GRADUATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Office of Graduate Studies

River Front Center 215
(916) 278-6470
www.csus.edu/graduate-studies (http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies/)

Institutional Graduate Learning Goals

The campus has articulated minimum learning requirements for recipients of graduate degrees. For each Institutional Graduate Learning Goal, students are expected to achieve a level of competency associated with an advanced degree, as appropriate to the discipline. In addition, each program may set Program Learning Goals and Outcomes that are mapped onto the curriculum and assessed.

Institutional Graduate Learning Goals for Masters Programs

1. **Disciplinary knowledge**: Master, integrate, and apply disciplinary knowledge and skills to current, practical, and important contexts and situations.

2. **Communication**: Communicate key knowledge with clarity and purpose both within the discipline and in broader contexts.

3. **Critical thinking/analysis**: Demonstrate the ability to be creative, analytical, and critical thinkers.

4. **Information literacy**: Demonstrate the ability to obtain, assess, and analyze information from a myriad of sources.

5. **Professionalism**: Demonstrate an understanding of professional integrity.

6. **Intercultural/Global Perspectives**: Demonstrate relevant knowledge and application of intercultural and/or global perspectives.

Institutional Graduate Learning Goals for Doctoral Programs

All of the above Institutional Graduate Learning Goals for Masters Programs, with the addition of:

7. **Research**: Conduct independent research resulting in an original contribution to knowledge in the focused areas of their graduate program.

General Program Requirements

Master's Degree Unit Requirements

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. No more than 6 units of 295, 299, or non-seminar courses may be counted towards the degree.

The total number of units required for master's 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. However, the minimum units for some master's programs may be higher, for example:

- Master of Science in Counseling requires minimum of 60 semester units
- Master of Business degree requires from 31 to 52 semester units of approved graduate credit depending upon the student's background in business at the time of admission
- Master of Social Work degree requires minimum of 60 semester units

Doctoral Degree Unit Requirements

The Doctor of Education degree requires a minimum of 60 semester units of approved graduate coursework. This must include a minimum of 48 units of regularly scheduled doctoral courses organized primarily for doctoral students. Units earned for the qualifying examination, or dissertation should not exceed 12 units and may contribute toward the major, but they are not permitted in the required 48 unit minimum. An oral defense of the dissertation is required.

The Doctor of Physical Therapy degree requires at least 90 semester units earned in graduate standing. At least 72 semester units required for the degree shall be in courses organized primarily for doctoral students, and the remaining units required for the degree shall be in courses organized primarily for doctoral students or courses organized primarily for master's and doctoral students. No more than eight semester units shall be allowed for the doctoral project and an oral defense of the doctoral project shall be required.

Graduate Transfer Credit

Graduate transfer credit (with a grade of "B" or better) toward a doctoral or master's degree at Sacramento State may be considered only if the coursework has not been used previously to complete another degree and the coursework must be current (within the time limit to complete the master or doctoral degree)[1] A maximum of 6 units may be transferred as determined by appropriate campus authorities.

[1] See Time Limit for more information.

Master's Degree Academic Residence Requirements

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

Doctoral Degree Academic Residence Requirements

A minimum of 42 approved semester units in the 600 series in a 60 unit Education Doctoral program must be earned in residence at Sacramento State. For the Doctor of Physical Therapy program, No fewer than 60 semester units shall be completed in residence at Sacramento State. At the discretion of the appropriate campus authority, courses required for the DPT that are completed at another CSU campus may apply toward the residency requirement.

Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR)

All students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation. Writing proficiency at the graduate level will be demonstrated by successful completion of the graduate program requirements. Students' preparedness for graduate level writing is demonstrated by successful completion of a Graduate Writing Intensive

(GWI) course or a writing-enriched curriculum in their discipline at California State University, Sacramento. A writing-enriched curriculum includes the same goals and requirements as a GWI course spread over two courses. To Advance to Candidacy, students must complete a GWI course or both courses in a writing-enriched curriculum. No grade below a B may be counted in this coursework unless expressly permitted by a campus-approved graduate programs' written policies. One of the courses in a writing-enriched curriculum may be graded CR/NC, but student performance must be equivalent to a B or above to receive a grade of CR. Failure to demonstrate writing proficiency in a timely fashion may result in a student's declassification from a degree program and require an application for readmission to the University.

