The University of South Carolina
Opportunity Scholars Program
2008—2009 Program Application

Making the Transition
...exploring the possibilities
TO THE STUDENT:

This application is for participation in the Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP) sponsored by The University of South Carolina. Please review carefully the following requirements to ensure that your application receives full consideration for selection.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Students must meet eligibility criteria established under federal TRIO Programs:

1. First-generation college students: individuals whose parents did not complete a baccalaureate (4-year) degree; or
2. Family income: students whose family income would qualify them to receive support under the Pell Grant Program; and/or

PROGRAM BENEFITS

Students selected for participation receive a number of benefits that promote academic success during the freshman year:

- Smaller classes taught by instructors who work as a team to promote students’ academic development,
- Reduced tuition charges for courses taught by OSP instructors,
- Opportunities to participate in cultural enrichment and mentoring activities,
- Academic assistance through small group and individual tutorials, and
- Eligibility for additional scholarships.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Students must complete this application packet and have all materials returned to the USC TRIO office before May 30, 2008. The application requests information on the student’s background and financial aid status, recommendations from high school teachers and/or guidance counselors, and an essay.

Applications must be returned to

Opportunity Scholars Program
TRIO Programs
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208

Please contact the University of South Carolina TRIO Programs (803/777-5127) if you have questions or require further assistance.
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP) provides academic support and services for promising and motivated students to succeed at the University of South Carolina. The Program is selective and supports the educational success of students who qualify for sizable Pell grant awards and those who are first-generation college students.

The OSP creates a small college atmosphere by allowing its students to take important freshman level classes from a team of faculty and staff especially prepared to work with the needs and concerns of our OSP students. In addition to classes, the program provides tutoring assistance, mentoring by upper-class students, a series of workshops on various topics, and cultural enrichment activities.

The Opportunity Scholars Program has a history of success. Typically, fewer than 50% of all first-generation college students earn four-year degrees. However, OSP participants graduate from the University at a rate comparable to or higher than that for the general student population (63%).

The Opportunity Scholars Program receives grant support from the U.S. Department of Education. Therefore, USC is able to offer a reduction in tuition to those students taking OSP classes. For example, students who take our five fall classes (English, math, history, psychology, and University 101) may have their tuition reduced by as much as 48%. Students who take three of these classes may receive up to a 27% reduction in tuition. These savings may affect financial aid awards; however, they represent significant savings for most students.

The individual attention of faculty and small group activities often mean a rigorous routine for OSP students. However, our success comes from helping students to acquire the skills and confidence they will need throughout college. We expect students to be committed to this rigor and to take advantage of our program’s benefits.

STUDENT SELECTION PROCEDURES

OSP applications are available March of each year through the TRIO Programs at the University of South Carolina. Potential students must complete the application that requires background information, two letters of recommendation from teachers and/or guidance counselors, and a personal essay. All application materials must be submitted by May 30, 2008. OSP faculty and staff review student applications to select individuals whose materials indicate they will benefit most from program involvement.
INITIAL ENROLLMENT ACTIVITIES

Students selected for participation must sign and return the Student Agreement Form that indicates willingness to participate in the program. The Student Agreement Form will be mailed to you once you have been accepted into the program.

Next, each student must meet with the OSP staff during the summer Freshmen Orientation sessions that all USC freshmen are required to attend. OSP students are asked to attend this orientation on one of the following dates: June 13th, 17th, 23rd, 25th, 27th, or July 3rd. If students cannot attend one of these sessions, we ask that they notify the OSP staff of the session in which they will participate.

During the orientation sessions, all OSP participants declare themselves to be undecided Undergraduate Studies majors. This designation allows the OSP staff to provide advisement that encourages the completion of degrees in four years. Also, being an undeclared major is only for the freshman year, when students are taking general education courses. Our advisement takes into consideration placement test scores and students’ plans to pursue particular majors.

During the Freshman Orientation session, students meet with the OSP staff after lunch (approximately 1 p.m.) in a Thomas Cooper Library Media Room. At this time, students will register for courses and receive additional information about the program. This advisement is a regular part of the orientation schedule and will not interfere with your participation in other orientation activities.

Students enroll in OSP courses that are part of the regular USC curriculum. All courses count toward graduation and most satisfy general education requirements. During the fall, these courses include English 101 (Composition), History 102 (Introduction to European Civilization), Psychology 101 (Introduction to Psychology), University 101 (Student in the University), Math 115 (Pre-calculus), Math 111 (Basic College Math), and Math 170 (Finite Math). Spring courses include English 102 (Composition & Literature), History 112 (U.S. History Since 1865), Math 122 (Calculus for Social Sciences), and Math 141 (Calculus I) and Math 170 (Finite Math). Students can enroll in other USC courses if they desire; however, the tuition reduction is only for OSP courses.

