3 or better processor, with a minimum of 4GB RAM (8 GB recommended);
  - graphics card and monitor capable of 1024x768 display;
  - stereo sound card, speakers and/or headset, microphone (A webcam is NOT required, but recommended).
- MACs: Office 2011 for mac;
  - MAC OS X 10.7 (Snow Leopard) and higher is supported for most online course materials;
  - Apple Safari and/or Google Chrome;
  - PDF reader
- Note: At this time, a tablet is not a suitable substitute for a computer in an academic setting.

### Internet access

Internet access is required to participate in online components of courses at MTSO. Broadband (LAN, Cable, or DSL) connection is highly recommended for optimal student experience. We recommend having internet broadband in one's home with a minimum of 1.5MB/sec.

Note: Many public internet access sites (public library/café/coffee house) offer an imperfect access solution.

## **INFORMATION SECURITY AT MTSO**

### **Overview**

In the course of daily operations at Methodist Theological School in Ohio, we handle data in many different forms. Poor data management practices can be of great consequence to the school, as they represent inadequate care and attention to the constituencies we serve, stall our productivity, and can have legal liability ramifications in serious instances. Creation of an information security policy is an important step in a process intended to minimize the level of risk inherent to the data-driven environment at MTSO.

Over the years, various work units at the school have developed procedures and practices for keeping such information appropriately safeguarded. This document's primary purpose is to institute a policy framework that will protect the school in the event of a security breach. It is intended to address particular areas where current practices in data security at MTSO may be ill-defined, especially with respect for data that is collected or stored electronically. It is a policy document, but can also be instructive to the extent that it introduces new ways of understanding the significance of the all the data we collect and store, and encourages review of current practices in light of its directives. Exercising sound personal judgment around the collection, storage, and sharing of data has always been, and remains, the best safeguard available against misuse.

### **Scope**

The policies described in this document will apply to all employees (regular full-time, regular part-time, regular time-limited, temporary, and student) and students (including student residents and their family members, visitors and/or guests). In addition, contracted vendors with MTSO who have access to personally identifiable information or other sensitive data related to MTSO constituencies should be made aware of these policies and agree to abide by them as a condition of their relationship with MTSO.

### **Enforcement**

Any persons found to have violated these policies may be subject to disciplinary action as described in the MTSO Personnel Policies manual, General Policies Governing Faculty, or other appropriate document governing one's working relationship with MTSO.

## **Policy Statements**

### Social Security Numbers

The Social Security numbers of MTSO employees and students are necessary for the school to collect and store as part of normal operations, such as for tax reporting purposes and background checking. When this information is collected, it is stored in the school's payroll accounting software system (employees) and integrated student information system (students). Both of these systems protect access to this information through user permissions, and are stored on separate secure servers. Access to this information is limited to only those employees with a need to know as part of the regular discharge of their job responsibilities. Social Security numbers (employee and student) are confidential information. Employees, agents, and representatives of MTSO shall not:

- Intentionally communicate or otherwise make available to the general public an individual's Social Security number
- Publicly display an individual's Social Security number (e.g., by including the number in electronic documents posted on internal Web sites or in paper documents posted internally)
- Intentionally print or embed an individual's Social Security number on any card, such as student identification cards, required for the employee or customer to access products or services
- Require an individual to transmit the individual's Social Security number over the Internet, unless the connection is secure or the Social Security number is encrypted
- Print an individual's Social Security number on any materials that are mailed (including facsimile and e-mail) unless required by law, with the students' permission, or on documents sent as part of a transcript, an application, an amendment, or termination of an account, in which case the number may not be on a postcard or visible through an envelope.
- Sell, lease, loan or otherwise intentionally disclose a Social Security number to third parties without written consent from the employee or customer; and
- Show more than the last four digits of an employee's Social Security number in a pay stub or other format at the time wages are distributed.



Use of a Social Security number is permitted if the use, collection or release of the number is required by federal or state law, or if the use is for internal verification or administrative purposes.

### Student Information and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is a federal law that protects a student's educational record. Only designated school officials (academic advisors, staff who need access to information to perform their job duties, etc.) are given access to student records, within the limitations of their need to know.

"Directory information" at MTSO includes those items of student information that the school can (but does not have to) publish or publicly release without the student's explicit permission. At MTSO, this includes a student's name, address, date of birth, MTSO mailbox number, telephone number, e-mail address, photograph, place of employment, employment telephone, degree or non-degree program in which enrolled, class level, dates of attendance, degrees or awards earned (with dates received) from MTSO, educational degrees received from other educational institutions, and names of spouse/children. This information is printed in the Student Handbook along with the complete policy for all student records. Only that information designated "directory information" will be published or publicly released. The seminary has chosen to keep all other student information confidential. Students have the right, under FERPA, to request that no information concerning their educational records is published or publicly released except with their written permission. To keep all information confidential, a student must present a written request to withhold information within the first two weeks of the Fall Semester of each academic year they are enrolled at MTSO. Any questions about the release of student information should be directed to the Registrar at MTSO.

## **Computer Use**

### **General Use and Ownership**

Users should be aware that the data they create on school systems remains the property of the school. Because of the need to protect the school's network, the school cannot guarantee the confidentiality of personal information stored on any network device belonging to the school, including without limitation, emails, text messages, IMs, voicemails, and other electronic communications.

The Internet and e-mail are useful tools for our work. MTSO provides employees with computers and related equipment. The equipment is the school's property, and is to be used for the benefit of the school. In general, employees should limit their use of the equipment to business matters. While personal use of school-owned computers is not strictly prohibited, employees are responsible for exercising good judgment regarding the reasonableness of personal use. Excessive use of the computer systems for personal reasons is a violation of school policy and may be used as the basis for disciplinary action. This applies to laptop computers or other school equipment that may be kept or used off-campus.

Internet use, e-mail and materials made and stored electronically are not private. The school reserves the right to monitor or review such communications and materials. Personal material that an employee wishes to keep private must not be stored on the computer system. Similarly, confidential information about the school and its constituent groups should not be communicated via e-mail or the internet except in such instances where the confidential information is encrypted or otherwise transmitted in a secure manner. Questions regarding the security of any transmission of information should be directed to the Director of Information Systems at MTSO. Under no circumstances should confidential information about the school and its constituent groups be removed from the protections provided by the MTSO network security system or the physical protections of campus without specific authorization or approval from the President, Academic Dean, or Director of Information Systems at MTSO.

For security and network maintenance purposes, individuals within the school authorized by a designated supervisor may monitor any equipment, systems and network traffic at any time.

Except as required by applicable data protection laws, users of school e-messaging systems shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they store, send, or receive on the school's e-messaging systems, including without limitation, e-mail, text messages, IMs, voicemails, Webmail, and other electronic communications.

### **Security and Proprietary Information**

All users must keep passwords secure and may not share accounts. Authorized users are responsible for the security of their passwords and accounts.

Employees must use extreme caution when opening e-mail attachments received from unknown senders, as such attachments may contain viruses, e-mail bombs, or Trojan horse code.

## **Cloud Storage**

Users should not upload confidential information (such as social security numbers, credit card numbers, financial/payroll information, personnel records) to cloud storage through any file hosting service (e.g., iCloud, OneDrive, Dropbox). If offsite access to confidential information is necessary, users should request from the Director of Information Technology an ENCRYPTED flash drive. Although retrieving Web pages that are unprotected if their owner does not intend that they be viewed may constitute a violation of the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, there is no way to guarantee the absolute security of uploaded files even if the process is handled with utmost caution. The risks of using cloud storage should therefore be carefully assessed.

## **Unacceptable Use**

The following activities are prohibited. Employees may be exempted from these restrictions during the course of their legitimate job responsibilities. Any exemptions must be authorized in writing by a designated supervisor.

Under no circumstances is an employee or temporary worker authorized to engage in any activity that is illegal under local, state, federal or international law while utilizing school-owned resources. The list below is by no means exhaustive, but attempts to provide a framework for activities that fall into the category of unacceptable use.

The following activities are strictly prohibited:

- Performing activities unrelated to the school's mission or activities unrelated to official assignments and job responsibilities (including excessive use of the computer systems for personal reasons)
- Interfering with or disrupting network users, services or equipment
- Using school information systems for private purposes such as marketing, business transactions, solicitation for religious and political causes, unauthorized not-for-profit business activities, private advertising of products or services and any activity meant to foster personal gain
- Violating the rights of any person or school protected by copyright, trade secret, patent or other intellectual property, or similar laws or regulations, including, but not limited to, the installation or distribution of "pirated" or other software products that are not appropriately licensed for use by the school, the unauthorized copying of copyrighted material (including, but not limited to, digitization and distribution of material from magazines, books, music, motion pictures, or other copyrighted sources), and the installation of any copyrighted software for which the school does not have an active license.

- The use of peer-to-peer (P2P) software is discouraged (BitTorrent, LimeWire, KaZaA, etc). P2P software has legal uses, however, mostly it is used to download and share copyrighted materials, including music, videos, and games. Most P2P software turns file sharing on by default as soon as the software is installed. This means that others may access materials on your computer without your knowledge, whether they have given permission or not. If you do install a P2P client for legal purposes, it is recommended that you turn off file sharing immediately. If you are sharing files, even inadvertently, you are still liable for violating copyright law.
- Intentional introduction of malicious programs into the network or server (e.g., viruses, worms, Trojan horses, e-mail bombs, etc.)
- Revealing your account password to others or allowing use of your account by others. This includes family and other household members
- Using school computing assets to actively engage in procuring or transmitting material that is in violation of sexual harassment or hostile workplace laws in the user's local jurisdiction
- Accessing or downloading pornographic or similarly offensive material
- Making fraudulent offers or offers for personal gain of products, items, or services originating from any school account
- Effecting security breaches or disruptions of network communication. Security breaches include, but are not limited to, accessing data of which the employee is not an intended recipient or logging into a server or account that the employee is not expressly authorized to access
- Circumventing the system of firewalls through the use of modems (dial-in, dial-out telephone lines, etc.) or network tunneling software to connect to the network
- Port scanning or security scanning
- Executing any form of network monitoring that intercepts data not intended for the employee's host
- Circumventing user authentication or security of any host, network or account
- Transmitting school confidential information over public networks without encryption
- Sending unauthorized and/or unsolicited e-mail messages, including the sending of "junk mail" or other advertising material to individuals who did not specifically request such material (e-mail spam)
- Any form of harassment via e-mail, telephone or paging, whether through language, frequency, or size of messages
- Unauthorized use, or forging, of e-mail header information
- Creating or forwarding "chain letters", "Ponzi" or other "pyramid" schemes of any type

- Transmission or storage of any messages or data that contain explicit or implicit threats, obscene, derogatory, profane or otherwise offensive language or graphics; defame, abuse, harass or violate the legal rights of others

### **Remote Access**

It is the responsibility of employees, contractors, vendors, agents and partners with external access privileges to and from the school network to ensure that their external connection is given the same consideration as the user's on-site connection to the network. For purposes of this policy, "external connection" means any access to the network through a non-school controlled network, device, or medium.

