

Application Instructions

ADMISSION TO USC LAW SCHOOL

What sets USC 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.

Each year, USC Law receives approximately 6,000 applications. With 200 seats to fill in the entering class, admission is highly selective. Our application deadline is February 1, 2012, but early applications receive priority review (not necessarily a final decision). We strongly encourage you to submit your application prior to the deadline.

Eligibility

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

USC Law 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, a member of the student services office and an elected student representative. The Committee reads a portion of 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.

Academic Requirements

In reviewing application files, the committee focuses on college grades, academic major, selection of courses, and significant scholarly achievements. Although USC Law 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 intensively researched written projects and active participation in classroom dialogue also will be helpful in preparing you to study law.

Your Personal Statement

The Admissions Committee gives careful attention to your personal statement. We are particularly interested in your motivation for studying law, your academic background, and qualities you possess that may enhance the diversity of our student body. If you are a college senior or recent graduate, you may wish to mention your work history and extracurricular activities. If you have spent a year or more in the workforce after college, tell us about your employment experience; enclose a résumé to illustrate your chronological work history. The statement must be electronically attached.

There is no specific word or page requirement or limit for your personal statement. However, typical page lengths have been 2-4 pages. The Admissions Committee values carefully crafted essays that are clear, concise, and compelling.

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 can 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 while, 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.

Credential Assembly Service (CAS) Evaluations

The CAS evaluation is another tool our Admissions Committee will consider when evaluating your candidacy. CAS evaluations are optional and we will accept two. CAS evaluations may not be substituted for any of the two required letters of recommendation.

Contribution to Diversity

USC Law'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 Law's educational environment or enhance the diversity of our student body or 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 Law'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).

Interviews

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

Admission Decisions and Timelines

Applications that are completed by February 1 receive priority review. All applicant files are reviewed administratively by the Dean of Admissions or a member of the admissions staff once 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 admission 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. Decisions typically are mailed beginning in mid-December and concluding around May 15. All decisions are final and no appeals process exists.

Requirements for Enrollment

If you are admitted to USC Law, you are required to pay two tuition deposits by the specified deadlines (typically May 1 and July 1). The enrollment instructions included with your admission packet will specify the amount of these deposits.

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

Acceptance Deferral Policy

USC Law 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.

Bar Admission Character Considerations

Each jurisdiction establishes bar registration and admission standards for individuals who wish to practice law within the jurisdiction. One important aspect of admission to practice law is an evaluation relating to character and fitness. USC Law 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 convicted of a felony or misdemeanor (other than a minor traffic violation)?
- Are any charges pending against you?

If the answer to any of the questions is in the affirmative, then a full written explanation must accompany the application via the Attachment 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. 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.

Application Fee Waivers

USC Gould School of Law offers several application fee waivers to assist students who are interested in applying to the JD program. We offer merit-based fee waivers, hardship/need-based fee waivers, Teach for America fee waivers, and waivers to USC undergraduates. USC fee waiver questions may be submitted to feewaiver@law.usc.edu.

USC Trojan Fee Waiver

As part of the Trojan family, any student or graduate of the University of Southern California qualifies for a USC Trojan Fee Waiver. In order to receive the fee waiver, you must opt-in to the LSAC Candidate Referral Service (CRS). Throughout the application cycle, we will send periodic e-mails confirming the award of a USC Law Trojan fee waiver. All USC fee waivers granted through the CRS program will reflect automatically on the candidate's electronic USC JD application at the final payment window. No fee waiver code is required if a USC fee waiver is awarded.

Candidate Referral Service (CRS) Merit Fee Waiver

USC Law offers merit-based fee waivers by invitation only to applicants whose profiles typically meet or exceed both the median LSAT score and the median GPA for our entering class. Candidates who wish to be considered for a fee waiver based upon a CRS profile must register for LSAC's Candidate Referral Service (CRS) before applying to our law school. Invitations will be e-mailed/mailed to those candidates who meet our profile criteria and are registered for CRS. All CRS fee waivers will reflect automatically on the electronic USC JD application at the payment window as the fee is connected to your LSAC account number. No fee waiver code is required if a CRS fee waiver is awarded.

Hardship/Need-Based Fee Waiver

USC Law offers hardship/need-based fee waivers. We review requests for hardship/need-based fee waivers on a weekly basis. There are several options under which someone can qualify for a hardship/need-based fee waiver. Candidates who wish to be considered for an economic hardship fee waiver will need to do the following:

- Complete the 2011-12 Fee Waiver Form at <http://law.usc.edu/assets/downloads/USCLawSchoolFeewaiverform.pdf>
- If you are currently in school and are a financial aid recipient, submit a PDF copy of your financial aid award letter from your undergraduate/graduate institution.
- If you are experiencing other economic hardship, then submit a copy of your 2011 Federal Income Tax return (or parent's income tax return if they claim you as a dependent on their tax forms).
- Send an e-mail with all your documents attached to feewaiver@law.usc.edu.

Teach for America Fellow: Candidates who are currently participating in a Teach for America program will need to do the following:

- Complete the 2011-12 Fee Waiver Form at <http://law.usc.edu/assets/downloads/USCLawSchoolFeewaiverform.pdf>
- Provide an official letter of employment from your Teach for America program coordinator
- Please send an e-mail with all your documents attached to feewaiver@law.usc.edu.

Once we have received and reviewed your completed documents, we will e-mail a response to you (typically on Friday after receiving your documents). If you are approved, the fee waiver will reflect automatically on the USC JD application at the payment window as the fee is connected to your LSAC account number.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have submitted a fee waiver request, do not submit the online application fee payment (\$75) before hearing from us. We will not be able to offer you a refund if you are later approved for a fee waiver.

