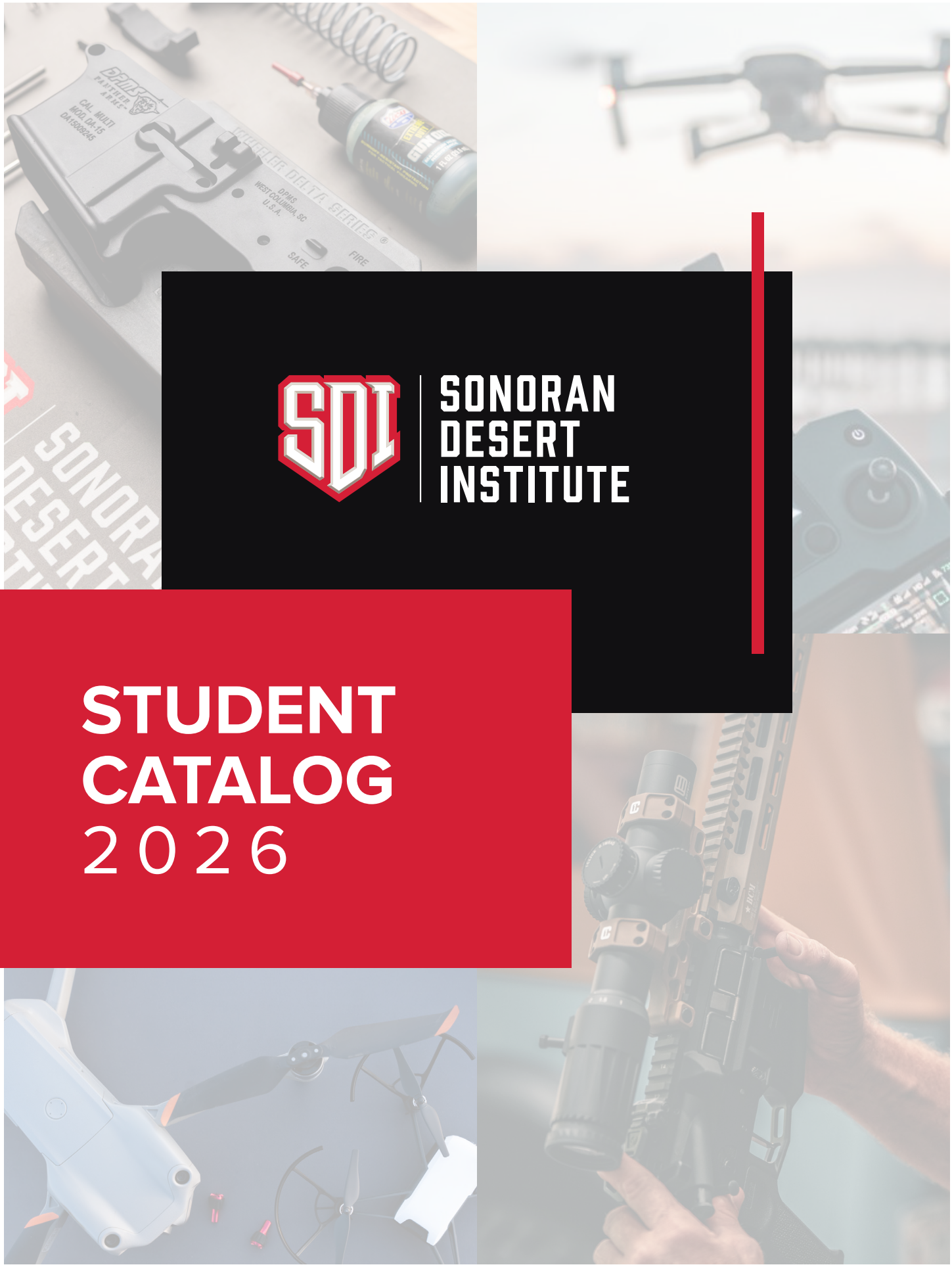

SONORAN DESERT INSTITUTE

STUDENT CATALOG 2026

NOTICE

SDI reserves the right to update, change, or modify this information. At the discretion of Sonoran Desert Institute, information contained in this catalog is subject to change without prior notification. If there is any inconsistency or conflict between the information contained in this catalog and any other material, the information in the catalog shall take precedence. Sonoran Desert Institute is not responsible for information or claims made by individuals not affiliated with the Institute that is contrary to Sonoran Desert Institute published material.

This catalog applies exclusively to SDI online programs. CDL ground campus schools are not within the scope of DEAC accreditation and therefore maintain separate catalogs and handbooks that contain location-specific information.

Throughout this catalog, "Institute" or "SDI" refers to Sonoran Desert Institute.

DEAC
DISTANCE EDUCATION ACCREDITING COMMISSION

Sonoran Desert Institute is accredited by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission.

Effective Dates January 2026 - December 2026

CONTACT INFORMATION

Sonoran Desert Institute
1555 W. University Dr., Suite 103
Tempe, AZ 85281

Phone: (480) 314-2102 or Toll Free 1-800-336-8939
www.sdi.edu

General Inquiries: info@sdi.edu
Student Services: students@sdi.edu
Admissions Department: admissions@sdi.edu

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to Sonoran Desert Institute (SDI)! We are pleased that you have chosen to pursue your studies with us and think you will find SDI to be a truly unique institution.

SDI is a 100% employee-owned, private, accredited, online institution focusing exclusively on distinct, specialized industries. Currently offering undergraduate programs in uncrewed technology and firearms technology, our curriculum includes certificates and associate degree level options for students pursuing an education in these fields of study.

We proudly serve the military community as part of our student population, supported by staff and faculty that also have a significant representation of veterans. SDI is recognized as an Arizona Veterans Supportive Campus and has earned the Gold Medallion Award recognition for veteran employment annually since 2020 by meeting the requirements of the HIRE Vets Act of 2017 (Public Law 115-31).

More than 12,000 credentials have been earned by our graduates and our student-focused model is evidenced by the high satisfaction rates reported by those completing our programs. We consider our ability to bring the lab experience to the student through our online delivery, supported with materials to achieve the learning outcomes as our key differentiator from other schools. Our staff and faculty are committed to your success, and we are here to guide you throughout your educational journey!

Again, welcome to SDI. We look forward to helping you achieve your academic goals and are excited to see what your future holds!

Sincerely,

Traci Lee

Traci Lee, President
Sonoran Desert Institute

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About Sonoran Desert Institute

HISTORY

Sonoran Desert Institute was founded in 2000, and was approved for training by the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education in 2001. The Institute was accredited in 2004 by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC). The DEAC is listed by the United States Department of Education as a recognized institutional accrediting agency. The DEAC is also recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

At its inception, the Institute offered Gunsmithing as a program, which ultimately became the foundation for SDI's growth. Key to the success of the Institute is its comprehensive approach to easily understood curriculum, attention to providing quality service to its students, and the flexibility of its instructional model. In 2014, SDI began the process with DEAC to seek Title IV certification. Upon approval, the institute submitted its application to the U.S. Department of Education (ED), primarily prompted by the Department of Defense's regulatory change linking eligibility for Active Duty Tuition Assistance to a school's approval and participation in Title IV funding. Recognizing the high percentage of military students, SDI deemed this an important initiative to support our population. SDI began offering Title IV funding to students in 2016.

In fall of 2018, SDI transitioned to become an employee owned company (ESOP). SDI introduced unmanned technology course topics, beginning with the Certificate in Unmanned Technology – Aerial Systems program, in January 2022. DEAC granted SDI a 5-year renewal of accreditation in June 2023 and SDI began to offer the Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist program in November of 2023. In December of 2024, SDI began offering the Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology and a modified version of its existing unmanned certificate, renamed the Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems. In 2025, Trade Training Company acquired several respected, in-person CDL training schools: Apex Technical Institute in Kansas, CL Driving School in North Carolina, and Interstate Truck Driving School in Minnesota. These CDL schools are outside the scope of accreditation granted by the DEAC. SDI takes pride in upholding the standards of multiple regulatory bodies while continuing a student centric focus on academic quality and superior service to students!

VISION

Sonoran Desert Institute's students will develop specialized job skills empowering them to be outstanding employees, skilled hobbyists, and responsible workplace leaders. Each student will be committed to improving their knowledge and skills. SDI's graduates will make decisions based on sound judgment, technical competency, and an awareness of the connections of their academic discipline and their community. SDI will accomplish these outcomes by continually improving its curricula, instructional delivery, and service, while successfully building partnerships with the students, the community, and the industries it serves.

MISSION

To provide students with current, industry-driven, quality education with a focus on specialized programs delivered through online distance education and practical application. SDI is committed to continuous improvement in our instructional processes and the overall student experience. We accomplish this through student and graduate achievement and satisfaction as well as our stakeholder relationships and reputation in the markets we serve.

CORE VALUES

Continuous Improvement
It's our goal to get better every day, to positively impact and support our industry, and to motivate others to drive towards continuous improvement in their knowledge, skills, businesses, and lives.

Ownership Mentality
We live an "Own It" life — we believe in taking ownership and accountability for the success of SDI and its students and partners every day.

Relevance
We will never stop enhancing the relevance and recognition of SDI as a post-secondary education leader, and those efforts will maintain the relevance of our students, graduates, and partners.

Sustainability & Growth
We will ensure the growth and future success of our school, students, and graduates through our commitment to cultivating and sustaining SDI's mission and vision.

Uncompromising Ethics & Integrity
SDI team members will act ethically and with integrity at all times, and we will expect and endorse that value in others.

Student Achievement
At SDI, we are passionate about cultivating student achievement through service and support.

Meaningful Relationships
In all we do, we will build, invest in, and maintain meaningful relationships.

ACCREDITATION AND APPROVALS

Sonoran Desert Institute has demonstrated the ability to meet criteria for academic and consumer rights standards from federal and state agencies as well as non-governmental agencies. These standards ensure quality education through sound financial operations, approved programs of study, qualified instructors, and approved recruitment and admissions policies. Reviews and renewals of accreditation are conducted periodically as required.

Sonoran Desert Institute is accredited by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC).

Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC)
1101 17th Street NW, Suite 808
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-234-5100 | Fax: 202-332-1386
Website: www.deac.org

Sonoran Desert Institute is licensed by the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education.

Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education
1740 W. Adams, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Phone: 602-542-5709 | Fax: 602-542-1253
Website: https://ppse.az.gov/

Sonoran Desert Institute is registered as an out-of-state institution with the California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education (BPPE) to enroll California students.

Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education
P.O. Box 980818
West Sacramento, CA 95798-0818
Phone: 888-370-7589
Website: www.bppe.ca.gov

Sonoran Desert Institute participates in the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements.

The Associate of Science in Firearms Technology (ASFT), Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology (ASUT), Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing (CFTG), Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist (CFTHS), and Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems (CUTAS) programs are approved by the Arizona State Approving Agency for use of VA Education benefits.

In recognition of the importance of ethical practices in the admissions process, Sonoran Desert Institute subscribes to the Statement of Principles of Good Practice in College Admission and Recruitment, which has been approved by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Counselors (AACRAO).

SDI has signed the Department of Defense Voluntary Education Partnership Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), agrees to the Principles of Excellence established by the Executive Order (EO) 13607, and is eligible to participate in military TA.

MEMBERSHIPS

Professional affiliations and memberships provide opportunities and access to a wealth of information for our employees, faculty and students. SDI currently participates as a member of the following organizations and associations:

- Aerospace Arizona
- Ahead Association of Higher Education and Disability
- American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
- Arizona Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (AASFAA)
- Arizona Private School Association (APSA)
- Arizona Veterans Program Association (AVPA)
- Arizona Veteran Supportive Campus (AVSC)
- Arizona Veteran Supportive Employer (AVSE)
- Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)
- Council of College and Military Educators (CCME)
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
- Federal Aviation Administration Uncrewed Aircraft Systems Collegiate Training Initiative (FAA-UAS-CTI)
- Florida Advisory Council on Military Education (FL ACME)
- HIRE Vets Gold Medallion Awardee
- National Association of Colleges and Employers
- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
- National Association of Veterans' Program Administrators (NAVPA)
- National Center for Employee Ownership (NCEO)
- National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF)
- Online Learning Consortium (OLC)
- The Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI)
- Women and Drones

SUCCESS MEASURES

Success measures for the Institute are evidence of student learning through the quantifying and monitoring of the instructional experience of SDI students. The academic assessment process provides the means for governing and monitoring the educational experience of our students, and for gathering evidence of student learning.

Success Indicator	ASFT Rate	CFTG Rate	CFTHS Rate	CUTAS Rate
Students surveyed who said they achieved their learning goals	95%	91%	88%	85%
Students surveyed who would recommend SDI to a friend	94%	92%	100%	85%
Students surveyed who were satisfied with their studies	95%	94%	94%	88%

**Information provided covers responses from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.*

OFFICE HOURS

Sonoran Desert Institute is open throughout the year to serve current, prospective, and prior students. SDI supports a remote workforce, with employees working from multiple time zones. Advisors and faculty provide their students with typical working hours to establish expectations and optimize communication.

Administrative Office Hours

Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 5:00 pm (Arizona Time)
Note that Arizona does not switch to Daylight Saving Time. Therefore, the office hours remain Mountain Standard Time year-round, which aligns with Pacific Daylight Time during the period in which daylight savings time is followed.

Holidays

The online classroom is available during holidays. However, the administrative offices will be closed during the holidays listed below. When the holidays fall on the weekend, SDI will typically align with the federal observance, usually the Friday prior or the Monday following such holiday. Current students will be informed of specific office closures by email and/or website and social media updates.

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day
President's Day
Memorial Day
Juneteenth
Independence Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

FACILITIES INFORMATION

All SDI online programs are delivered entirely online, therefore, the facilities are primarily designed to support employees who service the needs of students. In fall of 2018, SDI relocated from Scottsdale to a new office space centrally located in Tempe, AZ. SDI occupies just under 6,200 square feet of a building in a complex called Workspace. The space provides for both administrative use and a fulfillment warehouse to handle shipments of materials to SDI students. SDI has a combined workforce of local office employees and remote workers across the United States. This supports the commitment to service students who are also throughout the United States in multiple time zones. The local office employees also are offered flexible work schedules, which allows optimal use of space supported by employees working remotely. Additional warehouse space is located in Glendale, AZ.

The institution's systems allow for access to necessary information 24/7 from virtually any location with appropriate connectivity, minimizing dependency on physical space and equipment. This includes the student information system, the online classroom, email, and voice over internet protocol (VOIP) telephony. The building is equipped with technology to support presentations during meetings and solid connectivity for those working from the office.

Although most students communicate with SDI through phone, email and internet, the office provides meeting space for prospective students to meet with admissions representatives and current students and graduates to meet with advisors, as needed. SDI has established a virtual military and veterans center to support our military affiliated community. However, we will also provide necessary work space and equipment as needed to further support SDI military students as needed.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

SDI's online classroom is generally available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to provide the most flexibility for students to work at their convenience. Students will be notified in advance of any scheduled down times for system maintenance. Faculty hours and availability vary. Students will be provided with general guidelines by faculty for each course during their program of study. There is a one-week break between each semester during which no classes are scheduled. Students can review their term dates and class schedules on the Student Portal.

Semester Schedules

SDI offers start dates every 4-5 weeks for the following programs:

- Associate of Science in Firearms Technology Degree
- Certificate of Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing

Semesters are 16 weeks in length with courses of various lengths, typically 8 weeks and 4 weeks, within the semester.

SDI offers start dates every 5-6 weeks for the following programs:

- Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology Degree
- Certificate of Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems
- Certificate of Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist

Semesters are 20 weeks in length with 5-week courses within the semester.

For all online programs:

The academic week begins at midnight Monday through 11:59 pm Sunday, Arizona time. Courses are therefore scheduled to begin on Mondays and end on Sundays, regardless of how any holidays fall.

2026

Start Dates For ASFT and CFTG Programs	
January 26, 2026	July 27, 2026
March 2, 2026	August 24, 2026
March 30, 2026	September 21, 2026
April 27, 2026	October 26, 2026
May 25, 2026	November 23, 2026
June 29, 2026	December 21, 2026

Start Dates For ASUT, CFTHS, and CUTAS Program	
January 12, 2026	July 13, 2026
February 16, 2026	August 17, 2026
March 23, 2026	September 21, 2026
April 27, 2026	November 2, 2026
June 8, 2026	December 7, 2026

2027

Start Dates For ASFT and CFTG Programs	
January 18, 2027	July 19, 2027
February 22, 2027	August 16, 2027
March 22, 2027	September 13, 2027
April 19, 2027	October 18, 2027
May 17, 2027	November 15, 2027
June 21, 2027	December 13, 2027

Start Dates For ASUT, CFTHS, and CUTAS Programs	
January 11, 2027	July 12, 2027
February 15, 2027	August 23, 2027
March 29, 2027	September 27, 2027
May 3, 2027	November 1, 2027
June 7, 2027	December 6, 2027

FEDERAL STUDENT AID (FSA) ACADEMIC YEARS

Students interested in Federal Student Aid (FSA) must establish the academic year during which they wish to receive aid. The tables below provide dates for SDI semesters available to students receiving FSA and indicate how they are combined into academic years for FSA purposes.

FSA academic years for ASFT and CFTG are 32 weeks in length consisting of two 16-week semesters. The table below shows semesters schedules for start dates through 2027.

Start Dates	Semester 1 End	Semester 2 Begin	Semester 2 End	Semester 3 Begin	Semester 3 End	Semester 4 Begin	Semester 4 End
1/26/2026	5/17/2026	5/25/2026	9/13/2026	9/21/2026	1/10/2027	1/18/2027	5/9/2027
3/2/2026	6/21/2026	6/29/2026	10/18/2026	10/26/2026	2/14/2027	2/22/2027	6/13/2027
3/30/2026	7/19/2026	7/27/2026	11/15/2026	11/23/2026	3/14/2027	3/22/2027	7/11/2027
4/27/2026	8/16/2026	8/24/2026	12/13/2026	12/21/2026	4/11/2027	4/19/2027	8/8/2027
5/25/2026	9/13/2026	9/21/2026	1/10/2027	1/18/2027	5/9/2027	5/17/2027	9/5/2027
6/29/2026	10/18/2026	10/26/2026	2/14/2027	2/22/2027	6/13/2027	6/21/2027	10/10/2027
7/27/2026	11/15/2026	11/23/2026	3/14/2027	3/22/2027	7/11/2027	7/19/2027	11/7/2027
8/24/2026	12/13/2026	12/21/2026	4/11/2027	4/19/2027	8/8/2027	8/16/2027	12/5/2027
9/21/2026	1/10/2027	1/18/2027	5/9/2027	5/17/2027	9/5/2027	9/13/2027	1/2/2028
10/26/2026	2/14/2027	2/22/2027	6/13/2027	6/21/2027	10/10/2027	10/18/2027	2/6/2028
11/23/2026	3/14/2027	3/22/2027	7/11/2027	7/19/2027	11/7/2027	11/15/2027	3/5/2028
12/21/2026	4/11/2027	4/19/2027	8/8/2027	8/16/2027	12/5/2027	12/13/2027	4/2/2028
1/18/2027	5/9/2027	5/17/2027	9/5/2027	9/13/2027	1/2/2028	1/10/2028	4/30/2028
2/22/2027	6/13/2027	6/21/2027	10/10/2027	10/18/2027	2/6/2028	2/14/2028	6/4/2028
3/22/2027	7/11/2027	7/19/2027	11/7/2027	11/15/2027	3/5/2028	3/13/2028	7/2/2028
4/19/2027	8/8/2027	8/16/2027	12/5/2027	12/13/2027	4/2/2028	4/10/2028	7/30/2028
5/17/2027	9/5/2027	9/13/2027	1/2/2028	1/10/2028	4/30/2028	5/8/2028	8/27/2028
6/21/2027	10/10/2027	10/18/2027	2/6/2028	2/14/2028	6/4/2028	6/12/2028	10/1/2028
7/19/2027	11/7/2027	11/15/2027	3/5/2028	3/13/2028	7/2/2028	7/10/2028	10/29/2028
8/16/2027	12/5/2027	12/13/2027	4/2/2028	4/10/2028	7/30/2028	8/7/2028	11/26/2028
9/13/2027	1/2/2028	1/10/2028	4/30/2028	5/8/2028	8/27/2028	9/4/2028	12/24/2028
10/18/2027	2/6/2028	2/14/2028	6/4/2028	6/12/2028	10/1/2028	10/9/2028	1/28/2029
11/15/2027	3/5/2028	3/13/2028	7/2/2028	7/10/2028	10/29/2028	11/6/2028	2/25/2029
12/13/2027	4/2/2028	4/10/2028	7/30/2028	8/7/2028	11/26/2028	12/4/2028	3/25/2029

FSA academic years for ASUT, CUTAS, and CFTHS are 40 weeks in length consisting of two 20-week semesters. Some programs may be completed in one semester with a full-time credit load. The table below shows semesters schedules for start dates through 2027.

Start Dates	Semester 1 End	Semester 2 Begin	Semester 2 End	Semester 3 Begin	Semester 3 End	Semester 4 Begin	Semester 4 End
1/12/2026	2/15/2026	2/16/2026	3/22/2026	3/23/2026	4/26/2026	4/27/2026	5/31/2026
2/16/2026	3/22/2026	3/23/2026	4/26/2026	4/27/2026	5/31/2026	6/1/2026	7/5/2026
3/23/2026	4/26/2026	4/27/2026	5/31/2026	6/1/2026	7/5/2026	7/6/2026	8/9/2026
4/27/2026	5/31/2026	6/1/2026	7/5/2026	7/6/2026	8/9/2026	8/10/2026	9/13/2026
6/8/2026	7/12/2026	7/13/2026	8/16/2026	8/17/2026	9/20/2026	9/21/2026	10/25/2026
7/13/2026	8/16/2026	8/17/2026	9/20/2026	9/21/2026	10/25/2026	10/26/2026	11/29/2026
8/17/2026	9/20/2026	9/21/2026	10/25/2026	10/26/2026	11/29/2026	11/30/2026	1/3/2027
9/21/2026	10/25/2026	10/26/2026	11/29/2026	11/30/2026	1/3/2027	1/4/2027	2/7/2027
11/2/2026	12/6/2026	12/7/2026	1/10/2027	1/11/2027	2/14/2027	2/15/2027	3/21/2027
12/7/2026	1/10/2027	1/11/2027	2/14/2027	2/15/2027	3/21/2027	3/22/2027	4/25/2027
1/11/2027	2/14/2027	2/15/2027	3/21/2027	3/22/2027	4/25/2027	4/26/2027	5/30/2027
2/15/2027	3/21/2027	3/22/2027	4/25/2027	4/26/2027	5/30/2027	5/31/2027	7/4/2027
3/29/2027	5/2/2027	5/3/2027	6/6/2027	6/7/2027	7/11/2027	7/12/2027	8/15/2027
5/3/2027	6/6/2027	6/7/2027	7/11/2027	7/12/2027	8/15/2027	8/16/2027	9/19/2027
6/7/2027	7/11/2027	7/12/2027	8/15/2027	8/16/2027	9/19/2027	9/20/2027	10/24/2027
7/12/2027	8/15/2027	8/16/2027	9/19/2027	9/20/2027	10/24/2027	10/25/2027	11/28/2027
8/23/2027	9/26/2027	9/27/2027	10/31/2027	11/1/2027	12/5/2027	12/6/2027	1/9/2028
9/27/2027	10/31/2027	11/1/2027	12/5/2027	12/6/2027	1/9/2028	1/10/2028	2/13/2028
11/1/2027	12/5/2027	12/6/2027	1/9/2028	1/10/2028	2/13/2028	2/14/2028	3/19/2028
12/6/2027	1/9/2028	1/10/2028	2/13/2028	2/14/2028	3/19/2028	3/20/2028	4/23/2028

OWNERSHIP INFORMATION

Trade Training Company, LLC (TTC) d/b/a Sonoran Desert Institute (SDI) is registered with the Arizona Corporation Commission. The mailing address of TTC and SDI is 1555 W. University Dr., Suite 103, Tempe, AZ 85281.

TTC is owned by SDI Education Inc., an S-Corporation that was converted from a prior LLC as part of the strategy to enable the institution to become an employee owned company. To complete that transition, SDI Education, Inc. ESOP Trust was established in September 2018, as the owner of SDI Education, Inc.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Douglas Feeney, Chair

Jeff Cropsey, Director

Lawrence Gudis, Director

Jim Killin, Director

Traci Lee, Director

SDI ADMINISTRATION

Traci Lee, President – MA in Organizational Management

Chris Caraway, Chief Operating Officer – BS in Business Administration

Jeff Lagasse, Chief Financial Officer – MPA

Jennifer McInnis, Chief Marketing Officer – BS in Broadcast Journalism

Jarred McNeely, Chief Academic Officer – MS in Organizational Leadership

Rob Exham, Vice President of Student Finance – BA in Business Communication

Jason Larson, Vice President of Admissions – BS in Marketing

Janell McIntyre, Registrar – AAS in Business Administration

Patrick Versace, Vice President of Information Technology – MS in Computer Information Systems

Jeff Steinberg, CDL President, Founder of Apex Technical Institute

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SDI Contact Information

Sonoran Desert Institute offers assistance and resources to students and alumni for administrative, instructional, and financial requests. SDI provides students with specific advisor and faculty contact information throughout their program of study. We have also established the following departmental email addresses for your convenience.