Foreign Language

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

Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to Master's Candidacy

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 coursework 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.
   a. Must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies by October 1 for the spring semester and February 1 for the fall semester in order to register for Culminating Experience during priority registration.
   b. The Office of Graduate Studies will review the petition and process results within six to eight weeks.

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 cumulative grade point average of 3.0. No grade below a "B" may be counted toward the degree requirement unless expressly permitted by a campus-approved graduate programs' written policies.
   c. A total of 18 units of 200-level seminar courses must be listed.
   d. No more than a total of six units of 295, 296, or 299 may be counted toward the degree.
2. Evidence of a plan of graduate study acceptable to the institution and the faculty concerned.
3. Fulfilled the Graduate Writing Assessment (GWAR) requirement.

Advancement to Doctoral Candidacy

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

1. be admitted to classified standing in the doctoral degree program in which candidacy is sought;
2. have completed all coursework to qualify for the Qualifying Examination with a B or better in each course and a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 in all courses taken;
3. successfully passed the written and oral Qualifying Examination by Unanimous agreement of the qualifying examination committee;
4. file an application for advancement to candidacy for the doctoral degree at the Office of Graduate Studies.
   a. Must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies by February 1 for eligibility to enroll in dissertation units for the Summer term.
   b. The Office of Graduate Studies will process within four to six weeks.

Eligibility for advancement to doctoral candidacy is based upon the following:

1. Scholarship in doctoral work taken prior to advancement as follows:
   a. Satisfactory completion of any preparation coursework required for admission to classified graduate standing in the doctoral degree program.
   b. A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0. No grade of less than "B" can be counted toward the minimum number of units needed to advance to candidacy.
   c. A total of 48 units of 600-level seminar courses must be listed.
2. Evidence of a plan of graduate study acceptable to the institution and the faculty concerned.
3. Successfully fulfilled the Qualifying Examination requirement.
4. Fulfilled the Graduate Writing Assessment (GWAR) requirement.

Culminating Experience Requirement

Master's Culminating Requirement

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 Sacramento State 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. A simple majority determines whether the student has passed or failed. The results of the examination must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies on the "Report of Comprehensive Examination" form. 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 and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

This culminating experience option cannot be changed once the initial examination has been administered.

Doctoral Culminating Requirement

A qualifying examination, proposal examination, dissertation (Ed.D.) or doctoral project (DPT, AUD), and oral defense are required for the doctoral degree at Sacramento State.

Qualifying Examination

The qualifying examination is designed to provide evidence toward validation of the candidate's advanced training in educational leadership. The student must unanimously pass the qualifying examination prior to advancing to doctoral candidacy and enrolling in dissertation units.

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 to the Office of Graduate Studies on the "Report of Qualifying Examination" form. A unanimous decision on passing is required. 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 Dean of Graduate Studies.

Proposal Examination

The doctoral proposal will normally contain a description of the problem, a review of the relevant literature, a statement of the research question, and a description of the research methodology or approach to explore the problem. The proposal must contain either (i) materials already submitted to the Institutional Review Board regarding the proposed dissertation research or (ii) materials completed for submission to the Institutional Review Board to meet human subjects' requirement.

1. The dissertation proposal examination is normally conducted by a three faculty member committee. A written report will be provided by the committee members to communicate: (1) approval; (2) approval with modifications, or (3) lack of approval.
2. The results of the doctoral proposal examination will be communicated to the Office of Graduate Studies on the "Report of Doctoral Proposal Examination" form. The form shall be accompanied by a copy of the dissertation or doctoral project proposal.

The Dissertation Proposal (Ed.D.) shall identify the research problem and question(s), state the major theoretical perspectives, explain the significance of the undertaking, relate it to the relevant scholarly and professional literature, set forth the appropriate sources for and methods of gathering and analyzing the data. An oral defense before a three member doctoral proposal committee is also required.

The Doctoral Project Proposal (DPT) must demonstrate students' understanding of the application of current evidence-based practice in a multicultural and complex health care environment. The proposal must be of sufficient rigor to ensure students' demonstrations of critical and independent thinking and abilities to interpret the research literature and apply to current physical therapist practice. The proposal includes a written document with the following chapters; General Background, Case Background Data, Examination Tests and Measurements, Evaluation, Plan of Care-Goals and Interventions, Outcomes, and Discussion. An oral defense before a three member doctoral proposal committee is also required.

