

Coyote Accelerated Post-Baccalaureate Education (CAPE)

Blended Programs Policy

FAM 841.33

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Purpose and Scope

In July 2022, the CSU Board of Trustees voted to amend Title 5 to permit students to double count a maximum of 12 units of graduate level coursework towards their bachelor's and master's degrees. This allows CSU campuses to offer “Blended” programs that merge an existing bachelor's and master's degree program into a single pathway. A blended program allows the student to transition directly from undergraduate standing (bachelor's) to graduate standing (master's) without having to apply to the graduate program. These programs have increased access to graduate study, grown graduate programs, and reduced the time and cost to students for obtaining the two degrees.

Existing CSUSB bachelor's and master's degree programs may elect but are not required to create blended programs. The CSU's [Policy on Blended Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programs](#) establishes systemwide minimum processes and requirements for the creation and implementation of blended programs, and states that issues not addressed in that policy shall be determined at the campus level. This CSUSB policy describes the requirements and procedures through which existing CSUSB bachelor's and master's degree programs can

implement blended programs. Blended programs at CSUSB must meet all applicable CSU policies and state and federal laws.

Authority to grant post-baccalaureate 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.

The bachelor's and master's degree will typically be offered in the same support mode. However, if the bachelor's is in state support and the master's in self-support the campus will need to (1) clearly identify when the student completes the state support bachelor's degree, (2) begin to charge self-support tuition only for those graduate units that do not count towards the state support bachelor's degree, and, (3) clearly notify the students of the differences between the state and self-support programs including, at minimum, the impact on tuition and financial aid.

Definition

Blended Program: "Blended" programs merge an existing baccalaureate and master's degree program offered in the same support mode in similar disciplines into a single pathway. In Blended Programs, a minimum of 138 semester units are required to earn both degrees. Students are awarded the bachelor's degree when they satisfy the degree requirements for the degree; and students are awarded the master's degree when they satisfy the degree requirements for that degree. Coyote Accelerated Post-Baccalaureate Education (CAPE) is the unique name given to blended programs at CSUSB.

Policy Statement

1. Required Criteria to Implement Blended Programs
 - a. For consideration for a new blended program, the bachelor's and master's program must already be approved programs. If the undergraduate and graduate programs are not in the same department, the proposal must include evidence and agreement of terms by both department chairs.
 - b. The courses that will fulfill both the graduate and undergraduate degree requirements (12 units) must be 5000-level (approved for graduate level credit) or 6000-level courses. Each double counted course shall be specifically identified in the program catalog. All identified double counted courses are required

(students cannot pick from a menu of courses to double count). It is up to each blended program to limit the number of 5000-level and/or 6000-level courses that can be applied to a blended degree program according to university requirements.

- c. A minimum of 138 units are required for the blended program, which includes 120 units minimum for the undergraduate degree, 30 units for the graduate degree, and 12 units double counted between the two degrees.
 - d. In the case of courses that have variable unit loads or that can be repeated for degree credit, the number of course units allowed to be counted towards the graduate degree should be specified. The maximum repeatable units need to be maintained for each degree (bachelor's and master's) in the blended program.
 - e. While in undergraduate status, a student in a blended program will take graduate-level courses required for the master's degree. For units that are double counted, none of the required graduate courses can be replaced by an undergraduate course, and graduate courses that will also count toward the bachelor's degree must either require mastery of the more rudimentary knowledge taught at the undergraduate level or cover the content of the undergraduate courses that they replace. Justification for each double counted course must be provided in the proposal, ensuring that this is the case.
 - f. Every new blended degree program requires its own proposal through the curricular process. In the case of programs with concentrations, every concentration must have a different blended degree pathway that specifies the courses that can double count for each concentration (roadmaps are required for each concentration included in the blended program).
 - g. Once a blended program is created, changes to the blended program must be made through a program change. Visit the [CSUSB Academic Programs](#) website for more information on program changes.
2. Considerations for Developing Blended Programs
- a. With blended programs, more students who are in undergraduate status will be taking graduate courses. On the other hand, fewer students in graduate status will be in the courses that are double counted. There may be conversations at

the department level on the timing of course offerings and how that will impact enrollment.

