

**USC Dornsife**

Dana and David Dornsife  
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

# Department of Chemistry: Graduate Student Handbook

Requirements and Departmental Policies



July 2023

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<b>I. DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION</b>
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The office of the Department Chair is responsible for the administration of all teaching, research, and service functions. Vice-Chairs, members of the Executive Committee, and the Department Administrator, who is the chief administrator for the staff, work closely with the Chair. Policies and procedures for the department have been developed through a consultative process utilizing input from various departmental standing committees, faculty, staff, and students. Policies and procedures are developed and maintained in accordance with campus and university policies and procedures, such as those set forth by the Graduate School. Every attempt has been made to ensure that the information is accurate as of July 2023.

**Department Chair**

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[pzq@usc.edu](mailto:pzq@usc.edu)  
(213) 821-2461

**Vice-Chair**

**Dr. Matthew Pratt**  
[matthew.pratt@usc.edu](mailto:matthew.pratt@usc.edu)  
(213) 821-2554

**Vice-Chair**

**Dr. Barry Thompson**  
[barry.thompson@usc.edu](mailto:barry.thompson@usc.edu)  
(213) 821-2461

**Department Administrator**

**Michele Dea**  
[michele@usc.edu](mailto:michele@usc.edu)  
(213) 740-7036

**Graduate Program Administrator**

**Claudia Cortez**  
[chemgrad@usc.edu](mailto:chemgrad@usc.edu)  
(213) 740-6855

## A. Administrative Directory

**Main Office:** SGM 401, (213) 740-7036 (phone)  
Undergraduate Program: [coord105@usc.edu](mailto:coord105@usc.edu)  
Graduate Program: [chemgrad@usc.edu](mailto:chemgrad@usc.edu)

**Student Affairs:** **Claudia Cortez**  
Graduate Program Administrator  
SGM 401C, (213) 740-6855, [chemgrad@usc.edu](mailto:chemgrad@usc.edu)

**TBA**  
Undergraduate Program Advisor  
SGM 455, (213) 821-1615

**Barry Thompson**  
Undergraduate Program Coordinator  
LHI 105, (213) 821-2656, [barry.thompson@usc.edu](mailto:barry.thompson@usc.edu)

**Computing:** **Joel Salazar Sanchez**  
Computer Consultant  
SGM 419, (213) 740-7039, [joels708@usc.edu](mailto:joels708@usc.edu)

**Computer Support**  
USC ITS, (213) 740-5555, [consult@usc.edu](mailto:consult@usc.edu)

**Graduate Student  
Postdoc Advising  
Committee:**  
(GSPAC)

**Chao Zhang** (Chemical Biology)  
(213) 740-7040, [zhang.chao@usc.edu](mailto:zhang.chao@usc.edu)

**Smaranda Marinescu** (Inorganic)  
(213) 740-6075, [smarines@usc.edu](mailto:smarines@usc.edu)

**Surya Prakash** (Organic-Materials, co-chair)  
(213) 740-5984, [gprakash@usc.edu](mailto:gprakash@usc.edu)

**Curt Wittig** (Physical-Theoretical, co-chair)  
(213) 740-7368, [wittig@usc.edu](mailto:wittig@usc.edu)

## B. Shops and Facilities Directory

**Department Safety Officer:**     **Corey Schultz**  
Director of Facilities and Safety  
SSC 4th, (213) 740-7037, [cschultz@usc.edu](mailto:cschultz@usc.edu)

**Undergraduate Labs:**

**Thuc Do,**  
Instructional Lab Technician  
SGM 147,(213) 740-7028, [thucdo@usc.edu](mailto:thucdo@usc.edu)

**Steven Guillen,**  
Instructional Lab Technician  
SGM 223,(213) 740-8618, [thucdo@usc.edu](mailto:thucdo@usc.edu)

**Jennifer Moore,**  
Organic Chemistry Lab Director  
SGM 218, (213) 740-7025, [moorejl@usc.edu](mailto:moorejl@usc.edu)

**Cathy Skibo,**  
General Chemistry Lab Coordinator  
SGM 138 , (213) 740-8265, [skibo@usc.edu](mailto:skibo@usc.edu)

**Shawn Wagner,**  
Director Chem Instrumentation  
LJS ,(213) 764-1515, [shawn.wagner@usc.edu](mailto:shawn.wagner@usc.edu)

**Xiaojun Zhang,**  
Director BioChem Labs  
SGM 304, (213) 740-4109, [xiaojunz@usc.edu](mailto:xiaojunz@usc.edu)

**VWR Lab Store:**

**Darrell Karrfalt**  
Onsite Coordinator Avantor Services  
SGM 145, (213) 740-7026,  
[darrell.karrfalt@avantorsciences.com](mailto:darrell.karrfalt@avantorsciences.com)

<b>Glass Shop:</b>	<b>Phillip Sliwoski</b> Director Glass Shop SGM 308, (213) 740-4106, <a href="mailto:sliwoski@usc.edu">sliwoski@usc.edu</a>
<b>Machine Shop:</b> <b>6:30AM-2:30PM</b> <b>M-F</b>	<b>Seth Wieman</b> Industrial Design Engineer KAP Basement B-1B, (213) 740-6111, <a href="mailto:wieman@usc.edu">wieman@usc.edu</a>
<b>Electronics Shop:</b>	<b>Joseph Lim</b> Electronics Technician LJS 157, (213) 740-4104, <a href="mailto:lim760@usc.edu">lim760@usc.edu</a>

### C. Department Services

**Department E-mail Address:** All graduate students are required to obtain a USC email account. This is our primary way of sending you announcements and information. Only your USC e-mail will be used for departmental and USC-related correspondence, so be sure to check it regularly. If you use a personal account (Yahoo, Gmail, *etc.*), make sure that USC-generated messages are not intercepted by a spam filter.

**Mail and Mailboxes:** After joining a research group, you will be assigned a mailbox in the appropriate building. This is for departmental notices, campus mail, and professional mail that pertains to your role as a graduate student. Personal mail and packages should be received at your home address. You are expected to check your mail regularly. Mail left for more than 30 days, or that does not fit in your mailbox due to overflow, will be recycled. As a default, mail may be sent to the main office (3620 S. McClintock, SGM 401, Los Angeles, CA 90089-1062; or SGM 401, MC 1062).

**Copiers:** The copy machine in the main office is there to support your teaching responsibilities. Use your lab resources for research materials. If you experience a problem with the copier (jam, paper outage, error message, *etc.*), follow the instructions on the screen. Notify the Department Administrator if the problem persists or if there is no more paper in the mail room; extra paper is typically stored in the mail room of the main office.

