

Merit University

Student Handbook

2020

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Message to Students

Dear Students,

Congratulation and welcome to the Merit University student body. We have prepared this Handbook for your convenience while you pursue your studies in higher education. The information we've gathered here is intended to supplement (and not replace) the more-detailed information contained in the MU *General Catalog*. We hope that it will highlight important items you need to know about and help you explore the Los Angeles Basin.

Keep in mind that we always hold an orientation meeting early in the academic quarter. We strongly encourage you to attend this gathering so that you will have a chance to meet the MU administrators, faculty, and staff and ask any questions you might have. Light lunch will be provided after the session in a very informal atmosphere, so please don't miss this date.

The Office is open from 10:30AM to 7:00PM on Monday through Friday. If you need assistance, feel free to contact us. Again, a cordial hello. We hope you enjoy your studies with us.

Sincerely, Office of Academic Affairs



Mission

The mission of Merit University is to provide students with a unique educational experience where they can pursue their goals and achieve success. Upon enrollment until graduation, the students are the main focus of the staff, faculty and administration. By providing them with the university's full attention, the students can then go out and provide that respect and focus to their careers and endeavors. The university seeks to maintain a supportive environment where students are encouraged to find and develop their talents for the benefit of our society at large.

MU offers master's degree in business administration. This program is designed to reflect the most current professional trends in each field. It also offers programs in TOEFL Preparation and English as a Second Language. MU is authorized to issue degrees and operate its programs in accordance with the State of California guidelines.

University and Its Settings

MU offers many specialized learning opportunities, such as small classes, guest speakers, field trips, dedicated laboratories, and a well-equipped University library.

Our faculty is excellent. Faculty members are well educated and excited about making a difference in the lives of their students. All faculty and staff are readily for discussion and counseling. Do not hesitate to ask your professors to clarify points they have made. If you are having problems in a course for any reason, feel free to contact the professor, the Director of your program, or any member of administrator or staff.

We are proud of our students. Our graduates have gone on to obtain excellent jobs and hold leadership positions in the work world. With your help, we can continue our quest to create new leaders for the next generation.



Registration and Enrollment

Following acceptance for admission to the University, students will register for a program of study. Registration materials are available in the Registrar's Office.

Formal enrollment in class is complete only when the student's name appears on the Class Roll Sheet. Once enrolled, students may drop or add a class only by means of an official Change of Program form. Any class dropped or added requires confirmation by the instructor and must be recorded in the Registrar's Office. A class not officially dropped will result in an F grade; a class not officially added receives no credit.

Quarter Units of Credit

Academic work at Merit University is organized by quarters, each of which is eleven (11) weeks in length. In general, one quarter unit is equal to eleven (11) contact hours of lecture, or thirty (30) contact hours of field-based activities. Courses usually carry four (4) units of credits.

Study Loads

A larger study load requires the approval of the Dean of Academic Affairs. Graduate students enroll for a minimum of eight (8) units per quarter.

Add / Drop Policy

Students may add or drop courses through the third week of the quarter. Students must request these changes by submitting an Add / Drop Form to the registrar.

Minimum Unit Requirements for Degrees

Minimum unit requirement for Master of Business Administration degree is sixty (60) units.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is expected of every student. A student may be dropped from class when, in the judgment of the instructor, the student cannot benefit from further instruction.

A student who has been absent due to illness or medical appointment must explain the absence directly to the instructor. The University requires that any student who is absent for a total of three (3) class sessions in any subject shall be dropped unless the student has made prior arrangements.

Attendance without Official Enrollment: Students will not be permitted to attend classes in which they are not officially enrolled.

All class session will be held at <u>3699 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 970, Los Angeles, CA 90010</u>. Also, all class instructions will be taught in English only.

Mitigating Circumstances

The Dean of Academic Affairs may waive the Standards of Satisfactory Progress for circumstances of personal illness, unusual family responsibilities, military service, unexpected consequences arising in their homeland, or other significant occurrence beyond the control of the students. Students must document these circumstances to demonstrate that they have an adverse impact on their performance. No waivers will be provided for graduation requirements.

Warning Status

Students who do not meet the SAP Minimum Standards will receive written notification stating that he or she is being placed on Warning. A student on Warning who brings their CGPA and completion rate up to SAP standards by the end of the next term is removed from Warning. A student who fails to establish SAP by the end of the next evaluation period will be withdrawn.

Appeals and Probation

A student, who wishes to appeal determination that he/she is not making satisfactory academic progress due to mitigating circumstances, may submit a written appeal to the Dean of Academic Affairs for review. The written appeal should include a detailed explanation and documentation of the current academic status of the student, mitigating circumstances that led to the student's current academic status, how the student's situation has changed, and the student's plan for achieving required minimum standards of satisfactory academic progress.

The Dean of Academic Affairs is responsible for determining the appropriateness of the mitigating circumstances in regards to severity, timeliness and the student's ability to avoid the circumstances. The result of the appeal (granted or denied) will be provided to the student and documented in the student's academic file. If the appeal is granted, the Dean of Academic Affairs will outline the requirements of academic plan that the student must follow. The terms of the academic plan must ensure the student will be able to complete the program within the maximum timeframe. If the student agrees to the academic plan, the student is placed on probation, and allowed to continue at the university.

At the end of the probation period, the student's progress will be evaluated based on the academic plan. If the student is meeting the SAP standards, or he/she has met the requirements of the academic plan, the student will be eligible to remain at the university. If the student fails to meet the expectations of the academic plan at the end of the probationary period, the student will be terminated.

Dismissal

Students who have been dismissed due to the failure to maintain the academic minimum outlined above may reapply for admission after one quarter. A meeting will be scheduled between the Dean of Academic Affairs and the student for reapplying to determine whether the student has the academic ability and desire to successfully continue in the program. When a student receives a written dismissal notice from the school after instruction has begun, the student will receive a pro rata refund for the unused portion of the tuition and other refundable charges if the student has completed 60% or less of the program.

