



# GRADUATE STUDENT POLICIES



## Graduate Student Policies

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## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, SUMMARY

The complete University of San Diego Integrity Policy is located here:

<http://www.sandiego.edu/associatedstudents/branches/vice-president/academics/honor-council/integrity-policy.php>

All members of the University community share the responsibility for maintaining an environment of academic integrity since academic dishonesty is a threat to the University. Acts of academic dishonesty include: (a) unauthorized assistance on an examination; (b) falsification or invention of data; (c) unauthorized collaboration on an academic exercise; (d) plagiarism; (e) misappropriation of resource materials; (f) any unauthorized access of an instructor's files or computer account; or (g) any other serious violation of academic integrity as established by the instructor.

It is the responsibility of the instructor to determine whether a violation has occurred. An act of academic dishonesty may be either a *serious violation*, or, if unintentional, an *infraction* (a non-serious violation of course rules). If the instructor determines that an infraction (as opposed to a serious violation) has occurred, the instructor can impose penalties that may include: (a) reduction in grade; (b) withdrawal from the course; (c) requirement that all or part of the course be retaken; and (d) a requirement that additional work be undertaken in connection with the course or exercise. Students may formally challenge the instructor's determination of infraction (see below).

Instructors shall report all violations, whether, infractions or serious violations, both to the Dean's office and the student using the **Academic Integrity Violation Preliminary Worksheet**. The Associate Dean will contact the student and ensure she or he is aware of the Academic Integrity policy. The Associate Dean will appoint a hearing committee *only* when: (1) the instructor reports that a serious violation occurred, or (2) the instructor reports that an infraction occurred *and* the student wishes to appeal the determination of infraction.

The hearing committee will include, in addition to the Associate Dean, a faculty member and two students from the School of Leadership and Education Sciences, and a faculty member from outside the School of Leadership and Education Sciences. If the hearing committee determines that a serious violation has occurred it also will determine sanctions to be applied which may include: (a) expulsion from the University; (b) suspension from the University for up to one year; (c) a letter of censure; and (d) imposition of a period of probation. If the hearing committee determines an infraction has occurred the penalty imposed by the faculty member will be upheld. If the hearing committee determines that no serious violation or infraction has occurred, it will request the instructor to take action consistent with that determination. If the hearing committee determines that expulsion is the appropriate sanction the student may appeal to the Provost.

## ACADEMIC PROBATION

To be in good academic standing and to be eligible to graduate, graduate students in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences must maintain a 3.0 semester and cumulative grade point average (GPA) in their programs. A student who has completed at least six (6) units of course work and whose cumulative USD GPA for graduate program courses falls below a 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. At the end of each semester the Registrar notifies the School of Leadership and Education Sciences Dean's Office of students eligible for probation. The Associate Dean will send a letter to the student indicating probationary status and copies to the appropriate Department Chair or Program Director, and adviser. The student should meet with her or his faculty adviser to

develop a plan for academic success. A review will take place at the end of the next term in which the probationary student has registered for six (6) units. If students have not raised the cumulative USD GPA for graduate program courses to at least 3.0 at the end of the subsequent academic term they will be disqualified from the program. Students who wish to appeal their disqualification must do so in writing to the Associate Dean within ten calendar days of receiving such notice.

## **ADDING AND/OR DROPPING COURSES**

Students who wish to change their registration must do so on the appropriate form within the stipulated time period. This form can be found on the Registrar's Office website:

<http://www.sandiego.edu/registrar/documents/ADD-DROPform2014.pdf>

Students are allowed to add and/or drop courses during the pre-registration period at the One-Stop Student Center.

### Online Students:

For students in the Online M.Ed. Program, both courses must be dropped prior to the first day of the semester to receive a 100% refund and within the first three days of class to receive a 95% refund. No refund will be provided after the third day of the semester.

Courses officially dropped between the third day of class and the start of Week 5 will receive a grade of "W" (not included in GPA).

Students who wish to withdraw from the University can access the **Notice of Withdrawal** form through the SOLES website.

