

# THE MASTER'S DEGREE

## Degree Programs

Humboldt State University is authorized to offer the following programs. Detailed requirements for each program appear in the next section of this catalog.

Master of Arts degree with majors in:

- Applied Anthropology<sup>+</sup>
- Education
- English: Applied English Studies
- Psychology
- Public Sociology
- Social Science: Environment & Community

Master of Science degree with majors in:

- Biology
- Environmental Systems
- Kinesiology
- Natural Resources

Master of Business Administration degree

Master of Social Work degree

## Graduate Admission Requirements

Graduate and post-baccalaureate applicants may apply for a degree objective, a credential or certificate objective, or where approved, may have no program objective. Depending on the objective, the CSU will consider an application for admission as follows:

**General Requirements.** The minimum requirements for admission to graduate and post baccalaureate studies at a California State University campus are in accordance with university regulations as well as Title 5, Chapter 1, Subchapter 3 of the California Code of Regulations.

Specifically, a student shall at the time of enrollment:

1. have completed a four-year college course of study and hold an acceptable baccalaureate degree from an institution accredited by a regional accrediting association, or shall have completed equivalent academic preparation as determined by appropriate campus authorities;
2. be in good academic standing at the last college or university attended;
3. have earned a grade point average of at least 2.5 on the last degree completed by the candidate or have attained a grade point average of at least 2.5 (A=4.0) in the last 60 semester (90 quarter) units attempted; and

4. satisfactorily meet the professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards for graduate study, including qualifying examinations, as appropriate campus authorities may prescribe. In unusual circumstances, a campus may make exceptions to these criteria.

Students who meet the minimum requirements for graduate and post-baccalaureate studies may be considered for admission in one of the four following categories:

**Graduate Classified.** To pursue a graduate degree, applicants are required to fulfill all of the professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards, including qualifying examinations, prescribed by the campus; or

**Graduate Conditionally Classified.** Applicants may be admitted to a graduate degree program in this category if, in the opinion of appropriate campus authority, deficiencies may be remedied by additional preparation; or

**Post-Baccalaureate Classified,** e.g. admission to an education credential program. Persons wishing to enroll in a credential or certificate program, will be required to satisfy additional professional, personal, scholastic, and other standards, including qualifying examinations, prescribed by the campus; or

**Graduate-Post-Baccalaureate English Language Requirement.** All graduate and post-baccalaureate applicants, regardless of citizenship, whose native language is not English and whose preparatory education was principally in a language other than English must demonstrate competence in English. Those who do not possess a bachelor's degree from a postsecondary institution where English is the principal language of instruction must receive a minimum score of 550 written/80 internet-based on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Some programs require a higher score. Several CSU campuses may use alternative methods for assessing fluency in English including Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), and the International Test of English Proficiency (ITEP).. See "English Language Proficiency" on page 21.

*(These and other CSU admissions requirements are subject to change as policies are revised and laws are amended. The CSU website, [www.calstate.edu](http://www.calstate.edu), and the CSU*

*admissions portal, [www.calstate.edu/apply](http://www.calstate.edu/apply), are good sources of the most up-to-date information.)*

Other requirements as defined by specific programs. For example, some programs require a higher GPA for admission.

## Application Procedure

All graduate and post-baccalaureate applicants (e.g., master's degree applicants, those seeking educational credentials or certificates, and where permitted, holders of baccalaureate degrees interested in taking courses for personal or professional growth) must file a complete graduate application as described in the graduate and post-baccalaureate admission materials at [www.calstate.edu/apply](http://www.calstate.edu/apply). Applicants seeking a second bachelor's degree should submit the undergraduate application for admission unless specifically requested to do otherwise. Applicants who completed undergraduate degree requirements and graduated the preceding term are also required to complete and submit an application and the \$55 nonrefundable application fee. Since applicants for post-baccalaureate programs may be limited to the choice of a single campus on each application, re-routing to alternate campuses or later changes of campus choice are not guaranteed. To be assured of initial consideration by more than one campus, it is necessary to submit separate applications (including fees) to each. Applications submitted by way of [www.calstate.edu/apply](http://www.calstate.edu/apply) are expected unless submission of an electronic application is impossible. An electronic version of the CSU graduate application is available at [www.calstate.edu/apply](http://www.calstate.edu/apply)

**Application Acknowledgement.** On-time applicants may expect to receive an acknowledgment from the campuses to which they have applied within two to four weeks of filing the application. The notice may also include a request that applicants submit additional records necessary to evaluate academic qualifications.

