



Understanding OFAC-Sanctions Affecting Online Education Abroad

The U.S. Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control ([OFAC](#)) enforces economic sanctions that restrict transactions with certain countries, organizations, and individuals. These regulations apply to University of San Diego faculty, staff, and students and may impact distance education activities conducted outside the U.S.

In some cases, providing or receiving [educational services](#), including participating in distance education courses, from or within sanctioned countries requires a [specific license](#). Current high-sanction countries include **Cuba, Iran, Syria, North Korea**, and certain regions of **Ukraine**. These restrictions can also apply to software and other digital resources. Violations of OFAC regulations may lead to serious [legal consequences](#), including civil or criminal penalties.

All U.S. persons must comply with OFAC sanctions, including all U.S. citizens and permanent residents regardless of where they are located, all individuals and entities within the United States, and all U.S. incorporated entities and their foreign branches. <https://ofac.treasury.gov/faqs/11>

U.S. federal regulations require citizens or residents of **Cuba, Iran, Syria, North Korea**, and certain parts of **Ukraine**, who are physically located within these countries, to obtain a government license to engage in educational or research activities, including distance education coursework from outside the U.S. These restrictions do **not** apply if students are physically located within the United States or its territories.

Resources

[Sanctions Programs and Country Information](#)

[OFAC Basics: Requesting Guidance](#)

[OFAC Specific Licenses](#)