

---

# Division of Graduate Affairs

**OFFICE: Student Services East 1410**  
**TELEPHONE: 619-594-5213**  
**FAX: 619-594-0189**  
**E-MAIL: [gra@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:gra@mail.sdsu.edu)**

As part of Graduate and Research Affairs, the Division of Graduate Affairs (DGA) is the administrative unit responsible for post-baccalaureate and graduate study at San Diego State University. The DGA is composed of the academic units that offer graduate study in the university. The faculties of these units provide programs in over 70 fields of study leading to advanced degrees in the arts and sciences and in professional areas at both the masters and doctoral levels as well as to a wide variety of programs leading to advanced certificates and credentials. The Graduate Council, on which sit representatives of the seven academic colleges of the university, has been delegated university-wide jurisdiction over graduate study. The council's responsibilities are broadly defined and include the development of policies on such matters as graduate programs and curricula, graduate student affairs, and graduate student scholarship.

The dean of the Division of Graduate Affairs is the chief administrative officer of the division and serves as chair of the Graduate Council. The graduate dean has general responsibility for implementing the policies of the Graduate Council and for the development, improvement, and administration of all post-baccalaureate study.

## Graduate Study at San Diego State University

The year 2010 marked the sixtieth anniversary of the award of the first graduate degrees at San Diego State University. Those Master of Arts degrees were limited at first to such fields as education, English, history, and philosophy. They directly supported the historical mission of the institution to train teachers who serve the regional community. Although the number of degree fields in the arts and sciences increased significantly in the 1950s, most continued to be designed for students planning to enter the "teaching service." As the decade ended, however, the establishment of what was to become the California State University (CSU) prompted a notable departure from the earlier academic traditions.

In 1960, the California State Legislature organized a number of state colleges into an integrated system. An educational Master Plan for the State, defined the relationship of the new system to the University of California and to the State's network of community colleges. Although the new system was to continue its mission of training teachers and providing a broad range of undergraduate degree opportunities, each campus was invited to develop its own institutional characteristics within that framework. At what was then San Diego State College, the faculty embraced a model that emphasized the necessarily close relationship between teaching and faculty and student research. This orientation required the broadening of the focus and purpose of advanced study, and over the following decades, scholarly research and graduate education came to be one of the distinguishing characteristics of San Diego State within the CSU. Indeed, by the time San Diego State College was designated a university in 1971, graduate study over a wide range of academic and professional disciplines had become an integral part of the institution's central mission.

A growing and increasingly diverse student population helped to stimulate the rapid growth of graduate programs in the years after 1960. The number of advanced degree programs at the master's level quickly grew to cover more than fifty fields of study in the arts and sciences. Professional degrees appeared in such areas as business, city planning, social work, public administration, and public health. The Master of Fine Arts along with the Master of Music provided a terminal degree for students interested in pursuing careers in those fields.

Equally important was the recognition that the master's degree in those years was becoming an entry-level requirement in many fields of employment. This not only stimulated the constant updating of traditional programs but also led to the design of new programs that sought to address specific professional and academic needs. A degree program in computational science emerged as a discrete field of study as did a program for students interested in the processes involved in the transfer of technology from the academy to the broader community. The development of concurrent degree programs was also a response to changing societal needs. The School of Social Work, for example, established a program that led to the award of degrees in both social work and law. The nursing program provided a Master of Science degree that also qualified the student for certification as a nurse practitioner. The increasingly global interest of students and faculty resulted in a program that combined a degree in Latin American Studies with the Master of Business Administration. A network of international exchange agreements provided both students and faculty with scholarly opportunities around the world. Affiliation agreements gave graduate students access to some of the specialized educational resources of regional universities such as the University of California at San Diego. By 2012, the university had instituted three distance learning programs; affecting the educational opportunities of the twenty-first century.

The teacher-scholar model led inevitably to a faculty initiative to establish doctoral programs, and the first program leading to the degree Doctor of Philosophy began with chemistry in 1965. Today, 22 Ph.D. programs serve several hundred students. Some of these doctoral programs are in traditional academic disciplines whereas others had a more professional orientation as in public health, clinical psychology, and language and communicative disorders. True to its historical tradition of emphasizing study in the discipline of education, the university offers the Ph.D. in Education, Mathematics and Science Education, and the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. In addition to Ph.D. degrees offered in partnership with other institutions, SDSU offers independent doctorate degrees in Audiology (Au.D.), Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT), and Educational Leadership (Ed.D.).

By many measures, San Diego State University has become a competitive national doctoral research university. During the decade of the 2000s, the faculty generated about one billion dollars from extramural sources in support of student and faculty research and professional activity. SDSU will continue to develop programs to address issues of societal concern as they arise. Inevitably, other programs will disappear as circumstances and intellectual questions change. The result is a dynamic curricular and intellectual world and one of enormous academic and professional opportunity.

## Graduate Study in the Summer Term

San Diego State University offers state supported as well as special session courses in the various sessions that make up the summer term. Graduate students may earn residence credit that satisfies requirements for advanced degrees, credentials, or advanced certificates by successfully completing such courses during the summer. Enrollment in state supported courses requires that a student have been admitted to the university in an appropriate graduate category. Students who have not been admitted to the university may be eligible to enroll for such courses through Open University. For non-degree seeking students, enrollment in special session courses does not require admission to the university. For most master's degree

programs, not more than nine units of combined coursework taken in Open University or special sessions prior to admission to an advanced degree will be acceptable subsequently on a program of study. For advance certificate programs or master's degree programs that allow more than nine units, consult the Study Limits in the Division of Graduate Studies section of University Policies, the Division of Graduate Affairs, or the department adviser. For more information about the summer term, see the SDSU Summer Session *Class Schedule*.

