

GRADUATE EDUCATION

<https://grad.calpoly.edu/>

Graduate Admissions

Prospective Graduate Students

Cal Poly offers over 30 Master's degree programs covering all of our six colleges:

- Bailey College of Science and Mathematics (BCSM) and School of Education (SOE)
- College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences (CAFES)
- College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED)
- College of Engineering (CENG)
- College of Liberal Arts (CLA)
- Orfalea College of Business (OCOB)

A complete listing of our graduate programs can be found on the Cal Poly Graduate Education (<https://grad.calpoly.edu/>) site.

Application for Admission

All graduate and post-baccalaureate applicants (e.g., Master's degree applicants, those seeking educational credentials, or graduate certificates) must file a complete graduate application as described in the graduate and post-baccalaureate admission materials on the Cal State Apply website (https://www.calstate.edu/apply/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=performance-max&utm_campaign=ss23-engage). To be assured of initial consideration by more than one CSU, it is necessary to submit separate applications (including fees) to each. An acknowledgment will be sent to the applicant when the online application has been submitted.

Prospective students must supply complete and accurate information on the application for admission, residence questionnaire, and financial aid forms. Further, applicants must submit authentic and official transcripts from their bachelor-granting institution directly from the issuing institution to the Cal Poly Admissions Office by the application deadline. Failure to submit completed, accurate, and authentic application documents may result in denial of admission, cancellation of registration or academic credit, suspension, or expulsion (Section 41301, Article 1.1, Title 5, *California Code of Regulations*).

Applicants for graduate programs should refer to the Cal Poly Admission's Office website for program-specific deadlines. (<https://www.calpoly.edu/admissions/graduate-student/dates-and-deadlines/>)

Students who meet the minimum requirements for graduate and post-baccalaureate studies may be considered for admission in one of the four following categories:

1. **Graduate Classified** – To pursue a graduate degree, applicants are required to fulfill all of the professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards, including qualifying examinations, prescribed by the university; or
2. **Graduate Conditionally Classified** – Applicants may be admitted to a graduate degree program in this category if, in the opinion of the appropriate university authority, deficiencies may be remedied by additional preparation; or
3. **Post-Baccalaureate Classified (e.g., admission to an education credential program)** – Persons wishing to enroll in a credential or certificate program will be required to satisfy additional professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards, including qualifying examinations, prescribed by the university; or
4. **Post-Baccalaureate Unclassified** – To enroll in undergraduate courses as preparation for advanced degree programs or to enroll in graduate courses for professional or personal growth, applicants must be admitted as post-baccalaureate unclassified students. By meeting the general requirements, applicants are eligible for admission as post-baccalaureate unclassified students. Admission in this status does not constitute admission to, or assurance of consideration for admission to, any graduate degree or credential program. (Most CSUs do not offer admission to unclassified postbaccalaureate students).

Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate Admission Requirements

The CSU will consider an application for admission as follows:

The minimum requirements for admission to graduate and post-baccalaureate studies at a CSU are in accordance with university regulations as well as Title 5, chapter 1, Subchapter 3 of the *California Code of Regulations*.

Specifically, a student shall meet these criteria at the time of enrollment:

1. The applicant holds an acceptable baccalaureate degree earned at an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association, or the applicant has completed equivalent academic preparation as determined by the appropriate campus authority; and
2. The applicant has satisfied any one of the following three lettered conditions:

- a. The applicant has attained a grade point average of at least 2.5 in an acceptable earned baccalaureate degree,
 - b. The applicant has attained a grade point average of at least 2.5 in the last 60 semester units (90 quarter units) attempted;
 - c. The applicant holds an acceptable post-baccalaureate degree earned at an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association;
3. And the applicant was in good standing at the last institution of higher education attended.
4. Satisfactorily meet the professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards for graduate study, including qualifying examinations, as appropriate university authorities may prescribe.

In unusual circumstances, a university may make exceptions to these criteria. For example, an applicant who does not meet the GPA requirement would need GRE scores that are at the 50-percentile or higher (Quantitative, Verbal, and Writing) to be considered.

Some Cal Poly graduate programs require applicants to complete the GRE or GMAT; please check with the Cal Poly Admissions website for requirements for each program at Admissions Dates and Deadlines (<https://www.calpoly.edu/admissions/graduate-student/dates-and-deadlines/>). Applicants who earned a Cal Poly bachelor's degree may be granted an exemption from the GRE requirement; inquire with the program.

The Office of Admissions completes an initial portfolio review that includes verification of an equivalent B.A./B.S. degree, a determination of the appropriate level of study and an evaluation of all work completed. The Office of Admissions notifies all applicants of the documents needed to complete their portfolios. Graduate coordinators may require additional documentation to assist them in determining an applicant's suitability for the program of study.

(These and other CSU admission requirements are subject to change as policies are revised and laws are amended. The CSU website and the CSU admission portal are good sources for the most up-to-date information.)

Residency Status Determination

The campus Admissions Office determines the residency status of all new and returning students for nonresident tuition purposes. Responses to the application for admission and, if necessary, other evidence furnished by the student are used in making this determination. A student who fails to submit adequate information to establish a right to classification as a California resident is classified as a nonresident. For a detailed explanation, refer to Cal Poly Admissions Residency for Tuition Purposes (<https://www.calpoly.edu/admissions/residency-for-tuition-purposes/>).

International (Foreign) Student Admission Requirements

The CSU must assess the academic preparation of foreign students. For this purpose, "foreign students" include those who hold U.S. temporary visas as students, exchange visitors, or in other non-immigrant classifications. The CSU uses separate requirements and application filing dates in the admission of "foreign students". All graduate and post-baccalaureate applicants, regardless of citizenship, whose native language is not English and whose preparatory education was principally in a language other than English must demonstrate competence in English. Those who do not possess a bachelor's degree from a U.S. accredited post-secondary institution where English is the primary language of instruction must take either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing system (IELTS) exam, Duolingo, or another exam as indicated and approved by Cal Poly Admissions. For minimum scores, please visit this website (<https://www.calpoly.edu/admissions/international-student/selection-criteria/english-exam-requirements/>).

The process for filing an international application can be found at Cal Poly Admissions International Student (<https://www.calpoly.edu/admissions/international-student/>).

Master's Degrees

In graduate courses, students cope with more complex ideas, problems, techniques and materials than in undergraduate courses. Graduate study requires research and exhaustive analysis, identification and investigation of theories and principles; application of theory to new ideas, problems, and materials; extensive use of bibliographic and other resource materials, with emphasis on primary sources for data; and demonstration of competence in scholarly presentation of the results of independent study.

Regulations governing fees, grading, and financial aid are located elsewhere in the catalog. This section of the catalog reviews university policy and minimum requirements governing graduate studies. It is not, however, all-inclusive.

In addition to these general requirements, there are specific departmental requirements that can be found in the catalog descriptions for each master's degree program. It is important that graduate students, in consultation with their advisors, familiarize themselves with these requirements. Failure to do so may result in a substantial delay in progress towards the degree and graduation. It is the responsibility of the student to ascertain and comply with all university, college and departmental procedures and requirements.

- All available master's degree programs, graduate certificates and professional certificates can be found on the Cal Poly Graduate Education (<https://grad.calpoly.edu/>) website.

Master's Degree Programs

- Aerospace Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/aerospace/aerospace-engineering-ms/>)
- Agricultural Education (MAgEd) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agricultural-education-communication/agricultural-education-maged/>)

