

Mississippi College to change name in 2026

After significant review and in preparation for the institution's 2026 bicentennial, on Nov. 18 the Mississippi College Board of Trustees approved an institutional name change from Mississippi College (MC) to Mississippi Christian University.

This decision underscores MC's status as a comprehensive university and allows the institution to retain its MC logo and identity.

The institutional name change is a strategic decision that reiterates leadership's commitment to fulfilling the private university's vision statement – to be known as a university recognized for academic excellence and commitment to the cause of Christ. Planning for a name change and associated branding efforts will begin immediately, and the new name will take effect in 2026 to coincide with the bicentennial.

At the Nov. 18 meeting, the Mississippi College Board of Trustees also approved:

- A preliminary plan for academic reorganization.
- A strategic realignment of the athletic department.

"These transformational and necessary changes are extremely important to the future of this institution. As we look ahead to the institution's bicentennial in 2026, we want to ensure that MC will be a university recognized for academic excellence and commitment to the cause of Christ for another 200 years," said Mississippi College President Blake Thompson.

The preliminary plan for academic reorganization elevates the

Department of Christian Studies to an interdisciplinary unit that underscores the institution's commitment to Christian education. A new structure will be implemented that consolidates the School of Christian Studies and the Arts with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the School of Education will be renamed to the School of Education and Human Science. The Provost has been charged with evaluating the potential consolidation of a limited number of academic departments on campus. This plan aims to ensure academic programs are relevant to the marketplace while also making the university more efficient and innovative.

"By refining our academic offerings and investing in key academic initiatives, we seek to provide a learning environment where students and faculty can excel, pursue meaningful scholarship and engage in impactful service," said MC Provost and Executive Vice President Mike Highfield.

The strategic realignment of athletics includes the discontinuation of the intercollegiate football program, which will allow the institution to further its commitment to excellence in intercollegiate Division II play across its remaining 17 sports and pursue needed facility upgrades.

"Discontinuing our football program is a difficult decision. We acknowledge the program's legacy and the deep connection to the many student-athletes, alumni and supporters of the football program. I want to emphasize that we will always consider them as part of our MC Family," said MC Athletic Director Kenny Bizot.

"We will support our current student-athletes as they seek to continue their education at MC as well as those who wish to transfer," added Bizot.

All three changes – the institutional name change, academic reorganization plan and athletic department realignment – emphasize prioritizing the academic enterprise and supporting

the university's core functions.

The three changes were based on recommendations from a task force of university trustees, which were developed in consultation with university leadership and approved by the Board of Trustees, with the primary goal of providing long-term sustainability for the institution through strategic mission alignment, organizational efficiencies and a structurally balanced budget.