




UNIVERSITY OF THE
POTOMAC



Student Handbook



All information is current at the time of publication but is subject to change.
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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this publication is to answer frequently asked questions and familiarize students with administrative policy and procedures. Information is organized by category.

Keys to Academic Success

1. The first key involves learning about the policies, procedures, and important dates that affect students. Becoming familiar with the various services University of the Potomac provides and making use of those services when needed will facilitate your progress.
2. The key factor for student success is regular classroom attendance and active classroom participation.
3. Feel free to consult with your academic advisor when you have a problem or concern that is affecting your academic progress. Sometimes another person can help generate solutions that enable you to work through a challenge.
4. Developing study skills, time management skills, and interpersonal skills in academic and experiential coursework will enhance your effectiveness in your current position and your potential for career advancement.
5. Rely on the members of your cohort and/or class. As a cooperative, rather than a competitive team, you can help one another to be the best you can be as you go through the program as one support group.
6. The final key is to keep focused on your long-term goal: degree completion. As you encounter challenges, search for solutions that maintain your progress toward this goal.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Mission Statement

University of the Potomac provides educational opportunities at the undergraduate and graduate level leading to career enhancement for its multicultural learners by offering affordable and accessible education in career-oriented disciplines. The practitioner-led curriculum, building on a strong foundation in general education, utilizes flexible online and campus-based teaching and learning models that feature small classes emphasizing learning through technology. Instruction is delivered by professionally and academically qualified faculty committed to student success.

Accreditation, Licensure, and Approvals

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)

University of the Potomac is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 (267-284-5000). The Middle States Commission on Higher Education is an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

Higher Education Licensure Commission (HELC)

The main campus of University of the Potomac is located at 1401 H Street, N.W., Suite 100, Washington, D.C. 20005, and is licensed to operate in the District of Columbia by the Higher Education Licensure Commission of the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education located at 1050 First Street, NW, Washington, DC 20002.

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV)

University of the Potomac's Branch campus, located at 7799 Leesburg Pike., Suite 200 Falls Church, VA 22043, is certified by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (James Monroe Building, 101 North Fourteenth Street, Richmond, VA 23219: 804.255.2600) to operate in Virginia. Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) University of the Potomac is a SEVP-certified university. The university's campuses in Washington, DC, and Falls Church, VA, are authorized to enroll nonimmigrant students. National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA) University of the Potomac participates in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)

University of the Potomac is a SEVP-certified university. The university's campuses in Washington, DC, and Falls Church, VA, are authorized to enroll nonimmigrant students.

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA)

University of the Potomac participates in the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA).

Location and Access

DC Campus (Main Office)

1401 H St NW, Suite 100

Washington, DC, 20005

Phone: 202-274-2300

Metro: The closest metro station is McPherson Metro Station (orange, silver, and blue lines).

Parking: There are public parking garages and street parking available around the premises.

Parking fees may apply.

VA Campus

7799 Leesburg Pike, Suite 200

Falls Church, VA 22043

Phone: 202-521-1290

Metro: The closest metro station is McLean Station (Silver Line).

Parking: There is a public garage behind the building. Parking fees may apply.

Office Hours (DC/VA Campuses)

Monday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Tuesday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Wednesday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Thursday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Friday 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM (remote; campuses are closed)

Saturday Hours vary – contact the campus

Emergency Preparedness

The university recognizes the need to prepare for unexpected catastrophic events such as natural or human-made disasters or the outbreak of pandemic illnesses, as well as the need to return the university as quickly as possible to its normal operations should such events occur. Our preparation, response, and recovery will draw upon local, state, and federal agencies and experts.

For updated information, please check the Campus Security and Safety Report webpage:
<https://potomac.edu/about/campus-security-safety-report/>

Emergency Closing of the University

If the University finds it necessary to cancel or delay classes, announcements are made on local television stations, social media sites, and the institution’s website: www.potomac.edu. Students are advised to check their local stations for announcements or to call the University at 202-274-2300.

Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedures

University of the Potomac has designated an Emergency Management Team that will serve as the Campus Security Authority:

- President- Ms. Andrea Kemp-Curtis
- Executive Director, IT/Facilities- Mr. Mark Jiidee
- Dean, Student Affairs- Ms. Lachelle Matthews
- Director of Human Resources - Ms. Seble Teklehaimanot
- Chief Compliance Officer- Ms. Camilla Meros
- Director of Career Pathways- Ms. Omega Barrow

In the event of an emergency or dangerous situation on campus, any employee who is aware of the emergency should call 9-1-1 and alert the members of the Emergency Management Team by calling 1-202-274-2300 (DC) or 1-202-521-1290 (VA).

The team member who receives the call will determine, in consultation with other members of the Emergency Management Team as appropriate, whether a notification should be sent to the University of the Potomac community. The Emergency Management Team will, without delay, and considering the safety of the community, determine the content of the notification and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency. If it is determined that an emergency notification should be sent, a member of the Emergency Management Team will send the notification via text message to the identified campus community using the University of the Potomac’s notification procedure: email blast, one-to-one voice contact. The content of the notification will be determined by members of the Emergency Management Team, and certain messages will be pre-formulated to expedite the notification process.

After notification of an emergency or dangerous situation, the Emergency Management Team will monitor events and circumstances and determine appropriate follow-up information that should be disseminated, such as all-clear notices and updates about continuing steps taken to respond to the emergency, including class cancellations. The Emergency Management Team shall also notify local authorities, as appropriate.

Emergency Notification and Evacuation Testing

University of the Potomac will annually publicize its emergency response and evacuation procedures in conjunction with annual tests of the emergency notification and evacuation plans. The emergency notification system will be tested at least annually. These tests may include regularly scheduled drills, exercises, and appropriate follow-through activities, designed for assessment and evaluation of emergency plans and capabilities. Each calendar year, the Emergency Management Team will test the notification system, evaluate the outcome, determine if any revisions to existing procedures are necessary, and advise the University's President of the date, time, and result of the annual test. In addition, test evacuation procedures will be performed at least annually. A safety representative will be assigned to coordinate evacuation tests and assist with evacuation in the event of an actual emergency. Tests may be announced or unannounced and will be documented by Human Resources or the facilities manager. Documentation will include a description of the test, the date and time, and whether it was announced or unannounced.

When these Policies Take Effect

These policies and procedures will become active and remain in effect when a university state of emergency is declared, as defined herein. If a university state of emergency is not declared, regular university policies and procedures remain in effect.

Guiding Principles

The university will make every effort to provide necessary information to the university community throughout any state of emergency. Departments should be as flexible as possible to enable all faculty, staff, and student employees to continue to work and maintain operations to the extent possible, including facilitating working from home and other remote locations, allowing full-time employees to work part-time, using flexible work schedules or alternate work assignments, and utilizing other appropriate solutions during the emergency period.

Unless directed otherwise, individuals who can work are expected to report for work and support the department or university in whatever capacity is needed. Faculty, staff, and student employees can be required to work outside their usual classifications/responsibilities to the extent they are qualified and can safely perform the work.

In the event of a pandemic, to minimize the spread of the disease, employees may be directed not to report to the workplace. Normal leave policies will be applied until and unless a decision to change them for the emergency event is made by the proper University authority and communicated to the campus.

Catastrophic Event

University of the Potomac (UOTP) recognizes the need to prepare for unexpected catastrophic events such as natural or human-made disasters, the outbreak of pandemic illnesses, and other

events that affect the continuity of operations and make it difficult to maintain normal processes, including classroom instruction.

Definitions

Catastrophic Event – any unforeseen event, outside the control of the university, which is so widespread that it interferes with normal activities.

Policy

If a catastrophic event requires evacuation from the main campus or branch location, UOTP will notify the student population using a mass text and email through the university email system.

As our distance education program is done entirely through our Learning Management System (Canvas), classes and academic programs can be resumed through this medium as soon as possible. On-ground/Hybrid students will need to move to this modality until the main campus or branch location is able to resume normal operations.

UOTP leverages available educational technologies such as the SONIS Student Management System, as well as Canvas, as our Learning Management System. These cloud-based programs should minimize the likelihood of service interruptions.

UOTP utilizes AWS cloud backup services to store and protect data. This includes an online managed backup service that provides the university with a system for the backup, storage, and recovery of computer files. Backups are performed on a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly basis. University backup and recovery procedures are tested and verified on an annual basis to ensure protection in the event of an outage, system failure, or natural disaster.

Emergency Medical Procedures

In the event of minor medical emergencies, there are first aid kits located at the front desk, the office of student services, and in the kitchen. They are stocked with supplies necessary to treat minor cuts, bruises, and sprains. In more severe cases, the situation should be reported to the closest staff or faculty member, who will, in turn, delegate someone to report the event to the administrator in charge. The administrator will contact medical personnel and the emergency contact designated by the student, if necessary. If time is critical, there are phones with outbound lines in all offices and at the front desk.

The first person on the scene should call 911 immediately. Delegate the closest individual to contact an administrator or instructor. Clear others from the immediate vicinity. Attempt to keep the victim calm and still. Do not attempt to move the victim. Follow any directions provided by the 911 operator.

Fire Drills

Fire drills may be held at unspecified times. Students are expected to recognize the necessity for the procedure and to cooperate fully in the activity. Fire evacuation maps are posted in all classrooms. All exits are marked. Students are expected to leave the building promptly and in an orderly manner.

Insurance

The school does not provide insurance against fire, theft, or vandalism of student property.

Lost and Found

Lost items may be turned in to instructors or the front desk. Any person who loses an item may inquire at the Front Desk.

Smoking/Vaping

Smoking, vaping, or the use of tobacco products are not permitted anywhere inside the University's buildings. There are designated smoking/vaping areas outside campuses.

Student Information Updates

The University requires every student to keep the school informed of his/her current address, phone number, and e-mail. Changes can be made through [the student portal](#).

Minors on Campus Policy

This policy is established to ensure the safety and security of minors on campus and to maintain an environment conducive to academic activities and professional operations. This policy applies to all individuals under the age of 18 who are not enrolled as students or participating in an official university/college program.

1. General Rule

- Children under the age of 18 are not permitted on campus unless accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or responsible adult authorized by the parent or guardian.

2. Exceptions

- Enrolled Students: Students under the age of 18 who are officially enrolled in courses or programs at the institution are exempt from this policy.
- Official Campus Programs: Children participating in university-sponsored or approved events (such as summer camps, educational programs, or tours) are allowed on campus, provided they are always under the supervision of staff or a responsible adult.
- Events Open to the Public: Children under the age of 18 attending public events (such as sporting events, performances, or community programs) must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

3. Parental/Guardian Responsibilities

- Parents or legal guardians are responsible for the supervision, behavior, and well-being of their children while on campus.
- Parents or guardians must ensure their children remain in designated areas where the event or activity is taking place and do not interfere with academic, administrative, or operational activities.

GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

New Student Orientation for Online and Campus-based Students

All University of the Potomac classes are offered either online or in hybrid mode (online and classroom-based). New students are required to attend an online orientation class prior to the start of their first semester. The orientation session familiarizes new students with the University's online learning management system (LMS), the University's academic policies, teaching philosophies, curriculum, and related services. This online orientation is mandatory. Campus-based students will also attend an on-campus orientation. Dedicated faculty and staff throughout the University are committed to developing valuable programs that prepare students with knowledge, skills, and tools to achieve ultimate success in their university and educational careers.

The New Student Orientation helps students:

- Navigate the campus and identify available resources.
- Identify their individual academic advisor.
- Facilitate connections with other students, faculty, and staff.
- Navigate the Learning Resource Center to take advantage of its offerings.
- Learn about academic expectations and intellectual opportunities.
- Learn more about the diversity of culture, opportunities, and experiences at Potomac.

New students are required to complete the Policy and Procedure Form and the Computer Usage and Electronic Communication Policy Form, indicating they have reviewed the required guidelines set forth by the University and officiating agencies.

Registration

Registration is the process of enrolling in courses at University of the Potomac. All students are registered for a full semester (16 weeks or two 8-week sessions). Full-time undergraduate students register for 12 credits (six credits for each session). Full-time graduate and doctorate students register for six credits per semester (three credits each session) but may accelerate their studies by registering for a second course in any session. The process of registration occurs prior to the beginning of each semester and continues each semester of the student's program. By registering at University of the Potomac, students agree to all rules and regulations of the University. Students with no prior college or university credit or who have not received credit for a college-level English or mathematics course will be required to take the Accuplacer placement tests.

Add/Drop Period

Students may drop a course within the ADD/DROP period of their semester without incurring an academic penalty or financial obligation. The ADD/DROP period is defined as the first week of their semester (the first six days of the 16-week semester).

Class Schedule

Courses are offered at multiple start dates throughout the year, and class meeting schedules for each course are provided by the Registrar's Office.

Course Attendance Policy

Implicit in the Mission of the University of the Potomac is enhancing cross-cultural understanding among the diverse and multicultural student body it serves. As a result, the University places a high value on the classroom experience. Attendance is expected in all classes, and attendance records are maintained. Class attendance is important for the following reasons:

- University of the Potomac teaching strategies take advantage of small class sizes to encourage interactive learning among students and instructors, whether in an online or a classroom-based environment.
- Institutional learning outcomes require student participation in class. .

The University's attendance policy is as follows:

Minimum Attendance Requirement: Students must attend a minimum of 75% of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade

After 14 consecutive calendar days of absence, a student will be withdrawn from the University. Any action taken due to excessive absences may affect financial aid and graduation dates.

Obligations of students who are absent: Students are responsible for all missed content and assignments from classes that they miss. Whenever possible, students who will miss a class should make prior arrangements with their instructors to make up any work missed.

Prolonged absences: Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all of their courses. Under such circumstances, students should first consult student services, a program chair, or an Academic Dean.

When scheduled holidays or inclement weather interfere with scheduled classes, instructors are responsible for establishing make-up time and/or coursework. Fridays are set aside for such makeup. Scheduled make-up sessions, extended class sessions, additional assignments, and individual conferences may be considered make-up alternatives. Make-up must be completed prior to the end of the session in which they occurred.

Excused Absence Policy

Please refer to the [Course Catalog](#).

Course Attendance Periods

Attendance in online courses is automated through the University of the Potomac learning management system (LMS). Attendance in the online portion of Hybrid courses is also automated. All courses have 16 attendance periods each session, and students must attend a minimum of 75% (12 attendance periods) of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade.

Online: Attendance periods for each week of the eight-week session are from Monday 12:01 am to Wednesday 12:00 am (Eastern Standard Time) 12:00 am (Eastern Standard Time) and from Thursday 12:01 am to Sunday 12:00 am (Eastern Standard Time) 12:00

am (Eastern Standard Time). A student has attended an online class for an attendance period by logging into the class at least once during the period and answering at least one discussion question.

Hybrid: Attendance periods for each week of the eight-week session consist of the scheduled oncampus class meeting and the online period from Monday 12:01 am to Sunday 12:00 am (Eastern Standard Time) 12:00 am (Eastern Standard Time). A student has attended the online attendance period for the week by logging into the class at least once during the period and answering at least one discussion question. All times are Eastern Standard or Daylight Savings Time

Administrative Course Drops – No Attendance

If a student fails to attend a course during the ADD/DROP period of his/her session, the Registrar will drop the student from the course, and he/she may not attend the course during that session.

Administrative Course Withdrawals – Excessive Absences

If a student fails to attend a course during any 14 calendar-day period (14 consecutive days) throughout the semester, the Registrar will withdraw them from the course. Please see the Institutional Refund Policy for financial obligations.

Course Withdrawals

If a student has attended beyond the ADD/DROP period of their semester but subsequently wishes to withdraw from a course in that semester, the student must complete a Student Status Change Request (SSCR) form with Student Support Services, Registrar, or an academic advisor. The link to the form is in the student portal. Please see the Institutional Refund Policy for financial obligations.

Grade Assigned for Withdrawal from a Course

When students are withdrawn from a course, they will receive a grade of **W**. If the withdrawal occurs during or after week five of the term, a **WF** grade is issued. The grade WF is also applicable to those students who have not officially withdrawn from the class, have ceased attending, and have failed to complete the requirements of the course. This grade carries the same academic penalty as a grade of "F" and is computed as a part of the Grade Point Average.

Administrative Withdrawal

If students are dropped or withdrawn from all courses in a given session and do not request and receive a Leave of Absence, the Registrar will administratively withdraw them from the University. (See Payment and Refund Policies for financial obligations incurred when withdrawing or being withdrawn from the University.)

Official Withdrawal

To withdraw officially from the University of the Potomac, a student must complete a Withdrawal Request Form. The form can be requested from the Student Support Services Department or academic advisors. Only an approved Withdrawal Request constitutes an official withdrawal. (See Payment and Refund Policies for financial obligations incurred when withdrawing from the University.)

Re-Admission and Re-entry

Students seeking re-admission or re-entry to the University of the Potomac should contact:

- Admissions Department if they have been withdrawn for over one year (Re-admissions)
- Student Support Services if they have been withdrawn for less than one year (Re-entry)

If a student has enrolled in another institution after withdrawing from the University of the Potomac, official transcripts should be provided from that institution prior to re-admission or reentry to the University. Students are encouraged to contact Admissions for further details on readmission and Student Support Services for additional information on re-entry.

Academic Success Requirements

Students are required to comply with any new program requirements, policies, procedures, textbook changes, or changes in tuition and fees that are delineated in the catalog in effect at the time of their re-entry. The student must comply with any required academic success plan, advising meetings, or support program participation. If a reentry or readmit student's program or concentration has been discontinued, the student may need to select an active program or concentration and complete extra coursework to meet graduation requirements.

Third Reentry Policy

The University recognizes that students' academic pathways may include interruptions; however, repeated unsuccessful enrollment attempts may indicate the need for firm academic limits. Reentry for a third time is not automatic and is considered a final opportunity for enrollment. This policy applies to degree-seeking students who seek to return to the University after two prior reentries and subsequent separations, whether due to academic dismissal, suspension, or withdrawal following academic difficulty.