- Agriculture, Specialization in Animal Science (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agriculture-animal-science-ms/>)
- Agriculture, Specialization in BioResource and Agricultural Systems (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agriculture-bioresource-agricultural-systems-ms/>)
- Agriculture, Specialization in Crop Science (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agriculture-crop-science-ms/>)
- Agriculture, Specialization in Dairy Products Technology (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agriculture-dairy-products-technology-ms/>)
- Agriculture, Specialization in Environmental Horticultural Science (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agriculture-environmental-horticultural-science-ms/>)
- Agriculture, Specialization in Irrigation (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agriculture-irrigation-ms/>)
- Agriculture, Specialization in Plant Protection Science (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agriculture-plant-protection-science-ms/>)
- Agriculture, Specialization in Water Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/agriculture-water-engineering-ms/>)
- Architectural Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/architecture-environmental-design/architectural-engineering/architectural-engineering-ms/>)
- Biological Sciences (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/science-mathematics/biological-sciences/biological-sciences-ms/>)
- Biomedical Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/biomedical/biomedical-engineering-ms/>)
- Business Administration (MBA) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/business/graduate/business-administration-mba/>)
- Business Analytics (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/business/graduate/business-analytics-ms/>)
- City and Regional Planning (MCRP) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/architecture-environmental-design/city-regional-planning/city-regional-planning-mcrp/>)
- City and Regional Planning and Civil Engineering (Concurrent CRP/CE) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/interdisciplinary-programs/transportation-planning-ce-ms-mcrp/>)
- Civil and Environmental Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/civil-environmental/civil-environmental-engineering-ms/>)
- Computer Science (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/computer-science-software/computer-science-ms/>)
- Curriculum and Instruction (MA) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/science-mathematics/education/curriculum-instruction-ma/>)
- Educational Leadership and Administration (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/science-mathematics/education/educational-leadership-administration-ms/>)
- Electrical Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/electrical/electrical-engineering-ms/>)
- Emergency Management Certificate (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/emergency-management-certificate/>)
- Engineering Management (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/industrial-manufacturing/engineering-management-ms/>)
- English (MA) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/liberal-arts/english/english-ma/>)
- Environmental Sciences and Management (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/natural-resources-management-environmental-sciences/environmental-sciences-management-ms/>)
- Fire Protection Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/fire-protection-engineering-ms/>)
- Food Science (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/food-science-nutrition/food-science-ms/>)
- Higher Education Counseling and Student Affairs (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/science-mathematics/education/higher-education-counseling-student-affairs-ms/>)
- History (MA) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/liberal-arts/history/history-ma/>)
- Industrial Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/industrial-manufacturing/industrial-engineering-ms/>)
- Mathematics (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/science-mathematics/mathematics/mathematics-ms/>)
- Mechanical Engineering (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/mechanical/mechanical-engineering-ms/>)
- Nutrition (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/agriculture-food-environmental-sciences/food-science-nutrition/nutrition-ms/>)
- Polymers and Coatings Science (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/science-mathematics/chemistry-biochemistry/polymers-coatings-science-ms/>)
- Psychology (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/liberal-arts/psychology-child-development/psychology-ms/>)
- Public Policy (MPP) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/liberal-arts/political-science/public-policy-mpp/>)
- Quantitative Economics (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/business/graduate/quantitative-economics-ms/>)
- Special Education (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/science-mathematics/education/special-education-ms/>)
- Statistics (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/science-mathematics/statistics/statistics-ms/>)
- Transportation and Engineering Management (MS) (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/transportation-engineering-management-ms/>)

Blended Bachelor's + Master's program is available. See individual program link for information.

Graduate Certificates

An academic graduate certificate program provides an opportunity for a student to satisfactorily complete a sequence of advanced academic courses that provide instruction in a stand-alone, coherent body of specialized knowledge. It is designed to meet requirements for professional competence, expand access to specialized knowledge, or meet occupational needs for advanced interdisciplinary work.

Specific Requirements:

- Admission to a graduate certificate program requires a Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution with a major in a relevant field of study. The applicant must have attained a minimum GPA of at least 2.5 in the last degree completed or the last 60 semester units attempted. Work experience may substitute (at the discretion of the program) for the relevancy of the Bachelor's degree and for the minimum GPA requirements.
- At the discretion of the program, up to 30% of the units that are applied toward completion of a master's degree may satisfy the requirement of a graduate certificate program. However, students must apply separately for admission into a graduate degree program.
- No coursework for the certificate may be below the 4000 level and at least half of the units must be at the 5000 level. One 3-unit course in transfer credit, from a regionally accredited institution, may be allowed as determined by the graduate certificate program advisor.
- A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required for successful completion of a graduate certificate program. Students may not elect to take courses required for the certificate as credit/no credit. A graduate certificate program must be completed within three years.
- Students who are enrolled only in a graduate certificate program are exempt from the continuous enrollment requirement for graduate students.

Graduate Certificate Programs

- Emergency Management Certificate (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/emergency-management-certificate/>)
- Fire Protection Engineering Applications Graduate Certificate (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/fire-protection-engineering-applications-graduate-certificate/>)
- Fire Protection Engineering Science Graduate Certificate (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/engineering/fire-protection-engineering-science-graduate-certificate/>)

Graduate Student Continuous Enrollment Policy

Graduate students are required to maintain continuous enrollment from the time of first enrollment in a graduate program until completion of the degree (AS-692-09). Continuous enrollment is defined as being enrolled in at least one unit-bearing course during Fall and Spring semesters each year. All graduate students must be enrolled in at least one unit-bearing course during the term in which they graduate. Therefore, a student graduating Summer term must be enrolled during the summer. Students can maintain continuous enrollment by being enrolled as regular students or obtaining approval for a leave of absence prior to the term when such a leave would begin. Students who have completed all coursework for their degree and are making progress toward the completion of their thesis or project may maintain continuous enrollment by registering in GS 5597. This course is offered through Cal Poly Extended, Professional & Continuing Education and is a one-unit course, offered credit/no credit. Credits in GS 5597 do not count toward meeting degree requirements. Students not maintaining continuous enrollment lose classified graduate standing and will therefore be required to apply for readmission. Such students may be held for additional program or degree requirements which are current at the time of readmission. Re-admitted students may also need to re-enroll in their culminating experience course. This is at the program's discretion. Students who fail to fulfill this continuous enrollment requirement will not be permitted to graduate—even if all degree requirements have been completed—until payment has been made for all terms of non-enrollment.

For further information and a registration form, visit the Extended, Professional & Continuing Education (<https://extended.calpoly.edu/>) website.

Degree Requirements

The following conditions and academic requirements are common to all master's degrees:

- A graduate student must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 (grade of B on a scale where A = 4.0), or better. A course in which a 'CR' is assigned shall not be used in computing the grade point average. (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.4.)
 - Only graded courses with C- or higher can be used towards the master's degree. See the grade section for more details.
- A student must successfully complete a culminating experience (thesis, project, or comprehensive examination). (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.)
- A student must maintain satisfactory scholarship and professional standards. Only those graduate students who continue to demonstrate a satisfactory level of scholastic competence and fitness, as determined by the appropriate university authorities, shall be eligible to continue in such curricula. Students whose performance is judged to be unsatisfactory by the authorities of the University may be required to withdraw from all graduate degree curricula offered by the University.
- A student must complete all of the graduate degree requirements, including those to satisfy conditional admittance, within seven years (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.2.).
- A student may elect to meet the catalog graduation requirements in effect at the time the student was admitted to graduate standing (conditional or classified) provided that continuous enrollment was maintained (AS-692-09), or at the time of graduation.
- Graduate-level courses (5000-level) should make up no fewer than 60% of the units required for the degree (AS-825-17 (https://content-calpoly.edu.s3.amazonaws.com/academicsenate/1/images/AS-825-17_0.pdf)).

- At least 21 units of a 30-unit program must be taken while in residency (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.2.A). In programs with more than 30 units, an equivalent proportion (70%) of units must be taken in residency.

In-residence units are defined as units earned through:

- Cal Poly courses (both state and self-support) taken while officially matriculated in a master's program

Out-of-residence units (max 9 units or 30%) are defined as:

- Units earned while not matriculated in a master's program at Cal Poly
 - Transfer coursework from regionally accredited institutions
 - Credit earned in compliance with Cal Poly's Credit for Prior Learning Policy (AS-972-24)
 - Cal Poly graduate courses taken as an undergraduate, but not needed to meet baccalaureate degree requirements.
- No more than 6 units shall be in student teaching.
 - No more than 6 units shall be allowed for a thesis or project (Title 5, Article 7, b.2.C.).
 - Enrollment in these units must be as a master's matriculated student.
 - Units taken while matriculated in another master's program at Cal Poly, not used towards that master's degree or the degree was not completed may count towards in-residence units at the discretion of the program.
 - Some graduate programs may require more than 70% of the required degree units in residence; consult with the program.
 - Note: Some programs/departments set independent study limits on courses found in the course description. Typically, there is a 9-unit combined maximum of independent study units allowed.

Time Limit for Degree

Master's students have seven years to complete all graduate degree requirements (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.2.). Seven years begin at the time the first course used toward the degree is taken. The University, at its option, and in exceptional cases, may extend the time frame up to one additional year. Students who wish to extend the seven-year limit must submit a Graduate Petition for Special Consideration to Graduate Education before the end of the seven-year limit. If approved, courses that will be over 7 years old at the time of graduation must either be repeated or revalidated for currency using the Currency Petition form. Approval by Graduate Education to extend the time to degree and course currency will only be granted once. Courses taken outside of Cal Poly cannot be revalidated.

The petition to extend the time to degree requirement must include:

- An explanation of the reasons why the extension is necessary.
- Evidence to support the student's currency in the field of study.
- Identification of any additional coursework that needs to be completed as part of this petition.
- A list of courses that will be over seven years old at the proposed time of degree completion.
- Identify the culminating experience and current progress made toward completion.

The Currency Petition form must include:

- Confirmation from the program that the student has been examined and demonstrated competency for the current course content.
- The documentation used to establish course currency

Advisement

Departmental advisors and graduate coordinators share the responsibility for advising Master's degree students throughout their work toward a degree. Graduate students should work with both their graduate coordinator and advisor to help select appropriate courses that align with project or thesis work and the student's career objective. Graduate students can track degree progress using the Degree Progress Report (DPR). Information on how to access the DPR can be found here. Blended students do not have access to a DPR. Students are urged to maintain a personal file of transcripts and other records of all undergraduate and graduate work undertaken, and to make this file available whenever they seek advising.

