

MTFP Program Office

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MTFP Program Manager

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MTFP Contact Information:

University of Mississippi
Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program
School of Education/ Guyton Hall Annex
P.O. Box 1848
University, MS 38677-1848

Email: mtfp@olemiss.edu

Website: <http://www.mtfp.net>

Program Office (toll-free) 1-888-611-5160

Program Office (local) (662) 915-7382

Program Office (fax) (662) 915-3848

MTFP Partner Graduate Institutions

Alcorn State University	Dr. Robert Carr, Dean School of Education and Psychology	(601) 877-6141
Belhaven University	Dr. David Hand, Dean Department of Education	(601) 968-8703
Blue Mountain College	Dr. Jenetta Waddell, Dean Department of Education	(662) 685-4771 Ext. 240
Delta State University	Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dean College of Education	(662) 846-4400
Jackson State University	Dr. Daniel Watkins, Dean College of Education	(601) 979-2433
Mississippi College	Dr. Don W. Locke, Dean School of Education	(601) 925-3250
Mississippi State University	Dr. Richard Blackburn, Dean College of Education	(662) 325-3717
Mississippi University for Women	Dr. Sue Jolly-Smith, Dean Division of Education & Human Sciences	(662) 329-7175
Mississippi Valley State University	Dr. Mary Jennings, Chair College of Education	(662) 254-8374
University of Mississippi	Dr. David Rock, Dean School of Education	(662) 915-7063
University of Southern Mississippi	Dr. Ann P. Blackwell, Dean College of Education and Psychology	(601) 266-4568
William Carey University	Dr. Ben Burnett, Dean School of Education and Psychology	(601) 318-6189

**** Millsap College, Rust College, and Tougaloo College** do not offer a Master of Education or Educational Specialist degree, however, they serve as recruiters for the MTFP and have information materials for interested applicants.

Graduate Institution - Tuition Scholarship Contact Persons

Alcorn State University	Dr. Tabitha Smith School of Education & Psychology	(601) 877-4097
Belhaven University	Ms. Lynn Payne Financial Aid	lpayne@belhaven.edu
Blue Mountain College	Ms. Pam Pharr Financial Aid	(662) 685-4771 ext. 133
Delta State University	Mr. George Evans Bursar's Office	(662) 846-4682 gevans@deltastate.edu
Jackson State University	Ms. Carolyn Taylor Office of Financial Services	carolyn.a.taylor@jsums.edu (601) 979-3860
Mississippi College	Ms. Debbir Lenoir Financial Aid	(601) 925-3808
Mississippi State University	Ms. Delisa Pogue Comptroller's Office	(662) 325-8017
Mississippi University for Women	Dr. Monica Riley Division of Graduate Studies	(662) 329-7110
Mississippi Valley State University	Ms. Mabel Robinson College of Education	(662) 254-3136
University of Mississippi	Ms. Angie Gurner MTFP Senior Secretary	1-888-611-5160 (662) 915-7382
University of Southern Mississippi	Ms. Betty Williamson College of Education & Psychology	(601) 266-4568
William Carey University	Ms. Anna Powell Business Office	(601) 318-6127

Program Benefits and Expectations

- Tuition stipends(**non-resident/non-course tuition fees not applicable**)for a Master of Education **OR** Educational Specialist degree program at any Mississippi institution of higher learning (**graduate level only**)
- Stipends for books and supplies (\$30.00 per graduate hour)
- MTFP Town Meetings Discussion Board (2nd-year only)
- Chat room meetings (via the Internet) in subject area/grade level groups (1st-year only)
- Verification of Employment. All Fellows are required to submit a contract from school district that verifies your employment in a critical shortage school district the following year (1st, 2nd & 3rd Fellows)
- Support network of cohort MTFP Fellows

