

United States Sports Academy
Student Handbook
2024-2025

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Introduction

University Mission Statement

Created to serve as the world's first, finest and most influential sports university, we educate future generations, create knowledge that takes society forward and, through practice, intellectual rigor, research and scholarship, advance our world of sports.

The United States Sports Academy is an accredited university providing forward thinking education, specialized research, and superior service in the global realm of sports. We prepare and empower future leaders for a multifaceted and successful career in global sports through excellence in teaching, advanced scholarship, professional practice and transformational learning.

Our Core Values

The University's core values come from the University's mission and vision statement and serve as the guiding principles throughout the University. Together, faculty, staff, and students are committed to being:

1. Integrity
2. Accountability
3. Personal Growth & Wellness

Campus History

USSA was founded in 1972 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin by Thomas P. Rosandich, Ph.D. who went on to serve as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the institution for the next 43 years. The ever-increasing needs and demands of sports and society in America indicated a need for an organization to serve as a resource to provide instruction, research, and service to the world of sport. This need was brought into stark relief by two key events at that time. One of these events was the publishing of the landmark Blythe-Mueller Report that demonstrated the correlation between the professional preparation of coaches and the number and severity of injuries to their athletes; untrained coaches hurt their athletes. Concurrently, the sub-par performance of the 1972 United States Olympic Team in Munich highlighted the need for a new approach to the profession. Combined, the two events became the impetus that launched USSA's formation.

During USSA's formative years, the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) provided a forum for the exchange of ideas as a means of addressing the void in sports education, particularly in coaching, sports management, and sports medicine (specifically,

athletic trainers). This body gave rise to USSA's first Board of Advisors (currently the Board of Visitors) who continue to advise and evaluate the efforts of the institution in its mission to this day.

Encouraged by his peers in NACDA to go forward, Dr. Rosandich worked with a small group of professionals in Milwaukee. Together they developed the initial mission statement, academic programs, curriculum, and institutional goals. In 1976, USSA relocated from Wisconsin and became affiliated with the University of South Alabama. This affiliation continued until the early 1980s when USSA outgrew the University's ability to comfortably accommodate the institution. USSA moved into its present, permanent campus in Daphne, Alabama in 1986.

From its inception, USSA has focused on developing sport-specific courses and employing a combination of educational delivery modes. These include distance education for degree coursework, a unique internship program, and a wide array of post-secondary, non-degree, and continuing education programs.

In 1976, USSA secured its first major international agreement to deliver educational and training programs in the Kingdom of Bahrain, an island nation in the Middle East. USSA developed the Bahrain Sport Institute, which was modeled after USSA and through which USSA provided the full-charge development of their national sports effort. In addition to this effort, USSA worked to develop service programs locally, nationally, and internationally. Since its founding, USSA has extended its educational and cultural exchange programs to over 65 nations worldwide. USSA continues to investigate and provide programs in Europe, South Asia, Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, and Latin America.

One of the keys to USSA's ability to deliver its international and post-secondary, non-degree programs is its national faculty. This group numbers more than 100 distinguished educators from diverse areas of sports, who specialize in one or more of USSA's areas of concentration: Exercise Science, Sports Coaching, Sports Management, and Sports Studies. These national faculty members are also a resource for USSA's internship program, which provides students with the opportunity to embark on experiential education with proven experts in their discipline of study. This internship program also seeks local, regional, and national experiential opportunities and provides career planning and placement.

USSA became a candidate for membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in 1981. In 1983, USSA received accreditation to award the M.S.S. degree, making it the first and only graduate school dedicated solely to studies in sports. USSA went on to develop an Ed.D. degree in Sports Management that was accredited in 1996. Concurrently, USSA's distance education program was reviewed and approved. In 2004, USSA went through the substantive change process when its upper division (junior and senior years) BSS degree program was reviewed and accredited. In 2020, USSA added the lower division (freshman and sophomore years) to the B.S.S. program. For the first time in its 49-year

history, USSA admitted freshmen students in Spring 2021. Ever since it was first accredited, USSA has maintained its accreditation in good standing through reaffirmation processes with its last decennial review in 2018.

Besides the institutional accreditation conferred upon USSA by SACSCOC, USSA has also added programmatic accreditations. The National Committee for Accreditation of Coaching Education (NCACE) reviewed and accredited the B.S.S. Sports Coaching degree program in March 2020. The Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP) accredited USSA's Sports Management programs at all degree levels in April 2021. Additionally, the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) has recognized USSA's B.S.S. in Sports Strength and Conditioning as part of their Education Recognition Program (ERP).

Because art has traditionally been a feature of the Olympics in both the ancient and modern games, it was fitting that USSA combines sport and art in keeping with this tradition. In 1984, Dr. Thomas P. Rosandich introduced USSA's Awards of Sport, which recognizes the indelible cultural connection between sport and art. This promotional event gained momentum and when USSA purchased a permanent campus in 1986, the artistic lines and beauty of the main building served to inspire the establishment of the American Sport Art Museum and Archives (ASAMA). This division of USSA is dedicated to preserving sport art and sport art forms for posterity. The archives include printed and electronic sports information, which can be accessed by USSA's students and the public. In addition, the art gallery features periodic showings of renowned sports artists.

USSA provides further service to the sports world through its many publications, both in traditional print and online delivery. The Network is a full-color, semi-annual print publication with a readership of around 10,000 that features news and events pertaining to the institution, its programs, and its constituents. USSA also posts on our blog The Sport Digest, which is dedicated to covering contemporary issues in sport. In addition to these publications, we have The Sport Update and Alumni Network, which are monthly email newsletters distributed around the globe. All publications are designed to provide current information on a variety of topics for the sport profession, including contributions to the field by USSA and our graduates.

Additionally, USSA has published an electronic, peer-reviewed scientific journal addressing current issues in sport, published with the goal of advancing sport knowledge through research and expertise called The Sport Journal for the past 25 years. The Sport Journal seeks to provide readers with scholarly publications comprising advances in all areas of sport. Published articles include both detailed scientific methods and guided conclusions geared towards sports professionals, allowing for immediate application in the field. The open-access, peer-reviewed journal receives 1 million views annually on its online platform.

USSA will begin intercollegiate sports in the Fall of 2024 as a member of the United States Collegiate Athletic Association (USCAA). This connects the history, mission, and vision of the

university with principle and practice. Adding the excitement of sports competition and participation brings USSA full circle in the preparation of students for work in their chosen profession. As USSA takes the field in the Fall of 2024, so will our traditional classroom teaching and residence requirements return. Long known for our famous “global” faculty experience on the Eastern Shore, we will return to those teaching experiences that launched so many great careers. As we begin our sixth decade of higher education, we remain the only stand-alone, accredited sport degree granting university in America.

USSA is the oldest, self-standing accredited sports university in the United States.

University Community Standards

Students are subject to all university regulations from the time they arrive on-campus whether they are registered or not.

Any student who fails to comply with the rules and regulations of the university or is not able to become compatible with the institution’s philosophy may forfeit the privilege to continue his/her studies at the United States Sports Academy. The University reserves the right to refuse or revoke admittance and/or dismiss any person who does not conform either to the stated guidelines and regulations governing student conduct, or to the expressed principles, policies, and expectations of the University.

Failure to become familiar with university policies does not excuse a student from the regulations described in the handbook or catalog nor any penalty resulting from violation of the regulations of the handbook, the catalog, and other student publications that are subject to modification at any time.

The provisions of this student handbook do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between the United States Sports Academy and any applicant, student, student’s family, or faculty member.

The handbook is a general information publication only, and it is not intended to, nor does it contain all regulations that relate to students.

The University reserves the right to alter rules, regulations, policies and procedures at any time without further notice. It is the responsibility of the student to reference the most updated version of the student handbook, which is available at [Academic Catalogs – United States Sports Academy \(ussa.edu\)](https://www.usa.edu/academic-catalogs).

Equal Opportunity Statement

The United States Sports Academy is an equal opportunity educational institution and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national or ethnic origin, disability, genetic information, protected veteran status, or age in the administration or application of any of its programs or policies, including admissions policies, employment policies, scholarship and loan

programs, and athletic and University-administered programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students or employees.

Compliance with Federal Laws

The United States Sports Academy intends to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1973 (“Title IX”), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“Title VII”), the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (“SaVE Act”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and all regulations implementing these laws.

Student Life

Staff Leadership for Student Life

The Student Life staff works together with the university community to provide the highest quality student experience. Our goal is to provide programming, services, and resources that are relevant, addressing the interests and needs, to the student body. The student life staff conducts evaluations of our services and programs and uses the feedback to improve the student experience.

Eliana Tate, Retention and Admissions Specialist

etate@ussa.edu - [251-544-7177](tel:251-544-7177)

Taylor Rogers, Dean of Enrollment Services

trogers@ussa.edu - [251-626-3303 ext. 7128](tel:251-626-3303)

Student Leadership

The United States Sports Academy offers students with opportunities to lead on campus. The Student Life staff are committed to developing the next generation of leaders through training and investment. Some student leadership positions are elected but most are selected through an application and interview process. All student leaders must exemplify strong character, reflect the mission and core values of the University, and maintain a minimum 2.5 GPA. Some of USSA’s student leadership opportunities include:

- Student Activities
- Student Ambassador
- Student Government

Student Activities

The United States Sports Academy’s Student Activities provide student entertainment, activities, and programming for the campus community. This team seeks to provide the campus body with a balanced social, cultural, recreational, and educational co-curriculum through

scheduled events. Examples of events include art contests, game nights, outdoor movies, and more. Student Activities also provides leadership opportunities for students to develop skills in public relations and special events planning. For more information, please contact Eliana Tate at etate@ussa.edu or [251-544-7177](tel:251-544-7177).

Campus Clubs/Organizations Guidelines

Campus organizations are a vital part of student life at the United States Sports Academy. The Office of Student Life coordinates all student organizations and maintains a master list of organizations and provides resources and assistance to both new and existing organizations.

Student clubs or organizations must request, receive approval, and be officially recognized by the USSA's administration before they may meet on campus, advertise, host fundraisers, distribute or post materials, or use any University facilities for their activities or events. All such clubs or organizations and their activities or events must be consistent with the University's mission and philosophy and must be and remain in compliance with the United States Sports Academy Student Handbook, and any policies or procedures promulgated by the University. The University reserves the right to refuse the use of its facilities for any reason to any student club, organization, activity, or event.

No student club or organization shall be approved, recognized or permitted to meet on campus, advertise, distribute or post materials, or use University facilities if the statements, positions, doctrines, policies, constitutions, bylaws, platforms, activities, or events of such club or organization are inconsistent or in conflict with the mission of the University, Student Handbook, or the policies and procedures promulgated by the University.

Chartering a New Club

Students interested in forming a new club at USSA must complete the following steps for official recognition:

1. Complete the Club Charter Request Form.
2. Formulate a constitution under which the club will operate.
3. Provide a list of interested organization members.
4. Secure a faculty or staff advisor/sponsor for the club/ organization. A faculty or staff sponsor must be present at ALL meetings and social functions of the club.
5. Submit all documents via on-campus mail or email to Eliana Tate, Retention and Admissions Specialist - etate@ussa.edu or [251-544-7177](tel:251-544-7177).

The completed Club Charter Request Form, constitution, organization member list will serve as the club's application for university recognition. The completed application and request will then be reviewed and voted on. A final decision will be provided to the student representative.

University Honors Society

The Delta Mu Delta Honor Society is open to qualifying bachelor's, master's, and doctoral students majoring in sports management at the United States Sports Academy. Delta Mu Delta is a business

honor society that recognizes and encourages academic excellence of students to create a community that fosters the well-being of its individual members and the business community through lifetime membership.

University Athletes

The United States Sports Academy athletic program competes in the United States Collegiate Athletic Association and seeks to provide opportunities for student-athletes to develop their athletic talents through professional instruction, interactions with teammates and competitors, and lessons learned through practice and play. We offer diverse opportunities that build character, foster collaboration, teach work ethics, instill a championship mindset, and prepare students to succeed in all facets of life through co-curricular competition. The Eagles compete in men's and women's soccer, baseball, softball, and track and field.

