
Requirements for Master's Degrees

To receive the master's degree at San Diego State University, the candidate must complete the following general requirements as well as the more specific requirements listed in the appropriate sections of Part Five of this bulletin.

Official Programs of Study

Official programs of study are to be submitted to the Division of Graduate Affairs for approval after the student has been granted classified graduate standing. The program must be submitted prior to or concurrent with the time the student wishes to be considered for advancement to candidacy and the student must be in good academic standing at the time of submission. The requirements governing the official program will be those specified in the bulletin in effect at the time the program is approved in the Division of Graduate Affairs.

Official master's degree programs of study, as recommended by the graduate adviser and approved by the graduate dean, are binding unless the student withdraws from the university. Withdrawal is defined as having taken no courses during two consecutive semesters without an approved leave of absence.

A student who withdraws from the university and is later readmitted with classified graduate standing may, with the recommendation of the graduate adviser and the consent of the graduate dean, continue with the original official program of study or may be required to submit a new program that complies with the requirements of the current *Graduate Bulletin* in effect at the time of readmission.

When course requirements listed on an official master's degree program deviate from those prescribed in the *Graduate Bulletin*, the student must submit to the graduate dean a petition for adjustment of academic requirements.

It is the student's responsibility to complete the specific courses listed on the official program of study with a grade of C or better. No changes will be permitted unless recommended by the graduate adviser and approved by the graduate dean. No course can be deleted from an official program of study after the course has been completed. This includes a course for which a student has registered and received an "Incomplete" or "Report in Progress" grade.

Foreign Language Requirement

Some departments require students to pass a foreign language examination prior to advancement to candidacy, or in some cases, prior to graduation. See Part Five of this Bulletin for details.

Advancement to Candidacy

A student who holds classified graduate standing and who meets the scholastic, professional, and personal standards of the university may be considered for advancement to candidacy for the master's degree at the point of submission of the official program of study. For the Master of Arts, the Master of Science, the Master of Business Administration, the Master of Music, the Master of Public Administration, and the Master of Public Health degrees, a student may be advanced to candidacy after completing at least 12 units of coursework listed on the official program of study with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (B); for the Master of City Planning, the Master of Science in counseling, the Master of Science in rehabilitation counseling, and the Master of Social Work degrees, the student must have earned at least 24 units of coursework listed on the official program of study with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (B); for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in art, or the degree of Master of Fine Arts in theatre arts, the student must have earned at least 30 units of coursework listed on the official program of study with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (B); for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts in creative writing, the student must have earned at least 30 units of coursework listed on the official program of study with a minimum grade point average of 3.25.

In addition to having classified graduate standing and the grade point averages specified above, the student must have maintained the required grade point averages with no grade of less than 2.0 (C) in a program course and completed all the undergraduate deficiencies and the special requirements of the department or school concerned. The Division of Graduate Affairs will send the students written notification of advancement to candidacy.

A program of study must be on file at least one semester prior to graduation. A student may not enroll in 799A or take a Plan B comprehensive examination until advanced to candidacy.

Unit Requirements

Credit earned by correspondence or by examination is not acceptable on advanced degree programs. Courses applied toward one advanced degree may not be used to fulfill the requirements of another advanced degree.

At least one-half of the units required for a master's degree must be courses at the 600- and 700-level. Many programs are more restrictive than this regarding courses at the 500 level. Check the specific program for any further restrictions.

When directed by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, some students may be required to obtain approval when additional coursework, not on the official master's degree program, is required to prepare for a thesis or a project. The additional courses must be recommended by the graduate adviser and approved by the Division of Graduate Affairs in order for the student to receive financial aid.

Master of Arts, Master of Music, Master of Science, and Master of Public Administration Degrees

Thirty units (36 units for the Master of Public Administration and 38 units for the Master of Science degree in psychology) of approved 500-, 600- and 700-numbered courses earned in graduate standing. At least half of the units required must be in 600- and 700-numbered courses. Not more than nine units in approved extension and transfer courses may be used to satisfy the minimum unit requirement for the degree. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum number of units required for the degree. **No more than six units in courses numbered 797 and 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of Business Administration Degree

A minimum of 30 units and up to a maximum of 48 units of 500-, 600-, and 700-level courses specified by the College of Business Administration. A maximum of six units of 500-level courses are acceptable. Up to 12 units of coursework may be accepted for transfer credit for grams of study consisting 33 or more units. Up to nine units of coursework may be accepted for transfer credit for programs of study consisting of 30 units. **Not more than a total of six units in courses numbered 780, 797, 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of City Planning Degree