During the fall and spring semesters, courses may be added during the first eight days of class (adviser's signature required), dropped until the tenth week of the semester (adviser's signature not required), and withdrawn until the tenth week of the semester (adviser's signature not required). Courses officially dropped between the last day to add classes and the last day to withdraw from classes will receive a grade of "W" (not included in GPA). After the withdrawal deadline the student will receive a grade for the course. Withdrawal after the deadline (with a "W") is only granted when there is written documentation of a major injury, serious illness or similar factor beyond the student's control which precludes her or his continuing in the class.

Students who discontinue class attendance and neglect to withdraw ("drop") officially from the course are subject to failing the class. Registered students who withdraw from the University (i.e. terminate all courses in progress) must officially drop their courses by filing a **Notice of Withdrawal** form in the One Stop Student Center. The same drop policies and deadlines apply to students who withdraw from the University as for those who drop only one course.

Tuition is fully or partially refundable only when a student officially withdraws. The student must present a **Notice of Withdrawal** form to the One Stop Student Center where it will be date stamped. The following tuition refund schedule applies to the regular academic semester:

- 100% refund for withdrawal during the first two weeks of classes;
- 90% refund for withdrawal during the third week of classes;
- 80% refund for withdrawal during the fourth week of classes;



- 70% refund for withdrawal during the fifth week of classes;
- 60% refund for withdrawal during the sixth and seventh weeks of classes;
- 50% refund for withdrawal during the eighth week of classes; and
- No refund will be made for withdrawal after the end of the eighth week of classes.

**The date of withdrawal for refund purposes is considered the date the “Notice of Withdrawal” form is received and date stamped in the One Stop Student Center.** Students must secure all required signatures prior to submitting the form to the One Stop Student Center.

For deadlines and tuition refund policies during Summer and Intersession, see the relevant Summer and Intersession bulletins. Condensed or abbreviated sessions (e.g. five week, one week, weekend, etc.) also require that students register and/or withdraw by the posted deadlines in the relevant summer or intersession bulletin. Read semester course schedules carefully. Posted deadlines may differ for undergraduate and graduate students. For details please contact the One Stop Student Center, Hahn University Center, Room 126, (619) 260-2700.

Students who receive any form of financial aid must consult with the Office of Financial Aid if their registered units drop below the required number of units for continuation of aid.

Students withdrawing from their current classes will lose eligibility for Federal financial aid, and depending on the time of their withdrawal, will be required to return either all, or part, of the Federal financial aid they received for that semester.

## **CHANGE OF ADVISER**

Students may change advisers by submitting the **Change of Adviser** form available from the administrative coordinator of each program. After obtaining the new adviser’s signature, the student needs to return the form to the administrative coordinator of her or his program. The administrative coordinator will distribute completed forms to the program office, previous adviser, new adviser, and One Stop Student Center.

## **CHILDREN**

SOLES provides a supportive environment for parents attending SOLES programs and classes. However, children of students are not permitted to attend class or course activities except in the case of a last-minute, unforeseen emergency.

SOLES offers family-oriented activities throughout the school year and encourages students to participate with children in these extra-curricular events.

## **CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT/LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Upon matriculation, students are expected to register in at least one (1) unit of coursework every fall and spring semester until all degree requirements have been completed. Doctoral students who are in the dissertation stage must continue to enroll in at least one (1) unit of dissertation every fall and spring semester until the dissertation is completed. Students are not required to enroll during intersession or summer, although some courses may only be taught during those times.

Students who are unable to maintain continuous enrollment need to complete a **Petition for Leave of Absence** form (available from SOLES program coordinators, One Stop Student Center, and at the Office of Graduate Records or its website). The adviser, program director or department chair, and the SOLES associate dean must approve the leave of absence. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment may result in suspension from the program. Students who have been dropped from the program must apply for readmission unless a **Petition for Leave of Absence** form is on file and current. A leave of absence may be granted for up to one year, and only under extreme circumstances will a student be granted a second leave of absence. Students on academic probation are not normally eligible for a leave of absence. Students in the dissertation or thesis stage are not eligible to take a leave of absence.