Readmission

Students who have been dismissed or terminated from the University must wait one quarter before applying for readmission and must submit a Petition for Readmission to the Dean of Academic Affairs. The Petition must include the records of any academic work successfully completed at other institutions as well as present compelling reasons for reinstatement which include the ability to maintain Standards of Satisfactory Progress. The Dean of Academic Affairs will notify the students in writing concerning their readmission. Students who are re-admitted for enrollment will be placed on an Academic Plan and be required to meet the SAP standards. A student on Warning or Probation, who improves their CGPA and completion rate up to SAP standards by the end of the next term, will be eliminated from Warning/Probation status.

Reinstatement

Students who leave the University without filing a Request for Leave of Absence will not be automatically reinstated. Students must file a Petition for Readmission to a degree program, which have the recommendations of the Dean of Academic Affairs. The petition must be submitted to the Admissions Office. Upon reinstatement, students will be subjected to all of the current requirements for the degree effective from the time of reinstatement.

Leave of Absence

Students, in good standing and making satisfactory progress towards a degree, who must interrupt studies for compelling reasons (e.g. which may include but not be limited to personal illness, unusual family responsibilities, military service, and unexpected consequences arising in their homeland.) must file a Request for Leave of Absence, usually not to exceed four (4) quarters. Students must file this Request with the Registrar's Office and have approval from the Dean of Academic Affairs.

During the leave of absence, students are not entitled to assistance from the faculty or allowed to use University facilities. If granted, the leave is recorded on the students' transcripts. The period of leave is not counted in the time allowed for the completion of degree requirements.

Students who do not return to enrolled status at the end of the approved leave of absence are no longer considered to be pursuing a degree. Students who fail to apply for a Request for Leave of Absence or for whom a leave has been denied or has expired should refer to Readmission.

WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSES

Students should review and select classes carefully with their advisers and avail themselves of college counseling services before making a decision to withdraw from classes. Students may drop classes without academic penalty through the fifth week of classes. Due to unforeseen circumstances, students may withdraw from classes from the sixth week through the ninth week of classes and receive a grade of Withdrawal (W) with the permission from the Dean of Academic Affairs. After the tenth week of class, permission will not be granted for a student to withdraw, a letter grade of F or Incomplete (IN) will be assigned to the student.

CLEARANCE FOR GRADUATION

Prospective graduates must obtain an Application for Graduation from the Registrar's Office and submit it to the Registrar before they can be considered for graduation. Students are advised to file the application in the quarter preceding that in which they expect to graduate. During each registration period, graduating seniors meet with their advisors to determine whether their proposed class enrollments meet all requirements for their degrees.

Graduation ceremonies are held in June. Diplomas will be mailed to those students who have completed their degree programs and must depart prior to the graduation ceremonies.

All fees and tuition debts must be paid in full fifteen (15) days prior to graduation, and all graduating students must pay the graduation fees.

NOTICE CONCERNING TRANSFERABILITY OF CREDITS AND CREDENTIALS EARNED AT MU (STUDENTS TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER UNIVERSITY)

The transferability of credits you earn at Merit University is at the complete discretion of an institution to which you may seek to transfer. Acceptance of the degree or certificate you earn in the educational program is also at the complete discretion of the institution to which you may seek to transfer. If the credits or degree/certificate that you earn at this institution are not accepted at the institution to which you seek to transfer, you may be required to repeat some or all of your coursework at that institution. For this reason, you should make certain that your attendance at this institution will meet your educational goals. This may include contacting an institution to which you may seek to transfer after attending Merit University to determine if your credits or degree/certificate will transfer.

Transferring from MU to another university is the student's responsibility. Since all universities have different criteria for accepting students, it is beyond MU's ability to determine what credit might be given for course work completed at MU.

GRADING SYSTEM: Definition of Grades and Codes

Standard letter grades (A, B, C, D, and F) are used for graduate programs. Only these letter grades are used on transcripts and in computing grade point averages.

The following table is provided as a general reference:

Grade	Score	Grade Explanation	Grade Point
A	100-90	Excellent	4.00
В	89-80	Good	3.00
С	79-70	Average	2.00
D	69-60	Unsatisfactory	1.00
F	59-0	Failing	0
CR		Credit	Credit
NC		No Credit	N/A
IN		Incomplete	N/A
W		Withdrawal	N/A

At the completion of all required courses, the student is eligible to receive a degree provided that the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) is no less than a 3.0 for graduates.

Credit (CR)

Credit is used to denote "pass with credit" when no letter grade is given. It is assigned to a grade of C or better for certificate program students and a grade of B or better for graduate students. CR grades are not included in the calculation of the GPA.

No Credit (NC)

No Credit is used to denote "no credit" when no letter grade is given. NC grades are not included in the calculation of the GPA.

Incomplete (IN)

An Incomplete grade is an interim grade designed for students who have serious and compelling circumstances beyond their control occurring within the last two weeks of the quarter preventing completion of the course work.

An Incomplete (IN) must be removed within the next two quarters. Failure to comply will result in an F grade and will remain on the students' permanent record. An Incomplete (IN) is not used in calculating the GPA.

Withdrawal (W)

Withdrawal is a grade for students who may wish to change their schedule by dropping a course with the permission of the Dean of Academic Affairs. These grades are not calculated in the GPA, but will be considered credits attempted if the student has incurred a financial obligation for the quarter.

Repeat a Course (R)

Repeat a Course is a designated code following the earned grade. Students can repeat only once any course for which they have received a grade or have withdrawn from, prior to completion. Only the higher grade is calculated in the GPA. Students will not receive cumulative earned credit for a repeated course. However, both courses will be considered credit hours attempted for the purpose of determining successful course completion percentages.

Credit by Challenge Examination (CE)

Graduate students in good standing and with the appropriate background may petition to take courses for credit by challenge examinations. Eligible students must be registered for full time status. Graduate students must have completed two graduate courses and may challenge a maximum of two graduate courses.

