



SAN DIEGO STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Graduate and Research Affairs  
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## Orientation and Handbook: New Graduate Students

Welcome to San Diego State University! This orientation document provides an overview of graduate programs and policies at SDSU. For additional information, please visit the Graduate Affairs office in Student Service East 1410, call 619-594-5213 during business hours (Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM), or email us at <gra@mail.sdsu.edu>. More information and many of the forms you will need are also available on our website: <http://gra.sdsu.edu>

### Dean's Welcome

Dear incoming graduate students,

Over 2,000 of you will join more than 8,000 incoming undergraduate students to form the newest cohort at San Diego State University. You will build on your previous expertise, and strive to achieve a variety of personal, creative and career goals. The faculty, staff and administrators of SDSU will support you throughout your time as a graduate student, as we satisfy our commitments to engage the local community, create an educated workforce through advanced degrees, and expand the boundaries of human knowledge with original research.

It is this last category that binds the two divisions of our Graduate and Research Affairs office. Graduate students are the engines of scholarship: nearly half of the research papers our faculty publish each year include authorship by a graduate student. The products of that research are substantial. SDSU is widely recognized as a hub of invention, innovation and entrepreneurship. We are in the top 150 institutions for federal research funding, with the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health as the dominant sources. SDSU has nationally recognized excellence in many graduate programs, including Speech, Language and Hearing, Cell and Molecular Biology, Public Health, Rehabilitation Counseling, Geography, Ecology, Mechanical Engineering, Creative Writing and Musical Theatre. The National Research Council ranks our Clinical Psychology program #1.

Your arrival strengthens one of the most racially, ethnically and socioeconomically diverse academic communities in the United States. The academic, career and personal successes of those who have preceded you are impressive, and their legacy now passes to you. When your degree is complete, you will be well prepared to both develop your professional skills, and advance the reputation of the institution whose degree you will carry through life.

In the coming years as a graduate student, you will be pressed for high levels of achievement and personal growth. This will set the context for a fulfilling career, make lifelong friendships, and, I trust, develop a fondness for this institution. We welcome you with a genuine eagerness to foster your growth from student to professional colleague.

Stephen C. Welter  
Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Affairs

## Graduate Student Responsibilities

All graduate students are responsible for adhering to the policies and procedures of San Diego State University. Please become familiar with the information outlined in the Graduate Bulletin. Although some *operational procedures* described in the Graduate Bulletin may change over time, you are responsible for the specific *degree requirements* from the year you were admitted to your graduate program. (Some Master's and certificate programs may provide the option to use later catalog years, if degree requirements change before you complete your degree.)

Current and past Graduate Bulletins are available online at: <http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/catalog/bulletin/>

## Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is a student-run organization that hosts activities to encourage both professional and social interaction among graduate students. GSA provides an outlet for discussion of issues of concern to graduate students and to advocate for their rights and interests. GSA acts as a political voice for graduate students on the Associated Students Council and in Graduate Council (a committee of the SDSU Academic Senate). Additional information can be found on the GSA web page: <https://as.sdsu.edu/govt/board-pages/gsa.html>

## Registration and Enrollment

### Red ID Number and Red ID Card

When you applied to San Diego State University, you were issued a nine digit student identification number called a Red ID number. This number will be used by offices and departments across campus to identify you and locate your records. You will also need this number to access your WebPortal account and various other student services. A forgotten RedID number can be retrieved here: [https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pubred/alt\\_kiosk.main](https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pubred/alt_kiosk.main)

Your Red ID number is printed on the SDSU card issued by the SDSU card office, located in Student Services West 2620. Information about how to obtain your SDSU card is available here: <http://sdsucard.sdsu.edu/apply.htm>

### Registration and WebPortal

Registration at San Diego State University is administered through the Office of the Registrar. In nearly all cases, you will register online through the SDSU WebPortal. The WebPortal is your online resource for information about your student standing, registration, course schedule, transcripts, SDSU e-mail, and much more. Click here to log into your WebPortal account: [https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pls/webapp/web\\_menu.login/](https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pls/webapp/web_menu.login/)

The “My Registration” link in WebPortal will allow you to view your registration date and time, obtain information about fees, add and drop courses, and much more. To view a demonstration video about WebPortal registration, click here:

[http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/demos/portal\\_demo/portal\\_demo.htm](http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/demos/portal_demo/portal_demo.htm)

For additional information regarding registration and records, contact the Office of the Registrar at 619-594-6871 or [registrar@sdsu.edu](mailto:registrar@sdsu.edu).