Sonoran Desert Institute
1555 W. University Dr., Suite 103
Tempe, AZ 85281

Phone: (480) 314-2102 or Toll Free (800) 336-8939
Website: www.sdi.edu

Department email addresses:

Admissions – admissions@sdi.edu
General Inquiries – info@sdi.edu
Student Accounts/Bursar - StudentAccounts@sdi.edu
Student Services – students@sdi.edu
Financial Services – financialservices@sdi.edu
Alumni Services – alumniservices@sdi.edu
Military and Veteran Services – MVS@sdi.edu
Office of the Registrar – registrars@sdi.edu

ADMISSIONS

SDI's Admissions department is available to provide assistance and guidance to prospective students during the application process. This includes providing information regarding the programs offered and application procedures.

STUDENT SERVICES

SDI's Student Services department is available to provide assistance and guidance to students regarding their academic progression during their program of study. The primary role of Student Services includes monitoring academic progress, and keeping students informed of Institute policies and procedures to support the student through program completion and graduation. Students will be assigned to a Student Success Coach who serves as a primary point of contact for these academic-related matters.

STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES

SDI's Student Financial Services department is available to assist students with financial matters related to their program of study. This includes guidance on potential funding options, establishing payment plans, discussing student account transactions, and any other relevant financial information.

MILITARY AND VETERAN SERVICES

The SDI Military and Veteran Services department assists students in achieving academic, personal, and professional success. This includes advocacy and support for our military-connected students by offering outreach, networking, and personalized assistance.

REGISTRAR SERVICES

SDI's Registrar department is available to assist students, graduates, and other requestors with a variety of services while ensuring compliance with all regulatory agencies and applicable privacy laws. This includes transcript requests, enrollment verifications, investigative requests, and issuance of graduation documents while maintaining the integrity of student records and academic policies.

Transcript Request

Transcripts may be requested when official documentation of the student's academic record is needed. Students and alumni can order official transcripts through their Student Portal and may contact transcripts@sdi.edu for guidance on how to place a transcript order. In support of continuing education as well as personal and professional pursuits, SDI provides transcripts at no cost to the student.

FedEx requests are available for students who need to expedite delivery of an official paper transcript to a physical street address. Costs may vary for FedEx delivery options and all FedEx shipping charges are the responsibility of the student, paid directly to the transcript service.

Replacement Diplomas & Certificates

If a printed diploma or certificate of completion was permanently lost, stolen or destroyed, a replacement can be ordered from the Office of the Registrar and may be subject to a fee up to $50.00, plus shipping and handling, paid directly to the credential service.

Enrollment Verifications and Investigative Requests

A signed authorization to release information must be submitted with all third party requests to registrars@sdi.edu.

ALUMNI/CAREER SERVICES

SDI's Alumni Services department provides assistance to graduates to pursue additional endeavors. This includes identifying potential employers and employment opportunities, preparing for the job pursuit process including preparation and submission of resume, leveraging professional social media and other online tools, optimizing the interview process, etc. SDI also wants to know what our students continue to do after graduating. The Alumni Services department wants feedback on where our graduates are working, if they continue their college education, if they open their own business or anything else that may help us in our efforts to support students during and after their program of study. We encourage students and graduates to keep in touch!

SDI
SONORAN
DESERT
INSTITUTE

Funding Policies and Procedures

FUNDING OPTIONS

SDI students may be eligible for various types of financial assistance, depending on the program or study and specific requirements for each funding source. Students are expected to select the desired option(s) and provide appropriate documentation and/or payment as indicated for each source. Students are assigned to a Financial Services Advisor based on their intended funding source(s).

Generally speaking, the available options include:

- Self Pay
- Employer/Agency/Third Party
- Military Benefits (Veteran and Active Duty)
- Federal Student Aid (FSA/Title IV)

Deadlines: Students must be approved for funding no later than 14 days prior to the scheduled start date. SDI starts new students each month. See website or catalog for upcoming start dates. Continued enrollment also requires good financial standing and/or approved funding prior to the new semester start. See details of required documentation and/or approvals based on funding option(s) used.

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Funding Type	Prior to Program Start Date	Prior to Subsequent Semester(s)/Term(s)
Self Pay	• Initial Payment • SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement	• Must be current in payments • Updated SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement (if applicable)
Private Loans	• Loan Application • Accepted loan offer	• Loan Application • Accepted loan offer
Agency/Third Party/Employer	• Corresponding document from payor confirming eligibility	• Must be current in payments • New confirmation document as needed
VA-33	• School has confirmed eligibility for benefits • If only eligible at partial tier (less than 100%), must also have paid balance or SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement and made arrangement for initial payment	• Must be current in payments • Signed SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement (if applicable)
Veterans Vocational Rehabilitation (Chapter 31)	• Must have approved Form 28-1905 on file	• Must be current in payments from VA
VA- 30, 35 and 1606	• Initial Payment • SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement	• Must be current in payments • SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement
Tuition Assistance (Active Duty/Reserves)	• Valid TA approval letter(s)	• Valid course TA voucher(s)
Federal Student Aid (FSA)	• Institutional Application for Financial Aid • Valid ISIR • If FSA does not cover all costs, must also have paid balance or signed an SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement and made initial payment	• Must be current in payments • SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement (if applicable)

FUNDING DETAILS

SDI students may be eligible for a variety of financial assistance options based on their program of study and the specific eligibility requirements of each funding source. This section provides additional detail on each of the options summarized above.

SELF PAY

	No Interest Payment Plan	Extended Payment Plan (Interest-Bearing)
Eligibility	Full and partial cash-pay students	Full and partial cash-pay students
Interest Charged	No	Yes
Payment Duration	Payments must be completed by program end	Payments can extend beyond program completion
Minimum Monthly Payment	Varies	$400
Initial Payment Required	Yes	Yes
Automatic Payment Authorization	Required	Optional

Full Pay Option: Students are encouraged to consider options including 529 savings plans, and other savings that allow a student to pay in full for the program or on a semester-by-semester basis while attending. Students who commit to a full pay option may pay for the program in full or pay by semester for the actual charges by the first day of each semester. Students may pay for the program or current term/semester before the scheduled start date.

Requirements:

- If paid in full for the program, there are no additional documentation requirements. If paying by term/semester, student must complete the "SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement" indicating their authorization to process their credit card payments.

Payment Plan Option (No Interest): SDI offers students the option to make interest-free payments with no interest during their program of study. Although payment plans vary based on the program cost, length and other funding, SDI requires an initial payment prior to starting courses. Students are asked to authorize automatic payments in accordance with the established payment plan. Credit card payments are processed through a secure third-party processor. All payments must be completed prior to program completion. Early payments are permitted without penalty.

Requirements:

- Student must complete the "SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement" indicating their authorization for recurring credit card payments. The initial payment is due before the scheduled start date. All payments scheduled during a term must be paid in full before the student can advance to the next term.

Extended Payment Plan (Interest-Bearing)
SDI offers full and partial cash-pay students an extended payment plan with interest for lower monthly payments. This plan requires a minimum monthly payment of $400 and allows payments beyond program completion. This payment option is serviced by a third party provider. Students selecting this option must sign a separate agreement with the third-party servicer outlining repayment terms and interest.

Early payments are permitted without penalty.

General Payment Requirements

- An initial payment is required before the program start date.
- Students utilizing the no interest payment plans must authorize automatic payments via the SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement.
- Credit card payments are securely processed through a third-party provider.
- All payments must be completed before receiving program credentials.
- Accounts with unpaid balances may be sent to collections.

AGENCY/THIRD PARTY/EMPLOYER

Student pays SDI directly for tuition and fees, and then is reimbursed, or SDI is paid directly by the Agency/Third Party/ Employer. Employers and other agencies, such as vocational rehabilitation at the state level, may be available to assist students in funding their education. Specific requirements vary by employer or agency.

Requirements:

- If the Agency/Third Party /Employer will pay SDI directly, student must submit confirmation of eligibility from the payor before starting.
- If the student will be reimbursed instead of SDI being paid directly by the Agency/Third Party/Employer, student must complete the SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement as described in the Self Pay section above.
- Payment must be received prior to student starting each subsequent term.

PRIVATE LOANS

Students may have other options for student loans through private lenders. SDI does not have any preferred lenders, but will work with students as necessary.

MILITARY BENEFITS

Student must apply and the school will certify on a term or semester basis aligned with the funding agencies requirements. Note that the school is required to provide updated information to various agencies regarding student progress, including credit load adjustments and grades, which may impact eligibility. Details vary by chapter and agency. The following information is provided for reference but, students should always check directly with military resources for the most current information specific to their circumstances.

Veterans Assistance

The Associate of Science in Firearms Technology, the Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology, Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing, Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist, and Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems programs are approved by the Arizona State Approving Agency for use of GI Bill® Benefits, including Chapters 30, 31, 33, 35, and 1606. Eligible veterans and dependents can access additional information and apply online at www.benefits.va.gov/gibill. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) determines student eligibility. Eligibility may be impacted by many factors, including other schools attended, annual funding caps, and enrollment status.

SDI complies with the VA's requirements of 38 USC 3679(e) which requires schools to allow students to participate in any given course and other educational resources without restrictions or penalties if the course is approved for eligibility under chapters 31 or 33, even if disbursement of funding is delayed. Covered students will not be required to provide alternative funding when such funding is anticipated based on confirmation of eligibility.

Note that although SDI's full-time enrollment status requires 12 semester credits during a 16 or 20 week term, the VA considers eligibility based on course-specific credit hours and durations during the semester. Students are typically enrolled in multiple courses during a term and the modular nature of the schedule may impact the VA's calculation, which may vary during the semester based on actual scheduled courses. The table below illustrates the enrollment status for each individual course, which, when combined, can impact the actual enrollment status for the period.

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill.

Credit Hours	Course Length	VA Enrollment Status
4	8 weeks	3/4 time
4	5 weeks	Full time
3	8 weeks	1/2 time
2	4 weeks	3/4 time
1	4 weeks	< 1/2 time
3	5 weeks	3/4 time
1	5 weeks	1/4 time

VA - Chapter 33

The tuition and fees are paid directly to the school on behalf of the student when the school's enrollment certification is processed. That payment is prorated by the student's benefit level. The housing allowance is paid directly to the student and eligibility is based on the rate of pursuit using a credit hour formula. VA students are eligible if the student's rate of pursuit is more than 50%. Individuals only enrolled in distance learning courses will be eligible for a monthly housing allowance equal to 50% of the national average of all Basic Allowances for Housing. Rates will be multiplied by the rate of pursuit rounded to the nearest multiple of 10.

Requirements:

- Students apply for VA benefits online: www.va.gov/education/how-to-apply/.
  - » If student has already applied and is changing schools, use VA Form 22-1995 or VA Form 22-5495
- Students should sign up for benefits at ebenefits.va.gov to monitor eligibility related information.
- Students must verify their enrollment with the VA monthly. Students can verify their enrollment status in one of two ways:
  - » Text messaging: Students who choose VA's "Opt-In" features will receive a text message each month prompting them to verify their enrollment status.
  - » Telephone: Students may call the Education Call Center (ECC) at (888) 442-4551 to verify their enrollment status.

If students are eligible for a tier less than 100%, arrangements must be made to pay the remaining balance via self pay as outlined earlier, or another funding option such as Federal Student Aid (FSA).

Veteran Readiness and Employment (Chapter 31)

Veteran Readiness and Employment is a program designed to assist eligible veterans in achieving maximum independence in their daily life and aid them in becoming a contributing part of society. Students seeking assistance under this program should contact the Veteran Readiness and Employment Department of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Requirements:

- Chapter 31 – School must receive the approved Form 28-1905 by the Friday before the scheduled start date. The school invoices VA by semester and payment is made directly to the school.

VA Chapters 30, 35 and 1606

VA makes payments directly to students. Students make monthly payments to the school throughout the program, term, or semester.

Requirements:

- Student should complete the "SDI Student Payment Plan Agreement" to establish the credit card on file for monthly charges or pay the school by check. The initial payment is due prior to the start date. Student must be current in payments before a new term/semester is scheduled and/or certified for funding.
- Students must verify their enrollment with the VA monthly (WAVE or IVR). WAVE is on the Education Service website at https://www.gibill.va.gov/wave/index.do. IVR allows students to "phone in" (1-877-823-2378) their monthly verification if there are no changes to the enrollment during the previous month.
- Note: Chapter 35 students do not have to verify their enrollment like the other chapters.

Yellow Ribbon

The Yellow Ribbon Program is an agreement between the VA and participating institutions to cover all or a portion of tuition and fees charged after a student has exceeded the yearly maximum benefit rate. SDI is a Yellow Ribbon participating institution. More information about Yellow Ribbon can be found on the VA website at: https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits/post-9-11/yellow-ribbon-program/.

Active Duty Tuition Assistance (TA)

The Department of Defense (DoD) makes payments directly to the school.

Requirements:

- Students need to provide SDI with their course TA voucher prior to beginning the course.
- Service Members in the Coast Guard, Navy, Air Force, Space Force, and Army must request course TA funding at least 7 days prior to a course start date.
- Service Members in the Marines must request course TA funding at least 14 days prior to a course start date.

Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES)

SDI programs are approved to participate in DANTES. For information on this program, students should contact their base Education Services Officer (ESO) for details.

Military Tuition Assistance (TA)

Military Tuition Assistance (TA) Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve servicemembers may be eligible for tuition assistance. TA rate, credit cap, and service-specific eligibility criteria and management controls are determined by each Military Service. Before enrollment, military service members should contact their Installation Education Services Office for details.

Federal Student Aid (FSA)

Student must complete the necessary application process to determine eligibility for funding prior to starting classes.

Requirements:

- School must have a complete Institutional Application for Financial Aid on file
- School must have received a valid Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR)
- School must have a valid, payable ISIR before student progresses into a subsequent semester

FSA FUNDING SOURCES

Federal Student Aid (FSA) funds are grants and loans provided by the federal government to cover expenses such as tuition and fees and living costs associated with the programs cost of attendance. To be eligible for FSA, a student must apply by completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at studentaid.gov and meet the following general eligibility requirements:

- Be a U.S. citizen, a U.S. national, or an eligible non-citizen
- Have a valid Social Security number
- Possess a high school diploma, or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate
- Enrolled at least less than half time for Pell
- Enrolled at least half time for loans
- Demonstrate financial need (except for some loan programs)
- Not owe a refund on a federal student grant and not in default on federal student loan
- Sign a statement on the FAFSA certifying that the student does not owe a refund on a federal student grant and is not in default on a federal student loan

In addition, students who are selected for a process called Verification, must successfully complete Verification to receive FSA disbursements.

SDI offers the following FSA grants and loans for eligible students attending the Associate of Science in Firearms Technology Program, Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology Program, Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing, Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist, and/or the Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems program:

Federal Pell Grant Program

The Federal Pell Grant is a grant that does not have to be repaid. A student's eligibility for a Pell Grant is calculated using a formula developed by the U.S. Congress and information submitted by the student on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The amount awarded to a student depends on the student's financial need which is determined by the cost of attendance, student aid index (SAI) and enrollment intensity (number of credit hours in payment period). The Federal Pell Grant has a maximum lifetime eligibility of 600%, or 12 semesters of eligibility. Only Undergraduate students are eligible for the grant; therefore, once you have earned a baccalaureate degree, or your first professional degree, or have used up all 12 semesters of your eligibility, you are no longer eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant.

Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant Program

This program is another form of aid that does not have to be repaid. However, unlike the Pell Grant program, it is not based on financial need. The Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant Program (IASG) is intended to assist students who are not Pell-eligible, but whose parent or guardian died as a result of military service in Iraq or Afghanistan after September 11, 2001 and who, at the time of the parent's or guardian's death, were less than 24 years old or were enrolled in college at least part-time. The amount awarded to any eligible student is equal to the maximum Pell Grant for the award year, not to exceed the cost of attendance.

William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program

Federal loans provided through the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program are referred to as Direct Loans, because the federal government, through the U.S. Department of Education, is the lender. Unlike grants, student loans are borrowed money that students are legally obligated to repay, with interest. Students must maintain an enrollment status of at least half-time to be eligible for Direct Loans. Additionally, all first-time Direct Loan borrowers must complete a Master Promissory Note (MPN) at https://studentaid.gov/mpn/ and Entrance Counseling at https://studentaid.gov/counseling-selection before funds will be disbursed. Repayment begins after a six (6)-month grace period following graduation, withdrawal from school, or if the student's enrollment status is less-than-half-time.

Direct Loans options for eligible SDI associate degree and certificate seeking students include:

- Direct Subsidized Stafford Loans: Subsidized loans are awarded only to undergraduate students on the basis of financial need. If a student is eligible for a subsidized loan, the U.S. Department of Education will pay (subsidize) the interest on the loan while the student is in school in at least half-time enrollment status, for the first six (6) months after the student leaves school and during periods of deferment.
- Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans: Unlike subsidized loans, financial need is not required to receive an unsubsidized loan and the borrower is responsible for interest that accrues on Direct Unsubsidized Loans from the time the loan is disbursed until it is paid in full.

Interest Rates and Fees:

When borrowing Federal Student Aid, it is important to understand that those loans will be required to be paid with interest. In addition, loan fees are assessed at the time of disbursing loans. This means, the total loan amount will be less the loan fee however, you will still be responsible for repaying the full amount.

Every year, interest rates and loan fees are updated. Please reference Interest Rates and Fees at https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/loans/interest-rates for full details and dates of rates and fees.

Aggregate Loan Limits:

Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans have annual loan limits based on the student's dependency status, grade level, and lifetime aggregate limits:

Annual Loan Limits	
Dependent Undergraduate Students (Except students whose parents cannot obtain Direct PLUS Loans)	
First Year Total (maximum $3,500 subsidized)	$5,500
Second Year Total (maximum $4,500 subsidized)	$6,500
Independent Undergraduate Students (and dependent students whose parent cannot obtain Direct PLUS Loans)	
First Year Total (maximum $3,500 subsidized)	$9,500
Second Year Total (maximum $4,500 subsidized)	$10,500

Aggregate Loan Limits			
Dependent Undergraduate Student		**Independent Undergraduate Student**	
Subsidized	Total Subsidized and Unsubsidized	Subsidized	Total Subsidized and Unsubsidized
$23,000	$31,000	$23,000	$57,500

To access your annual and aggregate Direct Loans, please reference https://nsldsfap.ed.gov/login. Here you can monitor your loans as well as obtain your loan servicer information.

Before borrowing, remember that loans must be repaid. When considering Federal Student Aid, use the Loan Payment Calculator at https://studentaid.gov/loan-simulator/ to determine how much your monthly payment may be and the U.S. Department of Education Financial Awareness Counseling tool provided at https://studentaid.gov/counseling-selection to assist you with financial management basics, including information about your current loan debt and estimates of your student loan debt levels after graduation.

RETURN OF TITLE IV FUNDS

When a student withdraws from the Institute, federal regulations specify how the school must determine the amount of Title IV program assistance, also referred to as FSA funds, earned by the student.

Federal Pell Grants, Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grants, and Direct Loans
The Institute will use a Department of Education approved refund calculation that determines the percentage of Title IV funds earned by the student. If the student did not receive all of the funds earned, the student might be due a post-withdrawal disbursement. If the post-withdrawal disbursement includes loan funds, the Institute must obtain the student's permission before disbursing funds. Any post-withdrawal funds must be disbursed within 30 days of the date of determination of the student's withdrawal. There are some Title IV funds that a student might have been scheduled to receive that cannot be disbursed once the student withdraws because of other eligibility requirements. For example, if the student is a first-time, first-year undergraduate student and has not completed the first 30 days of his/her program before withdrawal, then the student will not receive any Direct Loan funds that would have been received if the student remained enrolled past the 30th day. If a student receives excess Title IV program funds that must be returned, the Institute must return a portion of the excess equal to the lesser of:

- Student's institutional charges multiplied by the unearned percentage of the student's funds, or
- Entire amount of excess funds

The Institute must return this amount even if it did not keep that amount of the student's Title IV program funds. If the Institute is not required to return all of the excess funds, the student is responsible for the remaining amount. Any loan funds that the student must return must be repaid in accordance with the terms of the Master Promissory Note. That is, the student may make scheduled payments to the holder of the loan according to his or her repayment plan.

The requirements for Return of Title IV program funds when a student withdraws are separate and different than the SDI Institutional Refund Policy (see Refund Policy). Therefore, the student may still owe funds to the Institute to cover unpaid institutional charges.

SDI WAIVERS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

SDI encourages students to seek scholarship and grant opportunities offered by a multitude of agencies. Additionally, the following financial support is available to eligible candidates.

SGT Michael Beckerman Memorial Scholarship

SGT Michael Joe Beckerman was 17½ when he enlisted into the National Guard. SGT Beckerman served two tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and one tour in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. While serving his country on these deployments, SGT Beckerman enrolled in Sonoran Desert Institute and worked toward continuing his education. On 31 December 2010, he made the ultimate sacrifice: SGT Beckerman was killed in action (KIA) in Howz-e Madad, Afghanistan. He is survived by his daughter, Brianna. In memoriam of our student's great sacrifice, the Sonoran Desert Institute proudly presents the SGT Michael Beckerman Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship provides full tuition and fees each semester for two recipients annually, one in the fall and one in the spring.

Initial Eligibility Requirements: The SGT Michael Beckerman Memorial Scholarship is a full academic scholarship for SDI's Associate of Science and Firearms Technology or Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology degree program. All applying candidates must:

- Submit a regular SDI application for enrollment with all relevant supporting documentation.
- Meet eligibility requirements for their selected program of study.
- Be currently serving in good standing or honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces.
- Provide a DD Form 214, NGB Form 22, Service Verification Letter, or Official Verification Letter from the Commanding Officer or Unit verifying military service.
- Demonstrate a commitment to and passion for the firearms industry or uncrewed technology field by answering essay questions.
- Submit a letter of recommendation from a non-family member.
- Begin studying at SDI within six months following the scholarship award.

Continuing Eligibility: Recipients of the SGT Michael Beckerman Memorial Scholarship must:

- Comply with SDI's Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements and clear of any financial holds on their accounts.
- Maintain eligibility requirements for their selected program of study as outlined in Sonoran Desert Institute's Catalog.
- Remain continuously enrolled to maintain scholarship eligibility and achieve a 3.0 Cumulative GPA.

Application: Applicants must complete an SDI Enrollment Application and the SGT Michael Beckerman Memorial Scholarship Application with all relevant supporting documents by the deadlines below. If you have any questions, please contact scholarships@sdi.edu.

- By Noon Mountain Standard Time on November 30 for the spring award.
- By Noon Mountain Standard Time on May 31 for the fall award.

Essay: Applicants must answer the prompt (maximum 1,000 words). The essay will be based on quality, content, organization, and proper formatting, grammar, and spelling.

- The essay prompt will be published on the application and is subject to change during each scholarship cycle.
- The essay should be submitted as a .pdf file that contains a cover page, is double-spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Your viewpoint and the essay's purpose should be clearly established and sustained. The essay should follow the conventions of Standard American English (correct grammar, punctuation, etc.)

Award Procedures: Applicants will receive an email notification regarding their award status approximately 30 days after the scholarship application deadline.

- The chosen recipient must respond within 30 days, indicating their intent to accept the scholarship.
- Current students who are awarded an SDI Scholarship are responsible for the charges obtained within the semester in which they are currently enrolled. The SDI Scholarship will be awarded at the start of the next full semester after the approval date.
- Scholarship recipients may only be awarded this scholarship once in their lifetime. This policy ensures that the available funds can support a broader range of students in achieving their educational goals.

Paul Jackson First Responder Memorial Scholarship

Paul Jackson served in Bravo Co, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment during WWII. As a paratrooper, Mr. Jackson made the jump into Normandy during Operation Overlord, the jump into Holland during Operation Market Garden, and was wounded on 12 January 1945 in Bastogne, Belgium. In honor of Mr. Jackson's service, the Sonoran Desert Institute proudly presents the Paul Jackson First Responder Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship provides full tuition and fees each semester for two recipients, one in the fall and one in the spring.

Initial Eligibility Requirements: The Paul Jackson First Responder Memorial Scholarship is a full academic scholarship for SDI's Associate of Science in Firearms Technology or Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology degree program. All applying candidates must:

- Submit a regular SDI application for enrollment with all relevant supporting documentation.
- Meet eligibility requirements for their selected program of study.
- Be currently serving or retired from the National Guard, military reserves, law enforcement, firefighting, or emergency medical services.
- Provide documentation verifying service.
  - If claiming military service, provide a DD Form 214, NGB Form 22, Service Verification Letter, or Official Verification Letter from the Commanding Officer or Unit verifying military service.
  - If claiming first responder, provide a copy of your current volunteer or employee ID card, a signed affidavit issued from the first responder agency, EMT certification, or pension certificate (if retired).
- Submit a DD214 or NGB22 if post-military service.
- Demonstrate a commitment to and passion for the firearms industry or uncrewed technology field by answering essay questions.
- Submit a letter of recommendation from a non-family member.
- Begin studying at SDI within six months following the scholarship award.

Continuing Eligibility: Recipients of the Paul Jackson First Responder Memorial Scholarship must:

- Comply with SDI's Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements and clear of any financial holds on their accounts.
- Maintain eligibility requirements for their selected program of study as outlined in Sonoran Desert Institute's Catalog.
- Remain continuously enrolled to maintain scholarship eligibility and achieve a 3.0 Cumulative GPA.

Application: Applicants must complete an SDI Enrollment Application and the Paul Jackson First Responder Memorial Scholarship Application with all relevant supporting documents by the deadlines below. If you have any questions, please contact scholarships@sdi.edu.

- By Noon Mountain Standard Time on November 30 for the spring award.
- By Noon Mountain Standard Time on May 31 for the fall award

Essay: Applicants must answer the prompt (maximum 1,000 words). The essay will be based on quality, content, organization, and proper formatting, grammar, and spelling.

- The essay prompt will be published on the application and is subject to change during each scholarship cycle.
- The essay should be submitted as a .pdf file that contains a cover page, is double-spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Your viewpoint and the essay's purpose should be clearly established and sustained. The essay should follow the conventions of Standard American English (correct grammar, punctuation, etc.).

Award Procedures: Applicants will receive an email notification regarding their award status approximately 30 days after the scholarship application deadline.

- The chosen recipient must respond within 30 days, indicating their intent to accept the scholarship.
- Current students who are awarded an SDI Scholarship are responsible for the charges obtained within the semester in which they are currently enrolled. The SDI Scholarship will be awarded at the start of the next full semester after the approval date.
- Scholarship recipients may only be awarded this scholarship once in their lifetime. This policy ensures that the available funds can support a broader range of students in achieving their educational goals.

Master Gunsmith Kip Carpenter Memorial Scholarship Overview

The Master Gunsmith Kip Carpenter Memorial Scholarship honors the legacy of Kip Carpenter, a revered master gunsmith who dedicated his life to craftsmanship, education, and mentorship. This scholarship supports and inspires the next generation of gunsmiths pursuing their education at Sonoran Desert Institute. The scholarship provides full tuition and fees each semester for two recipients, one in the fall and one in the spring.

Initial Eligibility Requirements: The Master Gunsmith Kip Carpenter Memorial Scholarship is a full academic scholarship for SDI's Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing or Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree program. All candidates must:

- Submit a regular SDI application for enrollment with all relevant supporting documentation.
- Meet eligibility requirements for their selected program of study.
- Demonstrate a passion for gunsmithing through personal experience, apprenticeship, professional involvement, or related activities by answering essay questions.
- Highlight any community involvement or volunteer work, particularly in craftsmanship or technical trades by answering essay questions.
- Submit a letter of recommendation from an instructor, employer, professional mentor, or a non-family member.
- Submit a portfolio showcasing gunsmithing projects, technical achievements, or related craftsmanship.

  This portfolio is required and should demonstrate your skills, attention to detail, and commitment to the craft. It may include photos, videos, and documentation of completed projects, in-progress work, or related technical accomplishments.

Acceptable submission formats include:

- A single PDF file with embedded images, descriptions, and links
- A PowerPoint or Google Slides presentation
- A link to a hosted video (e.g., YouTube or Vimeo)

Please ensure your portfolio is clearly labeled with your full name. If submitting a link, make sure it is publicly viewable without login or special access permissions.

Your portfolio must be uploaded as part of the scholarship application.

Continuing Eligibility: Recipients of the Master Gunsmith Kip Carpenter Memorial

Scholarship must:

- Comply with SDI's Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements and clear of any financial holds on their accounts.
- Maintain eligibility requirements for their selected program of study as outlined in Sonoran Desert Institute's Catalog.
- Remain continuously enrolled to maintain scholarship eligibility and achieve a 3.0 Cumulative GPA.

Application: Applicants must complete an SDI Enrollment Application and the Master Gunsmith Kip Carpenter Memorial Scholarship Application with all relevant supporting documents by the deadlines below. If you have any questions, please contact scholarships@sdi.edu.

- By Noon Mountain Standard Time on November 30 for the spring award.
- By Noon Mountain Standard Time on May 31 for the fall award.

Essay: Applicants must answer the prompt (maximum 1,000 words). The essay will be based on quality, content, organization, and proper formatting, grammar, and spelling.

- The essay prompt will be published on the application and is subject to change during each scholarship cycle
- The essay should be submitted as a .pdf file that contains a cover page, is double-spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman font. Your viewpoint and the essay's purpose should be clearly established and sustained. The essay should follow the conventions of Standard American English (correct grammar, punctuation, etc.).

Award Procedures: Applicants will receive an email notification regarding their award status approximately 30 days after the scholarship application deadline.

- The chosen recipient must respond within 30 days, indicating their intent to accept the scholarship.
- Current students who are awarded an SDI Scholarship are responsible for the charges obtained within the semester in which they are currently enrolled. The SDI Scholarship will be awarded at the start of the next full semester after the approval date.
- Scholarship recipients may only be awarded this scholarship once. This policy ensures that the available funds can support a broader range of students in achieving their educational goals.

HONOR SOCIETIES

Delta Epsilon Tau Honor Society

At Sonoran Desert Institute, we enjoy celebrating the hard work and dedication of our amazing students. Delta Epsilon Tau is just one way to show our appreciation for the outstanding academic and personal achievement of our students.

Upon graduation, students who meet the below criteria will be selected to join Delta Epsilon Tau:

- Graduates must have a minimum of a 3.5 GPA to be invited to join DETHS
- Demonstrated leadership and commitment to distance education and learning
- No student code of conduct violations
- Good financial standing

The Sonoran Desert Institute Chapter of the Delta Epsilon Tau Honor Society (DETHS) is sponsored by the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) and was established to recognize extraordinary high academic achievements and leadership of SDI graduates. Visit the SDI website for more information or to obtain the DETHS Student Application for Membership.

SALUTE Veterans National Honor Society: Honoring Service and Academic Excellenc

SALUTE—an acronym for Service, Academics, Leadership, Unity, Tribute, and Excellence—is the first national honor society established to recognize the academic achievements of student veterans and military members attending two- and four-year institutions of higher education. Founded in 2009 through the ACE/Walmart Success for Veterans Grant awarded to Colorado State University, SALUTE provides a prestigious platform for honoring military-connected students and fostering a nationwide community committed to academic success.

The SALUTE chapter at Sonoran Desert Institute (SDI) was officially established on March 10, 2016, continuing the tradition of recognizing SDI students who exemplify both service and scholarship.

A unique element for undergraduate students is the GPA ranking tier system, which was designed to encourage academic excellence and continued progress. Undergraduate SALUTE members can advance through the following tiers during their academic journey:

Alpha: 3.75 – 4.00

Bravo: 3.50 – 3.74

Charlie: 3.25 – 3.49

Delta: 3.00 – 3.24

For more information about the SALUTE Veteran National Honor Society, please visit: https://salute.colostate.edu/home

Membership Criteria:

To be eligible for induction into SALUTE at SDI, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Be currently enrolled in or a graduate of SDI's Associate of Science in Firearms Technology or Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology degree program.
- Be in good financial standing with the institution.
- Have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours at SDI (transfer credits do not apply).
- Hold a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Be currently serving in the U.S. Armed Forces (Active Duty, National Guard, or Reserves) or be a veteran with an Honorable discharge.

Membership Fees & Benefits:

Joining SALUTE requires a one-time lifetime membership fee of $35, payable upon acceptance. Each member receives a membership certificate and a military-style challenge coin as symbols of recognition and honor.

SALUTE membership offers several meaningful privileges:

- Scholarship Eligibility: Members can apply for national SALUTE scholarships, designed to support student veterans—especially those who need additional financial assistance beyond their GI Bill® benefits or who do not qualify for GI Bill® funding.
- Focused Funding: SALUTE operates with minimal overhead, ensuring that the majority of membership fees are directed toward scholarships for student veterans at charter member institutions across the country.
- Leadership Opportunities: Members have the opportunity to nominate representatives to serve on the SALUTE National Advisory Committee, contributing to the organization's direction and impact.

Application & Deadlines:

How to Apply

To be considered for membership, applicants must complete the official SALUTE Veterans National Honor Society Application through Sonoran Desert Institute at https://sdi.edu/military/salute/.

Membership applications and fees are submitted to the SALUTE National Office three times per year, aligned with the following deadlines:

- Fall Deadline: October 1
- Spring Deadline: March 1
- Summer Deadline: July 1

Once an application is verified, the completed membership packet and payment are submitted for processing by the next available deadline. Timely submission is critical—missing a deadline may result in the rescinding of the membership offer.

Processing & Delivery

Please allow 4–6 weeks after the submission deadline to receive your official SALUTE membership certificate and military-style challenge coin.

For further information concerning SDI's chapter of SALUTE, contact Military and Veteran Services at mvs@sdi.edu

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SDI Faculty

SDI faculty bring years of industry-specific experience to the student experience. A listing of faculty can be found here.

SDI Program Advisory Councils

FIREARMS TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COUNCIL	
Jayden Jung	Engineer, VG6 Precision
Stephen Kemp	Academic Dean and Senior Faculty Member, Antioch College
Bill Kleftis	Chief Executive Officer, Otis Technology
Mike Petronella	VP of Sales, B&T USA
Kurt Smith	Director of Industry Relations, Archer Trade Association

UNCREWED TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COUNCIL	
Matt Dunleavy	UAS Services Business Owner
Peter Gersten	UAS Defense Consultant
Mignonne Hollis	Founder, Aerospace Arizona
Stephen Kemp	Academic Dean and Senior Faculty Member, Antioch College
Jiyoung Hwang	Lead Flight Test Engineer, Firestorm Labs

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SDI Learning Process

Sonoran Desert Institute understands that its students are mature, responsible, and independent. Moreover, the Institute knows that its students are driven to learn in order to impact the workplace by applying their acquired knowledge. The learning process must therefore be flexible by allowing students to complete coursework while meeting the demands of work, family, and other commitments. It is with this understanding that SDI provides all of its coursework through distance-delivered learning practices.

Curriculum is developed with the assumption that students are partners in the learning process. The focus is on outcomes that move information from short-term memory to applied knowledge, as expressed through improved productivity and worthwhile skills. Materials are organized into logical groups of information that build on knowledge gained from previous coursework.

SDI Credit Hour Policy

SDI's academic credit-bearing courses are measured by the learning outcomes normally achieved through 45 hours of study (one credit/semester hour). Academic credit is assigned based on one semester credit hour for a combination of 30 participation or instructional hours and 15 outside preparation hours. This means that for every hour of lesson material included in a course, we anticipate that a student will spend at least a half-hour of additional time engaged in outside preparation, study, or research and/or the equivalent activity to master the subject material appropriately.

The Department of Education uses the clock to credit hour formula for programs that are less than two academic years in length and do not lead to a degree. As such, academic credit is assigned based on one semester credit hour for a minimum of 30 in-class hours. In-class hours are defined as a combination of participation and instructional time to allow the student to complete each project or engage in classroom activities to the utmost achievable standard per the grading policy or learning objectives. Students will spend additional preparatory time reflected in this calculation, depending on the activity, that is not required to calculate the in-class hours.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITY AND SUBSTANTIVE INTERACTION

Students are expected to establish participation by demonstrating academic activity within the first week of the course and are subject to course and/or institutional withdrawal or cancellation if there is no activity within 7 calendar days of the course start date. Throughout the term, students must participate in such a way as to ensure successful completion of the course by the course end date. Course acceleration is not permitted. Submitting work prior to its due date (accelerating) does not replace the need to participate each week to avoid penalties including impact to grades, being dropped from the course, and/or withdrawal from the institution. Bulk assignment submissions after periods of inactivity are not recommended since students are expected to keep pace with the weekly course guidelines. SDI does not have an add/drop period.

Proctored Assessments

SDI requires students to complete periodic proctored assessments to protect the integrity of the school and its graduates. Courses with proctored assessments are identified on the course homepage in the online classroom. You may contact your instructor with any questions.

Proctored assessments are conducted by a contracted third party and require the use of a computer, webcam, and internet access. A student who does not own a personal webcam may use one at a local library, recreation center, or similar facility.

Guidelines for proctoring:

- Student must show valid ID to the proctor.
- Details on what materials and resources may be used during a proctored assessment will be available as part of the proctoring instructions in the relevant course materials.
- Alternative in-person proctored assessments can be arranged upon request. Contact your instructor for more information.

Library Resources

Sonoran Desert Institute delivers online library resources through our Learning Management System. SDI's library provides access to peer-reviewed and full-text journal, magazine, and newspaper articles, e-books, and other multi-media resources, covering a variety of relevant topics, to support our students' academic studies.

Tutoring Services

SDI is proud to partner with Tutor.com to provide personalized support to students through 24/7 online tutoring. Students can utilize Tutor.com at no charge for assistance with all general education courses as well as review and feedback of any written assignments throughout their program. Students may also use this service to obtain feedback on career-related documents, such as resumes, cover letters, and letters of recommendation for various employment opportunities.

Scheduling and Attendance

Upon enrollment, an entry point is determined and a schedule for the program is established for each 16 or 20-week semester. Students will typically have a one-week break between each semester. Within the semester, courses are scheduled in a modular basis. SDI does not have a designated add/drop period due to the modular scheduling format that supports schedule changes throughout each term.

Courses are generally 4-weeks to 8-weeks in length, with fixed start and end dates and weekly requirements for each. SDI's academic week is defined as Monday through Sunday. Attendance is monitored on a daily basis, with an expectation that students demonstrate their participation online at least once per week. This is done as noted above by submitting assignments, posting course-related discussions and taking/submitting quizzes and exams. Students will be unregistered from any new course if there is no demonstrated academic participation in the first 7 days. Once academic participation is established within the first 7 days of the course, a student is subject to course withdrawal if there is no academic participation (attendance) for 14 consecutive days. Courses in which a student has already participated may be dropped, with a grade of "W" to show it was withdrawn, up to the 75% point in the 4-8 week course length or the 80% point in the 5-week course length. Students should discuss impact on funding with a Financial Services Advisor.

Enrollment Status

SDI uses the following credit hour guidelines to determine a student's enrollment status each term/semester. Please note that certain funding agencies utilize different methods to determine enrollment status, particularly for courses delivered using a modular delivery method. Please refer to specific agency guidelines for eligibility related to enrollment status.

Full-time = 12 credit hours or greater
¾ time = 9 to 11 credit hours
½ time = 6 to 8 credit hours
< ½ time = 5 credit hours or less

Credit Hour Maximum

A maximum of 18 credit hours may be attempted per term/semester. If a student wishes to reduce or increase course load, the student should contact the assigned Student Success Coach for assistance. If the student wishes to increase their course load above 18 credit hours within the semester, the Student Success Coach will provide the student with instructions on how to file an appeal. Students must appeal in writing by sending an email to the designated Student Success Coach or emailing students@sdi.edu. Such appeals will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

General Policies

ADMISSIONS POLICY

The programs offered at Sonoran Desert Institute are postsecondary in nature and require, at a minimum, that all students have a high school diploma, GED, or recognized equivalent. SDI courses are provided in English, and therefore may require proof of English proficiency prior to admission, if the student's native language is not English.

Admission Requirements

Applicants seeking admission must meet the following admission requirements prior to the start of the first course at SDI:

- Must have earned a high school diploma, a GED or recognized equivalent*. Applicants who have earned an associate or bachelor degree from an accredited institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education are considered to have met the requirement of a high school diploma, GED, or recognized equivalent.Must be at least 18 years of age at the time of admission.
- Must have access to a computer with internet connection for the web-based programs and meet the minimum technology, hardware, and software requirements outlined in this catalog.
- Must have the ability to study in English.
- Must meet the eligibility requirements for the selected program of study as detailed in the program specific admission requirements.
- Must have the physical and mental ability needed to successfully complete the program.

** Equivalents include completion of secondary school through homeschooling as defined by state law, or having earned an equivalent to a U.S. high school diploma at an international high school according to approved foreign evaluation services. An approved foreign evaluation service is any agency that is a current member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) or Association of International Credential Evaluators (AICE).*

Applicants must submit the following prior to admission:

- Application for admission, including student signature on the Enrollment Agreement
- Attestation of earning high school diploma, GED, or recognized equivalent**
- Copy of front and back of a valid government-issued photo identification (i.e. driver's license or passport) SDI does not permit the use of a copied military ID for proof of service or identification as federal law (Title 18 U.S.C. § 701: U.S. Code – Section 701: Official badges, identification cards, other insignia) prohibits the unauthorized copying of a military ID.

***SDI may also require, at its discretion, that an applicant or student provide a high school transcript, high school diploma, and/or evidence of passing the GED or state certificate awarded.*

Applicants must submit previous education documentation prior to start date. Acceptable documentation includes:

- Official transcripts are required for all transferrable credits;
- Unofficial transcripts or equivalent (determined by the SDI Registrar) will be accepted for (1) non-accredited institutions/ programs, (2) institutions whereby no credits were completed/earned, and (3) institutions whereby students are unable to obtain official transcripts due to holds at issuing institution. If an unofficial transcript reveals transferrable credit, students must provide official transcript for prior course credit to be granted

In recognition of the importance of ethical practices in the admissions process, Sonoran Desert Institute subscribes to the Statement of Principles of Good Practice in College Admission and Recruitment, which has been approved by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Counselors (AACRAO).

Single Course Enrollment

For single-course enrollments not leading to a credential, official transcripts may be waived. If a student later applies to a full program, transcripts must be submitted and evaluated before credits are applied.

Right To Deny

Sonoran Desert Institute does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and courses on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or disability as outlined in the Disability Services section of the SDI catalog. SDI reserves the right to refuse admission to any applicant if the Institute, in its sole discretion, determines that the applicant does not have the ability to benefit from the Institute's instruction or that it is in the best interest of the Institute or the applicant to do so.

Students Stationed Abroad

Active duty personnel stationed abroad may be subject to lack of course offerings, delays in receiving shipments, and restrictions in materials received. Some programs may have additional restrictions. SDI will work with military students to provide reasonable alternatives to achieve learning objectives but does not guarantee that every course will be adaptable to a deployed schedule. Please see the program specific admissions requirements for additional information.

International Students

Due to the nature of the programs, international students are not currently eligible for admission.

TUITION, FEES AND TERMS POLICY

Information concerning tuition, program costs, payment schedules, and financing options may be found on the Enrollment Agreement for each program of study. Details regarding tuition refunds are located in the SDI Refund for Denial/Cancellation and Withdrawal Policy. The student may contact the SDI Admissions department or the Student Services department with any questions or for assistance.

A student is required to clear any indebtedness to the Institute before a certificate/degree is issued. SDI reserves the right to charge the student for fees related to returned checks or declined credit card payments.

Tuition

Tuition is charged by credit hour each semester. The current rate of tuition is $360 per credit hour for all programs except the Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist which is $455 per credit hour. Students who have been continuously enrolled, or who withdrawal and reenter within one year, are charged at the rate in place at the time of their initial enrollment.

The tuition rate for active-duty military students in all programs except Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist is $250 per credit hour. The Active Duty Tuition Rate applies to uniformed members of the US Armed Forces who are serving on active duty, in the Reserves, or in the National Guard. Students electing to take individual or additional courses beyond their program of student will be charged at the current tuition rate at the time of such enrollment.

Educational Resource Fee

An Educational Resource Fee is a mandatory, non-refundable fee assessed to students each semester. Once the student has started the semester, the Educational Resource Fee is not refundable. The current Educational Resource Fee is $700 per semester. The Educational Resource fee for active-duty military students is $350 except for the Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist program which is $700.

SDI is committed to maintaining a simple approach to its tuition and fee structure, rather than charging a multitude of individual fees. This resource fee is intended to defray costs associated with delivery of distance education courses including the learning management system, proctoring and other identity validation efforts, library resources, tutoring, the student portal (extension of the student information system) and other associated items to provide students with a robust online learning experience and services throughout their program of study and beyond. Students are not charged for official SDI transcripts, or for evaluation services or application of transfer credit toward SDI programs.

Tuition, Fees, and Completion Time by Program

The following outlines information related to the current program offerings. SDI reserves the right to cancel or postpone courses or programs as necessary. Completion times may differ from agency or other funding eligibility.

Program	Credit Hours	Tuition Per Credit Hour	Education Resource Fee Per Semester*	Total Program Cost	CA STRF Fee***	Total Program Cost (CA only)	Expected Completion Terms****
Associate of Science in Firearms Technology	60	$360.00	$700.00	$24,400.00	$0	$24,400.00	4
Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology	60	$360.00	$700.00	$24,400.00	$0	$24,400.00	4
Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing	32	$360.00	$700.00	$12,920.00	$0	$12,920.00	2
Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist	16	$455.00	$700.00	$7,280.00 or $8,480.00**	$0	$7,280.00 or $8,480.00**	1
Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems	16	$360.00	$700.00	$6,460.00	$0	$6,460.00	1
Individual Courses	1-4 Varies	$360.00-$455.00 per credit hour	$700.00	Varies	$0	Varies	4-, 5-, or 8-weeks

* *The Associate of Science in Firearms Technology and the Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology Educational Resource Fee is billed at $700 per semester, not to exceed 4 semesters. The Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing Educational Resource Fee is billed at $700 per semester, not to exceed 2 semesters. The Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems and Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist Educational Resource Fee is billed at $700 per semester, not to exceed one semester.*

** *This amount includes the optional materials fee that students may opt out of. If the student opts out of paying the optional fee, the student must provide their own materials for this program.*

*** *California law mandates the collection of a Student Tuition Recovery Fund (STRF) fee when the fund falls below a designated amount. Fees are charged based on a designated amount per $1,000 dollars. Currently, the fund exceeds this amount, therefore, the fee is $0 (zero). Only California residents are subject to this fee. See California Student Tuition Recovery Fund section for more information.*

**** *Students may complete the program in less time based on year-round enrollment opportunities. Part-time students may take longer to complete.*

Prior Balance

Students are required to maintain good standing on their account ledger. The school reserves the right to deny future course registration to students with a prior balance. The following policies are in place to support this requirement.

Continuing Students – All students with continuous enrollment must have their prior balance paid in full OR agree to a monthly payment plan with the initial payment made prior to the next semester OR secure financial aid awards or other funding that will cover the balance.

Re-Entry Students – All students that have withdrawn and are re-entering must have their prior balance paid in full OR agree to a monthly payment plan with the initial payment made prior to the re-entry date.

Program Changes/Additions – All students transferring to a new program or graduating and starting a new program must have their prior balance paid in full prior to starting the new program.

Third Party Collections Agency

SDI reserves the right to send any unpaid balances to a third-party collections agency. Once sent to collections the debt must be settled with the collections agency before re-entering or re-enrolling at SDI.

CALIFORNIA STUDENT TUITION RECOVERY FUND

The State of California established the Student Tuition Recovery Fund (STRF) to relieve or mitigate economic loss suffered by a student in an educational program at a qualifying institution, who is or was a California resident while enrolled, or was enrolled in a residency program, if the student enrolled in the institution, prepaid tuition, and suffered an economic loss. Unless relieved of the obligation to do so, you must pay the state-imposed assessment for the STRF, or it must be paid on your behalf, if you are a student in an educational program, who is a California resident, or are enrolled in a residency program, and prepay all or part of your tuition.

You are not eligible for protection from the STRF and you are not required to pay the STRF assessment, if you are not a California resident, or are not enrolled in a residency program.

It is important that you keep copies of your enrollment agreement, financial aid documents, receipts, or any other information that documents the amount paid to the school. Questions regarding the STRF may be directed to the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education, 1747 North Market Blvd., Suite 225, Sacramento, CA 95834, (916) 574-8900 or (888) 370-7589.

To be eligible for STRF, you must be a California resident or are enrolled in a residency program, prepaid tuition, paid or deemed to have paid the STRF assessment, and suffered an economic loss as a result of any of the following:

1. The institution, a location of the institution, or an educational program offered by the institution was closed or discontinued, and you did not choose to participate in a teach-out plan approved by the Bureau or did not complete a chosen teach-out plan approved by the Bureau.
2. You were enrolled at an institution or a location of the institution within the 120 day period before the closure of the institution or location of the institution, or were enrolled in an educational program within the 120 day period before the program was discontinued.
3. You were enrolled at an institution or a location of the institution more than 120 days before the closure of the institution or location of the institution, in an educational program offered by the institution as to which the Bureau determined there was a significant decline in the quality or value of the program more than 120 days before closure.
4. The institution has been ordered to pay a refund by the Bureau but has failed to do so.
5. The institution has failed to pay or reimburse loan proceeds under a federal student loan program as required by law, or has failed to pay or reimburse proceeds received by the institution in excess of tuition and other costs.
6. You have been awarded restitution, a refund, or other monetary award by an arbitrator or court, based on a violation of this chapter by an institution or representative of an institution, but have been unable to collect the award from the institution.
7. You sought legal counsel that resulted in the cancellation of one or more of your student loans and have an invoice for services rendered and evidence of the cancellation of the student loan or loans.

To qualify for STRF reimbursement, the application must be received within four (4) years from the date of the action or event that made the student eligible for recovery from STRF.

A student whose loan is revived by a loan holder or debt collector after a period of noncollection may, at any time, file a written application for recovery from STRF for the debt that would have otherwise been eligible for recovery. If it has been more than four (4) years since the action or event that made the student eligible, the student must have filed a written application for recovery within the original four (4) year period, unless the period has been extended by another act of law.

However, no claim can be paid to any student without a social security number or a taxpayer identification number.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Credit Evaluation Policy

Sonoran Desert Institute will inquire about the previous education and training of each student. Students are required to submit official transcripts from all prior institutions, including all military training, traditional college coursework, and vocational training prior to the start date. Previous transcripts are typically evaluated prior to beginning the program to ensure proper scheduling of necessary coursework with SDI. Failure to submit transcripts prior to the start date may result in cancellation of enrollment, delayed start date, loss of funding eligibility, risk of not receiving credit for prior coursework, and withdrawal from the institution.

Students may appeal a transfer credit decision by submitting the Transfer of Credit Appeal Form to transcripts@sdi.edu with supporting documentation. All appeals must be submitted within 30 days from the date of evaluation. Appeals will not be accepted beyond 60 days after the program start date. SDI will respond to the student with a final decision within 14 days of the appeal.

Credit Transfer Into SDI

Sonoran Desert Institute may accept transfer of credit for coursework completed at accredited institutions* or coursework evaluated by the American Council on Education (ACE) under the following conditions:

- Students are required to submit official transcripts from the institution awarding the credit hours and/or granting the degree, for all prior coursework.

