



CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SACRAMENTO
UNIVERSITY POLICY MANUAL

Policy Title: Blended Baccalaureate and Masters Programs Policy, Establishment of

Policy Administrator: Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs

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Blended Baccalaureate and Masters Programs Policy

One of the primary goals of the Blended Programs Policy is to provide Academic Units with a framework around which they may, if they so choose, create an alternative pathway for their students to engage with graduate-level work earlier in their academic careers, transition more smoothly from undergraduate to graduate status, and progress more quickly through their graduate programs once transitioned.

A “blended” baccalaureate/masters program is one in which undergraduate and graduate courses may be taken concurrently. In an approved blended program (as described in this policy), an admitted student is permitted to replace undergraduate-level coursework with graduate-level coursework that satisfies undergraduate unit and content requirements as well as graduate content requirements. This does not imply that units are being double-counted, nor can they be, but it does permit an overall reduction in units.

For example, an Academic Unit normally offering a 120 unit bachelor’s degree and a 36 unit master’s degree could propose a blended program that would offer an alternative pathway to native continuing students requiring only 150 units for the completion of both degrees. In this case, 6 units of graduate coursework and content would be absorbed into the undergraduate portion of the blended program as “blended” units. The blended policy, therefore, differs from existing policy, which permits students to take as many as 6 units of graduate work in their last undergraduate semester and apply those units (via petition, and only if those units are not counted towards undergraduate requirements) to a subsequent graduate program.

Logistically, blended programs are likely to be of benefit to Academic Units with master’s programs that require more than 30 units and where the related undergraduate program might absorb some portion of that graduate coursework.

I. Establishment of a Blended Baccalaureate and Masters Program

Academic units that choose to establish a blended program must follow the normal curricular review process. A blended program must meet the following criteria:

- a. Title V requires completion of 120 units for a Baccalaureate degree and 30 units for a Master’s degree. Thus, a minimum of 150 units are required for a blended program.
- b. Academic units may only implement programs blending existing baccalaureate and master’s degree programs in the same support mode.

- c. Curricula for blended Baccalaureate and Masters programs must adhere to existing campus policies on curriculum requirements for both Baccalaureate and Graduate degrees.
- d. The blended Baccalaureate and Masters program must include blended units. Blended units are graduate-level courses required for the master's degree which students in a blended program take while in undergraduate status.

II. Admission to Blended Baccalaureate and Masters Program

Students may apply to the blended Baccalaureate and Masters program within their respective academic units after 60 units, but they must complete their application while in undergraduate status and with at least 30 semester units remaining until graduation.

All applicants must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 to apply to a blended program (in accordance with the minimum standard for all graduate admissions). Individual programs may determine additional criteria for admission, including a cumulative grade point average above 2.50. The criteria for admission will be approved through the normal curricular review process.

Once admitted to a blended Baccalaureate and Masters program, all students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50. Individual programs may also establish additional criteria and policies for maintaining status in their blended program, including a cumulative grade point average above 2.50.

Admission to a blended Baccalaureate and Masters program does not constitute recognition of graduate status by the Office of Graduate Studies. Students will be considered to be formally pursuing the blended degree objective when they are accepted into the blended program by the academic unit faculty. Students will not be recognized for graduate status until an "Application to Transition to Graduate Studies" has been approved by the Graduate Dean (see Section III).

Upon accepting applicants into a blended Baccalaureate and Masters degree program, the Graduate Coordinator will notify the Office of Graduate Studies of this decision, and an evaluation of the student's blended program will be prepared and forwarded to the student and the coordinator.

III. Change to Graduate Status

Students in blended Baccalaureate and Masters programs do not apply for the graduate program through CSU mentor and do not pay an application fee for the graduate program.

The Office of Graduate Studies will work with the Undergraduate Degree Evaluations unit. When a student in a blended program has earned 120 units, including all requirements for the undergraduate degree, the Office of Graduate Studies will notify the academic department that the student is eligible to submit a transition application for the graduate portion of the blended program, and the university will post the undergraduate degree. After the student submits the "Application to Transition to Graduate Studies," the student will be matriculated for the following term as a graduate degree seeking student if the following minimum eligibility requirements are met:

1. Successful completion of a minimum of 120 units including all requirements for the undergraduate degree. These units will include both undergraduate units and graduate units taken in accordance with the blended program plan.
2. Minimum 2.5 GPA in the last 60 semester-units attempted or the minimum cumulative GPA specified by the program, if higher. Note that students, once admitted to graduate standing, must maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA or better. In courses that appear on the Formal Study Plan for the graduate degree, no grade lower than a "B" may be counted toward the master's degree unless expressly permitted by a campus-approved written policy of the graduate program.

Once students in a blended Baccalaureate and Masters program are matriculated as graduate degree seeking students, they are subject to the same policies and procedures as other graduate degree seeking students.

IV. Award of Degrees

The student applies to graduate for the baccalaureate degree the semester before the student will complete the baccalaureate degree requirements. Upon evaluation of the baccalaureate degree requirements, if the student has satisfied all requirements for the baccalaureate degree, the degree will be awarded.

Students with graduate status must have an Advancement to Candidacy form approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, and no grade lower than a “B” unless expressly permitted through the campus curricular review process¹.

Students apply to graduate for the master’s degree in the semester in which they will complete the degree requirements for that degree.

Upon evaluation of the master’s degree requirements, if the student has satisfied all requirements for the master’s degree, the degree will be awarded.

If a student admitted into a blended program opts out of, or fails to complete, the master's degree portion of the program, graduate level coursework already counted towards completion of the undergraduate degree may not be used towards the completion of a subsequent master's degree, even if admitted for a future term.

*Approved by the Faculty Senate
October 6, 2016*

¹<http://www.csus.edu/acaf/academic%20resources/policies%20and%20procedures/Assignment%20of%20C%20Grades%20in%20Graduate%20Programs.html>