Because students are not registered during a leave they may not be eligible for the campus privileges for which a current ID card is necessary. Financial aid and international student visas are typically suspended for students on leave of absence. In addition, the leave may trigger the beginning of the loan repayment period for students with loan deferments.

Students should petition for leave prior to the requested leave period. Students who find it necessary to discontinue enrollment during a term may also petition for a leave, however, they must be in good standing and officially withdraw from their courses by submitting a Notice of Withdrawal form within the approved deadline.

Please see the Graduate Bulletin for further information related to international students.

## **GRADE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Grading criteria, course content, assignments and other requirements are set by instructors and provided to students in writing. The presumption is that students have been given ample opportunity for clarification of class requirements, including assessment, at the beginning of a given course. The instructor's judgment regarding assessment and grading is presumed to be correct. Therefore, the burden of qualifying a grievance rests with the student. At every level in the grievance procedures all participants should understand this presumption.

A student has the right to question a final grade given by a faculty member.

1. Any student may at any time consult her or his instructor about a grade. The exercise of this right does not require a fixed procedure nor is it subject to procedural conditions.
2. If a student feels that she or he has been given an unjust grade, the student should first approach her or his instructor to resolve the difficulty. However, if the student believes she or he has reason not to approach the instructor, the department chair/program director (or her or his delegate) shall be the judge of the advisability or inadvisability of making this first step.
3. In cases where the department chair or program director has ruled that direct consultation with the instructor is inadvisable, the student may present her or his case, along with any graded work, to the chair or director. The student may request that the instructor provide the student with a copy of the work in question. The chair or director shall review the disputed grade in consultation with the instructor. After this review, the instructor may decide to change the original grade or not. The chair or director will communicate the instructor's decision to the student.
4. If the matter is not satisfactorily settled at number "3" above, the student may present his/her case to the associate dean for review.

5. If the efforts described in steps “2” through “4” do not resolve the dispute, the student may formally challenge the assigned grade. The policy regarding a formal challenge of a grade in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences is as follows:
  - a) An academic grade may only be formally challenged on grounds that it reflects other than appropriate criteria as stated on the course syllabus.
  - b) Students may only challenge grades when they claim to have earned a grade at least one full letter higher than the grade assigned by the instructor (e.g. the student is assigned a grade of C+ and alleges that the actual grade should have been B+ or higher).
  - c) A written petition presenting evidence concerning step “5a” must be submitted to the School of Leadership and Education Sciences associate dean no later than the end of the seventh full week of instruction in the semester following that in which the grade was given.
6. The procedure following submission of the petition by the student is as follows:
  - a) On receipt of the petition, the associate dean will promptly appoint a committee consisting of two SOLES faculty members and one student. The student and at least one of the faculty members will be associated with the student’s program. The committee’s membership is privileged information.
  - b) The committee will promptly decide whether the evidence presented by the student warrants an investigation. If it does not so find, the committee will take no further action on the case and the student will be so notified. If the committee so finds, it will conduct an investigation.
  - c) During the investigation, the committee must provide a fair proceeding for instructor and student, including information as to the character and object of the proceedings, knowledge of the allegations and evidence produced by the student in making out her or his case, and an opportunity for both parties to respond in writing and/or orally.
  - d) If, during the course of this investigation, the instructor voluntarily decides to change the original grade assigned the instructor will report this decision to the student and the associate dean, and the committee will take no further action.
  - e) If no agreement is reached, the committee must decide whether the grade reflected criteria other than those stated on the syllabus, and if so, the criteria that were reflected.
  - f) Their conclusions shall be made in the form of a preliminary written report, copies of which are to be sent to the associate dean, the instructor and the student. The instructor and the student will have the opportunity of submitting written responses to the committee within ten days of receipt of the preliminary report. The committee will review the written responses, if any, before issuing its final report to the associate dean.
  - g) Submission of the final written report to the associate dean will be the final action taken by the committee.