Each Master's degree program has specific prerequisites, both in courses and in grade-point average. Deficiencies in prerequisites must be defined by the graduate coordinator as part of a conditional acceptance offer, and the graduate coordinator is responsible for verifying prerequisite compliance prior to the student's Advancement to Candidacy. Courses taken for this purpose normally do not count toward fulfillment of the unit requirement for the degree. Courses below the 4000-level cannot be used toward the master's degree (AS-313-89). However, in those programs where specific courses below the 4000-level may be essential for a student's success, the student may be conditionally admitted to the program contingent upon completing those courses.

Graduate Courses Taken by Undergraduates for Graduate Credit

Cal Poly undergraduates may take courses in the 4000 or 5000 series for graduate credit while still matriculated as undergraduates. If they subsequently enter a Cal Poly Master's, they may have such course credit applied toward that program only if the units were not used for the baccalaureate degree and the program approves. No more than 9 units of Cal Poly undergraduate work can be used toward the master's degree.

Cal Poly's Office of the Registrar will validate if Cal Poly undergraduate courses were not needed to meet any undergraduate degree requirement. However, students who want to use undergraduate courses from another institution must provide Cal Poly's Office of the Registrar with an official letter from the other regionally accredited institution indicating that the coursework was not needed to meet any undergraduate degree requirement.

Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to Candidacy (Title 5, Article 7, 40510a and 41011) recognizes that the student has, so far, sufficiently demonstrated the ability to operate at and sustain a level of scholarly competence that is satisfactory for the successful completion of the degree requirements. The student is then cleared for the final stages of the program, which include the thesis, project, or comprehensive examination, in addition to any remaining coursework.

Students become eligible to advance to candidacy when:

- Classified standing is achieved.
- The student is in good academic standing.
- The culminating experience has been identified as either a thesis, a project, or a comprehensive exam.
- Program-specific requirements are met. These can be found in the program's catalog section.

Culminating Experience/Research

The student must complete the culminating experience required by the specific program (thesis, project, or comprehensive examination) to be granted a graduate degree (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.). The quality of work accomplished, including the quality of the writing, is the major consideration in judging the acceptability of the thesis, project, and/or comprehensive examination.

Thesis

"A thesis is the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It identifies the problem, states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth the sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation. Normally, an oral defense of the thesis is required." (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.A.)

The following are the requirements for a thesis committee:

- 1) the graduate student has a thesis advisor who is a permanent full-time faculty member from the student's program;
- 2) the thesis advisor must serve as the chair of the thesis committee
- 3) the thesis advisor and the student recommend, for approval by the graduate coordinator and/or department head, at least two additional faculty members;
- 4) two of these members, one of whom is the committee chair, must be from the student's program.

Exceptions to the thesis committee composition must be approved by the College Dean.

All Master's theses must go through Graduate Education's Thesis Formatting Review, wherein an Editor reviews and provides the student with needed corrections. Upon completion of any corrections required by the Editor or thesis committee, the student contacts the Graduate Education Office (grad@calpoly.edu) to submit the electronic thesis report to the DigitalCommons@CalPoly, a digital archive for the University. The degree award date is based on the completion of all degree requirements and the acceptance of the thesis by Graduate Education for posting to [Digital Commons@CalPoly](mailto:DigitalCommons@CalPoly).

Project

"A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It is described and summarized in a written report that includes the project's significance, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation. An oral defense of the project may be required." (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.B.)

Projects require an advisor who is a permanent full-time faculty member from the student's program. A project may also include a committee that must be approved by the graduate coordinator and/or department head. Project reports are not submitted to Graduate Education and typically are not uploaded to the DigitalCommons@CalPoly.

Comprehensive Examination

"A comprehensive examination is an assessment of the student's ability to integrate the knowledge of the area, show critical and independent thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. The results of the examination evidences independent thinking, appropriate organization, critical

analysis and accuracy of documentation. A record of the examination questions and responses shall be maintained in accordance with the records retention policy of The California State University" (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.C.).

Research Involving Special Conditions

Research that involves the use of human subjects, vertebrate animals, hazardous materials, or information and materials subject to export-control regulations requires special campus review before the study begins. If your research involves any of these special conditions, check with your Graduate Coordinator, Thesis Advisor, and the Office of Research (<https://research.calpoly.edu/research-integrity/>) for procedures.

