

Live LA

with **IPPAM**

A handbook to help you plan your new life in the
International Public Policy and Management Program
at the USC Price School of Public Policy



Interesting Facts



Los Angeles is a multilingual city. About **60%** of people speak a language other than English.

(Source: <https://friendlylocalguides.com/blog/50-facts-about-los-angeles>)

University of Southern California serves as a key pillar of employment in the City of Los Angeles.



With a grand total of

6,779 faculty members

17,216 dedicated staff



USC's presence continues to foster job opportunities in the region

(Source: <https://about.usc.edu/facts/>)

32 units

IPPAM requires students to complete a minimum of 32 units, comprised of five core courses (18 units) and 14 units in an area of concentration chosen by the student.

(Source: <https://ippam.usc.edu/>)



USC has **450,000** living alumni in the Trojan family alumni in the Trojan

(Source: <https://about.usc.edu/facts/>)



USC has produced more Olympians, Olympic medalists and Olympic gold medalists than any other U.S. University.

(Source: <https://about.usc.edu/history>)

135 countries

USC is proud to host one of the largest numbers of international students at universities in the U.S. Its student body represents more than 135 countries.

40 countries

IPPAM alone has more than 850 alumni from 40 countries.

(Source: <https://ippam.usc.edu/>)

\$955.6 million

USC Sponsored Research

Housed within one of the world's leading private research universities, the Price School provides students with access to researchers and events in the USC Schwarzenegger Institute for State and Global Policy, the USC Schaeffer Center for Health Policy & Economics, the USC Lusk Center for Real Estate, the Center on Philanthropy & Public Policy and many more.

(Source: <https://about.usc.edu/facts/>)

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A Big Warm Welcome From IPPAM!

We are all very excited to have you in the IPPAM family!

This little book will facilitate your move to the U.S. and will help you to settle in your new home as smoothly as possible. We interviewed some of our recent graduates to provide you with information that reflects the actual experience of students. It is impossible to summarize everything in one small handbook, but here is all the basic information you need to know before starting a new life in LA!

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the IPPAM office, we will be very happy to assist where possible. The IPPAM Welcome Committee warmly greets every new cohort, offering valuable support for apartment hunting and an enriching mentor-mentee program to ensure a smooth transition and a successful settling-in process.

Enjoy the reading!

Fight On!



Safety

USC takes your safety very seriously. Below are some of the programs and measures to keep students safe.

The **USC Department of Public Safety (DPS)** patrols the campus as well as a 2-mile radius around the campus 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. There are also LAPD officers assigned to work at USC.

USC Security Ambassadors (identified by yellow jackets) patrol the sidewalks off campus in areas where students live. Their presence in the evening and through the night helps to deter crime and to report any suspicious persons to DPS.

Say goodbye to walking home alone at night! **Get Traveling USC** is your ultimate safe ride companion. The USC Safe Ride Program ensures you a secure journey from 6 PM to 2:45 AM, seven days a week. This service is free of charge.

TrojanAlert is an emergency notification system to contact you in case of emergency via text messages and emails. New students will automatically be registered at the beginning of their first semester.

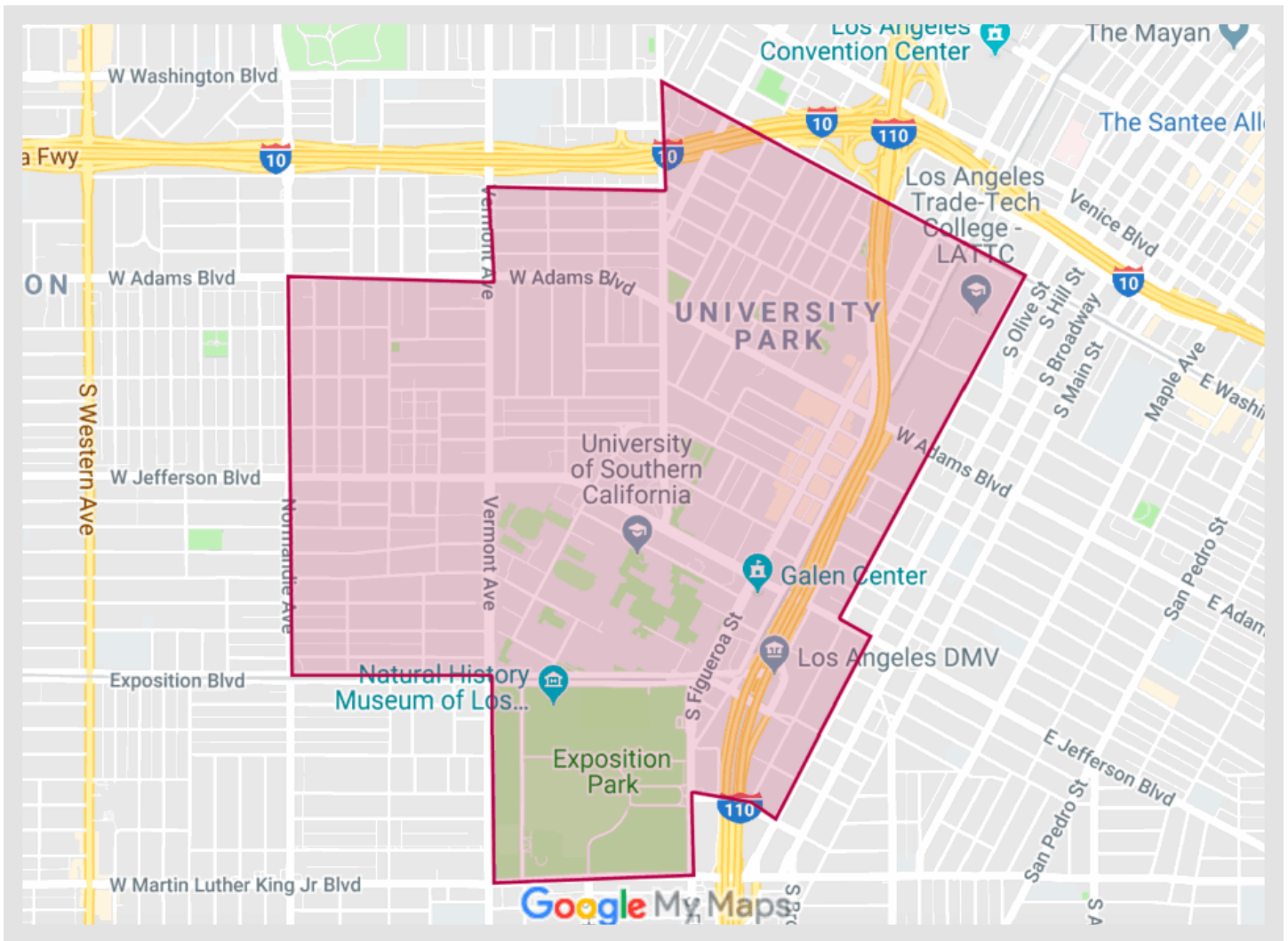
Emergency Blue Light Phones are located throughout the campus. The handset connects you to the 24-7 DPS response team. They will come to your location within minutes.

