

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA  
ACADEMIC SENATE

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

AA-011-189

Graduate Student Full-time and Part-time Status

Academic Affairs Committee

Date: September 2019

Executive Committee  
Received and Forwarded

Date: September 11, 2019

Academic Senate

Date: September 25, 2019  
First Reading

**Background**

**Your Name:** Richard Navarro

**Your Email:** [ranavarro@cpp.edu](mailto:ranavarro@cpp.edu)

**Title of Referral:** Graduate Student Full-time and Part-time Status

**Names and Titles of proponents:** Richard A. Navarro, Professor and Graduate Coordinator, CEIS

Cecilia Santiago-Gonzalez, Director, Strategic Initiatives, Office of Student Success

Sara Garver, Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Student Success, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

Jeffery Mio, Executive Graduate Council Representative, College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences

Liliane Fucaloro, Chair, Department of English and Modern Languages

Lise-Helene Smith, Graduate Coordinator, Department of English and Modern Languages

Aaron DeRosa, College Assessment Liaison, College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences

**Keywords:** Graduate Students, Semester Units, Full-time, Part-time, Financial Aid

**Is there a deadline by when this referral needs to be considered by the Academic Senate?:**

No

**Deadline Date:**

**Justification for deadline:**

**Background:** Under the quarter system, full-time status for graduate students was 8 quarter units or two classes. In the semester system, full-time status is 9 semester units or three classes. For purposes of financial aid, 8 semester units are required for full-time status. This referral would reduce the number of units required to 6 semester units for full-time status and 3 semester units for half-time status for financial aid eligibility, unless disallowed by the funding source.

**Recommended Resources:** CSU Campus Chart

Dr. S. Terri Gomez, Associate Vice President for Student Success

Dr. Diana Minor, Director of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships

Dr. Salomon Oldak, Director of the Office of Graduate Studies

<b>CSU LOCATION:</b>	<b>Full-time Status for Undergraduate Students:</b>	<b>Full-time Status for Graduate Students:</b>	<b>Eligible for Financial Aid for Graduate Students</b>
CAL STATE LA	12 semester units	8 semester units	4-6 units (for loans and state university grants only)
CSU FULLERTON	12-18 semester units	7 – 12 semester units	Minimum of 4 semester units (ONLY Loans)
CSU LONG BEACH	12 semester units	8 semester units	4 semester units
CSU NORTHRIDGE	12-15 semester units	8 semester units	4 semester units
CSU DOMINGUEZ HILLS	12 semester units	9 semester units	8 semester units
CSU SAN MARCOS	12 semester units	9 semester units	8 semester units
CSU EAST BAY (Hayward) <i>Note: converting from quarter to semester in Fall 2018</i>	12 semester units	8 or more semester units	8 semester units
CSU STANISLAUS	12 semester units	8 semester units	4 semester units

**Attachment 1:**

**Your Name:** Salomon Oldak

**Your Email:** [soldak@cpp.edu](mailto:soldak@cpp.edu)

**Title of Referral:** Full-Time Status for graduate students enrolled in a culminating experience class

**Names and Titles of proponents:** Dr. Laura Massa, Associate Vice President for Academic Programs; Jessica Wagoner, Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services; Dr. Salomón Oldak, Faculty Director of Graduate Studies.

**Keywords:** Graduate Studies, Culminating Experience, Thesis, Project, Comprehensive Exam, Academic Programs, Financial Aid

**Is there a deadline by when this referral needs to be considered by the Academic Senate?:**  
No

**Deadline Date:**

**Justification for deadline:**

**Background:** Currently, students that have completed all their coursework except for their culminating experience, do not to enroll in enough units to qualify for full-time status and consequently they are not eligible for full financial aid benefits. Some students enroll in more units than necessary for graduation for the sole purpose of maintaining full-time status. The situation parallels that of international students that lose their immigration visa status if they do carry a full-time load of classes. However, for international students, the practice is to grant full-time status to students that are enrolled in fewer units than full-time status requires, but are working on their culminating experience.

This referral recommends that all students enrolled in a culminating experience class should be granted full-time status even when they are enrolled in fewer units than required to gain that status.

The proposed policy has been implemented at CSULA (<http://ecatalog.calstatela.edu/content.php?catoid=25&navoid=2542>) and aligns with other CSU system policies.

**Recommended Resources:** Associate Vice President for Academic Programs, Dr. Laura Massa  
Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services, Jessica Wagoner  
Associate Vice President for Student Success, Dr. Terri Gomez  
Faculty Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Salomón Oldak  
Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships, Dr. Diana Minor  
CSU Chancellor's Office, Academic programs Planning

**Attachment 1:**

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/2070179/36745860/484011176/senate\\_referral\\_full\\_time\\_for\\_culminating\\_experience\\_students.docx](https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/2070179/36745860/484011176/senate_referral_full_time_for_culminating_experience_students.docx)

**Attachment 2:**

[https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/2070179/36745907/484011176/senate\\_referral\\_full\\_time\\_for\\_culminating\\_experience\\_students.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.formstack.com/uploads/2070179/36745907/484011176/senate_referral_full_time_for_culminating_experience_students.pdf)

**Discussion**

First, we want to acknowledge that two referrals submitted at similar times are combined in this Report. Here is what is listed on our University website as the current official policy.

