

graduate degree requirements

Office of Graduate Studies

River Front Center 206
(916) 278-6470
www.csus.edu/rgs/gradstudies

California State University, Sacramento is authorized to offer graduate programs culminating in the Master of Arts, Master of Science, Master of Business Administration, Master of Music, Master of Physical Therapy, Master of Public Policy and Administration, and Master of Social Work degrees. CSUS also offers a joint doctoral program in Public History in cooperation with UC Santa Barbara. In keeping with the objectives of the degrees offered, the University has developed a broad framework of requirements.

Master of Arts

Master of Arts programs are designed to provide improvement in professional competence in educational service, competence for self-directed study (research) in areas of specialization, broadening of cultural backgrounds, development of personal and social responsibility, and preparation for community leadership.

Master of Science

Objectives of the Master of Science programs are to increase competence in particular professional areas and to develop ability for independent self-directed study in selected fields. Provisions have been made in the various curricula for individual planning in light of each student's objectives, previous education, and experience.

Master of Business Administration

The Master of Business Administration curriculum is designed to broaden the participants' knowledge and understanding of business administration, to improve their capacity for effective decision-making, and to facilitate their professional growth and development for positions of greater responsibility. The curriculum is intended for individuals who seek careers as professional managers in business and business-oriented government organizations and as community college instructors of business administration. In addition, the curriculum prepares superior students for entry into doctoral programs in business administration.

Master of Music

The graduate program leading to the Master of Music degree is designed to provide opportunity for a variety of advanced studies in music. The Master of Music may be earned either with an academic or a performance emphasis. The program will effectively prepare students for continuation into doctoral study. Students may focus their studies in one of six areas: choral conducting, instrumental conducting, composition, music education, music history and literature, or performance.

Master of Physical Therapy

The Master of Physical Therapy curriculum is designed to educate competent physical therapy generalist practitioners who demonstrate ethical, responsible, professional behavior, sensitive to cultural and psychosocial differences. Graduates will be able to utilize critical thinking and problem solving, practice life long learning, and provide services that contribute to the optimal health and function of the residents of the communities they serve.

Master of Public Policy and Administration

The Master of Public Policy and Administration curriculum is designed to prepare individuals committed to public service as effective and ethical leaders and advisors, managers and administrators, analysts and advocates. Students develop competence in three areas: management of the organizational context of policy implementation and administration; understanding of the political environment and process of policy making; and the analytic and research tools to plan, design, and evaluate public policy.

Master of Social Work

The curriculum leading to the Master of Social Work degree is designed to enable the student to develop professional competence in working with individuals and groups, participate knowledgeably in the implementation of social welfare policy and administration, understand human growth and development as they affect social and personal functioning, and develop social philosophies, ethics, and values relating to the practice of professional social work.

Master of Arts or Master of Science in Special Major

The special major for either a Master of Arts or a Master of Science degree provides an alternative for those individuals whose special needs and interests cannot adequately be met by any single existing or planned master's degree program. A suitable interdisciplinary program may be planned for the superior graduate student who meets requirements established for admission to the special major graduate degree program. A student who wishes to undertake such a program should obtain an application to the program from the Office of Graduate Studies.

Ph.D., Public History

The joint doctoral program in Public History offered in cooperation with UC Santa Barbara provides training in public history, particularly in the following professional fields: history of public policy, cultural resource management, business and institutional history, and community and local history. Supporting courses are offered in oral history, archives and records administration, museum management, historical editing, and policy and litigation support.

Admission Requirements*

Graduate and postbaccalaureate applicants may apply for a degree objective, a credential or certificate objective, or they may have no program objective. Depending on the objective, the CSU will consider an application for admission* as follows:

Specifically, a student must:

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 have completed equivalent academic preparation as determined by appropriate campus authorities;
2. be in good academic 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; and
4. satisfactorily meet the professional, personal, scholastic and other standards for graduate study, including qualifying examinations, as appropriate campus authorities may prescribe.

In unusual circumstances, a campus may make exceptions to these criteria.

