

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

APPLICATION GUIDE

APPLICATION AT A GLANCE

TEST-OPTIONAL POLICY

UofSC will be test-optional through the fall, spring and summer 2023 terms. This policy applies to general university admission and South Carolina Honors College admission, as well as merit scholarships awarded by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Freshman admission will be based primarily on high school courses and grades. Students will indicate on their application whether or not they want UofSC to consider their standardized test scores in the admission process.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Completed application (including essay and activities section)
- ☐ \$65 application fee or valid fee waiver for eligible students
- ☐ School report form
- ☐ Unofficial high school transcript

SOUTH CAROLINA HONORS COLLEGE APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- ☐ Submitted UofSC application (recommended by the October 15 Early Action deadline)
- ☐ Submitted Honors College application supplement (including two essays and one short answer)
- ☐ Two letters of recommendation
- ☐ Resume (optional, but highly recommended)

IMPORTANT DATES

EARLY ACTION APPLICANTS

October 15	Application deadline
November 1	Credentials deadline*
Mid-December	Decisions released

HONORS COLLEGE / TOP SCHOLAR APPLICANTS

November 15	Application deadline
December 1	Credentials deadline*
Mid-February	SCHC decisions released

REGULAR DECISION APPLICANTS

December 1	Application deadline
January 15	Credentials deadline*
Mid-March	Decisions released

**Last date to submit any outstanding items listed on your UofSC Admissions Portal and to change your testing plan.*

REQUIRED COURSES CHECKLIST

ENGLISH — 4 UNITS

4 units with strong reading, writing, communicating and research

Recommended that 2 of the 4 units are literature based, including American, British and World literature

College prep English I, II, III and IV meet requirement

MATHEMATICS — 4 UNITS

Algebra I*

Algebra II

Geometry

Fourth higher level unit selected among Algebra III, pre-calculus, calculus, probability and statistics, discrete mathematics or computer science**

LABORATORY SCIENCE — 3 UNITS

2 units from different fields: biology, chemistry, physics or earth science

1 additional unit from biology, chemistry, physics or earth science or any other laboratory science with biology, chemistry, physics and/or earth science as a prerequisite***

SOCIAL STUDIES — 3 UNITS

1 unit U.S. history

½ unit economics

½ unit government

1 unit world history or geography strongly recommended

FOREIGN LANGUAGE — 2 UNITS

Both units must be same language

FINE ARTS — 1 UNIT

Art appreciation, art history or performance in one of the fine arts

ACADEMIC ELECTIVES — 2 UNITS

2 units of college-preparatory coursework****

Computer science with significant programming content recommended

***Foundations in algebra and intermediate algebra may count together as a substitute for Algebra I if a student successfully completes Algebra II.

**Computer science should involve significant programming content, not simply be keyboarding or using applications.

***Courses in general science or introductory science for which one of these four units is not a prerequisite will not meet this requirement.

**** Alternative electives include college-preparatory courses in English, fine arts, foreign languages, social science, humanities, mathematics and laboratory science (for which biology, chemistry, physics or earth science is a prerequisite).

STEP 1

PREPARE TO APPLY

☐ Review UofSC's deadlines and notification timelines

The deadlines and notification timelines are based on which admission plan you choose: Early Action or Regular Decision.

If you apply Early Action, you will receive your decision by mid-December. To meet this deadline, you must have an application submitted by October 15 and all required materials submitted by November 1.

If you apply Regular Decision, you will receive your admission decision by mid-March. To meet this deadline, you must have an application submitted by December 1 and all required materials submitted by January 15.

The requirements are the same whether you apply Early Action or Regular Decision. Refer to page 2 of this guide for all important dates.

☐ Consider your application options

There are two ways to apply for admission to UofSC. You should choose the application you are most comfortable submitting. There is no advantage in the admission process to using one application over the other, and there is no separate application for merit scholarships.