The **USC Safe Ride Program** also includes free Lyft that takes you home from 6PM to 2AM daily within geofence in spring and fall semesters. This service is free.

Between the hours of 9PM to 6AM, only students with a valid student card can enter the campus. Guests will have to register to enter.

DPS also offers free Self-Defense Courses for women if you are interested.

If you ever have a safety emergency outside of campus, you can reach the **LAPD**:
For Emergency call 911
For Non-emergency
877-ASK-LAPD



The pink area is where the USC Security Ambassadors patrol. It is safe to look for housing in this area if you plan to stay close to the campus.

For more information on USC safety, visit: <https://safety.usc.edu/>

There is also a website specifically for international students: <https://ois.usc.edu/living-in-la/safety/>

For more information on the USC Safe Ride Program visit: <https://transnet.usc.edu/index.php/how-to-use-lyft/>

IPPAM also has a video on campus safety: <https://youtu.be/QRmkyfoe3yc>.

Here is the QR code for the video:



Here are some helpful mobile apps to download:



Lyft



LiveSafe

**Department of Public Safety
University Park Campus
3667 McClintock Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90089-1912**

**USC Village
3131 South Hoover Street, Suite 1300,
Los Angeles, CA 90098**

**Emergency 213-740-4321
Non-emergency 213-740-6000**

Housing

In this section we have listed some housing options recommended by the IPPAM alumni: some are within walking distance to the campus; other are farther away.

Some students like to stay near the campus to enjoy the student life and avoid having to drive. Others like to stay in areas with good schools for their children or have access to more community amenities for their spouses. If you not planning on buying a car, the location is important as convenient public transit is not readily available in all areas.

If you are looking for temporary housing in late summer before you find longer term housing, here are some options for you: <https://ois.usc.edu/living-in-la/housing/>

USC has some limited dorm space for graduate students. You can find information and an application here:

https://housing.usc.edu/index.php/building_navigation_location/graduate-housing/

https://housing.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/CheckInGuide_Graduate_2023-Fall_FNL-web.pdf

However, there are a large number of private owned apartments and houses near campus. Most graduate students stay in privately owned housing rather than USC dorms.

Something that may be new to you is the option to rent a “bed”. This refers to bed space in a room that typically has two beds. Always make sure you are renting what you want.

Finding off-campus housing can be a challenge. We have a list of agencies you can contact on the next page. Before that you might want to think carefully if you want to share or to live alone. Sharing can keep your cost of living down.

Housing will be a big part of your cost of living in LA. Always check if the place is furnished as furniture can be a big cost. Also check which utilities are included in the rent. In a typical studio apartment, utility expenses such as water, gas, and electricity are essential factors to consider. Additionally, there may be a solid waste charge collected by the city.

Researching local options is crucial to determine accurate costs and service providers. These websites might be helpful in your search:

- Water and electricity: Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP)
- Gas: SoCalGas: <https://www.socalgas.com/>
- Solid Waste Charges: LA Sanitation & Environment (LASAN)
- Internet: AT&T (<https://www.att.com/internet/>) have been widely used by alumni

Before you sign a lease and before you terminate a lease, always walk through the apartment with the landlord or property manager to perform an inventory check. Carefully list and take photos and videos of all imperfections.

