

The background of the cover features a large, stylized 'V' shape. The top-left portion of the 'V' is yellow, the main body is maroon, and the bottom-right portion is light gray. The text is positioned in the upper left and lower right areas of the page.

USC Viterbi

School of Engineering
*Department of Aerospace and
Mechanical Engineering*

Master's Student Handbook ***2021-2022***

ame.usc.edu

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AME Student Affairs

Welcome to the Aerospace and Mechanical Engineering (AME) Department! We are the AME Student Affairs team:



Director
Chrissy Franks Sayed



Assistant Director
Susan Sath



Assistant Director
Lauren Terazawa

Our office is located in OHE 500. Master's students can reach an advisor by emailing amegrad@usc.edu. Please include your USC ID number in the email.

20-minute advising sessions are also available. To schedule a meeting, please visit [myViterbi](#) and click "Advisement Appointment System."

Degree Requirements

The [AME department website](#) provides information about degree requirements for all Master's programs. You can click on "Academics," go to "Graduate Degrees," then scroll down to find links for program requirements, captured below:

For detailed information and degree requirements for the following master's programs:

M.S. in Aerospace Engineering (MSAE)

M.S. in Mechanical Engineering (MSME)

M.S. in Computational Fluid and Solid
Mechanics (MSAME)

M.S. in Dynamics and Control (MSAME)

M.S. in Product Development
Engineering (MSPDE)

M.S. in Mechanical Engineering - Energy
Conversion (MSME - Energy Conversion)

AME 525 is required for almost all AME M.S. programs. If AME 525 (Engineering Analysis) is required for your degree, we *highly recommend* you take the course in your first semester at USC. Specializations for MSME or MSAE are NOT required. A thesis is also not required for any M.S. programs in AME.

Course Registration

Students use [Web Registration \(WebReg\)](#) to register for classes. You can access WebReg via [myUSC](#). We recommend watching the [WebReg Tutorial videos](#) to learn how to navigate this tool.

Use the degree requirements listed on the [AME department website](#) as a guide to select your courses each semester.

The [Schedule of Classes](#) archives schedules from previous semesters. While courses are subject to change, students can view archived schedules to see which courses are typically offered during the fall, spring and summer semesters.

D-clearance for On-campus Students

Courses that have the letter “D” next to the section number require Departmental (D-) clearance. To request D-clearance for an AME class, please email amegrad@usc.edu.

If a waitlist exists for the course, we will ask you to request D-clearance by logging into [myViterbi](#) and clicking “D-clearance and Pre-Requisite Waiver Request Manager.” Students will receive a confirmation email if D-clearance is granted.

For classes outside of the AME department, students must contact the academic department for D-clearance. The department’s contact information will be posted on the [Schedule of Classes](#). For example:

Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISE)

+ expand all

- collapse all

<https://ise.usc.edu>

D class assignments for undergraduates available in GER 247; phone (213) 740-4893.

(213) 740-4893. 7 D class assignments for undergraduates and on-campus graduate students available online at ise.usc.edu/current-students/ or via phone at (213) 740-4893. 7 D class assignments for undergraduates available in GER 247; phone

D-clearance for DEN Students

The Office of Viterbi Admissions and Student Engagement (VASE) manages enrollment in DEN courses. DEN sections of AME courses are designated as “DEN@Viterbi” in the room/location. DEN students can obtain D-Clearances for DEN courses through their [DEN Profile and the D-Clearance Request Form located in DEN@Viterbi](#).

You can check the status of submitted D-Clearance requests via the D-Clearance Status link also located in DEN Tools. If you have questions about enrollment in DEN courses, please email den@vase.usc.edu.

Note: DEN sections are reserved for DEN Off-campus students.