Forty-eight units of approved 500-, 600- and 700-numbered courses earned in graduate standing, at least 39 of which must be completed in residence. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum 48 units for the degree. **Not more than a total of nine units in courses numbered 797 and 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of Fine Arts in Art Degree

Sixty units of 500-, 600- and 700-numbered courses specified by the School of Art, Design, and Art History, at least 30 of which must be completed in residence. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum 60 units for the degree. **Not more than a total of nine units in course 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing Degree

Fifty-four units of 500-, 600- and 700-numbered courses specified by the Department of English and Comparative Literature, at least 36 of which must be completed in residence. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum 54 units for the degree. **Not more than a total of six units in course 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Arts Degree

Sixty units of 500-, 600- and 700-numbered courses specified by the School of Theatre, Television and Film, at least 30 of which must be completed in residence. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum 60 units for the degree. **Not more than a total of six units in course 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of Public Health Degree

A minimum of 51 units of approved 500- 600- and 700-numbered courses earned in graduate standing. Up to nine units of coursework may be accepted for transfer credit. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum units required for the degree. Twelve additional units of field experience are required unless the student has previous equivalent experience as determined by the graduate adviser. **Not more than a total of six units in course 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of Science in Counseling Degree

Sixty units of 600- and 700- numbered courses specified by the Department of Counseling and School Psychology. Up to 24 units of coursework may be accepted for transfer credit. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum 60 units for the degree. **Not more than a total of six units in courses numbered 797 and 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of Science in Nursing Degree

A minimum of 39 units of 500-, 600-, and 700- numbered courses specified by the School of Nursing. Some specializations require up to 11 additional units. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum number of units required in each specialization. Up to 12 units of coursework may be accepted for transfer credit. **Not more than six units in courses numbered 797 and 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Master of Science in Rehabilitation Counseling Degree

Sixty units of 600- and 700-numbered courses specified by the rehabilitation counseling program, at least 30 of which must be completed in residence. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies are in addition to the minimum 60 units for the degree. **Not more than a total of 12 units in course 744 will be accepted; no more than a total of 9 units in course numbered 745 will be accepted; and no more than a total of six units in course numbered 743 will be accepted toward the degree.**

Master of Social Work Degree

Thirty eight units of 500-, 600-, 700- numbered courses for the Advanced Standing Degree or sixty units of 500-, 600-, 700- numbered courses for the Standard Degree as specified by the school of Social Work at least 30 of which must be completed in residence. Courses required to remove undergraduate deficiencies in addition to the minimum units for the degree. **Not more than six units in courses numbered 797 and 798 will be accepted for credit toward the degree.**

Grade Point Averages

Grade point averages of at least 3.0 (B) must be maintained in:

1. All courses listed on the official degree program.
2. All courses, 300-level and above, taken at San Diego State University concurrently with or subsequently to the earliest course listed on the official degree program, including courses accepted for transfer credit.

A grade point average of at least 2.85 must be maintained in all courses on the graduate record. No transfer or extension credit may be used to improve the grade point average of units completed at San Diego State University whether computed to determine the average on the official degree program or the overall average.

Grade Restrictions for Master's Degree Programs

No course in which a final grade below "C" (2.0) was earned may be used to satisfy the requirements for an advanced degree. No 500-numbered courses graded Credit/No Credit except those offered for Credit/No Credit only are acceptable on a master's degree program. No undergraduate courses graded Credit/No Credit may be assigned to the deficiencies listed on a master's degree program. At least 70 percent of the units used to fulfill the minimum requirements on a master's degree program shall be letter graded.

Units graded Credit/No Credit earned in practica, field experiences, and internships explicitly stated as specific requirements for a graduate degree will not be included in the determination of the number of non-lettergraded units allowable on the program of study.

Degree Time Limitations

In all masters' degree and advanced certificate curricula offered at San Diego State University, any course completed more than seven years prior to the date on which all requirements for the degree are completed cannot be used to satisfy unit requirements of the official program of study. This includes a course for which a student has registered and received an "Incomplete" or "RP" grade. On the recommendation of the department or school concerned, the Graduate Council may extend the time for students who pass an examination covering the content of each outdated course. With the approval of the graduate adviser and the graduate dean, an outdated course may be repeated, a more recently completed course substituted, or additional coursework of equal unit value assigned. Specifically required courses must either be repeated or validated by examination.