If you have questions about housing contracts, you can reach out to:

USC Housing Law Clinic
2801 S Hoover St.
Los Angeles, CA 90089
213-740-6646

<https://communities.usc.edu/usc-housing-clinic/hlclinic@usc.edu>

You will find the following sources useful in your search for housing. They are recommended by IPPAM alumni. Everyone has different preferences, so check them carefully yourself.

- **USC Housing** (<https://nup.och101.com/>)
- **University Gateway** (<https://www.livegw.com/>)
- **Lorenzo** (<https://www.thelorenzo.com/>)
- **City Park** (<https://www.cityparkusc.com/>)
- **Tripalink** (<https://tripalink.com>)
- **Stuho Student Housing** (<https://stuho.com/>)
- **The Shrine Collection** (<https://shrinecollection.com/>)
- **First Choice Housing** (<https://firstchoicehousing.com/>)
- **Icon Plaza** (<https://www.iconplazausc.com/>)
- **Tuscany** (<https://www.tuscanyonfig.com/>)
- **The Orsini** (<https://www.theorsini.com/>)
- **Da Vinci** (<https://www.thedavincipts.com/>)
- **Wren Apartment** (<https://livewren.com/>)
- **Decron** (<https://www.decron.com/>)
- **Saint Joseph student residence in LA** (Telephone: 213 749 9577, Address: 1124 w Adams Blvd., Los Angeles, 90007)
- **Irvine Company Apartment Communities** (<https://www.irvinecompanyapartments.com>)
- **Rosam Apartment Investors** (310 Comstock Ave., Los Angeles, 90024)
- **Luxe Apartment** (<https://www.luxelifepasadena.com/>)
- **Jia Apartment** (<https://www.equityapartments.com/los-angeles/chinatown/jia-apartments>)
- **Facebook page (not an official USC group): USC Sub/Lease and Housing** (<https://shorturl.at/juxVX>)
- **Facebook page (not an official USC group): USC HOUSING / SUBLETS / RENTALS** (<https://shorturl.at/gpAGQ>)
- **Facebook page (not an official USC group): USC - Off-campus housing / Apartment / Sublets** (<https://shorturl.at/lxBNQ>)
- **Facebook page (not an official USC group): University of Southern California (USC) Housing, Sublets & Roommates**
- **Facebook page (not an official USC group): Free or for Sale USC** (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1741583442804981>)
- **Facebook page (not an official USC group): USC Taiwanese Student Association (TSA)** (<https://www.facebook.com/usctsa>)
- **Group in WeChat: 南加州跳蚤市場**
- **Group in WeChat: 洛杉磯租房助手** (WeChat id: [gh_38c375c9bd97](#))
- **Group in WeChat: Tripalink 鄰客租房** (WeChat id: [Tripalink](#))

Note: The information on this page was provided by IPPAM alumni and is for reference only. The details on this page are subject to change. It is best for you to call for an update on the status. The list is not in any particular order.

Disclaimer: All information provided is deemed reliable but is not guaranteed and should be independently verified.



tips for looking for a home in LA

If you are coming in the summer to get to know LA before the Fall semester, you'll find many sublease options as some students will be going back home in summer. You may find it useful to rent something for a few weeks to get to know the surroundings before you rent for the entire year.

If you are renting a place before arriving in LA, you may want to ask someone to check out the house and the neighborhood before you rent.

Always make sure what the monthly rent covers. You may be responsible for water, electricity, gas, wifi, parking, and in some cases the solid waste charges.

LA does get very hot in summer and cold in winter, making it useful to have AC and heating. In California, the landlord is required to install heating systems in main rooms, however, not all houses have air conditioning. You can purchase a portable fan and heater if needed. It's always good to speak to a previous tenant so you can ask questions.

Most shared housing has a washing machine and a tumble dryer that are shared among a few people. Some of them are free and some may cost \$2 to \$3 each load.

Some housing does not provide furniture even if the photos look furnished. Check with the landlord or property manager.

Some housing has carpet, if you are allergic to carpet, check with the landlord or property manager to ask if they have units without carpeting.

If possible, you may want to view the house twice, during the day and when it's dark so you get a better feel for the environment. Also, try to avoid the south or east sides of the campus as they are less safe.

Most places require a housing deposit. It is typically equal to one or two months of the rental price. Always read the contract carefully and make sure that the agency or the landlord does not withhold unreasonable fees, such as excessive cleaning charges.



Health

Health insurance provides coverage for medical care in the U.S. The U.S. does not have a governmental health care program that covers everyone. Most people have private health insurance.

USC requires that all students have health insurance and automatically enrolls students in the USC health plan for a fee. Students with their own health care coverage that meets the university requirements can waive out of USC's plan.

If you are covered by a health insurance plan from your home country, it is important that you check with your plan about its coverage of medical care obtained in the U.S. Some health care providers in the U.S. are reluctant to bill foreign insurance companies. Instead, they expect to receive payment directly from patients, who in turn file a claim with their health insurer to get reimbursed afterwards. For more information visit: <https://studenthealth.usc.edu/our-services/insurance-plan/>

You should understand what is being covered in the insurance plan and make use of it. For instance, the HPV vaccine for female students is provided at no cost which is usually not the case in foreign countries.

If you wish to waive the USC Student Health Insurance plan, please visit: <https://studenthealth.usc.edu/waiver-requirements/>.