Apply to Humboldt State University as early as possible. The fall applications are accepted beginning October 1; spring applications beginning August 1.

<sup>+</sup> program offered through the College of eLearning & Extended Education

Deadlines for submitting graduate applications vary by program. Check with the Office of Admissions–Graduate, 707-826-6250, or the individual program office. While some admission categories remain open later than others, no applications will be accepted later than one month prior to the beginning of the term.

In addition to a CSU graduate application and all college transcripts (official), applicants are required to submit the materials listed under Graduate Admission Requirements to complete their application. Please check with the individual departments for any additional requirements.

### Graduate Financial Aid

Placement in one or another of the post-baccalaureate admission categories has an effect on student eligibility for financial aid. Contact the Financial Aid Office, 707-826-4321, for clarification of eligibility.

### Candidacy

Admission to candidacy is an acknowledgement of a student's potential to complete the requirements for the master's degree. Students should apply for advancement to candidacy and graduation at least one semester prior to completion of course requirements. Some programs require earlier application. A student must be enrolled in the semester during which advancement to candidacy takes place.

#### Candidacy Requirements

- "Classified" standing;
- A GPA of 3.0 or better;
- Completion of 12 to 15 units approved coursework for the master's program;
- Approval of the advisor, committee, and graduate coordinator; and
- Approval of any plan to use humans or animals as subjects in research if applicable. (See "Use of Human Subjects in Research" or "Use of Animals in Research" in the *Graduate Student Handbook* for more information.)

Forms are available on the HSU Forms website. Some programs require their students to advance to candidacy within their first year at HSU.

### Graduate Degree Requirements

General requirements for the master's degree programs as specified by Title 5 are below. Discipline-specific requirements are outlined in the program description section of this catalog.

1. Completion of a specified program of study, usually requiring approval from the university department.
2. Completion of a minimum of 30 semester units of approved coursework within a maximum of seven years. (See "Seven-Year Limit"). This standard includes:
  - 21 or more semester units must be completed at Humboldt State University, after admission to the graduate program (resident requirement);
  - At least half the units must be at the graduate level (500-600 level);
  - lower division course (100-200 level) cannot be counted toward the degree;
  - No more than six thesis or project units will apply toward the degree with a maximum of nine total units for independent study, field work, and thesis/project courses.
3. B- or better in all courses taken to satisfy the requirements for the degree and maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or better. A higher grade standard than the campus minimum of B- may be specified by a graduate degree program.
4. Completion of an approved thesis, project, or comprehensive examination, as defined by Title 5:
  - 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 evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentation. Normally, an oral defense of the thesis is required.
  - A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality 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.
  - A comprehensive examination assesses a student's ability to integrate knowledge of the area, show independent and critical thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. The results evidence independent

thinking, appropriate organization, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation. Examination questions and responses are kept according to the CSU records retention policy.

5. The California State University, under Executive Order 665, requires that graduate students demonstrate competency in writing. The graduate writing requirements are built into each program.

### Academic Probation & Disqualification

Graduate students, including those who are classified or conditionally classified, will be placed on academic probation if their Humboldt grade point average falls below a 3.0 (B grade average). See Academic Regulations, "Academic Standing" on page 38.