Students taking coursework for a degree through summer programs only must apply to the university and be admitted with classified standing before completing more than nine units. Students pursuing an advanced degree in summer only must attend a minimum of three summers to complete a degree.

## Graduate Study for Foreign Students

The facilities of San Diego State University for graduate study are available to qualified graduates of foreign universities on the same basis and under the same regulations as apply to graduates of colleges and universities in the United States.

Admission procedures for foreign graduate students are stated in the section on Admission of Graduate Students in this bulletin.

## Veterans and Graduate Study

San Diego State University is approved to train veterans under the G.I. Bill. Veterans who are interested in graduate work should visit the Joan and Art Barron Veterans Center located in Student Services West for information and counseling regarding veterans' benefits prior to the date of registration. You can also call 619-594-5813 or visit <http://www.sdsu.edu/veterans> for more information.

### Graduate Teaching Associates

Appointments as graduate teaching associates, known more familiarly as a TAs, provide students the opportunity to participate directly in the teaching activities of the university. Indeed, faculty members in many programs consider such appointments an integral part of the academic curriculum for their graduate students. Under the supervision of senior faculty, TAs provide direct instruction to undergraduate students, primarily at the lower division level.

Appointments as graduate teaching associates may be obtained by qualified graduate students pursuing a master's degree in the areas of anthropology, art, astronomy, biological sciences, business administration, chemistry, communication, economics, educational technology, engineering, English, exercise and nutritional sciences, French, geography, geological sciences, history, linguistics, mathematical sciences, microbiology, music, physics, psychology, rhetoric and writing, sociology, Spanish, speech, language, and hearing sciences, television, film, and new media production, and theatre arts. In addition, all doctoral programs offer such appointments.

Qualifications for appointment include admission to San Diego State University with classified or conditionally classified graduate standing for the purpose of obtaining an advanced degree. Appointment is for a period of either one semester or the academic year. Reappointment following an appointment of one semester or one academic year is dependent upon satisfactory performance in graduate studies, as prescribed by the Division of Graduate Affairs, departmental need for the continued service in the department, and upon satisfactory teaching performance.

Information concerning an appointment as a graduate teaching associate may be obtained from the head of the department, school, or college in which the applicant wishes to obtain the advanced degree. The Division of Graduate Affairs also publishes *A Handbook for Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Associates* available at <http://aztecgrad.sdsu.edu/gra>.

### Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistants (GA) provide instructionally related services by tutoring and conducting advising. Alternatively, GAs may be assigned duties that directly support the research activities of the faculty.

Graduate assistants not involving teaching duties and permitting up to 20 hours of service per week for a full-time appointment are available in most of the departments and schools. Qualifications for graduate assistants include admission to San Diego State University with classified or conditionally classified graduate standing.

Appointment to a graduate assistantship is for a period of either one semester or the academic year. Reappointment or continuation of an appointment is dependent upon satisfactory performance in graduate studies, as prescribed by the Division of Graduate Affairs, satisfactory completion of assigned duties, and upon departmental need for the continued service in the department.

Information concerning an appointment as a graduate assistant may be obtained from the head of the department, school, or college in which the applicant wishes to obtain the advanced degree. For further information consult *A Handbook for Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Associates* available at <http://aztecgrad.sdsu.edu/gra>.

### Student Assistants

Graduate students are eligible for employment as student assistants who perform a wide variety of tasks supporting faculty and staff across the university. Assistants are paid by the hour and are restricted to assignments not to exceed 20 hours per week. Students may apply for this employment through the department chairs or program directors. In addition, the Office of Career Services located in Student Services East, Room 1200, maintains a listing of the positions available.

### Research Assistants

The university offers some graduate students part-time employment as research assistants. Research assistants work directly with faculty in a laboratory or other research facility in the health, physical, and social sciences. Research assistants are employees of the SDSU Research Foundation, but they are generally hired through departmental faculty seeking assistance on research programs. Students may inquire about such appointments through the chair or director of the respective science department or through the Office of Human Resources of the SDSU Research Foundation. Those interested in adding their names to a list of candidates for current or future part-time openings may obtain application materials from the San Diego State University Research Foundation, Gateway Building, 5250 Campanile Drive, San Diego, CA 92182-1945. Further information is also available on the university website.

### California Pre-Doctoral Program

The program is designed to increase the pool of university faculty by supporting the doctoral aspirations of individuals who are current upper division or graduate students in the California State University, economically and educationally disadvantaged, interested in a university faculty career, U.S. citizens or permanent residents, and leaders of tomorrow. Junior, senior, and graduate students in the CSU, especially those from environments where university teaching is not a common career goal, have unique opportunities to explore and prepare to succeed in doctoral programs. Working one-on-one with faculty members from both CSU and doctoral-granting institutions, students receive funding for activities such as participation in a summer research internship program at a doctoral granting institution to receive exposure to the world of research in their chosen field, visits to doctoral-granting institutions to explore opportunities for doctoral study, and travel to national symposiums for professional meetings in their chosen field. Other related activities include membership in professional organizations, journal subscriptions, graduate school application, and test fees. For information regarding the California Pre-Doctoral Program contact the campus co-coordinator in the Division of Graduate Affairs or go to <http://www.calstate.edu/PreDoc/index.shtml>.