Grades/Repeats

Report In Progress (RP) Grades

The grade of RP is used in connection with courses that extend beyond one academic term. It indicates that work is in progress and has been evaluated and found to be satisfactory to date, but that assignment of a grade must await completion of additional work. Work is to be completed within a time period stipulated by the instructor. The RP symbol shall be replaced with the appropriate final grade within one year for all courses or will convert to an F for graded courses or NC for CR/NC-only courses.

There is an exception for graduate degree thesis or project courses (5598/5599) for which the time may be up to seven years, but may not exceed the overall time limit for completion of all Master's degree requirements (AS-647-06). Failure to complete the assigned culminating experience work will result in the RP, only in these courses, being converted to an NC (AS-443-95).

Repeating a Course

Students may enroll in a course for credit more than once only if the catalog course description states that the course may be repeated for credit. However, since only C- grades or higher can count toward the student's degree, an exception to this policy allows the repeating of a course in cases where a grade of D or F was received. If a student earns a D+ or lower, the course can be retaken with the permission of the student's program and both grades will be used in the GPA calculation. Unlike for undergraduates at Cal Poly, a graduate student repeating a course cannot qualify for the removal of a lower letter grade from the overall GPA calculation on the student's transcript.

Credit/No Credit Grading

Courses that are offered only on a credit/no credit basis also satisfy the unit requirement if a credit grade is earned. The equivalent of an A or a B (including a B-) is required to earn credit in such courses (AS-8-76). Graduate students may elect to take courses that will not be used toward their master's degree on a credit/no credit basis.

Registration

The schedule and instructions for registration and payment of fees are available through the registration and enrollment tab at the MyCalPoly web portal. Detailed descriptions of courses can be found here (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/courses/>).

Enrollment/Prerequisites

To enroll in a 5000-level graduate course a student must have postbaccalaureate/graduate standing or the permission of the instructor. Please note that prerequisites are not waived for 4000-level courses; a graduate student may need to get a permission number from the instructor teaching that course to enroll in a 4000-level course.

Credit for Prior Learning

See Evaluation of Transfer Credit (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/academic-standards-policies/evaluation-transfer-credit/>).

Status

Full-Time Status

A full-time graduate student is defined as one taking 9 or more units in a semester. Students receiving financial aid may need to meet different requirements to be considered full-time and should consult with the Financial Aid Office. Graduate students are not permitted to enroll in more than 15 units each semester.

Leaves of Absence

Educational, medical, and military leaves are permitted if students meet the eligibility requirements and submit a Leave of Absence form with the required signatures and documentation to the Office of the Registrar. The maximum duration for any single Leave of Absence is 4 academic semesters (not including summer).

See the leave of absence (<https://catalog.calpoly.edu/academic-standards-policies/registration/#LEAVESOFABSENCE>) section for further details.

Discontinuation

Graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment. Therefore, graduate students who do not register for courses or have not been on an approved Leave of Absence will be discontinued and will not be allowed to enroll. Discontinued graduate students must apply for readmission before

the deadline listed on the Admissions Office (<https://www.calpoly.edu/admissions/returning-students/>) website. Readmitted students may be held to additional program or degree requirements that are current at the time of readmission.

Graduation

A student planning to graduate must file an Application for Graduation (<https://grad.calpoly.edu/checklist-forms/steps-to-graduation.html>) with the Graduate Education Office by the listed deadline in the semester before the student intends to complete all degree requirements. This form notifies the Evaluations Office which semester a graduate student intends to graduate and serves as a request for the degree to be evaluated. The student may only submit the form after the Advancement to Candidacy form has been approved. **It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all of their necessary forms have been signed and approved.**

Students can confirm that they will appear on the bookstore list (which allows them to purchase a cap and gown) and the Commencement Bulletin by checking their status on Poly Profile only after all of their paperwork has been received and processed by the Office of the Registrar. On the Poly Profile, under the Career Program Plan section and the Postbaccalaureate Graduate career, students will see an "Expected graduation is..." notation once the paperwork has been processed.

Note: Despite participation in commencement ceremonies, students are not official Cal Poly graduates until they have completed ALL degree requirements satisfactorily and have received a 'Congratulations' email from the Office of the Registrar, Evaluations Unit.

Academic Excellence

Master's degree candidates who are academically in the top 10 percent of their program and are nominated by their Graduate Coordinator are eligible to be recognized for Academic Excellence. Nominations must be approved by the appropriate College Dean or their designee with final approval from the Dean of Graduate Education. If approved, this honor will be designated in the Commencement Bulletin. Students can contact their Graduate Coordinator for details.

