Graduation Requirements and Catalog Rights Policy

1.00 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide students with the information they need to identify their requirements for graduation.

This policy is intended to reflect the University’s commitment to the principles, goals, and ideals described in the CSU Monterey Bay Vision Statement.

2.00 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply. Students should be aware that other University policies may define one or more of these terms differently.

Baccalaureate Students: are students who are pursuing a Bachelor’s degree and are also known as undergraduate students.

Graduate Students: are students who are pursuing a Master’s degree.

Credential-seeking Students: are students who are pursuing a post-baccalaureate credential or certificate.

Catalog rights: a specific set of requirements, as established in the University Catalog for a specific year, which the student must satisfy in order to qualify for a degree, certificate, or other terminal academic pursuit. A student must remain in continuous attendance in order to maintain catalog rights.

Continuous attendance: For Baccalaureate and/or Credential-seeking Students: at a minimum, enrollment in at least one course for at least one regular semester in any one calendar year. "Attendance" in a regular semester, regardless of the length of time, grade(s) earned, or the number of courses completed, is established if it results in a record of enrollment on the student’s official transcript.

For Graduate Students: graduate students must enroll every fall and spring term (and summer, if required by the program) until the degree is awarded.

Leave of Absence: refers to a period of time during which students neither enroll in nor attend classes, yet still maintain the rights and privileges ordinarily associated with continuing student status. Leaves of absence are granted to eligible students for a maximum of two consecutive semesters. Being on an approved leave of absence may not defer student loans, nor will it extend the maximum allowed time to degree for graduate students.

1 5 CCR § 40401
3.00 Graduation Requirements

Academic graduation requirements shall be identified in the student’s catalog of entry into CSUMB. These requirements meet the standards of CSUMB and the California State University System, as mandated by Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations.

Students may be eligible to use an alternative catalog in determining graduation requirements and should refer to sections 4.00 and 5.00 of this policy for more information.

All degree requirements must be completed by the end of the term in the semester in which the student has applied to graduate for degree conferral. Graduate students must complete all degree requirements, inclusive of transferred coursework, within a maximum timeframe of seven years\(^2\). This time limit applies to all graduate students, including those on an approved leave of absence. Some programs may use a maximum time frame of five years. Students in these programs shall adhere to the more stringent rule.

3.10 Prohibited Coursework

Course units used to fulfill requirements for one degree (at either Baccalaureate or Graduate levels) may not be used in fulfillment of program requirements for an additional degree (with the exception of the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement)\(^3\).

3.20 Baccalaureate Students

Undergraduate students shall earn a cumulative GPA and a major GPA of 2.0 or higher. Letter grades of D- or better shall fulfill degree requirements, except where higher standards have been established\(^4\).

A grade of C- or better is required in each CSU or transfer General Education course in written communication in the English language (A2), oral communication in the English language (A1), critical thinking (A3), and mathematics/quantitative reasoning (B4)\(^5\).

Some undergraduate degree programs may have more rigorous standards. Students shall adhere to the standards as identified on the degree program page in the University Catalog.

To be eligible for graduation, undergraduate students must complete a minimum of 30 semester units in residence at CSUMB, 24 of which must be upper division\(^6\).

3.30 Second Baccalaureate Students\(^7\)

Students who hold a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education may be admitted to CSUMB as post-baccalaureate students to pursue a second baccalaureate degree. Students pursuing a second baccalaureate degree are only required to complete major requirements, not any University requirements nor additional CSU requirements.

In order to complete a second bachelor’s degree at CSUMB, students are required to:

\(^2\) 5 CCR § 40510  
\(^3\) Executive Order 665  
\(^4\) See the Policy on Academic Progress Milestones for Undergraduate Programs  
\(^5\) EO 1100 and 5 CCR § 40405.1  
\(^6\) 5 CCR § 40403  
\(^7\) 5 CCR § 40509
1. Earn a minimum cumulative 2.0 GPA for all CSUMB major coursework comprising the second bachelor’s degree.
2. Complete a minimum of 30 units in residence at CSUMB beyond the first bachelor’s degree. Of the 30 units, 24 must be upper division in the major.
3. Complete all Major Requirements associated with the CSUMB baccalaureate degree. For students working toward a Bachelor of Arts degree, no fewer than 24 units, all of which are upper division and not used in fulfillment of requirements for another degree, shall be completed successfully. For students working toward a Bachelor of Science degree, no fewer than 36 units, of which at least 24 are upper division, and not used in fulfillment of requirements for another degree, shall be completed successfully.

Students pursuing a second baccalaureate degree are exempted from all other University requirements not specified in this section.

3.40 Credential-seeking Students
Credential-seeking students shall obtain a letter grade of C- or better in any course taken to satisfy program requirements, and earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students earning the designations of D+, D, or D- in any course taken to satisfy program requirements shall be determined to have earned course credit but not to have satisfied the requirement.

3.50 Graduate Students
Graduate students shall obtain a letter grade of B- or better in any course taken to satisfy program requirements, and earn a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students earning the designations of C+, C, C-, D+, D, or D- in any course taken to satisfy program requirements shall be determined to have earned course credit but not to have satisfied the requirement.

3.5.1 Classification and Advancement to Candidacy of Graduate Students
Graduate students are admitted to CSUMB with one of two classification statuses:

1. Conditionally Classified graduate students are determined to require additional preparation before beginning the major program of study and shall meet with the program coordinator/advisor to determine their obligations.
2. Classified graduate students are formally admitted to the program, and are prepared to begin the major program of study.

Once a student has received classified standing in a master's degree program, s/he must be "advanced to candidacy" prior to the graduation term. Students may petition for candidacy status after successfully completing a minimum of 15 units of graded work as a graduate student in courses that are acceptable to the respective graduate degree program.

