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Welcome to Cal Poly. We hope your time with us will challenge you to grow professionally and enrich your life personally. We look forward to supporting you in this process and hope this handbook will provide answers to your questions.

– Graduate Education Office Staff

CAL POLY GRADUATE EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

Achieve excellence in practice-oriented professional graduate programs which place graduates into the workforce with advanced knowledge and the leadership skills necessary to prosper in an increasingly competitive global economy. Inspire students to innovate and achieve excellence in their educational and professional career objectives.

INTRODUCTION

The California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, CA has more than fifty graduate programs. These programs offer Master’s degrees, Post baccalaureate Credentials (Education), and Graduate and Professional Certificates. For more information about Cal Poly’s Graduate Education programs, please visit our website: grad.calpoly.edu or contact us via email: grad@calpoly.edu.

This handbook is intended to help guide you through the many policies and processes that you must follow to complete your graduate studies. It contains many of the official rules and regulations that govern the Cal Poly campus; a complete set of regulations can be found in the University Catalog. This handbook should serve to answer many of the questions that faculty, staff, and students encounter as they map out their path to degree completion. If you have any recommendations for additions or corrections to this handbook, please contact the Graduate Education office at grad@calpoly.edu.

Keep in mind that students themselves are ultimately responsible for the successful completion of all of the steps and documents required for graduation. This includes submitting all forms in a timely manner and adhering to university, college, and department requirements related to their degree program. This also means maintaining continuous enrollment until the completion of their degree. This handbook will assist students in completing their plan of study in a timely manner.
GRADUATE PROGRAM ADVISING

Each graduate program has a designated Graduate Coordinator who advises and assists students in developing a Formal Study Plan and can help guide you through the detailed steps required to complete your degree. For a list of current Graduate Programs and designated Graduate Coordinators, visit: grad.calpoly.edu/program/coordinators.html

General questions regarding Graduate Education can be emailed to the Graduate Education Office grad@calpoly.edu, or an appointment can be made by calling (805) 756-2328. The Graduate Education office is located in Building 52, Room E47.

Our normal business hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Master’s students should make an appointment with their graduate advisor during their first quarter of enrollment in their program to develop a Working Formal Study Plan for their Master’s degree. The WFSP is an agreement between the student and the university on the specific coursework to be completed in order to fulfill the requirements for the Master’s degree. The Working Formal Study Plan also serves as the Advancement to Candidacy and indicates that a program of study has been started, the GWR has been completed, and a culminating experience has been selected. The WFSP must be submitted to the Graduate Education Office (Bldg. 52-E47) for review by the end of the 1st quarter of your Master’s program. It is understood that changes may occur to this plan as students make progress toward their degree. Changes in the Working Formal Study Plan do not need to be submitted to the Graduate Education Office. However, students must submit a Final Formal Study Plan within the first 3 weeks of the quarter in which they expect to graduate. This Final Formal Study Plan must accurately reflect the courses that have been completed to satisfy their program requirements.

Each Master’s degree program has specific prerequisites; deficiencies in prerequisites must be defined by the Graduate Coordinator in the conditional acceptance offer, and the Graduate Coordinator is responsible for verifying prerequisite compliance prior to the submission of the Final Formal Study Plan. Courses taken for this purpose normally do not count toward fulfillment of the unit requirement for the degree.

Departmental Faculty Advisors and Graduate Coordinators share the responsibility of advising Master’s degree students throughout their graduate careers. 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.

ADMISSIONS

An application for admission to a Master’s program at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo is available through calstate.edu/apply. The Cal State Apply system allows students to browse through general information about all of the CSU’s twenty-three campuses. They can view multimedia campus presentations, send and receive electronic responses to specific questions, and apply for admission and financial aid.

All graduate and post baccalaureate applicants (e.g., Master’s degrees, educational credentials, or graduate certificates) must submit a complete graduate application as described on the Cal Poly Admissions website: admissions.calpoly.edu. Applicants who completed undergraduate degree requirements at a CSU campus and graduated the preceding term are also required to complete and submit an application and pay the $55 nonrefundable application fee.
The CSU advises prospective students that they must supply complete and accurate information on the application for admission, residence questionnaire, and financial aid forms. Further, applicants must submit authentic and certified transcripts of all previous academic work attempted. Transcripts must be official and sent directly from the issuing institution to the Cal Poly Admissions Office. Failure to complete accurate and authentic application documents may result in denial of admission, cancellation of academic credit, suspension, or expulsion (Section 41301, Article 1.1, Title 5, California Code of Regulations).

Applicants for graduate programs can review specific program application deadlines on the Cal Poly Admissions Office website: admissions.calpoly.edu. Most Cal Poly graduate programs require applicants to complete the general GRE. However, exceptions may be granted to specific programs; check with the Graduate Education website for requirements for each program grad.calpoly.edu. Applicants who earned a Cal Poly Bachelor’s degree within the last seven years will be granted an exemption from the GRE requirement; however, specific programs may waive this exemption and require the GRE for all applicants. Please keep in mind that any applicant (external or Cal Poly undergraduate) with an undergraduate GPA of 2.5 or lower will be required to take the GRE and demonstrate results that are at the 50-percentile or higher (Quant, Verbal & Writing) to be considered for admission.

**FAQs**

- Do applicants who have a previous Master’s degree need to take the GRE?
  
  *Yes, unless the Master’s degree is from Cal Poly.*

- If I have a Bachelor’s from Cal Poly from a program that is different from my Master’s degree objective (e.g. BS materials engineering & MS biomedical engineering), do I need to take the GRE?
  
  *No*

- If I have a Bachelor’s degree from another university but am enrolled in a credential program at Cal Poly, do I need to take the GRE?
  
  *Yes*

Graduate programs wishing to request an exception to the GRE requirement must have a memo from their College Dean requesting this exception sent to the Dean of Graduate Education along with a rationale for supporting the exception.

**Admission Requirements for Master’s Programs**

Graduate and Postbaccalaureate Admission Requirements are detailed in the Cal Poly catalog: http://catalog.calpoly.edu/graduateeducation/#thesisorprojectreportrequirements

General Requirements -- The minimum requirements for admission to graduate and post baccalaureate studies at a California State University campus are in accordance with university regulations as well as Title 5, chapter 1, sub-chapter 3 of the California Code of Regulations for Education.

Specifically, a student shall at the time of enrollment:

1. Have completed a four-year college course of study and hold an acceptable baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association, or shall have completed equivalent academic preparation as determined by appropriate campus authorities.
2. Be in good standing at the last college or university attended.

3. Have attained a grade point average of at least 2.5 (A = 4.0) in the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units attempted or have earned a grade point average of at least 2.5 on the last degree completed by the candidate.

4. Satisfactorily meet the professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards for graduate study, including qualifying examinations, as appropriate campus authorities may prescribe. Have your GRE results reported to Cal Poly Admissions (Institutional Code 4038) and self-report the results in your application.

A student who meets the requirements for graduate and post baccalaureate studies may be considered for admission in one of the four following categories:

- **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 campus.

- **Graduate Conditionally Classified:** Applicants may be admitted to a graduate degree program in this category if, in the opinion of appropriate campus authority, deficiencies can be remedied by additional preparation.

- **Post Baccalaureate Classified:** 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 campus.

- **Post Baccalaureate Unclassified:** To enroll in graduate courses for professional or personal growth. Admission in this status does not constitute admission to, or assurance of consideration for admission to, any graduate degree or credential program. Only the Admissions Office can determine if an applicant can be admitted in this category.

### Conditional Acceptance

Conditional acceptance to Cal Poly can only be based on identifying 12 units or less of undergraduate courses that must be taken at Cal Poly in addition to the 45 units required for the Master’s degree. These conditional courses must be taken for academic credit at Cal Poly but are not counted as part of a student’s Formal Study Plan. It is up to the Graduate Coordinator to verify that conditional courses have been successfully completed.

### Application Process

All Master’s degrees, education credentials, and graduate certificate programs require that students follow the directions given on the Graduate Education website [grad.calpoly.edu](http://grad.calpoly.edu) for admission to Cal Poly. Details regarding admission deadlines can be found at the Admissions Office website [admissions.calpoly.edu](http://admissions.calpoly.edu). In general, students are required to complete their application on or before April 1st for Fall admission for each academic year. However, you must review program-specific deadlines on the Admissions website as admission deadlines can vary by department. It is important to carefully follow the instructions on the Graduate Education website and note that all documents must be submitted by the application deadline in order to be considered for admittance.

Applicants for Master’s degree programs may only apply to one program at a time, the application cannot
The application process for graduate students is summarized below:

- Visit the Cal Poly Graduate Program website and locate the degree you are pursuing; review your program specific requirements and deadlines.
- Review Cal Poly’s catalog for course descriptions and requirements for degree completion. Discuss any insufficiencies in academic background with the Graduate Coordinator of your program of interest and identify if any courses are required for “conditional admittance.”
- General application deadlines are as follows: Fall Quarter (April 1), Winter Quarter (November 1), and Spring Quarter (February 1); however, check with individual programs as specific deadlines can vary by program.
- Submit your online application through Cal State Apply. After your application is received and processed, you will be emailed instructions on accessing your personal Cal Poly portal: MyCalPoly. Applicants should access MyCalPoly to view further requirements specific to their program and complete any pending requests placed on the applicants: To Do List. Note that official transcripts and test scores must be submitted directly to the Cal Poly Admissions Office.
- Make sure you enter or upload ALL requested information by Cal State Apply under the 4-sections: Personal Information, Academic History, Supporting Information, and Programs Materials. This will enable your program of interest to begin assessing your qualification for admittance. Be sure to upload unofficial copies of your transcripts, your statement of purpose, and letters of recommendation.
- Once your application is completed, your program of interest will review your qualifications and recommend or deny your application to the Graduate Education Office. If you are recommended for admission, the Graduate Education Office will verify that you meet all of the requirements for admission and forward a recommendation for admission to the Admissions Office at Cal Poly. The Admissions Office will confirm receipt of official transcripts and verify residency status.
- Only after ALL of your documents have been verified will you be notified of the admission decision by the Cal Poly Admissions Office.

Note that all official acceptance notifications can ONLY come from the Cal Poly Admissions Office via an email signed by the Dean of Graduate Education. Any communication from your Graduate Coordinator is for informational purposes only based on their recommendation. Only the Cal Poly Admissions Office has the authority to grant admission to a graduate program.

- If your undergraduate GPA is less than 2.5 (last 90 units) then you are not eligible for admittance to Cal Poly. An exception can be requested by the Graduate Coordinator of a program to the Dean of Graduate Education. ONLY if the applicant provides general GRE scores that are at or above the 50-percentile ranking for Quantitative, Verbal, and Written skills can an exception be granted.
- The CSU advises prospective students that they must supply complete and accurate information on their application for admission along with certified transcripts of all previous academic work attempted. Failure to complete your application file and/or provide accurate and authentic official documents may
result in denial of admission, cancellation of academic credit, suspension, or expulsion (Section 41301, Article 1.1, Title 5, California Code of Regulations).

International Students

International applicants include those who hold U.S. visas as students, exchange visitors, or those in other non-immigrant classifications. As part of the California State University (CSU) system, Cal Poly must assess the academic preparation of international students and use separate requirements to confirm English language proficiency. International applicants, unless from one of the exempt countries, must satisfy the English language requirement by submitting either TOEFL or IELTS exam scores with an acceptable score (minimum internet-based TOEFL score of 80 or IELTS of 6.5). It is recommended that international students complete their application at least 30-days before the deadline in order to facilitate a timely completion of their transcript evaluation.

There are no conditional admittances for international students. International students cannot be admitted to Cal Poly and later prove their English proficiency. Your international credentials must be evaluated by one of these agencies: AACRAO, ACEI, WES, or IERF. An automatic waiver of TOEFL or IELTS will be given to graduate applicants who have earned an undergraduate degree from a U.S. institution of higher education. Proficiency in English must be demonstrated by taking TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) within the last 2 years with an internet score of 80 or greater or IELTS (International English Language Testing System) must be taken within 2 years with a score of 6.5 or greater. TOFEL or IELTS are required to issue an I-20 visa.

