If accepted to the PhD program, will I be a TA or RA?
The department generally recruits new PhD students as a TA for the first year. Funding in the subsequent years varies between TA and RA depending on the funding sources. However, a new student can also be directly recruited as an RA by a professor.

Is it necessary to communicate with the professors or just apply to the department? Is admission dependent on communication with the professor?

It is highly recommended that you identify one or more professors in the department that you may want to work with and start communicating with them by expressing your research and other interests and prior experiences. However, it is not a requirement for you to apply. Having communicated with professors may make your application stronger. You are also advised to contact the graduate program director if you have any questions regarding your application submission process.

Can my application fee be waived?
The application fee is waived only for students with prior USF degrees.

Can I apply past the application deadline?
If the deadline has passed, contact the graduate program director in the department for advice.

What are the minimum admission criteria?
Please refer to the department's website below:
https://www.usf.edu/engineering/imse/documents/phd-admission-requirements.pdf

The department critically reviews applicant's bachelor's and master's transcripts for performance in mathematics and engineering related subjects. High GRE scores (verbal, quantitative as well as writing) play a critical role. Prior journal publications and other leadership activities are considered favorably.

What are the research/coursework expectations from a new student?

The following are the minimum requirements.
  90+ total credit hours beyond baccalaureate degree (60+ total credit hours beyond master's degree)
  60+ hours (30+ hours beyond master's degree) of formal coursework
  20+ of the above must be at 6000 level
  8+ hours of mathematics/statistics graduate coursework
  20+ dissertation hours
  Successful completion of the comprehensive exam, candidacy exam, proposal defense, and final dissertation defense
  A minimum of two (at least one accepted, one submitted) refereed journal publications before graduation
  3.0+ GPA
Core courses
  ESI 6491 Linear Programming & Network Optimization
  ESI 6213 Stochastic Decision Models I
  ESI 6635 Advanced Analytics I
  EIN 6520 Systems Modeling & Performance Analysis

For further reference please visit the website below:
https://www.usf.edu/engineering/imse/documents/phd-degree-requirements.pdf

A new Ph.D. student is expected to secure a Major Professor to guide her/his doctoral research by the end of the first semester.

How many recommendation letters do I require for submitting my application?

IMSE department requires 3 letters of recommendation.

How do you convert the grading system used in my country to GPA used in the U.S.?

It is not necessary for you to convert your grades into a 4.0 GPA scale. IMSE department looks at your percentage scores in your degree transcripts.

Commonly asked questions by applicants in the post-application phase:

When can I expect to get the decision on my application?

IMSE department reviews applications on a rolling horizon basis. Strong applicants are interviewed generally during the months of March/April. Accepted candidates are notified soon after the interviews. Spring applicants are interviewed during September/October.

If accepted, what is the deadline for me to accept the offer?

As per accepted guidelines among all U.S. universities, the Ph.D. acceptance deadline is specified in the offer letter to be April 15. However, we encourage the applicants to accept as soon as possible so that appropriate VISA documents, when applicable, can be sent by the university.

follow-up e-mails while awaiting a decision?

It is always good to follow up, however, wait at least a month after your application is fully submitted.

If my application is rejected, can I apply again?

Yes, you can, but only if you believe that your overall portfolio has significantly improved since your last application.

Does Industrial Engineering at USF offer conditional acceptance?

IMSE department does not generally offer conditional acceptance for the Ph.D. program.

Commonly asked questions by selected applicants:

If I am accepted does that mean I am funded?

The IMSE department at USF offers funding to all accepted candidates for the Ph.D. program. The funding is offered in the form of a Teaching Assistantship (TA), Research Assistantship (RA) or Graduate Assistantship (GA), which also comes with in-state and out-of-state (when applicable) tuition waiver and health insurance. Students are required to pay some fees each semester of enrollment.

Can I defer my admission to a future semester?

Yes, you generally can for up to a year. You need to request the graduate program director for approval.

If accepted, when will I get my I20 for my visa application?

Once you accept our offer to the Ph.D. program, you get a notification from the international office to start the visa application process.

Can I bring my spouse and children as an international Ph.D. student?

Yes, the international office will guide you through the process. You are responsible for their financial support.

After the visa is approved, when should I come to USF?

We recommend our students arrive prior to the start of their TA/RA/GA appointment, but not prior to the date specified in the I20. Note that it takes several days to complete all the paperwork needed to begin your employment.

Will there be someone to pick me up from Tampa Airport?

Some student organizations offer pickup services for incoming USF students. You may contact them in advance. Common transportation services such as Uber/Lyft/Taxi/Buses are also easily available from Tampa Airport.

Where will I stay?

Contact student groups prior to arrival if you need help. For on-campus and limited off-campus housing, refer to the USF websites:

On-campus
https://www.usf.edu/housing/housing-options/index.aspx

Off-campus
https://offcampushousing.usf.edu/

Commonly asked questions after arrival to USF campus:

What should I do after arrival at USF?

Here are a few things that you should attend to soon after your arrival.
Report your arrival to the

How many courses are funded by the waiver?

When should I schedule my candidacy examination? What is the purpose of the candidacy exam?

Candidacy examination should be scheduled when most of the coursework is completed. Consult with your major professor. Upon completion of the candidacy exam, you transition from being a Ph.D. student to a Ph.D. candidate, which enables you to register for doctoral dissertation hours.

What is the difference between directed research and dissertation hours? Will my directed research hours be counted toward my dissertation?

Conference expenses are partially reimbursed either by the graduate school or by your major professor.

Does candidacy exam, proposal presentation, and final dissertation defense need forms or any other forms of approvals?

The Candidacy exam and the final dissertation defense require committee approval forms.

What should I present on final defense since I presented part of my research on candidacy and proposal presentations?

You should always plan to present the full extent of your dissertation work with more emphasis on the work accomplished after your proposal presentation.

What are the publication and other requirements for scheduling my final dissertation defense?

A minimum of two (at least one accepted, one submitted) refereed journal publications before scheduling the final defense.

What is a better semester to graduate? Fall/Spring/Summer?

You can plan to graduate in any semester. Historically more students tend to graduate during the summer semester. However, if you intend to join academia, summer graduation is preferred, as academic jobs usually begin in Fall.

What to do after graduation?

Stay in touch with your major professor and department. If you work in the industry, then encourage your HR department to hire from USF.