## University Cashiers Office

The University Cashiers Office maintains student accounts, and is also responsible for billing items such as university housing, mandatory lab fees, and financial aid overpayment obligations. The Cashier is located in Student Services West room 2536, and can be reached at 619-594-5253.

Additional information on a wide variety of student financial issues is available here:

<http://bfa.sdsu.edu/fm/co/sfs/>

## Financial Aid and Scholarships

- The *Graduate Equity Fellowship* program provides support for economically disadvantaged graduate students, especially from groups who are underrepresented within their respective disciplines. Only legal residents of the State of California who can demonstrate significant financial need of \$1,000 are eligible, as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form (FAFSA). Recipients must be classified or conditionally classified graduate students, maintain a 3.00 GPA, and must be enrolled for a minimum of six units of graduate coursework each semester they hold the fellowship. Fellowships range from \$500 to \$2,000 for an academic year depending on the demonstrated need. Students may receive awards for a maximum of two academic years, but they must apply each year. Post-baccalaureate students are ineligible.

Interested students should complete an application from the Graduate Affairs office (SSE 1410), and a FAFSA form, obtained from the Financial Aid office. Applications are due annually in September.

- Some students who are not California residents are able to obtain a *Non-Resident Tuition Waiver* (NRTW) at the time of admission. The NRTW covers the extra tuition fee paid by international and non-Californians for attending a California State University. You may ask your department/school to nominate you for a NRTW when applying to your graduate program. A very limited number of NRTWs are available, and they are awarded competitively to incoming graduate students.

Students with a NRTW must keep their GPA at 3.00 or above, or risk losing the NRTW. The NRTW may be renewed for up to five semesters. The NRTW only covers the Fall and Spring semesters.

- The *California Pre-Doctoral Scholarship Program* targets students who have experienced economic and educational disadvantages, and intend to apply to a Doctoral program. The program supports upper division undergraduate students, and current (non-PhD) graduate students. The program places a special emphasis on increasing the number of CSU students who enter Doctoral programs at one of the University of California institutions. Students chosen for this award are designated Sally Casanova Scholars. Recipients receive direct guidance from CSU faculty members and receive funding for travel, development (broadly defined), and summer research experience (at any U.S. major research university). For more information, contact Graduate Affairs or visit <http://www.calstate.edu/PreDoc/index.shtml>
- The *Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program* targets current or incoming Doctoral students who intend to eventually pursue CSU instructional faculty positions. Students who obtain a loan through this program may have a portion of it forgiven if they obtain a CSU faculty position. For more information, contact the Graduate Affairs or visit <http://www.calstate.edu/hr.cdip/>
- *Many additional scholarships and financial aid opportunities* are available to San Diego State University graduate students. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships or visit [http://go.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/financialaid/Default.aspx](http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/financialaid/Default.aspx)

## Graduate Student Employment

### Graduate Teaching Associate

Appointments as graduate teaching associates, known more commonly as TAs, provide students the opportunity to participate directly in the teaching activities of the university. Indeed, faculty members in many programs consider such appointments an integral part of the academic curriculum for their graduate students. Under the supervision of senior faculty, TAs provide direct instruction to undergraduate students, primarily at the lower division level.

Appointments as graduate TAs are available to qualified graduate students in all Doctoral programs, and many master's programs. Graduate TAs must be admitted to San Diego State University with classified or conditionally classified graduate standing. Appointments may be for a period of either one semester or the academic year. Reappointment is dependent on satisfactory performance in graduate studies (as prescribed by Graduate Council), departmental need, and satisfactory teaching performance. Information concerning an appointment as a graduate teaching associate may be obtained from the head of the department, school, or college in which the applicant wishes to obtain the advanced degree. For further information, consult the Orientation and Handbook for Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Associates available at <http://aztecgrad.sdsu.edu/gra>

### Graduate Assistant

Graduate assistants (GA) provide instructionally related services to undergraduate students, or may be assigned duties that directly support faculty research activities. Graduate assistants are available in most San Diego State University departments and schools. Graduate assistants must be admitted to San Diego State University with classified or conditionally classified graduate standing.

Appointments may be for a period of either one semester or the academic year. Reappointment or continuation of an appointment is dependent upon satisfactory performance in graduate studies (as prescribed by the Division of Graduate Affairs), departmental need, and satisfactory completion of assigned duties. Information concerning an appointment as a graduate assistant may be obtained from the head of the department, school, or college in which the applicant wishes to obtain the advanced degree. For further information, consult the Orientation and Handbook for Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Associates available at <http://aztecgrad.sdsu.edu/gra>

### Instructional Student Assistant (ISA)

Graduate students are eligible for employment as student assistants, who perform a wide variety of tasks supporting faculty and staff across the university. Assistants are paid by the hour and are restricted to assignments not to exceed 20 hours per week. Information concerning an appointment as a student assistant may be obtained from the head of the department, school, or college in which the applicant wishes to obtain the advanced degree. Some available positions are also be listed with the Office of Career Services in Student Services East, Room 1200.