For more information on international applicant requirements visit the following link: http://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/international/toefl_ielts.html

Returning Students

Students who left Cal Poly in good academic standing (3.0 or higher) before completing their degree and wish to resume their former program at Cal Poly can essentially be reinstated after submitting a paper CSU application and transcripts from any institutions attended after leaving Cal Poly. A returning student is one who has no enrollment record for 3 consecutive regular terms (Fall, Winter, Spring). If you have missed 2 terms, you may enroll without completing a returning student application. Once you have missed 3 terms, you must complete a returning student application.

The first step is to contact the Registrar’s Office and complete a Former Student Evaluation Request to assess the status of your progression to degree.

Once you are aware of any remaining degree requirements, you will then need to contact your Graduate Coordinator and begin a dialogue about satisfying those requirements before submitting the paper application to the Cal Poly Admissions Office. Your graduate program must signify their approval of your return by completing a Petition for Special Consideration, found on the Graduate Education website. The Petition for Special Consideration must be delivered to the Graduate Education Office.

The third step is to submit a paper application. You should download, print, and complete the application form and write a personal check in the amount of $55, payable to ‘Cal Poly’, for the application fee. Write ‘Former/Returning Student’ at the top of the application.
http://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/returning/
Submit the application by 1) dropping it off to the Cal Poly Admissions Office on campus, Administration Bldg., Rm. 206, M-F, 8am-5pm or 2) mail it to: Cal Poly Admissions, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.

Applications for returning students are accepted per the following deadlines:

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<tr>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>APPLICATION POSTMARK DEADLINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Quarter</td>
<td>July 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Quarter</td>
<td>October 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Quarter</td>
<td>February 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Quarter</td>
<td>Closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Admission to Graduate Certificate Programs**

All applicants to a Graduate Certificate must file a complete application through Cal State Apply. Participants in Graduate Certificate programs must be matriculated into the University. Follow the process detailed in the Application Process section above. Note that applicants cannot be conditionally admitted to a Graduate Certificate program. Also, only 4 units can be transferred from another school to count towards a certificate. In general, Certificate Programs are not eligible for financial aid.

**Admission to Professional Certificate Programs**

Applicants to Professional Certificates do not apply through Cal State Apply; they are not officially matriculated into the University. All Professional Certificate programs are managed by the Extended Education Office. To apply, follow the Interfolio links listed on the Graduate Education webpage next to each Professional Certificate program. Again, you do not apply through Cal State Apply. Applications can be completed at any point throughout the year. Check with Extended Education for enrollment deadlines. Applicants must supply complete and accurate information along with unofficial transcripts of all previous academic work attempted. Contact the Cal Poly Extended Education Office if you have questions about the application process. Extended Education does not guarantee that Professional Certificate courses will be offered unless adequate enrollments are realized.

Due to the Federal Higher Education Act 2008, applicants for certificates involving on-line courses will not be accepted from the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Oregon and Rhode Island; pending interstate distance education regulations. Please note: online course registrations from students residing in states not listed above may also be subject to review based on the ongoing changes in distance education regulations.
Appeals of Graduate Admission Decisions

Cal Poly carefully reviews all denied applications. Therefore, for an appeal to have merit, it must bring to light new academic information as well as information pertaining to extenuating circumstances that were not present in the original application. This information must clearly show the student to have stronger qualifications than had been earlier evidenced. Neither grades received in the current academic year nor mistakes made by the applicant on the application are a basis for an appeal or the reversal of a decision.

Submitting an Appeal

1. Send the Dean of Graduate Education a formal letter requesting that we reconsider your application. The letter must come from you (the applicant) and be postmarked no later than 15 days after receipt of your original admission decision. Note: letters submitted via email or fax are not acceptable and will not be considered. Be sure to identify the graduate program you applied to and your student identification number.

2. Your letter must clearly outline your reasons for appealing the initial decision. The information you present should be new and compelling. Your letter should not simply repeat information that had already been presented in your application.

3. Official GRE scores should be sent directly to Cal Poly Admissions and can provide a basis for consideration beyond your undergraduate GPA scores.

4. Letters of recommendation and personal statements or essays cannot be submitted as part of your appeal.

It is our usual practice to respond to appeals within 30 business days of the date we receive them. While all appeals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis, the rate of a decision being reversed based upon an appeal has historically been very low. All appeal decisions are considered final.

All appeals should be addressed to:

Cal Poly State University
Graduate Education Office
1 Grand Avenue.
Building 52-E47
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407 U.S.A.
Attn: Admission Appeal

Second Master’s Degree

A student can earn only one Master’s degree in any one of the disciplines at Cal Poly. A student who wishes to complete a second Master’s degree in another discipline, or two Master’s degrees simultaneously, must complete all requirements for both degrees. Existing concurrent programs in Engineering Management and Transportation Planning are the exceptions to this policy. To add a second Master’s degree, a student must complete a Post Baccalaureate Change of Objective form and secure all of the required signatures from both Master’s degree programs. The student must submit this form to the Graduate Education Office. Note that separate graduate forms must be completed for each Master’s degree program (separate Working Formal Study Plans; Applications for Graduation; Final Formal Study Plans; and Master’s Thesis, Master’s Project, or Master’s Exam Approval Forms).
Admission to a Blended Program: Bachelor’s + Master’s Degrees

Blended Programs provide an accelerated route for a student to achieve their academic goals with the simultaneous conferring of both a Bachelor’s and a Master’s degree. Blended Programs allow for the possibility of students taking additional 400/500 level courses during their senior year to apply said courses to their graduate Formal Study Plan so long as said courses are not required for their undergraduate degree. Blended programs allow students to seamlessly transition from undergraduate to graduate status without having to apply through Cal State Apply (thereby eliminating the need to pay the $55 application fee).

Undergraduate students should meet with their target graduate program coordinator once they reach junior status (before they have completed 180 degree applicable units) to discuss and outline a Formal Study Plan. A Blended Programs Application Approval Form must be completed and submitted to the Graduate Education Office (follow the directions on the grad.calpoly.edu website). Note that you are not officially accepted into a Blended Program until this form has been approved by the Graduate Education Office. Students can be accepted into Blended Programs during any quarter of the Academic Year.

Once a student has been approved by the Graduate Education Office to participate in a Blended Program, they should submit a Postbaccalaureate Change of Objective form (PBCO) to the Graduate Education Office during the quarter they complete 180 degree-applicable undergraduate units. Students must have a minimum of a 2.5 cumulative SLO GPA in order to be accepted to a Blended Program. Note that once students are admitted to graduate standing, they must maintain a 3.0 GPA or better in courses counting toward their graduate degree Formal Study Plan. In addition, a student must be at graduate status for a minimum of 2-quarters before they can graduate. See the section in this handbook on Blended Programs for more information.

Tracking Admissions Status

Cal State Apply provides a weekly update to the Admission’s Office at Cal Poly, and the Graduate Education Office maintains information of all applicants along with their admission status. Graduate Coordinators can monitor an applicant’s status through WebAdmit (part of Cal State Apply).

Recently Submitted Designations: shows applicants assigned for Coordinator Review

- Click on Applicant Name to get details
- Only appears when an applicant is ready for recommendation by Coordinator
Designations by Local Status

- Application Received: email greeting, directions to setup portal
- Ready for Review
- Admitted

Designations by Decision: Program Action codes:

<table>
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<th>Program Action</th>
<th>Program Action Rsn</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APPL</td>
<td>APPL</td>
<td>Application submitted through CS Apply and entered into PeopleSoft database; no recommendation from Coordinator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DDEF</td>
<td>RECM</td>
<td>Recommended for admission by Coordinator; file under review by Admissions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DENY</td>
<td>DENY</td>
<td>Denied admission by Coordinator, Graduate Education, or Admissions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATR</td>
<td>MASS or Manual</td>
<td>Matriculated and term activated so applicant can enroll.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAPP</td>
<td></td>
<td>Applicant withdrew their application after they were admitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMT</td>
<td>CLAS</td>
<td>Admitted to Cal Poly and notification sent by Admissions; CLAS means classified or CCLS means conditional classified. FSM means former same major.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WADM</td>
<td>MDL</td>
<td>Applicant was withdrawn from the system by Admissions; normally due to incomplete file.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Click on Applicants Name & see 14 categories of information:

Designations: application status
Assignments: recommendation by Coordinator
Documents: download Full Application as PDF and share with committees
Evaluations: letters of recommendation
Custom Questions: Quad #4 Cal Poly GradEd Questions
GPA Overview: self-reported GPA
Standardized Tests: GRE, GMAT, TOEFL, IELTS

Education: undergraduate institution(s)
Electronic Transcripts: courses in progress not reported on transcript
Personal Statements: statement of purpose
Experiences: work experience
Achievements: awards, honors, presentations, publications
Notes: internal use only
History: local status changes
Providing a Recommendation

After reviewing all of the applicant’s information in the 14 categories:

1. Open Assignments Tab & make sure Assignment Type says Coordinator Review

2. Click on [Submit Results]

3. Enter in Overall Comments. Field is required if denying or conditionally admitting an applicant; give reason(s) for denial or terms of conditional admission.

4. Use the drop down to select your Recommendation
   1. **Admit** - final decision will move forward to next step.
   2. **Conditional Admit** - final decision will move forward to next step.
   3. **Deny** - final decision will move forward to next step.
   4. **Wait list** - not a final decision, will not move forward to next step. Do not click Complete assignment. Keeps applicant at Coordinator Review status; make final recommendation before your recommendation deadline. Note that once an assignment is completed, you cannot go back and change it.

5. Click Complete assignment (unless you are putting on the wait list, in which case you would Save without completing).

6. Recommendation has been submitted and moves forward to Graduate Education and Admissions to validate that the applicant is eligible for admission.

**Note** - If the applicant does not have a final recommendation listed by the coordinator recommendation deadline for that program, the applicant will be denied by Admissions.
Rolling Admissions

Graduate Coordinators should check their WebAdmit sites to see how their applicant pools are developing. They can recommend an applicant at any time. We strongly urge programs to review applicants as they arrive and not to wait until the end of the application cycle. High quality applicants often apply early and need to make acceptance decisions as early as possible. Applications will be accepted up to the deadline listed for each program (contact the GradEd Office for updated list of Admissions deadlines); a deadline for receiving recommendations is also listed. Some programs may elect to receive applicants for Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters. International applicants will be accepted for Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters for some programs. Keep in mind that we cannot re-open the admissions Cal State Apply portal or accept any applicants beyond the deadline.

Each week the Graduate Education office checks WebAdmit to identify applicants who have been recommended for acceptance by Graduate Coordinators. If an applicant has been recommended and meets all of the Cal Poly and CSU requirements, the recommendation is forwarded to the Admissions Office for review. Important: DO NOT notify applicants of recommendation for admission.

The Admissions Office must verify final transcripts, GPA requirements, and residency before an official acceptance notification can be sent to the applicant. All communications regarding acceptance must come from the Admission Office. Once an applicant’s documentation has been verified by Admissions, an email message regarding acceptance will be sent to the applicant signed by the Dean of Graduate Education.

If the recommendation is to Deny the applicant, then a reason for denial must be provided through WebAdmit in the “comments” field. The reason for denial will not be shared with the applicant. All applicants that have either not received a recommendation or have not provided all of the required documentation by the Recommendation Deadline will be administratively withdrawn (Program Action: WADM). It is the goal of the Admissions Office to verify recommendations for admission within 30-days of receiving notification from the Graduate Education Office.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The following conditions and academic requirements are common to all Master’s degrees:

- All students must satisfy the Graduation Writing Requirement (EO 665.11.0) during the first quarter of enrollment; before advancement to candidacy.

- All students must file an approved Working Formal Study Plan with a minimum of 45 quarter units (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.2.) before the twelfth unit of graduate study is completed (before the end of first quarter of enrollment).

- All students must maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0 (grade of B on a scale where A = 4.0) or better based on all courses listed in the Formal Study Plan. 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 individual graded courses with C- or higher can be used on the Formal Study Plan.

- All students 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.
• All students must successfully complete a culminating experience (thesis, project, and/or comprehensive examination). (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.)

• All students must complete all of the graduate degree requirements within seven years (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.2.) of being matriculated, even conditionally, into a Master’s degree-seeking program.

