

USC Viterbi



# Viterbi Academic Advancement Workshop

Spring 2023





# Schedule

- 1** Intro
- 2** What is Academic Probation
- 3** Grade Point Average
- 4** What is Academic Dismissal?
- 5** Getting Back on Track, Wellness, Resilience, and Help-Seeking
- 6** Resources
- 7** Survey
- 8** Q&A



# Learning Outcomes

1

What is Academic Probation?

2

When is a student at-risk for Dismissal?

3

How grades impact GPA.

4

What resources are available?

5

When to seek out VASE advisor, dept advisor, and Lorena Duran

6

Review factors that contribute to resilience

7

Review cognitive-behavioral strategies that support academic growth

Don't Panic, Try Not to Stress





# Take Action!

## Create an Academic Plan for Success

- Admit deficiencies, missteps, *take ownership*.
- Consider factors within your control.
  - Time management
  - How often did you seek out academic assistance from TA/Instructor
- Consider factors outside of your control.
  - Can they be improved?
  - Will/has your circumstance changed for the current semester?
- Remember: You are **not** in it alone.
  - You have Department advisors, Wellness Director, Lorena Duran, VASE advisors, and other campus resources to help you!





# What is Academic Probation?

Academic probation is when a student's **grade point average (GPA)** falls below **the 3.0** USC Grade Point Average Requirement for Masters students.

Academic Probation is a **warning** to address your academics, identify challenges, and seek appropriate resources.

When a student reaches 3.0 they are removed from academic probation.





# Grade Point Average (GPA)

## Grade Point Average Requirement

At no time should the overall GPA drop below 3.0. A minimum grade of C (2.0) is required in a course to receive graduate credit. Work graded C- or below is not acceptable for subject or unit credit toward any master's or doctoral program. **An overall grade point average of at least 3.0 on all units attempted at USC while a graduate student is required for graduation, whether or not all such units are applied toward the degree.** In some cases, the University Committee on Curriculum has approved different GPA requirements for professional schools. The university will not deviate from policies governing the calculation of the grade point average through inclusion or exclusion of course work.

## Grade Point Average Categories and Class Levels

A system of grade points is used to determine a student's grade point average. Grade points are assigned to grades as follows for each unit in the credit value of a course: **A, 4 points; A-, 3.7 points; B+, 3.3 points; B, 3.0 points; B-, 2.7 points; C+, 2.3 points; C, 2 points; C-, 1.7 points; D+, 1.3 points; D, 1 point; D-, 0.7 points; F, 0 points; UW, 0 points; IX, 0 points.** Wherever these letter grades appear in this catalogue or other university documents, they represent the numerical equivalents listed above. Marks of CR, NC, P, NP, W, IP, MG and IN do not affect a student's grade point average.

Grade Point Average is calculated and truncated; it is not rounded.

- A minimum *individual* grade of C (2.0) will allow a course to count toward degree requirements, but the *cumulative* Grade Point Average (GPA) must be 3.0 (equivalent of B average)
- Both *applied* GPA, and *cumulative* GPA must be 3.0





# Grade Point Average Categories

## Important notations that can be found in an academic record are Unofficial Withdrawal (UW), Withdrawal (W), Incomplete (IN)

- A **Withdrawal (W)** is used when a student withdraws (drops) a course by the last add/drop deadline. A “W” does not affect a student's GPA. Students withdraw from a course when they feel they will not be academically successful.\*
- An **Unofficial Withdrawal (UW)** is when a student does not drop a course and stops attending prior to the add/drop deadline. This is equivalent to failing a course (F), and is treated as such in the GPA calculation.\*
- An **Incomplete (IN)** is used when a student receives an incomplete for a course. An incomplete is given by the faculty member when a student is faced with extenuating circumstances. An incomplete gives students a year to complete coursework and receive a grade.
- An **Expired Incomplete (IX)** is when a student's incomplete has expired without resolution. This is equivalent to failing a course (F), and is treated as such in the GPA calculation.
- **\*Note: International Students should not W or UW from a course without speaking to a VASE advisor and the Office of International Students. A W and UW will affect your F1 status.**





