



Franciscan School of Theology
at the UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO

Student Handbook

MTS-Franciscan Theology

(Online)

Rev. July 2025



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INTRODUCTION

The Franciscan School of Theology brings together three important words: Mission, Franciscan, and California. The Franciscans have provided theological training in California since the beginning of the state's history and have worked with California's diverse population since then.

In 1854 Mission Santa Barbara was chartered as an apostolic college and continued in that capacity until 1885. From 1869 to 1877, it also functioned as a college for lay men. In 1896, it began a four-year high school seminary program. The high school became a separate institution in 1901, and the college department became a separate institution at San Luis Rey, California in 1929. Over the course of the years, the college department expanded into a four-year accredited liberal arts college.

Mission Santa Barbara remained the center for theological studies and continued to operate as a seminary until 1968 when the theological school moved to Berkeley, California as the Franciscan School of Theology, a member school of the Graduate Theological Union, an ecumenical consortium of nine theology schools.

In academic year 2013-2014, the Franciscan School of Theology moved to Old Mission San Luis Rey, Oceanside, California, and entered into a service and curricular affiliation with the University of San Diego, San Diego, California, a private Catholic institution of higher learning. In 2019 FST moved onto the campus of USD. FST's ministerial degree students, both professional and academic, benefit from exposure to USD's graduate programs in peace and justice, non-profit management, counseling, secondary education, global education, leadership studies, and allied fields. In 2021 FST collaborated with USD's Division of Professional and Continuing Education to launch FST's first completely online degree, the MTS-Franciscan Theology. The Franciscan School of Theology maintains its autonomous corporate and canonical structure, as well as its accreditation.

As our history indicates, once we were a seminary preparing men for service as priests; now we are a seminary and a theology school preparing lay women and men, religious and clergy for shared ministry in the Roman Catholic Church. Once we were one of a number of Franciscan seminaries in the United States; now we are the only Franciscan seminary/theology school whose mission it is to prepare professional ministers for work in the Church and the society.

From its earliest history, the Franciscan School of Theology has responded to the changing cultural, social, and religious realities of California and the West. We find inspiration in the missionary zeal and educational heritage of Junípero Serra, who founded the first Franciscan mission in Upper California at San Diego in 1769. Like the students who journey with us in their preparation for ministry, the history of the Franciscan School of Theology is a story in progress.

Guided and governed in its educational mission, community life, and degree programs by the Order of Friars Minor's *Ratio Studiorum*, "In notitia veritatis proficere" (Rome, GSFS, 2001), the Franciscan School continues to bring the questions of contemporary culture, society, and Church into dialog with the ever-ancient and ever-new Word of the Gospel.



ADMINISTRATION, STAFF, AND FACULTY

[The Franciscan School of Theology \(FST\)](#) is owned by the [Franciscans of the Saint Barbara Province](#). The operation of the School flows hierarchically from the Board of Trustees, to a Board of Regents, to the officers of the School with specific responsibilities delineated as follows:

- **Board of Trustees.** The Board of Trustees of the Franciscan School of Theology is the Provincial Board of the Franciscan Province of Saint Barbara and holds fiduciary responsibility for the School. It has certain reserved powers outlined in its bylaws pertaining to the School's mission and philosophy, selection of faculty, approval of the annual operating budget, and final approval of new regents. The Board of Trustees has the power to appoint and dismiss faculty members, approve initial contracts of all regular faculty, approve tenure of all regular faculty, approve promotion to the rank of full professor, open new faculty positions, and nominate Franciscan friars as candidates for faculty positions. The Board of Trustees is the final authority in disputes between faculty and students and has representation on the Board of Appeals for disputes between faculty and administration.
- **Board of Regents.** The Board of Regents of the Franciscan School of Theology constructs the annual budget, approves faculty sabbaticals, and is the final voice in faculty contract renewals and promotion in rank from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor. The Board of Regents also recommends to the Board of Trustees the opening of regular faculty searches, hiring of new faculty, the movement of faculty to tenure, and the promotion of faculty from Associate to Full Professor.
- **President.** The President, a Franciscan, is the chief executive and administrative officer of the School and sets the tone for its educational direction. The primary internal goal of the President of the Franciscan School of Theology is to work closely with the administration in the day-to-day shepherding of the School so that the community of teachers and learners might further the mission.