- Transcripts that are not in English must be evaluated by a foreign evaluation service agency that is a current member of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES) or Association of International Credential Evaluators (AICE).
- SDI awards transfer credit on a course-by-course basis for courses with equivalent content and value as the corresponding SDI course(s). Generally, undergraduate college-level courses completed at accredited institutions recognized by the U.S. Department of Education will be eligible for transfer, provided that grades of at least "C" grade (minimum of 2.0 grade points) are earned and the course is similar in content and scope to work offered at SDI, or fulfills a required General Education category. Credits are awarded on quantitative basis towards credits attempted/credits earned thereby reducing the total number of courses/credits each student must complete to fulfill graduation requirements for their program of study. Quality points associated with transferring credits are not included in cumulative grade point average (CGPA) calculations.
- Students who have earned an Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS) or bachelor's degree from an accredited institution as defined above, will be granted transfer credit to fulfill SDI's General Education requirements at the associate degree level. Transfer credit for general education will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis as defined above for students who have earned an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) or Associate of Occupational Science (AOS) degree.
- Proof of coursework validated by ACE must be submitted via official transcript. SDI will review the recommendations made but reserves the right to accept transfer credit based on course objectives.
- Credit by Examination: Sonoran Desert Institute accepts the recommendations of the American Council on Education (ACE) College Credit Recommendation Service as listed in The Guide to Educational Credit by Examination. ACE recommends a credit-granting score of 50 for each CLEP exam. These include Advanced Placement Examinations, College Level Examination Program General Examinations (CLEP), and Excelsior College Examinations (ECEs). Semester hours of credit toward graduation earned on the basis of these tests are granted with a grade of P (Pass), and neither raises nor lowers a student's grade point average. SDI does not offer testing for credit by examination.
- Students must complete at least 25% of the required credit hours in the enrolled program at Sonoran Desert Institute to earn the credential. Additionally, credits earned after a student's final term at SDI will generally not be considered for transfer, unless previously approved by the Institute.

Currently, SDI does not grant credit hours for experiential learning, i.e., life experience, training, or employment.

** Note to Applicants: Credits must have been earned at an accredited institution. Accredited means accredited by an agency that is recognized by the U. S. Department of Education as an accrediting commission. No exceptions to this will be allowed.*

Credit Transfer Out of SDI

Students are encouraged to continue their education beyond SDI to align with their personal and professional objectives. Upon request, we will provide official transcripts to the institution(s) students intend to attend at no cost. It is always up to the receiving institution to evaluate credit earned for coursework earned at another institution and it is in their sole discretion to award transfer credit as they deem applicable to the specific program of study. Therefore, SDI cannot guarantee transfer credit or how it may be applied to a student's future educational pursuits. Recognizing the importance of ongoing education, SDI has established articulation agreements with multiple colleges and universities for various programs at those institutions. A current summary of those agreements is on our website at https://sdi.edu/education-partnerships.

STUDENT IDENTITY VERIFICATION

To protect the integrity of the school and its graduates, SDI requires that students verify their identity during the admissions process and throughout their program of study. This includes validation of identity prior to admittance and completion of periodic proctored assessments.

STUDENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS

A student accepted at SDI will be assigned a Student Identification number upon enrollment with the Institute. This number is very important because it identifies the student's records at Sonoran Desert Institute. A student will need to refer to the Student ID number when contacting SDI. The Student ID number can be found on the student's SDI Welcome Letter.

NAME AND SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER CHANGES

The name and Social Security number used by the student at the time of application or enrollment must remain on the student's academic record and transcript. The student's name associated with any degree or certificate issued by SDI must match the student's academic record.

Documentation is required by the Institute for legal name and/or Social Security number* changes. Acceptable forms of identification include any of the following:

- Marriage License
- Divorce Decree
- Passport
- Social Security Card
- Court Order

** A photocopy of the Social Security Card issued by the Social Security Administration is required for changes in the Social Security number.*

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND NON-HARASSMENT POLICY

Sonoran Desert Institute is committed to maintaining a fair and respectful environment for work and learning. Such an atmosphere must be free of intimidation, fear, and retaliation. The Institute prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital or military/veteran status or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law.

In keeping with this commitment, the Institute also maintains a strict policy that prohibits sexual harassment, which includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature.

Incidents of discrimination and/or harassment will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the Institute. In addition, retaliation, in any form, against any person raising a discriminatory or harassment concern will not be tolerated by the Institute.

PRIVACY POLICY AND FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Sonoran Desert Institute is committed to safeguarding the student's privacy. This privacy policy applies to the Institute's websites and governs data collection and usage at all the Institute's sites, services, and offices. In addition, the Institute maintains policies for conforming to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Privacy and Use of Personal Information

SDI tracks non-identifiable user data on its websites and pages in order to deliver customized content and to gauge the popularity and efficiency of sites, sections, and services.

On some pages on the SDI site, the Institute may request personally identifiable information, such as user's email address, name, home or work addresses, or telephone numbers. In addition, information about the user's computer hardware and software is automatically collected by the Institute or by other internet entities. This information may include the user's IP address, browser type, domain names, access times and referring website addresses. This collected information serves to provide operational and statistical feedback.

SDI does not sell, rent, lease or lend its Inquiry, Applicant, Student, or Instructor lists to third parties. SDI may share data with trusted partners who help SDI perform statistical analysis. All such third parties are prohibited from using the student's personal information except to provide services to the Institute and are required to maintain the confidentiality of the student's information.

The Institute will not disclose the student's personal information, except as required to do so by law or in the good faith belief that such action is necessary in order to accomplish the following:

- Conform to the edicts of the law or comply with legal process served on the Institute
- Protect and defend the rights or property of the Institute
- Act under demanding circumstances to protect the personal safety of the users of the Institute's websites, the functionality of those websites, or the general public

Security of Personal Information

The Institute secures students' personal information from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. The Institute secures this personally identifiable information on computer servers in a controlled, secure environment, protected from unauthorized access, use, or disclosure. Personal information, such as a credit card number, is only transmitted to other websites through the use of Secure Socket Layer (SSL) encrypted protection.

Changes to This Policy

The Institute may occasionally update this privacy policy and encourages the student to periodically review this policy in order to remain informed of how the Institute is protecting the student's information.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Under the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, a student's academic and financial files at the Institute will not be released to any third- party without the written consent of the student. Students should notify the Office of the Registrar in writing regarding any requests to release personal records information or provide consent through SDI's Student Portal. FERPA gives students 18 or older attending a postsecondary institution the right to:

- Inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the Institute. SDI may charge a fee for copies.
- Request that the Institute correct records that the student believes to be inaccurate or misleading. If the Institute decides not to amend the record, the student has the right to initiate a formal grievance with the Institute. See SDI Grievance Procedure for details. After the formal grievance process, if the Institute still decides not to amend the record, the student has the right to place a statement with the record stating his/her view about the contested information.
- Non-disclosure of the student's education records, except with written permission of the student. However, FERPA allows SDI to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:
  - » Institute officials with legitimate educational interest
  - » Other schools to which a student is transferring
  - » Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
  - » Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student
  - » Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
  - » Accrediting organizations
  - » To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
  - » Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
  - » State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law

FERPA and Directory Information

SDI may routinely disclose directory information without the student's consent. However, a student may request non-disclosure of directory information by submitting a written request to SDI Office of the Registrar. Directory information includes the following:

- Student's name
- Telephone number
- Degrees, certificates, honors and awards and date earned
- Address
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Email address
- Program of study
- Participation in Institute-sponsored activities
- Photographs of student or student works

The student may contact the resources below for more information.

Call: 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) / TDD Call: 1-800-437-0833
Write: Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-8520

REFUND FOR DENIAL, CANCELLATION, OR WITHDRAWAL

A student is accepted and enrolled in a course/program with the expectation of attending the entire course/program. Faculty contracts, learning materials and other Institute resources generate expenses based on that assumption. If an applicant is not accepted by the Institute, or a student does not complete a course/program, tuition refunds are governed by the policy outlined below.

The Institute's refund policy reflects the adjustment made to charges to the student's account. This may differ from the student's eligibility for funding from various sources, which the institution is required to return to the funding agency. Students are responsible for any remaining balance after the refund policy is applied and funds are returned to agencies, such as the Department of Education, the Veterans' Administration, and the Department of Defense.

Students are encouraged to notify the institution of their intent to cancel or withdraw for timely processing of status updates and refund processing.

General Refund Guidelines

Denied Admission and Tuition Refund

An applicant denied admission by the Institute is entitled to a refund of all monies paid. Monies shall be refunded no later than 30 days of the denial date.

Cancellation and Tuition Refund

Cancellation occurs if a student never begins their designated program as indicated on the Enrollment Agreement. SDI's enrollment deadlines provide for at least five days after signing an Enrollment Agreement prior to any tuition or fee charges to the student's account. Charges are assessed on the first day of the term start, typically more than three weeks after the enrollment is processed, to allow adequate time to secure funding and receive course materials. In the instance where a student cancels an enrollment agreement after the initial start date or is cancelled by the institution for failure to attend during the first week of the term, any charges will be removed or reversed on the student's account. Any prepaid monies will be refunded no later than 30 days of the Institute receiving the notice of cancellation.

Withdrawal and Tuition Refunds

SDI is subject to, and must abide by, the refund policies of any agency, or department of the federal government with which it is associated or affiliated. In the event of a conflict between SDI's Refund Policy and the refund policy of another regulatory agency, the relevant policy may supersede that of the Institute.

Refunds are calculated based on the last date of attendance as determined by academic-related activities. Academic-related activities include:

- Submission of assignment
- Course-related discussions
- Taking and/or submission of exam, quiz, or other assessment
- Any other activity that is categorized as "academically related"

If a refund is due to the student, it will be issued within 30 days of the date of determination of the withdrawal, or the determination of a credit balance after funds are returned to relevant funding agencies. The institutional refund amount shall be determined based on the table shown below. If a student is withdrawn and returns within one year of the last date of attendance, the terms of the Enrollment Agreement will be reinstated.

WITHDRAWAL

Official Withdrawal

Students wishing to officially withdraw from SDI should notify Student Services. The date of determination for official withdrawals will be the date the student initiates the withdrawal process or the date indicated as the final day of the term if they are providing advance notice to withdraw after courses are completed. For quality improvement and reporting purposes, SDI may request information from the student regarding their decision to withdraw.

Unofficial Withdrawal

Students are subject to withdrawal if there is no demonstrated academic participation (attendance) for 14 consecutive days. The date of determination will be no later than the 14th day following the last date of attendance.

Military Service Policy

Students withdrawing from a program due to military service requirements must inform their designated Student Success Coach of the date of withdrawal. Documentation of military service must be provided as far in advance as is reasonable under the circumstances of the military service, or it can be provided upon re-enrollment if not available prior. In circumstances where advanced notice is not required due to classified operations or other reasons precluded by military necessity, the student may alternatively provide an attestation of the classified nature of the operations including the dates of such service.

SDI will honor all federal guidelines regarding re-enrollment including the following:

- Students will be re-enrolled with the same satisfactory academic progress status as when they withdrew.
- Students will be re-enrolled in the same program (or most similar program if the same program is no longer available) unless the student selects a different program.
- Students will be re-enrolled at the same point in the program and with the same enrollment status (unless the student chooses a different enrollment status).
- Students will be re-enrolled with the same number of credit hours previously completed unless re-enrolled to a different program where those credits are not transferable.
- Students must also give oral or written notice to their Student Success Coach of their intent to return to the school within three years after the completion of the period of service unless otherwise excused as outlined in the federal guidelines, or will follow the Re-enrollment Policy for Service Members, and the cumulative length of absences for military service cannot exceed five years.

Institutional Refund Calculation

Institutional refund calculations will be done for each course the student has started, but does not complete, which result in a “W” grade. The last date of attendance and the course length determine the percentage credited to the account as indicated on the chart shown below. Refunds are calculated based on actual charges to the student, less any applicable discounts or institutional scholarships. If the refund exceeds the amount paid, the resulting credit balance will be refunded to the appropriate funding agencies and/or the student no later than 30 days of the withdrawal or within 14 days of a credit balance that is created as a result of payments received after the withdrawal. In cases where the refund goes to an agency rather than the student, the institute will issue the refund payment in accordance with the funding agency deadlines. In some cases, agencies have processes that must occur prior to receiving refund payments which may exceed a 30-day period.

Refunds	
Published Length of Course	**Percentage of Refundable Tuition After**
1 - 6 weeks	1st week – 70% 2nd week – 40% 3rd week – 20% 4th - 6th week – 0%
7 - 10 weeks	1st week – 80% 2nd week – 60% 3rd week – 40% 4th week – 20% 5th - 10th week – 0%

Sample Refund Calculation

For each course, the week of the last academic activity will determine the percentage of refund due.

Course Length	Credit Hours for Sample Course	Tuition Charged	Weeks of Last Activity	Refundable Percentage of Tuition	Amount of Tuition School May Retain	Amount of Tuition Refundable
5 weeks	4	$1,440.00	2	70%	$432.00	$1,008.00
			3	40%	$864.00	$576.00
			4	20%	$1,152.00	$288.00
8 weeks	4	$1,440.00	2	80%	$288.00	$1.152.00
			3	60%	$576.00	$864.00
			4	40%	$864.00	$576.00
			5	20%	$1,152.00	$288.00
			6 to 8	0%	$1,440.00	0

SAMPLE

RE-ENROLLMENT POLICY

A former student of Sonoran Desert Institute is subject to enrollment policies and admissions review of the student's record/history with the Institute. Completion requirements for the student's program will be determined by the Institute's current catalog. A student re-enrolling with SDI is responsible for all course/program tuition and fees in addition to any previous outstanding account balance with the Institute. SDI will honor the federal guidelines regarding readmission for service members for students returning after fulfilling service order requirements.

Voluntary Withdrawals

A returning student who voluntarily withdrew from the Institute and returns within 1 year from the last date of attendance may be readmitted under the prior enrollment agreement by contacting the assigned Student Success Coach via email. If a voluntarily withdrawn student chooses to return after one year from the last date of attendance, the student must submit a new application for admittance under the current program version requirements including graduation requirements, tuition and fees.

Administrative Withdrawals

If a student was administratively withdrawn for lack of course participation/attendance, the student should submit a request to resume program via email with an explanation of what has changed that will enable the student to successfully complete the program.

Administrative Dismissal

All administrative dismissals from the Institute are permanent. A student who has been dismissed is not eligible for re-entry with SDI.

Maximum Start Date Changes

SDI reserves the right to limit the number of times a student may change their start date once admitted to a program of study. Generally speaking, a student will be denied admission after changing start dates three times.

STUDENT EMAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

An official SDI email address will be assigned to all students and will act as the primary and official means of communication between SDI and the student. Students are required to monitor and check their SDI email account on a frequent and regular basis. Students may choose to forward their SDI email to a personal account.

SDI email users may not:

- Use their SDI email for personal communication
- Send spam
- Use their SDI email for any purpose that may violate laws, regulations or SDI policy
- Distribute access, store images, texts, or materials considered unacceptable, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate
- Transmit unsolicited commercial advertising material, chain mail, etc.
- Introduce any form of computer virus, malware, etc.
- Access another person's email account
- Share passwords with other students or individuals

Information exchanged between SDI and the student is considered confidential. No communication or attached files should be shared, disclosed or reproduced without the express written consent of SDI.

SDI has the right, consistent with applicable law, to access, review and release all electronic information to authorized staff that is transmitted over or stored in SDI Systems or facilities, whether or not such information is private in nature, and therefore, confidentiality or privacy of electronic mail cannot be guaranteed. Because of the nature of the medium, the need for authorized staff to maintain electronic mail systems, situations involving the health or safety of people or property, violations of SDI codes of conduct, regulations, policies, or laws, other legal responsibilities or obligations of the Institute, or the locating of information required for Institute business, IT staff may review and disclose the content of email messages.

Student email accounts will remain active as long as the student is enrolled. Upon graduation or withdrawal, student email accounts will remain active for a minimum of 30 days. After 30 days the account will be subject to termination and all remaining email correspondence will be deleted. Notification will be sent prior to account termination.

TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Sufficient technology and internet access is required to complete online classes at SDI. While most computers, tablets, smartphones, and other mobile devices may allow for some completion of coursework, they are not guaranteed to support every aspect of learning with SDI. The following hardware and software requirements are provided to assist students to ensure they meet or exceed the minimum standards.

Chromebooks are not an acceptable computer for use in any of SDI programs.

Computer Requirements:

- OS: Windows 10 (or higher); Apple Mac OS 13 (or higher)
- CPU: Intel I5 (or equivalent AMD) or Apple M1 (or higher)
- Memory: 8 GB RAM required (8 GB RAM or higher recommended)
- Network: Broadband Internet connection of 5 Mbps Reliable (10 Mbps or higher recommended)
- Storage: 200GB available free space

Internet Browsers:

- Chrome - latest version recommended
- Firefox - latest version recommended
- Safari - latest version recommended

Required Components/Software:

- Microsoft Office or equivalent (Open Office, Viewer, etc.)
- Webcam - resolution: 640 x 480 (1280 x 720 preferred)
- PDF reader

The following MUST be enabled:

- Cookies
- Pop-ups (in both internet browser and security software)
- Java/JavaScript

Security

With all firewalls, ensure that you enable uploading of files.

Third-Party Software

Certain SDI courses and exam proctoring may require the installation of third-party software or applets. The system requirements for third-party software should fall within the published specifications above, but please consult the individual software packages to ensure compatibility. Third-Party software technology requirements are subject to change. It is recommended that students access technology requirement information provided for by the vendor for the most up to date information.

Proctorio

Proctored exams will be proctored by Proctorio. All proctored exams require the student downloads and installs the Proctorio browser extension. The extension is supported on the following browsers: Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Opera, and Brave.

Browser Extension Compatibility
Technology Compatibility Requirements

Canvas Online Classroom

Some workplace IT environments or other public Wi-Fi connections can also restrict functionality in Canvas. Access to content, ability to upload files or file size limitations may apply in these situations. If you are having trouble accessing your course from your workplace, contact your organization's IT department.

The online classroom interface has been optimized for desktop displays. We recommend using a supported internet browser from your computer to access your course. While some mobile browsers are supported, small form factor phones may not be a pleasant experience and could limit functionality required in the classroom.

Canvas IOS and Android Mobile App

Canvas mobile applications are available on both the Apple and Google Play stores. However, Sonoran Desert Institute has not independently verified the availability of all features and functionality in the mobile application. Students are advised to use a supported computer internet browser while accessing the online classroom.

For information on Canvas browser and computer requirements, please reference the following: Browser and Computer Requirements

Important Notice for Mobile Device Compatibility

Some of the software used to control equipment in the Uncrewed Technology Programs requires a compatible smartphone or tablet. Before beginning your coursework or operating any equipment, you must verify that your device meets the following minimum operating system requirements:

Android Devices: Must be running Android version 7.0 or higher
Apple Devices (iPhone or iPad): Must be running iOS version 13.0 or higher

CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

SDI does not warranty, guarantee, or make representation that successful completion of the course of study will permit the student to obtain licensure or certification. A student who enrolls in an SDI program in a field for which professional practice requires any type of licensure or certification is solely responsible for determining and complying with state, local, or professional licensure and certification requirements. The student is also responsible for taking the steps necessary to satisfy those requirements.

VOTER REGISTRATION

The National Mail Voter Registration Form can be used to register U.S. citizens to vote, to update registration information due to a change of name, make a change of address, or to register with a political party. The national form also contains voter registration rules and regulations for each state and territory.

For more information about registering to vote, contact the state election office at https://www.eac.gov/voters/register-andvote-in-your-state. Register to vote by following the state-specific instructions and using the National Mail Voter Registration Form at https://www.eac.gov/voters/national-mail-voter-registration-form.

SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY

To learn the identity of registered sex offenders anywhere in the United States, visit the sex offender databases at www.nsopw.gov. This information is collected by other agencies, and SDI cannot guarantee this information is correct or complete. The information provided here is intended to be in compliance with the Campus Security Act to support the safety of students.

VACCINATION POLICY

SDI does not require vaccinations for students prior to enrollment. Certain courses may have requirements prior to participation.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY

SDI is committed to promoting a drug-free learning experience, maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all students and employees. The use of performance-impairing substances can have an adverse effect on judgment and increase the risk of injuries. In keeping with the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (Public Law 101-226), all students and employees are advised that individuals who violate federal, state, or local laws and/or the Institute's policies, are subject to disciplinary action and criminal prosecution.

The possession, use, or distribution of a controlled substance or dangerous drugs, or any drug unlawful to possess is a violation of law and the Institute's policy. Penalties may include required participation in and completion of appropriate rehabilitation programs in addition to federal, state, and local sanctions.

Students and employees should be aware of the significant psychological and physiological health risks associated with the use of illicit drugs and alcohol. Physical addiction, loss of control, withdrawal syndrome, and damage to vital organs can result from drug and alcohol abuse. Additional information regarding the effects, symptoms of overdose and withdrawal, and potential consequences may be found at www.getsmartaboutdrugs.com.

The following resources are available for assisting with possible problems related to substance abuse:

- Alcoholics Anonymous – www.aa.org
- National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence – https://recovered.org

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Academic Policies

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

Students are admitted to the program version offered in the catalog current at the time of enrollment. As long as a student is continuously enrolled, the Institute will honor the program completion requirements and tuition and fee rates in place on the date of admittance. Other policies are subject to change based on internal or external requirements and students will be held to policies published in the Institute's current catalog. Significant policy changes will be communicated to students prior to implementation.

APPROVED BREAKS

Academic Breaks

Students seeking a break in attendance should contact the Student Services department to determine the best way to accommodate a gap in attendance. Such breaks may impact funding eligibility and therefore should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Students receiving military benefits are typically funded on a term-by-term basis. Breaks between terms may be possible, although a student may be treated as a "withdrawal and re-enrollment" for reporting purposes.

For students receiving Federal Student Aid (FSA), a student is considered to have withdrawn for Title IV purposes if the student ceases attendance at any point prior to completing the payment period or period of enrollment, unless the school obtains written confirmation from the student at the time of the withdrawal stating that he or she will attend a module that begins later in the same payment period or period of enrollment. Students should contact the Student Services department to determine eligibility for a break and submit the appropriate written confirmation as needed.

CANCELLATION OF COURSES/PROGRAMS

Sonoran Desert Institute reserves the right to offer, cancel, or postpone courses or programs for any reason. However, every effort will be made to allow students or prospective students enough time to make other arrangements.

COURSE RETAKES

The Institute generally does not permit students to retake a course that is already passed with credit earned. Students retaking a failed course ("F" grade) or one from which they received a "W" grade will be charged tuition based on the per credit hour tuition rate.

GRADING

Sonoran Desert Institute ensures each student displays a mastery of the knowledge and skills required for the student's selected coursework. In order for SDI to accomplish this, SDI must gauge the progress of the student. One of the measures SDI uses is the scoring of the student's academic activities from the coursework taken at the Institute. Grades from these academic assessments within each course are combined to reflect a final course score, which is recorded in the student's official grade record.

Students requiring grade verification may request a current transcript at any point during a program of study from the Office of the Registrar or by emailing transcripts@sdi.edu. Upon graduation, students in good standing will automatically receive an official transcript along with the diploma indicating program completion. Additional official transcripts may be requested by students as needed.

GRADE SCALES

Letter Grade	Lower/Upper Limits	Grade Points	Description
A	94-100	4.0	Pass
A-	90-93.99	3.7	Pass
B+	87-89.99	3.3	Pass
B	83-86.99	3.0	Pass
B-	80-82.99	2.7	Pass
C+	77-79.99	2.3	Pass
C	70-76.99	2.0	Pass
F	0-69.99	0.0	Fail
PASS	Above 70	n/a	Pass
FAIL	Below 70	n/a	Fail
W	0.0	0.0	Withdrawal
I	n/a	n/a	Incomplete
TC	n/a	n/a	Transfer Credit

Associate of Science in Firearms Technology and Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing (start dates prior to 1/26/26)

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Points	Description
A+	97-100	4.0	Pass
A	92-96	3.9	Pass
A-	90-91	3.7	Pass
B+	86-89	3.5	Pass
B	82-85	3.3	Pass
B-	80-81	3.0	Pass
C+	76-79	2.5	Pass
C	72-75	2.3	Pass
C-	70-71	2.0	Pass
F	Below 70	0.0	Fail
PASS	Above 70	n/a	Pass
W	n/a	n/a	Withdrawal
WF	Below 70	n/a	Withdrawal-Failing
I	n/a	n/a	Incomplete
TC	n/a	n/a	Transfer Credit

Descriptions of Special Grades and Credits

W - Course Withdrawal

Students requesting to be withdrawn from a 4 or 8 week course up to the 75% point will be assigned a W grade. Course withdrawals will be treated as credits attempted but not earned for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) purposes. For a 5 week course, the 80% point will be used to assign a W grade.

Repeat Grades

Students are expected to repeat any courses in which they did not earn a passing grade. Repeats for grade improvement for passed courses with credit earned are not allowed. The highest (passing) grade replaces failed attempt(s) for Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) purposes. All attempts are considered for SAP requirements based on pace. Certain funding sources will not cover the cost of repeated coursework. Students repeating courses should consult the Student Financial Services office to determine eligibility.

I - Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade may be awarded in a course when a student cannot finish the course due to exceptional extenuating circumstances. Incomplete grades are not intended for students who have fallen behind in the course and simply need more time to submit assignments.

Even if the student is eligible for an incomplete grade, the decision to grant the incomplete grade lies solely with the faculty member. A student may be eligible for an incomplete grade if the following requirements have been met:

- Due to exceptional extenuating circumstances, the student needs additional time to complete assignments from the course's final week in 4- and 5-week courses or the final two weeks in an 8-week course.
- The student requests an incomplete grade from the faculty member before the course end date.
- The student has the potential to earn a passing grade once the eligible assignments are submitted.

