

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

ACADEMIC SENATE

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

AP-020-189

Structure of Blended Academic Programs

Academic Programs Committee

Date: xx/xx/2019

Executive Committee  
Received and Forwarded

Date: 10/16/2019

Academic Senate

Date: 11/13/2019  
First Reading  
12/04/2019  
Second Reading

**BACKGROUND:**

The CSU Chancellor's Office allows campuses to offer Blended Bachelor's + Master's Degrees (often referred to 4+1 programs) in which students can obtain both an undergraduate and a graduate degree in a single five-year program. Blended programs are designed to allow well-qualified students who are currently enrolled in an undergraduate program:

- Obtain two simultaneous degrees in a streamlined manner.
- Apply to a Master's degree via a simplified process, as admission to Blended programs does not have to go through the University Admissions Office and there is no application fee.

The Chancellor's Office has established policies governing such programs via Policy AA-2012-01. The purpose of this referral is to implement the policy and guide the development of Blended Programs at Cal Poly Pomona.

**RESOURCES CONSULTED:**

- Associate Deans, all colleges
- Department Chairs, all departments
- Dr. Laura Massa, AVP for Academic Programs
- Dr. Meihua Koo, Professor of Accounting and Interim Associate Dean of the College of Business Administration
- Jessica M. Wagoner, Senior Associate Vice President, Enrollment Management & Services
- Dr. Keith Forward, Faculty Director for Undergraduate Studies and General Education
- Dr. Seema Shah-Fairbank, Faculty Director for Assessment and Program Review
- Dr. Terri Gomez, Associate Vice President for Student Success
- Raymond Canlas, Institutional Research Planning and Analytics
- Dr. Deborah Brandon, Admissions and Enrollment Planning
- Daniel Parks, Registrar's Office
- Jennifer Andelin, Registrar's Office
- Dr. Diana Minor, Financial Aid and Scholarships
- Patricia Higuchi, Student Accounting and Cashiering

**DISCUSSION and RECOMMENDATION:**

The Academic Programs Committee reviewed the proposed policy with the goal of minimizing the number of restrictions above and beyond those laid out in the policies of the Chancellor's Office. Due to the diversity of disciplines and their varying academic and accreditation needs, it was felt that flexibility is important. During consultation, the Accounting Department (which is planning to offer a Blended Program in the near future) noted that planning course offerings requires that students be able to apply to the graduate portion of the program before their fourth year, as there is overlap of graduate and undergraduate coursework in the fourth year of the five-year program. Consequently, the Committee decided that students should be eligible to apply after completing 90 units of undergraduate work.

Additionally, while students should not be able to formally apply and receive admission until they have completed 90 units, preparing for such a program requires careful effort and advising much earlier in a student's course of study. The Committee therefore added a provision strongly encouraging academic departments that offer Blended Programs to establish appropriate advising tracks for students considering the Blended Program. This is particularly important in light of the Four-Year Pledge program no longer being offered.

During the discussion in the Senate, two concerns were raised. The first regarded students who, due to unforeseen circumstances, are unable to complete the graduate portion of the blended program. Per Chancellor's Office Memo AA-2012-01, students can switch back into the undergraduate portion of the program. Nonetheless, it was felt that departments should be flexible in allowing students to use any graduate courses completed to substitute for remaining undergraduate requirements. The Committee has revised the implementation language to reflect this.

An additional concern was raised concerning the requirement of a 3.0 GPA in the 60 most recent units to be admitted to the blended program. However, because graduate students are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA, the Committee recommends against admitting students with GPAs that would immediately place them on academic probation.

### **The following is the structure recommended for Blended Programs:**

Blended programs must:

- Have a minimum of 150 units (120 Bachelor's+30 Master's).
- ~~Have a 10-semester curriculum.~~
- The Bachelor's and Master's to be blended must exist at CPP before the creation of a Blended program.
- Guarantee that the Bachelor's and Master's satisfy all CSU and CPP University requirements.
- Comply with all external accreditation agency requirements when applicable.
- Use the same CIP (HEGIS) codes respectively for the existing Bachelor's and Master's degrees.
- For those programs requiring more than 120 units for graduation, up to a maximum of 6 units at the 4000 and 5000 levels, can double count in the Bachelor's and Master's degrees with advisor approval.
- No double counting is allowed between undergraduate Capstone Requirements and Culminating Experience units. Both requirements must be independently completed and cannot be substituted.
- Students will not be able to pursue a graduate Culminating Experience if their undergraduate Capstone Requirement has not been completed.

### **Implementation**

- Students will be admitted to the University as undergraduate students.
- Students file a "Change Objective" petition to their graduate coordinator or designee in order to add a blended objective.

- Students cannot apply for admission to the graduate portion of a blended program until they have completed a minimum of 90 units, maximum 120. However, departments should establish advising programs and roadmaps for students who declare an interest in a blended program so they can begin preparing in advance of 90 units.
- To be eligible students must have a minimum 3.0 GPA in their most recent 60 semester units.
- Students must have passed the GWT or equivalent.
- Students must have completed all 1000 and 2000 level classes in their Bachelor's program.
- Students must attach to the petition a "Graduate Program of Studies" (Contract) approved by their Graduate Coordinator and their Department Chair.
- Departments should develop an appeal procedure for "Change of Objective" denials.
- Departments can specify additional admissions requirements to their Blended programs.
- Departments must guarantee that classes will be offered to allow the timely graduation of Blended students.
- Per Chancellor's Office Memo AA-2012-01, students who cannot complete the graduate portion of the blended program may revert back to just the undergraduate portion of the program. Departments should determine which (if any) graduate courses are suitable substitutes for upper-division undergraduate degree requirements, and make this information available to students and advisors, so that they can substitute courses by petition.

**Attachments:**

- Chancellor's Office Policy AA-2012-01.
- List of existing Blended Programs in the CSU system.