Student Policy Handbook

**Master of Science
in
Cyber Security Operations & Leadership**

2025-2026

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MS-CSOL Degree Program Overview

Master of Science in Cyber Security Operations & Leadership (MS-CSOL)
30 semester units

The Master of Science in Cyber Security Operations and Leadership program (and elements of cyber security as a whole) presents the learner with tremendous ability to mitigate threats, but also with knowledge that could be utilized to cause damage to a system. Therefore, in every course, there is continuous teaching and application of generally accepted ethical conduct in the field, the University, and society. There are nuances in the cyber security domain that could be reasoned, and for this purpose, it is essential that each course provides a constant thread of ethical logic that develops student judgment, conduct, and decision-making consistent with the best practices in the field and the highest moral standing. Every course developed has this learning outcome: Gain an understanding of professional and ethical responsibility.

Completion of all the courses in the prescribed curriculum of ten 3-unit courses (including the 3-unit integrative Capstone course), for a total of 30 units, is required for program graduation. **A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required to successfully complete this program.**

MS-CSOL Program Learning Outcomes

1. Develops specialized field knowledge and integrates knowledge across content areas of cybersecurity.
2. Demonstrate critical inquiry through field-based approaches and methods and through effective and ethical information search strategies.
3. Applies learning across multiple contexts within the field, integrating knowledge and practice specifically relating to the areas of cybersecurity and leadership.
4. Reasons ethically in evaluating general perspectives, policies, and/or practices relevant to cybersecurity as well as evaluate diverse points of view to include temporal, cultural, linguistic, sociopolitical and/or technological contexts.

MS-CSOL Degree Program Structure

The program of study includes the ten-course prescribed curriculum with nine 3-unit core courses and a 3-unit integrative capstone course. Courses will be offered year-round with three semesters every year: spring, summer, and fall. Each semester is 14 weeks in length. Students will take two courses per semester. Courses will run for seven weeks each, with a one or two week break in between semesters. Students will enroll in the Capstone course during the last 7 weeks of their final semester. Students can expect to graduate in five semesters after successfully completing all ten courses.

Each 3-unit course will include 37.5 hours of core instructional time. Additional homework, research, and study time are required. **You can expect to spend 15-20 hours per week in each course in order to be successful.**

MS-CSOL Degree Program Curriculum

CSOL 500 Foundations of Cyber Security (3 units)
This course will feature a comprehensive overview of concepts and tools essential to the cybersecurity professional and provide a review of the five types of cybersecurity techniques. The student will explore the history and evolution of cybersecurity as well as the future trends while identifying the roles leaders can play in enhancing, supporting, and promoting cybersecurity in organizations. The course will outline a taxonomy of modern cyber terminology. This course will also set the stage for the program by explaining and instilling the "Business of Cyber" as a cybersecurity professional. The student will learn to view information as an asset to the organization, learn types of cybersecurity attacks, what are threat actors and threat vectors, the various roles of a cyber-professional, and the beginnings of designing a cybersecurity program. The student will also identify different types of threats to information and to the infrastructure and the operations that support it.

CSOL 510 Applied Cryptography (3 units)
This course introduces modern cryptographic theory and practice that supports information security. The course takes an executive perspective, focusing on applying industry-best cryptography across a cybersecurity program to reduce risk and prevent data breaches.

CSOL 520 Enterprise Security Architecture (3 units)
This course will introduce the student to the importance of architectural and network security at the enterprise level. Security architecture frameworks will be used to explore enterprise security architectures. Students will identify threats to today's networks and learn to identify appropriate security tools to safeguard these networks. The course will discuss how to evaluate the complexities of securing new types of networks such as cloud configurations and the Internet of Things.

CSOL 530 Governance & Risk in Cybersecurity (3 units)
This course discusses and explains the fundamentals of risk governance, the processes to follow, compliance regulation, and the security controls to implement for specific cybersecurity environments and situations. Information and information systems are subject to serious threats that can have adverse impacts on organizational operations (including mission, functions, image, and reputation). Cyber-attacks are often aggressive, well-organized, well-funded, and in a growing number of documented cases, very sophisticated. There is also a geopolitical part to cybersecurity as well that is discussed throughout this course. Successful attacks on public and private sector

information systems can affect organizational assets, individuals, other organizations, and the Nation by compromising the confidentiality, integrity, or availability of information being processed, stored, or transmitted by those systems. This can result in serious damage to the national and economic security interests of the United States.