Students validating by examination either individual courses or an entire program will be required to specify a date certain by which all requirements for the degree will be completed. Only in exceptional circumstances will this time limit exceed one calendar year from the date of validation. A course or program may be validated by examination only once.

A course completed prior to seven years of the date that the official master's degree program is approved cannot be listed on the program.

Subject (Thesis/Dissertation) Research Involving Human Subjects or Animal Subjects

Committee authorization must be obtained in advance of conducting research involving humans or animals. Failure to observe this requirement could result in the refusal of the university to accept the completed thesis/dissertation.

Research in which information is obtained about an individual through the use of a survey, interview, observation or experimentation or which involves analysis of previously collected human tissues, records, samples or other existing or secondary data is subject to review and approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). For students enrolled in a joint doctoral program, IRB review may be required at each campus. Students are responsible for knowing and

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complying with IRB review requirements at the institution(s) in which they enrolled. IRB review application materials and guidance on the SDSU campus may be obtained via the Internet at <http://gra.sdsu.edu/research/irb> or through the Division of Research Affairs in Student Services, Room 1410.

Students planning to conduct research that involves the use of live, vertebrate animals must be listed on a protocol approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) where the research will take place. If the research will occur under a SDSU approved protocol, the student must be listed on the responsible faculty's animal protocol form and receive required training. Application materials used to request a review by the IACUC can be obtained via the Internet at <http://gra.sdsu.edu/iacuc> or through the Division of Research Affairs located in Student Services, Room 1410.

Upon receipt of written authorization from the relevant committee, IRB or IACUC, students may initiate their research and register for required coursework.

Thesis, Plan A and Non-Thesis, Plan B

Satisfactory completion of a thesis, project, or comprehensive examination is defined as follows:

(a) 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 the methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization, language, and format, high level of writing competency, and thorough documentation. In most cases, an oral defense of the thesis is required.

(b) 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, language use, organization, and 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.

(c) A comprehensive examination is an assessment of the student's ability to integrate the knowledge of the area, show critical and independent thinking, and demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. The results of the examination evidence independent thinking, appropriate organization and high level of writing competency, critical analysis, and accuracy of documentation. A record of the examination questions and responses shall be maintained in accordance with the records retention policy of the California State University.

Plan A, requiring a thesis or project, may be selected by a student seeking the master's degree, provided the department or school includes 799A, Thesis, on the official program of study. Course 799A represents three units of academic credit and can only be taken Credit/No Credit. A grade of "CR" is granted by the Division of Graduate Affairs upon thesis approval by the thesis committee, the department or school, and the Graduate Council. Students will not be permitted to register in 799A until they have been officially advanced to candidacy, and have an officially approved *Thesis or Project Committee Form* on file in the Division of Graduate Affairs. Unauthorized registration in this course may result in cancellation of enrollment.

One microfiche copy and one **electronic** copy of all master's theses or projects are accessioned by the library of San Diego State University and are subject to the regulations of the library with respect to the circulation or duplication of its cataloged materials. Students should obtain a current edition of the *SDSU Dissertation and Thesis Manual*. The manual is available at

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~gra/grad/thesisreview/dtrmain.html>.

Plan B, requiring a comprehensive written examination in lieu of a thesis, may be followed in certain graduate degree curricula as indicated in Part Five of this bulletin. Dates on which comprehensive examinations are given are determined by the department or school concerned. Results of comprehensive examinations must be reported to the Division of Graduate Affairs by the department or school. Refer to the academic calendar preceding Part One of this bulletin for deadline dates. To be eligible to take the Plan B comprehensive examination, the student must have been advanced to candidacy.

Thesis Committee

In consultation with the graduate adviser, a student will select a thesis chair. The student, graduate adviser, and committee chair will select the remaining faculty committee members. The student must obtain *The Appointment of Thesis Committee Form* from the Division of Graduate Affairs. This form must be signed by all committee members and the graduate adviser. The Division of Graduate Affairs will then review the composition of the student's committee, verifying that it meets university requirements.

The thesis committee is composed of at least three full-time SDSU faculty members. At least two of the members, including the committee chair, must hold permanent faculty appointments, or be an approved emeritus faculty including faculty in the FERP program. The first two committee members must be faculty from the department or the interdisciplinary faculty group in which the thesis is written. The third committee member must be an SDSU faculty member from a department other than the department in which the thesis is written. For complete information on composition of a thesis committee, see Appendix C of the *SDSU Dissertation and Thesis Manual*.

