

# THE STUDENT SURVIVAL GUIDE

Structural Engineering  
University of California San Diego



**ACADEMIC YEAR**  
**2025-2026**

Structural Engineering Student Affairs presents...

# UCSD Student Survival Guide

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## Campus Currencies

### What's The Difference Between Dining Dollars And Triton Cash?

Both Dining Dollars and Triton Cash have a 1:1 equivalency with US Dollars (i.e. \$1 USD = \$1 in dining), but don't make the mistake when you come to campus thinking that they are the same thing. Dining Dollars are accepted at all dining halls and on-campus grocery markets, and *only* dining halls and on-campus grocery markets. Triton Cash can also be used in dining halls and markets, but also at any other place on campus, such as the food stalls at Price Center (including Sunshine Market and Tapioca Express) and the Old Student Center (like Blue Pepper). These places also take cash/card payments. Some places off campus accept Triton Cash as well; the complete list is on [HDH's website](#), which notably includes the nearby Whole Foods.



### What's The Point Of Triton Cash?

The general concept behind Triton Cash is to alleviate the need to carry around cash or cards; you can get around campus with only your ID. However, if you plan on carrying your wallet around anyways, Triton Cash may sound redundant. The only case in which a student would need Triton Cash is if they live on campus because **laundry facilities do not accept quarters or other currency!** Make sure to check your Transacts eAccount before running your first load of laundry.

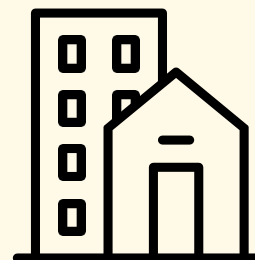
### What Does My Dining Plan Cover?

If you are an incoming student to UCSD, that is, you are a first year or transfer student, you are offered two dining plan options: the 5623 plan and the 3749 plan. If you are a continuing student, you are offered the same two options as well as a third option: the 1874 plan. The 5623 plan comes with \$5,623 in Dining Dollars, and a bonus \$100 of Triton Cash. It is intended to cover 3 meals a day, 5 days a week. The 3749 plan comes with \$3,749 in Dining Dollars, and a bonus \$50 of Triton Cash. It is intended to cover 2 meals a day, 5 days a week. The 1874 plan comes with \$1,874 in Dining Dollars, but does **not** have a bonus in Triton Cash. It is intended to cover 1 meal per day. Remember that you can always add money to your account, but excess dining dollar credits only roll over one quarter before they expire. (Triton Cash lasts through graduation.)

## Settling Into Campus Housing

### Undergraduate Housing

To be eligible for the undergraduate housing, students must:



- Be a registered student that is enrolled full-time.
- Meet all housing deadlines.
- Not have an outstanding student account balance that is past due.
- Meet all university-imposed deadlines.
- Completed terms of your housing agreement and/or university policies.

Undergraduate students can have two different residence assignments: Residence Hall Room Type and Apartment Room Type.

Incoming first-year and transfer room assignments will be determined by a variety of factors including: room type preferences, roommate requests, Personal History Form (PHF) answers, available space in all housing areas, and other factors.

- Incoming first-year student housing assignments begin in the residence halls and apartments in their college of registration, then continue into other on-campus housing areas.
- Incoming transfer housing assignments begin in Pepper Canyon East Apartments (including Matthews) and Rita Atkinson Residence Apartments. Will continue into other on-campus housing areas as needed.

Residence hall (suite) and apartment assignments will be at double and triple occupancy. There are also a limited number of single-occupancy bedrooms throughout our undergraduate communities.

**If you are a student living on campus and need assistance with maintenance and custodial requests, visit [this link](#) to get help! In case of emergency call 858.534.2600.**



## Graduate Student Housing

Graduate housing is available for:

- Full-time Graduate and Professional Students (i.e. enrolled in 12 units or more throughout the lease term)
- Graduate, Professional, and Undergrad Students with Children
- Full-time Undergraduate Student Couples

For graduate students, there are several graduate student communities available: Coast, Mesa, One Miramar Street, Mesa Nueva, Nuevo East, and Nuevo West. Detailed information about the room layout and even virtual tours can be found on the Housing Dining Hospitality (HDH) grad family website. A picture of the communities is shown below!

For grad students, the cheapest rent you'll find near campus is likely to be the on-campus graduate student housing. UCSD claims that monthly rent in grad housing costs 20% less than market value. Beginning October 1, 2021, an incoming resident will pay less than \$1,000/mo for a single room (the actual rate depends on which building and unit you are renting), and double occupancy reduces your rent by half. Check out the [UCSD Graduate Housing FAQs](#) page for more information.



## Off-Campus Housing

If you're not eligible for on-campus student housing, or are otherwise electing to live off campus, the best rates are likely to be found in a Facebook group. UCSD has several active unofficial housing groups (e.g. UCSD Student Off-Campus Housing) that students (or anyone looking for housing) can join, and oftentimes by joining onto someone's earlier lease your rent can be significantly less than if you were to rent a similar unit in the same complex. It is also a great platform to meet new potential roommates to go apartment searching together. On any social platform, beware of scammers! Use your best intuition and judgment to discern offers that seem too good to be true. Be sure to start your search early, off-campus housing fills up fast!

## Choosing a Location



While it may be tempting to narrow your search to the nearest five minutes to campus, you can find much better deals if you're willing to be a little further away. If you don't have a car, try looking at places near the Blue Line Trolley, and if you do have a car, consider looking at homes in Mira Mesa that you can rent with a group of friends. Hillcrest is another popular area for students to live, and although the Hillcrest shuttle has been discontinued, you'll be surrounded by other students from UCSD and SDSU. Clairemont/Convoy is also popular with students, and depending on the area there may be a convenient bus to get to your classes.

## Shopping for Home Goods

### Target



Target is right on campus just above the UCSD bookstore. It carries most of the daily essentials like cooking utensils or microwaves that you might not bring easily from home. They lack larger furniture items, but in terms of smaller items, it's a common go-to for students.

### Marshalls

Marshalls (the closest is right off campus at La Jolla Village Square) is a great spot for room essentials like organizers, bedding, towels, and kitchen essentials at a reduced price. Pro tip: at the start of the school year, the La Jolla Village Square location tends to be busy with parents. The Mira Mesa location has a much better stock with shorter lines! This is especially useful in the bedding section (where they notably have a selection of twin size sheets). It also happens to be close to the next spot, Five Below.

### Five Below

Five Below, named for its Dollar Tree-like variety of items \$5 and under, has a great assortment of affordable room decor and other room utility essentials that would otherwise cost more from places like Target and Bed Bath & Beyond. The quality tends to be much better than Dollar Tree. The nearest Five Below is in the same shopping center as the Mira Mesa Marshalls. Across the street from this shopping center is another Target, which has a better stock of Command strips than you'd otherwise see.

### IKEA

Finally, to fill in the rest of your needs on your shopping list, check out IKEA, a 20-minute drive from campus. During back to school season, they have a curated list on their website of suitable dorm room items, which can help when deciding what you're looking for. IKEA tends to have better prices for larger organizers than Marshalls does, as well as a potentially better selection of lighting options. Make sure to check the website to see what's in stock before you make the trip given their current shipping delays.

## General Tips

- If you live on campus, be mindful of clothes storage. The closets are small and will not fit much! Look up "[your residential area] dorm tour ucsc" on YouTube to know what to expect when it comes to room layout, furniture, and get a better feel of the room size.

Sometimes they also will show the closest dining and laundry facilities, and other essentials around where you live.

- Choose an earlier move-in day to have a better selection!
- Bring something that reminds you of home, like photos or some sentimental memorabilia, to make the space feel like yours.
- Set up a video call with your best friend from home during your first night in your dorm.
- Buy a mattress pad! Most of the dorm mattresses are very well-used.
- Consider living in your dorm for one night and taking note of things that would make your routines feel easier; that's your shopping list for the next day.

## Getting Around Campus And San Diego

### MTA Trolley

The new extension of the Blue Line opened up during Fall Quarter 2021, and it is free for all UCSD students (see information below on how to get your Triton U-Pass)! It connects to UTC on one end and Old Town on the other, with connections to places like downtown and the airport. For students without a car, this is the most reliable and efficient way to get downtown and explore more of San Diego. Even if you have a car, this takes the guesswork out of finding parking and can save you some gas money.

### Campus Shuttles

If you need to get to the opposite corner of campus, or even have a class at SIO (Scripps Institute of Oceanography), the best way is to take the campus shuttle. Check the [Triton Transit webpage](#) to check the best route, where stops are located, and see the live location of buses. Some routes (like the U/Every 10 minutes) only operate during the week of campus. Route GC only runs once an hour on the weekends to bring students to the Convoy/Clairemont shopping and dining area.

### Best Bus Routes

UCSD allows you to ride the MTA buses for free! Make sure you have [Pronto](#) downloaded on your phone and follow the instructions to receive your pass (see more information below on how to get your Triton U-Pass).