- b. If the double counted course is a 5000-level course, the blended student must do the extra work required for graduate students in the course.
- c. A blended program can alter the constitution of cohort-based master's programs, as some introductory courses in the master's program may not have all cohort-members taking the courses.
- d. A blended program may impact accreditation, so it is important to consider the implications.
- e. If the master's program is either hybrid or online modality, students need to be aware of the different course modality in the graduate program (this should be indicated in the catalog entry).
- f. If the unit count of the master's program is above 30 units, then the unit count may present a barrier.
- g. Unlike concurrent degree programs, new CSU degree codes will not be assigned for the blended bachelor's and master's programs.
- h. To ensure that enrollments are reported accurately, the campus is required to notify Academic Programs 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. The blended programs will also be added to the CSU Degrees Database.
- i. Students in blended programs must be designated as "Academic Plan Code_Degree Designation_B." Corresponding codes must be determined by the Office of the Registrar and shall be assigned for ERS reporting at the time the student begins and is maintained during the component undergraduate and graduate degree programs.
- j. 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. This code should be assigned for ERS reporting at the time the student begins and is maintained during the component undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

- k. When a blended-program student has earned the undergraduate degree, the campus will change the student designation to graduate. When a blended-program student has earned the undergraduate degree, the campus will change the student level code to "5," signifying graduate standing.
- l. Blended bachelor's and master's degree programs will continue to use the existing CSU degree program codes and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes for their components.

3. Tuition

- a. The cost of attending California State University, San Bernardino, consists of paying the state fees (also known as resident tuition fees) and university campus-based fees. Non-resident tuition may also apply to out-of-state students as well as international students. If courses are dropped, students may be responsible for retained charges of prorated fees based on the number of days enrolled in the school term.
- b. Tuition Fees are not calculated on a per-unit basis. Enrollment and tuition costs are either Part-Time (0-6 units) or Full-Time (6.1+ units). If a student is not a resident of California, an additional fee for each unit enrolled is added to registration and tuition fees. (The additional fee for non-residents in AY 2023-2024 is \$396.00 but may change in subsequent years.) Once the transition to graduate status is made, students will be considered as post-baccalaureate for tuition.
- c. A student will be assessed the undergraduate tuition and fees only during the time in which the blended-program student is designated as an undergraduate.
- d. When the degree-objective status is changed to "graduate," the student will be assessed the graduate student tuition and fees.
- e. Students in a blended bachelor's degree program who are completing units that will double count toward a master's degree that has been authorized to assess a fee for a graduate professional degree (e.g., graduate business professional fee) may or may not be charged that tuition fee for the double counted units, at the discretion of the blended program as indicated on the program's B-Form. The fee shall be charged to students after they transition to graduate status.
- f. 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 reopened in order to grant the baccalaureate degree. There shall be no related cost to the student and no refund of previous graduate fees paid.

4. Financial Aid

- a. If students transition between undergraduate and graduate standing during the academic year, they should reach out to the Financial Aid Office to determine if adjustment paperwork is appropriate and allowable.
- b. Students should complete the FAFSA or California Dream Act application annually with the correct status listed (i.e., undergraduate or graduate). As with all graduate students, students in blended programs will have different funding eligibility when they are in graduate status.
- c. Students will be funded with financial aid funds as undergraduate students while they are coded as undergraduate students and enrolled in courses applicable to their undergraduate degree.
- d. While coded as an undergraduate student, the student will not be funded for graduate coursework beyond the 12 units that can be double counted.
- e. Once the student is coded as a graduate student, their financial aid will be adjusted to graduate level funding.
- f. Funding for the summer term is limited. Winter term financial aid is not available.
- g. To maintain financial aid, students should be aware of changing Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements when moving from undergraduate to graduate status.