**Fax:** There are fax machines in the department's satellite offices and in the main office (SGM 401). The fax number for the SGM 401 location is (213) 740-2701. Please ask the office staff for assistance. If you receive a fax, it will be sent to you as a pdf through email.

**Keys:** First-year students will be issued keys to their teaching labs from their respective lab managers. These keys must be returned at the end of the semester. After selecting a research advisor, students should request keys to the appropriate building and lab/office space. These requests should be sent through the advisor to Corey Schultz (SGM 450, [cschultz@usc.edu](mailto:cschultz@usc.edu)), who will procure them from the university lock shop. These keys should be returned to your advisor upon graduation.

**Room Reservations:** The Department maintains meeting rooms that can be reserved by contacting the respective administrators below. When using these facilities, students are responsible for leaving them clean, in their original configuration, lights off, and locked.

- SGM460: Michele Dea ([michele@usc.edu](mailto:michele@usc.edu))
- SSC604: Diana Cervantes ([dianac26@usc.edu](mailto:dianac26@usc.edu))
- OCW214: Em Thielman ([edebeer@usc.edu](mailto:edebeer@usc.edu))

**Facilities Management Services (FMS):** It is the responsibility of all who use department labs and resources to clean and maintain them. However, it is understood that additional maintenance is required at times. For technical issues with projectors and related equipment in departmental meeting

rooms, contact the Director of Instructional Computing or Computer Consultant. For issues related to lighting, air conditioning, flooring, etc. contact FMS, or the Department Safety Officer, depending on the issue. For maintenance issues in your lab, office, common areas of buildings, or surrounding areas, FMS should be contacted directly. Requests may be made at: <https://fpm.usc.edu> or by calling (213) 740-6833 during business hours.

**The Week Ahead:** A weekly bulletin of announcements and information entitled “The Week Ahead” is sent to all members of the department. Topics include: announcements of general interest, awards to faculty and students, seminars, departmental, Dornsife, and USC-wide meetings, ACS meetings, etc.

#### **D. Department Organization**

Faculty within the department are self-organized into sections based on common research interests, with many holding affiliations in more than one section. Some topics, like Materials chemistry, are highly interdisciplinary and are represented in all sections. Each section hosts its own seminar series and special events like journal clubs that focus on these topical areas. Students are welcome to participate in any sectional activities applicable to their interest and can mix-and-match course work and exam structure as agreed upon with their advisor and Thesis Committee.

The Physical-Theoretical chemistry section has a long tradition of excellence in both theory and experiment and continues to develop its unique strengths in new research directions. Current research efforts span fundamental questions in physical chemistry, from the structure and reactivity of gas-phase molecules and clusters, to dynamical processes in solutions and interfaces. Several groups are involved in ultrafast laser spectroscopy applied to problems in photovoltaics, dynamics of liquids and electrolytes, and electrochemical interfaces. Much of the research is interdisciplinary, with applications in biophysical chemistry, nanoscience, and renewable energy. Several experimental and theoretical groups work on spin dynamics, with emphasis on new ways of measuring magnetic resonance, with applications in information technology and are involved in both method development and applications.

The Organic-Materials section builds on a strong tradition of translating fundamental research in organic chemistry to cutting-edge real-world applications. Research in the section spans traditional areas of organic synthesis, such as catalysis and synthetic methodology, to emerging topics such as batteries, fuel cells, solar energy, sustainable polymer materials, organic electronics, and drug discovery. The Loker Hydrocarbon Institute founded by 1994 Nobel Laureate George Olah is a cornerstone of the section where research on CO<sub>2</sub> capture and conversion to sustainable fuels and feedstocks is a central element.

The Chemical Biology section offers a wide range of common themes that encompass biochemistry of phenotype, convergent biosciences, engineered systems and drug discovery, DNA dynamics, molecular imaging, and structural biology. Experimental and computational methods employed in the section span the range of modern approaches, including diverse microscopy and spectroscopy techniques, mass spectrometry, biomolecular structure determination (X-ray and Cryo-EM) and the full spectrum of computational techniques.

The Inorganic section performs highly collaborative and interdisciplinary research that ranges from the core of the discipline to a myriad of applications. The research encompasses organometallic and main group synthesis, solid state and materials chemistry, metal-organic hybrids, nanomaterials, catalysis, and magnetic and electronic properties. Each group within the section develops novel synthetic methods to prepare new inorganic materials or molecular complexes that drive our research in these areas. The topics being actively explored lie at the core of many technologies



relevant for creating an environmentally sustainable future and range from hetero- and homogeneous catalysis, solar energy conversion, solid state lighting, fuel cells, and Li-ion batteries.

## II. GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

Students are admitted to the department in pursuit of the PhD. It is understood, however, that some students will subsequently opt for a Master's degree. The department is organized according to the disciplinary sections described in **Section I.D**. Interdisciplinary research is common and encouraged. Each student's course plans can be tailored, within bounds, to the needs and interests of each student. Degree requirements are sometimes altered to accommodate technical, academic, or administrative changes. Students are held to the requirements in effect when they join the department.

### A. PhD Requirements and Policies

#### Research Immersion and Advisor Selection:

Graduate students are admitted to the department, not individual groups. Chemistry is diverse, with many exciting areas, so it is important that each first-year student uses the first semester to explore research groups and advisors. To remain in good academic standing, students are required to join a group by the end of their second semester, but not until grades from their first semester have been posted.

Immersion with at least two research groups is required before committing to an advisor. Each student should make an informed decision that best fits their academic interests, as mutually agreed upon by student and advisor. The immersions are designed to help with this decision, whose importance cannot be overstated. Each immersion lasts four to five weeks, and students are expected to commit six to eight hours per week to the process. This program is open to all interested faculty, but the department does not require them to host anyone, so students interested in specific groups are encouraged to reach out early and discuss their interests with each professor with whom they would like to rotate.

The choice of advisor, while important, is not absolute. If, for whatever reason, a student is unhappy with the group they joined, it is possible to switch groups. Avoiding this situation is preferred, but the department recognizes that not all initial choices work. Students should consult with the Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Affairs Committee (GSPAC) before deciding to change groups.

Student-faculty matching for each immersion period is based on mutual interests and is managed by the GSPAC. During orientation week, students are given detailed information about how to input their choices, and how the matches are made. All research groups in the department are invited to present their research through oral and poster presentations during a mandatory all-day symposium at the beginning of the semester. Students are encouraged to look at the department website before and after the symposium to familiarize themselves with research in the department.