- The UCSD Blue Line trolley can take you directly to campus from many locations along the coast of San Diego. It starts at UTC and stops all the way at San Ysidro- the best part is that it stops right in front of our department! It is a great choice for commuter



students with a car since there is free parking in some stations. Take a look at the route using the [MTS map tool](#). The 201 and 202 buses run clockwise/counterclockwise and

- connect UCSD with the La Jolla Village Square shops, UTC, Vons, and off-campus student neighborhoods. This service primarily has UCSD students on board and runs every 10 minutes during the week and every 15 minutes on the weekend. It only runs from the center of campus (UCSD Transit Center), so depending on where you live it might not be the most convenient. The 101 bus route runs from UTC all the way up to Oceanside, with parts right along the ocean. However, it only runs once every 30 minutes and can often have delays or inconsistencies with the schedule. Biking the 101 can be more pleasant for a leisure weekend activity, but without a car the bus is a viable option. The 237 bus route is an alternative for those who need to get to/from UTC or any of the nearby apartments. This route is also great for students who want to go to Mira Mesa, as there are many stops along the way to its final destination of Miramar College.
- Keep in mind that the 237 only runs on weekdays and only runs between approximately 4-10 am, and 2-8 pm. Like the 201/202, the 237 also runs from the Gilman Transit Center.

## Triton U-Pass for Students

Did you know that Triton U-Pass provides UCSD students with unlimited rides on public transportation?

### Who is eligible for a Triton U-Pass?

All current undergraduate and graduate students who have paid quarterly registration fees are eligible for the Triton U-Pass.

### Which services does the Triton U-Pass provide?<sup>1</sup>

With the Triton U-Pass you can have unlimited rides on all regional MTS and NCTD mass transit bus and trolley/light rail, except for:

- NCTD: Coaster Train, FLEX and LIFT
- MTS: Rural Routes (888, 891, 892 and 894), Rapid Express Routes, and MTS Access.

### Is the U-Pass good all year around?

You can take advantage of the Triton U-Pass during Fall, Winter, and Spring academic quarters.

For more information on how to use the U-Pass, take a look at [this video](#) and visit the [Triton U-Pass web page](#).

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<sup>1</sup>Please visit the [Triton U-Pass webpage](#) for updated information on services available with U-Pass.

## Getting a California Driver License

The [Department of Motor Vehicles \(DMV\)](#) is where you would need to go to get a California Driver License.

Visit the [Driver's Licenses webpage](#) to learn more about what you need and which steps you need to take to get your California Driver License. If you already have a California Driver License but it is about to expire, visit the [Driver's License Renewal webpage](#).

## Where To Study

Some alternatives when none of the floors of Geisel feel appealing.



### Galbraith Hall Study Rooms

If you're willing to make the walk to the south end of Revelle, Galbraith Hall is one of the best-kept secret study spots at UCSD. It has a newly-renovated interior with two study rooms: one "active study" room where students can partake in group study, and one "silent study" that is supposed to mimic the upper floors of Geisel. Connected to the silent study room is also a group study room that students can reserve. The active study room tends to be less rowdy than the lower floors of Geisel, so it's the perfect environment if you work best with just a little noise, and the silent study room has a great non-intimidating layout and atmosphere to really buckle down and get to work.

### Biomedical Library

Located in the School of Medicine, the Biomedical Library (on average) is less busy than Geisel, still offering group study rooms and plenty of work spaces. It is smaller than Geisel with only two floors, and make sure to check their open hours before you decide to stop by (they tend to have slightly shorter hours than Geisel). At any rate, if you need a change of environment, the Biomed library definitely offers that.

### SME Building, 2nd Floor Patio

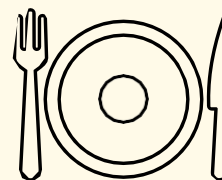
While this spot isn't the most ideal while the next-door amphitheater is being constructed, it is still worth noting since construction tends to end pretty early (between 3-4pm). If you don't mind working outside, the second floor patio is spacious with plenty of tables for students to study. Especially during COVID when eating inside might not be the safest choice (and food generally isn't allowed in the libraries these days), this outdoor patio is a great choice if you like snacking while eating.



SME building patio. Credit: [Safdie Rabines Architects](#)

For more locations to study on campus, check out [this page](#).

## Where To Eat



### Student Center A

**Blue Pepper** Blue Pepper has been a longtime favorite of UCSD students, located in the Old Student Center near Revelle College. They serve delicious Thai food with plenty of vegan and vegetarian options in very generous servings, and are open until 8pm on weekdays. If you haven't tried Blue Pepper, consider your first meal there to be a rite of passage in TritonHood.

### **Blue Bowl**

Blue Bowl opened in new Sixth College (North Torrey Pines Living and Learning Community) during Fall 2021, and whether you're on- or off-campus, they have some of the best acai bowls in Southern California. They are a small chain where you can totally customize your own acai bowl (but for your first time, consider ordering the Lazy Blue to take the guesswork out of it!). Especially if you aren't from San Diego or southern California, use Blue Bowl as an entry into the local acai bowl subculture.

## Price Center East

**Santorini** Discover the culinary delights of Greece without leaving the UCSD campus at Santorini Island Grill. This hidden gem captures the essence of the sun-soaked Mediterranean with its authentic Greek cuisine. From the sizzling aroma of gyro wraps to the savory layers of moussaka. You can indulge in their loaded fries, quarter lemon chicken, or combination meals for a mix of greens and proteins.

### **Tapioca Express**

Tapioca Express offers snacks to meals that can appeal to most taste buds as well as offers some okay bubble tea for campus goers. Most of their dishes are delicious such as their fried chicken meal or Korean barbeque beef served with some rice and vegetables.

**Panda Express** An easy go-to for students where you can get a quick and affordable meal. It offers beef, chicken, shrimp glazed with a variety of delicious sweet, tangy, spicy, salty sauces served with rice and vegetables.

## Dining Hall Picks

Although most students on a dining plan at *any* university will be moaning and groaning about dining hall food by the end of the year, each dining hall will offer something different so that there's something for everyone. Notable dining halls include the hEAT stand at Pines in Muir College, which serves comforting Asian-inspired dishes (that are likely the most authentic you'll find around campus); as well as Makai at Sixth College, which serves poke bowls with unlimited toppings, and several pre-designed bowls. Regardless of which dining hall you end up at, there will always be vegan and/or vegetarian options available. A great way to learn more about dietary information, or just ordering ahead to skip dining hall lines, is by downloading the [Triton2Go mobile app](#). This app shows symbols next to each menu item with dietary and allergen information, and connects to your dining plan so that you can use dining dollars, Triton cash, or even credit card.

## Triton2Go Mobile App

With the Triton2Go App you can skip the wait and place your order from any dining hall on campus. The app will notify you once your food is ready to be picked up so you won't need to wait in line. Triton2Go also offers options for you to customize your order, get access to secret menus items, and join a loyalty program - where you can earn points and win prizes!



For further instruction on how to use the app, click [here](#). For more information on the Triton2Go project, visit the [Triton2Go](#) website.

## Off Campus Favorites

The Grocery Shuttle (running hourly on weekends, see the [GC schedule](#)) connects the center of campus with Convoy, the part of San Diego known for its variety of Asian restaurants and grocery stores (H Mart and several locations of Ranch 99 are located here). Also in this area is a location of Vallarta Express, a 24-hour Mexican fast-food spot with unbelievably generous portions and also a UCSD student rite of passage. Definitely try out the Christian fries, which are loaded with guacamole, sour cream, cheese, egg, bacon, and beef. Other Convoy favorites are MNGO, an Asian dessert restaurant specializing in kakigōri (Japanese shaved ice with condensed milk and sweetener) and their mango selection of desserts.

Another off campus favorite is Caroline's Seaside Cafe. Near Scripps, Caroline's overlooks the ocean. Enjoy breakfast or lunch with a wonderful view and be sure to bring your student ID for a discount!



Caroline's Seaside Cafe. Credit: [Tripadvisor](#)

For more information on dining, please visit the [HDH Dining Services](#) website.

## Farmer's Market at Epstein Amphitheater

Experience the vibrant and bountiful Farmer's Market at Epstein Amphitheater, located in the heart of UC San Diego. Every Tuesday, this bustling marketplace transforms the amphitheater into a hub of fresh produce, artisanal goods, and a lively atmosphere. Stroll through the

vibrant stalls, filled with a colorful assortment of locally grown fruits, vegetables, and herbs, all bursting with flavor and nutritional goodness. Discover a wide selection of artisanal bread, cheese, honey, and other delectable treats from passionate local vendors who take pride in their craft. Engage with the friendly farmers and producers, learning about sustainable practices and the stories behind their products. With its lively ambiance and community spirit, the Farmer's Market at Epstein Amphitheater is not just a place to shop, but a destination to savor the best of local, seasonal produce and support the vibrant agricultural community. Embrace the farm-to-table experience and celebrate the abundance of nature at this thriving market.