Determination of whether the thesis research will involve human or animal subjects must be made at this point (see *Thesis/Dissertation Research Involving Human Subjects or Animal Subjects* in this section of the bulletin). If human or animal subjects will be used, appropriate authorization for such use must accompany the thesis committee form when it is submitted to the Division of Graduate Affairs. The thesis committee will not be approved without appropriate research clearance.

Upon official approval of the thesis committee by the Division of Graduate Affairs, the student is eligible to enroll in 799A, Thesis. Enrollment must occur during the normal registration period each semester and the schedule numbers for registration are provided by the Division of Graduate Affairs. Registration dates and deadlines are listed in the academic calendar each year.

Theses in Foreign Languages

As presentations of original research to the academic community, theses are ordinarily prepared for the university in the English language. In certain cases, however, for a foreign language degree, a student's thesis in the history and literary analysis of non-English languages and literatures may be presented in the subject language. When the departmental graduate adviser and the prospective thesis committee deem this academically appropriate for the specific research topic, the appointment of the student's thesis committee and authorization of the thesis research by the graduate dean shall be based on the provisions that (1) an abstract of the thesis shall be presented in English; (2) all members of the thesis committee shall be fluent in the subject language; and (3) student competency in standard written English shall be demonstrated through satisfactory completion of a departmental procedure that has been approved by the graduate dean.

To obtain approval by the graduate dean: (1) the "thesis in a foreign language" box must be checked on the appointment of thesis committee form, and (2) written verification by the departmental graduate adviser that provisions 2 and 3 above have been met must be attached to the appointment of thesis committee form when it is submitted to the Division of Graduate Affairs.

Submission of Theses

Final submittal of a thesis requires formal approval of the faculty thesis committee. Thesis manuscripts will only be accepted that conform to the format and presentation requirements specified by the Graduate Council and sponsoring department. These requirements are fully outlined in the *SDSU Dissertation and Thesis Manual*. The manual is available at <http://www.montezumapublishing.com/HOME/THESISDISSERTATIONS/THESISREVIEW/Procedures/tabid/212/Default.aspx>.

Students must be enrolled in 799A, Thesis, or 799B, Thesis Extension, in the term in which the thesis is granted approval by the faculty committee and submitted to Montezuma Publishing for review. Students will not be required to register for thesis in any subsequent term, provided the thesis is accepted by Montezuma Publishing by the end of the last working day of the semester in which the student is enrolled in 799A or 799B. Consult the academic calendar preceding Part One of this bulletin for specific deadline dates.

Manuscripts deemed unready for submission will be rejected and returned to the student. Manuscripts will be rejected in cases where the document contains gross deficiencies in format or presentation. Students who cannot meet the final deadline for submission because of such rejection will be required to enroll or reenroll in 799B and reapply for graduation for the following term.

A "CR" grade in 799A will only be granted upon approval of the thesis and payment of thesis filing fee. The Division of Graduate Affairs is solely responsible for the submission of grades for 799A and 799B. If the entire submission process is not completed by the publication deadline listed in the academic calendar, the student will be required to reapply for graduation for the term they expect to graduate.

Final Approval

The student's official program of study, as approved by the graduate adviser and the graduate dean, and all required examinations must be completed satisfactorily in order for the Graduate Council to recommend a student for an advanced degree.

Writing Competency

The university requires that all candidates for an advanced degree demonstrate writing competency in the English language. This requirement may be met by successful completion of the written comprehensive examination in Plan B or final approval of a thesis or project in Plan A.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals with a disability who are in need of an accommodation in order to fulfill this requirement should so notify their graduate adviser and appropriate accommodation(s) shall be made.

Application for Graduation

Graduation is not automatic upon the completion of requirements. Students who intend to graduate must take the initiative. When they believe they are eligible, they should file an application via their web portal. Deadlines by which applications must be received in the Division of Graduate Affairs are published each year in the academic calendar and on the GRA Web site at:

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~gra/grad/gramain.html>.

A nonrefundable application fee of \$55.00 is required. All requirements must be completed by the graduation date. Candidates for graduation are not eligible to register for terms subsequent to the graduation date unless an application for readmission has been filed with Graduate Admissions. For all other graduation or cancellation information please visit:

<http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~gra/grad/appgradadvdgr.html>.

Award of Degrees

Upon the recommendation of the faculty of San Diego State University, the Board of Trustees of the California State University awards the appropriate degree to a student who has completed the prescribed course of study.

Diploma

The Division of Graduate Affairs will mail the appropriate diploma to the student approximately eight to ten weeks after the date of graduation.