The President, *ex officio*, is a member of the faculty and the Board of Regents. In addition, the President initiates and oversees hiring, contract renewals, promotions, and suspension of faculty. The President is to maintain harmonious working relationships with the faculty, staff, and students, striving for participatory involvement in institutional decision-making.

- **Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).** The role of the Vice President is integral to the life of the School because it affects the lives of both students and faculty. The Vice President is directly responsible to the President for the academic programs, the morale and development of the faculty, and student academic advising. The Vice President is an *ex officio* member of the faculty and is its administrative officer.

The Vice President's general duties and responsibilities as they pertain to the faculty are: to work in concert with the President on all matters pertaining to the academic life of the School; provide academic leadership; formulate the agenda for and preside at faculty meetings; establish academic standards and policies; implement and coordinate evaluative structures of academic programs, teaching, and performance; coordinate the orientation and student advising programs; make final student curriculum decisions in cooperation with a student's faculty advisor; chair the Admissions Committee and the Faculty Recruitment and Appointment Committee; teach and engage in research; plan FST's annual graduation ceremony; coordinate FST's academic programs with



USD programs; develop long-range academic programs with the President and other FST faculty; cooperate with Student Leadership; and serve on the Academic Committee of the Board of Regents.

- **Chief Financial Officer.** The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the collection and disbursement of school funds, investments, and personnel matters.
- **Academic Program Director (AD).** The Academic Program Director coordinates administrative and academic matters pertaining to online degrees at FST and is the liaison with FST's partner in the online degree program at USD, the Division for Professional and Continuing Education.
- **Faculty.** The primary role of FST Faculty in the MTS-FT degree is instructional. All faculty (full- and part-time) are available to FST students by appointment.
- **Director of Student Services and Spiritual Formation.** The Director of Student Services and Spiritual Formation serves as the administrative liaison to Student Leadership. The Director of Student Services and Spiritual Formation also administers FST's Spiritual Formation program. The program, which is viewed through the lens of Franciscan spirituality, includes faith-sharing groups, retreats, liturgical prayer, and referrals for spiritual direction. The Director of Student Services and Spiritual Formation advises students about individual programs for formation that will nourish spiritual growth, a spirit of justice and peace, and the relationship between culture and faith.
- **Director of Enrollment Management.** The Director of Enrollment Management recruits quality candidates for admission to the School. He or she develops and implements a comprehensive recruitment strategy including representing FST at religious education conferences, communicating and meeting with prospective students, and preparing reports on recruitment status for administration and the Board of Regents.
- **Director of Development.** The Director of Development works with the President in his role as chief development officer to seek sources of funding for the School and to develop and implement a comprehensive development strategy including seeking grants and endowment monies from foundations and individuals.



STUDENT LEADERSHIP

Student Leaders host school events and act as the conduit between the student body and the administration of the School. Student Leadership meets at least once a month during the school year. All students are welcome at these meetings.

Mission of Student Leadership

The mission of Student Leadership is adapted from the mission of the School:

- To develop academically and spiritually for professional ministry
- To promote the Gospel message, following the examples of Francis and Clare
- To ensure FST is a welcoming community to students and visitors
- To recognize and embrace diversity
- To reach beyond the walls of the School in service, peace, and justice
- To represent students in academic, administrative, and strategic School policy
- To identify and address the needs of the student body
- To facilitate communication to, from, and among students
- To lead the student body in FST's common mission

Student Leadership Positions

There are four Student Leadership positions, some rotated and some permanent:

- **Convener.** The primary responsibility of the Convener is to coordinate and facilitate student leadership meetings. Specific responsibilities include: scheduling meetings, preparing the agenda, opening the meeting with prayer, and facilitating the meeting itself. This position may be permanent or rotated depending on the preference of the group.
- **Co-Convener.** The Co-Convener primarily acts as another voice in preparing the agenda and facilitating student leadership meetings, if the Convener is unable to do so. The Co-Convener is responsible for the meeting's closing prayer. This position may be permanent or rotated depending on the preference of the group.
- **Secretary.** The Secretary's primary responsibilities are to take meeting minutes, distribute them to each student leader before the next meeting, and file approved minutes. This position may be permanent or rotated depending on the preference of the group.
- **Treasurer.** The Treasurer administers student leadership funds and keeps records for Student Leadership. Specific responsibilities include the preparation of a budget report for Student Leadership at each meeting and maintaining student association ledgers. In the interest of continuity, this position should not be rotated.