*Refer to Applications to CSUS/Graduate and Postbaccalaureate Students, page 58.

**The minimum requirements for admission to graduate and postbaccalaureate studies at a California State University campus are in accordance with University regulations as well as Title 5 chapter 1, subchapter 3 of the California Code of Regulations.

Students meeting the minimum requirements for graduate and postbaccalaureate studies will be considered for admission in one of the four following categories:

Postbaccalaureate Unclassified

To enroll in graduate courses for professional or personal growth, a student must be admitted as a post baccalaureate unclassified student by meeting the general requirements as described above. Some departments may restrict enrollment of unclassified students because of heavy enrollment pressure. Admission in this status does not constitute admission to, or assurance of consideration for admission to, any graduate degree or credential program.

No more than six units earned by an unclassified student may be counted toward meeting requirements for a graduate degree.

Postbaccalaureate Classified

Students 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 department.

Graduate Conditionally Classified

Students may be admitted to a graduate degree program in this category if, in the opinion of appropriate campus authority, they can remedy deficiencies by additional preparation, including qualifying examinations.

Graduate Classified

To pursue a graduate degree, students will be required to fulfill all of the professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards, including qualifying examinations, prescribed by the department. Only those applicants who show promise of success and fitness will be admitted to graduate degree curricula, and only those who continue to demonstrate a satisfactory level of scholastic competence and fitness will be eligible to proceed in such curricula.

Normally, a graduate student may be a candidate for one degree only. Any exception to this policy will require the special permission of the Associate Dean, Office of Graduate Studies.

Second Bachelor's Degree

Students who have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a GPA of 2.5 or higher in the last 60 semester units of baccalaureate or graduate level courses may pursue a Second Bachelor's degree at CSUS. Students admitted in postbaccalaureate standing (unclassified) must meet residence and other specified requirements.*

Applicants to an impacted program will be considered in the upper division quota category for admission purposes. Course work completed in this status forms part of the postbaccalaureate grade point average and will affect the student's eligibility for classified standing.

Candidates must file for graduation TWO SEMESTERS prior to the date of graduation. Forms are available from Admissions and Records. A second bachelor's cannot be awarded in the same major or closely related field as the first degree.

*Refer to Baccalaureate Degree Requirements/Second Bachelor's Degree, page 96.

International Foreign Visa and International Non-Visa Students

Graduation from a recognized college or university with a degree requiring at least 16 years of prior education is required for graduate standing.

TOEFL Requirement for Graduate Students

All graduate and postbaccalaureate applicants, regardless of citizenship, whose preparatory education was principally in a language other than English, must demonstrate competence in English. Those who do not possess a bachelor's degree from a postsecondary institution where English is the principal language of instruction must receive a minimum score of 550 (213 if computer-based) on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).* Some CSUS programs may require higher scores than listed here.

*Refer to Application to CSUS/International Students/ TOEFL Requirement, page 59.

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Application for Graduate Status

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Applicants

All graduate and postbaccalaureate applicants (e.g., master's degree applicants, those seeking credentials, and those interested in taking courses for personal or professional growth) must file a complete graduate application as described in the graduate and postbaccalaureate admission booklet.

Applicants who completed undergraduate degree requirements and graduated the preceding term are also required to complete and submit an application with a \$55 nonrefundable application fee.

Since applicants for postbaccalaureate programs may be limited to the choice of a single campus on each application, redirection to alternate campuses or later changes of campus choice will be minimal. To be assured of initial consideration by more than one campus, it will be necessary to submit separate applications (including fees) to each. An electronic application is available online. Beginning fall 2005, all applicants for admission must submit their application online.

The application and fee are not required for students desiring to enroll only in extension, intersession or summer school work.

Classification

Students wishing to pursue a master's degree must be admitted to the specific program under which the student intends to study. At the time of application for admission to the University, the student indicates his or her proposed major and is evaluated against the admission requirements for that program.

