

## Frequently Asked Questions About Merit Badge University

1. **Where can I find the Registration link to sign up?** You will find it posted in several locations. On our [Facebook page](#), on [www.threefirescouncil.org](http://www.threefirescouncil.org) and on [www.tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org](http://www.tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org).
2. **What is the date and location of MBU?** February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at York Community High School - 355 West St. Charles Road, Elmhurst, IL 60126.
3. **Who may attend?** Any Scout or Venturer may attend MBU. Girls who are registered members of a Troop may attend MBU for the first time this year!
4. **Where's the Flyer?** We've gone digital! Please forward folks to our Facebook page and our registration.
5. **What is included in the \$49 fee?** All the merit badges and other activities you can squeeze into a single day! Plus, a hot lunch and a limited edition MBU 2019 commemorative patch.
6. **Can I sign up via my <mobile device>?** Sure. Our registration page may be used on any platform, but it's best viewed on a desktop computer or larger pad or tablet.
7. **Why do you put age and rank restrictions on Eagle badges?** We have a limited number of Eagle badge classes and we want our more senior Scouts (1st Class and above) to have the opportunity to choose these classes – as they typically need them to advance to Eagle in the short term. Our younger Scouts have plenty of time to earn these badges – plus, the content of the badges may be too advanced for our younger Scouts.
8. **The cost of MBU has gone up – why?** The cost has gone up slightly because our operating costs have increased. We are required to rent our classroom space, provide busses for transportation, pay for janitorial crews, etc. We think MBU is a great value – particularly compared to other merit badge courses offered by Park Districts and Commercial venues. Some of these can be as high as \$60-\$70 per badge! A Scout – who's done his prerequisites - may earn up to 4 merit badges in a single day at MBU.
9. **The cost includes a Lunch. What's for lunch?** We provide a quality lunch through a local Caterer. It will include a salad, bread, pasta and a protein (usually chicken) along with a drink.
10. **My son has food allergies.** We can't possibly anticipate every allergen; however, we don't serve peanut products at lunchtime. Please be aware that we do have a snack table with drinks, candy, chips and other products for sale. These products may contain allergens. Please ensure that your Scout is properly prepared for his particular allergies.
11. **Due to his allergies, my son needs to bring a sack lunch.** That's fine. Please don't pack peanut or peanut butter-based products as a courtesy to others.
12. **My Scout doesn't want to eat in the cafeteria. May he leave and come back to MBU?** Classes are spaced so that lunch is 20 mins only. There's no time to leave campus and return. Parking is restricted for security purposes and you may not return to campus once you leave. There are no food choices within walking distance of the school.

13. **My Scout doesn't want to eat at MBU. Is there a reduced price?** No. Lunch is included in his registration fee.
14. **I'm an adult volunteer at MBU (not an Instructor or Staff). May I eat lunch at MBU?** Sure! We'll have a line for you to purchase lunch for a small fee.
15. **May I wait for my Scout while he attends classes?** No. Due to limited parking, and the lack of space – every inch of York HS is being used for our classes – we ask that Parents drop their Scouts off in the circle in front of the high school and return and pick them up at the end of the day. There's no wifi, no extra outlets and no Starbucks – we'd prefer that you drop off your Scout and return to pick him later. You may register as a Staff Volunteer for the day – we always need help – and you may stay at the high school. Please go to [tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org](http://tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org) to pre-register as a volunteer. Your registration must be received and approved prior to the day of the event.
16. **It's my Scout's first MBU. Can I walk him/her to class?** For Security purposes, Adults are not allowed past the Commons. Scouts with special needs may be accompanied by a parent; however, they must check-in, register as a companion/aid, pay for lunch and be issued a wristband. There are a ton of Security volunteers posted around the School who will direct your Scout to classes. We haven't lost one yet!
17. **I have lots of questions about the content of the classes and what will be taught that day. Where do I get the details?** Start with the Event Class Catalog on the registration page. The Catalog provides a description of the merit badge being taught, any prerequisites required by the Instructor and any class notes. Over the years, our Instructors have developed ways to efficiently teach the classes in our 90-minute format. Most of our Instructors will send a preparatory email out to their students a few days ahead of the class as a reminder to bring required materials and work to class. Please remember that nearly all of our classes have prerequisites and that most Scouts will not earn the merit badge in a single day unless those prereqs have been completed in advance.
18. **My Scout has a 'partial' from MBU last year. He's completed the work and just needs the final requirement signed off. Does he have to register for the class just to get a few requirements signed off?** Yes. Our Instructors are teaching tons of Scouts in a single day across multiple classes. It's best to sign up for the class and review the requirements and present the work in class for sign off. You may also contact his instructor via the contact information on his blue card you received last year to make arrangements to meet/discuss the completion of the requirements. You may also contact any merit badge instructor (for that particular badge) in your home district to review the work and obtain signoff.
19. **What time does MBU end?** All formal classes are finished 4:30pm. Please coordinate via phone with your Scout – he may be a few minutes late departing his last class if he's getting a few last minute sign-offs from his Instructor. May Scouts remain after class to demonstrate their work and to meet individually with their instructor.
20. **My son only needs to take one class. Can he register and take only a single class?** Yes. He can take a class during any time period during the day. He must check in when he arrives and may depart after taking his class. Please coordinate in