CSOL 540 Cybersecurity Law & Policy (3 units)
This course provides students with an introduction to and discusses the relationship between cybersecurity, cybersecurity law and privacy law, and "reasonable security measures". The students will learn the responsibilities of a cybersecurity professional and cybersecurity counselor. The course will explore laws, regulations, and policies; enforcement, compliance, and litigation; consumer data privacy; US federal, state, and EU laws; and future trends.

CSOL 560 Secure Software Design and Development (3 units)
This course will provide an in-depth study of the principles and tenets of the design and development process of secure software used to provide enhanced cyber security. It will review the traditional models of software development, with the idea that a developer or project manager must strategize for security before starting development. Students will understand how to gather and plan for security requirements in development. The course will explore how vulnerabilities can be mapped and planned for. Students will understand how to run an effective development process, culminating with implementation, and how to review and test software. Finally, the course will introduce the concept of software assurance and its role in the cyber security paradigm..

CSOL 570 Fundamentals of Blue Team Operations (3 units)
Active defense of an enterprise is not only the responsibility of the equipment, applications, and security processes of an organization but is ultimately driven by Blue Team actions. Whether as a team, designated position, or assigned set of additional responsibilities, understanding and performing Blue Team actions are essential aspects of an effective cybersecurity program. Some of the fundamental concepts for Blue Team operations include "Defending the Castle" by environment and threat landscape awareness, establishing "normal" vs "abnormal" for your environment, understanding Threat Hunting tools and techniques (including intel and open-source research), as well as the components of some of the more significant threats to your organization such as lateral movement, malware, ransomware, and Command & Control. This course will also briefly introduce the concepts and relationships between the Blue Team with the related White, Red, and Purple Teams..

CSOL 580 Cyber Threat Intelligence (3 units)
The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI) with direct application to corporate (commercial) cyber security operations. It examines the basics of the intelligence life cycle, the analytical frameworks of intelligence, and the types of cyber threat intelligence. The course includes the fundamentals of open source intelligence, refining information into actionable intelligence, and anticipating threats to the cyber domain. The focus is to give you the skills to develop and implement a Cyber Threat Intelligence Program, with an objective, and a timely, relevant quantitative threat assessment tailored to your specific industry. Topics include business competitive intelligence, and cyber threat assessment with a review of past and current threats coupled with an examination of business case studies to highlight the role of intelligence (both failures and successes) in cyber security operations.

CSOL 590 Cyber Incident Response and Computer Network Forensics (3 units)
This course will introduce the principles and general practice of incident response, including an

overview to digital and network forensics. It will define what constitutes an incident, what is meant by incident response, the attack lifecycle, and goals of incident response. The course will discuss building an incident response team, the steps in the process, and preparing for incident response. Students will understand the process of detecting and characterizing an incident, collecting and analyzing data, and the process of remediation. The course will then provide a deeper dive into the practice of digital forensics, specifically focusing on computer, mobile, network, and database forensics. It will outline the investigative and analysis process, survey tools, digital evidence, and briefly touch on the law..

CSOL 599 Capstone: Real-World Cybersecurity Case Study (3 units)
In the final course of the program, students demonstrate the specialized knowledge, principles, and strategies learned throughout the program by critically assessing a real-world cybersecurity problem. Students will demonstrate achievement of the program learning outcomes by tying together the major concepts, skills, and examples of ethical leadership that were included in the program curriculum. The Capstone is the culmination of all coursework from the program to prepare students to develop into skilled cybersecurity professionals. The final project is centered on a case study relating to a current cybersecurity issue, trend, and/or event.

MS-CSOL Program Academic Calendar

Refer to your student success center for your academic calendar and respective dates. Course information can be found here:

onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/studentsuccess/mscsol/

MS-CSOL Program Policies and Procedures

Academic Probation

To be in good academic standing and to be eligible to graduate, graduate students in the Division of Professional and Continuing Education must maintain a 3.0 semester and cumulative grade point average (GPA) in this program. A student who has completed at least six (6) units of coursework and whose cumulative or semester 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 Division of Professional and Continuing Education Dean's Office of students eligible for probation. The Dean will send a letter to the student indicating probationary status and copies to the Academic Coordinator. The student should meet with the Academic Coordinator to develop a plan for academic success. A review will take place at the end of the next semester in which the probationary student has registered for six (6) units. If students have not raised the cumulative or semester USD GPA for graduate program courses to at least 3.0 at the end of the subsequent academic term, they may be disqualified from the program. Students who wish to appeal their disqualification must do so in writing to the Dean within ten calendar days of receiving such notice.

