

## Application Process

### **Q: How do I apply (Regular Admission)?**

A: See the departmental website for links (<https://ceenve.calpoly.edu/graduate-degree-programs>). In your statement of purpose, you should declare which area of civil/environmental engineering you want to focus on (Construction, Environmental, Geotechnical, Structures, Transportation, Water), if any. You can also highlight information about yourself that is not obvious from your transcript, such as leadership, volunteer opportunities, and – most important – your reason(s) for pursuing a graduate degree.

### **Q: What is the Regular Admission application deadline?**

A: See the admissions web site for application deadlines (<https://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/graduate/deadlines.html>). For international students see (<https://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/international>).

### **Q: What are the criteria used to admit students to the graduate program?**

A: An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better (in the last 90 units), evidence of motivation for the program, and strong letters of recommendation. The admitted pool typically has a mean GPA around 3.4.

### **Q: Am I eligible to apply to the Civil/Environmental Engineering master's program if I have a BS degree in something other than a civil or environmental engineering?**

A: Yes, you can apply for conditional admittance, and if you have 1 quarter or less of coursework to make up you can take that coursework at Cal Poly.

## Blended Program

### **Q: How do I apply to the Blended program?**

A: The Blended Masters (BMS) Program application requires students to develop a research plan with a faculty advisor prior to applying. Once a research plan is developed the application process is:

- Submit unofficial transcripts and a statement of purpose that lists the faculty advisor and the research plan you have developed with that faculty advisor.

Submit the names of three references who will provide letters of recommendation. One of these letters MUST be from your faculty research advisor. The others may be from other faculty members, supervisors, etc. Your recommenders will receive an email that contains a link where they can submit their letter.

### **Q: What is the application deadline for the Blended program?**

A: The deadline is the end of the first week in the quarter prior to the quarter that you are applying for (e.g. if you want to start your Blended degree in Winter quarter then the deadline to apply is the end of the first week of Fall quarter). Note you must be in the BMS program prior to graduating. Do NOT wait until your final quarter to apply – that will be too late!

**Q: Who should the letters of recommendation come from?**

A: Anyone who can speak towards your aptitude for succeeding in the graduate program; Professors who you have had contact with, employers who you have worked for...

**Q: What is the Blended program?**

A: This is a graduate program for Cal Poly students who want to pursue a thesis masters. Successful applicants are admitted to the program once they have completed all 300-level courses (90% of their units towards a BS). The Blended student will complete course work towards their BS and MS degrees concurrently. Both degrees will be conferred upon completion of the program.

**Q: What happens if I start the Blended program and decide to bail?**

A: Then you can exit with your BS degree by completing a Change of Objective form.

**General Information about the Program + Classes**

**Q: How long does it take to earn a MS degree?**

A: Most students finish their MS within 3 to 5 quarters.

**Q: How many classes do I need to take for a MS?**

A: An MS requires 45 units of 400 and 500 level course work. More than 60% of the 45 units must be from 500 level courses. All grad students are required to take two 1 unit graduate seminars (591 and 592). For a thesis masters, 9 of the 45 units will be thesis units (599).

**Q: Can I do a coursework only MS (non-thesis option)?**

A: Yes. In lieu of a 9-unit thesis, you must take 8 additional class units and you must pass a 1-unit culminating MS experience (596). This culminating experience is typically a project requiring roughly 40 hrs of labor, with the results presented in written and oral form to a committee of faculty.

**Funding + Miscellaneous Questions**

**Q: Are there funding opportunities for graduate students?**

A: Some faculty have funded research that will pay graduates students to work on research. There are opportunities for graduates students to teach labs within the department and be paid as a lecturer. The financial aid office has grant and loan opportunities available for graduate students. There is also university wide money on a competitive basis through Grad Ed (<http://grad.calpoly.edu/financial-resources/financial-home-real.html>).

**Q: How do I find a thesis topic?**

A: Most thesis topics are proposed by the faculty. Many faculty have active research programs with new and ongoing projects that provide thesis topics for graduate students. Faculty may also be open to novel topics proposed by students. The best choice

is to talk to the faculty in the area that you are interested in and discuss possible thesis topics.

**Q: What if I have further questions?**

A: Email the Graduate Program Coordinator, Rebekah Oulton at [roulton@calpoly.edu](mailto:roulton@calpoly.edu)