Student Leadership Committees

The collaborative model that Student Leadership employs deliberately leaves many detailed activities to committees. These committees do not require a student leader as chairperson. Any student may propose the establishment of and lead a committee. Membership and structure of the committees are left open for the committee itself to determine. Committees may include interested members of the student body and, in some cases, of the larger FST community. The number and purpose of committees vary from year to year. Some examples of past committees' purposes are those of planning holiday celebrations, social justice activities, and retreats.



REGISTRATION

Registering for Courses

Students will be notified by the Student Success Team about their registration prior to the registration open date. Once registered, students will then be notified about their course titles, dates, and textbook information.

Students will be automatically 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). For drop and withdrawal policy and deadlines, view the academic calendars found on the MTS Student Success Center webpage: <https://onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/studentsuccess/mts/>. All student accounts must be paid through the MyUSD portal on or before the first day of classes each semester. Failure to do so will subject the student to incurring monthly interest late fees. Please [refer to the FST catalog](#) for more information.

Dropping Courses

Students will be registered for two prescribed courses each semester (Spring, Summer, and Fall). (The exception to this is the final term when the student is registered for one 14-week “Capstone” course.) Both courses must be dropped before 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** (reversal of tuition) 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% 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 receive any form of financial aid must consult with the Torero Hub team by [submitting the student inquiry form](#) if their registered units drop below the required number of units for continuation of aid.

Students who discontinue class attendance and neglect to withdraw officially from the course are subject to failing the class. Courses dropped before the drop deadline will not be included on the transcript. 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 the GPA). After the drop deadline, a grade will be reported for all courses.



Registered students who withdraw from the Franciscan School of Theology (FST) (e.g., terminate all courses in progress) must officially drop their courses by filing a Notice of Withdrawal form and submitting it to the Torero Hub team. The same drop policies and deadlines apply to students who withdraw from the university as to those who drop only one course.

Withdrawal is effective on the date that the completed form is received by the Office of Student Services.

Continuous Enrollment/Leave of Absence

Students who are unable to maintain continuous enrollment need to complete a Leave of Absence Request. A Leave of Absence is an approved, limited suspension of participation in a graduate program during all three semesters. A Leave allows students in good academic standing to take time off and return to FST without applying for readmission. The Academic Program Director must approve the leave of absence. Leaves may be granted for up to one year, and only under extreme circumstances will a student be granted a second 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 is typically suspended for students on leave of absence and 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 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.

Introductory Courses Requirements:

Students enter the MTS-FT degree by taking two introductory courses in succession, MTS 510 followed by MTS 515. Students must earn a C- or higher in MTS 510 in order to be enrolled in MTS 515. If a student earns a grade below C-, they will be required to retake MTS 510 and pass the course (with a C- or higher) in the following semester before they are allowed to take MTS 515. The Academic Director and the instructor of MTS 510 will alert any student who is in danger of failing MTS 510 by the end of Module 4. The Program Coordinator will communicate with the student the implications for any financial aid received should they fail MTS 510. The instructor will post any failing grade by the date of the completion of MTS 510 to ensure timely administrative action.

Notice of Withdrawal

Students who terminate their enrollment in a graduate program must file an official Notice of Withdrawal with the Franciscan School of Theology Office of Academic Affairs. We recommend connecting with your Program Coordinator to discuss your options. If they are currently registered for courses, students must withdraw before the deadline to withdraw from classes. Courses dropped on or before the deadline will receive a grade of 'W' (not included in the GPA). Filing a Notice of Withdrawal after the deadline will make the withdrawal effective at the end of the current term and

will result in the posting of grades for the term. Students forced to discontinue enrollment after the withdrawal deadline due to a documented emergency may petition the Office of Student Services for an exception to this policy; however, the petition must be filed before the last day of class and is subject to review. International students must follow the same procedures and, in addition, obtain clearance from the International Resource Office at the University Center.