The USC Student Health Insurance plan does not include your spouse and children. Here are some insurance companies recommended by IPPAM alumni with families:

- Aetna: <https://www.aetna.com/>
- Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield: <https://www.anthem.com/>
- ISO Health Insurance for international students: <https://www.isoa.org/>
- If your children are under the age of 19, they may be eligible for Medi-Cal: <https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/services/medi-cal/eligibility/Pages/SB75Children.aspx>

Your spouse and children may be eligible for the California Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). For more information visit: <https://www.benefits.gov/>

INSURANCE

Transportation

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

There are numerous public transport options available in Los Angeles: Metro rail, Metro bus and DASH. The official mobile apps of Transit and the Los Angeles Metro and Bus will help you to navigate on a map and to plan your trip.

For more information on Metro visit: <https://www.metro.net/>

For information on the fares visit: <https://www.metro.net/riding/fares/>

The DASH to Class program allows students to ride DASH for free: <https://www.ladottransit.com/studentsridefree/>

The Graduate Student U-Pass Program offers you unlimited rides on Metro's rail and any bus line during the semester. Find out about the rates and availability: <https://transnet.usc.edu/index.php/student-u-pass/>

BUYING A CAR

You will need a car if you live far from the campus and if public transport is not adequate.

Before you find a car, here are some places where you can rent a car:

Priceline: <https://www.priceline.com/rentalcars/>

Kayak: <https://www.kayak.com/>

RentalCars: <https://www.rentalcars.com/>

If you want to buy a car, take time to do research online and speak to dealers on good cars for a good price. It's always helpful to bring someone who is knowledgeable about cars and how they are sold in the U.S. with you to the dealer. The best option is to see if any IPPAMer is selling their car. The price for second hand cars in the U.S. are very reasonable. You will be surprised!

If you have a car, it's mandatory to have auto insurance. The most used car insurance companies by IPPAM students are listed here for your information:

- AAA: <https://www.calif.aaa.com/insurance/auto-insurance.html>
- Geico: <https://www.geico.com/>
- If you are a Costco member: <https://www.costco.com/auto-home-insurance-services.html>
- USC alumni also have arrangements with some insurance companies: <https://alumni.usc.edu/special-offers/>

It is important to remember that your international driver's license is only valid for a short time after arrival. You'll need a California Driver's License. You can obtain one at the DMV (there is one very close to USC!). You must have all the documents required. Make an appointment if possible. Otherwise, expect to spend 2 or more hours in line. For more information: <https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/driver-licenses-identification-cards/>

Here is the California Driver Handbook for your reference. You might want to look up for some terminologies like Carpool, Express Lanes, Toll: https://www.dmv.ca.gov/web/eng_pdf/dl600.pdf

For more information on Toll and Express Lanes (FasTrak): <https://www.bayareafastrak.org/en/about/get-fastrak.shtml>

If you need to purchase a parking permit for the campus, check out the rates here: <https://transnet.usc.edu/index.php/parking-rates/>

The campus has charging stations for electric cars. The service is not free. For more information: <https://transnet.usc.edu/index.php/ev-charging/>

Remember: there is free Lyft between 6PM to 2AM everyday during spring and fall semesters!
Make use of it!

USC TRANSPORTATION

Also, USC Transportation provides a limited network of free buses throughout the year for students. Multiple routes service USC's main campus, the North University Park neighborhood, the USC Parking Center as well as the USC Health Sciences Campus, Marina Del Rey ISI/ICT locations, Keck USC of Alhambra, and even Union Station. For more information, visit: <https://transnet.usc.edu/index.php/about-usc-buses/>

For more information about transportation on the USC website: <https://transnet.usc.edu/>



USC Village

Schools

If you are coming to the U.S. with your children, this section will be important to you. The U.S. has a highly decentralized education system, each state is responsible for its own education systems. The primary and secondary education (K-12) is provided by school districts, these school districts run all the public schools within their jurisdictions and are often defined by the geographic boundaries of counties and municipalities. In this section we will talk about the education for your children. This table here gives you an idea of the U.S. education system.

Primary	Kindergarten (1 year)	Grade K (age 5)
	Elementary (5 years)	Grade 1-5 (ages 6-10)
Secondary	Middle School or Junior High School (3 years)	Grade 6-8 (ages 11-13)
	High School (4 years)	Grade 9-12 (ages 14-17)
Higher Education	College or University	Undergraduate (4 years) Graduate: Master Degree (1-2 years) Graduate: Doctorate Degree (4+ years)

For children between the ages of 0-5, you can send them to Daycare or Preschool. The After School program is for children after school.

In California, in addition to public schools, you have a choice of sending your children to private schools, magnet schools and charter schools. The first table on the next page shows you the difference between magnet and charter schools.

Bright Horizons at University Park (USC) provide care to children from infant to kindergarten: <https://child-care-preschool.brighthorizons.com/CA/LosAngeles/uscupc>

If you want to see more on private schools, you can visit: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ps/index.asp>. Here you can find more on public schools: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ds/pubschls.asp>.