## Places for Coffee

UCSD offers several excellent places for coffee enthusiasts to enjoy a delicious cup of joe. Here are a few recommended spots:

1. **Art of Espresso:** Situated in the heart of the Village, Art of Espresso is a charming coffee shop that offers a cozy ambiance and a menu of carefully crafted coffee beverages. It's a great place to unwind and enjoy a cup of coffee in a peaceful setting.
2. **Audrey's Café:** Located in Geisel Library, Audrey's Café offers a cozy and relaxing atmosphere with a wide selection of coffee and espresso beverages. It's the perfect spot to grab a coffee while studying or catching up with friends.
3. **Bird Rock:** Located at the Amphitheater, right behind the SE building. At Bird Rock you will find award winning coffees, house made flavored lattes, classic cappuccinos, local pastries, and an assortment of grab and go options.
4. **Café Ventanas:** Nestled within the Jacobs School of Engineering, Café Ventanas offers a modern and inviting space for coffee lovers. They serve specialty coffee drinks and provide a picturesque view of the campus.
5. **Starbucks:** Located at Price Center, right next to Dirty Birds, Starbucks offers a wide selection of coffee and espresso drinks. They pride themselves on sourcing the best beans and providing a comfortable environment for students and staff to relax and enjoy their drinks.
6. **Roger's Market:** This student-run market on campus not only provides a convenient place to grab groceries but also serves excellent coffee. You can find a range of caffeinated beverages and enjoy them in a laid-back setting.
7. **Zanzibar Café (The Loft):** This cafe located on the second floor of Price Center is an affordable option for espresso based drinks.

## Where To Shop

### For the Essentials: On-campus Target



Not every college has a convenient on-campus location of Target; in fact, UCSD is the only UC to have one! The prices are not marked up any more than other off-campus locations, and they offer a great selection of body care products, household essentials, and snacks priced much lower than at the food markets like Roger's and Sixth Market. The selection of most other things (like clothes and furnishings) are much more limited than at a typical Target, but the weekend Grocery Shuttle stops by the Balboa Target.

### For Groceries: Vons Or Trader Joe's

For quick meals: Most college students rely on Trader Joe's because of its selection of its prepared frozen meals and entrees that make cooking so much faster and easier, but because of its convenience, going at the wrong time can cost a long time in the checkout line. It's accessible by the 101, 201, and 202 bus routes, as well as the Trolley. Try going in the mornings, or roughly within an hour before closing (they currently close every day at 9pm) for the shortest lines.



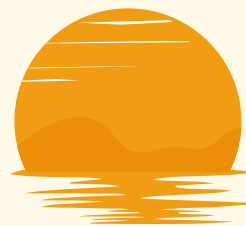
For "real" cooking/ingredients: Though new students often end up at the Ralph's next to Trader Joe's, continuing students tend to know that the Vons (accessible by the 201/202 buses) nearby campus has notably cheaper prices for the same items. Depending on the product, expect Vons to carry it for fifty cents to a few dollars cheaper than Ralphs.

### For A Fun Shopping Day: Westfield UTC

The UTC (University Towne Center) shopping mall is a classically Southern California outdoor shopping mall that includes clothing from affordable fast fashion to designer stores. They have a food court with great variety, and inside their food court is an ice rink open to the public. They have some coffee shops and a koi pond as well, so even just window shopping is an enjoyable experience in itself. Because UTC is accessible by so many buses (most frequently the 201, 202, and 101) and is at the end of the Trolley's Blue Line, this is definitely a hub for students on weekends.

## Where To Watch The Sunset

### The Student Favorite: Gliderport



It's difficult to think of a more quintessentially UCSD experience than going to Gliderport to watch the sunset. Gliderport is a ten minute walk straight off of Seventh College, which can

be accessed by the IL and OL campus buses if you don't live on that corner of campus. With tons of rocks to perch on and a great view of the cliffs down to La Jolla Shores, it's popular for friends and couples. Make sure to check the cloudiness before you make the walk over!

## The Not-So-Secret Swing

Whenever the "secret swing" is brought up with students, there's usually at least one person who talks about how it really isn't a secret. Good for them. It's still a great place to seek out, and every student should give the short walk a try at some point. Check out [this link](#) to find out how to get to the La Jolla hidden swing!

## For Tourists And Locals Alike: Sunset Cliffs

This one's more difficult to get to without a car, but if you have the means to drive there, Sunset Cliffs is absolutely a must-see place. Situated next to Point Loma Nazarene University, the aptly-named Sunset Cliffs is arguably the most iconic San Diego sunset location there is. Most tourists remember San Diego's natural beauty by this place, and like its name suggests, the cliffs that adorn it make the viewing experience that much better.

## SE Student Organizations

### Undergraduate SCSE

The Society of Civil and Structural Engineers (SCSE) is the UC San Diego student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) and the Structural Engineers Association of San Diego (SEAOSD). They supplement the engineering education of UCSD students, promote members' personal and professional development, and improve the community they are part of through outreach and community service. SCSE holds various events, outreach opportunities, and project teams. Project teams are a chance to get hands-on experience and apply concepts learned in class to a real world example.

The SCSE Project Teams are the following:

- Steel Bridge
- Concrete Canoe
- Seismic Design
- Timber Design

To learn more about SCSE visit their website at <https://scse.ucsd.edu/> or contact them at [scse\\_ucsd@gmail.com](mailto:scse_ucsd@gmail.com), or follow them on instagram [@scse\\_ucsd](#).

### EERI Student Chapter at UCSD

The objective of the EERI Student Chapter at UC San Diego is to motivate and encourage students into applying the best practices in Earthquake Engineering. More specifically, they hold events related to earthquake engineering such as seminars and industry tours. They

also support the undergraduate seismic design team in design, manufacturing, and testing tasks. To learn more about the EERI Student Chapter at UCSD, visit their website at <https://sites.google.com/ucsd.edu/eeriucsd>.

## Additional Engineering Student Organizations

Tau Beta Pi | [@tbpucsd](#)

Society of Women Engineers (SWE) | [Linktr.ee/SWEucsd](https://linktr.ee/SWEucsd)

National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) | [@nsbeucsd](#)

Society of Asian Scientists and Engineers (SASE) | [@saseatucsd](#)

Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE) | [@shpeatucsd](#)

Out in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (OSTEM) | [@ostemucsd](#)

### Student Organizations with Design Projects

Triton Racing | [sae.eng.ucsd.edu](https://sae.eng.ucsd.edu)

SEDS Rocket Development | [@seds\\_ucsd](#)

AUVSI Autonomous Aircraft Competition | [@tritonuas](#)

Human-Powered Submarine Competition | [@hps\\_ucsandiego](#)

AIAA Design Build and Fly Aircraft Competition | [@ucsd\\_dbf](#)

Constructions Management Association of America (CMAA) | [cmaaatucsd.wixsite.com](https://cmaaatucsd.wixsite.com)

More information on student organizations within Structural Engineering can be found on the [SE website](#).

## General Student Organizations

UCSD has over 500 student organizations. These include fraternities and sororities (both professional and social), religious organizations, pre-professional organizations, cultural organizations, and organizations formed based on common interests. The Costco Club is a unique highlight and demonstrates the broad range of student organizations that are offered here. For a complete list of student organizations, see the Center for Student Involvement's website at <https://studentorg.ucsd.edu/>. The best way to get involved with clubs and organizations on campus is through talking to people. Whether a SE specific club or a more general one, the best information is often received from talking to club members directly.

## Sports Clubs

Sports clubs are a great way to get involved on campus. UCSD offers 30 different sports, as well as additional esports. Club sports teams are the step between intramural and Division I sports teams. They allow students to play the sports they are most interested in without the pressure of being a D1 athlete. For more information on Sports Clubs including the sports offered at UCSD, see the website at <https://recreation.ucsd.edu/competitive-sports/sports-clubs/>. Sports clubs are run through UCSD Recreation.

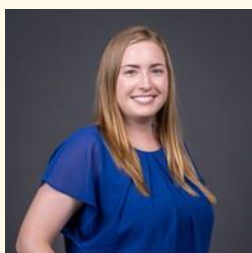
# Meet SE Staff and Faculty Members

## Staff

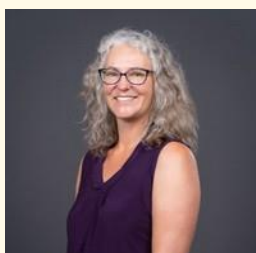


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Department Chair

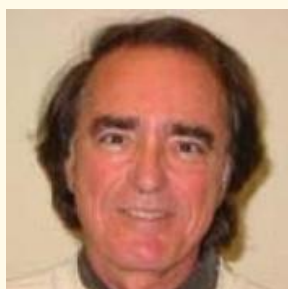


Krysl, Petr  
Vice Chair



Qiao, Yu  
Vice Chair

## Professors



Asaro, Robert



Chen, Jiun-Shyan



Conte, Joel P



Elgamal, Ahmed-Waeil



Hutchinson, Tara C.



Kim, Hyonny



Kim, Hyunsun



Kosmatka, John



Kuester, Falko



Lanza di Scalea,  
Francesco



Loh, Kenneth



McCartney, John S.



