

# YEAR 1 OVERVIEW

Review the [Handbook](#) for detailed information and regulations.

| YEAR 1     | Fall (1st semester)                                           | Spring (2nd semester)                                                | Summer (3rd semester)                                                   |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Milestones | Lab rotations, agreements, and summary forms                  | Lab rotations, agreements, and summary forms<br>Confirm Mentor Match | Begin Research Project<br>IDP for Year 2                                |
| Courses    | NSCI 524 (4 units)<br>NSCI 539 (1 unit)<br>NSCI 790 (7 units) | NSCI 525 (4 units)<br>NSCI 539 (1 unit)<br>NSCI 790 (7 units)        | NSCI 790 (3 units)<br>INTD 500 (1 unit)<br>Course Requirement (4 units) |

## YOUR ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED AT:

Coding Bootcamp: August 17-21

Annual Retreat: October 10-11

Annual NGP Symposium: TBD March

## COURSE REGISTRATION

Access Web Registration through [Experience USC](#). Detailed [registration instructions](#) are available on the Office of Academic Records and Registrar website.

Graduate student funding and payroll processing are closely tied to registration. Please register for courses as early as possible to avoid potential delays.

Be sure to waive Tuition Refund Insurance every semester! Otherwise, you will be responsible for the fee.

We'll go over the additional NGP course requirements in the future - stay tuned!

### NSCI 524/525: Advanced Neurosciences

An advanced overview of brain research, from molecular biology to cognitive neuroscience. The courses are purposefully broad, intending to provide students from different disciplines the basic language to approach all of brain research. **\*Fall and Spring, Year 1**

#### Please Note...

All students will take the same required courses in the fall semester. Students are expected to prioritize their rotations in Year 1, then start taking additional courses in Year 2 after successfully joining a lab.

### NSCI 539: Neuroscience Communication

Each student organizes and gives presentations to peers, receives constructive feedback to improve presentation skills, and provides constructive feedback. Skills in science communication to non-scientists are also developed. **\*Fall and Spring, Years 1 & 2**

## ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average. NGP expects students achieve a minimum grade of "B" (3.0) in all coursework. See the NGP Handbook for more detailed information.

## LABORATORY ROTATIONS

Students will rotate through three labs during the fall and spring semesters. Students should schedule meetings with several faculty to discuss research projects, funding, and lab availability. You should also discuss lab schedules and expectations before confirming a rotation, including holidays, preplanned personal conflicts, and how to navigate unexpected health or personal issues that may arise.

**To rotate with a faculty member, they must:**

1. Be NGP Faculty or currently applying for membership
2. Have funding to support a Research Assistant for **at least** year 2, preferably year 3 and onward
3. Be willing to consider accepting you into their lab at the end of the year

| Rotation # | Dates             | Agreement Due | Summary Due |
|------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1          | Sept. 8 – Nov. 6  | Aug. 31       | Nov. 13     |
| 2          | Nov. 16 – Feb. 5  | Nov. 9        | Feb. 12     |
| 3          | Feb. 16 – Apr. 16 | Feb. 8        | Apr. 23     |
| 4          | May 3 – July 2    | April 30      | July 9      |

You will submit a **rotation agreement** before the start of each rotation and a **rotation summary** at the end of each rotation. Make sure you discuss the faculty member's expectations, your rotation performance, and if it could be a good fit to join the lab permanently for your dissertation research.

Final lab selection and mentor confirmation will occur after rotation 3. You may only do a fourth rotation if you haven't been able to identify a mentor.

## ADVISEMENT

**NGP Leadership:** At the beginning of each semester, you will meet with Ruth Wood (NGP Director) and John Monterosso (Associate Director) for advice on rotations and course enrollment. They're always available to consult on grades, course selection, rotation selection, program milestones and expectations, as well as any challenges or problems that may arise.

**NGP Admin:** We're here to advise you throughout your time in NGP. Schedule a meeting through [AdviseUSC](#), or drop in during our weekly office hours!

- Dawn Burke (Director of Student Services) oversees progress to degree, student exceptions, student funding, and large-scale program operations.
- Charly Viola (Graduate Program Manager) advises students on meeting yearly milestones, fulfilling program requirements, and completing course electives.

## PROGRAM FORMS

Access all program forms on the NGP website under [Current Students > NGP Forms](#).

# ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

## IMPORTANT UPCOMING DEADLINES:

|                |                                                               |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>July 31</b> | Deadline to register for Fall classes, unless you have a hold |
| <b>Aug. 24</b> | Deadline to complete Prevention Education Modules (PEMs)      |
| <b>Aug. 28</b> | Deadline to submit Lab Safety Training certificate            |
| <b>Aug. 31</b> | Rotation 1 agreement due                                      |
| <b>Sept. 8</b> | Rotation 1 begins                                             |

### ☐ IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Immunization requirements must be satisfied **prior to registering for classes**. Review additional requirements and information from [USC Student Health](#) under the “Start Here” tab.

### ☐ REGISTER FOR CLASSES

Access [Web Registration](#) and enter the following information:

**Student ID:** 10-digit ID# - *Contact NGP admin if you haven't received your ID#.*

**PIN:** 6-digit Birth date (mm/dd/yy)

*Remember to waive Tuition Refund Insurance!*

### ☐ REQUEST USC STUDENT ID CARD (USCard)

All requests must be submitted online through [USCard Services](#). Complete your application, submit your photo, and select “KSOM” when asked about your school.

**\*\*International students must complete Immigration Status Verification with the Office of International Services (OIS) before obtaining their USCard - see below.**

### ☐ UPDATE EXPERIENCE USC INFORMATION

Your information must be current at all times to ensure that you receive important documents, such as the health benefits card and paychecks. Log in to [Experience USC](#) to update the following information:

- Address where your first paycheck should be mailed in August
- Local phone number
- Personal information (preferred name, pronouns, etc.)
- Emergency contact information

### ☐ COMPLETE LAB SAFETY TRAINING

All students must complete the [General Lab Safety Training](#) before the first rotation begins. Log in to [USC Trojan Learn](#) using your USC NetID, search for “General Lab Safety Training Online” using the search box, and launch the training. You may need to complete additional onboarding or safety trainings depending on your lab site, or if you plan to work in a lab with animals, biohazard reagents, or radioactive materials. Talk to the lab PI about any other required trainings.

### ☐ USC COMPUTER ACCOUNT ACTIVATION

If you haven't already, [activate your USC NetID](#).

# ONBOARDING CHECKLIST

## ☐ COMPLETE PREVENTION EDUCATION MODULES (PEMS)

Check [my.usc.edu](https://my.usc.edu) to see if any of your assigned modules are incomplete. The modules are accessed through [Trojan Learn](#), and you can view completed modules in the “My Transcript” area.

## ☐ DEGREE VERIFICATION

Required by the end of your first year, if USC has not received final transcripts (undergraduate or graduate) from the last institution attended. Submit an official copy of your final transcript(s) to the [Office of Academic Records and Registrar](#).

## ☐ CONDITIONAL ADMISSION

If you received a letter from the Graduate School indicating that you have “conditions on your admission,” these must be cleared by the end of the first semester.

## ☐ SET UP PAYROLL

All students need to [sign up for direct deposit](#) via Workday to receive stipend payments. You should receive your first stipend payment in August if you’re registered for classes by August 3. Dawn will provide more information on stipend payment dates during the stipend meetings.

You should also set up direct deposit for ad-hoc payments to receive any refunds or reimbursements. Log in to your [Experience USC](#) and sign up for Direct Deposit for automatic refunds (found under Pay My Bill).

## ☐ PARKING PERMITS AND TRANSPORTATION

If you plan on driving to campus, we recommend [purchasing a parking permit](#) for the campus where you anticipate spending the most time between rotations and classes.

- UPC and HSC parking permits generally provide some flexibility for parking on the other campus – review [parking resources](#) like “Where Can I Park?” and their Top 10 FAQs. USC also offers [Bus Routes](#) between UPC, HSC, and the Marina Del Rey locations.
- Parking permits are expensive, so you may also want to look into [public transportation](#) options, including the free [Student U-Pass Program](#) and a map of USC-specific Metro connections.

## ADDITIONAL ITEMS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### ☐ INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ENGLISH (ISE) EXAM

Students who do not meet USC’s English language proficiency requirement will be required to take the ISE Exam. If you are required to take the ISE Exam, it may be stated in your USC admission letter, and/or you will have an ALI hold on your registration portal. [Register for the ISE Exam](#) on the American Language Institute (ALI) website.

### ☐ IMMIGRATION STATUS VERIFICATION (ISV)

Upon entry to the United States, all international students must immediately complete ISV so the Office of International Services (OIS) can properly activate their SEVIS record. Review the [ISV website](#) for steps and detailed information.