Registration Policies and Procedures

The MS-CSOL program follows the university's registration policies and procedures, which are located at: https://graduate.catalog.sandiego.edu/academics/academicregulations#registration-policies-and-procedures1.

Students will be manually enrolled for each semester (including Spring, Summer, and Fall terms) by the Student Success Team. Once registered, students will receive an email confirming registration. It is the student's responsibility to notify their Program Coordinator if they do not wish to be enrolled in a given semester. In cases where a student does not wish to be enrolled for a given semester, a Leave of Absence will be required (see below). Tuition payment is due on the first day of the semester. Unpaid student accounts are subject to late fees. For drop and withdrawal policy and deadlines, view the academic calendars found on the MS-CSOL Student Success Center webpage: onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/studentsuccess/mscsol/

Dropping & Withdrawing Courses

Students will register for two prescribed courses each semester. All courses must be dropped prior to the first day of the semester to receive a 100% tuition refund* and within the first three days of the start date of the semester to receive a 95% tuition refund.* No refund will be provided after the third day of the semester for either class. *During the first semester of enrollment, any tuition refund amounts will not include the non-refundable enrollment deposit amount (5% of tuition). After the first three days of the start of the semester and before the start of the fifth week/module, students have the option to withdraw from their courses with a 0% tuition refund and a grade of "W" on their transcript (not included in GPA). Once the fifth week of the course starts, students are no longer able to withdraw from their course and will receive the grade earned. Students who discontinue class attendance and neglect to withdraw officially from the course are subject to failing the class.

Continuous Enrollment/Leave of Absence

Students who are unable to maintain continuous enrollment need to complete a Petition for Leave of Absence form. The Academic Coordinator 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.

Financial aid is usually suspended for students on leave of absence. In addition, the leave of absence 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.

Late Work Policy
Students who submit discussion board posts/assignments after the submission deadline are subject to a 10% deduction (or more) from the overall grade at the instructor's discretion. Students are encouraged to communicate with their instructor before the assignment deadline if extensions or further support are needed.

Grade Grievance
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 Academic Coordinator (or her or his delegate) shall be the judge of the advisability or inadvisability of making this first step.

3. In cases where the Academic Coordinator 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 Academic Coordinator or Dean. The student may request that the instructor provide the student with a copy of the work in question. The Academic Coordinator shall review the disputed grade in consultation with the instructor. After this review, the instructor may decide whether to change the original grade or not. The Academic Coordinator 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 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 Professional Studies 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 Professional Studies Dean no later than the end of the second full week of instruction in the semester following that in which the grade was given.

6. The procedure following the submission of the petition by the student is as follows:

   a. On receipt of the petition, the Dean will promptly appoint a committee consisting of two 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 warrant investigation, the committee will take no further action on the case and the student will be notified. If the committee so finds, it will investigate.

   c. During the investigation, the committee must provide fair proceedings for the 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 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 Dean, Academic Coordinator, the instructor, and the student. The instructor and the student will have the opportunity to submit written responses to the committee within ten days of receipt of the preliminary report. The committee will review the written responses, before issuing its final report to the Dean.
g. Submission of the final written report to the Dean will be the final action taken by the committee

Incomplete Grades
The grade of "Incomplete" ("I") may be recorded to indicate that at least 75% of the requirements of a course has been completed, but, for a legitimate reason, 25% or less 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 the 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 a maximum of two weeks after the course end date otherwise; the "I" grade will become an "F. 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.

Students receiving financial aid should be aware that taking an "incomplete" grade might 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
The University's policy is located at:
https://graduate.catalog.sandiego.edu/academics/academicsandadmission#completion-of-degree-requirements-the-petition-to-graduate

In order to be cleared for degree completion, students, in consultation with the Academic Coordinator must file a Petition for Graduation form. Students 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. 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. 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 Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from the Online MS-CSOL program for:
1. Failure to maintain an established grade point average of 3.0 or all coursework.
2. Failure to make satisfactory academic progress toward their degree.
3. Failure to complete the program within the time limits for the 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.
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 Academic Coordinator to discuss the concern. The Academic Coordinator 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 the required steps for remediation for successful completion of the program. The Academic Coordinator or her or his faculty designee(s) will, on an ongoing basis evaluate the student's progress and a 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 Associate Provost, Professional and Continuing Education 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 and other activities both in and out of the program. If the student is readmitted, the

faculty may recommend redoing any or all of the student's coursework and 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

Eligibility of transfer credit will be determined by the Academic Program Coordinator. It is recommended that students petition **prior** to 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 semester unless the transfer course is being taken in the final semester.