Expectations for the immersion period vary from one group to the next and are managed by the individual faculty members. Some groups only expect attendance at group meetings, while others may also require a period in the lab under the supervision of a senior student or postdoc. Whatever form is agreed upon by the student and faculty member is allowed, with the condition that the plan does not interfere with the student's coursework or teaching responsibilities. Students are encouraged to meet with all members of the faculty with whom they share research interests even if they are not paired for an immersion period. Students are not permitted to make a formal commitment to a professor prior to completion of the immersion process. This is true even in cases where a student has worked for, and/or been paid by, a professor during the preceding summer.

## Coursework

Graduate students must complete 24 units with an overall GPA of at least 3.00 to be in good standing. Some of these units can be satisfied by graduate courses taken prior to entering the program (see section on transferring units). A minimum of 60 units are required for the PhD. These include a minimum of 24 units of coursework and a minimum of 4 units of CHEM 794 a, b, c, z (dissertation). The remaining units must be CHEM 790 (research).

## Grades

Units from the teaching practicum (CHEM 593x) and courses taken outside the Department of Chemistry without prior approval by the GSPAC cannot be applied toward the 24 units. All courses must be approved by the student's representative on the GSPAC during the first, and sometimes the second semester, after which this duty passes to the Research Advisor. Courses taken outside the department require approval of the GSPAC prior to enrollment.

The lowest acceptable grade at the graduate level is B. All courses in which a final grade was assigned by the instructor are included in the GPA. Courses with a grade of C+ or lower do not count toward the required 24 units. Students who want to repeat a course in which a grade of C+ was received and have the subsequent grade calculated in the GPA must petition the university level Committee on Academic Policies and Procedures (CAPP) for permission to do so prior to re-registering in the course. CAPP will not grant *post hoc* approval. Courses with a grade of B- may be used towards the 24 units. However, a GPA below 3.00 in the first semester will result in academic probation. For example, a grade of B- in a 4-unit course must be offset by a grade of B+ or higher in a 4-unit course to avoid academic probation. No more than one grade of B- can be offset in this way. If there is more than one B- grade, the student must take one additional course.

A single grade of C+ or lower in the first semester will result in academic probation, regardless of other course grades, e.g., grades of C+ and A in two 4-unit courses will result in academic probation, even though the combined GPA is 3.17. **Students may not join a research group while on probation.** If, by the end of the second semester, the overall GPA of a student who was on probation after the first semester has risen to at least 3.00, their period of probation ends, and they may approach potential advisors.

**Failure to achieve an overall GPA of at least 3.00 by the end of the second semester, or failure to find an advisor will result in dismissal from the program.**

## Course Planning

Examples of core courses for each section are listed below. Courses that are needed to provide breadth and depth are discussed with each student individually, initially with the advisor from the GSPAC, and subsequently with the Research Advisor. Ultimate approval of the coursework is the responsibility of the Thesis Committee, which may impose further requirements.

- **Organic and Polymers:** CHEM 526 (4), CHEM 527 (4), CHEM 561 (4), CHEM 625 (4)
- **Physical/Theoretical:** CHEM 544 (4), CHEM 538 (4), CHEM 535 (4), CHEM 540 (4), CHEM 545 (4)
- **Chemical Biology:** CHEM 526 (4), CHEM 520a (2), CHEM 520b (2), CHEM 577a (2), CHEM 577b (2), CHEM 589 (2), CHEM 521 (2)
- **Inorganic:** CHEM 515 (4), CHEM 516 (4), CHEM 488 (4)

## Teaching

Students are required to teach a minimum of two semesters during their time in the program. Most students teach two semesters the first year, and average three to four semesters in total, but this is variable depending on each group's level of external funding. Exposure to teaching is valued as an essential skill gained during graduate school, and students should take this responsibility seriously.

### Thesis Committee

On completion of coursework, the Research Advisor, in consultation with the department, will assign a committee of faculty members to serve as the student's Thesis Committee. This committee is to consist of five members: one faculty member from a section different from that of the Research Advisor, and one a tenure track faculty member from a department other than Chemistry. This external member may hold a courtesy position in Chemistry, but this must be a zero percent appointment. This Committee will be responsible for ensuring the timely completion of all university and departmental requirements and has the authority to set dates for the exams in line with the requirements described in this document. **For all exams, the presiding chair must be a tenured professor from the student's home section and may not be the Research Advisor during the Qualifying exam.**

### Second Year Screening

Students must present a seminar detailing their research progress to their Thesis Committee prior to the start of their fifth semester. This is prerequisite for continuing in the PhD program. Students who fail to meet this deadline without formally requesting an extension, will be advised that they are not recommended to continue in the PhD program. In situations where an extension of the deadline is required, the Research Advisor must send a memo to the GSPAC and the Department Chair with an explanation. Only one extension of the original deadline is permitted, after which the student may be dismissed from the program.

### Qualifying Examination

Students must attempt the qualifying exam prior to the end of their sixth semester, and only after completing the required 24 units of coursework. This exam tests depth of knowledge and ability to think independently in research. If an extension of the deadline is required, the Research Advisor must send a memo to the GSPAC and the Department Chair with an explanation. Only one extension of the original deadline is permitted, after which the student may be dismissed from the program.

### Written Component

As part of this exam, students are required to submit two written documents to the Thesis Committee. One is an original research proposal in an area not directly related to the student's thesis topic. The second document varies according to section and is recommended by the Thesis Committee after completion of the screening exam. Some sections may require students to prepare a second original research proposal, whereas others may require a critical review of a recent journal article. These written documents are typically about ten single-spaced pages (usually less for a critical review), including figures, with 11 or 12-point font and one-inch margins. References must be uniform and conform to a journal format. The exam should not exceed two hours. If more time is needed, the committee may decide to adjourn and reconvene after a reasonable period.

**All written documents must be sent to the committee members at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date of the exam. Failure to do so may result in cancellation of the exam and/or other consequences at the discretion of the Thesis Committee.**

If the committee concludes that the written portion of the exam is so weak that the oral portion cannot counterbalance it, the student does not proceed to the oral and the exam is failed. The committee may provide the option of a retake but is not required to do so. If the committee decides a retake is not warranted, the student is dismissed from the program.

### Oral Component

Once the Committee has agreed to a day and time, the student must schedule a room for the exam and notify, by e-mail, the Graduate Program Administrator of the following: tentative dissertation title, committee members, exam date, time, and location. Prior to the exam, the Graduate Program Administrator will send the committee a form to sign via DocuSign on completion of the exam. This document is unique for each student and takes time to generate, so students should ensure they give plenty of notice prior to the exam. Any change of committee must be approved by the GSPAC and submitted to the Graduate School in writing. The presiding chair of the oral presentation may not be the research advisor.

### Outcome

The Thesis Committee chooses from three possible outcomes.

