

Blended Program Implementation Process and Proposal Guidelines

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Blended Programs

In July 2022, the Board of Trustees of the CSU voted to amend Title 5 to permit students to double count a maximum of 12 units of graduate level (500 and above) coursework towards their bachelor's and master's degrees. This allows CSUs to offer "Blended" or "4+1" programs that merge an existing baccalaureate and master's degree program in similar disciplines into a single pathway. In Blended Programs, a minimum of 138 semester units (e.g., BS 120 + MS 30, subtracting 12 units double counted) 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.

The practice of double counting units for both degrees is currently allowed, common, and thriving for a decade or more in other U.S. states. State University systems in Arizona, Florida, Massachusetts, and New York, for example, have been offering blended baccalaureate and master's degree programs for over a decade. These programs have increased access to graduate study and grown graduate programs. CSULB baccalaureate and master's degree programs now have the opportunity to offer such programs.

Herein outlines the processes through which *existing* CSULB baccalaureate and master's degree programs can implement Blended Programs. Note, departments/schools are not required to create a Blended Program. Doctoral, credential, certificate, or other non-master's post-baccalaureate degrees are not eligible to be a Blended Program with a bachelor's program.

Required Criteria to Implement a Blended Program

1. Master's program and discipline-related bachelor's degree program are in the catalog.
2. Master's program is able to have a maximum of 12 semester units (programs could choose fewer) of graduate-level coursework double count towards the master's and bachelor's degree requirements.
3. Doctoral, credential, certificate, or other non-master's post-baccalaureate degrees are not eligible to be a Blended Program with a bachelor's program. Blended Programs merge an existing bachelor's and master's degree program into a single pathway.

Preferred Criteria to Implement a Blended Program

1. Students are able to complete the master's degree in 1 *additional* year (can include summer and winter).
 - a. Those master's programs that will likely take longer than an additional year to complete shall specify this potential time to degree in their program-related materials.
2. A 30-36-unit master's degree program with a related bachelor's degree program.
3. The graduate program offers culminating activity options other than thesis.

Admissions Processes for Blended Programs

Eligible Students

1. Students can only apply to a Blended Program if they:
 - a. Are a matriculated undergraduate student at CSULB
 - b. Completed 60 units
 - c. Are enrolled or completed 12 discipline-specific upper-division units in residence (i.e., at CSULB; programs can choose if units must be completed or just enrolled)
 - d. Met their major specific requirements
 - e. Have a minimum GPA of 2.50 (programs may have a higher threshold)
2. Programs can choose to have other requirements (e.g., a letter grade in a particular course).

Application Process

1. Students will not apply to the Blended Program via Cal State Apply.
2. Programs must post internal application procedures and deadlines for their Blended Program; this procedure does not need to mirror that of their graduate program. Please share deadlines with Dina.Perrone@csulb.edu.
 - a. Possible procedures could include at least two faculty from the master's program reviewing applications (application form [see attached template], unofficial transcripts) and emailing decisions within 30 days of application deadline.
 - b. Note: Students will not also apply to the master's program. Once admitted to the Blended Program, they are admitted to the master's program.
3. Title 5 section 41001, which grants postbaccalaureate and graduate special-action admission, still applies.
4. Programs will notify Enrollment Services via the Advisor Request System in PeopleSoft of those who are admitted to the Blended Program. Admitted students and their Graduate Advisor must sign the Blended Program Agreement form prior to ARS notification (see form below).
5. Students who are denied admission to the Blended Program are still eligible to apply to the master's program during its traditional admissions cycle via Cal State Apply.

Admissions-Enrollment Statuses

1. Admitted students are admitted in classified standing as an undergraduate to the bachelor's component of the Blended Program (students cannot be admitted conditionally).
2. All requirements for the bachelor's degree (including the double-counted courses) shall be completed prior to changing to graduate status.
3. Once the student earns 120 units applicable to the blended bachelor's and master's degree programs (including the double-counted courses), they are moved into graduate status.

Tuition and Financial Aid in a Blended Program

1. Students are classified as undergraduate students and pay the undergraduate State University Tuition Fee until the semester after 120 semester units (including double-counted units) applicable to the blended bachelor's and master's degree programs are completed.
2. Upon satisfying the requirements for the bachelor's degree, students will be classified as graduate students by Enrollment Services and are charged graduate tuition. Students in a master's degree program that has been authorized to assess the higher graduate professional degree ("MBA Fee") will only be charged that tuition fee for courses required to complete the fee-approved master's degree program.
3. If students transition between undergraduate and graduate standing during the academic year, they should contact the Financial Aid Office to determine if adjustment paperwork is appropriate and allowable.
4. Students should complete the FAFSA or California Dream Act paperwork annually with the correct status listed (i.e., undergraduate or graduate). As with all graduate students, students in Blended Programs will have different funding allowances when they are in graduate status.
5. This information as is relevant to the Blended Programs should be shared with students via the programs' websites and graduate student handbooks, where appropriate.

