Viterbi Admission & Student Engagement (VASE)
PhD Orientation

August 6th, 2020
Agenda

• Welcome to USC
• Important Dates & Deadlines
• General Degree Requirements
• Enrollment Status
• Funding and Support
• Screening Exam and Qualifying Exam
• Defense of Dissertation
• Additional Important Links and Resources
• Additional Information and Helpful Tips
• Getting Involved
WELCOME TO VITERBI!

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Session Recording Notice

This session will be recorded and posted this evening. Students who have additional questions or is watching this recorded session can join us tomorrow, August 7th from 6AM to 8AM (PST) at:

https://usc.zoom.us/s/286603721
Departmental Orientation Sessions

- **AME** - Thursday, August 13\(^{\text{th}}\) 5-6PM (PST)
- **ASTE** - individual appointments
- **BME** - hosted in June 26\(^{\text{th}}\), can reach out to advisor if there are additional questions
- **CEE** - the department will reach out
- **CSCI** - individual appointments and first day of classes in CSCI 697
- **ECE** – Tuesday, August 11\(^{\text{th}}\) 7:30PM (PST)
- **ISE** - the department will reach out
- **MFD** - Thursday, August 6\(^{\text{th}}\) 1-2PM (PST) and Friday, August 7\(^{\text{th}}\) 10-11AM (PST)
UNIVERSITY CALENDAR – FALL 2020

Aug 21  Last day to register and settle without late fee
Aug 17  Fall semester classes begin for undergraduate courses
Aug 24  Fall semester classes begin for graduate courses
Sept 7  Labor Day, university holiday
Sept 3/11 Last day to drop a class without a mark of “W”
Sept 3/11 Last day to register and add classes
Nov 13    Last day to drop a course with a mark of “W” on the transcript

Nov 24    Fall semester classes end

Nov 25-29 Thanksgiving Recess

Nov 30 -1 Study days

Dec 2-9    Final examinations
General Degree Requirements

• Please check in with your department academic advisor and faculty advisor for major requirements within your department

• Satisfactory completion of at least 60 units of approved graduate level course work with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0

• Graduate students are expected to make regular progress toward their degrees as defined by the faculty of their respective departments and within the time limits allowed. Graduate students' progress and performance are reviewed each semester through the PhD Program Progress

• All courses applied toward the degree must be courses accepted by the Graduate School. Courses below the 400 level cannot be taken for credit towards any graduate degree.

• All course work must be approved by faculty advisors and department advisors. Please note some courses will not count towards your full time status (i.e. courses unrelated to your major/degree)
Enrollment Status

• All Ph.D. Students must remain enrolled full time to receive funding through a fellowship or graduate assistantship. Full time enrollment is six (6) units during each Fall and Spring semester or courses i.e. 794 series Doctoral Dissertation and GRSC 800 Studies for the Qualifying Exam fulfill that provides full time enrollment status

• All Ph.D. students are required to be enrolled in coursework counting towards their degree every Fall and Spring term, from the beginning through the end of the Ph.D. Summer enrollment is not required unless summer is your first semester

• Upon passing the qualifying exam, the student must enroll in the 794 series continuously until the dissertation has been successfully uploaded. Failure to remain in continuous enrollment may result in the delay of the degree.

• Courses may not be taken for audit or pass/no pass towards your degree
Funding and Support

- Viterbi students are typically funded through a fellowship, research assistantship, teaching assistantship, or outside/government funding.

- Your Multi-Year Funding Offer (MYFO) details your funding package.

- Please note that fellowships and graduate assistantships are paid on different cycle:
  - Fellowships are paid monthly from August 2020 through July 2021.
  - RA/TAships are paid through payroll based on the payroll calendar. i.e. fall 2020 is paid August 15th to December 31st; spring 2021 is paid from January 1st to May 15th.
  - Plan ahead when coming off fellowship and transitioning to RA/TAship.