### **Access and Storage**

All users accessing data must be authorized by a designated supervisor to access the appropriate systems and their resources. User-access privileges shall be adjusted, as needed, if the employee transfers, changes roles or terminates employment. All requests for access or changes in access privileges require the approval of a designated supervisor and the appropriate data owner, and are subject to review by legal counsel. Only users who have valid business reasons as determined by their supervisor will be granted access privileges appropriate to the user's job function. An authorized user may not, under any circumstances, extend their authority to another individual without the approval of a designated supervisor and the data owner. Users should never attempt access to unauthorized computer resources or restricted areas.

Users must keep hard copy documents and information from view of unauthorized recipients (e.g., users should erase whiteboards, refrain from leaving materials in view on tabletops, and remove materials from conference rooms). Confidential information should not be left unattended and should be stored in a locked office, desk, cabinet, bookcase, safe or other physically secured container. The ability to track both ingress and egress of all individuals must be maintained.

### **Identification/Authentication**

User identification and authentication is a process to help ensure security resources are protected. Identification is determined through the use of a unique user ID. Authentication is the process of confirming that a known individual is correctly associated with a given credential, for example, by use of passwords to confirm correct association with a username or account name. Authentication protects against fraudulent transmission by verifying the validity of a transmission, message, station or originator.

## **IDs**

Users will be assigned a unique ID to access systems, programs, applications and data. Users are responsible for all activity that occurs under their user ID and IDs may be revoked at any time.

## **Passwords**

All users must be uniquely identified and authenticated before being granted access to information. All accounts must have passwords with a minimum of eight characters. Passwords must contain a mixture of upper and lower case letters, numbers, symbols or special characters and be non-displayable when entered on a terminal. Passwords must be changeable by the owning User ID at will, and must be changed by the user every 180 days. Users may not use personal information such as name, file number, school name, or school address code. To enhance the security of the password, it is strongly recommended that users include numeric and special characters in passwords, and avoid using words that can be found in an English or foreign dictionary. Regardless of the circumstances, users shall not (a) share or reveal passwords to anyone; (b) print, store online, write down or give away passwords; (c) access systems with another user's password or account; or (d) disguise identity while using systems.

Users shall avoid using the "Remember Password" feature of applications. Passwords are required and must be activated when users are away from their PC or console.

## **Travel/Mobile Computers/Devices**

When traveling, users should not place confidential materials in checked baggage. Users should not leave campus with electronic versions of confidential data, and should not transfer confidential data to flash drives or other media unless absolutely necessary. Users should ensure that confidential information is encrypted when it is necessary to transfer the data; questions about the encryption process or its utility in a particular instance should be directed to the System Administrator. In cases where work-related reasons call for off-campus access to confidential data, users should contact the System Administrator in advance for advice on how to best access the data. Users should never leave laptop computers unattended and should not use laptops in public areas where others can read the screen. Users should never leave laptops alone in a conference room, hotel room or on an airplane seat, and should make arrangements to lock the device in a hotel safe, or take it with him/her. When using a desk, users should employ a cable locking system to secure the laptop. Laptop data on should be backed up to the school network on a regular basis. When leaving the office for the day, users should secure the laptop and any other sensitive material in a locked drawer or cabinet.

## **Monitoring**

MTSO reserves the right to monitor the use by employees of MTSO telephones, computer networks, and electronic messaging systems at any time. Employees should not consider their use of MTSO computer and electronic messaging systems, including without limitation e-mail, text messages, IMs, and voicemail, to be private or confidential. To the contrary, MTSO expressly reserves the right to monitor, copy, delete and/or disclose any and all documents, data, messages, or other files stored on MTSO network infrastructure and electronic messaging systems. MTSO may share any content or information obtained from an employee's computer or electronic messaging system, including without limitation e-mail, text messages, IMs, and voicemail, with law enforcement authorities as required by statute or to protect MTSO's interests. Except as required by applicable data protection laws, users of MTSO electronic messaging systems shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they store, send, or receive on MTSO's electronic messaging systems or computer systems, including without limitation email, text messages, IMs, and voicemail.

In instances in which an inspection or search is conducted because of MTSO's concern for security, or MTSO's need for MTSO property, or information related to MTSO business that is believed to be in the possession of an employee who is not available, no approval for the inspection or search is necessary, unless an item of the employee's personal property (such as a briefcase) will also be searched. In instances in which the inspection, search or monitoring is conducted because there is reasonable suspicion that a particular employee or group of employees may be using MTSO property in an unauthorized manner, and in instances in which an item of the employee's personal property may be searched, the inspection, search or monitoring will be approved in advance by the President, Academic Dean, or designated alternate in the event of unavailability.

## **Breach Response**

Any user who comes across any evidence of confidential information being compromised or who detects any suspicious activity that could potentially expose, corrupt or destroy confidential information, must report such evidence to his or her supervisor. A user shall immediately notify his or her supervisor and the Director of Information Technology and the Academic Dean if he or she becomes aware that confidential information has been acquired (through theft or inadvertence) by an unauthorized recipient.

In the event of a data security breach involving consumer or employee confidential information, regardless of the likelihood of misuse, legal counsel shall be contacted immediately upon learning of such incident in order for legal notification requirements, if any, to be met. No one should take it upon himself or herself to investigate the matter further without the

authorization of the Academic Dean or other appropriate school official in conjunction with legal counsel. The Academic Dean in conjunction with legal counsel, shall immediately commence an investigation to determine the likelihood of misuse of the affected information, and also shall provide notice of any security breach pursuant to any applicable laws and contracts.

**Adopted by Administrative Council, September, 2011**

**Updated by Administrative Council, August, 2013**

**Updated by Directors of IT and Human Resources, June 2015**

## **Additional campus communication**

### **E-Mail Accounts**

MTSO faculty and staff use email for a variety of official purposes, including notification of deadlines and other information of a time-sensitive nature. Students will be automatically assigned a free “mtso.edu” account upon enrollment. Students may choose to point their “mtso.edu” email to another address if desired. However, they will need to check the actual “mtso.edu” mailbox frequently to delete items stored there. If the mailbox is not checked and emptied frequently, it will become full and students will run the risk of missing important information. Students are required to check the email account frequently as notification of deadlines, class cancellations, etc. might be posted. Students will be held accountable for information transmitted through MTSO email. To connect a computer to the campus network, students will need an Ethernet cord (or a Category 5 data cable), or wireless (Wi-Fi) capability.

Academic information may be sent and received through Populi.

### **Community Calendar and News**

The purpose of the Community Calendar and News is to compile into one location information that might otherwise improperly be sent via email individually to the whole community. The degree of immediacy of a particular announcement should be considered before making a request for an addition to the Community Calendar and News. Community Calendar and News is constantly updated and revised to reflect new submissions. Any member of the community can send a message to [daily@mtso.edu](mailto:daily@mtso.edu) for inclusion in the Community Calendar and News.



The Community News is available on Populi under Home > Dashboard >The Feed. Members of the MTSO community are expected to stay current on campus news and events through this medium.

Information sent to the Community Calendar and News may include:

- Announcements of a personal nature
- General church announcements
- Messages that invite continued dialogue on a current event or political or social issue
- Opportunities for others to take something that a person is donating
- Babysitting or pet-sitting opportunities
- Boycott information (and other issues of social responsibility)
- Engagement, wedding or commitment ceremony announcements
- Job announcements that are not directly connected to Field Education opportunities
- Party announcements
- Invitations to gather socially for events other than meetings of school-sponsored clubs.

Some messages are not appropriate to communicate to the whole community through Community Calendar and News or campus-wide email. These are not a venue for airing complaints publicly and angry, vitriolic speech directed at the administration, faculty, staff or other students. Follow the grievance procedures as needed.

Inappropriate messages also include, but are not limited to:

- Solicitations for money or other support of a charitable or political cause
- Any message with an attachment of a large file size (>1MB)

The editor of the Community Calendar and News reserves the right to decline announcements deemed inappropriate.

### **Other campus communication**

Paper fliers may be posted on campus bulletin boards with the permission of the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs' Office or the Director of Student Services. Social networking and discussion board activity can be accomplished by joining one or more of MTSO's several Facebook pages.

### **Campus-Owned Computer Equipment**

Students, student spouses, guests, faculty and staff of MTSO are welcome to use the computer equipment in public spaces. Students have priority use of the computer equipment during the

academic terms (Fall Semester, January Term, Spring Semester, and Summer Terms) for their coursework. Children may use the computer equipment, but must be under adult supervision while doing so. The computers have Internet access, without parental control features activated, and parents are encouraged to monitor the sites to which their children navigate. Unfortunately, we must be aware of the dangers of Internet predators, websites and chat rooms that lure unsuspecting youth.

The following rules apply to all users, and compliance with them may be monitored:

- No individual shall use any part of the computing system in an activity that violates federal, state, or local laws (especially those applicable to obscenity, harassment and copyright violations).
- No user should attempt to access the programs or data of another user without that person's express permission. Users should not attempt to alter in any manner the operation of the computer, network system, or any part thereof.
- A person needing the computer facilities for research and class work takes precedence over recreational web browsing, email and games.
- Technical support may be available to students after the administration, faculty and staff needs have been met. This pertains to campus access only.
- Because of the nature of Internet technologies, users should not expect privacy in either the sending or receiving of electronic messages and the information on the Internet. MTSO reserves the right to retrieve, recover or delete any information generated or stored on school-owned equipment.
- Upon termination of employment or matriculation, all campus-owned equipment should be turned in to the director of technology or to an immediate supervisor.

# Policies for use of educational buildings

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## Gault/Werner Buildings

Food and drink can be consumed in the conference rooms, classrooms and offices with care. Food and beverages for breaks during meetings and receptions will be provided by MTSO food service only in the Schooler Atrium, which connects Gault and Werner Halls, the lounge in Gault Hall, and in Meyer Lounge in Werner Hall. There shall be no cooking in any conference rooms, classrooms or offices, except in the Coffee Shop using the microwave oven. It is expected that if a spill occurs, it will be cleaned up immediately by the person responsible, using cleaning supplies (stocked in the restrooms). The responsible person should send an email to [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu) identifying the type of spill and room number needing attention so that further cleaning can be done, if necessary. All faculty and staff are urged to comply.