For more information please visit:

https://psychology.fandom.com/wiki/Education_in_the_United_States

For your spouse, they are welcome to learn too! Here are some of the choices:

- Community colleges open admission for applicant with a high school diploma or its equivalent. The tuition is usually much less than universities. It is popular for people who wants to improve their skills and education.
- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) offers sub-degree and certificate level programs in specific vocations.
- Adult School offers public education programs for people 18 and older. It is a good place for adult English classes. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/ae/>)

	Magnet Schools	Charter Schools
Is it part of the public school system?	Yes	Yes
Can the school be for profit?	No. The same district administration and school board as public school operates the school.	Yes. Charter schools are public schools run by private entities (e.g. nonprofit, for-profit organizations)
Does the school need to be in the area where you reside?	No. A lottery system is used to admit students due to the high demand. Some offer boarding.	Yes.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Magnet schools are schools that strive for high academic standards and may specialize in a particular area of study. - The goal of magnet schools is to increase educational choices in geographic areas and to provide better educational opportunities to children of various socio-economic backgrounds, races, and academic achievement levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Charter schools are technically public schools that receive tax money and private funding. - Charter schools adhere to standard state requirements for curriculum but have the freedom that most public schools do not have.

IPPAM alumni have sent their children to the following schools and they liked it!

Name of School	School System	English as Second Language Program	Free Meal Program	After School Program	Safety	Comments
Olive Tree Learning Academy	Public pre-school	v	v	x	v	Good for Korean kids. Subsidies provided by CA government.
Repetto Elementary	Public pre-school	x	v	v	v	
Evans	Public pre-school	v	v	x	v	
Camino Grove Elementary	Public pre-school	v	x	v	Not sure	
Thomas Starr King Middle School	Public Magnet	v	v	v	v	
Myford	Public pre-school	v	x	v	v	Good ratios among races.
Hoover International	Public pre-school	x	v	x	v	Kids didn't like the free meal program.
Newton	Private pre-school	x	x	x	v	Good quality and good tuition.
Norwood Elementary	Public pre-school	v	v	v	v	

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Money

Living costs vary and depend on the location and your lifestyle. It is helpful to look at the cost estimates on your I-20 because it is usually accurate for a modest lifestyle.

If you need to transfer money to the U.S. even before you arrive, you can remotely open an account with the USC Credit Union. For information visit: <https://www.usccreditunion.org/>.

If you are not in a hurry, it is OK to wait until you arrive to open an account. There is a Bank of America branch in USC Village. It is important that you work out how much money you will need in the first few weeks as it might take a few weeks to open a bank account and receive the money you are transferring from your home country. You should check with the bank in your home country if there is any currency exchange restrictions. In the US, there are no restrictions for non-citizens to take or send money for educational purposes.

USC does not accept credit cards and debit cards for payment of tuition. For information visit: <https://sfs.usc.edu/updated-forms-of-payment/>

Digital payment methods in the U.S. include Venmo and Zelle (generally for transactions between friends).

VISA

The USC Office of International Services (OIS) assists students with visa questions and related issues. For more details, visit: <https://ois.usc.edu/new-students/prearrival/visaprocess/>

Information about student visa requirements is posted by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS): <https://www.uscis.gov/working-in-the-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors>