1st-year Fellows Expectations and Requirements

- Teach for three (3) consecutive years in a Mississippi Critical Teacher Shortage district. (**Administrative positions are not applicable.**)
- Maintain valid Mississippi teacher licensure
- Complete a Master of Education OR Educational Specialist degree program within the three-year commitment
- Access to a computer with internet account (at your expense) throughout the three-year commitment
- Check e-mail daily including the once-a-week "MTFP News" sent from the MTFP Program Office.
- Participate in chat room sessions (**10 total**) (via the Internet) (see CHAT ATTENDANCE POLICY section). Fellows who did not meet the chat attendance requirements for the first program year will participate in a Summer (May) "makeup" semester prior to the 2nd year
- Attend MTFP Orientation (7/25/15)
- Submit an updated official transcript by June 15th of each program year that reflects your graduate course work completed. Final transcript with degree posted required by completion of 3rd year

Retention Requirements for 2nd-year Fellows

- **Teaching.** Fellows must maintain a full-time classroom teaching position in a critical shortage district in Mississippi. (**Administrative positions are not applicable.**)
- **Internet access.** Fellows must maintain an Internet account (at his/her expense) throughout the three-year commitment.
- **E-mail communication.** All Fellows should check their email **daily** including the once-a-week "MTFP News" sent from the MTFP Program Office.
- **Graduate Program.** Fellows must maintain the G.P.A. and other requirements as outlined for his/her graduate degree program.
- **Town Meetings Discussion Board.** Fellows are required to research and post articles (6) on various topics assigned by MTFP staff using Blackboard Discussion.
- **Verification of Employment.** All Fellows are required to submit a signed contract from your school district that you are employed in a critical shortage school district the following school year by June 15th. (Any personal information can be blackened out).
- **Transcript.** Fellows must submit an updated, official transcript by June 15th of each program year.

Retention Requirements for 3rd-year Fellows

- **Teaching.** Fellows must maintain a full-time classroom teaching position in a critical shortage district in Mississippi (**Administrative positions are not applicable.**)
- **Internet access.** Fellows must maintain an Internet account (at his/her expense) throughout the three-year commitment.
- **E-mail communication.** Fellows should check their email daily, including the once-a-week "MTFP News" sent from the MTFP Program Office.
- **Graduate Program.** Fellows must maintain the G.P.A. and other requirements as outlined for his/her graduate degree program.
- **Verification of Employment.** All Fellows are required to submit a contract from your school district that you are employed in a critical shortage school district your final MTFP commitment year by June 15th. (Any personal information can be blackened out).
- **Transcript.** Fellows must submit a final transcript with degree posted—submitted by August 15th of final program year. (**The degree MTFP paid for should be posted on this final transcript.**)

**MISSISSIPPI TEACHER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
(MTFP)
RULES AND REGULATIONS**

I. ELIGIBILITY

- A. Applicant must be employed in a Critical Teacher Shortage district as designated by the Mississippi Department of Education as a classroom teacher for three consecutive years beginning start date with MTFP. (August 2015-July 2018)
- B. Applicant must hold a valid standard Mississippi teacher licensure.
- C. Applicant, once accepted to MTFP, must be admitted and enrolled in a Master of Education or Educational Specialist degree program at a Mississippi Institution of Higher Learning by February 1st of year one.
- D. Applicant must not presently or previously have defaulted on an educational loan.
- E. Applicants, if accepted, are not eligible for any other concurrent state aid (Graduate Loan Scholars, WIN, etc) but may apply for federal and institutional aid.
- F. Applicants, if accepted, must sign an initial copy of MTFP Rules and Regulations for submission by the end of the required Orientation session for participants.

II. THE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT RECEIVES:

- A. Tuition stipends (**non-resident/non-course tuition fees not applicable**) toward a Master of Education **OR** Educational Specialist degree paid directly to the participating IHL not to exceed an

amount equal to the highest total tuition assessed by a state public institution of higher learning during that school year and a total of 39 hours of graduate courses toward one graduate degree

- B. Stipends for books and supplies
- C. Professional development
- D. Ongoing cohort support via Internet chat rooms, email and MTFP office toll-free number

