



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MERIDIAN

MARROON *Elite*

2021-2022
AMBASSADOR
MANUAL

Introduction

Welcome to MSU Meridian's Maroon Elite! As a member, you are now a part of a very special group that plays an important student leadership role on both the College Park and Riley Campus. The Maroon Elite was established to assist in the promotion of MSU Meridian by providing service to various campus departments, first-hand information to prospective students, details about the admission process, academic offerings, and much more. By assisting with campus events, college fairs, and other special events, you will become a vital link between potential students and the pulse of the MSU Meridian student body.

This manual has been designed to provide you with the information you will need to do your job as a Maroon Elite member. In the following pages, you will learn how to serve as an informed representative of MSU Meridian. Thank you for your dedication!

Ambassador Goals

- To assist in converting large numbers of prospective students to applicants and ultimately enrolled students.
- To increase personal contact with prospective students through various communication methods.
- To represent MSU Meridian at college fairs and community college visits throughout the year.
- To promote the Maroon Elite to current MSU Meridian students through a yearly membership drive and other events.

Admission/Recruitment

Objective: Communicate directly with prospective students and their families and answer their questions through telecounseling, correspondence, etc. Actively participate in on-campus and off-campus recruiting programs. Welcome prospective students and other guests during campus events, as designated by the Maroon Elite advisor. Visit community colleges and attend outreach events.

Procedure: The advisor will announce upcoming events at regular Maroon Elite meetings. Members sign up with the Program Chairperson at meetings to attend programs or to select time slots for mandatory events.

Tele counseling sessions ("Bulldog Calls") will be held throughout the semester for approximately 1-2 hours. The advisor will be present in case any difficult questions or situations arise.

Campus Tours

Objective: An exciting responsibility of Maroon Elite members is directing campus tours to potential students and their parents/guests. Research has shown that the campus visit is the most influential factor in the college decision process and therefore a crucial part of our recruitment of our recruitment effort. A well-informed Maroon Elite ambassador leading a campus tour can provide valuable insight and information that could increase the likelihood that a student will enroll at MSU- Meridian.

Procedure: Tour times will be sent to your student emails when scheduled. You can also check the bulletin board during your weekly office hour for recently scheduled tours and sign up for them as your schedule permits. Members are encouraged to sign up for at least one tour per month. Campus tours begin from the Advisement and Career Services Center. If a tour is scheduled to take place during your weekly office hour, the tour will take precedence over other work to be done in the office.

College Fairs/Community College Visits

During the school year, particularly in the spring, community/junior colleges host college fairs for their students. Representatives from four-year/senior colleges are invited to speak to the students about admission requirements and degrees offered. In the fall, high schools hold similar programs. Some take place during the day, but many are held in the evening, which allows us to speak to parents as well as the high school seniors who may be considering going to a community college and staying in the Meridian/East Central Mississippi Area.

College Fairs/Transfer Days

The community college fairs that MSU-Meridian participates in are typically the "browse" format. Usually in a gym or a large room, tables are set up at which the representatives from each college are stationed. The students (and their parents at evening programs) are allowed to walk around and stop at the tables to talk to and ask questions of the representatives from the various colleges. Literature and visual aids about the colleges are displayed on the tables at each representative's station. When the student visits the table, he/she fills out a "Prospective Student Information Card" (a sample is included in your binder).

Community/Junior College Visits

Typically, the Advising Center advisor schedules one visit during each regular semester to each of the Partnership Pathway community colleges:

- East Central Community College, Decatur, MS
- Meridian Community College, Meridian, MS
- Jones County Junior College, Ellisville, MS
- East Mississippi Community College, Scooba, MS

Occasionally, a presentation visit will be scheduled in order to address more students and present information about MSU-Meridian more efficiently. During presentation visits, Maroon Elite ambassadors can contribute to answering questions about being a student at MSU-Meridian. Presentations have been done to organizations such as the Future Teachers, Student Education Association, and Phi Theta Kappa, as well as during a regular class.

Guidelines for Visits and College Fairs

It is our goal to present a professional image to prospective students. We have the power to influence their perception not only of the Meridian campus, but also of Mississippi State University as a whole, so it is important to make sure that we leave them with the best possible impression.

Arrive on time!

If you are meeting the MSU Meridian staff member at the program, you may not be expected to be there for the beginning of the program or the entire duration, but please arrive at the time you signed up for.

Dos and Don'ts for College Fairs and Community College Visits

These are rules for all college representatives to follow, paid staff or volunteer.

