

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: CRAFTING YOUR COURSE PLAN

Want to plan out your semesters?
Check out our guide to crafting your own course plan!

REMEMBER: Always have your course plan reviewed by an academic advisor.

STEP 1: UNDERSTANDING YOUR TOOLS

Dornsife Sample Course Plans

- Sample 4-year course plans for Dornsife majors - assumes a student with no transfer & exam credits, and no prior foreign language (FLAN) experience.
- Your individual plan can vary according to transfer & exam credits, Dornsife units, pre-professional interests, foreign language proficiency and more.

Biological Sciences, B.S.							
FRESHMAN		SOPHOMORE		JUNIOR		SENIOR	
FALL	SPRING	FALL	SPRING	FALL	SPRING	FALL	SPRING
Foreign Language I	Foreign Language II	Foreign Language III	GE A, B, C, G, or H	GE A, B, C, G, or H	GE A, B, C, G, or H	GE A, B, C, G, or H	BISC Upper Division Elective
WRIT 150	GESM 110/111, 120/121, or 130/131	GE A, B, C, G, or H	GE A, B, C, G, or H	WRIT 340	MATH 208x, QBIO 305 (GE F), or QBIO 310	BISC Upper Division Elective w/Lab	BISC Upper Division Elective
BISC 120L or 121L (GE D)	BISC 220L or 221L (GE D)	BISC 320L (GE D) FALL ONLY	MATH 125 (GE F)	PHYS 135aL or 151L (GE E)	PHYS 135bL or 152L	BISC Upper Division Elective	Elective
CHEM 105aL or 115aL (GE E)	CHEM 105bL or 115bL	CHEM 322aL	CHEM 322bL	BISC 330L	BISC 490 or BISC UD Elective w/Lab	BISC 325 FALL ONLY	Elective
BISC 193* 1 UNIT; FALL ONLY	BISC 194* 1 UNIT; SPRING ONLY	*Students must take one from BISC 193 (fall only) and BISC 194 (spring only). Some will choose to take both.					
← 128 UNITS →							
THIS PLAN IS BASED ON THE 2025-2026 USC CATALOGUE AND MAY VARY ACCORDING TO TRANSFER CREDITS, DORNSIFE UNITS, PRE-PROFESSIONAL GOALS, AND OTHER FACTORS. CONSULT ACADEMIC ADVISOR AND USC CATALOGUE FOR MORE INFORMATION. UPDATED AUGUST 2025.							

READING A DORNSIFE SAMPLE COURSE PLAN

- Cardinal - CORE requirements (GE, WRIT, FLAN)
- Orange - Major requirements
- Gold - Free Degree Elective space

The Gold tiles (elective space) are where you would plug in your minor/second major coursework.

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Your STARS Report

- Comprehensive degree audit of a student's academic progress toward degree completion.
- Lists all USC coursework, accepted transfer work, and remaining requirements for declared majors, minors, and general education.

EXPERIENCEUSC > MY ACADEMICS PAGE

My Degree Progress & Planning Tools

Please note: For the best experience, it is recommended to view the STARS Report, Transfer Credit Report, Course Transfer Pre-Approval, and Articulation Petition on your desktop / laptop.

Academic Records	STARS Report	Transfer Credit Report	Course Transfer Pre-Approval	Articulation Petition
A comprehensive view of your grade report , unofficial transcript and enrollment history .	Detailed listing of a student's degree requirements that have been met and those that remain to be fulfilled.	Detailed summary of transfer courses and exams (AP, IB, etc) and the credit awarded.	Provides verification of course transferability for continuing USC students only.	Request a change in the way your coursework has been evaluated on your Transfer Credit Report (TCR).
View Academic Records	View STARS Report	View Transfer Credit Report	Request Course Transfer Pre-Approval	Submit Articulation Petition

WATCH NOW

Advising Tip

STARS Report & Transfer Credit Report (TCR)

Advising Tips - STARS and TCR: Winter 2025

Dornsife Undergraduate Advising

SUBSCRIBE

READING YOUR STARS REPORT

- Watch our [advising tip video](#) to help you understand how to read your STARS report!
- It is important that you know how to read your STARS report correctly to identify which requirements you need to account for when course planning.

