The Graduate School
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The University of South Carolina is a Carnegie “very high-level” research university — the only one of this kind in the state. This distinction places USC among the top 50 public research universities in the nation. USC is also a recipient of the prestigious Carnegie Classification for Community Engagement.

Moreover, in recent years, USC has produced more than 300 doctoral graduates per year, an impressive accomplishment by any measure. In addition to our 2,000-plus doctoral students, USC is proud to offer graduate programs to nearly 4,000 students at the master’s degree level. With more than 240 different graduate programs, the University of South Carolina has something for everyone. Our diverse student body includes students from all 50 states and 83 countries.

The Graduate School at the University of South Carolina is rooted in a rich tradition of scholarship, innovation and spirit. In addition to our nationally acclaimed Presidential Fellows program, which now includes more than 85 doctoral students, The Graduate School offers a number of programs that enrich the experience of our students.

We urge all graduate students to take advantage of the full experience offered at USC, particularly the special value-added enrichment programs offered by The Graduate School. The following pages feature just a few of the outstanding graduate students at the university and the innovative and exciting research and scholarship being produced.

Become part of the Gamecock family and experience all that USC has to offer you.

LIVING IN COLUMBIA

The capital of South Carolina and the state’s largest city, Columbia provides residents with a wide variety of activities and attractions, including a nationally acclaimed zoo and botanical garden, an award-winning library system, two major arts and entertainment districts, a world-class art museum, six professional dance companies and three professional theaters. If you enjoy outdoor activities, Columbia is home to Congaree National Park, South Carolina’s only national park. The city also has many opportunities for boating, canoeing and kayaking along its three rivers and Lake Murray. You can also cheer on your fellow Gamecocks at one of our 19 varsity sports teams’ events. While Columbia is known for being “Famously Hot,” its temperature is fairly moderate, with average highs around 92 in July and average lows around 34 in January.* Columbia also consistently ranks among the most livable and affordable mid-sized cities. Learn more about Columbia at www.columbiacvb.com/.

*Figures come from the Columbia Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau: http://www.columbiacvb.com/visitor-information/weather/.

DR. LACY FORD, SENIOR VICE PROVOST AND DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES
EVERY SEMESTER, THE GRADUATE SCHOOL SPONSORS WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS DESIGNED TO HELP STUDENTS DEVELOP, ARTICULATE AND LEVERAGE VALUABLE TRANSFERABLE SKILLS THAT TODAY’S EMPLOYERS SEEK.

EVENTS
Career Panel: Advanced Degree to Industry
Communication Workshops (Three Minute Thesis (3MT®)/Dissertation Speech)
Curriculum Vitae Workshops
Dissertation Writing Retreat
Electronic Thesis & Dissertation Workshops
Entrepreneurial Workshops
Graduate Student Day
Graduate Student Resource Fair
Grant Writing
National Fellowship Workshops
Publishing Workshops
Preparing Future Faculty
$tart $mart Workshops (Financial Literacy)
Teaching Assistant Training
Community Engagement Institute (starting 2015)

AWARDS
Dean’s Award for Excellence in Leadership
Graduate Student Day (competitions)
Outstanding Dissertation Award
Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award
Outstanding Thesis Award
Presidential Fellowships
Travel Grants
Trustee Fellowships
Trustee Recruiting Fellowships

AFFILIATES
Career Center
Center for Teaching Excellence
Development and Alumni Relations
Faber Entrepreneurship Center
Graduate Student Association
Office of Fellowships and Scholar Programs
Office of the Vice President for Research
Writing Center
University of South Carolina Press
The Presidential Fellowship program has been a unifying force at the University of South Carolina since it was created in 2010.

More than 100 fellows from 35 different graduate programs at the University of South Carolina have participated in the recruiting fellowship program, which awards supplementary stipends totaling up to $32,000 for doctoral students and $20,000 for MFA students.

“The Presidential Fellowship enables us to bring in top talent from across the country and around the world,” says Jessica Elfenbein, senior associate dean of The Graduate School and director of the Presidential Fellowship program. “By combining requisite departmental assistantships with generous supplementary stipends, we are, by joint effort, able to provide attractive financial packages to outstanding applicants. So far, nine of the 12 eligible USC colleges and schools have had students who are Presidential Fellows or alumni.”