III. THE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT AGREES:

- A. To teach in a Mississippi classroom for three (3) consecutive years in a Critical Teacher Shortage district. (**Administrative positions are not applicable.**) (1st, 2nd, and 3rd year Fellows)
- B. To maintain a valid standard Mississippi teacher license (1st, 2nd, and 3rd year Fellows)
- C. To complete a Master of Education or Educational Specialist degree programs within the three-year commitment period from a Mississippi IHL funded through MTFP (1st, 2nd, and 3rd year Fellows). MTFP will pay up to 39 graduate credit hours total toward masters or specialist degree in education.
- D. To have access to a computer with internet (at own expense) throughout the three-year commitment (1st, 2nd, and 3rd year Fellows)
- E. To check UM Gmail daily (1st, 2nd, and 3rd year Fellows)
- F. To participate in required number of chat room sessions (**10 total**) (1st year Fellows)
- G. To participate in MTFP Town Meeting Discussion Board/Professional Development sessions (6 total) utilizing Blackboard (2nd year Fellows)

- H. To attend MTFP Orientation at the University of Mississippi (1st year Fellows)
- I. To submit an updated **official transcript** by June 15th each program year that reflects graduate course work completed during MTFP commitment. (1st and 2nd year Fellows. 3rd year Fellows must submit **final official transcript** by August 15th with degree posted).
- J. To submit a signed contract from your school district verifying your employment in a critical shortage school district each year during the MTFP three year commitment by June 15th. (1st 2nd & 3rd year Fellows)
- K. To return to the MTFP office all personal information sheets signed and updated each program year. Fellows should also notify the MTFP office of any changes in address or employment during three-year commitment. (1st, 2nd, and 3rd year Fellows)

IV. SERVICES OBLIGATIONS:

- A. A recipient agrees to render service as a licensed full-time classroom teacher (K-12) in a public school district in Mississippi in which there exists a critical shortage of teachers as designated by the State Board of Educations. It is the responsibility of the award recipient to secure employment in a Mississippi critical needs district. Prospective participants may contact the Mississippi Teacher Center for placement assistance at www.mde.k12.ms.us/mtc or call 601-359-3631. **Invalid positions (for time period of service) include but may not be limited to assistant teacher, full-time substitute, counselor, curriculum specialist, speech therapist or administrator.**
- B. A recipient must be **fully admitted** into a Master of Education degree or Educational Specialist degree program by February 1 of his/her program entrance year and must provide an official letter of

verification to the MTFP office by February 1st verifying **full acceptance** into a degree program or any conditions placed on the recipient by the participating IHL for acceptance. **If a recipient has conditional status, MTFP requires official documentation, at the end of each semester, of steps being taken to achieve full acceptance status. Failure to comply could result in dismissal from MTFP.**

- C. A recipient must maintain the G.P.A. and other requirements as outlined for his/her Master of Education **OR** Educational Specialist degree program by the participating IHL.
- D. A recipient must complete all MTFP expectations and requirements listed in MTFP handbook and section III of MTFP Rules and Regulations.
- E. Special circumstances regarding a recipient's failure to acquire and/or complete the required teaching obligation or to complete all expectations and requirements of the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program should be addressed in writing to the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program, Guyton Hall, University of Mississippi, P.O. Box 1848, University of Mississippi, University, MS 38677-1848.

V. REPAYMENT

- A. Any recipient who fails to complete the service obligation shall become liable immediately to the Mississippi Office of State Financial Aid for the sum of all awards (tuition and book) made to that person under the program, plus interest accruing at the current Stafford Loan rate at the time the person abrogates his/her participation in the program. **Repayment must be made within 36 months.**
- B. Bankruptcy: Awards pursuant to the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program are non-dischargeable in bankruptcy.

VI. Military

In terms of military service the following definitions shall apply:

Obligated or voluntary military service is that service which is performed by the individual in repayment of a debt owed the United States government as a result of military scholarships, ROTC scholarships, etc. received by the individual. Service is voluntary if the individual is not obligated to incur a period of military service, but chooses to incur the service obligation.