- advance so that he can meet you outside in the traffic circle. You won't be allowed into the high school to collect him.
21. **My son has some classes at Elmhurst College. How will he get there and back?** Many of our Eagle classes are taught around the corner at EC. We will provide school buses to shuttle Scouts to/from EC throughout the day. There will be adult volunteers to provide directions to classes at EC.
  22. **My Scout's classes are all at Elmhurst College. Why can't I just drop him off there in the morning?** For safety and security purposes we want EVERYONE to check-in at York HS and obtain a wristband. Security volunteers will direct EC Scouts to our buses for transport. Depending on his class schedule, he may be eating lunch at EC then returning to YHS for afternoon classes.
  23. **Why are some classes at York and some at Elmhurst College?** We've outgrown YHS and we find that we can teach many of our longer Eagle classes at EC.
  24. **Why do I have to choose a Lunch Period?** Crowd control. We need to move nearly 3,000 people through a 20-min lunch period efficiently as possible. **Can my Scout sit with his buddies? Can we choose a lunch period by unit?** You can coordinate lunch period choices and have everyone pick the same period. If a period is closed, it will not appear in the list of available choices. Because schedules vary – we can't make group 'reservations' for lunch.
  25. **What are the 'Midway' and 'Auditorium' in the lunch period choices?** We rotate Scouts through the Lunchroom, the Midway and the Auditorium. There will be lots of exciting things to see and do in our Midway – learn about High Adventure, Canoeing opportunities, summer camp, visit the Scout Shop – and more! We'll have announcements and raffle off an Xbox. In the Auditorium you'll see a presentation on the 2017 National Jamboree and hear from Scouts and Adults who attended in 2013.
  26. **Are there any Adult Classes at MBU?** No. And Yes! We aren't teaching any adult classes at YHS. We are teaching a number of classes right around the corner at Elmhurst College for adult volunteers. Drop your Scout off at YHS and pop over to EC for a ton of informative classes for adult leaders, committee members and volunteers. We're even teaching a number of Cub Scout-level courses! Visit the calendar page on [www.threefirescouncil.org](http://www.threefirescouncil.org) or go to [www.tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org](http://www.tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org) for more information on adult leadership classes.
  27. **How do I enter the drawing for prizes?** For 20 years, we've been asking our Scouts to 'do a good turn' at MBU – by bringing a grocery bag of non-perishable food to donate to our local Food Bank. Visit the MBU Registration Page and download the 'wish-list' from the Food Bank. Bring in a bag of food and receive a raffle ticket! We're giving away an Xbox, a \$250 Summer Camp voucher and a shopping spree at the Scout Shop. Plus, there are always sports tickets to give away too. Let's fill up a semi-truck again this year!
  28. **I need to make a change to my Scout's classes. How do I do that?** When you registered, you received an email with a 9-digit Registration Number and a link back to your personal registration. Simply go back in using that number and make schedule/class changes right up to our cut off a few days before the event. A word of caution – classes fill quickly. It's best to register early and get in before classes close.