The OSP staff will conduct a special orientation for students and parents in August. The USC Housing Office will allow most participants to move into their dorm rooms early so that they can attend this two-day orientation. The meeting will begin with lunch at noon. All parents are encouraged to attend the August orientation to learn about the program and to meet the staff. Further details will be mailed in July.
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM
APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Please type or print in black ink

Personal Data

Legal Name: __________________________________________________________

Last/Family  First  Middle (complete)  Jr., etc.  Gender

Prefer to be called: __________________________ (nickname)  Former last name(s) if any: __________________________

Permanent home address: _______________________________________________

Number and Street

City or Town  County  State  Zip Code

If different from the above, please give your local mailing address:

Local address: _______________________________________________

Number and Street

City or Town  County  State  Zip Code

Phone at local address: (___) ____________________________  Permanent home phone: (___) ____________________________

E-mail address: ________________________________________________

Birth date: ______________  Marital Status: ____________________  Number of dependents ___________

Citizenship: _____ U.S.  _____ U.S. Permanent Resident visa.  _____ Other citizenship: __________________________

TRIO Participation: _____ Upward Bound  _____ Talent Search/EOC  _____ Student Support Services

Location of TRIO Project  Director  Phone

Social Security Number: ___________  _______  ____________

First language, if other than English: _____________________________  Language spoken at home: ________________

If you wish to be identified with a particular ethnic group, please check the following:

_____ African American, Black  _____ Mexican American, Chicano

_____ American Indian  _____ Native Hawaiian

_____ Asian American  _____ Puerto Rican

_____ Asia (Indian Subcontinent)  _____ White or Caucasian

_____ Hispanic, Latino  _____ Other (specify ____________________________)

Did either of your parents complete a four-year college degree?  Yes  No

If yes, who completed the degree?  _____ Mother  _____ Father  _____ Guardian
Financial Aid Data

For financial aid purposes are you considered ___ independent or ___ dependent?

**IF DEPENDENT COMPLETE SECTION A; IF INDEPENDENT COMPLETE SECTION B**

**SECTION A**

Number of household members, including yourself: ________

Parents' 2007 taxable income? (Line 43 on 1040, Line 27 on 1040A, or Line 6 on 1040EZ): ___________________________

Parent’s signature to indicate that this information is correct _________________________________________ Date

**SECTION B**

Number of household members, including yourself, spouse, and/or other dependents: ______________

2007 taxable income? (Line 43 on 1040, Line 27 on 1040A, or Line 6 on 1040EZ): ___________________________

Your signature to indicate that this information is correct _________________________________________ Date

**Academic Information**

**PLEASE LIST ANY ACADEMIC HONORS AND AWARDS (INDICATE DATE RECEIVED)**

AWARD/DATE(S) _____________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

MEMBERSHIPS AND PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

ACTIVITY/DATE(S) _____________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

**Letters of Recommendation**

Whom have you asked to write your letters of recommendation?

Teacher or Guidance Counselor ______________________________________________________________________________________ PHONE NUMBER __________

Teacher or Guidance Counselor ______________________________________________________________________________________ PHONE NUMBER __________

**Personal Essay**

Write and submit a 300-word essay (approximately 2 double-spaced pages) responding to **one** of the following quotations:

1. I know of no more encouraging fact than the unquestionable ability of man to elevate his life by a conscious endeavor.——Henry David Thoreau,
2. Too often we enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought.——John F. Kennedy,
3. It is only when we forget all our learning that we begin to know.——Henry David Thoreau
TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT. PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>M.I.</th>
<th>Undergraduate Major</th>
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</table>

Telephone Number  Prospective Graduate Program

OPTIONAL: I understand that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-380) as amended provides me access to this letter of recommendation. I voluntarily waive this right with the understanding that failure to grant this waiver will not alter my chances for admission into the program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Applicant’s Signature</th>
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TO THE RECOMMENDER:

The Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP) provides academic support and services that help motivated students succeed at Carolina. Students attend smaller classes, participate in a mentoring program, enjoy cultural enrichment opportunities, and receive tutoring and other academic support services. Please help us assess the promise and motivation of this student to benefit fully from a program of this type.

1. What is your appraisal of the applicant's promise as a college student and future scholar?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. How long have you known this student and in what capacity?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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3. How would you evaluate the applicant's academic aptitude and potential?

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4. To what extent do you believe the applicant could benefit from this program?

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5. Other statements you wish to make on behalf of this applicant.

________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Name       Title       Department

Address

E-mail       Phone

Signature       Date
THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM
FACULTY/COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION FORM

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE APPLICANT. PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT.

__________________________________        ______________________________________ _______________________
Last Name     First Name   M.I.  Undergraduate Major
________________________________________________  _______________________________________________
Telephone Number       Prospective Graduate Program

OPTIONAL:  I UNDERSTAND THAT THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 (P.L. 93-380) AS AMENDED PROVIDES ME ACCESS TO THIS LETTER
OF RECOMMENDATION.  I VOLUNTARILY WAIVE THIS RIGHT WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT FAILURE TO GRANT THIS WAIVER WILL NOT ALTER MY CHANCES FOR AD-
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______________________________   _________________________________________________________________
Date      Applicant’s  Signature

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________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Name	Title	Department

Address

E-mail	Phone

Signature	Date
The University of South Carolina provides equal opportunity and affirmative action in education and employment for all qualified persons regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. The University of South Carolina has designated as the ADA Title II, section 504, and Title IX coordinator the Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs. The Office of the Executive Assistant to the President for Equal Opportunity Programs is located in Suite 405 of 900 Assembly Street, Columbia, SC 29208; telephone 803/777-3854.