Unique among peer institutions for its reach across disciplines and its focus on professional development, the Presidential Fellowship is Carolina’s highest university-wide award for incoming graduate students. Candidates for the merit-based fellowship are nominated by graduate directors after a student’s application is complete but prior to matriculation at USC.

In addition to receiving up to four years of funding, students who are selected for this highly competitive fellowship participate in a bimonthly, interdisciplinary seminar. Recent seminar and guest lecture topics include publishing and writing, work-life balance and community engagement.

“This is a really special program,” says Lacy Ford, senior vice provost and dean of The Graduate School. “Nobody else has one like it.”

In 2013 the program was recognized for “innovation” and “excellence” by the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools, a consortium of more than 200 graduate schools in the southern U.S.
Brittany Walter, a doctoral candidate in anthropology, is president of the Graduate Student Association. In that role, she is the chief advocate for the university’s graduate student body and serves as a liaison with the university administration.
What attracted you to Carolina to pursue a doctoral degree in anthropology? I chose Carolina for several reasons. Most importantly, when I researched the university, I was impressed with the level of research that the graduate students were conducting, and I wanted to become a part of it. Being offered the Presidential Fellowship from The Graduate School, which funds me for four years of my doctoral degree, was a great incentive to come to USC as well. The location was also attractive. Columbia has a small-town feel, and there is always something to do — festivals, shows, nightlife. The city is also not far from the beach or the mountains and cities such as Charlotte, Charleston and Atlanta.

What has the graduate student experience been like for you at Carolina? My graduate experience has allowed me to become immersed in not only research aspects of graduate school but also with getting to know my fellow graduate students. I knew when I started at Carolina that I wanted to become involved with the university because I had been involved with graduate student policy changes during my master’s degree at the University of Central Florida. Through my involvement, I’ve established valuable connections with my peers in my department and the Graduate Student Association. They have become a treasured support system and a family away from home.

What are some of the key factors that you think make Carolina an attractive option for graduate school? Other than the impressive, high-caliber research at Carolina, students who come to Carolina for their graduate education have access to several beneficial resources that help them conduct their research, such as a SPARC Grant or Walker Graduate Fellowship. Travel grants offered by The Graduate School also can help cover costs when presenting research at conferences. There is also an open dialogue between graduate students and The Graduate School, which is in charge of a number of policies and decisions that affect graduate students. The GSA helps graduate students become aware of resources such as these and works with university groups to ensure that graduate students are well represented.

Completing a terminal degree requires a lot of time — what led you to take on the extra tasks of serving as president of the Graduate Student Association? The university has opened so many doors for me; I thought it was time to give back. The last two years for the GSA have been a productive and successful period of rebuilding. We have grown immensely and helped graduate students become more visible on campus. Taking on the role of president means that I can ensure that important changes the GSA has put in place will be maintained and that new ideas and policies can be successfully implemented during my term.

How does the GSA help the graduate student population at Carolina? The GSA advocates on behalf of all graduate and professional students at USC and is dedicated to the advancement and development of these students during their graduate education. We support the diverse nature of the graduate student body (e.g. international students and students with families), recognizing that graduate students have different needs and interests. The GSA endeavors to accommodate all graduate students so that their time at USC is a productive and enjoyable part of their graduate education. We work closely with the administration and other organizations on campus to connect graduate students with valuable resources. We also provide opportunities that promote cohesion among graduate students and facilitate networking with activities like social events and community service opportunities.

What are your career plans after completing your Ph.D. at Carolina? My ultimate goal after completing my Ph.D. is to secure a tenure-track position at a university. I absolutely love to teach, so combining my love of research and teaching is my dream job. Also, after working with administration here at USC while in leadership roles, I have become interested in eventually advancing to an administrative role within a university.

The Department of Anthropology has a four-field Ph.D., MA and BA program as well as three graduate certificate programs.
Andrew Allen has been chasing his dream of teaching music since he discovered music as a kid.

He realized his goal in the summer of 2013 when he began teaching at Valley City State University in Valley City, ND, and conducting jazz band. His goal was furthered when he graduated that December with a doctoral degree in musical arts performance from the University of South Carolina.