29. **If my son takes the BSA Swim Test at MBU can he use that for Summer Camp or for our high adventure trip?** Most Troops and Crews will allow the test to be counted towards camp and other activities for the year. Please check with your Scoutmaster or Advisor.
30. **Why do some merit badges and other activities have additional fees?** Usually because there's special equipment to rent or supplies needed for just a few hours during MBU – such as renting SCUBA tanks or paying for First Aid & CPR course materials.
31. **We use merit badge worksheets from meritbadge.org. My Instructor said to bring the worksheet to class. Do I have to have the BSA book for my merit badge?** Please remember that the Official source for requirements for a particular merit badge is the BSA Merit Badge Pamphlet. These are available at any Scout Shop and some local retailers. Worksheets downloaded from various sources are for organizing and presenting your work. The official BSA pamphlet will take precedent over worksheets when it comes to requirements. Many of our Instructors use the worksheets as a tool in class. If you're tracking your work in the official BSA Pamphlet, you may bring it with you to class.
32. **The 'blue card' handed out at MBU is not on the official BSA form. Will my Scoutmaster and Scout Shop accept it?** Most units and Council Scout Shops will recognize a requirements sheet from an event like MBU. The logistics of printing the BSA form have caused us to develop our own version of the blue card. We track and maintain information on every Scout who attends a particular class. We track what Instructors teach what classes and we keep meticulous records – by unit, District and Council. If your organization has a question regarding your attendance or our format for teaching merit badges, please refer them to us at [ptdmbu@gmail.com](mailto:ptdmbu@gmail.com).
33. **How many merit badges do you teach at MBU?** We teach over 90 individual merit badges. If you add in the number class periods – that's over 300 classes taught in a single day!
34. **Do you need Merit Badge Instructors?** Absolutely. We're always looking for qualified Instructors! We need primary and assistant instructors – running nearly 2,000 Scouts through in a single day takes a ton of effort to teach and check off on requirements. Email us at [ptdmbu@gmail.com](mailto:ptdmbu@gmail.com) and join the team! You may also visit [www.tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org](http://www.tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org) to complete a Merit Badge Instructor or Assistant Instructor Application.
35. **Can my Webelo attend MBU?** Only Scouts registered in a Boy Scout unit may attend MBU.
36. **I have a New Scout who just crossed over. He's registered in our Troop, but doesn't have his uniform yet. Can he still attend?** Absolutely. He can wear his Webelos uniform.
37. **Does my Scout or Venturer have to wear a uniform?** MBU is a uniformed event. All Scouts and Venturers must wear their uniform for the entire day. We represent Scouting and can expect local Press and dignitaries throughout the day. I'm an adult volunteer/committee member/volunteer parent. I don't have a uniform. If you are a non-uniformed volunteer participating as Staff or on our Registration or Lunch team – you don't need to wear a uniform.

38. **I have a brand new Scout. What merit badges should he take?** Just our opinion, but we think newer Scouts should load up their merit badge sash! Take some fun merit badges that can be earned in a single day – Railroading, Transportation, Art, Collections, etc. You'll need to check out the pre-reqs, but you can come home with 4 badges - if you budget your time. If your Scout is 10, he's got plenty of time to earn those Eagle badges!
39. **How many merit badges can my Scout earn in a single day?** There are 4 periods throughout the day. Some Eagle badges take 2 periods. A Scout can earn 2-4 badges in a day – provided he completes the pre-requisites ahead of time. **Most Scouts DO NOT earn their merit badges in a single day;** however, your Scout will keep in touch with his Instructor and continue to work on his badge. Once the work has been completed, the Instructors and your Scout will meet/talk and review the requirements. His Instructor will then sign off on the completion of the badge.
40. **How does check-in and arrival work?** Parking is at a premium at the high school. We want you to drop your Scout off in the circle up front and have a nice day – then pick him back up from the circle. There will be lots of Security Staff to direct your Scout to Registration. If you absolutely need to come in, do your best to find a parking spot and make your way to Registration. Find the line with your last name initial and check in. Registration begins at 7:30am. You'll get an updated room assignment sheet and a wristband indicating your lunch period. As a reminder, Parents may not accompany Scouts to class. Parents may not stay at the high school – you must depart after you register your Scout – we just don't have the room for everyone to stay.
41. **I don't see <insert merit badge here>? Why don't you teach it?** We do our best to teach as many badges as possible. We're also limited by our classroom space and the number of Instructors. Drop us a line at [ptdmbu@gmail.com](mailto:ptdmbu@gmail.com) with your suggestions for next year.
42. **My Scout needs <insert merit badge here> and the class is closed. Is there a waitlist? Can't you fit just one more in the class?** Registration is on a first-come first-served basis. Eagle classes fill quickly, but we offer multiple classes throughout the day. Believe it or not, Chess is one of our most popular badges. Unfortunately, we don't maintain a wait list.
43. **Will you be adding additional classes before registration closes?** Not usually. Occasionally we'll announce openings in a particular badge - either we've added an instructor or classroom space has become available. We announce additional classes on our Facebook page.
44. **What is First Class Trail? Do you earn merit badges in FCT?** One of the best (and most popular) classes at MBU! Recommended for all New Scouts. Learn and practice the requirements for map & compass, the Scout Oath & Law. Learn to properly fold our Flag. Take the BSA Swim Test, learn the basics of first aid and practice your knots and lashings. You won't earn a merit badge, but learning these skills will prepare you for when you return to your unit and need to demonstrate these skills so you can get that sign-off in your Handbook! Will your Instructors sign off in my Scout's Handbook for what he learns in FCT? Our Instructors cannot sign-off on a requirement at MBU – that's the Scoutmaster's job. We will provide a sheet that shows what skills you learned in FCT at MBU.

