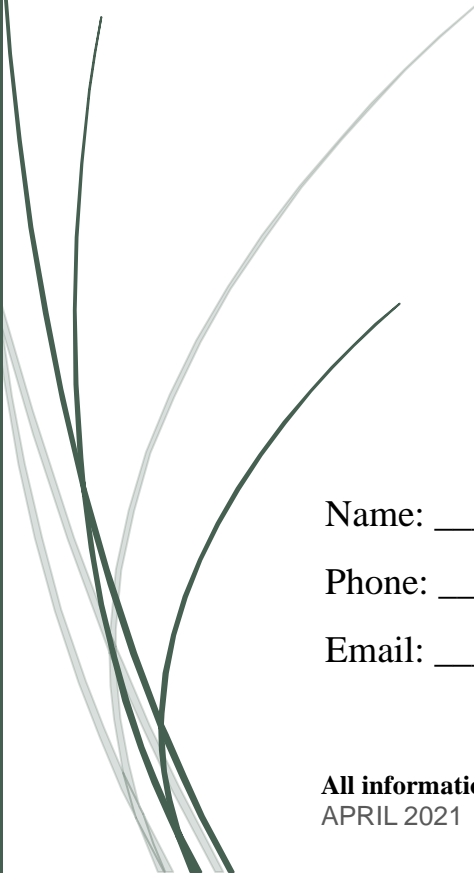




# Student Handbook



Personalize your handbook

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**All information is current at the time of publication, but is subject to change**  
APRIL 2021

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## INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this publication is to answer frequently asked questions and familiarize students with administrative policy and procedures. Information is organized by category. Link to frequently used forms are located in the appendix.

### KEYS TO ACADEMIC SUCCESS

- (1) The first key involves learning about the policies, procedures, and important dates that affect students. Becoming familiar with the various services University of the Potomac provides, and making use of those services when needed, will facilitate your progress.
- (2) Research shows that regular class attendance is very important to academic success. It is simple but true: the key factor for student success is regular classroom attendance and active classroom participation.
- (3) Feel free to consult with your academic advisor when you have a problem or concern that is affecting your academic progress. Sometimes another person can help generate solutions that enable you to work through a challenge.
- (4) Developing study skills, time management skills, and interpersonal skills in academic and experiential course work will enhance your effectiveness in your current position and your potential for career advancement.
- (5) Rely on the members of your cohort and/or class. As a cooperative, rather than a competitive team, you can help one another to be the best you can be as you go through the program as one supportive group.
- (6) The final key is to keep focused on your long-term goal: degree completion. As you encounter challenges, search for solutions that maintain your progress toward this goal.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### LOCATION AND ACCESS

**DC Campus (Main Office)**  
1401 H St NW  
Suite 100  
Washington, DC, 20005  
Phone: 202-274-2300

Metro: The closest metro station is McPherson Metro station (orange, silver and blue lines).  
Parking: there are public parking garages and street parking available around the premises.

### **VA Campus**

7799 Leesburg Pike  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Falls Church, VA 22043  
Phone: 202-521-1290

Metro: The closest metro station is McLean station (silver line). The building shuttle runs from Monday through Friday from 7am-9am and 4pm-6pm (4:30pm being the last run from building to metro).

Parking: There is a public garage behind the building. Parking fees may apply.

### **IL Campus**

828 S Wabash Avenue  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60605  
Phone: 773-866-0111

El Train: The closest El station is Harrison Street (red line).

Metra: Union Station, 225 S Canal St, Chicago, IL 60606

Ogilvie Station, 500 W. Madison St., Chicago, IL 60661

Metra Electric

Parking: There are parking lots around the premises. Parking fees may apply. Discounted parking rates available from LAZ Parking: 1 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Chicago, IL 60605

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

### **DC Campus**

Monday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Tuesday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Wednesday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Thursday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Friday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Saturday	Hours vary – contact campus

### **VA Campus**

Monday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Tuesday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Wednesday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Thursday	9:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Friday	9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Saturday	Hours vary – contact campus

### **IL Campus**

Monday	8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
Tuesday	8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
Wednesday	8:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Thursday	8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
Friday	8:00 AM – 7:00 PM
Saturday	8:00 AM – 5:30 PM
Sunday	8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING OF THE UNIVERSITY**

If the University finds it necessary to cancel or delay classes, announcements are made on local radio and television stations. Students are advised to check their local stations for announcements or to call the University. A prerecorded announcement is placed on the University's website. All students must check their Potomac email for announcements and additional information.

### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES**

In the event of minor medical emergencies, there are first aid kits located at front desk, library and/or in the kitchen. They are stocked with supplies necessary to treat minor cuts, bruises, and sprains. In more severe cases, the situation should be reported to the closest staff or faculty member, who will in turn, delegate someone to report the event to the administrator in charge. The administrator will contact medical personnel and the emergency contact designated by the student, if necessary. If time is critical, there are phones with outbound lines in the library and the lobby.

The first person on the scene should call 911 immediately. Delegate the closest individual to contact an administrator or instructor. Clear others from the immediate vicinity. Attempt to keep the victim calm and still. Do not attempt to move the victim. Follow any directions provided by the 911 operator.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

Fire drills may be held at unspecified times. Students are expected to recognize the necessity for the procedure and to cooperate fully in the activity. Fire evacuation maps are posted in all classrooms and hallways. All exits are marked. Students are expected to leave the building promptly and in an orderly manner.

### **INSURANCE**

The school does not provide insurance against fire, theft, or vandalism of student property.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost items may be turned in to instructors or front desk. Any person who loses an item may inquire at the Front Desk.

### **SMOKING**

Smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the University's buildings. There are designated smoking areas outside DC, VA and IL campuses.