If approved, the extension period will not exceed one week from the course end date. Discussion board activities are not eligible for submission as part of the incomplete grade. The usual late assignment policy will not apply to assignments submitted as part of the incomplete grade. The VA certification period will not be extended for the duration of the incomplete grade; however, if the student begins a new term, the student will be accountable for participation in the subsequent semester coursework while completing work for any course with an incomplete grade. Incomplete grades will not be used in the SAP evaluation until a final grade is entered.

Transfer Credits

A transcript will reflect coursework evaluated and accepted for transfer when granted for courses applied to the student's program of study. Transcripts must be submitted and evaluated within the first semester to ensure proper scheduling of necessary coursework with SDI. All transfer credits that are accepted by SDI and applied to the student's program of study will be treated as both credits attempted and credits earned for SAP pace calculations. Transfer credits are not factored into CGPA calculations for SAP or graduation considerations.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

The Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy for SDI is designed to promote the successful completion of each student's academic program and is aligned with specific regulatory requirements. Each student's academic progress will be evaluated at the end of each semester using grade and pace standards. For a student to meet the standards of SAP, the student must have a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) at the end of each semester of 2.0 and demonstrate successful completion of at least 66.67% of credits taken toward the program of study. This pace is designed to ensure completion of the program within the 150% maximum time frame. If at any evaluation point, the student cannot mathematically complete the program without attempting more than 150% of the program's required credits, the student would not be meeting SAP based on maximum time frame. At each evaluation point, SDI will notify the student of any result that may affect funding and/or eligibility to continue.

All transfer credits that are accepted by the Institute and applied to the student's program of study will be treated as both credits attempted and credits earned. Courses with a temporary grade of Incomplete will not be used in the SAP evaluation until a final grade is entered and SAP is recalculated for that period. All attempts for repeated course work will be treated as credits attempted and the passing grade will replace failed grades in the CGPA. Courses may not be repeated for credit if the student has already achieved a passing grade. Individual 4 or 8 week courses from which a student withdraws up to the 75% point in the course will be assigned a "W" grade and will be treated as credits attempted but not earned, impacting pace but without impact to the CGPA. Individual 5 week courses from which a student withdraws up to the 80% point in the course will be assigned a "W" grade and will be treated as credits attempted but not earned, impacting pace but without impact to the CGPA.

Academic Warning

A student who fails to achieve the SDI SAP standards under this policy will be placed on one semester of Academic Warning. During the Academic Warning period, students can receive guidance to assist in attaining acceptable progression requirements and are still eligible to receive funding. SDI may require students to fulfill specific conditions, including modifications to course loads or registration in specific courses.

Academic Dismissal

At the completion of the warning period, a student who fails to achieve standards of CGPA and/or pace and/or maximum time frame constraints is subject to academic dismissal and loss of all funding options.

SAP Appeals

In extenuating circumstances, SDI may consider an appeal from a student who fails to achieve SAP after the Academic Warning period. Consideration of such appeal would include determination of the student's ability to reestablish acceptable academic progress. Students who wish to appeal must submit a signed SDI appeal form to the SAP Appeals Committee at SAPAppeals@sdi.edu, including the reason why the student failed to make satisfactory academic progress and what has changed in the student's situation that will allow the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress at the next evaluation point. Upon submission of the SAP Appeal, a review will be conducted by the SDI Appeals Committee and the student will be notified of the decision.

SAP Probation

Students whose appeals are approved will be placed on Academic Probation and are eligible to receive funding. The standard duration of the Academic Probation period is one semester in length. By completion of this semester, the student must have achieved a CGPA of 2.0, and demonstrated successful completion of at least 66.67% of courses taken toward the program of study and have the ability to complete the program within the 150% maximum time frame to be removed from Academic Probation status. Students who fail to make academic progress, will be subject to academic dismissal.

Academic Plans

On occasion, a student may be approved for a probationary period that includes multiple evaluation periods (semesters). In these circumstances, an academic plan is established detailing the requirements the student must meet to demonstrate progressive achievement toward SAP standards. Academic plans must be reviewed and signed by the student as a condition of the approved academic probationary period. At each evaluation period during the academic plan, the student's progress is measured against the plan requirements to determine if the student may continue under the probationary status. If the requirements of the plan have not been met, the student would be in violation of SAP and again subject to academic dismissal.

Denied Appeals

Students whose appeals have been denied may request to continue in self pay status. Students who wish to pursue this option will initiate the request through their assigned Student Success Coach. A review will be conducted by the SDI Appeals Committee and the student will be notified of the decision.

GRADE DISPUTES AND CORRECTIONS

Faculty members are responsible for issuing earned grades. SDI supports the assessment made by the faculty member based on student performance throughout the course. Overturning a grade is unlikely and will be considered only if a miscalculation occurred. Students should address concerns or questions directly with their faculty member, promptly after receiving grades and feedback. Final grades cannot be disputed unless the student has ample evidence that the grade was miscalculated.

To initiate a grade dispute, students should contact their Student Success Coach and provide ample documentation indicating where the grade was miscalculated, as well as evidence of communication with the faculty member about the alleged miscalculation of the overall course grade. If this documentation is missing, the dispute will be rejected. A final grade for a course may only be disputed within four weeks of the last day of the course. Grade disputes may not be filed on an individual assignment while the course is still in progress. The decision on a grade dispute is final and may not be appealed.

ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

At Sonoran Desert Institute, we enjoy celebrating the hard work and dedication of our amazing students. SDI has several ways to recognize student success. The following outlines requirements for each of our academic honors to show our appreciation for the outstanding academic and personal achievement of our students.

Dean's List

Each semester, students who meet the below criteria will be honored with the distinction of being on the Dean's List:

- Earn at least 12 or more graded credit hours during a semester*
- 3.5+ Semester / Term GPA

**Credit Exception-Students whose final period of study is less than full-time (but at least 6 credits) as a result of transfer credits and earn 3.5 (or higher) semester GPA will also be eligible for Dean's List.*

President's List

Upon graduation, students who meet the below criteria will be honored with the distinction of being on the President's List:

- 4.0 GPA
- Successful completion of all courses
- No outstanding financial balance
- No unsuccessful grades including W's
- No student code of conduct violations

Undergraduate Honors

Upon graduation, students who meet the below criteria will be honored with:

- Cum Laude – GPA 3.5-3.79
- Magna Cum Laude – GPA 3.8-3.99
- Summa Cum Laude – GPA 4.0

Honor Societies

SDI students may be eligible for honor society membership during their enrollment and/or upon graduation.
See Honor Societies section of this catalog.

Student Policies

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Students enrolled at Sonoran Desert Institute are accountable for their actions and are expected to conduct themselves ethically, honestly, and with integrity in all situations, including academic exercises. Additionally, students are to demonstrate mutual respect and civility in all Institute-related activities and interactions. The Student Code of Conduct applies to all interactions whether conducted in person, telephonically, via text, chat, email, social media, or through any other electronic platform, including any learning management system. This policy describes the types of conduct that are deemed prohibited and unacceptable, the procedures for handling violations, and possible sanctions for violations.

Behavioral Conduct Violations

The following is a non-exhaustive list of actions that are considered student conduct violations and for which students may be subjected to disciplinary action:

- Falsification, forgery, alteration, or invention of information, including but not limited to any document used for admission or eligibility to the Institute or other official Institute documents.
- Aiding, abetting, or procuring another person to violate an Institute policy.
- Communicating or behaving in any form that disrupts or interferes with the educational process or any institutional function or creates a hostile or offensive educational environment for any student, faculty member, or staff member.
- Communicating or behaving in any manner that is considered threatening, vulgar, obscene, or lewd.
- Failing to comply promptly with any reasonable request or directive from a faculty member or Institute official.
- Failing to cooperate with officials in an Institutional investigation.
- Possessing, using, distributing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while on Institute property or as part of any Institute activity (refer to Substance Abuse Prevention Policy).
- Attempted or actual theft of the Institute's property or the property of an SDI employee or student.
- Permitting online classroom access to any person, enrolled or not, so that person may attend class in the stead of any legitimately enrolled student, whether oneself or another student.
- Sharing one's password or using someone else's password for any Institute system or network.
- Using the Institute's computing and communication resources (including the learning management system) for any purpose other than approved education purposes, or otherwise inconsistent with Institute policies.
- Using any Institute system, network, or other IT resource to upload, download, or otherwise share and/or distribute any copyrighted music, video, software, written works, images, or other materials without the written consent of the copyrighted owner.
- Failing to disclose any pending legal actions which may result in the student becoming ineligible to continue with their respective training/academic program.

Academic Integrity Violations

Academic integrity is a vital part of Sonoran Desert Institute's foundation, and every member of the SDI community is expected to adhere to this principle in all academic endeavors. Students consent to a review for academic integrity by a third party of any academic work submitted. The following is a non-exhaustive list of actions that are considered academic integrity violations:

- Cheating, attempting to cheat, or assisting others to cheat, including dishonest activity or unauthorized use of any resource or materials in any academic exercise.
- Plagiarizing, intentionally or unintentionally, the words, works, or ideas of others without proper citation or acknowledgement and representing them as one's own in any academic exercise. This includes using materials from third parties that sell or provide academic papers or assignments, regardless of how the third party describes their mission, purpose, or materials. This also includes output created by generative artificial intelligence tools.
- Paraphrasing sources which do not represent the student's original words or ideas without proper citation or acknowledgement.
- Creating fake or misleading citations for sources.
- Presenting work that has been prepared by someone other than the student, including the purchase and sharing of work.
- Allowing another person to complete work on one's behalf, including any classroom post, assignment, lab project, quiz, test, exam, or similar evaluation, or completing such work on behalf of another student.
- Submitting work that has been prepared and used for a different course, wholly or in part, without prior approval of faculty.
- Completing an assignment using materials not authorized by faculty or the Institute, or materials provided by someone other than the student, including but not limited to providing/receiving exam answers, using faculty materials, answer keys, or solution manuals.
- Collaborating with another person on any academic exercise without prior faculty approval.

The Institute reserves the right to review any course for any purpose at any time. If unreported / undiscovered academic dishonesty is found, the Institute may engage in a thorough investigation of all coursework the student has completed in the past and apply appropriate sanctions up to and including dismissal.

Procedure for Processing Alleged Code of Conduct Violations

A student suspected of committing any violation of the Institute's policies will be provided fair process before disciplinary action is imposed. An investigation will be conducted by administration. If it is more likely than not that a violation has occurred, the student will be notified in writing of the following:

- **Warning**. A warning letter is notice to the student that a violation of the Student Code of Conduct has occurred, and that continued or repeated violations of specified conduct may be cause for further disciplinary action. This letter is not appealable and no response from the student is requested.
- **Charge**. A charge letter is notice that the student has been involved in an incident in which the student's alleged actions are in violation of the Institute's Student Code of Conduct. These letters request a student response.

The student will be given 10 calendar days from the date of the charge letter to submit a written response to the Institute. The response gives the student the opportunity to provide input regarding the charge, including any extenuating circumstances relevant to the issue. If the student does not provide a written response within 10 calendar days, the case will proceed without the student's input.

Cases involving a charge letter will be decided by the Code of Conduct Committee, which will consist of senior members of SDI leadership. If a violation is found, sanctions appropriate to the violation will be applied and a decision letter will be sent to the student. Students are not entitled to representation by any third party, personal representative, or attorney at any stage of the disciplinary process, including investigations, hearings, or appeals.

Disciplinary action for violation of any portion of the Code of Conduct may include:

- Failing grade for an assignment
- Failing grade for a course
- Rescission of credit awarded for course
- Rescission of degree awarded
- Probation
- Dismissal (expulsion)

Appeals must be requested in writing to the Institute within 10 calendar days from the date on the decision letter.

Appeals will only be accepted for review if the student can demonstrate at least one of the following:

- New evidence which was unavailable to the student at the time of the initial response.
- Institute procedures were not followed, which includes informing the student in writing of the charges and providing the student the opportunity to respond to the charges

The preceding sections notwithstanding, any member of executive leadership, or their designee, individually or as a group, have the authority and sole discretion to carry out an immediate administrative action on behalf of the Institute, up to and including expulsion, when a student's continued enrollment constitutes a significant risk to members of the SDI community or to the orderly functioning of the Institute.

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING FOR VA BENEFITS

Students who use their military Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits are required to complete the SDI Statement of Understanding for VA Education Benefits form at the time of enrollment. SDI reports student status changes and program completions to the VA for determination of payment eligibility or debts based on available information as required by the VA. Students with pay issue questions are directed to the VA Education Office 1-888-442-4551. For more information on VA education benefits, go to www.benefits.va.gov/gibill.

STUDENT FALSIFICATION OF INFORMATION

A student enrolling at the Institute has the responsibility to submit complete and accurate information. This includes any supporting documentation for personal, academic, and specific program requirements. Submitting incomplete, false, or misleading information and/or documentation may be grounds for dismissal at any time. For FSA students selected for verification, purposely giving false or misleading information may lead to a fine, imprisonment, or both.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTING AND COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

The Institute's computing and communication resources are the property of the Institute. Use of SDI computing and communication resources is a privilege and is provided as a service to the Institute's users. Among other purposes, these resources are provided for the following:

- Delivery of curriculum and related materials
- Conducting distance learning classes
- Conducting educational research
- Communication between and among students, faculty, and staff
- Accessing and obtaining the Institute's services

A student, faculty, or staff member who uses these resources without authorization will be subject to appropriate review processes and penalties. In addition, all activity and information (including personal) on SDI systems may be monitored and recorded. Any individual accessing SDI computing and communication resources expressly consents to such monitoring and is advised that if such monitoring reveals unauthorized or criminal activity, Information Technology staff and/or providers will present the evidence from monitoring to the appropriate Institute officials for investigation.

COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT AND PEER-TO-PEER FILE SHARING

A student is responsible for the proper use and storage of all SDI learning materials received or obtained from the Institute and its resources. This includes electronic data as well as printed materials. The student should be aware of copyright laws and potential risks associated with file sharing. Violating copyright laws and/or appropriate file sharing protocols may be grounds for dismissal from the Institute. In addition, violators may be subject to prosecution to the fullest extent of the law.

Copyright Law and Infringement

Copyright is a form of protection provided by U. S. law (title 17, U.S. Code) to the authors of "original works of authorship" including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and certain other intellectual works. This protection is available to both published and unpublished works. Section 106 of the copyright law provides the copyright owner exclusive rights:

- To reproduce the work in copies
- To prepare derivative works based upon the work
- To distribute copies of the work to the public by sale or other transfer of ownership, or by rental, lease, or lending
- To perform the work publicly
- To display the copyrighted work publicly
- In the case of sound recordings, to perform the work publicly by means of a digital audio transmission

Section 501 of the copyright law states that "anyone who violates any of the exclusive rights of the copyright owner...is an infringer of the copyright or right of the author." Generally, under the law, one who engages in any of these activities without obtaining the copyright owner's permission may be liable for infringement.

Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA)

The Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) attempts to address copyright in the digitally networked environment. DMCA addresses a number of significant copyright-related issues. Details on DMCA can be found at the United States Copyright Office website (www.copyright.gov).

Peer-to-Peer File Sharing (P2P)

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) technology is a distributed computing software structure that enables individual computers to connect to and communicate directly with other computers. Through this connection, computer users (known as "peers") can share communications, processing power, and data files. With respect to file sharing specifically, P2P technology allows "decentralized" sharing. Rather than storing files in a central location to which individual computers must connect to retrieve the files, P2P technology enables individual computers to share directly among themselves files stored on the individual computers.

A student may face a number of risks when he/she downloads and uses commercial P2P file sharing software programs. If a student downloads a particular program, he/she could possibly download other software, such as spyware or adware that is bundled with the file sharing program. The user may not understand the configuration of the P2P file sharing software's "shared folder" and may inadvertently share sensitive personal files, or Institute files, residing on his/her hard drive. A user also might receive files with viruses and other programs when sharing files using P2P programs. These viruses could impair the operation of his/her personal computer. The student is at risk to receive or redistribute files that may subject him/her to civil or criminal liability under copyright infringement laws. More information about P2P can be found in reports at the Federal Trade Commission website (www.ftc.gov).

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A student is encouraged to discuss academic progress, suggestions, or concerns with Sonoran Desert Institute staff, faculty, or administration. It is suggested that the student contact the staff by email or telephone. For concerns related to Satisfactory Academic Progress or academic standing, please refer to the SAP appeals process for more details. For matters related to grade disputes or corrections, please refer to the Grade Disputes and Corrections section of the current SDI Catalog. For any other concern, grievance, or complaint that is not satisfactorily addressed through informal conversation, the student may submit a formal complaint relating to the following unresolved areas:

- Administration
- Finance
- Technical issues
- Faculty performance
- Program content

The formal complaint must be in writing and submitted online using the form available at https://sdi.edu/about-us/student-grievance-procedures/. The student should include information regarding any informal conversations about the issue.

When the Institute receives an SDI Student Grievance Form, the Grievance Committee will contact the staff/faculty members directly involved and attempt to reach a resolution. Within 15-business days after receipt of the SDI Student Grievance Form, the Grievance Committee will provide the student with a written response of the Institute's decision.

If not satisfied with the decision, the student may appeal that decision in writing, to the Institute's president. The president will respond to the student within 15-business days after receipt of the appeal. The decision of the president is final, and the Institute will conclude the investigation regarding the grievance.

If the student's complaint cannot be resolved after exhausting the Institute's grievance procedure, the student may file a complaint with the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education. The student must contact the State Board for further details. The State Board mailing address and contact information is listed below. The Grievance Committee will keep a log of all formal complaints.

Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education
1740 W. Adams, 3rd Floor
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Phone: 602-542-5709
Website: https://ppse.az.gov/student-complaint-procedure

The student may also file a complaint with the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC). Their contact information is listed below.

Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC)
1101 17th Street NW, Suite 808
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-234-5100
Fax: 202-332-1386
Website: www.deac.org

California Students Complaint Policy

An individual may contact the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education for review of a complaint. The bureau may be contacted at:

P.O. Box 980818
West Sacramento, CA 95798-0818
Phone: 916-574-8900 | Fax: 916-263-1897
Website: https://www.bppe.ca.gov/enforcement/complaint.shtml

AZ-SARA Complaint Process

The Arizona SARA Council has jurisdiction over Arizona SARA-approved institutions including Sonoran Desert Institute (SDI) in relation to non-instructional complaints. Instructional complaints, such as grade grievances, are not reviewed by the Council and should not be submitted for review. Prior to registering a non-instructional complaint with the Arizona SARA Council, the student/complainant must complete SDI's and the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education complaint processes, as listed in the above grievance procedures. The AZ SARA complaint process is only for non-Arizona based students. Non-instructional complaints may be submitted at https://azsara.arizona.edu/complaints.

DISABILITY SERVICES

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended, SDI prohibits discrimination on the basis of a disability. The Institute is committed to making reasonable accommodations to meet the needs of the student with a disability as long as it does not fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity or give rise to an undue financial or administrative burden. Appropriate academic adjustments will be determined based on the student's specific disability and individual needs. These may include auxiliary aids and services, as well as modifications to academic requirements as necessary to ensure equal educational opportunity. Reasonable accommodations will be granted to students who present appropriate documentation of a disability and are otherwise qualified to participate in their specific program of study. Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should send an email to accomodations@sdi.edu for assistance.

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Associate Degrees

Currently, Sonoran Desert Institute offers an Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree and an Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology degree.

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE IN FIREARMS TECHNOLOGY

The Associate of Science in Firearms Technology program is designed for individuals aiming to deepen their expertise in the firearms industry while developing advanced technical, craftsmanship, and business skills. This comprehensive program builds on foundational knowledge with a focus on specialized gunsmithing techniques, manual machining, and professional practices essential for success in the firearms field.

Students will expand their competencies by learning the operation of lathes and other precision machinery, as well as wood and metalworking techniques for firearm customization and restoration. Courses emphasize craftsmanship, attention to detail, and safe industry practices while providing hands-on experience with project-based learning.

In addition to technical skills, students will gain knowledge in firearms business principles. These skills prepare graduates to navigate the business side of gunsmithing, from working in established shops to launching their own ventures.

The curriculum includes core courses on firearms mechanics, advanced modifications, troubleshooting, and accurizing techniques. Elective options allow students to tailor their learning to specific interests or platforms to support their market.

Graduates of the program will emerge with a well-rounded skill set that combines technical expertise, craftsmanship, and business acumen, making them well-prepared to thrive in diverse roles within the firearms industry.

Program Specific Admissions Requirements

- Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Applicants must be a minimum of 18 years of age as of the program start date.
- Applicants may be subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study.
- Students will need to have access to a firearm to complete assignments in some of the coursework.
- Must be eligible to obtain a Federal Firearms License.

Statement of Eligibility

Due to the nature of the coursework offered, SDI reserves the right to deny enrollment to any individual who is unable to answer “No” to all questions below. Additionally, enrollment may be denied if SDI has reasonable cause to believe that an individual’s answer(s) to a question below should be “Yes.”

- Are you under indictment or information in any court for a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could imprison you for more than one year, or are you a current member of the military who has been charged with violation(s) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and whose charge(s) have been referred to a general court-martial?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court, including a military court, of a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could have imprisoned you for more than one year, even if you received a shorter sentence including probation?
- Are you a fugitive from justice?
- Are you an unlawful user of, or addicted to, marijuana or any depressant, stimulant, narcotic drug, or any other controlled substance? Warning: The use or possession of marijuana remains unlawful under Federal law regardless of whether it has been legalized or decriminalized for medicinal or recreational purposes in the state where you reside.
- Have you ever been adjudicated as a mental defective OR have you ever been committed to a mental institution?
- Have you ever been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions?

- Are you subject to a court order, including a Military Protection Order issued by a military judge or magistrate, restraining you from harassing, stalking, or threatening your child or an intimate partner or child of such partner?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, or are you or have you ever been a member of the military and been convicted of a crime that included, as an element, the use of force against a person as identified in the instructions?
- Have you ever renounced your United States citizenship?
- Are you an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States?

Background Checks

Prior to admission into SDI, all applicants must submit authorization for a background check. Applicants are subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study. Applicants who have been identified as prohibited persons under The Gun Control Act (GCA), codified at 18 U.S.C. § 922(g) will immediately be deemed ineligible for admission. Applicants whose background check indicates other charges will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. SDI will permit or deny admission based on the charges listed according to the SDI Right to Deny Policy.

SDI may consider an appeal from an applicant who has been denied for charge(s) not violating the Identify Prohibited Persons list. Consideration of the appeal shall be based on:

1. likelihood of the student's ability to successfully complete the program,
2. timeframe of charge(s) listed, and
3. nature of the charge(s) listed.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Associate Dean Firearms Programs, including any reason(s) why circumstances have changed surrounding the charge(s) resulting in denial and/or any documentation showing suspension of charges, restoration of civil rights, etc. Applicants whose appeals are approved may continue through the admissions process. Denied appeals are final, and the applicant will be barred from enrollment at Sonoran Desert Institute indefinitely.

Courses Requiring a Firearms Transfer

Certain courses require Sonoran Desert Institute to provide learning materials that fall within the federal definition of a firearm. Upon selecting a course that features a firearm, students must designate an FFL at which to pick up their receiver/ other protected parts. At time of pick up, students will be required to pass a NICS background check, administered by the designated FFL, prior to obtaining the receiver/other protected parts. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will be required to appeal the background check and/or be withdrawn from the course. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will not be subject to refunds outside of SDI's school refund policy. Failure of a NICS background check will negatively affect the ability to be employed in the firearms industry.

State Laws and Restrictions

SDI provides students with tools and equipment that are related to the firearms industry. The Institute strives to ensure tools and equipment are issued in accordance with federal, state, and local firearm laws. SDI will work with individual students based on the state they reside in when assigning courses. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to comply with the individual state(s) and federal law regarding firearms. Students are accountable under the exact wording and current interpretations of all applicable laws and regulations within each state.

Graduate Employment Opportunities

Some of the many areas where a student may apply the knowledge gained from the Gunsmithing program include the following:

- Shooting sports management
- Retail firearms sales
- Firearms repair and customization
- Gunsmith
- Armorer
- Research and Development
- Basic Machining

CIP/SOC Classifications & Summary

The Classification for Instructional Programs (CIP) associated with this program is 47.0402, titled "Gunsmithing/Gunsmith". The Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) is considered as 49.9099, "Installation, Maintenance and Repair." Requirements to practice as a gunsmith or in a firearms-related industry may require federal and/or state approvals. A graduate who desires to work in the industry may need to obtain a Federal Firearms License (FFL). This is required if the graduate hopes to repair firearms for compensation. A graduate employed by a business that has an FFL may not be required to obtain an individual FFL. A graduate who desires to repair only personal firearms is not required to obtain a firearms license. Because of changes in requirements, the graduate is advised to regularly review the requirements for the FFL with the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The graduate can find this information on the ATF website (www.atf.gov). Sonoran Desert Institute does not guarantee job placement or employment.

Tools and Equipment

Tools and equipment are provided by the Institute and included in the total program cost. These items are shipped to the student with other learning materials and will belong to the student. Students need to have access to a firearm for certain courses and may need additional supplies to complete certain projects. Please visit the following link for a comprehensive list of supplies required for the completion of assignments per current course offerings. www.sdi.edu/tools-and-materials/

Completion Requirements

To earn an Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree, a student must do the following:

- Complete all coursework required in the degree program
- Complete at least 44 credit hours of discipline-specific coursework
- Complete at least 15 credit hours of general education coursework
- Complete 1 credit hour of student success coursework
- Complete the program with a minimum grade point of 2.0 or above

Completion of the Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree does not require additional specialized training, practicum, or externships.

