

**University Policy Statement  
California State University, Fullerton**

## UPS 410.106

# ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR GRADUATE DEGREE STUDENTS

### I. General requirements for the master's degree

- A. A master's degree requires a minimum of 30 approved semester units.
- B. Master's degree Study Plans must be approved by the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs before nine units of Study Plan course work have been completed. The following restrictions apply to Study Plans:
  - 1. At least 21 semester units or half the units required by the program, whichever is larger, must be taken in residence. Transfer and California State University, Fullerton extension credits are not residence units.
  - 2. All courses on the Study Plan must be at the 400- or 500-, or equivalent level. 400-level General Education courses may not be counted toward the Study Plan.
  - 3. The normal academic standard is that at least 70 percent of all Study Plan courses shall be at the 500-level. However, with prior approval, upon the recommendation of the Graduate Education Committee, programs may permit students to include up to 50 percent of course work at the 400-level. Such programs shall justify a standard of 50 percent in the course of program performance reviews.
  - 4. The Study Plan may include no more than nine units of postbaccalaureate work taken at this institution prior to admission to an approved graduate program.

5. Prerequisite requirements, correspondence courses, courses with non-traditional grades (e.g., CR, S, P), and course credit by examination may not be used on a Study Plan.
  6. The Study Plan may include no more than 6 semester units of thesis work.
  7. The Study Plan may include no more than 6 semester units of independent study.
  8. The Study Plan may not include courses that were applied to another degree.
- C. The candidate must complete or successfully validate all Study Plan courses within five years starting with the earliest course on the Study Plan. Courses completed more than ten years prior to the completion of requirements for the degree are not eligible for validation.
- D. The approved Study Plan is valid as long as the student maintains continuous enrollment in regular semesters at the University; otherwise it is necessary to reapply and meet any changed or additional requirements approved in the interim.
- E. The candidate must satisfactorily undergo a culminating experience, which may be a thesis, a project, a comprehensive examination, or any combination of these. This experience should be educationally appropriate to the student and to the discipline. An oral presentation is strongly encouraged. The department or program is expected to maintain records indicating the form of culminating experience and the faculty members involved therein.

## **II. Grade point requirements**

- A. To earn a graduate degree, a student must earn a cumulative grade-point average (grade points earned divided by units attempted) of at least 3.0 in both: a.) all units attempted subsequent to admission to a degree program; and b.) all Study Plan course work.
- B. A student may request a change in the Study Plan in order to raise the Study Plan grade-point average to 3.0 by:
1. Adding no more than six units of approved course work, or
  2. Repeating no more than six units of course work in which a C (2.0) or lower was earned, or
  3. A combination of a. and b. not to exceed six units.
- C. Requests to add courses to the Study Plan or to repeat courses must be approved by the graduate program adviser and by the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs or his/her designee prior to registration.

### **III. Repeated courses**

- A. Each course on the Study Plan must be completed with a grade of C (2.0) or better.
- B. If a student receives a grade less than a C (2.0) in a Study Plan course, the course must be repeated and passed with a grade of C (2.0) or better. A course may be repeated only once.
- C. If a course is repeated, both grades are included when computing the student plan and cumulative CSUF grade-point average.
- D. Repetition of a course carries no additional unit credit toward a degree.
- E. In extenuating circumstances, the student may petition the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs to add another course to the approved program with unit value equivalent to that of the course in which the unsatisfactory grade was received.

### **IV. Probation and Disqualification**

- A. A graduate student enrolled in a graduate degree program is placed on probation if either the cumulative or the Study Plan grade-point average falls below 3.0.
- B. A graduate student may also be placed on probation or may be disqualified for any of the following reasons: repeated withdrawal; failure to progress toward an educational objective; non-compliance with an academic requirement; failure to demonstrate a level of professional competence or fitness commensurate with the standards of the discipline being studied; or inappropriate behavior as defined in UPS 300.000, Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities, and in UPS 300.021, Academic Dishonesty.
- C. The Office of Graduate Studies maintains a list of students on probation.
- D. The Associate Vice President, Academic Programs, with the advice of the student's graduate program adviser, shall disqualify a graduate student who is on academic probation if the student does not, or cannot, raise the Study Plan grade-point average and cumulative grade-point average to 3.0 by the completion of the second regular semester following the session in which the cumulative or Study Plan grade-point average fell below the minimum 3.0 standard.
- E. The student shall be disqualified from the master's degree program if that student's grade-point average becomes so low that it cannot be raised to 3.0 within the defined probationary period.

- F. Disqualification removes a student from graduate standing and prevents further enrollment in University courses (except through University Extension).
- G. A student who has been disqualified from a master's degree program may not apply for readmission to that program.
- H. A student who has been disqualified may apply for readmission to a different program. A readmitted student must file a new Study Plan that meets current requirements and policies. A disqualified student who wishes to use previous course work must have it approved by the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs.

**V. Guidelines for Independent Study on Graduate Study Plans:**

- A. 300-level courses may not be used as the sole basis for 499 Independent Study. 300- and 400-level course work may not be used as the sole basis for 599 Independent Study. 100- and 200-level courses may not be used as any part of the basis for 499 or 599 Independent Study.
- B. Applications for Independent Study shall include a proposal signed by the faculty member, the student, the graduate program adviser and the department chair.