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STEP 1: UNDERSTANDING YOUR TOOLS

USC Catalogue

- Contains information detailing academic policies, procedures, degree requirements, course descriptions, etc.
- Make sure you are reviewing your catalogue year based on **your admitted term** for your major and minor requirements.

USC Catalogue 2025-2026

USC Catalogue 2025-2026

Fireworks explode in the night sky over the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum during USC's one hundred forty-second commencement ceremony, held in May 2025. The Coliseum, future host of the opening and closing ceremonies for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympic Games, offered a unique graduation experience for USC students and their families. Photo courtesy of USC/Gus Ruelas.

MATH 125g Calculus I

MATH 125g Calculus I

Units: 4
Terms Offered: FaSpSm

Limits; continuity, derivatives and applications; antiderivatives; the fundamental theorem of calculus; exponential and logarithmic functions.
Prerequisite: MATH 108 or math placement exam.
Satisfies New General Education in Category F: Quantitative Reasoning
Instruction Mode: Lecture, Discussion
Grading Option: Letter



The catalogue may also contain information on course descriptions, pre-requisites/co-requisites, GE categories, and when courses are typically offered.

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: CRAFTING YOUR COURSE PLAN

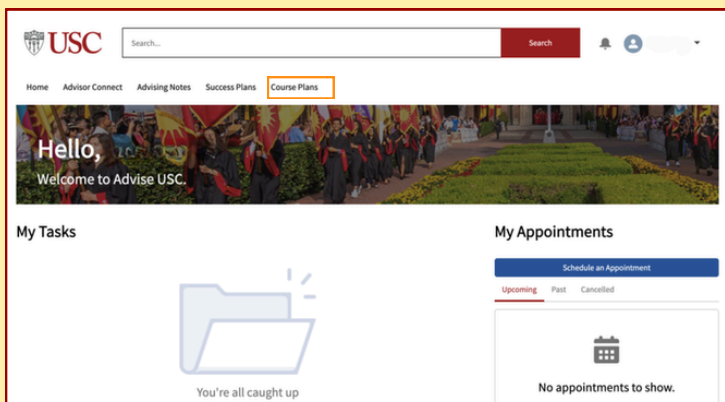
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STEP 1: UNDERSTANDING YOUR TOOLS

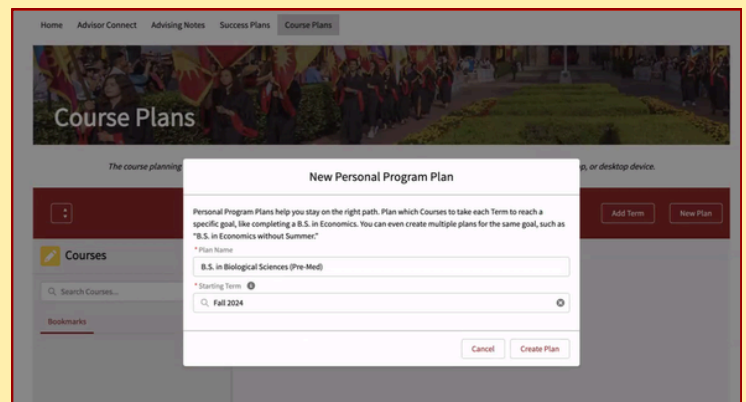
Advise USC

- Centralized USC-wide academic advising platform. Serves as a single digital hub for scheduling appointments, creating academic plans, and communicating with advisors.



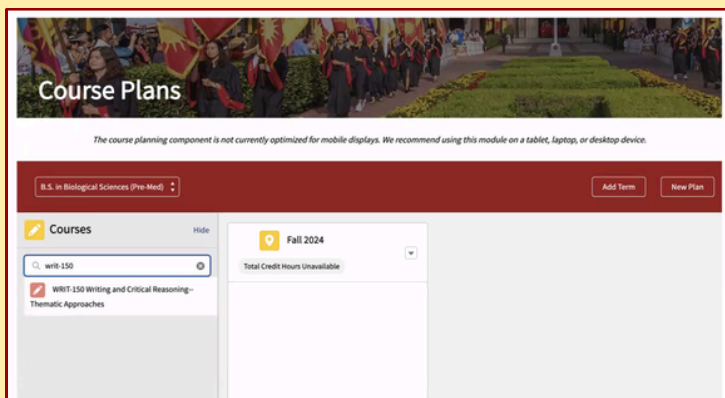
ADVISE USC > COURSE PLANS TAB

Navigate to Advise USC and click on the Course Plans tab to start your course plan.