University Fitness Center

The Fitness Center offers free weights and other fitness equipment for use during available "open lift" hours. To participate, students must complete the appropriate forms and waivers. These forms, insurance information, and emergency contacts must be submitted to participate. Contact Cody Cleveland, Strength & Conditioning Coach - ccleveland@ussa.edu for further information.

Student Success

New Student Courses

First-time freshman and transfer students, entering with 29 credits or less, are required to complete SPT 100: Achieving Academic Success. SPT 100 exists as a comprehensive introduction to the college experience providing academic and personal wellness management tools. Topics include general study skills, academic technology, university resources and services, use of the library, and healthy lifestyle and mindset.

For students entering USSA with 30 semester hours or more are required to take SPT 101: Undergraduate Student Orientation. This orientation is not a course, but an introduction to the college experience at USSA providing information about the use of academic technology and university resources and services.

Career Services

The Office of Career Planning and Placement provides students and alumni with career advisement that includes developing a career path, finding an internship, constructing a resume, writing a cover letter, and sharpening interview skills. Students are encouraged to make an appointment to have their resume reviewed and participate in Career Services workshops offered each semester. In addition, students interested in finding part-time jobs while in school or full-time jobs after graduation are encouraged to utilize Career Shift, the university's career platform. For more information regarding Career Shift and other job search tools contact Geroge Minoso at Career Services at gminoso@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7139](tel:251-626-3303).

Counseling Services

The University Office of Student Life is available to provide referrals and assist currently enrolled students in obtaining counseling services appropriate to their needs, and to provide consultation and crisis intervention services.

Disability Support Services

The United States Sports Academy provides reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities as defined in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University coordinates support resources for students with disabilities.

It is the student's responsibility to exercise initiative in identifying and obtaining support services. The student must have all documentation of his/her disability forwarded to and register for disability services at the Office of Registration and Records. Students should make an appointment with the Support Services Coordinator following registration to discuss possible accommodation. Should there be a need to change accommodation during the semester, students must contact the coordinator. Students will receive email information of accommodation to be discussed with course instructors (within 48 hours of request once official documentation has been received and approved). The necessary form can be found at: [USSA Disability Self-Identification Form](#).

It is the responsibility of the student to meet with course instructors at the beginning of the semester to provide information regarding their disability and to discuss accommodation and strategies that will be appropriate. The Support Services Coordinator will provide supportive assistance when requested by the student.

Support Services Coordinator

Ashley Barnes, Executive Director of Registration and Records

abarnes@ussa.edu - [251-626-3303](tel:251-626-3303) ext. 7148

Learning and Writing Center

USSA offers one-on-one writing lab sessions for students at all degree levels. All writing support resources, tutorials, and lab sessions are offered to USSA students at no cost. The writing lab sessions are designed for students who have completed the research and preliminary writing for an assignment (including those seeking help with revisions based on instructor feedback). Lab sessions are conducted one-on-one with the Director of the Library or other faculty and staff and provide personalized proofreading, formatting, and revision support for student papers and other written assignments. The sessions also offer students the opportunity to be actively involved in improving their academic writing. Students may schedule writing lab sessions for between 45-60 minutes and must do so at least three (3) business days in advance via the online Writing Lab Session Request. Requests must include a copy of the assignment for which the student is seeking support.

For questions or assistance, students should contact the Director of the Library at library@ussa.edu.

Library Resources

The ProQuest Research Companion is an intuitive, self-guided online tool that supports students in areas such as information literacy, writing, and research skills. This tool is offered as a support resource for students beginning their writing or research process and/or for students who need help with a specific skill area of source-based writing and academic research. The Research Companion consists of three modules. Each module offers brief tutorial videos and interactive tools designed to help students understand research in a specific context: finding information, evaluating information, and using information. The Research Companion allows students to develop a foundation for academic writing and research skills through practical, easy to find and follow instructional materials. Alternatively, all parts of the Research Companion can be reviewed individually, giving students access to the support they need on demand. The ProQuest Research Companion may be accessed through [Library Resources – United States Sports Academy \(ussa.edu\)](#).

University Resources

Campus ID Cards

Upon enrolling, new on-campus students are issued a United States Sports Academy campus ID card. These cards serve as the official identification card for USSA students, faculty, and staff. Campus ID cards must be presented to attend campus activities, use the library, and use the fitness center. In addition, these cards serve as access to get into the buildings on campus.

This card is not transferrable and will be confiscated if presented by anyone other than the person to whom it was issued. Replacement cards are \$20.00 and may be obtained in the Department of Operations and Logistics, weekdays from 8:00am to 5:00pm.

Email Services

Students are assigned an email address within USSA's domain upon admission. Students must adhere to USSA policies regarding the use of the network and email facilities described in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs.

All official United States Sport Academy communications regarding student accounts, policies, and communications with instructors will go through USSA email addresses. To access an USSA email account, go to myapps.microsoft.com.

To receive technical support with email service or other technical issues students can send a help ticket to helpdesk@ussa.edu.

Robert Block Library

The Robert Block Library, serving students on campus and at a distance, holds a collection that contains a variety of electronic formats including books, journals, newspapers, and more.

Access to online resources is available 24/7. In addition to the library's physical and virtual collections, USSA is also a member of the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL) which was founded to promote resource sharing among Alabama academic libraries. There is no charge for loans from member libraries of NAAL.

The Robert Block Library is staffed with professional librarians available to serve as an educational partner in the integration of information literacy into the curriculum and provide direct support and research assistance to students and faculty. To assist students, library instruction is offered by phone, email, in-person, and by research appointments provided during normal business hours.

The Robert Block Library includes quiet and group spaces for research, collaboration, instruction, and testing. Special collections and areas of interest in the library include the Olympic Room, the Art Collection, the Golf Collection, and the Faculty Reserve Collection.

[United States Sports Academy Bookstore](#)

The bookstore is an online shop for faculty, staff, students, families, and friends to purchase USSA spirited apparel, gifts, and souvenirs. Purchases may be made via a secure e-commerce site at <http://ussa.edu/bookstore>.

[Veteran Services](#)

The United States Sports Academy is approved by the Alabama State Approving Agency (SAA) to offer VA Educational Benefits (GI Bill®) to eligible individuals enrolled in approved programs and is a participant in the Post 9/11 GI Bill® "Yellow Ribbon Program." Veterans or dependents of veterans who have questions or desire assistance relative to Veterans Administrations regulations should contact the Office of Financial Aid at financialaid@ussa.edu.

General Student Policies

[Assistance Animal Policy](#)

The United States Sports Academy is committed to making reasonable modifications to its rules, policies, and practices as required by law to afford people with disabilities an equal opportunity to access its programs, services, and activities. The university recognizes that assistance animals may be an effective accommodation for certain qualified students. To preserve the mission of the university, to recognize the rights and obligations of all members of the University community, and to ensure the health, safety, and security, and educational needs of these members, the following guidelines apply to all approved assistance animals and their owners/handlers at the United States Sports Academy unless the nature of the documented disability of the owner/handler precludes adherence to these guidelines. Students interested in bringing an assistance animal must seek approval through the Department of Student Services. We request that all students utilizing the services of a Service Animal fill out the Service Animal Form, supporting documentation as well as submit a vet vaccination records to the Department of Student Services prior to bringing the assistance animal on campus. All

assistance animals must be registered with the Support Services Coordinator and will be shared confidentially as needed with the Department of Operations and Logistics.

Assistance Animal Definitions and Policies

Service Animal: Under Titles II and III of the Alabama Disabilities Act (ADA), beginning on March 15, 2011, only dogs or miniature horses are recognized as service animals. Service animals are defined by the ADA as dogs or miniature horses that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. Examples of such work or tasks include guiding people who are blind, alerting people who are deaf, pulling a wheelchair, alerting and protecting a person who has seizures, reminding a person with mental illness to take prescribed medications, calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack, or performing other duties. Service animals are working animals, not pets. The work or tasks an animal has been trained to provide must be directly related to the person's disability. Animals whose sole function is to provide comfort or emotional support do not qualify as service animals under the ADA.

The United States Sports Academy cannot ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability to determine whether a person's animal qualifies as a service animal. However, when it is not readily apparent that a dog is a service animal, University staff may make two inquiries to determine whether the dog qualifies as a service animal, which are:

- Is the service animal required because of a disability?
- What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?

Emotional Support Animal: Under the Fair Housing Act (FHA), a person with a disability may keep an Emotional Support Animal (ESA) in the individual's dwelling when there is an established need for the therapeutic nature of the animal that is connected to the individual's disability. An ESA is prescribed by a person's physician, licensed therapist, psychologist, psychiatrist, or mental health professional as a part of a treatment program for that person and is designed to bring comfort and minimize the negative symptoms of the person's emotional/psychological disability.

Unlike a service animal, an ESA does not need to be trained to provide a service or task and does not accompany a person with a disability at all times. A student may qualify for this accommodation if: 1) the student has a documented disability; 2) the animal is necessary to afford the student with the disability an equal opportunity to learn; and 3) there is an identifiable and documented nexus between the disability and the assistance that the animal provides with approval from a medical professional. The University will only allow ESAs allowed by local and state laws and conform to standards within this policy.

Animal Behavior

An Assistance Animal is approved if their behavior, noise, odor, and waste do not exceed reasonable standards for a well-behaved pet and doesn't create unreasonable disruptions for

students. In accordance with Baldwin County leash laws, the assistance animal must be on a leash at all times.

An animal may be removed if its behavior is unruly or disruptive (i.e., barking, growling, running around, or displaying aggressive behavior). If such behavior persists, the owner/handler may be prohibited from bringing the animal on campus until the owner/handler takes significant and effective steps to correct the animal's behavioral problems.

Exceptions and Exclusions Regarding Assistance Animals

The United States Sports Academy may pose some restrictions on, and may even exclude, an assistance animal in certain instances. Any animal may be excluded from an area in which it was previously authorized to be only if:

- it is experiencing behavioral issues and effective action is not taken to control it;
- it is not housebroken;
- it poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others that cannot be mitigated by reasonable modifications of policies, practices, or procedures, or the provision of auxiliary aids or services;
- the animal causes substantial property damage to the property of others, including University property;
- the animal's presence results in a fundamental alteration of a university program;
- the owner/handler does not comply with the owner's responsibilities outlined in this policy.

In considering whether an assistance animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others, the United States Sports Academy will make an individualized assessment, based on reasonable judgment, current medical knowledge, or the best available objective evidence, to determine: 1) the nature, duration, and severity of the risk; 2) the probability that the potential injury will actually occur; and 3) whether reasonable modifications of policies, practices, procedures, or the provision of auxiliary aids or services, will mitigate the risk. Any removal of an approved assistance animal will be done in consultation with the Student Support Coordinator. The Student Support Coordinator will provide a written statement of explanation to any person with a disability if a determination is made that the presence of that person's assistance animal would fundamentally alter the nature of a program, service, or activity.

In the event that restriction or removal of an assistance animal is determined to be necessary, the person with a disability will still be given the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the assistance animal present.

General Guidelines for People with Disabilities Using Assistance Animals

The United States Sports Academy is not responsible for the care or supervision of assistance animals. Owners/ handlers are responsible for the cost, care, and supervision of assistance animals, including:

- Compliance with any laws pertaining to animal licensing, vaccination, and owner identification;
- Immunizations against disease common to that type of animal (i.e. rabies);
- The safety, health, behavior, and actions of the animal;
- Any harm caused by the assistance animal to other students, faculty, staff, or campus visitors, including bodily injury or property damage including, but not limited to, any replacement of furniture, carpet, window treatment, or wall covering, etc. The owner/handler is expected to cover these costs upon repair;
- Properly containing and disposing of all animal's fecal waste. Animal waste must be immediately retrieved by the owner, placed in a plastic bag, and securely tied before being disposed of in an outside trash dumpster.

The owner/handler must abide by current city, county, and state ordinances, laws, and/or regulations pertaining to licensing, vaccination, and other requirements for animals. It is the owner /handler's responsibility to know and understand these ordinances, laws, and regulations. The University has the right to require documentation of compliance with such ordinances, laws, and/or regulations, which may include a vaccination certificate. The University reserves the right to request documentation showing that the animal has been licensed.

Any violation of the above rules will be reviewed through the appropriate student disciplinary process and the student will be afforded all rights of due process and appeal as outlined in that process.

