



Graduate Student Handbook



Sacred Heart
UNIVERSITY

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Purpose & Acknowledgements

The Graduate Student Life Handbook was compiled by Mr. Jagdeep Singh Khasriya, a graduate student at Sacred Heart University.

When I was accepted at SHU for graduate studies, I was excited, confused, and curious at the same time as to where I will live, eat, shop, socialize, etc. Therefore, this book was compiled from a new graduate student's perspective on what elements will interest the current students and help the prospective students. This is a general-purpose handbook that I hope will help students in showing everything that SHU has to offer by serving as a navigational guide. I would like to thank Dr. Kathy Dilks and Ms. Erica Sharp for allowing me the opportunity to develop this project and for their constant valuable guidance throughout this project. I would also like to thank all my friends for their insights on helping this handbook provide a deeper perspective on the graduate student body.

Thank you!

Jagdeep Singh Khasriya

Graduate Assistant for Graduate Student Affairs

Disclaimer: Please note that this handbook is compiled to serve all graduate students to discuss universitywide services and standards. You may have an additional handbook of professional standards and department regulations issued by your academic program in addition to this one.

I. Academic Integrity

It is expected that students act with integrity in their respective programs. [Academic Integrity](#) includes, but is not limited to, doing your own work, papers, tests, etc. It is the responsibility of students to notify their professor of any form of cheating or plagiarism that they become aware of. Violations of academic integrity will lead to a grade of F (Fail) in the course and possible dismissal from the program or university.

II. Student Conduct & Community Standards

Sacred Heart University students are responsible for staying aware of policies and procedures involving the Code of Student Conduct and Community Standards. Students must keep in mind that the student conduct process is very different from criminal and court proceedings.

[Student Conduct Process](#)

[FAQs Regarding Student Conduct & Community Standards](#)

III. Title IX

Sacred Heart University is dedicated to maintaining a safe learning and working environment for the SHU community free of any form of discrimination and harassment. The Title IX office is

open and accessible to all members of the Sacred Heart community. Anyone impacted by sex/gender/caste/color discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, or other forms of discrimination is encouraged to contact the [Title IX office](#) and [submit a report](#).

IV. Grading Policy

Letter Grade	Grade Points
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00

Graduate students must always maintain a minimum GPA of at least 3.0. In some cases, a GPA above 3.0 may be required depending on their respective program.

V. Orientation

While enrolling in a graduate program can be an exciting experience, it could also be confusing if you have never been a graduate student, or have attended Sacred Heart University prior, which is why the office of Graduate Student Affairs holds [orientation sessions](#) for all its graduate students to help you transition to SHU as smoothly and easily as possible.

VI. Initial Account Activation and Usage

A. Setting up your SHU account

The SHU account will enable you to activate and access various online SHU services such as your MySHU Portal and email.

[How to Setup Your SHU Account](#)

B. MySHU Portal

The [MySHU Portal](#) allows you to access your courses on Blackboard, SHU email, MyHealth, Student Planning, and Advising, etc. You can also use MySHU to access free software download, pay your bills, access your online library resources, update your health records, update your address, and contact information, see events, etc.

C. Checking your Email

You can check your email by clicking on the "[Office 365 \(Email\)](#)" icon after logging into your MySHU portal. You can also check your email by logging into your SHU account in Outlook on your PC or installing the Outlook app on your phone and logging in using your SHU account credentials.

[Outlook App for iOS](#)

[Outlook App for Android](#)

D. Blackboard

Blackboard is the portal to your classes. Here is where you would look for your assignments, upload or download material, see your grades, as well as interact with others in the class.

[Blackboard Tutorial](#)

E. Student Planning & Advising

As mentioned in Section I – B, [Student Planning & Advising \(SPA\) is found within your MySHU portal](#). Student Planning & Advising is where you can plan your courses, register for classes, view your schedule, find your classrooms, track your academic progress, add/drop classes, email your academic advisor, view final grades, etc.

Learn how to register for your future classes by watching the [Student Planning and Advising Tutorial](#).

VII. Tuition & Financial Aid

A. Tuition & Fees

For information on tuition and fees, visit [Student Accounts](#).