• All students 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. The student may be required to make substitutions for discontinued courses by submitting a new Formal Study Plan.

• Graduate level courses (500-level) should make up no fewer than 60% of the units required for the degree (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.2.B.); note that 50% will be allowed until Fall 2018 per AS-825-17.

• The majority of the Formal Study Plan coursework should be taken while enrolled through Cal Poly’s state-supported system (Title 5, Article 7, 40510.A). Cal Poly requires that at least 32 units of a 45-unit program must be completed while in-residence at Cal Poly; a limit of 13 units out-of-residence can be taken. In programs with more than 45 units an equivalent proportion (32/45 or 71%) of units must be taken in-residence at Cal Poly.

   In-residence
   ○ Cal Poly undergraduate courses not used for undergraduate credit (MAX 12 units)
   ○ Cal Poly Summer Session (‘S’) courses (EO 1099 9.1 & 10.2)
   ○ Cal Poly Open University (‘P’) courses (MAX 12 units)

   Out-of-Residence (MAX 13 units)
   ○ Extended Education (‘E’) courses (EO 1099 9.2)
   ○ Credit by exam units
   ○ Transfer units (MAX 12 units)

• No more than 24 quarter units of approved Cal Poly Extended Education [a combination of Summer Session (S), Open University (P), or Special Session (E) courses] courses shall be accepted for the Master’s degree. (EO 1099 10.1.2)

• The majority of Formal Study Plan coursework should be taken after having been matriculated at Cal Poly as a Graduate Classified or Graduate Conditionally Classified (both seeking a Master’s degree) or Post Baccalaureate Classified (credential or academic certificate) student. Therefore, only 12 units can be taken while unclassified, and only 12 units can come from Cal Poly undergraduate enrollment; no more than a combined total of 24 units from both categories.

   Post Baccalaureate or Graduate Classified
   ○ Courses taken (here or in transfer) after having been matriculated into a Cal Poly Master’s, credential, or academic certificate program.

   Unclassified (MAX 12 units)
   ○ All transfer and Cal Poly post baccalaureate enrollment before being matriculated into a Cal Poly’s Master’s, credential, or academic certificate program.

   Cal Poly Undergraduate enrollment (MAX 12 units)
   ○ Coursework taken as a Cal Poly undergraduate student.
• No more than 24 quarter units of approved Cal Poly Extended Education [a combination of Summer Session (S), Open University (P), or Special Session (E) courses] courses shall be accepted for the Master’s degree. (EO 1099 10.1.2)

• No more than nine quarter units shall be in student teaching.

• No more than nine quarter 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 (therefore, cannot be enrolled through Extended Education)

• Some programs/departments set independent study limits on courses found in the course description. Typically, there is a 12-unit combined (400/500) maximum of independent study units allowed.

**Graduate Courses Taken by Undergraduates for Graduate Credit**

Cal Poly undergraduates may take courses in the 400 or 500 series for graduate credit while still matriculated as undergraduates. If they subsequently enter a Cal Poly Master’s, credential, or academic certificate program, they may have such course credit applied toward that program only if the units were not used for the baccalaureate degree. Students must list these courses taken as an undergraduate in the appropriate place on the Formal Study Plan. No more than 12 units of Cal Poly undergraduate work is allowed on the Formal Study Plan. Cal Poly’s Office of the Registrar will validate if Cal Poly undergraduate courses listed on the Formal Study Plan 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.

**PROGRESS TO DEGREE COMPLETION**

**Registration & Full-time Status**

For graduate students, full-time status is 8 units per quarter. However, graduate students may enroll in up to 16 units during their CPReg rotation period and up to 22 units (maximum) per quarter.

[http://www.registrar.calpoly.edu/registration](http://www.registrar.calpoly.edu/registration)

**PolyPlanner**

PolyPlanner is not currently designed to accommodate graduate courses.
Steps to Graduation: Checklist & Forms

Students can utilize the following checklist to help ensure they are following all the steps required to complete their graduate program:

☑ Checklist

1. Attend Graduate Education Orientation meeting Fall Quarter.

2. Meet with Graduate Coordinator and select a faculty advisor.
   - Determine culminating experience: Thesis, Project, or Exam.
   - Identify members of evaluation committee if necessary.
   - Evaluate core curriculum and electives needed to achieve academic goals.

3. Submit Working Formal Study Plan Form & Advancement to Candidacy
   - Must be submitted by end of 1st quarter in the program.
   - Complete Graduation Writing Requirement (GWR) by end of 1st quarter. If Blended Program, complete before filing PBCO.
   - Signifies Advancement to Candidacy (Title 5, Article 7, 40510a & 41011) and recognizes that the student has sufficiently demonstrated the ability to operate at and sustain a level of scholarly competence that is satisfactory for successful completion of the degree requirements.

4. Submit Application for Graduation
   - Submitted one quarter prior to the quarter that you plan to graduate. For example, if you plan to graduate in Spring quarter, you must submit this form by the end of Winter quarter. For graduation in Fall, please submit your form by the end of previous Spring quarter.

5. Submit Final Formal Study Plan
   - Must be submitted within the first 3 weeks of the beginning of the quarter in which you plan to graduate.

6. Submit Master’s Thesis, Master’s Project, and/or Master’s Exam Approval Form
   - There are separate forms for theses, projects, and exams.
   - Must be submitted by the last day of the quarter (end of final exam week) in which you intend to graduate. If submitting a thesis, refer to the Master’s Thesis Submission Process at grad.calpoly.edu and below for more details.

NOTE: Each of the forms identified in the checklist (Bold & Underlined) should be downloaded directly from the Graduate Education website at grad.calpoly.edu to ensure they are the most current versions. All forms must be submitted to the Graduate Education Office in Science Building 52, Room E47 only once they have been completed.
The Formal Study Plan

Each student should make an appointment with their Graduate Coordinator during their first quarter of graduate study to develop a Working Formal Study Plan for their Master’s degree. A formal study plan is an agreement between the student and the college on the specific coursework to be completed in order to fulfill the course requirements for the Master’s degree. The student should always consult with their advisor to ensure that only approved courses are selected as departmental requirements vary and some courses are excluded. A copy of the study plan must be submitted to Graduate Education for review and final approval.

Courses below the 400-level may not constitute any part of the approved units on the Formal Study Plan (AS-313-89). However, in those programs where specific courses below the 400-level may be essential for a student’s success, the student may be conditionally admitted to the program contingent upon the completion of those courses. Do not list any pre-requisite courses on the Formal Study Plan.

It is understood that changes may occur to the formal study plan as students make progress with their studies; changes do not need to be submitted to the Graduate Education Office. However, students must submit a Final Formal Study Plan within the first 3 weeks of the quarter in which they expect to graduate. This Final Formal Study Plan must accurately reflect the courses that have been completed to satisfy their degree requirements.

No less than 32 quarter units of a 45-unit program must be completed while matriculated. In programs with more than 45 units, an equivalent proportion (32/45 or 71%) of units must be taken while matriculated. Up to 12 quarter units of Open University courses may be requested to be applied to a graduate degree. Up to 24 quarter units of Cal Poly Profession Certificate units may be requested to be applied to a graduate degree. Thesis or project units cannot be completed through Extended Education (GS597). No more than 12 quarter units of approved post baccalaureate course credits may be accepted from another University for the Master’s degree.

Full-Time Graduate Student Status

A full-time graduate student is defined as one taking 8 or more units in a quarter. Students receiving financial aid may need to meet different requirements to be considered full-time and should consult with the Financial Aid Office. Normally students are not permitted to enroll in more than 24 units in any one quarter.

Enrollment in Graduate Courses

To enroll in a 500-level graduate course, a student must have post baccalaureate standing, graduate standing, or the permission of the instructor. Undergraduate prerequisites are waived for 500-level courses. Note that prerequisites are not waived for 400-level courses; you may need to get a permission number from your Graduate Coordinator or department administrator to enroll in these classes. The maximum number of independent study units are defined by each program/department and are listed in the Cal Poly catalog; typically the maximum is 12 units.

Courses Counted Toward Graduation and Credit/No Credit Grading

Only those letter-graded courses in which an A, B, or C is earned (C- is acceptable) count toward satisfying the total unit requirement for a graduate degree. Courses which 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 is required to earn credit in such courses. Graduate students may elect to take courses that are not part of their formal program
of study on a credit/no credit basis. Every class in the Formal Study Plan must have a grade of C- or higher. There can be no classes on the Formal Study Plan with a D+, D, or D-. If a student receives a D grade in a required class, the course can be retaken, and both grades will be averaged into the Formal Study Plan GPA. There is no grade forgiveness for Master’s students. If the course is not required, it can be removed from the FSP and replaced with a suitable alternative.

**CULMINATING EXPERIENCES: THESIS, PROJECT, OR EXAM**

**Culminating Experience**

All graduate students must successfully complete the culminating experience required by their specific program (thesis, project, and/or comprehensive examination) to be granted a Master’s degree (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.). The quality of work accomplished including written expression is the major consideration in judging the acceptability of the thesis, project, and/or comprehensive examination. Importantly, the degree award date is based on the submission of the Master’s Thesis, Master’s Project, or Master’s Exam Approval Form to the Graduate Education Office.

**Archiving Culminating Experience Documentation**

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Offices provide guidelines for retention and disposal of student records pertaining to post baccalaureate culminating experiences. They recommend that evidence of completion be archived for 7-years. Theses are permanently stored in the Cal Poly Kennedy Library Digital Commons. Project reports must be kept by the advisor who approves the report. Exams, both written and oral, must be kept by the faculty who certifies that the experience was passed. Oral exams must be recorded and digitally stored.

**Thesis Format**

A thesis must be a cohesive document that defines an area of study along with its relevant background, theory for a solution, methods utilized to proving theory, and a detailed discussion of results and conclusions. It must be an integrated document with chapters and sub-headings that support a continuous flow along with references consecutively numbered throughout the document. There must be enough detail in the methods section to replicate the work. A thesis is not an amalgamation of separate articles with their own introductions, methods, conclusions, and separate references.

Once all edits required by a thesis committee and/or a faculty adviser are complete, the final version of the thesis must be uploaded to the Digital Commons. All Master’s theses must go through the Graduate Education Office’s thesis formatting review process, wherein an editor reviews and provides the student with needed formatting and layout corrections. It is imperative that students respond in a timely manner to requests for modifications to bring their theses into compliance. Upon completion of any corrections required by the editor, the thesis is approved and posted in the DigitalCommons@CalPoly, a digital archive for the University. A thesis is not posted in the Digital Commons until all edits requested are completed.

**Thesis Requirements**

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 conclusions or recommendations. 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. A thesis must be authored by one and only one student. (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.A.).

**Project Requirements**

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. A project may be completed by a team of students, but each student must write an individual report that reflects their contribution to the project and how it meets the standards of a Master’s project as described above. A project may be evaluated by oral defense, which must be documented. A project must be approved by a faculty advisor from the student’s program. A project may also utilize a committee to evaluate the student’s undertaking, and the committee should meet the same standards as a thesis committee. (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.B.) Project reports will not be reviewed by the Graduate Education office’s thesis editor, do not have to comply with the thesis formatting guidelines, and will not be posted to the DigitalCommons@CalPoly.

**Thesis or Project Advisor**

The faculty member who serves as a graduate student’s thesis or project advisor must meet the University’s standards for teaching graduate courses. Graduate courses are normally taught by tenure/tenure track faculty who demonstrate mastery of the topic by possession of the appropriate terminal degree.

**Thesis/Project Committee**

The following are requirements for the members of a thesis or project committee: 1) that the graduate student have a thesis/project advisor (committee chair) who is a permanent full-time faculty member from the student’s program or from another closely-related program; 2) that the thesis/project advisor and the student recommend a thesis/project committee comprised of at least three members; 3) that the other two members may be from the student’s program or from another department or college within Cal Poly. One of the two committee members (not the committee chair) may be from an organization that sponsored the thesis/project undertaking. Please note that a project does not require a committee; it is optional and should be decided by the student and their project advisor.