[Guidelines for Members of the United States Sports Academy Community](#)

To ensure equal access and nondiscrimination of people with disabilities, members of the United States Sports Academy community must abide by the following practices:

- Allow assistance animals to accompany people with disabilities on campus;
- Do not ask for details about a person's disability;
- Do not touch or pet an assistance animal without permission;
- Do not offer food or treats to the service dog without permission;
- Do not deliberately startle, tease, or taunt an assistance animal;
- Do not ask that the animal demonstrate its ability to perform its work and/or tasks;
- Do not separate or attempt to separate a person from his/her assistance animal;
- Do not ask for medical documentation to support the need for the animal;
- Do not ask for documentation that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed.

[University Drug & Alcohol Policy](#)

USSA is committed to providing an environment free of the abuse of alcohol and illegal use of alcohol and other drugs. The unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol

on the campus is strictly prohibited. USSA authorities will cooperate fully with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

Alcohol

No alcoholic beverages may be brought or consumed on university property, school grounds, or during university related activities, or trips even if the student is twenty-one years of age. Alcoholic beverages include beer, wine, liquor, or other beverages with alcohol content. Any student found consuming, in possession, under the influence of, or in the presence of alcohol will be subject to university disciplinary action. The use, possession, or distribution of alcoholic beverages, (or use of any substance with the intent of becoming impaired/intoxicated) by students of the United States Sports Academy is prohibited and violates this policy as well as the University's standard of conduct.

Drugs

The purchase, possession, use, sale, or distribution of drug paraphernalia or any substance of abuse (including misuse of prescribed medications or use of any substance with the intent of becoming impaired/intoxicated) is prohibited. A substance of abuse includes, but is not limited to, any form of marijuana, narcotics, stimulants, hallucinogenic, sports enhancement or "street drug," and any other controlled substances as defined by law. The United States Sports Academy does not tolerate the use and possession of illegal drugs.

Distribution of drugs will not be tolerated and will be considered a third offense resulting in disciplinary dismissal from the University.

Alcohol and Drug Disciplinary Sanctions

1. First Offense: a student will be required to take a 4-hour Drug and Alcohol Awareness Course at the student's expense and 10 hours of Campus Service.
2. Second Offense: Fine of \$100, 8-hour Drug and Alcohol Awareness Course at the student's expense, 20 hours of Campus Service, and disciplinary probation which implies that the individual's standing within the University is in jeopardy and that further negligent or willful violations will normally result in immediate suspension or expulsion.
3. Third Offense: Disciplinary dismissal permanently removing the student from the United States Sports Academy. Once a student has been dismissed, he or she may not be eligible for readmission. Disciplinary dismissal is permanently recorded on the student's academic record maintained by the Registrar's Office.

Violation of University drug and alcohol policies may also be crimes under the statutes in the State of Alabama Criminal Code and may be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials and subject to criminal prosecution.

Violation through Implied Consent

As it is difficult to accurately determine degrees of culpability, all students present in a room or area at the time of an alcohol or drug violation will generally be held responsible for such violation. The student's implied participation in the misconduct does not depend on whether the student is actively participating in the behavior, is in possession of the prohibited items, or how long the student has been in the room. The possession of empty alcoholic beverage containers and/or drugs and drug paraphernalia on campus will be considered strong evidence that alcohol and drug regulations have been violated. Students are advised in advance to avoid such situations, which may put them at risk of disciplinary action.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse Resources

There are a variety of community organizations available to help individuals who have substance abuse problems. Below is a list of some drug and alcohol prevention, counseling, treatment and rehabilitation, and re-entry programs:

Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
Tel: (757) 563-1656 www.al-anon.org

Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.
475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10115
Tel: (212) 870-3400 www.aa.org

Narcotics Anonymous World Services
P. O. Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409
Tel: (818) 733- 9999 www.na.org

United Way of Southwest Alabama, Inc.
218 Saint Francis Street, Mobile, AL 36602
Tel: (251) 433-3624 www.uwswa.org

To find local recovery programs, visit Start Your Recovery at:
www.startyourrecovery.org/treatment/rehab-centers/alabama/daphne

Facility Reservation and Use

The Facility Use Policy sets priorities for facilities usage, defines scheduling procedures, and establishes charges associated with event management and facility usage. All events or functions associated with United States Sports Academy facilities must be consistent with and will not promote any agenda contrary to the educational tenets, university catalogs, the Employee Handbook, and the Student Handbook. Any event that is inconsistent with those tenets will be denied access or cancelled. Based on these considerations, the university shall allow use of its facilities by others in accordance with the following guidelines and requirements.

University approved organizations are allowed to use University facilities but must reserve the facility in advance. To reserve a facility, email Operations and Logistics at operations@ussa.edu.

Facility Purposes:

The purpose of the facilities at the United States Sports Academy is to support the educational mission and strategic goals of the university. The facilities are available primarily for programs offered by and intended for the campus community. To the extent that space is available, the university welcomes community groups and organizations to utilize limited, designated spaces in certain campus facilities for purposes compatible with the university's mission and strategic goals.

Official Scheduling/Calendar:

University facilities are used for many purposes by internal and external groups. For published information and to avoid conflicts, use of any University facility for all meetings, functions, or events by internal or external groups must be placed on the University calendar. University organizations must also place their off-campus functions/events on the University calendar. The University calendar is maintained by the Department of Operations and Logistics.

Rental Fee:

The university may request donations or charge cost sharing contributions to defray the estimated cost of facility use. No such fees shall be charged with any impermissible view to profit, and all fees are subject to waiver or reduction based on the prospective user's financial need.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

USSA follows the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment). Under pertinent provisions of the Act, the items listed below are designated as "Directory Information" and may be released for any purpose at the discretion of USSA, unless the student exercises the right to withhold the disclosure of any or all the categories of "Directory Information."

- Category I: Name, address, telephone number, dates of attendance, and class;
- Category II: Previous institution(s) attended, major field of study, awards, honors, and degree(s) conferred; and
- Category III: Past and present participation in officially recognized sports and activities, physical factors (such as height and weight of athlete), date, and place of birth. Unless a signed form is received by the Division of Student Services stating that the above information may not be released, it will be assumed that the information may be disclosed.

Intellectual Property

The United States Sports Academy supports the intellectual property rights of students. Intellectual property created, made, or originated by a student is usually the property of the student except in the following circumstances: 1) the work is created as a specific requirement

of employment, 2) the author has voluntarily transferred the copyright, in whole or in part to the institution, or 3) the university has contributed to a “joint work” under the Copyright Act.

Insurance Requirement for Athletes

Every student-athlete must maintain current primary health insurance to participate in athletics. This information is required prior to participation in any practice or game. Insurance documentation must be kept on file with the Head Athletic Trainer. Failure to submit the appropriate documentation may result in a delay in eligibility to play. For more information, see the Student-Athlete Handbook.

Insurance Requirements for International Student

International students must submit proof of insurance at the time of attendance and must have continual coverage for each academic year.

USSA requires that international students enroll in the mandatory policy offered by the university. International students are billed automatically at the beginning of each academic period to cover the cost of insurance from August until May of each year. It is the international student’s responsibility to understand the benefits and exclusions of their health policy and to comply with all insurance procedures for claims to be paid in accordance with their policy.

News Media Policy

The Office of Marketing and Communications is the only office on campus permitted to send out news releases and obtain news media coverage on behalf of the university and its administrative and academic units. The Marketing and Communications department has access to numerous news media contacts and will work with faculty, staff, and students to coordinate publicity or visibility for programs, events, or newsworthy issues. Employees, faculty, students, schools, or departments that seek to generate external media publicity/coverage for university-related programs, events or achievements must first contact the Dean of Marketing, Communications, and Community Relations for University Communications communications@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7244](tel:251-626-3303).

Athletics press releases and statements to the news media are coordinated, approved and disseminated by the Director of Sports Information,sid@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7259](tel:251-626-3303) or Director of Athletics at athletics@ussa.edu.

The United States Sports Academy requires that all news media obtain permission from the Marketing and Communications department before arriving on university property to cover a story or conduct an interview. If advance permission has not been obtained from the department, news media may be required to conduct their interview off campus.

All news media on university property must be accompanied by a member of the Marketing and Communications department or a university employee designated by the department.

media covering athletic events on university property must be accompanied by an athletic department staff member or a university employee designated by athletics.

On-Campus Demonstrations and Protests

Discussion and expression of all views is permitted within the University, subject only to requirements for the maintenance of order. Events conducted on the campus must not:

- disturb or interfere with the regular academic or institutional programs of the University;
- interfere with the flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on the sidewalks and streets and at places of entry and exit to university buildings; or
- harass or intimidate the person or persons being solicited.

If an individual or group violates the provisions of this policy, the appropriate University official may prohibit the offender from engaging in any solicitation/protest on the University campus. In the case of a repeated violation of these rules, the following sanctions shall apply:

- Suspend or cancel recognition status of an offending student organization;
- Suspend the use of any University property, resources, or facility by an offender.

Photography

The United States Sports Academy reserves the right to photograph members of the university community including, but not limited to, its students, faculty and staff, in situations appropriate to the image of an academic institution, and to publish likenesses in USSA's publications, video, websites, the news media, social media, or other recruitment or promotional materials. Anyone wishing to be excluded from university photography must notify the Dean of Marketing, Communications, and Community Relations in writing at communications@ussa.edu with an accompanying photograph.

Posting and Publicity

All advertisements, announcements, and posters must be approved and sign off on by the Marketing and Communications department. Postings must be placed in properly designated locations (i.e. bulletin boards).

- Postings are not permitted on doors and ceilings, or painted, wooden, marble, or glass surfaces.
- Postings must be removed within twenty-four (24) hours after an advertised event has taken place.
- Posted materials that do not bear the Student Life stamp are subject to removal.
- Only University approved organizations are permitted to advertise events on-campus.
- Failure to adhere to the advertisement, announcement, and poster policy may result in loss of posting privileges.

Solicitation and Operating a Business

The University reserves the right to deny permission to students to operate a business, to sell any kind of merchandise, solicit subscriptions, or engage in any kind of commercial activity on the University campus. Permission will not be given to businesses that compete with campus vendors; use the University computer network, servers, computers, bandwidth, etc.; take up large amounts of University facility space; or use University resources.

Student Complaints

The United States Sports Academy strives to promptly respond to student complaints, especially written ones. To address and resolve typical complaints as quickly as possible, students should:

1. Contact the office responsible for overseeing the immediate area causing the concern and express the concern or complaint with the supervisor for that office. The student with a concern or potential appeal should first discuss the issue(s) with the professor or staff member. If the issue is unresolved, the student may appeal to the director/supervisor of the faculty/staff member. If the matter is still unresolved, the student may then appeal to the Dean or Vice President of the specific area. If the matter cannot be resolved, the student may request a final appeal with the President of the University.
2. Students who are unsure of which Dean or Vice President to contact should complete the [Complaint Ticketing Form](#). Any faculty or staff member can also submit a form on behalf of a student. The complaint will be directed to the appropriate Vice President for an investigation and response. Complaints must be actionable and supported by documentation.
3. Upon submission, staff will classify and investigate the complaint, providing a written response within 15 days. Students receive automatic updates on the status of their complaints.
4. Appeals must be filed within 10 days of the response.

Students with complaints involving the following department/issues are advised to contact:

- Academics – academics@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7156](tel:251-626-3303)
- Alabama Private School Licensure Division of the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education – <https://sheeo.org/about/contact/>
- Athletics – athletics@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7212](tel:251-626-3303)
- Discrimination Complaints – titleix@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7148](tel:251-626-3303)
- Disability Support Services – registrar@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7148](tel:251-626-3303)
- Facilities/ Maintenance – operations@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7103](tel:251-626-3303)
- Financial Aid – financialaid@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7146](tel:251-626-3303)
- Fees/Bills – billing@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7144](tel:251-626-3303)
- Parking Citation Appeals –

- Sexual Harassment or Title IX Violations – titleix@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7148](tel:251-626-3303)
- Technology – technology@ussa.edu or [251-626-3303 ext. 7229](tel:251-626-3303)

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Complaints

Students who wish to file a complaint with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges should complete the Commission Complaint Form and send two print copies to the President of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097). To access the Commission complaint policy, procedures, and the Complaint Form, please see Complaint Procedures against the Commission or its Accredited Institutions -

<https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2020/01/ComplaintPolicy-1.pdf>.