B. Making a Tuition/Fee Payment

Sacred Heart University offers the following [payment options for Graduate students](#):

- Employer Tuition Reimbursement (Guaranteed Payment Plan)
- Installment Payment Plan
- Payment in full

C. Student Accounts

[Access your account](#) to view your current tuition bill.

D. Graduate Student Financial Assistance

Domestic graduate students can apply for financial aid in the form of loans. Kindly read and understand the eligibility criteria carefully before applying.

[Financial Aid Application Process & Deadlines](#)

E. On-Campus Employment

Graduate students can apply for on-campus job positions such as graduate assistants or non-work study positions within their academic department or other offices on campus:

- [Graduate Assistant Student Guide](#): This guide contains all the information required for Graduate students to know before applying for an on-campus job role.

- **[Job Postings](#)**: You can find graduate job postings listed on SHU's website in the link below. Make sure to carefully read and understand the role before applying.

VIII. Off-Campus Housing and Transportation

A. Off-Campus Housing

Graduate Students can find off-campus housing using [Jump-Off Campus](#), a resource that's also listed on the Sacred Heart University's website to help Graduate Students find off-campus housing. Students can find the list of a few of the rental communities which are located near Sacred Heart University's Main Campus in Fairfield, Connecticut, or [additional apartment websites](#).

B. Transportation

- **[Airport Shuttle](#)**: The Airport Shuttle helps you get to campus from the airport as well as to the airport from campus. There are a few services, however one example is [Go Connecticut Airport Shuttle](#).
- **[Greater Bridgeport Public Transit](#)**: If your residence is located in an area that is on the route-map of the Greater Bridgeport Transit, then you can use the public bus to reach Sacred Heart University's Main Campus from your off-campus housing.
- **[SHUttles](#)**: The SHUttles are a building-to-building transportation service offered by Sacred Heart University for the community to utilize. Graduate students may use the shuttle service to navigate around campus.

C. Parking

Graduate students can [purchase commuter parking decals](#) for a nominal fee per academic year.

IX. Health Forms & Insurance Options

A. Health Forms

The following link includes required Graduate student health forms and vaccinations as well as a link to MyHealth where you can upload and submit health forms and vaccinations.

- [Health Forms – Graduate Students](#)
- [MyHealth](#)

B. Health Insurance

It is highly recommended that graduates buy a health insurance plan to avoid paying expensive bills for even the most basic medical needs. The following links contain a few health insurance options for both Domestic as well as International Graduate Students.

- [Health Insurance options for Domestic Students](#)
- [Health Insurance options for International Students](#)

C. Personal Counseling Services

Sacred Heart University offers free personal counseling services for its full-time graduate students via [Uwill](#). Please use your SHU account credentials to register at Uwill to receive free therapy online from licensed mental health professionals.

X. Student ID

Graduate Students must always carry their Student ID and show it to SHU officials upon request. To print your student ID, you must first [upload your SHUcard photo](#) and receive approval for your submission. You can pick up your Student ID card free of charge from the Student ID office which is located at the Campus Concierge within the Main Campus of Sacred Heart University in Fairfield. Check the website for hours of operation. In case of a lost or stolen card, please visit Campus Concierge to request a new one for a nominal replacement fee.

XI. Campus Bookstore

The SHU Campus Bookstore offers students the opportunity to buy or rent new as well as used textbooks and course materials. The bookstore also consists of a variety of things including official SHU apparel, merchandise, gift cards, etc. The Campus Bookstore is located at 5151 Park Ave, Fairfield, CT-06825. Students should also check out the [bookstore online](#) to know more about online exclusive items available to purchase from the bookstore.

XII. Student Success & Research

A. Academic Support Services

Sacred Heart University offers academic support services for graduate students.

- [Jandrisevits Learning Center \(JLC\)](#): The Jandrisevits Learning Center (JLC) offers academic support services for various subjects as well as skills that you may need help with throughout the semester.
- [Online Writing Lab](#): The JLC's Online Writing Lab is a great academic resource available for graduate students to have their papers reviewed by professionals.
- [English as a Second Language](#): The English Language Institute (ELI) at Sacred Heart University offers high-quality English Language instruction to all non-native speakers.