Conditions of Third Reentry

Students approved for third reentry will be subject to all of the following conditions:

- The student will return on academic probation and must meet probationary requirements as defined by University policy.
- Enrollment Restrictions. The University may impose limitations on:
 - Course load;
 - Mode of instruction; and
 - Term-by-term enrollment approval
- The student must acknowledge in writing that a third reentry constitutes a final opportunity for enrollment, and any subsequent academic dismissal or failure to meet reentry conditions will result in permanent ineligibility for further reentry to the University.

Effect of Subsequent Dismissal

A student who is academically dismissed or fails to meet the conditions of third reentry approval is permanently ineligible for further reentry, reinstatement, or readmission to the University as a degree-seeking student.

Re-entry application

Students must complete the [Re-entry Application](#) prior to the term in which they are returning. Upon receiving the re-entry application, a member of Student Support Services will contact the student to schedule an interview with the Re-entry Committee. During the meeting, the student will have the opportunity to explain their reasons for withdrawing from the University and present their academic plan for continuing and graduating. The Re-entry Committee will make a final decision within 48 hours after the interview, and the student will be notified of the outcome via email.

Students must pay any outstanding balance prior to registration. If approved, the Re-entry Application is routed to the DSO (if applicable), Academics, and Student Financial Services for signatures. The student is granted access to the university email and learning management system.

Review Authority

The re-entry committee will consist of members of academics, student support services, and faculty members. Petitions are reviewed by an academic and student support review committee (Program Chair, Dean of Student Support, plus advising representation).

Note: Approval is discretionary and not guaranteed

Academic Reinstatement Policy

Students academically dismissed from the university for more than one semester must be approved by the Academic Dean or their designee. If approved, the Students Support Services Department will request a financial review by the Bursar and the Financial Aid Office to ensure that all financial obligations are met. The student will re-enter the University on academic probation and the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy will apply.

Students changing Academic degree programs, or re-admitted to a different program, are required to complete their degree within the designated maximum time frame of one and a half times the program length, based on the number of credits in the program. In cases of extenuating circumstances, students may request an extension, subject to review and approval by the Dean or their designee.

Change of Program

A student may request a change of program. However, some credits earned while enrolled in the former program may not transfer to the latter because of curricular differences. Students are strongly advised to seek advice from the program Chair or Dean prior to changing programs.

Courses previously completed at University of the Potomac will be evaluated for their applicability to the new program, and the grades will be calculated in the student's grade point average.

If a student changes programs, a new Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy maximum time frame is calculated based on the credits required by the new program. Written permission from the Academic Dean or designee is required if students change programs more than once.

Leave of Absence (LOA) – Undergraduate Program

Undergraduate program students in good standing who find it necessary to interrupt their education may apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA) for up to one semester (two consecutive eight-week sessions) per academic year. Students are encouraged to consult both an academic advisor and a Financial Aid Officer before taking a leave. Students needing a period of time longer than 16 weeks are required to withdraw from the University.

Reminders:

- Students must contact Financial Aid for information on the effects of a Leave of Absence on financial aid packages.
- Students who request and receive a Leave of Absence or who withdraw from the University and subsequently return must meet with an Advisor to reestablish their academic plan/degree map.
- If a student takes a Leave of Absence during a course, the student must repeat the entire course unless a final grade can be given.
- Students taking an LOA may have financial obligations.

International Students – undergraduate

International students in good standing who find it necessary to interrupt their education may apply for a Leave of Absence for a maximum of one semester (two consecutive eight-week terms) once they have successfully completed two semesters (four consecutive terms of 8 weeks or 24 credits) per academic year. A leave of absence does not adversely affect satisfactory progress toward a degree. Students who have not completed 24 credit hours at the time of a Leave of Absence request are required to withdraw from the University. International students cannot apply for a Leave of Absence in the middle of their semester.

Application for LOA must be made prior to the start of the session at which the LOA is to begin. The LOA will not be granted for a session that has already started. Students must fill out a Leave of Absence (LOA) Request Form by the deadline announced by the University. The request must be approved by the Academic Department, Student Finance Department, and International Student Services Department. The Student Support Services Department will file the request and keep track of students on LOA. Failure to return at the end of an approved leave of absence results in the student being withdrawn from the University. The effective date of the withdrawal is the last day of an approved leave of absence.

Leave of Absence (LOA) – Graduate Program

Graduate program students in good standing who find it necessary to interrupt their education may apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA) for up to one semester (two consecutive eight-week sessions) per academic year. Students are encouraged to consult both an academic advisor and a Financial Aid Officer before taking a leave. Students needing a period of time longer than 16 weeks are required to withdraw from the University.

Reminders:

- Students must contact Financial Aid for information on the effects of a Leave of Absence on financial aid packages.

- Students who request and receive a Leave of Absence or who withdraw from the University and subsequently return must meet with an Advisor to reestablish their academic plan/degree map.
- If a student takes a Leave of Absence during a course, the student must repeat the entire course unless a final grade can be given.
- Students taking an LOA may have financial obligations.

International Students – graduate

International students in good standing who find it necessary to interrupt their education may apply for a Leave of Absence for a maximum of one semester (two consecutive eight-week terms) once they have successfully completed two semesters (four consecutive terms of 8 weeks or 12 credits) per academic year. A leave of absence does not adversely affect satisfactory progress toward a degree. Students who have not completed 12 credit hours at the time of a Leave of Absence request are required to withdraw from the University. International students cannot apply for a Leave of Absence in the middle of their semester.

Application for LOA must be made prior to the start of the session at which the LOA is to begin. The LOA will not be granted for a session that has already started. Students must fill out a Leave of Absence (LOA) Request Form by the deadline announced by the University. The request must be approved by the Academic Department, Student Finance Department, and International Student Services Department. The Student Support Services Department will file the request and keep track of students on LOA. Failure to return at the end of an approved leave of absence results in the student being withdrawn from the University. The effective date of the withdrawal is the last day of an approved leave of absence.

Medical Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy for F-1 International Students

To ensure compliance with federal F-1 visa regulations and to provide clarity to our international students, the following Medical Leave of Absence (LOA) policy outlines the eligibility requirements, documentation standards, and responsibilities that must be followed. This policy is designed to support students' health needs while also protecting their immigration status.

Duration of Medical LOA

- A Medical LOA cannot exceed 12 months during the entire duration of your academic program.
- Requests for extensions beyond this limit will not be granted.

Medical Documentation Requirements

- Only medical documentation from licensed doctors within the United States will be accepted.
- The doctor's note must:
 - Clearly state the medical condition,
 - Specify the date on which you can return to school, and
 - Be signed and dated by the physician.

Restrictions During Medical LOA

- Students on Medical LOA are not permitted to work on or off campus.

- Unauthorized employment during LOA is a violation of F-1 visa regulations.

Travel and Re-Entry Guidelines

- If your Medical LOA is approved, you may leave the United States.
- However, you must return within five (5) months of departure.
- If you remain outside the U.S. for more than five (5) months, you will need:
 - o A newly issued I-20, and
 - o To pay the I-901 SEVIS fee again before re-entry.

Eligibility Limitations

- A Medical LOA can only be granted to the F-1 students themselves.
- Medical LOA cannot be approved based on a family member's illness or condition.

Requesting Medical LOA

- To request Medical LOA, you must:
 - o Provide proper medical documentation, and
 - o Meet with Student Services to complete the required process.
- Incomplete requests will not be processed.

Maintaining Status if LOA is Denied

- If your request for a Medical LOA is denied, you must:
 - o Continue to maintain a full course load of study, or
 - o Speak with your Designated School Official (DSO) to request an early withdrawal.
- If you withdraw from your program, you must exit the United States within 15 days of the withdrawal date.

Completion of Program and Course Requirements

Check out the latest version of the [Course Catalog](#) for complete information.

Graduation Dates

The formal commencement ceremony is held in June each year on a date announced by the University. Degree candidates who have completed all graduation requirements since the previous commencement ceremony are eligible to participate. Degree candidates who will be enrolled in their final courses on the date of commencement may also apply to participate in the ceremony. A student receiving an incomplete grade in a course who completes the course requirements and is issued a grade in that course is deemed to have completed the course in the session it was taken.

The degree conferral date (noted on transcripts and diplomas) is the final day of the session in which the student completes all degree requirements. Diplomas are issued only to students who have completed the academic requirements of their program.

Transcript

Official Transcript requests must be submitted via Parchment using the following link: <https://www.parchment.com/u/registration/110987/institution> . Requests can be submitted by the student or a third party. For requests submitted by a third party, the request must accompany a release signed by the student. The release can be uploaded to Parchment at the time of submitting

the request. Processing of transcripts cannot be expedited. All requests are processed within 3-5 business days, barring any unforeseen circumstances. Transcripts can be received electronically or via US postal mail. Unofficial transcripts can be retrieved from the student or alumni portal. Students without access should contact Potomac's Help Desk for assistance.