Note: The complaint policy only addresses significant, documented, alleged non-compliance with the SACSCOC accreditation standards policies or procedures. Complainants are expected to have attempted to resolve the issue through the institution's complaint processes before filing a complaint with SACSCOC. The SACSCOC complaint process is not intended to be used to involve the Commission in disputes between individuals and member institutions or to cause the Commission to interpose itself as a reviewing authority in individual matters; nor does the policy allow the Commission to seek redress on an individual's behalf. The primary purpose of the SACSCOC complaint procedure is to acquire valuable information regarding an accredited institution's possible non-compliance with accreditation standards, policies and procedures rather than to resolve individual disputes. Complaints must be tied to specific standard numbers from The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement.

Student Complaint Arising from USSA Courses/ Learning Placement Outside of AL

Students not residing in Alabama who are enrolled in distance education through the United States Sports Academy as well as students who are participating in USSA learning placements outside Alabama, including but not limited to, clinical requirements, practicum, and internships, must first follow USSA's standard student complaint process prior to filing a complaint with any state agency. The State of Alabama is a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA), and the United States Sports Academy is an approved NC-SARA institution, following a set of standards shared by all member states related to distance education.

Students with complaints not resolved through USSA's standard complaint process must determine whether the state where they participated in the related course or learning placement holds membership in NC-SARA (<https://www.nc-sara.org/directory>).

NC-SARA States: If, after exhausting all available United States Sports Academy processes, a student's complaint remains unresolved, and the state in which the related course or learning placement took place is an NC-SARA state, the student may file a complaint with the Alabama State Portal Agency. The Alabama State Portal Agency is part of the Alabama Commission Higher Education (ACHE) and will handle complaints related to USSA's distance education and learning placements that have taken place in other NC-SARA states. Information on the associated complaint process is posted on the NC-SARA website: <https://nc-sara.org/student->

complaints and the complaint form is available at <https://www.ache.edu/wp-content/sara/studentcomp.pdf>.

Complaints dealing with grades and/or student conduct will not be considered by Alabama State Portal Agent. Please note that if a student has not exhausted the USSA's internal procedures, she or he will be referred back to USSA to complete the process.

Non-NC-SARA States: If, after exhausting all available United States Sports Academy processes, a student's complaint remains unresolved and the state in which related course or learning placement took place does not hold NC-SARA membership (<https://www.nc-sara.org/directory>), the student may make a complaint to an agency in the state where the course or learning placement took place.

Complaints about fraud or criminal activity can go to any state Attorney General, the Office of Inspector General, or complaint unit of the U.S. Department of Education.

[Supervision and Control of University Related Extracurricular Activities & Campus Organizations](#)

The University reserves the right to exercise supervision and control of University sanctioned organizations and/or extracurricular activities and events conducted on or off campus if the activity is planned under the auspices of a University administrative office or academic department and/or if University funds, including student activity fee money, are used to support any aspect of the program.

Faculty, staff, and students will be expected to abide by University philosophy, policies, regulations, and the spirit of the student conduct code. The fact that an activity is held off campus does not negate applicable policies and procedures.

[Technology](#)

The University maintains comprehensive policies and guidelines regarding the appropriate use of technology by students which includes, but is not limited to, web content filtering and tracking, copyright infringement, firewall protection, traffic optimization practices, user usage limitation, etc. These policies are available at ussa.edu and students are expected to abide by these expectations. Violations are subject to disciplinary sanction.

All students are responsible for security regarding their user IDs, passwords, and any activities using the USSA computer resources. Students inappropriately sharing or distributing passwords or user IDs to unauthorized individuals will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the program. As additional security, students will be required to change their password periodically.

[Tobacco Free Campus](#)

USSA is a tobacco free campus. All tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes), and other vaping devices, are prohibited

on university property. This includes buildings and vehicles owned or leased by the university. Repeated violations may result in disciplinary action in accordance with university procedures.

University Sponsored Student Travel

The opportunity to represent the United States Sports Academy throughout the state, nation, and world is one of the many benefits of being a recognized student organization. The University has established a travel registration process to promote the health and welfare of students. The student travel procedures apply to student travel sponsored by an academic department, university unit, or student organization. Specifically, these procedures are required when the intended travel is to an activity or event located 25 miles or more away from the University and any of the following circumstances apply:

- The event is funded by the University;
- The travel is undertaken using a vehicle owned or leased by the University;
- The activity or event is required by a recognized student organization;
- The travel is undertaken under the scope, direction or election of a college, department, class, university office, learning community, study abroad program, recognized student organization, or their representatives.

Having access to current information is an essential factor in the University's ability to respond effectively to a critical incident involving USSA students. In an effort to ensure individuals responsible for providing assistance during student trips have the information needed, student organizations are responsible for completing the following steps prior to travel:

- Complete and submit a travel roster at least 48 hours before the group departs to the Office of Student Life (or designee). Information submitted on this roster should include the names, student ID numbers, and emergency contact information of all participants traveling with the organization. This information will be used by University staff members to assist student participants in case of an emergency. It is imperative to maintain a correct and up-to-date list of participants and travel plans.
- Facilities shall be approved by the trip sponsor as the official overnight facility, and all members and guests will stay in that facility except with the permission of the attending faculty/staff adviser. The name of this facility and an emergency telephone number will be listed on the travel roster.

Weapons Policy

USSA prohibits the possession or use of firearms or weapons of any type on USSA's premises. The definition of weapons shall include, but is not limited to, all types of firearms (regardless of size), knives (other than small pocketknives with a blade length of three inches or less), mace, and pyrotechnic devices (i.e., fireworks).

Infractions will be considered and evaluated on a case-by-case basis as a student disciplinary matter. Punishment for a weapons infraction may include suspension for a semester or immediate dismissal.

Campus Policies

Appliances

Electrical items must have an Underwriters Laboratory, Incorporated (U.L.) approval rating on the unit or cord. Because of the amount of electricity required to operate hot plates, toasters, halogen lamps, and deep fryers and because of the dangers of fire created by their improper use, the items listed above are prohibited.

Damaging, Destroying, or Defacing Property

Students are individually liable for any loss or damage to campus facilities and furnishings, regardless as to whether the damage is intentional or accidental. Unapproved room alterations and damage to furniture, buildings, or other University property are charged to the student(s) responsible at a cost determined by the University. Any person(s) causing damage will be fined and is subject to disciplinary action.

Parking and Vehicle Registration

All students and employees are required to register their vehicle(s) with the Department of Operations and Logistics. Vehicles are registered online via [Vehicle Registration-Parking Permit \(jotform.com\)](http://jotform.com). Upon registration, a USSA Parking Permit will be issued. These permits are to be displayed at all times when a vehicle is parked on USSA's campus. If a new license plate or vehicle is obtained during the academic year, the new information must be shared with the Department of Operations and Logistics.

The speed limit in USSA's parking lot is 10 MPH. Pedestrians and bicyclists have the right-of-way.

General Parking

Students are permitted to park in any marked parking spot on campus, except where restrictions are specified. All vehicles must display a valid parking permit issued by the university. The garage level parking is exclusively reserved for faculty and staff. Students are strictly prohibited from parking in the garage level.

Enforcement and Violations

Vehicles parked in unauthorized areas, including the garage level, will be subject to fines and/or towing at the violator's expense. Repeated violations may result in revocation of parking privileges and further disciplinary actions as determined by the university.

Visitor Parking

Visitors must park in designated visitor parking areas in front of the university main lobby entrance across from the flag poles.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring special parking accommodations due to disability or other reasons must contact the university's Department of Operations and Logistics for appropriate arrangements and permits.

Owner/Operator Responsibility

The University assumes no responsibility or liability for any vehicle on the campus, whether or not school is in session. In the event of damage to or theft of a vehicle on the campus, if the person who caused the damage or committed the theft cannot be determined, the owner/operator of the vehicle and/or his/her insurance company shall be responsible for any damages or loss. If the insurance company requires a police report, the Daphne Police Department should be called at 251-620-0100.

Abandoned Vehicle Policy

After determining whether a vehicle is abandoned or may be abandoned, Operations and Logistics will issue a letter (sealed in an envelope) to be placed on the vehicle with the next citation. To be considered abandoned, the vehicle must be continuously parked in the same spot and have received 5+ parking tickets. The letter will be placed on the vehicle and after a set period of days (to be determined by Operations and Logistics), the vehicle will be towed as abandoned at the violator's expense.

Personal Property

The University does not accept responsibility for any loss of valuables due to vandalism, facility damage incidents, theft, or burglary. The loss or theft of personal property should be reported immediately to the Security Office. Lost and found items are retained in the Department of Operations and Logistics.

Emergency Procedures

Tornadoes

In the case of a tornado, Campus Security will monitor the approach and severity of the weather. If the weather services issues a tornado warning for the areas, students, faculty, staff, and visitors should assemble as follows: basement level lobby, men's and women's locker room, and turf room in sitting position with head down until given all-clear.

Hurricanes

Hurricane season in coastal Alabama is June 1 through November 30. To ensure the safety of students and property, the University has developed an Emergency Preparedness Plan, which will be implemented at the direction of the President of the University or his appointed representative. University personnel monitor the development of each tropical storm and use this Preparedness Plan.

Hurricane Preparedness

At the time of a hurricane warning, the University recommends that students evacuate by going home or to the home of a friend or relative. The University will keep students informed of the hurricane's location and potential danger and will make an announcement concerning when to evacuate. Students evacuating should prepare their private residence, inform a staff member of their evacuation plan, and depart campus. When the storm has passed, local students should tune in to local television and radio stations and await official notification that it is safe to return. Students who have gone out of town may call the University's switchboard or visit ussa.edu for information regarding re-openings.

During a hurricane, campus may experience loss of electrical power, heavy rain and high winds. Once it is determined that power loss will occur, the university will move all students remaining on campus to one area of the facility. University staff members will remain with students during the storm, and basic food service will be provided. Students should bring personal items including prescription medications, snacks, bedding, entertainment, and a flashlight. The Student Life Office will oversee the safety of all resident students who have been given permission to remain on campus.

Fire Procedures

If you notice a fire, pull the fire alarm, evacuate the building, call 911, and make a report to a staff member or security. Once each semester, a fire alarm drill may be held. Students are required to evacuate the buildings according to the route posted during a fire or fire drill. In the event of a fire, it is important that students stay calm, walk – don't run – to the exit, and not return to the building until a staff member says it is safe to reenter. When leaving the building, it is important for students to feel the doors. If cool, depart from the room closing the door behind them, using route posted. If the door is hot or if the hall is too smokey to use, stay where you are at. Keep the door closed. Stuff towels or like objects into cracks around the door, air conditioning outlets, etc. Open bottom of window, get face near opening to breathe, wave towel, sheet, blanket, etc. from window to attract attention.

Fire Hazards

The following items are prohibited because they are serious potential fire hazards.

- Open flames such as candles and incense;
- Appliances with exposed heating elements;
- Use or possession of fireworks;
- Smoking in campus buildings.

Active Shooter Emergencies

In an event of an active shooter on USSA's campus, students, faculty, staff, and visitors are to take immediate action and then call for help until law enforcement arrives.

Immediate Action:

1. Run:

- If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises.
- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Keep your hands visible.

2. Hide:

- If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the shooter is less likely to find you.
- Your hiding place should be out of the shooter's view, provide protection if shots are fired in your direction, and not trap you or restrict your movement.
- Lock and barricade doors, turn off lights, silence cell phones, and remain quiet.

3. Fight:

- As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the shooter.
- Act with physical aggression, throw items, and use improvised weapons.

When safe to do so, call the authorities by dialing 9-1-1. Provide the operator with the location of the shooter, number of shooters, physical description of the shooter, number and type of weapons held by the shooter, and number of potential victims at the location.

When law enforcement arrives, it is important for students, faculty, staff, and visitors to try and remain calm and follow officers' instructions. It is important to put down any items in your hands (i.e. bags, jackets), raise hands and spread fingers while keeping your hands visible. Avoid quick movements towards officers, pointing, screaming, or yelling.

Bomb Threats Emergencies

In the event of a bomb threat, students, faculty, staff, and visitors are to take immediate action and then call for help and wait until law enforcement arrives.