DO:

- ✓ SMILE and look approachable
- ✓ Stand at all times (depends on the setting, but a good general rule)
- ✓ Stay alert and by your table: Visit with the students...not other recruiters
- ✓ Use eye contact to draw your audience
- ✓ Use the student's name in your conversation...this is always impressive
- ✓ Make each student/parent feel important
- ✓ Know your information/be honest (if you don't know the answer, refer the question to the MSU Meridian staff member or tell the student how to contact someone on campus)
- ✓ Be tactful and civil at all times...even if the student is not
- ✓ If the parent dominates the conversation: include the student by using his/her name and directing questions to them (but do not aggravate the parent)

- ✓ Dress appropriately
 - Maroon Elite shirt
 - Khaki shorts (appropriate length) or pants
 - Closed toe shoes

DO NOT:

- Leave early
- Rate schools
- Speak ill of other schools
- Recruit students away from other tables
- Guarantee financial aid/scholarships
- Eat or drink at the table

After the conclusion of the program, we pack materials, clean up any trash around the table, and thank counselor/coordinator for inviting us.

“Bulldog Calls”

Objective: Tele counseling sessions will be held to enhance communication with students in the following two categories:

- *Interested Potential Students:* The goal is to share your experiences as a student at MSU Meridian, answer questions and hopefully increase the potential student’s interest in attending.
- *Applied Students:* The goal is to encourage students who have applied for admission to submit missing application documents.
- *Admitted Students:* The goal is to congratulate the student on admission to the University and encourage them to schedule appointments for registration.

Supplies needed to make calls:

- ✓ Phone list
- ✓ Questions frequently asked
- ✓ Viewbook
- ✓ Current Academic Calendar/Fee Sheet
- ✓ Class schedule or registration flyer for upcoming semester (if available)
- ✓ Conversation forms
- ✓ List of important phone numbers
- ✓ Partnership Pathways information

Interested Potential Student Calls:

- ✓ State your name and identify yourself as a student ambassador at MSU Meridian.
- ✓ Tell the student that you were informed by their inquiry card that he/she is interested in attending MSU Meridian and you are calling to find out how his/her college search is going.

- ✓ Answer any questions that he/she has about MSU Meridian.
- ✓ Complete a conversation form.

Applied Student Calls:

- ✓ State your name and identify yourself as a student ambassador at MSU Meridian.
- ✓ Tell the student that you were informed by the Admissions Department that he/she has missing documents needed to process his/her admission application.
- ✓ Give them details about which documents need to be submitted
 - *Transcripts, Application Fee, High School Transcript (if applicable), etc.*
- ✓ Answer any questions that he/she has about MSU Meridian.
- ✓ Complete a conversation form.

Admitted Student Calls:

- ✓ State your name and identify yourself as a student ambassador at MSU Meridian.
- ✓ Tell the student that you were informed by the Admissions Department that he/she was admitted to MSU Meridian and you are calling to extend your congratulations and to encourage them to set up an appointment for registration with the assigned advisor.
- ✓ Answer any questions that he/she has about MSU Meridian.
- ✓ Complete a conversation form.

If you do not know the answer to a question do not feel bad. It is impossible to know everything about our campus/university because it is constantly growing and changing. Even enrollment Counselors who have been with MSU for several years find it difficult to keep up with every aspect of the university. Just be honest and tell the student that you do not know and do one of the following two things:

- Take clear and concise notes on the question or problem and contact the appropriate staff member as soon as possible. A staff member will follow-up from there.
- Provide the student with our toll free number and refer them to the appropriate staff member (use the telephone directory as needed).

When you are through making calls, return the list, forms, etc. to an Advising Center staff member.

Postcards

Objective: Writing to prospective students is another way of helping recruit students to MSU Meridian. When students receive personalized postcards from you offering to answer any questions that they might have or to give them your impressions of our campus, the special attention they are receiving is sure to make them give MSU Meridian extra consideration in their college search.

Procedure: A list of names and addresses will be provided to Maroon Elite ambassadors of prospective students (from their area or who have a similar major) to which

postcards will be sent. During subsequent office hours, you may call students who received a postcard from you within two weeks of the date it was sent.

