

January 9, 2012

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Provosts/Vice Presidents, Academic Affairs

FROM: Ephraim P. Smith
Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: “Blended” or “4 + 1” Bachelor’s and Master’s Degree Programs

This coded memorandum establishes systemwide minimum processes and policies 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 memorandum 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 programs will need to be aware that timely coordination is required between the academic department and the campus registrar’s office to ensure accurate recording of the student’s transition from undergraduate to graduate status. This will have direct consequences for student 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 in the same support mode and for the purposes of providing an accelerated pathway to a master’s degree, and to enhance the undergraduate learning experience. Campuses shall establish, monitor, and maintain appropriate academic rigor and quality.

- 1.1 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.

- 1.2 Blended programs must meet all applicable CSU policies and state and federal laws.

2. Reporting

- 2.1 Blended bachelor's and master's degree programs will continue to use the existing CSU degree program codes (formerly "HEGIS") 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.
- 2.2 To ensure that enrollments are reported accurately, the campus is required to notify Academic Programs and Policy 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 When a blended-program student has earned at least 120 semester/180 quarter 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 units equals one FTES.

3. Application to Blended Programs

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 Students shall not be required to apply formally for graduate admission.

4. Enrollment and Enrollment Status

- 4.1 While in undergraduate status, a student in a blended program will take graduate-level courses required for the master's degree.
- 4.2 At the end of the first academic term in which blended-program students have earned at least 120 semester/180 quarter units (the minimum required for the regular baccalaureate major degree program), the campus will change the student-level codes to "5," signifying graduate degree objective status.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.

5. International (F-1 Visa Holder) Students

A letter must be submitted to the appropriate office on campus to indicate the change of degree status for international students. This requirement is related to the students' need to maintain full-time status, as the number of units required for full-time status is different at the undergraduate level and graduate level.

6. Tuition Fees

- 6.1 A student will be assessed the undergraduate State University Tuition Fee only during the time in which the blended-program student has earned fewer than 120 semester/180 quarter units applicable to the blended bachelor's and master's degree programs.
- 6.2 When the *degree-objective status* is changed to "graduate," the student will be assessed the graduate student fee, and may continue to take upper-division undergraduate courses.
- 6.3 Students in a master's degree program that has been authorized to assess the higher graduate professional degree ("MBA Fee") will only be charged that tuition fee for courses required to complete the fee-approved master's degree program.

7. Minimum Requirements for Completion of Blended Programs

A minimum of 150 semester units (120 + 30) or 225 quarter units (BS 180 + MS 45) 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 re-opened in order to grant the baccalaureate degree. There shall be no related cost to the student nor refund of previous graduate fees paid.

9. Awarding of Degrees

Both degrees may be awarded during the same term and at a single graduation ceremony, as authorized by Executive Order 971 (<http://www.calstate.edu/EO/EO-971.html>).

Students are evaluated for Latin honors based on the first 120 semester units or 180 quarter 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. Philip Garcia at (562) 951-4764 or pgarcia@calstate.edu. Admission questions and Common Management System issues may be directed to Mr. Eric Forbes at (562) 951-4744 or eforbes@calstate.edu. Financial aid questions should be addressed to Mr. Dean Kulju at (562) 951-4737 or dkulju@calstate.edu. Dr. Christine Mallon may be reached at (562) 951-4672 or cmallon@calstate.edu to answer questions related to curriculum.

ES/clm

- c: Dr. Ron Vogel, Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
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