**Comprehensive Examination**

A comprehensive examination is one of the possible culminating experiences for a Master’s degree and assesses the student’s ability to integrate knowledge, show critical and independent thinking, and demonstrate a mastery of the subject matter. The results of the examination should provide documented evidence of these abilities and achievement. A record of the examination questions and responses shall be maintained by the Graduate Coordinator for the program. It is the responsibility of the academic department supporting the graduate program to ensure that the comprehensive exam assesses all of the learning outcomes identified for the program. (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.3.C.).
Thesis Defense Checklist:


2. Complete a draft of your thesis and submit to your advisor for review and feedback at least 1-quarter before the quarter you plan to graduate. Be sure to check the Master’s Thesis Formatting Guidelines available on the Graduate Education website: [grad.calpoly.edu](http://grad.calpoly.edu)

3. Edit your thesis based on your advisor’s feedback and submit a copy to your committee members at least 2 weeks before your defense.

4. Schedule your defense date/time and reserve a conference room at least 3 weeks before the end of the quarter in which you will graduate.

5. Complete your oral defense and collect all edits/feedback from your committee and update your thesis. Make sure to download, print, and complete the Master’s Thesis Approval Form and have your committee members sign it. Remember to indicate on the form if you wish to restrict access to your thesis. Refer to the Master’s Thesis Submission Process on the Graduate Education website for more detailed instructions.

6. Obtain a Cashier’s receipt for the Digital Archiving Fee (thesis only) from the Administration Building Cashier’s Office and attach it to the Master’s Thesis Approval Form. You may also pay the archiving fee online (refer to [grad.calpoly.edu/thesis.html](http://grad.calpoly.edu/thesis.html)) and attach a copy of your confirmation email to the form. Turn in the form with attached receipt to the Graduate Education Office (Bldg. 52-E47). The Graduate Education Office will review the form and verify that all required documentation has been submitted. Then the form is forwarded to the Office of the Registrar (Evaluations) for review. The Registrar’s Office makes all final decisions regarding granting of a degree and will notify the student when their degree is awarded.

7. Upload your thesis to the Digital Commons Library Archiving website. Refer again to [grad.calpoly.edu/thesis.html](http://grad.calpoly.edu/thesis.html). Once your thesis has been uploaded, an automatic notification will be sent to the Graduate Education thesis editor. After the editor has reviewed your thesis, you will be contacted with any necessary formatting edits. When all of the suggested edits have been made, the thesis editor will post (publish) your thesis to the Cal Poly Digital Commons.

8. Complete the Career Services Graduate Status Report survey.

Note that a student must submit a Master’s Thesis Approval Form and a thesis to the Digital Commons by the following dates in order to be considered eligible to graduate in the quarter specified below, assuming all other academic requirements for the degree have been satisfied.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadlines for Theses Submissions via Digital Commons</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
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<td>Winter 2018</td>
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<td>Spring 2018</td>
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Thesis Author’s Rights

As the author of the thesis, you retain all rights to the work, granting the university a non-exclusive license upon deposit in the DigitalCommons@CalPoly. The license confirms that you, as the creator and contributor of your work, grant the university permission to share your work in an open-access digital environment, which is intended for educational purposes.

You and any co-authors retain all intellectual property rights to your work. If you submit material for which you do not own copyright, you must certify that you have obtained permission from the copyright owner to make your materials available online.

You are giving the university permission to make your work available to all users and to migrate it to accessible formats as necessary. Requests for use of your work for purposes other than education will be referred back to you as copyright holder.

Authors who wish to share their work for specific purposes while retaining their copyrights may do so by using an appropriate Creative Commons License.

For more information about author rights and sharing your research with other scholars, please see the Library’s web pages on scholarly communication and copyright. No proprietary information should be included in a thesis or project report.

http://lib.calpoly.edu/collections/theses/

Digital Commons: Restricted Access to Thesis

Two levels of electronic distribution are available. A student, in concert with the advisor, may choose the level which fits the situation. Open Access (Worldwide) distribution is the first option and is recommended by the University and Library to make the information freely available worldwide. It should be noted that this Open Access option may be viewed by some book or journal publishers as publishing the work.

Please note: Kennedy Library’s Interlibrary Services Department (ILS) receives national and international borrow requests for Cal Poly Theses & Projects. Open Access designated theses will be distributed to satisfy relevant borrow requests. Restricted Access theses will not be distributed through ILS until the restricted access time period lapses. The second option is to embargo (restrict) the thesis for patent, proprietary, or data sensitivity reasons. The student, with the written approval of his/her advisor, may select “restricted access” distribution for the thesis. During the submission process, the student will have the ability to indicate the initial embargo time period. Theses holding the status of “Restricted Access” will receive a bibliographic record in the Library Catalog, and a brief bibliographic display will be available in the DigitalCommons@CalPoly. “Restricted Access” status is designed to secure the work, even disallowing access to the Cal Poly community. This procedure addresses situations such as when a patent application is planned or when proprietary or security interests are at stake. A thesis under the “Restricted Access” status will be placed on a secured server, but the file will not be made visible or available. Only the descriptive data (author, title, abstract, and basic information about the submission) will be publicly visible.

The status of “Restricted Access” will lapse after 1 year or 3 years depending on the restriction initially determined by the student and his/her advisor. The student may contact the Graduate Education Office to obtain an extension before the expiration of the initial restriction. After the restriction expires, the document will be moved into Open Access (Worldwide) distribution unless an exception has been granted by the department and/or college/school.
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 and the Academic Department of your program for procedures.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a direct violation of intellectual and academic honesty. Although it exists in many forms, all plagiarism refers to the same act: representing someone else’s work as one’s own. The most extreme forms of plagiarism are the use of a paper written by another person or obtained from a commercial source or use of a paper made up of passages copied word for word without acknowledgment. Paraphrasing another author’s ideas or quoting even limited portions of their text without proper citation is also an act of plagiarism. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this academic community. It will result in a failing grade for the assignment, exam, or task. It may result in a failing grade in the course. See the Cal Poly Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities for further information on plagiarism and disciplinary actions that may be taken. See the Academic Programs website: Academic Policies Cheating & Plagiarism, along with Academic Senate Resolution AS-722-10, Campus Administrative Manual, and Section 684.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Cal Poly has over thirty separate Master’s degree programs, and with the inclusion of specializations, there are over 50 different degree paths offered by the University. A complete listing of all of the graduate programs is maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs.

Blended Degree Programs

The academic objective of a blended program is to provide an accelerated route to achieving your degree objectives by simultaneous awarding both Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees. Blended programs allow for students to take additional 400/500 level courses during their senior year that are not required for the Bachelor’s degree. These excess courses may be part of their graduate Formal Study Plan. It also enables students doing a thesis/project for their Master’s degree to extend their capstone senior project into a Master’s culminating event.

Cal Poly received permission from the CSU Chancellor’s Office (AA-2012-01) to offer programs that award a Bachelor’s degree and a Master’s degree at the same time. The Blended Programs started in 1998 and completed their Pilot Period in 2005. The Academic Programs and Graduate Education Offices at Cal Poly have approved several majors to be eligible to pursue a paired Bachelor’s and Master’s degree. Please contact the Graduate Education Office to confirm if your degree objectives fit into one of these programs. Graduate Programs that want to request that a pairing of a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree programs be eligible as a blended program must work with the Academic Affairs and the Graduate Education Offices to establish approval. The following table identifies the currently approved paired blended program offerings:
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<th>CENG</th>
<th>Master’s Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Aerospace Engineering</td>
<td>Aerospace Engineering</td>
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<td>Biomedical Engineering</td>
<td>Biomedical Engineering</td>
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<td>Civil &amp; Environmental</td>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Computer Science, CSC</td>
<td>Computer Science, CSC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
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<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
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<td>Engineering w/Integrated Tech Mgmt</td>
<td>Industrial Engineering</td>
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<th>CAED</th>
<th>Master’s Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree</th>
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<td>Architectural Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<th>CSM</th>
<th>Master’s Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MS Polymers &amp; Coatings</td>
<td>Chemistry</td>
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<tr>
<th>CAFES</th>
<th>Master’s Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree</th>
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<td>MS Agriculture w/Food Science</td>
<td>Food Science w/ Advanced Food Science</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Food Science w/ Applied Food Technology</td>
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Admission to a Blended Program: Students may be admitted to a blended program in their third or fourth year of undergraduate study. Admission recommendation is determined at the program level with final approval from the Dean of Graduate Education. The student must submit a Blended Programs Application Approval Form to the Graduate Education Office. The specific requirements for admission are set by the program with approval by the Graduate Education Office and Office of the Registrar. Once accepted, students may take graduate-level courses towards Master’s degree requirements, as their schedules permit, provided they have the course prerequisites.

Transition to Graduate Standing: Students admitted to the blended program will maintain their undergraduate status until they have reached a minimum of 180 or a maximum of 196 degree-applicable units towards their undergraduate degree. By the fourth week of the first academic term in which the student has earned the appropriate degree applicable units, the student must file a Post Baccalaureate Change of Degree Objective (PBCO) form. Once the form is processed, the student will transition to graduate status and incur the appropriate increase in tuition fees. Students must be at graduate status for a minimum of two quarters before degree completion. To ensure proper awarding of degree credit, all lower-division work should be completed prior to changing to graduate degree objective status. Please note that transitioning to graduate status may impact a student’s financial aid status and will change their tuition rate. The student must complete their GWR requirement before filing the PBCO form and submit a Working Formal Study Plan to the Graduate Education Office. Note that the PBCO will not be processed until the GWR has been completed.

Double Counting Units: A student may apply units that are in excess of the 180 undergraduate degree minimum requirements towards both their undergraduate and graduate degree requirements (a maximum of 9 units can be double counted). However, neither senior project nor Master’s thesis/project units can be double counted.

Senior Project Requirements: Students in a blended program must complete all undergraduate requirements including senior project requirements as detailed in the Cal Poly Catalog and Master’s degree culminating event requirements as detailed in the Cal Poly Catalog. A student can align the objectives of their senior project with the objectives of their thesis or project if a thesis or project is the approved culminating event for the program. A thesis or project does not satisfy, replace, or substitute for the undergraduate senior project requirement. Senior project requirements must be completed before a student begins their thesis or project requirements.

Impact on Financial Aid: Students should speak with the Financial Aid Office to see if transitioning to graduate status might impact their eligibility for financial aid.

Progress-to-degree on Cal Poly Portal: Note that once students transition to graduate status they will lose access to their progress-to-degree information on their portal (Degree Progress Report).

Co-Op Experiences: Blended students cannot file Leaves of Absence during the first quarter they have reached graduate standing. If a student does not enroll in regular coursework during the first quarter that they reach graduate standing, Cal Poly’s system discontinues them as “no shows.” Please speak with the Graduate Education Office for more information.

Graduate Status for minimum of 2-Quarters: Note that students MUST be at graduate status for at least 2 quarters before they are eligible to graduate.

Academic Units Required for Completion: Under Title V, a minimum of 225 total units are required (Bachelor’s 180 + Master’s 45) for receiving a combined (blended) degree. A Blended Program can allow double counting equal to the number of units greater than 180, but not to exceed 9 units.
Process to Award Both Degrees: Students must submit the following forms to Graduate Education with the indicated approval signatures: Working and Final Formal Study Plans; Application for Graduation; and Master’s Thesis, Master’s Project, or Master’s Exam Approval Form. When all requirements have been met for both degrees, the Office of Records re-opens undergraduate matriculation (secondary), posts the undergraduate degree, and completes graduate matriculation (primary). Both degrees are awarded at the same time and recognized at a graduation ceremony. If a student fails to complete his/her Master’s requirements but completes all of his/her undergraduate degree requirements, the undergraduate matriculation can be re-opened in order to grant the Bachelor’s degree only. The student must submit a PBCO Form and change their degree objective back to their undergraduate program. Graduate Coordinators should advise students to ensure that their study plans include completion of all undergraduate degree requirements, including required senior project courses. Any research work should be directed so that a student could submit a senior project report even if the effort does not result in a Master’s thesis. Every effort must be made to enable students to satisfy their undergraduate requirements in the event that they choose not to complete their Master’s degree.