45. **Do you have a website?** We do. Visit [www.tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org](http://www.tfcmeritbadgeuniversity.org). Like Us on Facebook for all the very latest info and updates ([www.facebook.com/meritbadgeuniversity](http://www.facebook.com/meritbadgeuniversity))
46. **I don't have a credit card. Can I mail in my payment?** We can't accept mail-in payments. You may use our new echeck payment method through our Registration page.
47. **Can I register and make a payment at the Scout Shops?** No.
48. **I'm booking my Troop/Crew from out of State. Will you take a check for registration via mail?** No mail-in payments. Please pay with a credit card or use our echeck function when you register.
49. **My schedule's pretty busy. I'm not sure if I can make it yet. Can I sign up at MBU on the day of the event?** Unfortunately, we can't take walk-up registrations. All of our classes are sold out prior to the day of the event. This is a once-a-year event and our Scouts look forward to it every year and make it a priority to attend.
50. **I'm having trouble registering through your system. I need help!** Don't worry we can assist. Send an email to [ptdmbu@gmail.com](mailto:ptdmbu@gmail.com) and one of our volunteers will contact you within 24 hours.
51. **Our plans have changed. I need a refund.** We rent the high school, cater the food and drink, and staff for our max number of students. Unfortunately, we cannot offer refunds. You may transfer your registration to another Scout. Contact us at [ptdmbu@gmail.com](mailto:ptdmbu@gmail.com) to arrange a transfer. You may also donate your registration fee.
52. **I really need to talk to a human. Can I speak to someone in authority at MBU?** Sure. Please email us at [ptdmbu@gmail.com](mailto:ptdmbu@gmail.com) and one of our volunteers will contact you within 24 hours. Please remember, we're all volunteers and lead full and productive lives outside of MBU. We do our best to get back to folks as quickly as possible. Please recognize that the volume of requests gets really high just prior to the event. Always start by reviewing our frequently asked questions list.
53. **My son lost his MBU blue card. My Scout went to MBU 2 years ago and lost his blue card. Help! I need a copy of a blue card.** This is the number one issue we encounter as a volunteer team with MBU. Here's how blue cards work at MBU:
- a. **We print your Scout's MBU blue card in advance.** It contains his name and his instructor's contact information. Your Scout's individual blue cards are handed to him/her at check in on the morning of the event. We do not accept blue cards from outside of MBU.
  - b. During class, our instructor (or an assistant) will review your Scout's pre-work (if he's done any prerequisites ahead of class) and sign off on those requirements as necessary. For example, the Personal Fitness merit badge cannot be earned in a single day at MBU. There is a requirement to track and measure fitness goals over a multi-week period. If your Scout has done the work ahead of time, then our instructor will review and sign off on that work.

c. If your Scout hasn't done the pre-work – don't panic! He'll go home, continue to work on the badge, staying in contact with his instructor until he's completed all the work. He'll then arrange to review the work with his instructor – via email, in person, via photographs, etc. to get the final approval for completion of the badge.

d. In fact, your Scout doesn't even need to have our instructor sign off on his work. Any other merit badge instructor, qualified in the particular badge – in your district or council – may work with your Scout to complete the rest of the work.

e. If the work IS completed at MBU, your Scout will receive a signed, completed blue card sheet with the instructor's signature showing that all the requirements have been met. The instructor keeps the bottom 1/3 of the sheet for his records.

f. If SOME of the work is completed in class, our instructor will list and initial the requirements completed the day of the event. Our instructor will hand your Scout his entire blue sheet at the end of class. It is the responsibility of the Scout not to lose his partially completed blue card. MBU does NOT maintain copies of blue cards – completed or partial. Nor do we track who's completed what badges. We only maintain records of who attended a particular class on the day of the event.

g. If a blue card is lost, we can look up your Scout's registration, determine who his instructor was and put you in contact. Given that an instructor sees hundreds of Scouts on event day, he may or may not remember your individual Scout. Please ensure that your Scout holds tight to his completed or partial blue cards.