Grading Policy

All candidates for the MTS—Franciscan Theology degree must maintain a **minimum** GPA of 3.00.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93.00 - 100 %
A-	90.00 – 92.99%
B+	87.00 – 89.99%
B	83.00 – 86.99%
B-	80.00 – 82.99%
C+	77.00 – 79.99%
C	73.00 – 76.99%
C-	70.00 – 72.99%
D+	67.00 – 69.99%
D	63.00 – 66.99%
D-	60.00 – 62.99%
F	59.99% and below

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/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 the 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 form in consultation with the MTS-FT Program Coordinator. 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 at the 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 Academic Program Director. One copy is then placed in the student’s file and the original is sent to the registrar.

Academic Probation

To be in good academic standing and to be eligible to graduate, graduate students must maintain a semester and cumulative grade point average (GPA) in their programs. A student who has completed at least six (6) units of coursework and whose cumulative FST GPA for graduate program courses falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. At the end of each semester, the Academic Program Director will send a letter to the student indicating probationary status. When necessary, the Academic Director notifies the VP for Academic Affairs (VPAA) of students eligible for probation. The VPAA will send a letter to the student indicating probationary status and copies to the Academic Program Director and Program Coordinator. The student should meet with the Academic Program Director 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 FST 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 VPAA within ten calendar days of receiving such notice.

Student Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from the Graduate Programs in the Franciscan School of Theology for the following reasons:

1. Failure to maintain an 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 their degree.
4. Failure to make satisfactory progress in the development of academic and practitioner skills and dispositions.
5. Violations of ethics code(s) as established by applicable field of study and program area.
6. Violations of FST/USD policies and the Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities, including academic dishonesty and plagiarism, as published online at:
<https://www.sandiego.edu/conduct/the-code>
7. Failure to maintain cooperative relationships with other students and/or faculty.

When any of the above concerns are raised, the student will meet with the Academic Program Director to discuss the concern. The Academic Program Director 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 the successful completion of the program. The Academic Program Director will, on an ongoing basis, evaluate the student's progress. A written evaluation of progress will be sent to the student and placed in the student's file. If satisfactory progress is not made within the time limits set by the plan, 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 Vice President for Academic Affairs of the Franciscan School of Theology 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 complete application, including a new personal statement of interest in the program, three (3) new letters of recommendation, and a complete set of current transcripts. If the student is readmitted, the faculty may recommend redoing any or all of the student's coursework depending on the length of the time away from the program and the circumstances for leaving the program. There is no guarantee of readmission.

Petition to Transfer Courses

Petition to Transfer Courses must take place at the time of application to the MTS-Franciscan Theology degree program. Students may transfer up to six units of relevant master's level coursework taken at an accredited institution prior to enrollment in the MTS-Franciscan Theology.

Credit and Grading System

At the end of each semester, a graduate student's grade and credit in semester hours for each course taken are recorded on the transcript and the grade report, accessible through the MyUSD portal. A final grade below "C" is not acceptable and the course(s) in which the grade was earned will not count toward the graduate degree (see Repetition of Courses). A student earning below a "C" in any course must retake that course and successfully complete it with a grade of C or higher. This must be completed before enrolling in MTS 599, Capstone: Finding Your Voice in the Franciscan Tradition.

Repetition of Courses

A student who has earned a grade of C-, D, or F in a course may be allowed to repeat the course. If allowed, it may be repeated one time only. The higher grade of the two earned will be calculated in the student's cumulative grade point average, although both grades will remain on the transcript. Students may not take the repeated course at another institution without the permission of the program area dean.

Students are allowed to repeat only two courses during their enrollment in a graduate program at FST. A student who fails two courses or more will not be permitted to continue in the program.



