

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
LONG BEACH**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

March 22, 1985  
NUMBER: 81-09  
Amended

FILE: SPECIAL MAJOR

The following policy, recommended by the Academic Senate at its meeting of January 29, 1981, and approved by the President on March 5, 1981, was amended in the Senate on February 28, 1985 and the amendments received the concurrence of the President on March 22, 1985. See also Policy Statement 80-04 entitled, "Master of Science Degree in Special Major."

**REVISION AND REORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL MAJOR: MA/MS**

**Master of Arts Degree (Code 5-0405) and Master of Science Degree (Code 6-0405) in a Special Major**

A student may submit a proposal for a degree program leading to the Master of Arts or Master of Science Degree in a Special Major (Interdisciplinary Studies) when special needs and interests cannot adequately be met by any of the existing graduate degree programs offered by the University. The proposed program must not be substantially available within any existing graduate programs offered at CSULB and must have adequate focus and coherence in cognate disciplines. The degree program is administered by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Procedural guidelines and forms are available in the Academic Advising Center, Library E-106.

**PREREQUISITES**

1. A Bachelor's Degree.
2. Twenty-four units of preparatory (prerequisite) course work, selected in consultation with the student's graduate committee. The preparatory (prerequisite) coursework must be listed on the Prerequisite Sheet which accompanies the Application for a Master's Degree in the Special Major. This work must have been completed by the student with a minimum 3.0 GPA after attaining junior standing at an accredited college or university, or be completed with a minimum 3.0 GPA prior to advancement to candidacy for the degree.

**ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY**

To satisfy the general requirements of the University and the special requirements for the Master of Arts or Master of Science Degree in a Special Major, the student must comply with the following procedures:

1. Convene a graduate committee to consist of a minimum of three tenured/tenure-track faculty members at CSULB. The Chairperson of the committee must be a member of the department approved to grant a graduate degree.
2. Secure approval of the Application for a Master's Degree in the Special Major by (a) all members of the graduate committee, (b) the Chair/Graduate Advisor of the primary department or designated area of study, (c) the Special Major Advisor, (d) the School Dean (or designee) of the primary department or designated area of study, and (e) the Dean of Graduate Studies.
3. Consult with the members of the committee to insure: (a) compliance with any unique guidelines of the degree-issuing department or school (the department of the student's graduate committee chair), (b) that all preparatory (prerequisite) course work has been satisfactorily completed and that the Prerequisite Sheet for the Master's Degree in the Special Major reflects this, (c) that all transcripts have been filed with the Admissions Office and that a complete set is available to the committee for their inspection, (d) that the Statement of Rationale is complete and acceptable, and (e) that the Application for the Master's Degree in the Special Major conforms to the University regulations and the Requirements for the Master of Arts/Science Degree in a Special Major.

4. Include no more than nine units of completed coursework on the Application for a Master's Degree in the Special Major prior to submission of the above Application.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS**

Applications for a Master's Degree in the Special Major are provided by the Academic Advising Center, Library E-106. A program must be prepared to conform to University regulations. Requirements for the M. A. Degree are as follows:

1. The special major degree program must include not less than 30 upper division and graduate level units approved by all the student's graduate committee members, Chair/Graduate Advisor of the primary department or designated area of study, the School Dean (or designee) of the primary department or designated area of study, Special Major advisor, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.
  - a. No less than 18 units shall be in the 500 and 600 level series.
  - b. A minimum of 15 units shall be completed within a primary department or designated area of study.
  - c. No more than six units in any one or combination of:
    - (1) Approved CSULB extension. No extension class credit earned at another college may be used to satisfy degree requirements. Extension credit may not be used to reduce the minimum units required in the program, nor may excess grade points earned in extension classes be used to offset a grade point deficiency in the total graduate program. Transfer credit.
  - d. No more than three units in independent study in addition to Thesis on a minimum 30 unit program. Exceptions to this regulation are as follows:
    - (1) Up to six units of independent study in addition to Thesis may be permitted in a minimum 30 unit program when the projected studies are not to be taken in the same department; when the focus of each projected independent study is clearly distinct from any other (as evidenced on the Independent Study Agreement Forms) for each projected study to be submitted with the Application for a Master's Degree in Special Major. (See Acceptance Procedures, no. 3.d); and, when each independent study is justified by the graduate committee as programmatically essential.
    - (2) In excess of 6 units of independent study in addition to the Thesis may be permitted only in cases when a Special Major graduate program exceeds the minimum 30 units; when the focus of each projected study is clearly distinct from any other (see 1.d(1), above); and, when each study is justified by the graduate committee as programmatically essential. Programs with more than six units of independent study will be referred to the Special Major Advisory Board for final approval.
2. A thesis or comprehensive examination will be completed in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in the Special Major. The option of the thesis or comprehensive examination will be determined by the graduate committee in consultation with the student.
3. Students electing the thesis shall enroll for thesis credit in the committee chair's department.
4. A favorable vote is required by departmental faculty of the thesis or comprehensive chair and by graduate advisors in departments represented on the student's committee, before the degree may be conferred.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF SCIENCE**

The requirements for the M. S. Degree in a Special Major shall be the same as the M. A. Degree in a Special Major with the following exception:

1. A thesis in the primary department is required.

**EFFECTIVE: IMMEDIATELY**