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 in 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 considered 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 Academic Coordinator.
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.

USD Email

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 regularly check his or her USD account and to respond to any notices or information in a timely manner. Failure to check the USD email account will not be considered a legitimate reason for a policy exception.

Academic Integrity and Guidance for Online Students

All students will adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of the University of San Diego. As an online student, you will be asked to sign a pledge prior to starting each course in the program acknowledging that you have read the [Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#) as well as the Guidelines for Online Students.

As an online student, you are encouraged to reach out to your fellow students in the online classroom to build community, to discuss topics, and to ask each other questions, but there are limits to this collaboration. As a student at University of San Diego, you are bound by the [Honor Code](#) established by the University.

> In accordance with the University of San Diego's Mission Statement, the Honor Code establishes a standard of integrity which is aligned with the University's Core Values: *Academic Excellence, Knowledge, Community, Ethical Conduct, and Compassionate Service.* The promotion of academic integrity should take place in the context of a commitment to creating a culture of integrity that encompasses all constituencies of the university including students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and trustees. Only through campus-wide engagement will the University achieve its goal of "developing ethical and responsible leaders committed to the common good."

Standards of Conduct

Adherence to standards of honesty and integrity precludes engaging in, causing, or knowingly benefiting from any violation of academic integrity. Without regard to purpose, the following violations are prohibited.

Cheating

Cheating is the use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information, and study aids, as well as unauthorized collaboration on examinations and other academic exercises. It is the responsibility of students to consult with their professors concerning what constitutes permissible collaboration. Cheating or helping others cheat is academic fraud.

Check your course syllabus for more guidance about your assignments and assessments, such as quizzes, projects, papers, and exams. You may see rules such as these:

> **OK:** Listening to lectures with another student.
> **Not OK:** Working simultaneously with another student when doing an assignment.

> **OK:** Studying together online or offline for the midterm.
> **Not OK:** Taking the midterm with another student and discussing the answers to the questions.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting, as one's own the ideas or writings of another; plagiarism, in any of its forms, violates academic integrity. While different academic disciplines have different norms of attribution, all strive to recognize and value individuals' contributions to the larger body of knowledge. It is the responsibility of students to consult with their professors in order to understand the norms of attribution in each discipline and area of study.

Check your course syllabus for more guidance about your research assignments. You may see rules such as these:

> **OK:** Researching the web or "Google-ing" a topic for a written assignment or discussion question.
> **Not OK:** Copying or paraphrasing text from a website without citing the source.

False Citations
False citation is attribution to an incorrect or fabricated source; false citation is academic fraud. False citation seriously undermines the integrity of the academic enterprise.

Submitting the Same Work for Multiple Assignments
Students may not submit work (in identical or similar form) for multiple assignments without the prior, explicit approval of all faculty to whom the work will be submitted. This includes work first produced at USD or at another institution attended by the student.

Submitting False Data
False data is information that has been fabricated, altered, or contrived in such a way as to be misleading; the submission of false data is academic fraud.

> **OK:** Discussing online or offline the discussion question topic.
> **Not OK:** Writing an answer together and submitting the same or slightly paraphrased text.

Falsifying Academic Documentation
Forging or altering academic documentation (including transcripts, signatures, letters of recommendation, certificates of enrollment or standing, registration forms, and medical certifications) concerning oneself or others is academic fraud.

Abuse of Library Privileges
Depriving others of equal access to library materials constitutes a violation of academic integrity. This includes sequestering library materials for the use of an individual or group, refusal to respond to recall notices, and the removal or attempt to remove library materials from any University library without authorization.

Abuse of Shared Electronic Media
Depriving others of equal access to shared electronic media used for academic purposes constitutes a violation of academic integrity. This includes actions that result in the damage or sabotage of computer systems.

Generative AI Guidelines
Transparency: If you are using ChatGPT and similar programs you must be transparent about your use and disclose any generated content as being produced by an AI program. This includes, but is not limited to, written assignments, research papers, and other forms of communication through citations and documentation.