### Research Assistant (SDSU Research Foundation)

Some graduate students obtain part-time employment as research assistants. Research assistants work directly with faculty in a laboratory or other research facility in the health, physical, and social sciences. Although research assistants are employees of the SDSU Research Foundation, they are generally hired directly by faculty members seeking assistance for specific research programs. Students may inquire about such appointments through the appropriate faculty in their program, the chair or director of the respective department, or the Office of Human Resources of the SDSU Research Foundation. Those interested in adding their names to a list of candidates for current or future openings may obtain application materials from the San Diego State University Research

Foundation, Gateway Building, 5250 Campanile Drive, San Diego, CA 92182-1945. Further information may also be available on faculty and department websites.

## **Know Your Status**

### Main Campus vs. College of Extended Studies programs

Most graduate programs are *state-supported Main Campus* programs in which students use the administrative services that are found in various offices in Student Services West. Most courses that apply to graduate degrees are state-supported. Enrollment in state-supported graduate courses requires admission to SDSU in an appropriate graduate program.

The SDSU *College of Extended Studies* (CES) is located in the Extended Studies/Gateway Centers on the southern edge of campus. San Diego State University offers some CES courses that are applicable to graduate degrees, certificates and credentials, and a small number of degrees that include only self-supported CES courses. Students who intend to earn a Master's degree from these programs must be admitted to and matriculate in the program before completing more than nine units. Similarly, students who pursuing an advance certificate must be admitted to and matriculate in the program before completing an excess of non-matriculated units (consult the department for specific unit limits). Students in CES programs that are offered only during summer session must attend a minimum of three summers to earn their degree. Tuition for CES programs and courses differs from tuition and fees for state-supported San Diego State University courses. For more information, see <https://www.ces.sdsu.edu>

### Conditional Admission vs. Classified

Every graduate student is admitted to SDSU with a specific classification, which is listed on your unofficial transcript under "Student Standing." Students admitted with *classified standing* have met all university and department requirements for admission. Classified students are fully eligible to proceed with courses for their graduate program of study, and should not be required to take any prerequisites or meet any additional requirements beyond those listed in the Graduate Bulletin for all students in the program. Students *admitted conditionally* have not met all program requirements for admission. Conditionally admitted students are typically required to take prerequisite courses or maintain a minimum GPA during their first 1-2 semesters of attendance. The specific conditions are set by the student's department and approved by Graduate Affairs. If you have been admitted conditionally, your graduate advisor should inform you of your specific conditions and when they must be completed. Students who do not meet their admissions conditions may be dismissed from their graduate program.

### (Master's and Doctoral students) Filing the Program of Study

Graduate degrees generally have more flexibility in specific coursework requirements than undergraduate degrees. This allows the Graduate Advisor to customize courses based on each student's needs. The Program of Study (POS) is essentially a contract between the student, the program, and the university. The POS is a list of the specific courses a student will take in order to satisfy the requirements for the degree (as printed in the Graduate Bulletin). It includes both required coursework and electives. The POS can only be submitted for students who have classified graduate standing. Each graduate program permits a limited number of transfer units (usually 3-9) toward the POS. These include graduate courses from other accredited universities, as well as SDSU courses taken through Open University before the student started his or her program.

Students should consult their graduate advisor about their Program of Study, usually during the first semester. The advisor will later submit the POS to Graduate Affairs electronically for review. If the

POS meets all university requirements, it is given final approval by the Graduate Dean and becomes binding.

Courses in an approved and filed POS may not be deleted or substituted after they have been completed. Graduate Advisors may petition for other types of POS changes using a Petition for Adjustment of Academic Requirements. The student will complete the Petition with the Graduate Advisor, who will sign it. The signed Petition is submitted to Graduate Affairs in SSE 410. After approval, a copy will be mailed to the student.

#### (Master's and Doctoral students): Advancement to Candidacy

A student who has been *advanced to candidacy* is officially recognized by the university as a candidate for the degree. In order to be advanced to candidacy a student must have an approved Program of Study (POS) on file, completed a minimum number of POS units, and meet minimum grade requirements (see *Grade Requirements* below). Students are typically nominated for advancement by their department, and reviewed for advancement by GRA at the time the POS is submitted. If approved for advancement to candidacy, the student becomes eligible to file the Appointment of Thesis/Project Committee form in preparation for enrollment in thesis (Plan A), or to sit for the comprehensive examination (Plan B). Refer to the Graduate Bulletin for a list of advancement requirements, and exceptions to the rules listed above.