# How to Check Your GPA



**Student Action Required: Update Your Contact Information**

Please **update your contact information by March 3, 2023**. To do so, log in to **Ex** prompt. Note, all information is confidential and if you have any questions, please If you have already updated your information or are not a registered student for t disregard this banner. Thank you for helping USC maintain accurate student reco

**myUSC**

**Services** EDIT WIDGET

- Registration & Fee Summary
- Blackboard online learning
- Courses
- Web Registration
- OASIS academic records
- Gmail
- OASIS academic records
- Gmail
- Web Registration



On-line Academic Student Information System

Course Information Financial Information Course Transfer Record Ordering Services Other Services Logout

askUSC Knowledge Base Start Here

**Course Information**

- Registered course List**  
Registered course(s), time, date and location for the three most recent semesters.
- Book list**  
Lists all required and optional books that have been ordered through TrojanBookstores for the courses in which you are registered.
- Enrollment history**  
Enrollment history including class level, enrollment status, units earned, program of study, etc.
- Unofficial Transcript**  
History of completed course(s) including units and grades.
- Restrictions**  
Summary of active "holds," description, and removal location/ phone number and any mandatory advisement obligations, if any...
- STARS report**  
Detailed listing of a student's degree requirements that have been met and those that remain to be fulfilled (if any).
- STARS Interactive Audit Report**  
Provides a graphical representation of a student's STARS report. Also provides the ability to plan future course registration to determine its impact on degree progress.
- Grade Report**  
Grades for the current semester will post as professors submit them. You can check your grades on the Unofficial Transcript page or on the Grade Report page.
- Permit to register**  
Eligible students' registration appointment times.
- Eligible students' registration appointment times**  
**Permit to register**  
Grades on the Unofficial Transcript page or on the Grade Report page. You can check your grades for the current semester will post as professors submit them. You can check your
- Grade Report**



# Project Your GPA

- Projecting your GPA for the end of the Spring 2023 is absolutely **essential** for your academic planning.
  - Goal Setting: You *must* have an exact idea of the *minimum* grades you must get in each of your classes to be on track for a 3.0 cumulative GPA.

## Quick GPA Calculation Tool:

<https://www.collegesimply.com/colleges/california/university-of-southern-california/gpa-calculator/>

\*Note: This particular GPA calculation tool is meant for **general guidance**, and is not intended to be an exact calculation. It is highly suggested that you do your own GPA calculation to get a more accurate GPA projection.



# What is Academic Dismissal, and Am I At-Risk?



# Academic Dismissal

- **What is Academic Dismissal?**
  - Dismissal means a student's student status at the University is terminated. A dismissed student may not register for any University course, and their academic post will be closed.
- **From USC Catalogue:**
  - *"Satisfactory progress toward an advanced degree as determined by the faculty is required at all times. Students who fail to make satisfactory progress will be informed by their department or committee chair or school dean. The faculty has the right to recommend at any time after written warning that a student be dismissed from a graduate program for academic reasons or that a student be denied readmission."*
- **A student will be considered for Academic Dismissal:**
  - If GPA has not improved **enough to be on track to graduate with a 3.0 or more at the end of their program.**





# Am I At-Risk for Academic Dismissal?

- It is important to keep in mind that Academic Dismissal review cases are reviewed on a case by case basis by both Academic Department and VASE GSA office.
  - We partner to examine student cases holistically.
- Will the student be on track to achieve a 3.0 by the end of their program?
  - Is this academic path to a 3.0 realistic given the student's academic history?
- Did the student's GPA improve this semester, and are they on an upward trajectory?
- Are there any other factors that significantly impacted the student's performance?
- Has the student been in contact with their academic department and actively sought out resources?



# At-Risk Case Study 1

Fall 2022	
Grades: C (4 units), C (4 units)	Cumm GPA: <b>2.0</b>
↓	
Spring 2023	
Grades: A (4 units), A (4 units)	Cumm GPA: <b>3.0</b>
↓	
Fall 2023	
Grades: A (4 units), B (4 units)	Cumm GPA: <b>3.17</b>
↓	
Spring 2024	
Grades: A (4 units), A (4 units)	Cumm GPA: <b>3.38</b>

- ❖ This student will be fine, no risk for dismissal at end of Spring 2023.





