

Application Instructions

ADMISSION TO USC GOULD SCHOOL OF LAW

What sets USC Gould School of Law students apart from their peers at other institutions? Extraordinary academic credentials and a rich diversity of background and experience in a law school with a small student body. USC Gould is a small law school on a large and vibrant campus, and the environment is both collaborative and supportive.

Each year, USC Gould receives many more applications than we have spaces in the entering class. With approximately 200 seats to fill in the entering class, admission is highly selective. Our priority application deadline is February 1, 2017, but we will continue to accept applications through April 1, 2017. Early applications receive priority review and scholarship consideration (although not necessarily a final decision). We strongly encourage you to submit your application by the February 1, 2017 priority deadline.

Eligibility

To be eligible to apply, you must have received OR plan to receive a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university before enrolling at USC Gould. We base our admission decisions on academic record, LSAT score, personal statement, résumé, letters of recommendation, and other information in your application file.

USC Gould has a long tradition of striving to provide equal opportunity, and is firmly committed to a policy against discrimination based on ethnicity, national origin, disability, race, religion, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, or age.

Our Admissions Committee

The Admissions and Financial Aid Committee is comprised of members of the faculty, the associate dean, the director of admissions, and an elected student representative. Members of the Committee read each application in the applicant pool thoroughly and considers each application on an individual basis. Committee members pay close attention to the "soft" factors, factors other than LSAT score(s) and undergraduate grade point average. All files are read at least twice.

Academic Requirements

In reviewing application files, the Committee focuses on college grades, academic major, selection of courses, and significant scholarly achievements. Although USC Gould does not require specific college courses for admission, we look favorably on students who have selected intellectually challenging courses of study.

Whatever your discipline, we urge you to concentrate on developing strong writing and analytic skills. Courses that require intensive research projects and active participation in classroom dialogue will also be helpful in preparing you to study law.

Your Personal Statement

Of the qualitative or "soft" factors of the application, the personal statement is of critical importance to the admissions committee. This is your primary opportunity to discuss who you are beyond the quantifiable components of your application. While there is no prompt and we encourage you to approach the personal statement with an open-mind, we are particularly interested in how your background (academic and otherwise) has led to your decision to study law. Please note, the personal statement is not the place to repeat items on your résumé.

The personal statement should be 2-3 pages, double-spaced, and at least 12 point font. The Admissions Committee values carefully crafted essays that are clear, concise, and compelling. The personal statement is a writing sample and you should pay particular attention to the details of your composition. The statement must be electronically attached.

Résumé

You are required to submit a résumé to illustrate your chronological work history. Indicate hours per week for each activity where applicable. Please limit your résumé to no more than two pages, but one is preferred.

Letters of Recommendation

We require two letters of recommendation to complete your application. The most influential letters of recommendation focus on your academic potential. They are written by people who know you well and will evaluate your academic performance.

Although recommendations not pertaining to academic abilities are helpful, academic recommendations carry the most weight with the Admissions Committee. If you have been out of college for a number of years, then a letter from an employer would be appropriate. As this is an academic environment, we encourage employers to discuss the candidate's written and oral communication skills, leadership skills, and potential for the study of law. We will accept a maximum of THREE letters of recommendation.

Contribution to Diversity

USC Gould's admissions process is guided by the view that a student body that reflects the broad and rich diversity of our society provides a superior educational environment for all law students. The primary goal of our admissions process is to enroll students who demonstrate outstanding academic and professional promise and whose background and experience will enrich USC Gould's educational environment or enhance the diversity of our student body and the legal profession.

You may be regarded as potentially contributing to student diversity if your background or experience would not ordinarily be well represented in the student body or the legal profession. Examples include (but are not limited to) students who:

- Have struggled against prejudice, economic disadvantage, family or personal adversity, or other social hardships (perhaps as a result of disability, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation).
- Have lived in a foreign country or who spoke a language other than English at home.
- Have unusual career goals, employment history (perhaps military or law enforcement experience), or educational background (including graduate study).
- Demonstrate unusual extracurricular achievement (including school or community service).

If you believe your background or experience can contribute to USC Gould's goal of diversity and educational enrichment--and if you would like this factor considered in the admissions process--please include detailed written information about your background or experience in your application (providing such information is voluntary). There is an optional diversity statement in the Attachments section of the application and should be limited to 2-3 pages, double-spaced, and at least 12 point font.

Interviews

The Admissions Committee does not grant interviews to candidates as part of the admissions process.