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) EDUCATION BENEFITS

University of the Potomac is approved for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits. Veterans should consult with their Campus School Certifying Official (SCO) as eligibility varies by campus and program.

Yellow Ribbon Program for Veterans

The Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program (Yellow Ribbon Program) is a provision of the Post 9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008. This program allows institutions of higher learning (degree-granting institutions) in the United States to enter voluntarily into an agreement with Veterans Affairs to fund tuition expenses. The institution can contribute up to 50% of those expenses, and Veterans Affairs will match the same amount as the institution. UOTP's Washington, DC location participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program.

Private or Foreign School	Up to \$24,476.79 per academic year National Maximum
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Active Military and Veterans

University of the Potomac provides book voucher assistance of up to \$200 per semester for Active Military, defined as active members of the military, spouses, and/or dependents of active-duty military personnel. Veterans may also be eligible for this assistance.

To be eligible, a candidate must:

- Be accepted for admission into a degree program by the University.
- Verify his or her military status or, for a spouse, the marital relationship to the person on active duty or, for a dependent, the dependent relationship to the person on active duty.

This institution is approved to offer GI Bill® educational benefits by the Virginia State Approving Agency." GI Bill ® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at <https://www.benefits.va.gov>. For students utilizing Post 9/11 or Veteran Readiness and Employee (VR&E) benefits, even though the VA has not yet paid tuition and fees, University of the Potomac will NOT:

- Prevent students from enrolling,
- Assess a late penalty fee,
- Require the student to secure alternative or additional funding, or
- Deny access to any school resources (access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities) that are available to other students that have paid.

However, University of the Potomac may require that such students be required to:

- Produce the VA’s Certificate of Eligibility by the first day of class,
- Provide a written request to be certified, and
- Provide additional information needed to properly certify (many students have their own form that must be completed each term and that is still allowed).

SUPPORT FOR ARMED SERVICES ACTIVE DUTY

Relief, Refund, and Reinstatement Tuition Guidelines

University of the Potomac supports military students called to active duty in the armed services by providing tuition relief and refunds, and for reinstatement of students whose documented service in the uniformed services has required their sudden withdrawal or prolonged absence from their enrollment in the institution. Included is service in the uniformed services, whether voluntary or involuntary on active duty in the Armed Forces, including such service by a member of the National Guard or Reserve. When a UOTP military student is under call or ordered to active duty for a period of more than 30 days, the following provisions will apply.

Tuition Charges and Student Account Balances

If an enrolled student is deployed to active-duty military service during the semester, the student can:

- Drop all classes and all tuition charges will be waived with:
 - Personal payments refunded.
 - Financial aid adjusted as required.
 - Financial aid refunds repaid by the student if appropriate.
- Maintain all or part of enrollment with:
 - Tuition adjusted accordingly.
 - Financial aid adjusted as required.
 - Financial aid refunds repaid by the student if appropriate.

If there are unpaid student account balances at the time of deployment, the university will work with individual students on payment arrangements. No collection actions will occur during deployment; however, the student must resolve any unpaid balances prior to subsequent enrollment.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AND RESOURCES

Academic Advising

Academic advising is a vital resource available to all students. Upon enrollment, each student is assigned an advisor based on their educational level to ensure personalized guidance throughout their academic journey. Advising sessions are offered in a one-on-one format and can be accessed through multiple convenient modes: on-campus meetings, virtual appointments or phone consultations. These flexible options are designed to accommodate diverse student needs and schedules.

In addition to dedicated advisors, academic staff and faculty members are available to support students during scheduled office hours and by appointment. Office hours are clearly posted across both campuses and are also listed in each faculty member's course syllabus for easy reference. For online students, support is just a call or email away. Students are encouraged to reach out to their assigned advisor or Academic Program Chair to request a virtual appointment whenever needed.

International Student Advising

Non-immigrant alien students who attend University of the Potomac through the auspices of a non-immigrant student visa are encouraged to contact University of the Potomac's Principal Designated School Official (PDSO) or Designated School Official (DSO), who serves as the International Student Advisor, at the Washington, DC, and Falls Church, VA campuses. Non-immigrant alien students may seek specialized assistance related to the Student and Exchange Visitors Program (SEVP). This assistance includes but is not limited to temporary absences from the United States, maintaining required full-time course loads, authorization for off-campus employment, authorization for optional pre- and post-completion practical training, and authorization to change an academic degree level or an academic program.

Military Student Advising

Military active, or veteran, students may seek specialized assistance related to academic advising from the designated Military Academic Advisor. This assistance includes, but is not limited to, degree audit review and requirements, maintaining benefits, authorization for Military Leave of Absence, and authorization to change an academic degree level or an academic program.

Textbooks

The course syllabi contain information about textbooks and supplemental materials for the individual courses offered at the University of the Potomac. In numerous courses, the learning resources available are digitized and provided to students and faculty through Cengage.com. Courses that are not supported by Cengage.com may also offer an e-resource option through eCampus and can be accessed at <http://www.ecampus.com>.

Questions about textbooks should be directed to the instructor or the Learning Resource Center (LRC). In addition, the LRC can provide alternative sites where the students may order books. Students are expected to purchase the required textbook(s) for each course. New and used textbooks, eBooks may be purchased or rented through eCampus. Students who receive financial aid may qualify for alternative payment options only through eCampus.

Learning Resource Center/Library

The University of the Potomac maintains an online Learning Resource Center (LRC) under the Academic Affairs division. The LRC provides students with access to digital resources via the Library Information Resources Network (LIRN) and online tutoring services by Tutor.com. Whether students are seeking assistance with a challenging subject, preparing for an exam, or looking to enhance their understanding of various topics, they can access the LRC/LIRN through the Moodle Learning Management System. University of the Potomac faculty, staff, and students may access these databases from any location after creating a user ID and password. The Learning Resource Center (LRC) provides digital access for courses and programs to a wide variety of resources that include:

- Electronic materials and e-Books
- Periodical databases with access to abstracts (some in full print). These databases include, but are not limited to:
 - Business Sources
 - Regional Business News Journals
 - Scholarly Journals, articles, and publications (ProQuest Host)

The University of the Potomac LRC is an institutional member of the Association of College and Research Libraries and the American Library Association.

Career Development Services

Career Development Services has the resources students need to begin their job search journey. The department offers workshops on resume development, interview skills, employment applications, and networking throughout the year.

For more information, students should contact careerservices@potomac.edu.

Academic Integrity and Ethics

The goal of the Academic Integrity and Ethics Policy is to define what constitutes appropriate research and reporting methodologies in the academic community and to provide assurance that each student is able to work in an atmosphere free of intellectual dishonesty. Breaches of the Academic Integrity and Ethics Policy are considered serious violations of trust and may result in censure, course failure, and/or dismissal from the University.

Academic dishonesty may take many forms, and each is considered an equally serious offense. The more common forms of academic dishonesty are:

- Cheating – Cheating includes the intentional giving or receiving (or attempts thereof) of any assistance not authorized in advance by an instructor, including the use of notes, copying or prior knowledge of examination materials.
- Fabrication – Fabrication includes the intentional falsification or invention of any information for inclusion in a written paper or project.
- Plagiarism – Plagiarism includes the use or representation of the thoughts, ideas, or words of another as one’s own work in any assignment including the paraphrasing of information, the duplication of an author’s words or ideas without identifying the source, and the failure to cite quoted material properly.
- Duplication of Materials – Academic integrity extends to the appropriate duplication of the materials of others that are under copyright protection. Faculty and students are required to comply with all copyright restrictions in the use of materials within the classroom and in reports and presentations.
- Students, faculty, and staff must also be cognizant of and avoid copyright infringement. Copyright infringement is using someone else’s ideas or material, which may include a song, a video, a movie clip, a piece of visual art, a photograph, and other creative works, without authorization or compensation if compensation is appropriate. The use of copyright material without permission is against federal law, and penalties may include fines and/or imprisonment.

As a consequence of the expanded availability of digitized files and computing, peer-to-peer file sharing has become commonplace. However, making copyrighted material available to others using file-sharing networks is also prohibited by University of the Potomac and is considered copyright infringement. In addition, to the aforementioned potential for federal penalties, University of the Potomac reserves the right to revoke the Information Technology privileges of those using or contributing to the use of file-sharing networks to either access or provide use of or access to copyrighted material.

The concept of “Fair Use” applies, and the limited reproduction of copyrighted works for teaching and research purposes *may* be permitted. Multiple copies for classroom use may be produced provided the copies are not sold or distributed beyond classroom use and provided such duplication is specifically for a direct educational purpose. This statement does not restrict the limited duplication of copyrighted materials through the University’s purchased online databases. Should questions exist regarding the duplication of materials, academic advice should be sought before materials are copied.

Faculty and students may face civil or criminal charges if they are found to be illegally printing and/or downloading copyrighted material.

While intent is a component of academic dishonesty, a lack of knowledge of the specifics as to what constitutes a violation of the University’s standards is not accepted as an excuse. Any questions regarding the specific application of the Academic Integrity Policy should be directed to an instructor.