## **STUDENT INFORMATION**

The University requires every student to keep the school informed of his/her current address, phone number and e-mail. Changes must be reported promptly to one of these departments:

Registrar: [registrar@potomac.edu](mailto:registrar@potomac.edu)

Student and Retention Services (DC/VA/Online): [studentservices@potomac.edu](mailto:studentservices@potomac.edu)

Student and Retention Services (Chicago): [il.studentservices@potomac.edu](mailto:il.studentservices@potomac.edu).

## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

### **NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION**

All new students are required to participate in University of the Potomac's orientation. This familiarizes new students with the University's academic policies, teaching philosophies, curricula, and support services.

### **CELL PHONE USAGE**

The usage of cell phones is not permitted during class time.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE**

Courses begin at various times throughout the year. Class meeting dates for each course are available at the University upon request.

### **COMPLETION OF PROGRAM AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

See the [Academic Catalog](#) for completion information.

### **GRADUATION DATES**

The formal commencement ceremony is held in June or July each year on a date announced by the University. Degree candidates who have completed all graduation requirements since the previous commencement ceremony are eligible to participate. Degree candidates who will be enrolled in their final courses on the date of commencement may also apply to participate in the ceremony. A student receiving an incomplete grade in a course that completes the course requirements and is issued a grade in that course is deemed to have completed the course in the session it was taken. The degree conferral date (noted on transcripts and diplomas) is the final day of the session in which the student completes all degree requirements.

Diplomas and transcripts are issued only to students in good financial standing with the University and only these students may participate in the commencement ceremony. Eligible students may submit an application for graduation to the Student Retention and Services by the established deadline.

### **LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA)**



Students in good standing who find it necessary to interrupt their education may apply for a Leave of Absence (LOA) for up to one semester (two consecutive eight-week sessions) per academic year. Students are encouraged to consult both an academic advisor and a Financial Aid Officer before taking a leave. Students needing a period of time longer than 16 weeks are required to withdraw from the University.

### **International Students**

Students in good standing who find it necessary to interrupt their education may apply for a Leave of Absence for a maximum of one semester (two consecutive eight-week terms) once they have successfully completed two semesters (four consecutive terms of 8 weeks) per academic year. A leave of absence does not adversely affect satisfactory progress toward a degree. Students who have not completed 12 credit hours at the time of a Leave of Absence request are required to withdraw from the University.

### **Chicago ESL Students**

Students are eligible for a Leave of Absence after successful completion of five consecutive 8 week sessions.

### **Reminders:**

- Students must contact Financial Aid for information on the effects of a Leave of Absence on financial aid packages.
- Students who request and receive a Leave of Absence or who withdraw from the University and subsequently return must meet with an Advisor to reestablish their academic plan/degree map.
- If a student takes a Leave of Absence during a course, the student must repeat the entire course unless a final grade can be given. Students taking a LOA may have financial obligations.

Student must fill out a Leave of Absence (LOA) Request Form. The request must be approved by the Academic Department, Student Finance Department, and International Student Services Department (if applicable) before submission to the Registrar's Office. The Student Retention and Services Department will file the request and keep track of students on LOA. Failure to return at the end of an approved leave of absence results in a student's being withdrawn from the University. The effective date of the withdrawal is the last day of an approved leave of absence.

## **COURSE ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Implicit in the Mission of the University of the Potomac is enhancing cross-cultural understanding among the diverse and multicultural student body it serves. As a result, the University places a high value on the classroom experience. Attendance is expected in all classes and attendance records are maintained.

## **MINIMUM ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT**

### **ESL Students**

ESL students must attend a minimum of 80% of a course in order to be considered for a passing grade.

### **Academic Students**

Academic students must attend a minimum of 75% of a course in order to be considered for a passing grade.

**After 14 consecutive calendar days of absence a student will be withdrawn from the University. Any action taken due to excessive absences may affect financial aid and graduation dates.**

**Obligations of students who are absent:** Students are responsible for all missed content and assignments from classes that they miss. Whenever possible, students who intend to miss a class should make arrangements with their instructors to make up any work missed.

**Prolonged absences:** Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all their courses. Under such circumstances, students should first consult their academic advisor or Dean of Student Retention and Services.

When scheduled holidays or inclement weather interfere with scheduled classes, instructors are responsible for establishing makeup time and/or course work. Fridays are set aside for such make up. Scheduled makeup sessions, extended class sessions, additional assignments and individual conferences may be considered as make up alternatives. Makeups must be completed prior to the end of the session in which they occurred.

### **Online and Hybrid Course Attendance Periods**

Attendance in online courses is automated through the University of the Potomac learning management system (LMS). Attendance in the online portion of hybrid courses is also automated. As for campus-based courses, online and hybrid courses have 16 attendance periods each session and students must attend a minimum of 75% (12 attendance periods) of a course in order to be considered for a passing grade.

**Online** Attendance periods for each week of the eight-week session are from Monday 12:01 am to Wednesday 12:00 midnight and from Thursday 12:01 am to Sunday 12:00 midnight. Students must login and participate in the online class at least once during each attendance periods per week.

**Hybrid:** Attendance periods for each week of the eight-week session consist of the scheduled on-campus class meeting and the online period from Monday 12:01 am to Sunday 12:00 midnight. A student has attended the online attendance period for the week by logging into the class at least once during the period.

## **HOW TO OBTAIN UNIVERSITY OF THE POTOMAC TRANSCRIPTS**

Requests for official University of the Potomac transcripts must be made in writing and submitted to the Registrar. Requests must include a student's name, social security number (if applicable), dates of attendance and a complete address to where the transcript may be sent. Our system is not set up to email official transcripts. The cost for an official transcript is \$10. Financial clearance is required by the Student Financial Services Department before a transcript can be released (official or unofficial).

Request form and detailed information are available on the [Registrar's Office webpage](#).

## **REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

Every student must register each semester. A semester is defined as two 8-week sessions. Continuing students should register at midterm of the second session of their semester to insure a place in upcoming classes.