The Doctoral Project Proposal (AUD) must demonstrate originality, evidencing students' critical and independent thinking. It shall be organized in an appropriate form and shall identify the research problem and question(s), state the major theoretical perspectives, explain the significance of the undertaking, relate it to the relevant scholarly and professional literature, identify the methods of gathering and analyzing the data. An oral defense before a three member doctoral proposal committee is also required.

Dissertation (Ed.D)

A dissertation shall be the written product of systematic, rigorous research on a significant professional issue. The dissertation is expected to contribute to an improvement in professional practices or policy. It shall evidence originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale.

The dissertation shall identify the research problem and questions(s), state the major theoretical perspectives, explain the significance of the undertaking, relate it to the relevant scholarly and professional literature, set forth the appropriate sources for and methods of gathering and analyzing data, and offer a substantiated conclusion or recommendation(s). It shall include a written abstract that summarizes the significance of the work, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation(s). All members of the dissertation committee must approve the written work.

Project (DPT)

The Doctoral Project/Culminating Experience may include evidence-based practice projects, clinical research projects, or case reports consistent with the Chancellor's Office Executive Order. Culminating

events must demonstrate students' understanding of the application of current evidence-based practice in a multicultural and complex health care environment. They must be of sufficient rigor to ensure students' demonstrations of critical and independent thinking and abilities to interpret the research literature and apply to current physical therapist practice. The doctoral project includes a written document with the following chapters; General Background, Case Background Data, Examination Tests and Measurements, Evaluation, Plan of Care-Goals and Interventions, Outcomes, and Discussion.

Project (AUD)

The doctoral project shall demonstrate the student's doctoral-level mastery of research skills, hearing science and/or current evidence-based practice. It shall demonstrate critical and independent thinking and a command of the research literature. The written component of the doctoral project shall demonstrate originality, evidencing critical and independent thinking. It shall be organized in an appropriate form and shall identify the research problem and question(s), state the major theoretical perspectives, explain the significance of the undertaking, relate it to the relevant scholarly and professional literature, identify the methods of gathering and analyzing the data, analyze and interpret data and offer a conclusion or recommendation.

Oral Defense

An oral defense of the dissertation or project is required. The student must notify the Office of Graduate Studies of his/her intent to defend the dissertation/project 30 days prior to the defense. A notice of the date, time, and place of the defense must be posted in a public place for 14 calendar days prior to the dissertation oral defense. The notice should include the title of the dissertation/project and a brief 150 word abstract.

Graduate and Post-Baccalaureate [1] Academic Action Categories

[1] *Graduate and Post-baccalaureate Academic Action Categories listed below do not apply to post-baccalaureate students pursuing a second bachelor's degree*

Good Standing

Graduate, credential, certificate and unclassified students whose Sacramento State and cumulative grade point average (GPA) is 3.0 or above are considered in good academic standing.

Academic Probation

Students whose cumulative Sacramento State grade point average or overall grade point average falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Students on probation are eligible to enroll in the subsequent semester.

Continued Probation

Students on probation will be placed on Continued Probation if they:

- earn a 3.0 in the semester, but have a Sacramento State GPA and/or overall GPA below 3.0.

Students placed on Continued Probation will be limited to a maximum course load of 9 units per semester until they return to academic good standing.

Academic Disqualification

If a graduate, credential, certificate, or unclassified student is on academic probation and the Sacramento State or cumulative grade point average is below 3.0 for the active term, the student will be academically disqualified.

Students not on probation will be disqualified if the Sacramento State or cumulative GPA is 2.0 or less.

Disqualified students will not be allowed to register unless they are formally reinstated and/or readmitted to the University.

Administrative Probation and Administrative Disqualification

Graduate, credential, certificate, and unclassified students are subject to Administrative 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, when such failure is due to circumstances within the control of the student.
3. Failure to comply, after due notice, with an academic requirement or regulation.

Students who do not meet the conditions for removal of administrative probation may be subject to further administrative actions, including Administrative Disqualification.

Notification

The Office of the University Registrar will notify students of their academic status (academic probation, continued probation, or academic disqualification) by letter, My SacState message, and/or email at the end of each semester. Graduate, credential, certificate, and unclassified students on Probation or Continued Probation are required to meet with an advisor in their major department, the credential office or the Office of Graduate Studies. Academic departments and units may block registration of students who fail to meet advising appointments. Students receiving veterans' educational benefits may be ruled ineligible for continued benefits if, after one semester of unsatisfactory achievement (probation or disqualification), they do not return to academic Good Standing at the completion of the next semester.

