

## Section 4

### Graduate Admissions

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#### Office of Graduate Admissions

University of South Florida  
Office of Graduate Admissions  
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#### University Admissions Criteria and Policies

USF Regulation USF3-018: Admission to the University of South Florida  
<http://usfweb2.usf.edu/usfgc/ogc%20web/currentreg.htm>

**Statement of Principles**

In graduate admission decisions, multiple sources of information should be used to ensure fairness, promote diversity and balance the limitations of any single measure of knowledge, skills, or abilities. The sources may include: undergraduate grade point average, letters of recommendation, personal statements, samples of academic work, portfolios, auditions, professional experience related to proposed graduate study, as well as nationally known, standardized test scores. It is the responsibility of each graduate program to select admissions criteria that best predict success in their specific field and to determine the weight given to each measure.

None of the sources of information, particularly standardized test scores, should be used in isolation nor should such scores be used in combination or separately to establish minimum or “cut off” scores. Program specific guidelines for the use of standardized test scores should be developed based on the experience of a given department with its pool of applicants.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the GRE “Guide to the Use of Scores” 2003-2003

## Admission Requirements

Each applicant to a graduate program at the University of South Florida is required to meet the following minimum requirements:

1. An applicant must have **one** of the following:
  - a. A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution and satisfying at least one of the following criteria:
    - i. "B" average or better in all work attempted while registered as an undergraduate student working for a degree, or
    - ii. "B" or better average in all work attempted while registered as an upper division undergraduate student working for a baccalaureate degree.
  - b. A bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution and a previous graduate degree from a regionally accredited institution.
  - c. The equivalent bachelors and/or graduate degrees from a foreign institution.
2. Submission of a GRE/GMAT score is required unless specifically waived by the University.
3. All specific and additional requirements of the graduate program to which admission is sought (including requirements to submit standardized test scores) consistent with the above Statement of Principles.

The Program Chair and College Dean must approve any exceptions to these requirements with information copies to the Graduate School.

### **Application Process (How it works)**

Graduate applicants are urged to submit accurate and complete information as early as possible. Applications and supporting documents received after the application deadline will be processed for the next available term.

The Graduate Admissions Office and the Graduate Program review your application for admission to the Graduate School. Once the graduate program determines your eligibility for its graduate program they will forward their decision to the Graduate Admissions Office which in turn will issue the official decision. Please note if the graduate program is a Direct Receipt Program ([http://www.grad.usf.edu/newsite/direct\\_receipt.asp](http://www.grad.usf.edu/newsite/direct_receipt.asp)). For Direct Receipt Programs application materials should be sent directly to the program (NOT to the Office of Graduate Admissions.) All inquiries regarding application status should also be directed to the program. If you are a foreign graduate applicant, the International Services Office (<http://web.usf.edu/iac/iss/prospect.html>) will evaluate your financial statement after you are admitted to determine your eligibility for a student visa. Each of these offices may request additional documents from you to make a decision.

For a complete list of graduate programs and deadline dates please visit the Graduate School website at <http://www.grad.usf.edu/programs/programs.asp>

## Admission Application Deadlines

The University deadlines for admission follow below. **Colleges and programs may have earlier deadlines or may continue to process applications after the deadline if space exists within the program.** Admission applications and supporting materials must be received by the program and university deadlines as posted in the Graduate Catalog and online at: <http://www.grad.usf.edu/programs/programs.asp> *Note: Professional programs may have deadlines later than the University deadline if approved by Graduate Council.*

### Domestic Application Deadlines

For spring 2010 Admission	October 15, 2009
For summer 2010 Admission	February 15, 2010
For fall 2010 Admission	February 15, 2010
For fall 2010 Admission to Professional Programs	June 1, 2010

### International Application Deadlines

#### Living inside the United States

For spring 2010 Admission	refer to Domestic Deadlines
For summer 2010 Admission	refer to Domestic Deadlines
For fall 2010 Admission	refer to Domestic Deadlines

#### Living outside the United States

For spring 2010 Admission	June 1, 2009
For summer 2010 Admission	January 2, 2010
For fall 2010 Admission	January 2, 2010

Foreign applicants who are outside the US are required to apply for a visa. Depending on what country this may take a few months so the deadlines for these international applicants are early. Foreign applicants who are in the US are currently on a visa and may use the domestic application deadline dates.