If the student meets all the program's admission requirements, he/she is admitted as a classified graduate student in the designated program and to the University. If the student is deficient in one or more requirements, which in the judgment of the appropriate campus authority can be met by specific additional preparation, the student may be admitted to conditionally classified status.

A student not wishing to pursue a master's degree can be admitted as an unclassified graduate student, but no more than six units earned in unclassified status can be applied toward a subsequent master's program. Therefore, unclassified students are urged to seek classification during their first semester's enrollment if they wish to pursue a graduate degree.

Writing Proficiency Requirement

All graduate students are expected to have demonstrated writing proficiency at the undergraduate level as prescribed by California State University. Students applying for admission to graduate programs who have not fulfilled this requirement (because they graduated from a non-CSU institution or completed undergraduate degree requirements prior to the imposition of the writing standard in 1980) shall be required to demonstrate writing proficiency. The University's writing proficiency requirement may be demonstrated by passing the CSUS Writing Proficiency Examination with a score of eight or better or by meeting an equivalent standard approved by the Associate Dean, Office of Graduate Studies.

In all cases, writing proficiency must be demonstrated before the student can be advanced to candidacy.

Advising

Classified graduate students should confer with their academic departments for requirements, course selection and appointment of advisors.

Postbaccalaureate students seeking a teaching credential should contact the College of Education Student Service Center, Eureka Hall 216, (916) 278-6403.

General Program Requirements

Required Graduate Units

The number of units required for graduate degrees vary, depending on the field and the degree sought. Master of Arts and Master of Science degrees require a minimum of 30 semester units of approved graduate credit.

The Master of Arts degree in International Affairs, however, requires a minimum of 39 units plus specific language preparation. The Master of Science degree in Counseling requires a minimum of 60 semester units of approved graduate credit. The Master of Business Administration degree requires from 31 to 52 semester units of approved graduate credit depending upon the student's background in business administration at the time of admission. The Master of Social Work degree requires 31-60 semester units of approved graduate credit.

Graduate transfer credit (with a grade of "B" or better) toward a master's degree at CSUS may be considered only if the course work has not been used previously to complete another degree.

Major

Each master's degree program must include a minimum of 20 approved units in the major subject area. These shall normally include a minimum of 18 units in a 30-40 unit degree program and 36 units in a 60 unit degree program of regularly scheduled 200-level courses requiring student participation as the primary instructional method and seminar courses requiring formal presentations by students. Units earned for thesis or project may contribute toward establishing the major, but they are not permitted in the required units in 200 level seminar courses.

Foreign Language

A reading knowledge of a foreign language may be required in some liberal arts areas. Students should consult their advisors to determine if foreign language requirements apply in the particular field in which they plan to take the master's degree.

Academic Residence

A minimum of 21 approved semester units in 100-, 200- and 500-series offerings in a 30-unit program must be earned in residence at CSU Sacramento. Three-hundred-level (methods) courses, student teaching, extension courses offered by CSUS or work completed at other accredited institutions do not meet residence requirements.

Advancement to Candidacy

Initiation of advancement to candidacy procedures is the responsibility of the student. Each student who plans to become a candidate for a master's degree is required to do the following:

1. Be admitted to classified graduate standing in the graduate degree curriculum for which candidacy is sought;
2. Complete at least 40 percent of the graduate degree course work and meet any special departmental requirements in the field in which they propose to take the degree; and
3. File an application for advancement to candidacy for the master's degree at the Office of Graduate Studies.

Eligibility for advancement to candidacy is based upon the following:

1. Scholarship in undergraduate and graduate work taken prior to advancement as follows:
 - a. A satisfactory undergraduate preparation for admission to classified graduate standing in the graduate degree program.
 - b. A minimum grade point average of 3.0. No grade of less than "C" can be counted toward the minimum number of units needed to advance to candidacy.
2. Evidence of a plan of graduate study acceptable to the institution and the faculty concerned.
3. Fulfilled Writing Proficiency Exam (WPE) requirement.

