



## 1. Prepare for Success

### Familiarize Yourself with the myCSUSM Student Portal

- The **myCSUSM Student Portal** is your official university account providing you access with university web-based services. The student portal allows you to view personal information that is on file with the university, the courses for which you are currently registered and/or have previously taken, as well as your student financial information.
- **Important Notice:** It is important to check this account regularly to ensure that your registration and financial information are correct.
- **To access the myCSUSM Student Portal**, you will need your User ID and Password. (Your User ID can be found in your Welcome Email.) Please follow the steps below to access your account.
  1. Go to the myCSUSM website: <https://my.csusm.edu>
  2. Enter your 9-digit ID # for User Name
  3. Enter your temporary password: 1st 2 letters of your first name, 1st 2 letters of your last name, and then the last 4 digits of your ID # (Capitalize all letters)
  4. Click "Sign In"
  5. Look for "Network Password" located on the right-hand side
  6. Enter your 9-digit ID # for Campus ID
  7. Enter your temporary password for Current Password and click submit.
  8. Answer at least three of the password security questions. (They will be used in the event you forget your password.) Scroll down and click on the "SUBMIT" button.
  9. Click the button "Continue to change your password".
  10. Enter the temporary password you have been using in "Enter Current Password".
  11. Create a password of your choice (per rules specified on the web page) and confirm the new password. Click "change passwords."
  12. Print your network username. (The first part of your network name will be the first part of your new CSUSM email address.) Example: If your email was doe001@cougars.csusm.edu then the new username would be doe001
  13. Logout of myCSUSM
    - a. You will no longer be able to login to your Student Center with your 9-digit ID#.
- Please contact the Student Help Desk at (760) 750-6505 or [sth@csusm.edu](mailto:sth@csusm.edu) for any troubles or issues with the myCSUSM Student Portal.

### Set up Your Cougar Email

- As an incoming student, you will be required to set up your student email. This is where all future communications from the university will be sent. It is important to do this, as it will provide you access to further steps up to, and including, registration. Check your Cougar Email often and regularly!
- To set up your student email, please see the section titled "Familiarize yourself with the myCSUSM Student Portal." Here, you'll find instructions on how to determine your Cougar Email and create your password. From there, you can visit the Cougar Email site and proceed to set up your account.
- To access your Cougar Email, please visit: <https://my.csusm.edu/>



## Federal Financial Aid

- Federal Student Aid, a part of the U.S. Department of Education, is the largest provider of student financial aid in the nation. Federal Student Aid is responsible for managing the student financial assistance programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965. These programs provide grants, loans and work-study funds to students attending college or career school.
- If you have not already done so, please visit <https://fafsa.ed.gov/> and submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This will allow us to determine how much student aid you are eligible for and will help you pay for any education-related expenses. (Note: To see if you qualify and to request further information, you can visit: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/help.htm> as well as <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/>)
- **Items required:** Internet-enabled device, a copy of your and/or your parents' (if applicable) income tax return from the previous year, relevant W2 forms, a Social Security number, and CSUSM's Federal School Code (**030113**). For additional requirements, visit: <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
- For greater assistance, please visit the CSUSM dedicated Financial Aid webpage: <http://www.csusm.edu/finaid/index.html>. Here, you can find resources and more information on how you can apply for financial aid, academic requirements, loan processes, etc. (Note: Cost of attendance details for online students are located exclusively at: <http://degree.csusm.edu/tuition-fees.aspx>.)
- If you have already applied for financial aid, please check your Cougar Email periodically for any updates that may be sent to you regarding the status of your aid. Additionally, you can also log into the myCSUSM Student Portal to check your status, look at pending "To-Dos" and accept any awards that you may have received.
- **Important Notice:** Be aware that registering for classes incurs a financial obligation. Payment is due for all online classes prior to the first day of class. Please plan accordingly, as disbursement of financial aid may follow your payment due date. (See Payments for additional information.)

## 2. Enrolling

### Class Registration

- Registering for classes at CSUSM is easy! Once you have been admitted to the program, have paid your enrollment deposit and submitted your transcripts, you will be automatically enrolled in the appropriate program-specific courses. If you require additional non-program specific courses, you will have to enroll manually.
- If you are required to take additional courses, an email communication will be sent to your Cougar Email account detailing which courses you will be required to take and whom your advisor will be. From this point, it will be your responsibility to contact your advisor and discuss your options. (See Student Advising for more details.)
- To enroll in courses, please follow the steps below:
  1. Go to <https://my.csusm.edu>
  2. Enter your User Name and Password.
  3. Click "Sign-In" (Note: If you have ever taken courses at CSUSM, your student account has already been created for you. If you do not know your User Name and Password, please contact the Student Help Desk.)
  4. Click on Student Center.
  5. In Student Center, under Academics, click "Enroll" on the left.
  6. Repeat for each class.



7. Once all classes are in your enrollment shopping cart, click “Proceed to Steps 2 of 3.”
8. Confirm all of your classes are correct, then click “Finish Enrolling.”

