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**Asst VC & State Univ Dean**  
Area **Academic and Student Affairs**  
Codes **AA 2012-01**

## Policy on “Blended” Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree Programs

### Policy

This policy establishes systemwide minimum processes and requirements pertaining to CSU undergraduate and graduate degree programs offered to students through simultaneous matriculation. Combinations that blend degree and credential programs are excluded, and issues not addressed in this policy shall be determined at the campus level.

Campuses are not required to offer blended programs, and the standards included herein are minimum requirements. Campuses wishing to offer blended bachelor's and master's degree programs must ensure timely coordination between the academic department and the campus registrar's office to assure accurate recording of the student's transition from undergraduate to graduate status. This action will have direct consequences for student tuition and fee assessment and financial aid eligibility, as types of aid and award amounts may vary according to the student's official academic objective. Appropriate state funding to the campus will also depend on accurate recording of student transition in blended programs.

### 1. Authorization to Implement Blended Programs

The president or designee is authorized to implement programs blending existing baccalaureate and master's degree programs for the purposes of providing an accelerated pathway to a master's degree and enhancing the undergraduate learning experience. Campuses shall establish, monitor and maintain appropriate academic rigor and quality.

1. Authority to grant postbaccalaureate and graduate special-action admission is provided under Title 5 section 41001: An applicant who does not qualify for admission under the provisions of subdivisions (a) or (b), or both such subdivisions, of Section 41000, may be admitted by special action if, on the basis of acceptable evidence, the applicant is judged by appropriate

campus authority to possess sufficient academic, professional and other potential pertinent to the applicant's educational objectives to merit such action.

2. Blended programs must meet all applicable CSU policies and state and federal laws.
3. The bachelors and master's degree will typically be offered in the same support mode. However, if the bachelors is in state support and the masters in self-support the campus will need to (1) clearly identify when the student completes the state support bachelor's degree; (2) begin to charge self-support tuition only for those graduate units that do not count towards the state support bachelor's degree, and; (3) clearly notify the students of the differences between the state and self-support programs including, at minimum, the tuition/cost differences and the financial aid impacts.

## 2. Reporting

1. Blended bachelor's and master's degree programs will continue to use the existing CSU degree program codes and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes for their component undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Unlike concurrent degree programs, new CSU degree codes will not be assigned for the blended bachelor's and master's programs.
2. To ensure that enrollments are reported accurately, the campus is required to notify Academic Programs in the Chancellor's Office, signaling an intention to implement the planned blended program. The resultant Chancellor's Office software edits will allow accurate reporting in the CSU Enrollment Reporting System (ERS), without receiving an "error" message. The blended programs will also be added to the CSU Degrees Database.
3. While students in regular, non-blended, baccalaureate and graduate programs have a degree objective code that ranges from digits "2" to "7," students in blended programs have only the digit "9" as their degree objective code. This code should be assigned for ERS reporting at the time the student begins and is maintained during the component undergraduate and graduate degree programs.
4. When a blended-program student has earned at least 120 semester units toward program completion, the campus will change the student level code to "5," signifying graduate standing. As these students have yet to attain either a baccalaureate or master's degree, their degree held code will remain as either "0" or "1." The term FTE calculation for these students will be: 12 semester units equals one FTES.

## 3. Application to Blended Programs

1. A student must apply to the blended program while in undergraduate status and will be admitted as an undergraduate to the bachelor's component of the blended program.
2. Students shall not be required to apply formally for graduate admission.

## 4. Enrollment and Enrollment Status

1. While in undergraduate status, a student in a blended program will take graduate-level courses required for the master's degree.
2. If permissible by the program, a student may double-count up to 12 semester units between the undergraduate and graduate degree.

3. None of the required graduate courses can be replaced by an undergraduate course, and graduate courses that will also count toward the bachelor's degree must either require mastery of the more rudimentary knowledge taught at the undergraduate level or cover the content of the undergraduate courses that they replace.
4. Units considered toward meeting this degree-objective status threshold may include either undergraduate or graduate and shall include only those units that count toward satisfying either the bachelor's or master's requirements in the blended program.
5. To ensure proper awarding of degree credit, all lower-division work (including lower-division general education courses and American Institutions courses) shall be completed prior to changing to graduate degree objective status.
6. Blended programs may choose to include enrollment in winter or summer courses for an accelerated 1-year graduate program. Stateside winter or summer courses may be offered by blended programs in cases where there are no identical stateside courses offered in the fall or spring semesters.

