

SSU FAQ

Where is SSU?

Sonoma State University occupies 274 acres in the beautiful wine country of Sonoma County, in Northern California. Located at the foot of the Sonoma hills, the campus is just an hour's drive north of San Francisco and 40 minutes away from the Pacific Ocean.

What's special about SSU?

Sonoma State University, a small campus of 7,500 students, is dedicated to the liberal arts and sciences. Our students enjoy a high quality education that features close interactions with faculty due to our size and SSU's status as one of the premier public undergraduate institutions in the state.

SSU strives to graduate students who are ready to navigate the intricacies of our modern world, and who are prepared to make informed decisions that benefit their own lives, as well as the lives of their families and communities.

How and when do I apply?

Sonoma State University is part of the California State University System and uses admissions procedures established by the CSU. Electronic versions of the CSU undergraduate and graduate applications are accessible on the World Wide Web at www.csumentor.edu/. The CSU Mentor system allows students to browse through general information about CSU's 23 campuses, view multimedia campus presentations, send and receive electronic responses to specific questions, and apply for admission and financial aid.

Applications also may be obtained online or at any California high school or community college or from the Office of Admission at any of the campuses of the California State University. The SSU Office of Admissions and Records is located on the second floor of Ruben Salazar Hall, and the phone number is (707) 664-2778.

Admission at Sonoma is competitive and students are encouraged to apply during the specified filing period. For entry in the fall semester, the filing period is October-November with the final date to file November 30. For entry in the spring semester, the filing period is August, with the final date to file August 30.

Some of the programs in the highest demand are called "impacted programs." These programs receive more applications during the filing period than can be accommodated. In such cases, you must meet supplementary admission criteria if applying to an impacted program.

Applications will be accepted after the initial filing period on a rolling basis provided space is available in the student's preferred major.

Where will I live?

The Residential Community provides comfortable, convenient campus housing for 3,000 single students. The Community is a unique

mix of nontraditional residence hall suites and campus apartments, all located just seconds from the campus classroom buildings. All suites and apartments are fully furnished and carpeted and have their own living rooms, bathrooms, and kitchens with all appliances. The suites and apartments are wired into the University's computer network, giving residents direct access to University computing resources, the library, and the Internet. The Community has its own dining hall, swimming pools, study rooms, convenience store, post office, meeting rooms, game room, and outdoor recreation areas.

Thirty percent of our students are housed on campus. For those students who choose to live off-campus, the Housing Services Office maintains a listing of available rental accommodations in the local area. This listing, accessible online on Housing's website, includes rental houses, apartments, and rooms in private homes.

What are my annual costs?

For the 2008-09 academic year, fees for students who are California residents enrolled in 6 units or fewer is \$1,391 per semester. For a class load of 7 units or more, the cost is \$1,973 per semester. Non-resident tuition is an additional \$339 per unit. For a complete list of fees and other charges, see the 2008-09 fee schedule under the heading "Fees and Expenses," or go online to www.sonoma.edu/ar/registration/Fees.shtml.

With other costs, such as housing, books, meal plans, various course fees, and incidentals, an in-state student can expect to pay between \$15,000 and \$16,500 each year. Fees for international students are listed in the section of this catalog on admissions procedures for international students.

What about financial aid and scholarships?

Nearly 45 percent of our students receive some type of financial aid, while 27 percent receive grants or scholarships. We participate in all state and federal financial aid programs. The University's merit, athletic, and talent scholarship programs total more than \$600,000 in awards.

You should apply for financial aid in January. Each year, the priority filing date for the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is March 2. Some types of financial aid are available if you apply after that date.

You should apply for scholarships at the same time you apply for admission to the University. If you are applying for spring admission, you should apply for scholarships for the following fall semester. The scholarship applications are available in October of each year, and the deadline for your application and any supporting materials to be received or postmarked is January 15 of each year.

For complete information on Sonoma State University fees and our financial aid and scholarship programs, see the Fees, Expenses, and Financial Assistance section in this catalog.

How do I register for my classes?