## John W. Dickhaut Library

MTSO is an institution dedicated to the advancement of learning and is firmly committed to a philosophy of mutual respect. Our goal is to make our library a pleasant and effective facility for our readers.

### **Food and beverage policy**

The food and beverage policy is intended to preserve the collections and protect library facilities from vermin and harmful molds. By following the guidelines below, everyone helps to ensure the health and safety of all library users and a long life for library collections, furnishings, and equipment. Library users are asked to be considerate of others and to avoid consuming food items that create messes, strong odors, and/or noise.

- a. Acceptable Food: Includes snack size containers of chips, cookies, candy, and other snack foods; small amounts of finger foods (e.g., small size fruits and vegetables, dried fruits and nuts, string cheese); candy bars, granola bars, power bars, etc.; and other snack foods that are not messy and lack a distracting odor.

- b. Unacceptable Food: Consist of hot entrees, e.g., burgers, French fries, pizza, noodles, sub sandwiches, burritos, tacos, soup, large size bags or packages of chips, crackers, cookies, doughnuts, salad, etc. that are messy and emit a distracting odor.
- c. Beverages in covered, spill-proof containers, or capped bottles and snacks are permitted except at library workstations and in other areas as posted.

Please be considerate of other library users. We ask that all library users act responsibly when consuming food and drink in the library. Bring all food garbage to the lobby to discard on the way out of the library. Food garbage should not go into the trashcans that are in the library. Collect and bring out all trash. Help us keep work surfaces clean. Report accidental spills to the circulation desk as soon as possible so that they can be addressed quickly.

Library staff has final approval of any sort of food, beverage, or container allowed in the Dickhaut Library, and reserves the right to exclude any food, beverage, or container for any reason. Users disregarding the Food and Beverage Policy will be asked to leave the library.

### **Visitors' registration and service fee**

In order to support central Ohio residents pursuing theological degrees at other institutions or wishing to perform individual theological/religious research, the Dickhaut Library began to extend borrowing privileges through the OPAL and OhioLINK catalogs to MTSO alumni, regional members of the clergy, and visitors (non-affiliated persons) on January 4, 2010. As of that date, any person wishing to register for alumni, clergy, or visitor status borrowing privileges will be asked to present a form of photo identification to the Director of the Library. In addition, a \$30.00 service fee during the four-year registration period will be requested for anyone registering for visitor status borrowing privileges. The purpose of the fee is to cover the use of MTSO resources by nonaffiliated users.

### **Library circulation standards for books borrowed from MTSO by MTSO patrons**

Students, clergy, alumni, visitors may keep MTSO materials for 21 days with four renewals unless a hold is placed. Faculty and staff may keep MTSO materials for 90 days with three renewals unless a hold is placed.

### **Circulation of books borrowed from OPAL or OhioLINK by MTSO patrons**

Students, faculty, staff, alumni, clergy, and visitors may keep materials borrowed from OPAL or OhioLINK for up to 21 days with six renewals unless a hold has been placed by the loaning library.

Alumni, clergy, and visitors are limited to only ten items requested from OPAL/OhioLINK member libraries. No more than five items can be requested from OhioLINK libraries outside of OPAL. Five to ten items can be requested from OPAL libraries.

Books borrowed from OPAL or OhioLINK by MTSO faculty and staff may be kept by the library user for up to 42 days with six renewals unless a hold has been placed from the loaning library.

### **Library standards for media items borrowed from MTSO by MTSO patrons**

Students, clergy, alumni and visitors may keep media items for up to 14 days with three renewals unless a hold has been placed by the library.

### **Media items borrowed from OPAL or OhioLINK by MTSO patrons**

Students, faculty, staff, alumni, clergy, and visitors may keep media items for up to seven days with three renewals. Only MTSO students, faculty and staff are eligible to put holds on OPAL and OhioLINK items.

### **Use of reserved items**

All reserve items in the library may be kept by the library user up to two hours and can be renewed unless others are waiting.

### **Overdue Items and Bills**

Library users will receive a series of overdue notices before fines begin to accrue. On the day that fines accrue, they do so at the rate of \$0.25 per day (\$0.10 per hour for reserves) back to the original date due. Once the user is billed for an item that is considered lost, the default cost of replacement is \$75 plus a \$50 processing fee. Returning the item at this point may reduce but will not eliminate fines and fees on the users account. The default cost of replacing an item borrowed through OPAL or OhioLINK is \$125 plus any other fines or fees as determined by the owning library.

From the due date on a reserved item, a 24-hour grace period begins during which a series of overdue notices are sent. As of the end of the grace period and the sending of the third overdue notice, fines are levied at \$0.20 per day retroactive to the original due date. As of hour 26 following the original due date, fines accrue at a rate of \$0.03 per hour for an indefinite period. Items are also considered lost at this point and, in addition to the fines, are subject to replacement cost to be determined by the library as well as a \$25 processing fee. Returning the item at this point may reduce but will not eliminate all fines and fees.

These policies and the other rules governing items loaned within OPAL and OhioLINK apply to all borrowers and may vary by owning library.

Depending on the status of the user, borrowing privileges will be suspended for fines and replacement costs exceeding the following levels on a user's record:

- Students, Faculty, and Staff \$50.
- Alumni, clergy, and visitors \$10.

Borrowing privileges will be restored upon payment of the fine balance.

### **Other library services**

The library offers its users a printer/copier that is connected to each student's account. It can be used by logging-in using one's MTSO email address and one's password for her/his email account. More information on print services can be found posted by the printer/copier in the library. Additional value for one's account can be extended at the school Business Office. The printer/copier can also be used to scan images to one's email account. There is no charge for this scanning service.

# Student services

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## Students with disabilities

Students with documented disabilities (both temporary and long-term) may register for reasonable accommodations for academic empowerment through the Director of Student Services. Refer to the section, Disability Services at MTSO, for detailed information on policies and the procedures for accessing services.

## International student services

International students are encouraged to refer to the International Student Services at MTSO, for detailed information regarding maintaining their current visa status. The Director of Student Services provides support for international students.

### Federal regulatory concerns and maintaining visa status

The Director of Student Services is the Principal Designated School Official (PDSO), the Director of Academic Affairs and Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar, the Director of Financial Aid and the Assistant to Academic Affairs each are Designated School Officials (DSO). International students must register with the PDSO or a DSO upon arrival on campus, and at the beginning of each semester the student is registered for classes.

### Tutoring, conversation partners and writing assistance for international students

Native English-speaking students are available for peer tutoring if international students need assistance with concepts discussed in class. Native English-speaking students are available for intentional conversation to assist international students with language skills. International students needing writing assistance in English, assistance with understanding concepts discussed in class, and/or assistance with language skills are encouraged to utilize the services of the Writing Instructor, Kim Trimboli (ktrimboli@mtso.edu). For more information on services designed to assist international students, refer to the International Student Services Section in this handbook.

## Vocational discernment

Students of any background or interest in ministry are encouraged to utilize resources and support in the area of Vocational Discernment at any point in their seminary experience. A variety of programs and events as well as individual consultations will be offered on several topics, including identifying and articulating strengths, interests and values, and developing related materials (portfolios, CVs and more). In addition, students may search positions posted to MTSO by community organizations from volunteer to full-time opportunities and will gain support in relevant networking. Kathy Dickson, Director of Vocational Discernment and Community Engagement, may be reached at [kdickson@mtso.edu](mailto:kdickson@mtso.edu), 740-362-3440 or in Werner Hall, W117.

## Health and wellness

### Health Insurance

International students must be covered by health insurance, and should contact the Director of Student Services, the school's official international student liaison, regarding insurance requirements set by the U.S. Citizen & Immigration Services (USCIS).

Students who experience financial difficulty related to medical expenses can see the Director of Student Services for information on additional assistance that may be available through government resources.

### Walking trail

A one-mile walking trail has been established on the campus. Wooden markers along the trail guide walkers through the woods that surround the campus, which includes a wooden footbridge for easy crossing at the creek. All students are invited to use the walking trail as part of a regular fitness routine/exercise regimen.

Check these websites for information on Preservation Parks of Delaware County <http://preservationparks.com/>, the Columbus Metro Parks <http://www.metroparks.net/>, or State Parks of Ohio [www.dnr.state.oh.us/parks](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/parks).

### Exercise room

A small exercise room is located in the lower level of the Dewire Residence Hall. Students need a keycard to access the room. Students and campus residents are encouraged to email [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu) to arrange to have their existing keycard programmed for the necessary



doors or to request a new keycard. The room is equipped with elliptical trainers, a treadmill, and a recumbent bike and weight/resistance equipment. Follow the directions for use of each piece of fitness equipment (found on the equipment) carefully. Use of this equipment is at the users own risk. If a particular piece of equipment is found broken or in disrepair, send an email to [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu) so the problem can be addressed.

For insurance and liability reasons, the following rules apply to use of the fitness and weight equipment in the room: Students, spouses and dependents (who are at least 16 years of age), guests, faculty and staff of Methodist Theological School in Ohio are welcome to use the fitness and weight equipment in this space. No one younger than 16 years of age is permitted to use the weight or other fitness equipment.

### **Game room**

A game room, on the lower level of Werner Hall, across from the mailboxes, contains a foosball table and a ping pong table. Individuals who are younger than 16 years of age are welcome to use these tables while under an adult's supervision.

### **Free short-term counseling and professional referrals**

This service is available for all MTSO students and staff through the Pastoral Care department of Riverside Methodist Hospital. Persons seeking these services will need to arrange to meet with a pastoral care staff person at Riverside. Contact the office of the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs, the Director of Student Services, or Director of Pastoral Care at Riverside Methodist Hospital (614-566-5307) for additional information.

The Director of Student Services has information regarding low-cost professional counseling services, as well. One resource is the Central Ohio Mental Health Center, <http://www.comhc.net/home/>.

## **Spiritual life connections**

### **Spiritual directors**

Students are encouraged to develop a relationship with a Spiritual Director. The Director of Student Services has a roster of Spiritual Directors as well as information from the Spirituality Network (<http://www.spiritualitynetwork.org/>). Visits with Spiritual Directors are confidential.

**The Frazer Prayer and Meditation Room** is located on the first floor of Gault Hall, just outside the Burgett Preaching Chapel (Gault 145). It is available whenever Gault Hall is open.

**Sabbath Space (formerly the Gene Vest Conference Room)** was a gift to the campus from the Class of 2007. This is a comfortable space with chairs, a table, a fountain, and a restroom. If students need, a quiet place to study and put their feet up between classes, this could be the place. It is located on the lower level of Werner Hall.

**The Alford Centrum** when not scheduled for other events, the Alford Centrum Chapel is available for prayer, meditation, as well as community worship and other large community gatherings. Weekly worship services will be announced through the announcements on Sakai.