Cross Disciplinary Blended Applicants: Some Blended Programs may want to admit students that have an undergraduate degree that is not from the same department as their graduate degree. Only students from approved paired degrees may apply to Blended Programs. Note that all Blended Programs must adhere to the CSU Coded Memorandum (AA-2012-01) objective of providing an accelerated pathway to a Master’s degree. Accordingly, the combined program must not require any additional units other than those required by the primary degree path. For example, any student accepted to a Blended Program must not be required to take any additional courses other than the required and elective courses identified in the Cal Poly Catalog. An undergraduate degree that is not in the same department as the graduate degree might not provide all of the pre-requisite requirements of the graduate program. Pre-requisite requirements may be satisfied by taking electives that are approved by the undergraduate curriculum and part of the normal unit count for completion of the undergraduate degree.

Returning Blended Students: If a blended student becomes discontinued and wants to return to complete either their Bachelor’s or Blended Program, they must first submit a Former Student Evaluation Request to the Office of the Registrar (https://registrar.calpoly.edu/registrar_forms). If additional coursework needs to be completed to grant either the Bachelor’s or Blended Program degree, the student must reapply to their undergraduate program by submitting a Former Returning Undergraduate paper application to the Cal Poly Admissions Office (https://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/returning). Once their Bachelor’s degree requirements are satisfied, they can then petition to transition to graduate standing using a Post Baccalaureate Change of Objective form. Note: If you have been discontinued as a blended student, you cannot return to Cal Poly as a graduate student; you must first return as an undergraduate student and reapply for the Blended Program.

If the returning blended student does not need to complete regular coursework to satisfy the Blended Program requirements (i.e. the student only needs to defend their Master’s thesis), then they are responsible for paying the required continuous enrollment fees (GS 597) appropriate for the period they were absent from Cal Poly. If the student needs to complete undergraduate courses ONLY to receive their Bachelor’s degree ONLY, then they are not required to pay continuous enrollment fees.
Requesting Approval for a New Blended Program

All of the information described below should be written in a Memorandum to the Dean of Graduate Education. The title of the memo should be “A Proposal for a new Blended Program in XXX from the College of YYY.”

1. Faculty from the Department proposing the new blended program must document both undergraduate and graduate curricula that students would complete and explain how the combined degrees would provide an accelerated path for students to achieve their professional objectives.

   a. Outline a typical graduate curriculum flowchart; indicate total number of units required (45 minimum); identify the core required (min. 23 units) and elective courses; be sure the Department is willing to offer sufficient courses to meet the requirements; if electives are from other departments, you must get a concurrence memo for those departments. Note that the number of 500 courses required to be taught by the home department is a minimum of 27 units.

   b. The combined units that a student must complete for both undergraduate and graduate degrees should not exceed the unit totals listed in the Cal Poly catalog for both degrees. (e.g. if the undergraduate degree is 180 units and the graduate degree is 45 units, then the blended program should not exceed 225 units).

   c. Verify that all undergraduate requirements will be completed even if the graduate requirements are not completed.

   d. Define the culminating experience: thesis, project, or exam. If thesis or project, then identify the faculty in the department who are willing to support the required research and serve as advisors. Indicate the sources of funding for supporting the research.

   e. Define the acceptance criteria for admitting students.

   f. Indicate the number of anticipated enrolled students in the program for a typical academic year along with a projection for the next 3 academic years.

   g. Identify a Graduate Coordinator along with a commitment from the Department to provide assigned time for the role.

   h. Identify the quarter/AY that is being requested for the start of student enrollment for the program.

2. Departments supporting both undergraduate and graduate degrees must review and agree with the proposal. Both Department Chairs and Department Curriculum Committee Chairs should sign the Memorandum.

3. The College Curriculum Committee and Dean must review and sign the proposal. Please indicate if this blended program will have any impact on the college budget.

4. If there are any Course Modifications or New Course Proposals associated with the program, then the ASCC must review these per standard practices.

5. The proposer of the program must organize a meeting to review the proposal which includes representatives from each of the following administrative offices: 1) Academic Programs & Planning, 2) Graduate Education, 3) Office of the Registrar, 4) Admissions, and 5) Financial Aid. This committee will be chaired by the Dean of Graduate Education.

6. Once the proposal is reviewed and accepted by the committee, then the Dean of Graduate Education will forward the memo along with his/her recommendation to the Vice Provost of Academic Programs & Planning.

7. Final approval will rest with the Provost, President, and/or CSU Chancellor’s offices as appropriate.
Graduate Specializations

Specializations are defined as an aggregate of courses within a graduate degree program designed to give a student specialized knowledge, competence, or skill. As outlined in E.O. 283 a specialization must be related to an approved graduate degree major program on campus by a common core requirement of at least 23 units. Completion of a specialization will be noted on the graduate student’s transcript and will be shown on the diploma.

One Degree Title—One Curriculum—One Code: Campuses are to maintain the degree requirements associated with a degree program approved by the Chancellor’s Office; and substantive curricular changes are to be approved by the campus curriculum-approval process. To ensure the integrity of degree programs, each approved degree title is to be associated with only one set of curricular requirements. Requirements in addition to the core curriculum may be achieved through use of subprogram (a specialization), as noted in Executive Order 1071. The program core shall represent the majority (>50%) of required units so that the program’s student learning outcomes can be achieved by all enrolled students, regardless of subprogram pursued.

Suspension & Reactivation of a Graduate Program

In the event that a College wishes to request the suspension of a graduate program, the Dean of the College must write a memo to the Dean of Graduate Education explaining the reason(s) for suspension, such as 1) lack of enrollment, 2) inability of a department to offer adequate 500 level courses, and/or 3) inability of faculty to support thesis research. Please specify the quarter/year that the suspension should begin. The following approvals should be included in the memo: Graduate Program Coordinator, Department Chair, and College Associate Dean. The memo will serve to let all relevant parties know of the request for suspension, so they can evaluate the impact of the suspension. The Dean of Graduate Education will make the final decision on approving or not approving the suspension, and all impacted departments and offices will be notified (Admissions, Extended Education, and Vice Provost of Academic Programs). Suspension of a program means that no new applicants will be admitted to the program. The program is responsible to “teach out” any remaining students. The fact that the program is suspended will be updated in the current Cal Poly Catalog.

To request reactivation of a graduate program, the Dean of the College must write a memo to the Dean of Graduate Education indicating how the factor(s) that led to the program’s suspension have changed along with a projection for enrollments for the next 3-years. Note that a program will not be re-activated until the Dean of Graduate Education has received approvals and comments from all of the involved parties. The Dean of Graduate Education will make the final decision to approve or not approve re-activating the program.

Discontinuation of a Graduate Program

Per Cal Poly AS-552-00 resolution, all graduate academic programs must be reviewed at least once every 6-years. During each review, the graduate program must supply enrollment data for the previous years. If any program has an average of less than 5 enrolled students, then the program should be suspended and discontinued by the end of the next review cycle (per CSU AP 71-32).

In the event that a College wishes to discontinue a graduate program, then the procedures outlined in CSU AAP91-14 and EP&R 79-10 should be followed. The campus President must then inform the CSU Chancellor who will review and provide comments.
Teach Out Guidelines

Once the decision is made to not accept any new applicants into a Master’s program, a teach out plan must be developed that ensures the last student admitted will be able to complete all degree requirements. The “teach out” will be implemented and monitored by the College Associate Dean and Dean of Graduate Education and shall include the following:

1. Preparation by Registrar’s Office of an official list of students enrolled in the program at the time of the discontinuation.
2. Departmental notification that the program is being discontinued by email to all students on the list (with copies to the College Dean and Dean of Graduate Education).
3. Students must be able to graduate under degree requirements stated in the Cal Poly Catalog for the year they entered Cal Poly, the year they began the program, or the year the program discontinuation was made.
4. Students who withdraw or take a leave of absence will be removed from the list of students completing this program. They will be notified by the Registrar of their change in status.
5. Careful academic advising must be provided to all students to assist them in completing the program in a timely manner.
6. Identify substitute courses on campus or include those of other universities that will be acceptable, especially those delivered online, to complete the degree.

Certificate Programs

A graduate-level Certificate Program offers post baccalaureate coursework leading to a specific, applied, and focused set of learning outcomes. It may be interdisciplinary and should have some professional application (e.g. enables professional licensing). There are two different types of certificate programs offered by Cal Poly. Both include courses that must be approved by the Academic Senate and are awarded with academic credit that is documented on a Cal Poly transcript.

A Certificate Program declares that a student has satisfactorily completed 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. It consists of 12-24 quarter units (3-6 courses) and may be provided via Special Sessions (self-support) through Extended Education (see Executive Orders 1047 & 1099).

Graduate Certificate: is comprised of a set of courses that build upon each other to develop a deeper level of expertise in a field of study. Students must follow all of the guidelines as described in AS-726-11 and AS-774-14. The Graduate Certificate requires that a student be matriculated through the Cal Poly Admissions office to enroll in classes, and the certificate the student receives is awarded by the Registrar’s Office.

Professional Certificate: is a set of individual courses that can be taken in any sequence and provides expertise required in a professional field of employment. Students must follow all the guidelines for Special-Session or Open University courses (CSU EO-1047). The Professional Certificate does not require a student to be matriculated, and courses are offered through the Extended Education Office. The Professional Certificate is awarded by the Extended Education Office.
Specific Requirements for Certificate Programs:

• 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 2.5 in the last 90 units attempted or have earned a GPA of at least 2.5 in the last degree completed. Work experience may substitute (at the discretion of the program) for the relevancy of the Bachelor’s degree and for the minimum GPA requirements.

• Admission to a Professional Certificate program requires consent of the instructor, and students must apply through Extended Education. All Professional Certificate applicants must complete an application by following the Interfolio links found next to each Certificate Program on the Graduate Education website. Applications can be completed anytime throughout the year. Students can be concurrently matriculated in a Master’s degree program at Cal Poly and a Professional Certificate program.

• A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required for successful completion of either certificate program. Students may not elect to take courses required for the certificate as credit/no credit. A certificate program must be completed within three years.

• Students who are enrolled only in either certificate programs are exempt from the continuous enrollment requirement for graduate students.

• There is no GWR requirement for either certificate program.

• There are NO conditional admissions for either certificate program.

• For Graduate Certificates that utilize online courses, international students must still satisfy Cal Poly TOFEL requirements for admission to Cal Poly.

• For Professional Certificates that utilize online courses, international students who will not attend courses on campus do not need an F1 VISA and do not need to satisfy Cal Poly TOFEL requirements.

• Students in Professional Certificate programs are not eligible for financial aid through Cal Poly.

• Students must submit both a Final Formal Study Plan and an Application for Graduation to the Graduate Education Office to receive either certificate.

• For Graduate Certificate courses, no more than 30% of the course units can be taken while not matriculated (EO 1099).

• Only 4 units can be transferred from another school to count towards either certificate program.

Concurrent, Dual, and Joint Degree Programs

Concurrent Degrees: two different degree programs from the same campus are coupled by the university for the purposes of offering complementary learning experiences; students enroll simultaneously in both programs and are awarded two separate degrees upon completion of the required curriculum.

Dual Degree: two or more institutions collaborate to provide a single degree program curriculum, the completion of which results in two or more degrees being awarded, one by each participating institution.

Joint Degree: multiple institutions collaborate to offer the curriculum required to earn a single degree that is awarded jointly by the partner institutions.
Cal Poly offers ONLY two Concurrent Degrees Programs: 1) Engineering Management, which is combination of a MBA degree and a MS in Engineering with a specialization in Integrated Technology Management, and 2) Transportation Planning, which is a combination of a Master’s in City & Regional Planning and a MS in Engineering with a specialization in Transportation Planning.

Elevating a Specialization to Full Degree Program

A specialization may be elevated into a stand-alone Master’s program by submitting a request to the Vice Provost for Academic Programs and the Dean of Graduate Education. After review at the University level, the request must then be approved by the Chancellor’s Office. An implementation proposal is required to elevate a formal specialization to a full degree program.

Each proposal must include, at a minimum:

1. A well-supported rationale for elevating the specialization to a full degree program;
2. Side-by-side comparison of the existing Master’s degree that the specialization is part of along with the proposed new major, showing the catalog number, title, and number of units for all required and elective courses; the new major must have a significantly different set of course requirements (greater than 50% of the units) than the existing primary Master’s degree; and
3. Evidence of a significantly greater campus commitment to the program than was required to establish it as a specialization area.