- A. Loans/Scholarships shall be eligible for deferment of the accrual of interest and repayment of principal during the time of **obligated military service**. The recipient must apply in writing to the Board for a leave of absence, stating beginning and ending dates of such required military service.
- B. If a recipient obligates himself/herself to **voluntary military service** prior to during or after the award under the Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program Loan/Scholarship program, then that person shall be declared ineligible for deferment and the remaining unpaid principal and interest shall become due and payable on demand to the Board equal consecutive monthly installments, as determined by the Board, with interest calculated at the current Federal Stafford Loan rate at the time of the occurrence of such event.

VII Death/Total and Permanent Disability

- A. Death: If an individual recipient dies and, that recipient had elected to repay by teaching service as specified in **Service Obligation** Section IV. or by loan as specified in **Repayment** Section V. then the recipient's obligation is canceled. The Board shall require a copy of the death certificate or other proof of death that is acceptable under applicable State Law. The Board may not attempt to collect on the loan from the deceased recipient's estate.
- B. Total and Permanent Disability: If the Board determines that an individual

recipient is totally and permanently disabled, the recipient's obligation to make any further payments of principal and Interest on the loan is canceled. A recipient is not considered totally and permanently disabled on the basis of a condition has substantially deteriorated since he/she applied for the loan/scholarship, unless the recipient's condition has substantially deteriorated since he/she submitted the loan/scholarship application, so as to render the recipient totally and permanently disabled.

I HAVE READ AND I UNDERSTAND ALL OF THE ABOVE AND I HEREBY AGREE TO ABIDE BY ALL OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE MTFP LOAN/SCHOLARSHIP UNDER THE MISSISSIPPI TEACHER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM LOAN/SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AS SET FORTH BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Loan/Scholarship Recipient (Printed Name)

SSN

Signature

Date

Tuition Scholarships

Each MTFP Fellow will be eligible for tuition scholarships (**non-resident/non-course tuition fees not applicable**) for a Masters **OR** Specialist program in the School of Education at a Mississippi institution of higher learning.

To ensure receipt of these scholarships, please follow these instructions carefully:

1. Pre-register/Register for courses (**graduate courses only**) at your graduate institution...Fall, Spring, Summer, Intersessions
2. Once you receive a bill/invoice for your courses, you should take a copy of the bill/invoice and **your schedule** to the contact person at your graduate institution. These contact persons are listed on page three (3) of this handbook.
3. The contact person will submit to the MTFP Program Office your MTFP Tuition Invoice Form along with a copy of your bill/invoice for courses and a copy of your schedule. ****Note: Do not pay tuition out of pocket. Tuition scholarships are not processed as reimbursements to Fellows.**
4. Fellows will be responsible for paying any late fees incurred due to failure to submit (in a timely manner) appropriate paperwork to the MTFP Office.
5. If a Fellow chooses to withdraw from a course which has been paid for by MTFP tuition scholarships, the Fellow must follow his/her graduate institution's procedure and may be held responsible for repayment.
6. Fellows are responsible for any extra fees such as registration fees, parking, activity fees, late fees, class withdrawal fees, online class fees, etc.

MTFP only pays for the actual course.

Book Stipends

In addition to tuition scholarships, each Fellow is eligible for thirty (30) dollars per course hour as book stipends. Once the MTFP Program Office receives a Fellow's tuition invoice form and verification of graduate course hours from his/her graduate institution (See TUTION SCHOLARSHIPS section), a book stipend will be processed from the MTFP Program Office. These stipends (a University of Mississippi check mailed directly to the Fellow's home address or Fellow can choose direct deposit) should act as a reimbursement to the Fellow due to time constraints in processing the appropriate paperwork.

Duration of Scholarships

Tuition scholarships and book stipends will be available for three (3) years (until July 2016 for 2013 Fellows; until July 2017 for 2014 Fellows; until July 2018 for 2015 Fellows), or until completion of a Master of Education OR Educational Specialist degree program. MTFP will pay a maximum of 39 graduate hours towards degree program. Degree programs that require more than the 39 maximum hours will have to be approved by MTFP. MTFP will not pay for undergraduate courses, non-resident tuition fees or non-course tuition fees.

