

Applying to the NIIN Program through the Progressive Degree Program

1. This program is open only to juniors and seniors at USC. It allows high-performing undergraduates to begin graduate work before graduating from undergrad.

2. Eligibility

- Students should submit their applications when they are in their junior or senior years. This means that they have completed **at least 64 total units** of undergraduate course work excluding units from advanced placement (AP) classes, the International Baccalaureate Program (IB), or transfer units earned prior to graduation from high school).
- Seniors must apply no later than the semester prior to the one in which they will begin their graduate work.
- Applicants must have **at least a 3.0 GPA from classes taken at USC**. Grades on transfer credits don't count toward this GPA.

3. **Applying** to our program through the Progressive Degree Program at USC.

- **Please note that you should apply to only one program through the Progressive Degree.** Progressive Degree applicants may not be considered for multiple graduate programs. If you were to apply to multiple programs, the USC Academic Records & Registrar office would instruct you to withdraw your application from all but your top choice as soon as they become aware that you have applied to multiple programs. This would likely take place before you have received an answer from those programs.
- Progressive degree applicants should submit the following to niin@ini.usc.edu with the subject line: Progressive Degree Application – *YourName* (e.g., “Progressive Degree Application - Tommy Trojan”):
 - Application form (found here: <https://academicprograms.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2024-Progressive-Degree-Application.pdf>)
 - STARS report showing at least a 3.0 GPA from classes taken at USC. Grades on transfer credits don't count toward this GPA.
 - Two letters of recommendation sent directly from USC faculty academic email accounts with the subject line: Progressive Degree Letter of Recommendation – *YourName* (e.g., “Progressive Degree Letter of Recommendation - Tommy Trojan”). Please fill out and sign the recommendation forms and give them to your referees when you ask them for a letter of recommendation. They may write their letter directly on the form or as a separate attachment, but both the form and any accompanying letter should be submitted directly to us from the faculty's professional email account.
 - CV or resume
 - Statement of purpose that answers our questions listed below.
 - Proposed course plan

4. **Statement of purpose** questions. **Please address all of the following questions** in your statement of purpose. If needed, you may also comment on any perceived weaknesses in your application and explain why you think they will not affect your success in our program.
- What has made you interested in learning about neuroimaging and/or informatics?
 - What evidence can you provide that you are likely to succeed academically in a program that requires scientific aptitude and technical skills?
 - What is your 5-year goal after completing our program, and how will our program help you to meet that goal?
 - What are your long-term goals and how will being part of our program help you to make a positive impact?
5. **Proposed course plan**
- Our classes can be found on our website <http://niin.usc.edu/about#curriculum>.
 - Please see the memo outlining proposed course plans before applying. If you have questions about the memo, please contact us at niin@ini.usc.edu
 - Once you have read the memo and we have answered any questions you may have, please construct your proposed course plan with your undergraduate advisor and include the completed course plan with your application.
6. **Intent to enroll.** Students accepted into the NIIN program through the Progressive Degree Program are considered to be included in our program when they notify us in writing of their intent to enroll by emailing us at niin@ini.usc.edu.