**The Outdoor Chapel** is available for quiet reflection. The Class of 2012 added low-voltage lighting to this worship and prayer space located on the hill west of Helen Werner Apartment Building, just behind a small grove of trees. Students are encouraged to use this space at any time. To reserve the space, send an email to Denise Hart at [dhart@mtso.edu](mailto:dhart@mtso.edu).

**The Dee Ann Childs Memorial Garden** is located near the gazebo and pond on the north end of campus. A quiet stream runs through the garden.

**The Labyrinth** was a gift of a previous graduating class and is maintained by current students. Students walk the labyrinth as a pathway to prayer and reflection. The Labyrinth is located on the north side of campus, east of the pond.

## Student groups and community life

### Creating/Initiating student groups

Student-initiated groups are encouraged. Organizations desiring official recognition shall present a written proposal to the Director of Student Services for presentation to the Student Leadership Council and Administrative Council. Each group shall have at least five members, meet at least once per semester, and shall have a sponsor who is a current or retired faculty member. Sponsors shall meet with the group at least once each semester and be available to meet with the chairperson of the organization as needed. Student groups may receive recognition and limited funding through the Student Leadership Council. The Director of Student Services will supervise the budget of recognized student groups. Contact Denise Hart at [dhart@mtso.edu](mailto:dhart@mtso.edu) to reserve space for meetings and events.

### Emergency campus needs fund

A fund administered by the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs' office is available to assist any student in need of emergency financial support. Contact the Director of Student Services, or if unavailable, the Director of Academic Affairs and Registrar.

## Disability services at MTSO

MTSO supports students of special populations in their efforts to reach their potential by encouraging self-advocacy and facilitating student accommodations; empowering students to help themselves and providing the safe environment in which to do so. We commit to an inclusive learning environment and will make every effort to support reasonable, documented requests for accommodations and learning adaptations.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted in 1990 and amended in 2008 and again in 2010 to address discrimination against persons with disabilities. Title II of the ADA provides that “no individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, program, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity.” Title III of the ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in public accommodations, such as schools, operated by private entities. The Department of Justice has primary responsibility for enforcing Title II as it relates to education. To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability or have a relationship or association with an individual with a disability (parent, spouse/partner or child). An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as “a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such impairment.” The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered. Students who feel they may be covered by the ADA should see the Director of Student Services to begin the process for receiving the appropriate accommodations and learning adaptations.

### **Gaining access to accommodations or learning adaptations**

Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 with amendments of 1974 as well as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 and 2010 require adult students to self-identify to the institution and provide appropriate documentation that substantiates the need for adjustments, adaptations or accommodations. The documentation needs to be provided by a licensed health care provider on the appropriate forms, available on the MTSO website and through the Director of Student Services. This documentation needs to be provided as soon as possible after the onset of the disability, or for pre-existing conditions, upon registration for courses. When the documentation and the reasonable accommodations are verified, the Director of Student Services, in cooperation with the student and the student’s faculty advisor, will provide a Letter of Accommodation to the student and the faculty members teaching the class(es) for which accommodations are requested.

All institutions are also required to hold confidential any documentation of a disability that a student supplies. As such, each institution usually has a separate office or program that students with disabilities can use to request accommodations. At MTSO, the Director of Student Services is the coordinator for all disability services. All student records related to disabilities are located in a locked file cabinet.

### **Impact of learning accommodations for a student with a disability at MTSO**

There are general requirements that must be met under ADA and Section 504. The requirements include:

- MTSO will not exclude students solely on the basis of disability.
- MTSO makes every effort to include all students in programs and events in a way that does not infringe on an individual's privacy or the overall learning environment.
- MTSO will not discriminate against students with disabilities in their participation in any degree program; however, all students will be required to meet the conditions or requirements of their degree program with reasonable and necessary accommodations in order to successfully complete the degree and graduate.
- When it is necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of a disability, MTSO will make every effort to modify policies, practices and procedures unless MTSO concludes and can demonstrate that modifying the policy or practice would fundamentally alter the nature of the activities or services offered.
- MTSO affirms the presence and use of appropriately trained and licensed service animals (dogs).
- Students with disabilities will not be charged for reasonable necessary accommodations in classrooms and housing. Students with disabilities may be charged a fee for programs or resources that exceed the reasonable necessary accommodations.
- Examinations and courses must be accessible. This is only true for examinations and assignments for MTSO classes at MTSO. Accessible accommodations may include alternate testing locations and times cooperatively determined by the professor and the student. Accessible accommodations for classes or examinations held at other institutions are the responsibility of those institutions.

- MTSO will not tolerate harassment or retaliation and will not engage in harassment or retaliation against those who request accommodations or file complaints about procedures or facilities at MTSO that may not meet ADA requirements.

### **Rights and responsibilities of students requesting disability accommodations at MTSO**

Students requesting disability accommodations have the following rights:

- Equal access to education and opportunity to participate in programs and activities.
- Timely and appropriate accommodations and use of necessary assistive devices. Students should not have to wait more than two weeks for internal communications to be completed between the Director of Student Services and the faculty.
- Privacy. Information about disabilities and/or accommodations will only be shared with those directly affected, including faculty members with whom the student is enrolled each semester, the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs and others deemed necessary by the Director of Student Services. Information concerning individual students, their needs and/or diagnosis will be kept in a locked file cabinet, separate from any other student records on campus. Access is granted only to the student and, with the student's permission, those directly involved with his/her academic success.

Students requesting disability accommodations have the following responsibilities:

- **Self-advocacy.** Students will not be questioned about or be pursued for information about any existing disabilities. They must initiate all requests for accommodations and maintain continuous communication with their advisor, their professors and the Director of Student Services.
- **Provide adequate documentation.** To obtain accommodations, students must provide documentation of a disability by a licensed professional in the medical field relating to their disability and in accordance to MTSO policy. Students who request an accommodation, but do not have documentation showing a necessity for that particular request may be denied that accommodation until the student provides appropriate documentation showing a need for it.
- **Advanced notice of need for accommodation.** Students must notify the Director of Student Services about their need for specific accommodation, preferably upon registration for classes. Newly diagnosed conditions or changes in the need for

accommodations should be reported as soon as possible. The student is urged to discuss the need for the accommodation with the professor.

- **Request the accommodation.** A student who has documentation recommending an accommodation but does not request or desire the accommodation may not be granted it. They may visit the Director of Student Services and request the accommodation during the first four weeks of classes or, if newly diagnosed, upon learning of their diagnosis.
- **Maintain Grades.** Students with disabilities are required to maintain the same standard of grades as students without disabilities as per school policy for academic progress and financial aid.

### **Appeal policy and process**

Students working with the Director of Student Services to receive accommodations are entitled to file a grievance against decisions made on their behalf. In order to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of grievances, MTSO recommends grievances regarding accessibility to be handled in the following manner:

1. To file a grievance regarding accessibility and/or accommodation decisions, a student should first discuss the grievance with the Director of Student Services.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, the student can request a meeting with the Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs or Director of Human Resources, Compliance and Risk Management and discuss the issue with him/her.
3. The Director of Student Services and the Director of Human Resources, Risk Management and Compliance or Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs will then meet within 14 days to review the grievance.
4. The student will be notified in person and/or in writing of the outcome. If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome, he/she is entitled to contact the US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights:

Office for Civil Rights, Cleveland Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
600 Superior Avenue East Suite 750  
Cleveland, OH 44114-2611  
Telephone: (216) 522-4970, Fax: (216) 522-2573  
Email: [OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Cleveland@ed.gov), Website: [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

## **Record retention policy**

The Director of Student Services is required to keep all records of students with disabilities for a minimum of five years. After a student has left the seminary and has not been enrolled continuously as a student, the documents may be destroyed. The Office of Student Services will shred expired documents. Students who return after documents have been shredded must obtain new documentation of their disability in order to obtain accommodations.

## **Alternate text policy and procedure**

Students in need of alternate texts (audio books, Braille, enlarged print, etc.), as an accommodation made based on the documentation of their disability, must notify the Director of Student Services upon registration for classes. Failure to give appropriate notification may result in the arrival of the text after the semester has begun. In order to ensure students receive the texts in the desired format in a timely manner, the following guidelines are suggested:

1. The student informs the Director of Student Services of course enrollment for the upcoming semester/term by the posted deadline.
2. The student reviews the required, recommended and supplemental books for each class and informs the Director of Student Services of the textbooks needed and purchased for each class. The student searches for the books on Bookshare (or similar resource). The student shall inform the Director of Student Services of books that cannot be secured through alternative sites.
3. The Director of Student Services will contact publishers to request books in accessible formats. This may require that a book be scanned and converted into a format that allows text-to-speech.
4. The Director of Student Services works to acquire the alternate text and notifies the student when it has arrived and is available for use by the student.

## **Recorded lecture policy agreement**

Students with disabilities who are unable to take or read notes have the right to record class lectures for their personal study only. Lectures recorded for this purpose may not be shared with other people without the consent of the lecturer. Recorded lectures may not be used in any way against the lecturer, other faculty members, or students whose classroom comments are recorded as a part of the class activity. Information contained in the recorded lecture is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published or quoted without the express consent of the lecturer and without giving proper identity and credit to the lecturer.

## **Accessible housing and service animals**

Two rooms in Dewire Residence Hall are wheelchair accessible and have been designated to accommodate students with physical disabilities. Housing requests from students with physical disabilities will be given every consideration, but the number of on-campus housing options is quite limited. MTSO does not guarantee housing availability for any student. While MTSO has a pet-friendly policy, we recognize that service animals are not pets. Service animals (dogs) are welcome on campus. If a student or a member of a student's family has a service animal to assist with a physical challenge (mobility, vision, hearing), or neurological challenge (such as epilepsy), inform the Director of Student Services so appropriate arrangements can be made. The Code of Federal Regulations states, in 28 CFR Part 35, "the work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability." "A pet or support animal may be able to discern that the individual is in distress, but it is what the animal is trained to do in response to this awareness that distinguishes a service animal from an observant pet or support animal."

## **On-campus housing policies**

Temporary or short-term overnight accommodations are generally available for guests of MTSO faculty, staff and students at standard rates (see the 2015-2016 rate sheet). Permanent or long-term apartment housing at MTSO is intended for master's degree-seeking students. MTSO cannot and does not guarantee housing to anyone. The Housing License, which students living on campus must sign annually, spells out the responsibilities that the student and/or spouse and children must follow.

### **Higher Education Vaccine Policy**

The Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 3345.85 for institutions of higher education requires that institutions maintain individual status records on meningococcal meningitis and hepatitis B for students living in on-campus housing. The Methodist Theological School Housing Application contains a section requesting the vaccination status of each resident living in on-campus housing. A housing contract will not be accepted if this information is not completed. The complete policy is attached to each Housing License.