Intent to Graduate/Petition to Graduate

In order to be cleared for degree completion, students must submit [the Intent to Graduate form](#) by posted deadlines. There are three graduation dates: January 31, May 31, and August 31. Students who meet the deadline for May graduation will receive their degree at that time. Students who fulfill all requisites for their degree in the summer will have their degree recorded in their transcript effective August 31st. Students who fulfill all requisites for their degree in the fall semester will have their degree recorded in their transcript effective January 31.

Graduates are confirmed by a vote of the FST Core Faculty followed by a vote of the FST Regents. Regents Meetings with graduation voting take place in December and May. Names of students intending to graduate must be submitted for faculty voting to prepare for these two opportunities for Regents' voting.

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 FST/USD no later than May 1st. The Franciscan School of Theology holds only ONE graduation ceremony each year in May. All graduates during the relevant academic year are welcome to participate in the May graduation. If a candidate does not graduate at the expected time, the registrar will automatically roll the Intent to Graduate (also known as a 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 intent/petition was filed, a new intent/petition must be completed.

Instructions: [The Intent to Graduate form](#) is available online and will also be sent by the MTS-FY Program Coordinator to all Capstone students. When the student has completed the petition with all required signatures, an email is generated by the Director of Student Services and sent to: the student, their Program Coordinator, their Academic Program Director, and the Office of Graduate Records for review.

Financial Aid

The Franciscan School of Theology participates in the Federal Direct Loan program open to US citizens and permanent residents. To apply for the Federal Direct Loan program, complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa> Please note: the Graduate FAFSA School Code for the Franciscan School of Theology is **G11792**.

To be eligible for a student federal loan the student must be enrolled in **at least 6 units per semester**.

Artificial Intelligence

Allowing artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the course will be determined at the instructor's discretion. While it is understood that generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, etc.) are becoming more popular in educational settings, students are encouraged to rely on their own thinking ability, intellectual capacity, personal reflection, and critical analysis. Their use in academic work is governed by the following guidelines:

- Instructor Permission: The use of AI tools in specific assignments or projects must be approved



by the course instructor. It is the student's responsibility to seek and obtain this permission in advance.

- Original Work: AI tools should be used as supplementary aids rather than as replacements for personal intellectual effort. Students must ensure that the work submitted reflects their own understanding, analysis, and synthesis.
- Disclosure: Students must disclose any use of AI tools in their coursework or research. This includes specifying the nature of the tool used and the extent of its contribution to the final work.
- Ethical Use: AI tools should be used ethically and responsibly. Students must avoid using AI tools to generate content that is intended to deceive, mislead, or violate academic integrity.

RESOURCES

MyFST

The MyFST online student portal directs you to the MySanDiego portal, which provides access to registration; grades; student accounts and financial aid status; forms and handbooks; and instructional technology. It also provides valuable information about the degree programs; FST services; local and USD communities; and technological support. Students are encouraged to make the portal the first stop for information. At the beginning of the semester, students will receive instructions for logging in to MyFST.

MTS Student Success Center

The MTS Student Success Center provides specific information about the MTS-Franciscan Theology degree program including the program's academic calendar. Students are encouraged to visit this site regularly: <https://onlinedegrees.sandiego.edu/studentsuccess/mts/>

Student Email Accounts

Students are automatically assigned a USD username and email account. Students will use this username to access MyUSD and instructional technology. USD and FST will send announcements, safety alerts, and email from Canvas to this address. Students are encouraged to set their USD account to forward to their preferred account.

Writing Center

FST students can obtain support and tutoring in writing skills at the [SOLES Writing Center at USD](#).

Career Development

FST students may use the [USD Career Services](#).



Textbook Purchasing

Booklists for FST MTS-FT courses are [posted online on the Student Success Center website](#).

Required books for MTS-FT courses are available in the Digital Theological Library (DTL) or Copley Library. Students have the option to purchase books from vendors such as Amazon or any other preferred bookseller.

Library Services

FST maintains a library of 18,000 volumes devoted to the course work students will do, and to Franciscan history and spirituality. This collection is housed in USD's Copley Library. FST students have full access to USD's [Copley Library](#) and the [Digital Theological Library](#).