**VI. Guidelines for Postbaccalaureate and Transfer Coursework**

- A. The use of postbaccalaureate course work on a student's graduate Study Plan is governed by the general regulations for all graduate degrees and must be approved by the program adviser, the appropriate graduate committee and the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs.
- B. A graduate student may petition for a maximum of nine units of credit for course work (either 400- or 500-level) taken while the student was an undergraduate at California State University, Fullerton, if:
  - 1. The course work was not used to meet any of the University's requirements for the baccalaureate degree (including major, minor or concentration).
  - 2. The course work was completed with a grade of B or better.
  - 3. The course work was taken during the twelve months immediately prior to the student's graduation.

If a student's petition is approved, appropriate notations will be entered on the student's permanent record.

- C. Graduate students may apply to use a limited amount of transfer course work in meeting the requirements for a master's degree. Use of transfer work on a student's Study Plan is

subject to all other policies concerning study plan course work. Further, the course work being transferred must:

1. Have been taken at an accredited college or university;
2. Have been completed with a grade of B or better;
3. Be acceptable for credit toward a graduate degree at the institution where the course work was taken;
4. Not have been used in meeting the requirements for another earned degree (either graduate or undergraduate);
5. Have been completed within the student's five-year time period which is required for completion of the requirements for the master's degree at CSU Fullerton.

## **VII. Exceptions**

Requests for exceptions to these policies must be submitted in writing by the graduate program adviser to the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs.

## **VIII. Classification**

### **Postbaccalaureate Standing: Unclassified**

To qualify for admission with no degree objective, a student must (1) hold an acceptable bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution or have equivalent preparation as determined by the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs, (2) have a grade point average of at least 2.5 (A=4.0) in the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units; and (3) have been in good standing at the last college attended. In unusual circumstances, exceptions may be made to these criteria.

### **Postbaccalaureate Standing: Classified**

To qualify for admission with a credential or certificate objective, a student must (1) meet the requirements for postbaccalaureate unclassified standing and (2) satisfy any additional professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards, including qualifying examinations.

### **Graduate Standing: Conditionally Classified**

To qualify for admission with a graduate degree objective, a student must (1) meet the admission requirements for postbaccalaureate unclassified standing and (2) meet any additional requirements of the particular program, including a favorable recommendation from the academic unit.

An applicant who has deficiencies in prerequisite preparation or in grade-point average may be considered for admission in conditionally classified standing with the approval and recommendation of the graduate program adviser. A student admitted in

conditionally classified standing may subsequently be granted classified standing in an authorized graduate degree curriculum if professional, personal, scholastic, or other standards including qualifying examinations are met.

### **Graduate Standing: Classified**

To qualify for classified standing, a student must have completed all prerequisites, formulated an official Study Plan, and been recommended by the appropriate graduate adviser and committee to the Associate Vice President, Academic Programs who gives final approval. An eligible student may be granted classified standing prior to the first registration or during the first semester of registration. A student is not officially classified until an approved Study Plan is on file in the Office of Graduate Studies.

## **TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

### **Certificate**

A university approved course of study, either credit or noncredit, which exceeds the requirements of a one-semester course and does not substitute for majors, minors or credentials. Certificate programs may be offered in residence or through extended education. Residence and credit extended education certificates require approval through official curriculum review procedures outlined in UPS 410.115.

### **Continuous Enrollment**

Enrollment in fall and spring semester from admission to the program of study until award of the degree. Continuous enrollment is maintained during approved leaves of absence and enrollment in GS 700 Special Session.

Units taken during Intersession, Summer, and through Extended Education do not fulfill the University's continuous enrollment policy, except for GS 700 Special Session which can only be taken to maintain continuous enrollment while completing the culminating experience.

International students on an F-1 visa are considered "in status" when taking GRAD 700 through University Extended Education enrollment during the regular academic year as well as the Summer Session if they plan to graduate at the end of that Summer Session. Such enrollment must be approved by the appropriate Graduate Program Advisor and the Office of International Education and Exchange.

### **Credential**

A state approved program of courses required for certification by the state. Credential requirements are established by the Legislature and enforced by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

### **Culminating Experience**

A "capstone" requirement that may be a thesis, project, comprehensive examination, or any combination of these.

**Disqualification**

Termination of studies and removal of a student from a master's degree program, a postbaccalaureate credential or certificate program.

**Leave of Absence**

Temporary, approved interruption of study that preserves the election of curriculum rights regarding catalog requirements. A leave of absence does not change the time limit for completion of the degree.

**Nonresidence Units**

Course work taken at another institution, and/or course work taken through the Office of Extended Education that is labeled Extension or Adjunct Enrollment.

**Probation**

Action which suspends a student's good academic standing and precedes disqualification.

**Residence Units**

Course work taken at the University during the regular sessions of Fall and Spring, and any Special Session.

**Session**

A time period during which courses are offered: Fall, Intersession, Spring, Summer. Specific course designations include Special Session (residence credit), Extension (extension credit, nonresidence credit) and Adjunct (extension credit, nonresidence credit).

**Undeclared**

Unclassified Postbaccalaureate.

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