Allen says none of it would have been possible without the moral support of his family and the financial support from Carolina’s Presidential Fellowship program.

“I am a first-generation college student from a blue-collar background, but knowledge and art were always something that was taken very seriously,” Allen says. “My parents and both sets of my grandparents drove me to lessons and attended every performance, from middle school band on up. I think with that support it was easy for me to see how much fun it all was, and it heightened my desire to take everything as far as I possibly could.”

Allen was the first participant in Carolina’s Presidential Scholars program to complete his degree. The merit-based program awards doctoral students a supplemental stipend totaling $32,000 over four years. Spanning the university’s 12 colleges and schools and representing more than 27 doctoral and master of fine arts graduate programs, the Presidential Fellowship is Carolina’s most prestigious university-wide award for excellence at the graduate level.

“The Presidential Fellowship aided in the fact that it insured that I would have to pay nothing for an incredible doctoral education,” says Allen, who completed his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at other colleges, but chose USC to study with Clifford Leaman, saxophone professor and associate dean of undergraduate studies in the School of Music. “In addition, I was intrigued by the opportunity I would have to associate with high-caliber doctoral students from across campus.”

Allen was involved with multiple university ensembles, but he says the Presidential Fellows program gave him a chance to meet and get to know graduate students in other disciplines. Fellows are nominated by graduate directors and have promising research agendas or creative projects, coupled with accomplished academic records, and — depending on the type of program (doctoral or MFA) — superior standardized test scores or impressive portfolios.

Jessica Elfenbein, a history professor and senior associate dean of The Graduate School, heads the Presidential Fellowship Program and meets with fellows individually and as a group in a bimonthly seminar. These meetings helped Allen branch out of the music school.

“It also furthered my attachment to Carolina, as a whole,” he says. “It was one of the few times in the week that I would be in a building other than the School of Music, around people other than fellow music students.”

Now an assistant professor of music at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls, Texas, Allen credits his time at USC with helping him stay competitive in the job market, and he credits music faculty with helping him prepare to become a college faculty member.

“I have formed so many wonderful personal and academic ties with people both inside and outside the music department that will stay with me throughout my career,” he says.

The School of Music has one of the top three graduate piano pedagogy programs in the nation.
When Xi “Joe” Chen returned to Columbia to defend his dissertation, he had a few other items on his to-do list as well. He wanted to catch a football game at Williams-Brice, he wanted to soak up a little more Southern charm, and he wanted to score a few kid-sized Gamecock T-shirts to take home — to Kosovo.

As a political affairs officer for the United Nations mission in Kosovo since 2012, Chen primarily serves as an advocate for ethnic Serbs, the war torn republic’s onetime majority population that became the minority following the conflict with the region’s Albanian population in the late 1990s.

Chen’s role in Kosovo is also to encourage Serbs to accept newly established Albanian institutions necessary to access education, health and social welfare benefits. It’s a job that dovetails perfectly with the political scientist’s research at USC on local governance.

“My job is to make sure the minority groups are protected. Even though the Serbs did a lot of bad things during the war, plenty of bad things have been done on both sides,” Chen says. “At some point, in order to not inflict more wounds on future generations, you have to come together and move forward.”

On a typical day, Chen and a translator travel to Serb villages, or to camps for internally displaced persons, known as IDPs. There, he interviews residents about a wide range of complaints that arise from poverty, violence and a lingering resentment between ethnic groups. He helps individuals and families access existing programs designed to improve their situations, which frequently are grim.

“It can wear you out, but at the same time, you realize that you are one of the few hopes they have of their problems actually being addressed,” Chen says. “If you don’t come through, their situation will never change.”

And for Chen, change is the keyword, something he relates to personally as a Gamecock. Prior to a U.N. internship in New York that led to his job in Kosovo, the native of Chongqing, China, spent nearly eight years at USC, where he says he was transformed through work with Sustainable Carolina and through humanitarian service projects, like the ones that took him to New Orleans more than half a dozen times after Hurricane Katrina.

Along with his research, these experiences helped lead Chen to his current career. But they are also why, when he returned to Kosovo after successfully defending his dissertation at Carolina, he stuffed several kids-sized Gamecock T-shirts into his luggage for children of families he has already helped.