The elevation process requires department, college, and university-level review and approval. To merit approval, the new degree program must not have significant overlap with the requirements of the existing degree program from which it was derived. The existing specialization will need to be discontinued when the degree elevation is approved. Executive Order No. 1071 http://www.calstate.edu/EO/EO-1071.pdf sets system wide policy on establishing options, concentrations, and other subprograms (specializations).

ACADEMIC STANDING

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 citizenship 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.
Grades

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 theses or project courses (539/596/598/599) 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).

Earned D+ or Lower: 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 averaged into the Formal Study Plan. Alternately, if the course is not required, it can be removed from the Formal Study Plan and replaced with a suitable alternative.

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. An exception to this policy allows the repeating of a course in cases where a grade of D or F was received. Unlike the undergraduate policy 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. See the Earned D+ or Lower section above for more information.

Credit/No Credit Grading: Courses which 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 are not part of their Formal Study Plan on a credit/no credit basis.

Grade Point Calculation for Graduate Degree

Satisfaction of the GPA requirement for the conferring of the Master’s degree requires a GPA of 3.0 or more in the courses taken in the Formal Study Plan. Repeating a course does not remove a lower letter grade from the overall GPA calculation on the student’s transcript.

Academic Probation

A student who is enrolled in a graduate degree program in conditionally classified or classified standing may be placed on academic probation for failure to maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 (grade of B on a scale where A = 4.0) in all courses in the Formal Study Plan for the degree.

A student who has been admitted as post baccalaureate classified in order 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 post baccalaureate 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 post baccalaureate standing.
Academic Disqualification

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

1. The conditions for removal of academic probation are not met within the period specified.
2. The student goes on administrative probation while on academic probation.
3. 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 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 Disqualification

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

1. The conditions for removal of administrative probation are not met within the period specified.
2. The student goes on academic probation while on administrative probation.
3. 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.
**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 disqualification, or from a disciplinary action.

**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 are found in the on-line catalog. Typically, continuing graduate students register for Fall enrollment during Spring quarter, and new graduate students register in August for Fall enrollment.

**Enrollment & Prerequisites**

To enroll in a 500-level graduate course, a student must have post baccalaureate/graduate standing or the permission of the instructor. Note, prerequisites are not waived for 400-level courses; a graduate student may need to get a permission number from the instructor teaching that course to enroll in a 400-level course.

**Full-Time Status**

A full-time graduate student is defined as one taking 8 or more units in a quarter. 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 22 units each quarter.

**Discontinuation**

Matriculated students who have not registered for three consecutive quarters and have not been on an approved Leave of Absence will be discontinued and will not be allowed to enroll. To enroll again, students must apply for readmission before the deadline dates listed below for each quarter. An application fee must accompany the application for readmission. [http://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/returning/](http://admissions.calpoly.edu/applicants/returning/)

A graduate student who has been discontinued but has completed all required degree requirements except for their culminating experience (thesis, project, and/or exam) may be able to return to Cal Poly to receive their Master’s degree without reapplying to their Master’s program. The student is encouraged to speak directly with the Graduate Education Office for more information.

Matriculated students who have not registered for one quarter or two consecutive quarters are entitled to their registration priority without applying for readmission.

**Application Deadlines for Returning Students:**

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GRADUATION WRITING REQUIREMENT

The Board of Trustees of the California State University has mandated that all students earning undergraduate or graduate degrees in the CSU must be certified as proficient in writing (EO 665-11). In accordance with this mandate, all Cal Poly students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation.

Graduate students seeking a Master’s Degree or credential should fulfill the GWR during their first quarter at Cal Poly. Students who do not complete the GWR will not be Advanced to Candidacy. Also note that Blended program students must satisfy the GWR before they will be advanced to graduate standing.

The GWR may be satisfied, at the discretion of the Writing & Rhetoric Center, if certain criterion was met prior to post baccalaureate enrollment. See the center’s website for more details.

Graduate students who cannot submit materials suitable for GWR substitution should review their program requirements and determine which of the following GWR completion pathways is appropriate:

1. Pass the Writing Proficiency Exam (WPE). Details can be found on the Writing & Rhetoric Center’s website.

2. Earn both a grade of C or better (C- does not qualify) and a certification of writing proficiency based on a 500- to 800-word, in-class essay in a GWR-approved course selected from the eligible classes listed on PASS.
   - Note: Although students can take the course on a CR/NC basis, they are discouraged from doing so because the student must then earn a B- or better instead of a C or better in order to earn GWR and course credit.

Additional information about the GWR may be obtained from the Writing & Rhetoric Center at 805.756.2067 or on their webpage at writingcenter.calpoly.edu.

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

Effective Fall Quarter 2009, 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 during Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters each year. All graduate students must be enrolled during the quarter in which they graduate. Therefore, a student graduating Summer quarter must be enrolled during the Summer. Students can maintain continuous enrollment by being enrolled as regular students; obtaining approval for an education or medical leave prior to the quarter when such a leave would begin; or registering in a special course designated for this purpose during quarters in which they are not regularly enrolled. The special course, GS 597, is listed in the University catalog and is taken through Cal Poly Extended Education. GS 597 is a one-unit course, offered credit/no credit; credits in GS 597 do not count toward meeting degree requirements. 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 quarters of non-enrollment. This requirement is not retroactive to terms prior to Fall 2009.

There is no maximum (or cap) on the number of quarters that students will be responsible for maintaining continuous enrollment. Enrolling in one unit of GS 597 each quarter entitles students to use of the library, access to their Cal Poly portal, use of their Cal Poly email account, and access to their thesis advisor and committee members. In addition, they can procure a Cal Poly ID card and extracurricular services like the fitness center. The GS 597 fees are used to support graduate programs at Cal Poly.
Leaves of Absence

A leave of absence is granted if a student meets one of the eligibility factors (see below) and submits a Leave of Absence form with the required signatures and documentation to the Office of the Registrar. A leave of absence (LOA) means that a student is not discontinued and remains active in the university. For graduate students, note that the LOA excuses the necessity for continuous enrollment, but it does not extend the 7-year rule for degree completion. If a student was discontinued but not granted a LOA, then they must re-apply through the former returning student application process (contact the Admissions Office) in order to register for classes again. The maximum length for a LOA is one academic year; students should check in with the Student Advising Center and can then receive a one academic year extension on their LOA.

- Eligibility factors for LOA
  - Educational: co-op, internship, study abroad
  - Medical: treatment of medical condition by doctor
  - Military: deployment documentation required
  - Personal: care of elder, child-birth

The 7-Year Rule

The time allowed to successfully complete all Master’s degree requirements is seven years (Title 5, Article 7, 40510 b.2.) from the time the student was first matriculated, even conditionally, into a Master’s degree-seeking program.

The University, at its option, and in exceptional cases, may extend this time frame. Students who wish to extend the seven-year limit must submit a Petition for Special Consideration to the Graduate Education Office. The petition must include: 1) an explanation of the reasons why the extension is necessary, 2) evidence to support the student’s currency in the field of study and 3) a copy of the student’s Final Formal Study Plan. The petition should indicate any additional coursework that needs to be completed and which of those courses will be over seven years old at the proposed time of completion. If the extension is necessary for completion of the culminating experience, list the specific experience being used (thesis, project, or comprehensive exam). Indicate the current progress made on the culminating experience and when final degree requirement completion is expected. The seven-year rule cannot be extended indefinitely; the student must specify in the petition what quarter and year they will be completing all degree requirements, thus indicating precisely how far the seven-year rule will be extended.

COMMENCEMENT

A student planning to participate in commencement must file an Application for Graduation with the Graduate Education Office the quarter before the student intends to participate in the appropriate commencement ceremony (either in December or June). A student cannot graduate without completing this form; it is available at grad.calpoly.edu. Keep in mind that 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 Poly Profile, under the Career Program Plan section and the Post Baccalaureate Graduate career, students will see an “Expected graduation is...” notation once the paperwork has been processed. Corresponding deadlines for these items are communicated to students via email from Graduate Education.

Note that, 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 recommended by their Graduate Program Coordinator are eligible to be recognized for Academic Excellence. Nominations must be approved by the appropriate College Dean. If approved, the student will be permitted to wear “honor cords” at commencement. Note that Latin honors (summa, magna, cum laude) are only for undergraduate degrees.

**Graduation with Distinction**

Graduation with Distinction will be determined by the Registrar’s Office after a student’s Final Formal Study Plan has been reviewed and approved. It will **NOT be awarded at the December or June Commencement Ceremonies**. The designation will appear on a student’s final transcript and diploma. The criterion for graduation with distinction is defined on the Office of Registrar’s website and in the Cal Poly catalog: “a student whose grade point average is 3.75 or better, may upon the recommendation of the college Dean be designated as ‘Graduating with Distinction’.”

**June Only Commencement Awards**

Faculty in each program of study should make recommendations for the Outstanding Graduate Student and the Outstanding Graduate Thesis awards to the appropriate Graduate Coordinator. 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.

**Criteria for Outstanding Graduate Student Award:** Master’s Degree candidates who have received degrees or who are receiving degrees between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018 are eligible for this award. For the Outstanding Graduate Student Award, the following criteria will be evaluated:

1. Academic Excellence
2. Creative Achievement
3. Scholarly/Professional Potential
4. Service to the University Community
5. Notable or outstanding characteristics which make the nominee exceptional

For the Outstanding Student Award, the nomination must include: 1) a letter of recommendation from the program’s Graduate Coordinator, addressing each of the criteria listed above, and 2) the student’s resume.
Criteria for Outstanding Thesis Award: All students who have completed a thesis (oral defense & submitted written thesis to Graduate Education Office) between May 1, 2017 and April 30, 2018 are eligible for this award. The following qualities will be considered:

1. Creativity and Originality
2. Depth
3. Significance*
4. Clarity of the Exposition
5. Methodology
6. Overall Quality

* Extra weight will be given to a thesis (or some portion thereof) that has been published in a peer-reviewed journal and/or presented at a conference.

For the Outstanding Thesis Award, the nomination must include: 1) a letter of recommendation from the program’s Graduate Coordinator, addressing EACH of the SIX criteria listed above and 2) the student’s resume.

Each Graduate Coordinator can make a recommendation for a student from their program. For a program having more than 50 students, two nominations can be made. The Coordinator should send their letter of recommendation addressing each of the criteria listed above to the Graduate Education Office via email (grad.calpoly.edu). Finalists for the awards may be asked to supply additional information or material to the review committee. The nominations will be reviewed by a sub-committee of Graduate Coordinators and scored using an evaluation rubric. Results will be communicated before the June Commencement ceremony.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The Office of Graduate Education oversees several programs to which students can apply to receive financial support toward their educational goals. Students should contact their Graduate Coordinator or the Graduate Education Office to determine which program will provide the maximum benefit to their academic goals and support a timely completion of their degree.

- TA/GA Appointments
- Resident Tuition Waivers
- Non-resident Tuition Waivers
- Graduate Equity Fellowships
- Graduate Presentation Awards
- California Pre-Doctoral Program
- Chancellor’s Doctoral Incentive Program

The expected outcomes of our financial support program are as follows:

- Enable top quality students to join and remain at Cal Poly by providing necessary financial support.
- Support the teacher-scholar model by enabling students to do creative works that are either published or presented at an appropriate conference.
- Enable graduate students to develop teaching skills and encourage them to enter the teaching profession at institutions of higher education.
• Provide an experience that deepens the student’s mastery of their field of study through the learn-by-doing experience.

Criteria for receiving awards:

• Appointment will improve your time-to-graduation.
• Must have filed a Working Formal Study Plan with the Graduate Education Office.
• TA/GA Appointments are limited to maximum of 3-quarters in any one academic year.
• TA appointments are paid a stipend according to Academic HR rates ($/WTU) and collective bargaining agreements.
• GA appointments are stipends based on a pay rate of $2,000/quarter based on 8 hours of work per week; note that the total collective work hours for a student cannot exceed 20 hours/week.
• Certificate and Credential Programs are not eligible for TA/GA appointments.
• Self-support programs are not eligible for TA/GA awards.
• Student must be enrolled on a full-time basis for each quarter they receive funds. Full-time status for graduate students is 8 units/quarter.
• Blended program students are not eligible until they complete their PBCO and transition to graduate status.