B. Library

One of the greatest resources at the university is the Ryan Matura Library. Graduate Students can access dedicated program resource guides and databases, as well as have access to an expert librarian in your field of study. Log in 24/7 and you can also connect virtually with a librarian utilizing the online chat feature.

[Library Resources for Graduate Students](#)

XIII. Transcripts

Sacred Heart University processes official transcripts for its students upon request. Students can request their transcript online via [National Student Clearinghouse](#). Make sure that you have no blocks on your account before trying to order a transcript. There is a nominal fee for each transcript requested. For any questions regarding transcripts, contact transcripts@sacredheart.edu.

XIV. Career Services

Do not wait to utilize the expert resources at SHU's [Center for Career & Professional Development](#). Services include but are not limited to, dedicated graduate workshops, internships, resume writing, cover letter writing, career panel discussions, networking events, job fairs, etc.

XV. Technical Support

Technical Support, also known as The Factory at Sacred Heart University offers various technical services. You can reach out to the factory by:

- visiting [Self-Service Portal](#) and submitting your ticket.
- emailing techsupport@sacredheart.edu.
- calling at 203-365-7575.
- stopping by their office in your academic building.

XVI. Public Safety

Public Safety at Sacred Heart University provides a safe environment for students on campus. You can reach out to Public Safety by:

- Calling them at 203-371-7995
- In case of an immediate emergency, call at 203-371-7911
- Emailing them at public-safety@sacredheart.edu

If you have a situation in your local off-campus apartment or are near campus, contact public safety and your local police station. Students should also use the SHU safe app in case of emergencies as a helpful resource.

[SHU Safe for iOS](#)

[SHU Safe for Android](#)

XVII. Valentine Health & Recreation Center

The Valentine Health & Recreation Center offers the recreation and workout experience for students by providing facilities such as group fitness, workout studios, climbing wall, bowling

alley, golf simulator and many more! To learn more about getting a membership, email Liz McGreevy mcgreevy@sacredheart.edu.

XVIII. Athletics

Being a student athlete is both thrilling as well as a challenging experience at the same time. Here are few things to keep in mind:

- Attend practice as per the requirements set in your chosen sport.
- Maintain the minimum GPA requirement in your program.
- Representing SHU with respectful behavior during games and competitions.

[Visit SHU Pioneer Sports to learn more](#)

A. NCAA Student Athletes

NCAA student athletes may not participate in Intramural Sports for the same or related sport as their NCAA sport (for example - baseball and softball, football and flag football, etc.). This rule also applies to any NCAA athlete who has transferred from another university during the current academic year.

B. Club Athletes

Club athletes are eligible to participate in Intramural Sports. However, when it comes to similar or like sports - teams are limited to two club members for sports with five or more players at the field/court and are limited to one club member for sports with four or less at the field/court.

- [The Intramurals Handbook](#)
- [How to join a Club Sport](#)

XIX. Graduate-level Clubs & Activities

A. Graduate Student Clubs

There are various graduate clubs at Sacred Heart that you can be a part of to meet new people outside your class as well as become more involved at Sacred Heart with people who may share similar interests. [View a list of current graduate student clubs](#). If you are interested in creating a graduate-level club, contact Kathy Dilks, EdD at dilksk@sacredheart.edu.

B. Graduate Student Activities

Life as a Graduate Student could be stressful at times. The office of Graduate Student Affairs plans and conducts various events and activities throughout the year which allows Graduate Students to meet new people, make new friends during their journey at SHU. Make sure to check your SHU email regularly to receive monthly newsletters as well as sign up for events that are happening each month. [View a list of graduate student events](#).

XX. Blocks or Holds on Your Account

There are a few reasons that you could have a hold on your account which would prevent you from requesting a transcript, registering for your next term, or graduating.

Student Account/Financial Block

A student account block means that you owe a certain amount of tuition or fees. You can check to see what you owe by going to your Student Account through your MySHU portal.