Credit earned by challenge examinations may be applied toward the minimum course requirements for the master's degree. The passing mark for credit by examination at the undergraduate level is C and the graduate level is B. Credits earned will be posted on the transcript as CR, rather than the letter grade, and not calculated in the student's GPA. If a student does not pass the challenge examination, the code "NC" will be entered on the transcript. Requests for Challenge Examinations may be made through the Dean of Academic Affairs' Office.

Students may challenge a particular course only once and may not take a challenge examination for courses already taken or attempted at the University. The Credit by Special Examination Fee per course is four hundred fifty dollars (\$450.)

Credit for Prior Experiential Learning (CX)

Graduate students in good standing and with the appropriate background may petition to earn degree credit for prior experiential learning. Eligible students must be registered for full time status.

Petitioning students must identify the courses for which credit is sought and document in writing how the prior experiential learning is equivalent to standards in higher education and meets curricular criteria. Graduate students must have completed two graduate courses and may receive prior experiential learning credit for a maximum of two graduate courses.

Credits earned through petitions for prior experiential learning may be applied toward the minimum course requirements for the master's degrees. Credits so earned will be posted on the transcript as CR and not calculated in the student's GPA.

Forms requesting prior experiential learning credit may be requested through the Dean of Academic Affairs' Office. The Credit for Prior Experiential Learning Fee per course is \$100.

GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

The grade point average (GPA) for the quarter is determined by multiplying the number of credit hours for each course by the number of points identified for each grade outlined above and dividing by the total number of units for the quarter.

GRADE CHANGES

Grades assigned by instructors must conform to individual policies as stated in the course syllabus. A grade submitted by an instructor is considered final and may be changed only for the following reasons: (1) error in recording a score for a student product (test, quiz, paper, etc.); (2) miscalculation of a score, including the cumulative score for a quarter; and (3) omission from consideration of valid student products that were submitted on time.

No other reasons constitute a basis for a request for a grade change.

All requests for grade changes must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the instructor within two weeks following the date of issuance of the grade in question. Under no condition will a grade change be permitted after a degree has been awarded.

TRANSCRIPTS OF MU COURSES

The Registrar's Office maintains all official transcripts, which are issued only at the written request of the student. Three working days should be allowed for processing of official transcripts. Exceptions to this rule are covered under Student Records. Requests for transcripts may be submitted either in person, by fax, or by mail. No telephone requests for transcripts are accepted. Copies of transcripts for work taken at other institutions will not be issued.

Official transcripts bear the institutional seal and the signature of the University Registrar. *MU* reserves the right to withhold any and all services if the petitioner is not in good financial standing with the University.

STUDENT RECORDS

Federal law allows current and former students access to their education records. To protect the privacy of students, the law sets certain conditions on the disclosure of personal information kept by the University. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974— also known as the Buckley Amendment or FERPA— and the California Education Code 67-100ff states that students have the right to access their educational records. Educational institutions shall not release educational records without consent of the student, subject to exceptions provided by law.

The student's name, birth date, field of study, attendance dates, degrees received and other items designated as Directory Information are public information and may be disclosed without the student's prior consent. Students may request that public information not be released by providing a written statement to the Registrar's Office.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

STUDENT RIGHTS

Students are the primary focus in campus life. Their welfare and the conditions under which they study, work, and relax must be safeguarded to preserve their rights under the United States Constitution, federal laws, and California statutes. Campus policies and procedures seek to guarantee these civil liberties. Student understanding and cooperation are essential to the successful implementation of this legal structure.

Student's Right to Cancel Policy

The student has the right to cancel this enrollment agreement and obtain a refund of charges paid through attendance at the first class session or the seventh day after enrollment, whichever comes later. Procedures to cancel the enrollment agreement or withdraw from the institution and obtain a refund: 1) To receive a refund of any portion of the tuition fees, you must give school written notice that you intend to withdraw from the program in which you have enrolled. 2) Withdrawal from the program may be affected by a student's written notice, by a student's misconduct, including, but not necessarily limited to, a student's lack of attendance. 3) If you have completed 60% or less of your program, the University shall provide a pro rata refund of the amount paid for institutional charges, less the non-refundable application fee, non-refundable processing fee and other reasonable fees not to exceed two hundred fifty dollars (\$250). 4) If you complete more than 60% of your program, the University shall NOT refund any portion of the amount paid for institutional charges. 5) If you are eligible for a refund under the conditions above, you will receive the refund within 45 days of the University receiving written notice of cancellation or University's notice to you of dismissal. To cancel this agreement mail, fax, or deliver a written notice of Withdraw / Cancellation to this mailing address: Registrar's Office at Merit University, 3699 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 970, Los Angeles, CA 90010 USA.

Right to Appeal

The University has initiated and implemented procedures for appeals by students with the intent of assuring fairness and objectivity. The procedures are not designed to incorporate all of the due process safeguards that the courts of law require. The purpose is to provide a system that will represent "fairness and the absence of arbitrariness." The University makes every effort to see that appeal procedures are clear to students and that their avenue of appeal is not burdensome (please refer to Appeal and Probation on page 41).

Nondiscrimination Policy

The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition, ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or service in the uniformed services. The University also prohibits sexual harassment. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission, access, and treatment in University programs and activities. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972 and other non-discriminatory statutes should be directed to the Dean of Academic Affairs for reviewing such matters.

Students with Disabilities Policy

The University is committed to complying with all the mandates set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Americans with Disabilities Act. Disabled students may make any request for reasonable accommodations to the Dean of Academic Affairs' Office and are required to provide medical certification of their disability. In certain circumstances, early registration may be available for students with disabilities. Students who wish to file a formal grievance should secure a copy of the Student Grievance Procedures from the Dean of Academic Affairs' office.

Student Records Policy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. In compliance with FERPA, MU designates the following categories of personally identifiable information as *directory information:* name, address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, dates of attendance, enrollment status, program of study, honors, awards and degrees received. MU may release or publish directory information without prior consent of the student, unless specifically instructed by the student to withhold information. To restrict the release or publication of any student information, a student must provide the appropriate written instructions to the Registrar's Office.