Immediate Actions:

- If You Receive a Bomb Threat:
 - Remain calm and try to keep the caller on the line as long as possible.
 - Listen carefully and take notes on everything said, including any background noises, the caller's voice, and exact words.
 - Ask the caller the following questions:
 - When is the bomb going to explode?
 - Where is the bomb located?
 - What does the bomb look like?
 - What kind of bomb is it?

- Why did you place the bomb?
 - Note the time of the call and the number from which it came if possible.
 - If You Find a Suspicious Object:
 - Do not touch, move, or tamper with the object.
 - Evacuate the area immediately and notify the authorities.

Notify Authorities:

- Call 911 immediately and provide them with all information regarding the threat.
- Inform campus security at [251-610-4615](tel:251-610-4615).

Evacuation:

- Evacuate the building or area immediately if instructed by authorities.
- Follow the building's evacuation plan and proceed to the designated assembly area.
- Do not use elevators.
- Assist individuals with disabilities or those needing special assistance.

Await Further Instructions:

- Once evacuated, do not re-enter the building until it has been declared safe by the authorities.
- Follow all instructions from law enforcement and emergency personnel.

Periodic safety drills may be conducted in each building in compliance with state law. Failure to evacuate a building or to comply with instructions during an evacuation will result in disciplinary action.

Health Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, call 911 before notifying Campus Security **251-610-4615**. Campus Security can and will respond to emergencies and will also assist emergency responders with finding the location of emergencies when arriving on campus.

Hospitals/Emergency Rooms:

- Thomas Hospital - 29487 AL-181, Daphne, AL/ 251-279-5400
- USA University Hospital - 2451 University Hospital Dr, Mobile, AL/ 251-471-7000
- USA Children's and Women's Hospital -1700 Center St, Mobile, AL/ 251-415-1000
- Mobile Infirmary Medical Center - 5 Mobile Infirmary Cir, Mobile, AL/ 251-435-2400

Urgent Care (no appointment necessary):

- Eastern Shore Urgent Care – 29710 Urgent Care Drive, Daphne, AL / 251-626-3782
- Urgent Care by the Bay – 1208 US-98, Daphne, AL / 251-626-5377
- Fast Pace Health Urgent Care – 9932 Spanish Fort Blvd, Daphne, AL / 251-237-8181

Reporting an Emergency

In reporting an emergency, state your name, location, and nature of the emergency.

If an emergency occurs:

- Dial 911 to report the incident. Remain on the phone with the operator and follow instructions.
- Call Campus Safety at [251-610-4615](tel:251-610-4615).

Public Safety Policies

Alert System

The United States Sports Academy has an emergency alert system that will notify students and employees in the event of any University emergency, weather warnings, school closing, power outages, etc. An alert notification account will be automatically set up for those currently enrolled or employed by the United States Sports Academy. Account options may be set to receive USSA emergency communications via text message, email, or recorded voice messages.

Building Access

During business hours, the university will be open to students, parents, employees, contractors, visitors, and invitees. During non-business hours, access to all university facilities is by key or card access, if issued, or by admittance via the Department of Operations and Logistics or certain faculty and staff. In the case of periods of extended closing, the university will admit only those with prior written approval to all facilities.

Some facilities may have individual hours, which may vary at different times of the year. In these cases, the facilities will be secured according to schedules developed by the department responsible for the facility.

Campus Safety and Security Survey

The Jeanne Clery Act requires college and universities to report statistics for certain crimes that occurred on campus and on public property within and immediately adjacent to school-owned buildings and property. Current and prospective students or employees have the right to obtain a copy of this information and review this information by accessing the federal government website at <https://ope.ed.gov/campussafety> (by typing in the "United States Sports Academy") or by accessing USSA's website at <https://ussa.edu/safety/campus-security/>.

USSA also is an online institution, and off-campus student criminal activity is not monitored.

On-Campus Crime Reporting

Anyone observing or suspecting a crime being committed on the campus is encouraged to report this as soon as possible. Contact the United States Sports Academy's Security Office at 251-610-4615, or the Daphne Police Department at 9-1-1 (emergencies only).

The United States Sports Academy's Security Office members do not provide law enforcement service to off-campus residences, recognized organizations, or off-campus activities. Criminal activity at off-campus residences is under the jurisdiction of local law enforcement agencies.

In the event that a situation arises, either on or off campus, that, in the judgment of the Security Office, constitutes an ongoing or continuing threat, a campus wide "timely warning" will be issued. The warning will be issued through the university alert system to students, faculty, and staff.

Depending on the circumstances of the crime, especially in all situations that could pose an immediate threat to the community and individuals, the Security Office may also post a notice through the University Alert system, providing the university community with more immediate notification. Anyone with information warranting a timely warning should report the circumstances to Campus Safety, by phone 251-610-4615 or in person with any Security Officer available.

Accurate and Prompt Crime Reporting

Community members, students, faculty, staff, and visitors are encouraged to report all crimes and public safety incidents to the Campus Security promptly. To report a crime or an emergency on USSA's campus, call Security at extension 7104 or from outside the University phone system, 251-610-4615.

In response to a call, Campus Safety will take the required action, dispatching an officer or asking the victim to report to the office to file an incident report. All incident reports are forwarded to the Department of Operations and Logistics for review and potential action by the Office of Student Life. Investigators will investigate a report when it is deemed appropriate. Additional information obtained via the investigation will also be forwarded to the Office of Student Life.

If assistance is required from the Daphne Police Department or the Daphne Fire Department, Campus Safety will contact the appropriate unit. If a sexual assault or rape should occur, staff on the scene will offer the victim a wide variety of services. Crimes should be reported to the Security Office to ensure inclusion in the annual crime statistics and to aid in providing timely warning notices to the community, when appropriate.

Missing Student Notification

The United States Sports Academy has adopted a missing student notification policy for students. In accordance with this policy, each student can identify an individual as their emergency contact to be contacted by USSA in case of an emergency. Students who have not

already provided Emergency Contact Information, including those students who live off-campus, are strongly encouraged to do so. Except as otherwise permitted or required by law, Emergency Contact Information will be accessible only to authorized campus officials and will not be disclosed to non-campus officials other than law enforcement personnel.

In addition to notifying the emergency contact(s) identified by a student, USSA must also notify a custodial parent or guardian of a student who is under 18 years of age and is not an emancipated individual if such student is determined to be missing. USSA will notify the appropriate law enforcement agency (or agencies) if any student, regardless of age, is determined to be missing. USSA reserves the right to notify additional individuals or authorities in its discretion, including the parents or guardians of students over 18 years of age, if a student is determined to be missing. These notifications are made within 24 hours of the determination that a student is missing.

Threatening Behavior by Students

USSA seeks to promote a safe environment in which students and employees may participate in the educational process without compromising their health, safety, or welfare. The Student Conduct Policy prohibits any actions that jeopardize the rights and freedoms of others or adversely affect the integrity of USSA.

Threatening behavior is prohibited. "Threatening behavior" means any statement, communication, conduct, or gesture, including those in written form, directed toward any member of the USSA community that causes a reasonable apprehension of physical harm to a person or property. A student can be guilty of threatening behavior even if the person who is the object of the threat does not observe or perceive it, so long as a reasonable person would interpret the maker's statement, communication, conduct, or gesture as a serious expression of intent to physically harm. Violations are subject to disciplinary sanction.

If threatened by any student's conduct to the point of reasonable fear of immediate physical harm to self, others, or property:

1. Leave the area immediately.
2. Call the police by dialing 911 to request that an officer come to the location. Inform the police if it is a repeat occurrence.
3. Anyone who observes what appears to be threatening behavior by a student must report it to Campus Security.
4. USSA employees who observe what appears to be threatening behavior by a student must also report it to their supervisor or Department Head, who should report it to Campus Security.

Title IX Policies

Title IX protects students, employees, applicants for admission and employment, and other persons from all forms of sex discrimination, including discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or

femininity. Sex discrimination harassment, assault, and violence are forms of prohibited discrimination under Title IX. USSA expressly prohibits the offenses covered under this policy.

The university's Title IX Coordinator oversees compliance with all aspects of the sexual harassment, discrimination, and misconduct policy. Anyone wishing to make a report relating to discrimination or harassment may do so by reporting their concern to the university Title IX Coordinator.

Title IX Coordinator

Ashley Barnes, Executive Director of Registration and Records

abarnes@ussa.edu - [251-626-3303](tel:251-626-3303) ext. 7148

Definitions and Examples of Sexual Misconduct

Sexual Misconduct Offenses include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Assault
- Sexual Violence
- Sexual Exploitation
- Domestic and/or Dating Violence
- Stalking

The Institution uses the definitions from the Clery/Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA), for the purposes of this policy.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. This may occur in student to student, employee to student, student to employee, or employee to employee relationships. The types of Sexual Harassment include:

- Quid Pro Quo sexual harassment exists when there are:
 - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature;
 - Submission to or rejection of such conduct results in adverse educational or employment action;
- Hostile Environment includes any situation in which there is harassing conduct that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity. This may occur in student to student, employee to student, student to employee, or employee to employee

relationships. The determination of whether an environment is “hostile” may be based on any of these circumstances:

- the frequency of the conduct;
 - the nature and severity of the conduct;
 - whether the conduct was physically threatening or humiliating;
 - the effect of the conduct on the alleged victim’s mental or emotional state;
 - whether the conduct was directed at more than one person;
 - whether the conduct arose in the context of other discriminatory conduct;
 - whether the statement is a mere utterance of an epithet which engenders offense in an individual or offends by mere discourtesy or rudeness;
 - whether the speech or conduct deserves the protections under other principles such as academic freedom.
- Retaliation
 - The University will sanction a student or employee who takes adverse action against a person because of the person’s participation in or support of an investigation of discrimination or sexual misconduct.
 - Adverse action includes, but is not limited to, threats, harassment, intimidation (implied threats), or actual violence against the person or his or her property, adverse educational or employment consequences, ridicule, taunting, bullying, or ostracism.
 - Retaliation sexual harassment may occur in student to student, employee to student, student to employee, or employee to employee relationships.

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is defined as any sexual act directed against another person without consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent. Attempted sexual assaults are also included in this policy. The types of sexual assault for the purpose of this policy are:

- Rape: the penetration of the vagina or anus with any body part or object or oral penetration with a sex organ of another person without the consent of the victim. This offense includes the rape of both males and females.
- Fondling: the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of their age or because of their temporary or permanent mental incapacity.
- Incest: sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.
- Statutory Rape: sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent. The age of consent in Alabama is 16 years old.

Consent & Incapacitation

In Alabama, consent is without forcible compulsion, or incapacity to consent, or if the offense charged is sexual abuse, or any circumstance in which the victim does not expressly or impliedly acquiesce in the actor's conduct. In Alabama, incapacitation is the physical and/or mental inability to make informed, rational judgments. States of incapacitation include, but are not limited to, mentally defective, mentally incapacitated, intoxicated, or physically helpless.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is defined as physical sexual acts engaged in without the other person's consent or when the other person cannot consent to the activity. Sexual violence includes sexual assault, rape, battery, and sexual coercion, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation occurs when a person takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for his or her own advantage or benefit, or to benefit or advantage anyone other than the one being exploited, and that behavior does not otherwise constitute one of the other sexual misconduct offenses.

Examples of sexual exploitation include, but are not limited to:

- Prostituting another student;
- Non-consensual video or audiotaping of sexual activity;
- Going beyond the boundaries of consent (such as letting a friend hide in the closet to watch the consensual sex);
- Engaging in voyeurism;
- Knowingly transmitting a Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD) or HIV/AIDS to another individual.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner, usually displayed in physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person.

- by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim;
- by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common;
- by a person who previously has or currently is cohabitating with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
- by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred;
- by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.

Dating Violence

Dating violence is defined as violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. For the purposes of this definition dating violence includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.
- Does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

Stalking

Stalking is defined as engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:

- Fear for the person's safety or the safety of others;
- Suffer substantial emotional distress;
- Course of conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person's property.
- Significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling. Stalking will only attach to Title IX if the stalking is sex based. Stalking that is not sex based will be addressed in other policies such as Student Conduct Policy or Threatening Behavior Policy

Title IX Sexual Misconduct Grievance Reporting

A sexual misconduct grievance may be reported by anyone to a USSA Responsible Party with the authority to take corrective action on the part of USSA. Reports may be provided via the ussa.edu website, email, telephone, written notice, or in person.