All registration is conducted online. For new students at Sonoma, your first experience is Summer Orientation. This optional program gives you an opportunity to register for your first classes online, make friends with fellow students, and become acquainted with the campus and the area. Faculty and staff advisors assist you before the registration process. Other orientation programs are available for transfer students.

All entering students are assigned an advisor in their academic department. One-third of new students who enroll do not have a declared major and receive academic advising from professional staff members in the Advising Center.

The Educational Mentoring Team is a highly recommended program that provides advising and orientation for all first-time freshmen. Each EMT consists of a faculty member, student services professional, and a peer advisor. The EMT program helps students begin their educational career with the appropriate coursework and career planning.

Advising for upcoming semesters for continuing students takes place in the departments at the end of the previous term. Students register for classes on the Web. For more details on registration, see Admissions; for details on advising, see Student Academic Services. The section on Degree Requirements will help you plan your course of study.

What about technology?

One of the first universities in California to require computer access of all its entering freshmen, Sonoma State continues to lead the curve in its use of technology. Our designation as one of the Top 100 Wireless Universities in the United States is just one example of the highly sophisticated, technological environment you will discover at Sonoma.

In addition to registration via the Web, you will receive all official communication from the University online. As you progress through your coursework, you will experience technology in a variety of settings: in an online chatroom from your room in the residence halls, in a class on how to conduct research using the Internet in the Schulz Information Center, in a wireless computer lab, and in a classroom that allows the professor to send and receive screenshots to and from students, to name a few.

How can I personalize my education?

There are a number of ways to pursue your interests. Each year, many students take advantage of the study abroad programs, traveling to a host University or special study center in one of 20 countries.

Through a variety of internships, students can gain practical experience or academic credit in settings that are related to their career.

Many volunteer opportunities are available, such as the JUMP program offered through Associated Students. In some situations, credit may be earned for volunteer experiences, while providing valuable service to the community.

How can I become involved?

The more you're involved in the life of the campus, the more rewarding your college experience will be. Sonoma has more than 100 registered student clubs and organizations on campus. Whether your interests are student government, athletics, recreational sports, Greek organizations, or the arts, you will find many opportunities to develop leadership roles.

Sonoma State University is a Division II member of the NCAA and sponsors 13 intercollegiate programs: five for men – soccer, basketball, baseball, tennis, and golf – and eight for women – soccer, cross country, volleyball, basketball, softball, tennis, water polo, and track and field. SSU teams have been extremely successful at all levels capturing two national championships and 28 conference championships since 1990.

Another way for students to get involved is through the Student Ambassadors. These students represent SSU at the campus and community levels, and work with the Alumni Association to keep current students and alumni connected.

The performing arts are alive and well at SSU. More than 140 performances in drama, dance, and music are given each year. Whether you prefer to sing Bach or gospel, or play modern jazz or classical guitar, there is a place for you at SSU. A wide variety of ensembles are open to students of all majors and to members of the community.

What fun can I find off campus?

With the coast and the mountains within easy reach, there is always plenty to do outside the classroom. Recreational Sports sponsors a variety of activities all year, including hiking, biking, skiing, river rafting, and camping.

The local area and the communities of Santa Rosa, Petaluma, and Sebastopol offer an abundance of activities – from festivals and farmers' markets to several symphonic, chamber music, and theater groups. The campus is just an hour's drive from beautiful San Francisco and the Bay Area.

Already thinking about graduation?

On a beautiful day in May, you will join the thousands of Sonoma State University graduates who have come before you.

SSU Career Services works closely with new graduates and offers several job placement programs. Graduates have access to informational resources, such as job listings, workshops, job fairs, and other employment search services. Whether you are just beginning your major or searching for a full-time job, the center helps you define and achieve your career goals.

Today, there are more than 40,000 Sonoma State alumni. The SSU Alumni Association works to maintain a strong bond between the University and its alumni. In addition to offering the many advantages of membership in the organization, the Association sponsors student scholarships and special events for alumni throughout the year, including the Distinguished Alumni Awards.