- All of your funding packets will cover:
  - Health Insurance
  - Dental insurance
  - Health Center Fee Access

- Students on fellowships will also have the following covered:
  - Computer Access Fee Waiver
  - Any additional fees that your fellowship pays will be outlined in your offer letter.
Funding Offer for Incoming PhD Students, 2018-2019

Name: [Redacted]
Award: Biomedical Engineering
Total Offered: [Redacted] 4 years
Stipend: $32,000

Funding Details:
1. Academic-year(s) Fellowship support - the Graduate School
2. Academic-year(s) Teaching or Research Assistant from the PhD Program or School
3. Year(s) of Summer support - Teaching or Research Assistant from the PhD Program or School
4. Year(s) of Travel support - the Graduate School
Payment of up to 35 units of tuition to be used for courses counting towards the PhD degree

My health and medical insurance and student health service fee

I understand that holding this award is contingent upon full-time enrollment toward the PhD in the program listed above at the University of Southern California, and that continuation of the award depends upon superior academic performance and timely progress towards my PhD degree.

I understand that I must use my year(s) of fellowships support within the duration of the package described above.

I understand that I am expected to devote myself to full-time study towards my PhD degree and will not undertake employment or other time-consuming commitments during the academic year.

I understand that receiving this award is contingent upon satisfactory completion and verification of any academic work I have in progress, including verification of my application materials and Graduate Record Examination results, and if applicable, TOEFL or IELTS scores.

I understand that by accepting this award my eligibility for other University-administered assistance, such as Financial Aid forms, may change.

I understand that I must acknowledge the fellowship for any research performed during the tenure of the award in publications, whether copyrighted or not.

I understand that, in accordance with the Council of Graduate Schools' resolution, acceptance given on or after April 15 commits the student to not accept any other offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution that made the first offer. I understand that this offer supersedes any prior offers from USC.
Funding Offer for Incoming PhD Students, 2018-2019

Name: 
Program: Biomedical Engineering
Award: Viertel School of Engineering/Graduate School Fellowship for Incoming Students
Total Offered: 4 years
Stipend: $32,000

Funding Details:
1. Academic year(s) fellowship support - the Graduate School
2. Academic year(s) Teaching or Research Assistant from the PhD Program or School
3. Year(s) of Summer support - Teaching or Research Assistant from the PhD Program or School
4. Payment of up to 20 units ability to be used for courses required towards the PhD degree

Disclaimer: The above are examples and the actual funding offered is subject to availability.

I understand that holding this award is contingent upon full-time enrollment toward the PhD in the program listed above at the University of Southern California, and that continuation of the award depends upon superior academic performance and timely progress towards my PhD degree.

I understand that I must use my year(s) of fellowship support within the duration of the package described above.

I understand that I am expected to devote myself to full-time study towards my PhD degree and will not undertake employment or other time consuming commitments during the academic year.

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I understand that I must acknowledge the fellowship in any research performed during the tenure of the award in publications, whether copyrighted or not.

I understand that, in accordance with the Council of Graduate Schools' resolution, an acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student to not accept any other offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution that made the first offer. I understand that this offer supersedes any prior offers from USC.
What Do Fellowships Include?
Fellowship Years

• Stipend paid over 12 months.
• 36 Units of Tuition per Academic Year.
• Health Benefits package (student health insurance, dental insurance and access to the Student Health Center).
• Computer Access Fee Waiver each semester ($75 in Fall and Spring, $35 in summer).
• Any additional fees that your fellowship pays will be outlined in your offer letter.
Graduate Assistantship Years

• Research or Teaching Assistantship (RA/TA) at the 50% level provided by the department.

• Stipend at the current RA/TA Rates

• 36 Units of Tuition per Academic Year.

• Health benefits package (student health insurance, dental insurance and access to the Student Health Center).

• Computer Access Fee Waiver each semester ($75 in Fall and Spring, $35 in summer).
What do fellowships not include?

- Lab Fees
- Discretionary Expenses
- Audited courses and courses outside your program must be approved by your department or the VASE Office
- Tuition Refund Insurance
- Parking or Transit Passes
- Books
What do I need to do to receive my fellowship awards?