Reinstatement of Disqualified Students

Students who have been academically disqualified may petition for reinstatement. The Petition for Reinstatement is obtained from the Office of Graduate Studies. If reinstated, students will be placed on an academic contract that may stipulate maximum units, specific courses and achievement levels. Failure to meet the conditions of the reinstatement contract and/or failure to achieve a subsequent semester GPA of 3.0 or higher will result in academic disqualification.

Students who are administratively disqualified or not recommended by their academic department for continuation in the graduate degree, credential, or certificate program must formally apply to the University as well as a graduate degree, credential, or certificate program and submit a petition for reinstatement. Reinstated unclassified students will not be allowed to enroll in graduate level courses during the period of the reinstatement contract without the permission of the department chair or designee for that major.

Deadlines to petition for immediate reinstatement are as follows:

- Third week of January for Spring Semester
- End of June for Fall Semester

NOTE: Please check the Office of Graduate Studies Web site www.csus.edu/graduate-studies (https://www.csus.edu/graduate-studies/) for specific dates and forms.

Students whose petitions are approved are subject to review each semester until the Sacramento State GPA and overall cumulative GPA reach the minimum standard of 3.0. Students may not earn the degree, credential, or certificate unless they are in good academic standing and their Sacramento State GPA and overall cumulative GPA reach the minimum standard of 3.0.

Continuous Enrollment

Classified graduate, post-baccalaureate, credential, or certificate students normally retain rights to the catalog and/or degree program requirement under which they were classified, providing they remain continuously enrolled. Students who do not stay continuously enrolled lose classified graduate standing or post-baccalaureate standing and will be required to apply for readmission. Such students may be required to fulfill additional program and/or university degree requirements that are current at the time of readmission.

Continuous Enrollment (599) During the Culminating Experience

Graduate students who have been advanced to candidacy and who have completed all coursework can maintain the required active degree program status without additional University registration by enrolling in "599 Continuous Enrollment." There are no units associated with this enrollment, but a continuous enrollment fee equal to one unit is required. The fee is paid through the College of Continuing Education. Such enrollment is valid as long as the student is within the time period allowed for the completion of the culminating experience requirement.

Continuous Enrollment (599) for the Master's Degree

If not otherwise actively registered at the University, students completing a thesis, project, or comprehensive exam who did not complete the culminating work in the semester of original enrollment must enroll in "599 Continuous Enrollment" and pay the associated 599 enrollment fee. Students may be allowed up to a maximum of three semesters of 599 enrollment beyond the semester of original enrollment to complete the culminating requirement according to the requirements of the graduate program.

Students who do not finish the master's thesis/project/comprehensive exam within the semester of original enrollment will receive a grade of "RP" provided that 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 "599 Continuous Enrollment" is maintained in the subsequent semester(s) as allowable by the graduate program.

If the student does not complete the culminating experience within the total allowable semesters, a No Credit ("NC") grade will be assigned for the original units. The "NC" remains as part of the academic record. If the seven-year deadline for the Master's degree program has not expired, the student must re-enroll in the culminating experience units within the next semester and pay University fees before continuing the program. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment will result in the need to file an admission application and all related fees during the next available open admission cycle.

Continuous Enrollment (599) for Ed.S. and Doctoral Degrees

If not otherwise actively registered, students completing a Doctor of Audiology (AUD), Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT), Education Specialist in School Psychology (Ed.S.), or Education Doctorate (Ed.D.) who do not complete the culminating work in the semester of original enrollment in their culminating requirement must enroll in "599 Continuous Enrollment" and pay the associated 599 enrollment fee. Students are allowed up to a maximum of two semesters of 599 enrollment beyond the semester of first registration to complete the culminating work.

Students who do not finish the AUD, DPT, Ed.S., or Ed.D. culminating work 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 "599 Continuous Enrollment" is maintained the subsequent semester(s).

If the student does not complete the culminating experience within the total allowable semesters (a maximum of two semesters), a No Credit ("NC") grade will be assigned for the original units. The "NC" remains as part of the academic record. If the five-year deadline for the Ed.S. or doctoral degree program has not expired, the student must re-enroll in the culminating experience units within the next semester and pay University fees before continuing the program. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment will result in the need to file an admission application and all related fees during the next available open admission cycle. Students may be required to fulfill additional program and/or university degree requirements that are current at the time of readmission.

Time Limit

All requirements for the master's degree must be completed within seven (7) years immediately prior to graduation.

All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within five (5) years immediately prior to graduation.