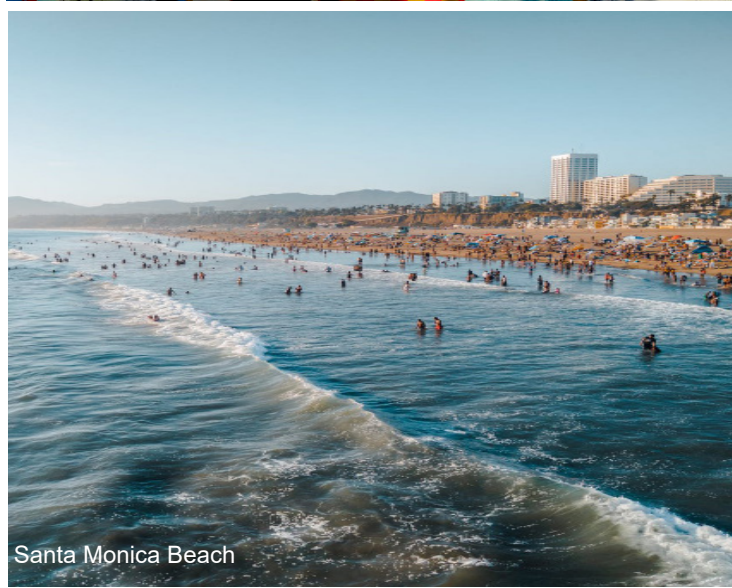




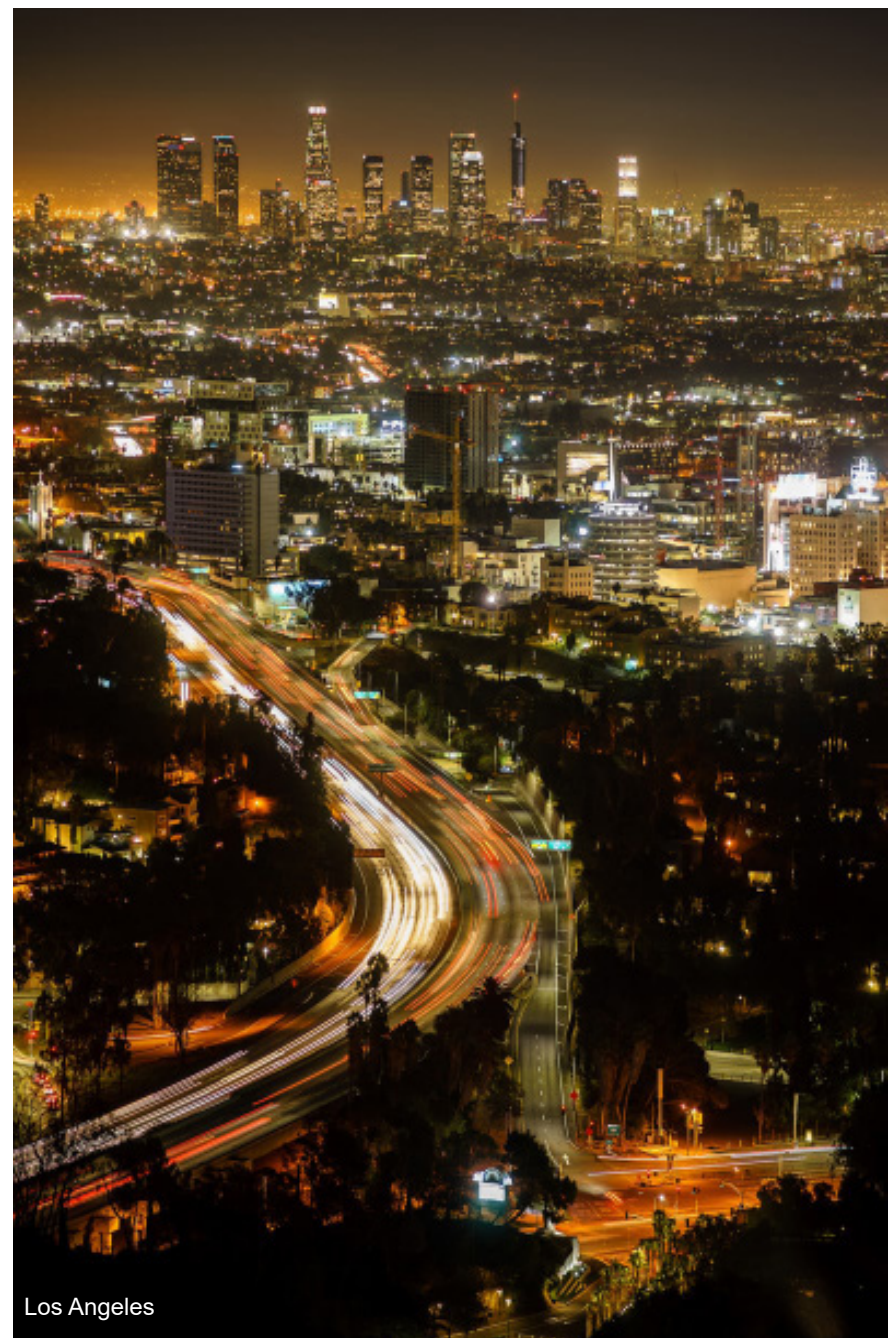
Walt Disney Concert Hall



"American Dreamers" by Shepard Fairey and Vhils



Santa Monica Beach



Los Angeles



Rose Bowl



Urban Light at LACMA



IPPAM is a very special place

During the course of your time with IPPAM, you will be invited for many academic related events, social events and cultural events.

It is important that you attend these events because you will learn about other cultures, you will develop a network perhaps with the IPPAM alumni, students from other student organizations, or even an external guest speaker who happens to be the person finds you a job after graduate. When you receive the invitations, it is important that you RSVP so the IPPAM office can make sure there is enough of everything for everyone at the event. If something does come up and you cannot attend anymore, it is important that you send an email to cancel too.



Etiquette & Social Customs

In the U.S., taxes are not added to the price you see on the tags. In California, a state tax of 9.5% is added to your final bill. There are states without sales tax, including Oregon, Alaska, Delaware, Montana, and New Hampshire if you need to do big shopping.

Tipping may not be part of your culture. It is however expected when certain services are provided in the U.S. Examples of these services include when you go to a restaurant, hairdresser or barber and when you drive with Lyft or Uber. Although the percentage tipped is discretionary, it is generally between 10% to 20% of the charges on your bill (excluding tax).

When you purchase water or soda in plastic or glass bottles, there is a 10 cent fee per container to encourage recycling. The fee can be redeemed at recycling centers.

It is normal when a good friend or even a recent acquaintance gives you a hug upon meeting you.

Do not get offended when you don't get much of a reply when you ask "How are you?"

It is common to use "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Miss," "Ms.," or "Professor" with a family name, but not a person's given name. For example, if you meet someone whose name is Rebecca Lin, you would call her "Ms. Lin" and not "Ms. Rebecca." However, IPPAM professors with long or hyphenated family names make an exception and have you call them by their given name.

Americans are friendly and may greet you even if they don't know you.

The "comfort zone" in every culture is different. Do not be offended if someone backs away from you slightly when you speak to them.

Americans in general welcome people to their homes, and will be happy if you accept their invitations. However, if they end the conversation with "Let's find a time to meet", "Come to my house for coffee if you are in the area", they might just be polite. A meet up is not confirmed if it does not have a date and time.

