660 Membership and Subscriptions

Approved by President

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Sidney A. McPhee, President

Effective Date: June 5, 2017, 2019

Responsible Division: Business and Finance
Responsible Office: Business and Finance
Responsible Officer: Associate Vice President, Business and Finance

I. Purpose

This policy sets forth provisions for purchase of membership dues and subscriptions at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU or University) whether paid from state funds, or purchased with restricted gift or grant funds, or under a University contract. James E. Walker Library, Center for Historic Preservation, and Center for Popular Music are exempt from this policy, with respect to library collections only. Memberships and subscriptions purchased with restricted gift or grant funds, or under a University contract are also not subject to these guidelines. They are covered under the terms of the gift, grant, or contract agreement the provisions set forth herein.

II. Definitions

A. Membership Dues or Subscriptions. Any expenditure from state funds by Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU or University) which entitles subscription of material or membership, associate membership, access to online database material, or participation in activities of an organization.

B. Organization. A group (public or private), association, or society whose purpose is to promote common interests and share information.

C. Publication directly related to the mission. A publication without which the mission of the University would be difficult, or impossible, to perform.

III. General

The application for memberships and subscriptions should adhere to the following criteria:

A. The memberships and subscriptions must be directly related to the goals and mission of the University.
B. The University-wide may not pay the memberships and dues or subscriptions are encouraged to avoid duplicate memberships and subscriptions unnecessarily increasing cost to the University, for individuals. An exception may be granted in instances where an organization does not permit University membership or where an individual membership (in the name of a University representative) is less expensive than a University membership. However, memberships necessary to maintain or enhance an employee’s professional status (i.e., American Institute of Certified Professional Accountants or Bar membership dues) should be considered the responsibility of the employee and the association dues considered a personal expense.

C. Individual memberships and subscriptions are allowed based on the following criteria: The University should evaluate the duplication of memberships and subscriptions, with the intention of providing only one (1) membership for the University.

1. When University memberships are not offered with an organization or where an individual membership (in the name of a University representative) is less expensive than a University membership.

2. The individual membership’s primary purpose would be to promote the mission of MTSU and the expense is justified by the benefit the University receives.

3. The individual membership is necessary for the employee to carry out the job responsibilities for which the employee was hired.

4. Memberships that maintain or enhance an employee’s professional status are not allowed and should be considered a personal expense.

D. Membership dues that are included as a part of the expense of registration for an organizational meeting, for which the University pays the expense of an employee to attend, will be considered memberships dues under this policy and subject to the approval process conditions set forth herein.

E. Payment for, or reimbursement of, Faculty and staff memberships in civic organizations or social clubs is not allowed. are encouraged; however, the University may not use state funds to pay for memberships.

F. Subscriptions for political publications are not allowed shall not be approved, unless used for instructional purposes.

1. The type of media content requested. (For example, all statewide daily newspapers.)

2. The users of the media content provided by the service.
3. The benefit of the service to the University.

4. Justification that the media monitoring service is the most economical means of fulfilling the University’s need.

IV. Departmental Responsibility for Approval of Memberships and Subscriptions

A. Each department/department head will be responsible for ensuring the membership and subscription purchase adheres to the parameters of this policy. All memberships and subscriptions must obtain the approval of the President as delegated to the Vice President of each division, with the exception of the Athletics Department, which must have the approval of the President are under the discretion and responsibility of the department head.

A-B. Each department is encouraged to develop a specific procedure for procuring and tracking memberships and subscriptions to ensure adherence to this policy.

V. Procedures

A. Memberships and subscriptions may be purchased with a Payment Authorization through Accounting Services. Both the Application for New Subscription/Membership, with attached applicable subscription/membership documentation/forms, and the Payment Authorization must be completed and submitted for approval to the President or Vice President, as appropriate.

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B. Memberships and subscriptions may be purchased using a University P-card and must follow policies relating to proper card use and card security measures as addressed in Policy 632 Purchasing Card (P-Card) Program. Payment for either a new or a renewed subscription, up to one (1) year, will be made in the fiscal year the original subscription is invoiced or the renewal invoice is received and does not need to coincide with the fiscal year.

1. A request for payment of a subscription longer than one year must include justification of the substantial cost advantage of subscribing for a period longer than one (1) year.

2. No payments will be permitted for more than a two (2) year subscription period.

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C. Upon approval from the President or Vice President, all original forms must be forwarded to Accounting Services for final processing and tracking. Accounting Services is responsible for maintaining a file on the initial application and approval of all
memberships and subscriptions being paid by the University. Payment for either a new or renewed subscription, up to two (2) years, will be made in the fiscal year the original subscription is invoiced or the renewal invoice is received and does not need to coincide with the fiscal year. No payments will be permitted for more than a two (2)-year period.

D. Renewals of previously approved memberships and subscriptions already on file with Accounting Services, as indicated in A. and B. above, may be paid with the P-Card in accordance with Policy 632 University Purchasing Card (P-Card) Program.

VI. Exceptions

The President must approve all exceptions to this policy.

Forms:

Application for New Subscription/Membership

Payment Authorization


Last Reviewed: June 2017, November 2019.

References: Policy 632 University Purchasing Card (P-Card) Program.