Pursuant to the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the California Information Act and Educational Code, students at MU have the right to:

- (1) Inspect and review their education records that pertain to themselves as students, unless waived or qualified under Federal and State law or College policies;
- (2) Seek to amend the content of their education records that may be considered inaccurate or misleading;
- (3) Withhold from disclosure personally identifiable information contained in their education records, except as provided in Federal and State laws or College policies; and
- (4) File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education (Family Policy Compliance Office) regarding alleged violation of their FERPA rights.

Students and alumni who desire the University to release their records and information to perspective employers, graduate schools, etc., can expedite their applications by providing MU with written permission to release their records, specifying which records and to whom the release should be made.

A student will be given the opportunity to inspect and review his/her education records within 15 days from the day that the school receives the request for access. The student should submit to the Registrar, or other appropriate school official, written requests (or emails) that identify the record(s) s/he wishes to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and will notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the school official for whom the request was submitted, that official should advise the student of the appropriate official to whom the request should be addressed.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with a legitimate educational interest. A school official is a person employed by the college as an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff person (including the law enforcement unit, personnel and health staff); a person or company contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, funding agency, or collection agent); a person serving 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 legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Parental access to a student's records will be allowed without prior consent if the student is under eighteen years of age or is a dependent as defined in Section 252 of the Federal Internal Revenue Code. If any MU student wants to ensure or block access for their parents to his/her grades, any disciplinary action that has been taken or other information, then it is best to file written permission with the Registrar to clarify their wants and needs.

Right to File a Complaint Policy

Any student alleging failure of the University to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education. Students are encouraged to use the internal University grievance procedures to resolve complaints prior to contacting outside agencies. A student of any member of the public may file a complaint about this institution with the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education by calling (888) 370-7589 or by completing a complaint form, which can be obtained on the bureau's Internet Web site (www.bppe.ca.gov).

Student Tuition Recovery Fund (STRF) Policy

"The State of California established the Student Tuition Recovery Fund (STRF) to relieve or mitigate economic loss suffered by a student in an educational program at a qualifying institution, who is or was a California resident while enrolled, or was enrolled in a residency program, if the student enrolled in the institution, prepaid tuition, and suffered an economic loss. Unless relieved of the obligation to do so, you must pay the state-imposed assessment for the STRF, or it must be paid on your behalf, if you are a student in an educational program, who is a California resident, or are enrolled in a residency program, and prepay all or part of your tuition.

You are not eligible for protection from the STRF and you are not required to pay the STRF assessment, if you are not a California resident, or are not enrolled in a residency program."

"It is important that you keep copies of your enrollment agreement, financial aid documents, receipts, or any other information that documents the amount paid to the school. Questions regarding the STRF may be directed to the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, 1747 N. Market Blvd. Ste 225, Sacramento, CA 95834, (916) 574-8900 or (888) 370-7589.

To be eligible for STRF, you must be a California resident or are enrolled in a residency program, prepaid tuition, paid or deemed to have paid the STRF assessment, and suffered an economic loss as a result of any of the following:

- 1. The institution, a location of the institution, or an educational program offered by the institution was closed or discontinued, and you did not choose to participate in a teach-out plan approved by the Bureau or did not complete a chosen teach-out plan approved by the Bureau.
- 2. You were enrolled at an institution or a location of the institution within the 120 day period before the closure of the institution or location of the institution, or were enrolled in an educational program within the 120 day period before the program was discontinued.

- 3. You were enrolled at an institution or a location of the institution more than 120 days before the closure of the institution or location of the institution, in an educational program offered by the institution as to which the Bureau determined there was a significant decline in the quality or value of the program more than 120 days before closure.
- 4. The institution has been ordered to pay a refund by the Bureau but has failed to do so.
- 5. The institution has failed to pay or reimburse loan proceeds under a federal student loan program as required by law, or has failed to pay or reimburse proceeds received by the institution in excess of tuition and other costs.
- 6. You have been awarded restitution, a refund, or other monetary award by an arbitrator or court, based on a violation of this chapter by an institution or representative of an institution, but have been unable to collect the award from the institution.
- 7. You sought legal counsel that resulted in the cancellation of one or more of your student loans and have an invoice for services rendered and evidence of the cancellation of the student loan or loans.

To qualify for STRF reimbursement, the application must be received within four (4) years from the date of the action or event that made the student eligible for recovery from STRF.

A student whose loan is revived by a loan holder or debt collector after a period of noncollection may, at any time, file a written application for recovery from STRF for the debt that would have otherwise been eligible for recovery. If it has been more than four (4) years since the action or event that made the student eligible, the student must have filed a written application for recovery within the original four (4) year period, unless the period has been extended by another act of law.

However, no claim can be paid to any student without a social security number or a taxpayer identification number." (CEC §94909(a)(14), 5, CCR §76215(a), and §76215(b))

Student Grievances

The procedure for the resolution of student academic complaints is a three-step process. The University anticipates that most disputes either will be resolved through step No. 1, informal discussions or step No. 2, the intervention of an ombudsman. Only a few cases should require step No. 3, the judgment of an informal hearing panel.

- First, a student who feels that the faculty, staff, administration, or any other students have treated him/her unfairly is advised to seek informal counsel with the offending party or the Dean of Academic Affairs in the interest of a speedy resolution of the problem.
- Second, if this step does not lead to satisfaction of the student, he/she should petition for a grievance review, a formal procedure at the University. The petitioner should write a letter to the Dean of Academic Affairs requesting the assignment of an ombudsman. The letter must outline the specifics of the complaint, all pertinent information, and the steps taken to remedy the situation through an informal process.

The Dean of Academic Affairs will act promptly in assigning an ombudsman and informing the President of the grievance. The Dean of Academic Affairs will outline some possible steps to the ombudsman in solving the problem. These may include interviewing the grievant, contacting the offending party, and/or convening all parties to the grievance. The ombudsman will notify

the Dean of Academic Affairs in writing of the outcome of the intervention with recommendations. These will be sent to the President who will confer with the Dean of Academic Affairs to guarantee that the cause of the grievance is removed.