“My experience at USC shaped me. It made me the man I am right now,” says Chen, who talks up his alma mater whenever he can. “The way I perceive the world, the way I treat others, and the way I want to be treated came from my experience at USC as a student.”

The political science department’s public law program was recently ranked as one of the top five programs in the nation.
Deonna Farr was on the path to becoming a medical doctor when she traveled to Ecuador to work with a community clinician. What she saw there changed her mind. She still wanted to help people, but she thought her talents and skills would be better spent focused on improving health and wellness for whole communities rather than curing an individual’s illness.

“Public health works to build bridges between what’s discovered and what’s delivered in a culturally appropriate and efficient way,” says Farr, a doctoral student in health promotion, education and behavior. “By nature, it’s an interdisciplinary science.”

Farr worked as a project manager at the Stroke Disparities Project and earned degrees from Cornell and George Washington universities before coming to the University of South Carolina in 2012 as a Presidential Fellow.

Inspired by the energy and sense of community at Carolina, Farr quickly got to work, mentoring two undergraduate students and drafting a successful National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant during her first semester at USC.

The grant provides two years of support for Farr to look at factors that influence cancer research participation by African-Americans. Working alongside Heather Brandt, an associate professor, Farr will examine individual and structural factors that lead to increased rates of chronic diseases, like cancer, in minority communities.

“One of the advantages of USC is that we have a high participation of African-Americans in our research and a large network of researchers and community partners to help us better understand how to address the problem of cancer,” says Brandt, who is also a faculty associate in the Arnold School of Public Health’s Cancer Prevention and Control Program. Farr’s grant builds on the successes of a larger NIH project at USC.

“The grant encompasses faculty researchers from several departments affiliated with the Cancer Prevention and Control Program and includes community organizations as part of the research team,” Brandt says.

This is crucial to building trust among participants. “When community organizations have a partnership and a place at the table from the beginning, we’re more likely to have an impact,” Farr says.

And her study has no shortage of involvement from across disciplines and from local partners. Faculty from health promotion, epidemiology, psychology and nursing are all participating in the project.

“Public health is broader than what happens at a doctor’s office,” Farr says. “We’re working with communities to first find out what the needs are, then to build solutions based on that.”

The Arnold School of Public Health is one of the first accredited schools of Public Health in the nation and the only one in South Carolina.
ACADEMIC MATCHMAKER

The only university Wright Culpepper ever applied to, twice, was the University of South Carolina.

“I have two degrees from USC, and although I grew up in Georgia, Columbia was always my home away from home,” he says.

Now Culpepper is working on behalf of the university to assist academic departments in attracting prospective graduate students to USC.

“I see my role as being a conversation-starter between prospective graduate students and academic departments. If I can direct prospective students to particular programs and provide them with a basic knowledge of funding and academic opportunities at USC, then I will consider my efforts a success,” he says.

Culpepper, who joined The Graduate School last year as assistant director of recruitment and special events, started his career as an epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta.

When the opportunity came for him to represent his alma mater, he jumped at the chance.

“I enjoy helping people transition into graduate school,” says Culpepper. “And I think my experience as a researcher has enabled me to see the bigger picture of what a graduate education can do.”

“My job is to be the face that introduces the larger university and Columbia communities to the smaller research-focused academic community. My goal is to start the conversation, but it is the academic departments that make the biggest impact on prospective students.”

A confidential resource

GRADUATE STUDENT OMBUDSMAN HELPS STUDENTS BETTER UNDERSTAND PROBLEMS AND OPTIONS FOR SOLVING THEM

Dale Moore might know more about the nuts and bolts of academic policies for graduate education than anyone.

Since 1989, Moore has been on staff at The Graduate School, with responsibility at different times for tasks as varied as admissions, recruitment, development, registration, graduation clearance, progress to degree, international recruitment and admissions and thesis and dissertation submissions.

In 2012 Moore was promoted to assistant dean and named The Graduate School’s first ever graduate student ombudsman — an informal, confidential, neutral and unaligned resource for addressing concerns and conflicts.

“In my role as ombudsman, I am not an arbiter or a student advocate as such,” Moore says. “Instead, I am a facilitator. When students come to me with a problem, I help them better understand their problem and what their options are for addressing that problem.