Prerequisite waivers

Some graduate courses list prerequisites. Web Registration will block students from enrolling in the course if the student did not complete the prerequisite at USC. However, prerequisites for AME classes can be waived if:

1. The student took the prerequisite at their previous institution. If you took the course from your previous school and would like the prerequisite waived, please fill out our [request form](#).
2. The student contacts the professor directly to discuss their academic or professional background. If the professor determines the student is prepared for the course and approves a prerequisite waiver, please forward the communication to amegrad@usc.edu

The AME department cannot waive prerequisites for non-AME classes. Please contact the appropriate academic department to ask if a prerequisite waiver is allowed. You can find department contact information in the [Schedule of Classes](#).

Courses with time conflicts

Web Registration will prevent students from registering for courses with time conflicts. We strongly encourage students to enroll in classes that do not have time conflicts. If there are two courses you need to take that are offered at the same time, please email amegrad@usc.edu to discuss other options.

In some circumstances, it is possible to register for two courses with a time conflict. For example, two courses might have a 10-minute overlap and a professor may be okay with you leaving class 10 minutes early or arriving 10 minutes later. We recommend contacting the professors directly to determine if it's feasible to take both courses. Be aware of any exams, attendance, presentations, etc. required on the same date.

If you decide to enroll in courses with a time conflict, enroll in one class first. Afterward, contact the [Registrar Office](#) to request assistance with enrolling in the second course. You can email this office via the [askUSC portal](#).

Registration Deadlines

The registration calendar is available on the [Schedule of Classes](#). Please check it every semester to be aware of important deadlines, such as:

- The deadline to add a class
- The deadline to drop a class and receive a refund
- The deadline to drop a course without a mark of “W” on the transcript
- The deadline to drop a course with a mark of “W” on the transcript

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How many classes should I take each semester? How long will it take to finish my degree?

The typical course load for students is 8-10 units per semester. 8 units is considered full-time status. If you are an international student, please review the [requirements to maintain visa status](#). Students working full-time often take one class per semester.

The duration of your program will depend on how many units are required for the degree and how many courses you take per semester. Most of our M.S. programs require 27 units total and can be completed within 1.5-3 years. Students have a maximum 5 years to complete their degree.

2. Can I transfer graduate courses to count towards my Master's degree?

USC accepts a maximum 6 units of transferred graduate credit. You must first [request the Registrar Office to evaluate your courses and create a Transfer Credit Report \(TCR\)](#). If the courses appear on the TCR, email the course syllabi to amegrad@usc.edu. AME faculty will review the course(s) to determine if it can be applied toward the degree.

3. Is it possible to change to a different degree program?

Students can switch from one M.S. program to another program in the AME department* if they receive a minimum 3.0 GPA in their first semester. Complete and email the [Change of Major form](#) to amegrad@usc.edu.

*AME students who wish to switch to a dual degree with Engineering Management will need the change of major form approved by both the AME department and ISE department.

If students want to switch to a M.S. program in a different department, they will need to contact the department to confirm admission requirements and eligibility.

4. How do I get involved in research?

We recommend reviewing the [AME faculty directory](#) to find professors doing research in a topic you are interested in. Students can contact faculty members directly to ask if there are any opportunities to participate in their research lab. If students want to complete directed research (AME 590), they must first set up a meeting with a professor to discuss this option and commit to a topic and research plan.

Once you have gotten the preliminary approval from your professor, log into [myViterbi](#), click on the "Directed Research" link, and follow the steps to obtain D-clearance to enroll in the directed research course.

Check your [degree requirements website](#) to confirm if directed research can be applied to your degree.

5. Are Research Assistantships or TA-ships available for Master's students?

The AME department does not offer Research/Teaching Assistantships for Master's students. If you work in a research lab, please ask the principal investigator if there are payment options (i.e. hourly wage). Students can also search for paid positions to be a grader.

You can view other funding sources on the [Viterbi Graduate Admissions website](#). You can also contact the [Financial Aid Office](#) to inquire about other funding opportunities:

Campus Resources and Student Organizations

Viterbi Career Connections

[Viterbi Career Connections \(VCC\)](#) offers career-focused support to prepare engineering students for internships, co-ops and full-time employment. VCC hosts a variety of technical companies throughout the year with job openings to fill. Visit the Viterbi Career Gateway for the Job & Internship Portal, Career Events, On-Campus Interviews, and more.