TA and GA Appointments

Cal Poly has launched a program, funded by Student Success Fees, that awards appointments for Teaching Associate (TA) or Graduate Assistant (GA) positions. Funds for the graduate student TA & GA programs are provided by Student Success Fees managed through the Provost Office. Students (newly admitted and currently enrolled) can apply for appointments by following the steps outlined on the GradEd website: http://grad.calpoly.edu/financial-resources/ta-ga-program.html

TA Appointments: positions available for TA appointments can be found on the GradEd website by following the link to Interfolio. The posted positions are for informational purposes only. Students who are interested should contact the department/person noted on the job posting and arrange for an interview. All TA appointments are determined by the department hosting the position. No applications are accepted by the GradEd Office. If selected by the department hosting the position, then the GradEd Office will make arrangements to transfer the funds associated with the job to the hosting department.

Note that TA positions are part of the Unit 11 UAW Collective Bargaining Agreement. Details of the contract can be found on the Cal Poly Academic Personnel Website: https://academic-personnel.calpoly.edu/

Students are paid by the number of WTUs that they teach. A TA position requires that the student be assigned to a specific class as the instructor of record.

CSU Coded Memorandum HR 2005-30: The Teaching Associate classification provides currently enrolled or admitted CSU graduate students with part-time employment offering practical teaching experience in fields related to their advanced study. They teach university courses and may also assist faculty or teaching staff with various professional and technical activities. Work assignments are closely associated with their program of study or the academic department in which they are enrolled.
Range A represents the salary range for CSU graduate students who (1) are currently enrolled or admitted to Master’s degree programs and (2) usually teach credit-bearing courses.

The Teaching Associate classification is distinguished from the Graduate Assistant and Student Assistant classifications by assignments that primarily involve classroom and laboratory instruction. Responsibility for a course may be vested in the Teaching Associate under the direct supervision of an appropriate faculty member.

Teaching Associates typically are responsible for providing classroom and/or laboratory instruction, giving assignments to students, preparing course materials, administering examinations, assessing student performance, tutoring students, and determining course grades. Also, incumbents may assist faculty with field experience, supervision, simulation exercises, and/or research projects. Normally, incumbents in Range A are designated to teach courses at the lower division level.

Qualifications: Knowledge of the subject matter of the discipline to which the individual is assigned. Ability to relate well to others within the academic environment and ability to instruct and evaluate students. Evidence of satisfactory achievement in previous academic work. Equivalent to or completion of the requirements for a Bachelor’s degree and concurrent admission to or enrollment in a graduate degree program of the university that is related to the discipline to which the individual is assigned.

**GA Appointments:** provide research or instructional support for a specific faculty member. A student (newly admitted or currently enrolled) can apply for a position through the GradEd website: [http://grad.calpoly.edu/financial-resources/ta-ga-program.html](http://grad.calpoly.edu/financial-resources/ta-ga-program.html). Applications open on January 1st and close on April 1st each year. GA applicants must have a recommendation from a faculty advisor and are evaluated and ranked by their corresponding College Associate Dean. The Graduate Education office will make the final decision on all appointments. Typically, GA appointments are for an entire academic year.

CSU HR 2005-29: Under immediate supervision, the Graduate Assistant assists a regular faculty member or the teaching staff with various professional and/or teaching duties associated with the subjects or programs in which the assistant is doing graduate work. This work should not take precedence over the successful completion of the graduate degree program in a timely manner by the student.

The Graduate Assistant is distinguished from those classifications used for undergraduate student help in the instructional program (e.g. those who perform clerical or other routine tasks such as grading examinations, recording grades, etc.), by the following:

- Graduate Assistants are provided part-time employment and practical experience in fields related to their advanced study.
- Graduate Assistants provide professional non-teaching assistance to faculty members.

Graduate Assistant work may involve supervising students in a classroom, workshop, or laboratory (where final responsibility for the class and its entire instruction, including the performance of the Graduate Assistant, is vested in a member of the faculty); training students in the use of equipment or other resources; assisting faculty with research and preparation of course materials; participating in the evaluation of students’ work; tutoring students; and other related work. Graduate Assistants are not responsible for the instructional content of a course, selecting student assignments, planning of examinations, determining the term grade for students, instructing the entire enrollment of a course, or providing the entire instruction of a group of students enrolled in a course. Graduate Assistants may not be employed to assist in a course in which they are enrolled, nor should they be consulted regarding the grading of their peers.
Qualifications: Knowledge of the subject matter of the discipline in which assigned. Ability to relate well to others within the academic environment; ability to supervise, assist, and train students; and ability to assist faculty in the completion of special projects or research within the discipline. Equivalent to completion of the requirements for a Bachelor’s degree and registration in a CSU graduate degree program. Students enrolled in credential programs are not eligible for this position.

CSU Guidelines for Hiring GA and TA Positions

There are two different kinds of student employees: academic student employees and student assistants. An academic student employee is a student who is hired to do work that is academic in nature; that is, their primary work assignment must be related to a program of study offered in their University. There are three categories of academic student employment: Teaching Associates, Graduate Assistants, and Instructional Student Assistants. All other student employees (besides TAs, GAs, and ISAs) are simply student assistants (SAs).

A Teaching Associate is a graduate student hired to teach a course or laboratory in the same department in which they are enrolled in graduate study (there may be exceptions to this for students in interdisciplinary programs, who may be hired to teach in disciplines related to their graduate studies). The TA is the instructor of record and has primary responsibility for the course, including grading. They work under the supervision of a faculty member but are expected to have the expertise and independence to teach the (introductory-level) course. A TA must be admitted to or enrolled in the graduate program in which they teach.

A Graduate Assistant is a graduate student hired to assist one or more faculty members with professional or technical duties. This may include holding discussion sections related to a faculty member’s course(s), holding office hours, providing tutoring, proctoring exams, running laboratory exercises, grading papers, serving as a research or laboratory assistant, and so forth. As with the TA, a GA’s work assignment must be related to their graduate studies; however, the requirements of this classification are slightly looser. The GA may work in a department in which he or she is not enrolled in graduate studies, provided that the work they are hired to do is closely related to their own studies. For example, a student who is enrolled in mathematics may work as a GA in physics, and a student studying computer information systems might be hired to assist in a computer graphics course in the Art department. Similarly, a GA may be hired in an interdisciplinary department, even if that department does not offer a graduate degree program. In every case, however, the GA’s work assignment should be related to their graduate study, and the GA must be enrolled during every quarter in which they work as a GA.

An Instructional Student Assistant is any student (graduate or undergraduate) who is hired to assist in an academic setting; ISA’s may be hired to teach (though not to be an instructor of record for a course), grade, tutor, help out in laboratories, mentor other students, and the like. Unlike TAs and GAs, ISAs are not restricted in terms of the subject matter they are studying—that is, any student may be hired as an ISA in any department, provided that their work assignment is academic in nature and they are enrolled in some degree program during the term(s) in which they work as an ISA.

1 The ‘admitted to’ simply allows a department to hire an incoming student as a TA on their way into the program. Once hired, a TA is expected to be enrolled in the graduate program during each quarter in which they work as a TA.
Classification Codes, Salary, and Work Hours: A classification code is a four-digit number that identifies the type of employee within the CMS (“PeopleSoft”) system and on the Employee Transaction forms. Most classification codes have defined “classification standards” associated with them—these standards help you to determine whether or not a prospective employee qualifies for employment into this classification. The standards for a GA and a TA are defined by the Chancellor’s Office (CO). Those standards can be found on the CO’s website under Unit 11 (the bargaining unit for academic student employees). It is highly recommended that you bookmark this page: [http://www.calstate.edu/HRAdm/Classification/index.html](http://www.calstate.edu/HRAdm/Classification/index.html)

If you click on the pull-down menu under Unit 11, you will see options for Graduate Assistant and Teaching Associate (as well as Instructional Student Assistant). These classification standards will tell you the minimal qualifications required (e.g., admission to or enrollment in a degree-granting graduate program is required for both GA and TA employees). At the top of each classification standard, there are several classification codes—these will be the codes that you use to hire employees into these classifications.

The vast majority of Graduate Assistants will be hired into classification code 2355. GAs are typically hired to do a certain amount of work per week (e.g. 20 hours/week or less). Thus, a 20 hour/week assignment will be half-time. Note that “hours/week” is the anticipated average over the course of the quarter. A GA should expect to put in more hours during exam-grading periods and less in some other weeks. The Graduate Coordinator (and/or the Department Chair) responsible for hiring the student employees should provide a realistic estimate of the time required to do the tasks assigned to the GA and appoint them accordingly.

Most Teaching Associates will be hired into the 2354 classification code; in this classification, range1 indicates a TA enrolled in a Master’s degree-granting program and range 2 indicates a TA enrolled in a doctorate program. Teaching Associates will generally be hired for a certain number of Weighted Teaching Units (or WTU), as they are assigned as instructors of record and each course they are assigned will have WTU associated with it.

Supervision and other Regulations: Both TAs and GAs are expected to work under the supervision of a faculty member. The supervisor is responsible for overseeing the work of the student employee (including attention to such issues as whether or not the GA or TA is performing all required duties in a satisfactory manner, as well as serving as a mentor to the student employee with regards to such matters as appropriate grading standards, classroom management, avoidance of discrimination/bias towards students, etc.). At all times, the supervisor and the student must keep in mind that a student employee is to be a student first and foremost. Appointment as a GA or a TA should further, not hinder, a graduate student’s training. For this reason, supervisors should pay attention to whether or not a student’s employment is compatible with satisfactory progress in the degree program.

Resident Tuition Waivers

A limited number of resident tuition waivers are available for graduate students who are legal residents of the State of California. The waiver applies to state tuition only and does not cover University fees. Applications for waivers should be completed through the Interfolio link provided on the GradEd website. The waivers are for graduate students enrolled in state supported graduate programs only, not for self-support graduate programs. The criteria that should be addressed in the application include:

- Scholastic achievement including GPA, standardized test such as GRE, GMAT, etc., and honors/awards (only students with at least a 3.0 GPA overall will be considered).
- Significant accomplishments such as research or work experience.
- Contributions the student would make to the program (e.g., bring ethnic, gender, geographical diversity, or unique background and skills).
• Significance of the waiver in the student's decision to enroll: e.g., financial need, personal circumstances, competitive offers.

Tuition waivers are normally applied to three consecutive quarters, beginning with the first term of enrollment. Recipients must be engaged in full-time studies toward their degree, which means enrollment in a minimum of 8 units per quarter. Recipients of CA State University Grants (SUG) are not eligible for Tuition Waivers. Applications must be submitted by April 1st each year for awards to be available for the following academic year.

Non-Resident Tuition Waivers

A limited number of non-resident tuition waivers are available for graduate students. The waiver is defined as a reduction in tuition fees for non-resident students to the resident rate. The waivers provide financial support for highly qualified applicants from outside the State of California. Application for waivers should be completed through link provided on the GradEd website. The criteria that should be addressed in the application includes:

- Scholastic achievement including GPA, standardized tests such as GRE, GMAT, etc., and honors/awards (only students with at least a 3.0 GPA overall will be considered).
- Significant accomplishments such as research or work experience.
- Contribution the student would make to the program (e.g., bring ethnic, gender, geographical diversity, or unique background and skills).
- Significance of the waiver in the student’s decision to enroll: e.g., financial need, personal circumstances, competitive offers.

Tuition waivers will normally be for three consecutive quarters, beginning with the first term of enrollment. The waivers are for graduate students enrolled in state supported graduate programs only, not self-support graduate programs. Recipients must be engaged in full-time studies toward their degree, which means enrollment in a minimum of 8 units per quarter. Applications must be submitted by April 1st each year for awards to be available toward the following academic year.

Graduate Equity Fellowships

This program seeks to increase the diversity of students completing master’s degree programs in the CSU. It provides fellowships for economically disadvantaged CSU students, especially from groups that are underrepresented among graduate degree recipients in their areas of study.