Blended Program Parameters

The Blended Program must meet all applicable CSU policies and state and federal laws.

GPA Requirements

1. All courses applied toward the master's degree must lead to a program GPA of at least 3.00, this includes double-counted courses.

Courses

1. An undergraduate student in a Blended Program will take graduate-level courses required for the master's degree.
2. Undergraduate students in a Blended Program shall enroll in the graduate level of double-numbered courses.
3. Up to 12 graduate-level semester units may double-count between the bachelor's and master's degree, as determined by the program. Programs can choose to double count fewer units.
4. None of the required graduate courses can be replaced by an undergraduate course.
5. 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.

6. Blended Programs may choose to add winter or summer courses for an accelerated 1-year graduate program. Stateside winter or summer courses may be offered by Blended Programs in cases where there are no identical stateside courses offered in the fall or spring semesters.

Program Enrollment and Enrollment Status

1. Students in a Blended Program who change majors or master's programs will be withdrawn from the Blended Program.
2. Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment will need to reapply to the program based on their student status (if they ceased enrollment in undergraduate student status, then they must apply to the bachelor's program and reapply to the Blended Program; if they ceased enrollment in graduate student status, then they must apply to the master's program).
3. If a student in a Blended Program opts not to complete the master's program but completes the bachelor's degree requirements, they will receive their baccalaureate degree and be withdrawn from the Blended Program. There shall be no related cost to the student and no refund of previous graduate fees paid.
 - a. If the student decides to return to pursue their master's program in the future, they shall formally apply for graduate admission. With the approval of their academic department, students may count graduate courses completed during their Blended Program towards their master's degree. Such courses cannot exceed seven years since completion, unless approved for validation by both the academic program and the Dean of Graduate Studies or designee.

Awarding of Degrees

1. Students must apply to graduate for their bachelor's degree after earning 90 timely graduation units and when their MyCSULB Student Center indicates they are eligible to apply.
2. Students are awarded their bachelor's degree upon satisfactory completion of the requirements for the degree (this includes the double-counted courses). Students are evaluated for Latin honors based on the first 120 semester units (i.e., the time period of undergraduate degree objective), regardless of the number of graduate courses taken prior to the transition to graduate status.
3. Students must apply to graduate for their master's degree when they are eligible.
4. Students are awarded their master's degree upon satisfactory completion of the requirements for the degree.

International (F-1 Visa Holder) Students and Blended Programs

- a) When an F-1 student in a Blended Program becomes a graduate student for visa purposes, CIE will issue a change of educational level (i.e., I-20 status) when they satisfactorily complete the requirements for the bachelor's degree. This change will shift the minimum unit requirement for undergraduate student status (12 units) to that for graduate student status (7 units).
- b) International students in the F-1 permitted post-OPT for up to 12 months (or 24 months in STEM OPT) per degree level will have their OPT eligibility cancelled upon the date of their change in educational level to graduate student status, as indicated on the I-20. This will remain in effect until they complete the graduate program.
- c) This information should be shared with students via the programs' websites and graduate student handbooks, where appropriate.

Enrollment Services Reporting of Students in Blended Programs

1. Blended bachelor's and master's degree programs will continue to use the existing CSU degree program codes (formerly "HEGIS") and Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes for their component undergraduate and graduate degree programs. New CSU degree codes will not be assigned for the Blended Programs.
2. Students in Blended Programs have only the digit "9" as their degree objective code.
3. When a Blended Program student has earned at least 120 semester/180 quarter units toward program completion, the campus will change the student level code to "5," signifying graduate standing. Their degree-held code will remain as either "0" or "1," until they earn their degrees. The term FTE calculation for these students will be: 12 semester (18 quarter) units equals one FTES.

How to Create Blended Programs

1. Existing bachelor's and master's programs meet to propose creating a blended program.
2. During that meeting, they discuss the Blended Program Parameters and Application Process (See above), including:
 - a. The courses that will double-count
 - b. The culminating activity
 - c. Curriculum Roadmap (see 3.d below, Curriculog Information)
 - d. Potential Resources and Supports needed (see page 7 below, Curriculog Information)
 - e. The student application deadline
 - f. The student application requirements
 - g. The student application review and admissions procedures
3. The programs consult as needed with the Office of Graduate Studies (Dina.Perrone@csulb.edu or Jody.Cormack@csulb.edu) to craft their blended program.
4. The designated faculty/staff from either the master's or bachelor's program inputs the information into Curriculog (see below) and starts the routing/approval processes for the blended program to be in the next AY Catalog.
5. Programs create materials and update websites with the new Blended Program information, including application procedures.
6. The Programs, Colleges, Office of Graduate Studies, and University advertise the Blended Program.