“Because of my experience as an administrator, I am well-versed in those options. This empowers me to be a more effective ombudsman and a better advocate for fairness.”

Students who turn to an ombudsman might find the process is more informal, less combative, and, at times, much more effective than formal proceedings, where people might feel constrained by policy or unprepared for the unintended consequences of a lengthy formal process.
Every spring, a lively crowd of about 100 graduate students, faculty and staff in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Program circle around the Wardlaw College statue, “The Torch Bearer,” in anticipation of the traditional run to the statue. Students who successfully complete their comprehensive exams make a mad dash for the statue, while those not sitting for the exam decorate the statue with balloons, streamers and banners of support. Legend has it that if you touch the statue before comps, you won’t pass the exam.

Students enrolled in the master’s degree in higher education and student affairs can concentrate in either higher education administration or student affairs administration.
CELEBRATING TENURE-TRACK JOB OFFERS

Dinner for 70

When more than 70 doctoral students from the University of South Carolina’s graduating class landed tenure-track faculty positions in 2013, the Office of the Provost and The Graduate School decided to throw a dinner party.

Although many departments celebrate their own students who secure these highly competitive faculty positions, the celebration stood out as the first institution-wide event to recognize the scores of doctoral students who succeeded in this endeavor.

It might also have marked one of the first of such events in the country.

“We always emphasize the tenure-track position as something we would like our graduates to achieve,” says Lacy Ford, senior vice provost and dean of graduate studies. “But we have never formally recognized it. The impressive number and quality of USC placements that year prompted the idea to invite students and their advisors to a dinner to highlight their accomplishments.”

Since that inaugural dinner, the two offices have continued to host an annual celebration to honor the many doctoral and MFA students who find faculty positions at leading colleges and universities across the country and around the globe.

Thank you for your interest in the University of South Carolina. If you are ready for graduate school and think Carolina would be a good fit, then we hope you will apply!

The majority of graduate programs use The Graduate School application, through CollegeNet.* The following application materials are required by all departments in The Graduate School:

• A baccalaureate degree (or the international equivalent) from an accredited college or university
• Standardized Test scores (consult the program to which you are applying for particular test requirements)
• Official Transcripts
• Two or more letters of recommendation
• Application
• Application fee
• English Proficiency Requirement**
• Other Supporting Materials***

For further information and for answers to the most frequently asked questions about applying to Carolina visit http://gradschool.sc.edu/prospective/bya.asp?page=b4 .

* Some programs do not use The Graduate School application. The Darla Moore School of Business, the Arnold School of Public Health, and the J.D., M.D., and Pharm.D. programs use other applications. Please see each program’s respective webpage for further information.

** An applicant whose native language is not English is required to submit a satisfactory score on the TOEFL or IELTS exams.

*** Many programs require personal statements, resumes, writing samples, audio files (recitals, auditions), art portfolios and/or licensure. Please consult your program for further requirements.
GRADUATE STUDENT DAY
It’s equal parts celebration, competition and award ceremony —
and the University of South Carolina’s most comprehensive
showcase of graduate scholarly and creative work. Sponsored by
The Graduate School and held each spring, Graduate Student Day
provides students with an opportunity to present their work to
the university and the larger USC community. All current gradu-
ate students from every discipline are eligible to participate in the
competitions, which include oral presentations, poster presenta-
tions, creative performance and displays and Three Minute Thesis
(3MT®)/dissertation speeches.

HISTORY STUDENT GETS
BIG FORUM FOR BIG IDEAS

Robert Greene enjoys thinking about big ideas,
which are the stock and trade of intellectual his-
tory — the focus of his doctoral studies at USC.

But beyond merely thinking about such
things, Greene’s ability to articulate his ideas in
an engaging fashion has earned him a prestigious
forum. He’s now a regular contributor on the Society
for U.S. Intellectual History’s blog site.

His posts appear every Sunday and have focused on some of
the big ideas of the late twentieth century, such as public memory,
the civil rights era, pop culture, and radical, conservative and
liberal viewpoints. It’s heady stuff for a doctoral student who’s
one of USC’s Presidential Fellows: Greene’s fellow bloggers
include history professors from around the country.