Program Outcomes

With the successful completion of this program, a student will be able to do the following:

- Interpret and apply federal, state, and local firearms laws and regulations to ensure legal compliance in gunsmithing practices.
- Develop firearms and ammunition vocabulary to distinguish between broad industry terms and manufacturer specific language.
- Distinguish firearms and ammunition by industry-defined characteristics and terms, to support the translation of customer identified problems.
- Use safe industry practices while applying tools and knowledge to effect firearms related repairs or customizations.
- Apply gunsmithing techniques across various firearms platforms to complete basic modifications or upgrades consistent with industry standards or good craftmanship.
- Diagnose and troubleshoot mechanical and operational issues in firearms, utilizing critical thinking and specialized tools to implement effective solutions.
- Uphold industry standards for workplace safety and proper handling of tools, machinery, and firearms in all gunsmithing activities.
- Demonstrate proficiency in specialized gunsmithing techniques, including the operation of lathes and other precision machinery, and perform accurate modifications, repairs, and restorations on a wide range of firearms.
- Identify and apply business principles by understanding basic retail and repair scenarios within a firearms business operation.
- Apply advanced wood and metalworking techniques to fabricate and customize firearm components, with attention to detail, quality, and aesthetic design.
- Explore concepts in communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, critical thinking, natural and physical sciences, social and behavioral sciences, and the humanities.

Required Courses: Associate of Science in Firearms Technology

CATEGORY	COURSE	SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS	LENGTH IN WEEKS
Student Success	SDI 101: Success in Distance Learning	1	8
	Total Student Success	**1**	
Firearms Technology Discipline	FTT 102: Principle of Mechanics in Firearms	4	8
	FTT 103: Principles of Ammunition and Basic Ballistics	4	8
	FTT 105: Firearms Laws, Rights, and Responsibilities	4	8
	FTT 106: Hand and Specialty Tools in Gunsmithing	4	8
	FTT 131: Maintenance and Troubleshooting of Firearms	4	8
	MAC 110: Basic Power Tools and Machining Principles	4	8
	FTT 133: General Gunsmithing Modifications	4	8
	MAC 150: Introduction to Manual Lathe	4	8
	FTT 213: Wood and Metalwork in Gunsmithing	4	8
	FTT 220: Firearm Business Principles	4	8
	FTT 299: Firearms Technology Elective*	4	8
	Total Firearms Technology	**44**	
General Education	AGT 100: American Government	3	8
	MAT 101: Mathematics for Technical Trades	3	8
	PSY 101: Introduction to Psychology	3	8
	ENG 101: English Composition 1	3	8
	SCI 101: Introduction to Physical Science	3	8
	Total General Education	**15**	
	TOTAL PROGRAM	**60**	**64**

***FTT 299 Elective Options: Course availability may vary each semester. Not all courses may be offered each term.**

FTE 211: 1911 Advanced Armorer
(Students must be 21 years of age to select FTE 211 course. Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 211 course).

FTE 217: Modern Sporting Rifle
(In some states, students must be 21 years of age to select FTE 217 course. Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 217 course).

FTE 218: Pump Shotgun Armorer
(In some states, students must be 21 years of age to select FTE 218 course. Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 218 course).

FTE 225: Developing a Business Plan

ANY student who fails the firearm transfer background check and appeal process will only be eligible to select FTE 225 to meet the FTT 299 elective requirement.

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE IN UNCREWED TECHNOLOGY

Program Summary

The Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology degree program provides the student with a thorough understanding of concepts focusing on operating, maintaining, and managing small uncrewed aircraft systems (sUAS). This associate program has a strong focus on uncrewed systems supported by basic general education courses. This is a four-semester program consisting of 60 semester credit hours of college-level study. There are 15 general education credits, 32 discipline specific credits, 12 discipline specific elective credits, and one student success credit. Students study historical, technical, and operational knowledge of uncrewed aircraft systems and technology.

Program Specific Admissions Requirements

For SDI Uncrewed Technology programs and courses, the following requirements are in place:

- Students will need access to a legal and safe space to fly drones to complete assignments in some of the coursework.
- The FAA requires drone pilots to be in a physical and mental condition that allows them to safely fly a drone. This involves being physically capable of operating the drone controls and mentally alert to handle any situations that may arise during flight.

Graduate Employment Opportunities

Some of the many areas within the Uncrewed and Autonomous Aircraft Industry where a student may apply the knowledge gained from the Certificate in Uncrewed Technology at the entry-level include:

- Project Manager
- Systems Engineering Management Apprentice
- UAS Assistant Manager
- UAS Aviation Management Apprentice
- UAS Technician
- UAS Technologist

CIP/SOC Classifications & Summary

The Classification for Instructional Programs (CIP) associated with this program is 15.0407, titled “Mechatronics, Robotics, and Automation Engineering Technology/Technician.”. The Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) 17-3024.00, Electro-Mechanical and Mechatronics Technologists and Technicians and 17-3024.01, Robotics Technicians. Sonoran Desert Institute does not guarantee job placement or employment.

Completion Requirements

To earn an Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology degree, a student must do the following:

- Successfully Complete all coursework required in the degree program
- Complete at least 44 credit hours of discipline-specific coursework
- Complete at least 15 credit hours of general education coursework
- Complete at least one credit hour of student success coursework
- Complete the program with a minimum grade point of 2.0 or above

Program Outcomes

With the successful completion of this program, a student will be able to do the following:

- Describe the knowledge, skills, and practical experience necessary to contribute to UAS operations in roles such as remote pilots, sensor operators, technicians, data analysts, mission planners, or program/project managers.
- Demonstrate proficiency in operating, maintaining, and troubleshooting uncrewed aircraft systems.
- Discuss important system elements of UAS technology, including airframes, flight controls, propulsion, sensors, and communication systems.
- Explain the multidisciplinary nature of UAS technology with respect to regulations, aviation principles, aeronautics, electronics, remote sensing, wireless communications, data analysis, and computer science, enabling them to approach UAS operations from a comprehensive perspective.

- Plan UAS missions to collect data for post-flight analysis.
- Analyze UAS mission data using industry-standard tools/software to make informed recommendations or decisions.
- Demonstrate professional integrity and ethical conduct in all UAS-related work and explain federal regulations, industry standards, and ethical guidelines for UAS operations in the U.S. National Air Space.
- Use effective verbal and written communication skills to clearly and concisely articulate technical concepts to supervisors, team members, stakeholders, and customers and compose well-written findings, recommendations, and reports.
- Demonstrate a safety focus to identify and assess potential risks, implement appropriate safety protocols, and effectively manage risks associated with all UAS operations.
- Explain aviation authorities' legal requirements and guidelines and apply their knowledge to design compliant missions for legal operations throughout the United States.
- Practice problem-solving and critical-thinking skills to analyze operational scenarios, identify issues, and devise solutions for UAS operations; Demonstrate adaptability to unexpected challenges, including making justifiable decisions during real-time scenarios.
- Advocate "Drones are Good" concepts and defend the industry's safe, legal, ethical, and responsible use of UAS.

Required Courses: Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology

CATEGORY	COURSE	SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS	LENGTH IN WEEKS
Student Success	SDI 101: Success in Distance Learning	1	5
	TOTAL STUDENT SUCCESS	**1**	
Uncrewed Technology Discipline	UAS 101: UAS Fundamentals*	4	5
	UAS 201: sUAS Sensors and Remote Sensing	4	5
	UAS 213: sUAS Design, Build, and Fly	4	5
	UAS 231: UAS Flight Test and Evaluation	4	5
	UAS 234: sUAS Thermography Level 1	4	5
	UAS 250: FAA sUAS Professional Remote Pilot	4	5
	UET 102: Fundamentals of Electronics	4	5
	SYS 212: Project Management for UAS Engineering and Technology	4	5
	TOTAL UNCREWED TECHNOLOGY DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC	**32**	
	UAS 202: UAS Aviation Management	4	5
	UAS 205: Introduction to Geographical Information Systems	4	5
	SYS 201: UAS Systems Engineering Management	4	5
	TOTAL UNCREWED DISCIPLINE SPECIFIC ELECTIVES	**12**	
General Education	AGT 100: American Government (Arts and Humanities)	3	5
	ENG 101: English Composition 1 (Communication Arts)	3	5
	MAT 101: Mathematics for the Technical Trades (Mathematics)	3	5
	SCI 101: Introduction to Physical Science (Natural and Physical Sciences)	3	5
	PSY 101: Introduction to Psychology (Social and Behavioral Sciences)	3	5
	TOTAL GENERAL EDUCATION	**15**	
	TOTAL PROGRAM	**60**	**80**

**UAS 101 is a prerequisite to all other UAS courses in the Associate of Science in Uncrewed Technology*

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Certificate Programs

Currently, Sonoran Desert Institute offers a Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing, Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist, and a Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems.

CERTIFICATE IN FIREARMS TECHNOLOGY – GUNSMITHING

The Certificate in Firearms Technology - Gunsmithing program is for individuals seeking foundational skills and knowledge in the firearms industry. Students will learn to recognize and differentiate firearms by operational and legal characteristics, identify critical measurements and tolerances, and apply specialized tools in project-based work. Emphasis is placed on using safe industry practices, performing compliance functions relevant to gunsmithing, and conducting basic modifications and accurizing work on firearms. The curriculum includes courses on mechanics, ammunition basics, firearms laws and responsibilities, maintenance, troubleshooting, and the use of both basic and advanced gunsmithing tools. Additionally, students have the option to select electives to tailor their studies to specific interests within the field.

Program Specific Admissions Requirements

- Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Applicants must be a minimum of 18 years of age as of the program start date.
- Applicants may be subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study.
- Students will need to have access to a firearm to complete assignments in some of the coursework.
- Must be eligible to obtain a Federal Firearms License.

Statement of Eligibility

Due to the nature of the coursework offered, SDI reserves the right to deny enrollment to any individual who is unable to answer "No" to all questions below. Additionally, enrollment may be denied if SDI has reasonable cause to believe the individuals answer of "No" to a question below should be "Yes."

- Are you under indictment or information in any court for a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could imprison you for more than one year, or are you a current member of the military who has been charged with violation(s) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and whose charge(s) have been referred to a general court-martial?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court, including a military court, of a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could have imprisoned you for more than one year, even if you received a shorter sentence including probation?
- Are you a fugitive from justice?
- Are you an unlawful user of, or addicted to, marijuana or any depressant, stimulant, narcotic drug, or any other controlled substance? Warning: The use or possession of marijuana remains unlawful under Federal law regardless of whether it has been legalized or decriminalized for medicinal or recreational purposes in the state where you reside.
- Have you ever been adjudicated as a mental defective OR have you ever been committed to a mental institution?
- Have you ever been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions?
- Are you subject to a court order, including a Military Protection Order issued by a military judge or magistrate, restraining you from harassing, stalking, or threatening your child or an intimate partner or child of such partner?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, or are you or have you ever been a member of the military and been convicted of a crime that included, as an element, the use of force against a person as identified in the instructions?
- Have you ever renounced your United States citizenship?
- Are you an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States?

Background Checks

Prior to admission into SDI, all applicants must submit authorization for a background check. "Applicants are subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study. Applicants who have been identified as prohibited persons under The Gun Control Act (G.C.A.), codified at 18 U.S.C. § 922(g) will immediately be deemed ineligible for admission. Applicants whose background check indicates other charges will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. SDI will permit or deny admission based on the charges listed according to the SDI Right to Deny Policy.

SDI may consider an appeal from an applicant who has been denied for charge(s) not violating the Identify Prohibited Persons list. Consideration of the appeal shall be based on:

1. likelihood of the student's ability to successfully complete the program,
2. timeframe of charge(s) listed, and
3. nature of the charge(s) listed.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Dean, School of Firearms Technology, including any reason(s) why circumstances have changed surrounding the charge(s) resulting in denial and/or any documentation showing suspension of charges, restoration of civil rights, etc. Applicants whose appeals are approved may continue through the admissions process. Denied appeals are final, and the applicant will be barred from enrollment at Sonoran Desert Institute indefinitely.

Courses Requiring a Firearms Transfer

Certain courses require Sonoran Desert Institute to provide learning materials that fall within the federal definition of a firearm. Upon selecting a course that features a firearm, students must designate an FFL at which to pick up their firearm/ other protected parts. At time of pick up, students will be required to pass a NICS background check, administered by the designated FFL, prior to obtaining the firearm/other protected parts. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will be required to appeal the background check and/or be withdrawn from the course. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will not be subject to refunds outside of SDI's school refund policy. Failure of a NICS background check will negatively affect the ability to be employed in the firearms industry.

State Laws and Restrictions

SDI provides students with tools and equipment related to the firearms industry. The Institute strives to ensure tools and equipment are issued in accordance with federal, state, and local firearm laws. SDI will work with individual students based on the state in which they reside when assigning courses. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to comply with the individual state(s) and federal law regarding firearms. Students are accountable under the exact wording and current interpretations of all applicable laws and regulations within each state.

Graduate Employment Opportunities

Some of the many areas where a student may apply the knowledge gained from the Gunsmithing program include the following:

- Shooting sports management
- Retail firearms sales
- Firearms repair and cusomization
- Gunsmith
- Amrorer
- Research and Development
- Basic Machining

CIP/SOC Classification & Summary

The Classification for Instructional Programs (C.I.P.) associated with this program is 47.0402, titled "Gunsmithing/ Gunsmith". The Standard Occupation Classification (S.O.C.) is considered as 49.9099, "Installation, Maintenance and Repair." Requirements to practice as a gunsmith or in a firearms-related industry may require federal and/or state approvals. A graduate who desires to work in the industry may need to obtain a Federal Firearms License (FFL). This is required if the graduate hopes to repair firearms for compensation. A graduate employed by a business with an FFL may not be required to obtain an individual FFL. A graduate who desires to repair only personal firearms is not required to obtain a firearms license. Because of changes in requirements, the graduate is advised to regularly review the requirements for the FFLwith the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (A.T.F.). The graduate can find this information on the A.T.F. website (www.atf.gov). Sonoran Desert Institute does not guarantee job placement or employment.

Tools and Equipment

Tools and equipment are provided by the Institute and included in the total program cost. These items are shipped to the student with other learning materials and will belong to the student. Students need to have access to a firearm for certain courses and may need additional supplies to complete certain projects. Please visit the following link for a comprehensive list of supplies required for completion of assignments, per current course offerings. www.sdi.edu/tools-and-materials/

Completion Requirements

To earn an Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing, a student must do the following:

- Complete all coursework required in the certificate program
- Complete at least 32 credit hours of discipline-specific coursework
- Complete the program with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 or above

Program Outcomes

With the successful completion of this program, a student will be able to do the following:

- Interpret and apply federal, state, and local firearms laws and regulations to ensure legal compliance in gunsmithing practices.
- Develop firearms and ammunition vocabulary to distinguish between broad industry terms and manufacturer specific language.
- Distinguish firearms and ammunition by industry-defined characteristics and terms, to support the translation of customer identified problems.
- Use safe industry practices while applying tools and knowledge to effect firearms-related repairs or customizations.
- Apply gunsmithing techniques across various firearms platforms to complete basic modifications or upgrades consistent with industry standards or good craftsmanship.
- Diagnose and troubleshoot mechanical and operational issues in firearms, utilizing critical thinking and specialized tools to implement effective solutions.
- Uphold industry standards for workplace safety and proper handling of tools, machinery, and firearms in all gunsmithing activities.

Required Courses: Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing

CATEGORY	COURSE	SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS	LENGTH IN WEEKS
Firearms Technology Discipline	FTT 102: Principles of Mechanics in Firearms	4	8
	FTT 103: Principles of Ammunition and Basic Ballistics	4	8
	FTT 105: Firearms Laws, Rights, and Responsibilities	4	8
	FTT 106: Hand and Specialty Tools in Gunsmithing	4	8
	FTT 131: Maintenance and Troubleshooting of Firearms	4	8
	MAC 110: Basic Power tools and Machining Principles	4	8
	FTT 133: General Gunsmithing Modifications	4	8
	FTT 299: Firearms Technology Elective	4	8
	TOTAL PROGRAM	**32**	**32**

FTT 299 Elective Options:** ***Course availability may vary each semester. Not all courses may be offered each term.

FTE 211: 1911 Advanced Armorer
(Students must be 21 years of age to select FTE 211 course. Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 211 course).

FTE 217: Modern Sporting Rifle
(In some states, students must be 21 years of age to select FTE 217 course. Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 217 course).

FTE 218: Pump Shotgun Armorer
(In some states, students must be 21 years of age to select FTE 218 course. Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 218 course).

FTE 225: Developing a Business Plan

ANY student who fails the firearm transfer background check and appeal process will only be eligible to select FTE 225 to meet the FTT 299 elective requirement.

CERTIFICATE IN FIREARMS TECHNOLOGY – HANDGUN SPECIALIST

The Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist is a comprehensive exploration into pistols and revolvers. Concepts studied include the mechanism and cycle of operations, assembly and disassembly techniques, diagnostic and troubleshooting strategies, and methods to improve the functionality and aesthetics of handguns. The Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist is an accelerated, one-semester program consisting of 16 discipline-specific semester credit hours.

Program Specific Admissions Requirements

- Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Applicants must be a minimum of 21 years of age as of the program start date.
- Applicants may be subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study.
- Students will need to have access to a firearm to complete assignments in some of the coursework.
- Must be eligible to obtain a Federal Firearms License.

Students Stationed Abroad

The Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist program is delivered in 5-week courses. Each course includes practical application labs. In addition to accessing and interacting within the online classroom, students must be able to receive lab kits sent via UPS, FED EX or USPS; perform the practical application assignments; and create and upload videotaped submissions. This program is not available for deployed active duty or reservists at this time. Deployed active duty or reservists are advised to plan their enrollment for a time period when they can receive shipments of lab tools and firearms.

Statement of Eligibility

The information you provide will be used to determine whether you are prohibited by Federal law from receiving a firearm, or whether Federal law prohibits the sale or disposition of a firearm to you. Due to the nature of the coursework offered, SDI reserves the right to deny enrollment to any individual who is prohibited by Federal law from possessing a firearm. Additionally, enrollment may be denied if SDI has reasonable cause to believe that an individual's answer(s) to a question below is inaccurate. If you need clarification about your eligibility to possess firearms, please contact the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) at 800-800-3855.

- Are you under indictment or information in any court for a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could imprison you for more than one year, or are you a current member of the military who has been charged with violation(s) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and whose charge(s) have been referred to a general court martial?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court, including a military court, of a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could have imprisoned you for more than one year, even if you received a shorter sentence including probation?
- Are you a fugitive from justice?
- Are you an unlawful user of, or addicted to, marijuana or any depressant, stimulant, narcotic drug, or any other controlled substance? Warning: The use or possession of marijuana remains unlawful under Federal law regardless of whether it has been legalized or decriminalized for medicinal or recreational purposes in the state where you reside.
- Have you ever been adjudicated as a mental defective OR have you ever been committed to a mental institution?
- Have you ever been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions?
- Are you subject to a court order, including a Military Protection Order issued by a military judge or magistrate, restraining you from harassing, stalking, or threatening your child or an intimate partner or child of such partner?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, or are you or have you ever been a member of the military and been convicted of a crime that included, as an element, the use of force against a person as identified in the instructions?
- Have you ever renounced your United States citizenship?
- Are you an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States?

Background Checks

Prior to admission into SDI, all applicants must submit authorization for a background check. Applicants are subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study. Applicants who have been identified as prohibited persons under The Gun Control Act (GCA), codified at 18 U.S.C. § 922(g) will immediately be deemed ineligible for admission. Applicants whose background check indicates other charges will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. SDI will permit or deny admission based on the charges listed according to the SDI Right to Deny Policy.

SDI may consider an appeal from an applicant who has been denied for charge(s) not violating the Identify Prohibited Persons list. Consideration of the appeal shall be based on:

1. likelihood of the student's ability to successfully complete the program,
2. timeframe of charge(s) listed, and
3. nature of the charge(s) listed.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Dean, School of Firearms Technology, including any reason(s) why circumstances have changed surrounding the charge(s) resulting in denial and/or any documentation showing suspension of charges, restoration of civil rights, etc. Applicants whose appeals are approved may continue through the admissions process. Denied appeals are final, and the applicant will be barred from enrollment in Firearms Technology programs.

Courses Requiring a Firearms Transfer

Certain courses require Sonoran Desert Institute to provide learning materials that fall within the federal definition of a firearm. Upon enrolling in courses that features a build kit or firearm, students must designate an FFL at which to pick up their serialized parts or firearm. At time of pick up, students will be required to pass a NICS background check, administered by the designated FFL, prior to obtaining the serialized parts or firearm. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will be required to notify SDI and may be disenrolled from courses. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will not be subject to refunds outside of SDI's school refund policy. Failure of a NICS background check will negatively affect the ability to be employed in the firearms industry.

State Laws and Restrictions

SDI provides students with tools and equipment that are related to the firearms industry. The Institute strives to ensure tools and equipment are issued in accordance with federal, state, and local firearm laws. SDI will work with individual students based on the state they reside in when assigning courses. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to comply with the individual state(s) and federal law regarding firearms. Students are accountable under the exact wording and current interpretations of all applicable laws and regulations within each state.

Graduate Employment Opportunities

A graduate of the Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree program may find employment in several fields including the following:

- Armorer/gunsmith
- Assembler
- Firearms retail

The Classification for Instructional Programs (CIP) associated with this program is 47.0402, titled "Gunsmithing/Gunsmith". The Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) is considered as 49.9099, "Installation, Maintenance and Repair." Requirements to practice as a gunsmith or in a firearms-related industry may require federal and/or state approvals. A graduate who desires to work in the industry may need to obtain a Federal Firearms License (FFL). This is required if the graduate hopes to repair firearms for compensation. A graduate employed by a business that has an FFL may not be required to obtain an individual FFL. A graduate who desires to repair only personal firearms is not required to obtain a firearms license. Because of changes in requirements, the graduate is advised to regularly review the requirements for the FFL with the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The graduate can find this information on the ATF website (www.atf.gov).

Sonoran Desert Institute does not guarantee job placement or employment.

Tuition and Fees

Total tuition is $8,000 for the 16-credit hour program. Students are also charged an Education Resource Fee of $700 for a total program cost of $8,700.

Tools and Equipment

Sonoran Desert Institute offers an optional, non-refundable materials fee assessed each term for the Certificate in Firearms Technology - Handgun Specialist program. This fee is designed to streamline students' access to required materials by providing a convenient and cost-effective option. All materials covered by the fee will be shipped directly from SDI to the student, with the exception of firearms, which will be shipped to the student's selected Federal Firearms Licensee (FFL) in accordance with federal regulations.

During the application and enrollment process, students must choose whether to opt into or out of the materials fee. This selection will remain in effect for the duration of enrollment.

Students who opt in will receive all the required materials for their registered courses and the per term charge will be posted to their account ledger.

Students who opt out are fully responsible for acquiring all required materials independently, prior to the start of classes, and at their own expense. SDI assumes no responsibility for delays or errors related to students who opt out. Students who opt out of the materials fee must ensure that all tools and materials meet SDI specifications. Incorrect or incompatible materials may delay impact a student's ability to complete assignments.

If a student withdraws from SDI, no further materials will be shipped. The optional materials fee is non-refundable once supplies are shipped, even if the student subsequently withdraws or discontinues from the program.

A list of required materials is available HERE.

Completion Requirements

To earn a Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist, a student must do the following:

- Successfully complete all coursework required in the certificate program
- Earn at least 16 credit hours of discipline-specific coursework
- Complete the program with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or above

Completion of the Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist does not require additional specialized training, practicum, or externships.

Objectives

With the successful completion of this program, a student will be able to do the following:

- Diagnose a variety of handgun malfunctions and prescribe repairs
- Disassemble and assemble common pistols and revolvers
- Customize a handgun to improve reliability, accuracy, ergonomics, and/or aesthetics
- Demonstrate best practices of firearms safety at all times
- Examine the role of the handgun in the larger context of modern firearms technology

Required Courses: Certificate in Firearms Technology – Handgun Specialist

CATEGORY	COURSE	SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS	LENGTH IN WEEKS
Handgun Specialist Discipline	FTT 101: Mechanics in Firearms	4	5
	FTH 202: Revolvers	4	5
	FTH 212: Striker-Fired Pistols	4	5
	FTH 223: Hammer-Fired Pistols	4	5
	TOTAL PROGRAM	16	20

CERTIFICATE IN UNCREWED TECHNOLOGY – AERIAL SYSTEMS

Program Summary

The Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems program provides students with a solid foundation of historical, technical, and operational knowledge about uncrewed aircraft systems. Students learn how uncrewed aircraft systems are used by commercial businesses to make their operations more efficient, cost effective, and safe.

Graduate Employment Opportunities

Some of the many areas within the Uncrewed and Autonomous Aircraft Industry where a student may apply the knowledge gained from the Certificate in Uncrewed Technology at the entry-level include:

- Project Manager
- Systems Engineering Management Apprentice
- UAS Assistant Manager
- UAS Aviation Management Apprentice
- UAS Technician
- UAS Technologist

CIP/SOC Classifications & Summary

The Classification for Instructional Programs (CIP) associated with this program is 15.0407, titled Mechatronics, Robotics, and Automation Engineering Technology/Technician. The Standard Occupational Classifications (SOCs) are 17-3024.00, Electro-Mechanical and Mechatronics Technologists and Technicians and 17-3024.01, Robotics Technicians.