Questions Frequently Asked By Prospective Students

- Where is MSU's Meridian campus?
 - *Mississippi State-Meridian consists of two campuses. The college park campus is located at the intersection of Highway 19 North and College Drive. This campus houses the Division of Education, Division of Arts & Sciences, Student Services, and the Advisement and Career Services Center. The Riley campus is located in downtown Meridian off 8th street. This campus houses our newly renovated Kinesiology facility, the division of Business, and the Bully Shop. The Bully Shop sells delicious snacks, MSU gear, and the famous MSU homemade ice cream and cheese (yes, the same ice cream and cheese made/sold in Starkville). Next door to the Riley campus, is the Riley Center that houses numerous events and MSU Meridian's graduation ceremony.*

- How many students are enrolled at MSU Meridian?
 - *Just over 600 students, including graduate students.*

- Where do MSU Meridian students come from?
 - *The majority of MSU Meridian students come from Lauderdale County, approximately 43%. The remaining 57% come from 36 other Mississippi counties (including Jasper, Jones, Kemper, Leake, Neshoba, Newton, and Scott) as well as from Alabama.*

- Are there residential facilities (residence halls) for MSU Meridian students?
 - *No; however, there are several convenient apartment complexes in Meridian.*

- Can I attend MSU Meridian after graduating from high school?
 - *No, not immediately after high school. You must earn 54 credit hours (approximately two years) of college coursework prior to enrolling at MSU Meridian since we do not offer freshman or sophomore level classes.*

- How do I apply to MSU Meridian?
 - *Complete online application for admission at www.apply.msstate.edu*
 - *Submit \$40 non-refundable application fee*
 - *Request Official Transcripts from each college or university attended (to be sent directly to MU Meridian Campus, 1000 Highway 19 North, Meridian, MS 39307). If you are currently enrolled at another institution, follow up with a completed transcript showing final grades.*
 - *Or send a copy of your Unofficial Transcript to the assigned program's academic advisor:*
 - *Advising Coordinator- Kristi Dearing*
 - kdearing@meridian.msstate.edu
 - *Division of Arts & Sciences- Ben Pace*
 - bpace@meridian.msstate.edu
 - *Division of Business- Candace Adams*
 - cadams@meridian.msstate.edu

- *Division of Education- Greshka German-Stuart*
 - gg707@msstate.edu
 - *Submit proof of two Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) shots. By state mandate, students born on or after January 1, 1957, are required to provide proof of immunity before they may complete registration.*
- *When should I apply for admission?*
 - *Undergraduate students are advised to submit the application for admission and supporting documents at least 20 days prior to the date of registration (encourage them to go ahead and apply as early as possible to ensure documents are submitted successfully prior to registration periods)*
 - *Priority application deadlines for all graduate applicants (in the US) are: July 1 (Fall), November 1 (Spring), April 1 (First Summer Term), May 1 (Second Summer Term). Some programs may have earlier deadlines for application, which override those set by the Office of Graduate Studies.*
- *What are the admission requirements for transfer students?*
 - *After completing a minimum of 54 hours of transferable course work (including core requirements listed below) at a community college or other institution of higher learning, students may apply for admission to MSU Meridian. To be eligible for admission, transfer students should have earned a 2.0 overall grade point average on all courses attempted. Official transcripts from all institutions attended must be submitted. Students with less than a 2.0 overall GPA who are missing units from the 30 hour core may be required to submit an official high school transcript and ACT or SAT scores.*
 - *Core requirements for transfers*
 - *6 semester hours of English Composition*
 - *3 semester hours of college algebra or higher level mathematics*
 - *6 semester hours of laboratory sciences*
 - *6 hours of Social Sciences*
 - *6 hours of Humanities*
 - *3 hours of Fine Arts*
 - *Applicants should contact the individual academic division to determine whether or not the courses taken can be used to meet the requirements for a specific major. Transfer students must complete the last 32 hours of course work taken to fulfill degree requirements at MSU Meridian.*
- *Are there any additional admission requirements for international students?*
 - *Yes, international applicants must complete a separate application. Admission requirements are different. Students who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents should contact the Office of Student Services at 601-484-0230 for complete details.*
- *If students apply for a certain semester and they don't attend that semester to they have to reapply?*
 - *Yes, but the application fee is good for three years.*
- *Must I send a transcript form a college where I have only taken one class?*