Option 1

UofSC APPLICATION

This is our general university application available on our admissions website. It is a great option if you feel more comfortable using each individual school's application instead of the Common App.

[Start your UofSC Application](#)

Option 2

COMMON APPLICATION

Our university, along with nearly 900 other institutions, accepts the Common App, making it more convenient for you to apply to several colleges at one time.

[Start your Common Application](#)

STEP 1

PREPARE TO APPLY

☐ Consider your testing plan options

As you are deciding your preferred testing plan, we suggest reviewing our academic profile that shows the ranges for standardized test scores, high school GPA and class rank for general admission, Capstone Scholars and the South Carolina Honors College. These ranges reflect the middle 50% of students who were admitted in 2022 and give you a general idea of where you fall within each academic range.

STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES* MIDDLE 50%

S.C. RESIDENTS

1100 - 1300 SAT
21 - 29 ACT

NONRESIDENTS

1250 - 1400 SAT
28 - 32 ACT

HONORS COLLEGE

1410 - 1520 SAT
32 - 34 ACT

CAPSTONE SCHOLARS

1340 - 1420 SAT
30 - 32 ACT

*Test score ranges only include students who chose to have their test scores considered in the admission and scholarship process.

HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE** MIDDLE 50%

FRESHMAN CLASS

4.1 - 4.7 HS GPA
7% - 29% Class rank

HONORS COLLEGE

4.5 - 5.0 HS GPA
1% - 6% Class rank

CAPSTONE SCHOLARS

4.2 - 4.9 HS GPA
4% - 17% Class rank

**Class rank ranges only include students whose high school provides a ranking.

Students are able to change their testing plan via their [UofSC Admissions Portal](#) until the [credentials deadline](#) associated with their preferred admission plan.

Note: If you choose to have your test scores considered in the admission process, you will self-report the scores in your [UofSC Admissions Portal](#).

STEP 1

PREPARE TO APPLY

☐ Review our high school course requirements

The following is a list of high school courses required for admission to our university.

English – 4 units

4 units with strong reading, writing, communicating and research

Recommended that 2 of the 4 units are literature based, including American, British and World literature

College prep English I, II, III and IV meet requirement

Mathematics – 4 units

Algebra I*

Algebra II

Geometry

Fourth higher level unit selected among Algebra III, pre-calculus, calculus, probability and statistics, discrete mathematics or computer science**

Laboratory Science – 3 units

2 units from different fields: biology, chemistry, physics or earth science

1 additional unit from biology, chemistry, physics or earth science or any other laboratory science with biology, chemistry, physics and/or earth science as a prerequisite***

Social Studies – 3 units

1 unit U.S. history

½ unit economics

½ unit government

1 unit world history or geography strongly recommended

Foreign Language – 2 units

Both units must be same language

Fine Arts – 1 unit

Art appreciation, art history or performance in one of the fine arts

Academic Electives – 2 units

2 units of college-preparatory coursework****

Computer science with significant programming content recommended

*Foundations in algebra and intermediate algebra may count together as a substitute for Algebra I if a student successfully completes Algebra II.

**Computer science should involve significant programming content, not simply be keyboarding or using applications.

***Courses in general science or introductory science for which one of these four units is not a prerequisite will not meet this requirement.

**** Alternative electives include college-preparatory courses in English, fine arts, foreign languages, social science, humanities, mathematics and laboratory science (for which biology, chemistry, physics or earth science is a prerequisite).