Thesis, Project or Comprehensive Examination:

A thesis is required under Plan A, a Project is required under Plan B and a Comprehensive Examination is required under Plan C. Students are eligible to enroll for full or partial credit for their theses or projects at any time after being advanced to candidacy, subject to approval by their faculty advisors. Credit is granted upon completion.

Each department offers one or more or a combination of the following plans:

Plan A: Thesis

A thesis is the written product of the systematic study of a significant problem. It clearly identifies the problem; states the major assumptions; explains the significance of the undertaking; sets forth the sources for, and methods of gathering, information;

analyzes the data; and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product must evidence originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, clarity of purpose, and accurate and thorough documentation. Normally an oral defense of the thesis will be required.

Plan B: Project

A project is a significant undertaking of a pursuit appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It must evidence originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It must be described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project's significance, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation. An oral defense of the project may be required. Some samples of types of projects are outlined below:

1. A Creative Project in the Arts: an original contribution to the verbal, visual, or performing arts. Examples include a music recital; a musical composition; a completed novel or play; a completed collection of short stories or poems; direction of a theatrical production; a gallery showing of works of art.
2. A Curriculum Project: a project that contributes to a field of teaching by enhancing communication of a subject matter. Examples include a course of study; a teacher's guide; an instructional manual; a design for a new teaching method; the development of new teaching materials.
3. A Research Project: a project which contributes to the physical sciences, natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, or the professions, by adding to technical/professional knowledge in the professional field. Examples include building a device; designing an experiment; a field study; a case study; a documentary report; a professional article of publishable quality.

The fulfillment of any of the above culminating requirements must conform to the appropriate requirements of the CSUS Thesis and Project Format Requirement Guides.

Plan C: Comprehensive Examination

A comprehensive examination should test the range of subject matter covered in the student's graduate program. The department may opt for an examination that is written, oral, or a combination of written and oral. Ordinarily the examination will be given in the student's last semester before the student plans to receive the degree, and in no instance can a student who has not been advanced to candidacy take the examination.

At least three examiners must certify to the success or failure of the student in the examination, and the results of the examination must be submitted promptly to the Associate Dean of Office of Graduate Studies on the "Report of Comprehensive Examination" form. A simple majority determines whether the student has passed or failed. A student may repeat the examination once after a failure, provided that at least four calendar months have lapsed since the previous examination. A third trial is not allowed unless extreme extenuating circumstances are demonstrated by the department to the Associate Dean, Office of Graduate Studies.

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Scholarship

A minimum grade point average of 3.0 for all graded work presented for the degree is required. No units with a grade lower than a “C” may be credited toward fulfillment of the requirements for a master’s degree. “CR” grades are excluded in calculating grade points. It is the responsibility of the student to remedy performance or program deficiencies (indicated by “D”, “F”, “WU”, “I”, “W” and “NC” grades) in the approved program prior to graduation.

Students who are enrolled in graduate degree programs in conditionally classified or classified standing shall be subject to academic warning and subsequent disqualification if they fail to maintain a cumulative and semester grade point average of at least 3.0 in all units attempted subsequent to admission to the program.

Disqualification may be either from further registration in a particular program or from further enrollment at the campus.

Unclassified postbaccalaureate students will be disqualified immediately if their cumulative grade point average falls below 2.0. Unclassified students are subject to probation and subsequent disqualification if they fail to earn a 2.5 grade point average each semester.

Students in classified, conditionally classified, or unclassified standing who meet grade point average requirements stated above will be placed on Academic Warning if they earn one or two “NC” grades in a semester. Grades of “NC” earned in subsequent consecutive semesters will result in Probation, Continued Probation, or Disqualification, depending upon the number of “NC” grades earned and the semester grade point average.

Unclassified Students will be Disqualified if their Grade Point Average Falls Below 2.5

Postbaccalaureate students who meet grade point average requirements will be placed on Academic Warning if they earn one or two “NC” grades in a semester. Grades of “NC” earned in subsequent consecutive semesters will result in Probation, Continued Probation, or Disqualification, depending upon the number of “NC” grades earned and the semester grade point average.