#### (Master's and Doctoral students): Appointment of Thesis/Project Committee

After advancement to candidacy, Master's and Doctoral students may choose their thesis/dissertation committees and file the Appointment of Thesis/Project Committee form. A very specific set of rules restricts who may (and may not) serve on your committee. A full set of guidelines is provided when you obtain the Appointment of Thesis/Project Committee form from Graduate Affairs (SSE 1410). Refer to your program's Graduate Advisor with questions, and to find out about program-specific guidelines

#### (Master's students) Plan A or Plan B culminating experiences

All Master's students complete a “culminating experience” at the end of their program. This final step is satisfied through either the Plan A or Plan B option. You will officially declare whether you are on Plan A or B at the time your Program of Study is submitted.

##### *Plan A (Thesis or Project)*

Plan A is completed with a thesis that will be published in the San Diego State Library. (A small number of programs require their Plan A students to complete and publish a comprehensive project that does not take the form of a traditional thesis.) A thesis is the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem; it states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth the sources for and the methods of gathering information, and analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization, language, and format, high level of writing competency, and thorough documentation.

Your thesis will be supervised by a faculty committee consisting of two members from your department, and one from another SDSU department. It is never too early to start thinking about your thesis committee! Identify faculty members you work well with, and that specialize in your area of interest.

### *Plan B (Comprehensive Examination)*

Students pursuing Plan B will complete a comprehensive written examination in lieu of the thesis. The comprehensive examination is an assessment of your ability to integrate knowledge of your subject area, show critical and independent thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. Your department will administer your comprehensive examination. Examination procedures, dates, and guidelines vary, so consult with your graduate advisor early and often regarding how to prepare.

### Registering for culminating experience coursework (790, 795, 797)

In some Master's and Doctoral programs, a specific course is associated with the culminating experience (for example: 790, 795 or 797). Certain departments only allow graduate students who have been advanced to candidacy to register for these courses.

## **Grade Requirements**

There are 6 sets of grade requirements for graduate students:

1. Some programs define a "core" set of courses that have their own set of minimum grade requirements.
2. For graduate programs that have a Program of Study (POS):
  - 2a. A Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.00 or greater for the POS, excluding transfer courses (= "SDSU POS GPA").
  - 2b. A GPA of 3.00 or greater for the POS, including transfer courses (= "Total POS GPA").
  - 2c. A minimum grade of C for every course in the filed POS. However, some degree programs require higher grades for some or all courses (see the Graduate Bulletin).
3. GPA of 3.00 or greater for 300-level and above courses taken concurrently with, or subsequent to, the earliest course listed on the POS (= "300+1 GPA"). This includes transfer courses. Courses taken prior to the first course on the POS are not used in this calculation.
4. GPA of 2.85 or greater for all SDSU courses on the graduate record (= "Post-baccalaureate Cumulative GPA"). This does not include transfer courses.

### Similar GPA calculations

GPA calculations 2a, 2b, 3 and 4 will be identical when there are no transfer courses, no courses numbered < 500, and all courses are on the student's POS.

### Grade requirements for good academic standing

All students are required to remain in good academic standing by maintaining grade requirement 4 (2.85 post-baccalaureate cumulative grade point average). Failing to do so will result in academic probation. Without immediate improvement, the student will be academically disqualified. Please consult the section of the Graduate Bulletin titled *Probation and Disqualification* for detailed information regarding the specific timeframe and requirements for avoiding disqualification.

### Grade requirements for advancement to candidacy

To be advanced to candidacy, all six grade requirements must be met, and 12 minimum POS units must be completed. A few programs require more than 12 units (check the Graduate Bulletin).

## Grade requirements for graduation

To graduate, all six grade requirements must be met (1, 2a, 2b, 2c, 3, 4).

## **Leave of Absence (LOA)**

### One-semester stop outs (no longer available)

Prior to Fall 2016, the university permitted "one-semester stop outs". You could remain a matriculated (active) graduate student for one semester even if you took no classes and did not formally apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA). Graduate students not taking classes only had to apply for LOA every second semester. That policy has now ended. If you are not taking classes during the fall semester or spring semester, and do not file the LOA request, you will lose matriculation.