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5 CCR § 40402
5 CCR § 40403
5 CCR § 40500
Credit/No-Credit grade modes may be available in some graduate coursework; see section 3.4.3 of this policy for more information.
5 CCR § 41010
5 CCR § 41011
3.5.2 Independent Study Courses in Graduate Programs
A maximum of six graduate level independent study units may be approved for use toward a graduate degree.

3.5.3 Credit/Non-Credit Coursework
A maximum of nine units of CR-graded course work may be applied to a Master’s degree.

3.5.4 Culminating Experience for Graduate Students
Satisfactory completion of a thesis, project, or comprehensive examination is required of all graduate students. These terms are defined as follows:

1. A thesis is the written product of a systematic study of a significant problem. It 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 evinces originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation. Normally, an oral defense of the thesis is required.

2. A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to the professional fields. It evinces originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale. It is 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.

3. A comprehensive examination is an assessment of the student’s ability to integrate the knowledge of the area, show critical and independent thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. The results of the examination evince independent thinking, appropriate organization, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation. A record of the examination questions and responses shall be maintained in accordance with the records retention policy of the California State University.

Students engaged in research shall adhere to the Human Subjects in Research Policy and the Humane Care and Use of Animals in Research and Instruction Policy of CSU Monterey Bay.

4.00 Catalog Rights for Baccalaureate Students
It is the policy of the CSU system that undergraduate students who have maintained continuous attendance at a CSU or a California Community College may elect to qualify for graduation from the CSU under catalog requirements in effect either:

1. At the time they began attending a California Community College or CSU campus;
2. At the time they entered the CSU campus from which they will graduate; or
3. At the time they graduate from the CSU.

14 CCR § 40510
15 5 CCR § 40510
16 5 CCR § 40401
However, students who change their major, minor, or concentration, including changing from "undecided" status to a defined degree objective, may be required to move their catalog year to the one in effect at the time of the change and be governed by those degree requirements. Students should consult an advisor for specific details.

Students shall use one single catalog year to determine all requirements for graduation.

Once catalog rights are established, absence related to an approved medical, military, or academic leave shall not be considered an interruption of attendance, provided that the absence is consistent with the CSUMB Leave of Absence policy.\(^{17}\)

Undergraduate students who are not in continuous attendance or on an approved leave of absence shall be required to reapply to the University, shall be subject to any new admissions requirements, and will be held to the degree requirements in effect at the time of their readmission to the University. Students who have been academically disqualified may lose catalog rights previously established.

Substitutions for discontinued courses may be authorized or required by the designated campus authority, usually the Department Chair.

**5.00 Catalog Rights for Graduate Students**

Students admitted to a graduate program establish catalog rights by enrolling in and successfully completing at least one graduate-level course in their program. Students maintain their catalog rights through continuous attendance.

This means, if continuous attendance is maintained, students may elect to qualify for graduation from CSUMB under the catalog requirements in effect either:

1. At the time they entered the CSUMB graduate program; or
2. At the time they graduate from the CSUMB graduate program.

Once catalog rights are established, absence related to an approved medical, military, or academic leave shall not be considered an interruption of attendance, provided that the absence is consistent with the CSUMB Leave of Absence policy.\(^{18}\)

Graduate and post-baccalaureate students who are not in continuous attendance or on an approved leave of absence shall be required to reapply to the University, shall be subject to any new admissions requirements and fees, and shall be held to the degree or program requirements in effect at the time of their readmission to the University.

Students who have been academically disqualified may lose catalog rights previously established.

Substitutions for discontinued courses may be authorized or required by the designated campus authority, usually the Graduate Program Coordinator.

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\(^{17}\) See section 6.00 of the *Enrollment and Registration Policy*.

\(^{18}\) See section 6.00 of the *Enrollment and Registration Policy*. 
5.10 Maintaining Continuous Attendance
A graduate student who has completed all course work except thesis is expected to maintain continuous attendance through completion of the thesis by registering for the research/thesis course required by the graduate program. If the program does not require continuing enrollment in its research course, the student will enroll through Extended Education for Grad 699, a zero unit course, and pay an administrative fee (equal to one credit hour and other appropriate registration fees – amount subject to change). Registration in Grad 699 must be completed no later than by the end of the fourth week of classes each term (the University census date). No credit is earned for this enrollment, but it maintains the student’s continuous attendance in the master’s degree program. Students enrolled in less than four semester units shall consult with CSUMB financial aid counselors to determine the implications of their enrollment status.

6.00 Continuous Renewal
This policy shall be reviewed ten (10) years from its effective date to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. This policy may be reviewed before that time as necessary.

[Signature]
President Eduardo M. Ochoa

Effective Date: June 1, 2019

Certification of Process Reviewed by: Matriculation Committee, Policy Facilitation Team, Academic Affairs Council, Enrollment Services and Student Affairs Leadership Team, Associated Students, Academic Senate, Educational Planning and Policy Committee, Senate Curriculum Committee Council, Post Graduate Studies and Research Committee, University Personnel, and Provost.
Memorandum from Policy Facilitation Team

To: President Eduardo M. Ochoa

Date: January 31, 2019

Subject: Policy Recommendation

From: Provost Bonnie Irwin

Policy: Graduation Requirements & Catalog Rights Policy

This new policy represents the last of the group of policies (including Academic Standing Policy, Enrollment & Registration Policy, Credit Hour Policy, Financial Aid & Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy) that emanated from the Matriculation Policy.

I recommend implementation of this policy begin after the conclusion of the Spring 2019 term due to changes in the definition of minimum passing grades.

Further, implementation of this policy will catalyze the sunset of the both Undergraduate and Graduate Matriculation Policies.

Provost Bonnie D. Irwin

2-4-19 Date