Administrative-Academic Probation and Disqualification

Graduate and postbaccalaureate students may be subject to administrative-academic probation for the following reasons:

1. Withdrawal from all or a substantial portion of their courses in two successive terms or in any three terms.
2. Repeated failure to progress toward a degree or other program objective.
3. Failure to comply, after due notice, with an academic requirement or regulation.

Students who do not meet the conditions for removal of administrative-academic probation may be subject to administrative-academic disqualification. Students will receive written notification of administrative-academic actions with an explanation of the basis for the action and the conditions they must meet to return to good standing.

Continuous Enrollment

Classified graduate students normally retain rights to the catalog and/or degree program requirement under which they were classified providing they maintain continuous enrollment as defined by the University. Students not maintaining continuous enrollment lose classified graduate standing and will be required to apply for readmission. Such students may be required to fulfill additional program or degree requirements that are current at the time of readmission.

Continuous Enrollment — Open University

Graduate students who have been advanced to candidacy and who have completed all course work can maintain the required active degree program status without additional University registration by enrolling in “Continuous Enrollment” through Open University. There are no units associated with this enrollment, but a College of Continuing Education fee equal to one unit is required. Such enrollment is valid as long as the student is within the time period allowed for the completion of the culminating experience requirement. Students completing a thesis or project are allowed a maximum of three semesters past the semester of first registration to complete the thesis or project. If not otherwise actively registered, the student must enroll in “Continuous Enrollment” each of the three semesters beyond the initial University enrollment for thesis or project units.

Students who do not finish the thesis or project within the semester of original enrollment will receive a grade of “RP”^{*} provided satisfactory progress has been made toward completion of the culminating experience. The “RP” grade will remain as long as progress is made toward completion and “continuous enrollment” is maintained the following three semesters.

If the student does not complete the culminating experience within a total of four semesters, she/he will receive a No Credit (“NC”) grade for the original units. If the seven-year deadline for the program has not expired, the student must re-enroll in culminating experience units within the next two semesters and pay University fees before continuing her/his program.

Students taking the comprehensive exam for the culminating experience in a semester in which they are not registering for any other units will be required to sign up for “Continuous Enrollment.”

Time Limit

All requirements for the master’s degree must be completed within seven years immediately prior to graduation.

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CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO CLASSIFIED GRADUATE STATUS

