

In each of your choices related to wellness, relationships, and community, don't accept the minimum — make the choice to strive for the ideal.

As a Catholic, values-based university, USD takes seriously its obligation to assist you in thinking through these and other key issues. These Choices that Matter have the potential to impact your life while in college as well as into the future, and thus they deserve serious consideration.

The University of San Diego offers a variety of resources to help inform your decision-making. For more information about any of these issues, please visit [www.sandiego.edu/choices](http://www.sandiego.edu/choices) or visit the following offices:

For more information about any of these issues, please contact:

**Center for Health and Wellness Promotion**

Hahn University Center, Room 161  
Melissa Halter • (619) 260-4618

**Counseling Center**

Serra Hall, Room 300  
(619) 260-4655

**United Front Multicultural Center**

Student Life Pavilion, Room 418  
Mayté Pérez-Franco • (619) 260-2395

**University Ministry**

Hahn University Center, Room 238  
Michael Lovette-Colyer • (619) 260-4735

**Office of the Dean of Students**

Hahn University Center, Room 232  
Donald Godwin • (619) 260-4588

**Women's Center**

Student Life Pavilion, Room 420  
Erin Lovette-Colyer • (619) 260-2396

relationships

wellness

community

CHOICES  
THAT MATTER



5998 Alcalá Park  
San Diego, CA 92110-2492  
[www.sandiego.edu/choices](http://www.sandiego.edu/choices)



## CHOICES THAT MATTER

College is an exciting time — a time of new friends, new experiences, new opportunities, a new environment. College is also a busy time — activities to participate in, sporting events to attend, people to meet, parties to go to, not to mention homework. In the midst of all that is new, immersed in an unfamiliar environment away from the people on whom you've relied for years, it's easy to lose sight of who you are and what you believe in.

You'll be presented with all sorts of choices during your time at USD: what to major in; where to live; what clubs and organizations to join; who to spend time with; what to do with your evenings and weekends; where and how much to study. One important key to making wise decisions is to remember that these are choices. Don't just go along with the crowd in order to fit in; don't take the path of least resistance for the sake of convenience.

The choices you make while on campus can set you up not only for an excellent college career, but a life-time of success. Other choices, however, can negatively impact both your standing at the university and your future.

Choices matter. Make yours based on your values, faith, morals, and your sense of self.

### Three areas that deserve particular thought include: COMMUNITY•RELATIONSHIPS•WELLNESS

#### COMMUNITY

Engaging in the life of the USD community has many academic and social advantages. Participating in this community is a choice and includes living in the residence halls, getting involved by joining a student organization or participating in the many opportunities offered. It also means making the choice to try new experiences and to engage in dialogue around difference. The diversity of community provides a rich context in which to learn, inside and outside the classroom. Here are some questions to consider.

What are your boundaries around difference? With whom will you spend your time? How will you meet, develop relationships with, and learn from those who are different from you? Who will you talk with for guidance?

As you arrive at USD, you will meet people from a wide variety of states, and even from other countries. This variety, this diversity of people, can lead to great learning, but it also has the possibility of creating great tension. The key is to open your mind and heart to those who may experience and view the world differently.

The University of San Diego is striving to become a culturally diverse and culturally competent community. While there are many dimensions to each individual's identity, there are some specific dimensions such as socio-economic, racial and sexual identity that present challenges as incoming members transition into this community. You can contribute to creating a welcoming community by treating people equally, regardless of their identity; extending dignity and respect to each member of the community; and considering carefully the impact of your actions on others.

- At a minimum, you are expected to respect all those you meet, especially those different from you. Respect means actively working to understand differences and avoid offending or insulting others and helping create an environment where all feel safe and included.
- Ultimately, diversity leads to a keen appreciation of differences and of people who are different from you. This appreciation includes actively seeking relationships with people who come from different backgrounds, have had different experiences, or see the world differently.

**For assistance in making decisions regarding diversity,  
please visit the United Front Multicultural Center.**

## RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are an integral element of joining the USD community. Relationships involve making new friends at USD, adjusting to changing relationships with family and 'at home' friends, living with a roommate. Relationships can present many choices, one of which may include decisions about sexual intimacy. Here are some questions to consider.

What are your boundaries regarding sex? How will you make decisions about what is and what is not acceptable to you? Who will you talk with for guidance?

We may not make the best decisions if we take popular culture as our guide for appropriate sexual decision-making. In fact, much of popular culture confuses the reality that sex is an important choice worth considering very carefully. Human sexuality is a beautiful and powerful gift. It has a unique life-giving and unifying power. Each one of us is called to inform our decision-making with the wisdom of others and the traditions of those who have gone before us.

Mature people are honest about sex. They are truthful about its power, straightforward about their guiding values and honest about the level of intimacy that is appropriate for each relationship.

- At a minimum, you are expected to respect the rights and integrity of others and to foster an environment where all feel safe and free to make the informed choices that are appropriate for them.
- Ultimately, healthy sexual relationships align with your deepest values and beliefs. What informs your values about sex? Peers? The teachings of your faith tradition? Pop culture? Sexual decision-making should be informed by and consistent with your values and reflect the unique power of sex.

**For assistance in making decisions regarding sex,  
please visit the Health Center, the Women's Center or University Ministry.**

#### WELLNESS

Your wellness is a vital component of your experience at USD. You'll be making choices that affect your academic and social life. Some of those choices will be around sleeping and eating well, managing your time and stress. One decision you may be faced with early on is regarding alcohol and other drugs. Here are some questions to consider.

What are your boundaries involving alcohol and other drugs? How will you make decisions about drinking? Will you choose to spend time with those who use drugs? Who will you talk with for guidance?

Despite the fact that many students are not 21, college is the time when many young adults begin to test their limits with alcohol. While this is a common college stereotype, it is not true for everyone. Even if it sometimes seems like everyone else is choosing to drink, more than 40 percent of USD students surveyed through AlcoholEdu reported not drinking.

Those who do experiment with alcohol or other drugs engage in more risk-taking behavior, which can negatively impact one's academic performance. Additionally, significant consequences including serious injury, alcohol poisoning, and an increase in the risk of being a sexual assault victim or offender are associated with binge drinking or heavy alcohol use.

- At a minimum, you are expected to be safe and make choices that promote the safety and well-being of others. Similarly, you are expected to follow the law and respect the USD Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities.
- Ultimately, healthy decision-making around alcohol means making choices that lead to responsible use of alcohol. If you choose to drink, know your limits and identify steps to protect yourself from excessive use of alcohol.

**For assistance in making decisions regarding alcohol and other drugs,  
please visit the Center for Health and Wellness Promotion.**