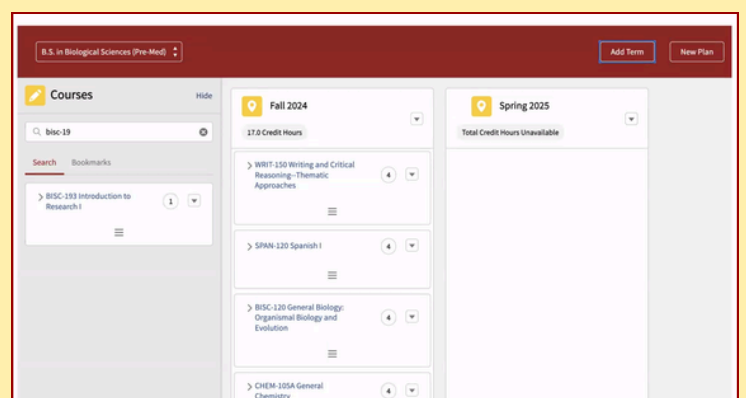
NEW PLAN > TITLE PLAN

Click on "New Plan", title your plan and select your Starting Term (ex: Fall 2025, Spring 2026, etc)



ADD IN COURSES

Search for courses via the Search Bar on the right. Drag and drop the course to the appropriate term.



CONTINUE TO ADD TERMS & COURSES

Add Terms as you go to fit your graduation timeline. Add in all required coursework.

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: CRAFTING YOUR COURSE PLAN

STEP 2: UNDERSTANDING USC POLICIES & CURRICULUM

General USC Policies



- A single Dornsife degree requires the completion of 104 Dornsife units and a total of 128 units to graduate.
- Adding a major/minor may change the number of required Dornsife units and total units.
- All major and minor-related courses must be taken for a letter grade, and a minimum 2.0 GPA is required (higher standards may apply).
- All upper-division courses must be taken at USC.

CORE Requirements

All Dornsife students are required to complete CORE requirements which include, GE's, WRIT courses, and Foreign Language (FLAN):

CORE LITERACIES

GE A GE D
 GE B (2) GE E
 GE C (2) GE F

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

GE G
 GE H

WRITING REQUIREMENT

WRIT 150
 WRIT 340

DORNSIFE FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Level III of a
 Foreign Language
ASL is not accepted

Thematic Option Curriculum

Thematic Option (T.O.) students follow the below curriculum

CORE LITERACIES

GE A GE E
 GE C GE F

T.O. COURSES (INCL. WRITING)

CORE 111 CORE 102
 CORE 112 CORE 103
 CORE 101 CORE 104

DORNSIFE FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Level III of a
 Foreign Language
ASL is not accepted

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: CRAFTING YOUR COURSE PLAN

STEP 3: COURSE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Course Sequencing

When course planning, you must be mindful of course sequencing.

Do certain courses need to be taken in a specific order?

Are there pre-requisites or co-requisites you need to consider?

PRE-REQUISITES

- A prerequisite is a class that must be taken **BEFORE** enrolling in the class in question.
- You may be eligible to waive certain pre-requisites based on transfer/exam credit. Consult with your academic advisor.
- **Example 1:**
 - MATH 126 has a pre-requisite of MATH 125.
 - You must complete MATH 125 **before** you can enroll in MATH 126.
- A single course may require multiple pre-requisites. If so, you must meet ALL pre-requisite requirements.
- **Example 2:**
 - ECON 305 has a pre-requisite of ECON 203, ECON 205, and MATH 118/125 (one of the two).
 - You must complete ECON 203 **and** ECON 205 **and** MATH 118/125 **before** you can enroll in ECON 305.