## **COURSE WITHDRAWAL**

If a student has attended beyond the ADD/DROP period of their semester but subsequently wishes to withdraw (Drop) from a course in that semester, they must complete a Student Status Change Request Form (SSCR) form. Form is available on [Student Services webpage](#). Please see the Institutional Refund Policy for financial obligations.

Chicago ESL Students: Please refer to Institutional Policy which may be obtained through Student Services.

## **ADD/DROP PERIOD**

Students may drop a course within the ADD/DROP period of their semester without incurring an academic penalty or financial obligation. The ADD/DROP period is defined as the first week of the 16-week semester. If a student has attended beyond the ADD/DROP period of their semester but subsequently wishes to withdraw from a course in that semester they must complete a Student Status Change Request (SSCR) form. Form is available on [Student Services webpage](#). Please see the Institutional Refund Policy for financial obligations.

## **OFFICIAL ACADEMIC PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL**

To officially withdraw from University of the Potomac, a student must inform Student and Retention Services Department at [studentservices@potomac.edu](mailto:studentservices@potomac.edu) or [il.studentservices@potomac.edu](mailto:il.studentservices@potomac.edu)

Only an approved SSCR constitutes an official withdrawal. (See the Refund Policy for financial obligations incurred when withdrawing from the University.)

## **ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL**

If a student fails to attend a course during any 14 consecutive day period or to register for subsequent sessions, the Registrar withdraws them from their program. This process

constitutes an administrative withdrawal. (See the Refund Policy in the University of the Potomac Catalog for financial obligations incurred when withdrawing from the University).

Catalog available on campus and online at <https://potomac.edu/students/course-catalog/>

## VETERANS BENEFITS

### DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA) EDUCATION BENEFITS

University of the Potomac is approved for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) education benefits. Please see your Financial Aid Officer as eligibility varies by campus and program.

#### Yellow Ribbon Program for Veterans

The Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program (Yellow Ribbon Program) is a provision of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008. This program allows institutions of higher learning (degree granting institutions) in the United States to voluntarily enter into an agreement with VA to fund tuition expenses that exceed either the \$21,084.89 cap for private institutions or the resident tuition and fees for a public institution. The institution can contribute up to 50% of those expenses and VA will match the same amount as the institution. UOTP's Washington, DC location participates in the Yellow Ribbon Program.

Private or Foreign School	Up to \$24,476.79 per academic year National Maximum
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#### Active Military and Veterans

University of the Potomac provides book voucher assistance up to \$200 per semester for Active Military, defined as active members of the military, spouses and/or dependents of active-duty military personnel. Veterans may also be eligible for this assistance.

To be eligible, a candidate must:

- Be accepted for admission into a degree program by the University.
- Verify his or her military status or, for a spouse, the marital relationship to the person on active duty or, for a dependent, the dependent relationship to the person on active duty.

This institution is approved to offer GI Bill® educational benefits by the Virginia State Approving Agency." 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 <http://www.benefis.va.gov/gibill>. For students utilizing Post 9/11 or VocRehab benefits, even though VA has not yet paid tuition and fees, University of the Potomac will NOT:

- prevent student from enrolling,
- assess a late penalty fee,

- require the student to secure alternative or additional funding, or
- Deny access to any school resources (access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities) that are available to other students that have paid.

However, The University of the Potomac may require that such students be required to:

- produce the VA's Certificate of Eligibility by the first day of class,
- provide written request to be certified, and
- Provide additional information needed to properly certify (many of you have your own form that must be completed each term and that is still allowed).

## **STUDENT SERVICES AND RESOURCES**

### **LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER/LIBRARY**

The University's central Learning Resources Center/Library is maintained at the Washington, DC campus and provides support to the Falls Church, VA campus.

The Chicago, IL campus has a Learning Resource Center accessible to all students during the hours of operation. Students may also utilize the Chicago Public Library (400 S State St, Chicago, IL, 60605) located within walking distance from the campus.

Computers providing both internet access and the Microsoft Office Suite are available for faculty, staff, and student use at all libraries. The Librarian schedules instructional sessions on information literacy, library research skills, internet searching, commercial database searching, and on any other library-related topic of interest to faculty and students.

### **TEXTBOOKS**

The University uses an on-line virtual bookstore for all course text materials. These materials are provided by E-campus and can be found at: <https://potomac.ecampus.com/>

Students may purchase new and used textbooks and resell used textbooks through this source. Course textbook requirements are listed on the website several weeks prior to the beginning of class. Financial Aid students may qualify for alternative payment options. Please contact the Financial Aid office for details.

### **VIRTUAL LIBRARY**

#### **How to use the virtual library:**

Use the link to access the library page at <http://opac.libraryworld.com/opac/signin.php>

- Type in the library's name (in lower case) "**Potomac college library**". Remember to leave a space between each word as shown. No password is required for access to the library page.

- Click on the login prompt. There are links for all our electronic resources on the page.

Resources include:

- Over 6,500 print volumes located at the DC Campus
- EBSCO FLIPSTER Periodicals collection available online
- Databases – Article’s databases providing electronic access to thousands of abstracts, case studies, and full-text articles. The individual databases include:
  1. Business Source Complete (EBSCO);
  2. Open Dissertations (EBSCO);
  3. Global Road Warrior – A country study database providing business and statistical information on 175 countries;
- Open source news and article resources available
- Smarthinking.com – Online tutorial service and Writing lab.
- APA citation and plagiarism resources available

**Library Book Collection** – The book collection is housed at the DC campus.

**eBook/Digital Collection** – We are currently in the process of reviewing digital book collections for future acquisition.