Curriculog Information

Input in Curriculog

1. Proposal Originator Information

- a) Name:
- b) Email:
- c) Primarily Responsible for Proposed Blended Program (*Include School/Department/Program*):

2. Current Degree Information

The Bachelor's Program

- a) Degree Title and Option (*as applicable*):
- b) Delivery Format (*Fully face-to-face, Hybrid, Fully Online*):
- c) Total Discipline-Specific Units Required:
- d) Support-Mode (*Stateside or Self-Support*):

The Master's Program

- a) Degree Title and Option (*as applicable*):
- b) Delivery Format (*Fully face-to-face, Hybrid, Fully Online*):
- c) Total Units Required:
- d) Cohort Program (*Yes, No*):
- e) Support-Mode (*Stateside or Self-Support*):

3. The Blended Program

Blended Program Title

- a) Degree Designation and Title(s) of the Blended Program (e.g., BA History + MA History):

Curriculum Information

- a) **New** Double-Counted Courses (*List any new courses that will be double-counted in support of this proposal*):
- b) Double-Counted Courses (*List all courses and their unit counts that will be double-counted between undergraduate and graduate levels. Students are only allowed a total of 12 graduate units to be double-counted. Courses do not need to be double-numbered to be double-counted*):
- c) Culminating Activity Options (*non-thesis only options are preferred*):
 - Mark all accepted activity options.
 - *For Programs with Thesis options:*
 - i. Describe how students can satisfy the requirements for the master's degree in one year:
 - ii. Describe model communication if/when students take more than one-year to complete the master's degree:
- d) Does your bachelor's program have options or degree specializations?
 - If yes, outline the courses that will double-count for in each option/specialization:

- Describe the pathway from each option/specialization into the blended:
- e) Does your master's program have options or degree specializations?
 - If yes, outline the courses that will double-count in each option/specialization:
 - Describe the pathway from the bachelor's program to the master's option/specialization in the blended:
- f) Provide a general 5-year Roadmap for the Blended Programs that includes GE and program requirements and a marker of when students apply to the blended (Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer Semesters, as applicable [*List below or attach separate document*]). If you have options or specializations, include a roadmap for each option/degree specialization:

4. Assessment

- a) Give one brief statement explaining how the assessment practices for the individual programs will inform the blended program (i.e., how can you learn from the assessment of your individual programs be incorporated into the blended program) and another brief statement if/how the assessments of the bachelor's and master's programs will include and/or be separate from the blended program:

5. Admissions Process

- a) Check this box indicating that you attached/uploaded a separate document outlining your internal application and admissions processes, including minimum requirements and deadlines.

6. Resources and Support

Note: *If additional support resources will be needed to implement and maintain the Blended Program, a statement by the responsible administrator(s) should be attached to the proposal assuring that such resources will be provided.*

- a) Present evidence of potential enrollments in the Blended Program by relying on undergraduate headcount and time to degree. The following tables (to which department chairs have access) could help:
 - Update: PARC Student Enrollment and Faculty - Tableau Server (csulb.edu)
 - FTFY Avg TTD table in [Undergraduate Student Success - FTFY: GI 2025 Grad Rates and Time to Degree - Tableau Server \(csulb.edu\)](#)
 - Transfer Avg TTD table in [Undergraduate Student Success - Transfers: GI 2025 Grad Rates and Time to Degree - Tableau Server \(csulb.edu\)](#)
- b) Provide your current graduate student headcounts, projected graduate student headcount with the addition of the Blended Program, and present a general enrollment plan to ensure that your program has the faculty to cover the potential increase in graduate level courses/sections. Consider the financial impact of these projections:
- c) Specify the faculty rank of those typically teaching the double-counted courses. List additional faculty or staff support positions needed to implement the proposed Blended Program and support student demand:

- d) List the amount of additional lecture and/or laboratory space required to initiate and to sustain the program over the next five years. Indicate any additional special facilities that will be required:
 - e) Indicate additional academic technology, equipment, specialized materials, or library resources that will be (1) needed to implement the program, and (2) needed during the first two years after initiation. Indicate the source of funds and priority to secure these resource needs:
 - f) Explain how students matriculated through the blended program will receive advising support (e.g., will rely on current graduate advisor or current undergraduate advisor), including thesis advising, where applicable. List additional faculty or staff positions needed to support blended program students:
-

Curriculum Approval Process

1. Originator (Grad Advisor, Chair, etc.)
2. Technical Review ->
3. Department Curriculum Committee ->
4. College Curriculum Committee ->
5. College Associate Dean ->
6. Academic Programs Leadership (Jody)



BLENDING PROGRAM STUDENT APPLICATION TEMPLATE

Bachelor of Arts/Fine Arts/Science in & Master of Arts/Fine Arts/Science in ...