### Do I need to apply for LOA?

1. Yes, if you are in a main campus graduate program, are not registered for one or more main campus courses, and wish to remain matriculated (active in your graduate program).
2. No, if you are in a graduate program run through the College of Extended Studies.
3. No, if you only need to apply for graduation.
4. No, if you only need to take the comprehensive exam (or file the exam completion form with Graduate Affairs) AND you will not be taking any more main campus classes before completing your degree. Check with Graduate Affairs if you have questions about this situation.
5. No, if you are registered for 799B or 799C through the College of Extended Studies, and will not be taking any more main campus classes before completing your degree. Check with Graduate Affairs if you have questions about this situation.

### What if I don't take any classes, and don't apply for LOA?

You will lose matriculation at the beginning of the following semester. You will be required to file an application for readmission in order to take additional main-campus classes (but not 799B through the College of Extended Studies).

### How do I apply for LOA?

1. Download the LOA request through your WebPortal account. LOA will be granted if compelling circumstances prevent you from making progress in your degree program at this time. Documentation from a third party to verify the circumstances may be required.
2. LOA may be requested for only one semester at a time. Students are generally expected to register for classes and resume their studies in the following semester. If LOA is approved, reapplication to the university is not necessary.
3. Students are not eligible for LOA if they are not in good standing with the university (for example: academic disqualification, unpaid debts).

### When are LOA applications due?

LOA applications are due by the last day of the add/drop period each fall and spring semester.

## Limits to LOA

1. Each LOA applies to only one semester. If an additional LOA is required in the following semester, a new application must be filed.
2. You are permitted to take a maximum of four semesters of LOA during your post-baccalaureate/graduate status.
3. Students on LOA are expected to meet with their graduate advisor (and thesis advisor, if applicable) to develop a plan to complete their degree in a timely fashion. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that LOA will not interfere with the requirements for degree completion.
4. LOA semesters are included in degree time limits. All requirements for graduation must be completed within 6 consecutive calendar years (not academic years) after initial registration for a graduate program with < 36 units, and within 7 consecutive calendar years for programs with  $\geq 36$  units. This includes time spent on Leave of Absence and one-semester stop outs. This does not include time spent in compulsory service. For example, in a 36 unit program, a student beginning with Fall 2015 courses would need to finish by December 2022. Students must submit their thesis to Montezuma Publishing by the end of the 7th calendar year.

## **Graduation**

Graduation is not automatic upon completion of your degree requirements!

### Applying for graduation

You must declare your intention to graduate by filing an Application for Graduation with an Advanced Degree. The application is due 3-6 months before the official diploma date. Application deadlines are posted in the Graduate Affairs office and on the web page: <http://gra.sdsu.edu>

Applications are submitted through your WebPortal account, and a \$55 fee is required (subject to changes). If you do not graduate in the term that you applied for, you must reapply in a future term with a new fee payment. If you have missed the deadline for graduation applications, visit Graduate Affairs to determine whether it is possible to petition for a late application.

### Plan A Master's students and Doctoral students

1. Most Doctoral and Plan A Master's degree programs require a thesis or dissertation defense (format varies by program).
2. 799A and 799B registration for Plan A Master's students and Doctoral students:
  - Plan A Master's students and Doctoral students must be registered in 799A or 799B when they submit their formatted thesis to Montezuma Publishing.
  - Credit is issued for 799A if the final version of the thesis (approved by Montezuma Publishing) is submitted, paid for and published by that semester's publishing deadline. If the thesis is not published by the deadline, a grade of "RP" is assigned. RP means "Report in Progress".
  - If a 799A student doesn't submit their thesis to Montezuma Publishing by the semester deadline, they must register for 799B in a subsequent semester. Otherwise their thesis submission won't be accepted.