## At-Risk Case Study 2

Fall 2022	
<b>Grades:</b> C (4 units), C (4 units)	<b>Cumm GPA: 2.0</b>
↓	
Spring 2023	
<b>Grades:</b> B (4 units), A (4 units)	<b>Cumm GPA: 2.75</b>
↓	
Fall 2023	
<b>Grades:</b> A (4 units), B (4 units)	<b>Cumm GPA: 3.00</b>
↓	
Spring 2024	

- ❖ This student did not meet minimum 3.0 at end of Spring 2023, but has displayed significant improvement. They have a realistic path to a 3.0 by the end of their program!



# At-Risk Case Study 3

Fall 2021	
Grades: C (4 units), F (4 units)	Cumm GPA: 1.0
↓	
Spring 2022	
Grades: C (4 units), C (4 units)	Cumm GPA: 1.5
↓	
Fall 2022	
Grades: B- (4 units), C+ (4 units)	Cumm GPA: 1.83
↓	
Spring 2023	
Grades: B (4 units), B- (4 units)	Cumm GPA: 2.09
↓	
Fall 2023	
Grades: A (4 units), B (4 units)	Cumm GPA: 2.37
↓	
Spring 2024	
Grades: A (4 units), A (4 units)	Cumm GPA: 2.64
↓	
Fall 2024	

❖ Is this student's path to a 3.0 realistic?





# General Notes

- Retaking a course will not remove previous attempts' impact on your GPA.
- Final withdrawal deadline is April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
  - **International students** must maintain full-time enrollment (8 units) unless approved for a Reduced Course Load.
- Program Extensions for international students will only be approved if path to 3.0 is realistic.



Getting back on track to  
achieve your goals!



# Academic Probation: Next Steps

Breathe, take a moment to collect your thoughts.  
Develop a plan to seek academic help.

Develop a study plan.

Meet with an advisor to discuss the courses/GPA needed in future semesters to meet GPA requirements.

Use resources that can help if you need academic support.

# Strategies to Stay Academically “Healthy”



Be strategic in your academic planning



Create study habits



Calculate your grade using syllabi



Time Management



Visit office hours to speak to a TA



Form study groups

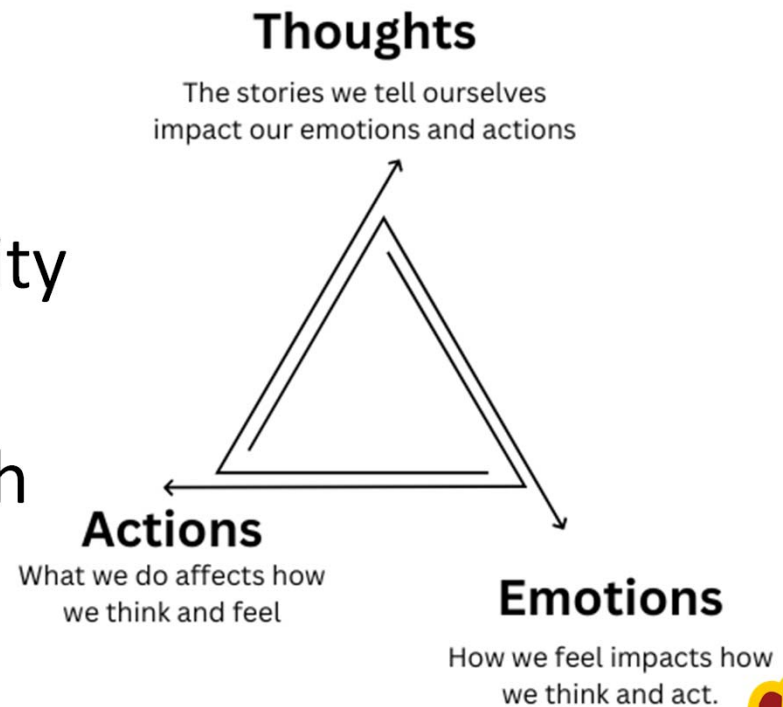
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# Resiliency\*

The ability to

- adapt and grow through adversity
- navigate difficult challenges with awareness, intention, and skill



(adapted from Sharon Milgram, NIH Building Resilient Scientists, 2022)





