I have a BS degree and my goal is to obtain a PhD degree. Should I apply for the MS degree or the PhD degree?

*You should apply for the PhD degree if your intent or goal is to get a PhD.*

Should I apply for the MS in Materials Science or the MS in Materials Engineering?

*If you only plan to get a Master's degree you should apply for the MS in Materials Engineering.*

What is the MS in Materials Science degree program?

*This MS degree requires the six core classes that are the same six core classes required for the PhD degree. It is designed as the Master's degree that student in the PhD program can obtain along their way to getting the PhD.*

I am applying to a MS degree program. Is there any financial support of Master's students?

*Nearly all of our Master's students are self-supported. There are no funds to provide financial support for Master degree students.* *(financial statement form)*

I have submitted my application several months ago but I have not received any reply?

*It is not unusual for a decision to take more than two months from the time of submission of the application. The decision can only be made after the application package is complete and reviewed by the USC Admission Office. This includes letters of reference and transcripts.*

How long will it take to make a decision once my application package is complete?

*For students applying to the MS degree program a decision should be made within 30 days of the application package being complete and sent by the Admission Office for Departmental review.*

*For students applying for the PhD degree program the admission process is a two step process. The first step is to be determined if the applicable is admissible and the second step is putting together a financial support package. If the PhD applicant is not admissible they will be promptly notified. For those that are admissible they will not be admitted unless a financial support package can be put together which can take some time.*
What should I do if I am a PhD applicant that does not require any financial support?

Sometimes applicants have their own support such as a NSF fellowship or support from the company where they work. You should indicate on your application that you do not need financial support and give the source of your financial support. (financial statement form)

I have applied for the PhD degree program. Do I need to apply for financial aid as well?

No, if you have applied for the PhD degree program you will automatically be considered for all available financial aid. The majority of financial aid is offered in the Fall Semester only. In rare cases, a Research Assistantship may be offered by a Faculty research group.

May I contact faculty if they can provide me with financial support?

Yes you may but we advise students to do this after they have submitted their application. It is difficult for faculty to make a decision without all the information in the application package.

May I e-mail my unofficial scores and transcripts and get an opinion of my chances of being admitted?

No. You will be asked to submit an application.

What are the minimum requirements for admission?

The following are minimum requirements for admission. Applicants who meet these minimum requirements may still be denied admission. Applicants who do not meet any one of these minimum requirements most likely be denied admission. For MS applicants the minimum GPA is 3.0 for PhD applicants the minimum GPA is 3.25. For GRE the minimum Verbal score is 340 (for international students) and the minimum Quantitative score is 740. For international students the minimum TOEFL score is 71 for the internet-based TOEFL, 197 for the computer based TOEFL.