“One of the reasons I’m doing the blog is to think out loud
and to incorporate some of those thoughts, once they’ve been
refined, into my dissertation,” said Greene, who earned a
bachelor’s in creative writing and a master’s in history, both
from Georgia Southern University, before starting work on
a Ph.D. in history at USC.

One of the fringe benefits of being a contributor to the
intellectual history blog site is quality feedback, Greene said,
adding that criticisms and observations come from other
historians and have proven to be quite helpful. “It’s a community
of scholars who read the blog,” he said. “No one has an ax to
grind, but there are some very lively discussions sparked by
our posts.”

Greene focuses on twentieth century African-American intel-
lectuals — individuals such as Harold Cruse, Albert Murray, and
James Baldwin — political history, and the U.S. since 1965. He’s
also interested in public memory and its relation to actual events.

“One of the questions I’m asking is how do we, in the twenty-
first century, remember the civil rights era and desegregation?”
Greene said. “I’m studying how different black intellectuals have
constructed that memory, with some focusing on the radical ele-
ments and some remembering the inclusivity of that era. We have
to remember that memory isn’t the same as history.”

Greene credits several professors, including history faculty
members Bobby Donaldson and Marjorie Spruill and journalism
professor Kathy Forde, with helping him find his way in his first
year. “After taking courses and talking with them, I began to real-
ize that intellectual history was what I wanted to do,” he said.

As a student of intellectual history, Greene will continue
to think every day about the big ideas of the latter half of the
twentieth century — and post his thoughts on the Society of
U.S. Intellectual History’s blog every Sunday.

The history department boasts the only public history pro-
gram in the country to win the prestigious Robert Kelley
Memorial Award, given by the National Council on Public
History.

The Graduate School and held each spring, Graduate Student Day
provides students with an opportunity to present their work to
the university and the larger USC community. All current gradu-
ate students from every discipline are eligible to participate in the
competitions, which include oral presentations, poster presenta-
tions, creative performance and displays and Three Minute Thesis
(3MT®)/dissertation speeches.
Carole Sox didn’t set out to make history when she started a Ph.D. program three and a half years ago, but she accomplished that when she became the College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management’s first-ever doctoral graduate in 2014.

Sox, who will receive a Ph.D. in hospitality management, was part of the college’s inaugural cohort of doctoral students. One of 14 degree-granting colleges and schools within the University of South Carolina, the college recently added another Ph.D. program in sport management.

“I think all of us in this first group of Ph.D. candidates are honored to be part of the college’s progress,” said Sox, who had been an adjunct instructor in HRSM for several years before starting the doctoral program in 2011.

A 20-year corporate career with a focus in the hospitality business was the perfect setup for Sox’s role as an adjunct, and that teaching experience inspired Sox’s pursuit of a Ph.D.

“Students like Carole Sox help the college achieve national recognition,” said Brian Mihalik, dean of the College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management. “Carole now will most certainly enhance her teaching, research and service reputation, and that will heighten the reputation of USC and the college.”

Sox’s work experiences at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and as a special events planner provided plenty of real-life examples to share in the conference planning and hospitality marketing courses she taught at Carolina.

“Students seem to enjoy the stories from my past jobs. It adds a real-life dimension to the classroom and helps me to provide a working industry perspective to the students,” Sox says. “I’m energized by students, and those classroom experiences made me realize how much I need to be current in best practices.”

Sox had great support from her husband, Greg, during the three years it took to complete coursework and a doctoral dissertation, but her real motivation for finishing the program in a relatively short time was their two daughters, Millie and Lennae.

“It’s been a rigorous experience, the coursework and all of the writing,” Sox said, “And I had to devote many evenings and weekends to getting it all done. While Greg was wonderful about shouldering most of our parenting responsibilities, I didn’t want to be away from Millie and Lennae any more than I had to. My family kept me focused.”

Two of the College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management’s programs are ranked nationally. The Master of International Hospitality and Tourism Management program was recently ranked No. 2 in the nation, and the college’s Sport and Entertainment Management graduate program ranked No. 9.
Travis Edwards is part of a USC effort that helps keep America’s soldiers safe and its military helicopters ready for action. And his contribution hasn’t gone unnoticed: Aviation Week recently named the mechanical engineering master’s candidate one of 20 promising, young engineers in aerospace.