**NOTE: All other student academic appeals in SOLES will follow a similar process.**

## **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

The grade of “Incomplete” (“I”) may be recorded to indicate that the requirements of a course have been substantially completed, but, for a legitimate reason, a small fraction of the work remains to be completed; and that the record of the student in the course justifies the expectation that he or she will complete the work and obtain a passing grade by the deadline. It is the student's responsibility to explain to the instructor the reasons for non-completion of the work and to request an “incomplete” grade **prior** to the posting of final grades. The instructor should discuss with the student the conditions and deadline for completion, whenever possible, and should document the conditions and deadline using the **Petition for Grade of Incomplete**. The “incomplete” grade is not counted

in the computation of the grade point average, nor is credit earned for the semester/session for which the grade was authorized.

Students who receive a grade of “incomplete” must submit all missing work no later than the end of the tenth week of the next regular semester; otherwise, the "I" grade will be counted as an "F." (Students who receive a grade of “incomplete” in the spring semester need to complete their work by the tenth week of the fall semester.) A faculty member assigning a grade of “incomplete” will complete a **Petition for Grade of Incomplete**, indicating the reason for the “incomplete”, and attach a copy of the form to the grade roster when turning in grades. A copy of this form will be placed in the student’s file. Disqualification or Scholastic Probation may be the result if the work is not finished within the posted deadlines and the “incomplete” turns into an “F.”

Students receiving financial aid should be aware that taking an “incomplete” grade may affect their eligibility for financial aid by their failure to earn the appropriate amount of credit within a year. When the work is completed, a **Removal of Incomplete** or **Change of Grade** form will be completed by the instructor and signed by the associate dean. One copy is then placed in the student’s file and the original is sent to the registrar.

## **PETITION TO GRADUATE**

In order to be cleared for degree completion, students, in consultation with their adviser must file a **Petition for Graduation** form with the One Stop Student Center, Hahn University Center 126, by the deadlines outlined in the *Graduate Bulletin Academic Calendar*. The following instructions have been published by the Graduate Records Office:

1. Complete petition with the requested information.
2. Proceed to the One Stop Student Center and request copies of your current “Academic Record” and USD transcript. These may be picked up in person on the same day. A valid picture ID is required. If you are out of town or unable to come in during regular office hours, you may fax a written request (please include your signature) to (619) 260-4649 to request for them. There is a minimum two (2) day turnaround to have it faxed back. Due to privacy and the PATRIOT Act, requests made without the student’s signature will not be accepted.
3. Attach these copies to your petition form.
4. Call your academic adviser and/or program director for an appointment to review your file and complete the remaining sections of the petition form.
5. Retain “student copy” (pink sheet) for your reference after the petition is signed by your adviser and program director.
6. Return original copy of your petition form with all the attached documents to the One Stop Student Center in Hahn University Center 126. These are time-sensitive; please observe submission deadlines posted in the *Graduate Bulletin*.

There are three annual graduation dates at the end of January, May, and August. The effective degree date for students who complete their program requirements by the posted deadline for the fall semester and intersession will be January 31st. Those who meet the deadline for May graduation will receive their degree at that time and students who fulfill all requisites for their degree in the summer will have their degree recorded in their transcript effective August 31st. Deadlines for defense and submission of theses and dissertations are also listed in the *Graduate Bulletin*.



Students who fail to meet the stipulated deadlines will not be permitted to graduate, even if all other graduation requirements have been met. In order to receive permission to attend commencement, eligible students must register and pay in full for their remaining units at USD no later than May 1st. The University of San Diego holds only ONE graduation ceremony each year. All graduates during the relevant academic year are welcome to participate in this May graduation ceremony.

Graduate students scheduled to receive their degree the following August who have nine (9) units or fewer of remaining work may participate if their work falls in the category of coursework, portfolio, practicum/fieldwork/student teaching, or internship. Such August graduates must take the remaining Summer work at USD and they must register and pay for their remaining units by May 1st. Students scheduled to graduate in August whose remaining program requirements include any of the following will not be allowed to participate in the preceding May commencement: comprehensive exam; final project, or paper; master's thesis; or doctoral dissertation.