## 5. International (F-1 Visa Holder) Students

1. Each campus must issue a change of educational level (i.e., I-20 status) when an F-1 student in a blended program becomes a graduate student according to visa regulations. This change will shift the minimum unit requirement for undergraduate student status (12 units) to that for graduate student status as defined by the campus. However, the trigger for that change may differ depending on how the campus implements the blended program (e.g., if the bachelor's degree is awarded when earned or at the end of the blended program). The international student office on each campus should be consulted to work out the timing and workflow for issuance of the new I-20 to F-1 students in blended programs.
2. International students with an F-1 visa are permitted post-completion OPT for up to 12 months (and additional 24 months with STEM OPT extension) per degree level. Unless the campus determines that a break/gap between educational levels is permitted to allow for OPT, students will otherwise become ineligible for bachelor's level post-completion OPT upon the date of their change in educational level to graduate student status, as indicated on the I-20. Students would still be eligible to apply for graduate level post-completion OPT and STEM OPT extension.

## 6. Tuition, Fees and Financial Aid

1. A student will be assessed the undergraduate tuition and fees only during the time in which the blended-program student has earned fewer than 120 semester units applicable to the blended bachelor's and master's degree programs.
2. When the degree-objective status is changed to "graduate," the student will be assessed the graduate student tuition and fees and may continue to take upper-division undergraduate courses.
3. Students in a master's degree program that has been authorized to assess a fee for a graduate professional degree (e.g., graduate business professional fee) will only be charged that tuition fee for courses required to complete the fee-approved master's degree program.
4. If students transition between undergraduate and graduate standing during the academic year,

they should reach out to the Financial Aid Office to determine if adjustment paperwork is appropriate and allowable.

5. Students should complete the FAFSA or California Dream Act application annually with the correct status listed (i.e., undergraduate or graduate). As with all graduate students, students in blended programs will have different funding eligibility when they are in graduate status.
6. Students will be funded with financial aid funds as an undergraduate student while they are coded as an undergraduate student and enrolled in courses applicable to their undergraduate degree. While coded as an undergraduate student, the student will not be funded while an undergraduate student for graduate coursework beyond the 12 units that can be double counted. Once the student is coded as a graduate student, their financial aid will be adjusted to graduate level funding.
7. Funding for the summer term is limited. Winter term financial aid is not available.

## 7. Minimum Requirements for Completion of Blended Programs

Up to 12 semester units of graduate level coursework that applied to their 120 baccalaureate units can double count towards the master's degree requirements, leaving at-minimum 18 additional semester units in the master's degree program. Therefore, a minimum of 138 semester units (e.g., BS 120 + MS 30, subtracting 12 units double counted) are required in blended programs.

## 8. Provision for Completing the Baccalaureate Portion Only

If a student in a blended program opts not to complete the master's program but does complete the undergraduate degree requirements, undergraduate matriculation shall be reopened in order to grant the baccalaureate degree. There shall be no related cost to the student nor refund of previous graduate fees paid.

If a student decides to return to pursue their master's program in the future, they shall formally apply for graduate admission. With the approval of their academic department, students may count up to 12 units graduate courses completed during their blended program towards their master's degree. Such courses cannot exceed seven years, unless approved for validation by both the academic program and designated University administrator.

## 9. Awarding of Degrees

Campuses can choose to award the bachelor's degree upon completion of the 120 semester units or upon completion of both degree requirements. Both degrees may be awarded during the same term and at a single graduation ceremony, as authorized by the [Awarding of Multiple Degrees at a Single Commencement](#) policy. Students are evaluated for Latin honors based on the first 120 semester units (i.e., the time period of undergraduate degree objective), regardless of the number of graduate courses taken prior to the transition to graduate status.

For questions regarding Enrollment Reporting System coding, please contact Dr. Edward Sullivan at

(562) 951-4767 or [esullivan@calstate.edu](mailto:esullivan@calstate.edu). Admission questions and Common Management System issues may be directed to Dr. April Grommo at (562) 951-4726 or [agrommo@calstate.edu](mailto:agrommo@calstate.edu). Financial aid questions should be addressed to Ms. Noelia Gonzalez at (510) 885-3018 or [ngonzalez@calstate.edu](mailto:ngonzalez@calstate.edu). Dr. Brent Foster may be reached at (562) 951-4149 or [bfoster@calstate.edu](mailto:bfoster@calstate.edu) to answer questions related to curriculum.

## Authority

This policy is issued pursuant to [Section II of the Standing Orders of the Board of Trustees of the California State University](#), and as further delegated by the [Standing Delegations of Administrative Authority](#).

### All Revision Dates

12/3/2022, 6/17/2020, 2/12/2020, 1/9/2012

### Approval Signatures



Step Description	Approver	Date
EVC	Sylvia Alva: EVC Acad/Stdnt Affairs [NE]	12/3/2022
Area Manager/Owner	Alison Wrynn: Assoc VC Acd Prg,Innov&Fac Dev	12/2/2022
Area Manager/Owner	Christina Gutierrez: Comm Spclst, Acad & Sdnt Affrs	12/2/2022