

CALIFORNIA STATE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY, POMONA

ACADEMIC SENATE

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

AP-003-234

Amendment to Blended Programs Policy

Academic Programs Committee

Date: 11/29/2023

Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded

Date: 02/28/2024

Academic Senate

Date: 03/13/2024
First Reading

BACKGROUND:

Policy 1121 in the Academic Manual governs “Blended Programs”, programs that combine a bachelor’s and master’s degree into a single integrated whole. (These programs are often referred to as “4+1” programs, as many baccalaureate degrees are 4 years and many master’s degrees are 1 year, but this terminology is not always accurate.) This policy was put in place via Academic Senate report AS-2857-190-AP. The purpose of such programs is generally to create a path for high-performing students to move directly to graduate studies, and also take a few graduate courses in their 4th year of study (or 5th year in the case of longer programs), while delaying a few advanced undergraduate courses until they have advanced to graduate status. The purpose of mixing levels of instruction is less to create sloppy curricula than to allow well-prepared students to begin whatever advanced studies they are ready for, while delaying a few classes that we can be reasonably sure they will still complete in a later year.

Since the enactment of Policy 1121, there have been a few changes to wider campus policies, including the ending of the Graduation Writing Test (GWT) and codification of a Chancellor’s Office Policy on Blended Programs. We received a referral asking the AP Committee to revise the policy in response to these changes.

RESOURCES CONSULTED:

Associate Deans, all colleges
All Department Chairs
Extended Graduate Council (All Graduate Coordinators)
Aaron DeRosa, Faculty Director of Undergraduate Studies.
Salomón Oldak, Faculty Director of Graduate Studies.
Keith Forward, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Programs.
Connie Kuang, University Registrar.

DISCUSSION:

The AP Committee examined the referral, the existing Policy 1121, and the Chancellor’s Office’s policy on Blended Programs (<http://calstate.policystat.com/policy/12518003/>.) We agreed on 4 main changes:

- A double-counting policy in line with the Chancellor’s Office’s ceiling on double-counted units. Students shall be allowed to double-count up to 12 units of courses between the bachelor’s and master’s degree, provided that these are at the 4000/5000 levels (courses which might be plausibly taken by both graduate and undergraduate students).
- Removal of all mentions of the GWT.
- Removal of all mention of a “Graduate Program of Studies” contract, a form that no longer exists in university processes.
- Removal of all language barring double-counting of capstones and culminating experiences. There are disciplines in which such double-counting would be completely inappropriate, for accreditation reasons if nothing else. Conversely, there are disciplines in which advanced undergraduates might initiate a project that develops into something

suitable for a master's thesis, and no policy should bar that. Instead, all matters around culminating experiences and capstones shall be at department discretion, drawing on their disciplinary expertise.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Academic Programs Committee recommends that sections 2 and 3 of Policy 1121 be revised to state the following:

Section 2: STRUCTURE

Blended programs must comply with the following:

- Any Bachelor's and Master's programs that are blended must exist at CPP before proposing 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.
- The Bachelor's portion of the Blended Program shall have a minimum of 120 units, and the Master's portion shall have a minimum of 30 units. Departments may, at their discretion, allow up to 12 double-counted units between the Bachelor's and Master's portions of the Blended Program, resulting in a minimum of 138 units for Blended Programs. The double-counted units must be at the 4000 and/or 5000 levels.

Section 3: IMPLEMENTATION

- Students will be admitted to the University as undergraduate students.
- Students shall file a "Change of 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 towards the degree, and a maximum of 114 units towards the degree. 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 completed all 1000 and 2000 level classes in their Bachelor's program prior to beginning the Blended Program.
- Departments should develop an appeal procedure for "Change of Objective" denials.
- Departments can specify additional admissions requirements for their Blended programs.
- Departments must have a plan in place to offer classes on a schedule that will allow the timely graduation of students in Blended Programs.
- 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.