## Student Advising

- To receive student advising, you can contact your advisor directly (via email or phone) and set up a meeting time, email [el@csusm.edu](mailto:el@csusm.edu) and request an appointment with an advisor, or call 760-750-4020 to reserve an advising time slot.
- **Pro Tip:** To expedite the advising process via email, it is recommended that you include dates and times you are available, as well as your student ID and your full name.
- **Important Notice:** Advising cannot be setup using a personal email account. Any email communication done with the advising office and advisors must be done exclusively through your Cougar Email.

## Payments

- To determine the payment amount you will incur, please go to your myCSUSM Student Center. In the Finances tab, click on Account Inquiry to view your amounts due. (Note: Cal State San Marcos does not bill students for current fees due.)
- Methods of Payment include: Cash, Conventional Check, Money Order/Cashier’s Check, ATM/Debit Card, Online Credit Card, and Online E-Checks. ( For associated fees and additional instructions, please visit: <https://www.csusm.edu/sfs/fees/payfees.html> )
- CSU makes every effort to keep student costs to a minimum. Fees listed in published schedules or student accounts may need to be increased when public funding is inadequate. Therefore, CSU must reserve the right, even after initial fee payments are made, to increase or modify any listed fees, without notice, until the date when instruction for a particular semester or quarter has begun. All CSU listed fees should be regarded as estimates that are subject to change upon approval by the Board of Trustees.
- **Important Notice:** If you have applied for financial aid and have submitted all required documentation, but will not receive financial aid before your courses begin, a fee deferment will be placed on your account. The fee deferment will prevent you from being dropped from your courses until you receive your financial aid award.

## 3. Achieving Success

### Textbooks - Purchasing/Renting

- After successfully being registered for classes, you can check the CSUSM bookstore to determine which books you will be required to use.
- To reach the bookstore, you can visit the university homepage at <https://www.csusm.edu/> and then select “Bookstore & University Store” in the Student Essentials section.
- To determine the actual materials you require, you can select “Textbooks and Course Materials” from underneath the Books tab in the CSUSM bookstore homepage.
- You have the option of buying your textbooks directly from the bookstore, as well as renting material if it is available.
- **Pro Tip:** Remember to buy any materials you need as soon as possible to avoid inconveniences and delays. There are many vendors from which to choose.



## Online Student Orientation

- **Online Student Orientation** is an important part of student preparedness. Doing your online orientation early will help you create a smooth online experience, as it will guide you through the ins and outs of the online program and the Canvas LMS (learning management system) you will be using.
- After registration, you will be sent an email with instructions on how and where to access your online student orientation. To logon, however, you must activate your student portal account and your Cougar Email.
- **Important Notice:** You are expected to complete your online orientation prior to the first day of class as an integral part of setting yourself up for success in your online degree program—not doing so may result in negative outcomes.

## Class Participation

- It is important to note that class participation is required for successful course and program completion. Professors will require constant interaction and participation from you and everyone else enrolled in their courses.
- Please be sure to remain engaged with you professors, TAs and fellow classmates.
- **Important Notice:** If you are having communication issues with professors or TAs, please be sure to contact Student Services at 760-750-4020.

## Credit Transfers

- To begin the transfer credit process, you must first submit transcripts from all post-secondary, regionally accredited institutions that you have attended. From this point, an advisor will review all courses and determine which courses can be applied to your current program. An email will then be sent to you detailing which courses have been approved and any further actions required.
- To determine if your transcripts are in the review process, please log on to the CSUSM Student Center and look under your “To-Do” list. If transcripts are no longer listed, they have been received and are under review.
- In case any course is not accepted, you have the option of disputing the review process with your advisor and requesting a reevaluation. For the reevaluation process to occur, you must submit course descriptions and related course syllabi. Please note that the dispute process may take some time (up to 2-3 weeks) to complete and you will be notified of the final decision taken.

## Drop/Refund Policy

- A student must cancel registration or drop all courses prior to the first day of the session to receive a full refund and not owe any fees to the university. Students withdrawing or dropping courses after 11:59 p.m. on the 7th day of the session start date are not entitled to a refund of fees or tuition.
- It takes approximately 4-6 weeks for a refund to be processed.

## Graduation Requirement: LOTER (Language Other Than English Requirement)

CSUSM believes strongly in preparing its students for the demands of a diverse and globalizing world. So, every student — regardless of major and before graduation — must demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English.

The LOTER is a graduation requirement for all students. Meeting it confirms that you have reached an intermediate level of linguistic and cultural proficiency in a second language. It does not require fluency.



You can learn about the many ways to satisfy this requirement at: <https://www.csusm.edu/loter/options.html>

## RN to BSN Practice Experience (Clinical Requirements)

### RN TO BSN PRACTICE EXPERIENCES (CLINICAL)

Dr. P. Hinchberger 2015 School of Nursing

#### Definition

Baccalaureate programs provide opportunities for practice experiences designed to assist graduates to achieve The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice. All baccalaureate programs, including RN to BSN programs, must provide practice experiences for students to bridge to baccalaureate-level professional nursing practice. In pre-licensure programs, this practice experience is usually referred to as a traditional “clinical experience.”