CO-REQUISITES

- A co-requisite class must be taken simultaneously **WITH** another course OR must be taken **BEFORE** the course in question.
- **Example:**
 - DSCI 250 has a co-requisite of TAC 115/116 (one of the two).
 - You must enroll in DSCI 250 **with** TAC 115/116 or have completed it **before** enrolling in DSCI 250.
- A single course may require multiple co-requisites AND pre-requisites. If so, you must meet ALL co-requisite AND pre-requisite requirements.
- **Example 2:**
 - PHYS 161 has a *pre-req* of MATH 126 and a *co-req* of MATH 226.
 - To enroll in PHYS 161, you must have completed MATH 126.
 - You must also enroll in PHYS 161 **with** MATH 226 or have completed MATH 226 **before**.

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: CRAFTING YOUR COURSE PLAN

STEP 3: COURSE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Course Offerings

We must keep course offering times in mind when course planning.

Are certain courses only offered in specific semesters?

Are there pre-requisites/co-requisites I need to plan in advance, in order to take a course only offered during a specific term?

A FEW EXAMPLES

- PHYS 190 is only offered in Fall
- BISC 421 is only offered in Fall
- QBIO 105 is only offered in Spring
- BISC 199 is only offered in Spring



PLEASE NOTE

Course offerings are subject to change. While courses have been historically offered in certain terms, this can change. Consult your academic advisor.

Courseload

- USC flat rate tuition covers **12-18** units.
- A typical course load is **16 units** per semester.
- Each unit beyond 18 will incur an **additional per-unit cost**.
- Full-time student status requires a minimum **12 units**.
- Enrollment in **over 20 units** requires advisor approval.

Pre-Health

- Note that Pre-Health is **not** a major or academic program.
- “Pre-Health” is the broad umbrella term.
- Within the Pre-Health umbrella, there are several **tracks** such as Pre-Med, Pre-PT etc.
- If pursuing a Pre-Health track, include those course requirements in your plan.

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STEP 3: COURSE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Degree Electives vs Major Electives

You might hear the word “Electives” or see it listed within our course plans. There are two types of electives you’ll need to consider.

DEGREE ELECTIVES

- Degree electives can be any available USC courses 100-499.
- Degree electives help you reach the total 128 units required for graduation.
- Degree electives can be taken in any subject.
- The number of Degree Electives you may need can vary.

MAJOR ELECTIVES

- Major electives are selected from a specific list of courses set by the department.
- Major electives are required for and count toward your major.
- Major electives typically stay within the discipline of your major.
- The number of Major Electives you need are already set.

EX: SAMPLE COURSE PLANS

FALL	SPRING
GE A, B, C, G, or H	BISC Upper Division Elective
BISC Upper Division Elective w/Lab	BISC Upper Division Elective
BISC Upper Division Elective	Elective
BISC 325 FALL ONLY	Elective

Major electives (pointing to the two BISC Upper Division Elective courses)

Degree electives (pointing to the two generic Elective courses)

EX: USC CATALOG

Example of Major Electives

Upper-Division Electives (20 units)

Twenty units of upper-division BISC course work available for major credit are required. At least two courses in the upper-division electives must carry a lab (“L”) or be 490. No more than 4 units of [BISC 490x](#) may be used to fulfill the upper-division elective requirement. In addition, no more than two seminars ([BISC 460](#) to [BISC 462](#)), totaling 4 units, may be applied to the upper-division elective requirement.

The USC Catalog only holds major-specific information and generally does not list Degree Elective space.

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: ADDING A MINOR

WHAT IS A MINOR?

- An academic program completed in addition to an undergraduate student's major.
- Can allow you to explore a personal interest, enhance your major area of focus, or emphasize a career field.

IMPORTANT POLICIES

- At least **16 units** must be “**unique**” to the minor and cannot overlap with another major or minor program.
- For many minors, at least **16 units** must be taken **outside** of a student's major department – some minors are not open to department majors.
- For Dornsife majors with any minor, the number of **Dornsife units** required for degree completion **reduces from 104 to 96**.

NOT ENOUGH SPACE FOR A MINOR?

Consider taking individual classes, joining clubs/student orgs, or pursuing your interests via an alternative path!