Morrison, Machel L.



Mosqueda, Gilberto



Palermo, Alessandro

Semnani, Shabnam  
Jandaghi

Shing, Pui-Shum



Tehrani, Mehran



Tomac, Ingrid



Tsampras, Georgios



Uang, Chia-Ming

Van Den Einde, Yael  
"Lelli"

Zhu, Qiang

## Adjunct



Chadha, Mayank



Farrar, Charles R.



Loh, Chin-Hsiung

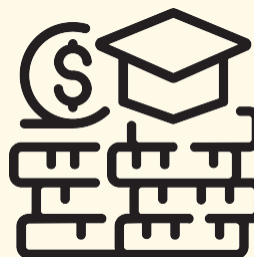
# Financial Support

## Financial Aid and Scholarships

The [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) is available for U.S. citizens and eligible non-citizens (i.e. permanent residents). The [California Dream Act](#) Application is available for undocumented students who qualify for the AB540 fee exemption.

Make sure to explore these other Financial Aid resources:

- [Understand your Cost of Attendance](#)
- [Financial Aid Estimator](#)
- [Work Study](#)
- [Financial Aid during Summer Sessions](#)
- [Hope Scholars](#)
- [Military Affiliated Students](#)
- [Aid for International Students](#)
- [Financial Aid FAQs](#)



### For Undergraduate Students

The Financial Aid Office at UC San Diego is committed to providing a comprehensive need-based financial aid program that makes it financially possible for undergraduate students to meet the cost of the program they wish to attend.

The first step to apply for Financial Aid is to submit the appropriate application, ideally by the priority deadline. Visit the [Undergraduate Financial Aid website](#) for more information on how and when to apply.

### For Graduate Students

Graduate students receive their primary funding through their department. If graduate support is limited, students may be eligible to apply for student loan options. For more information about Graduate Aid, please visit the [Graduate Division website](#).

### Loans

There are several types of loans available for Undergraduate and Graduate students to help them pay for their education. Check out the links below to learn more about the different types of loan you can take.

- [Federal Undergraduate Loans](#)
- [Federal Graduate/Professional School Loans](#)
- [Federal Direct Loan Program](#)
- [California Dream Loans](#)

- [University Undergraduate and Quon Family Loans](#)
- [Short-Term Emergency Loans](#)
- [Private Loan Programs](#)

If you need help with understanding the different types of loans, with choosing which loan is best for you, with assistance on how to repay your loan, or any further help with student loans, visit the [Financial-Aid Loan webpage](#) or call (858) 534-4480.

## Scholarships

Scholarships are a great way to get financial help for college education! Scholarships are gift aid (money you do not have to repay) awarded to students for either academic merit only, or merit and additional criteria such as major of interest, leadership, or financial need. Scholarships at UCSD are divided into the ones that are administered by UCSD and the ones that are not administered by UCSD. Please visit the [scholarships website](#) for more information on scholarships resources.

On the SE website you can also find a [Fellowship and Scholarship webpage](#) (updated daily) that has information regarding fellowships and scholarships that come across the SE Student Affairs Team. What are you waiting for? Go check it out!

## Student Employees (Applies to all PhD students)

### Employment Pay Rates

Pay rates for every year are updated and [posted here](#).

M.S. Thesis students (if compensated by their faculty member) start at a Step 2.

PhD students start at a Step 3 and then move to a Step 4 once they advance.

### Employment Pay Calendar

The Payroll Calendar for every year is updated and [posted here](#). By following the link you will also find information on timekeeping and absence management, and some FAQs.

### How to Complete Direct Deposits

All students - both international and domestic - are advised to **ensure that they enroll in direct deposit, and update their current mailing address, in all three of the following systems:**

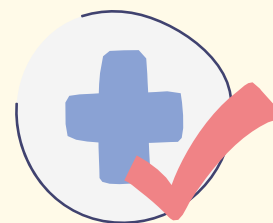
- [Student Financial Services](#) (for **all students** - even if the student does not receive stipends, overpayments and other credits related to student billing may result in refunds via this system) [UCPath](#) (for students holding any campus employment appointment)
- [Payment Compass](#) (for international students receiving stipends, and **all students** who will receive travel & expense reimbursements)

Though it seems ideal, a single direct deposit portal is unfortunately not an option on campus at this time. As a “next best” option to minimize payment issues, all students are strongly encouraged to enroll in direct deposit if possible.

**Keeping the current mailing address up to date in each system is also important** - should there be any issue with a direct deposit (or the student is not enrolled), inaccurate address information will delay check delivery.

## Health Resources

### Health Insurance - Understanding UC SHIP



#### **Did you know that all UCSD students are automatically enrolled into the UC Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP)?**

In 2011, the UC Regents made health insurance a mandatory non-academic condition for course booking. To ensure that all students have adequate health care coverage, including ongoing primary and specialty care, and to satisfy the mandatory health insurance requirement, UCSD automatically enrolls all registered students into [UC SHIP](#).

#### **Am I able to opt out from UC SHIP?**

If you are covered under an individual, U.S. federal or state, employee, or employer-sponsored health insurance plan and do not wish to be covered by UC SHIP, you can submit an online application to waive SHIP for an entire academic year. To submit a waiver application, visit the [Triton Student System](#).

#### **What is UC SHIP and what does it cover?**

UC SHIP is a student-focused benefits package for UCSD graduate and undergraduate students, including strong **medical, behavioral health, pharmacy, dental, and vision care benefits**. UC SHIP is compliant with the Affordable Care Act requirements

and works to complement your care at the Student Health Services right on campus. Course booking is automatic for registered students; waiver application is also available.

### How much does it cost to have UC SHIP and how do I make a payment?

You will be charged through your student billing account along with registration fees **each** quarter (Fall, Winter, and Spring). Coverage for the Summer is included in the cost of the Spring quarter.

**For Undergraduate Students:** \$671.002 per quarter

**For Graduate and Professional Students:** \$1,335.003 per quarter

For questions regarding Student Health charges on your UCSD Campus Student Account please contact SHS by phone at (858) 534-2124 or by email at [SHIP3@health.usd.edu](mailto:SHIP3@health.usd.edu). For questions regarding services performed at UCSD Health system or charges you see on [MyStudentChart](#) contact UCSD Health System Billing at (858) 827-3633.

### Can I have dependents added to my UC SHIP?

Yes, dependents can be added to students' UC SHIP plan. Dependents also have to enroll in UC SHIP every quarter for coverage. For more information, visit [this link](#).

### How do I get my UC SHIP insurance card?

Physical insurance cards are not issued for UC SHIP. To obtain an electronic copy of your insurance card, download the [UC SHIP mobile app](#) to your smartphone or tablet, and log in to your account. To access care at [Student Health Services](#) (SHS), your student ID is all you need. You will need your insurance card when accessing emergency services and care for outside referrals.

### How do I access dental care?



Dental coverage through UC SHIP is provided under the Delta Dental PPO network. Dental services are not offered at SHS, so you will need to select a dentist from the [Delta Dental website](#) or call Delta Dental Customer Service at (800) 765-6003. You do not need referrals from SHS for dental care.

### How do I access vision care?

<sup>2</sup> Price for the 2022-2023 Academic Year. Subjected to change. Please consult the [UC SHIP](#) webpage for updated information on health insurance costs.

<sup>3</sup> Price for the 2022-2023 Academic Year. Subjected to change. Please consult the [UC SHIP](#) webpage for updated information on health insurance costs.

UC SHIP vision coverage is provided through Anthem Blue View Vision. Vision services can be accessed at the SHS Optometry Center or by calling Anthem Blue Cross at (866) 940-8306.

### **Can I access Medical Care outside the UCSD Area?**

UC SHIP requires students to obtain a referral from SHS prior to ALL non-emergency and non-urgent care outside of SHS, regardless of the distance from campus. You can also visit other UC campuses to seek medical care and obtain referrals. Just keep in mind that you might be charged a fee as a visiting student depending on that UC Campus health service policy.

### Useful things to know!

#### **Need assistance paying your medical bills?**

All graduate and undergraduate students and dependents who are currently enrolled in UC SHIP and are undergoing financial hardship are eligible to receive assistance through the UC SHIP Reserve Fund Investment Committee (RFIC) in paying out-of-pocket medical expenses that exceed \$500. In addition, applicants must have no outstanding financial balance with their campus and have applied for charity care from the provider of service to be eligible. For more information and to apply, visit the [Medical Assistance Fund](#) webpage.

#### **Free rides to your medical and mental health appointments!**

Students enrolled in UC SHIP have the right to request up to 24 rides per academic year at **no cost** to medical or mental health appointments up to 40 miles (one-way distance) away from UCSD main campus. Rides are not covered for transportation to dental, vision, or non-medical services.

**How do I schedule a ride?** Contact Student Health Services (SHS) at (858) 534-2124 or the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at (858) 534-3755 to book your free ride to your medical appointment.

To learn more about UC SHIP, follow the links below:

- [UC SHIP](#)
- [UC SHIP FAQs](#)

## Student Health Services (SHS)

The SHS is located on Library Walk, west of the Price Center, south of Gisel Library, and it is open all year around. Some of the services offered at SHS are visits to physicians and nurse practitioners, X-rays and lab services, urgent care, optometry, dietician, acupuncture, and much more. A pharmacy and the Counseling and Psychological Services are also located inside SHS.

For hours of operation and more information regarding SHS, please visit the [Student Health Services webpage](#) or call (858) 534-3300.

## Mental Health Resources

*Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make healthy choices<sup>4</sup>.* Our mental health is impacted by many factors and being a college student is a big one! Motivation, academic performance, concentration, and relational behaviors are some of our life areas impacted by our mental stability, and that it's why it is so important to take care of our mental health!

With UC SHIP, you can access Mental and Behavioral Health services by contacting your primary care physician at UCSD SHS or by contacting the [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) at (858) 534-3755. Keep in mind that if you wish to seek mental or behavioral health care outside of UCSD Student Health and CAPS, you will need a referral.

## Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

CAPS provides counseling, workshops and community forums for UCSD students. Visit their [webpage](#) and find out about the many services you can benefit from!

One of our favorite programs offered by CAPS are the RISE Workshops! The objective of the workshops are to promote students reaching their potential in all areas of their lives: emotional, physical, and social.



- Appointments are not required (unless the workshop indicates the need of pre-registration).
- A quarterly schedule can be found [here](#) under "RISE Calendar" and "RISE Daily Schedule."

## The ZONE

The ZONE is a lounge dedicated for student well-being and it was designed to promote a healthy and balanced living to UCSD students. You can stop by The ZONE to relax, hang out,

<sup>4</sup> Mental Health definition from the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#).

charge your devices, fill up your water bottle, and de-stress. You can also make use of the free [programs](#) offered at The ZONE:

- Yoga classes
- Meditation
- Therapy Fluffies
- Healthy Cooking Demonstrations
- R&R Squad Body Works
- Art & Soul DIY Crafting Workshops



The ZONE is located at the Price Center Plaza, right next to Jamba Juice. Visit their [website](#) for hours of operation and an updated weekly schedule. For more information, you can email [zone@health.ucsd.edu](mailto:zone@health.ucsd.edu) or call (858) 534-5553.

## Gender Affirming Care

With UC SHIP you have access to Gender Affirming benefits. For a complete list of the covered benefits, please [visit the Gender Affirming Care](#) webpage. Note that a referral from SHS is required for services to be covered by UC SHIP.



## Pharmacy Benefits

UC SHIP offers unlimited prescription benefits. To maximize those benefits, visit UCSD Student Health Pharmacy inside the Student Health and Well-Being Clinic on campus. You may also access pharmacy benefits outside of Student Health, but keep in mind that you will pay higher out of pocket co-pays. For any questions regarding pharmacy benefits, please call the UCSD Student Health Pharmacy at (858) 534-2135.

## Urgent and Emergency Care

**If you experience a life-threatening emergency, call 911.**

Student Health Services (SHS) offers Urgent Care services on a walk-in basis for serious illness or injury that requires immediate attention. Please refer to the [Cost of Services](#) page for applicable fees.

If SHS is closed, you may call their main telephone number (858) 534-3300 and select option 1, "After Hours Advice," to speak with a registered nurse who will assist you in obtaining the appropriate care. You may also visit the [Emergency Care webpage](#) for more information on how and where to seek Urgent and/or Emergency care outside SHS. The [webpage](#) will also provide information regarding the cost of seeking urgent and/or emergency care outside campus.

## Additional Resources

### Basic Needs

- UC San Diego students that are facing challenges with access to adequate food, stable housing, or general resources, are encouraged to complete the [Basic Needs Assistance Form](#). The form will be assessed to provide individualized resource suggestions and options to meet with supportive staff for a Basic Needs Consultation.
- The [Basic Needs Center](#) also provides undergraduate and graduate students with personal hygiene products that can be picked-up weekly. Pick-ups are available by appointment only and can be scheduled through the [Personal Hygiene Product Pick-Up Form](#).

### Food Security

- Undergraduate and Graduate UCSD students have access to the [Triton Food Pantry](#). At the Food Pantry, a variety of dried and canned goods, and fresh produce are available to students.
  - Check out the [Triton Food Pantry website](#) for information on how to use the pantry and their updated hours for each quarter. It is also worth checking out some [Meal Ideas Using Pantry Items](#) and the [Items Every College Student Should Have in Their Pantry](#) list that were put together by the Food Pantry team!
- Did you know that the **UC San Diego App** has a new feature that allows students to set up alerts for when there's free food on campus?
  - Any registered undergraduate, graduate, or professional student can download the **UC San Diego App** on the [\[Apple\] App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#) and set up alerts on the [Food Notification Interest Form](#) to be notified of when and where there is free food on campus.
- Also, did you know that there is a **FREE Grocery Shuttle** that takes you to various groceries stores? The shuttle can be used by undergraduate and graduate students and it usually operates during the weekend (subjected to change).
  - On the [Grocery Shuttle webpage](#) you can find information regarding the Grocery Shuttle Route with dates and times and several coupons and special offers for UC San Diego students.
  - There is also a [Grocery Store Map](#) that you can access to find grocery stores near the shuttle stops. On the map, the stores are color-coded to represent their cost.



- The [Basic Needs Center](#) also provides assistance for [CalFresh](#) statewide food program applications throughout the [CalFresh Assistance Form](#).
  - CalFresh is California's food stamp program. You can qualify as a student if you meet the [eligibility requirements](#).
- Additional Food Security resources can be accessed [here](#).

Additional services/resources provided by UC San Diego campus partners can be found [here](#).

## Student Discounts with ID card

UCSD Student IDs grant access to many discounts off-campus, including (but certainly not limited to) Birch Aquarium, 99 Ranch, Caroline's Seaside Cafe, and Amazon. Find a list of student discounts [here](#). Be sure to verify with the company that they are still offering the discount and note that restrictions may apply.

## FE Exam and PE Licensing for Engineers

The Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam is generally the first step to becoming a **professional licensed engineer (P.E.)**. By becoming a P.E., you will have doors open to you, you will belong to a license profession, and you will protect the public by ensuring a baseline level of proven qualification and expertise. The FE exam is designed for recent graduates and students who are close to finishing an undergraduate engineering degree from an EAC/ABET-accredited program (UCSD is one!).

For more information on the FE exam, please visit the [SE Professional Licensing page](#) or the [NCEES FE Exam website](#).

## For International Students

The [International Students & Programs Office](#) (ISPO) has the mission of enriching the academic, research, and intercultural experiences of international students, providing the highest levels of knowledge and expertise in advising and immigration services, in partnership with campus departments and units at UCSD.

If you are an International student at UCSD, you can seek ISPO advising for help with:

- Visa Status
- Working in the U.S. as an International Student
- Traveling as an International Student
- Taxes, Social Security Number (SSN), and Financial Resources
- Housing
- Health and Wellness Resources



- Family and Dependents Resources
- Driver License and Transportation Information
- Safety and Legal Resources
- And much more...

Do not wait and contact ISPO [here!](#)



## For Undocumented Students

The [Undocumented Student Services](#) is committed to serving undocumented students at UCSD with the mission of helping them overcome obstacles that arise from their immigration status and support them through personal and academic excellence.

The Undocumented Student Services is located on the 5th floor, room 518, of the Student Services Center. To book an appointment, visit their [scheduling platform](#). For more information, please visit their [website](#) or email [undoc@ucsd.edu](mailto:undoc@ucsd.edu).

## Academic Resources and Tips

### How can I build my resume?

Putting a Resume together is one of the biggest challenges students face. But there is plenty of help at UCSD!

The Career Center can help you to [create your resume](#), either if you're doing it for the first time or if you have a long list of experiences. Not only that, the Career Center can also help you make a [Cover Letter](#), [build a network](#), look for a [job](#) or [internship](#), and even help you [prepare for an interview](#). The Career Center can also help you find some cool [research opportunities](#) and [get into grad school](#).

Now, getting back to creating a resume... Here are some tips to help you put yours together!

- The purpose of a resume is to **identify and market your skills**
  - All your **classes, work, community service, internships, and campus experience** count as experience, as all help you develop skills that are valuable in the workplace!
  - Remember that your resume is your personal marketing document!
- Is always a good idea to **tailor each resume to the position you are applying to**
  - Review your experiences and rewrite descriptions as needed

- **Using the same language as the position post** is a good technique as it demonstrate to the employer/recruiter that you are paying attention to what they are looking for
- **Make your resume as easy to read** by:
  - Using consistent formatting
  - Using an easy to read font, like Times New Roman or Arial
- **Apply the correct verb tense**
- Organize your educational and professional experiences either in a **reverse chronological order** or by **relevance** to match the position's requirements
- Here are some ideas of **section titles** you can add to your resume:
  - Objective
  - Summary or Qualifications
  - Projects (Team Projects, Research, Business, Arts, etc)
  - Leadership and Community Service
  - Certifications and Additional Trainings
  - Additional Experience (in case you want to add some experience that is not that relevant to the position you are applying for)
  - Awards and Honors
  - Clubs and Organizations
  - Skills: Technical, Languages, and others



## Remember this!

A lot of students believe that they do not have anything to add to their resume. And that is not true! While it can be that many students do not have any work experience, all of you went through high school and/or community college, and all of your academic involvement is experience! So make sure to include projects, organizations, and clubs you were part of, leadership or community involvement, and anything else you believe an employer/recruiter should know about you. And now you are part of the UCSD community, and there are plenty of opportunities to be involved with. Within the Structural Engineering department, there are several clubs, student organizations, and some very cool project teams that you can become a member of! Getting involved will help you make connections and friendships, get familiar with the engineering world, and build up technical experience. And all of those can go to your resume! Check out the [SE Student Organizations](#) webpage and the [SE Undergraduate Labs](#) webpage to get involved today!