**EBSCOHOST Research Database:** The *EBSCO Business Source Complete* database, is an articles database which can be used to find, full-text, articles, article abstracts, case studies, and theses and dissertations. It is primarily a business focused database, but the term “business” is broadly used here. The EBSCO database is probably the best resource that we have to support all of our programs.

**FLIPSTER Periodicals Collection:** We have a small digital periodicals collection called FLIPSTER (Time, Fortune, Forbes, Wired, and Black Enterprise). It can be used anywhere that you can connect to the Internet. The focus of the periodicals’ collection is Business, IT, Global news, and Diversity.

### **SMARTHINKING.COM**

Smarthinking.com is a online tutoring service which can help students to improve their Writing, along with their Math, Business, and IT skills. The service offers students several ways in which they can access Tutors (chatroom, scheduled appointments, submitted questions and submission of writing drafts). Potomac College began using Smarthinking.com in 2008. There are several videos currently available on YouTube which explain how the Smarthinking service works.

### **Additional Student Resources in Moodle rooms:**

#### *Global Road Warrior*

UOTP also has an excellent website to support our International Business curriculum called Global Road Warrior. It has become more popular lately with International students who are using it to research their countries.

#### *APA writing style*

The APA writing style helps students to learn the citation style. There is an APA formatted, template that students may use until they feel more comfortable using APA. The APA guide addresses all aspects of APA and includes sample papers, and examples at the end.

### *Plagiarism*

The Learning Resources Center has linked four “Plagiarism Checkers” on the Student Resources page. Students can self-check their work prior to submitting it to their instructors.

***Plagiarism is a serious offense at the University and could result in eventual expulsion.***

## **PUBLIC LIBRARIES**

In order to obtain a public library card, you need some form of ID showing your residence. Acceptable items are a driver’s license, a check with your local address, or even a letter addressed to you at a local address. Check out which libraries have materials for the particular courses you are taking.

## **STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

So that students may have an organized voice in the operations of the University and a vehicle for arranging such social and cultural activities as they may wish, a student government has been established. The University of the Potomac Student Government represents students’ views and concerns in advising University officers. The University of the Potomac Student Government:

- (1) Meets at least twice each year with administrators to discuss concerns and serves as a sounding board for administrators on proposed changes in programs and services;
- (2) Administers a student activity budget to be expended by the Student Government for such social and cultural activities as they wish to organize and sponsor. The Dean and Faculty Advisor(s) work with Student Government to develop speaker series, establish student chapters of national professional associates, and generally enrich the academic life of the University.

Meetings of the Student Government are open to all students. Meeting dates are posted as determined by the Student Government Association.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **COMPLIANCE WITH THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964**

University of the Potomac admits students without regard to sex, race, color, sexual preference, national or ethnic origin, and accords all students the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to students at the University. The University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, sexual preference, national or ethnic origin, handicap, religion or age in staff hiring, student admission or in the administration of its policies and programs.

Students, faculty and administrative employees should refer any discrimination complaints in writing to the Human Resources department. For additional assistance related to Civil Rights under Title IX, contact:

Office of Civil Rights, District of Columbia Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
330 C Street, SW, Room 5046 Washington, DC 20202  
Phone: (202) 260-9225  
Fax: (202) 260-7250  
Email: OCR@ed.gov

(NOTE: There are different offices for different areas of the country. Visit the OCR web site for more information.)

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

Sexual harassment is inappropriate in a working environment and is not tolerated at University of the Potomac. Sexual favors may not be explicitly or implicitly suggested as a term or condition of an individual's academic performance or employment. Sexual contact and conduct with sexual overtones, which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic work performance or which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or working environment, is prohibited. The Student Retention and Services Department promptly investigates complaints of sexual harassment and when necessary, takes disciplinary action up to and including termination of the offending individual. Complaints of sexual harassment should be brought to the attention of the Human Resources department.

#### **What is sexual harassment?**

**Quid pro quo** sexual harassment involves a school employee explicitly or implicitly conditioning a student's participation in an education program or activity or basing an education or employment decision on the student's submission to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Similarly, no employee, agent, or third party shall promise, imply, or grant any preferential treatment to any student for engaging in sexual conduct or submission to sexual harassment.

**Hostile environment** harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of sexual nature. This type of sexually harassing behavior is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive as to limit a student's ability to benefit from an education program or activity or has created a hostile or abusive educational or work environment. Acts of physical aggression, intimidation, hostility, or unequal treatment based on sex are examples of a hostile environment. This type of sexual harassment also includes a display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, or graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, dress, or habits.



## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Any student who feels that he or she is a victim of or a witness to sexual harassment, including but not limited to any of the conduct listed above, by any employee, student or third party should report the matter to the Sexual Harassment/Equal Employment Opportunity Officer or her alternate:

### **DC/VA campus**

Dr. Sergei Andronikov, Dean of Academic Affairs, or Ms. Andrea Ford, Chief Operation Officer  
University of the Potomac  
1401 H. Street NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20005  
Phone: 202-274-2300

### **IL campus**

Ms. Rosanna DePinto, Campus Director, or Dr. Lee Smith, Dean of Academics  
University of the Potomac  
828 S Wabash Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Chicago, IL, 60605  
Phone: 773-866-0111

The EEO Officer or their alternate will promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment as confidentially as is possible. An investigation is initiated within 7 calendar days of a complainant's lodging an allegation.

The complainant may be asked to appear before the EEO Officer or their alternate and/or the ad hoc Grievance Committee to answer questions about the allegations. The Committee may call such witnesses as are appropriate, and the complainant may also request that the Committee hear witnesses. If the complainant requests that his or her name be kept confidential, that request will be honored. However, such a course of confidentiality may hinder the investigation and/or limit the University's ability to respond to the situation.

The EEO Officer or their alternate will maintain documentation of the allegations and any related hearing(s) and provide written notice to the complainant of the outcome of the complaint(s) and any related hearings. The EEO Officer will follow written procedures on conducting the investigation, the reporting of subsequent problems, and making follow-up inquiries to the complainant(s).