### **Building managers and guests**

#### Building Managers

Building Managers serve as key resource people for the residents of campus housing units. The Building Manager is the person to see if a resident has been locked out of his/her room or



apartment, want to share an idea for a community-building event, spot an emergency situation in a housing unit, etc. The Building Manager will also facilitate communication and community within the building/unit. Do not hesitate to contact the Building Manager to talk about any housing-related matter.

Each Building Manager has a cell phone that can be used to help residents in the event of an emergency or unusual situation. In the event a resident needs assistance from the Building Manager, he or she should try the Building Manager's school extension first, and then the cell phone. Also, in the event that the school loses electrical power for a sufficient amount of time to disable the phone system, Building Managers will allow residents to use the cell phone to make outgoing calls if necessary.

### Guests

MTSO students, faculty or staff living on campus are permitted to have overnight or short-term guests (staying no longer than four consecutive nights), but residents may want to consider reserving a room for them in the Dewire Residence Hall (fully furnished sleeping rooms with shared bathrooms) or a guest apartment in the Helen Werner Apartment Building or Kleist Manors. Residents are responsible for the actions of their guests while they are visiting campus housing units, and/or staying in guest rooms. Availability of guest rooms/apartments is limited and charges range from \$28 to \$90 per night. Contact the Maintenance Department at [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu) for reservation forms and further information. Weather emergencies and the potential for fires require Building Managers be able to account for all occupants; therefore, to ensure the safety of all our residents and guests, the resident must inform the Building Manager of the presence of any guest and the anticipated duration of their stay.

### **Expectations within campus housing**

MTSO values and practices non-violent forms of conflict resolution and we strive to provide a safe environment for faculty, staff, students and their families within which all have an opportunity to live, learn and grow.

### Guidelines for children living on campus

Children are a loved and treasured part of community life at MTSO. They are welcome at Chapel services and, unless specifically stated otherwise, at all other community events. Residents are responsible for the behavior of their children and their children's guests. The expectation is that children will be supervised at all times, and that parents and children will respect others, as well as the grounds and property of MTSO.

The following specific guidelines grew out of parents' conversations with the MTSO administration about safety and security issues on campus. They are offered as a framework for parenting decisions of Kleist Manor residents.

1. Be advised that children should not be in administration or faculty office areas (Gault and Werner Halls) unless accompanied by an adult student, parent or guardian.
2. Children should not be in the classrooms during class time, unless previous arrangements have been made with the professor. The classrooms are off limits to unsupervised children while classes are not in session.
3. Children under the age of 14 should never be unsupervised on campus. **The "buddy system" is recommended for any child playing or walking anywhere on campus.** The volume of traffic in the front entrance area is significant. The area is also visible to traffic on Columbus Pike/State Rt. 23, making unsupervised children vulnerable. We recognize that decisions about the age at which children are allowed to play alone will vary from family to family and even from child to child within the same family. The general point is that there needs to be a carefully considered decision about this matter, and that both the child's level of responsibility and judgment and the environment need to be taken into account.
4. Additionally, **the "buddy system" is recommended for any child playing by or in the creek or the pond.** If a child cannot swim, they must be supervised by a responsible adult at all times at the creek or pond. Be aware that MTSO's property line runs down the middle of the creek.
5. Children are welcome and encouraged to attend chapel with their parents or guardians.
6. Children are welcome and encouraged to join our community during meals in the dining hall with their parents or another responsible adult.
7. MTSO encourages children to use on-campus play areas. It should be noted that the road between Kleist Manors and Dewire Residence Hall is an active road, and children should observe safety rules when crossing from the Kleist Manor apartments to Dewire Residence Hall. Playground equipment is located behind Kleist Manor Apartments. While our community encourages sharing, children should ask before playing with toys from neighbors' porches and see that they return the items when done.
8. The basketball hoop is in an actively used parking lot behind Dewire Residence Hall; therefore, parents and children are encouraged to exercise caution when playing basketball. Signs are posted that alert drivers of the potential for "Children at Play." The

area of unsupervised play for children is in the Kleist Manor courtyards; Kleist Manor playground/swing set area, and the front grounds of family housing.

9. Children are not to be in the Helen Werner Apartment Building or Dewire Residence Hall or grounds immediately surrounding them unless supervised by an adult. Children are not allowed, under any circumstances, to enter vacant apartments or rooms.
10. Children under the age of 14 years old are not permitted access to Seminary Hill Farm unless accompanied by a responsible adult.

*(Developed by Parents for Parents, March 2006. Revised August 2011. Updated June 2015)*

### **Bicycles/skateboards/etc.**

The expectation is that common sense, courtesy and safety will guide the general use and storage of these items. The use of bicycles, skateboards, scooters, and roller blades is permitted on sidewalks, but *not* on the road, the steps, in the Dickinson Courtyard, or in any campus building. Toys and bikes should be gathered by their owners each evening, rather than left on sidewalks, parking lots or the campus roadway. For the safety of persons and property, be aware that the lawns need to be free of all toys and personal items when mowing is taking place.

Upon moving out of the community, do not leave unwanted toys unless someone has specifically said they would like the item and is willing to take responsibility for the care and upkeep of the item.

### **Curfew**

The City of Delaware has established the following curfews for children:

- Ages 12-18: Weekdays during the School year: 11:00p.m. -4:30 a.m.
- Friday-Saturday: midnight -4:30a.m.
- Under age 12: Dark to dawn (In the winter months, this can be as early as 5 p.m.)
- MTSO is not responsible for enforcing these curfews, but encourages parents to observe them.

### **School system**

The MTSO campus is part of the Olentangy School System. Parents of children who have lived in Kleist Manors and have attended school may be one of the best resources for information

about the OSS. The Olentangy School System can be reached by calling 740-657-4050 or logging on to <http://www.olentangy.k12.oh.us/index.html>.

### **Lounge/recreation areas**

The Helen Werner Apartment Building and Dewire Residence Hall each have lounge/recreation areas intended for the use of all residents of the facility. Dewire Residence Hall Dorm Lounge is one of the comfortable spaces in which to study and/or have a meeting. This room can be reserved for student activities as needed. If a student is studying and a group has reserved the Dorm Lounge, the student should check with the group to determine if the presence of non-group members will be disruptive to their gathering and, if so, leave and find another place to study. When it is not in use or reserved by another group, students are permitted to study, relax, watch television in the Lounge until 10 p.m., after which, he or she must be the invited guest of a Dewire resident. Respect the privacy of those students who live in the residence hall. Adults who live on campus should supervise any children whenever they are using one of the lounge/recreation areas. All areas are to be cleaned up after use (floors swept/vacuumed, trash picked up and thrown away, chairs returned to original position).

### **Resident concerns**

The nature of the MTSO community is such that consideration of, respect for, and sensitivity to the needs of others are assumed to be valued and practiced. There are times, however, when one or more residents might have a different viewpoint and/or cooperative residential life is challenging. In such a situation, the first course of action is to talk about the problem directly with the person(s) involved. If the problem cannot be resolved in this way, talk with the Building Manager. When necessary, the Facilities Manager and/or the Director of Student Services can be contacted.

### **Noise Policy**

Noise is unreasonable if it is too loud, prolonged or disturbing for the time of day. The following guidelines are helpful:

- Loud gatherings after midnight on a Friday or Saturday night are generally unreasonable.
- Loud gatherings after 10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday are generally unreasonable

In the event that these guidelines are violated, use the following protocol:

1. Ideally, the complainant should contact those making the noise directly and ask them to lower the noise level.

2. If the complainant has already contacted the offender(s) and the noise continues, then the complainant should contact a Building Manager and have the Building Manager inform those making the noise that the noise level needs to be lowered to an acceptable level. The complainant may go directly to the Building Manager if necessary.
3. If the noise level continues unabated, then either the complainant or the Building Manager is free to call the Facilities Manager, who will contact the offenders and instruct them to lower the noise level.
4. The final option is to contact the Delaware Police Department at 740-362-1111. An officer will be dispatched to address the concern.

## The Housing Units

### Dewire Residence Hall

The Dewire Residence Hall is designed for students who commute to campus and stay only a few days. Rooms are cleaned between one occupant's departure and the next occupant's arrival. Dewire residents are expected to be good stewards and respectful of those who provide the cleaning service.

#### General room accommodations

The rooms are furnished with a double bed (linens are provided), a nightstand with lamp, a TV and remote, a desk with lamp, desk chair, and a comfortable sitting chair. There are also two locking closets in each room, with keys in the locks. For students that return weekly, personal items can remain in one of the two locking closets in each room. When a student vacates the room at the end of the semester they should replace the key in the lock and remove all personal belongings. MTSO is not responsible for any personal items left or stored in the rooms.

#### Swipe cards/room keys

If a student or guest does not already have a key to the assigned room, a swipe card and key (if applicable) will be at the front desk of Dewire Residence Hall on the student's expected day of arrival. The swipe card is programmed to work through the end of the current semester. The student should keep the key and swipe card until the end of the semester, or until are no longer registered for classes at MTSO. It is not necessary for the student to return the key and swipe card when he or she checks out each week.

### Check-in and checkout times

**Check-in is 4 p.m. and checkout is 12 p.m.** Some rooms have two students assigned to them (on different days of the week), and this four-hour window allows time for the room to be cleaned and made ready for the next arrival. DRH rooms are also often used on weekends for conferences, retreats and Course of Study; adherence to the check-in and checkout policy makes the turnover go smoothly.

### Bathrooms

Two residents share each bathroom. Towels, washcloths and bathmats can be found under the sinks in each bathroom. Place dirty towels on the floor for laundry pick-up each day. Hang towels that are intended to be used again on the towel racks. The cleaning contractor will only remove towels that are on the floor.

### Cleaning of rooms

The bed linens will be changed at the end of each student's/guest's weekly stay.

### Meals/kitchen facilities

Meals are available in Dunn Dining Hall Tuesday through Thursday during the semester. For breakfast and meals on other days of the week, students may use the full-size kitchen in the basement of the building. It is equipped with two refrigerators, a large freezer, pots, pans, dishes and silverware. Be sure to mark personal items before placing them in the refrigerators. Also be kind to fellow residents by cleaning up after using the kitchen.

### Internet access

Rooms in Dewire Residence Hall have WI-FI service.

### Exercise equipment

There is an exercise room in the basement. The swipe card will give MTSO students and their guests access. Many within the campus community use this room, not just residents of DRH. (See also page 97 regarding exercise facilities.)

### Building security

The building is generally unlocked during the day when classes are in session so that the campus community has access to the lounge area. During the Summer and campus breaks, the

building remains locked. However, be sure to take the swipe card at all times in the event that the building is locked. For lockouts during business hours, contact Maintenance at x 3380.

