

USC Progressive Degree Program

Program Eligibility and Application Instructions



A Progressive Degree is a highly individualized program that allows a student to begin work on a master's degree while completing the requirements for the bachelor's degree. Applications for Progressive Degree require multiple approvals from both the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Program Eligibility

- Applicants to the progressive degree program must have completed 64 units since high school graduation and must submit their completed application prior to the completion of 96 units of course work. (AP units, IB units, and course work taken prior to high school graduation are excluded).
- Applicants are not required to submit GRE or other graduate entrance exam scores but are expected to have at least a 3.0 GPA at the time of application.

Application Requirements

- Students must complete all necessary sections on the *Application for Admission to a Progressive Master's Program* form. Admission must be approved by program/department chair and the dean of the student's undergraduate major, and by the program/department chair and the dean of the master's degree program at USC. All approved signatures must be present on the completed application form.
- Students must complete a *Progressive Degree Program Proposed Course Plan* form as part of the application process. This is necessary to determine how future terms of registration will apply to remaining undergraduate and graduate degree requirements. Course work taken to fulfill degree requirements will be listed here and will be indicated as satisfying undergraduate requirements or graduate requirements.
- Applicants must provide two letters of recommendation from USC faculty supporting their admission to a progressive master's degree; at least one from a faculty member in the student's bachelor's degree major.

Instructions to Students and Departments:

1. Program Selection

Students identify a master's degree that is of interest and consult with the Graduate Advisor or Admissions Officer of the program to determine if the Progressive Degree option is available. Offering the Progressive Degree option is solely at the discretion of the department or school offering the master's program.

The master's program need not be from the same department as the student's undergraduate major, but typically the two programs are at least loosely related. Students may also pursue a master's program based on an associated minor program at the undergraduate level.

2. Proposed Course Plan

The Progressive Degree Program application requires a Proposed Course Plan that incorporates all of the remaining requirements for the student's undergraduate major(s) and minor(s), and the intended master's program. The Proposed Course Plan should be constructed in consultation with advisors for both the undergraduate and graduate programs. Required coursework for the master's program may be *reduced* by up to one-third, as appropriate. However, all coursework for the undergraduate program(s) must be completed in full.

3. Letters of Recommendation

Applicants must provide two letters of recommendation from USC faculty supporting their admission to a progressive master's degree; at least one from a faculty member in the student's bachelor's degree major.

4. Undergraduate Approvals

The Application for Admission to Progressive Master's Program form and the Proposed Course Plan form each require signed approval from:

- a. The student's current undergraduate department chair
- b. The student's current undergraduate program dean

5. Graduate Approvals

The Application for Admission to Progressive Master's Program form and the Proposed Course Plan form each require signed approval from:

- a. The student's proposed master's program department chair
- b. The student's proposed master's program dean

6. Application Submission

Students should submit their complete application to the office of the master's program in which they hope to enroll. If final approval is granted by the master's program, the graduate program department will submit a copy of the approved Application for Admission and Proposed Course Plan to the Degree Progress department for final review, opening of the Program of Study on the student's record, and designation as a Progressive Master's student.

If the graduate program department determines not to admit the student to their program, the department will be responsible for communicating that decision to the student and retaining the application for their own records. Denied applications should not be forwarded to Degree Progress.

7. Recorded on USC Record (if admitted)

The Master's department should forward the approved Application for Admission and Proposed Course Plan to: **Degree Progress, JHH 010, MC 0912**

Degree Progress will retain a copy of the Proposed Course Plan and the Application for Admission through graduation, and the student's master's program should retain the original application in the student's file.

8. Course Plan Changes

If the student's course plan needs to be changed at any point during the Progressive Degree Program, an updated Proposed Course Plan must be submitted to Degree Progress with all appropriate signatures. Updates to the STARS report cannot be completed without an approved revised course plan.

Program Requirements

1. Progressive degree program students must fulfill all specified degree requirements for both the bachelor's degree and the master's degree. The total number of units for the master's degree, however, may be reduced by a maximum of 1/3. A minimum of 2/3 of the units required for the master's degree must be at or above the 500-level.
2. Progressive degree students are classified as undergraduate students, until they attain one of the following conditions, *whichever comes first*:
 - a. up to and including the semester they complete 144 units *;
 - b. their first bachelor's degree is conferred; or
 - c. they receive a research or teaching assistant award.

* Transfer units and all units completed at USC, including both undergraduate- and graduate-level course work, will be counted toward the 144-unit limit. Transfer course work not being applied as either subject-specific requirements or free electives toward the bachelor's degree may increase the 144-unit threshold which determines

when a student transitions from undergraduate status to graduate status.

3. Progressive degree program students will be subject to undergraduate academic progress standards while in undergraduate status and master's academic progress while in graduate status.
4. While classified as undergraduates, students are assessed the undergraduate tuition rate, and their enrollment status and financial aid eligibility are determined by undergraduate standards. Undergraduate-level progressive degree students maintain their eligibility for Federal Pell Grants, Federal SEOG Grants, Cal Grants, Direct Subsidized and Unsubsidized Loans, Direct Parent PLUS Loans, and any applicable eligibility for USC Merit Scholarships or USC University Grants, as long as they are enrolled in courses that are required for, or that can be applied as an eligible elective credit toward, their undergraduate degree. The Financial Aid Office relies on the Registrar's determination of the applicability of a course to a degree program and the completion of the bachelor's degree.
5. While classified as graduate students, progressive degree students are assessed the graduate tuition rate, and their enrollment status and financial aid eligibility are determined by graduate standards. Graduate students are not eligible for federal, state, or university need-based grants. Graduate-level progressive degree students are eligible to borrow Direct Unsubsidized Loans, up to the maximum yearly amounts established for graduate students, and Direct Graduate PLUS Loans.
6. The bachelor's degree may be awarded separately, but the master's degree will not be awarded before the undergraduate degree.
7. The time limit for completing a progressive degree program is 12 semesters.
8. Students may complete only one master's degree as part of the progressive degree program.