- Pass, and proceed to candidacy based on a positive vote by members of the committee.
- Fail, with the option to retake either specific sections of the exam or the whole exam, at the discretion of the committee. Retaking a failed qualifying examination or any portion thereof must take place between one and six months from the date of the first examination. If the committee allows a student to retake the exam, they must notify the GSPAC and the Graduate Program Administrator prior to scheduling and setting any conditions for the reexamination.
- Fail, with dismissal from the program.

A student may not change committee members after attempting the qualifying examination the first time. The student must be reexamined by the same faculty on the same subject matter. If a faculty member is unable to serve on the committee (for example, due to illness, retirement, or transfer to another institution), the dean of the degree program must be notified in writing in advance of the rescheduled exam in order to approve the change. The faculty replacement must be approved by the dean of the degree program and the student must file a change of committee form well in advance of the exam.

**Students that fail the qualifying exam twice are automatically dismissed from the program.**

### Fourth Year Seminar

Prior to the ninth semester in residence, each student must present their research in a formal seminar that will be scheduled by the faculty within each section. There are several ways to meet this requirement. Typically, students will present a 30-minute seminar to students, postdocs, and faculty in their section. Those members of the Thesis Committee from the student's home section that attend the seminar will provide feedback. If the Thesis Committee chooses, they may require a closed-door session to address issues. If a student has given an oral presentation at a national or international conference, the Research Advisor may petition the GSPAC to waive this requirement.

### Dissertation

The dissertation must meet the Graduate School requirements. These, together with the deadlines for submission of various forms and abstracts can be found at the Graduate School website ([graduateschool.usc.edu](http://graduateschool.usc.edu)). Students should consult the *Thesis/Dissertation Submission* section of this site for detailed instructions. Things like topic headings and sequencing, references, footnotes, etc. should adhere to the format of a recognized journal in the thesis area. Students typically choose journals such as: Journal of the American Chemical Society, Journal of Chemical Physics, or Journal of Organic Chemistry, and they are advised to consult with the Thesis Committee if serious departure is contemplated. Final approval rests with the Committee. The dissertation must contain a bibliography at the end, regardless of how references are handled in the body of the text.

The dissertation should include (but not necessarily in the following order):

- a) A critical appraisal of the research area, including background and general significance.
- b) All significant results obtained by the student, whether publishable or not.
- c) A critical discussion and evaluation of these results.

The dissertation must show technical mastery of a field, prowess in research, and independent scholarly ability and must be composed by the student alone. Published manuscripts may be included, provided the student played a significant role in their preparation, but must be integrated into the thesis by the student.

#### Final Defense

The student is required to present their dissertation to the Thesis Committee in a seminar that is open to the public and advertised to the department. At the conclusion of the seminar, the student is required to defend the work in a closed-door session. The student must provide the penultimate draft of the dissertation to the Thesis Committee at least two weeks prior to the defense. Failure to do so may result in cancellation of the defense. The committee must decide unanimously to accept the exam and may request revisions prior to final acceptance.

### **B. Master's Degree Requirements and Policies**

The Master's degree serves distinct purposes from those of the PhD. It requires deep knowledge in a chosen area of chemistry. It is not possible to be admitted as a Master's candidate, but a student in the PhD program may switch to a Master's track at any point.

#### Master of Science (MS)

The MS requires at least 24 units of graduate credit, approved by the student's Thesis Committee, together with an overall GPA of at least 3.00, a thesis based on original research, and oral defense of the thesis. The Graduate Program Administrator must be consulted once a student decides to pursue this track so that they may be given clearance to enroll in CHEM594a+b. The thesis format should follow the Graduate School guidelines. The MS Thesis Committee shall have the same faculty composition as for the PhD. The Research Advisor is responsible for supervision of the thesis. Final acceptance is based on approval of the penultimate draft by the Thesis Committee and passing the Final Exam. Not more than two attempts may be made to pass the Final Exam. No more than three months can elapse between attempts.

#### Master of Arts (MA)

The MA degree requires at least 24 units of graduate credit with an overall GPA of at least 3.00 and a comprehensive MA Exam administered by the GSPAC. The MA Exam is mandatory and generally taken the semester the student plans to graduate. It consists of a critical review or response to questions selected by the GSPAC representative from the student's home section. The student must schedule the exam and provide any required written responses two weeks prior to the date of the exam. If this exam is failed, a second attempt is allowed. Having passed the PhD qualifying examination can serve as a substitute for the MA exam at the discretion of the Thesis Committee.

### **C. Transfer Credit Requirements and Policies**

The number of graduate-level units that can be transferred from other institutions is determined on an individual basis by the Graduate School in consultation with the Office of Admissions. The initial request must be approved by the GSPAC in consultation with the research advisor and cannot be submitted prior to the end of the first semester. Courses submitted for consideration for transfer credit are determined in consultation with the Thesis Committee and must be approved by the Graduate School. New students with previous graduate credit, whether or not with a Master's degree,



will be required to register for at least two non-research courses, one of which must be in Chemistry, during their first semester. Additional courses may be required by the GSPAC or by the student's Thesis Committee to make up deficiencies. Approval of this request by departmental faculty members does not constitute approval of the Graduate School, Office of the Registrar, or other campus offices. Students granted a waiver or substitution of departmental requirements by faculty within the department are not exempt from any Graduate Division requirements.

#### **D. Residence Requirements**

Roughly five years are typical for a full-time student making good progress to complete all the requirements for a Ph.D. degree after obtaining the baccalaureate. The Graduate School requires a minimum of twenty-four units of academic coursework exclusive of 794 units, which are considered research units.

### **III. GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Academic policies and procedures set by the Graduate School apply to all graduate students. Additional policies and procedures are set by the department. Campus-wide policies can be found in the General Catalogue of the Office of the Registrar and the Graduate School.

#### **A. Academic Advising**

The choice of a program of study is primarily that of the student, but advisors are available to provide support/guidance at any time. In addition to those described below, students may approach any member of the faculty for advice, direction, or answers to questions. Students are encouraged to meet with the members of the Thesis Committee for progress checks and feedback.

**Graduate Program Administrator:** This person provides comprehensive support to the graduate program by assisting the chair, faculty, and students. In general, administrators in academic advising, admissions, financial aid, career counseling, and related programs are resources that graduate students can go to with questions related to university and department requirements.

**Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Affairs Committee (GSPAC):** Each student has a GSPAC representative from one of the departmental sections: Chemical Biology, Inorganic, Organic/Materials, and Physical/Theoretical. These faculty members are available for consultation and guidance in course selection and any other issue where the student feels they need additional advice. They also act as temporary Research Advisor in the first semester. All students are required to meet with their GSPAC representative during initial orientation and academic advising. Once a Research Advisor has been selected, the GSPAC representative may be consulted regarding the program of study, and their approval may be required for certain departmental forms and petitions.