### Administrative-Academic Probation and Disqualification

See Academic Regulations, "Academic Standing" on page 38. All the reasons for administrative-academic probation and disqualification for undergraduate students shall apply to graduate students. In addition:

1. Students may be placed on administrative-academic probation by the Dean of Graduate Studies, following a request from the program/department and consultation with other appropriate offices, for failure to comply, after due notice, with a requirement or regulation, as defined by campus or program policy which is routine for all students or a defined group of students (e.g., demonstrating consistently disruptive behavior, hostile or abusive behavior; failure to advance to candidacy, failure to abide by standards set by approved external placements, etc.). The probationary student shall be informed in writing by the graduate dean (with a copy provided to the department/program).
2. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall inform the Office of the Registrar when students have been placed on or removed from administrative-academic probationary status so that student records can be updated. When a student is placed on academic or administrative-academic probation, the student must work with the program coordinator to develop a plan for remediation, including a timeline for completion. In the case of administrative-academic probation, the remediation plan must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies, who will send a letter to the student documenting the plan. A student cannot be advanced

to candidacy if the student is on either academic or administrative-academic probation.

A student who has been placed on administrative-academic probation may be disqualified from further attendance by the Dean of Graduate Studies if any of the conditions for disqualification apply. In addition:

In the event that a student fails the thesis/project defense, the student may repeat the thesis/project defense once. Failure at the second thesis/project defense will result in disqualification from a program. The thesis/project committee will specify the time period and/or conditions of the repeated defense.

A student may repeat a comprehensive examination once. Failure of the second comprehensive examination results in disqualification from a program. The comprehensive exam committee will specify the time period and/or conditions of the repeated examination. Students who are disqualified at the end of an enrollment period should be notified by the Dean of Graduate Studies before the beginning of the next consecutive regular enrollment period. Students disqualified at the beginning of a summer enrollment break should be notified at least one month before the start of the fall term. In cases where a student ordinarily would be disqualified at the end of a term, save for the fact that it is not possible to make timely notification, the student may be advised that the disqualification is to be effective at the end of the next term. Such notification should include any conditions which, if met, would result in permission to continue in enrollment. Inability to contact a student does not create the right of a student to continue enrollment.

### **Continuous Enrollment**

In order to maintain continuous enrollment, students are required to enroll for a minimum of one unit per term for at least two terms per academic year (fall, spring, summer) until their degree requirements are completed. Students who do not maintain continuous enrollment (two terms each academic year), and who have not been granted a leave of absence, must reapply for admission to the university and to the graduate program. They will be subject to any new admission requirements and if admitted, will be required to meet the degree requirements in effect at the time of readmit.

### **Educational Leave of Absence**

An educational leave of absence must be requested if continuous enrollment, as defined above, will be interrupted. At least one term must be completed prior to taking a leave of absence. The maximum duration of a single leave is one academic year; the total duration of combined leaves may not exceed two years. A leave of absence does not extend the seven-year time limit. See Academic Regulations, "Educational Leave (Leave of Absence)" on page 44 for additional information.

### **Extended Education**

Some departments allow master's students to register for one unit of a discipline-specific x693 course through the College of eLearning and Extended Education. Enrollment in the discipline-specific x693 course maintains continuous enrollment and status in the master's degree program.

The minimum requirements to be eligible to enroll through eLearning and Extended Education:

- Advancement to candidacy;
- Completion of all the coursework required for the degree; and
- Current graduation date on file with the Office of the Registrar.

The Graduate Continuous Enrollment form is used to request authorization to enroll in one unit of discipline-specific x693 course through Extended Education. Forms are available online on the HSU Forms website ([www.humboldt.edu/forms](http://www.humboldt.edu/forms)).

This policy does not apply to credential candidates.

Additional requirements for registering through extended education vary by program.

### **Seven-Year Limit**

Title 5 Education of the California Administrative Code of Regulations limits the maximum time for completing a master's degree program to seven years. The seven years is calculated from the time of completion of the oldest course listed on the Approved Graduate Course List. An extension may be granted if warranted by individual circumstances and if the outdated coursework is validated by examination. See the *Graduate Student Handbook* for additional information.

### **Graduation**

Students apply for graduation at the same time as they apply for advancement to candidacy. The dual application initiates a degree check to ensure that the coursework listed meets the requirements of the master's degree program.

The graduate student application for graduation should be filed at least one semester before finishing all degree requirements. Forms are available online on the HSU Forms website ([www.humboldt.edu/forms](http://www.humboldt.edu/forms)). See the online *Registration Guide* for appropriate deadlines.