USC Progressive Degree Program Application for Admission to Progressive Master's Program

Submit this application to the graduate department to which you are applying with the following: 1) Proposed Course Plan; 2) Two letters of recommendation; and 3) a current USC STARS report. Check with the department for additional requirements. Failure to comply with these instructions will delay processing of your application.

To be completed by the Student

Printed name of student (Last)	(First)	(Middle)
USC ID Number	Email address	Phone Number
GPA	Units Completed	Current Major/Minor

Proposed Master's Program

Degree: M.A. M.S. Other _____ Proposed Admit Semester/Year: _____

Department/School: _____ Expected Graduate Semester/Year: _____

I hereby apply for admission to the Progressive Master's Degree. My Proposed Course Plan is attached and has been approved by the Chairs and Deans of the respective departments/schools.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by the Undergraduate Program

Major Department/School	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommended
Admission to Progressive Master's Degree		
Dean's Signature	Printed Name	Date
Second Major Department/School (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/> Recommended	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Recommended
Admission to Progressive Master's Degree		
Second Major Dean's Signature	Printed Name	Date

To be completed by the Master's Program

Approved to Begin (Semester/Year) _____ Denied Date of Approval/Denial _____

Post code: _____ Master's Program Name: _____

The Proposed Course Plan has been approved and a copy is on file in the student's master's program department.

Master's Program Chair's Signature	Printed Name	Date
Master's Program Dean's Signature	Printed Name	Date

**The department should forward the approved Application for Admission and Proposed Course Plan to:
Degree Progress, JHH 010, MC 0912**



USC Progressive Degree Program Proposed Course Plan

Enter all remaining requirements for the bachelor's degree and all master's degree requirements chosen in consultation with the graduate advisor. This information will be used to create your master's program STARS report if your application is accepted. In addition to the master's courses identified on the course plan, all other requirements for Master's degree completion must be satisfied/waived on the STARS report.

(Please type or print)

Printed name of student (Last) (First) (Middle)

USC ID Number Email address Phone Number

Bachelor's Program Master's Program

- This is the original course plan submitted with the program application This is a REVISED course plan for an existing approved program
- List courses and units to be taken to fulfill degree requirements. ***Exact*** courses must be listed for each master's program requirement.
 - Begin with the current semester. If this is a revised course plan, begin with the term in which the first master's course was or will be completed.
 - Check "UG" for courses to be taken to fulfill bachelor's requirements; check "GR" for courses to be taken for the master's degree.
Only ONE box (UG or GR) should be checked for each course.

Semester/Year	Dept / Course #	UG	GR	Course Title	Units
Total Units					

Semester/Year	Dept / Course #	UG	GR	Course Title	Units
Total Units					

Semester/Year	Dept / Course #	UG	GR	Course Title	Units
Total Units					

Semester/Year	Dept / Course #	UG	GR	Course Title	Units
Total Units					

Proposed Course Plan (continued)

Semester/Year	Dept / Course #	UG	GR	Course Title	Units
				Total Units	

Semester/Year	Dept / Course #	UG	GR	Course Title	Units
				Total Units	

Total units *required* for the master's program: _____

Semester/Year in which 144 units will be completed: _____

Total units *to be completed* in the master's program: _____

Total semesters of registration after completion of 144 units: _____

**The Proposed Course Plan must be approved by the student, and by
the Chairs and Deans of *both* the Undergraduate and Master's Departments**

Course Plan Approval

Student's Signature

Date

To be completed by the Undergraduate Program

Undergraduate Department Chair's Signature

Printed Name

Date

Undergraduate Department Dean's Signature

Printed Name

Date

To be completed by the Master's Program

Master's Program Chair's Signature

Printed Name

Date

Master's Program Dean's Signature

Printed Name

Date

USC Progressive Degree Program Recommendation Form



Instructions for student: Fill in the top portion of this form and present it to your recommender.

Instructions for faculty: Return this form to the applicant in a sealed envelope with your signature across the seal, or to the graduate admission administrator in the department to which the student is applying.

(Please type or print)

Printed name of student (Last)

(First)

(Middle)

Department to which you are applying

Email address

I waive my right to inspect the contents of the following recommendation.

I do NOT waive my right to inspect the contents of the following recommendation.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Recommender Section: Please write candidly about the student's qualifications and potential to pursue advanced study in the field specified.

Admission to Progressive Degree Program is:

Strongly recommended

Recommended

Recommended with reservations

Not recommended

Signature

Printed Name

Date

USC Progressive Degree Program Recommendation Form



Instructions for student: Fill in the top portion of this form and present it to your recommender.

Instructions for faculty: Return this form to the applicant in a sealed envelope with your signature across the seal, or to the graduate admission administrator in the department to which the student is applying.

(Please type or print)

Printed name of student (Last)

(First)

(Middle)

Department to which you are applying

Email address

I waive my right to inspect the contents of the following recommendation.

I do NOT waive my right to inspect the contents of the following recommendation.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Recommender Section: Please write candidly about the student's qualifications and potential to pursue advanced study in the field specified.

Admission to Progressive Degree Program is:

Strongly recommended

Recommended

Recommended with reservations

Not recommended

Signature

Printed Name

Date