Our Nondiscrimination Policy

USC Law 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

SAMPLE

Application Type

Are you a first time applicant to USC Law?

____ Yes

____ No

Are you a Reapplicant to USC Law?

____ Yes

____ No

If a Reapplicant, for what year did you apply for the fall semester?

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 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 address good until date _____

Day phone _____

Evening phone _____

Other Contact Information

Primary e-mail _____

Secondary e-mail _____

Mobile phone _____

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

____ Yes

____ No

Biographic/Contact Info

Please answer the following questions even though they may have been asked elsewhere in the application.

Prefix:

Gender: Male, Female

Primary telephone number. This may be cell or a landline. (enter numbers only)

Primary e-mail address you would like correspondence sent to.

Demographics

1. Citizenship

Citizenship

- ☐ Non-Resident Alien
☐ US Citizen
☐ US Permanent Resident

Permanent city _____

Permanent state/province _____

Permanent country _____

Country of citizenship _____

Visa number _____

Permanent resident number _____

Country of citizenship _____

2. Ethnicity

Are you Hispanic or Latino

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

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

- ☐ Asian
☐ Filipino
☐ Japanese American
☐ Other Asian
☐ Vietnamese

- ☐ Chinese
☐ Filipino American
☐ Korean
☐ Pakistani
☐ Vietnamese American

- ☐ Chinese American
☐ Japanese
☐ Korean American
☐ Thai

Black or African American

☐ Black/African American

Canadian Aboriginal

☐ Canadian Aboriginal

Caucasian/White

☐ White/Caucasian

Hispanic/Latino

- ☐ Central American
☐ Mexican
☐ Other Hispanic/Latino

- ☐ Cuban
☐ Mexican American
☐ South American

- ☐ Hispanic/Latino
☐ Other Hispanic

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

☐ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

☐ Puerto Rican

Demographics continued

Consent

☐ Decline to respond

Standardized Testing

LSAT

Test Date

Test Score

Conduct Information

Conduct Information

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you are required to submit a separate explanatory statement via the Attachments section of the electronic application.

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? (If yes, you are required to submit a separate explanatory statement from the institution's dean or an authorized school official, providing information about the incident.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, other than a minor traffic violation? (If yes, then you are required to submit an addendum, via the Attachments section, summarizing the facts and the conclusions of the court and the final resolution.)

☐ Yes

☐ No

Are any charges pending against you?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Have you ever been or are you currently registered at another law school?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Education

List ALL educational institutions attended.

Institution name _____

Major _____

Country _____

Start date _____

State/Province _____

End date _____

City _____

Degree _____

GPA _____

Date degree granted _____

Rank _____

Institution name _____

Major _____

Country _____

Start date _____

State/Province _____

End date _____

City _____

Degree _____

GPA _____

Date degree granted _____

Rank _____

Institution name _____

Major _____

Country _____

Start date _____

State/Province _____

End date _____

City _____

Degree _____

GPA _____

Date degree granted _____

Rank _____

Institution name _____

Major _____

Country _____

Start date _____

State/Province _____

End date _____

City _____

Degree _____

GPA _____

Date degree granted _____

Rank _____

Have you ever attended any law school?

____ Yes

____ No

Education continued

Did you leave the law school in good standing?

____ Yes

____ No

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

____ Yes

____ No

List the academic honors, awards, or other recognitions you have received and explain the reason(s) upon which awards were made.

Employment

List all employment including internships..

Employer _____

Position _____ Country _____

Hours per week _____ State/Province _____

Start date _____ City _____

End date _____ Employment type (ex. Full time) _____

Reason for leaving _____

Employer _____

Position _____ Country _____

Hours per week _____ State/Province _____

Start date _____ City _____

End date _____ Employment type (ex. Full time) _____

Reason for leaving _____

Employment continued

Employer _____

Position _____ Country _____

Hours per week _____ State/Province _____

Start date _____ City _____

End date _____ Employment type (ex. Full time) _____

Reason for leaving _____

Employer _____

Position _____ Country _____

Hours per week _____ State/Province _____

Start date _____ City _____

End date _____ Employment type (ex. Full time) _____

Reason for leaving _____

Total number of months full time work experience.

List your extracurricular, community, or other activities in the order of their importance to you. Give a brief description of your involvement, including any special responsibilities or leadership positions held.

Additional Information

Personal Statement (required)

You are required to submit a personal statement.

Letters of Recommendation (required)

Two letters of recommendation are required to complete your application. We recommend that at least one letter be written by a professor who knows you well and can evaluate your academic performance. Candidates may include in their application up to one LSAC evaluation in addition to the two required letters of recommendation.

Résumé (required)

You are required to submit a résumé. It should be no more than 2 pages, but preferably 1 page.

Do you believe you were raised in an economically disadvantaged household? If yes, please explain in a separate addendum via the Attachments section.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Do you believe your LSAT score accurately represents your past performance or future promise? If not, please provide an explanation in a separate addendum via the Attachments section.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Do you believe your college transcript accurately represents your past performance or future promise? If not, please provide an explanation in a separate addendum via the Attachment section.

☐ Yes
☐ No

Additional Information continued

An applicant who believes that his or her background or experience can contribute to USC Law'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 Law 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 Law's educational environment. USC Law'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 submitted a diversity statement (via the Additional Information attachments section) along with your application.

☐ Yes

☐ No

Certification

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 Section 3 - Conduct Information, prior to my fall 2012 enrollment during the 2012-13 academic year, I will inform USC 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:
