

# ADMISSIONS

## General Information

1. An application for admission must be submitted and approved and an official notification of acceptance issued by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions before any person may enroll in an undergraduate course. Before action can be taken on an application for admission, all credentials required by University policy must be received by the Admissions Office, which has responsibility for evaluation of credentials for the purpose of admission.
2. First-time applications must be accompanied by a nonrefundable application fee specified on the application form. Application forms may be obtained from the Admissions Office or completed online through the USC Union website.
3. Selected applicants who present evidence of special talents for University programs requiring such special talents may be evaluated on the basis of these talents as well as high-school grades and entrance examination scores. The University reserves the right to place conditions on the admission of any student. In the event such action is taken, the conditions will be clearly explained in the letter of acceptance.

Proof of immunization as well as proof of U.S. citizenship or qualification as an international student is required before enrolling at USC Union.

Campus visits can be arranged through the Admissions Office. The Admissions Office is usually open year-round except for Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday, and 10 days at Christmas.

## Categories of Admission

In keeping with its mission to provide accessible higher education, USC Union is committed to an admissions policy which ensures access while only admitting students who have a reasonable chance of academic success. As a means to this end, we have developed specific policies to govern admission to the various admissions categories.

### Freshman Admissions

A freshman applicant is an individual who has not attended a regionally accredited college or university following high school graduation. Applicants who attended a college or university prior to high school graduation must enroll as freshmen and submit official transcripts of all attempted courses.

#### Requirements

Freshman applicants must have either a high school diploma from a regionally accredited association or its equivalent (GED) prior to enrolling. Accepted applicants must submit senior grades and a verification of graduation as soon as they are available. Applicants who did not graduate from high school must submit a copy of a GED certificate or satisfactory GED test scores.

#### Freshman Applicants Must Submit:

- Completed Application for Admission & Application Fee
- Official High School Transcript or GED Test Scores
  - Current transcripts should be submitted at the time of application.

- If applicable, final transcripts must be submitted following high school graduation.

#### Validating High School Completion Documents

High school and GED transcripts are considered official when received directly from a high school or recognized educational agency. In the event there are concerns about the validity of a transcript received, the Admissions Office will contact the appropriate entity to verify the validity of the document(s) and determine whether they are acceptable. If there are concerns about the accreditation of the school or agency providing the transcript(s), the Admissions Office will utilize official State or U.S. Department of Education agency resources for verification.

#### College Preparatory Course Prerequisite Requirements

High School transcripts for freshman applicants must show completion of the College Preparatory Curriculum ([https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/Institutions%20and%20Educators/Policy%20Program%20Etc/Policies/College\\_Preparatory\\_Course\\_Prerequisite\\_Requirements\\_Fall\\_2019.pdf](https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/Institutions%20and%20Educators/Policy%20Program%20Etc/Policies/College_Preparatory_Course_Prerequisite_Requirements_Fall_2019.pdf)), which includes 20 units of the following academic subjects:

- **FOUR UNITS OF ENGLISH:** All four units must have strong reading (including works of fiction and non-fiction), writing, communicating, and researching components. It is strongly recommended that students take two units that are literature based, including American, British, and World Literature.
- **FOUR UNITS OF MATHEMATICS:** These units must include Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. A fourth higher-level mathematics unit should be taken before or during the senior year.
- **THREE UNITS OF LABORATORY SCIENCE:** Two units must be taken in two different fields of the physical, earth, or life sciences and selected from among biology, chemistry, physics, or earth science. The third unit may be from the same field as one of the first two units (biology, chemistry, physics, or earth science) or from any laboratory science for which biology, chemistry, physics and/or earth science is a prerequisite. Courses in general or introductory science for which one of these four units is not a prerequisite will not meet this requirement. It's strongly recommended that students desiring to pursue careers in science, mathematics, engineering or technology take one course in all four fields: biology, chemistry, physics, and earth science.
- **TWO UNITS OF THE SAME WORLD LANGUAGE:** Two units with a heavy emphasis on language acquisition.
- **THREE UNITS OF SOCIAL SCIENCE:** One unit of U.S. History, a half unit of Economics, and a half unit of Government are required. World History or Geography is strongly recommended.
- **ONE UNIT OF FINE ARTS:** One unit in appreciation of, history of, or performance in one of the fine arts. This unit should be selected from among media/digital arts, dance, music, theater, or visual and spatial arts.
- **ONE UNIT OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION OR ROTC:** One unit of physical education to include one semester of personal fitness and another semester in lifetime fitness. Exemption applies to students enrolled in Junior ROTC and for students exempted because of physical disability or for religious reasons.
- **TWO UNITS OF ELECTIVES:** Two units must be taken as electives. A college preparatory course in Computer Science (i.e., one involving significant programming content, not simply keyboarding or using applications) is strongly recommended for this elective. Other acceptable electives include college preparatory courses in English; fine arts; foreign languages; social science; humanities;

mathematics; physical education; and laboratory science (courses for which biology, chemistry, physics, or earth science is a prerequisite).