However, nursing is a practice discipline that includes both direct and indirect care activities that impact health outcomes. RN to BSN students have an opportunity to meet their practice requirements in various settings since they maintain current RN licensure. In order to meet the CCNE accreditation mandate, Cal State San Marcos requires students in the community and leadership courses to apply their newly learned baccalaureate competencies into practice. CSUSM uses the term “practice experience” to define the completion of the student application project. This type of learning is not what students typically think of when using the term “clinical assignment.”

Practice experience: Experiential learning for this practice discipline is frequently called practice experiences, clinical experiences, clinical learning opportunities, clinical strategies or clinical activities. The term practice experiences will be consistently used to refer to experiential learning in any setting where healthcare is delivered or health is influenced that allows for and requires the student to integrate new practice-related knowledge and skills.

#### Requirements

Two courses require practice experiences. Students are required to have 135 hours of practice experience activities for the Community Health course (NURS 445) and 90 hours of practice experience for the Leadership course (NURS 451).

Students who are working in a healthcare institution are strongly encouraged to identify a supervisor in their hospital or outpatient work environment to assist students during the completion of their projects. Students are also encouraged to consult with their managers/employer for ideas on projects that will benefit their nursing service and/or community. Please review a copy of the course objectives in your syllabus to serve as a guide for possible projects. Please feel free to share the course objectives with your supervisor so they can assist you with potential project options.

### RN TO BSN PRACTICE EXPERIENCES (CLINICAL)

Practice experiences may be augmented by simulation and laboratory experiences. This work is used to acquire the degree or specific clinical training experiences that will transition a nursing student’s role behaviors from the Associate Degree or diploma to the baccalaureate level of proficiency. These include:

- Working with other providers in any setting where healthcare is delivered, including the community, to identify gaps in care and implement a quality improvement strategy.
- Collaborating with nursing staff to implement a new procedure or nursing practice that is evidence-based.
- Working with an interprofessional team to evaluate the outcomes of a new practice guideline and implement recommended changes.



- Designing and implementing a coordinated, patient-centered plan of care with an interprofessional team.
- Educating other healthcare providers regarding the safe and effective use of new technology.
- Writing a policy and working with other stakeholders to have the policy approved by the state board of nursing.
- Working with community leaders to develop a disaster/emergency preparedness plan for a specific population in a community.
- Collaborating with the facility information technology staff to design or implement an electronic health record.
- Working with staff to write an administrative policy that will improve communication among the units in the facility.

For students not presently employed, we will assist in securing project-focused activities in their regions. Practice experience hours are only required for the Community and Leadership courses in this program.

### Practice Experience Examples

Community centers that focus on health education  
Palliative care settings  
Senior centers  
Goodwill Industries centers  
Soup kitchens  
Emergency room patient education  
Education for specific populations—e.g., diabetes, hypertension, obesity  
Health education fair for AARP group

### Pro Tips

- To help you be successful, remember that constant communication with your professors and TAs can go a long way. They are helpful resources that you should consider throughout your online experience.
- It is very important that you constantly monitor your online student portal and your Cougar Email. These two resources will be key to a smooth online experience.
- Make sure that you complete your online orientation prior to the first day of your courses. Orientation will be your best friend, helping you get started.
- Check out important resources, such as the vast online library and available online journals to which you have 24-hour access.
- You can also request to receive a Student ID Card to take advantage of the California State University System physical library resource. By having an ID card, you can request to have a book shipped to your house.
- To request an ID card, you will have to send an email (using your Cougar email) to [el@csusm.edu](mailto:el@csusm.edu). The email should be formatted in the following manner:
  - Subject: Online (Program Name) Student ID Card Request / Last Name, First Name / Student ID
  - Body: Please send me a Student ID Card. I am in the online (program name) and would like to have an ID card.  
**Here is my information:**
    - First Name Last Name
    - Student ID



- In addition to the aforementioned items, please include the following:
  - A clear and unedited JPEG picture of your face with a blank background.
  - A clear PDF copy of a government-issued identification card—e.g., driver's license, passport, etc.
- There is a charge associated with this request.

## Resource Contacts

**Student Services**

**Email:** [el@csusm.edu](mailto:el@csusm.edu)

**Phone:** 760-750-4020

**IT Help Desk**

**Email:** [sth@csusm.edu](mailto:sth@csusm.edu)

**Phone:** 760-750-6505



## Follow this guide when you require more information.

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**Remember: Always have the necessary documentation or reference information in front of you before calling.**

1. Accepted and want to know more about the next steps:
  - a. Call 1.844.221.5368
2. Denied or Conditionally Accepted and want to know why:
  - a. Call Student Services at 760.750.4020
3. Admitted, but want to be advised on which courses to take:
  - a. Call your advisor or call: 760.750.4020
4. Having trouble registering for class:
  - a. Call Student Services at 760.750.4020
5. Want to inquire about or having trouble with financial aid:
  - a. Call Financial Aid at 760.750.4850
6. Questions about your student account, bill, or amount due:
  - a. Call Student Services at 760.750.4020