Americans tend to be punctual. If you agree to meet, be there on time. If you are going to be late or not going to make it is important that you call to reschedule or cancel. This applies to IPPAM events too.

In the classroom and meetings, you will hear Americans speak up when they have a question or some thoughts to share. It is good that you speak up too. Professors in the U.S. encourage two-way communication. They expect students to be vocal in class.

If you need something, be straightforward. You will never get what you don't ask for!

Readings for fun:

<https://usahello.org/life-in-usa/culture/american-values/>

<https://uucsj.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/L-Robert-Kohl-The-Values-Americans-Live-By>

Before Departure..

Remember to have the following documents with you in your carry-on bag, not in your check-in luggage:

Valid passport with at least six months validity beyond your entry date and the non immigrant (F-1 or J-1) visa placed inside your passport by a consular officer of a U.S. Embassy or Consulate

Certificate of Eligibility (I-20 for those with an F-1 visa or DS-2019 for those with a J-1 visa)

Arrival-Departure Record (I-94 form). You can find it here: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94#/home>
Remember an I-94 expires after three months

Small amount of U.S. cash and a credit card if you have one

Insurance card

Letter of admission and other important documents from USC

Important addresses and telephone numbers

International driver's license if you have one

It is also a good idea to bring an official copy of your birth certificate, as this may be requested when applying for various forms of identification and other documents in the U.S. If you are married and your spouse will accompany you, bring a copy of your marriage certificate or other proof of marriage. Be sure to obtain notarized translations of these certificates if they are not in English

Be prepared for both immigration and customs inspections, with all documents ready for the officials

Do not bring something that you can easily get in the U.S. You have limited weight for your luggage.

Some say find a safe home then a school for the kids nearby. I say find a good school for the kids then find a safe home near it.

LA is big, so there are a lot of things you can discover.

Don't just stay in your comfort zone.

**Have fun
at the
IPPAM
study lounge.**

Words From

IPPAM Alums

Safety is the most important thing to consider; get involved with IPPAM activities; keep an eye on other activities/seminars held by the Price School; enjoy the school life. You will miss it!

If you are only here for 2 years, you should make use of the opportunity to learn about the American culture, try western food, be friends with people who speak languages other than your own.



If you are not big in cooking, USC has meal plans for you. Check out the Hospitality website. Remember to try the USC waffles at the Parkside Restaurant and Grill near the Viterbi School. Also, have fun at the Farmer's Market on Wednesdays! You have to have the Pad Thai and fresh strawberries! By the way my favorite place at USC is the Hoose Library

Finding a house can be difficult but spend time searching for options, because usually the lease agreements are at least 1 year long, so it is a commitment you are making! You don't want end up living in the place you are not comfortable with for a year.

**Do more than just study!
When are you going to live in LA again!? Live it!**

The American culture is extremely diverse and complex. Having a culture shock is normal. If you feel homesick that's ok too. But I promise that you'll start loving LA, the new environment, new lifestyle and new friends! If you ever need to talk to someone, the IPPAM office always welcomes you. I know because I have been there!

ALWAYS KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE ALUMS, ESPECIALLY THE ONES FROM YOUR OWN COUNTRY. YOU'LL BE AMAZED BY HOW HELPFUL THEY CAN BE!

Always ask if you have a question.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

APPLICATION DEADLINES

IPPAM PRIORITY DEADLINE: **March 15**
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT FINAL DEADLINE: **May 1**
DOMESTIC STUDENT FINAL DEADLINE: **July 1**

- Transcripts - School #1 _____
- Transcripts - School #2 _____
- Transcripts - School #3 _____
- Transcripts - School #4 _____
- CV or Resume
- Personal Statement of Purpose
- Letter of Recommendation #1 _____
- Letter of Recommendation #2 _____
- Letter of Recommendation #3 _____

The following pertain to international applicants:

Official Standardized Tests

- TOEFL Scores
- IELTS Scores

* See the next page for instructions for Standardized Tests

- Scanned colored copy of passport for yourself and family members accompanying you**
- A Financial Guarantee Statement** showing proof of ability to pay tuition, university fees, and 9-months of living expenses (can be submitted after being admitted, but submitting it early will help to expedite the processing of an I-20)

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Standardized Tests -Official TOEFL or IELTS Scores

Scores must be received directly from the testing service and dated no earlier than 2 years (24 months) prior to the start of your intended first term at USC.

For TOEFL scores, **the institution code for USC is 4852** (no department code is required). To submit an IELTS score, please select the “**University of Southern California**” from the list of available institutions when you register to take the IELTS test.

Do not enter the name, contact information or mailing address of the specific USC department to which you are applying on your IELTS registration.

If you have already taken the IELTS, you may request that your test results be sent to USC by contacting the test center at which you took the test and requesting that your results be sent to the University of Southern California **electronically, not by postal mail.**

You can search for contact details for all IELTS test centers. USC will only accept IELTS scores sent electronically from the IELTS test center where you took the test.

Paper test report forms received by postal mail or email are not accepted.

Apply Online: <https://gradadm.usc.edu/apply/>

Online Application Instructions

Profile

Create your profile by clicking “Create Account” in the middle of the page on the right-hand side.