Any employee, student, agent, or third party who is determined after an investigation to have engaged in sexual harassment in violation of this policy will have the right to appeal any disciplinary action. Such appeal must be made in writing to the EEO Officer or her alternate, within ten calendar days of the date of the written notice of disciplinary action. The appeal will be heard by the ad hoc Grievance Committee, and a written decision will be sent to the appellant within three calendar days of the appeal. The decision of the Grievance Committee is final.

The Virginia State Approving Agency (SAA) approves education and Virginia training programs. Our office investigates complaints of GI BILL ® beneficiaries. "This institution is approved to offer GI Bill® educational benefits by the Virginia State Approving Agency."

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 <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>. While most complaints should initially follow the school grievance policy, if the situation cannot be resolved at the school, the beneficiary should contact our office via email at [saa@dvs.virginia.gov](mailto:saa@dvs.virginia.gov).

### **Retaliation Is Prohibited**

Retaliation against a sexual harassment complainant by any employee, student, agent, or third party is prohibited. Likewise, retaliation against any witness or other participant in an EEO hearing or investigation by any employee, student, agent, or third party is also prohibited. Any such retaliation will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, expulsion, contract termination, and/or appropriate legal action.

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

Students wishing to avail themselves of special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act must disclose special needs at time of admissions; accordingly, every effort is made to make reasonable accommodations. Certain programs may require manual dexterity. For detailed information and request for accommodation, please check out our website at <https://potomac.edu/about/student-service/disabilities-support-services/>

For physically challenged students, University of the Potomac has appropriate elevator service with ramps to facilitate easy entry. Restrooms are equipped with wide doorways and bars to ensure accessibility.

### **MAINTENANCE OF A DRUG-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

University of the Potomac is committed to drug and alcohol abuse prevention and to the maintenance of a drug-free educational and work environment. University of the Potomac's Substance Abuse Policy is as follows:

- University of the Potomac engages in the education of its students, employees, and community members who are involved with the University regarding substance avoidance and abuse.
- The University disseminates materials addressing prevention, detection and treatment of substance abuse.
- The University is committed to the reporting the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance.
- Students who violate University of the Potomac's Substance Abuse Policy are subject to appropriate action in accordance with policies for review and discipline for academic dishonesty; such discipline may involve dismissal from the University.
- The Drug Policy Manual is available electronically. Printed copies of this manual are available upon request.

The policy has several components:

- (A) University of the Potomac is committed to the education of students, employees, and community members involved with the University regarding substance abuse prevention, detection and treatment services, and to other efforts which foster such education.
- (B) The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited at University of the Potomac.
- (C) University employees and students are subject to appropriate disciplinary action for violation of the policy, in accordance with University policies and procedures regarding employee discipline and discharge and in accord with the student code of ethical conduct.

### **CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

The University of the Potomac's code of conduct defines the rights and responsibilities of students and establishes a structure by which to hold students accountable for violations of the code, other rules and regulations of the University. University of the Potomac expects its students will conduct themselves as business professionals as they progress toward their goals of academic achievement and career success. Students conduct subject to disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Academic Dishonesty such as cheating, fabrication and plagiarism.
2. Forgery, alteration and/or misuse of University documents, financial instruments, or identification cards with intent to defraud.
3. Unprofessional Conduct.
  - a) Obstructing or acting in a manner disruptive or disturbing to the normal educational functions of the University, administration of the University, disciplinary procedures or other authorized activities on University property.
  - b) Disrespect of or insubordination to University personnel.
  - c) Use of oral or written profanity.
  - d) Physical and/or psychological abuse or the threat of such abuse of any person on or in the vicinity of University property or at University-sponsored or University-supervised functions or conduct that threatens or endangers the health or safety of any such person.
  - e) Sexual harassment of other students, faculty, or staff.
4. Misuse of College Property.
  - f) Unauthorized use of, damage to, theft or seizure of any property or facilities of the University, or located within the boundary of University premises, threat to do so, or refusal to depart from any property or facilities of the University upon direction by officials or other persons authorized to represent the University.

- g) Littering, defacing, destroying, or damaging property of the University or property under its jurisdiction.
  - h) Unauthorized entry into, presence in, or use of any University building or facility.
  - i) Violation of the computer use policy.
  - j) Violation of the University's policy on solicitation and sales.
5. Improper use of library materials, including damage to materials and failure to return materials when due.
6. Alcohol and Drug Violations.
- k) Use of drug and alcoholic beverages, including the purchase, consumption, possession, or sale of such items.
  - l) Violation of the University's policy pertaining to smoking. (See page 5 of this handbook regarding smoking policy).
7. Criminal Activity and Violent or Dangerous Behavior.
- m) Violation of any local, state, or federal law.
  - n) Possession on University property or at any University activity of weapons, such as knives, firearms, or any dangerous chemical or explosive elements or their component parts.
  - o) Physical detainment or restraint of another person or the removal of such person from any place where he and/or she is authorized to remain or to in any way obstruct the free movement of persons on University premises or at University activities.
  - p) Threatening of any member of the University of the Potomac community.
  - q) Tampering with fire protection apparatus or failure to comply with emergency evacuation procedures.
  - r) Gambling or holding of a raffle or lottery on University premises.
  - s) Participation in unauthorized and/or disorderly assembly or incitement of a riot.
8. Other Violations.
- t) Violation of any other University rule or policy not contained in official publications but announced by a University official or other person authorized by the President.
  - u) Willful encouragement of others to commit any of the acts herein prohibited.

### Sanctions

The following sanctions may be imposed:

- **Warning:** An oral or written statement to a student that he/she is violating or has violated University rules and may be subject to more severe disciplinary action.
- **Probation:** Exclusion from the participation in privileges or activities set forth by the University, including the holding of any office, for a specified period of time.