Semester & Year:

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Last:

First:

MI:

Other Names (as may appear on transcripts):

Student ID#:

Email:

Phone:

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Major(s):

Minor(s):

Overall GPA:

GPA in Major:

Total units completed:

Total discipline-specific units completed:

PREREQUISITE COMPLETION INFORMATION*

Prerequisite Courses	Uni/College Completed	Semester & Year	Course Number & Name	Grade

*You may apply without completing the prerequisites; if so state: "will complete". If no grade received yet, type: IP (in progress)

BLENDING PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Submit the following to Name@csulb.edu, by DUE DATE

☐ Program Application (this form)

☐ Unofficial Transcripts from CSULB and all universities/colleges where completed prerequisite courses (as stated above)

Other application components could include:

- The name and email of a recommending CSULB faculty member.
- Personal statement (*In no more than 300 words, indicate your achievements and how pursuing the blended program will help meet your goals*).

Sample Process:

Within 30 calendar days, no fewer than two faculty from the Master's Program will review applications, render decisions, notify the applicants, and when applicable, inform Enrollment Services via the Advisor Request System.

BLENDING PROGRAM AGREEMENT FORM

Blended Program Agreement Form

Part 1: Student Information (Completed by Graduate Advisor)

Last Name, First Name

SID

CSULB Email Address

Phone Number

Blended Program

Blended Program Graduate Advisor

Part 2: Eligibility Requirements Met (Completed by Graduate Advisor)

Student Admitted to the Blended:

- ☐ Is a matriculated undergraduate student at CSULB
- ☐ Completed 60 units
- ☐ Met their major specific requirements
- ☐ Has a minimum GPA of 2.50
- ☐ Is enrolled or completed (select one) 12 discipline-specific upper-division units in residence, and
- ☐ Met additional requirements set by the Blended Program

Part 3: Double-Counted Coursework and Effective Term (Completed by Graduate Advisor)

List of Double-Counted Courses

Course Number (e.g, Econ 500)	Semester/Term Completed/To Be Completed	Year Complete(d)	Number of Units

Part 4: Signatures

By signing below, the Graduate Advisor confirms that

- the student has met the requirements listed above,
- the courses above are in the catalog designated as double-counted courses for their blended program,
- they or a designee has advised the student on the requirements for the blended program, the financial aid implications, and the timeline for degree completion

Graduate Advisor Signature

Date

By initialing, the student admitted to the Blended Program acknowledges that:

_____ 1. If they change undergraduate majors or master's programs, they will be withdrawn from the Blended Program.

_____ 2. They are classified as an undergraduate student and pay the undergraduate State University Tuition Fee until the semester after they complete 120 units (including double-counted units) applicable to the blended bachelor's and master's degree programs. They will then be classified as a graduate student and be charged graduate student tuition and fees.

_____ 3. Financial aid (CADAA and FAFSA) eligibility and packages are based on their student status (i.e., undergraduate or graduate).

_____ 4. Once in graduate status, the student must maintain a 3.00 GPA overall and in their program.

_____ 5. Students who fail to maintain continuous enrollment will need to reapply to the program based on their student status (if they ceased enrollment in undergraduate student status, then they must apply to the bachelor's program and reapply to the Blended Program; if they ceased enrollment in graduate student status, then they must apply to the master's program).

_____ 6. They must separately apply to graduate for each degree when eligible (i.e., apply to graduate with the bachelor's when eligible; apply to graduate with their master's when eligible)

_____ 7. They are awarded their bachelor's degree upon satisfactory completion of the requirements for the bachelor's degree (this includes the double-counted courses). They do not need to complete the master's to earn the bachelor's degree. They are evaluated for Latin honors based on the first 120 semester units (i.e., the time period of undergraduate degree objective), regardless of the number of graduate courses taken prior to the transition to graduate status.

_____ 8. They are awarded their master's degree upon satisfactory completion of the requirements for the master's degree (this includes the double-counted courses).

_____ 9. If they opt to not complete the master's program but complete the bachelor's degree requirements, they will receive their baccalaureate degree and be withdrawn from the Blended Program. No refunds of previous graduate fees paid will be provided, and there will be no related additional costs to the student.

Student Signature

Date