Transcript Requests

- **Official transcripts** must be submitted to the MTFP Office by **June 15th** of each year. If transcripts are not received, tuition scholarships will be suspended beginning the fall of that program year, until receipt of the transcript. *Third-year Fellows must submit a final transcript with degree posted—submitted by August 15th of final program year. The degree MTFP paid for should be posted on this final transcript.*

****Fellows who have grade point averages (GPA) which fall below a 3.00 cumulative will be required to submit a transcript upon completion of each semester in which they are enrolled. The MTFP will work in conjunction with University Supervisors in monitoring the progression of Fellows in raising their overall GPA. Failure to show continual progression towards improving their GPA in order to meet the 3.00 graduation requirement for each graduate school may lead to a Fellow's dismissal from the MTFP.**

MTFP News

Each 1st, 2nd and 3rd year Fellow will receive the once-a-week "MTFP News" from the MTFP Office. The purpose of these messages is to provide pertinent program information, maintain ongoing contact with all Fellows, and to promote the development of the cohort group through the sharing of both professional and personal successes of Fellows.

Chat Sessions

MTFP Fellows are divided into chat groups by content area and/or grade level. Each chat group is assigned a Faculty Chat Coordinator who will facilitate and maintain records for the group's required number of chat sessions (see CHAT ATTENDANCE POLICY). The purpose of these chat sessions is to allow Fellows to share teaching strategies and successes and to brainstorm solutions to challenges in the classroom. Each group establishes topics and dates for the sessions with guidance from the Faculty Chat Coordinator. A list of Chat Groups will be distributed at MTFP Orientation.

Please note: Chat sessions are scheduled for one hour. Unless you are present for at least 45 minutes, you will not receive credit.

Chat Attendance Policy (1st-year Fellows)

MTFP Fellows will be allowed two (2) absences from chat per semester, resulting in a **total of 10 completed** for the program year. If a Fellow accumulates more than two (2) absences in a semester, he/she will be required to make up that semester of chat sessions in the summer (May) prior to the second year of the program. Chat sessions are not required of second-year or third-year Fellows. Failure to comply with this policy in the "make-up" summer semester would result in suspension of tuition and a formal review of the Fellow by the MTFP Board of Directors, which could lead to dismissal from the program.

Please note: Any session missed due to an emergency situation should be made up by meeting with the make-up group, which also meets twice each month.

Town Meeting Discussion Board (2nd-Year Fellows)

Second year Fellows are required to research and post research articles (6) on various topics using Blackboard Discussion Board. Throughout the year, MTFP Staff will assign topics of interest for Fellows to research and post an article pertaining to the assigned topic. All second year Fellows will be able to read articles posted by other Fellows.

Town Meeting Discussion Board Policy

MTFP Fellows are expected to post articles according to the given schedule that will be posted on the Announcements in Blackboard and Bi-Weekly News. There is no reason for not posting an article within the given time. Failure to comply with this policy by May 31st would result in suspension of tuition and a formal review of the Fellow's status in the program by the MTFP Board of Directors, which could lead to dismissal, repayment of full tuition. **Town Meeting Discussion Board is not required of first-year or third-year Fellows.**

Accessing the MTFP Website

Go to: <http://www.mtftp.net>

The Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program website provides general program information, educational resource links and communication sites. The teaching **Commitment** and **Application** process boxes both lead to information for prospective applicants to the program.

As a Fellow, you will use the **Communication** area very often. Unlike the above-mentioned areas, this Communication site is restricted to only MTFP Fellows, Program Staff, and other authorized users (i.e. Faculty Chat Coordinators). You will be given an Ole Miss user id and a password that will allow you to enter the Communication site. Blackboard is the software program used for the MTFP Communication site as well as several other courses on the University of Mississippi campus.

MTFP Communication Site

- Once you are on the MTFP homepage (www.mtftp.net), click on the "BlackBoard" located on the right-hand side of your screen. This connects you to the "Blackboard".
- You will then be asked to enter your USERNAME and PASSWORD.

Username _____

Password _____

**Passwords must be
changed every 80 days**

Now, click on LOGIN.

- You will be redirected to a welcome page specifically designed for you with your name at the top. You will see a listing of tasks and announcements and courses. First-year Fellows should click on the **2015 Mississippi Teacher Fellowship Program** button in the "My Courses" section.