5. International Students and Blended Programs

- a. Each campus must issue a change of educational level (i.e., I-20 status) when an F-1 student in a blended program becomes a graduate student according to visa regulations. Undergraduate blended program students will shift to graduate status when they have completed 120 semester units. The international student office should be consulted to work out the timing and workflow for issuance of the new I-20 to F-1 students in blended programs.
- b. International students with F-1 visas are permitted post-completion OPT for up to 12 months (and additional 24 months with STEM OPT extension) per degree

level. Unless the campus determines that a gap between educational levels is permitted to allow for OPT, students will otherwise become ineligible for bachelor's level post-completion OPT upon the date of their change in educational level to graduate student status, as indicated on the I-20. Students would still be eligible to apply for graduate level post-completion OPT and STEM OPT extension.

6. Advising Structures in Blended Programs: Option 1 and Option 2

- a. Option 1: Each student in a blended program will obtain tenure-track faculty sponsorship in the degree program. That faculty sponsor will be responsible for advising the blended program student they sponsor.
- b. Option 2: Each blended program will appoint their own blended advisor to advise current blended program students.

7. Advisor Responsibilities in Blended Programs

- a. Familiarity with all blended program policies and procedures at CSUSB, including semester deadlines.
- b. Familiarity with the requirements for their department's blended degree program. At maximum, blended programs will allow for 12 units of double-counted coursework between the undergraduate and graduate degrees.
- c. Attending a meeting once per semester for blended program advisors at CSUSB (hosted by Graduate Studies).
- d. Advising of blended program students.
- e. Program admissions, including submitting the form to admit a student to the blended program based on program admission criteria. Graduate Studies can conduct GPA evaluations as needed.
- f. Submitting the transition form to move the student from undergraduate to graduate status.
- g. Completing the off-ramp form when a student wants to leave or is no longer eligible for the blended program.
- h. Close coordination with other advisors, Graduate Studies, and other CSUSB personnel as needed for blended program students.

- i. For international students, close coordination with International Students & Scholars (ISS).
 - j. Consistently reminding participating students to visit their assigned ASUA advisor regularly to ensure proper progress for their General Education and major requirements.
 - k. Consulting with the designated administrator for advisor training needs at the undergraduate level, i.e. how to post advising notes in EAB.
 - l. Programs should share some of these responsibilities among faculty and staff, such as for program recruiting and prospective blended program advising, but the blended advisor should be aware of these efforts and coordinate the blended program activities.
8. Forms and Procedures in Blended Program Advising
- a. Blended Program PAWS
 - b. Admission to Blended Program form (Undergraduate to Undergraduate Blended)
 - c. Transition to graduate standing form (Undergraduate Blended to Graduate Blended)
 - d. Change of major (to discontinue the blended student and return them to the major)
 - e. How to submit EAB Notes and use EAB advising tools
9. The Blended Program Life-Cycle and the Advisor
- a. Submit the blended program admission form to admit students. Note: If the student had any PAWS exceptions prior to admission to the blended program, those will carry over automatically to the new blended PAWS.
 - b. Submit the form for transition to graduate standing in the semester during which a student will complete 120 units. Note that students must also have completed their GE and lower division requirements.
 - c. For a Fall transition to the graduate program, the form must be submitted by March 1. For a Spring transition to the graduate program, the form must be submitted by October 1.

- d. For international students, coordinate with ISS as the student changes their status. ISS will provide guidance on how to update the student's I-20.
- e. Students should be transitioned to the graduate record and be monitored for graduation each semester by the graduate program coordinator until their degree is completed.

10. Blended Program Off-Ramps

- a. A student in undergraduate status may decide not to continue in the blended program. In this case, the student can request a change of major through the normal process and the student is returned to their undergraduate degree program. The student may later apply to the program's graduate degree. The advisor provides guidance to the student to see their ASUA academic advisor for completion of their bachelor's degree. If units are transferred into a future master's degree at CSUSB, units cannot exceed seven years, unless approved for validation by both the academic program and Provost Designee for Graduate Studies.
- b. If a student in undergraduate status goes on Academic Notice, the student is automatically transitioned back into the undergraduate major. The student may later apply to the program's graduate degree, but double counting units will not be possible. ASUA designee must communicate the transition back to the undergraduate major to the Office of the Registrar.
- c. If a student in graduate status goes on Academic Notice, the student must clear their status through the same policies that apply to graduate students. Graduate Studies will put relevant advising materials and contacts on their webpage for advisors to access.