Student Involvement

- The [Viterbi Graduate Student Association](#) provides a forum to promote interaction among the graduate students of the USC Viterbi School of Engineering, and whenever possible, to address students' needs and concerns
- USC has more than 800 [student organizations](#), which are responsible for the majority of programs and events held on campus, including concerts, lectures, special events, spirit rallies, cultural and social events, and conferences
- The [Viterbi Graduate Student Mentorship Program](#) is designed to help new Viterbi graduate students adjust smoothly to life at USC and Los Angeles. Participating new students (mentees) will be paired up with current Viterbi graduate students (mentors)

Student Wellness

Please review VASE's [student wellness website](#) to review the various resources USC offers to maintain your wellness, such as:

- Student Counseling Center Services and Student Health Center
- Office of Religious Life
- Trojans Care for Trojans
- Recreational Sports
- Disability Services and Programs
- LGBT Resource Center
- Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services

General Policies You Need to Know

For International Students

Passport Verification (PPV)

International students need to visit the [Office of International Services](#) for passport verification. Otherwise, you will not be able to register for your courses because you will have a restriction hold (STU50) on your account. The AME Department does not handle Visa's or I-20's. You will need to [contact OIS](#) in regards to any I-20 questions.

Academic Advisor Signature

For any OIS-related forms that require the academic advisor's signature (examples: CPT, OPT, RCL), please visit [VASE's International Services website](#) and contact masters@vase.usc.edu if you have additional questions.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)

USC accepts only Internet-Based TOEFL (iBT) test scores.

If you did not receive sufficient scores on your TOEFL exam, you are required to take the ISE (International Student Entrance) exam. You can register for the ISE exam on the [ALI \(American Language Institute\) website](#).

Some students retake the TOEFL exam and receive better scores. If this is your case, you need to [contact ALI](#) to see if your restriction hold can be removed based on improved results.

Conditions of Admission

If you received a **letter with conditions of admission**, please be prepared to present the letter or discuss these conditions when you meet with your advisor. These conditions were placed by the admissions committee and serve to reemphasize the importance of performing well during your first semester. If the letter indicates specific courses you need to take, then you **MUST** take the courses during your first semester.

Due to these conditions, you will have a restriction hold on your account (ADM 20) and this hold will not be removed until you email your advisor in the second semester and indicate that you have satisfied the admission conditions. This hold will not prevent you from registering for courses.

Prior Degree Verification

Check your OASIS account in [myUSC](#) to find out if Degree Verification is required for you.

If you have an "Activity Restriction," identified as an ADM40 or RNR40, you must have your prior degree(s) verified. ADM40 and RNR40 holds will not prevent initial registration, but you must resolve the degree verification by the end of your first semester.

Complete information about prior degree verification can be found on the [Degree Progress website](#).

What happens if a student does not complete Degree Verification?

- Students are **STRONGLY** encouraged to start the process as early as possible.
- Documents submitted with the graduate application are not enough to satisfy the degree verification requirement.
- Failure to complete verification prior to end of first term of enrollment will result in a restriction that prevents registration transactions. (ADM 41 or RNR 41). This means that registration for the following semester cannot take place.
- Late registration can result in late fees being added to your account.

Good Academic Standing

All graduate students are required to maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (“B” average), as well as a 3.0 (“B” average) in your applied major courses

Leaves of Absence

Graduate students are expected to be enrolled in courses every Fall and Spring semester. If you need to take a semester off, you must apply for a Leave of Absence. International Students must contact [VASE](#) to apply for a Leave of Absence. Domestic Students can email the [AME department](#). Enrollment during the Summer semester is optional.

Please feel free to email us at amegrad@usc.edu if you have any questions. **Fight On!**