

Popular academy for international students gets new, expanded home

The USC International Academy prepares students for study at top research universities across the country



Lisa Chavac checks in Undergraduate Prep students in the USC International Academy during a 2014 orientation. *Photo by David Sprague*

USC International Academy has a new permanent home to befit its growing success: the renovated Davidson Conference Center.

A site once dedicated primarily to large-group meetings, the Davidson Conference Center on the northeast corner of the University Park Campus was refitted to contain 28 classrooms. The change reflects the high student demand for the USC International Academy's services.

The university launched the academy in fall 2014 for international students. The academy helps students qualify for admission to undergraduate and graduate programs at research universities across the U.S., including USC, by assisting them with test preparation, language courses and individualized admissions consulting.

Offerings include a pre-master's program that provides a unique suite of courses to prepare students for USC's rigorous graduate degrees. No other top 25 research university offers similar services. Nearly 100 USC graduate degrees offer conditional admission through the pre-master's program, including business, engineering and computer science.

"It's the first time a university like USC, a top-tier research university, has a program that makes degree programs this much more accessible to international students," said Anthony Bailey, USC vice president for strategic and global initiatives.

Besides the pre-master's program, USC faculty also teach in the academy's three other areas:

- an undergraduate preparation program in which students can earn up to 12 transferable USC course units
- a master's preparation program
- an intensive program to learn English

More than 700 students are now enrolled in the academy, with 247 in the pre-master's program. The academy's student body includes more than 30 nationalities, with China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Turkey, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Korea, Brazil and Vietnam representing the top 10 sources of students.

The university community will celebrate the academy's new home in the rededicated Davidson Conference Center at a grand opening at 3 p.m. on Oct. 21.

1. More than 500 people attended the opening of the USC International Academy, including government representatives from Chile, China, France, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, and Mexico.
2. President Nikias spoke at the event.
3. Deborah Detzel, Academic Director of the USC International Academy.
4. Anthony Bailey, Vice President for Strategic and Global Initiatives.
5. President Nikias and Dr. Bailey with International Academy staff. *From left to right: Aga Paul, Deborah Detzel, C. L. Max Nikias, Anthony Bailey, Terence Liu, Pam Ireland, and JJ Lee.*