Note: Latin honors (summa, magna, cum laude) are only for undergraduate degrees.

Distinction

Graduation with Distinction will be determined by the Office of the Registrar only at the time of degree posting. **It will NOT be noted or awarded at the Commencement Ceremonies.** Instead, the designation will appear on a student's final transcript and diploma. The criterion for graduation with distinction is a grade point average of 3.75 or better in courses that count toward the master's degree.

Commencement Awards

Faculty in each Master's program should make recommendations for **Outstanding Graduate Students** to the appropriate Graduate Coordinator by the date set by Graduate Education. For a program having more than 50 students, two nominations per award can be made. Graduate Education awards one Outstanding Graduate Student per college and the School of Education. For a program having more than 50 students, two nominations per award can be made. Finalists for the awards may be asked to supply additional information or material to a review committee appointed by the Dean of Graduate Education. The students selected for these awards will be recognized at the Spring Commencement ceremony.

Conduct/Probation/Disqualification/Dismissal

Student Conduct and Discipline

It is expected that all Cal Poly students are enrolled for serious educational pursuits and that they conduct themselves so as to preserve an appropriate atmosphere of learning. It is also expected that all students who enroll at Cal Poly are willing to assume the responsibilities of membership in the campus community. Association in such a community is voluntary, and students may withdraw from their graduate programs any time they consider the obligations of membership disproportionate to the benefits. While enrolled, students are subject to campus authority that includes the prerogative of dismissing those whose conduct is inimical to the aims of an institution of higher education. While enrolled, students are subject to the regulations governing discipline stated in Education Code Section 66017 and in Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, Sections 41301–41302, and to such rules and regulations as have been approved and promulgated by authority of the University President. Students are subject to other applicable regulations contained in this Catalog, in the Campus Administrative Policies, the Standards for Student Conduct, Rights and Responsibilities, and in other official university publications, including the Cal Poly website.

Academic Probation

A student who is enrolled in a graduate degree program in conditionally classified or classified standing shall be subject to academic probation if the term grade point average, Cal Poly postbaccalaureate cumulative grade point average, and/or postbaccalaureate higher education grade point average drops below 3.000 (AS-983-24) ([https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I585ED6134C6911EC93A8000D3A7C4BC3/?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=\(sc.Default\)](https://govt.westlaw.com/calregs/Document/I585ED6134C6911EC93A8000D3A7C4BC3/?viewType=FullText&originationContext=documenttoc&transitionType=CategoryPageItem&contextData=(sc.Default))).

A student who has been admitted as postbaccalaureate classified to pursue a credential program shall be subject to academic probation for failure to maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in all units taken in the credential program.

A postbaccalaureate unclassified student (one who has not been admitted to either a credential or graduate degree program) shall be subject to academic probation for failure to maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 in all units attempted subsequent to admission to postbaccalaureate standing.

Academic Disqualification

A graduate or postbaccalaureate student who has been placed on academic probation may be disqualified from further attendance in a program by action of the Dean of Graduate Education in consultation with the College Dean (or the Dean's designee) in which the student is enrolled for any of the following reasons:

1. The conditions for removal of academic probation are not met within the period specified.
2. While on probation the student fails to earn sufficient grade points to be removed from probationary status.
3. The student goes on administrative probation while on academic probation.
4. The student is subject to administrative probation for the same or similar reason for which the student has been placed on academic probation previously, although not currently in such status.

When such action is taken, the student is notified via email from the Dean of Graduate Education that includes an explanation of the basis for the action. Disqualification may be either from further registration in the program or from further enrollment at the University as determined by the Dean of Graduate Education.

Administrative-Academic Probation

A graduate student may be placed on administrative-academic probation by action of the Dean of the College (or the Dean's designate) in which the student is enrolled for any of the following reasons:

1. Withdrawal from all or a substantial portion of a program of study in two successive quarters or in any three quarters. (Note: a student who is on an approved Leave of Absence is not subject to administrative-academic probation for such withdrawal.)
2. Repeated failure to make progress toward the stated degree or program objective when such failure appears to be due to circumstances within the control of the student.
3. Failure to comply, after due notice, with an academic requirement or regulation which is routine for all students or a defined group of students (for example, failure to complete a required campus or program examination, failure to complete a required practicum, failure to complete a required internship, failure to comply with professional standards appropriate to the field of study, failure to make satisfactory progress in the academic program, etc.).

When such action is taken, students are notified via email and are provided with the conditions for removal from probation and the circumstances that would lead to disqualification, should probation not be removed.

