



# Choices That Matter

COMMUNITY | RELATIONSHIPS | WELLNESS

# Making the Choices That Will Shape Your Experience

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, events to attend and people to meet, 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, what to do with your evenings and weekends, where and how much to study, and with whom to spend your time. 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 USD experience, but a lifetime 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 and 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, joining a student organization or participating in the many opportunities offered. It also means making the choice to try new experiences.

Being part of a community also means learning from the diverse culture around you. The diversity of the community provides a rich context in which to learn, both inside and outside the classroom. Here are some questions to consider:

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

When 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 socioeconomic, racial and sexual identity – that present challenges as incoming members transition into this community. You can help create 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, avoiding offending or insulting others and helping to 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. The key is to actively seek 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 Commons (listed individually on the back of this brochure).**



## Relationships

Relationships are an integral element of the USD community. Relationships involve making new friends at USD, living with roommates and adjusting to changing relationships with family and friends “at home.” 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? Whom 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 often glosses over the fact that sex is an important choice worth considering very carefully. Human sexuality is a beautiful and powerful gift when shared between consenting adults. Consent is an affirmative decision to engage in mutually acceptable sexual activity given by clear action or words. It is an informed decision made freely, actively and voluntarily by all parties.



- 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 Student Health Center, the Women's Commons or University Ministry.**

**For assistance in addressing questions or concerns about sexual violence, contact a Campus Assault Resources and Education (CARE) advocate at (619) 260-2222 or [www.sandiego.edu/care](http://www.sandiego.edu/care).**

## Wellness

Your wellness is a vital component of your experience at USD. You'll make choices that affect your academic and social life. Some of those choices will be around how to stay healthy by sleeping and eating well and about how to manage competing demands and stresses. 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? Whom 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. Although some students experience problems because of excessive drinking, the majority of students are not problematic drinkers. Nearly 25 percent of USD students report that they almost always choose not to drink, and more than half do not binge drink.

Those who do experiment with alcohol and other drugs engage in more risk-taking behavior, which can negatively impact one's academic performance and lead to significant consequences, including serious injury and alcohol poisoning. Additionally, heavy alcohol use and binge drinking increase one's risk of being sexually assaulted and one's risk of being an offender.



- At a minimum, you are expected to make choices that promote the safety and well-being of yourself and the USD community. Similarly, you are expected to follow the law and respect the USD Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities.
- Ultimately, smart and healthy decision-making around alcohol and other drugs is your responsibility. Many students choose not to drink. If you choose to drink, know your limits and identify steps to protect yourself from excessive drinking and other problematic behaviors.

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



## Make the Choice to Strive for the Ideal

In each of your choices related to community, relationships and wellness, don't accept the minimum.

As a Catholic, values-based university, USD takes seriously its obligation to assist you in thinking through these and other key issues. These are the choices that matter and have the potential to impact your life not only while you're in college, but well into the future. As such, they deserve serious consideration.

The University of San Diego offers the following resources to help inform your decision-making:

### **Black Student Resource Commons**

Student Life Pavilion, Room 410 · (619) 260-4173  
[www.sandiego.edu/bsrc](http://www.sandiego.edu/bsrc)

### **Campus Assault Resources and Education (CARE)**

(619) 260-2222  
[www.sandiego.edu/care](http://www.sandiego.edu/care)

### **Center for Health and Wellness Promotion**

Hahn University Center, Room 161 · (619) 260-4618  
[www.sandiego.edu/health-wellness](http://www.sandiego.edu/health-wellness) · <https://sites.sandiego.edu/youareusd/>

### **Commuter Student Commons**

Hahn University Center, Room 119 · (619) 260-4600 ext. 4478  
[www.sandiego.edu/campus-life/commuter](http://www.sandiego.edu/campus-life/commuter)

### **Counseling Center**

Saints Tekakwitha and Serra Hall, Room 300 · (619) 260-4655  
[www.sandiego.edu/counseling-center](http://www.sandiego.edu/counseling-center)

### **LGBTQ+ & Allies Commons**

Student Life Pavilion, Room 418 · (619) 260-4517  
[www.sandiego.edu/lgbtq](http://www.sandiego.edu/lgbtq)

### **Student Health Center**

Maier Hall, Room 140 · (619) 260-4595  
[www.sandiego.edu/health-center](http://www.sandiego.edu/health-center)

### **United Front Multicultural Commons**

Student Life Pavilion, Room 418 · (619) 260-2395  
[www.sandiego.edu/unitedfront](http://www.sandiego.edu/unitedfront)

### **University Ministry**

Founders Hall, Room 20 · (619) 260-4735  
[www.sandiego.edu/ministry](http://www.sandiego.edu/ministry)

### **Women's Commons**

Student Life Pavilion, Room 420 · (619) 260-2396  
[www.sandiego.edu/womens-commons](http://www.sandiego.edu/womens-commons)

### **OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS**

Hahn University Center, Room 232  
5998 Alcalá Park, San Diego, CA 92110-2492  
(619) 260-4588