The Responsible Parties who can receive actual knowledge of a grievance for USSA are:

- Title IX Coordinator
- President & CEO
- Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Assistant Vice President for Administration
- Human Resources Manager
- Director of Registration and Records

According to the Code of Alabama, essentially everyone working in higher education is considered a mandatory reporter. Therefore, all USSA employees are considered mandatory

reporters, and as such, employees must immediately report to a duly constituted authority if he or she observes any form of child abuse or sexual misconduct. Child abuse or sexual misconduct incidents must also be reported to one of the Responsible Parties as defined above.

The form can be accessed via USSA's website: <https://ussa.edu/consumer-information/student-complaints/>.

Procedure for Formal Complaint Filing

1. Although anyone may report a sexual misconduct grievance, USSA must have a signed, Formal Complaint to proceed with the grievance procedure. The Formal Complaint must be signed by the Complainant.

Note: a Formal Complaint may be signed by the Title IX Coordinator for limited reasons, such as an overall safety concern for the USSA community.

2. Upon receipt of a reported grievance, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly reach out to the Complainant, or whomever submitted the report, and gather further information.
3. The Complainant will be offered supportive measures when a grievance report is received, whether a Formal Complaint is filed. Supportive measures are designed to restore or preserve access to the institution's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, protect the safety of all parties and the school's educational environment, and deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures may include but are not limited to:

- Consultation with the Campus Security or local police agency as appropriate.
- Assistance identifying additional resources such as counseling services.
- Mutual "no contact" orders.
- Transferring to another course section.
- Rescheduling academic assignments or tests.
- Providing additional time to complete assignment(s) or course(s).
- Accessing academic support, such as tutoring.
- Arranging for incompletes, a leave of absence, or withdrawal from course(s).
- Preserving eligibility for academic or other scholarships, financial aid, internships.
- Arranging for alternative USSA employment arrangements or work schedules.

It is the Complainant's choice to accept or not accept any supportive measures offered. These measures are offered at no charge.

4. If the reported allegations by the Complainant do not meet the Title IX definition of sexual misconduct, the grievance reported will be dismissed as regards Title IX. However, the grievance can be referred to and pursued based on other USSA policies and processes outlined in the Student Handbook and the Employee Handbook.

5. The Complainant will be provided with the opportunity to submit a Formal Complaint by the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will explain how to file the Formal Complaint, and they will also review the grievance process.
6. Once a Formal Complaint has been filed with the Title IX Coordinator, a written notice will be provided to both the Complainant and the Respondent and will include information on whether an informal resolution is an available option.
7. The Respondent will receive written notice with sufficient time to prepare before an initial interview or meeting. Specific information must be contained in the notice including the identities of the parties involved and the conduct allegedly constituting the sexual offense, including date/time/location of the alleged event. Written notice must also state that the Respondent is presumed not responsible, may have an Advisor, and may inspect and review any evidence that is collected.
8. The Respondent will be offered supportive measures which will be non-disciplinary in nature. It is the Respondent's choice whether to accept or not accept any supportive measures offered, other than a mutual "no contact" order, or the interim actions of emergency removal or administrative leave.
 - **Emergency Removal:** A student may be removed from an education program or activity if the institution conducts an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines there is an imminent physical threat of health and safety to a person which arises from the sexual misconduct allegation. The Respondent must be provided with a notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following removal.
 - **Administrative Leave:** If the Respondent is an employee, they may be placed on Administrative Leave. Details concerning Administrative Leave can be found in Policy 5410.9 as set out in the USSA Administrative Manual.
9. Except for allegations that an employee harassed a student, an informal resolution process is allowed. Both parties must agree in writing to informal resolution and either party may withdraw from the informal process and resume the grievance process. If applicable, both parties will be asked by the Title IX Coordinator if they would like to pursue an informal resolution process. If the Formal Complaint is not resolved through informal resolution, there will be a further investigation and the evidence will go in front of the decision maker(s).

Confidential Crime Reporting

While reports of this nature may result in the gathering of extremely sensitive information about individuals, such information is considered confidential, and every effort will be made to keep the information confidential. Disclosures of certain personal information may be disclosed concerning a report of sexual harassment or sexual violence to the Institution. In such cases, efforts will be made to redact the records in order to protect the privacy of individuals.

Students are encouraged to speak to officials from the Institution to make formal reports of incidents. Students have the right and can expect to have incidents of sexual misconduct to be taken seriously by the Institution when formally reported, and to have those incidents investigated and properly resolved through administrative procedures.

The Institution has an obligation to investigate reports of this nature with or without the consent from the victim. The Institution will attempt to obtain consent from the victim before beginning an investigation. If the victim requests confidentiality or asks that the complaint not be pursued, the Institution will take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the request for confidentiality or request not to pursue an investigation. If the victim insists that his/her name or other identifiable information not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator, the Institution may be limited in its response. Although the response may be limited, these types of reports help to keep the Title IX Coordinator informed of the general extent and nature of sexual violence on and off campus so the coordinator can track patterns, evaluate the scope of the problem, and formulate appropriate campus-wide responses. There are other resources listed below. These other resources are available for the reporting of crimes and policy violations, and they will take action when a report of victimization has been made to them. Neither Institution resources, nor the law requires a divulgence of private information from a student.

[Title IX Grievance Procedure](#)

[Standard of Evidence and Impartiality](#)

The evidentiary standard used for the Title IX Grievance Procedure and any alleged sexual misconduct incident is that of clear and convincing evidence, meaning that the evidence presented must be highly and substantially more probable to be true than not. All steps of the grievance procedure will be conducted with impartiality, and the Respondent will be deemed not responsible unless proven to be responsible based on the evidentiary standard of this policy.

[Right to an Advisor](#)

The Complainant and the Respondent may have an Advisor of their choosing. The institution may provide a pool of advisors from whom to choose; however, the parties may decide to choose someone outside of this pool. If desired, a lawyer may be selected to serve as the Advisor. Advisors will perform the cross-examination function at the live hearing stage of the grievance procedure.

[Investigation](#)

Upon receipt of a signed Formal Complaint, the institution's assigned Title IX investigator(s) will begin the investigative process to gather facts regarding the Complaint. The required ADA accommodations will be provided during the grievance procedure to Complainants and Respondents with the appropriate ADA documentation. Requests for accommodation will be made to the Title IX Coordinator.

The role of the investigator(s) is to collect facts, including inculpatory and exculpatory facts, regarding the alleged incident described in the signed Formal Complaint. It is not the role of the investigator(s) to report findings or recommendations. Both the Complainant and the Respondent may present evidence to the investigator(s) or provide names of witnesses and any other information for investigative consideration. The Complainant and the Respondent will have access to the investigator(s) during the grievance procedure, and the institution will not restrict either party from discussing the allegations under investigation or from gathering and presenting relevant evidence to the investigator(s). Both parties will be given an equal opportunity to inspect evidence.

After investigating, the investigator(s) will provide a Preliminary Report of the gathered facts to both parties and their Advisors. The parties have ten (10) business days to review the Preliminary Report and to respond to the investigator regarding any inaccuracies or to identify any other information or persons that need to be included in the investigation. After follow-up and completion of the report, the investigator(s) will provide the Final Report to both parties, their Advisors, and the Decision Maker(s).

Decision Maker Role

The institution will designate a Decision Maker or Board of Decision Makers. The Decision Maker(s) will review the collected evidence and they will ultimately determine if a Title IX policy violation has occurred.

Appeal Process

An appeal must be allowed for any material procedural irregularity, new evidence, or conflict of interest/bias. A request for an appeal must be made to the Title IX Coordinator within ten (10) business days from the distribution of the Written Determination. The appeal must be conducted within 30 days of receipt of a request for an appeal. The Complainant and Respondent have equal access to appeal. An Appellate Decision Maker(s) will be assigned for the appeal process. Following the appeal, a Written Outcome with the rationale for the findings will be provided to both parties. The decision made by the Appellate Decision Maker(s) is final.

Sanctions and Remedies

If the Respondent is found to be responsible, sanctions and remedies will be determined. No sanctions or remedies will be imposed without a find of responsibility.

Records Management

All records regarding a signed Formal Complaint, informal resolution, the grievance procedure, appeals, and associated training materials will be kept by USSA for seven (7) years and in accordance with USSA Record Retention Policies. The Title IX Coordinator, along with USSA Administration, is responsible for maintaining these records. All records pertaining to pending litigation or a request for records shall be maintained in accordance with instructions from legal counsel.

Retaliation

This policy prohibits retaliation against a person who reports sexual harassment, assists someone with a report of sexual harassment, or participates in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a sexual harassment report. Retaliation includes threats, intimidation, reprisals, and/or adverse actions related to employment or education.

Dissemination of the Title IX Policy

This policy shall be disseminated to USSA's students, employees, and community through the Institution's website (www.ussa.edu) as well as the USSA Academic Catalog, Student Portal website, and other appropriate channels of communication. New and current students and employees will be provided with educational materials to promote familiarity with this policy. Annual training will be provided to the Title IX Coordinator, Responsible Parties, Investigators, Advisors, and Decision Makers. The educational programs and employee training provide ongoing awareness and prevention campaigns that also identify safe and positive options for bystander intervention that may be carried out by an individual to prevent harm or intervene when there is a risk of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking against a person other than such bystander. Additionally, information is provided on risk reduction so that students and employees may recognize warning signs.

Student Conduct

Enrollment at USSA is entrance into an academic community. As such, students voluntarily assume obligations of performance and behavior expected by USSA. Disciplinary procedures are authorized and administered to prevent obstruction of the mission, processes, and structure of USSA.

Students attending USSA are accepted as responsible adults working with faculty colleagues in pursuit of knowledge. Since freedom must be balanced by individual responsibility and respect for the rights, responsibilities, and freedom of others, students are held accountable for their own decisions and actions. USSA considers unacceptable behavior to be actions that jeopardize the rights and freedom of others or adversely affect the integrity of USSA. USSA prohibits threats of physical harm to any member of the institution community, including oneself. Such actions may result in discipline ranging from probation to dismissal.

USSA reserves the right to deny admission or continued attendance to a student whose actions are contrary to the policies and procedures of USSA. As an independent institution, USSA explicitly reserves the right to judge whether it is in the best interest of the institution that a student be allowed to continue affiliation and may, for reasons deemed sufficient by USSA itself, discontinue affiliation. By registering, the student concedes to USSA the right to require withdrawal whenever USSA deems withdrawal necessary. The provisions of this catalog do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student or faculty member, and USSA. The catalog reflects the general nature of and conditions concerning the educational services of USSA effective at the time of preparation.

Reporting Misconduct

Students are strongly encouraged to report any suspected misconduct they witness. Though anonymous complaints are permitted, doing so may limit the University's ability to investigate and respond to a complaint. Those who are aware of misconduct are encouraged to report it as quickly as possible to the Office of Student Life and/or to the Campus Safety.

Students who are actively struggling with issues and behaviors that violate community standards or University policies are encouraged to seek support and help. They will be required to participate in an accountability contract and/or seek professional assistance rather than proceed through the judicial process. Students who request help will be asked to abstain from behaviors that violate University policies. If violations continue while engaged in the accountability contract or professional assistance, the student will be subject to disciplinary action.

The violations listed in this handbook are not comprehensive in nature. The University faculty and administration reserve the right to confront and/or address other behaviors that are viewed by the University as dangerous, destructive, or inconsistent with the United States Sports Academy's mission and related statements of philosophy.

Authority for Student Conduct and Student Discipline Process

Students at the United States Sports Academy are provided a copy of the *Student Handbook* annually in the form of a link on the University website. Hard copies are available upon request from the Office of Student Life. Students are responsible for having read and abiding by the provisions of the *Student Handbook*.

The *Student Handbook* and the student conduct process apply to the conduct of individual students, both undergraduate and graduate, and all University affiliated student organizations. For the purposes of student conduct, the United States Sports Academy considers an individual to be a student when an offer of admission has been extended and thereafter as long as the student has a continuing educational interest in USSA. The University retains conduct jurisdiction over students who choose to take a leave of absence, withdraw or have graduated for any misconduct that occurred prior to the leave, withdrawal or graduation. If sanctioned, a hold may be placed on the student's ability to re-enroll and/or obtain official transcripts and/or graduate and all sanctions must be satisfied prior to re-enrollment eligibility.