If a candidate does not graduate at the expected time, the registrar will automatically roll the **Petition for Graduation** over to the next graduation period if it is in the same calendar year. If the graduation period extends beyond the calendar year for which the petition was filed, a new petition must be completed.

## **STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCESS**

SOLES encourages students to give voice to concerns that arise in the course of their programs of study.

The SOLES Graduate Student Association (SGSA), consisting of elected student representatives, is one vehicle for raising issues of general concern to students. The SGSA President's report of student activities and issues is a standing agenda item at monthly SOLES faculty/administrator meetings.

When individual student complaints are governed by another University or SOLES policy, the complaint will be handled in a manner consistent with that policy. Examples include but are not limited to grade grievances, complaints of harassment, discrimination, or research misconduct. Complaints about courses, other than grade grievances, should be brought directly to the instructor of the class in question to seek resolution through a face-to-face discussion. If this meeting does not resolve the student's concern he or she should meet with the appropriate program director or department chair to seek assistance. If, after taking this step, the student's concern is still unresolved, he or she should contact the associate dean of SOLES who will work to resolve the issue in conformance with the policies of USD, SOLES, and the student's program. There is no appeal beyond this level.

Complaints of a non-academic nature, as well as personal issues that are interfering with academic progress should be brought directly to the SOLES assistant dean of student affairs.

## **STUDENT DISMISSAL**

Students may be dismissed from the Graduate Programs in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences for the following reasons:

1. Failure to maintain established grade point average of 3.0 for all coursework.

2. Failure to make satisfactory academic progress toward their degree.
3. Failure to complete time limits for degree.
4. Failure to make satisfactory progress in the development of academic and practitioner skills.
5. Violations of ethics code(s) as established by applicable field of study and program area.
6. Violations of USD policies and the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities, including academic dishonesty and plagiarism, as listed in the Student Handbook which is published online at <http://www.sandiego.edu/archways>.
7. Failure to maintain cooperative relationships with other students and/or faculty or failure to maintain satisfactory delivery of services to clients during fieldwork, including, but not limited to: internships, student teaching, practicum or service learning.

When any of the above concerns are raised, the student will meet with her or his adviser and/or the director/chair to discuss the concern. The director/chair or her or his faculty designee(s) will provide the student with a written plan for improvement that specifies the nature of the concern(s) along with required steps for remediation for successful completion of the program (See **Student Assistance Plan** form in Appendix). The director/chair or her or his faculty designee(s) will, on an ongoing basis evaluate the student's progress and written evaluation of progress will be sent to the student and placed in the student's file. In the event that satisfactory progress is not made within the time limits set by the plan, a written notification of dismissal will be sent to the student. Students who are terminated for any reason may appeal for reinstatement in writing to the associate dean in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences within ten calendar days of receiving notice of termination.

## **STUDENT REINSTATEMENT**

Students who fail to make satisfactory progress toward the required deadlines, who have dropped out of the program for any reason, or who have failed to return from an official **Leave of Absence** will be dismissed from the program. Students may apply for readmission. Depending upon the time and circumstances, the procedure for readmission may require a new personal statement of interest in the program, three (3) new letters of recommendation and a complete set of current transcripts. In considering the readmission request, faculty will evaluate previous coursework, clinical/field/practicum/internship work, and other activities both in and out of the program. If the student is re-admitted, the faculty may recommend redoing any or all of the student's coursework and clinical/field/practicum/internship work depending on the length of the time away from the program and the circumstances for leaving the program. There is no guarantee of readmission.

## **TRANSFER OF GRADUATE CREDIT**

It is recommended that students petition during their first semester in order to plan their academic program accurately. Transfer petitions for previous work will not be accepted in the student's final term unless the transfer course is being taken in the final term. Upon matriculation at USD, students must receive approval prior to taking course work outside USD if they plan to transfer it into a degree program. Immediately upon completion of the course, the student must request that an official transcript be sent to the USD Graduate Records Office.