- **Interim Suspension:** If, in the opinion of the President and/or the Disciplinary Committee, the presence of a student poses a serious threat to others, the President or his designee may, pending a hearing, suspend the student immediately. In such a situation, a hearing shall be held at the earliest reasonable time.
- **Suspension:** Exclusion from the University (to include classes and other University related activities) for a definite period of time. If a student, while on suspension, violates the Code of Conduct while on University property or in relation to a University-sponsored activity, he/she shall be subject to further discipline in the form of dismissal or expulsion.
- **Dismissal:** Termination of student status for an indefinite period. The conditions of readmission, if any, will be stated in the order of dismissal. If a dismissed student violates the Code of Conduct while on University property or in relation to a University-sponsored activity, he/she shall be subject to further discipline in the form of expulsion.
- **Expulsion:** Permanent termination of student status without possibility of readmission to any campus of the University.
- **Revocation of Degree:** If, in the opinion of the President and/or the Disciplinary Committee, the student has committed gross violations of the University's Academic Integrity and Ethics Policy, the President or his designee may, after a hearing, revoke the student's degree.
- **Restitution:** In addition to any of the above sanctions, reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property may be required. This may take the form of appropriate services or other compensation.

#### Disciplinary Procedures (Non-Academic)

A warning or probation may be administered by the President or his designee without further consultation. All cases involving suspension, dismissal, expulsion, revocation of degree or restitution of students will be referred by the President or their designee to the Chief Academic Officer of the University, who will convene the Disciplinary Committee for a hearing.

Any academic or administrative official, faculty member, or student may file a complaint with the Chief Academic Officer against any student for violations of University policies and procedures.

1. Written notice will be given to a student charged with violating the policies set out in this document.
2. If a student requests a hearing, the Chief Academic Officer will schedule a disciplinary hearing via teleconference, giving the student reasonable time to prepare his/her defense. If the student does not request a hearing, the Chief Academic Officer will still convene the Disciplinary Committee, who will make a written

determination, which the student may petition for appeal within ten working days following receipt of the decision. (See item ten below.)

3. The student has the right, if he/she desires, to be represented by counsel or other advisers (at his/her own expense), parents, and relatives. (No more than three of the aforementioned shall be present in the hearing at any one time.) If a student intends to be accompanied at a hearing by an attorney, he/she must notify the Chief Academic Officer 7 days in advance of the hearing date to permit the college to make arrangements for counsel.
4. A student has the right to remain silent at disciplinary hearings; such silence will not be used as a factor in the determination of guilt or innocence.
5. Witnesses may be called on the student's behalf, and the student or his/her counsel may confront all adverse witnesses.
6. An adequate summary of the hearing will be kept by the University. A student may, in addition and at his/her own expense, obtain the services of a stenographic reporter.
7. A draft of the summary will be furnished to the student upon request.
8. A written decision will be issued within ten working days after the hearing.
9. The student shall be advised in writing of appeal procedures.
10. The student may petition for appeal within ten working days of receipt of the decision by writing a letter to the Chief Academic Officer outlining the reasons the student objects to the decision of the Disciplinary Committee and providing any written evidence supporting the student's position.

The Chief Academic Officer will forward the student's petition for appeal, along with the summary of the disciplinary hearing and the Disciplinary Committee's written decision, to the President, who will review all evidence and issue a written decision within thirty days. The decision of the President is final. The University will not accept further appeals from the student.

#### Procedures for Dealing with Disruptive Behavior

If a student's behavior, in addition to disrupting the instructional area, presents a threat to the safety of those present, the faculty and/or staff members should:

1. Order the student to stop the disruptive behavior and leave the area.
2. Call, or assign someone to call, the police to remove, and if necessary, arrest the student.
3. Notify the Chief Academic Officer and file a charge under the Code of Conduct.

4. If the instructor feels that the student's presence within the University presents an immediate threat to the safety of the University community, the instructor should request through the Chief Academic Officer that the student be placed on interim suspension.
5. Unless the president has imposed the interim suspension, the student will be required to meet with the Chief Academic Officer prior to being permitted to return to class. The meeting will be held at the earliest time practicable, but in no event later than three working days subsequent to the instructor's action. The meeting shall be informal in nature. The official conducting the meeting shall seek to determine whether the student should be permitted to return to class or should be excluded pending resolution of the matter and provide the student with an explicit warning as to the consequences of any future disruption. The instructor should also be present unless specifically excused for good cause by the Dean.

#### *First Violation*

The first time a particular student causes a disruption, the instructor, depending on the seriousness of the infraction, should:

- Order the student to immediately stop the disruptive behavior and give the student a verbal warning
- Make written note of the warning for the instructor's files, and
- Talk with the student after class to explain the consequences of any further disruption

#### *Second Violation*

The second time a particular student causes a disruption, the instructor, depending on the seriousness of the infraction, should:

- Inform the student of the infraction and order the student to leave the instructional area
- If the student leaves voluntarily, the instructor shall permit the student to return the next class period. If the student refuses to leave, the instructor shall advise the student that the failure to leave voluntarily renders the student liable for immediate suspension, dismissal, or expulsion as well as criminal prosecution for trespassing. If the student still refuses to leave, the instructor shall call, or assign someone to call, the police to remove, and if necessary, arrest the student.
- If the student refused to leave, the instructor must file a charge under the Code of Conduct, and unless interim suspension has been imposed, the student will be required to meet with the dean prior to being permitted to return to class. The meeting will be held at the earliest time practicable, but in no event later than three working days subsequent to the instructor's action. The meeting shall be informal in nature. The official conducting the meeting shall seek to determine whether the student should be permitted to return to class or should be excluded pending resolution of the matter and provide the student with an explicit warning as to the consequences of any future disruption. The instructor should also be present unless specifically excused for good cause by the Dean.