Degree Program (Options)	Minimum GPA: 60 Semester Units	Supplemental Department Application	Test Required	Reference Letters	BA/BS in Same Field	For More Information (916)
M.A. Anthropology	3.0	Yes	GRE	Yes	Yes	278-6452
M.A. Art Studio	2.5	Yes	None	No	Yes or equivalent	278-6166
M.S. Biological Sciences (Biological Conservation, Molecular and Cellular Biology)	2.75 et al. reqts	No	None	No	No	278-6535
M.B.A. Business Administration (Urban Land Development; Finance; Human Resources Mgmt.; Mgmt. Computer Applications; Marketing)	3.0 in Business	No	GMAT	No	No	278-6772
M.S. Business Administration (Management Information Systems)	3.0 in Business	No	GMAT	No	No	278-6772
M.S. Chemistry	2.5 overall et al. reqts	No	None	Yes	No	278-6684
M.S. Civil Engineering	2.8 overall et al. reqts	No	None	Yes	Yes	278-6982
M.A. Communication Studies	3.25 et al. reqts	No	GRE	Yes	No	278-6688
M.S. Computer Engineering	3.0	No	GRE	Yes	No	278-6834
M.S. Computer Science: M.S. Software Engineering	3.0 et al. reqts	No	GRE	No	Yes	278-6834
M.S. Counseling (Career Counseling; Community Counseling; Marriage Family and Child Counseling; School Counseling) (Vocational Rehabilitation) <i>Also offered: Pupil Personnel Services Credential (School Counseling or School Psychologist)</i>	2.5 3.0 overall	Yes	None None	Yes Yes	No No	278-5399 278-6622
M.S. Criminal Justice	3.0 et al. reqts	No	None	Yes	Yes	278-6487
M.A. Economics	3.0 in Economics	Yes	GRE	Yes	No	278-6223
M.A. Education (Educational Technology; Multicultural Education) (Curriculum and Instruction; Early Childhood Education; Behavioral Sciences [Women's Studies]; Language and Literacy) (Educational Leadership; Higher Education Leadership) (Special Education; School Psychology) <i>Also Offered: Specialist or Services Credential or Certificate In: Bilingual/Cross-Cultural; Preliminary or Professional Administrative; Reading/Language Arts; Language Development Specialist; Resources Specialist</i>	2.5 2.5-3.0 et al reqts. 2.5 3.0 overall	Yes Yes	None None	No Yes-ECE Yes Yes	No Yes-ECE Yes Yes	278-5942 278-6155 278-5388 278-6622
Credential - Education: Single and Multiple Subjects; Special Education	2.5 overall et al. reqts	Yes	CBEST	No	Yes	278-6639
M.S. Electrical and Electronic Engineering	3.0 et al. reqts	No	None	No	Yes	278-6873
M.A. English (Literature; TESOL; Pedagogy; Creative Writing)	2.75 et al. reqts	No	None	No	No	278-6586
M.S. Geology	2.75 et al. reqts	YES	GRE general and subject	Yes	Yes or equivalent	278-6337
M.A. Government	3.0	No	GRE	Yes	No	278-6202
M.A. History (Public History; Humanities); Ph.D. Public History	3.0 et al. reqts	Yes	None	Yes	Yes or equivalent	278-6206
M.A. International Affairs	3.0 overall	Yes	GRE	Yes	No	278-6557
M.S. Kinesiology (Exercise Science; Sport Performance) <i>Also offered: Adapted P.E. or Athletic Training Credential</i>	3.0 et al. requirements	No	None	No	No	278-6441
M.A. Liberal Arts	2.75	No	None	Yes	No	278-6444
M.S. Marine Science (Contact the Biology Department or The Moss Landing Marine Laboratories at 408-755-8656.)						
M.A. Mathematics	2.5 et al. reqts	No	None	No	Yes	278-6534
M.S. Mechanical Engineering	3.0 et al. reqts	No	None	No	Yes or equivalent	278-6624
M.M. Music (Conducting; Composition; Music Education; Music History and Literature; Performance)	3.0	No	GRE	Yes	Yes	278-6514
M.S. Nursing (Family Nurse Practitioner) <i>Also offered: School Nurse Credential</i>	3.0 overall et al. reqts	Yes	GRE	Yes	Yes	278-6525
M.P.T. Physical Therapy	2.5; 3.0 in pre-reqs	Yes	GRE	Yes	No	278-6426
M.A. Psychology (Counseling Psychology, Industrial Organizational Psychology)	3.0	Yes	GRE	Yes	Yes or equivalent	278-6254
M.P.P.A. Public Policy and Administration	3.0	Yes	GRE	Yes	No	278-6557
M.S. Recreation Administration	2.75 overall et al. reqts	Yes	None	Yes	No	278-6752
M.S.W. Social Work <i>Also offered Pupil Personnel Services Credential (School Social Worker)</i>	2.5	Yes	None	Yes	No	278-6943
M.A. Sociology	3.0 et al. reqts	No	PPST: Writing	Yes	No	278-6522
M.A. Spanish	2.5	No	Spanish Test	No	No	278-6333
M.A./M.S. Special Major	3.0	Yes	None	No	No	278-6470
M.S. Speech Pathology and Audiology (Audiology; Speech Pathology) <i>Also offered Clinical Rehab Spec. Credential</i>	2.75 et al. reqts	Yes	GRE if GPA below 3.5	Yes	Yes	278-6601
M.A. Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)	3.0 et al. reqts	No	None	No	No	278-6586
M.A. Theatre Arts	3.0	Yes	None	Yes	No	278-6368