**Research Advisor:** When students join a group, the Research Advisor takes over as supervisor, teacher, and mentor. Their role is critical to the graduate student experience, but their recommendations do not supersede the requirements outlined herein or those set out by the Graduate School.

#### **B. Changing Degree Objective**

Students in the PhD program who elect to switch to the Master's program should discuss this with the GSPAC, their Research Advisor, and their Thesis Committee. If the student still wishes to change the degree objective, a Change of Degree Status petition must be submitted to the Graduate School by the Graduate Program Administrator.

## C. Registration

Students register for classes via Web Registration through the <https://my.usc.edu> portal. Instructions are available at the Office of the Registrar website. It is the student's responsibility to consult Web Registration each semester for schedules and deadlines concerning registration and enrollment. It is essential to register for courses on time. If students foresee a problem, contact the Graduate Program Administrator for help. All graduate students are expected to maintain a course load of at most 12 units each semester. Students who do not enroll in at least 6 units by the posted deadline will incur a \$100 fee for late registration. <https://arr.usc.edu/registration-counseling/registration/web-registration/>

## D. Verification of Graduate Student or Employment Status

Students requiring verification of enrollment, student status, employment status, or financial support for housing, visa, student loans, childcare or other personal reasons may request a letter from the Graduate Program Administrator. Requests must be made at least one week prior to the date the verification letter is needed and must be made by the student. Letters should be picked up from the Graduate Program Administrator during regular business hours on or after the agreed upon date.

## E. Grades

**Grade Point Average:** See Section III.A.2.

**Incomplete:** An incomplete (IN) is given when a student cannot finish the course because of a documented illness or emergency (see the Recommended Definition of Emergency below) that arose after the withdrawal deadline. A student may not request an IN before the withdrawal deadline, as the course can be dropped. No more than one year is allowed for completion of an IN. The Grading Handbook has more information.

**Recommended Definition of Emergency:** A situation or event that could not be foreseen, and that is beyond the student's control, and that prevents the student from taking the final examination or completing other work due during the final examination period. Also note that as defined above, a student may not request an IN before the withdrawal deadline; the rationale is that the student still has the option to drop the course until the withdrawal date. The grade of IN exists so there is a remedy for illness or emergency that occurs after the withdrawal deadline.

## F. Leave of Absence

A student in good standing who must interrupt studies for compelling reasons may petition for a leave for a stated period, usually one semester. Reasons for a leave of absence may include:

- Medical/Health Difficulties
- Pregnancy/Parenting Needs
- Family Emergency Leave
- Military Leave

The university provides two types of health leaves, a Voluntary Health Leave of Absence, and a Mandated Health Leave of Absence. Students requesting a health leave of absence will be assigned a Health Leave Coordinator from the Office of Campus Wellness and Crisis Intervention who will administer the leave and support the student through the administrative and logistical issues associated with the leave, possible appeal, and return processes. In all cases, students with disabilities will be assessed to determine if there are reasonable accommodations that would permit

the student to continue to participate in the campus community without taking a Voluntary or Mandated Leave of Absence. If the issue is health related, the student should reference the university's excellent resources: <https://policy.usc.edu/student-health-leave-of-absence>

## G. Colloquia and Seminars

The Chemistry department hosts a variety of seminars and colloquia throughout the year. Each section hosts a topical seminar series on a specified day of the week as follows:

- Physical/Theoretical – Monday
- Inorganic – Tuesday
- Organic/Materials – Wednesday
- Chemical Biology – Thursday
- Department Colloquia/Named Lectures –Friday

All graduate students are required to attend the seminar series in their research area. Seminars are posted to the shared calendar ([https://chem.usc.edu/dept/seminar\\_subscribe.html](https://chem.usc.edu/dept/seminar_subscribe.html)) with upcoming seminars announced through “The Week Ahead” e-mail sent each week. All students are required to attend departmental colloquia and named lectures. These include:

- George A. Olah Lecture in Chemistry
- Carl M. Franklin Lecture on Science and Society
- Anton Burg Memorial Lecture
- John Stauffer Distinguished Lecture in the Sciences.

## H. Commencement, Transcripts, Diplomas

**Commencement:** Commencement ceremonies are in May. Students who finished their graduate programs in December, March, or June, or will finish during the summer or fall may participate in the May ceremony. This is a ceremony only; no diplomas are presented. Online registration is required.

**Transcripts:** Transcripts are not automatically sent upon degree completion; rather, they must be ordered from the Office of the Registrar. An unofficial transcript can be obtained through **STudent Academic Record System (STARS)**, (<https://atweb.usc.edu/OASIS>) It indicates academic progress toward degree completion. It contains all USC coursework and accepted transfer work that applies to degree requirements. USC has authorized Parchment Inc. to act as its agent for processing orders of official electronic transcripts in PDF format. Parchment collects fees and forwards the request to the Registrar's office (<https://www.parchment.com/>).

**Diplomas:** Diplomas are generally printed and mailed six to eight weeks after the conclusion of the final semester. If an official verification of the degree is needed before receiving the diploma, contact the Verification or Transcript department. If "Hold for Pick-Up," is requested, or if the mailing address is in the 90007 or 90089 zip codes, the Registrar One Stop Center will email a notice when the diploma is ready for pick-up. If the diploma was damaged in transit, return it to the Registrar One Stop Center with a clear photocopy of a valid government-issued photo ID, the damaged diploma, AND the original mailer (to verify the in-transit damage). If the original mailer is returned, the university may waive the replacement fee of \$125.

## I. Department Policy on Probation and Dismissal

Probation following the end of the first semester is accompanied by a warning letter that failure to reach a 3.00 GPA by the end of the second semester may result in dismissal from the program. These measures are intended to provide students with unsatisfactory grades an opportunity to remedy the



situation. A student that receives a B- or lower in more than one course in the first semester requires special permission by the Department Chair and the GSPAC to remain in the program.

Probation is recommended for students whose GPA is below 3.00 after the first semester if recovery is deemed feasible. Dismissal is recommended when the overall GPA is below 3.00 after two consecutive semesters and is approved by the Graduate School. The department accepts one 4-unit grade of B- if the cumulative GPA is at least 3.00. More than one grade of B- requires that the student repeat one or more classes, as recommended by the GSPAC, to remove probation status. In addition to grades, good academic standing and degree progress requires reaching degree milestones as described in Section III: joining a research group by the end of the second semester, attempting the screening exam prior to the beginning of the fifth semester, attempting the qualifying exam by the end of the sixth semester, adequately performing all teaching duties, and adhering to USC's rules of conduct.

