



## **MSME Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. When can I apply?**

Admissions are only made for the Fall Semester. Application deadlines may be different for domestic and international students. For details, see the Graduate Affairs website

### **2. I got admitted to SDSU last semester, but could not start attending because of a personal problem. Do I have to reapply from scratch?**

Your record remains in the Graduate School for one year. If you want to reactivate your file, you have to pay the application fee again. Your file will be re-examined and you will be notified of the outcome officially.

### **3. I attended SDSU last semester, but cannot attend school for a prolonged period due to personal problems. How long can I stay out of the system without having to reapply?**

You can be out of the system for one semester after being a regular student for at least a semester. If you have to stay out for another semester, you must contact the Admission office and fill out a special request form. Usually a break is easily granted. If you stay out for more than two semesters in succession, you have to reapply. Of course, your old courses may still be applicable towards your degree if they are not more than six years old.

### **4. I am already a Master's student at SDSU in another department. Do I have to apply from scratch?**

No! Go to Graduate School and fill out a special form. Your record at SDSU will be routed through proper channel and you will be considered for admission like any other applicant.

### **5. What GRE scores are acceptable?**

While there is no target number for admission, it is unlikely you will be accepted with a (V&Q) score below 306.

### **6. What is the minimum TOEFL score I need?**

Applicants whose major education has not been in the English language must score at least 85 on TOEFL or 6.5 on IELTS

### **7. What is a minimum required GPA?**

A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required. Exceptional students who have done very well in the GRE but have fell a little below the GPA requirement may be considered for conditional admission.

### **8. I have exceptional Quantitative and Analytical scores in GRE, but the verbal part is deficient. Is there any chance I can be admitted?**

You may be admitted conditionally. One of the conditions may be to take a remedial Technical Writing class RWS 503. You must get a B or better grade in that class.

### **9. Can I transfer courses taken in another university?**

Yes, you can transfer a maximum of 9 units from another accredited university if the courses satisfy SDSU's requirements.

**Note 1:** Quarter system courses such as those from UCSD typically count as 2 units. Since you can transfer max of 9 units, you can transfer 4 or 5 such courses from quarter systems. If you want to transfer 10 units, you have to ask Grad Affairs (by completing the "Petition for Academic Adjustment" form) to allow you to transfer the extra 1 unit since you have exceeded the allowable 9 units.

**Note 2:** SDSU students can register for UCSD classes through the "UCSD Exchange Agreement" program by dually registering at both schools. This exchange program allows SDSU students to take UCSD classes without paying additional fee to UCSD. Students who don't go through this exchange agreement program will have to pay UCSD fees. Students cannot take more than one course per semester through the "UCSD Exchange Agreement" program. Course that a student wants to take through the "UCSD Exchange Agreement" program have to be listed on Program of Study.

**10. Can I start taking courses even if I am not enrolled as a regular student? If so how can I apply those units towards my Masters?**

Yes. You can take classes through what is called "Open University" and apply one semester worth of such classes towards your Masters. It does not matter how many classes you take, but it cannot span more than a semester. For more info on Open University classes contact Open University Program, Extended Studies, Gateway Center, SDSU.

**11. Is it possible to drop a class after the last day to drop a class?**

You should submit a petition to drop a class after the last day to drop a class. Graduate Affairs may allow you to drop, depending how compelling your reason is.

**12. What is the repercussion if I just drop a class after the last day to drop a class?**

If your petition is denied, and you still drop a class, you will earn an "F" grade in that course. If the course is listed in your POS, in order for you to graduate, you should retake and get high enough a grade such that the average of the two grades in that course is a "C". If it is not listed in your POS, and you drop the class without approval of your petition, you don't have to retake it, but it will still affect your GPA since it will be an "F". No repercussions if your petition is approved.

**13. Will I get a refund if my petition is approved?**

You will receive a refund if you drop before the deadline. Check for deadlines.

**II. Class/Test Related Questions**

**1. How do I get the schedule number for ME797?**

You should be classified and advanced to candidacy before you register for ME797. Find a thesis or project advisor and complete Graduate Advisor Form available at the ME website.

**2. I have finished all coursework and am working on my thesis. Do I need to register for 799?**

You should register for 799A or 799B (if you have already taken 799A) if you are going to submit the thesis in a particular semester. If you are not enrolled in either, the grad division will not accept your thesis.

**3. Can I register for 797 and 799 in the same semester?**

Yes.

**4. I have taken a similar course at another institution. How do I transfer the credits? What is the maximum number of units I can transfer?**

Transfer of units is not easy. You have to formally apply to the MSME Graduate Advisor with all the evidence (transcript, description of the course, etc.) and submit a "Petition for Adjustment of Academic Requirement for Master's Degree". Upon receiving this petition, the Graduate Advisor sends his/her recommendation to the Graduate School where the final decisions are made. You can only transfer a maximum of 9 units.