Applications for this fellowship should be submitted online through the link provided on the GradEd website. A letter of recommendation from the Graduate Program Coordinator is required. The application cycle is May 1st through October 1st each year. Your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must have been filed 2 weeks before your application to the Grad Equity Fellowship to ensure that the results are available for consideration for this fellowship.

**Academic Qualifications:** You must either be making progress toward a Master’s degree or have been accepted to a Master’s program at Cal Poly and have satisfied all criteria for admission. For details concerning admission requirements, consult the current Cal Poly Catalog, or contact the graduate coordinator of your specific program. As a fellowship recipient, you will be required to maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or higher, and to engage in full-time studies toward your degree, which means you must enroll in a minimum of eight units per quarter of 400/500 level courses.
Residency: You must qualify as a California resident by meeting the CSU requirements for payment of in-state fees.

Financial Need: You must demonstrate financial need by filing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Additional information can be obtained from the Cal Poly Financial Aid Office. You must also comply with all standard requirements for receiving financial aid at Cal Poly.

Duration: The typical grant period for this award is 2 academic quarters in the same academic year of the application cycle. The award is normally distributed during the Winter and Spring quarters.

Graduate Presentation Awards

The Graduate Presentation Award provides financial support for graduate students who are presenting their thesis or research at a professional conference. This award is to help support conference registration fees, airfare, or lodging costs of up to $500 per student per academic year. The student must be enrolled in at least 1 course at Cal Poly at the time of application. Travel must occur within the same academic year that the application is submitted.

Qualifications

- Must be enrolled as a graduate student at Cal Poly.
- For conferences within the U.S. only, not international.
- Must be listed as an author on the paper/poster to be presented (not for just attending the conference); submit abstract.
- Travel covered: airfare, hotel, conference registration (no auto mileage or food).
- Submit all travel claims to program department administrator.
- Email of approval from faculty thesis advisor.

Application Instructions

Applications for the Graduate Presentation Award should be submitted through the link on the Graduate Education website.

State University Grants

These grants provide need-based awards to cover a portion of the State Tuition Fee for eligible undergraduate, graduate, and post baccalaureate students who are California residents or are otherwise determined as eligible. Systemwide, the priority is to award a SUG at least equal to the amount of the State Tuition Fee ($5,472 for undergraduates, $6,348 for teaching credential and $6,738 for graduate and postbaccalaureate students) to eligible students who apply for financial aid by March 2nd, who have an expected family contribution (EFC) of $4,000 or less, and who are not receiving a Cal Grant or other award designated to cover fees. Funding for this program is limited. Students must reapply for consideration every year. State University Grant awards are limited based on the number of units a student has earned and published length of their academic program.
Note: All graduate students who receive State University Grants, effective 2013 by CSU mandate:

Master’s level students who have earned more than 125% of units toward completion of their program/degree at the post baccalaureate level are no longer eligible to receive a State University Grant (SUG). For example, if the minimum number of units for your graduate program is 45, then a student may receive SUG funding for up to 57 units. Please note that the number of units subject to this 125% limitation includes any units that are part of conditional admittance requirements. Please contact your graduate coordinator to determine the number of conditional admit units (MAX 12 units) that you are required to take as part of your matriculation into your graduate program. Any questions regarding the terms of your financial aid should be directed to the Financial Aid Office (Administration Building, Room 212) or call 805-756-2927.

California Pre-Doctoral Program

The California Pre-Doctoral program is designed to increase the diversity of the pool from which the California State University draws its faculty. It does so by supporting the doctoral aspirations of CSU students who have experienced economic and educational disadvantages. A special emphasis is placed on increasing the number of CSU students who enter graduate programs at one of the University of California campuses.

Each of the applicants selected will be designated a Sally Casanova Pre-Doctoral Scholar and will work closely with a CSU faculty sponsor to develop an overall plan which leads ultimately to enrollment in a doctoral program. The plan should be tailored to the specific goals and career objectives of the student.

In addition, the program provides: Travel Funds ($3K) for the student and a faculty sponsor to visit U.S. doctoral-granting institutions; to attend a professional meeting appropriate to the student’s development; and to participate in other related activities, such as student membership in professional organizations, subscriptions to journals, graduate school applications, test fees, GRE preparation, and the cost of minor research materials.

A Summer Research Internship opportunity at a University of California campus or other major research university, fully funded (~ $7K) by the Pre-Doctoral Program, so that the Scholar can participate in doctoral-level research prior to enrolling in a Ph.D. program.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Applicants to the California Pre-Doctoral program must be upper-division (seniors) or Master’s degree students who are enrolled at a CSU institution during Spring Quarter of the year of application and who will also be enrolled at a CSU campus for at least two quarter terms of the next academic year. Applicants will be selected on the basis of three major criteria: 1) potential for success in completing a doctoral program; 2) probable effectiveness of the student/faculty plan; and 3) level of economic and educational disadvantages.

All applicants must be either U.S. citizens or permanent residents at the time of application. Current or previous Pre-Doctoral Scholars are not eligible to re-apply. Each applicant must have a faculty sponsor from the student’s home campus who will be available for the duration of the plan specified in the application. The program is designed for students interested in obtaining research doctorates. Students interested in obtaining professional degrees (law, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, or an MBA degree) are not eligible.

If you wish to apply to this program, follow the instructions given on the GradEd website grad.calpoly.edu. Applications are typically due February 1st and should be sent directly to the Dean of Graduate Education. Additional details can be obtained at calstate.edu/predoc/apply/
Chancellor’s Doctoral Incentive Program (CDIP)

This program provides student loans (up to $30K) to a limited number of individuals pursuing full-time doctoral degrees at accredited universities throughout the United States. After participants receive their doctoral degrees and obtain a qualifying position in the CSU, a portion of their loan from this program will be forgiven every year.

Applications are typically due by February 1st and should be sent directly to the Dean of Graduate Education. More information can be found at: http://www.calstate.edu/hr/cdip/

OPEN UNIVERSITY

Open University allows non-matriculated individuals paying self-support fees to enroll in state-supported course offerings on a space-available basis after reasonable steps have been taken to provide full enrollment opportunity to eligible state-support matriculated students. (Title 5 section 40202; EO 805) Self-support classes are specified as “special session” classes.

Self-Support Mode: Instruction offered through self-support mode does not receive state general fund appropriations and instead collects non-state student fees that are adequate to meet the cost of offering a course. Such fees shall be required pursuant to rules and regulations prescribed by the trustees, including but not limited to fee policies such as Executive Order 1054 and Education Code section 89708.

ACADEMIC RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Cal Poly is committed to creating and maintaining an intellectual community designed to promote educational goals. In this community, students are entitled to a classroom environment where they have the academic freedom to express their ideas and opinions freely, to learn from competent and professional faculty, and to build critical thinking and reasoning skills. For a full statement of the policy regarding academic rights, see the section entitled Student Academic Rights & Responsibilities within Policies on the Rights and Responsibilities of Individuals.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The value of an academic degree is based upon the reputation of the university. Tolerating academic misconduct ultimately harms that reputation. The Standards for Student Conduct require that students who witness academic dishonesty notify their instructor, department chair, or the Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities. Disciplinary sanctions can be imposed for “encouraging, permitting, or assisting another to do any act that could subject him or her to discipline” [Title 5, Article 2, Section 41301 (b) (20)].

Academic integrity is essential to the educational process. Traditional academic practices require that faculty members address cases of academic dishonesty in the classroom. Executive Order 1073, Article III, K, Cases Involving Academic Dishonesty, insists that, in addition, CSU faculty members report any infractions to a central location so that a student can be held accountable for multiple academic violations, and the campus can recognize any patterns of misconduct.

The resolution of academic dishonesty cases seeks a balance between encouraging a student’s professional development and upholding the standards of the academic community. The faculty member can recommend
that OSRR either provide a written warning to the student or file formal charges. OSRR ultimately evaluates
the merits of the allegation according to the student conduct process and determines appropriate sanctions,
if warranted, based on the specific facts of the case.

CAL POLY INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY POLICY

More details can be found at research.calpoly.edu/policyIP

**Purpose:** The University is committed to providing an intellectual environment in which all members
of the academic community, whether they are faculty engaged in life-long professional development,
students pursuing educational objectives, or staff dedicated to their own career goals, learn to the fullest
extent possible. The University also recognizes and values creativity and innovation as part of this learning
process. Similarly, the University recognizes the importance of, and wishes to encourage, the transfer of new
knowledge, generated in the University, to the private sector for the public good. At the same time, as a
publicly funded institution, the University must be a good steward of the public resources provided to it, and
must safeguard against the use of public funds for private gain.

**Scope:** This policy addresses the rights to, interest in, and protection and transfer of intellectual property
created by University faculty, staff, and students. Issues not directly considered in this policy, including
disagreements concerning its application or interpretation, will be addressed and resolved consistent with
applicable law and collective bargaining agreements. In the event of a conflict between this policy and the
collective bargaining agreements, the bargaining agreements shall prevail. Policies affecting the use of the
University’s names or symbols are covered elsewhere.

**Governing Principles:** The following principles underlie this policy and should guide its application and
interpretation: Academic Freedom and Pre-eminence of Scholarly Activities. The missions of teaching and
scholarship have preeminence over that of the transfer and commercialization of research results. The
University’s commitment to its educational mission is primary, and this policy does not diminish the right
and obligation of faculty members to disseminate the results of research and creative activity for scholarly
purposes.

**Equity and Fair Play:** This policy sets forth general principles and procedures, and it has not been designed
to address every conceivable circumstance. Under principles of fair play, the inventor(s)/creator(s) and the
University mutually operate so that no one will unfairly exploit inadvertent errors or omissions in the written
policy. If the need for corrections or exceptions to this policy is identified, appropriate recommendations shall
be made to the President.

**Mutual Trust and Goodwill:** Throughout all phases of the creation and implementation of this policy,
it is assumed that all members of the University community will be guided by a sense of mutual trust
and goodwill. In the event of future controversies regarding the rights to intellectual property, the
commercialization of particular property, or in the interpretation of this policy, all parties should recognize
that mutual trust and goodwill were fundamental tenets in the forging of this policy.

**Faculty Shared-Governance and Review:** University faculty, through the Intellectual Property Review
Committee (see 3A.2), shall play a primary role in the establishment and periodic revision of this policy, and
in the review and recommendation of resolutions to disputes arising under it. This committee shall have a
majority of members who are faculty without administrative appointments, and shall be chaired by a faculty
member.
Transparency: The principle of transparency promotes both the disclosure and avoidance of actual and apparent conflicts of interest associated with external commercial activities.

Reasonableness in Licensing: When the University owns intellectual property under this policy, the inventor or creator shall normally play an active role in the entire licensing process, including consultation and/or approval of licensing decisions, particularly where the inventor/creator has no financial interest in the licensee. Otherwise, such participation shall be consistent with conflict of interest regulations or University policy.

Policy Application: This policy takes effect immediately and supersedes all prior intellectual property policies.
University Contacts & Informational Resources

ASI
asi.calpoly.edu
Bldg 65
Rm 212
(805) 756-1281

Career Services
careerservices.calpoly.edu
Bldg 124
Rm 114
(805) 756-2501

Children's Center
asi.calpoly.edu/childrens_center
Bldg 133
Front Desk
(805) 756-1267

Disability Resource Center
drc.calpoly.edu
Bldg 124
Front Desk
(805) 756-1395

Health & Counseling Center
hcs.calpoly.edu
Bldg 27
Front Desk
or Rm 136
(805) 756-1211

International Center
international.calpoly.edu
Bldg 52
Rm E32
(805) 756-1477

Parking & Public Transportation (UPD)
afd.calpoly.edu/police/services_parking.asp
Bldg 36
Front Desk
(805) 756-6654

Performing Arts & Theater
pacslo.org
Bldg 6
General
(805) 756-7222

Recreation Center
asi.calpoly.edu/recreation_center
Bldg 43
Front Desk
(805) 756-1366

Sports Information
gopoly.com/landing/index
*see website for sports information

Center for Teaching, Learning, & Technology
cttl.calpoly.edu
Kennedy Library (35)
Rm 319
(805) 756-7002

Cal Poly Dream Center
Bldg 52
Rm E11
(805) 756-6362

Student Ombuds Services
ombuds.calpoly.edu
Bldg 35
Rm 113
(805) 756-1380