Admission Decisions and Timelines

Applications that are complete by February 1, 2017 receive priority review both for admission and scholarships. However, we will accept applications through April 1, 2017. This means that applicants who have not taken the LSAT until the February 2017 administration ARE eligible to apply. All applicant files are reviewed administratively by the Dean of Admissions or a member of the admissions staff once before they are complete. A portion of the applicant pool is admitted and denied by the Dean of Admissions based on admissions criteria set forth by the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee. A small number of files are reviewed by the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee who make advisory admissions decisions. Candidates who are placed on a waiting list are encouraged to submit letters of continued interest periodically. In addition, they may update their file with new information, which they believe may support an offer of admission. Decision notifications typically begin mid-December and conclude around May 15, 2017. All decisions are final and no appeals process exists.

Requirements for Enrollment

If you are admitted to USC Gould, you are required to pay two non-refundable \$500.00 tuition deposits by specified deadlines (typically May 1 and July 1). The enrollment instructions included with your admission packet will provide deadlines and instructions.

Prior to enrollment in August, you must submit your official transcript, verifying your receipt of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university to the law school Registrar.

Acceptance Deferral Policy

USC Gould grants deferrals for up to one year (except for applicants who are participating in Teach for America who may receive up to two years). Candidates must agree to submit the required tuition seat deposit(s), withdraw all applications from other law schools (including waiting lists), and agree not to submit new applications during the next admission cycle. Deferrals are granted on a case-by-case basis and generally only where circumstances not present at the time of application submission have since arisen.

Bar Admission Character Considerations

In addition to a bar examination, there are character, fitness, and other qualifications for admission to the bar in every U.S. jurisdiction. Applicants are encouraged to determine the requirements for any jurisdiction in which they intend to seek admission by contacting the jurisdiction directly. Addresses for all relevant agencies are available through the National Conference of Bar Examiners. USC Gould requires applicants for admission to fully disclose responses to the following questions:

- Have you ever been dropped, suspended, warned, placed on academic or disciplinary probation, disciplined, expelled, or requested or advised to resign from any post-secondary school, college, university, professional school, or law school?
- Have you ever been arrested or otherwise charged formally or informally with a violation of the law? (You should not provide information about any criminal proceedings which you believe to have been sealed or expunged).
- Are any charges pending against you?
- Have you ever been or are you currently registered at another law school?

If the answer to any of the questions is in the affirmative, then a full written explanation must accompany the application. You will be prompted to include your statement within the application, or if you need additional space, you may include your statement via the Attachments section. If the conduct in question is related to discipline taken by a post-secondary school, college, university, professional school, or law school, then in addition to your explanatory statement, we must receive a separate explanatory statement from the institution's dean or authorized school official, providing information about the incident. Any applicable statement or letter must be sent to the law school directly from the institution, and not emailed, faxed, or included in the application. Candor is extremely important and appreciated by the Admissions Committee.

We recommend you familiarize yourself with the rules governing admission to the bar in the states where you intend to practice. You can obtain information about bar requirements by writing to the appropriate state board of bar examiners.

Ongoing Duty to Disclose

All candidates for admission have an ongoing duty to disclose material changes to their application especially as they relate to conduct matters (criminal or disciplinary) to the Dean of Admissions prior to enrollment. Candidates agree that providing inaccurate or misleading information on the admission application, or omitting information will be cause for an investigation of misconduct in the admissions process, rescission of any offer of admission, or for discipline, dismissal, or revocation of degree if discovered at a later date.

Application Fee Waivers

USC Gould School of Law will be offering fee waivers to ALL applicants through February 1, 2017. Please apply early to enjoy the benefit of an automatic application fee waiver. In the past, USC Gould has offered several types of application fee waivers. These included merit-based fee waivers, hardship/need-based fee waivers, Teach for America fee waivers, and waivers to USC undergraduates. Applicants who fall into any of these categories will receive the automatic fee waiver granted through February 1, 2017, however, if you apply following this priority deadline, fee waivers will NOT be granted.

Beginning February 2, 2017, the non-refundable application fee is \$75.00. Refunds will not be granted for applicants who fail to follow the application instructions.

Our Nondiscrimination Policy

USC Gould is firmly committed to a policy against discrimination based upon ethnicity, national origin, disability, race, religion, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity, or age.

Questions?

If you have questions about the admissions process, please call the Office of Admissions at 213.740.2523 or send an e-mail message to Admissions@law.usc.edu.

Application Type

Are you a first time applicant or a re-applicant to the USC Gould School of Law?

1st time applicant

Re-applicant

If a re-applicant, for what year did you previously apply for the fall semester?

What was your final admissions decision?