In cases involving charges of academic dishonesty made either by an instructor or another student, the instructor shall present the evidence in the case to the Program Chair, Academic Dean, Academic Dean, or designee, as appropriate. If there is any sound reason for believing that there has been an act of academic dishonesty, the Academic Dean or designee consults with the student involved. The Academic Dean or designee imposes the appropriate penalty and notifies the student in writing. The student, in writing, will acknowledge the penalty. At a minimum, a grade of “F” is assigned to any assignment, paper, or test on which a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy has occurred. Repeated violations may result in the student being dismissed from the institution.

Dismissal: Termination of student status for an indefinite period. The conditions of readmission, if any, will be stated in the order of dismissal. After two semesters, a dismissed student may apply to return to school. If a dismissed student violates the Code of Conduct while on University property, or in relation to a University-sponsored activity, he/she shall be subject to further discipline in the form of expulsion.

Academic Freedom

The Academic Freedom policy underscores the university's unwavering commitment to upholding academic excellence. The essence of academic freedom lies in empowering professors to exercise their academic autonomy in selecting the pedagogical methods that best facilitate the effective

delivery of educational content to their students, ultimately fostering a dynamic and engaging learning environment.

Intellectual Property

The University of Potomac respects intellectual property rights and provides guidelines for the protection and use of intellectual property created by its faculty, staff, and students. This policy outlines the ownership rights of individuals and the university, as well as procedures for obtaining permission to use copyrighted materials. Intellectual property created by faculty and staff in the course of their employment at the University shall be subject to the standard policies outlined in the employment agreements. In most cases, the University will assert ownership over intellectual property created as part of the employee's duties. This includes, but is not limited to, course materials, research outputs, and software developed for the university's purposes.

Student Creations:

Intellectual property created by students as part of their academic coursework shall typically be owned by the student. However, this may vary based on specific course or program requirements. In cases where a student's work is part of a collaborative project or sponsored research, ownership will be determined by the terms of any relevant agreements.

Joint Creations:

In cases where intellectual property is jointly created by faculty, staff, and/or students, ownership shall be determined through mutual agreement that shall establish clear written guidelines pertaining to:

- The rights and responsibilities of each party.
- Revenue-sharing arrangements.
- An agreed-upon process for resolving disputes related to joint creations.

Such agreements shall be documented and approved by the Chief Academic Officer and the President's Office prior to commencement of said creation or as soon as the need for such an agreement is made apparent.

Use of Copyrighted Materials

Fair Use:

University of Potomac recognizes and respects the principles of fair use, as defined by applicable copyright laws, allowing for the limited and reasonable use of copyrighted materials for purposes such as criticism, commentary, teaching, scholarship, and research (see Fair Use Defense: Chapter 1 section 107). Users must adhere to the four factors of fair use, considering:

- The purpose and character of the use, including whether such use is of a commercial nature or is for non-profit educational purposes.
- The nature of copyrighted work.
- The amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole; and
- The effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work.

Obtaining Permission:

When the use of copyrighted materials falls outside the scope of fair use, individuals are responsible for obtaining the necessary permissions from the copyright owner. Academic leadership can provide guidance on the process of securing permissions, including necessary documentation, and can help evaluate whether the use qualifies as fair use under the law.

Licensing and Contracts:

When the University enters into licensing agreements or contracts for the use of intellectual property, all parties involved are required to adhere to the terms and conditions stipulated in these agreements. It is essential for faculty, staff, and students to review and understand the terms of any such agreements before engaging in the use of licensed intellectual property. All such agreements must be approved by the Chief Academic Officer, the Chief Compliance Officer, and the President's Office.

The University's commitment to these principles ensures that intellectual property is managed with fairness, transparency, and integrity, creating an environment conducive to innovation and respect for the rights of creators and innovators.

Policy on Artificial Intelligence in Teaching and Learning

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is transforming education, offering new opportunities to enhance teaching, learning, and research. The University of the Potomac is committed to preparing students and faculty for the evolving demands of the workforce by promoting the positive, responsible, and ethical integration of AI across all academic disciplines.

Policy Statement

The university encourages faculty and students to actively engage with AI tools and methodologies within their courses. AI should be used to support critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving, not as a substitute for original thought or mastery. The university supports the integration of AI to enrich learning experiences, foster interdisciplinary collaboration, and improve educational outcomes while maintaining academic integrity and transparency.

Guidelines and Best Practices for AI Integration:

- **Align AI Use with Learning Outcomes:** AI technologies should be selected and used only where they clearly support course objectives and learning outcomes. Avoid using AI as a novelty or shortcut; instead, focus on how it enhances teaching and learning.
- **Foster AI Literacy:** Make AI literacy an explicit goal for both students and faculty. This includes understanding how AI works, its capabilities and limitations, recognizing bias, and learning to evaluate, verify, and cite AI-generated outputs.
- **Design Assignments for an AI-Enabled World:** Create meaningful assignments that assume students have access to AI, such as requiring students to critique AI outputs, document their use of AI, or combine AI-assisted work with in-class or oral assessments.
- **Provide Clear, Transparent Course-Level AI Policies:** Each course syllabus should specify what AI tools may be used, for what purposes, and set clear expectations for disclosure, citation, and consequences for misuse.
- **Use AI to Enhance Feedback and Accessibility:** AI can be used for formative feedback, practice quizzes, revision support, and accessibility accommodations, but faculty should retain evaluative authority and oversight.

- **Protect Academic Integrity by Assessment Design:** Prioritize authentic, process-based, and reflective assessments. Use AI detection tools cautiously and never as the sole evidence of academic misconduct.
- **Uphold Ethical Standards:** All AI use should respect principles of academic integrity, fairness, equity, and inclusion. Protect data privacy and avoid entering sensitive or personal information into public AI tools.
- **Institutional Support and Professional Development:** The university will provide training, resources, and opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration to support effective, ethical AI integration.

Faculty and Student Responsibilities

- Engage with AI tools thoughtfully, ensuring that their use enhances learning and is aligned with course outcomes.
- Properly disclose and cite any use of AI in academic work, following university guidelines.
- Do not submit AI-generated work as original unless explicitly permitted and cited.
- Refrain from inputting confidential, sensitive, or personally identifiable information into AI platforms.
- Uphold the principles of academic integrity in all AI-related activities.

Ethical Considerations and Governance

The university will establish and maintain institutional governance for AI use, including regular policy reviews, guidance on data privacy, and ethical oversight to ensure equity, inclusion, and sustainability. Feedback from faculty, students, and administrators will be solicited annually to adapt the policy as AI technologies and educational best practices evolve.

Summary of Best-Practice Principles

- Start with pedagogy and learning outcomes, not technology for its own sake.
- Teach AI literacy explicitly as a core academic skill.
- Design assignments that remain meaningful with AI present.
- Be transparent about AI use, expectations, and disclosure requirements.
- Use AI to support, not replace, teaching and learning.
- Protect academic integrity through thoughtful assessment design.
- Govern AI use collaboratively and ethically, with institutional support.

Student Financial Services

For information on student financial services, please refer to the [course catalog](#).

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Grievance Policy

University of the Potomac recognizes the importance of providing a prompt and efficient procedure for resolving grievances fairly and equitably, without fear of prejudice or retaliation for initiating a grievance or participating in its settlement on the part of the person(s) involved. The University has a grievance policy that provides a process for all students, faculty, and employees

to discuss issues of concern with management and to receive careful consideration and a prompt resolution of their problem in an open and constructive manner. This procedure is intended to supplement, rather than discourage or replace, informal discussion between students and faculty and between supervisors and employees. A faculty member or a supervisor should make every reasonable effort to resolve concerns outside the formal Grievance Process. Students should refer to Student Grievance Procedures (Academic) and Grievance Procedures (Non-Academic) below.

Student Grievance Procedures (Academic)

The University of the Potomac carefully considers student academic grievances and makes adjustments when appropriate. Students submitting a grievance are not subject to unfair action or treatment as a result of their initiation of such a grievance. It is the University's objective to maintain good communication and to ensure that the concerns of all members of the University community (students, staff, and faculty) are addressed fairly. To accomplish this, the following process should be used in seeking a resolution of a student's concerns:

Step 1: Discuss with the course instructor (if appropriate)

Most academic issues involving faculty or academic departments (e.g. grade appeal) can be resolved by contacting the faculty member teaching the class before the issues escalate further.

Step 2: Discuss with the Program Chair or designee

Students must request a meeting with the Program Chair or Academic Dean by telephone or in writing. The meeting can be through videoconferencing or in person. The parties involved should attempt to resolve the complaint informally within 14 calendar days of the alleged act or omission.

Step 3: If necessary, file a formal grievance with the Academic Dean or designee

A grievance must be submitted in writing to the Dean within 30 days of the incident. Students must complete the [student grievance form](#) and ensure all necessary information is included. Submissions should include:

- A detailed description of the issue
- Any supporting evidence or documentation
- Student's contact information and student ID

The form will be submitted directly to the Dean who will respond to the student within 48 hours. The Academic Dean or designee appoints an Academic Grievance Committee (usually within 24 hours) to collect facts and make a recommendation for resolution. At a minimum, the committee consists of a member from the student services department, a faculty member, and a student. There are some cases where a committee meeting must be assembled due to the nature of the grievance. When a meeting is assembled, the person bringing forth the grievance is invited to attend but is not required to do so. If the grievance is related to a faculty action, the faculty shall also be invited to the committee meeting unless the written evidence previously provided by the faculty suffices.