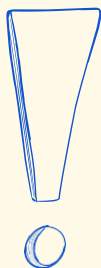
## Where can I find job and/or internship opportunities?

Now that you have your resume ready to go, it is time to apply for jobs and/or internships!

SE updates daily the [Scholarships/Internships/Careers](#) webpage, where you can find opportunities inside and outside UCSD. Research opportunities are also posted on that same page, so keep an eye out if you are interested in getting involved with research. Jacobs School of Engineering also has a [Job and Internship Portal](#) where you can create your own profile and resume, view and apply for career opportunities, and gain access to some of the top employers in your field of study. Companies are utilizing this database to proactively search for the best talent at the Jacobs School to fill their open jobs and internships, so be sure to create your profile and keep your information up to date!

Another cool resource available at UCSD is the [Career Center](#). Here you can meet with a career coach to get help on the path to success.

### Something to keep in mind!



If you got really excited about applying to a job or internship position but you do not have any experience, do not let this discourage you! Go back to [How can I build my resume?](#) section and try to better understand what experience really means. If you are discouraged to apply even after reading the resume section, think that going through the application and interview process is already a way of gaining experience! Then, next time you apply for a position, it will not be your first time doing it and, after some practice, you will feel more comfortable and confident with the whole process.

### Where can I go to use a computer/printer on campus?

If you need to use a computer while on campus, check out the [Computer Lab LookUp](#) to find the closest computer to you. Also check out the [Laptop Lending Program](#) to see if you are eligible for quarter-long laptop loans.

If you need to print some pages while on campus, make use of the [Wēpa Printing on Campus](#). Wēpa is a cloud-based printing service that allows you to conveniently upload, print and pay for documents! Check out their [webpage](#) for instructions on how to use Wēpa and for a map of where you can find a printer on campus.

If you are creating an impressive class project or if you need to print and bind your thesis, check out the services offered by the [Triton Print & Digital Media](#).

If you are in need of banners, signs, and posters, check out the [Large-Format Printing](#) services offered at UCSD.

For more information on Technology, Computers, and Labs at UCSD, click [here](#).



## How can I form better study habits?

Every person will have their particular routine to study, but there are some tips that can be useful to all students!

- **Find a good place to study.** Go back to the Where to Study section of this guide for some tips on where to study on campus.
- **Minimize distractions.** Look for a quiet place to study and try to be away from your phone and social media.
- **Take breaks.** Taking intentional breaks has been linked to better retention, increased attention, and boosts your energy. Taking a short walk, relaxing with a friend, listening to some mood-boosting song, stretching, and meditating are some good ways of taking a break from your studies.
- **Don't cram for your exam.** Do not leave all your studies for the last minute. Space out your studying during the week of or the week before the exam. Remember that attending class, taking good notes, and doing your homework assignments on time are all ways of studying before an exam, so make sure you are on top of them!
- **Keep track of deadlines and important dates.** Make a calendar with all the deadlines for all your classes. That way, you will have an idea of how each week of your quarter will look like and you can plan accordingly.
- Aromatherapy, plants, and music can help!
- **Set study goals for each study session.** You might aim to study for three hours, or review three chapters of a textbook. Just remember that it is important to be realistic about your goals to avoid any frustrations in case they are not met.
- **Reward yourself.** After a study session and after turning in an assignment or an exam, make sure you recognize your efforts and treat yourself with your favorite meal, spending some time with friends and family, or making time for your favorite activity.
- **Organize a study group.** The people in your group can help one another work through a difficult problem, provide encouragement, hold each other accountable, provide different perspectives, and make studying more enjoyable. Explaining difficult concepts to others is also another great way to help with comprehension and retention of the material.
- **Take practice tests.** This is a great way to discover gaps in your knowledge, and practice problems on a time limit. Making flashcards and having a friend quiz you are also great ways to practice!
- **Ask for help!** Professors, peers, TAs, tutors, advisors, graders, and readers are all people available to help you! Do not hesitate to go to them if you are stuck in a problem or if you would like to further discuss a subject topic. Who knows, you can end up finding a new friend!
- **Take care of yourself.** This is definitely the most important habit to form, for your personal, professional, and academic life. Make sure you exercise regularly, eat well, get good sleep, and take care of your mental wellbeing. Check out the Mental Health



Resources section above for some cool tips on services and workshops offered on campus.

## How can I manage my time better?

As a college student, knowing how to best manage your time is a crucial skill to have. Poor time management causes students to feel overwhelmed, frustrated, and stressed. And those are all feelings we do not want to have. So here are some tips to help you manage your time better and enjoy the most out of your time here at UCSD!

- Create a to-do list of all the tasks you wish to complete at the beginning of each week or day. Look at each task and ask yourself:
  - What is the **most** important **and** urgent?
  - What is important **but not** urgent?
  - What is **not** important **but** urgent?
  - What is **not** important and **not** urgent?



- Say “no” to requests that add more stress to your life or more obligations to your plate. When saying “no,” be direct, honest and respectful.
- Understand that we only have so many hours in a day, so be realistic on how you're planning your day.
- While it is important to complete your tasks on your to-do list, it's equally (if not more) important to make time for your health and well-being! Make sure you're prioritizing your health and well-being by going to bed at a reasonable time and scheduling time to move your body at least 30 minutes each day.
- Schedule breaks during the day to restore your energy. This will allow you to meet the demands of your daily life.

One thing important to keep in mind is that UCSD runs on a quarter system. A quarter system is more fast-paced than a regular semester schedule, and having good time management skills will help you navigate through this more fast-paced system a lot easier!

If you have any questions or need help with managing your time better, call a Health Educator at (858) 822-5382.

## Tips on how to take tests

### Before the test

- Study in small groups
  - Go over as many different problems as you can and discuss with your group about different approaches to each problem. Make use of the many brains in the room! Do not leave the problem until you're convinced you could do it by yourself.
- **Make a summary sheet** with the key ideas, equations, and procedures you might need for the test. Either bring the sheet with you or know what's on it, depending on the test policy. **Don't stay up all night studying.** Try to get a reasonable amount of sleep the night before the exam. If that is not possible, try to take a nap or a short-rest before the exam. **Set up a backup system for your alarm clock.** Set a second alarm or arrange a wake-up call from a friend. **Make sure you have reliable transportation to campus.**
- **Pack everything you will need** for the exam (pen, pencil, eraser, calculator, and anything else requested/allowed for the test) beforehand to make sure you will not forget anything.

### During the test

- **Read over the whole exam** before you write anything. **Choose the problem or question that seems easiest to you and do it first.** Continue to do the problems in order of increasing difficulty. **Stay in motion!** Work on a problem until you get stuck. Think about it for a couple minutes, and if nothing comes to you, drop it and go on to another problem. Revisit the problems you skipped after you were done with all the other ones you were confident about. **Show your work!** Give enough detail so that both you and the grader can tell what you're trying to do. Even if you can do the problem in your head, make sure you show your work. **Watch out for significant figures. Think partial credit!** Try to put something down for each part of every problem and/or question. If you don't have time to solve a problem completely, write down what you would have done if you had more time. **Keep your work eligible!** If you don't understand a question, **ask** the instructor/proctor **for help.** **Do not panic!** If you feel yourself sweating or hyperventilating, put down your pencil, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths, and consciously relax any muscles that you're clenching. When you're calmer, go back to work, If you have time, **check your solutions.**

## Computer Recommendations

If you are looking to buy a computer/laptop and are in doubt of what to pick, check out the specifications and examples below put together by a group of SE students!

- Specs
  - Processor – Intel Core i7-i9 (8th-gen or newer) or AMD Ryzen (4000-series or newer)
  - Operating System – Windows 10 64-bit
  - Memory – 16-32 GB
  - Hard Drive – 500 GB - 1 TB NVMe M.2 SSD recommended or SSD (SATA based with 400-550 MB/s read and write speeds)
  - Display – 15"-17" with High Definition 1920x1080 resolution or Ultra High Definition with 3840x2160 resolution (touchscreen optional)
  
- Examples
  - Dell XPS 13/15
  - Dell Precision
  - Surface Laptop 5
  - Surface Laptop Studio
  - Asus K501UX

Computers and laptops can be quite expensive, and if affordability is a concern for you, check out the [Laptop Lending Program](#) to see if you are eligible for quarter-long laptop loans. Also check out the [Where can I go to use a computer/printer on campus?](#) section to find out where to access a computer while at UCSD.