Health Services/Vaccination

A Health Services block means that you are missing verified vaccination records in your MyHealth portal. You can access this via MySHU to upload your official documents. Current standards indicate you need official and validated Measles, Mumps, Rubella, COVID and Varicella vaccinations. Sometimes health services will also require you to have a TB test as well if you have visited areas with a high tuberculosis rate.

Academic Advisement

If you see an advisor's block in SPA, you must make arrangements to meet with your advisor to receive approval.

XXI. Graduation Information

Both graduate and part-time students will be charged a graduation fee approximately a month before their expected date of graduation. Kindly note that the graduation fee is non-refundable. This fee applies to students who are earning a degree. Both degrees and certificates are conferred three times a year – May, August, and December. To apply for graduation online, please visit the “Graduation Overview” section in your [Student Planning and Advising](#). For any questions or problems regarding applying for your online application of graduation, contact graduation@sacredheart.edu.

XXII. International Student Specific Information

A. Support During Transition

The office of Graduate, International & Veteran Student Affairs and the Office of International & Immigration Services organizes a few pre-arrival and post-arrival orientations which are designed to help new international students learn about the academic culture of the American University.

B. Maintaining F-1 Status

Here are a few things to keep in mind to maintain your F1 status:

- Check in with the DSO and let them know your current US address and cell phone number.

- Report any change of address, email, or phone number to the Office of International and Immigration Services. So, that your information stays up to date in the SEVIS (Student Exchange & Visitor Information System) database.
- Read your SHU email daily to receive important reminders.
- Be aware of updates to your MyHealth portal or requests for additional health records.
- Attend all your classes whether online or on-campus to maintain your status as a full-time student.
- Register for classes and know your minimum credit requirements per term.
- Pay your tuition bill before classes beginning each term. Those who do not, often have blocks preventing them from registering, putting their F1status at risk.
- Ensure your Passport and I-20 is always valid. If expired, contact the Office of International & Immigration Services to learn about renewal.

Do not hesitate to reach out to the Office of International and Immigration Services for any queries that you may have as an F1 student. You can contact the Office of International and Immigration Services by emailing them at oiis@sacredheart.edu or calling them at 203-396-6400.

C. Cultural Adjustments

The following websites provide comprehensive information on American culture, social customs, cultural differences, and transitioning. Note the importance of attending class, functions, and appointments on time, and that most will want you to make appointments to visit their office before arrival to ensure they are there to greet you. To learn more, here are a few sites, please note we are not endorsing any of the products they may be selling.

- [International Student Guide to the U.S. | Cultural Adjustment & Transitioning](#)
- [Living in the USA](#)
- [The USA “Way of Life”](#)

D. Opening a bank account

There are many options to choose from when it comes to opening a bank account as an international student. Students can either opt for a checking account or a savings account depending on their preference and needs. Banks such as Bank of America, Chase, Wells Fargo, TD Bank, etc. are known to be few of the popular choices among international students.

E. Getting a State ID/Driver’s License

Students should follow the given instructions listed below before applying for a Connecticut State ID or Driver’s license.

- Fill out the [State ID/Driver’s License Request Form](#) for address verification and SSN Ineligibility Support.

- Students who do not have a social security number can request the Office of International and Immigration Services for an SSN Ineligibility Support letter after submitting their State ID/Driver's License Request Form.
- The DMV (Connecticut Department of Motor Vehicle) will require an official transcript from students applying for a State ID or Driver's license. Visit [Section XII](#) of the handbook to know more about how to get an official transcript.
- Schedule an appointment at the nearest DMV after getting the transcript and SSN Ineligibility Letter.

F. Cell Phone Providers

What to do with your current phone? There's a great chance that you already have a cell phone in your home country. In this case, instead of buying a new phone. You can check to see whether your phone is unlocked (i.e. can be used with an American cellular service provider's network). However, if your phone is locked then you will have to purchase a new phone upon arrival in the United States. You can either buy a phone from a service provider's store such as T-Mobile, Verizon Wireless etc. which will only work with that service provider's network, or you can buy an unlocked phone (i.e., can be used with various cellular service provider's network) from an electronics retail store such as Target, Best Buy, Walmart, etc.