Admissions FAQs:

Questions about Transcripts:

1. **What transcripts should I request?** Applicants should submit official transcripts for all institutions from which a bachelor’s degree or higher degree was obtained AND official transcripts for all work completed after obtaining the bachelor’s degree, including undergraduate and graduate coursework. **Junior/community college transcripts are NOT required.** (Applicants who are applying for nursing programs and have earned an Associate’s of Science-Nursing should include those transcripts.)

2. **I am currently in my final year/semester of coursework before receiving my degree. Do I have to wait to apply to graduate school until I have graduated?** No. Applicants may submit in-progress, official transcripts from their current institution. If admitted, it is the student’s responsibility to submit final, official transcripts during their first semester at Southern Miss.

3. **How will I know if you have received all my transcripts?** You can track the receipt of all required documents, including transcripts, by logging into your self-service portal. Click on Applications and then Summary to view the status of outstanding documents. Please be aware that transcripts typically take 24-48 hours to be processed.

4. **I graduated from The University of Southern Mississippi. Should I request my Southern Miss transcripts?** If you were a former student at Southern Miss, you will **NOT** need to request your transcript. As a courtesy, we will request a transcript on your behalf. Just be sure to include Southern Miss in your education history.

5. **Where should I send my transcripts?** Graduate Admissions accepts official transcripts sent in sealed, official envelopes via the postal mail and via electronic transcript services. Our eScriptSafe code is 002441 GRAD. For electronic transcript services requiring an email address, please use graduateschool@usm.edu. Transcripts being sent via the postal mail should be addressed to:
   
   **The University of Southern Mississippi**
   Graduate School Admissions
   118 College Drive #5024
   Hattiesburg, MS  39406
   
   International applicants should address official transcripts to:
   
   **The University of Southern Mississippi**
   International Student and Scholar Services
   118 College Drive #5151
   Hattiesburg, MS  39406 USA

6. **How long until you process my transcripts?** Official transcripts are received daily both electronically and through the postal mail. Once we have received a transcript, it typically takes 24-48 hours for the transcript to be processed and attached to your application. You can track the status of your transcripts by logging into your self-service account. If you attended a previous institution under a different name, you may need to contact our office after sending your transcript.
Questions about Test Scores:

1. What standardized test should I take? Most departments require GRE test scores. The College of Business and other select departments may accept GMAT scores. Certain programs in education may accept the MAT. Contact the department of your anticipated major to determine whether they will accept scores other than the GRE. If you have not already taken the GRE or other test, you should do so at least six weeks prior to your program deadline.

2. I requested my test scores. How long will it take for them to be uploaded to my application? GRE scores can take up to 7-10 business days to be reported from your request date. Scores are loaded daily.

3. What is the GRE code for Southern Miss? Southern Miss’s ETS for GRE and TOEFL code is 1479.

4. Can my test score requirement be waived? Graduate-level standardized tests are required for admissions to the graduate school. On rare occasions, certain departments may request a test score waiver from the Dean of the Graduate School for applicants who are particularly well qualified or who may have extensive experience in their field. Please contact the department of your anticipated major to inquire about test waivers.

Questions about Requirements:

1. What is the minimum GPA or GRE requirements? The Graduate School determines the minimum GPA requirements for regular admission into masters, specialist, and doctoral programs. Higher standards may be stipulated by the department.
   - Applicants to master’s programs must have at least a 2.75 GPA on their last 60 hours of undergraduate study.
   - Applicants to a specialist program must have at least 3.25 GPA on previous graduate work.
   - Applicants to a doctoral program who have not earned a master’s degree must have at least a 2.75 GPA on their last 60 hours of undergraduate work.
   - Applicants to a doctoral program who have earned a master’s degree must have at least a 3.5 GPA on all previous graduate work.

The Graduate School does NOT stipulate a minimum GRE, GMAT, or MAT score. Please contact the department of your anticipated major for questions regarding test score requirements. For additional information regarding regular admissions requirements and conditional admissions requirements, please see the current year’s Graduate Bulletin.

2. What documents will I need in addition to transcripts and test scores? In addition to official transcripts and official test scores, most applicants should be prepared to provide contact information for three individuals who are able to speak to your academic performance. (Applicants to the Speech Pathology program will not be required to submit letters of recommendation. Applicants to the Political Science master’s programs are only required to submit two letters of recommendation.)

Most departments require additional supplemental documents as part of the application file. You should contact the department of your anticipated major for additional information about those materials.
Questions about the Application:

1. **Can I change any information on my application after I have submitted it?** Up until the point of submission, you can update any information on your application by logging into your self-service portal. Once you have submitted your application, the information is locked. If your information has changed, please contact The Office of Graduate Admissions at 601.266.5137 for assistance.

2. **I uploaded an outdated/incorrect resume/statement of purpose/etc. What should I do?** You can make changes regarding any uploaded documents up until the point of submission by logging into your self-service portal. Once your application has been submitted, the information is locked for review. However, if you have an updated document that you would like to submit, you can forward the document to graduateschool@usm.edu. If your application file has not been sent to the department for review, we should be able to upload the new document.

