

**California State University, Stanislaus  
GRADUATE CURRICULUM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The purpose of this document is to provide a singular and helpful source of information for graduate programs and courses– master’s degrees and doctoral programs.

**Proposing New Master's Degrees**

Rationale for Program

1. Demonstration of quality/academic rigor for graduate study
2. Demonstration of need for program
3. Demonstration of student demand
4. Demonstration of employment demand

Department Capacity

5. Sponsoring department is well established and has achieved a level of quality affirmed by academic program review.
6. Impact of proposed graduate program on corresponding bachelor’s degree of the department.
7. Department’s capacity to support the level of research required for a graduate program.
8. Offer at least four graduate-level courses each college year (in addition to independent and supervision courses).

Degree Designations

9. The CSU has approved the following degree designations for graduate degrees:

Master of Arts (MA)	Master of Public Administration (MPA)
Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT)	Master of Public Health (MPH)
Master of Business Administration (MBA)	Master of Public Policy (MPP)
Master of City Planning (MCP)	Master in Public Policy and Admin. (MPPA)
Master of City and Regional Planning (MCRP)	Master of Science (MS)
Master of Engineering (MEng)	Master of Social Work (MSW)
Master of Fine Arts (MFA)	Master of Urban Planning (MUP)

10. The following definitions of degrees are provided by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (*WASC Handbook of Accreditation/2001*, pages 121-122), a source that may be useful in determining master's degree designations for specific programs at CSU Stanislaus.

M.A., M.S.: A first graduate degree, representing at least one year of post-baccalaureate study (30 semester or 45 quarter units), or its equivalent in depth and quality. The distinctions between M.A. and M.S. are similar to those between B.A. and B.S. Some M.A. and M.S. degrees are merely continuations at a higher level of undergraduate work without basic change in character. Others emphasize some research and may lead to doctoral work.

M.B.A., M.P.A., M.S.W., etc: Professional degrees requiring up to two years of full-time study. Extensive undergraduate preparation in the field may reduce the length of study to one year.

### Curriculum

11. *Total Units.* A minimum of 30 semester units for a M.A. and 36 semester units for a M.S.; more total units for applied programs if justified by accreditation, licensure, or professional requirements.
12. *Graduate Units.* At least 70% of the semester units at graduate 5000-level courses (a minimum of 21 units in 30-unit M.A. and 25 units in 36-unit M.S.).
13. *Residency.* 21 units of coursework must be in residence at CSU Stanislaus.
14. *Special Session, Open University, Extension, Correspondence Credits.* May not be used to meet graduate program requirements without prior authorization by the Associate Director of the Graduate School.
15. *Prerequisite Study.* Graduate courses should have academic prerequisites that provide foundational knowledge and prepare the student for advanced study.
16. *Baccalaureate Preparation.* Graduate programs must require a baccalaureate degree in the discipline or closely related disciplines from an accredited university.
17. *Individual Study.* No more than 20% of the unit requirements are in individual study courses (maximum of 6 units for M.A. and 7 units for M.S.).
18. *Research Methods.* Demonstration of fundamental knowledge of research methods appropriate to the discipline.
19. *Required culminating experience.* Required thesis, project, and/or comprehensive examination that demands demonstration of quality of student writing (foremost), breadth of disciplinary knowledge, depth in specific areas, ability to integrate learning, and originality. Choice of culminating experience appropriate to discipline, and each equivalent in academic rigor. Required oral defense for thesis and project.
20. *Thesis/project units.* No more than 6 units of credit for thesis/project applicable toward the degree.
21. *Continued Enrollment in Culminating Experience.* Students must register in a 7005 thesis/project course or 7006 comprehensive examination course each semester or term until all degree requirements are met.

### Courses

22. *New Courses.* New course proposals must be submitted simultaneously with the proposal for a new graduate program.
23. *5000-level Courses.* Without an overriding rationale, departments or programs that do not offer a graduate degree program may not offer 5000-level graduate courses.
24. *Writing Proficiency.* Required demonstration of written communication as required by the CSU for graduate writing proficiency. May either be satisfied by completion of the course designated by the department for assessing writing proficiency in English or an alternate plan adopted by department and approved by the Graduate Council.
25. *Student Learning Outcomes.* Identify student learning goals/outcomes, specific to the type of course and linked to overall student learning goals for the program.
26. *Advanced Study.* Criteria for developing and reviewing master's course proposals.
  - a. *Comprehensive Information.* Clear, concise, and orderly organization of information.
  - b. *Advanced Disciplinary Content and Intellectual Rigor.* Expectation of advanced intellectual challenge and mastery of requisite knowledge and skills. Investigation of theories, principles, and assumptions underlying the discipline.
  - c. *Sophisticated Critical and Creative Thinking.* Advanced cognitive complexity commensurate with graduate education. Integration of knowledge and preparation for specialization. Critical and creative application of disciplinary content and methods.