#### Building manager contact information

The Building Manager lives in Rooms 107/109 on the first floor. Telephone numbers are in the front of this Student Handbook.

#### **Helen Werner Apartment Building**

HWAB is a three-story building designed for single adult apartment living. Unfurnished efficiency and one-bedroom units are available. Efficiency apartments have a combined living area and bedroom, a dining area, bathroom and kitchenette. One-bedroom apartments have a living room, bedroom, kitchenette, and bathroom. A community room, laundry facilities, and small storage areas are also provided.

#### **Kleist Manor Apartments**

Kleist apartments are unfurnished one and two-bedroom apartments designed for family living. Priority in rental of Kleist Manor Apartments is given to students with dependent children. When units are available, one-bedroom apartments in Kleist may be rented to single students, and two-bedroom units may be rented to two students, with or without dependent children, on a first-come, first served basis. We follow the occupancy guidelines of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development which recommend a maximum of two occupants per bedroom per apartment. The apartments are arranged in clusters of five separate buildings with one-bedroom on a single level and two bedroom apartments in a townhouse design. In addition, each apartment contains a living room, eat-in kitchen, and bathroom. A utility room with a washer/dryer combination is shared with the neighboring apartment. All units have central heat and air conditioning. Every apartment has a ground level front and rear entrance with a shared front porch. Limited storage space is available in the lower level of building E. *Do not stack items in the storage unit to the ceiling.* Delaware Fire Codes require that items in the storage area have a 24 inch gap between the storage items and the ceiling or fire sprinklers. Items in violation of this Fire Code can be discarded by the Maintenance Department.

Rates for both HWAB and Kleist Apartments include all utilities, high-speed Internet and cable TV. Semester rates cover September through December and February through May. Monthly rates are charged for January, June, July and August and are billed separately.

## Inside the Apartment

### Personal Property Insurance

MTSO is not responsible for loss of personal property of campus housing residents due to theft, fire, smoke and water damage, power outages, etc. Accordingly, all campus housing residents are expected to carry some form of personal property insurance (i.e., renter's insurance) on their belongings while living in campus housing facilities. Replacement coverage is recommended.

### Moving in procedure

Complete the walk through and return the completed form to the Maintenance Department as soon as possible, but no later than two weeks, after moving in. The purpose of this form is to provide a baseline record of conditions in the apartment unit for our mutual reference.

### Moving out procedure

The Maintenance Department will send instructions for vacating units to all residents at the end of the any academic term. If a resident plans to move at any other time, contact the Maintenance Department and the Building Manager in writing. Contact [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu) to schedule a moving out walk-through. The moving out walk-through report is the basis for determining how much of the housing deposit is returned. Repairs of any damages to the apartment, beyond regular wear and tear will be deducted from the deposit. If the damage exceeds the amount of the deposit, MTSO will retain the deposit and the resident will be charged for the balance owed for the repairs.

Residents will need to return all keys and swipe cards issued to them. Students can return the keys to Maintenance, or bring them to the front desk in Werner Hall. If the resident is leaving after hours, return the keys and swipe cards to the Building Manager. *Resident names and room or apartment number should be attached to the key and swipe card.*

A valid forwarding address should be left with the MTSO Business Office to ensure all students entitled to a refund of their security deposit, receive that deposit in a timely manner.

Arrangements should be made with the Building Manager or Maintenance to store items in the appropriate storage areas over the summer months (or any other extended period of time) should the resident be returning to the residence hall.



## **Repairs**

Report all repairs needed by emailing [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu) with a copy to the Building Manager.

Repairs that should be reported include, but are not limited to:

- Storm doors, screens, handles. Do not disconnect the door from the cylinder closer.
- Cabinets missing screws or loose knobs
- Floors cracking, lifting or the carpet unraveling

All non-emergency repair requests must be made in writing. The Maintenance staff will respond as soon as possible. The goal is to provide an initial response (assessment and, if possible, the necessary repair) within 48 hours. Sometimes, however, things happen to delay planned timetables; parts have to be ordered, or other matters require the response by the entire maintenance staff. Patience is appreciated. If there has been no response or communication regarding a written work request within 48 hours, file another. Email [Maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:Maintenance@mtso.edu) and copy the Building Manager.

The Maintenance staff will try to schedule the repair for a time when the resident can be in his or her room or apartment. If that is not possible, the maintenance staff will leave a note telling the resident 1) when they were in the unit (there will always be two staff if no one is at home), and 2) what has been done and/or remains to be done.

Judgment will need to be exercised to distinguish between facility issues that represent an inconvenience that can wait for regular working hours versus an emergency that requires an immediate response. The lack of heat or plumbing leaks *is* considered an emergency and MTSO staff will respond to the best of their ability.

## **Home Improvements**

A resident must check with Maintenance before tackling any home improvement project that involves more than affixing a Command Strip(T) to hang a picture. As a general rule, we ask all residents to live with the paint that is on the walls and the carpet or tile that is currently on the floor of the assigned housing unit. If either needs repair/attention, file a work request ([maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu)). Residents are not permitted to change the color of the paint in their apartments.

## Telephones/Telephone Lines

MTSO provides free telephone lines and one telephone handset to all campus housing units. This handset is the property of MTSO and is expected to remain installed when students depart. Residents may install additional handsets at their own expense.

Four courtesy phones are available for student use (for local calls only). They are located in: the Gallery next to the Library, the Coffee Shop, Gault Hall and in the Werner Hall lobby. There are call boxes located outside the Helen Werner Apartment Building and the Dewire Residence Hall. If someone is coming to visit (including pizza delivery), the guest will dial the resident's extension from the call box and the resident will come down to greet the guest. *As a safety precaution for all residence, do not leave doors propped open.*

Residents can dial any on-campus number (four-digit extension) directly from any campus phone. Residents can also make local calls (we have a limited service area) by first dialing "9" for an outside line. Residents can also receive incoming long distance calls (but not collect calls). To place a long distance call using the residence unit phone line, residents will need to use a pre-paid phone card. (Students may purchase prepaid phone cards from the MTSO Business Office if desired.)

The residence unit phone line is part of a linked system. If the campus loses electricity, we lose telephone service as well. In such a situation, the Building Manager will have a cell phone that can be used if a resident needs to place an outgoing call.

Contact [Support@mtso.edu](mailto:Support@mtso.edu) if there is a problem with the phone service.

## Smoke Detectors

It is crucial that residents contact the Building Manager if the smoke detector in the apartment is activated. Once the smoke detector is activated, the fire department is alerted and begins to respond within one minute. In the case of a false alarm or other non-emergency, the smoke detector must be silenced in the apartment and reset at the main panel. This is not something a resident can do. The Building Manager must do this. Call the Building Manager *every time* the smoke detector or alarm is activated.

**UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD RESIDENTS DISMANTLE OR OTHERWISE TAMPER WITH THE SMOKE DETECTOR. RESIDENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR TAMPERING WITH SMOKE DETECTORS WILL BE RECOMMENDED TO BE REMOVED FROM CAMPUS HOUSING.**

Building managers, maintenance staff, and the Delaware fire department conduct random tests of the smoke detectors to ensure the safety of every resident.

### **Air Conditioners and Water Heaters**

Each housing unit comes with an air conditioner. Be sure to check with the Building Manager if unsure of how the particular unit works. If there is a problem that cannot be resolved, contact [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu).

Water heaters: There should be 3 feet of clear space in front of the water heater. (No flammable materials can come within 3 feet of the heater.) Do not wrap insulating blankets around the water heater.

### **Storage Facilities**

Limited storage space is available to all campus housing residents. Each room in the Dewire Residence Hall has a lockable closet for storing items from week to week. In addition, the Dewire Residence Hall and the Helen Werner Apartment Building contain storage cages in the basement level of each building, and storage compartments are located under the E-Building in Kleist Manor. Generally, the storage compartments are available on a one per unit basis. Residents are responsible for labeling the contents in the storage containers and removing items that are no longer of use. Items must remain within that designated area and cannot be kept outside of the individual units. Any items not labeled or those stored outside of a designated unit will be donated or discarded after June 30th of each year.

- Procedures for storage: Label any storage unit or area used with the name, current apartment, and anticipated graduation/move-out date of the resident.
- Provide personal lock for the lockable cages.
- Residents should not store any flammable or perishable materials.
- *Residents should not stack items in the storage unit to the ceiling.* Delaware Fire Codes require that items in the storage area have a 24 inch gap between the storage items and the ceiling or fire sprinklers. Items in violation of this Fire Code can be discarded by the Maintenance Department.
- When residents leave campus housing permanently, they must remove their belongings and make sure their storage area is ready for the next resident to use no later than June 30 of the year of their departure.

Storage areas will be inspected by MTSO staff at least once per semester and can be inspected by fire marshals at any time. MTSO assumes no responsibility for items left in storage areas. (See Personal Property Insurance).

### **Laundry Facilities**

Washers and dryers can be found in the basement of the Helen Werner Apartment Building and on each floor of the Dewire Residence Hall. Kleist Manor apartment residents share a washer and dryer located between each set of apartments. There is no charge for campus housing residents to use these facilities. Remember to empty the lint traps in the dryers (failing to do this is a fire hazard) and wipe or sweep up all spills. Residents are expected to generally clean up after themselves. Neither the maintenance staff nor the Building Manager is responsible for cleaning the laundry rooms.

## **Pet Policy**

### **1. General Purposes and Limitations of the Policy**

- a. Offers a Pet Friendly housing privilege to students and staff who reside in designated housing units on the MTSO campus.
- b. Does not apply MTSO farm working animals or service animals defined as an accommodation with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- c. Defines Acceptable Campus Pets to include: fish kept in aquariums of 10 gallons or less, domestic indoor cats, and certain dog breeds and size.
- d. Establishes that students and staff residing on campus are responsible for following the policies and guidelines for approval consideration.
- e. Prohibits guests from bringing pets into any building on campus at any time.

### **2. General Requirements (must be met and certified by the Facilities Manager *before* the pet is allowed to move on campus):**

- a. The following types of "Acceptable Campus Pets" are permitted: domestic indoor cats, domestic dogs, and fish kept in aquariums of 10 gallons or less.
  - i. Exotic and wild animals kept as pets are prohibited.