3. **How do I replace a recommender on my application?** Up until the point of submission, you may change recommenders or recommender emails by logging back into your application self-service portal and editing your application. Once you have submitted your application, you can contact the Office of Graduate Admissions at 601.266.5137 or at graduateschool@usm.edu to change recommenders or update recommender contact information. If you need to resend a recommendation request after submitting your application, you can do so by logging into your self-service portal. In your application account, you should navigate to your application summary by clicking Application in the upper left hand corner and then clicking Summary under the appropriate application. From there, you can resend recommendation requests.

4. **Can I submit my application before all the required documents have been received?** Applications can be submitted before all required documents have been received. However, all student uploaded documents (such as curriculum vitas, letters of interest, and other supplemental materials) must be uploaded before submission. In most cases, applications that are submitted and paid for by the application deadline are considered “on-time”. However, certain departments do require that all application materials be received by the application deadline. If you are concerned about missing documents having an adverse effect on your application, please contact the department of your anticipated major.

5. **Today is the deadline for my application, but my letters of recommendation, transcripts, or test scores have not been received yet. What should I do?** Applications submitted and paid for by the application deadline are typically considered “on time”. Certain departments do require that all application materials be received by the application deadline. If you are concerned about missing application materials and the application deadline, contact the department of your anticipated major for additional information.

Questions about Application Fees and Deadlines:
1. **What is the deadline for applying to graduate school?** Application deadlines are set by the department. For the most accurate information regarding application deadlines, you should contact the department of your anticipated major.

2. **I missed the application deadline for my program. Do I have any other options?** Program application deadlines are firm. If you have missed your program’s deadline, you can be admitted as a non-degree seeking student for your first semester and then apply for a future term in your program. Please be aware that you will be required to submit a second, program-specific application and pay a second application fee. Students can be admitted as non-degree seeking through the first day of the term. Non-degree seeking students must submit the online application, application fee, proof of bachelor’s degree, and immunization records. Please be aware, non-degree seeking applicants are not eligible for federal financial aid.

3. **How much is the application fee and can I get it waived?** There is a $60 non-refundable, non-transferable application fee. The Office of Graduate Admissions offers fee waivers for domestic applicants who are active duty or veterans of the United States military, former or current McNair Scholars, and current, full-time Southern Miss employees. If you qualify for one of these waivers, you will be notified as you complete your application.

4. **Where can I pay the application fee?** After submitting your application, a text box will open directing you to click OK to open the payment portal. In that portal, you can pay using a credit or debit card. If you choose not to pay at the time of submission, you can pay later by logging into your self-service account. In your application account, you should navigate to your application summary by clicking Application in the upper left hand corner and then clicking Summary under the appropriate application. On the Summary page, there will be an Invoices section with a link to Make Payment. Please be aware that your application will not be processed until your application fee has been paid.

**Questions about Decisions and Post-Decision Actions:**

1. **How long until I receive a decision?** Once you have submitted your application, application fee and all required application documents, your application will be reviewed by graduate admissions staff, usually within 7-10 business days. Your application will then be forwarded to the department for review. Each department’s review process and timeline is different. You can contact the department of your anticipated major for specific dates and timelines. Once the department has made their decision recommendation, you will be notified via email that a decision has been reached.

2. **How do I defer my admissions?** Students are admitted to a particular program for a specific term. Departments may choose to offer a deferred admission at their own discretion. To request an admission deferral, you will need to complete a deferral request.

3. **What do I do if I can’t access my immunization (MMR) records?** Immunization records can typically be obtained from your personal physician or from your local health department. If you are unable to obtain your records, and you have received two doses of the MMR (or comparable vaccine), you can have a MMR titer test completed. If you were born before January 1, 1957, you are not required to submit proof of immunization.
4. I was admitted before I completed my bachelor's degree. Do I need to submit a final transcript? Yes. In-progress transcripts may be used for admissions purposes. However, if admitted it is the student's responsibility to submit their final transcript as soon as possible. Students will not be permitted to enroll in their second semester of coursework until all final transcripts have been received.

5. Who is the Academic Advisor for my program? Each department assigns their own academic advisors. Contact the department of your major to find out who your advisor will be.

6. How many credits can I transfer to a Master or Doctoral program? What is the process for transferring credits? Students may transfer no more than six credit hours for use toward the completion of a graduate level degree. These credit hours can NOT have been used or obtained during the course of completion of a previous degree. To begin the credit transfer process, contact the department of your major.

7. How many credit hours does a graduate assistant have to be enrolled in to be considered fulltime? Graduate assistants are required to be enrolled in at least nine hours of graduate level course work during the fall and spring semesters and three hours of graduate level course work during the summer semester.

Additional Questions:

1. I took a leave absence/dropped out of my program. Now I'm ready to come back. What do I need to do? Students who wish to return to a graduate program to which they were previously admitted and enrolled, need to fill out an Application for Readmission for the term they wish to return. Applicants seeking readmission are not required to resubmit application documents or transcripts, unless they have attended another institution of higher learning since leaving Southern Miss. Students who wish to return to graduate school in a new or different program and students who were previously undergraduates will need to complete a new, program specific application.

2. How much does graduate school cost? Information regarding tuition and fees and other expenses can be found on the Business Services website.

3. What scholarship opportunities are there for graduate students? Information regarding scholarships and other funding opportunities can be found under the Financing Your Education section of the Graduate School website.