- d. *Research*. Demonstration of competence in scholarly presentation of the results of independent study and demonstration of fundamental knowledge of research and scholarship appropriate to the discipline.
  - e. *Diversity*. Imparts within its scholarly or professional context an appreciation of intellectual contributions of women and minorities; diverse perspectives; prepares scholars for a diverse society.
  - f. *Written Communication*. Advanced written communication skills. Number, type, length, and complexity of writing assignments. Fluency of communication linked to audience.
  - g. *Oral Communication*. Advanced oral communication skills. Number, type, length, and complexity of oral presentations. Fluency of communication linked to audience.
  - h. *Technological Literacy*. Expectation for students' ability to find, evaluate, use, and communicate information from various technological formats, synchronous and asynchronous as appropriate.
  - i. *Course Student Learning Outcomes*. Clear, explicit, measurable course learning objectives that faculty expect students to achieve for each course (sometimes divided into content knowledge, performance skill, values/attitudes). Linked to program goals, and student learning outcomes.
  - j. *Required Texts/Scholarly Readings*. Statement of required texts and scholarly readings. Appropriateness for graduate study: number, currency, complexity, and primary source. Synthesis and evaluation of readings.
  - k. *Library Usage/ Information Competence*. Extensive library resource usage; bibliographic literacy, with emphasis on primary sources of information.
  - l. *Course Assignments*. Number, varied, academically rigorous methods for evaluating student performance; linked to specified student learning outcomes/program goals.
  - m. *Weighting of Assignments*. Percentage of individual assignments contributing to final course grade, with most weight normally assigned to individual student assignments demonstrating achievement of course goals.
  - n. *Grading*. High standards for student achievement. Specification of use of +/- grading.
  - o. *Pedagogy*. Appropriate for course modality and program level, may be varied, traditional and/or mediated instruction.
27. *Course Requirement Information (Course Syllabi)*.  
The CSU Stanislaus Academic Senate resolution, approved by the President in 1982, requires each department to ensure that students are provided information about their courses, no later than the end of the first week of classes and that any changes in course requirements be communicated to students in an expedient and timeline manner. Such information to include, as appropriate to the course, course goals, objectives, and requirements; grading policy; attendance requirements; policy on due dates and make-up work; required texts and other materials; policy on assignments; and availability of instructor outside of class, including office hours and office telephone number.

28. *Types of Graduate Courses.*

*Fieldwork and Clinical Practice.* Requires that graduate students have a high level of theoretical competence and master of advanced skills necessary to perform professional duties with minimum direction and with judgment of a higher order.

*Introductory Course.* Restricted to professional graduate programs in which students are not required to have completed a baccalaureate degree in the same discipline as prerequisite to entrance into the program. Other graduate courses should not be introductory in either content or title.

*Individual Study.* Requires student to conduct an individual study directly related to the objectives of the graduate program (and may not supplant a regular course offering); required demonstration of competence through a scholarly presentation of the result of independent study.

*Internship.* Requires graduate students to engage in supervised academic study through participation in an applied setting.

*Laboratory.* Focuses on data gathering and analysis, with an emphasis on research and investigation rather than laboratory techniques; uses specialized facilities and relatively independent investigation by students.

*Culminating Experience.* Successful completion of a graduate thesis, project, or comprehensive examination. The quality of the work, in both content and written expression, is the major consideration in judging acceptability of the culminating experience. The choice of the experience should be the most appropriate to the discipline and as required by the program. An oral defense is required for theses and projects.

*Continuing Enrollment.* Applicable to those students who have completed all registration for graduate coursework must maintain enrollment each semester or term until all degree requirements are met (course numbers 7005 for thesis/project and 7006 for comprehensive examinations).

*Seminar.* Requires students to assume primary responsibility for an investigation that will contribute to achievement of the course objectives. Students are expected to report, interpret, and defend their research findings orally and in writing. In addition, within the framework of the seminar goals, student participation in course planning and evaluation is desired.