### Application Checklist (To-Do-List)

To assist you in the admissions process the following is your *To-Do-List*.

1. Graduate Application
2. Application Fee
3. Transcripts (including evaluations)
4. Test Scores
5. Conduct Clearance Policy (Legal Disclosure Statement)
6. Residency Policy

#### 1. Graduate Application:

All graduate applications to USF must be submitted online through FACTS.org ([http://www.grad.usf.edu/newsite/admissions/grad\\_app.asp](http://www.grad.usf.edu/newsite/admissions/grad_app.asp))

#### 2. Application Fee:

All applicants are required to submit an application fee of **\$30.00** for **EACH** graduate program (USF Regulation USF4-0107: Special Fees, Fines and Penalties <http://usfweb2.usf.edu/usfgc/ogc%20web/currentreg.htm> If you attended USF as a former degree seeking student or non-degree seeking student then you will also be required to submit the application fee. Applicants have the option to pay their application fee by credit card

(Discover, Master Card, Visa) or by E-Check (personal checking/savings account) through FACTS.org Graduate Online Application. **ALL APPLICATION FEES SUBMITTED ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.**

□ **3. Transcripts:**

One (1) official transcript from all institutions of higher learning where the applicant has earned a degree is required, but applicants may provide unofficial copies of transcripts to expedite the processing of their applications. Any admissions granted using unofficial transcripts **will not** be finalized until official transcripts are received in a sealed envelope from the Office of the Registrar where they attended. All transcripts must be in English; it is the applicant's responsibility to have transcripts translated and evaluated\* before submitting them as part of their graduate application packet. If you are applying while still completing an undergraduate degree, you must submit transcripts of at least six (6) semesters of completed undergraduate work. Final transcripts showing the award of a bachelor's degree will be required if an applicant is admitted and enrolls. Do not submit USF transcripts if you have attended as a USF degree-seeking student. \*All foreign transcripts require a **course by course** evaluation from a foreign transcript evaluation service. Refer to the Graduate Admissions' website for a list of evaluation services (<http://admissions.grad.usf.edu/>).

□ **4. Test Scores**

**GRE (Graduate Record Examination):** <http://www.gre.org>

All applicants to programs requiring the GRE\* must submit GRE test scores earned within five (5) years of the desired term of entry. Official scores must be submitted to USF directly from the Educational Testing Service, but applicants may provide unofficial copies of their test scores to expedite the processing of their applications. Any admission granted using unofficial scores will not be finalized until official scores from ETS are received. The institution code for USF is 5828 and applies to all tests administered by ETS.

\*The GRE requirement may be waived at the discretion of individual graduate programs. Please contact your program of interest directly for additional information.

**GMAT (Graduate Management Aptitude Test):** <http://www.gmac.com>

Applicants to programs in the College of Business should submit GMAT\*\* scores earned within five (5) years of the desired term of entry. Official scores must be submitted to USF directly from the Pearson VUE Testing Service, but applicants may provide unofficial copies of their test scores to expedite the processing of their applications. Any admission granted using unofficial scores will not be finalized until official scores from Pearson VUE are received. The following are the institution codes for USF administered by Pearson VUE.

VP9-M4-23	Ph.D. in Business Administration
VP9-M4-04	Executive M.B.A.
VP9-M4-97	M.B.A., Full Time
VP9-M4-80	M.B.A., Part Time
VP9-M4-25	M.B.A., USF St. Petersburg
VP9-M4-18	Masters in Accountancy
VP9-M4-67	M.A. in Economics
VP9-M4-86	M.S. in Finance
VP9-M4-17	M.S. in Management
VP9-M4-66	M.S. in Management Information Systems
VP9-M4-40	M.S.M. in Marketing
VP9-M4-48	M.S. in Entrepreneur in Applied Technology
VP9-4J-76	Health Administration, College of Public Health

\*\*Applicants may not have to submit a GMAT if you have taken the GRE. Please contact your program of interest directly for additional information.

**TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language):** <http://www.toefl.org>

Applicants whose native language is not English or who have not earned a degree in the United States must also submit TOEFL scores earned within two (2) years of the desired term of entry. A minimum total score of 79 on the internet-based test, 213 on the computer-based test, or 550 on the paper-based test are required. Applications submitted with TOEFL scores that do not meet the minimum requirements will be denied with no exceptions. The TOEFL requirement may be waived if the applicant meets one of the following conditions:

- Has scored 500 or higher on the GRE Verbal Test
- Has earned a college degree at a U.S. institution of higher learning
- Has earned a college degree from an institution whose language of instruction is English (must be noted on the transcript).
- Has scored 6.5 on International English Language Testing System (IELTS) <http://www.ielts.org/>

☐ **5. Conduct Clearance Policy (Legal Disclosure Statement):**

All graduate applicants are required to answer the Conduct Clearance questions of the graduate application. The applicant will not be notified of the admission decision until answers to the two questions have been received and cleared by the Vice President of Student Affairs or his/her designee (Associate Dean of Students), if warranted.

☐ **6. Residency Policy:**

Applicants desiring classification as Florida residents for tuition paying purposes must sign and complete the Florida Residents section of the Florida Residency Classification page of the Graduate Application. **Incomplete or unsigned forms will be classified as non-Florida residents.** The Office of Graduate Admissions will classify applicants as Florida residents if they have provided documentation that verifies they began living in Florida at least twelve months prior to the first day of classes of their admitted term of entry. Additional documentation other than what is required may be requested in some cases. All documentation is subject to verification. The student is responsible for checking their residency classification when admitted to the University of South Florida. The residency classification is noted on the official acceptance letter. If the student feels that their initial classification is in error, they have until the last day of the term to contact the appropriate admissions office and request a re-evaluation. After the student has completed their first semester of study they may seek to have their residency reconsidered. They may submit a Request for Reclassification Form with the Office of the Registrar. This must be filed by the 5th day of classes for the term being requested.

**Independent Student:**

A student who meets any one of the following criteria shall be classified as an independent student for the determination of residency for tuition purposes:

1. The student is 24 years of age or older by the first day of classes of the term for which residency status is sought at a Florida institution;
2. The student is married;
3. The student has children who receive more than half of their support from the student;
4. The student has other dependents who live with and receive more than half of their support from the student;
5. The student is a veteran of the United States Armed Forces or is currently serving on active duty in the United States Armed Forces for purposes other than training;
6. Both of the student's parents are deceased or the student is or was (until age 18) a ward/dependent of the court;
7. The student is working on a master's or doctoral degree during the term for which residency status is sought at a Florida institution; or
8. The student is classified as an independent by the financial aid office at the institution.

Evidence that the student meets one of these criteria will be requested by the higher education institution.

Florida residency statutes require at least two documents, dated 12 months prior to the first day of class for the entry term sought, to validate a claim for Florida residency for tuition purposes. Documents are classified in two tiers – at least one of the required documents must be from the First Tier.

**FIRST TIER DOCUMENTATION** (at least one of the two documents submitted must be from this list)

1. Florida Driver's License (driver's licenses from other states must be relinquished) **or** a State of Florida ID card (if there is no evidence of ties to another state)
2. Florida Voter's Registration card
3. Florida Vehicle Registration (proof of previous registration can be obtained from the local tag office)
4. Declaration of Domicile in Florida (12 months from the date the document was sworn and subscribed as noted by the Clerk of the Circuit Court)
5. Proof of purchase of a permanent home in Florida that is occupied as a primary residence of the claimant
6. Proof of permanent full-time employment in Florida (one or more jobs for at least 30 hours per week for a 12-month period – letter from employer on official letterhead required)
7. Benefit histories from Florida agencies or public assistance programs

**SECOND TIER DOCUMENTATION** (may be used in conjunction with one document from First Tier)

1. Florida professional or occupational license
2. Florida incorporation
3. Proof of membership in Florida-based charitable or professional organizations
4. Utility bills and proof of 12 consecutive months of payments
5. Lease agreement and proof of 12 consecutive months of payments
6. State or court documents evidencing legal ties to Florida