Administrative-Academic Disqualification

A graduate student who has been placed on administrative-academic probation may be disqualified from further attendance in a program by action of the Dean of Graduate Education in consultation with the Dean of the College (or the Dean's designee) in which the student is enrolled for any of the following reasons:

1. The conditions for removal of administrative-academic probation are not met within the period specified.
2. The student goes on academic probation while on administrative-academic probation.
3. The student is subject to administrative-academic probation for the same or similar reason for which the student has been placed on academic probation previously, although not currently in such status.

When such action is taken, the student is notified via email from the Dean of Graduate Education that includes an explanation of the basis for the action. Disqualification may be either from further registration in the program or from further enrollment at the University as determined by the Dean of Graduate Education.

Dismissal from University

This is an administrative action that prevents students from enrolling at Cal Poly for any future quarters. Dismissal may result from academic disqualification, administrative-academic disqualification, or from disciplinary action.

Blended Bachelor's + Master's Programs

The purpose of a blended program is to provide an accelerated pathway to a master's degree and enhance the undergraduate learning experience. While in undergraduate status, a student in a Blended program will take graduate-level courses required for the master's degree (AA 2012-01). Cal Poly awards the Bachelor's and Master's upon completion of both degree requirements.

At the discretion of the program, up to 12 semester units may be double-counted for both the Bachelor's degree and the Master's degree, so that the total number of units may be 138 semester units (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.2.D). Refer to the specific Blended program catalog section to determine

if the program allows double-counting. In addition, Blended programs may provide an opportunity for students to integrate their senior project more seamlessly with their graduate thesis/project.

Students who are interested in pursuing a Blended program should visit the program's Blended section in the catalog, the Graduate Education website, and contact the Graduate Coordinator for the desired program. Since blended programs are an accelerated pathway to a Master's, students must start planning early. To facilitate timely degree completion, students should apply to a blended program during their third year or when their academic progress gauge reaches between 50-80%. The latest a student can apply to a Blended program is the semester before their last undergraduate term. For example, if a student will complete their bachelor's degree requirements spring term, they must apply by fall of that academic year. Refer to the individual program catalog section for eligibility requirements and required application materials. Blended program students do not need to apply through the Cal State Apply and thus are not charged an application fee. Instead, students must complete the Blended Program Application form available through the Graduate Education Office. After all approvals are obtained and eligibility is confirmed by Graduate Education, the student is officially accepted into the blended program. The student's status is then changed to a blended undergraduate, and they continue to pay undergraduate tuition and fees. Blended undergraduate students will complete bachelor's coursework while also taking graduate courses.

Note: Students should not start taking graduate coursework until they have been accepted into the blended program, as this will impact the transition to graduate standing and could result in the student no longer being eligible for the blended program.

CSU policy states that students will be assessed the undergraduate tuition and fees only during the time in which the blended-program student has earned fewer than 120 semester units applicable to the blended bachelor's and master's degree programs (AA 2012-01). Students admitted to the blended program will maintain their undergraduate status until they have reached a minimum of 120 degree-applicable units (or the minimum units required for a degree program of more than 120 units); these units can apply to either the undergraduate or graduate degree. At the beginning of the first academic term in which the student will earn this number of units, the student must file a post-baccalaureate change of degree objective (PBCO) form. The student's request to change to graduate standing will only be approved when the following requirements are completed (pending does not count as completed):

- Graduate Writing Requirement
- All lower-division coursework (including general education courses)

Once approved, the student will transition to blended graduate status and incur the appropriate increase in tuition and fees. Students must have graduate standing for a minimum of two terms before degree completion.

Note: Students who fail to transition to graduate standing during the academic term in which they will earn 120 degree-applicable units have missed the transition period. If this occurs, the student's status will be reviewed, and they may be removed from the Blended program.

Provision for Completing the Baccalaureate Portion (Bachelor's Degree) Only

If a student fails to complete the Master's program requirements, the Bachelor's degree may be granted. It will be awarded for the term in which all requirements for that degree were met. Students should contact the Graduate Education Office for information on how to initiate this process.

Second Master's Degree

Typically, a student can earn only one Master's degree in any one of the programs offered at Cal Poly. A student who wishes to complete a second Master's degree in another discipline, or two Master's degrees simultaneously, must meet admissions requirements for Cal Poly and the academic unit granting the degree. Students should contact the Graduate Education Office for information on how to initiate this process.

Note: Students must complete all requirements for both degrees. There will be no double-counting of any units for students who are pursuing a second Master's degree. This limit does not apply to concurrent programs that have Chancellor's Office preapproved unit reductions.