Tools and Equipment

Tools and equipment are provided to students by the Institute at no cost to the student. These items are shipped to the student with other learning materials, where applicable, and will belong to the student. Students need to have access to a drone for certain courses. Please visit www.sdi.edu/tools-and-materials/ for a comprehensive list of supplies required for completion of assignments, per current course offerings..

Completion Requirements

To earn a Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems, a student must:

- Complete all coursework required in the certificate program
- Complete 16 credit hours of major coursework
- Complete the program with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 or above

Program Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this certificate program, students will be prepared to:

- Describe the knowledge, skills and practical experience necessary to contribute to UAS operations in roles such as remote pilots, sensor operators, technicians, data analysts, mission planners or program/project managers.
- Demonstrate proficiency in operating, maintaining, and troubleshooting uncrewed aircraft systems.
- Discuss important system elements of UAS technology, including airframes, flight controls, propulsion, sensors, and communication systems.
- Explain the multidisciplinary nature of UAS technology with respect to regulations, aviation principles, aeronautics, electronics, remote sensing, wireless communications, data analysis, and computer science, enabling them to approach UAS operations from a comprehensive perspective.
- Demonstrate professional integrity and ethical conduct in all UAS-related work and explain federal regulations, industry standards, and ethical guidelines for UAS operations in the U.S. National Air Space.
- Use effective verbale an written communication skills to clearly and concisely articulate technical concepts to supervisors, team members, stakeholders, and customers and compose well-written findings, recommendations and reports.
- Demonstrate a safety focus to identify and assess potential risks, implement appropriate safety protocols, and effectively manage risks associated with all UAS operations.

Required Courses: Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems

CATEGORY	COURSE	SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS	LENGTH IN WEEKS
Uncrewed Technology Discipline	UAS 101: UAS Fundamentals*	4	5
	UAS 201: sUAS Sensors and Remote Sensing	4	5
	UAS 202: UAS Aviation Management	4	5
	UAS 250: FAA sUAS Professional Remote Pilot	4	5
	TOTAL PROGRAM	**16**	**20**

**UAS 101 is a prerequisite to all other UAS courses in the Certificate in Uncrewed Technology – Aerial Systems.*

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COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Listed in course number order. Sequence for scheduling will vary.
Course availability may vary each semester. Not all courses may be offered each term.

AGT 100: American Government **3 Credit Hours**
This course introduces students to the fundamentals of American government and politics, focusing on the historical evolution of government and policies, and the major institutions and processes. Course goals include developing an interest in and understanding of today's government, policy development, and politics, as well as developing critical thinking and information literacy skills in the areas of government and politics. Topics include the Constitution; federalism; civil rights and liberties; the structure and processes of the three branches of government; political socialization; interest groups and public opinion; political parties and the election process; and basic U.S. social, economic, and foreign policy. Students will examine institutional structures and how they interact with each other to explain the processes of government and how the historical development of the United States has affected the contemporary political environment. Instruction includes an analysis of the formal and informal processes by which public policy is made; how individual actors impact the contemporary political environment; and application of informational literacy skills in the study of politics.

ENG 101: English Composition I **3 Credit Hours**
This course develops written communication skills with an emphasis on understanding the writing process, analyzing text, and practicing writing for personal and professional applications. Students will learn to implement the steps of the writing process; identify essay components; and write effective and grammatically correct paragraphs and essays. Instruction includes how to analyze the role of reading and writing in academic and professional careers; apply strategies to achieve clarity and effective style in writing; differentiate between writing patterns; identify sentence types and parts of speech; discriminate between proper and improper use of punctuation; and to implement correct spelling. The student will also examine and then apply strategies and guidelines for writing an effective research paper.

FTE 211: 1911 Advanced Armorer **4 Credit Hours**
This course presents a comprehensive overview of 1911-style firearms. Discussed in the lessons are the history, development, and practical applications of 1911-style firearms, including their parts, the function of each part, ammunition types and calibers, troubleshooting, maintenance, and repair. Also presented are sight options, considerations for building or buying your 1911-style firearm, tuning your 1911 for accuracy and reliability, customizing the 1911 with coatings and accessories. Students will be presented step-bystep instructions that will be applied to the firearm supplied by the school. *Students must be 21 years of age to select the FTE 211 course.*

FTE 217: Modern Sporting Rifle **4 Credit Hours**
This course presents an overview of the AR style platform in various configurations, including the AR 15, AR 10/LR .308, and AR 9/pistol caliber carbine. Discussed in the lessons are the history, design characteristics, operations, and platform-specific characteristics of these rifles. Students select a platform on which to demonstrate practical skills and abilities, including the measurement of critical dimensions, assembly and disassembly procedures, and the use of specialty tools. Malfunction diagnosis, operating characteristics, and application of gunsmithing techniques will also be demonstrated.

FTE 218: Pump Shotgun Armorer **4 Credit Hours**
This course presents an overview of the pump shotgun platform in various makes and models. Discussed in the lessons are the history, design characteristics, operations, and platform-specific characteristics of these firearms. Students receive a pump shotgun platform on which to demonstrate practical skills and abilities, including the measurement of critical dimensions, assembly and disassembly procedures, and the use of specialty tools. Malfunction diagnosis, operating characteristics, and application of gunsmithing techniques will also be demonstrated.

FTE 225: Developing a Business Plan **4 Credit Hours**
This course includes establishing a formal business plan for a firearms related business. Included are the various stages of researching and outlining a plan, consideration of marketing, financial, and other general business factors and presentation of a formal plan.

FTH 202: Revolvers **4 Credit Hours**
This course is a comprehensive exploration of the revolver. Students learn about the legal definition of a revolver, the mechanical design of the revolving action, and the history of this handgun platform. Common parts of their functions, troubleshooting methods and strategies, and customization techniques are all covered in this course.

FTH 212: Striker-Fired Pistols **4 Credit Hours**
This course covers striker fired pistols in detail. Topics include parts and function, assembly and disassembly, critical measurements, and customization. Students will practice building a striker fired pistol from a parts kit and stippling synthetic material used for pistol grips. Additionally, students will learn about researching firearms and firearms schematics to help them access valuable information before beginning work on a project.

FTH 223: Hammer-Fired Pistols **4 Credit Hours**
While the core emphasis of this course is the hammer-fired pistol, also examined are concepts that generalize to most modern semi-automatic handguns. Students explore pistol malfunctions and methods of preventing or repairing them, the parts and components of hammer-fired pistols, and methods of improving pistol operation and reliability. Students also learn how to research firearms components needed for repair and customization jobs. Students will perform critical measurements and perform various hands-on projects to enhance striker and hammer-fired pistol performance.

FTT 100: Introduction to Firearms **3 Credit Hours**
This course is an introduction to firearms technology and the field of shooting sports management. During the course the student will review firearm fundamentals and multiple types of firearms available. The student will practice researching disassembly procedures and demonstrate a comprehensive project on the topic of cleaning firearms.

FTT 101 Mechanics in Firearms **4 Credit Hours**
This course is an introduction to firearms technology. During the course, the student will review firearms fundamentals, simple machine concepts, and various firearm operating systems. Students will apply concepts and fundamentals in practical applications to identify working systems of firearms.

FTT 102: Principles of Mechanics in Firearms **4 Credit Hours**
This course is an introduction to firearms technology. Students will review firearms fundamentals, simple machine concepts, and various firearm operating systems. Students will apply concepts and fundamentals in practical applications to identify working systems of firearms.

FTT 103: Principles of Ammunitionand Basic Ballistics **4 Credit Hours**
This course introduces students to essential concepts related to ammunition and basic ballistics. Students will develop an understanding of the terminology about these topics and demonstrate an understanding of the various steps of ballistics, the material and environmental aspects that affect ballistics, cartridge design, various propellant types, mechanical steps completed within a firearm, and phenomena that occur as projectiles move through the air.

FTT 105: FirearmsRights, Laws, and Responsibilities **4 Credit Hours**
This course will provide students with a comprehensive understanding of firearm regulations, ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives) laws, FFL (Federal Firearms License) dealerrequirements, types of firearms, and the identification of firearm types. Students will gain the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the complex world of firearms in the United States.

FTT 106: Hand and Specialty Tools in Gunsmithing **4 Credit Hours**
In this course, students will better understand the standard hand tools used in the gunsmithing trade. Through hands-on application, students will develop more profound skills in finesse and workmanship, how and when to use specific tools and equipment in this trade, and why specific tools are better for a particular job.

FTT 131: Maintenanceand Troubleshooting of Firearms **4 Credit Hours**
In this course, students will learn foundational troubleshooting principles. Students will identify firearm failure types, components, responsibilities and perform gunsmith function checks. Students will explore popular operating systems, the cycle of operations, repairs, and operator and ammunition-induced malfunctions.

FTT 133: General Gunsmithing Modifications **4 Credit Hours**
This course introduced the student to the specifics of enhancing firearms for improved performance, ergonomics, and aesthetics. This course guides students through the process of discerning optimal modifications tailored to diverse firearm platforms and shooting disciplines. This course emphasizes both the safety considerations essential for any modification endeavor and the legal nuances surrounding firearm alterations.

FTT 213: Wood and Metalwork in Gunsmithing **4 Credit Hour**
This course provides a comprehensive, hands-on study of gunstock fitment and repair. Students will explore the selection of suitable wood species, the shaping of wood into functional and visually appealing designs, and the precise fitting of gunstocks to firearm actions. Emphasis is placed on customizing gunstocks to meet specific customer requirements. Through practical projects, students will refine their skills in inletting furniture, applying professional stock finishes, and executing intricate metalwork.

FTT 220: Firearm Business Principles **4 Credit Hours**
This course offers a comprehensive overview of the key components involved in establishing and managing a firearms-related business. Weekly topics guide students through setting business goals, selecting the appropriate business structure, developing marketing strategies, and addressing industry-specific operational challenges. Students will complete marketing and business evaluation projects, gaining practical knowledge and exploring career opportunities within the firearms industry.

***FTT 299: Firearms Technology Elective** **4 Credit Hours**
See individual descriptions of courses that students select from to fill this elective.

MAC 110: BasicPower Tools and Machining Principles **4 Credit Hours**
This course is an introduction to machining and other repair concepts. The student will be introduced to small machines commonly used in the gunsmith profession. The student will also be introduced to basic shop/blueprint reading and the formulas and vocabulary to successfully utilize power tools and equipment. An introduction to milling machines, the metal turning lathe, polishing tools, and other firearms-specific machinery is discussed. The student will also be introduced to fixtures and work holding concepts to elevate the use of machinery in a shop environment.

MAC 150: Introductionto Manual Lathe **4 Credit Hours**
This course introduces students to the fundamental skills and techniques required for proficient lathe operations. Emphasizing shop safety and machine-specific protocols, the course covers the theory and practical application of precision machining, including tool preparation and work- holding methods. Through hands-on practice, students will perform essential lathe techniques such as facing, parting, turning, and threading.

MAT 101: Mathematics for Technical Trades **3 Credit Hours**
This course applies math fundamentals to technical applications. Topics include a basic math review, geometric principles including angles, lines, and shapes, understanding basic algebraic concepts as applied to real-world problems, and trigonometric functions applied to angles and distances. Students will learn to solve mathematical problems; apply mathematical concepts to various technical and industry-based problems; and analyze mechanical problems using mathematical equations.

PSY 101: Introduction to Psychology **3 Credit Hours**
This course introduces human behavior. It includes the study of the theories and concepts of psychology including the scope of psychology, biological foundations and the brain, sensation, perception, motivation, personality, learning/memory, emotion, states of consciousness, personality theories, cognition, lifespan development, and applied psychology.

In this course, students will examine the field of psychology in terms of history, key perspectives, issues, and current trends. Instruction will cover scientific and research methods; the anatomical structures and physiological functions related to psychology; sensation, perception, heredity, and genetics; consciousness, sleep, sleep disorders, and hypnosis as related to psychology; the underlying principles and basis of the psychology behind learning, memory, and experience; cognitive abilities and intelligence from a psychological perspective; the different phases and stages in human development; the different motivation theories; and the psychological basis of emotions. Moreover, students will examine sexuality and gender in relation to psychology; psychoanalytic approaches and humanistic theories to explain behaviors and traits in personalities; health psychology and approaches to health management; different mental disorders; psychotherapy, differing methods, and their effectiveness; the importance of thoughts; trends in social behavior; and the impact of social influences.

SCI 101: Introduction to Physical Science **3 Credit Hours**
This course introduces students to the foundational ideas and concepts of physical science to gain a better understanding of the world. Topics covered include measurement, motion, force and motion, atomic and nuclear physics, elements of chemistry, work and energy, temperature and heat, and waves and optics. Direct application of some of these topics will be made to provide students with further context and real-world application.

SDI 101: Success in Distance Learning **1 Credit Hour**

This course is designed to equip SDI students with the essential skills and strategies needed to succeed in a distance learning environment. The primary purpose of the course is to empower students to navigate the challenges and leverage the opportunities presented by online education, specifically within the SDI virtual classroom. Included in this course are topics on business productivity applications, learning management system use, academic integrity, student support applications, and exposure to other distance learning resources.

SYS 201: UAS Systems Engineering Management **4 Credit Hours**

This course introduces students to systems thinking and concepts. Students learn what comprises a system and study systems engineering management principles used to develop new systems. The course examines case studies related to UAS ethical considerations to facilitate student understanding of and appreciation for public and private concerns with uncrewed aircraft systems.
Prerequisite: UAS 101.

SYS 212: Project Management for UAS Engineering and Technology **4 Credit Hours**

The Project Management for UAS Engineering and Technology course explores project management theory and best practices that can be used in the uncrewed and autonomous aircraft systems industry. Students learn the elements required to develop general and technical projects. The course discusses the five phases of project management and how each phase is utilized in the official project plan.
Prerequisite: UAS 101.

UAS 101: UAS Fundamentals **4 Credit Hours**

This first course in uncrewed aircraft systems introduces the history and evolution of the uncrewed aerial vehicle (UAV). The course provides a technical introduction to the subsystems of an uncrewed aerial system (UAS) to include the aircraft, payload, propulsion, navigation, wireless communications and control, autonomy, ground control station, and support systems/equipment. The topics of man-machine interface, system design, FAA regulations and UAS operations in the national airspace are also introduced. Students are introduced to how uncrewed aircraft systems are used in the commercial/civil, public service, and military sectors.

UAS 201: sUAS Sensors and Remote Sensing **4 Credit Hours**

This course provides a comprehensive exploration of remote sensing technologies and sUAS sensors. Students learn the principles, applications, and practical skills necessary to capture remotely sensed data using a small, uncrewed aircraft system (sUAS) and how to analyze that data. Students will learn about the different types of remote sensors used in the uncrewed industry and how these sensors operate. Students learn how to evaluate remote sensing scenarios and how to choose a suitable sensor for the mission. By the end of this course, students have a solid foundation in aerial sensors and remote sensing and are prepared to apply this knowledge in real-world scenarios.
Prerequisite: UAS 101.

UAS 202: UAS Aviation Management **4 Credit Hours**

This course provides the student with a comprehensive knowledge of a professional aviation organization model with special focus on the key pillars of safety, operations, maintenance, and culture in the context of the current regulations and specific requirements to operate an UAS in the national airspace for commercial use. UAS operations, operational risk management, aeronautical decision making, training, scheduling, standardization/evaluation (STANEVAL), maintenance, remote pilot in command responsibilities, and key federal regulations and guidance for flying commercially in the national airspace.
Prerequisite: UAS 101.

UAS 205: Introduction to Geographical Information Systems **4 Credit Hours**

This course will provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct flight operations using a UAV for Geographical Information System (GIS) data collection, post-processing, and analysis of the collected data using appropriate software tools. The student will complete the course to understand the full process for using UAVs as a tool for collecting and then post-processing the collected data
Prerequisite: UAS 101.

UAS 213: sUAS Design, Build, and Fly **4 Credit Hours**

This course will introduce the students to building, assembling, powering, and configuring components of a small uncrewed aircraft system into an aircraft that will be capable of stable flight that students can use for this and future classes. This course will detail the assembly requirements of each component and subsystem. Once assembly is completed the aircraft will be powered on and sensors and autopilot configured as required to ensure stable flight. Students will gain additional skills such as soldering, hardware assembly, ground control station software basics, and telemetry setup.
Prerequisite: UAS 101.

UAS 231: UAS Flight Test and Evaluation **4 Credit Hours**

This course provides an introduction into how Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS) are flight tested and their performance is evaluated. This course provides students with the background and knowledge to understand the fundamental principles of flight test engineering. The topics covered include Introduction to Flight Test Engineering, Test and Evaluation Fundamentals, UAS Test Management, UAS Performance Testing, UAS Flying and Handling Qualities Testing, and UAS Systems Testing.
Prerequisite: UAS 101.

UAS 234: sUAS Thermography Level 1 **4 Credit Hours**

This is an introductory thermography course with infrared and heat transfer science training. This course is focused on how aerial inspections and thermal scans using sUAS infrared cameras can support several industries to be safer, more efficient, and more effective. The course provides students with the theory and science of infrared radiation and how infrared measurements are used to determine thermal patterns. The course covers the theoretical background, knowledge, and skills to properly capture, tune, and interpret thermal images collected from an sUAS platform and infrared sensor. Students learn to select the proper camera and lens combinations for their application's needs. Students are provided with a handheld infrared camera to conduct practical assignments and experiments that reinforce the concepts learned during the course. This infrared camera is theirs to keep and use after the course. After successfully completing this course, students have the knowledge, skill, and ability to enter the workforce as entry-level and/or apprentice thermographers
Prerequisites: UAS 101, UAS 201.

UAS 250: FAA sUAS Professional Remote Pilot **4 Credit Hours**

This course provides students with a comprehensive education in the knowledge areas covered by the Remote Pilot sUAS Airman Certification standards. Students learn to fly drones and develop safe flying skills in a state-of-the-art drone flight simulator and hands on application. The course presents instruction on the components of a modern multi-rotor drone, fundamentals of flight, navigation, communication, sensors, human factors, and risk management. The course includes a comprehensive overview of the U.S. National Air Traffic Control System using 3D animations and describes how it affects remote pilots and drone operations. This course provides comprehensive review of subjects included in the FAA Remote Pilot sUAS Airman Certification Exam. After completing the course, the student may seek to attempt the FAA exam which is administered at an FAA exam center.
Prerequisite: UAS 101.

UET 102: Fundamentals of Electronics **4 Credit Hours**

This course introduces students to the basic electronics knowledge that they will need to understand for Uncrewed Aircraft Systems (UAS). This is an introductory course with hands-on elements and simulation of electronic circuits used in robotics. Topics include Ohm's Law and theorems used in electrical circuits for batteries, switches, wiring, resistors, capacitors, inductors, semiconductors, and an introduction to microcontrollers. Students will also be conducting circuit builds with the Arduino microcontroller as a practical portion of the class.
Prerequisite: UAS 101

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Legacy Programs

The following pages pertain to the ASFT and CFTG programs for students who started prior to January 1, 2026.

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE IN FIREARMS TECHNOLOGY (LEGACY)

The Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree program provides the student with a thorough understanding of concepts and applications in the maintenance and care of firearms. This associate program has a strong focus on gunsmithing supported by basic general education courses. This is a four-semester program consisting of 60 semester credit hours of college-level study. There are 15 general education credits and 45 discipline credits. The associate of science degree program provides a predominant focus on the core courses in Firearms Technology and is vocationally focused. The program is oriented toward preparing the student who wishes to directly enter the firearms workforce upon completion of the program.

Program Specific Admissions Requirements

- Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Applicants must be a minimum of 18 years of age as of the program start date.
- Applicants may be subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study.
- Students will need to have access to a firearm to complete assignments in some of the coursework.
- Must be eligible to obtain a Federal Firearms License.

Statement of Eligibility

The information you provide will be used to determine whether you are prohibited by Federal law from receiving a firearm, or whether Federal law prohibits the sale or disposition of a firearm to you.

Due to the nature of the coursework offered, SDI reserves the right to deny enrollment to any individual who is prohibited by Federal law from possessing a firearm. Additionally, enrollment may be denied if SDI has reasonable cause to believe that an individual's answer(s) to a question below is inaccurate. If you need clarification about your eligibility to possess firearms, please contact the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) at 800-800-3855.

- Are you under indictment or information in any court for a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could imprison you for more than one year, or are you a current member of the military who has been charged with violation(s) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and whose charge(s) have been referred to a general courtmartial?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court, including a military court, of a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could have imprisoned you for more than one year, even if you received a shorter sentence including probation?
- Are you a fugitive from justice?
- Are you an unlawful user of, or addicted to, marijuana or any depressant, stimulant, narcotic drug, or any other controlled substance? Warning: The use or possession of marijuana remains unlawful under Federal law regardless of whether it has been legalized or decriminalized for medicinal or recreational purposes in the state where you reside.
- Have you ever been adjudicated as a mental defective OR have you ever been committed to a mental institution?
- Have you ever been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions?
- Are you subject to a court order, including a Military Protection Order issued by a military judge or magistrate, restraining you from harassing, stalking, or threatening your child or an intimate partner or child of such partner?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, or are you or have you ever been a member of the military and been convicted of a crime that included, as an element, the use of force against a person as identified in the instructions?
- Have you ever renounced your United States citizenship?
- Are you an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States?

Background Checks

Prior to admission into SDI, all applicants must submit authorization for a background check. "Applicants are subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study. Applicants who have been identified as prohibited persons under The Gun Control Act (GCA), codified at 18 U.S.C § 922(g) will immediately be deemed ineligible for admission. Applicants whose background check indicates other charges will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. SDI will permit or deny admission based on the charges listed according to the SDI Right to Deny Policy.

SDI may consider an appeal from an applicant who has been denied for charge(s) not violating the Identify Prohibited Persons list. Consideration of the appeal shall be based on:

1. likelihood of the student's ability to successfully complete the program,
2. timeframe of charge(s) listed, and
3. nature of the charge(s) listed.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Dean, School of Firearms Technology, including any reason(s) why circumstances have changed surrounding the charge(s) resulting in denial and/or any documentation showing suspension of charges, restoration of civil rights, etc. Applicants whose appeals are approved may continue through the admissions process. Denied appeals are final, and the applicant will be barred from enrollment in School of Firearms Technology programs.

Courses Requiring a Firearms Transfer

Certain courses require Sonoran Desert Institute to provide learning materials that fall within the federal definition of a firearm. Upon selecting a course that features a firearms, students must designate an FFL at which to pick up their receiver/ other protected parts. At time of pick up, students will be required to pass a NICS background check, administered by the designated FFL, prior to obtaining the receiver/other protected parts. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will be required to appeal the background check and/or be withdrawn from the course. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will not be subject to refunds outside of SDI's school refund policy. Failure of a NICS background check will negatively affect the ability to be employed in the firearms industry.

State Laws and Restrictions

SDI provides students with tools and equipment that are related to the firearms industry. The Institute strives to ensure tools and equipment are issued in accordance with federal, state, and local firearm laws. SDI will work with individual students based on the state they reside in when assigning courses. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to comply with the individual state(s) and federal law regarding firearms. Students are accountable under the exact wording and current interpretations of all applicable laws and regulations within each state.

Graduate Employment Opportunities

A graduate of the Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree program may find employment in several fields including the following:

- Shooting sports management
- Retail firearms sales
- Firearms repair and customization

The Classification for Instructional Programs (CIP) associated with this program is 47.0402, titled "Gunsmithing/Gunsmith". The Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) is considered as 49.9099, "Installation, Maintenance and Repair." Requirements to practice as a gunsmith or in a firearms-related industry may require federal and/or state approvals. A graduate who desires to work in the industry may need to obtain a Federal Firearms License (FFL). This is required if the graduate hopes to repair firearms for compensation. A graduate employed by a business that has an FFL may not be required to obtain an individual FFL. A graduate who desires to repair only personal firearms is not required to obtain a firearms license. Because of changes in requirements, the graduate is advised to regularly review the requirements for the FFL with the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The graduate can find this information on the ATF website (www.atf.gov).

Sonoran Desert Institute does not guarantee job placement or employment.

Tools and Equipment

Tools and equipment are provided by the Institute and included in the total program cost. These items are shipped to the student with other learning materials and will belong to the student. Students need to have access to a firearm for certain courses and may need additional supplies to complete certain projects. Please visit the following link www.sdi.edu/current-students/lab-tools/ for a comprehensive list of supplies required for completion of assignments, per current course offerings.

Completion Requirements

To earn an Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree, a student must do the following:

- Complete all coursework required in the degree program
- Complete at least 42 credit hours of discipline-specific coursework
- Complete at least 15 credit hours of general education coursework
- Complete 3 credit hours of general business coursework
- Complete the program with a minimum grade point of 2.0 or above
- Meet all financial obligations to the Institute

Completion of the Associate of Science in Firearms Technology degree does not require additional specialized training, practicum, or externships.

Program Outcomes

With the successful completion of this program, a student will be able to do the following:

- Explain, in detail, the operating principles of all major types of firearms.
- Classify firearms by type, action type, and platform by defined characteristics, and describe the functionality of each.
- Perform the basic functions of an armorer, to include cleaning firearms, diagnosing, troubleshooting, and repairing a variety of common malfunctions, and assembling a firearm from parts.
- Improve firearms by customizing woodwork, engraving metal finishes, and applying custom finishes to firearms.
- Perform basic techniques to fit barreled actions and describe the process of performing advanced techniques to fit barreled actions.
- Improve firearms accuracy by installing and adjusting metallic sights and/or optics.
- Create strategies for improving firearms by synthesizing advanced procedures, such as accurizing, repairing metal finishes, and advanced woodworking.
- Explain the principles of ballistics as they relate to ammunition production and explain various procedures for making ammunition.
- Explain machining operations as used in firearms manufacture and customization.
- Evaluate the industry of firearms service, sales, and repair, and apply basic managerial practices to a firearms-related business.
- Exhibit best-practices of firearms and firearms-repair safety.