**Application Documents Access/Forward/Return Policy**

No application, test scores, transcripts, letters of recommendations, or other documents submitted with the application packet will be returned to the applicant or forwarded to another institution/third party. The Office of Graduate Admissions applicant file is not to be released to the applicant or other third parties. Requests, subpoenas, or court orders are to be forwarded to the Office of the General Counsel after review by the Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions. Applicants once admitted and enrolled during the term of admission may request access to their student file at the Office of the Registrar. Letters of Recommendation that the applicant has waived the right to view (indicated on Request for Recommendation Form) are not to be given, copied or viewed by the applicant or third parties. Requests for degree/enrollment verification information are referred to the Office of the Registrar.

The Office of Graduate Admissions graduate application files may be copied and released to USF staff conducting legitimate University business.

**Additional Requirements of Programs** (If applicable)

Many programs require additional application materials such as resumes, writing samples, or letters of recommendation. These items may be sent as part of the overall graduate application packet or directly to the appropriate department/program. These materials will be forwarded to the appropriate program if sent with the

application packet but DO NOT become part of the applicant's permanent file; therefore, the Office of Graduate Admissions does not track them.

**Final Admission Criteria**

Applicants accepted for admissions whose official documents (transcripts and/or test scores) have been received by the Office of Graduate Admissions are admitted as "Final." The admission file is complete.

**Provisional Admission Criteria**

Applicants accepted for admission whose official documents (transcripts and/or test scores) have not been received by the Office of Graduate Admissions are admitted provisionally pending receipt of these missing items. The required transcripts and/or test scores must be received before a third semester registration is permitted. If the missing documents are not provided by the end of the second semester of attendance, the Office of Graduate Admissions will place a registration hold on the student's file.

**Exception Admission Criteria**

The University may admit up to 10% of new enrollees as exceptions to the Board of Trustees minimum requirements. To be considered for an exception, a student should present evidence that their academic preparation was such that it might account for less than the minimal University and/or program requirements, and evidence of potential for academic success such as excellent letters of recommendation from trusted academicians, performance in graduate courses taken as a post-bachelor's student, professional experience in his/her discipline for a period of time, etc. Each request for a 10% exception must include a statement describing the special circumstances of the applicant. It is the discretion of the program and college to accept exception application requests.

**Conditional Admission Criteria**

A program and/or college may admit students conditionally upon satisfaction of requirements separate from University minimum requirements. These conditions may include attendance in specific core or remedial courses and/or required earned GPA of 3.00 for those courses. Failure to satisfy those conditions by the deadline established by the program will result in academic dismissal from the program. The College/graduate program will submit a [Dismissal Form](#) to the Graduate School.

**Deferment of Admission Request**

A student's acceptance is granted for that semester and the particular program specified in the official acceptance notification. The student must validate that acceptance by enrolling for that semester. Students who fail to validate their admission may contact the Graduate Program Director and request a Deferment of Admission. This request must be made in writing within 12 months of the initial requested entry date. If a request for Deferment of Admission is not received in the specified time, a new application and fee must be submitted. Deferment requests must also be received no later than the program or University application deadline for the semester desired, whichever is earlier. Students who were admitted provisionally upon receipt of official test scores and/or transcripts must supply those missing items prior to having their deferment decision processed by the Office of Graduate Admissions. International students must also provide a new financial statement dated no earlier than 6 months before the requested date of entry.

**Update of Admission Request**

If admission has not been granted because of a late application or missing credentials, the student must request that the Office of Graduate Admissions update the application for a future semester and specify the new enrollment date. This request must be made in writing within 12 months of the initial requested entry date and must be received no later than the program or University application deadline for the semester desired, whichever is earlier. Applications are held for only 12 months. If a request for change in entry date is not received in the specified time, a new application and fee must be submitted. The Office of Graduate Admissions will not process any update requests without first receiving all official test scores and/or transcripts.