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AND SPIRITUAL LIFE

Liturgy

In keeping with the School's mission and Franciscan spirit, FST students, staff, faculty, and friends regularly celebrate liturgies during the academic year. Liturgies are collaboratively prepared by the Director of Student Services and Spiritual Formation with an ongoing liturgy team in conversation with presiders and preachers. The planning team draws upon a variety of forms of Christian prayer, the diversity of our school community, and the communities we are preparing to serve. Regular liturgies are live-streamed so that members of the online community can attend.

Special Liturgy Celebrations. Special liturgies are celebrated at the beginning of the school year, at Christmas, and at the close of the Spring semester. All are followed by an in-person reception for FST students, faculty, staff, and friends. Online students are invited to attend by livestream or in person when they are able.

Retreats The Director of Student Services and Spiritual Formation in collaboration with the Student Leadership Team organizes an off-campus weekend retreat for students during the year. Occasional day or evening reflections are also planned. All students are welcome to attend in person when able or by live-stream.

Graduation Graduation is traditionally celebrated on a Saturday in late May. It is followed by a reception. Graduating students receive a certificate stating that a diploma will be issued upon successful completion of all program requirements and settlement of all indebtedness to FST and USD. Diplomas are mailed to graduates after grades are posted and all accounts are settled. Online students are encouraged to attend.

Social Justice

Concern for issues of social justice and peace has long been a part of the Franciscan tradition. The School is committed to laying a foundation for students, so the pursuit of justice and peace

continues after their graduation from FST. Year after year, FST students have been an active presence in the larger community by participating in activities such as hospital chaplaincy, ministry to the homeless, the poor, the undocumented, and others in need.

Getting More Information

Sources of information are:

Email Communications. The FST offices send out emails regarding academic issues, faculty and staff announcements, and events sponsored by FST and The University of San Diego. Students are expected to refer to their email regularly to stay aware of important information concerning academic programs, and to keep current with events happening at the School.

FST and USD Websites. The FST website and the USD website contain information such as announcements of upcoming events; the academic calendar; registration and financial aid information; information on student services and spiritual formation; and academic policies. *Special attention needs to be given that you access FST information intended for its online degree students*, since some details, such as the academic calendar and registration procedures differ.

FST YouTube Channel. The [FST YouTube channel](#), FST EDU1, hosts a number of recorded lectures, liturgies, commencements, and other FST events.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

FST faculty members are entitled to full freedom in the pursuit of their academic functions, which include: the advancement of human knowledge, insight, and understanding; the education of the students and the presentation to them of divergent views and opinions that are intellectually within the content of the course being offered; and the responsibility to serve the community by lending their intellectual abilities to the solution of current problems.

Faculty members of FST are members of a learned profession and members of an educational institution. When speaking or writing as individuals, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline, but their special position in the community imposes special obligations. As persons of learning and educators, they should remember that the public may judge the teaching profession and the School by their utterances. Hence, they should at all times be accurate, should exercise appropriate restraint, and should not indicate that they are speaking for the institution when they are not. This does not preclude them from identifying themselves as holding a position at the School.

The academic functions of faculty members shall not be abridged, either before or after the fact, directly or indirectly by any segment of the Franciscan School. The academic freedom of the faculty members shall not be construed to permit them to use the student audience to gratuitously, deliberately, and persistently express views misrepresenting or impugning the authoritative teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.



DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Title IX

FST is committed to justice and fairness in its educational programs and activities. The School complies with [Title IX](#) of the U. S. Department of Labor's Education Amendments of 1972 requiring that no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. In addition, FST is committed to respecting individual rights and tolerates no discrimination based on race, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental handicaps. [FST's Title IX Policy](#) is delineated in full on its webpage. Juliet Mousseau, RSCJ, is FST's Title IX Coordinator. She can be reached at jmousseau@fst.edu, (619) 574-5802.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is a discriminatory practice that is unethical, unprofessional, and threatening to intellectual freedom. Such harassment is directly opposed to FST's mission, which attempts to include "all in an embrace of mutuality, equality, and respect." Sexual harassment has serious consequences in higher education. It is not simply inappropriate behavior; it is also illegal.