## Students' Tips

We asked current students for some advice they would give to incoming SE students and here is what they said!

*Please note that these are opinions of individual students and may not represent the entire student body/UCSD Staff & Faculty.*

Never give up, you only live once!

*Keijiro Tsurukawa, M.S. Student*

You might feel out of place when you first enter the school, but just remember that almost everyone is in the same shoes.

You'll find people who you can truly call "Your People" as long as you put your effort into forming new, meaningful relationships.

*Cynthia Zhan,  
Undergraduate Student*

Everything is better with good friends, so finding your people at UCSD will make your experience here much better!

*Sydney Kundert, Undergraduate Student*

For International Students, look for students currently enrolled and ask about their experience and how to navigate the system.

*Ricardo Bustamante, PhD Student*

College is a time for experimentation. I came in not expecting to love the major I hesitantly chose, and I am so glad I was able to stick by it.

*Julia Cube, Undergraduate Student*

Take this opportunity to push yourself out of your comfort zone, to grow academically, socially, and mentally, to work hard and to have fun. Although always remember to not be too hard on yourself, whatever you do make sure you are proud and happy with yourself and your decisions.

*Anne-Sophie Roobol, B.S./M.S. Student*

Stay organized with your calendar/planner.

*Alejandro Chavez, Undergraduate Student*

Get a flat at UCSD grad housing because outside it is so expensive.

*Benjamin Cazarez Adriano, M.S. Student*

Don't hesitate to ask and request help!

*Sergio Godinez, PhD Student*

Don't be afraid to grasp all the opportunities laid out in front you. You might be missing out on a life-changing experience!

*Kelley Ha, Undergraduate Student*

It is okay to fail, move on.

*Lilia Vergara, B.S./M.S. Student*

There are people out there who make more money than structural engineers selling toe pics on OnlyFans. Keep exploring different career paths and try to keep your options open.

You might not end up working as an engineer, you might question your choice to pursue a career in engineering, but an engineering degree is a very valuable asset to have and can lead you to many opportunities.

*Thitipong Sakonpiriyanon, B.S./M.S. Student*

Don't be afraid of rejection and having to get up from it. Resiliency is the name of the game.

*Louis Lin, PhD Student*



## Important Phone Numbers

Emergency - Life threatening situation	911
Suicide and Crisis Lifeline	988
UCSD Campus Police	(858) 534-HELP (4357)
UCSD Medical Center, La Jolla, Thornton Hospital, Emergency and Urgent Care	(858) 657-7600
UCSD Medical Center, Hillcrest, Emergency and Urgent Care	(619) 543-6400
Student Health Services (Urgent Care)	(858) 534-3300
San Diego County Center for Community Solutions (Rape Crisis Hotline)	(888) 385-4657
Student Sexual Assault Resource Center (SARC)	(858) 534-5793
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)	(858) 534-3755
Poison Information Hotline (24 hours)	(858) 876-4766
Environment Health & Safety Hotline	(858) 534-3660
Lost & Found	(858) 534-4361
Student Policies & Judicial Affairs (SPJA)	(858) 534-6225

## UCSD Glossary (Important Acronyms and Abbrevs.)

Know your PB from your PC.

[Click here](#) for even more acronyms and abbreviations.

Acronym	Meaning	Acronym	Meaning
<b>ABET</b>	Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology	<b>JDP</b>	Joint Doctoral Program (with SDSU)
<b>AEP</b>	Academic Enrichment Programs	<b>JGSC</b>	Jacobs Graduate Student Council
<b>AIP</b>	Academic Internship Program	<b>ITS</b>	Information Technology Services
<b>AP&amp;M</b>	Applied Physics and Mathematics Building	<b>JSOE</b>	Jacobs School of Engineering
<b>APPC (App to C)</b>	Application Advancement to Candidacy	<b>Lib</b>	Library
<b>AS</b>	Associated Students	<b>MAE</b>	Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering
<b>ASE</b>	Academic Student Employee	<b>MATS</b>	Materials Science & Engineering
<b>ASES (IA System)</b>	Academic Student Employment System	<b>MechE</b>	Mechanical Engineering
<b>BG</b>	Block Grant	<b>MOS</b>	Mosaic Building, Sixth College
<b>Bioeng</b>	Bioengineering	<b>MCWP</b>	Muir College Writing Program
<b>Biomed Lib</b>	Biomedical Library	<b>MMW</b>	ERC Writing Program (Making of the Modern World)
<b>Block Grants</b>	\$ for recruiting new Ph.D. students for their first year	<b>NCAA</b>	National Collegiate Athletic Association
<b>CalRA</b>	Name of fellowship allocated from the Dean's Office in the form of GSR position	<b>NRST</b>	Nonresident Student Tuition
<b>CAD</b>	Computer-Aided Design	<b>OASIS</b>	Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services
<b>Cafe V</b>	Cafe Ventanas	<b>OB</b>	Ocean Beach

<b>CAP</b>	Sends emails for internship and job opportunities	<b>Ochem</b>	Organic chemistry
<b>CAPE</b>	Courses and Professor Evaluation	<b>OEC</b>	Office of Engineering and Computing
<b>CAPS</b>	Child & Adolescent Psychiatry Services, Counseling and Psychological Services	<b>OPT</b>	(int'l grad students only) Optional Practicum Training
<b>CCR</b>	Co-Curricular Record	<b>Org</b>	Organization
<b>CE</b>	Computer Engineering	<b>OSD</b>	Office for Student with Disabilities
<b>Cog Sci</b>	Cognitive Science	<b>OVT</b>	Oceanview Terrace (dining hall)
<b>CS CSB</b>	Computer Science	<b>PB PC</b>	Pacific Beach
<b>CSE</b>	Cognitive Science Bldg	<b>PCYN</b>	Price Center
	Computer Science & Engineering	<b>H</b>	Pepper Canyon Hall
<b>CSI</b>	Center for Student Involvement	<b>TSN</b>	Triton Student Number
<b>CV</b>	Canyon Vista (dining hall)	<b>Poli Sci</b>	Identification Number Political
<b>D1</b>	(Ph.D. students only) pay students receive before their Senate Exam	<b>Prof</b>	Science Professor
<b>DD</b>	Degree & Diploma Application	<b>Prov</b>	
<b>A</b>	Departmental System Administrator	<b>Psych</b>	Provost Psychology
<b>DSA</b>			
<b>DSC</b>	Data Science	<b>RCL</b>	
<b>EBU I</b>	Engineering Building, Unit 1	<b>RCLAS</b>	Reduced Course Load Remote
<b>EBU II</b>	Engineering Building, Unit 2	<b>RDR</b>	Class
<b>ECE</b>	Electrical and Computer Engineering	<b>Res Hall</b>	Readers (student TAs) Residence Hall
<b>Econ</b>	Economics	<b>RIMAC</b>	Recreational, Intramural, & Athletic Complex (Gym)

<b>EECS</b>	Electrical Engineering and Computer Science	<b>SCSE</b>	Society of Civil & Structural Engineers
<b>ELC</b>	Engineering Learning Community	<b>SE</b>	Structural Engineering
<b>EnvE</b>	Environmental Engineering	<b>SERF</b>	Science Engineering Research Facility
<b>ERC</b>	Eleanor Roosevelt College	<b>SI</b>	Supplemental Instruction
<b>FAS</b>	Financial Aid & Scholarships	<b>SIO</b>	Scripps Institution of Oceanography
<b>FFW</b>	Geisel Library, First Floor West	<b>SRC SS,</b>	Sustainability Resource Center
<b>Geochem</b>	Geochemistry	<b>SS1, SS2</b>	Summer Sessions, Summer Session 1, Summer Session 2
<b>GD</b>	Graduate Division	<b>SSB</b>	Social Sciences Building
<b>GH</b>	Galbraith Hall	<b>STDT</b>	Student Assistant (in UC Path)
<b>GPA</b>	Grade Point Average	<b>TapEx</b>	Tapioca Express
<b>GSO</b>	Graduate Student Organization	<b>TE</b>	Technical Elective
<b>GSR HDH</b>	Graduate Student Researcher	<b>TLC</b>	Teaching + Learning Commons
<b>H&amp;SS IA</b>	Housing, Dining, & Hospitality	<b>Uctr</b>	University Center
<b>IA</b>	Humanities & Social	<b>UG</b>	Undergraduate
<b>System</b>	Instructional Assistance	<b>UTC</b>	University Towne Center (mall)
	Instructional Assistant Management SYstem	<b>VAC</b>	Virtual Advising System
<b>I- House</b>	International House (in ERC)	<b>VAF</b>	Visual Arts Facility
<b>IFSO</b>	International Faculty & Scholar Office	<b>VC</b>	Vice Chancellor
<b>ISPO</b>	International Students & Programs Office	<b>WCWP</b>	Warren College Writing Program

## For Undergraduate Students

Hey Undergraduate Students!