Responsibility: You are responsible for critically evaluating the accuracy, reliability, and quality of any information generated by ChatGPT and similar programs and verifying it through additional sources if necessary.

Critical Thinking: You are encouraged to use ChatGPT and similar programs as a tool to support your own learning and critical thinking, but not as a replacement for independent

research and analysis. The use of ChatGPT and similar programs must be accompanied by the development of your critical thinking skills and an understanding of their limitations.

Note: Responses generated by ChatGPT, an AI language model developed by OpenAI, were used as a source of information for these guidelines.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **How should I keep track of the financial aid documents and additional forms?** It is suggested that students constantly monitor their student portal (mysandiego.edu) to receive the most up-to-date information regarding their financial aid.

2. **How many units do I need to take to be eligible for financial aid?** If a student drops below 4.5 semester units, they are no longer eligible to receive financial aid.

3. **What additional financial aid forms do I need to complete besides the FAFSA?** Every student's file is unique so in addition to completing the MPN and Entrance Loan Counseling they may have to complete: Verification paperwork, prove that they are actually the student (in front of a notary rep), C-Codes (Selective Service, Defaulted loans). FAFSA will contact students directly if these documents are necessary via their student portal.

4. **What are the interest rates for student loans available for graduate students?** Students are eligible for unsubsidized loans and GRAD Plus loans.

5. **What other forms do you suggest I complete?** It is advised that the student fill out the FERPA release form if they plan to allow someone else to access their personal information.

6. **How do I receive my FA award letter?** The award letter is sent via email. You will need to Accept or Deny the award electronically.

7. **Can financial aid be used to pay for books, course materials, and on-campus experiences? If so, what is the process?** Yes, financial aid can be used for any school-related purpose. If students receive excess funding after their tuition and fees have been deducted, they can use those funds to assist with these expenses. However, you are advised to take out only what you need for the program.

8. **Is financial aid awarded year-round?** There are specific deadlines in order to be awarded financial aid for all three (3) semesters. There is one FAFSA application for each academic year – which starts in the Fall and ends after the Summer term. (Ex. Fall 2025 – Summer 2026 aligns with the 2025-2026 FAFSA application). For the summer semester, there is an additional summer supplemental form to be completed in addition to FAFSA. Refer to the website for details.

9. **Is there additional financial aid available for military personnel?** Yellow Ribbon is automatically awarded to inactive military and they can be 100% eligible depending on their service time. Tuition assistance is also accepted, but military students must be active duty to receive it. G.I. Bill requires students to provide a Certificate of Eligibility.

10. **What services does the Student Accounts Office provide?** The Student Accounts team provides service to our online students with billing and payment of tuition, fees, financial aid updates, and registration access. You are encouraged to check your student portal regularly for updates.

11. **Is there a payment plan option?** Yes. Online students have the option to pay in 3-5 equal installments dependent upon the term of enrollment; Student Accounts provides this option for a processing fee of $50 per semester.

12. **What is the program course drop policy? Both** courses must be dropped prior to the first day of the semester to receive a 100% tuition refund* and within the first three days of the start date of the semester to receive a 95% tuition refund*. **No refund** will be provided after the third day of the semester for either class. *During the first semester of enrollment, any tuition refund amounts will not include the non-refundable enrollment deposit amount (5% of tuition).

13. **How do I know when to register for classes?** On a semesterly basis, students will be registered for courses by their student success team. Once registered, students will receive an email confirming their registration. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Program Coordinator via email if they do not wish to be enrolled in a given semester.

Program Contacts and Important Websites and Emails

Academic Director Michelle Moore, PhD michellemoore@sandiego.edu	**Your Student Success Team** studentsuccess@sandiego.edu onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/studentsuccess/mscsol/

USD Student Portal My.SanDiego.edu	**Canvas** canvas.sandiego.edu	**ITS (Technical Support)** 619-260-7900 help@sandiego.edu
Copley Library 619-260-4799 libanswers.sandiego.edu/ Copley@sandiego.edu	**Torero Store** usdtorerostores.com	**Campus Card Services** 619-260-5999 sandiego.edu/campuscard/ campuscard@sandiego.edu
Financial Aid Office 619-260-2700 sandiego.edu/torero-hub/financial-aid Student Inquiry Form	**Registrar** 619-260-4600 x2888 registrar@sandiego.edu	**Student Accounts** 619-260-2700 (Option 3) sandiego.edu/finance/student-financial-services/student-accounts.php Student Inquiry Form