### *Third Violation*

The third time a particular student causes a disruption, the instructor, depending on the seriousness of the infraction, should:

- File a charge under the code of conduct (mandatory)
- Inform the student of the infraction and order the student to leave the instructional area and if the student still refuses to leave, the instructor shall call, or assign someone to call, the police to remove, and if necessary, arrest the student.
- Notify the Chief Academic Officer and bar the student from attending further classes until the matter has been resolved. The student will be required to meet with the dean prior to being permitted to return to class. The meeting will be held at the earliest time practicable, but in no event later than three working days subsequent to the instructor's action. The meeting shall be informal in nature. The official conducting the meeting shall seek to determine whether the student should be permitted to return to class or should be excluded pending resolution of the matter and provide the student with an explicit warning as to the consequences of any future disruption. The instructor should also be present unless specifically excused for good cause by the Dean.
- The conditions for readmission to class, if permitted at all, shall be determined by the Chief Academic Officer and communicated to the instructor.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES (NON-ACADEMIC)**

The grievance procedure described below is applicable to non-academic student complaints.

**Level 1** — Since grievances should be raised and settled promptly, a grievance shall be raised as soon as the event occurs or the student gains knowledge of it and in no event more than **60 days** after the event occurred.

If a complaint cannot be resolved informally, the student may file a written grievance following a written response from an administrative official. The written grievance is filed with Student Retention and Services Department and shall contain the name of the complainant, the date of the filing, and a brief, specific description of the grievance and the redress sought. Students will receive a written response typically within thirty days of receipt, unless the situation requires additional research or investigation. All sexual discrimination, sexual harassment or sexual assault matters should be brought immediately to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator. All disabilities discrimination matters should be brought to the attention of the Disabilities Office/Coordinator.

**Level 2** — If not satisfied with the grievance disposition at Level 1, the student may file a written grievance with the Campus Director or Designee within thirty days of receipt of the written decision from the Level 1 official. The written grievance shall contain the name of the complainant, the date of the filing, a brief, specific description of the grievance and the redress sought, and the results of the disposition of the grievance at Level 1.



The student is contacted upon receipt of the written grievance and receives a written response typically within thirty days of receipt, unless the situation requires additional research or investigation.

Personnel who review the appeal at this level include the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and any additional person the CAO deems relevant to the appeal, e.g., the Director of Academic Operations, an Academic Program Chair, the Director of Financial Aid or the Registrar. The CAO replies in writing typically within thirty days after receipt of the written request. The decision of the CAO is final.

Please note that the President, whose decision shall be final, will hear all discrimination and sexual harassment matters. Both parties have the right to copies of all information presented at the grievance proceeding. A summary will be made of the discrimination and sexual harassment grievance hearings and retained for future reference. The student is entitled to a copy of this summary at his/her request. In discrimination and sexual harassment cases, revision of the deadlines for filing appeals and rendering responses may be made by mutual agreement, in writing, between the student and the Chief Academic Officer.

**Level 3:** If a student has a complaint or grievance and it cannot be resolved after exhausting Potomac's grievance procedures, a complaint may be filed with the:

Higher Education License Commission (HELIC)  
Government of the District of Columbia  
1050 First Street, NE; 5th Floor  
Washington, DC 20002  
[www.osse.dc.gov/helc](http://www.osse.dc.gov/helc)

Students may also contact the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) as a last resort if all other efforts above have been exhausted and resolution has not been found. SCHEV can be contacted at 804-225-2600 or via email [www.schev.edu](http://www.schev.edu).

Chicago students may contact the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) at 217-782-2551.

## **PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

Policies and procedures concerning the privacy of student records are governed by the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-380). Student records are maintained by the Registrar's Office (academic records) and Student Financial Services Department (Financial Aid and accounts receivable records). Files that are accessed by outside personnel are documented with date and the name of the person or entity accessing the file.

Students have the right to inspect and review their educational records, request amendment of their educational records, consent to disclosure of their educational records and file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education.

Students age 18 or over have access to their personal record files kept by University of the Potomac. All authorized University of the Potomac personnel have access to student records for official purposes. A student (or in some cases an eligible parent) is given access to his/her record within a reasonable time after submitting a written request to the office in possession of the record. Students should allow 72 hours for a written request to be fulfilled.

If the content of a record is believed to be in error, inaccurate, discriminatory, misleading or in violation of student rights or otherwise inappropriate, it may be challenged, and students may submit a written explanation to be included in the record. A student's right to due process allows for a hearing, which may be held at a reasonable time and place at which time evidence may be presented to support the challenge.

Student information is released to persons, agencies or legal authorities as required by subpoena/legal process or by consent of a student (or eligible parent). Information is released on a consent basis in cases where a student or eligible parent has provided a written consent, signed, dated and specifying the information to be released and name(s) of persons to whom the information is to be released.

## **RIGHT OF REFUSAL TO PROVIDE COPIES**

University of the Potomac reserves the right to deny transcripts or copies of records not required to be made available under FERPA regulations in any of the following situations:

- A student has an unpaid financial obligation to the University
- A student is in default on a Title IV federal loan
- There is an unresolved disciplinary action against a student

University of the Potomac designates the following items as directory information: Student name, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, dates of attendance, degrees, certificates and awards received. If a student does not want any or all of the above information released, he/she should inform the Registrar's Office in writing by the fifth calendar day following the start of classes.