- Although 799A or 799B registration is required for thesis submission, a continuous string of 799B registrations is not necessary in order to remain a matriculated (active) graduate student. Students who are not registered for courses may request a one-semester Leave of Absence. Students are permitted up to 4 semesters of Leave of Absence in total.
  - Credit is issued for 799B if the final version of the thesis (approved by Montezuma Publishing) is submitted, paid for and published by the publishing deadline that semester. If this does not happen, the 799B course has not been completed and a grade of NC (No Credit) is issued. After receiving an NC grade in 799B, students can register again for 799B in a future semester. A grade of NC is issued each time a 799B student does not get their thesis submitted to Montezuma Publishing by that semester's deadline.
  - When credit is eventually issued for 799B (as described above), credit is also given retroactively for the outstanding RP in 799A that is on the transcripts. However, any 799B NC grades from previous semesters remain NC, since the 799B requirement (thesis approval) was not met in those semesters.
  - There is one final possibility. Rarely, a 799B student will get their thesis submitted before the semester's publishing deadline ... but it doesn't get published until after that deadline. In this case, the 799B grade will be NC, but an additional 799B registration in the next semester isn't required. The outstanding 799A grade will be updated to Credit when the thesis is published.
3. The final version of thesis must be approved by the student's thesis committee and the cover page signed by all committee members.
  4. Some Plan A programs require the *Report for Final Exam or Thesis Defense form* to be filed with Graduate Affairs. Most do not. Ask your Graduate Advisor if your program requires this.
  5. The signed thesis signature page, an electronic copy of the appropriately formatted thesis, and a thesis review fee must be submitted to Montezuma Publishing for formatting review (located in ED 107). Information is available at:  
<http://www.montezumapublishing.com/thesis1/ThesisandDissertation.aspx>
- Montezuma Publishing can only guarantee graduation if you submit your thesis at least 6 weeks before the official graduation date on the diploma. If your thesis is submitted after that time, it is possible that your diploma will be issued in the following semester. (Diplomas are issued only three times per year, not continuously.)
6. Your thesis will be returned to you if formatting changes are needed. Additional fees are required if 3 or more reviews are needed.
  7. Montezuma Publishing has a strict publication deadline at precisely noon, approximately two weeks before the official diploma date (the exact date varies by semester). Your thesis must be approved, paid for and published before noon on this day, or the degree cannot be issued until the following semester. This is a strict deadline without exceptions.

#### Thesis fees for Master's Plan A and Doctoral students (subject to annual revision)

1. Montezuma Publishing requires a \$50 thesis review fee at the time that the thesis is submitted. Additional fees are required if three or more reviews are needed by Montezuma Publishing.
2. Montezuma Publishing requires a minimum \$45 thesis publication fee. This fee covers ProQuest submission, an electronic file, metadata file, and abstract for SDSU Library. Additional publication fees will be also required if you, your department and/or your committee members

require a physical copy for their own libraries. Verify whether a copy of your thesis is required by your department, thesis chair and other committee members prior to submission.

### Plan B Master's students

Plan B students must pass their comprehensive examination after they have been advanced to candidacy. After passing your comprehensive examination, submit the *Report for Final Exam or Thesis Defense form* to Graduate Affairs.

## **Campus Services and Facilities**

### Research with safety concerns, hazardous waste or ethical considerations

Many types of research require additional safety protocols, the generation of hazardous waste or ethical considerations. This includes research with carcinogenic chemicals, human subjects research, animal research, export control, and intellectual property. In these cases your research protocols must be vetted and approved before you begin your project. Without proper review and documentation, you may put yourself and the university at legal risk.

- Do not assume that your research is so insignificant that proper review is unnecessary.
- Do not assume that your thesis advisor or faculty mentor has conducted the proper protocol reviews for you. Discuss all details with them in your first semester as a graduate student.
- If you change your protocols after approval, obtain new approval.

**For environmental hazards** (including chemical handling and disposal), discuss with your department or building manager and visit the Environmental Health and Safety website:

<http://bfa.sdsu.edu/ehs/>

**Research with human subjects** must be approved in advance by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). You will need IRB review and approval if you will obtain information from people (survey, interview, observation or experimentation), or you will analyze human information, records, tissues or samples previously collected by someone else. Visit

<https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/researchaffairs/hrpp.aspx/> and click on the infoed link under "Start Here". Submit your protocol and obtain approval in advance of subject recruitment or analysis of existing data. After submission, you will be sent an email verifying that the review is underway. Print this email and submit it with your thesis committee form and 799A registration. These forms can be processed simultaneously with the review. But note that all human subjects activities associated with theses, dissertations or intended for publication require approval by the IRB in advance of subject recruitment or analysis of existing data. If you do not obtain prior approval, your thesis cannot be published, and your degree will not be issued.

Allow 4-6 weeks for IRB review. Contact the IRB at <irb@mail.sdsu.edu> or 619-594-6622.

**Research involving vertebrate animals** must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Prior approval of protocol is required in advance of any work in the field or laboratory. This includes handling or observing vertebrate animals or their tissues. It may include research with vertebrate tissue samples, even if you did not personally collect them. Together with your research mentor/thesis advisor, submit your protocol for advanced review, and complete training modules. For initial inquiries, email <iacuc@mail.sdsu.edu> email a brief description of your project including what you propose to do with vertebrate animals or their tissues, the reason for animal use, species, whether wild or laboratory, number of individuals, timeframe for the project and who your faculty sponsor/mentor/thesis advisor will be. See

<https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/researchaffairs/animalcare.aspx> for additional information. Protocol

approval and all necessary training must be completed prior to beginning work. Allow 4-8 weeks for IACUC review and approval. Contact the Animal Care and Use Program at 619-594-0905 with additional questions.