**The department may recommend that the Graduate School places a student on academic probation for failing to comply with any of these components of good academic standing.**

#### IV. FINANCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

All PhD students who maintain good academic standing are supported financially throughout their course of study. Annual salaries can come from different sources, including, but not limited to, Teaching Assistantship (TA), Researcher Assistantship (RA), and/or fellowships.

##### **A. Annual Salary and Financial Support Policies and Regulations**

Each graduate student will receive an offer letter from the department at the beginning of each semester stating whether they will be paid through an RA or TA position. It is important that the student electronically accepts this offer so the Payroll Office can make the appropriate arrangements. At the end of each semester, students receive an "end of semester" report, generated by the Payroll Office, that must be completed. In some cases, a student may be paid a "stipend" during the summer. There is no offer letter associated with such payments.

##### **B. USC Workday**

Workday is USC's human resources, benefits, payroll, and performance management system. It is designed to modernize and improve the way USC delivers key services to staff and faculty. Workday includes features that allow students to manage personal information: payroll deductions, address changes, etc. To access Workday, students must fill out forms with Human Resources. Most first year students do this during orientation week, but if changes need be made, the Human Resources office is in the Allan Hancock Foundation building (AHF) room 108.

##### **C. Internal Fellowships**

**Departmental Fellowships Awarded on Admission:** The department awards a number of fellowships on the basis of outstanding academic performance.

**Graduate School:** The Graduate Recruitment Committee (GRC) screens applicants and submits outstanding files for Graduate School fellowships. These provide one year of funding at the annual stipend level. Fellows will not have TA obligations during this time, enabling total dedication to research. If they have been offered a departmental top-off, they will receive that in addition.

**Departmental Top-Off:** These fellowships are sponsored by the department. They provide funding in addition to the base annual stipend. The duration is five years and is annually renewed contingent on academic performance (*e.g.*: coursework, qualifying exam, and progress towards research goals) and good progress towards degree. This fellowship is not guaranteed beyond five years.

**Provost:** The Office of the Provost awards up to two fellowships each year. These have an increased stipend but are limited to two years. The department may continue to support successful fellows at the elevated rate for up to five years depending on performance in coursework and research.

**WiSE:** The Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE) program awards up to two fellowships each year. A bonus is added to the annual stipend for one year. Fellows are selected based on exceptional academic performance prior to joining USC.

## **D. Externally Sponsored Opportunities**

Fellowships awarded directly by sponsoring agencies are usually publicized in professional journals and on bulletin boards in universities. Graduate students in good standing are encouraged to explore their options and apply, if eligible. The department maintains a list of currently available opportunities that is posted on the department website.

## **E. Teaching Assistantships (TA)**

One year of TA is required as part of the PhD, with many students fulfilling this obligation by the end of their first year. This section outlines the expectations of TAs in the Chemistry Department. Responsibilities may vary, depending on the course to which the graduate student is assigned. TAs must attend all TA meetings with lab directors or instructors of the course throughout the semester. Each TA will be assigned specific lab or discussion sections associated with a specific course. TAs are responsible for arriving to the laboratory ahead of start time to ensure the space is set up for the undergraduate students and must be fully prepared to lead the students through the experiment. TAs should be familiar with all techniques and instruments that will be used each section and prepared to answer questions that undergraduate students may have. TAs are also responsible for maintaining a safe laboratory environment and will be fully trained in what to do in an emergency during the mandatory TA training. TAs are also responsible for grading the weekly lab reports and posting the scores in the appropriate learning management system.

In addition to the laboratory responsibilities listed above, TAs are responsible for proctoring and grading all midterm exams for the lecture portion associated with the assigned laboratory. Depending on the structure of the course additional grading can be assigned for quizzes, homework or other assignments. These duties will be clearly outlined at the beginning of each semester in a contract that will be signed by the graduate student, the lab director, and the instructor of the course. Questions regarding TA expectations are encouraged and should be directed to the appropriate lab director and course instructor.

### **Eligibility**

All new students must attend mandatory TA training sessions, campus-wide TA Orientation, and the required laboratory safety course during orientation week. International students must participate in an oral interview if English is not their native language. This is required for all international students regardless of visa, residency, citizenship status, or educational background. Any student not demonstrating adequate English proficiency will be required to enroll in the American Language Institute (ALI), which provides courses designed to improve oral and writing skills in English. Units associated with ALI courses count towards the maximum enrollment of 12 units.

## **F. Equal Opportunity Policies and Procedures**

USC is an equal opportunity, affirmative action educator and employer, proudly pluralistic and firmly committed to providing education and employment opportunities to outstanding, qualified individuals with diverse backgrounds and experience. The university strives to maintain a welcoming community in which all its members may live, work and learn in peace and dignity, be proud of who they are, and have equal opportunity to realize their full potential as individuals and members of society. To this end, the university places great emphasis on those values and virtues that bind us together as human beings and members of the Trojan Family. The university enthusiastically supports the principles of affirmative action and equal opportunity in their entirety and expects that every person associated with the university will give continuing support to their implementation.

## **G. Research Travel Funds for Doctoral Students**

Chemistry PhD students attending conferences where they present results from their research may be eligible for a departmental travel award. This is possible through funding from Dornsife and the Provost's office but is not guaranteed and not all applications can be approved. Students must present their research as a poster or a talk. Awards vary by distance and are contingent on the applicant's advisor paying 50% of the expenses. Department funds are limited so students are also encouraged to seek assistance from conference organizers, WiSE, or USC's Graduate Professional Student Senate as well.

Candidates are eligible to receive one award per fiscal year, contingent on availability of funds. In case of limited funds, eligible candidates who have not already been recipients of a Chemistry Travel Award will be given preference. Postdocs are not eligible.

## **H. Internships**

It is understood that research internships come in many forms. In each case, however, the internship must be approached as a means of enhancing the graduate student's educational program. They are not for the financial gain of the research advisor, *e.g.*, saving money on a grant, startup company, *etc.* Nor are they for the student's financial gain. Specifically, the stipend or salary for the internship is not to be paid in addition to RA or TA support.

The preferred time of year is the summer, not during the academic year, and students are strongly discouraged from participating in an internship until after passing the qualifying exam. Participation in an internship is not acceptable rationale for delaying any exam deadlines. Prior to accepting an internship opportunity, both the student and research advisor must provide a memo to the GSPAC explaining how the proposed internship will benefit the student's educational program, specifically, thesis objectives. The GSPAC will return a decision as soon as possible, and approval is not guaranteed. In order to meet the requirements for their visas, international students must sign up for a one-unit course entitled: Curricular Practical Training (CPT).