*Special Topics Courses.* A graduate special topic course may be offered as an elective but not a required core course. A special topic course may be offered only one time.

#### Class Size and Mode of Instruction

29. Normal class sizes and normal course classification levels (other may apply):
  - C-4 Discussion..... normal limit 25....1 WTU per unit
  - C-5 Graduate Seminar Courses..... normal limit 15....1 WTU per unit
  - C-6 Clinical Processes, Graduate ..... normal limit 10....1 WTU per unit
  - S-3 Supervision of Fieldwork, Thesis, Projects .. ratio of 1:25 .....5 WTU 1.5 hrs per wk
  - S-4 Supervision of Fieldwork ..... ratio of 1:18 .....67 WTU 2 hrs per wk
  - S-5 Supervision of Fieldwork ..... ratio of 1:12 .....1.0 WTU 3 hrs per wk

#### Course Grading Options

30. Graduate courses are normally graded by Grading Option 3: A,B,C,D, F grades exclusively.
31. For fieldwork, clinical courses, or thesis/project, courses may employ Grading Option 1: Courses graded exclusively Credit/No Credit (Credit for grades A and B; No Credit for grades C, D and F).
32. Use of plus/minus grading in combination with letter grades to be stated on course syllabus.

#### Course Grading for Graduate Students Enrolled in 4000-level Undergraduate Courses

33. Graduate students expected to complete one or more additional assignments.
34. Differential grading standards to reflect higher standard of quality expected by graduate students. Quality of written and oral performance of graduate students expected to be at least one grade point higher than that of undergraduate students.

#### Faculty

35. A minimum of 5 faculty with education and expertise to deliver the program.
36. A graduate director assigned for program oversight.
37. Faculty with educational attainment (doctorate or other appropriate terminal degree) and relevant professional experience in curricular areas of program.
38. Faculty with extensive experience in offering graduate programs, including supervision of student research.
39. Quality and extensiveness of faculty's ongoing research, scholarship, and creative activity.
40. Faculty engage students directly in scholarship and creative activity and foster a research-oriented culture at the graduate level.

#### Library Support

41. Consult with the Dean of Library Services to make an assessment of current library holdings and/or needed additional support to assure adequate library resources for the new program.

#### Technology and Instructional Support

42. Laboratory, equipment, and instructional technology resources at level adequate for advanced research and quality student graduate work.

Program Assessment

43. Identify and assess program goals.
44. To improve currency and effectiveness, new programs are subject to the university's academic program review.

Student Learning Assessment

45. Faculty take collective responsibility for establishing, reviewing, fostering, and demonstrating students' attainment of student learning goals.
46. Clearly defined entry-level requirements.
47. Clearly defined and stated levels of student achievement necessary for graduation (more than simply an accumulation of courses or credits).
48. Expectation for student learning embedded in the standards faculty use to evaluate student work.
49. Assessment of student learning outcomes includes direct methods of student work, with evidence from external constituencies such as employers and professional societies included in such reviews.
50. Graduate programs and nomenclature are consistent with expectations of respective disciplines and professions.
51. Graduate curricula visibly structured to include active involvement with the literature of the field and ongoing student engagement in research and/or appropriate high level professional practice and training experiences.

Sources

For master's degrees, this information was derived from various CSU system, WASC, and CSU Stanislaus documents, including the following:

- ER&R 76-36 ..... Faculty Workload Policy (1976)
- ER&R 82-39 ..... Definitions of Graduate Level Instruction (1982)
- Faculty Handbook..... Course Requirement Information (1982)
- AAP 91-04..... Recommendations of the Advisory Committee to Study Graduate Education in the CSU. Implementation Plan for the Recommendations on Graduate Education (1991)
- AAR 92-07 ..... Amendment to Coded Memorandum EP&R 76-36, Faculty Workload Policy (1992)
- Graduate Council ..... Criteria for Evaluation of Graduate Courses (1996)
- WASC ..... Western Association of Schools and Colleges Standards (2001)
- AA-2004-39..... Additional Academic Planning Guidelines Suggested by the Division of Academic Affairs, the Committee on Academic Planning and Program Review, and/or the Committee to Study Graduate Education in the CSU (2004)
- AA-2007-2..... Proposing New CSU Degree Programs (2007)