- ii. Pit bulls, pit bull crosses , German Shepherds, Rottweilers , Doberman Pinschers, Mastiffs, and other aggressive breeds of dogs are not permitted.
  - iii. Dogs over 40 pounds are not permitted.
- b. The owner must complete a pet registration form and submit a photograph of the pet to Maintenance.
- c. The owner must provide a current copy of a renter's insurance policy that covers animal attacks.
  - i. It is the responsibility of the owner to ensure that the Maintenance Department has a copy of current renter's insurance policy that covers animal attacks.
    - 1. If the insurance coverage lapses, the owner will have pet privileges permanently revoked.
- d. The owner must sign an agreement, risk acknowledgement and liability waiver.
- e. Dogs and cats must be spayed or neutered prior to living on campus.
  - i. The owner must provide proof of spaying or neutering to Maintenance during the application process.
- f. Dogs and cats must be over the age of 1 year, housebroken or trained to use a litter box, and must have lived with the student or student's family at least one year prior to living on campus.
- g. The acquisition of any dog/cat, purchased, fostered or stray, while a student, guest or employee living on campus is prohibited.
- h. The maximum number of pets permitted is two pets per residential unit.
  - i. Pets can only be quartered in their registered units by their owners.
  - ii. The total number of pets is an upper limit. The types of pets may be mixed.
  - iii. Residents found with more than the approved amount of pets in their units at any time will have their pet privileges revoked and must remove all pets from their unit.

- i. Maintenance will conduct periodic inspections to ensure that the pets are not creating unsafe or unsanitary conditions within the units.
  - i. If unsafe, unsanitary or nuisance conditions are found, the pet will be removed from campus and pet privileges for the owner will be permanently revoked.
- j. Permitted Pet Friendly areas
  - i. Designated residence buildings
    - 1. Permitted buildings are: Kleist Manors C and D only.
      - a. Litter trays and dog kennels are not permitted in any of the common laundry rooms of the C and D Manors.
    - 2. Pets are NOT permitted in the following areas: Dickhaut Library, Centrum, Gallery, Werner and Gault Halls, Dunn Dining Hall, Helen Werner Apartment Building, Dewire Residence Hall, Kleist Manors A, B, E and Seminary Hill Farm.
  - ii. Outside
    - 1. Outside quartering of pets is prohibited with the exception of the farm dog.
      - a. This includes the use of a dog run, a leash attached to a fixed object, or an outside cage.
    - 2. Outside exercising of pets under positive control of a leash is permitted.
  - iii. Fish in tanks of 10 gallons or less may be kept in all Kleist Manor buildings and the Helen Werner Apartment Building.
- k. Housing Selection & Application Process
  - i. Residents must request pet-friendly housing during the housing application process. MTSO will attempt to accommodate all such requests, if space in approved housing units is available, but there is no guarantee that all requests can or will be honored.

- a. If the student or staff requests pet friendly housing and none is available, the student or staff member will be notified and has the option of being placed in other MTSO housing. Without the pet(s)
- b. If pet-friendly space is not available, and the student or staff member is assigned to non-pet designated housing, the student or staff member will not be permitted to have a pet live in their housing unit.

l. Annual Requirements

- i. Licenses where applicable. Proof must be submitted annually.
- ii. Insurance policies, covering against any and all possibilities of the pet causing harm to another resident. Proof must be submitted annually.

m. Community Rules of Conduct

- i. Pets must remain under control at all times. The owner of the pet is always ultimately responsible for the pet's behavior.
  - 1. Physical control on a leash not to exceed 6 feet when outside of the owner's registered housing unit.
- ii. Pets must not create a public nuisance defined as, but not limited to: excessive barking, whining, or howling, molesting passersby; chasing vehicles; attacking other domestic animals; depositing excretory matter on private property other than that of the animal's owner; damaging property; chasing or approaching persons or other domestic animals in a menacing fashion; attempting to bite or otherwise harm any person or domestic animal; behaving in any way that endangers the health or safety of persons of any age.
- iii. Owners must promptly clean up and dispose of all pet wastes in a designated trash receptacle. Composting of pet wastes is not permitted.
- iv. Pets must wear a collar with tags for identification of the owner and rabies vaccinations.
- v. Failure to abide by these rules will result in the removal of the pet from campus and the permanent revocation of all pet privileges.

### 3. Housing Regulations

- a. All pet owners and their roommates must complete a pet friendly roommate agreement.
  - i. Students sharing an apartment must sign an agreement on the presence of pets in their unit. The number of pets in the unit cannot exceed two.
- b. An additional damage deposit of \$500 per pet dog and/or cat is required.
- c. All damages caused by pets must be reported immediately to the Maintenance Department.
  - 1. Failure to report such damage will result in the removal of the pet from campus and the permanent revocation of pet privileges.
  - 2. The pet owner will be responsible for the cost of any and all repairs to the housing unit caused by the pet.
    - a. This includes replacement of carpet, repainting and other repairs as necessary.
    - b. Repair work will only be arranged by the Maintenance Department.
- d. Owners will be responsible for restraining or removing pets from apartments while any maintenance activities are occurring.
- e. Pets shall not be left alone overnight. If an overnight or extended absence is necessary, the owner must find or arrange for pet sitting or find off-campus housing for the pet.
  - 1. The pet must be kept in its registered unit.
  - 2. The pet sitter must inform Maintenance of his/her presence and be approved by Maintenance.
- f. Abandonment, neglect, or mistreatment of any pet by any member of MTSO will not be tolerated. No warnings will be issued. Abuse will result in the removal of the pet from the owner, or in measures taken to prevent contact with the person responsible for the abuse. These actions are taken at the discretion of Maintenance.



- g. Should a student be unavailable to care for his/her pet(s), MTSO will contact the listed emergency contact to provide care. Should this person be uninterested or unreachable the school may need to release the animal to a shelter.
- h. All owners must display their approved pet placard on the exterior entrance of their living space. This placard will be provided by the Maintenance Department.
- i. Upon residing in the Pet Friendly residence, residents agree to review and abide by all policies and guidelines outlined in the Pet Policy, as well as those terms noted in the Pet Friendly Housing Application Agreement and Liability Waiver.

#### **4. Limitations on Occupancy of Pet-Friendly Residence Units**

- a. Cause for removal of pets and/or pet owners approved from pet-friendly campus housing facilities include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Aggressive pet behavior towards other pets and people.
  - ii. Persistent noise issues.
  - iii. Owner abandonment, neglect, or mistreatment of any pet(s).
  - iv. Any failure to abide by campus policies listed above.

#### **5. Visitation of Other Animals**

- a. Only domestic cats and domestic dogs are allowed campus, and any dog or cat brought to campus other than those approved for pet-friendly housing units must:
  - i. remain outside all housing units at all times, unless the owners and the pets comply with all the policies stipulated above and have approval of Maintenance prior to the visit.
  - ii. remain in positive control of its owner at all times.
- b. The owners of visiting pets must clean up any and all pet wastes and dispose of them in a trash receptacle immediately.
  - 1. The composting of pet wastes is prohibited on campus.

## **6. Complaint Procedure**

- a. Any member of the MTSO community may file a complaint with and/or Building Managers. The complaint may address any form of misconduct or rule violation on the part of the pet, owner, or member of the MTSO community. Pet complaints should be discussed with a building manager who will then refer the complaint to Maintenance.
- b. If any MTSO student, faculty, or staff member observes a violation of the pet policy, it should be documented with Maintenance. Be aware that unless a written complaint is submitted, no action can be taken.

## **Outside the Apartment Building**

### **Resident Parking**

Parking spaces are limited. One parking space is available in front of each Kleist Manor unit. There are 30 spaces behind the Helen Werner Apartment Building, however, there are 34 apartments; therefore, 4 spaces in front of Kleist will be used for HWAB residents. All other vehicles should be parked in the areas across the street from HWAB and/or behind Dewire Residence Hall. Contact Maintenance if a vehicle will be parked (not moved) at MTSO for longer than one week. The make, model, color, and license plate of all student vehicles must be registered with the Maintenance Department. This is both for safety of campus residents and for reference if there is ever a need to contact the owner of a specific vehicle. The access code for residents arriving through the back gate, is 3081.

### **Recycling at MTSO**

The City of Delaware provides recycling bins for residents to use free of charge. Contact the Building Manager or Maintenance for collection schedules and procedures. Glass, plastics, aluminum and paper must be separated before collection. The blue recycling bins that are located in the apartment or building units are the property of the City of Delaware. Remember to leave the bins at MTSO when moving off campus.

There are recycling bins for aluminum cans, plastic bottles and paper in the Coffee Shop, Schooler Atrium, Gault Hall across from G133, and in the copier rooms. Students should utilize these additional locations to recycle.

## **Trash Removal**

Dumpsters are provided for residents to dispose of trash. One is located in the parking lot behind the Apartment Building (for use by Apartment Building and Kleist Manor residents); the other is located in the parking lot behind the Residence Hall.

All students and guests living in Dewire Residence Hall are asked to take their trash to the dumpster rather than filling wastebaskets emptied by the Maintenance staff.

The City of Delaware empties our dumpsters on Tuesday and Friday. They will empty *only* what is *inside* (as opposed to near or next to) the dumpster. Do not place furniture in or around the dumpsters. The City of Delaware will not remove these items.

Additional personal garbage cans are not permitted outside the housing unit. Animals have been known to be attracted to them, with unpleasant results.

MTSO will attempt to arrange for extra pick-up times when significant trash overloads are anticipated (e.g., beginning and ending of an academic term.) Notify [Maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:Maintenance@mtso.edu) if the dumpsters are filled to overflowing on a regular basis at other times. Be sure that vehicles do not block access to the dumpsters. Furniture and other large items to be discarded may be placed in these large dumpsters.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited in all buildings on the MTSO campus, including all campus housing units. Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3794, smoking is prohibited within 30 feet of the doors and windows on campus. Smoking is restricted to the designated smoking areas located outside most buildings. Dispose of cigarette butts in the receptacles provided only. Do not move the cigarette ash receptacles closer to the doors.

## **Snow and Ice Removal**

Snow and ice are usually part of winter in Central Ohio. Residents are expected to clear the walkways and parking spaces for their units. Shovels and buckets of “ice melt” are provided for your use. Contact Maintenance when the ice melt bucket is empty. Use caution when approaching or leaving the housing unit during/after a snowfall or ice storm.

Maintenance is responsible for clearing campus walks, steps and the roadway when a snowfall occurs. Clearing will happen as soon as it is reasonable to do so and generally will begin on the most-used walkways: near the Library, Gault Hall and Werner Hall. The Maintenance team will provide the best possible snow/ice removal service, but it is not possible to ensure that any

given surface will be completely free from snow and/or ice at any given time. Also, buckets containing “ice melt” crystals will be placed strategically around campus. Feel free to spread some of the crystals whenever needed. Be aware that after a Level 3 snow emergency, it may take longer than usual to have our lots cleared. Help one another, especially if the snowstorm happens over a weekend.