PLANNING A MINOR

STEP 1

Review Minor requirements

Ask yourself

How many courses does this minor need?

STEP 2

Determine how much space you have

Ask yourself

How much space do I have AFTER accounting for all of my major & CORE requirements?



Toolkit Tips

Utilize the following:
STARS Report
Dornsife Sample Course Plans

STEP 3

Add minor courses to your course plan

Planning Tip!

Add in minor courses where you have free space in future semesters

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: ADDING A SECOND MAJOR

DOUBLE MAJOR

Two majors with the same degree objective
(e.g. BS & BS, BA & BA)

AND

conferred by the same
academic unit/school
(e.g. Dornsife)

Examples:

- B.A. Economics + B.A. Classics
- B.S. Mathematics + B.S. Physics
- B.A. Sociology + B.A. Communications

Unit Requirements

Dornsife Unit Requirement

- Two Dornsife Majors = 104 Dornsife Units
- Special Note:
 - One Dornsife Major + Major from a school whose degree is conferred by Dornsife = 70 Dornsife units
 - Refer to the USC Catalogue. Programs marked with an asterisk (*) fall under the jurisdiction of Dornsife.

Total Units to Graduate

- Minimum 128 units

Course Overlap

2-3 upper-division courses can potentially overlap between the two majors
(number depends on combination of majors)

2ND BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Two majors with different degree objectives
(e.g. BA & BS, BA & BFA)

OR

conferred by different
academic units/schools
(e.g. Dornsife & Marshall, Dornsife & Viterbi)

Examples:

- B.S. Biology + B.A. Spanish
- B.A. History + B.S. Business (Marshall)
- B.S. Physics + B.S. Engineering (Viterbi)

Unit Requirements

Dornsife Unit Requirement

- Dual Degree = 96 Dornsife Units

Total Units to Graduate

- Minimum 160 units

Course Overlap

Courses may overlap without restriction
(if possible)

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: ADDING A SECOND MAJOR

PLANNING A SECOND MAJOR

STEP 1

Determine if your major combination will be a Double Major or a 2nd Bachelor's Degree

Ask yourself

Is my major of interest a B.A. or a B.S.? Which schools would confer my degrees?

STEP 2

Review the second major's course requirements and declaration process

Ask yourself

How many courses does this major need? Are there any courses I can overlap with my current major?

STEP 3

Check if you have enough space to add the second major to your course plan

Ask yourself

How much space do I have AFTER accounting for my first major & CORE requirements?

IF YOU DO HAVE ENOUGH SPACE

Add the second major's courses to your current course plan

Ask yourself

Have I accounted for all my Dornsife units and the total units needed for degree completion?

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH SPACE

Consider pursuing your interests via an alternative path!

Ask yourself

*Are there minors I could pursue?
Are there clubs or student orgs I could join?
Could I take individual classes?*



Toolkit Tips

Utilize the following:

STARS Report | USC Catalog | Dornsife Sample Course Plans

DISCOVER DORNSIFE: ADDING A SECOND MAJOR

IMPORTANT NOTES

- A Double Major or Second Bachelor's Degree may require Summer terms, 20-unit semesters, or an extended time to graduation.
- A heavier workload during the semesters may mean less time for social activities, and extracurricular opportunities.

SUMMER COURSEWORK

Considering Summer coursework when planning your second major?

SUMMER AT USC

- Summer Schedule of Classes is typically released in early February.
- Summer registration typically begins at the end of February.
- Review USC's [Summer Term website](#) for details on Summer 2026.
- Speak with your advisor via an appointment or a support case to discuss Summer courses.

If planning to take Summer courses outside of USC, **please speak with your academic advisor**. In the meantime, see the below policies.

SUMMER OUTSIDE OF USC: RESTRICTIONS

- Foreign language courses and lab sciences must be taken **in person** over Summer.
- Lower division (100-299) major coursework may be completed over Summer. Make sure to consult with an academic advisor first.
- Core Literacy GE courses (GE A-F) must be completed at USC.
- Upper Division coursework (300-499) must be completed at USC.
- To receive credit for summer classes, you must earn a C- or higher in your courses.