

LDT 592: NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

This orientation course introduces students to the University of San Diego and provides important information about the program. Throughout the orientation, students will learn to successfully navigate through the online learning environment and locate helpful resources. Students will practice completing tasks in the online learning environment as preparation for success in their online graduate courses. This orientation course will be available to students as a reference tool throughout the entirety of the program.

LDT 500A: FOUNDATIONS IN INSTRUCTIONAL AND LEARNING DESIGN

This course focuses on the field of instructional and learning design. Students will examine foundational theories of learning and cognition, the instructional design process, and human-centered design thinking strategies. By identifying real-world instructional challenges, students apply research-based approaches to solving knowledge and skills gap problems that occur in a variety of workplace, education, and organizational settings. In this foundational course, students actively engage in various instructional design process activities that build professional competency. The course learning experience includes an introduction to AI tools like Gemini and NotebookLM for productivity and self-regulated learning.

LDT 500B: FOUNDATIONS IN MULTIMEDIA AND ELEARNING DESIGN

This course introduces research-based principles of effective multimedia design and the creation of original media that aligns with those principles. Students examine common learning technologies used in the development phase of the instructional design process, including eLearning authoring software (such as Articulate Storyline 360 and Rise 360) and generative AI tools. Students apply principles of visual and graphic design to storyboard and prototype interactive learning experiences. Generative AI is integrated as a productivity tool to support ideation, rapid prototyping, and the creation of interactive eLearning activities. Emphasis is placed on critically evaluating and refining AI-assisted outputs to ensure they align with learning goals and professional instructional design standards.

PROGRAM DETAILS

- All coursework is online and asynchronous
- 30 units completed in under 2 years
- Part-time program: 2 courses per term, 1 course at a time, 7 weeks for each course
- \$735 per unit
- New students may start in Spring (January), Summer (May) or Fall (September)

LDT 520: ADVANCED LEARNING THEORY AND EVIDENCE-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

This course examines advanced topics in instructional design, including needs assessment, learner characteristics, alignment of learning objectives, instructional strategies, and formative and summative assessments. Students engage with generative AI tools as professional design partners to support instructional ideation, scenario development, and activity design, while learning to critically evaluate AI-generated outputs using evidence from learning science. Students will explore critical theories of learning and motivation and the ethical responsibility of instructional designers to analyze and dispel common myths and misapplication of these concepts, including those that may be introduced or amplified by AI systems. The course emphasizes the application of sound design principles to plan, design, evaluate, and refine inclusive learning experiences that are grounded in research and responsive to real-world contexts.

LDT 530: DESIGNING FOR ALL LEARNERS: LEGAL AND ETHICAL DIGITAL DESIGN STANDARDS

This course explores the artistic and technical aspects of creating engaging and accessible digital media for diverse learners. Students examine research-based and ethical approaches to multimedia design to develop ADA-compliant learning artifacts. Students will apply appropriate federal and state laws guiding accessible design requirements, and explore professional guidelines such as the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework. Students leverage generative AI as an industry tool to streamline professional workflows and create accessibility resources used in the field, while critically assessing AI outputs for correctness and quality. Design decisions are evaluated through a Learner Experience (LX) design rubric to ensure effective, equitable, and professional information delivery.

LDT 535: CURATING DIGITAL ASSETS AND ARTIFACTS

This course explores the lifecycle of digital assets and artifacts within instructional systems, from initial needs assessment to final implementation. Students analyze assets as critical system inputs – ranging from tangible media and AI-generated content to intangible learner prior knowledge. A significant portion of the course is dedicated to the legal and ethical landscapes of instructional design. Students will navigate the complexities of U.S. Copyright law, the TEACH Act, and Creative Commons, with a specific focus on the emerging intellectual property challenges posed by Generative AI. Through case studies and hands-on design, students conduct needs assessments to evaluate assets for pedagogical alignment, accessibility, and technical feasibility. The course further examines the shift toward authentic assessment and the disruptive impact of generative AI on learning. By the conclusion of the course, students will be able to craft ethically sound, comprehensive design plans that balance the risks and liabilities of copyright with the innovative potential of modern instructional tools.

“I entered the MS-LDT program with strong professional skills in adjacent areas but limited formal expertise in instructional design. Over the course of the program, I experienced meaningful growth across every area of practice, developing clear competency in instructional design foundations, technology integration, learner-centered design, and implementation planning.”

***-Candice Hoz, MS-LDT
Class of 2026***

LDT 540: STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN DIGITAL LEARNING

This course establishes the foundations for ethical leadership within the digital learning landscape. Students develop essential skills for leading cross-functional remote teams, managing complex project delivery, and navigating the requirements of regulatory bodies (e.g., Accreditation, Accessibility, and GDPR). Students will use generative AI as a strategic tool to enhance research, facilitate project management tasks, and streamline professional communication. Through a user-centric lens, students map learner journeys and synthesize their expertise into a comprehensive business plan for an online program.

LDT 545: LEARNER ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

This course examines theories and techniques for assessing and evaluating educational and training programs, with an emphasis on contemporary, technology-supported evaluation practices. Students apply methodologies to identify needs, establish measurable objectives, and design, test, and refine assessment and evaluation plans for educational, training, and adult learning environments. Students will examine practical applications of Kirkpatrick's Four Levels of Training Evaluation and how they are supported by generative AI to draft, analyze, and pressure-test assessment and evaluation artifacts. Through an applied case study, students will demonstrate workforce-ready competencies in program evaluation and assessment best practices, informed by AI literacy and responsible use.

LDT 550: APPLYING EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH METHODS

This course prepares students to critically engage with educational research to inform effective, evidence-based decisions in learning design and instructional technology. Students will identify a real-world problem of practice, conduct a scholarly literature review, and design an actionable research proposal to address it. Through scaffolded assignments and collaborative peer feedback, students will analyze current research, develop well-aligned research questions, and explore appropriate methodologies, ethical considerations, and data presentation strategies. Throughout the course, students will engage with generative AI tools as analytic and reflective supports, using them to interrogate ideas, surface assumptions, and refine scholarly reasoning. By the end of the course, students will not only produce a comprehensive research proposal but also reflect on how educational research shapes their professional identity and strengthens their ability to justify design decisions grounded in data and theory.

“The most unexpected part of the LDT program was how ALIVE an online program can feel. I walked in expecting discussion boards, but I got a true design studio. Faculty and classmates remembered my projects, asked pointed follow ups, and helped me pressure-test real problems from work, fast. The feedback was kind, specific, and usable the same week.”

*-Hope Okorougo, MS-LDT
Class of 2025*

LDT 555: EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES IN LEARNING DESIGN

Designed as a dynamic exploratory lab, this course explores the rapidly evolving landscape of learning technologies with content that continuously adapts to reflect the latest industry advancements. Students evaluate the value and practical application of cutting-edge tools in creating high-impact learning activities for diverse learning and development contexts. Students will actively engage in the applied use of generative AI to create diverse training content, such as animated training videos and AI-powered chatbot tutorials, aligned with the specific learning needs of their Capstone project. By assessing real-time learning design trends and the ethical implications of rapid tech adoption, students learn to move beyond the hype and make responsible, research-based recommendations for technology deployment in the modern workforce.

LDT 560: CAPSTONE PROJECT: PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO AND ONLINE COURSE DESIGN

This Capstone course is the culminating assessment of the Master of Science in Learning Design and Technology. In this course, students will demonstrate all program learning outcomes through an instructional design portfolio project that showcases their knowledge, skills, and abilities in the field. They'll complete a two-module online course that reflects their ability to apply learning theories, instructional design processes, and technology integration to address a specific instructional need for a target audience. Additionally, students will engage in peer evaluation to demonstrate critical evaluation skills against ethical, quality, research-based, and professional standards in learning design and technology. Throughout the online course design process, students are encouraged to collaborate with AI systems, assess output accuracy, document transparent use, and justify the strategic application of AI as a professional tool of the trade.

THE PORTFOLIO: YOUR PROFESSIONAL PROOF OF MASTERY

In the field of Learning Design your portfolio is your most powerful asset. As an MS-LDT student, you'll build a body of work that proves you can solve real-world problems. In your final course, LDT 560, you will synthesize your skills into a showcase for current or future employers:

- **Build a Functional Online Course:** Using an LMS system of your choice, you'll build an online course with a minimum of two-modules from the ground up.
- **Master AI as a Tool:** Collaborate with AI systems to accelerate your design process, learning to justify and document AI-augmented decisions—a critical skill in today's market.
- **Peer Evaluation & Industry Standards:** Rigorously test your work against industry-standard ethical and research-based benchmarks.
- **Showcase Your Knowledge, Skills and Abilities in Your Professional Portfolio:** As part of your capstone course, you'll publish a live digital portfolio featuring professional digital artifacts created in your courses.

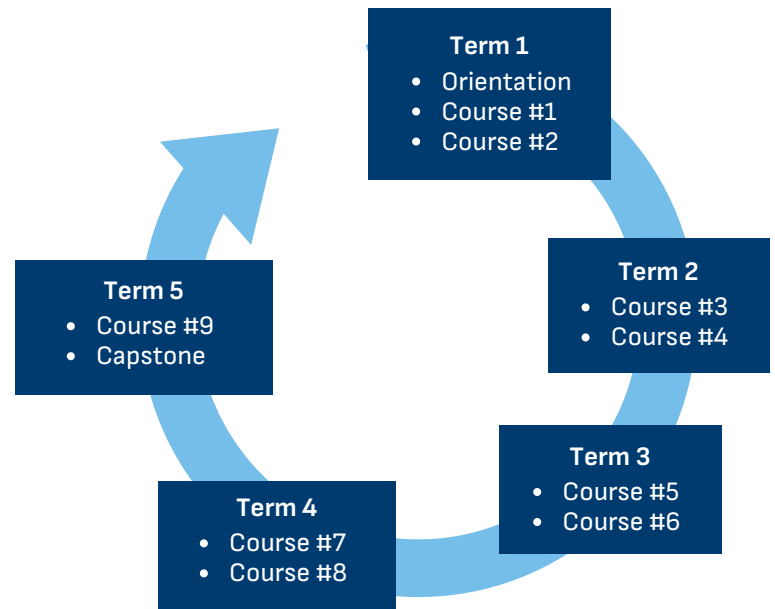
UNDERSTANDING THE COURSE CAROUSEL

Courses in the MS-LDT program are scheduled on a carousel, which allows new students to start at any time. Students will take two 7-week courses each term. Courses are offered sequentially.

The academic year is comprised of three 14-week terms, with breaks from one to three weeks between each term:

- Fall – courses start in August
- Spring – courses start in January
- Summer – courses start in May

The full program is comprised of five terms (a total of 10 classes).



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need to have learning design experience?

Students in this program have come from a variety of backgrounds including educators, training facilitators, and corporate settings. This program is also suited for those looking for career change possibilities connected to learning development.

How much time should I expect to spend on coursework each week?

On average, students should expect to spend 10–20 hours per week on reading, researching, assignments and discussion boards.

What tools will I work with in the program?

You'll develop a comprehensive understanding of the science of how people learn, while gaining proficiency in the leading technology tools currently used in instructional and learning design, such as Articulate 360 (including Storyline), LMS/CMS systems and other emerging tech.

Are there any on-campus requirements?

The MS-LDT program is 100% online. There is no on-campus requirement. However, we do hope you and your family can join us on campus for commencement. If you are ever in the San Diego area we hope you'll stop by for a tour of our beautiful campus.