<b>V. HEALTH AND SAFETY</b>
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In addition to the information below, USC offers services aimed at maintaining a safe environment and increasing student awareness and comfort. Students may sign up to receive campus alerts via the Trojans Alert System and request a Lyft when walking at night.

## A. Department of Chemistry Safety Practices and Policies

**Safety:** Safety is of paramount importance in the Department. Ensuring a safe work environment is a shared responsibility of all students, postdocs, faculty, and administrators. The Department supports a strongly proactive approach to safety concerns.

**Training:** USC Environmental Health and Safety offers classes that deal with general lab safety, blood borne pathogens, radiation, and x-rays. Any person working in a department lab must, at minimum, take the appropriate general lab safety class prior to beginning work. Additionally, each research advisor is responsible for ensuring specific training and practices germane to the group's research. Safety Data Sheets (SDS), formerly known as Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), describing the properties of various chemicals are available to the USC research community at the SDS Website. SDSs for many common chemicals are also available at the Sigma Aldrich website.

**First-Aid:** First Aid cabinets are located within the research labs. Corey Schultz is the Department Safety Coordinator. He has information about first aid assistance.

**Hazard Reporting:** Unsafe conditions in any workspace should be reported to Corey Schultz or the Chair. Forms for reporting hazards or unsafe conditions are at: [https://chemmac1.usc.edu/safety\\_concerns](https://chemmac1.usc.edu/safety_concerns).

## B. University Safety Practices and Policies

**Environmental Health and Safety:** The office of Environmental Health and Safety (EH&S) is committed to promoting a safe and healthy environment for research, instruction, and the campus community. EH&S assists the campus meet its obligations for compliance with State and Federal health, safety, and environmental regulations through education, auditing and monitoring, technical consultation, and provision of direct services,

**Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP):** The IIPP is the most important health and safety regulation/program in California. The IIPP law is administered by the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal-OSHA). It requires employers to establish the following foundation safety program elements that apply to all workers regardless of their job duties:

1. Ensure that workers are trained in, and comply with, safe work practices.
2. Inspect for and correct unsafe/unhealthy work conditions as soon as possible.
3. Maintain documentation of all training and inspections.
4. Encourage workers to report unsafe conditions at <https://ehs.usc.edu/report-a-safety-concern-form/without-fear-of-reprisal>
5. Communicate safety issues in a way that is understandable to all workers.
6. Report and investigate all occupational injuries.

## C. Handling and Reporting Incidents

Procedures for responding to fire, chemical exposure, medical, and other emergencies are outlined below. This information is also available in the [USC 1-2-3 Serious Injury Reporting Flyer](#) and [EH&S Emergency Notification Fact Sheet](#), posted on the wall of each lab and office. In case of emergency and/or injury, the incident should be reported to your supervisor or lab manager and the Department Safety Coordinator or Chairperson. When an emergency occurs, a system is in place to handle it. The Department of Public Safety (DPS) immediately notifies the proper internal/external departments and agencies (e.g. Environmental Health and Safety, Fire Safety, LAFD, LAPD, and LA County HazMat) to respond and assist. In case of emergency, do the following:

1. **Notify DPS immediately:** UPC (213) 740-4321; HSC (323) 442-1000

2. **Give the following information:** your name, call-back number, location (campus, building, room number), nature of the emergency. Describe in detail, including names of injured parties if possible.
3. **Notify USC EH&S within 8 hours:** (323) 442-2200, USC must report serious injury or illness to Cal-OSHA within 8 hours.
4. **Report the emergency to your supervisor and the Department Safety Coordinator**
5. **Complete Workers' Compensation form:** If you are injured, you (or responsible agent) must complete the Employee's Claim form for Workers' Compensation Benefits (DWC-1).

#### **D. Substance Abuse and Smoking Policies**

The USC Drug Free Policy recognizes that illegal or abusive use of alcohol and other drugs by members of the university community has a detrimental effect on the university's commitment to provide excellence in teaching and research. Misuse of alcohol and drugs by USC students, faculty, and staff poses hazards both to the individuals involved and to the community. Students, faculty, and staff share responsibility for creating an environment conducive to eliminating alcohol and drug abuse in the university community. Unauthorized use, possession or distribution of alcohol, tobacco products, unauthorized or illegal drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia in the university community or at university-sponsored activities is prohibited. See <https://policy.usc.edu/drug-free>

It must be clearly understood by all students that chemistry lab work carries significant safety and facility risk, and the level of risk is heightened following the consumption of alcohol or other drugs. Individuals under the influence of alcohol or drugs must not perform any laboratory work. Alcohol and drugs impair a person's ability to make sound decisions and judgments. With their decision-making ability seriously impaired, any person working while intoxicated could make grievous errors. It is Department policy that no lab work at the instructional or research level be performed by individuals under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Persons under 21 years of age are prohibited to possess or consume alcohol. Official identification may be required to verify that a person has attained the legal age for possessing or consuming alcohol. Many undergraduate students are under 21 years of age. As a result, uncontrolled access to alcohol in departmental areas accessible to students under 21 years of age, such as classrooms, meeting rooms, and offices, is prohibited. Any type of food and beverage storage or consumption in instructional and research labs is also prohibited.

#### **VI. CODES OF CONDUCT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

General principles of Academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All Students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. SCAMPUS, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00, while the recommended sanctions are in Appendix A: <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <https://policy.usc.edu/studenthandbook>

#### **A. Student Code of Conduct**



**Students:** Graduate students are responsible for meeting not only the academic standards outlined here, but also standards for personal conduct and responsibility outlined in the General Catalogue, SCAMPUS, and other USC publications. Students have an obligation to act in a manner compatible with the University's function as an educational institution. Standards of Conduct and processes for reporting violations are outlined in SCAMPUS Part B. Ignorance is not an acceptable justification for violating community standards. Lack of intent or awareness of university standards normally will not be accepted as excuses for violations and will normally receive the same consequences as deliberate violations.

## **B. Departmental Resources for Conflict Resolution**

All members of the Department are expected to contribute to a positive and professional environment fostering growth and collegiality. Yet, conflicts will inevitably arise. When you are comfortable and safe doing so, you are encouraged to discuss potential disagreements with your colleagues or Research Advisor and work toward agreeable solutions. When this proves not feasible, students should seek outside assistance as soon as the problem arises.

**Graduate Program Administrator:** The Graduate Program Administrator is available for advice and referral and serves as the initial contact for students wishing to vocalize and address concerns. This person can provide impartial feedback on a situation, suggest roles that particular faculty members may play in providing assistance, or advise a more formal grievance process, if necessary.