• Third, if the grievant is unable to receive a satisfactory resolution of the complaint he/she should notify the President in writing, who will convene an impartial hearing panel for judgment. For further redress the student may contact the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education by calling (888) 370-7589 or by completing a complaint form, which can be obtained on the Bureau's website (www.bppe.ca.gov). The complaint form may also be mailed to: 1747 N. Market Blvd., Suite 225, Sacramento, California, 95834. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Bureau at: (916) 574-8900 or by fax at: (916) 263-1897. More information may be obtained by contacting ACICS (Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools) at (202) 336-6780 or at 1350 Eye Street, NW, Suite 560, Washington, DC 20005.

Student Evaluation of Instruction

To sustain a high quality of instruction at the University, students are expected to evaluate each class and instructor in which they are enrolled. Evaluation forms are distributed toward the end of each quarter. The evaluation forms, filled anonymously, are collected and returned to the Administration Office by a designated student. Student evaluations are tabulated by the University, and the results are analyzed by the Dean of Academic Affairs and distributed to the individual instructors.

Sexual Assaults on Campus Grounds Policy

MU is committed to creating and maintaining an academic environment dedicated to learning and research in which individuals are free from sexual assault or sexual harassment from any party. Sexual assault is defined by California Education Code Section 94385 to include without limitation, rape, forced sodomy, forced oral copulation, rape by a foreign object, sexual battery, or threat of sexual assault. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions, requests for sexual favors, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, subtle pressure or request for sexual activities, unnecessary touching of an individual, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, a display in the school of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, sexually explicit or offensive jokes, physical assault, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

No student, applicant, faculty member or other employee of the University shall: (a) sexually assault any student or applicant; or (b) threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly that a student's or applicant's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect that student or applicant's application, enrollment, grades, studies, or educational experience at MU. Similarly, no faculty member or other employee of the University shall promise, imply or grant any preferential treatment in connection with any student or applicant with the intent of rewarding for or engaging in sexual conduct.

Any student, applicant, faculty member or other employee of the University who feels that he or she is a victim of sexual assault or harassment (including, but not limited to, any of the conduct listed above) by any student, applicant, faculty member, or other MU employee, or visitor or invitee of the school, in connection with the educational experience offered by the University, should bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Dean at the telephone number specified in the MBA Program Catalog. A student, applicant, faculty member or other employee of the University who is uncomfortable for any reason in bringing such a matter to the attention of the Dean, or who is not

satisfied after bringing the matter to the attention of the Dean, should report the matter to the President of the University. Any questions about this policy or potential sexual assault or harassment should also be brought to the attention of the same persons.

MU encourages students, applicants, faculty members or its employees to promptly and accurately report all sexual assaults occurring at any of the school's facilities to the Dean and the appropriate police agencies. Upon the request of a sexual assault complainant, the University personnel will: (a) transport the complainant to the hospital or contact emergency personnel on behalf of the complainant; (b) refer the complainant to a counseling center or an agency that can make such referral; and (c) notify the police on behalf of the complainant if this has not been reported previously.

The office of the Dean will promptly investigate all allegations of sexual assault and harassment in as confidential a manner as it deems reasonably possible and take appropriate corrective action if warranted. MU will inform the complainant of the results of the school's investigation. Sexual assault complainants may, in their sole discretion, pursue their own remedies against the alleged perpetrator, whether civilly and/or criminally. The University will assist any student with academic difficulties arising as a direct result of a sexual assault on the student by any MU student, applicant, faculty member or employee occurring on campus.

A student of any member of the public may file a complaint about this institution with the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) by calling Toll Free: (888) 370-7589 or by completing a complaint form, which can be obtained on the bureau's website (www.bppe.ca.gov).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Conduct

The following regulations apply to any person who is enrolled as a Merit University (MU) student. These rules are not to be interpreted as all-inclusive of situations in which discipline will be invoked. These rules are illustrative, and the University reserves the right to take disciplinary action in appropriate circumstances not set out in this catalog. The University reserves the right to exclude at any time students whose conduct is deemed undesirable or prejudicial to the University community's best interest.

The disciplinary procedure described herein affords procedural fairness to the accused student and flexibility to the administration to sanctions based on the individual circumstances of each case. Students accused of improper conduct shall be given adequate notice of the charges and an opportunity to respond to the charges made against them. Where a student is disciplined for improper conduct, the student may submit a grievance with regard to the decision in accordance with the University's Grievance Policy, which can be obtained from the Dean's Office. While disciplinary action against a student is pending, the student poses a significant threat to the University community. The disciplinary action taken may be reflected in the student's permanent record, as part of the disciplinary punishment. Behavior resulting in disciplinary action may involve, but is not limited to, one or a combination of those listed below:

- Dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, illegal copying of software, and knowingly furnishing false information to the University
- Forgery, alteration, or misuse of University documents, records, or identification.

- Failure to comply with written or verbal directives of duly authorized University officials who are acting in the performance of assigned duties.
- Interference with the academic or administrative processes of the University or any of its approved activities.
- Theft or damage to property.
- Violation of civil or criminal codes of local, state, or federal governments.
- Unauthorized use of or entry into University facilities.
- Violation of any state policies or regulations governing student relationship to the University.

The disciplinary procedure described herein affords procedural fairness to the accused student and flexibility to the administration to sanctions based on the individual circumstances of each case. Students accused of improper conduct shall be given adequate notice of the charges and an opportunity to present their case to an impartial appeals committee. Written notice of the specific charge(s) made against a student shall be given at least ten days before the student is to appear before the committee. While disciplinary action against a student is pending, the student's status does not change unless it is found that the student poses a significant threat to the University community. Hearings are private. The accused student is afforded the opportunity to rebut all charges. The University establishes the charges by a preponderance of the evidence. The student has the right to appeal the disciplinary action to the Dean of Academic Affairs, but only on the grounds that fair procedure was not followed by the committee or that the evidence in the record does not justify the decision or the sanction. A record will be kept of the disciplinary action taken, and the basis for this decision. The disciplinary action taken may be reflected in the student's permanent record, as part of the disciplinary punishment. Disciplinary action invoked by the committee may involve, but is not limited to, one or a combination of the alternatives listed below:

Dismissal: Separation of the student from the University on a permanent basis.

Suspension: Separation of the student from the University for a specified length of time.

Probation: Status of the student indicating that the relationship with the University is tenuous and that the student's record will be reviewed periodically to determine suitability to remain enrolled. Specific limitations and restrictions on the student's privileges may accompany probation.

Students dismissed from the University for disciplinary reasons must exclude themselves from University classes, activities, facilities, and buildings. Any exception must be approved by the President. Students found culpable of any of the foregoing violations will be subject to disciplinary action. A student who is dismissed may reapply for admission after two quarter's leave. When a student receives a written dismissal notice from school after instruction has begun, the student will receive a pro rata refund for the unused portion of the tuition and other refundable charges if the student has completed 60% or less of the program.

Students who have not fulfilled their financial obligation to the University are in violation of the University contract. Said students may be denied the right to graduate, take examinations, receive degrees, and obtain or request transcripts of their grades.

Student Obligations

For students to remain in good standing at the University, they must:

- 1. Maintain academic standards, attend classes, and meet all financial obligations.
- 2. Be courteous and respectful in dealing with faculty, administrators, and fellow students.
- 3. Adhere to the federal, state, and municipal laws of the U.S., as well as to the rules and policies of the University.

Cheating and Plagiarism Policies

Cheating: The act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for work by use of dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means.

Plagiarism: The act of taking ideas, words, or specific substances of another and offering them as one's own.

One or more of the following actions are available to any faculty member who suspects a student of cheating or plagiarizing. The choice of action taken is guided by the extent to which the faculty member considers the cheating or plagiarism reflective of the student's lack of scholarship or lack of academic performance in the course.

- Review-no action.
- Oral reprimand with emphasis on counseling aimed at preventing further occurrences.
- Requirement that the work be repeated.
- Assignment of an F grade for the specific work in question.
- Assignment of an F grade for the course.
- Referral to the Dean of Academic Affairs and/or the appropriate committee.

Students accused of cheating or plagiarism are entitled to and may petition for due process. Regulations in their entirety are published in the *Faculty Handbook*.

Drug, Alcohol, and Tobacco Policies

MU strongly supports the goals of "Drug-Free Schools and Campuses" and a "Drug-Free Workplace." It is MU's policy that no person shall manufacture, distribute, possess, or use illegal drugs, a controlled substance, on its premises or as a part of any of its activities. A controlled substance includes, but is not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, cocaine derivatives, heroin, "crack," amphetamines, barbiturates, LSD, PCP, and substances typically known as "Designer Drugs" such as "ecstasy" or "eve." Possession of paraphernalia associated with the illegal use, possession, or manufacture of a controlled substance is also prohibited. The President has designated the Dean of Academic Affairs to act in all matters pertaining to the enforcement of this policy with regard to students and faculty and the President to act in all matters pertaining to this policy in regard to staff. Whenever possible or reasonable University personnel will counsel offenders and make available sources of rehabilitative services. At the discretion of the administration, the University may impose the following sanctions:

- 1. A warning to the student, staff member, or faculty member.
- 2. Administrative suspension of the student or suspension of employment of the staff or faculty member.
- 3. Administrative dismissal of the student or termination of employment of the staff or faculty member.

University policies concerning the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages do not contravene federal, state, or municipal law. Gatherings on University premises or as part of University activities, at which alcoholic beverages are to be served, must receive prior approval from the Dean.

It is the policy of MU that smoking is prohibited in all University facilities. At the discretion of the administration, outside areas may be set aside within the University facilities to accommodate

students, staff members, and faculty who smoke. Violations of the smoking policy may result in suspension or termination of academic status or employment.

Academic Discipline

Re-admission of dismissed students can be granted only after they file a petition with the Dean of Academic Affairs and have been on leave for two quarters. Students re-admitted after dismissals are placed on academic probation for the immediate quarter following re-admission.

Refer to Standards of Satisfactory Progress Policies, for other conditions which apply students.

Non-Academic Discipline

Students not conforming to University standards are subject to probation, suspension, or dismissal from the University. Faculty members may initiate proceedings through the Dean of Academic Affairs, who will refer the matter to the administrators for a final decision.

Students who feel they have been treated unfairly may petition a grievance review through the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Faculty members encountering unruly and unmannerly conduct in class will report such instances to the appropriate director or Dean of Academic Affairs for appropriate action. Examples of unacceptable conduct requiring non-academic disciplinary action are as follows:

- Lighting a fire on campus
- Possessing or displaying a weapon
- Unauthorized possession of University property
- Offering bribes for special favors from faculty
- Use of obscene language
- Insolence or insubordination toward faculty, administrative personnel or any University employee
- Cheating, or otherwise duplicating the work of another student
- Excessive absence from class
- Intoxication or being under the influence of a controlled substance
- Hazing, humiliating, or intimidating other individuals

Students found culpable of any of the foregoing violations will be subject to disciplinary action. A student who is dismissed may reapply for admission after two quarter's leave.

Students who have not fulfilled their financial obligation to the University are in violation of the University contract. Said students may be denied the right to graduate, take examinations, receive degrees, and obtain or request for transmission transcripts of their grades.

Attendance Policy

Regular attendance is expected of every student. A student may be dropped from class when, in the judgment of the instructor, the student cannot benefit from further instruction.

A student who has been absent due to illness or a medical appointment must explain the absence directly to the instructor. The University requires that any student who is absent for a total of three (3) class sessions in any subject shall be dropped unless the student has made prior arrangements.

Student Services

Student services is committed to working closely with students by providing personalized attention and professional services. It seeks to develop a campus climate that brings together students, staff, faculty and the community. It facilitates and supports various activities to assist students in making a successful transition to the University Community and to prepare them for life after graduation.

New Student Orientation

Orientation is held at the beginning of each quarter for new students and is designed to familiarize them with campus facilities, policies and procedures, financial aid, faculty, administrators, and staff.

Career and Placement Services

The Career and Placement Services makes available the services of a coordinator who provides individual counseling as well as materials, references, and job listings designed to assist students in making short and long range vocational decisions. Workshops, employer interviews, and online job searches through the Internet help focus student choices. Appointments for counseling can be made through the main office.

Extra Curricular Activities

Every quarter the University hosts a luncheon for students, faculty, and staff to welcome new students and as a reunion for returning students. Commencement activities are a highlight for students, faculty, and staff who enjoy a luncheon following the ceremonies.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

All students are urged to participate in Merit University's student government. This organization is recognized by the faculty and administration as important to the student's education and cultural experience. Through their participation, students can provide information that assists both the faculty and administration in strengthening the academic program and improving the collegiate life at MU.

FACILITIES

All facilities, classrooms, computer lab, library, and student lounge, of Merit University are located at 3699 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 970, Los Angeles CA 90010 and all programs are offered at this location.

Classrooms

Each classroom is equipped with desks, chairs, whiteboards, computer projectors, screens for the projectors, and laptops with Internet access. All class sessions are held at 3699 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 970 with assigned classroom numbers on the schedule and enrollment agreement form.

Computer Laboratory

The computer laboratory helps students write, rewrite, edit, and debug computer programs. It is equipped with a variety of computers, laptops, and printers. Wireless Internet access is available for notebook computer users. The lab assistants are available for student consultation. Computer hours will be posted weekly and will be closed on Sundays.

Library

The Merit University Library's mission is to meet the informational, educational, and research needs of its students, faculty and staff. A variety of services and resources are available including electronic databases, books, journals/periodicals, and an online catalog. Services include reference, database training, and library orientations. Access to relevant, current resources is available to meet the research needs, support the high quality curriculum, and enrich the educational experience.

Library Services:

- Reference
- Training on Database Searching
- Research Assistance
- Information Literacy Instruction

Library Hours:

Monday through Friday from 10:30am to 7:00pm. Online library (LIRN) is available 24 hours 7 days.

Collections and Resources:

The library collection includes books and periodicals available for reference or circulation exclusive to Merit University students and online resources of over 60 million journal articles, books, encyclopedias, newspapers, magazines, and audio video clips to support all academic programs through Library and Information Resources Network (LIRN).

Library Policies:

- The Library is dedicated to use as a study area. Students should conduct their business quietly and are expected to mute audible devices before entering the facility.
- The computers and network are reserved for legitimate research and study purposes.
- Materials from the reference collection are available for use in the library, and may not be checked out.
- Students may check out books from circulating collection for two weeks and renew for an additional two weeks. The cost of replacement of any lost or damaged materials will be charged to the student who has checked out the materials, and will include the actual replacement cost plus appropriate fees.

Other Resources available:

- California Open Online Library for Education (cool4ed.org)
- County of Los Angeles Public Library (<u>lacountylibrary.org</u>)
- Los Angeles Law Library (www.lalawlibrary.org)
- Los Angeles Public Library (www.lapl.org)

Student Lounge

The student lounge is equipped with a microwave, a refrigerator, beverages with a comfortable sofa and tea tables for students to relax, read, and have their snacks or meals before and/after classes.

Equipment

Educational equipment necessary for information technology management major courses are computers installed with Microsoft Office, and Microsoft Project programs. Faculty and students may check out laptops by providing a photo identification card.

Housing Services

All programs at Merit University are "non-residential." MU does not hold dormitory facilities but is located in Los Angeles and is easily accessible by public transportation. Many different arrangements are available, for example: the rent of a studio or one bedroom apartment ranges from \$1,000 to \$2,000 monthly. The area offers a vast array of inexpensive restaurants, including many fast-food chains, and minimum monthly food costs are within an affordable range for city living. The institution has no responsibility to find or assist a student in finding housing.

MU assists student housing, near campus, and the cost for rent varies by size. Students can travel on the Metro Red Line subway to Hollywood, the L.A. Union Station, or transfer to Long Beach (the Blue Line), Pasadena (the Gold Line), or beyond (Amtrak travels to many cities across the United States).

Transportation and Parking

You may need some form of transportation for getting to and from MU. If you are planning to use L.A. City buses or the subway, remember that MU is located at 3699 Wilshire Blvd. The area around the office building is known as "Koreatown." If you are commuting from a non-local address, use the Metro Red-Line to the Wilshire/Vermont Station within walking distance to the campus.

The MU Registrar can provide you with a letter that qualifies you for a student discount on a Metro Pass. Metro Bus schedules and information are available at One Gate Plaza, Los Angeles, CA 90012, or by calling (213) 922-6235 (8:00am to 4:15pm, Monday through Friday). Metro subway schedules and information can be obtained at (213) 626-4455.

Again, you may call us for any information or help in solving your transportation problems.

Parking – Parking is available for students at the building facility during classes with parking fees. No vehicles may be left in the parking lot overnight.

The University is not responsible for theft or to damage to vehicles.

California Driver's License

A California driver's license can be used as identification when writing a personal check and for other purposes.

To obtain a California driver's license, you must pass both a written and a driving examination at the Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV). The manual of driving regulations for the written test can be obtained from any DMV office.

Nearest DMV

The DMV nearest to MU is at 3500 South Hope Street, Los Angeles, CA 90007. The phone number is (213) 744-2000; the hours are 8:00am to 5:00pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, and 8:00am to 6:30pm on Thursday.

To get to this DMV from MU, take Venice Boulevard East to Hoover. Turn right on Hoover and proceed South to Jefferson Boulevard. Make a left on Jefferson and go underneath the Harbor Freeway (110) overpass. Make a right on Hope Street; the DMV is in the second block.

Application Requirements

To take the written test, some form of photo identification (passport, student ID, driver's license from another state, birth certificate, etc.) and a fee of \$12 are required.

