

USCDornsife

Dana and David Dornsife
College of Letters, Arts and Sciences

USC POSTBACC PREMED PROGRAM

Spring Newsletter

April 2024

Director Spotlight

Program Director - Dr. Chi Mak

Dr. Mak has been on USC's faculty since 1990 and he currently holds joint appointments as Professor of Chemistry and Quantitative & Computational Biology. He also teaches a biochemistry course in the postbacc core curriculum.



What are your goals for the postbacc program?

I took up the directorship of USC's Postbacc program in 2022. Before that, I have taught hundreds of postbaccs in my chemistry classes over the years at USC, and some of the best students I have ever had have been postbaccs. My singular goal is to help our postbaccs realize their aspirations, whether their goals are medical school, dental school or vet school.

Since taking up the directorship of the program, I have been focusing on implementing new initiatives designed to bring even more benefits to our students. Among these are: (1) a relationship with USC's Keck School of Medicine to grant guaranteed interviews to those postbaccs who meet a certain GPA and MCAT requirement, (2) establishing a merit scholarship for incoming postbaccs, and (3) launching a Chemistry Bootcamp to help students in our Summer and Fall cohorts to build a strong background preparing them for a solid start in their first gen chem course at USC. This Spring, the program will be adding another Physics Bootcamp for first-year postbaccs going into general physics in the Summer semester. In conjunction with these, we are adding even more advisement and support services for our students to guide each of them in building a compelling profile for their med school applications.

What is your advice for students interested in pursuing a postbacc program?

My advice is to keep your focus on the academics instead of thinking of your postbacc as a means to an end. Medicine is the application of science to health, and a strong science foundation will pay dividends throughout med school and into your life as a physician. Of course, there are other elements in your profile like clinical, volunteer and/or research experiences that are also important for your profile, and we will help you build those with all of the richness of what USC and Keck offers. Focusing on learning the science in your postbacc program and understanding them will become one of your greatest strengths.

What's upcoming in the program?

foundations.

- April 2024 - May 2024 - *AMCAS Primary Application Workshop Meeting*: Our second-year students will begin their Primary Application and start their glide year.
- Mid-May 2024 - Our *Summer 2024 cohort* begin their postbacc journey at USC!

Glide Year Student Spotlight

Alex Mancoll

USC Postbacc Alum '23

Tell us about your glide year (2023-2024) experience so far.

"My glide year has been coming along nicely. I spent the first portion of it continuing to work as an EMT, while taking my MCAT and diving into the long process of applying, completing secondaries, and ultimately interviewing. Between my interview phase and hearing back I volunteered at a nursing home in Costa Rica to get some extra volunteering in and to work on my medical Spanish. I am pleased to announce that upon my return I was accepted into my first pick, Eastern Virginia Medical School, in my hometown in Virginia. I will be spending the rest of the year shadowing, volunteering, pre-studying, and getting my life in order for the start of medical school in the fall."

Learn more about the postbacc program!

Upcoming Information Session: [Friday, April 19, 5 - 6:30pm PDT.](#)

Preliminary Application Deadlines

Fall 2024 term: June 21, 2024

Spring 2025 term: TBD

[Start your application](#)

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