Total: 20

### Important Notes:

- Applicants must complete additional units to meet or exceed state and local high school graduation requirements. In choosing these electives, students should consider the recommendations given in the preceding listing for specific prospective majors.
- Applicants must have a 2.0 GPA (4.0 scale) or higher for admission. Applicants with a GPA less than 2.0 or with missing College Preparatory Course Prerequisite Requirements will be reviewed by the designated admissions committee for a determination on admission to the institution.
- Standardized test scores (e.g., ACT, SAT) are not required for admission but may be submitted or requested if pertinent for scholarship or other committee review.
- Students admitted with 'in-progress' transcripts (i.e., prior to high school graduation) cannot register for subsequent semesters until all final documents are received.
- Applicants can update their start term within 365 days of submission.

Freshman applicants are encouraged to apply 6-12 months prior to the term for which they seek admission. However, applications for admission will be accepted and reviewed year-round.

## Transfer Admissions

A transfer applicant is an individual who has attended another regionally accredited college or university following graduation of high school or completion of a GED.

### Requirements

Transfer applicants must have a Cumulative GPA of 2.0 or higher (4.0 scale). If fewer than 30 semester hours (45 quarter hours) of college-level work have been attempted, the applicant must also meet freshman admission requirements.

### Transfer Applicants Must Submit:

- Completed Application for Admission & Application Fee
- Official Transcripts
  - Transcripts from all regionally accredited colleges and universities attended are required.
  - Transcripts with in-progress work will not be accepted.
  - If less than 30 semester hours (45 quarter hours) of college-level work were attempted, official high school transcripts or GED test scores are also required.

### Important Notes:

- A transfer grade point average is calculated using all credits attempted and all grades earned on college-level courses at regionally accredited institutions outside the USC System.
- Applicants with a GPA less than 2.0 (4.0 scale) will be reviewed by the designated admissions committee for a determination on admission to the institution.
- Applicants can update their start term within 365 days of submission.

Transfer applicants are encouraged to apply 6-12 months prior to the term for which they seek admission. However, applications for admission will be accepted and reviewed year-round.

All applicants for transfer admission must be eligible to return to the last institution attended as a degree-seeking student.

The applicant must submit official transcripts of all previous college courses attempted whether or not credit was earned and regardless of whether the applicant wishes to transfer any credit. An official transcript must be sent directly to the admissions office from each institution attended. Failure to report all attempted college courses may constitute sufficient cause for later dismissal from the University.

Students transferring from nonaccredited colleges may be allowed to validate credit after admission to the University. Details of the validation procedure may be obtained from the admissions office.

Original records are required for courses exempted at a previous college. Exemption credit or acceptance of transfer credit by another college has no bearing on the evaluation of transfer credit at the University of South Carolina.

Generally, credits earned in courses that fall into one or more of the following categories are not acceptable in transfer to the University:

1. courses that are occupational or technical in nature
2. courses that are essentially remedial in nature
3. courses from a two-year institution which are considered upper division or upper level at the University
4. courses from a two-year institution that are not listed as part of that institution's college parallel program.

Exceptions to this rule may be made only by the designated academic official(s) on the campus where the student is majoring and only in specific cases where such courses are judged to be uniquely relevant to the student's degree program.

## High School Concurrent (Dual Enrollment) Admission

A high school concurrent (dual enrollment) applicant is a current high school student in their junior or senior year with interest in taking courses through the University prior to high school graduation.

### Requirements

High school concurrent applicants must have a High School GPA of 3.0 or higher (4.0 scale) and the recommendation of the high school principal or their designee, following the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education's Statewide Higher Education Policy for Delivery and Transferability of "Dual Enrollment" (<https://che.sc.gov/sites/che/files/Documents/Institutions%20and%20Educators/Policy%20Program%20Etc/Policies/DualEnrollmentPolicy.pdf>).

### High School Concurrent Applicants Must Submit:

- Completed Application for Admission & Application Fee
- Official High School Transcripts
  - Transcripts must be current through the term of enrollment.

### Important Notes:

- Standardized test scores (e.g., ACT, SAT) are not required for admission.
- Documented exceptions may be made for freshman or sophomore students at the request of the high school principal, his or her designee, or the designee of the governing school association.

- The institution may establish additional criteria for admission into courses.
- Applicants who are recommended by their school principal or designed but do not meet requirements will be reviewed by the designated admissions committee for a determination on admission to the institution.
- Enrollment eligibility is restricted to partner schools and districts. For questions about eligibility, contact the institution's dual enrollment coordinator or school guidance office.
- Applicants can update their start term within 365 days of submission.

High school concurrent applicants are encouraged to apply 6-12 months prior to the term for which they seek admission. However, applications for admission will be accepted and reviewed year-round.

### Assurance of Quality

All claims from any public two- or four-year institution challenging the effective preparation of any other public institution's course work for transfer purposes shall be evaluated and appropriate measures shall be taken to reassure that the quality of the course work has been reviewed and approved on a timely basis by sending and receiving institutions alike. This process of formal review shall occur every four years through the staff of the Commission on Higher Education, beginning with the approval of these procedures.