To take the driving test, you need to pass the written test (you do not need a Social Security Number). To pass the written test, you must not get more than 3 of the 20 questions wrong. You will be given 3 chances to pass the written exam.

Driving Examination

After passing the written test, you need to make an appointment for the driving test. Once you pass your driving test, the DMV will take a picture photo of you (so wear something nice) and issue your temporary license. This license can be used to drive but not as a form of identification. The official license should arrive in your mailbox within a few weeks.



Immigration Information

consulates in California:

Consulate General of the People's Republic of China

501 Shatto Pl., Suite 300, Los Angeles, CA 90020 (213) 380-0981

Consulate General of Indonesia

3457 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90040 (213) 383-5126

Japanese Consulate

250 E. First St., Suite 1507, Los Angeles, CA 90012 (213) 617-6700

Korean Consulate

3243 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010 (213) 385-9300

Taiwanese Consulate

3731 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90010 (213) 389-1215

Thai Consulate

801 North La Brea Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90038 (323) 962-9574

Bank Accounts

Checking Account

A checking account is a way to keep money in a safe place and still have easy access to it. To open a checking account, you must go to a bank and present your passport, I-94, I-20 form, driver's license, Social Security card and/or other forms of identification.

Upon depositing money into the account, you will receive a temporary supply of checks that you can use like cash. Most merchants will require at least two forms of identification (passport and student ID). Your permanent checks will be mailed to you.

Savings Account

A savings account is only for money you do not need for immediate use. Savings accounts usually pay you interest on a quarterly basis. Different banks vary on the services offered, e.g., interest rates and many other charges, so be sure to compare before selecting one.

Bank of Hope

3200 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010 (213) 427-1000

Bank of America

Wilshire Branch 3442 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010 (800) 678-1433

Wilshire State Bank

Wilshire Branch 3832 Wilshire Blvd #104., Los Angeles, CA 90010 (213) 427-7711



Employment

Students who wish to work must meet all the following conditions:

- You must have been enrolled in a full course of study during the past 9 months
- You must be in good academic standing: Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher
- You must have the approval of an advisor.

If you have questions regarding on campus employment students, please contact MU Student Service.

Income Tax (IRS)

All students are required to file both a statement with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a 1040NR, if students have income which exceeds \$7,700 annually.

Specifically, there are two major income tax forms that need to be submitted: (1) the Federal Income Tax Form and (2) the State Income Tax Form. Forms and instructions are available at most banks, libraries, and U.S. Post Offices.

If you are employed, your employer must issue a W-2 Form, which you must submit with your tax forms. The W-2 details the amount of wages paid to you during the calendar year and the amount of taxes that were withheld. If you do not receive W-2 Form by the end of the January following a year in which you were employed, notify your employer.

Additional information on federal tax obligations for non-resident aliens can be found in IRS publications 518 and 519. These instructions can be obtained from the IRS by calling (800) 829-1040 or visit www.irs.gov.

For more information on state income taxes, contact: <u>California Franchise Tax Board</u> 300 South Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Call: (800) 338-0505 or visit www.ftb.ca.gov.

Social Security Card

You will need to obtain a Social Security card for employment on-campus or off-campus.

To apply for a Social Security card, take your passport, and official letter of employment to a Social Security Administration Office.

Nearest Social Security Administration Office is at: Wilshire Center 4000 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles 90010.

Website: www.ssa.gov.

Phone No.: (800) 772-1213. (Hours: 9:00am to 4:00pm Monday through Friday)

Health Care

INSURANCE

Upon student's request, the health insurance information that has been designed for your health care needs. These insurance policies are offered by private, independent companies, which are not affiliated with Merit University.

HOSPITALS

The following are some of the hospitals available in the area:

California Hospital

1401 S. Grand Ave. Los Angeles, CA (213) 748-2411

Harbor General Hospital

100 Carson St. Torrance, CA (310) 222-2345

(Anyone is eligible for treatment; emergency fees are based on ability to pay.)

Hospital of the Good Samaritan

1225 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA (213) 977-2121 (Walk-in service is available from 7am to 7pm.)

Orthopedic Hospital

2400 S. Flower St. Los Angeles, CA (213) 742-1000

(Admits only those with orthopedic problems- strains, sprains, or fractures.)

St. Vincent Medical Center

2131 W. 3rd Street Los Angeles, CA (213) 484-7111

USC/County General Hospital

1200 N. State St. Los Angeles, CA (323) 442-8500 (Accepts anyone.)

Emergency Information

The front pages of the telephone directory are a good source of information on what to do in case of an emergency, such as an earthquake, accident, or other occurrences that require immediate action and/or assistance.

Fire Drills - Fire drills are available with the building management. In the event of a fire drill or fire, walk to the nearest exit and wait at the outskirts of the front parking lot. Be careful to stay out of the way of fire engines or other emergency vehicles.

Earthquakes - Southern California is prone to earthquakes. If you are inside a building when an earthquake occurs, remember to duck down, take cover, and hold this position until the earthquake is over.

Reporting Suspicious Activities - If you notice any suspicious activity, or suspicious stranger, please inform the office.

Administrative Services

Academic Advising

Students are encouraged to meet with an academic advisor during registration. Students can discuss their academic plans with the academic advisor at any time during the quarter with prior appointment.



Instructions on Filing a Complaint with BPPE and ACICS

If you feel your rights have not been upheld, you may contact the BPPE or ACICS:

Student may contact the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education by calling (888) 370-7589 or by completing a complaint form, which can be obtained on the Bureau's website (www.bppe.ca.gov). The complaint form may also be mailed to: 1747 N. Market Blvd., Suite 225, Sacramento, California, 95834. Further information may be obtained by contacting the Bureau at: (916) 574-8900 or by fax at: (916) 263-1897.

More information may be obtained by contacting ACICS (Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools) at (202) 336-6780 or at 1350 Eye Street, NW, Suite 560, Washington, DC 20005.

CONTACT INFORMATION

MERIT UNIVERSITY

Address: 3699 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 970, Los Angeles, CA 90010

Telephone: (213) 325-2760

Website: www.meritu.edu