The Academic Dean or designee has the final decision on recommendations resulting from Grievance Committee deliberations. When a final decision has been reached, the Academic Dean or designee notifies all relevant parties in writing. The committee should attempt to resolve the

complaint within 30 calendar days of the grievance filing date. If a grade change or other record revision is required, the Academic Dean or designee notifies the Registrar. The Registrar makes the appropriate change(s) to the student's records. The decision of the Academic Dean or designee is final.

As a last resort, if all other efforts above have been exhausted and a resolution has not been found, a complaint may be filed with any of the following regulatory bodies:

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE):

<https://www.msche.org/complaints/>.

Higher Education Licensure Commission (HELCO) – District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education:

<https://helc.osse.dc.gov/topic/helcadmin/community-stakeholders/public-complaints>

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV):

<https://www.schev.edu/students/resources/student-complaints>

Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)

<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/contact>

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA):

<https://nc-sara.org/student-complaints>

The Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA) approves education and Virginia training programs. Our office investigates complaints of GI BILL ® beneficiaries. "This institution is approved to offer GI Bill® educational benefits by the Virginia State Approving Agency." GI Bill ® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>. While most complaints should initially follow the school grievance policy, if the situation cannot be resolved at the school, the beneficiary should contact the office via email at saa@dvs.virginia.gov.

Grievance Procedures (Non-Academic)

The grievance procedure described below is applicable to non-academic student complaints.

To ensure that grievances are addressed and resolved in a timely manner, it is essential that grievances are brought to the attention of leadership as soon as the incident occurs or when the individual gains knowledge of it. Although there may be instances where it is reasonable and permissible to report a grievance significantly beyond the time of the occurrence, there should be every effort to report such grievances as soon as possible, and not to exceed 60 days.

Level 1: Contact the Student Support Services

Most non-academic concerns can be resolved by contacting the Student Support Services Department before the issue escalates further. Students must first request a meeting with the Dean of Student Support Services by telephone or in writing. The meeting can be through

videoconferencing or in person. Involved parties should attempt to resolve the complaint informally within 14 calendar days of the alleged act or omission.

Level 2: File a written grievance

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, the student may file a written grievance using the grievance submission form. The written grievance shall contain the name of the complainant, the date of the filing, and a brief yet specific description of the grievance and the redress sought. Non-academic grievances will be submitted to the Dean of Student Support Services who will respond to the student and appoint a Non-Academic Grievance Committee to collect facts within 48 hours. Personnel who review the appeal at this level may include the Academic Dean and any additional people, e.g., the Director of Financial Aid, or Registrar. There are some cases where a committee meeting must be assembled due to the nature of the grievance. When a meeting is assembled, the person bringing forth the grievance is invited to attend but is not required to do so. The Dean of Student Support Services has the final decision on recommendations resulting from Grievance Committee deliberations. When a final decision is reached, the Dean notifies all relevant parties in writing within 30 calendar days of the grievance filing date unless the situation requires additional research or investigation.

All sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault matters should be brought immediately to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator via the [Title IX incident report form](#). All disability discrimination matters should be brought to the attention of the Disability Support Services/Coordinator at studentservices@potomac.edu.

If a student had a complaint or grievance that could not be resolved after exhausting Potomac's grievance procedures, a complaint may be filed with any of the following regulatory bodies:

Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE):
<https://www.msche.org/complaints/>.

Higher Education Licensure Commission (HELIC) – District of Columbia Office of the State Superintendent of Education:
<https://helc.osse.dc.gov/topic/helcadmin/community-stakeholders/public-complaints>

State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV):
<https://www.schev.edu/students/resources/student-complaints>

Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP)
<https://www.ice.gov/sevis/contact>

National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (NC-SARA):
<https://nc-sara.org/student-complaints>

The Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA) approves education and Virginia training programs. Our office investigates complaints of GI BILL ® beneficiaries. "This institution is approved to offer GI Bill® educational benefits by the Virginia State Approving Agency." GI Bill ® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about

education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at <http://www.benefis.va.gov/gibill>. While most complaints should initially follow the school grievance policy, if the situation cannot be resolved at the school, the beneficiary should contact the office via email at saa@dvs.virginia.gov.

Non-discrimination Policy

University of the Potomac adheres to the non-discrimination regulation of the District of Columbia § 2-1402.42. University of the Potomac adheres to the following federal regulations to ensure nondiscrimination: American Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. University of the Potomac affirms that it will not discriminate on the basis of the actual or perceived gender, gender identity or expression, race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, veteran status, personal appearance, familial status, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income or marital status in any of its policies, practices or procedures in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws, nor will it condone any acts of illegal discrimination by its employees. This provision includes, but is not limited to, employment, admissions, testing, financial aid and educational services. If any student has a discrimination concern, please contact Student Services. If the discrimination concern is one regarding sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault, please contact the Title IX Coordinator listed below immediately. If the discrimination concern is one regarding disability discrimination, please contact the Disability Coordinator listed below.

Students, faculty, and administrative employees should refer any discrimination complaints in writing to the Human Resources Department. For additional assistance related to Civil Rights under Title IX, contact:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
Lyndon Baines Johnson Department of Education Bldg
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-1100
Telephone: 800-421-3481
FAX: 202-453-6012; TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR@ed.gov

(NOTE: There are different offices for different areas of the country. Visit the OCR website for more information.)

Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy

Sexual harassment is inappropriate in a working environment and is not tolerated at University of the Potomac. Sexual favors may not be explicitly or implicitly suggested as a term or condition of an individual's academic performance or employment. Sexual contact and conduct with sexual overtones, which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic work performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment, is prohibited. The University promptly investigates complaints of sexual harassment and when necessary, takes disciplinary action up to and including termination of the

offending individual. All complaints of sexual harassment will be handled according to the Grievance Policy (Non-Academic) section of the Catalog and should be brought to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator or to General Counsel.

All sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual assault matters should be brought immediately to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator on campus or via the [Title IX incident report form](#).

Washington D.C. Campus/Online

Title IX Coordinator

1401 H Street, N.W., Suite 100,
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 274-2300
studentservices@potomac.edu

Falls Church, VA Campus

Title IX Coordinator

7799 Leesburg Pike, Suite 200
Falls Church, VA
(202) 521-1290
studentservices@potomac.edu

Once a formal complaint is received, an investigation will begin within 72 hours. To ensure fairness and accountability, an ad hoc committee will be convened to review the findings of the investigation and to develop final recommendations. This committee will carefully evaluate all evidence, consider relevant policies, and ensure that the process remains consistent with institutional standards. The committee will provide its recommendations within 30 days of being formed.

Disability Policy

University of the Potomac does not discriminate in admission or access to its programs on the basis of age, race, color, sex, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or national origin. If a student wishes to request academic adjustment or auxiliary aids, please contact the Disability Coordinator listed below. They may request academic adjustments or auxiliary aids at any time. The Disability Coordinator is responsible for coordinating compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Applicants who are persons with disabilities, as defined in paragraph 104.3(j) of the regulation under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, may apply for admittance into the program. The University will work with the applicant or student to determine whether reasonable accommodation is effective and/or available.

Definition of Disability

A disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the individual.

- **Major Life Activities:** The phrase major life activities refers to normal functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.
- **Physical Impairment:** A physical impairment includes any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory and speech organs, cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, hemic and lymphatic, skin, and endocrine.

- **Mental Impairment:** A mental impairment includes any mental or psychological disorder, such as organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities.
- **Learning disabilities:** A learning disability is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities. These disorders occur in persons of average to very superior intelligence and are presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction.

Reasonable Accommodations

A reasonable accommodation is any modification or adjustment that will enable a qualified student with a disability to participate in a course, program, activity, or service. Reasonable accommodations assure that students with a disability have rights, privileges, and access equal to students without disabilities. Reasonable accommodations may include academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or adaptive technology, outreach services, or physical access modifications.

The university has an obligation to make reasonable accommodations in policies, practices, or procedures when accommodations are needed to prevent discrimination on the basis of disability, unless making the accommodations would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity, or would result in undue financial and administrative burdens.

Requesting Disability Accommodations

Students requesting academic accommodations for their disability must first contact the Disabilities Coordinator by submitting an [Accommodation Request Form](#).