School: USC Price –Sol Price School of Public Policy

Program: International Public Policy and Management Program (IPPAM)

Program Level: Master Degree (MIPM)

My Application - There are FOUR SECTIONS that need to be completed.

SECTION #1 - PERSONAL INFORMATION

Biographical Information Tab

Complete the entire section.

Indicate an alternate or previous name in the “other name” field, if applicable.

Contact Information Tab

Complete the entire section.

Fill in your current address. This is very important. Admission and immigration documents will be sent to this address if admitted.

Your phone and email address will be pulled from the Profile Section. Please provide a personal email address that is NOT associated with your place of employment.

Citizen Information Tab

Complete the entire section.

International students are required to obtain an F-1 visa in order to study in the International Public Policy and Management (IPPAM) program. If admitted, you will be required to show financial documents indicating your ability to pay for one year of the program. Be sure to fill in all visa information.

To view what documents are required, please go to <https://gradadm.usc.edu/lightboxes/international-students-financial-documentation/>. In the drop down menu under Program Costs, select Price School of Public Policy. We encourage you to prepare these documents as soon as possible in order to expedite the issuance of your I-20 if you are admitted into the program.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Additional visa information - For U.S. citizens:

- Select “Not Applicable” for Type of Visa.
- Then select “Does Not Apply” for the following two questions.

Race and Ethnicity Tab

Optional. Save and continue if unable to complete.

Other Information Tab

Complete the entire section. You may skip the optional questions.

SECTION #2 -ACADEMIC HISTORY

Colleges Attended Tab

Complete the entire section.

It is important that we have a record of all post-secondary educational institutions that you attended, including USC, whether or not a degree was earned from the institution.

Please list all colleges and universities you have attended (including any community college, study abroad term, summer enrollment, or ESL studies), in chronological order, starting with the first institution after high school graduation.

If you cannot find your institution, please select “**Can’t Find Your School?**”

Upload official copies of your transcripts into this section. Please note that while the copies are sufficient for review purposes, you are still required to send in your official transcripts from ALL universities attended.

You will need to submit official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, **whether or not a degree was earned**. To be considered “official,” the transcript must be received by USC in an unopened envelope from your university. You may have your university send the transcript directly to the USC Office of Graduate Admissions. The transcript must be delivered to USC in an unopened envelope from your university.

Do not open an official transcript envelope for the purpose of scanning the transcript and uploading it to your application, and then mailing the transcript in the opened envelope to USC because these will not be considered official. We recommend you order two official transcripts - one to scan, upload to your application, and keep as a personal copy and the other to mail to the USC Office of Graduate Admissions.

Master's of International Public Policy and Management (MIPM)

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

USC accepts some forms of e-transcripts. Please check with the institution you attended to see if they provide e-transcripts. If your school does not provide e-transcripts through one of these methods below, you must submit a hard copy of your transcripts.

Please note that we accept only e-transcripts submitted via the following methods:

eSCRIPSAFE (Grad)
eTranscriptCA(CCC)
Texas Server (Grad)
University to University

Please send all official transcripts to the USC Office of Graduate Admissions. The mailing and email addresses of the USC Office of Graduate Admissions appear at the bottom of this page.

GPA Entries Tab

All on a 4.0 scale.

Standardized Tests Tab

For International Students, official TOEFL or IELTS Scores are required. Students with less than three years of professional work experience are encouraged to submit a GRE or GMAT score report. Please request that the testing agency send the score report to USC electronically.

SECTION #3 -SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Experiences Tab

List current and last place of employment in reverse chronological order.

Documents Tab

A CV/Resume is required.

Financial documents and a copy of your passport can be submitted at a later time (after admission).

SECTION #4 -PROGRAM MATERIALS

Home Tab

Read through this page for an overview of the Admission Criteria, Application Process, and Application Deadlines. This page also contains contact information for the IPPAM Program.

Master's of International Public Policy and Management (MIPM)

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Documents Tab

Personal statements

Required: Statement of Purpose of approximately 1,000-1,500 words addressing:

Your reasons for applying to the International Public Policy and Management Program and how you see the program contributing to your professional goals or personal growth.

Describe your academic interests and the skills or knowledge you hope to gain from the program.

Recommendations Tab

Three letters of recommendation are required, including at least one academic reference from a professor who taught a course in which you were enrolled. Letters from family friends or from ESL schools generally do not count toward the requirement. We will not accept letters of recommendation emailed by the applicant or paper copies sent through postal mail.

Recommenders must submit letters online.

- Provide the name and contact information for your recommenders. After you complete and save this section, an email request will be sent to the recommenders on your behalf.
- Recommenders will be instructed to submit recommendation letters on official letterhead.
- Letters sent by the applicant through email or postal mail will NOT be accepted.

Add Program Tab

In the search field, enter “International Public Policy and Management”.

Select [+] to the left of the program name, continue to payment, and submission.

After clicking “Submit” in the online application:

Please have all official transcripts sent to:

By Mail:

University of Southern California
USC Office of Graduate Admission
3601 South Flower Street, Room 112
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0915

By Email:

etrans@usc.edu

Questions:

ippam@usc.edu
+1.213.740.0547



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**Live LA with IPPAM
July 2023**

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