The *Student Handbook* may be applied to behavior conducted online, via email, or other electronic medium. Students should also be aware that online postings such as blogs, web postings, chats and social networking sites are in the public sphere and are not private. These postings can subject a student to allegations of conduct violations if evidence of policy violations is posted online. The University does not regularly search for this information but may take action if and when such information is brought to the attention of University officials.

The guidelines for behavior outlined in this handbook, the University catalog, and any other student related publications, outline the student discipline process. The Office of Student Life will be responsible for conducting investigations, gathering evidence, and enforcing all University rules and regulations related to student behavior. The Office of Student Life is responsible for administering the student discipline process as it relates to any allegations or complaints involving University students. For certain offenses, the authority to conduct a hearing and recommend sanctions may be delegated to another appropriate USSA official. When disciplinary action is necessary in response to behavior not specifically listed in this handbook, the Office of Student Life is responsible for interpreting the spirit of this handbook and the University's philosophy.

Student Disciplinary Process

This overview gives a general idea of how the University's campus conduct proceedings work, but it should be noted that not all situations are of the same severity or complexity. Thus, these procedures are flexible and not the same in every situation, though consistency in similar situations is a priority. The campus conduct process and all applicable timelines commence with notice to an administrator of a potential violation of University rules.

Students should be aware that the student conduct process is quite different from criminal and civil court proceedings. Procedures and rights in student conduct procedures are conducted with fairness to all, but do not include the same protections of due process afforded by the courts. Due process, as defined within these procedures, assures written notice and a hearing before an objective decision-maker. No student will be found in violation of University policy without information showing that it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred and any sanctions will be proportionate to the severity of the violation and to the cumulative conduct history of the student.

1. When a violation of community standards occurs, a Campus Safety Officer or Student Life Staff member will document the incident.
2. The Office of Student Life will schedule a meeting with the student(s) involved to discuss the alleged violation, gather additional information, and explain the student discipline process.
3. If there is enough information to support the conclusion that it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred, the staff member will assign appropriate sanctions. Notice of the sanctions will be provided to the student and kept on file. If a student chooses not to be present at the meeting, a decision will be made without his or her input.

Disciplinary Sanctioning

Penalties imposed must bear a reasonable relationship to the violation. Possible sanctions are listed below under Disciplinary Sanctions for Misconduct. Disciplinary records are maintained for students on a continual basis. Violations of the United States Sports Academy community

standards are cumulative and are carried over from year to year. A student's complete discipline record will be considered when deciding sanctions. Information regarding a student's involvement in a violation of the standards of conduct may be shared as needed with other University departments or offices. Students attending the University who receive sanctions related to their conduct may become immediately ineligible for all or a portion of USSA funded scholarships or grants. If a student subject to conduct proceedings indicates they have a mental/behavioral disorder, that student will be required to complete a psychological assessment with the University counselor.

Disciplinary Sanctions for Misconduct

Violation of University policies may result in the imposition of one or more of the sanctions listed below. A sanction is a disciplinary action that requires the student to meet certain expectations and/or complete specific requirements within a stated time frame. Sanctions that may be imposed are not limited to those listed.

Sanctions affecting the conduct of students are based on general principles of fair treatment. Sanctions will consider the intent of the accused, the effect of the conduct on the victim and/or University community, the student's disciplinary history, whether sanctions such as education and community service are likely to change the student's conduct, and the student's needs and prospects for improvement. While attempting to be consistent in its disciplinary decisions, the University also seeks to be fair and sensitive to the facts and circumstances of each individual case. Some sanctions may need to be more punitive due to the seriousness of the offense. Possible sanctions include:

- **Reprimand:** An informal warning that continuation or repetition of inappropriate behavior may result in a more severe sanction. A reprimand is not subject to appeal.
- **Disciplinary Warning:** An official written notification that a student's behavior is in violation of University regulations or standards, with clarification of expected behavior in the future. Further misconduct may be treated with more serious sanctions. A warning is not subject to appeal.
- **Referral for Counseling:** Students may be referred for counseling at the expense of the student. Progress reports are to be provided as requested by the Office of Student Life.
- **Fines or Restitution Fines:** Ranging from \$25.00-\$500.00 may be levied for policy violations. Fines or restitution are payable to the University by the date specified by the University official. When deemed appropriate, the University official may require restitution for damages done or other payment for expenses incurred as a result of the student's actions.
- **Educative Sanctions:** Tasks, assignments or experiences which a student is obligated to complete. Examples include letters of apology; research on an issue related to the offense; attending a workshop, lectures or other meetings. Failure to comply may result in further sanctions such as suspension, denial of the privilege to re-enroll, or dismissal.

- **Disciplinary Probation:** Probation is for a designated period of time and includes the probability of more severe sanctions if the student is found to violate any institutional regulation(s) during the probationary period. Disciplinary probation implies that the individual's standing within the University is in jeopardy and that further negligent or willful violations will normally result in immediate suspension or expulsion.
- **Disciplinary Probation with Restriction:** In addition to Disciplinary Probation listed above, Disciplinary Probation with restriction involves the imposition of specified restrictions and/or prohibits the student from participation in designated activities for a stated period of time. Such privileges include, but are not limited to, visitation, employment, parking, involvement in clubs, organizations, extracurricular activities, athletics, performance groups, internships, or other privileges appropriate to the violation. The extent of the restrictions and the length of the period is determined by the offense's magnitude. A record of the loss of privilege will be maintained by the Office of Student Life. Additional infractions of the University rules and regulations during a period of restriction may lead to probation, suspension, or dismissal.
- **Disciplinary Suspension:** Separates the student from the University for a specified period of time, prohibits attendance at any classes, social events, or other functions, and visiting University grounds or buildings unless by written permission. The University may interim suspend a student pending the completion of an investigation and resolution, particularly when in the judgment of the Office of Student Life the safety or well-being of any member(s) of the campus community may be jeopardized by the presence on-campus of the student whose behavior is in question. During an interim suspension a student or employee may be denied access to University housing and/or the University campus/facilities/events. A suspension will be recorded on the student's transcript until suspension expires. Suspensions may be indefinite.
- **Revocation of Institutional Gift Aid:** In certain circumstances, particularly those that jeopardize the integrity or reputation of the University, all or a portion of a student's USSA institutional aid may be revoked.
- **Denial of Privilege to Reenroll:** This sanction places the student on indefinite disciplinary probation, may allow for the completion of the current semester but prohibits enrollment for subsequent semesters without permission from the Office of Student Life.
- **Disciplinary Dismissal:** Any student who receives disciplinary dismissal will be permanently excluded from the United States Sports Academy. Once a student has been dismissed, he or she is not eligible for readmission. Disciplinary dismissal is permanently recorded on the student's academic record maintained by the Registrar's Office.

Student Rights

A student accused of a violation of University regulations have the following rights:

- The student may have a person of choice from the University community to advise or assist in any hearings. The advisor may provide support and guidance through the investigation process. Any advisor who steps out of their role in any meeting under the campus resolution process will be warned once and only once. If the advisor continues to disrupt or otherwise fails to respect the limits of the advisor role, the advisor will be asked to leave the meeting. When an advisor is removed from a meeting, that meeting will typically continue without the advisor present.
- The student can request a written statement of charges.
- The student can offer personal testimony and witnesses on his/her own behalf.
- The student may exercise his or her right to appeal sanctioning decisions as outlined in this handbook.

Appeals

A student wishing to appeal the discipline sanction decision must do so in writing via a written letter and via the Disciplinary Sanction Appeal Form within 24 hours of the original sanctioning decision. These documents should be submitted to the Office of Student Life and will be reviewed by the appropriate member of the student discipline process. All sanctions remain in effect until otherwise noted as a result of the appeal. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the all appeal documentation was received.

Appeals will normally be considered only when:

- there is relevant new information that was not available at the time of the original hearing and the introduction of the information could substantially impact the original finding;
- there was a substantial procedural error that may have significantly affected the decision;
- if the sanctions are substantially disproportionate to the severity of the violation.

Guidelines for Writing a Letter of Appeal

The letter must include:

1. Names of the parties involved,
2. Clear statement of the nature of the appeal consisting of one or more of the reasons listed above,
3. A narrative of the incident including:
 - Why it occurred
 - How it occurred
 - Where it occurred
 - Who was present
4. The information on which the appeal is based,
5. The desired outcome.

Upon receipt of a student appeal, the Vice President (or designees) will forward the written appeal along with any other appropriate information to the Discipline Committee that will review the request for appeal. The Vice President (or designees) will notify the student in writing of the decision. If the appeal cannot be considered within one week of the appeal request, the Vice President (or designees) will notify the student. Decisions of the Discipline Committee may be appealed to the President of the University within 24 hours of the Discipline Committee decision. A decision of the President is not subject to further appeal.

University Standards and Off-Campus Behavior

Students are responsible for displaying conduct and behavior that reflect favorably on them, the University, and the community. Accordingly, the University reserves the right to take disciplinary action in response to behavior off campus that violates University standards and policies or adversely affects the University community and/or the pursuit of its objectives. The University also reserves the right to take disciplinary actions for violations of University standards by graduates awaiting degrees and students who withdraw from school while a disciplinary matter is pending.

Violation Of Law and University Discipline

The University reserves the right to review actions taken by civil authorities regarding any student or student organization. If a student is arrested for a criminal violation, that student must report the arrest to the Office of Student Life within seventy-two (72) hours of release; athletes must also report the arrest to the Director of Athletics. University disciplinary proceedings may be instituted against a student charged with violation of a law and may, at the sole discretion of the University, be carried out prior to, concurrently, or following civil or criminal proceedings. Violations occurring during non-enrolled periods may be considered by the University in determining whether a student will be eligible to continue his/her enrollment in the University and if so, under what conditions.

Parental Notification

The University reserves the right to notify parents/guardians of dependent students regarding any health or safety risk, change in student status or conduct situation, particularly alcohol and other drug violations. The University may also notify parents/guardians of non-dependent students who are under age 21 of alcohol and/or drug policy violations. Where a student is non-dependent, the University will contact parents/guardians to inform them of situations in which there is a significant and articulable health and/or safety risk. The University also reserves the right to designate which University officials have a need to know about individual conduct reports pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

University Academic Policies

Definition of Academic Year

USSA's academic increments are termed as 16-week semesters in Fall, Spring with courses offered in 16-week and 8-week modular formats, which follow USSA's academic calendar. Summer courses are offered in 12-week and 6-week modular formats. Students receiving financial aid at the bachelor's level are permitted nine (9) years or up to 180 semester hours to complete their program of study.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

All students at USSA who receive federal financial aid must make satisfactory progress toward completion of a degree program within a reasonable period of time.

USSA has developed the following standards defining satisfactory progress, in accordance with regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education.

Bachelor's students are considered to be making satisfactory progress if they:

- Are admitted and enrolled as degree-seeking students.
- Meet the required qualitative and quantitative measure for financial aid recipients.
- Maintain measurable progress toward the completion of the degree
- Complete degree requirements within a reasonable length of time.

Required Qualitative Measure

To meet the required qualitative measure, a student must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. This measure comes into effect after the student has attempted 6 semester hours at USSA.

Measurable Quantitative Progress Requirement

To maintain measurable progress toward the completion of a degree, a student must successfully complete 67% of all semester hours attempted at USSA; hours attempted include repeated courses, dropped courses, withdrawals, failed courses, and incomplete courses. This measure becomes effective when a student has attempted six semester hours at USSA.

Reasonable Length of Time Requirement

At USSA, a reasonable length of time for the completion of a degree program is defined as no more than 150% of the normal time required to complete a degree program measured

in terms of academic years or terms, semester hours attempted, or clock hours completed. The maximum time allotted to complete the bachelor's degree is nine (9) years or 180 attempted semester hours. Coursework which transfers into a degree program will adjust the time frame accordingly. Satisfactory academic progress status will be determined for each student when financial aid applications are reviewed.