## Proposing New Doctoral Programs

### Degree Designations

1. The CSU has approved the following degree designations/authorization for the offering of independent doctoral programs: Doctorate of Education, Educational Leadership (EdD).
2. Proposals for the Ed.D. must follow the proposal format and criteria that have been created specifically for this degree program.
3. Doctorates offered jointly with the campuses of the University of California or private universities are authorized. Proposals for joint doctorates must be approved in accordance with system procedures for joint doctorates with the University of California and/or with private universities. Campuses may establish policies governing doctoral programs offered jointly with other institutions.
4. The following definitions of degrees are provided by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (*WASC Handbook of Accreditation/2001*, pages 121-122), a source that may be useful in determining doctoral degree designations for specific programs at CSU Stanislaus.

Ph.D.: The standard research-oriented degree which indicates that the recipient has done, and is prepared to do, original research in a major discipline. The Ph.D. usually requires three years or more of postgraduate work including an original research thesis or project.

Ed.D. Psy.D., M.D., J.D., etc.: Degrees with emphasis on professional knowledge. These degrees normally require three or more years of prescribed postgraduate work.

### Course Approval Process/Criteria

5. Because overall academic rigor of course expectations and the intellectual challenge for students in a doctoral program are paramount for program quality, criteria and a review process for the development of syllabi for the doctoral program have been established by the Graduate Council. Course proposals must be approved by the department and college curriculum committees, the Graduate Council, and the Vice Provost.
  - a. *Comprehensive Information.* Clear, concise, and orderly organization of information.
  - b. *Advanced Disciplinary Content.* Mastery of requisite knowledge and skills for doctoral study.
  - c. *Intellectual Challenge and Cognitive Complexity.* Demonstration of highly sophisticated, integrative thinking, critical analyses, creative thinking, and originality in applied research projects and dissertation. Integration of theory and practice. Interdisciplinary thinking and cognitive complexity.
  - d. *Doctoral Culture.* Expectations for doctoral level course requirements explicitly stated on course syllabi, applied, and evaluated.
  - e. *Course Student Learning Outcomes.* Clear, explicit, measurable course learning objectives that faculty expect students to achieve for each course (sometimes divided into content

- knowledge, performance skill, values/attitudes). Linked to program goals, student learning outcomes, and core elements.
- f. *Course assignments*. Number, varied, academically rigorous methods for evaluating student performance at doctoral level. Linked to specified student learning outcomes/program goals. Predominance of assignments to require research and written competency; Essay examinations only.
  - g. *Weighting of Assignments*. High expectations for doctoral study; largest percentage of course grade related to individual student assignments (versus group projects).
  - h. *Course Embedded Assessment*. Include statement that randomly selected, anonymous student work will be used for program assessment and improvement.
  - i. *Required Texts/Scholarly Readings*. Statement of required texts and scholarly readings. Appropriateness for doctoral study, number, currency, complexity, and primary source. Readings linked to (grounded by) research, philosophical, and theoretical underpinnings. Synthesis and evaluation of readings.
  - j. *Research*. Demonstration of competence in scholarly presentation of the results of independent study and demonstration of fundamental knowledge of research and scholarship appropriate to the discipline and doctoral education.
  - k. *Grading*. High standards for doctoral study and student achievement.
  - l. *Pedagogy*. Appropriate for course modality and doctoral program, varied, traditional, and mediated instruction.
  - m. *Diversity*. Imparts within its scholarship or professional context an appreciation of the intellectual contributions and diverse perspectives; prepares scholars for a diverse society (gender and ethnicity of authors, course readings/research about diversity elements).
  - n. *Written Communication*. Number, type, length, and complexity of writing assignments. Fluency of communication linked to audience.
  - o. *Oral Communication*. Number, type, length, and complexity of oral presentations. Fluency of communication linked to audience.
  - p. *Technological Literacy*. Student ability to find, evaluate, use, and communicate information from various technological formats, synchronous and asynchronous as appropriate – e.g., use of learning management systems for teaching and learning, software applications databases, on-line instruction; ethical use of technology.

#### Sources

Policies and procedures for proposing a Doctor of Education degree are identified in the following documents:

- AA-2006-36..... Doctor of Education Degree Proposal Process (2006)
- Executive Order 991..... Doctor of Education Degree Programs (2006)
- Memorandum..... Template for WASC Substantive Change Proposals (2006)