• Register full time (6 units) in Fall and Spring by registration deadlines.
• If you are an International Student, fill out and turn in your GLACIER paperwork along with supporting documents to your department coordinator.
• If you are on your fellowship abroad, we will provide you further details of a new process
• Maintain satisfactory academic progress.
• Meet or exceed expectations when working as an RA or TA.
Doctorate Examinations

Screening Examination

• Please check in with your department in regards to your screening exam procedures.

Qualifying Examination

• The student must satisfactorily complete an qualifying examination administered by his or her guidance committee. This examination will cover both areas of concentration and will consist of at least one written and one oral examination. This examination is normally taken during the last semester of course work toward the degree, but please check in with your department and faculty advisor in regards to timing and expectations.

• Your qualifying exam committee must consist of one outside member along with 4 other committee members which includes your committee chair

• All members on your committee must be tenured/tenure track. Exception requests will need to be approved by the Dean’s office

• Upon passing the qualifying exam, you are required to begin enrolling in your program’s corresponding 794 course until you upload your defended dissertation.
Dissertation Defense

• After satisfactorily meeting all other requirements and after the research and writing of the dissertation are substantially complete, the PhD candidate must pass a general final oral examination devoted to the major field and to the topic of the dissertation.

• The examination will be conducted in such a manner as to determine to the satisfaction of the dissertation committee that the candidate has attained the stage of scholarly advancement and power of investigation demanded by the university for final recommendation to the doctorate.

• The dissertation committee consists of 3 faculty members including your faculty chair and one outside member. Unanimous approval of the committee is required for the student to upload the dissertation to the Graduate School.
PhD Orientation Online Module will be emailed to you on Monday, August 10th. The module contains several important links to resources all around campus.

• The VASE Graduate Advising Main Page
  – https://viterbigrad.usc.edu/
    • Links to PhD Walk in Hours
    • Viterbi Specific Schedule of Classes

• Viterbi COVID FAQ for Researchers
  – https://viterbischool.usc.edu/covid-19-faq-for-usc-viterbi-researchers/

• COVID FAQ
  – https://viterbischool.usc.edu/covid-19-faq-for-the-usc-viterbi-community/-Viterbi

• Passport Verification (international students)
  – https://ois.usc.edu/new-students/firstweeks/passport-verification-ppv/
Additional Information and Helpful Tips

- Please check in with your department academic advisor and faculty advisor for detailed major requirements within your department.
- Please check your funding status at the beginning of every semester.
- At the beginning of every semester, please check in with your faculty advisor to outline and plan the semester’s expectations and deliverables. This should be done in regard to your academic progress as well as in regard to the fulfillment of your funding obligations i.e. RA/TAship.
- Refer to the USC Schedule of Classes and Thesis Center for planning purposes.
- Check your USC email regularly.
- Check in with your faculty advisor and PhD staff advisor often.
- Review all the orientation modules. There is a lot more information on them for you.
- The VASE office is here to support you, so if you aren’t sure, come chat with us!
Getting Involved

• Viterbi Graduate Mentorship Program
• Experience Viterbi App
• Join VGSA
• Viterbi Graduate Student Liaison (VGSA)
• Join other student groups
The Viterbi Graduate Mentorship program is designed to help new Viterbi graduate students smoothly adjust to life at USC and in Los Angeles. When you sign up, you become "mentees" and will be paired up with a current Viterbi graduate student mentor. Mentees and mentors are usually paired up in the same academic department and the same degree level.

Learn more about the program benefits, expectations, and application:
https://usc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5cYvp4NlboBpOOV

*Questions: please contact us at vgradm@vase.usc.edu
Experience USC Viterbi App
eva.usc.edu

Easily accessible resources and engagement opportunities at your fingertips!
What makes a student successful?

Academic
- Academic Department
- Academic Advisor
- Classmates
- Faculty

Social
- Academic Socials
- USC Student Orgs
- Peers

Career
- Viterbi Career Connections
- Academic Department
- Industry Reps

Wellness
- Counseling Center
- Medical Services
- Student Health Insurance

You
App Functions – Paths & Events
App Perks

The top Undergrad, Masters, & PhD points leader from each department wins a monthly prize!
Earn EVA Points TODAY!