With the strength of the program here, Edwards knew that staying at the USC College of Engineering and Computing for a master’s degree would bolster his career options. He took a research position in the Condition-Based Maintenance (CBM) Laboratory immediately after earning a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering in 2012. “I’ve always been interested in aerospace, so that was a big factor in my continuing here as a graduate student,” he says. The team in the CBM lab is working closely with the U.S. Army to enhance performance and maintenance procedures on the AH-64D, the Apache helicopter.

“We’re trying to improve the component life of the tail rotor swashplate right now,” he says, referring to the mechanics that turns the rotor blades on the tail section.

Monitoring the condition of components is the heart of the CBM method. The goal is to move away from a scheduled maintenance plan, such as an automobile oil change every 3,000 miles, and instead replace parts only when necessary based on their actual condition.

Sensors installed in several locations on a gear housing, for example, record vibrations. Properly interpreted, the vibration signature can be used to show that a component has significant life remaining, even if an arbitrary limit in hours of usage has been exceeded.

In cars, stretching an oil change by a thousand miles might save a few bucks. But with multimillion-dollar aircraft, savings are measured in tens of thousands of dollars and in the millions for an entire helicopter fleet.

“One of our earlier projects had almost a 17:1 return on investment,” says Edwards, referring to a research project that cost the Army just over half a million dollars but saved more than $10 million in maintenance costs.

Joining the CBM lab and helping move its work forward was an important part of Edwards’ recent selection by Aviation Week. Beyond awards, working in the CBM lab gives him the kind of experience that aerospace employers value. “I get hands-on, actually-touching-the-equipment experience in this program. It’s not just theoretical work here,” Edwards says. “And I also get to deal with the customer. With a masters, normally you just have research experience; here I will actually have two years of work experience under my belt because I’m providing a product to the customer — the Army in this case.”
MFA STUDENTS’ DESIGNS CHOSEN FOR 2015 PRAGUE QUADRENNIAL

At the 2014 United States Institute for Theatre Technology conference, the design work of scenic design students Xuemei Cao and Meredith Paysinger Hart and costume design student Vera DuBose was selected to be shown at the 2015 Prague Quadrennial, the world’s preeminent scenography convention.

A jury comprised of professionals from around the nation selected just 14 works out of 148 entries submitted by theatre design professionals, MFA theatre design students and faculty representing university programs from all over the country.

Works showcased were the sets and costumes for the production of Anton Chekhov’s “Three Sisters” and the set for Jeffrey Hatcher’s “Complete Female Stage Beauty.”

Held every four years and thus considered to be the Olympics of theatrical design expositions, the Prague Quadrennial highlights the best design work from more than 70 countries in the fields of scenography, costume design, lighting design, sound design and more. In addition to a large exhibition space, the convention features hundreds of performances throughout the city. The 2011 event drew nearly 50,000 visitors.

This selection is very important for the professional careers of the MFA students and demonstrates, once again, the national and international recognition of the University of South Carolina’s MFA Program in Design, which was selected among a very few design programs from top universities to represent theatre design education in the U.S. to a worldwide audience. Congratulations to these deserving students!

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

read & repeat

No. 1
International MBA program in the U.S.

328
doctoral degrees conferred

31%
of graduate students are international

246
degree and certificate programs

6,259
graduate students

9
top 25 graduate programs

25%
of the total student body at USC Columbia is made up of Graduate and Professional students

31
is the average graduate student age

315
Travel Grants awarded to graduate students by The Graduate School

40%
In any given year of graduate students are awarded assistantships
The stain from the high-water mark was over Chelsea’s head, almost out of reach. Hurricane Katrina devastated much of the Gulf Coast, including New Orleans’ Ninth Ward, and the horror of the storm became real to Chelsea Ball when she helped rebuild a home there. It was one of many stops during last year’s Bike and Build program, and Chelsea gets chills when she talks about it. But even after biking more than 4,000 miles in 81 days, she’d do it again. “The things I learned,” Chelsea explains, “planning and leading, working with others, helping those in need — I will carry those things with me forever.”