Procedure and Process

11. Procedures for Creating Blended Programs

- a. Initial consultation: Contact the Office of Graduate Studies for a consultation. Program requirements will be discussed. Campus guidance for developing a blended program will be reviewed.
- b. Checklist: Be sure you understand the following requirements; you must meet this checklist before submitting your blended program proposal.

- i. Existing bachelor's and master's degrees: You must have BOTH an existing baccalaureate degree program AND an existing graduate degree program to blend. If the undergraduate and graduate programs are not in the same department, the proposal must include evidence of agreement on the curriculum and roadmaps by both department chairs.
 - ii. Modality: By default, the modality will be the modality of the existing baccalaureate and graduate programs.
 - iii. Double-counting 12 units: Decide which specific 12 units will count for both the bachelor's and the master's degrees. These units may include 5000-level courses approved for graduate credit or 6000-level courses. All double counted courses must be required for all blended students. A program can choose less than 12 units to double count.
 - iv. Update the P-Form: Update the P-Form for both the bachelor's and master's degrees to indicate the blended program is offered. In the P-Forms, link to the department website that contains blended program requirements for admission and completion.
 - v. B-Form (See attached): Complete the B-Form including two roadmaps. The B-Form will be located in the bachelor's P-Form. Link to the B-Form from the CIM in the bachelor's P-Form. You must create two roadmaps within the B-Form: 1) a five-year roadmap for first-year students (FYS), and 2) a three-year roadmap for upper-division transfers (UDT). The B-Form is accessible on the Academic Programs website for viewing before completing it in the CIM.
 - vi. CIM: With the above checklist and initial consultation complete, you are ready to launch your proposal. Log into the CIM and update the P-Form. The B-Form will auto-populate when you select the blended program option in the bachelor's P-Form.
 - vii. Visit the [CSUSB Academic Programs](#) website for general information on P-Form approval processes.
- c. Following University approval of a blended program, the Office of Academic Programs is responsible for submitting the blended program to the Chancellor's Office for final approval and authorization. Approval from the Chancellor's Office must be obtained prior to implementing a blended degree program. WSCUC approval is not required.

12. Procedures for Admission to Blended Programs

- a. Eligibility: Students are eligible to enter the blended program if they meet the following conditions:
 - i. Completion of a minimum of 60 units but not more than 120 units
 - ii. Not currently in the semester in which they will complete the baccalaureate degree
 - iii. Completion of at least 12 upper-division course units in-residence
 - iv. At least a 2.5 cumulative GPA
 - v. Faculty sponsorship or blended program advisor approval
 - vi. Programs can determine admission requirements that are more stringent than these university standards. For example, the program can set a higher GPA threshold or require minimum grades in specific courses. Each department and program can determine the specific courses or additional requirements (if any) that must be completed in the major prior to entering or applying to the blended program. These will be outlined in the catalog for the blended program.
 - vii. Changes to these requirements will be made by a program change.
 - viii. Transfer students and international students are eligible, pending they meet eligibility criteria, including having completed 12 upper-level course units in-residence. It should be noted that international students must be enrolled in mostly in-person courses. Master's programs with mostly online courses may not be options for international students.
 - ix. Departments shall publish their admissions requirements. Departments can move a student to the blended program (undergrad major to blended undergraduate) at any time. However, the department can implement their own timeline for admitting undergraduate students for blended programs.
- b. Application Form: Students can apply for admissions into blended programs during the semester they are completing the eligibility requirements. Application deadlines are at the discretion of the department.
- c. Application Process