## Campus safety, fire safety, weather and other emergencies

### Campus Patrol

The City of Delaware Police Department will patrol the campus in the evenings and after dark. MTSO is in the city limits of Delaware and all city and state laws are enforced on campus. If any police action is taken on campus, the Delaware Police Department will inform MTSO of any violations and all actions taken. Annually, MTSO has to record all major accidents and police activity that takes place on campus and report these results to the federal government.

### Firearms

No person shall store or possess dangerous weapons, have under the person’s control, convey, or attempt to convey devices or substances including, but not limited to, firearms or ammunition on the property of MTSO or off campus at an MTSO-related activity, unless permitted on the basis of the person’s position as a recognized public safety official or appointed peace officer, even if otherwise permitted by law. A valid license does not authorize the licensee to carry a weapon onto the school premises. Use or misuse of weapons, devices, or substances in a manner that causes or threatens serious harm to the safety or security of others is expressly prohibited.

Violations of this policy by students will result in consideration for expulsion upon the first offense. Violations of this policy by employees will result in consideration for immediate dismissal upon the first offense. All violators of this policy, whether affiliated with MTSO or not, will be subject to prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

### Safety and Security

Students are encouraged to walk together to the parking lots or to the residence halls after dark.

Residents are the primary eyes and ears of the campus, particularly after dark. Campus residents are likely to develop the best sense of what is normal in terms of campus life. **If residents notice any activity or anyone who seems unusual or suspicious, share those**

**concerns with the facilities manager and/or building manager right away. (Do not wait until the next day.)** If a campus resident witnesses anything that causes concern (such as an unfamiliar car, unknown people loitering near the housing units or other buildings after they are locked, etc.), call 9-911. The Delaware City Police Department, non-emergency number is 740-362-1111.

One of the ways to prevent unwanted intruders in campus buildings is to remember that the swipe card permits access to some buildings after they have been locked. **Do not leave doors propped open.** If a resident is expecting a guest (including pizza delivery) instruct the guest to utilize the call box located outside the Helen Werner Apartment Building or Dewire Residence Hall to gain entry to the building. The guest will dial the appropriate extension to reach the resident and the resident will come to the door to greet the guest.

**In the event of a fire** call 9-911 and call the Building Manager. In the event that the smoke detector is activated, call the building manager.

## **Fire safety**

### Fire Drills

MTSO is required by our insurance company and the City of Delaware to have regular fire drills in all residence units. These fire drills are held at least annually and are unannounced. When the fire alarm sounds, evacuate the room or apartment immediately, using the nearest exit.

### Evacuation Guidelines

So that Building Managers can attempt to account for all residents and guests when there is a fire drill/alarm, evacuate using the following guidelines:

- *Dewire Residence Hall* (Dorm) residents should proceed to the far side of the parking lot on the south side of the building (near the Maintenance garage).
- *Helen Werner Apartment Building* residents should proceed to the front lawn of HWAB.
- *Kleist Manor* residents should gather in the front lawn of their respective building.

Persons who do not evacuate a building during a fire drill will be assessed a fine by the fire marshal.

### Alarm Systems

All residence units have fire alarm systems and smoke detectors that are checked by Maintenance staff on a regular basis. Residents noticing any trouble with a smoke detector should contact Maintenance at [maintenance@mtso.edu](mailto:maintenance@mtso.edu).

Once an alarm has sounded, it needs to be re-set in the living unit as well as the in the Administration Building – regardless of the time it is occurring. If the alarm sounds in a unit and the resident is *certain there is no fire* (e.g. smoke from cooking may have set off the alarm), immediately inform maintenance, the front desk *and* a Building Manager. Regardless of the time of day, CALL the Building Manager.

In **Kleist Manor** apartments fire extinguishers are located in the joint laundry rooms. In **Dewire Residence Hall** and the **Helen Werner Apartment Building** fire extinguishers are located in each hallway. Additionally, residents may want to purchase a fire extinguisher for one's personal protection in the apartment.

### Fire Doors

The Residence Hall and Apartment Buildings have fire safety doors in hallways and stairways. In the event of fire, these doors automatically close to prevent the spread of smoke and are marked "KEEP CLOSED." **Do not** prop these doors open.

### Fire Safety Practices

Parents who live on campus should be sure their children understand basic fire safety principles and procedures for reporting a fire as well as evacuating their residence in the event of a fire.

All residents need to be careful about how and where flammable materials are stored. Paper, empty boxes, chemicals and other flammable materials should not be stored in storage bins, hallways, or in Kleist Manor apartment utility areas. (Items stored in Kleist Manor utility areas must be at least 3 feet away from all sides of the furnace and water heater.)

MTSO allows the use of candles or open flames in worship services and other events where such use is appropriate, as long as the use is in full compliance with the requirements of applicable codes (e.g., not used near flammable or combustible materials, etc.) and where there is a continuous presence of individuals who are responsible for candle or open flame usage. However, based upon the potential fire risk for building occupants and buildings, MTSO requests that candles or other open flames not be used inside campus buildings (including

housing units) outside of worship services and other appropriate events (such as birthday parties). We request that other means be used to accomplish the desired effect.

During Advent and Christmas, campus residents may wish to have a tree in their apartment and/or decorate using electrical lights. The lights must be turned off and unplugged when leaving the apartment for any length of time. Live trees present a fire hazard and must be watered daily. In addition, they are not to be placed near any location in the apartment that could be combustible. If a live tree is in an apartment, and the resident will be leaving campus for more than one day, the tree must be taken down prior to leaving and disposed of properly. Artificial trees may be used in MTSO housing; however, they must not be placed in the apartment near the heating units or any other location that could be combustible.

## **Severe Weather**

### MTSO Alert

MTSO Alert is MTSO's primary method for communicating about weather-related cancellations and other urgent emergency messages. All students, faculty and staff are expected to sign up for this free information service at [www.mtso.edu/alert](http://www.mtso.edu/alert).

Through MTSO Alert, important campus information is sent to all registered users via text message, email, or telephone voice message. As a registered user, you may choose which of these methods you prefer. MTSO provides this service at no charge, though text messages or calls you receive are subject to whatever rates your own phone service provider might charge.

### Weather-related cancellations and schedule changes

Central Ohio does experience severe weather on occasion. Subscribers to MTSO Alert will be the first to know of any weather-related cancellations or changes in schedule. MTSO also shares such news via its website and social media and by notifying Columbus-area radio and television stations. But the quickest and most reliable way to ensure that you will learn of closings is to create and maintain your MTSO Alert account.

### General weather safety

Remember that a **"WATCH"** of any kind means that conditions are conducive for severe weather to develop; a **"WARNING"** means that severe weather is imminent. Sirens may also sound when severe weather is approaching.

## Thunderstorms

In case of severe thunderstorms, it is wise to turn off and unplug televisions, computers and other electronic equipment. A power strip will not necessarily protect one's computer from the type of surges that an electrical storm can produce. Only a surge protector will protect electronic devices. In the event there is a power outage a flashlight should be a part of each resident's emergency preparedness kit. For more information on emergency preparedness kits go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov). We urge all residents to keep a flashlight handy since high winds, lightning strikes, and fallen trees/limbs often take down power lines. Sometimes, it can take quite some time before power is restored.

## Tornados

April, May and June constitute the peak of tornado season in central Ohio although tornados can form at any time when conditions are right, regardless of the calendar date.

A **Tornado Watch** means that weather conditions are such that there is a good possibility tornados could develop.

A **Tornado Warning** means that a funnel cloud has been sighted and persons should take cover immediately.

Persons who have experienced tornadoes report hearing a very loud noise that sounds like a freight train just before the tornado strikes. There may be very little time to react.

**Helen Werner Apartment Building and Dewire Residence Hall:** Proceed immediately to the basement or to a lower level stairwell. Usually the northeast corner of a basement is the safest place to be when a tornado passes over a building. Stay away from windows.

**Kleist Manor Apartment:** Proceed immediately to the basement of D or E building whichever is closest. Usually, the northeast corner of a basement is the safest place to be when a tornado passes over a building. Stay away from windows.



<b>If you are in:</b>	<b>Then:</b>
A structure (e.g. residence, small building, school, nursing home, hospital, factory, shopping center, high-rise building)	Go to a pre-designated shelter area such as a safe room, basement, storm cellar, or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck. Do not open windows.
A vehicle, trailer, or mobile home	Get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or a storm shelter. Mobile homes, even if tied down, offer little protection from tornadoes.
The outside with no shelter	Lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of the potential for flooding. Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location. Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.

## **Campus Closings**

### Administrative Procedures

The President and Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs each have the authority to close the campus, delay opening, and/or cancel classes in response to an emergency, power or utilities failure, severe weather or other calamity.

There may be some circumstances under which classes would be cancelled, but offices will remain open, and vice versa. When circumstances permit, a decision to close the school will be made as early as possible in the day.

Classes will automatically be cancelled and offices will automatically be closed during a Level III weather emergency in Delaware County. The Delaware County Sheriff's Department declares all such emergencies.

Students living outside Delaware County should not drive if a Level III emergency is declared in the county in which they reside. Traveling during a Level III will result in a ticket and a fine.

### **Definitions (Source: Delaware County Sheriff)**

**Level I Snow Emergency:** Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads are also icy. Extreme caution is advised when driving.

**Level II Snow Emergency:** Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be out on the roadways. The student should contact his or her employer to see if he or she should report to work.

**Level III Snow Emergency:** All roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. No one should be out during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary travel. All employees should contact their employers to see if they should report to work. Those traveling on the roadways may be subject to arrest under 2917.13 of the Ohio Revised Code. This offense is a misdemeanor of the fourth degree.

### **Notification of Closing or Delayed Opening**

Notice of closing or delayed opening will be available through the following means:

- Sent instantly to MTSO Alert subscribers via text, email or voicemail (subscribe at [www.mtso.edu/alert](http://www.mtso.edu/alert))
- Posted to [www.mtso.edu](http://www.mtso.edu), [www.facebook.com/MethodistTheologicalSchoolInOhio](https://www.facebook.com/MethodistTheologicalSchoolInOhio) and @MTSOedu on Twitter
- Announced to callers to the main MTSO number: 740-363-1146
- Submitted to Columbus-area radio and TV stations.

### **Use of Personal Judgment/Notification of Absence**

Given that weather conditions in home locations of students and employees may differ significantly from those in Delaware County, employees and students should always exercise their best personal judgment when MTSO is open, and when travel to and from the school involves unusual or extraordinary risk. Students and employees should initiate direct communication with supervisors or faculty if absence is deemed necessary. It is assumed that responsibility, reasonableness and fairness will guide decisions regarding absence, and that compassion and understanding will guide faculty and supervisors as arrangements are made to make up for missed work.