Washington, DC Campus/Falls Church, VA Campus/Online
 Disability Coordinator
 Student Support Service
 1401 H Street, N.W., Suite 100
 Washington, D.C. 20005
 (202) 274-2300 studentservices@potomac.edu

The University will work with the applicant or student to determine whether reasonable accommodations can be effective and/or are available. Any qualified individual with a disability requesting an accommodation, auxiliary aid, or service should follow this procedure:

1. Notify the Disabilities Coordinator in writing of the type of accommodation needed, date needed, documentation of the nature and extent of the disability, and of the need for the accommodation or auxiliary aid. The request should be made at least four weeks in advance of the date needed.
 - Once medical documentation is received, the Disabilities Coordinator will review, verify, and assess the documentation. If further information is needed or if the documentation submitted is insufficient, the student will be notified. After the review process is complete, the Disabilities Coordinator will invite the student to a meeting with the Special Accommodation Committee.

- After the meeting, the Special Accommodation Committee will determine what academic accommodation, if any, a student is eligible to receive.
2. The Disabilities Coordinator will respond within two weeks of receiving the request. If a student is eligible to receive academic accommodation in his or her classes, the Disabilities Coordinator will email the student a Student Accommodation Acknowledgement Form. This form will inform the student of what accommodation he or she is eligible to receive, as well as what his or her responsibilities are for receiving the accommodation each sub-term.
 - The student must sign the form and return it to the Disabilities Coordinator before accommodation can be made effective. By signing the form, the student acknowledges that he or she is responsible for completing the expected requirements by their due dates in order to receive academic accommodation.
 - Academic accommodation cannot be backdated for courses already in progress or completed. If sufficient notice is not given to the Disabilities Coordinator for special accommodation, such as an alternate format for textbooks or transcripts for audio files once a student goes on file, these accommodations may be withheld until a later semester when sufficient notice is provided.
 - The Disabilities Coordinator will notify the appropriate parties (i.e., publishers, professors, etc.) to ensure that the student receives his or her accommodation. The Disabilities Coordinator is not responsible if a student does not receive academic accommodation in his or her classes due to the student's failure to notify them of the necessary information by the required due date.
 - If the student's medical condition changes, it is the student's responsibility to notify the Disability Support Services staff as soon as possible.
 3. If the student would like to request reconsideration of the decision regarding his/her request, he/she should contact the Disabilities Coordinator within one week of the date of the response. At that time, the student will be required to provide a statement of why and how the response should be modified.
 4. In accordance with Section 504, medical documentation will be reviewed on a regular basis. If the documentation is outdated or if further information is required at that time, the student will be notified. The student will also be notified if, during the review process, any changes are made to the student's academic accommodation.

Personal Counseling

University of the Potomac does not offer personal or psychological counseling. Students who express a need for such services are referred to appropriate community resources through Student Services.

Maintenance of a Drug-Free Environment

University of the Potomac is committed to drug and alcohol abuse prevention and to the maintenance of a drug-free educational and work environment. University of the Potomac's Substance Abuse Policy is as follows:

- University of the Potomac engages in the education of its students, employees, and community members who are involved with the University regarding substance avoidance and abuse.
- The University disseminates materials addressing prevention, detection, and treatment of substance abuse.
- The University is committed to reporting the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance.
- Students who violate University of the Potomac's Substance Abuse Policy are subject to appropriate action in accordance with Disciplinary Procedures (Non-academic) on the following pages; such discipline may involve dismissal from the University.
- The drug-free environment policy is also located in the course catalog and is available electronically.

Code of Student Conduct

University of the Potomac's code of conduct defines the rights and responsibilities of students and establishes a structure by which to hold students accountable for violations of the code and other rules and regulations of the University. University of the Potomac expects its students to conduct themselves as business professionals as they progress toward their goals of academic achievement and career success. Conduct subject to disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, fabrication and plagiarism.
2. Forgery, alteration and/or misuse of University documents, financial instruments, or identification cards with intent to defraud.
3. Unprofessional conduct, such as, but not limited to:
 - i. Obstructing or acting in a manner disruptive or disturbing to the normal educational functions of the University, administration of the University, disciplinary procedures or other authorized activities on University property;
 - ii. Disrespect of or insubordination to University personnel;
 - iii. Use of oral or written profanity;
 - iv. Physical and/or psychological abuse or the threat of such abuse of any person on or in the vicinity of University property or at University-sponsored or University-supervised functions, or conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any such person; or
 - v. Sexual harassment of other students, faculty, or staff.
4. Misuse of University property, such as, but not limited to:
 - a. Unauthorized use of, damage to, theft or seizure of any property or facilities of the University, or located within the boundary of University premises, threat to do so, or refusal to depart from any property or facilities of the University upon direction by officials or other persons authorized to represent the University;
 - b. Littering, defacing, destroying, or damaging property of the University or property under its jurisdiction;
 - c. Unauthorized entry into, presence in, or use of any University building or facility;
 - d. Violation of the computer use policy; or

- e. Violation of the University's policy on solicitation and sales.
5. Improper use of resource center materials, including damage to materials and failure to return materials when due.
6. Alcohol and drug violations, such as, but not limited to:
 - a. Use of alcoholic beverages, including the purchase, consumption, possession, or sale of such items on campus property;
 - b. Possession, use, sale, or distribution of any type of drugs for illegal purposes; or
 - c. Violation of the University's policy pertaining to smoking.
7. Criminal activity and violent or dangerous behavior, such as, but not limited to:
 - a. Violation of any local, state, or federal law;
 - b. Possession on University property or at any University activity of weapons, such as knives, firearms, or any dangerous chemical or explosive elements or their component parts;
 - c. Physical detainment or restraint of another person or the removal of such person from any place where he and/or she is authorized to remain or to in any way obstruct the free movement of persons on University premises or at University activities;
 - d. Threatening of any member of the University of the Potomac community;
 - e. Tampering with fire protection apparatus or failure to comply with emergency evacuation procedures;
 - f. Gambling or holding of a raffle or lottery on University premises; or
 - g. Participation in unauthorized and/or disorderly assembly or incitement of a riot.
8. Other violations.
 - a. Violation of any other University rule or policy not contained in official publications but announced by a University official or other person authorized by the President or Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
 - b. Willful encouragement of others to commit any of the acts herein prohibited.

Sanctions

The following sanctions may be imposed:

- **Warning:** An oral or written statement to a student that he/she is violating or has violated University rules and may be subject to more severe disciplinary action.
- **Probation:** Exclusion from the participation in privileges or activities set forth by the University, including the holding of any office, for a specified period of time.
- **Interim Suspension:** If, in the opinion of the President, CEO and/or the Disciplinary Committee, the presence of a student poses a serious threat to others, the President or his designee may, pending a hearing, suspend the student immediately. In such a situation, a hearing shall be held at the earliest reasonable time.
- **Suspension:** Exclusion from the University (to include classes and other University related activities) for a definite period of time. If a student, while on suspension, violates the Code of Conduct while on University property or in relation to a University-sponsored activity, he/she shall be subject to further discipline in the form of dismissal or expulsion.
- **Dismissal:** Termination of student status for an indefinite period. The conditions of readmission, if any, will be stated in the order of dismissal. After two semesters, a dismissed

student may apply to return to school. If a dismissed student violates the Code of Conduct while on University property, or in relation to a University-sponsored activity, he/she shall be subject to further discipline in the form of expulsion. .

- **Expulsion:** Permanent termination of student status without possibility of readmission to any campus of the University.
- **Revocation of Degree:** If, in the opinion of the President, CEO and/or the Disciplinary Committee, a student has committed gross violations of the University's Academic Integrity and Ethics Policy, the President or his designee may, after a hearing, revoke a student's degree.
- **Restitution:** In addition to any of the above sanctions, reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property may be required. This may take the form of appropriate services or other compensation.

Disciplinary Procedures (Non-Academic)

A warning or probation may be administered by the President, CEO, or designee without further consultation. All cases involving suspension, dismissal, expulsion, revocation of degree, or restitution of students are referred by the President, CEO, or designee to the Academic Dean or designee, who convenes a Disciplinary Committee for a hearing.

Any academic or administrative official, faculty member, or student may file a complaint with the Academic Dean or designee against any student for violations of University policies and procedures.

1. Written notice will be given to a student charged with violating the policies set out in this document.
2. If a student requests a hearing, the Academic Dean or designee will schedule a disciplinary hearing via teleconference, giving the student reasonable time to prepare his/her defense. If the student does not request a hearing, the Academic Dean or designee will still convene the Disciplinary Committee, who will make a written determination, which the student may petition for appeal within ten working days following receipt of the decision.
3. A written decision is issued within ten working days after the hearing.
4. The student is advised in writing of appeal procedures.
5. The student may petition for appeal within ten working days of receipt of the decision by writing a letter to the Academic Dean or designee. The appeal must outline the reasons the student objects to the decision of the Disciplinary Committee and provide any written evidence supporting the student's position.

The Academic Dean or designee forwards the student's petition for appeal, along with the summary of the disciplinary hearing and the Disciplinary Committee's written decision, to the President, who reviews all evidence and issues a written decision within thirty days. The decision of the President is final. The University does not accept further appeals from the student.