- i. Departments can establish their own process and materials needed to review candidates for the blended program. However, at minimum, the student must have a cumulative 2.5 GPA and a tenure-track faculty sponsor or approval of the blended program faculty advisor depending on advising structure (see section 6).
 - ii. Departments may decide to review applications on a rolling basis or have an internal established timeline for receiving applications.
 - iii. Application forms should be signed by (1) the faculty sponsor or blended program faculty advisor, (2) department chair, and (3) the student, indicating that all department level requirements for entry into the blended program (except confirmation of GPA) have been met.
 - iv. The applicant will submit the signed application form to Graduate Studies Admissions.
 - v. Submission of transcripts is not necessary as Graduate Studies Admissions has access to all CSUSB student transcripts on file.
 - vi. Graduate Studies will evaluate the GPA. If the GPA falls below the minimum requirement for the blended program, Graduate Studies Admissions will notify the faculty sponsor or blended program faculty advisor, department chair, and the student that the applicant does not meet GPA requirements for admission to the blended program.
 - vii. If the applicant meets the GPA requirement for the blended program, Graduate Studies will initiate the process of entry into the blended program.
 - viii. No fee is assessed for the blended program application process.
- d. Entering the Blended Program: Once an applicant has been accepted into the blended (undergraduate) program, the following steps will be taken.
- i. Graduate Studies initiate the form for Blended Program Entry (undergraduate major to undergraduate blended major) and route it to the faculty sponsor or blended program faculty advisor, the department chair, and the student. Once all signatures are obtained, Graduate Studies will route the Blended Program Entry form to the Office of the Registrar. The Student will be coded in PeopleSoft as "Academic Plan Code_Degree Designation_B."

- ii. The Office of the Registrar moves the student into the blended undergraduate program (similar to a major change).
- iii. Notification of the new blended student is sent to the faculty sponsor, International Students & Scholars (ISS), Student File, Financial Aid, Registration & Records, and Graduate Studies. ISS and Financial Aid will separately track blended students. Please direct any blended students with F-1 visa status and Optional Practical Training (OPT) to ISS for additional guidance.

13. Transition to Graduate Study

- a. Once the student is eligible for transitioning to the blended graduate program, the faculty sponsor or the blended program faculty advisor will request that the student transition to the blended graduate program via an Adobe Sign form. The blended student does not apply to the graduate program through Cal State Apply.
- b. Eligibility requirements for transitioning to graduate status:
 - i. The form for transition to graduate status is initiated by the term before the conferral of the undergraduate degree, including in-progress units.
 - ii. The student is in good academic standing in their undergraduate program.
 - iii. The student maintains a 3.0 GPA in graduate level courses taken while in undergraduate status.
 - iv. The Office of the Registrar will evaluate the student record for these requirements before advancing them to graduate status. If the student does not meet these requirements, the student will be moved back into the appropriate undergraduate major.
 - v. Blended students do not pay an enrollment deposit when transitioning to graduate status. Transitions to graduate status only occur in Fall or Spring semesters and must be requested by the deadline the semester before transitioning.
 - vi. Students are evaluated for honors based on the undergraduate degree.
- c. International Students Transition to Graduate Status