The Franciscan School of Theology is strongly opposed to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as using "one's authority or power, either explicitly or implicitly, to coerce another into unwanted sexual relations, or to punish another for his or her refusal; or the creation of an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment through verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature." (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission of the United States Government)

Sexual harassment behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Sexist remarks, jokes, or behavior
- Insults, including lewd remarks or conduct
- Visual displays of degrading sexual images or pornography
- The use of professional authority to inappropriately draw attention to the gender, sexuality or sexual orientation of an employee, colleague, or student
- Pressure to accept unwelcome social invitations
- Unwelcome sexual advances, including unwanted touching
- Request for sexual favors
- Sexual assault, including attempted or completed physical sexual assault. (Adapted from the Sexual Harassment Policy of American Academy of Religion)

Sexual harassment occurs from these behaviors and other verbal or physical conduct of asexual nature when any or all of the following conditions apply:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is made, implicitly or explicitly, a term or condition of instruction or employment
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for evaluation in making academic or personnel decisions affecting an individual
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work



or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

(Adapted from the Sexual Harassment Policy of American Academy of Religion)

Student-Faculty Relationships

The Franciscan School of Theology is strongly opposed to sexual relations between faculty and students. Sexual relationships are expressly prohibited in cases where faculty are engaged in teaching, advising, or supervising a student, or engaged in research or professional development activities with a student.

The Franciscan School of Theology, following the guidelines of Title IX, investigates and resolves sexual harassment cases in a prompt and equitable manner. The Franciscan School shall pursue discipline against individuals who retaliate against those who bring forth claims (or cooperate in investigations) under this article, or knowingly or frivolously make a false charge regarding a violation of the above.

Arbitration Procedures

Juliet Mousseau, RSCJ, has been designated by the President as Title IX Coordinator of FST. This person investigates complaints of discrimination and harassment.

1. A faculty member or student who believes he or she has been the object of discrimination or harassment should so advise the Title IX Coordinator of FST. The person bringing a complaint founded in fact will suffer no retaliation.
2. The Title IX Coordinator will try to work out a solution of the situation informally. Failing that, he or she will proceed with an investigation of the complaint, assuring maximum confidentiality consistent with the principles of due process and fundamental fairness.
3. The complaint will be put in writing with sufficient specificity.
4. A person charged will be promptly so notified and given an opportunity to respond.
5. If a complaint is found to be valid, counseling may be made available to the offender and/or disciplinary action consistent with the degree of seriousness of the harassment may be instituted by the President. If the complaint is made against the President, appropriate action is taken by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.



Academic or Personality Disputes Between Faculty or Administrators and Student

In addition to issues involving sex, race, or ethnicity, it is also possible that a student may have an academic or personality dispute with a faculty member or administrator at FST. In such cases, the student is expected to employ the following procedures in seeking to resolve the dispute.

Within FST:

1. First, approach the individual with whom there is a grievance in an attempt to resolve it.
2. If the student is unable to approach the faculty member or administrator in question, the student should ask the VP for Academic Affairs or another faculty member to facilitate a meeting.
3. If faculty members or administrators are aware of a student who has a dispute with another faculty member or administrator, they should encourage the student to voice his or her complaint. If necessary, this may involve serving as a mediator for the student.
4. All complaints should be put in writing, and the faculty member or administrator should have a right to respond in writing.
5. If the previous steps do not succeed in resolving the conflict, the student, faculty member, or administrator may consult the President of the School.
6. If the issue remains unresolved after approaching the President, the student may wish to explore other avenues, up to and including the involvement of the Board of Trustees, the highest governing authority for FST.
7. If the student does not inform the faculty member or administrator of the complaint, either personally or through a mediator, the matter shall be considered moot.

At the University of San Diego:

The University of San Diego maintains its own policies which can be found on their [website](#).

An individual may contact the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education for review of a complaint. The bureau may be contacted at 2535 Capital Oaks Drive, Suite 400 Sacramento, CA 95833; Website: www.bppe.ca.gov, Phone: (916) 431-6924 Fax: (916) 263-1897

FEDERAL NOTICES

Family Educational Rights of Privacy Act (FERPA)

The [Family Educational Rights of Privacy Act of 1974 \(FERPA\)](#) is a federal law that protects the privacy of education records of all students enrolled in schools beyond the high school level. Students are entitled by FERPA and by FST policy to examine their academic records.