Visit eva.usc.edu in your mobile or desktop web browser

@ExperienceViterbi
Welcome Experience Events

Viterbi Student Panel
   Thursday, August 13th at 5:00 pm
Experience Viterbi App Zoom Party & Netflix Party
   Friday, August 14th at 3:00 pm
International Student Information Session
   Monday, August 17th at 5:00 pm
Viterbi Mandarin Welcome & Info Session
   Wednesday, August 19th at 6:00 pm
Career Readiness Week
   Wednesday, August 19th – Friday, August 21st
Viterbi Get Connected Fair
   Thursday August 20th at 4:30 pm
Experience Viterbi Resource Fair
   Friday, August 21st at 4:00 pm

Viterbi Sustain-A-Thon 48-hour student competition
   Friday, September 4th – Sunday, September 6th
Faculty Socials
   Tuesday, September 8th – Friday, September 11th
Spirit Week
   Monday, September 14th – Friday, September 18th
Trojan Tour de L.A.
   Friday, September 18th
Viterbi Career Expo
   Tuesday, September 22nd – Friday, September 25th

RSVP via the Experience Viterbi App
eva.usc.edu
VITERBI GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (VGSA)

Executive Board

President
L. Sebastian Ojeda
vgsapres@usc.edu
2nd Year BME PhD

Executive VP
Anusha Sreenivasan
vgsavp@usc.edu
2nd Year CS Masters

VP Programs
Tanvi Kasture
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2nd Year EE Masters

VP Finance
Abhilash Pandurangan
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2nd Year CS Masters

VP Communications
Kaushik Karalgikar
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2nd Year CS Masters
Viterbi Graduate Student Association (VGSA)

VGSA is the largest student-run organization at USC

We work alongside the VASE office & receive funding from GSG

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<th>VGSA Council</th>
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<td><strong>Executive Board</strong></td>
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<td>Elected at the end of Spring semester by previous years’ E-board &amp; Senators</td>
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<td><strong>Senators</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>a) Departmental</td>
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<td>Elected by each academic department</td>
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<td>b) Diversity</td>
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<td>Chosen by E-Board</td>
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<td><strong>Ambassadors</strong></td>
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<td>Each Viterbi graduate student organization can nominate one ambassador</td>
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What does VGSA do?

Serve as student advocates for your department / Viterbi

Organize inclusive events to promote engagement within the graduate student community

Facilitate a safe and open environment for all engineering students

Encourage inter-departmental, school-wide, and community collaboration/outreach
VGSA Graduate Student Panel

August 13th at 5 PM PST!

Join us and our virtual panel of representatives from AIS, NSBE, QuEST, SHPE, WISE, & the VGSL share their experiences as graduate students, how to get involved on campus, and answer questions from students!

Zoom Link:
https://usc.zoom.us/s/93262649461
VGSA Is Hiring a Webmaster!

**Role of the VGSA Webmaster:**

- Regularly maintain and update the VGSA website ([vgsa.usc.edu](https://vgsa.usc.edu))
- Help promote VGSA events via social media & by creating marketing material.
- Collaborate with department Senators and the other VGSA Executive Board

**Benefits of Being the VGSA Webmaster:**

Join the VGSA Executive Board, gain valuable web design/marketing skills, & become actively involved in the Viterbi Graduate student community!

Form link: [https://forms.gle/dSHGdyj1DgVgPXJfA](https://forms.gle/dSHGdyj1DgVgPXJfA)
VITERBI GRADUATE STUDENT LIAISON (VGSL)

Emily Millard
vgsl@vase.usc.edu

- Bridge between the student body, VGSA, and the administration
- Resource for concerns regarding policies, procedures, etc.

Office Hours: Thursday, 3:00PM-6:00PM
THANK YOU!

HAVE A GREAT FALL SEMESTER!

FIGHT ON ✌