If you would like to read more on academic resources and information, check out the [Undergraduate Handbook](#)! There you will find information on Academic Advising, Academic Plans for Freshmans and Transfers, Focus Sequence, Technical Electives, General Education, Academic Enrichment Opportunities, Student Organizations and Project Teams, and much more!

### UNDERGRADUATE HANDBOOK

# STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING

AEROSPACE • CIVIL • GEOTECHNICAL • STRUCTURAL HEALTH



**UC San Diego**  
Structural Engineering  
JACOBS SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

## For M.S. Students

### Funding

The M.S. program is considered a "self-funded" program, which means that the student is responsible for paying the tuition and that funding/fellowship opportunities are few and far between. M.S. Students are encouraged to apply for [Instructional Assistant \(IA\) positions](#) (Teaching Assistantship, Readership) but there is a rigorous selection process and PhD students are given priority.

Since there may not be many IA positions within the Structural Engineering (SE) Department, many M.S. Students apply to IA opportunities within other departments (i.e. Mathematics, other STEM departments, and even Language Arts departments).

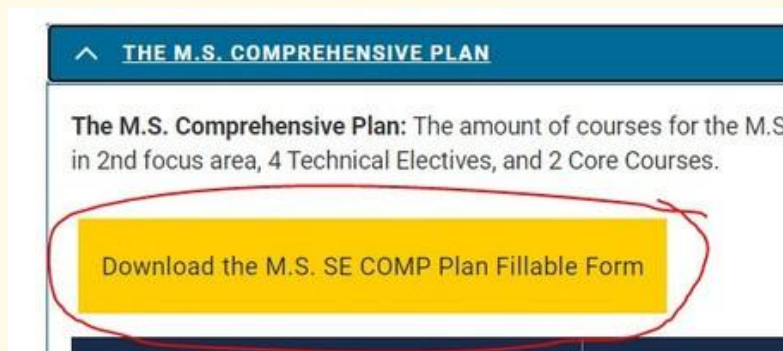
There may also be some opportunities throughout the academic year where the Graduate Division announces [fellowship opportunities](#) that may be open to M.S. students as well. For more information on these, please visit the [Graduate Financial Support webpage](#).

Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) positions may be available if you choose the M.S. degree with the Thesis track, though they are not guaranteed. You will need to seek out a [SE Faculty member](#) to conduct research with; please review contact information on our [website](#) (faculty listed under "Leadership" and "Professors") to contact them directly.

GSR positions are typically reserved for Ph.D. students, although sometimes M.S. students are able to obtain one as well. Funding availability will depend on each Faculty Advisor and will need to be discussed with them directly.

### Comprehensive vs. Thesis Track

Additionally, you can find your program planning forms to download on the [SE Website](#). You'll see that there are 2 plans within the SE75 M.S. program. There is a [COMPrehensive Plan Track](#) and a [THESIS Plan Track](#). The fillable forms can be found on the yellow buttons:



or

THE M.S. THESIS PLAN

The M.S. Thesis Plan is designed for those students with an interest in engineering profession or prior to entering a doctoral degree program. leading to the completion and defense of a master's thesis.

The thesis defense is the final examination for students enrolled in the after completion of all course work. Upon completion of the research p be successfully defended in an oral examination and public presentatic three faculty members. A complete copy of the student's thesis must b two weeks before the defense. The committee consists of three faculty

Download the M.S. SE Thesis Plan Fillable Form

Requirement Thesis option (units)

If you are curious what they mean by focus area, you will want to refer to [the Focus Areas](#) link. Please note that some classes are not offered every semester so you'll want to check what [quarter they are typically scheduled](#) as well. Additionally, if you want to lighten your workload for 1 or 2 quarters, please note that you're able to take up to 8 units of [preapproved UG Courses that are listed here](#). If you want to take any courses that are not outlined on our website, please contact your advisor and let them know which course you would like to take and why. Your advisor will then discuss it with the Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC) and provide you with feedback.

Students usually select/finalize their track once they meet and discuss their interest with their faculty advisors in [the fall orientation](#).

If you'd like to read more about the different tracks, please see page 7 through 9 on the [SE Graduate Handbook](#).

If you're interested in the PhD program after you begin the M.S. program, you will need to fill out [this form](#). SE advisors **HIGHLY** recommend speaking with [SE Faculty](#) if you decide to pursue the PhD program since they are the ones who can decide to move your application forward.

## Enrolling in Classes and Transferring Credits

[Important course booking dates](#) can be found here.

Course booking is done via [TSS](#) but when you need preapproval for a course, you will need to use the [TEA](#) system. Once your TEA request has been approved, please give it one business day before enrolling in the [course](#) via TSS.

For GR courses, priority for [TEA requests](#) will be given to current M.S. and PhD students then it will go to incoming Graduate students then the newest [B.S./M.S. students](#).

If you are looking for any transfer credits, it will need to meet the requirements of the [UCSD M.S. Transfer policy](#). If your courses meet the transfer requirements, please contact SE Graduate Admissions at [se-sa-grad@ucsd.edu](mailto:se-sa-grad@ucsd.edu) to begin the transfer process via DocuSign (Transfer Request/Waiver Form).

Please see [My Triton Links: Tools](#) for other important links.

## For PhD Students

***PhD students' primary responsibility is to perform research under the guidance of their PI.***

Please ensure you read over the [Student Employees](#) section, as it contains important information regarding your employment with UCSD as a PhD student.



## PhD Exams

All exams and necessary documents must be completed **by 2pm of [the last Friday](#) of the quarter** in order for it to be considered for that quarter's completion date. If any of the documentation is missing, your exam completion will be marked for the end of the following quarter. Additionally, all PhD exams that are passed during the summer will be processed by the end of fall quarter.

All exam guides are posted on the [SE PhD Website](#) under the Doctoral Examination section. If you're taking one of these exams, you will need to follow the appropriate guides:

### Doctoral Examinations:

A Structural Engineering Ph.D. student is required to pass three examinations.

- ✓ 1. DEPARTMENTAL QUALIFYING EXAMINATION
- ✓ 2. PH.D. ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY SENATE EXAMINATION
- ✓ 3. DISSERTATION FINAL DEFENSE

1. If you have a general idea of when you'll be taking your exam (i.e. month or date), please let [se-sa-grad@ucsd.edu](mailto:se-sa-grad@ucsd.edu) know ASAP.

2. If you plan on taking the DQE exam this quarter and plan on obtaining an M.S. Degree through the Ph.D. program, please request to fill out the M.S. Application to Candidacy paperwork. This is only possible if you have no other M.S. degree due to [UCSD's Duplication of Degree policy](#).
3. Dissertation abstracts are due at least 1 to 2 weeks in advance so that announcements can go out to the SE Department.
4. If you are only defending your thesis and not enrolling in the quarter, you will be responsible for paying a filing fee upon the successful completion of your defense. The filing fee is typically around \$200.

## PhD Summer Schedules

Although most of our PhD students receive stipends and employee payment over the summer, PhD students do not enroll in courses. If you do enroll in [summer session courses](#), please note that you will need to cover the cost of the course.

## General Tips for Success

Upon your earliest convenience, make an **in person** appointment with your P.I. (SE Faculty Advisor). We recommend discussing the following items during your first few meetings:

1. How often does your P.I. want to meet with you? Will it be in person or over zoom? What is expected of you to present or do during the meetings?
2. When you are taking classes during the quarter, how many hours of research a week are you expected to complete?
3. If you have a difficult course, are you allowed to “make up” the research hours during winter/spring/summer break?
4. If given a task to do (i.e. “Please fix the computer tower”), always ask when it is due so that there is a clear agreed upon goal in mind. If you’re unsure what to do, ask questions to get clarification. If you need more time, please communicate it BEFORE the deadline so that the P.I. is aware of any delays in tasks being completed.
5. Before ending a meeting, we suggest asking, “Is there anything else I can do or help with?” If you’re unable to take on any additional tasks at that given time, ensure that your P.I. is aware of your current workload.



6. When you are close to graduating, discuss if the faculty member would be available to hood you (if you'd like) at the graduation ceremony. Never assume that faculty members will attend the graduation ceremony.
7. Before the end of every quarter, ask your P.I. if you will need to apply to [TAs](#). If they are not sure, apply anyway. It's better to have your application in early. If possible, try NOT to TA during your first year at UCSD. Acclimating to the curriculum, school, and research environment can be a lot to take on all at once so you'll want to avoid the workload of having to TA on top of adjusting to school. If this is not possible, clearly communicate with both your PI & the professor regarding your workload.

## Thank you and Good Luck!

We hope you found this Survival Guide helpful! If you believe something is missing in this booklet, please contact SE Student Affairs at [se-sa@ucsd.edu](mailto:se-sa@ucsd.edu) with your suggestion. We would love to hear from you and improve our guide! We wish you all the luck with your journey at UCSD and please do not hesitate to contact SE Student Affairs if you need any help during your time here! We are here for you!