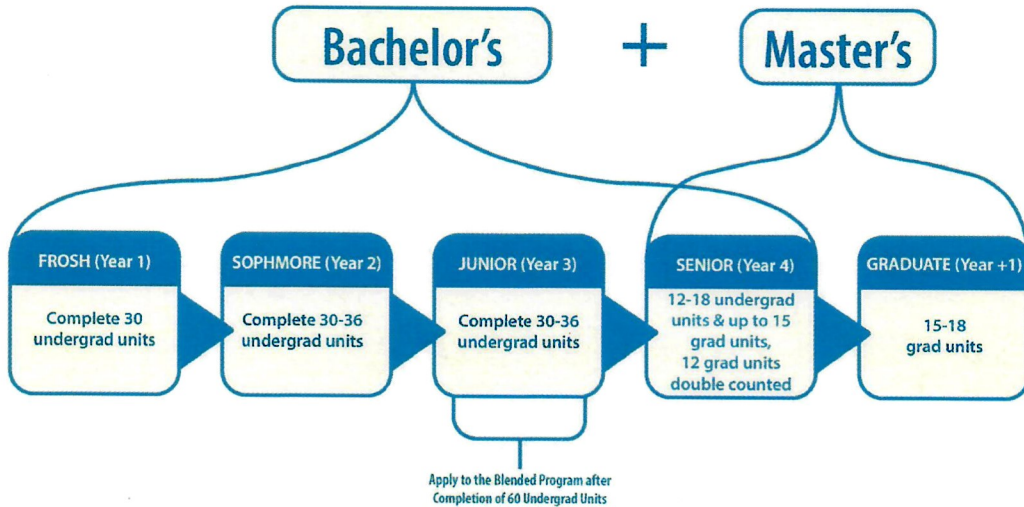
- i. International students who are moving to graduate status need to have completed all graduation requirements for the bachelor's degree for International Students and Scholars (ISS) to issue an updated Form I-20 reflecting change to graduate status.
 - ii. International students who do not meet this requirement will be moved back into the appropriate undergraduate major.
 - iii. All programs that international students enter must be approved on the SEVIS list.
 - iv. If the student meets eligibility, ISS issues an updated Form I-20 for change of educational level (i.e., changing level from bachelor's to master's). This change will shift the minimum unit requirement for F-1 undergraduate student status (12 units) to that for a graduate student (9 units, unless other full course load is defined by college or academic department).
 - v. International students with an F-1 visa are permitted post-completion Optional Practical Training (OPT) for up to 12 months (and additional 24 months with STEM OPT extension) per degree level.
 - vi. Unless the campus determines that a gap between educational levels is permitted to allow for OPT, students will otherwise become ineligible for bachelor's level post-completion OPT upon the date of their change in educational level to graduate student status, as indicated on the I-20. Students would still be eligible to apply for graduate level post-completion OPT and STEM OPT extension.
- d. **Deadlines:** For a Fall transition to graduate status, the transition form must be submitted by the faculty sponsor or blended program advisor by March 1. For a Spring transition to the graduate program, the form must be submitted by the blended advisor by October 1.
- e. **Workflow:** The workflow for the transition to graduate status impacts several offices on campus. The review of each blended student will follow the process below.
- i. The faculty sponsor or blended program advisor identifies which students need to transition to graduate status and initiates and signs one form per student. The blended student signs the form electronically to

acknowledge the implications in financial aid and tuition resulting in the status change, as well as the master's degree completion time limit.

- ii. The Office of the Registrar reviews criteria for entering graduate status. ISS reviews and issues an updated I-20 for eligible students.
- iii. In PeopleSoft, Graduate Studies Admissions adds an application for the graduate record. The student is then coded in PeopleSoft as "Academic Plan Code_Degree Objective_B."
- iv. The Office of the Registrar discontinues the undergraduate record and confirms term activation is complete for the graduate record.
- v. Copies of the form are sent to all in the workflow plus Financial Aid, Student Business Services, and Graduate Studies.

14. Graduation and Degree Conferral

- a. Blended program students will receive their bachelor's degree once they have completed the bachelor's degree requirements. They will receive their master's degree once they have completed the master's degree requirements. Students may participate in both ceremonies.
- b. Bachelor's students' grad checks are initiated by the university. Master's students must apply for the grad check after they have been advanced to candidacy.
- c. One of the conditions for the student to be switched into graduate status is to have already completed an undergraduate grad check.
- d. The Office of the Registrar will track the student for graduation requirements as soon as they enter the graduate record.



Approvals

Approved by the Faculty Senate on 11-21-2023

Approved by the President on *POM* 2/24/2024

History

First created: 10-24-2023 [Date] by EPRC Committee


Revised: N/A [Date] by N/A

Renumbered: N/A [Date] from N/A to N/A


FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved by the CSUSB Faculty Senate on 11-21-2023

Signed and dated by



Claudia Davis (Senate Chair) 1-31-2024
Date



Tomás Morales (President) 2/26/24
Date

[This is the last page of a FAM document and shall be kept in the senate office. The dates on this page must match dates on the corresponding lines of the previous page.]