**Denial of Admission / Appeal for Reconsideration Criteria**

Applicants denied admission will be given timely notice by email or in writing. Denied applicants who meet the minimum standards may write the Graduate Program Director of the program to which they applied within 30 days of the date of denial to request reconsideration. The request should present additional evidence of potential for academic success at USF and contain reasons why reconsideration is warranted. Applicants denied admission to a degree-seeking program are eligible to enroll as special (non-degree seeking) students. Non-degree seeking applications must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar.

**Readmission Policy**

A graduate student who is not registered and enrolled for a minimum of six (6) credits in a 12 month period is automatically placed in non-degree seeking (i.e. inactive) status. Students must be readmitted to the degree program to continue their studies. Readmission is at the discretion of the program and is not guaranteed.

Eligibility for readmission:

- Students who have been Academically Dismissed from the University for Academic Dishonesty may not apply to *any* graduate program at USF.
- Deadlines: The readmission application and all supporting materials must be submitted by the application deadline.

Additional Requirements:

- **Graduate Application:** In order to be considered for readmission, students must submit a new graduate application, application fee, and any required supporting materials.
- **Test Scores:** The Department may require new Test scores (GRE/GMAT/TOEFL) and transcripts.
- **Catalog Year:** students who are readmitted must meet the degree requirements and policies in the Graduate Catalog in effect at the time of readmission.
- **Prior Coursework taken at USF:** coursework taken at USF prior to readmission may be accepted toward the degree requirements at the discretion of the Department. However, all coursework taken when previously enrolled as a graduate student is included in the overall GPA. Refer to the Time Limit Policy for time limits on coursework applied toward the degree. Students who completed required coursework and were previously in doctoral candidacy do not have to retake courses older than eight years unless determined by the program. Students may be required to take new coursework at the program's discretion. The decision to accept courses previously transferred to USF and applied toward the degree is at the discretion of the program. There is no time limitation for waived hours from a completed master's degree used toward a doctoral degree.
- **Enrollment:** Students must enroll for the semester in which their readmission is effective.
- **Doctoral Candidacy:** Students who are readmitted to a doctoral program who were previously admitted to doctoral candidacy may retain their candidacy status at the discretion of the Department, College, and Graduate School. Students must file an approved request for Readmission to Doctoral Candidacy Form through Graduate School procedures. Once approved, the Candidacy date is effective as of the semester of readmission.
- **Dissertation Hours:** Students must enroll for two hours of dissertation per the enrollment policy, plus an additional three dissertation hours for a total of five dissertation hours in their first semester. Programs may require additional hours.

The Readmission policy does NOT apply to inactive students wishing to enroll in a program other than the original admitting program. These students must submit an application for the new program of interest. Transcripts of any work completed while not attending USF may be required.

**Change of Program Request**

Change of Program Request will NOT be considered for graduate students in their first semester of study. Only a continuing graduate student enrolled for study in a particular program who wishes to change to another program at the same or lower level must complete the Change of Program Request. It is up to the discretion of the student's original program to determine if a Change of Program is appropriate and will be granted. Students may obtain the form at [www.grad.usf.edu](http://www.grad.usf.edu). This form must be signed both by the current program and the new program, after which it must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval. If approved by the Graduate School, the change of program form is then sent to the Registrar for processing. **NOTE:** Some programs may require another application to be submitted because the Change of Program Request Form does not contain sufficient information for them to make a decision. You should check with the new program before completing any paperwork.

**Students with Disabilities Policy**

Students with disabilities apply for admission under the same guidelines as other students. Applicants believing that a disability has had an impact on grades, course choice, or standardized admission test scores, should request consideration of this during the admissions process. Students requesting substitution of departmental guidelines will need to contact the appropriate department chairperson. Please submit supporting documentation when requesting a disability exception. Students bear the responsibility for providing documentation of their disabilities. The University reviews documentation and determines if students are eligible for services and accommodations because of disabilities. The Office of Student Disability Services is charged with the task of determining eligibility. Accommodations and services are not provided on a retroactive basis. Approval must be given prior to receiving services or accommodations. The process begins when students provide documentation of disability and meet with a coordinator in the Office of Student Disability Services to request in writing services and accommodations. Any faculty members or students who have questions about this process are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Disability Services at (813) 974-4309 or visit the website at <http://www.sds.usf.edu/>