Student Classroom Behavioral Expectations

Students and faculty each have a responsibility in maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a mature manner that does not distract from or disrupt the educational pursuits of others. Examples of distracting behavior, include but are not limited to uninvited casual talk among students, use of cell phones or other electronics, sleeping, or inappropriate behavior toward fellow students or faculty. Examples of disruptive behavior, including but not limited to a false report of an explosive or incendiary device, which constitutes a threat or bomb scare; verbal, written, or physical abuse (or threats of physical abuse) to any member of the University community.

Should a professor determine that a student's conduct is distracting or disruptive, the professor may impose the student's immediate removal from the classroom until it can be determined by the faculty member that the student can conduct him/herself in an appropriate manner. Behaviors which may have been influenced by a student's mental state or use of drugs or alcoholic beverages shall not in any way limit the responsibility of the student for the consequences of his or her actions. Students who fail to cooperate or adhere to behavioral standards, as set forth in the course syllabus, may be subject to sanctions imposed by the University student judicial process. Professors may refer students for disciplinary action.

Faculty members have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions.

Plagiarism

Students should maintain high standards of conduct in their academic work. Disrespect for, or violation of, these standards is a serious offense. The penalty for violations of academic integrity ranges from failure on a paper or in a class to dismissal from USSA. The process of notification regarding a violation of academic integrity is described in the Student Conduct section of the academic catalogs.

Cheating is unacceptable behavior. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting the same paper, or part of the same paper, for more than one course;
- Copying another student's answers during an examination;
- Using someone else's work and representing it as your own;
- Using unauthorized materials during an examination;
- Having someone else take an examination for you;
- Plagiarism (using information from other people's work without proper citation).

All instructors monitor academic integrity with online tools such as Turnitin.com, an Internet-based plagiarism detection service. The Research Companion has tutorials devoted to proper citation and avoiding plagiarism.

Academic Updates – Learning Management System

USSA regularly posts online announcements to all students through the Learning Management System (LMS). Their purpose is to keep students informed regarding regulations, policies, and procedures of USSA, in addition to alerting them to upcoming calendar events and general news of interest.

Grade Appeal

The purpose of the grade appeal procedure is to allow the student an opportunity to appeal a course assignment grade and a final course grade that the student feels was inequitably awarded.

A grade appeal will not be considered if the reason for the appeal is that a student is generally dissatisfied with a grade or disagrees with a faculty member's professional judgment of the student's performance.

Since the grade appeals process may result in the change of a grade, it must be noted that change because of the appeals process is of a different nature than a grade change initiated by professors. A grade change per se is initiated by the professor, whereas the grade appeal is initiated by the student.

Students are advised that the grade appeals process entails an examination of the student's assignment submission or, in the case of an appeal of the final course grade, a review of the entire body of work in the course in which the grade is being appealed. Consequently, the list of possible options includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. the original grade given by the professor can remain unchanged.
2. the grade can be changed upward.
3. the grade can be changed downward.

Textbook Policy

Students are responsible for obtaining and accessing the appropriate textbook for their course before each course start date. For students eligible and using vocational rehabilitation benefits, funding is available for textbooks and materials.

A list of textbooks and materials for each course is available for all students on our website:

<https://ussa.libguides.com/textbooklist>

Release of Information

Release of Grades

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits the release of grades without written permission. Grades are neither mailed out to students nor given out over the telephone. Students may access their grades via their unofficial transcript, which can be found in the Student Information System. In the acceptance letter, students will receive user ID and password information for access to the student records portal. Students who experience difficulty with this procedure should contact the Help Desk.

Release of Student Portal Login/Password Information

Students receive Student Portal website user ID and password information upon application to their degree program. Accepted students must request this information via the Help Desk. If the student can provide self-identifying information to 2-3 questions.

Repeat Policy

A student may repeat a course. If a student repeats a course once, the second grade awarded (excluding grades of "W") replaces the first grade in the computation of the cumulative grade point average. The semester grade point average during the semester in which the course was first attempted will not be affected. When a course is repeated more than once, grades for the second and all subsequent attempts of the course will be used in the computation of the cumulative grade point average. Official records at USSA will list each course in which a student is enrolled.

Withdrawing from USSA

A student may withdraw from a course or from the institution up to the student's course completion date by filing an official Withdrawal Form which can be found on our website. Students must submit the completed form to the Director of Registration and Records. Students who file the appropriate paperwork for withdrawals prior to the course deadline will be assigned a grade of "W." The withdrawal becomes effective on the day the form is received by the Director of Registration and Records. Refunds, if applicable, may not be authorized without completion of the withdrawal form and are based on USSA's pro-rated refund schedule.

Academic Records (Transcripts, Registration, Diplomas)

Transcripts

Requests for transcripts can be made through the Parchment website at parchment.com or through the Student Information System. Transcripts requested through Campus Café will only be released and delivered in hard copy. The current fee for each transcript can be found in the Tuition and Fees section of this academic catalog or on our website. No official transcript will be furnished to a student who has an outstanding balance due to USSA as evidenced by an administrative hold placed on the student's file. It is against USSA policy to fax or email academic transcripts. USSA reserves the right to require additional documentation for identity verification purposes prior to processing any transcript requests. Academic honors will be noted on the transcript.

Replacement Diploma

Students may order a replacement paper diploma upon completion of the Replacement Diploma Order Form and the associated fees can be found online at our website. The form should be emailed, mailed, or faxed, and payment for the replacement must accompany the order.

Replacement Diploma Fees

Parchment Copy (8 ½" x 11") - \$25

University Financial Aid and Billing

USSA has a variety of financial aid programs available to qualified students enrolled in the bachelor's degree program. Federal financial aid is not available for non-degree-seeking students or those enrolled in certification programs, nor does it apply to Continuing Education Units. All students receiving financial aid student loans must maintain at least half-time enrollment status (which is six credit hours per semester at the bachelor's degree level); however, bachelor's degree students who are eligible for Pell Grants can still receive a Pell Grant if the student is below half time, and the Pell Grant will be pro-rated based on the number of credit hours taken.

To apply for any financial aid program, students must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Application forms can be obtained from the Federal Student Aid website: <https://studentaid.gov/>.

Distribution of Financial Aid Funds

Payment of tuition and fees is due when a student registers for a course. In the event that a student has been awarded financial aid and intends to use the proceeds to pay for the course registration, USSA, with the concurrence of the student, will post the incoming funds to the student's account. USSA will deduct from these proceeds all costs associated with the registration including (but not limited to) tuition, fees, and learning materials. Remaining funds will be provided to the student after funds have been disbursed, and after the student has attended class (per the policy stated below). Additionally, the amount of this refund is limited to the amount of the financial aid proceeds actually received for the term of the award.

The following procedures will be followed:

1. Students must be eligible based on enrollment status according to U.S. Department of Education guidelines to receive Title IV funds.
2. Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress to be eligible to receive financial aid.
3. Financial aid funds will be disbursed once per each student's term.
4. Course attendance must be verified to receive the financial aid disbursement and VA certification. Attendance must be verified within 7 days of the course's start date.
5. Accounts receivable balances will be subject to collection procedures, as indicated in USSA's Administrative Manual.
6. All financial aid refunds must be made by direct deposit to the student's designated bank account. No checks will be issued.

Refund and Course Withdrawal Policy

Refund of tuition and general fees for a student who drops a course, or all courses, or a student who is dismissed or suspended, is made in accordance with the refund policy. All application fees, enrollment fees, and special fees are non-refundable.

Students who are enrolled in more than one course will be refunded the difference in tuition paid and the tuition rate applicable to the reduced number of hours, including tuition fees appropriate to the classes dropped.

Refund Schedule

16-Week Courses:

A student who drops or withdraws within the first 38 days of a course will be refunded according to the date as follows:

- Prior to the course start date 100% refund
- 1-7 days: 100% refund
- 8-18 days: 90% refund
- 19-29 days: 50% refund
- 30-38 days: 25% refund
- After 38 days: No refund

8-Week Courses:

A student who drops or withdraws within the first 21 days of a course will be refunded according to the date as follows:

- Prior to the course start date 100% refund
- 1-7 days: 100% refund
- 8-14 days: 50% refund
- 15-21 days: 40% refund
- After 21 days: No refund

For Withdrawal from Internship

- 1-5 days: 100% refund
- 6-25 days: 95% refund
- 26-60 days: 50% refund
- 61-125 days: 25% refund
- 126 days or later: No refund

Processing of refunds requires at least two weeks. Students with financial aid should consult the Financial Aid Review section or contact the Financial Aid Office for additional information on withdrawing or falling below half-time status.

Withdrawals for Students Using Veteran Affairs (VA) Benefits

After the 38th day (3rd week) and up to the 45th day (prior to the start of the 5th week) of course enrollment, a student utilizing Veteran Affairs (VA) educational benefits may submit a request for withdrawal. The 45th day of enrollment (start of the 5th week) is the last day to receive a grade of "W" for the course. The grade of "W" 81 does not affect a student's GPA. After the 45th day (start of the 5th week) of enrollment, the student will be awarded a grade based on the work completed up until the end of the course.

Appeals Policy

Students who become ineligible for financial aid because they do not maintain satisfactory progress towards the completion of a degree may reapply for financial aid when they have cleared the deficiency and are again progressing satisfactorily according to the requirements outlined above. When mitigating circumstances are involved, students may appeal decisions that they have not complied with the academic requirements for financial aid. To do so, they must submit letters to the Financial Aid Appeals Committee, to the attention of the Chief Academic Officer, requesting reinstatement of eligibility for financial aid. The letters must explain why satisfactory progress is not being made and any documentation that supports the rationale for the appeal. Appeals may be accepted without provision, or they may be accepted provisionally entailing a probationary period in which a student must earn a given number of semester hours and/or earn a specified GPA. Appeals may also be denied. It is each student's responsibility to initiate any appeal for financial aid eligibility. Appeals for academic reinstatement do not constitute reinstatement of financial aid eligibility.

Return of Title IV Funds USSA's

The Financial Aid Office is governed by rules concerning Title IV Federal Student Aid funds, which include student loans. USSA awards aid to students based on 100% completion of courses. If a student withdraws, USSA must determine the percentage of financial aid "earned" for that course. If students do not complete 60% of the academic term, they have not "earned" the full allotment of financial aid. In this case, USSA is required to return the "unearned" portion of aid to its originating source (i.e., the student-loan lender).

16-Week Course Students:

Upon withdrawal, if USSA determines that a student is due a refund, it will credit the student's account. USSA determines the amount, if any, that must be returned on their behalf. If return of aid is required, USSA will use any credit balance a student may have to fulfill this responsibility. If those funds are more than USSA is required to return, the student will receive the remainder. In most instances, however, those funds are not enough to cover the amount, which could leave the student owing USSA a balance. To determine if funds must be returned, USSA determines how much aid was earned. Each 16-week term contains 112 class days. Once the student has completed 60% of the academic term, or 68 days, it is considered that 100% of the funds are earned. However, if the student completed only 50% or 56 days, USSA would be required to return only 50% of aid awarded/disbursed to the student during that term.

Therefore, if USSA awarded and disbursed \$2,800.00 of aid to the student, USSA would have to return \$1,400.00 to the federal government. Note that in this situation, the student would not be afforded a refund from USSA as 56 64 days exceeds the 38-day maximum, as stated in the USSA Refund Policy found in Section 8 of this catalog. Students can determine the amount of their personal situations by using the same formula. The number of days attended is determined by the start day of the course in the Academic Calendar, based on seven (7) schooldays per week. This number can then be compared to 112 to determine what percentage

of aid was earned. If less than 60%, the student can compare that percentage to the term's financial aid award amount to determine the amount USSA will return on a student's behalf to the student-loan lender.

8-Week Course Students:

USSA awards aid to students based on 100% completion of courses. If students withdraw, USSA must determine the percentage of financial aid "earned." If students do not complete 49% of the academic term, they have not "earned" the full allotment of financial aid. In this case, USSA is required to return the "unearned" portion of aid to its originating source (i.e., the student-loan lender). Upon withdrawal, if USSA determines that a student is due a refund, it will credit the student's account. USSA determines the amount, if any, that must be returned on their behalf. If return of aid is required, USSA will use any credit balance a student may have to fulfill this responsibility. If those funds are more than USSA is required to return, the student will receive the remainder. In most instances, however, those funds are not enough to cover the amount, which could leave the student owing USSA a balance.