FERPA allows institutions to identify certain types of information called 'directory information' that may be disclosed without student consent. Students who wish to place a privacy hold on directory information must complete a form obtainable through the Office of Student Services.



Veterans Administration Educational Benefits Policies

FST accepts Tuition Assistance and GI Bill®/Post 911 Educational Benefits. GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government Web site at <https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill> The Chief Financial Officer is FST's certifying official for veterans' affairs. Veterans and eligible family members need to submit their certificate of eligibility to the CFO. Policies related to students eligible for Veterans Administration (VA) educational benefits may be found at the US Department of Veteran Affairs website.

Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act

FST complies with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226) which requires the following notification to students:

The Franciscan School of Theology requires that the campus be drug-free. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, possession, or use of a controlled substance while on FST premises is prohibited. Abuse of alcohol on the FST campus is also not allowed. Violation of this policy will be considered cause for dismissal from school.

Campus Crime and Safety Report

The Franciscan School of Theology is required by the US Department of Education to make available to students the local Campus Crime and Safety Report. [Click here](#) to access the full report.

State Authorization Status & Compliance

State authorization is a federal regulation ([34 CFR § 600.9\(c\)](#)) of the Department of Education that mandates institutions obtain approvals from each state where it conducts educational activities. Each state's regulations determine which educational activities require approval. These activities can include offering distance education or online courses, advertising in local media, marketing and recruiting, employing faculty, and conducting experiential learning. Experiential learning encompasses activities that are part of a program's curriculum and occur in person. Examples include fieldwork, clinicals, externships, internships, clerkships, practicums, independent studies, mentoring, advising and proctoring. Students must notify the university if they relocate to another state at any time during their program. If a student relocates, either temporarily or permanently, to a state not currently authorized as listed on the website, they will become ineligible to continue in their program due to state authorization regulations.

Students must notify the FST if they relocate to another state at any time during their program. If a student relocates, either temporarily or permanently, to a state not currently authorized as listed on the [website](#), they will become ineligible to continue in their program due to state authorization regulations. Please review the unauthorized states before making any relocation plans.



APPENDIX A: USD SERVICES

USD services available for FST students include the following. Click on the links for more information.

Bosley Fitness Center	Jenny Craig Pavilion
Campus Card Services	Legal Research
Campus Recreation	Military and Veterans Program
Career Services	Mission and Ministry
Cashier's Office	MySanDiego Portal
Center for Christian Spirituality	Parking and Tram Services
Center for Educational Excellence	Professional and Continuing Education Division
Center for Health and Wellness Promotion	Student Health Center
Center for Inclusion and Diversity	Student Organizations
Copley Library	Summer and Intersession Office
Counseling Center	Torero Hub
Dining Services	Torero Store
Disability Services	United Front Multicultural Center
Outdoor Adventures	University Center/ Student Life Pavilion
Center for Catholic Thought and Culture	University Ministry
Graduate Student Life	Women's Center
International Center	



APPENDIX B: LOCAL CHURCHES

Some Roman Catholic churches in the immediate area are:

- **The Immaculata Catholic Church** (located on the USD Campus)
<https://www.sandiego.edu/immaculata/>
5998 Alcala Park Way
San Diego, CA 92110
Phone: (619) 574-5700
- **Church of the Immaculate Conception**
<https://immaculate-conception-sandiego.org/>
2540 San Diego Ave
San Diego, CA 92110
Phone: (619) 295-4141
- **Holy Family Catholic Church**
<https://www.oneholysfamily.org/>
1957 Coolidge St. San Diego, CA 92111
Phone: (858) 277-0404



APPENDIX C: EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the event of a serious illness or injury on campus, immediately call Public Safety at ext. 2222 or (619) 260-2222.

If you notice any jewelry with an inscription of medical information, bring it to the dispatcher's attention. Give appropriate first aid until the Public Safety Officer arrives. DO NOT MOVE THE VICTIM UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

See the locations of all [Automatic External Defibrillators \(AED\)](#) on the USD campus.