**For other research-related issues** including export control and intellectual property, see the Division of Research Affairs website: <http://newscenter.sdsu.edu/researchaffairs/default.aspx>

### Student Health Services (non-emergency)

All regularly enrolled students prepay a health fee that is included in their registration fees. This entitles you to basic medical services through Student Health Services. Student Health Services (SHS) is staffed by fully licensed and certified health professionals who are dedicated to the college community. No-cost or low-cost medical services include outpatient evaluation and treatment of common medical problems, preventive care, health counseling, immunizations and psychiatric treatment. Specialty care services including Dentistry, Optometry and Orthopedics are available for additional fees. All services are provided at their offices in the Calpulli Center (located near Viejas Arena). Appointments can be made by calling 619-594-4325. For information on available services, see their web site: <http://shs.sdsu.edu/index.asp>

Student Health Services is a primary care medical center but does not provide any inpatient services or other specialty services. You are strongly advised to stay on your parents or your own medical insurance/hospitalization policy if possible.

*Teaching Associates* appointed half time or more for an academic year are eligible for high quality off-campus health benefits. Teaching Associates must enroll in benefits within 60 days of hire. Contact the Center for Human Resources to attend a benefits orientation at the start of your employment. For more information, see the Unit 11 Benefits Summary at the CSU web site: <http://www.calstate.edu/hr/benefits/benefits-summaries.shtml>

### Counseling and Psychological Services (non-emergency)

Students may obtain services from Counseling and Psychological Service, located in Calpulli Center 4401 (619-594-5220). For more information, see their web site: [http://go.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/cps/Default.aspx](http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/cps/Default.aspx)

### Emergency Health Services

Students who require immediate psychological help should call 619-594-5220 during business hours. After hours, students can call the San Diego Access and Crisis 24-hour Hotline at 800-479-3339, or the Student Health Services Nurse Advisory Line at 888-594-5281.

For all other medical emergencies, call 911 from a campus phone. Student Health Services does NOT have an emergency room or trauma center.

### Student Disability Services

Student Disability Services (SDS) is the campus office responsible for determining and providing appropriate academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Support services are available to students with certified visual limitations, hearing and communication impairments, learning disabilities, mobility, and other functional limitations. For more detailed information, consult the SDS website or contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473.

## Public Safety

In addition to providing law enforcement and promoting a safe and secure environment, SDSU Public Safety offers services such as bike registration, Live Scan services, and training for crises, crime prevention and safety awareness. Additionally:

- Emergency blue light "duress phones" located throughout campus will give you immediate access to the SDSU police communication center in an emergency.
- The Red and Black Shuttle drives a loop around campus Monday through Thursday, 5 PM - 10 PM during the fall and spring semesters. The Library Shuttle operates Sunday through Thursday, 10:45 PM - 2:30 AM during the fall and spring semesters.
- Students who are alone at night and need safe passage on campus can request safety escort from a duress phone, or by calling (619) 594-6659.
- Students who have accessibility needs may use the Red & Black and Library Shuttles. For more information, call (619) 594-6659 during the normal hours of shuttle operation. Student Disability Services may also be to assist students needing transportation to and from classes.

## Library and Information Access

Library and Information Access supports the information, curricular and research needs of the university's diverse community through the widest possible range of resources. This includes information literacy, lifelong learning, and creative endeavors in a welcoming environment. The six-story Love Library, named after former SDSU President Malcolm A. Love, holds more than 6.4 million items among its collections. The library features student study rooms, computing center, media center and much more.

## Career Services

Through partnerships, education, and programming, Career Services empowers students and alumni to build bridges to their future careers. Career Services provides current Aztecs and Aztec alumni with many opportunities to define, develop and realize their career potential. They also work closely with employers and community partners to fill important staffing and internship positions from within the diverse and talented Aztec student body. See their website for more information:

[http://career.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/career/aboutus.aspx](http://career.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/career/aboutus.aspx)

## International Student Center

The International Student Center (ISC) provides support and assistance to international students at San Diego State University. The ISC offers a full range of programs and services to foster student success, global perspectives, intercultural awareness and international cooperation. ISC has advisors to help guide students through immigration issues, so that they can maintain legal visa status and progress in their studies. For more information about the ISC services, see their website:

[http://isc.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/isc/](http://isc.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/isc/)

