APPENDIX B: Program Participant Interview Protocol

Introduction: My name is _______. I am _______ with the IDEA Center and on the research team for this study about undergraduate engineering student success. Thank you for agreeing to participate in an interview about your experience as an engineering student at UC San Diego.

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Interviewer Name: ___________________________ Date: ____________
Interviewee Name: ___________________________
Current/Former Participant (SEI Only / IDEA / ACES)

Background
- What year are you (or when did you graduate)?
- What is your current major?
  - If no longer engineering: Include former engineering persistence/retention questions

Academic Success
- What does “success” as an engineering student look like for you personally?
- For you personally, what have been the top three things that have supported your success as an engineering student?
  - People: How did you meet them? What role did they play?
  - Programs/Resources: How did you get involved? What was your experience?
  - Personal: Tell me more. How did that influence you?
- What challenges to your success have you experienced? What has helped you overcome them? Or, what do you think would help you overcome them?

Community Features
- Tell me about the peer network or community you built when you first started at UC San Diego.
  - Who was part of your community?
  - How did your community start?
- Were there any differences between your peer network or community inside engineering and outside engineering? Tell me about them.
  - Who was part of those communities?
  - How did those communities start?
- How did these communities shift or change from year to year (e.g., 1st year, 2nd year, etc.)? Please note if this was pre- or post-COVID.
- How, if at all, did these different communities overlap with your academic community, for example study groups?
  - Who was part of your community?
○ How did your community start?
○ How has who you study with shifted over time?

Persistence / Retention

● CURRENT/GRADUATED ENGINEERING
  ○ Have you ever considered leaving [the program/Jacobs School of Engineering/UC San Diego], and what factors did you consider?
    ■ Probe for academic factors, social/community factors, personal factors
  ○ What experiences or people have supported you or motivated you to persist in engineering?

● FORMER ENGINEERING (CHANGE MAJOR/LEAVE UCSD)
  ○ Before you changed majors, what was your engineering major?
  ○ When did you first consider leaving [Jacobs School of Engineering/UC San Diego], and what factors influenced your decision?
    ■ ~Probe for academic factors, social/community factors, personal factors
  ○ What experiences or people supported you or motivated you to persist in engineering?
  ○ If different from when you first decided to change majors, when did you officially change? What was the final deciding factor for your decision?
  ○ What would have needed to change or happen differently for you to decide to remain in engineering/UC San Diego?

Belonging

● What experiences or people have made you feel the most like you belong in engineering at UCSD?
● What, if any, experiences or people have made you question whether you belong in engineering at UCSD?

Career Aspirations

● What are your future education and career goals? Probe for: Academic enrichment, Graduate school, Careers

Program Experience

● Thinking back about your experience in SEI, how did participating benefit you or support your success at UCSD overall?
● How, if at all, did participating in SEI create a network of people and resources to support your success?
  ○ Were there any ways SEI could have been better at this?
● How, if at all, did participating in SEI support your academic success?
● How, if at all, did SEI help you navigate campus resources and opportunities?
● How, if at all, did the benefits of SEI extend beyond your first year?
• Are you an IDEA or ACES Scholar? If so, which one?
  ○ (IDEA/ACES Only) After participating in SEI, how did the IDEA/ACES Scholars program benefit you or support your success at UCSD? Probe for: Community, Academic Success, Awareness of Resources
    ■ Were there any ways the program could have been better at this?
  ○ (IDEA/ACES Only) How did participating in IDEA/ACES Scholar create a network of people and resources to support your success?
    ■ Were there any ways the program could have been better at this?
  ○ (IDEA/ACES Only) How, if at all, did participating in the Scholars program support your academic success?
    ■ Were there any ways the program could have been better at this?
  ○ (IDEA/ACES Only) How, if at all, did the Scholars program help you navigate campus resources and opportunities?
    ■ Were there any ways the program could have been better at this?
  ○ (IDEA/ACES Only) How, if at all, did the benefits of the Scholars program extend beyond your first year?
    ■ Were there any ways the program could have been better at this?
• Beyond SEI (and the Scholars Program), were there other ways you were connected to the IDEA Center? What role did that play in your success as an engineering student?
• What more do you feel the IDEA Center could be doing to support student success?
• Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience as an engineering student to help us better support students?