☐ Gather your materials

- **Copy of your transcript(s):** Upload a legible unofficial copy of your high school transcript or a web-based copy that lists grades through the end of your junior year, and shows your full name and the name of your high school. You may upload documents in PDF or JPG formats. Do not send an official high school transcript unless it is requested.
- **Senior-year and middle school coursework:** You will be required to self-report your senior-year coursework in progress and any middle school courses that qualify as high school credits.
- **High school counselor contact information:** Your high school counselor should submit a school report form on your behalf. This form documents your academic progress and may include a school profile.
- **A list of activities, work and family responsibilities:** This includes work, volunteering, sports, research, clubs and organizations, arts, taking caring of family members and other activities. If it's important to you, we want to hear about it!
- **Academic honors and achievements:** We want to learn about any areas in which you excel or achievements that are meaningful to you.
- **Parent/legal guardian information:** This includes parent or guardian contact information, education level and if they attended UofSC. This information is collected for demographic purposes.
- **Test Scores:** Compile your SAT/ACT scores if you intend to report them. You will also have an opportunity to report AP/IB/AICE scores in your [UofSC Admissions Portal](#).

STEP 1

PREPARE TO APPLY

☐ Review the essay prompts

You will be asked to respond to one of the prompts below in the UofSC application or Common App. This is an opportunity to tell your story and share more information about yourself in 250-650 words.

- Some students have a background, identity, interest or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- Discuss an accomplishment, event or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
- Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
- The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Describe a topic, idea or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
- Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

There are also two optional questions about extenuating circumstances (e.g.: COVID-19 and natural disasters). Answer these questions if you would like to provide more context for your application. UofSC cares about impacts to your health and well-being, safety, family circumstance, future plans and education, including access to reliable technology and quiet study spaces.

STEP 2

CREATE YOUR ACCOUNT

UofSC Application

To create your UofSC application account, follow these steps:

- ☐ Access the [UofSC application](#) and select the term in which you expect to start college. Then click "Start Your App."
- ☐ Select "First-time users" and then enter your email address, name and birthdate on the "Register" page. We suggest using an email other than your high school email so you will have access to important messages once you graduate. A temporary, unique pin will be sent to this email.
- ☐ Enter your temporary pin and birthdate on the Login page and create your new secure password on the "Set Password" page. Make note of your login information as you will need it to access your [UofSC Admissions Portal](#) and view your admission decision.
- ☐ Click on "Start New Application" and then "Create Application" and "Open Application" to begin completing the application.

Once you start your application, you can update it as many times as you need and submit it when you're ready. To continue your application:

- ☐ Access the [UofSC application](#) and click "23-24 Freshman" under "Your Applications."
- ☐ Click on "Open Application." Your application will appear on the page where you last left off.

Common Application

To create your Common Application account, follow the steps in the [Application Guide for First-Time Students](#).

If you choose to complete the Common App, your [UofSC Admissions Portal](#) login information will be emailed to you 24-48 hours after we receive your application.

STEP 3

COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION

Here are some tips to help you navigate the application, regardless of which one you choose.

☐ **Select your term and plan**

Start by selecting the term in which you expect to begin at UofSC. The majority of freshmen will select the Fall 2023 entry term as a 2023-2024 freshman.

Next, familiarize yourself with our application deadlines and select your preferred admission plan. The requirements are the same whether you apply Early Action or Regular Decision, and all of our admission plans are nonbinding. If you are interested in being considered for the South Carolina Honors College, we recommend applying by the Early Action deadline to give yourself one full month to complete your honors application supplement.

Finally, decide if you want your ACT or SAT scores considered as part of your admission and scholarship decisions. You have until your [credentials deadline](#) to change your testing plan through your [UofSC Admissions Portal](#). Refer to the credentials deadlines on page 2 based on the admission plan you selected. Remember, we superscore both the SAT and ACT, which means we will use your best subscores from different test dates to give you an overall higher score.

☐ **Select your major**

First, select the college your major falls under. [View our full list of colleges and majors](#). Then, select a first-choice and second-choice major. This is not a double major, but two academic programs that interest you. We will consider your first-choice major first. However, we require a second-choice major since some majors are competitive based on student interest. If you're unsure of what you want to study, you can select "Undeclared" under the College of Arts and Sciences.

☐ **Enter your high school information**

In this section you will complete three steps. First, add your high school information, your weighted GPA and your class rank, if available, as listed on your transcript.

Second, list your senior year schedule. Be sure to enter all the courses you will take throughout your senior year.

Lastly, enter your high school counselor's contact information. Your counselor will provide us with your school report form. We will accept the UofSC institutional school report form, the Common App school report form or the NACAC school report form.

☐ **Upload your transcript**

Obtain a copy of your high school transcript, or take a clear photo if you have a paper copy. Make sure your name, high school name and your grades through your junior year are clearly displayed. You can double-check this in the preview before you upload the file.

☐ **Decide if you want to apply for the South Carolina Honors College**

Our top-ranked [South Carolina Honors College \(SCHC\)](#) provides a comprehensive and individualized academic experience. If you have [excellent high school grades](#) and an outstanding resume, we encourage you to apply to the SCHC. To be considered, you are required to submit the application supplement that will become available on your [UofSC Admissions Portal](#) after submitting your general university application. The deadline to complete the application supplement is November 15.

STEP 3

COMPLETE YOUR APPLICATION

☐ Enter your additional education information

In this section, you will enter your high school graduation information, course rigor information and junior high/middle school coursework.

In the high school equivalency section, be sure to only check “yes” if you have taken or plan on taking an equivalency exam instead of graduating from high school. (e.g., GED instead of a high school diploma).

Pay close attention to the junior high/middle school coursework section. It’s important to enter any of the required courses you took in middle school that may not appear on your high school transcript. Skipping this section could delay your admission notification.

☐ Complete the activities/work experience section

This section allows you to list and explain up to 10 extracurricular experiences you’ve been involved in throughout high school. If you’re unsure of how many hours you participated in each activity, give us your best estimate. In the description, indicate your duties, recognitions or leadership roles. Explain the activity and your specific involvement. Remember, this section is about quality, not quantity.

☐ Write your essay

The essay allows you to provide information about who you are beyond the numbers. It is a great place to share more information about yourself or to further explain a topic or activity. We suggest drafting your essay outside of the application so you can review it for completeness and accuracy.

Here are a few additional tips for writing your essay:

- Be creative.
- Make it less about the topic and more about you.
- Let your personality and character shine through.
- Imagine how the person reading your essay will feel.
- Don’t feel pressure to include every detail of any experience.
- Tell a specific story rather than a generic one.
- Make sure it addresses how the experience affected or changed you.
- Write, rewrite, edit and proofread.

Remember, you can always reach out to the Admissions Office at 803-777-7700 if you have questions. You can also email, call or LiveChat with an [admissions representative](#).

STEP 4

SUBMIT THE APPLICATION FEE/WAIVER

When you have completed either the UofSC Application or Common Application and are ready to submit it, you will pay a \$65 nonrefundable application fee or select an approved fee waiver. We accept SAT or ACT college application waivers, as well as NACAC, TRIO or Common App fee waivers. Your application is not submitted until this step is complete.

If using an SAT or ACT fee waiver, be sure to submit the college application fee waiver and not the actual SAT or ACT test fee waiver. Students who are eligible for the SAT or ACT application fee waiver may use it to waive the application fee even if they do not report a standardized test score.

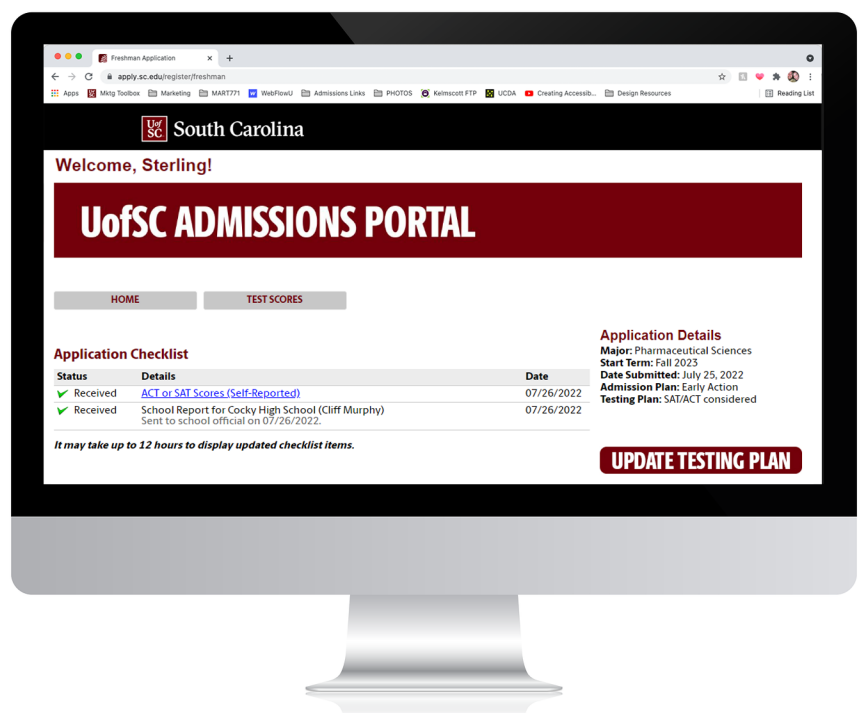
STEP 5

EXPLORE YOUR UofSC PORTAL

Your [UofSC Admissions Portal](#) serves as your personal landing page for important information and reminders. You will receive an email with instructions for accessing your UofSC Admissions Portal.

Through the portal, you can:

- Update your testing plan.
- Self-report your SAT/ACT scores.
- Self-report your AP/IB/AICE test scores.
- Check for any missing credentials.
- Complete any application change requests.
- Connect with your local admissions rep.
- Check out our virtual events.
- View your admission decision.
- Receive important updates.



ADMISSIONS FAQ

Does UofSC accept letters of recommendation?

Letters of recommendation are not considered for general university admission. Do not send letters of recommendation unless you are applying to the South Carolina Honors College.

I completed coursework on a pass/fail basis. How will this impact my admission?

Courses with a grade of "pass" will satisfy appropriate course requirements. These will not be calculated into a student's GPA since no numeric grade is available. Additionally, we will be flexible with students missing a course requirement due to extenuating circumstances.

How do I report dual enrollment or dual credit coursework?

Credits that appear on your high school transcript may be used in the review process. To receive college credit, students who enroll must send an official transcript directly from the awarding institution.

Do you accept Cambridge (AICE) credits?

The university awards college credit for A Level courses if students earn a specific grade on the A Level exam. [View UofSC course equivalencies for A Level exam credit](#). Students can submit their official Cambridge International Examinations Subject Results Transcript on the [UofSC Admissions Portal](#).

Should I write a different essay if I am applying to more than one Common Application school?

Pay attention to the essay prompts for different colleges and universities, and make sure you address the prompt. Still, feel free to repurpose an essay written for another application, but remember to change the name of the other university if you used it!

Can I major in pre-med, pre-law, pre-health or another pre-professional subject?

You cannot major in a pre-professional subject. Instead, you will indicate your interest in one of these tracks on the application. UofSC's [Office of Pre-Professional and Graduate Advising](#) offers support for interested students.

How do I apply for the South Carolina Honors College?

For students who appear competitive for the South Carolina Honors College (SCHC), the application supplement will be available via the UofSC Admissions Portal after they apply. Students can also request the [South Carolina Honors College application supplement](#) after they apply for general admission. We recommend students interested in applying to the SCHC submit their general university application by October 15 in order to give themselves enough time to complete the Honors College application supplement by November 15. There is no additional application fee.

How do I apply for merit-based scholarships?

Students who meet our December 1 Regular Decision deadline and have a complete application on file by January 15 are automatically considered for general university merit-based scholarships awarded through the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Students who wish to be considered for the university's most prestigious scholarships must also complete the Honors College application supplement by November 15.