## Veterans Center

The Veterans Center provides support and services to military, military veterans, military spouses, and dependent children. These include outreach/admission, GI Bill benefits, academic success, graduation, and career services. For more information, visit the Veterans Center in Student Services West 1661, or see their website: [http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/veterans/resources\\_campus.html](http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/veterans/resources_campus.html)

### Center for Intercultural relations

The Center for Intercultural Relations researches, designs and implements unique programs that promote the appreciation of cultural diversity, and fosters intercultural and cross cultural understanding. They work with other university departments and colleges to conduct programs related to recruitment, orientation, retention and graduation of underrepresented student populations in addition to academic, personal, professional and cultural development. The Center for Intercultural Relations is located in the Conrad Prebys Aztec Student Union, Suite 250. See their website for more information: [http://go.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/intercultural/](http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/intercultural/)

### Pride Center

The Pride Center creates, sustains, and strengthens an open, inclusive, safe, and affirming gathering space and campus environment for persons of all sexual and gender identities and their allies. For more information about the Pride Center, see their website: [https://go.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/pridecenter/](https://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/pridecenter/)

### Housing Administration and Residential Education

SDSU on-campus housing options generally cater to undergraduates. Contact the Office of Housing Administration and Residential Education to find out about the current availability for graduate students at (619) 594-5742 or oha@mail.sdsu.edu. See their website: <https://go.sdsu.edu/housing/>

## **Grievance Procedures**

### Grievances related to a specific course

Students with grievances related to a specific course should first attempt to resolve them with the instructor. Both student and instructor are advised to document the request and response in writing (email is usually appropriate). If an agreeable solution is not found, the student should appeal to the instructor's supervisor (for a multi-section course) or the department's Chair. For graduate students, further appeals are directed to the Assistant Dean or Associate Dean of the College, as directed by the Chair. Final appeals may be made to the university Ombudsman.

### Grievances not course-related

Graduate students should see the Ombudsman in SSE 1105 (or email ombuds@mail.sdsu.edu) for grievances concerning employment, sexual harassment, discrimination, fees/Student Account Services, or other offices within Student Services/Enrollment Services. The Ombudsman acts as the student liaison or mediator, and is a confidential, independent, and neutral resource for students. The Ombudsman will direct students appropriately, depending on the specific issues.

Graduate students with grievances that do not fall into these special categories and are not course-related should first attempt to resolve the issue directly with the relevant faculty or staff member. A clearly articulated request sent by email will establish a written record. If there is no resolution, students may appeal to the Department Chair or Graduate Advisor, as appropriate. After that, students may appeal to the Assistant Dean of their College or the Assistant Dean of Graduate Affairs. Final appeals may be made to the university Ombudsman. Students who are concerned about conflicts of interest or retribution may direct their appeal to the next highest level, or the Assistant Dean of Graduate Affairs <AsstDeanGRA@mail.sdsu.edu>.

Additional information about grievance review may be found on the Ombudsman's website: [http://go.sdsu.edu/student\\_affairs/ombudsman/Default.aspx](http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/ombudsman/Default.aspx)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is the contact information for Graduate Affairs?

Division of Graduate Affairs  
5500 Campanile Drive  
San Diego, CA 92182-8220

Campus office: SSE 1410  
Phone: (619) 594-5213  
Fax: (619) 594-0189  
gra@mail.sdsu.edu

### 2. What are the most important things a graduate student can do to be successful?

- Understand your degree requirements. Read through your degree requirements in the Graduate Bulletin, and confirm them with your Graduate Advisor.
- Forge a positive and collegial relationship with at least one faculty member (usually your thesis advisor or the program's Graduate Advisor), who can act as your mentor.

### 3. How do I register for classes?

Registration for classes is completed online through the Web Portal. Prior to registration, your required fees must be paid. Payment may be made in the cashier's office, or through the Online Student Account Services at this website: <http://bfa.sdsu.edu/fm/co/sfs/>

### 4. What if my research involves hazardous materials, animals or humans (including surveys)?

See the above section titled Research with safety concerns, hazardous waste or ethical considerations on page 11.

### 5. What does it mean to be conditionally admitted?

See the above section titled Conditional Admission vs. Classified on page 5.

### 6. What is a Program of Study (POS), and can it be changed?

See the above section titled (Master's and Doctoral students) Filing the Program of Study on page 5.

### 7. What does it mean to be advanced to candidacy?

See the above section titled (Master's students): Advancement to Candidacy on page 6.

### 8. How are formal complaints handled at the university?

See the above section titled **Grievance Procedures** on page 14.

### 9. Is graduation automatic once all degree requirements are completed?

No! See the above section titled **Graduation** on page 9.