**GSPAC:** Serves as impartial advisors to students during their first semester at USC and later as a resource for students external to their Research Advisor. When a conflict arises, that students are uncomfortable discussing with their research advisor they are encouraged to meet with the GSPAC representative for their section.

**Department Chair:** When additional help, guidance, or conflict resolution is needed, students may consult with the Department Chair. This should be reserved for very serious situations.

**Note:** If information is disclosed during conversation with a departmental representative that implies or suggests harassment (sexual or otherwise) or a threat of danger/harm to any individual, confidentiality does not apply. The appropriate resource or authority must be contacted. **IF YOU ARE IN A THREATENING OR UNSAFE SITUATION, SEEK HELP IMMEDIATELY.**

## **C. Office of the Ombuds**

The Office of the Ombuds provides a safe place on both campuses for faculty, students, and staff to navigate policies, issues, concerns, and conflicts without fear of reprisal or judgment. In so doing, the Office promotes and embodies an ethical, empathetic, and engaged culture committed to problem-solving, dispute resolution, and workplace wellness. If you are not satisfied with informal attempts at resolving a conflict, you may choose to initiate a grievance process. The Ombuds can give you information about the process but cannot handle or get involved with it. Consulting with the Office of the Ombuds is completely voluntary. All members of the University community have the right to speak with the Office. Retaliation for exercising that right will not be tolerated. The Ombuds can be contacted at (213) 821-9556 or [upcombuds@usc.edu](mailto:upcombuds@usc.edu).

## **D. Office of Equity and Diversity**

The Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) deals with Title IX. It is responsible for investigating cases of protected-class discrimination or harassment in the university community and enforcing the university's anti-harassment and non-discrimination policies. OED also ensures university compliance and best practices in the implementation of other laws, including equal opportunity

requirements. OED can be contacted at (213) 740-5086 or [eeotix@usc.edu](mailto:eeotix@usc.edu).

## VII. CAMPUS SERVICES AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

USC is a close-knit community that serves the needs of a highly diverse group of scholars, students, faculty, and staff. The campus offers a wide variety of resources, services, information, and professional staff to help meet your needs. The following resources and services are provided for your benefit.

### A. Student Health Services

The Engemann Student Health Center is a full-service health center licensed by the State of California. It provides primary care and referrals to our specialty care services, as well as referrals to off-campus services (for specialized or emergency care) as necessary. The equivalent facility on the Health Sciences Campus is the Eric Cohen Student Health Center. Payment of the Student Health Fee entitles you to services at the Student Health Center on the USC campus where you are enrolled. This fee is automatically charged to your account if you are enrolled in six or more units. Nominal additional fees are charged for laboratory tests, prescriptions, immunizations, copies of X-rays, and copies of medical records. The health fee does not cover hospitalization or specialty care that cannot be obtained through the health center.

**USC Student Health Insurance Plan:** The Aetna Student Health Insurance Plan is a comprehensive major medical insurance plan, providing medical, nutrition counseling, prescription, vision, and dental services. All students are automatically enrolled in this plan upon registration at USC. Details are available via the Student Health website or may be obtained from Student Health in person. Student Health may be reached at (213) 740-9355 for general information and appointments.

### B. Mental Health Support

Each graduate student's time at USC should be a happy, rewarding and productive experience. Nevertheless, there may be periods where students lack motivation, become stressed, are dealing with significant life changes, or simply feel burned out. USC provides several options to help manage such challenges. Counseling and Mental Health programs at Student Health include individual therapy, group therapy, crisis support, psychiatric services and specialties for gender-based harm. Counselors are also available to provide consultation to those who are interested in reaching out to a student in distress by calling (213)740-7711.

**Office of Equity and Diversity/ Title IX:** Information about how to get help for (or help a survivor of) harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristics that may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations. (213) 740-5086.

**Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services:** For free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm, call (213) 740-4900 (available 24hrs a day, 7 days a week).

**Bias Assessment Response and Support:** To report incidents of bias and hate crimes for appropriate investigation and response, call (213)-740-2421. USC Support and Advocacy Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely

affecting their success as a student; call (213) 821-4710.

### C. General Catalogue

The General Catalogue is published online annually by the Office of the Registrar and serves as a guide and resource for all students at USC. The Catalogue includes descriptions of all courses offered during that academic year; University and campus policies, mission statement, accreditation statement, and general information; academic policies and procedures; college, department, and program-specific policies, requirements, and details; and financial information. The catalogue can be accessed electronically at <https://catalogue.usc.edu>

### D. Office of International Services

The Office of International Services (OIS) supports international students and scholars as they strive to achieve their educational, professional, and personal objectives. OIS is a resource center that provides advising, information, and opportunities for involvement to help members of the USC international community make the most of their USC experience. OIS advocates for these benefits on campus, locally and nationally. <https://ois.usc.edu>

### E. Involvement and Outreach Opportunities

**Women in Science and Engineering (WiSE):** WiSE administers a variety of grant programs aimed at faculty, postdocs, graduate and undergraduate students, and high school and middle school girls. These programs encourage women to select USC as an institution in which to study, conduct research, and develop successful careers. WiSE is eager to support student activities that serve to increase the representation of women in science and engineering. If you would like to develop an activity that involves undergraduate, graduate, or postdoctoral students please send a brief proposal and an estimated budget to the WiSE Program Office at [wiseprog@usc.edu](mailto:wiseprog@usc.edu).

**Women in Chemistry (WiC):** This organization promotes the success of women in the field of chemistry. It provides professional development opportunities for its members such as hosting meetings dedicated to career opportunities, holding academic conferences, etiquette workshops, forums for discussing appropriate conduct in the workplace, and more. WiC has a first-year mentorship program that eases the transition to graduate school. There are social events throughout the year such as book club, ice cream social, movie nights, and more. WiC encourages and participates in community out-reach to inspire young women to enter STEM fields. WiC activities are open to both men and women.

**Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS):** SACNAS is an inclusive organization dedicated to fostering the success of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans, from college students to professionals, in attaining advanced degrees, careers, and positions of leadership in STEM. The USC chapter is active in organizing graduate student mentors for undergraduate researchers, running workshops on assembling effective resumes, and running outreach programs to the community.

**Chemistry Graduate Student Organization (CGSO):** The Chemistry Graduate Student Organization (CGSO) is student-led. It promotes the professional growth of graduate students by organizing symposia and networking opportunities. An example is the annual Career Symposium held in the Spring Semester. CGSO members select speakers to give a narrative about their education and the steps that lead them to their current career. Speakers and graduate students' network over lunch and coffee. The Career Symposium informs students about careers in industry, academia, and government, including how to enter and succeed in these environments.



APPENDIX A: TIMELINE OF IMPORTANT MILESTONES DURING THE PH. D.