Admitted

Denied

Withdrawn Before Decision

Biographical

Prefix _____

Date of birth _____

First name _____

Place of birth: City _____

Middle name _____

Place of birth: Country _____

Last name _____

Place of birth: State/Province _____

Suffix _____

Gender _____

Previous (other) name _____

Preferred first name _____

LSAC account number _____

Contact Information

Current Address

Country _____

Current mailing address good until date _____

Street address--line 1 _____

Day phone _____

Street address--line 2 _____

Evening phone _____

Street address--line 3 _____

City _____

State/province _____

Zip/postal code _____

Contact Information continued

Permanent Address

Country _____

Street address--line 1 _____

Street address--line 2 _____

Street address--line 3 _____

City _____

State/province _____

Zip/postal code _____

Permanent mailing address good until date _____

Day phone _____

Evening phone _____

Other Contact Information

Primary e-mail address _____

Secondary e-mail address _____

Permanent e-mail address _____

Mobile phone _____

University of Southern California, Gould School of Law can send text messages to my mobile phone.

Yes

No

Demographics

Citizenship

Citizenship

Non-Resident Alien

US Citizen

US Permanent Resident

Country of citizenship _____

Visa type _____

Visa/SEVIS number _____

Permanent resident number _____

Permanent city _____

Permanent state/province _____

Permanent country _____

Demographics continued

Ethnicity

Are you Hispanic or Latino?

Yes

No

If you selected 'Yes' to the above question, select an ethnicity.

Central American

Cuban

Mexican

Mexican American

Other Hispanic

Other Hispanic/Latino

South American

What is your race? Select one or more races to indicate what you consider yourself to be.

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Australian

Aboriginal/Torres Strait Isl. Australian

American Indian or Alaska Native

Alaskan Native
Native

American Indian

American Indian/Alaskan

Asian

Bangladeshi

Chinese

Chinese American

East Indian

Filipino

Filipino American

Indian

Japanese

Japanese American

Korean

Korean American

Other Asian

Pakistani

South Asian

Thai

Vietnamese

Vietnamese American

Black or African American

Black/African American

Canadian Aboriginal

Canadian Aboriginal

Caucasian/White

White/Caucasian

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

Puerto Rican

Puerto Rican

Demographics continued

Consent

Decline to respond

Tribal Affiliation

Tribal affiliation or village name _____

Enrollment number (enrolled members only) _____

Military

Have you served or are you now serving on full-time, active US military duty?

Yes

No

Date of entrance (month/year) _____

Date of discharge (month/year) _____

Rank _____

Expected military reserve or National Guard status during law school

Branch _____

Discharge type _____

Have you ever been separated from any branch of the US armed forces under less than honorable conditions?

Yes

No

If you have been separated from any branch of the US armed forces under less than honorable conditions, explain the circumstances.

Standardized Testing

LSAT

Test Date

Test Score

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Conduct Information

In addition to a bar examination, there are character, fitness, and other qualifications for admission to the bar in every U.S. jurisdiction. Applicants are encouraged to determine the requirements for any jurisdiction in which they intend to seek admission by contacting the jurisdiction.

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you are required to submit an explanatory statement below. If you need additional space, please submit your explanatory statement via the Attachments section of the electronic application and indicate that in the box below.

Have you ever been dropped, suspended, warned, placed on academic or disciplinary probation, disciplined, expelled, or requested or advised to resign from any post-secondary school, college, university, professional school, or law school?

___ Yes

___ No

Family continued

Relationship to applicant

What dates did they attend the university?

Degree awarded

Do you have another relative who has attended USC Gould School of Law?

Yes

No

First (given) name

Middle name/initial

Last (family) name

Relationship to applicant

What dates did they attend the university?

Degree awarded

SAMPLE

Education

List ALL educational institutions attended.

Institution type High School Undergraduate Graduate Law Other Post Graduate

Institution name _____

Major _____

Country _____ Start date _____

State/Province _____ End date _____

City _____ Degree _____

GPA _____ Date degree granted _____

Rank _____

Institution type High School Undergraduate Graduate Law Other Post Graduate

Institution name _____

Major _____

Country _____ Start date _____

State/Province _____ End date _____

City _____ Degree _____

GPA _____ Date degree granted _____

Rank _____

Institution type High School Undergraduate Graduate Law Other Post Graduate

Institution name _____

Major _____

Country _____ Start date _____

State/Province _____ End date _____

City _____ Degree _____

GPA _____ Date degree granted _____

Rank _____

Education continued

Institution type High School Undergraduate Graduate Law Other Post Graduate

Institution name _____

Major _____

Country _____ Start date _____

State/Province _____ End date _____

City _____ Degree _____

GPA _____ Date degree granted _____

Rank _____

Has your education in college, university, or professional school been interrupted for one term or more for any reason?

Yes

No

If your education was interrupted, explain the circumstances.

Additional Information

Please select all areas of law that interest you:

Do you believe you were raised in an economically disadvantaged household?