Required Courses – Associate of Science in Firearms Technology (Legacy)

CATEGORY	COURSE	CREDIT HOURS	LENGTH IN WEEKS
Firearms Technology Discipline	FTT 122: Intro to Ammo and Basic Ballistics	3	8
	BBS 200: Advanced Ballistics	3	8
	FTT 100: Introduction to Firearms	3	8
	FTT 104: Gunsmithing Tools Lab	2	4
	FTT 111: Firearms Inspection and Troubleshooting	4	8
	FTT 114: Custom Kydex Lab	2	4
	FTT 201: Firearms Finishes and Engraving	4	8
	FTT 210: Customizing and Woodworking	4	8
	FTT 211: Stock Refinishing and Metal Work Lab	1	4
	FTT 214: Hand Checkering Lab	2	4
	FTT 221: Sights, Optics, and Accuracy	4	8
	FTT 231: Machining and Manufacturing of Firearms	3	8
	FTT 240: Shooting Sports Management	3	8
	*FTT 299: Firearms Technology Elective	4	8
	Total Firearms Technology	**42**	
Genera Business	BUS 101: Introduction to Business	3	8
	Total Business	**3**	
General Education	Physical Science	3	8
	Arts and Humanities	3	8
	Communication Arts	3	8
	Science and Mathematics	3	8
	Social and Behavioral Sciences	3	8
	Total General Education	**15**	
	TOTAL PROGRAM SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS	**60**	

*FTT 299 Elective Options: Course availability may vary each semester. Not all courses may be offered each term.

FTE 211: 1911 Advanced Armorer (Students must be 21 years of age to select FTE 211 course)
(Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 211 course).

FTE 217: Modern Sporting Rifle
(Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 217 course).

FTE 218: Pump Shotgun Armorer
(Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 218 course).

FTE 225: Developing a Business Plan

ANY student who fails the firearm transfer background check and appeal process will only be eligible to select FTE 225 to meet the FTT 299 elective requirement.

CERTIFICATE IN FIREARMS TECHNOLOGY – GUNSMITHING (LEGACY)

The Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing program provides the student with a thorough understanding of concepts and applications in the maintenance and care of firearms.

Program Specific Admissions Requirements

- Applicants must be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident.
- Applicants must be a minimum of 18 years of age as of the program start date.
- Applicants may be subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study.
- Students will need to have access to a firearm to complete assignments in some of the coursework.
- Must be eligible to obtain a Federal Firearms License.

Statement of Eligibility

The information you provide will be used to determine whether you are prohibited by Federal law from receiving a firearm, or whether Federal law prohibits the sale or disposition of a firearm to you.

Due to the nature of the coursework offered, SDI reserves the right to deny enrollment to any individual who is prohibited by Federal law from possessing a firearm. Additionally, enrollment may be denied if SDI has reasonable cause to believe that an individual's answer(s) to a question below is inaccurate. If you need clarification about your eligibility to possess firearms, please contact the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) at 800-800-3855.

- Are you under indictment or information in any court for a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could imprison you for more than one year, or are you a current member of the military who has been charged with violation(s) of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and whose charge(s) have been referred to a general court-martial?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court, including a military court, of a felony, or any other crime for which the judge could have imprisoned you for more than one year, even if you received a shorter sentence including probation?
- Are you a fugitive from justice?
- Are you an unlawful user of, or addicted to, marijuana or any depressant, stimulant, narcotic drug, or any other controlled substance? Warning: The use or possession of marijuana remains unlawful under Federal law regardless of whether it has been legalized or decriminalized for medicinal or recreational purposes in the state where you reside.
- Have you ever been adjudicated as a mental defective OR have you ever been committed to a mental institution?
- Have you ever been discharged from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions?
- Are you subject to a court order, including a Military Protection Order issued by a military judge or magistrate, restraining you from harassing, stalking, or threatening your child or an intimate partner or child of such partner?
- Have you ever been convicted in any court of a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, or are you or have you ever been a member of the military and been convicted of a crime that included, as an element, the use of force against a person as identified in the instructions?
- Have you ever renounced your United States citizenship?
- Are you an alien illegally or unlawfully in the United States?

Background Checks

Prior to admission into SDI, all applicants must submit authorization for a background check. "Applicants are subject to a background check prior to and/or during their program of study. Applicants who have been identified as prohibited persons under The Gun Control Act (GCA), codified at 18 U.S.C § 922(g) will immediately be deemed ineligible for admission. Applicants whose background check indicates other charges will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. SDI will permit or deny admission based on the charges listed according to the SDI Right to Deny Policy.

SDI may consider an appeal from an applicant who has been denied for charge(s) not violating the Identify Prohibited Persons list. Consideration of the appeal shall be based on:

1. likelihood of the student's ability to successfully complete the program,
2. timeframe of charge(s) listed, and
3. nature of the charge(s) listed.

Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Dean, School of Firearms Technology, including any reason(s) why circumstances have changed surrounding the charge(s) resulting in denial and/or any documentation showing suspension of charges, restoration of civil rights, etc. Applicants whose appeals are approved may continue through the admissions process. Denied appeals are final, and the applicant will be barred from enrollment at Sonoran Desert Institute indefinitely.

Courses Requiring a Firearms Transfer

Certain courses require Sonoran Desert Institute to provide learning materials that fall within the federal definition of a firearm. Upon selecting a course that features a firearms, students must designate an FFL at which to pick up their receiver/ other protected parts. At time of pick up, students will be required to pass a NICS background check, administered by the designated FFL, prior to obtaining the receiver/other protected parts. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will be required to appeal the background check and/or be withdrawn from the course. Students who do not pass the NICS background check at their designated FFL will not be subject to refunds outside of SDI's school refund policy. Failure of a NICS background check will negatively affect the ability to be employed in the firearms industry.

State Laws and Restrictions

SDI provides students with tools and equipment that are related to the firearms industry. The Institute strives to ensure tools and equipment are issued in accordance with federal, state, and local firearm laws. SDI will work with individual students based on the state they reside in when assigning courses. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to comply with the individual state(s) and federal law regarding firearms. Students are accountable under the exact wording and current interpretations of all applicable laws and regulations within each state.

Graduate Employment Opportunities

Some of the many areas where a student may apply the knowledge gained from the Gunsmithing program include the following:

- Gun repair and renovation
- Retail firearms sales

The Classification for Instructional Programs (CIP) associated with this program is 47.0402, titled "Gunsmithing/Gunsmith". The Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) is considered as 49.9099, "Installation, Maintenance and Repair." Requirements to practice as a gunsmith or in a firearms-related industry may require federal and/or state approvals. A graduate who desires to work in the industry may need to obtain a Federal Firearms License (FFL). This is required if the graduate hopes to repair firearms for compensation. A graduate employed by a business that has an FFL may not be required to obtain an individual FFL. A graduate who desires to repair only personal firearms is not required to obtain a firearms license. Because of changes in requirements, the graduate is advised to regularly review the requirements for the FFL with the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The graduate can find this information on the ATF website (www.atf.gov).

Sonoran Desert Institute does not guarantee job placement or employment.

Tools and Equipment

Tools and equipment are provided by the Institute and included in the total program cost. These items are shipped to the student with other learning materials and will belong to the student. Students need to have access to a firearm for certain courses and may need additional supplies to complete certain projects. Please visit the following link for a comprehensive list of supplies required for completion of assignments, per current course offerings. https://sdi.edu/sdi-lab-tools-list

Completion Requirements

To earn an Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing, a student must do the following:

- Complete all coursework required in the certificate program
- Complete at least 32 credit hours of discipline-specific coursework
- Complete the program with a minimum grade point average of 2.0 or above
- Meet all financial obligations to the Institute

Completion of the Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing does not require additional specialized training, practicum, or externships.

Program Outcomes

With the successful completion of this program, a student will be able to do the following:

- Perform the basic functions of an armorer, to include cleaning firearms, diagnosing, troubleshooting, and repairing a variety of common malfunctions, and assembling a firearm from parts.
- Explain machining operations as used in firearms manufacture and customization.
- Improve firearms by applying custom finishes.
- Explain the principles of ballistics as they relate to ammunition production and explain various procedures for making ammunition.
- Evaluate the industry of firearms service, sales, and repair.
- Improve firearms accuracy by installing and adjusting metallic sights or optics.
- Exhibit best-practices of firearms and firearms-repair safety.
- Explain, in detail, the operating principles of all major types of firearms.
- Classify firearms by type, action type, and platform by defined characteristics, and describe the functionality of each.

Required Courses – Certificate in Firearms Technology – Gunsmithing (Legacy)

CATEGORY	COURSE	CREDIT HOURS	LENGTH IN WEEKS
Firearms Technology Discipline	FTT 122: Intro to Ammo and Basic Ballistics	3	8
	FTT 100: Introduction to Firearms	3	8
	FTT 104: Gunsmithing Tools Lab	2	4
	FTT 111: Firearms Inspection and Troubleshooting	4	8
	FTT 114: Custom Kydex Lab	2	4
	FTT 201: Firearms Finishes and Engraving	4	8
	FTT 221: Sights, Optics, and Accuracy	4	8
	FTT 231: Machining and Manufacturing of Firearms	3	8
	FTT 240: Shooting Sports Management	3	8
	*FTT 299: Firearms Technology Elective	4	8
	Total Firearms Technology	**32**	
	TOTAL PROGRAM SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS	**32**	

*FTT 299 Elective Options: *Course availability may vary each semester. Not all courses may be offered each term.*

FTE 211: 1911 Advanced Armorer (Students must be 21 years of age to select FTE 211 course)
(Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 211 course).

FTE 217: Modern Sporting Rifle
(Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 217 course).

FTE 218: Pump Shotgun Armorer
(Students MUST complete a firearms transfer with a Federal Firearms Licensed dealer to be eligible to select FTE 218 course).

FTE 225: Developing a Business Plan

ANY student who fails the firearm transfer background check and appeal process will only be eligible to select FTE 225 to meet the FTT 299 elective requirement.

LEGACY COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Listed in course number order. Sequence for scheduling will vary.
Course availability may vary each semester. Not all courses may be offered each term.

AGT 100: American Government **3 Credit Hours**

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of American government and politics, focusing on the historical evolution of government and policies, and the major institutions and processes. Course goals include developing an interest in and understanding of today's government, policy development, and politics, as well as developing critical thinking and information literacy skills in the areas of government and politics. Topics include the Constitution; federalism; civil rights and liberties; the structure and processes of the three branches of government; political socialization; interest groups and public opinion; political parties and the election process; and basic U.S. social, economic, and foreign policy. Students will examine institutional structures and how they interact with each other to explain the processes of government and how the historical development of the United States has affected the contemporary political environment. Instruction includes an analysis of the formal and informal processes by which public policy is made; how individual actors impact the contemporary political environment; and application of informational literacy skills in the study of politics.

BBS 200: Advanced Ballistics **3 Credit Hours**

This course builds on the outcomes of the Basic Ballistics course. The course will explain how ammunition accuracy is impacted by gunpowder and various projectiles. This course will address reloading techniques including the basic components of reloading for both the brass cartridge and shotgun shell, how to set up shell plates, dies, reloading dies, and how to prime cartridges. Further discussion will take place on how to reload for accuracy, measuring with precision equipment, and how to develop customized loads.

BSM 100: Business Mathematics **3 Credit Hours**

This course applies math fundamentals to business applications. Topics include a basic math review, business statistics, profit calculations, payroll, banking, interest calculations, insurance and taxes. Students will learn to solve mathematical problems; apply mathematical concepts to various business transactions and statistics calculations; and analyze business problems using mathematical equations.

BUS 101: Introduction to Business **3 Credit Hours**

This course provides students with an overview of business in an increasingly global society. Topics include the business environment, ethics, management, marketing, production, information systems, financial elements, entrepreneurship, and global business. This course serves as an introduction to business terminology, concepts, environments, systems, strategies, and current issues, and provides a solid business foundation for more detailed and higher-level study in subsequent courses. Students will gain an understanding of the key components of contemporary U.S. and international business in addition to the role of ethics and social responsibility within this sector. Included is an examination of how businesses can be organized and structured; the key strategies, tools, and issues involved in operations; and the key financial concepts involved in enterprise. Students will be instructed in how to analyze the various functions of and approaches to management, marketing processes, forces, and issues in a business enterprise; and to develop a business plan incorporating sound concepts, systems, and strategies.

ENG 101: English Composition I **3 Credit Hours**

This course develops written communication skills with an emphasis on understanding the writing process, analyzing text, and practicing writing for personal and professional applications. Students will learn to implement the steps of the writing process; identify essay components; and write effective and grammatically correct paragraphs and essays. Instruction includes how to analyze the role of reading and writing in academic and professional careers; apply strategies to achieve clarity and effective style in writing; differentiate between writing patterns; identify sentence types and parts of speech; discriminate between proper and improper use of punctuation; and to implement correct spelling. The student will also examine and then apply strategies and guidelines for writing an effective research paper.

ENS 100: Environmental Science **3 Credit Hours**

This course explores the relationship between man and the environment. Students examine the balance between natural resources and the needs of mankind as well as the scientific, political, economic, and social implications of environmental science. Students will examine the field of Environmental Science in terms of theoretical perspectives, economics, policies, and environmental ethics. Included is an exploration of population growth and demographic transitions; toxic substances and their effects; non-renewable energy sources and their impact on the environment; the biodiversity of earth and conservation biology and its benefits; and the foundations of environmental science. Students will learn how to analyze land use and planning for creating livable cities; evaluate soil as a system and its importance in the environment; describe the function of the earth's atmosphere, its composition, structure, and changing global climate; and appraise the importance of water and marine ecosystems. The student will also understand how to examine renewable energy and analyze the types of waste generated and disposal methods.

FTE 211: 1911 Advanced Armorer **4 Credit Hours**

This course presents a comprehensive overview of 1911-style firearms. Discussed in the course's lessons are the history, development, and practical applications of 1911-style firearms, including their parts, the function of each part, ammunition types and calibers, troubleshooting, maintenance and repair. Also presented are sight options, considerations for building or buying your 1911-style firearm, tuning your 1911 for accuracy and reliability, customizing the 1911 with coatings and accessories. Students will be presented a step-by-step lab for completing build kit. Students must be 21 years of age to select the FTE 211 course.

FTE 217: Modern Sporting Rifle **4 Credit Hour**

This course presents an overview of the AR style platform in various configurations, including the AR 15, AR 10/LR .308, and AR 9/pistol caliber carbine. Discussed in the lessons are the history, design characteristics, operations, and platform-specific characteristics of these rifles. Students select a platform on which to demonstrate practical skills and abilities, including the measurement of critical dimensions, assembly and disassembly procedures, and the use of specialty tools. Malfunction diagnosis, operating characteristics, and application of gunsmithing techniques will also be demonstrated.

FTE 218: Pump Shotgun Armorer **4 Credit Hours**

This course presents an overview of the pump shotgun platform in various makes and models. Discussed in the lessons are the history, design characteristics, operations, and platform-specific characteristics of these firearms. Students receive a pump shotgun platform on which to demonstrate practical skills and abilities, including the measurement of critical dimensions, assembly and disassembly procedures, and the use of specialty tools. Malfunction diagnosis, operating characteristics, and application of gunsmithing techniques will also be demonstrated.

FTE 225: Developing a Business Plan **4 Credit Hours**

This course includes establishing a formal business plan for a firearms related business. Included are the various stages of researching and outlining a plan, consideration of marketing, financial, and other general business factors, and presentation of a formal plan.

FTT 100: Introduction to Firearms **3 Credit Hours**

This course is an introduction to firearms technology and the field of shooting sports management. During the course the student will review firearm fundamentals and multiple types of firearms available. The student will practice researching disassembly procedures and demonstrate a comprehensive project on the topic of cleaning firearms.

FTT 104: Gunsmithing Tools Lab **2 Credit Hours**

In this lab, the student will engage in hands-on techniques with some of the gunsmith's essential hand tools. The student will replicate detailed firearms disassembly using their assigned tools, with the aid of research and detailed diagrams and drawings. Techniques will be identified that gunsmiths apply in the use of files, rasps, hacksaws, drills, wrenches and screws, among others. Maintenance techniques of these tools will also be identified.

FTT 111: Firearms Inspection and Troubleshooting **4 Credit Hours**

This course will describe methods to diagnose malfunctions of a firearm and prescribe an appropriate troubleshooting method. The course will address rimfire and centerfire rifles, handguns and shotguns. Also reviewed are methods to diagnose modified and competition firearms as well as learning to diagnose malfunctions through cartridge case analysis. A lab on the topic of fastener repair will be assigned to the student, along with requisite materials to accomplish proper screw removal, repair, and restoration.

FTT 114: Custom Kydex Lab **2 Credit Hours**
This lab investigates the development and design of firearm holsters, including modern thermoforming designs. The student will participate in a detailed project on the topic of designing firearm retention devices, to include both the one-piece and two-piece designs. Lab materials will be provided to the student to customize a holster to a specific designation.

FTT 122: Introduction to Ammunition and Basic Ballistics **3 Credit Hours**
This course introduces students to important concepts related to ammunition and basic ballistics. Students will develop an understanding of the terminology pertaining to these topics. This knowledge will help them as they communicate with their instructors and fellow students in their courses throughout their time with SDI as well as throughout their professional work within the firearms industry. Among other concepts, students will demonstrate their understanding of the various steps of ballistics, the material and environmental aspects that affect ballistics, cartridge design, various propellant types, mechanical steps completed within a firearm, and phenomena that occur as a projectile moves through the air.

FTT 201: Firearms Finishes and Engraving **4 Credit Hours**
This course covers the preparation and finishing of metal. Techniques for polishing, bluing, Parkerizing, and browning of metal are explained. Modern firearm finishes, such as spray-on finishes, hydrographics, ferritic nitrocarburizing, PVD coating, and other methods are discussed. Also included are methodologies for the engraving of metal that will allow customization of firearms.

FTT 210: Customizing and Woodworking **4 Credit Hours**
This course will describe methods to replace and repair gunstocks. Techniques on ways to properly select the wood and to shape the stock will be described. Included in those techniques will be methods to fit the new stock to the action of a firearm. Included in this course is how to custom fit a gunstock to a customer's specifications and how to install a recoil pad. Students will demonstrate the process of gunstock inletting, and a hands-on lab on this topic is included.

FTT 211: Stock Refinishing and Metal Work Lab **1 Credit Hours**
In this lab, the student will practice and develop the stock refinishing and metalworking techniques examined in FTT 210 and FTT 201. Students will sand, stain, seal, and finish the wood stock provided, and will polish the brass components and install them onto the stock. Also provided are a browning solution to finish the barrel, and a brass lap and compound to finish a rough crown of the barrel. Students will also continue the discussion regarding "classical" and modern gunsmithing techniques, learn more about muzzleloading concepts, and finish the assembly of the Traditions Shenandoah Muzzleloader.

FTT 214: Hand Checkering Lab **2 Credit Hours**
This lab will cover hand checkering wood stocks and pistol grips. Checkering is a process of cutting parallel grooves with specific wood cutting tools. Students will be provided with all supplies necessary to complete this process, including wood and cutting tools. These tools are used to familiarize students with the techniques of hand checkering, and a final test on the topic will be conducted. A template of the pattern will be provided in the course.

FTT 221: Sights, Optics, and Accuracy **4 Credit Hours**
This course provides a thorough understanding of accuracy for the gunsmith. Included in this course are techniques on how to inspect a rifle for accuracy, tools needed to achieve accuracy, installation of sights, and mounting optics. Other topics introduce the gunsmith to modern bolt-action trigger kits and how to check proper fit of a bolt-action rifle. A core component of this course is to describe the correct procedure of rifle bedding, including how to pillar bed both modern synthetic stocks and wooden stocks. This course also explains how to properly maintain long-range hunting rifles for long-term storage and to mount a telescoping optic.

FTT 231: Machining and Manufacturing of Firearms **3 Credit Hours**
This course provides a comprehensive overview of machining and other metal manufacturing concepts. The student will discover the science behind metallurgy and how to shape metal for a desired result. The student will be introduced to milling machines, the metal turning lathe, polishing tools, and other firearms-specific machinery. Included in this course are the processes of welding, soldering, and brazing. Methods for configuring a barrel to a customer's unique specifications will also be covered in detail. Also included is an overview of heat treatment, normalizing, and how to temper gunmetal.

FTT 240: Shooting Sports Management **3 Credit Hours**
This course provides the foundation to establish a firearms-related business. Included in the course is a review of the practices, rules, and laws that govern the operation of a firearms repair and sales business. In addition, the course is an introduction to bookkeeping and appropriate business record maintenance related to shooting sports. Advertising and marketing will also be described.

PSY 101: Introduction to Psychology **3 Credit Hours**

This course introduces human behavior. It includes the study of the theories and concepts of psychology including the scope of psychology, biological foundations and the brain, sensation, perception, motivation, personality, learning/memory, emotion, states of consciousness, personality theories, cognition, lifespan development, and applied psychology. In this course, students will examine the field of psychology in terms of history, key perspectives, issues, and current trends. Instruction will cover scientific and research methods; the anatomical structures and physiological functions related to psychology; sensation, perception, heredity, and genetics; consciousness, sleep, sleep disorders, and hypnosis as related to psychology; the underlying principles and basis of the psychology behind learning, memory, and experience; cognitive abilities and intelligence from a psychological perspective; the different phases and stages in human development; the different motivation theories; and the psychological basis of emotions. Moreover, students will examine sexuality and gender in relation to psychology; psychoanalytic approaches and humanistic theories to explain behaviors and traits in personalities; health psychology and approaches to health management; different mental disorders; psychotherapy, differing methods, and their effectiveness; the importance of thoughts; trends in social behavior; and the impact of social influences.

SCI 101: Introduction to Physical Science **3 Credit Hours**

This course introduces students to the foundational ideas and concepts of physical science to gain a better understanding of the world. Topics covered include measurement, motion, force and motion, atomic and nuclear physics, elements of chemistry, work and energy, temperature and heat, and waves and optics. Direct application of some of these topics will be made to provide students with further context and real-world application.

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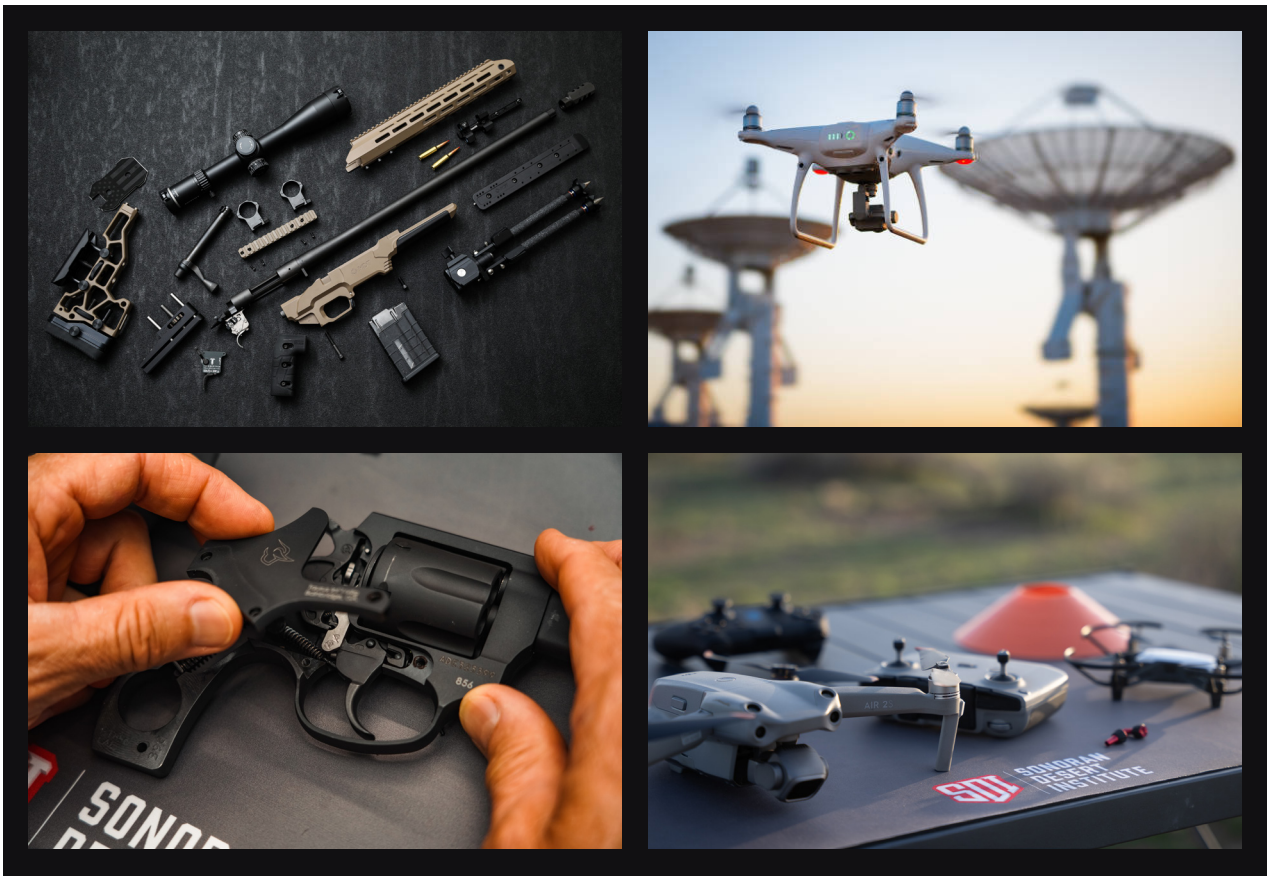

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