**I must  
Be  
Perfect.**

**Other  
students are  
more  
qualified.**

**I cannot let  
anyone  
down.**

**I can't show  
any  
weakness.**

**I won't be  
disappointed  
if I don't try.**

**I don't  
belong  
here.**

**If I expose my  
real self,  
people won't  
like me.**

**I  
shouldn't  
need help.**

**Things will  
fall apart if I  
don't do it  
myself.**



# To Be Resilient We Have To

- ❑ Learn from previous experiences
- ❑ Be mindful about how we approach setback and engage with our distorted self-talk (inner critic/inner champion)
- ❑ Develop our growth mindset - **the power of YET**
- ❑ Develop our emotional literacy and understand how strongly emotions can drive behavior and impact our responses
- ❑ Build strong positive relationships with peers and mentors
- ❑ Be proactive and use resources to thrive

(Sharon Milgram, 2022, NIH Building Resilient Scientists Series)



# Barriers to Help Seeking

What are some of the barriers that might keep someone from using potentially helpful resources?

1. **Fear/Shame**
2. No time
3. Lack of resources or knowledge
4. Too exhausted or defeated
5. Feel the need to handle by self
6. Negative self-talk
7. Denial of the problem
8. Mental health conditions

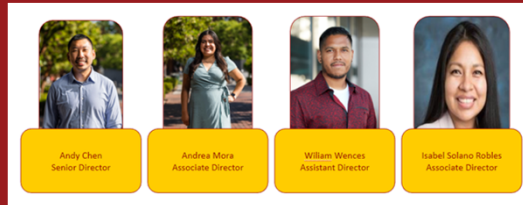
(adapted from Sharon Milgram, NIH Building Resilient Scientists, 2022)



# STRUGGLING? SEEK HELP!

## Who can help?

- Faculty (Instructor)
- Department Advisor
- VASE drop-ins & appts
- TAs, Course Producers
- Course graders



Office of  
Student Accessibility Services

- ## Who can help?
- Support for students with a documented disability
  - <https://osas.usc.edu>



- ## How to reach us
- [Studenthealth.usc.edu](https://studenthealth.usc.edu)
  - 213-740-9355



- ## What we offer
- Academic Coaching
  - Drop-in Services
  - On-demand workshops

# Seeking Assistance - Who to Seek Out

- **VASE GSA Advisor:**
  - General questions regarding USC and Viterbi policies and procedures including Academic Probation *policy*, international student processes, general questions and support.
    - VASE Virtual Drop-ins M-F, one on one appointments.
    - Visit: <https://viterbigrad.usc.edu/academic-advisement/>
- **Department Academic Advisor:**
  - Academic advice and guidance within your program including: Academic Probation *guidance and support*, course planning, general academic advice, department resources, department-specific questions and support.
    - Appointments vary by department.
    - Visit: <https://viterbigrad.usc.edu/academic-advisement/>
- **Lorena Duran, Viterbi Director of Student Wellness**
  - A private resource to students in need of emotional support and resource coordination to manage their well-being.
    - Student check-ins, wellness workshops
    - Visit: <https://viterbigrad.usc.edu/student-life/student-wellness/>







## Academic Departments

Each department has their own process to assign d-clearance and advising appointments.

Click on your department to learn more about the curriculum and advising.

**[Aerospace & Mechanical Engineering](#)**

**[Astronautical Engineering](#)**

**[Biomedical Engineering](#)**

**[Mork Family Department of Chemical Engineering & Material Science \(Petroleum Engineering\)](#)**

**[Sonny Astani Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering](#)**

**[Computer Science](#)**

**[Ming Hsieh Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering \(Green Technologies\)](#)**

**[Daniel J. Epstein Department of Industrial & Systems Engineering](#)**

Find your academic advisor here:

**<https://viterbigrad.usc.edu/academic-advisement/#academicAdvisors>**

# Attendance and Satisfaction Survey

- [https://usc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5BF04xw0KCJFxTo](https://usc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5BF04xw0KCJFxTo)
- **Survey is highly encouraged**
  - Your department will be aware of your attendance.
  - Will communicate to Viterbi that you are dedicated to your academic success.
  - Will help us get a better understanding of students on Academic Probation, and how we can best assist these students now and in the future.
  - Will inform how we improvement this workshop in the future.



# Q&A