Yes

No

Additional Information continued

An applicant who believes that his or her background or experience can contribute to USC Gould's goal of diversity and educational enrichment—and who wishes to have this considered in the admissions process—should provide written detailed information about his or her background or experience as part of the application. Providing such information is voluntary.

USC Gould is firmly committed to a policy against discrimination based upon ethnicity, national origin, disability, race, religion, political beliefs, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity, or age. The primary goal of the admissions process is to enroll students who demonstrate outstanding academic and professional promise and whose background and experience will enhance the diversity of the student body or the profession, or will enrich USC Gould's educational environment. USC Gould's admissions process is guided by the view that a student body that reflects the broad and rich diversity of our society provides a superior educational environment for all law students.

An applicant will be regarded as potentially contributing to student diversity if his or her background or experience would not ordinarily be well-represented in the student body or the profession. Examples of applicants' backgrounds or experiences, which may be considered for diversity purposes, include (but are not limited to) the following: an applicant who has struggled against prejudice, economic disadvantage, family or personal adversity, or other social hardships (perhaps as a result of disability, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or religious affiliation); an applicant who has lived in a foreign country or who spoke a language other than English at home; an applicant who possesses unusual career goals, employment history (perhaps military or law enforcement experience), or educational background (including graduate study); or an applicant who demonstrates unusual extracurricular achievement (including school or community service).

If you believe the above applies to your situation, please indicate whether you will submit a diversity statement (via the Attachments section) with your application.

Yes

No

Financial Information

All admitted students will be considered for merit scholarships shortly following admission. Merit scholarships do not require an additional application or statement.

USC Gould has two special application-based scholarship opportunities available, each requires you to complete a separate statement for application to each program. These scholarships are optional, but they do require that you submit an additional statement as application to the scholarship. Although each of these scholarships may have thematic elements, they both maintain the same stringent academic requirements as our general merit based scholarships. Applicants not meeting the general criteria for merit-based scholarships, will not be considered for these scholarship opportunities. Your application must be submitted and complete no later than the priority deadline of February 1, 2017 for consideration for these two special application-based scholarships. Please indicate the program(s) to which you will apply:

Financial Information continued

Frank Rothman Scholars Program

The program honors the late Frank Rothman '51, one of the nation's most respected sports and entertainment lawyers.

The benefits of being a Rothman Scholar are quite extraordinary:

- Full-tuition scholarship guaranteed for 3 years (estimated at \$180,000)
- \$2,000 stipend each year for 3 years
- Paid 1L summer fellowship at one of the top law firms in the world - Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom in Los Angeles

One Frank Rothman Scholar is selected each year. Selection criteria include strong academic indicators (LSAT and undergraduate cumulative gpa) combined with a specific interest in the areas of law to which Frank Rothman dedicated his life. Frank Rothman was known for his influence in the halls of corporate America as well as his spirit of always doing the very best he was capable of. Past recipients successfully conveyed the ideals of Frank Rothman via accomplishments such as running a successful business, inventing useful devices, engaging in cutting edge medical research, and publishing books and articles. Many have gone on to become successful corporate lawyers, business entrepreneurs, and judicial clerks. To learn more about the Rothman Scholars Program, please visit <http://www.law.usc.edu/how/jd/rothman/>.

Will you submit a statement as application for the Frank Rothman Scholars Program?

Yes

No

Public Interest Scholars Program

This program honors the commitment of both USC Gould and our students dedicated to working and serving the public interest.

The benefits of being a Public Interest Scholar include:

- Special public interest merit based scholarship
- Access to public interest certificate mentor opportunities
- Guaranteed public interest based summer employment after 1L year
- Guaranteed summer grant for 1L summer employment
- Opportunity to serve as a future mentor to subsequent groups of Public Interest Scholars

Public Interest Scholars are selected on the basis of merit and demonstrated commitment to public interest work. Selection criteria include strong academic indicators (LSAT score and undergraduate cumulative gpa) and significant achievements in the fields of public interest or government service. The committee will give priority to applicants with a history of full-time non-profit or public interest focused work.

Will you submit a statement as application for the Public Interest Scholars Program?

Yes

No

Certification

By submitting this application electronically, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct, and that all information on this form and submitted as part of this application is authentic, true, and complete to the best of my knowledge. If any of this information changes, particularly with regard to Conduct Information, prior to my fall 2017 enrollment, I will inform USC Gould School of Law immediately, and will update my application accordingly. I understand and agree that any inaccurate or misleading information, or omission will be cause for an investigation of misconduct in the admissions process; rescission of any offer of admission; or for discipline, dismissal, or revocation of degree if discovered at a later date. I acknowledge that, prior to enrollment, I will be required to provide official documentation that verifies my receipt of a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

Signature:

Date:

SAMPLE