Procedures for Dealing with Disruptive Behavior

If a student's behavior, in addition to disrupting an instructional area, presents a threat to the safety of those present, the instructor should:

1. Order the student to stop the disruptive behavior and leave the area.
2. Call, or assign someone to call, the police to remove, and if necessary, arrest the student.
3. Notify the Academic Dean or designee and file a charge under the Code of Conduct.
4. If the instructor feels that the student's presence at the University presents an immediate threat to the safety of the University community, the instructor should request through the Academic Dean or designee that the student be placed on interim suspension.
5. A student on suspension is required to meet with the Academic Dean or designee prior to being permitted to return to class. The meeting is held at the earliest time practicable but in no event later than three working days subsequent to the instructor's action. The meeting is informal in nature. The official conducting the meeting seeks to determine whether the student should be permitted to return to class or should be excluded pending resolution of the matter, and provides the student with an explicit warning as to the consequences of any future disruption. The instructor should also be present unless specifically excused for good cause by the Academic Dean or designee.

First Violation

The first time a particular student causes a disruption, the instructor, depending on the seriousness of the infraction, should:

- Order the student to immediately stop the disruptive behavior and give the student a verbal warning.
- Make a written note of the warning for the instructor's files, and
- Talk with the student after class to explain the consequences of any further disruption.

Second Violation

The second time a particular student causes a disruption, the instructor, depending on the seriousness of the infraction, should:

- Inform the student of the infraction and order the student to leave the instructional area.
- If the student leaves voluntarily, the instructor shall permit the student to return the next class period. If the student refuses to leave, the instructor shall advise the student that the failure to leave voluntarily renders the student liable for immediate suspension, dismissal, or expulsion as well as criminal prosecution for trespassing. If the student still refuses to leave, the instructor shall call, or assign someone to call, the police to remove, and if necessary, arrest the student.
- If the student refuses to leave, the instructor must file a charge under the Code of Conduct, and unless interim suspension has been imposed, the student will be

required to meet with the Academic Dean or designee or the Academic Dean prior to being permitted to return to class. The meeting is held at the earliest time practicable but in no event later than three working days subsequent to the instructor's action. The meeting is informal in nature. The official conducting the meeting seeks to determine whether the student should be permitted to return to class or should be excluded pending resolution of the matter and provides the student with an explicit warning as to the consequences of any future disruption. The instructor should also be present unless specifically excused for good cause by the Academic Dean or designee.

Third Violation

The third time a particular student causes a disruption, the instructor, depending on the seriousness of the infraction, shall:

- File a charge under the code of conduct (mandatory).
- Inform the student of the infraction and order the student to leave the instructional area. If the student still refuses to leave, the instructor shall call, or assign someone to call, the police to remove, and if necessary, arrest the student.
- Notify the Academic Dean or designee and bar the student from attending further classes until the matter has been resolved. The student is required to meet with the Academic Dean or designee prior to being permitted to return to class. The meeting is held at the earliest time practicable but in no event later than three working days subsequent to the instructor's action. The meeting is informal in nature. The official conducting the meeting seeks to determine whether the student should be permitted to return to class or should be excluded pending resolution of the matter and provides the student with an explicit warning as to the consequences of any future disruption. The instructor should be present unless specifically excused for good cause by Academic Dean or designee.

The conditions for readmission to class, if permitted at all, are determined by the Academic Dean or designee, and communicated to the instructor.

Student Records

The Office of Records and Registration maintains students' records. Student records include evidence of application and acceptance, admissions forms, official transcripts, registration records, financial records, and educational plans. Academic records, including grades and attendance, are generated electronically via the Learning Management System (Canvas) and integrated with the Student Information System (Sonis), which houses all academic records. Both cloud-based systems are password-protected with specific security permissions and undergo regular backups.

Maintenance of Records

University of the Potomac maintains a system of record retention in accordance with applicable federal and state requirements and consistent with accreditation standards and those of the

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO). It is the responsibility of the Registrar to establish and verify a system of record retention that is in accordance with federal and state requirements. Academic records are maintained for seven years after a student leaves school. Student transcripts are maintained indefinitely. In the event of a school closure, academic records are maintained by the Higher Education Licensure Commission (HELIC) of the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education, and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

Privacy of Student Records

Policies and procedures concerning the privacy of student records are governed by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 (Public Law 93-380). Student records are maintained by the Office of Records and Registration. Students have the right to inspect and review their educational records, request amendment of their educational records, consent to disclosure of their educational records, and file a complaint with the US Department of Education.

Students aged 18 or over have access to their personal record files kept by University of the Potomac. All authorized Potomac personnel have access to student records for official purposes. A student (or in some cases an eligible parent) is given access to his/her record within a reasonable time after submitting a written request to the office in possession of the record. Students should allow 72 hours for a written request to be fulfilled. If the content of a record is believed to be in error, inaccurate, discriminatory, or in violation of student rights or otherwise inappropriate, it may be challenged, and students may submit a written explanation to be included in the record.

Student information is released to persons, agencies, or legal authorities as required by subpoena/legal process or by consent of a student (or eligible parent). Information is released on a consent basis in cases where a student or eligible parent has provided written consent, signed, dated, and specifying the information to be released and the name(s) of persons to whom the information is to be released.

Directory Information

Colleges and universities may disclose, without consent, directory information. University of the Potomac designates the following items as directory information: Student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, dates of attendance, degrees, certificates, and awards received, e-mail address, and the most recent previous educational institution attended.

Right of Refusal to Provide Copies

University of the Potomac reserves the right to deny transcripts or copies of records not required to be made available under FERPA regulations. University of the Potomac designates the following items as directory information: Student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, dates of

attendance, degrees, certificates, and awards received, e-mail address, and the most recent previous educational institution attended. If a student does not want any or all of the above information released, he/she should inform the Registrar's Office in writing by the fifth calendar day following the start of classes.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SGA)

The Student Government Association (SGA) has been established to empower students to have an organized voice in the operations of the University and a vehicle for arranging social and cultural activities as they wish. University of the Potomac Student Government represents students' views and concerns and takes these views and concerns to the University administration. University of the Potomac Student Government:

- (1) Meets at least twice each year with administrators to discuss student concerns and the progress of the University;
- (2) Administers a student activity budget to be expended by the Student Government for social and cultural activities. Student and Retention Services work with the Student Government to develop speaker series, establish student chapters of national professional associations, and enrich the academic life of the University.

Meetings of the Student Government are open to all students. Meeting dates are posted as determined by the Student Government Association.

Students can contact studentservices@potomac.edu for more information.

COMMON ACRONYMS AND ACADEMIC TERMS

ACE – American Council on Education, an agency that evaluates non-traditional forms of education and provides credit recommendations.

BUDGET PERIOD (FINANCIAL AID) - a period of time in which a student completes a minimum of 24 credits; the equivalent of an academic year.

CATALOG – an institutional publication containing academic offerings, course descriptions, and institutional policies

COHORT – a group of people banded together to achieve a common goal. All Upper Division students in the baccalaureate program are assigned to a cohort based on when they begin the Upper Division program. This same group of individuals will progress through the degree program together as a group

COA (COST OF ATTENDANCE FOR FINANCIAL AID) - the amount it costs to attend University of the Potomac per academic year. This amount includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, or other education-related expenses.

CLEP - College Level Examination Program – a testing program designed to grant college credit for successful completion of subject area examinations.

CYCLE – A term used to identify a student’s billing and registration periods.

DANTES – Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support - an examination for college credit program originally developed by the armed forces.

ELECTIVE – a course chosen by the student, which does not specifically fulfill requirements of general education or degree concentration.

EFC (EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION FOR FINANCIAL AID) - the amount, based on federal calculations, that you/your family are expected to contribute towards your education.

FACULTY ADVISOR – An academic person responsible for assisting students with the development of their educational plan and with other academic concerns throughout their educational career.

FAFSA - FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID - A form used to apply for all federal Title IV Financial Aid programs. Application must be made once per year.

FINANCIAL AID – A general term used to refer to government student loans and grants.

GENERAL EDUCATION - The general education component of a standard degree program is a common core of learning including subject matter from the humanities, the natural sciences, the physical sciences, and the social sciences. It is recognized that such a common core is necessary in the development and for the growth of the educated person. It is much more important that the general education subjects be taught with emphasis upon generalization rather than with an academic specialization as the major objective.

GRADE REPORT – A report of academic progress for a single session.

ISIR - INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION REPORT – An information report generated from a FAFSA which indicates a student’s eligibility status.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE – A short period of time when a student is not attending school. Students are required to notify University of the Potomac in writing before taking a leave of absence.

MSCHE – Middle States Commission on Higher Education

PROMISSORY NOTE - A binding legal document students sign when applying for a student loan.

REGISTRAR – the party responsible for the maintenance of academic student records.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP) – Please refer to the Catalog for satisfactory academic progress requirements.

SESSION – An 8-week period of time during which a student takes a designated number of courses (two sessions equal a 16-week semester).

SPECIAL STATUS STUDENT – A student who is a non-degree-seeking student (refer to the Catalog for additional information).

STUDENT HANDBOOK - A guide designed to provide students with information on policy and procedure of University of the Potomac.

TRANSCRIPT – A record of the student’s entire academic career.

WITHDRAWAL – The action of a student leaving the University for a period of time in excess of one session.