**Full time status is defined as the following:**

For the purpose of maintaining Visa (F1) status:

Graduates -8 quarter units during fall, winter and spring quarters (subject to change when the University converts to a semester calendar)

For the purpose of maintaining eligibility for financial aid:

Graduates -24 quarter units per academic year (subject to change when the University converts to a semester calendar)

Credential students-27 quarter units per academic year (subject to change when the University converts to a semester calendar)

**Guidelines for Course Number Assignments**

Course numbers consist of a Subject Area, a Catalog Number, and a suffix (optional). Some course numbers are reserved for particular circumstances.

Subject Area Abbreviation

Each academic discipline shall be assigned a subject area abbreviation used to identify courses related to that discipline. Abbreviations shall be two to three characters.

Catalog Number

- The catalog number is a four digit number used to identify a course, and its academic level.
- The first digit of each course number will indicate the academic level of the course.
  - **0** Pre-collegiate level; no credit allowed towards degree requirements
  - **1** Lower division courses, most typically taken by freshmen
  - **2** Lower division courses, most typically taken by freshmen or sophomores
  - **3** Upper division courses, most typically taken by juniors and seniors, may be restricted to such groups; usually have prerequisites; students may earn graduate credit only by exception
  - **4** Upper division courses, most typically taken by juniors and seniors, may be taken by graduate students, may be restricted to such groups; usually have prerequisites; may earn graduate credit
  - **5** Graduate courses, open only to postbaccalaureate students and seniors with prior approval
  - **6** Graduate courses, open only to unconditionally classified graduate students
  - **7-8** Graduate courses, open only to students enrolled in doctoral program
  - **9** Courses designed to provide professional and occupational improvement as part of specialized workshops, seminars, and institutes; no credit allowed towards degree requirements
- The remaining three digits of a catalog number shall be used by departments to indicate sequencing, grouping by discipline, and other advisory curricular information.

### Suffixes

Some course numbers may have letter suffixes, used to indicate special attributes or mode of instruction related to the course. Approved suffixes are:

- **A – Activity**, course must be assigned a C/S classification associated with activities
- **L – Lab**, course must be assigned a C/S classification associated with laboratories
- **H – Honors**, course must be approved by the Kellogg Honors College to receive this designation
- **S – Service Learning**, course must be approved by the Center for Community Engagement to receive this designation

### Restricted Catalog Numbers

The following three digit numbers may not be used as the first three digits of a catalog number for purposes other than outlined below. By default, the fourth digit shall be zero (0). However, a non-zero number may also be used by departments to provide curricular advisory information.

- **198, 398, 598 Foreign Study Topics**  
study undertaken in a foreign university under the auspices of The California State University International Programs
- **200, 400, 500 Special Study**  
a course for individual or group investigation, research, study or survey of a particular problem; must be assigned a C/S classification associated with supervisory work.
- **299/299A/299L, 499/499A/499L 599/599A/599L Special Topics**  
a well-defined special topics course usually on a topic or in an area not covered by a regular titled catalog course; may be used to pilot new courses for a maximum of one year; may be assigned a C/S classification associated with lecture, laboratory, activity, or supervisory components
- **441, 442, 541, 542 Internship, Cooperative Education**  
a closely monitored, structured course that merges academic experience, personal development, and career exploration and provides meaningful, professional work experiences while meeting specific learning outcomes; progressive learning with prerequisite knowledge from one course to the next is expected if sequential numbers are used
- **461, 462 Senior Capstone, Senior Thesis, Senior Project, Senior Seminar**  
an undergraduate culminating experience that reflects upon, integrates, and applies what students have learned in their degree program; progressive learning with prerequisite knowledge from one course to the next is expected if sequential numbers are used
- **691 Directed Research**  
Individual research in a specialized area, under the direction of a graduate faculty member; work does not pertain directly to the thesis; must be assigned a C/S classification associated with supervisory work
- **692 Independent Research**  
Individual study/investigation and research in a specialized area proposed by the student with the approval, and under the supervision, of a graduate faculty member; work does not pertain directly to the thesis; must be assigned a C/S classification associated with supervisory work
- **694 Master's Thesis/Project Research**  
Research conducted in a specialized area under the direction of a faculty member as part of the preparation for writing a thesis or preparing a graduate project; units are part of the 6 semester unit requirement for culminating experience
- **695 Master's Project**  
A significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields that evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and a rationale

described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project's significance, objectives, methodology and a conclusion or recommendation; an oral defense may be required; units are part of the 6 semester unit requirement for culminating experience

- **696 Master's Thesis**

The written product of a systematic study of a significant problem that 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 and evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation; an oral defense of the thesis is required; units are part of the 6 semester unit requirement for culminating experience

- **697 Comprehensive Examination**

preparation for and completion of 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 evidenced through independent thinking, appropriate organization, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation; preparation may be independent or guided by a graduate faculty member, if a graduate faculty member directs the preparation, a C/S classification associated with lecture or supervisory work should be assigned, otherwise a C/S classification of C78 must be assigned; units are part of the 6 semester unit requirement for culminating experience

- **699 Master's Degree Continuation**

a course that allows candidates who have enrolled in the maximum number of thesis or project units to maintain resident status in order to receive university services; graded on a mandatory credit/no credit basis

### **Recommendations:**

The committee recommends the adoption of the following policy:

For full-time enrollment certification by the University graduate students must carry a unit load of 6 units of approved prerequisite, corequisite, or graduate program courses per semester.

Upon recommendation of a student's primary department/division/school and approval by the appropriate college dean, a student enrolled in any of the following department/division/school courses: 6910, 6950, 6960, 6970, 8000 may be certified as full-time with fewer than 6 units.

The maximum unit load for students working towards a graduate degree is 16 units per semester.

Authorization to enroll in more than 16 units requires approval by petition per the usual process.