Tools

This is your most commonly used area of Blackboard. Once you enter this page you will see the following icons: Home Page, Information, Content, Discussions, Groups, Tools. By clicking "Tools" you will see:

- Announcements

The announcements section will list upcoming chat sessions and Town Meetings. Check this page to stay on schedule.

- Send e-mail

With this function, you can send a direct e-mail to any authorized user of the MTFP website. You may choose to send e-mail to All Users OR Single/Select Users.

- Discussion Board:

"Posting Articles on the Discussion Board" for a step-by-step guide for getting online and participating in Town Meeting requirements.

To post and/or respond to topics for all MTFP users, you may enter the general Discussion Board. To post and/or respond to topics for your assigned group, you should go to the discussion board found on your group's Group Page. You will need to click on the "Add a new thread" button in order to post your response.

- Collaboration

We do not utilize this function unless you are planning a separate meeting with a Fellow who is not in your group. **You will not receive credit for chatting here as one of your scheduled sessions.**

ACCESSING CHAT/COLLABORATION (First Year Fellows)

A step-by-step guide for getting online and participating in required chat sessions.

8. Accessing Chat (Follow the steps below to access chat sessions):

1. Go to www.mtfp.net
2. Click on "Blackboard" right side of page
3. Enter username and password... then login
4. Click on course you are enrolled in "2015 MTFP"
5. Under "My Groups" click on your assigned group (i.e. Elementary A; SPED, Make-up, etc)
6. In dropdown click on "Collaboration"
7. Click on "Office Hours"
8. Wait for chat to load... Must download Java the first time you chat.
9. Once the collaboration room pulls up, look for the cursor in the lower left hand corner. Type at the cursor and press enter

9. Posting Articles on Discussion Board (Second-year Fellows)

Go to www.mtfp.net

1. Blackboard (Same as accessing chats)
2. Click login, then enter your username and password on Blackboard
3. Click on Course you are enrolled (2015 MTFP)
4. Click, "Discussions"
5. Click "the topic assigned" (i.e. classroom management, inclusion; etc.)
6. Click, + add new thread"
7. Type in the "subject" box the name of article you are posting
8. Type in the "message" a summary of article you are posting
9. Be sure to save the article you wish to attach somewhere on your computer)
10. Go to "attachment" click on "browse" and identify where the article is saved on your computer (i.e. your documents, desktop, etc.)
11. Attach article
12. Submit

***Email communication with MTFP will be through UM Gmail only. If you don't check your UM gmail account daily, your account will become inactive. Passwords must be changed every 80 days or you will have to fill out a form with ID picture and fax it in. This could cause you to miss several chats and other information while you wait.**



Numbers to Know

Mississippi Teacher Fellowship
Program

1-888-611-5160

MS Office of Licensure

601-359-3483

State Student Financial Aid

1-800-327-2980

Problems getting chats to load?

Add Blackboard to your Java exceptions list on your computer.

On a Mac:

Go to Apple menu—System Preferences.

Choose the Java control panel. The Java Control Panel will open in a new window.

Choose Security from the top of the Java Control Panel.

Under the Exception Site List, you need to add the following:

<https://blackboard.olemiss.edu>

<https://bbpfs.olemiss.edu:8443>

<https://bbpfs.olemiss.edu:8012>

To add the above sites, click Edit Site List, click Add, enter the first site, then choose Add again and enter the second site. When done, click Okay.

You should now see both sites listed in the exceptions list. Click OK to close the Java control panel.

On a Windows PC:

Go to Start—All Programs—Java—Configure Java.

The Java Control Panel will open in a new window.

Choose Security from the top of the Java Control Panel.

Under the Exception Site List, you need to add the following:

<https://blackboard.olemiss.edu>

<https://bbpfs.olemiss.edu:8443>

<https://bbpfs.olemiss.edu:8012>

To add the above sites, click Edit Site List, click Add, enter the first site, then choose Add again and enter the second site. When done, click Okay.

You should now see both sites listed in the exceptions list. Click OK to close the Java control panel.