- Yes.
- When will I be assigned an advisor or academic counselor?
 - Upon admission to the university, you should contact the appropriate advisor based on your declared major/program to set up an appointment time for registration.
 - Advising Coordinator- Kristi Dearing
 - kdearing@meridian.msstate.edu
 - Division of Arts & Sciences –Ben Pace
 - bpace@meridian.msstate.edu
 - Division of Business- Candace Adams
 - cadams@meridian.msstate.edu
 - Division of Education- Greshka German-Stuart
 - gg707@msstate.edu
 - During your registration appointment, you will meet with an academic advisor to discuss your transcript evaluation and plan your class schedule. This applies to new undergraduate students. New graduate students must contact the specific graduate program's coordinator for registration.
- Which of my hours from another college will transfer to MSU Meridian?
 - The Advising Center staff can make this determination after Official Transcripts have been reviewed by the Registrar's Office in conjunction with the admission application.
- How many credits will transfer for applicants who have earned an Associate of Arts degree?
 - All academic hours earned at a regionally accredited institution are acceptable as transfer hours if they are not technical or remedial. The academic advisor and/or division chair determines the applicability of hours toward a degree.
- Can full-time military personnel transfer hours to MSU?
 - Mississippi State University offers credit for training and experience in the Armed Services to currently enrolled students. Those wishing to receive this credit must furnish the Office of Student Services with a DD214 (discharge papers), a DD295, or a certificate of Achievement. The academic advisor and dean will determine applicable credit toward a degree.
- Are full-time military personnel eligible for Bulldog Free Tuition to MSU?
 - Army and Air National Guard members may be eligible. Refer students to Linda Gyst to check eligibility.
 - Lynda Gist
 - Lgist@meridian.msstate.edu
 - (601) 484-0132
- Does MSU Meridian have an orientation program?

- *No, MSU Meridian offers a more one on one orientation like experience. During your registration appointment, you will be provided with the necessary information needed to start successfully at MSU Meridian.*

- **What happens during orientation?**
 - *During orientation students participate in activities and sessions which will inform them of all facets of the university. You will have the opportunity to:*
 - *Meet with your academic advisor*
 - *Finalize your schedule for the upcoming semester;*
 - *Get your parking permit and student identification card;*
 - *Find out about computer and library resources;*
 - *Receive important information about billing, deadlines, and campus policies and procedures;*
 - *Meet other incoming students who share similar interests and concerns;*
 - *Get answers to all of your questions about getting started at MSU Meridian*

- **Is MSU Meridian on the quarter system or the semester system?**
 - *We are on the semester system: two 16-week class sessions per academic year. Two summer sessions are optional. Full-time undergraduate status requires that students take at least 12 hours per semester. At the graduate level, full-time means taking at least 9 hours per semester.*

- **Do I have to enroll full-time?**
 - *No. Students may enroll full-time or part-time in daytime or evening classes. Most evening classes meet one night a week. Students who wish to apply for scholarships should be aware that most academic scholarships awards require full-time status (12 credit hours or more for undergraduates).*

- **How much is tuition?**
 - <https://www.meridian.msstate.edu/student-services/financial-aid/tuition-fees/>

- **When do I have to pay for tuition?**
 - *Billing statements are mailed to students on approximately the 15th of each month. Current tuition and required fees should be paid at the established monthly due date.*

- **Is financial aid available?**
 - *Yes. Please contact Ms. Lynda Gist in Student Services to discuss your financial aid.*
 - *Lynda Gist*
 - Lgist@meridian.msstate.edu
 - *(601) 484-0132*

- **How do I apply for financial aid?**

- *Applicants for need-based aid should submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Students are encouraged to submit completed FAFSA early in the spring. If applying for aid, you should also request a Financial Aid Transcript from all institutions previously attended, whether or not you received financial aid while enrolled.*

- **How do I apply for university scholarships?**
 - *Academic scholarships are provided by the university to recognize outstanding achievement by undergraduate students attending MSU Meridian. Scholarship amounts range from \$100 to \$3,500 per academic year. The deadline to apply for local Meridian based scholarships is April 1 of each year for the following fall, unless otherwise published. Applicants for academic scholarships must also submit a General Scholarship application, once admitted, through their MyState banner account.*

- **Is there a library on campus?**
 - *MSU Meridian has two libraries. One is located on the College Park Campus and the second is located at the downtown campus.*

- **Is there a cafeteria on campus?**
 - *The Bully Shop is located on the downtown campus and offers sandwiches, MSU Ice Cream, MSU Cheese, and other snacking options.*

- **Are there opportunities for on-campus jobs?**
 - *Yes. Students who are eligible for federal work-study may apply for jobs on-campus. Contact the Office of Student Services for more information.*