## Other Admissions Opportunities

A variety of admissions opportunities are available for those students who do not meet regular freshman or transfer requirements stated above. Please see the Admissions Office ([https://www.sc.edu/about/system\\_and\\_campuses/union/apply/](https://www.sc.edu/about/system_and_campuses/union/apply/)) for complete details.

### Admission as a Nondegree Candidate

Applicants who wish to attend the University for one semester or on some limited basis may be approved to do so upon submitting an application accompanied by an explanation of their educational goals. The admissions office reserves the right to determine the proper category of admission and to determine what credentials may be required.

**Non-degree Seeking Students.** This category is for part-time applicants who are not interested in earning a degree at USC. A maximum of 30 semester hours may be earned in this category. Applicants who have been officially denied admission as degree-seeking students are not eligible for admission as special students. Courses completed as special students carry full University credit; however, none of the hours is applicable to a degree until the student applies and qualifies for admission to a degree program. Usually no credentials are required if the applicant has no plan to seek a degree.

**Senior Citizens.** A senior citizen (age 60 or above) may enroll in courses at USC Union tuition-free on a space available basis. They must pay the application fee and technology fee and purchase textbooks. A special form documenting their eligibility must be obtained from the Registrar's Office.

**Auditor.** An auditor may apply as a special student (see above).

**Military Special.** Certification of active-duty military status is required.

Persons attending the University in any of these categories will be nondegree candidates. Credit earned while attending as a nondegree candidate may be used toward a degree only after the student has applied for and been accepted into a degree program. An applicant

denied admission to any degree category is not eligible for admission as a special student. The period of enrollment in these categories is limited by either time or number of allowable credits. The official acceptance letter explains all enrollment restrictions for the category in question. Nondegree students are not eligible for financial aid, veterans' benefits, or on-campus housing during the fall or spring terms. Rooms on the campus may be available to students in the summer whether or not they are working for degrees.

### Readmission of Former Students

An application for readmission must be submitted by any former student who wishes to return to the University after missing a major (fall or spring) semester. Summer sessions do not count as a major semester in this instance. Applications for readmission are obtained from the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and when completed should be returned to the admissions office at the campus where the student expects to enroll. Readmission to the University and to the program in which the student was previously enrolled is not automatic. An interview may be requested and some basis for a favorable decision may be required.

Students who attend the University as special students (including probationary or nondegree candidates) are not considered for "readmission" because these students were not fully admitted to the University originally. If special students wish to return to the University as degree-seeking candidates, they must apply for regular admission as freshmen or transfer students, furnishing all official transcripts and any entrance test scores which may be required.

Students who leave the University in good standing, miss one or more major semesters, and attend another institution while away must submit the application for readmission and official transcripts of all college-level work attempted during their absence from the University. Such applicants must meet the same requirements as transfer students.

A student who leaves the University on suspension must apply for readmission upon completion of the period of suspension and qualify for readmission to the major program requested. To attempt to return to the University prior to the completion of the suspension period requires:

1. an application for readmission and a petition for reinstatement if a major semester has been missed; or
2. a petition for reinstatement if the attempt is being made after notification of suspension but prior to missing a major semester. A petition for reinstatement is made to the University college from which the student was suspended.

If students attend another college-level institution while suspended from the University, they must maintain a satisfactory average at that institution in order to retain the privilege of being considered for readmission at the conclusion of their suspension. The University does not transfer credit earned during a period of suspension, but the quality of grades could affect the decision on readmission.

### Admission of International Students

The University of South Carolina welcomes the applications of qualified international students.<sup>1</sup> At least 90 days before the beginning of the semester they wish to enter, students must send a complete application, including standardized test scores, school records, and financial statements, to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

International applicants must be proficient in the English language. A score of 550 or above on the paper version of the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is required (a score of 210 on the

computerized version is required). A score of 115 on the DUOLINGO test or a passing score on either the SAT or ACT test will also meet this requirement. TOEFL scores are not required for international students from countries where the primary language of instruction is English nor from graduates of high schools in the United States.

An English proficiency test will be administered to international students, except those from English-speaking countries, upon arrival at the University. All international students must demonstrate sufficient proficiency in written and oral English to progress at the University level. Students who are not proficient in English will be required to take noncredit, concentrated English language training until proficiency is demonstrated.

In some of our University programs, minimum Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores are required for admission. It is therefore recommended that international students take the SAT before applying to the University.

In addition, freshman applicants must have completed a level of education equivalent to that of students entering from accredited secondary schools in the United States and have superior grades on their school work. Applicants who seek to enter from another college or university in the United States must meet transfer admission requirements.

International applicants will not be allowed to enroll in classes until they establish their ability to pay education expenses (approximately \$22,750 for each year of study). The policies of certain countries have created financial difficulties for their citizens studying at the University. Applicants from these countries will be so notified and required to make an advance deposit of expenses. Applicants from other nations must submit certification of financial support to satisfy this requirement. International students should not expect to obtain any financial assistance from the University.

<sup>1</sup> Applicants who are not citizens or permanent residents of the United States.