Students may petition the associate dean in the School of Leadership and Education Sciences for an exception to these regulations, but should do so only after consulting with the adviser and department chair or director of the graduate program, whose recommendations must appear on the

**Petition for Transfer of Graduate Credit.** The student must also request that an official transcript of the course be sent to the Graduate Records Office if the transcript was not included among the admissions documents. When both the petition and transcript are on file they will be reviewed in the Graduate Records Office for conformity to USD policies. Grade(s) awarded by the issuing institution will not be calculated in the student’s overall grade point average or taken into account during probationary review.

Students may petition to transfer credit from another university under the following conditions:

1. Credit must be from an accredited, USD-approved university.
2. Credit must be at the graduate-level at the university of origin. The student is responsible for submitting acceptable supporting documentation.
3. Credit must be relevant to the USD degree program and be approved by the department chair or program director.
4. Transfer courses cannot repeat essentially the same content of work taken at USD.
5. Credit may not be used (or have been used) toward any other degree.
6. Credit earned more than five (5) years prior to matriculation at USD will not be accepted.
7. A grade of “B” or higher must have been earned (grade of “pass” or “satisfactory” ordinarily is not acceptable).
8. Students must supply satisfactory documentation regarding course content for independent study or self-directed courses.
9. The number of credit hours transferred will be based on USD’s semester credit system rounded down to the nearest full or half unit (multiply the number of quarter hours by .67 and round down). For example, four (4) quarter-hours x .67 = 2.68 which will be recorded as 2.5 USD semester-hour units). It is the student’s responsibility to make up the difference if the total number of degree credits falls short of the requirement for the degree. The amount of USD credit awarded may not exceed the equivalent amount on the originating transcript.
10. Although transfer credit from other universities will be posted on the USD transcript, grades will not be posted or computed in the USD grade point average for probation/disqualification review.
11. See table below for the maximum number of non-USD credits allowed:

<i>Maximum Number of Semester Units Transferable</i>	<i>Program</i>
6	30-44 unit Master’s
9	45-53 unit Master’s
12	54-63 unit Doctorate

Exceptions to these limits require written permission of the Associate Dean.

### **Courses Taken After Enrollment at USD**

USD students planning to take a degree requirement or elective at another university must process the transfer petition as described above prior to taking the course. Immediately upon completion of the course, the student must request that an official transcript be sent to the USD Graduate Records Office. A grade of “B” or better is required in order to receive credit (units only) when transferring a course from another institution. Grade(s) awarded by the issuing institution will not be calculated in the student’s overall grade point average. After the petition and transcript are on file they will be reviewed by the Graduate Records Office for conformity to USD policies.

## USD EMAIL ACCOUNTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

All USD graduate students are required to have a USD email account. The University may conduct official business by sending notices or other information to the student's USD email address. It is the student's responsibility to check regularly his or her account and to respond to any notices or information in a timely manner. Failure to do so will not be considered a legitimate reason for a policy exception.

## WAIVER OF REQUIREMENTS

Students who have taken an equivalent course prior to enrollment at USD may petition to waive a course requirement; however, the number of required credit hours remains the same. Consequently, students must enroll in approved course work to make up the difference in the total number of units required. USD has discretion to approve or deny course waivers based on the content of the course and when or where it was taken. The administrative coordinator for your program can provide you with a **Request for Substitution/Waiver of Graduation Requirements** form. The completed form with appropriate signatures from the department chair or program director and the SOLES associate dean must be submitted to the One Stop Student Center.

**SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION SCIENCES**  
**STUDENT ASSISTANCE PLAN**

Student \_\_\_\_\_ ID# \_\_\_\_\_  
Program \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty/instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Area(s) in need of improvement (describe all that apply)**

Academic (e.g. writing skills, oral communication, knowledge integration): *Knowledge*

Professional: *Skills*

Interpersonal: *Dispositions*

Personal:

Action Steps:

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student notified                           | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Written feedback to student (attach copy)  | Date: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program Director/Department Chair notified | Date: _____ |
| Signature: _____  |             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Copy to Dean's Office                      | Date: _____ |

Plan for remediation (describe – use back if necessary):