Individuals who have questions about FERPA or who wish to file a complaint should contact:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

## **DISCLOSURE OF EDUCATION RECORDS**

University of the Potomac will disclose information from a student's education records only with the written consent of the student, EXCEPT:

1. To school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the records. A school official is:
  - A person employed by University of the Potomac in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position.
  - A person employed by or under contract to the University to perform a special task, such as attorney, auditor, or consultant.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:

  - Performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or by a contract agreement
  - Performing a task related to a student's education.
  - Performing a task related to the discipline of a student.
  - Performing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.
2. To certain officials of the U.S. Department of Education, the Controller General, and state and local educational authorities in conjunction with an audit, review, or evaluation of compliance with education programs.
3. In connection with a student's request for or receipt of financial aid, as necessary to determine the eligibility, amount or conditions of the financial aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
4. If required by a state law requiring disclosure that was adopted before November 19, 1974.
5. To comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena.
6. The records of a disciplinary proceeding conducted by University of the Potomac against an alleged perpetrator of a violent crime will be disclosed to the alleged victim of that crime without consent of the alleged perpetrator.

## **DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

Colleges and universities may disclose, without consent, "directory" information. University of the Potomac designates the following items as directory information: Student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, dates of attendance, degrees, certificates and awards received, e-mail address, and the most recent previous educational institution attended.

## **ETHICAL STANDARDS**

Every University of the Potomac student is expected to represent himself or herself honestly in all oral or written statements. Students will not knowingly misrepresent any material fact to other students, faculty, staff, prospective employers, or anyone else while representing himself or herself as a member of the University of the Potomac community. This includes misrepresentation of others by speaking unfavorably about the staff, students and the University as a whole. Refer to the Academic Catalog for specific information regarding Academic Integrity and Ethics.

## GLOSSARY

**ACE** – American Council on Education, an agency that evaluates non-traditional forms of education and provides credit recommendations.

**THEORETICAL APPLICATION PROJECT** – a three-credit course allowing the student to demonstrate the practical theory or principles of any of the ten subject areas in the degree programs. For detailed information, refer to the Theoretical Application Project section of the Academic Catalog.

**BUDGET PERIOD (FINANCIAL AID)** - a period of time in which a student completes a minimum of 24 credits; the equivalent of an academic year.

**CATALOG** – an institutional publication containing academic offerings, course descriptions and institutional policies

**COHORT** – a group of people banded together to achieve a common goal. All Upper Division students in the baccalaureate program are assigned to a cohort based on when they begin the Upper Division program. This same group of individuals will progress through the degree program together as a group

**COA (COST OF ATTENDANCE FOR FINANCIAL AID)** - the amount it costs to attend University of the Potomac per academic year. This amount includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, or other education-related expenses.

**CLEP** - College Level Examination Program – a testing program designed to grant college credit for successful completion of subject area examinations.

**CYCLE** – A term used to identify a student’s billing and registration periods.

**DANTES** – Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support - an examination for college credit program originally developed by the armed forces.

**ELECTIVE** – a course chosen by the student, which does not specifically fulfill requirements of general education or degree concentration.

**EFC (EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION FOR FINANCIAL AID)** - the amount, based on federal calculations, that you/your family are expected to contribute towards your education.

**FACULTY ADVISOR** – An academic person responsible for assisting students with the development of their educational plan and with other academic concerns throughout their educational career.

**FAFSA - FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID** - A form used to apply for all federal Title IV Financial Aid programs. Application must be made once per year.

**FINANCIAL AID** – A general term used to refer to government student loans and grants.

**GENERAL EDUCATION** - The general education component of a standard degree program is a common core of learning including subject matter from the humanities, the natural sciences, the physical sciences, and the social sciences. It is recognized that such a common core is necessary in the development and for the growth of the educated person. It is much more important that the general education subjects be taught with emphasis upon generalization rather than with an academic specialization as the major objective.

**GRADE REPORT** – A report of academic progress for a single session.

**ISIR - INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT INFORMATION REPORT** – An information report generated from a FAFSA which indicates a student’s eligibility status.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE** – A short period of time when a student is not attending school. Students are required to notify University of the Potomac in writing before taking a leave of absence.

**MSCHE** – Middle States Commission on Higher Education (a regional accrediting agency)

**PROMISSORY NOTE** - A binding legal document students sign when applying for a student loan.

**REGISTRAR** – the party responsible for the maintenance of academic student records.

**SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)** – Please refer to the Catalog for satisfactory academic progress requirements. Chicago ESL Students should refer to the Academic Office for a copy of the policy.

**SESSION** – An 8-week period of time during which a fulltime student takes two courses (two session equal a 16-week semester).

**SPECIAL STATUS STUDENT** – A student who is a non-degree-seeking student (refer to the Catalog for additional information).

**STUDENT HANDBOOK** - A guide designed to provide students with information on policy and procedure of University of the Potomac.

**TRANSCRIPT** – A record of the student’s entire academic career.

**WITHDRAWAL** – The action of a student leaving the University for a period of time in excess of one session.

## APPENDIX

### LINK TO ONLINE FORMS

RE-ENTRY APPLICATION:	<a href="https://uotp.forms-db.com/view.php?id=11766">https://uotp.forms-db.com/view.php?id=11766</a>
LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST FORM:	<a href="https://apply.potomac.edu/203443664514958">https://apply.potomac.edu/203443664514958</a>
STUDENT STATUS CHANGE REQUEST FORM:	<a href="https://apply.potomac.edu/203455535537963">https://apply.potomac.edu/203455535537963</a>
GRADUATION APPLICATION:	<a href="https://apply.potomac.edu/203485768400963">https://apply.potomac.edu/203485768400963</a>
UOTP STUDENT LAPTOP LOANING AGREEMENT:	<a href="https://uotp.forms-db.com/view.php?id=14770">https://uotp.forms-db.com/view.php?id=14770</a>
AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION FERPA RELEASE FORM / ADDRESS UPDATE:	<a href="https://apply.potomac.edu/210665554687971">https://apply.potomac.edu/210665554687971</a>
STUDENT AMBASSADOR APPLICATION:	<a href="https://apply.potomac.edu/210943983236966">https://apply.potomac.edu/210943983236966</a>