**5. I performed badly in a couple of courses. What is the minimum GPA I need to graduate?**

You need to have a minimum overall GPA of 2.75 (that includes all courses taken at SDSU since you joined the program) and a minimum GPA of 3.0 in the program.

**6. Can I retake a course to improve my grade?**

A student cannot repeat a course that has been taken as part of the official master's degree program unless when the minimum grade requirement is not satisfied. Before you retake the course, you need to petition for adjustment of Academic Requirement to include the 3 units (to exceed 30 units).

**7. What happens to my GPA if I retake a class and do better the second time?**

Your major GPA will reflect only the later grade whereas your overall GPA will carry the earlier and the later grades.

**8. What grades do I need for courses in my POS?**

You must complete any course listed on your official program of study with a grade of C or better. Note that no course can be deleted from an official program of study after the course has been completed.

**9. What GPA do I need to maintain as a graduate student?**

You need to maintain grade point averages of at least 3.0 (B) in all courses listed on the official degree program. Also, a grade point average of at least 2.85 must be maintained in all courses on the graduate record. No transfer or extension credit may be used to improve the grade point average of units completed whether computed to determine the average on the official degree program or the overall average.

### **III. ME 799A (Thesis) Related Questions**

#### **1. When should I register for ME799A?**

You should register for ME799A or ME799B during the semester you expect to submit your thesis, defend it and graduate.

#### **2. Are there any conditions I must satisfy before I can register for ME799A?**

Yes, you must already be classified, filed your program of study, have been advanced to candidacy, and have an approved thesis committee form.

#### **3. What do I do if I register for ME 799A but end up for some reason not defending my thesis during that semester?**

If this happens you should register for ME799B, in the subsequent semester. This course is an extension of ME 799A and does not carry units of credit. If you are not enrolled in either of these courses, the graduate division will not accept your thesis.

#### **4. Can I register for both 797 and 799 during the same semester?**

Yes.

### **IV. Thesis Committee Form related Questions**

#### **1. When is the best time to complete the thesis committee form?**

You should complete your thesis committee form with your thesis advisor and submit it to the graduate division only after you have been advanced to candidacy.

#### **2. Can I register for ME 799A at the same time as completing my thesis committee form?**

NO, your thesis committee form must have already been filed with the graduate division and have already been approved before you will be allowed to register for ME799A.

#### **3. I understand that the committee form must be signed by two ME thesis committee members (hence two ME faculty) and one external member, usually from another engineering department, but what if I have two ME advisors, do they qualify as the two ME committee members?**

NO. If you have two ME thesis advisors (i.e. one is the advisor and the other the co-advisor), then you will need a third ME committee member, in addition to the external committee member.

### **V. Program of Study Related Questions**

#### **1. What is the Program of Study form?**

This is a form that you complete which lists the courses that you intend to be taking in order to graduate. It is in fact your course plan for graduation.

#### **2. Why is it important for me to complete the Program of Study form early?**

Without an approved Program of Study, you cannot be advanced to candidacy and without advancement to candidacy you cannot register for ME797 or ME799, i.e., cannot graduate.

#### **3. When should I complete my Program of Study?**

When you have a Classified Status, an Official Program of Study must be completed in consultation with the Graduate Adviser. You will do this electronically but in person, by visiting the graduate Advisor. The official Program of Study should be filed after the first or second semester of coursework. The requirements governing the Official Program of Study will be those specified in the bulletin in effect at the time the program is approved in the Graduate Division, not the term in which the student began program course work. Once approved, the student can view it on her/his WebPortal.

#### **4. Can I Make Changes to the Program of Study?**

Yes. But any change made to the Official Program of Study after it is approved must be made on either a Request for Change of Official Program if the request is within the Graduate Bulletin requirements or a Petition for Adjustment of Academic Requirements if the request is outside of the Graduate Bulletin requirements.

#### **5. How Long is My Program of Study Valid?**

A course completed prior to seven years from the date on which the official master's degree program is approved cannot be accepted.

#### **6. Who should I consult before completing My Program of Study?**

You need to discuss your Program of Study form with your thesis or research advisor before meeting with the Graduate Advisor to file the form electronically. Your advisor will be the best person to help you select the courses most helpful for your thesis or project.

**7. What if I need to change my “approved” Program of Study later on; what do I do?**

If a student wants to make changes to the official Program of Study after it has been approved and the courses have not yet been completed, the student may do so by submitting a "Petition for Adjustment of Academic Requirement" form, with consent from his/her thesis advisor.

*Any requests for changes that are outside of the Graduate Bulletin requirements or are required (core) classes must be made on a "Petition for Adjustment of Academic Requirements"*