

Division of Graduate Studies

Certificates of Advanced Study Programs

Policy and Procedures

Purpose

This document provides definitions, policies and procedures governing the graduate certificate programs that lead to university conferral of the Certificate of Advanced Study (CAS). (It does not include other certificate programs such as Certificates of Completion that may be awarded for completion of a planned educational experience.)

Graduate Certificates

The only university-recognized graduate certificate is the Certificate of Advanced Study. These certificates prescribe formally constructed and approved areas of study designed to meet requirements for professional competence, expand access to specialized knowledge, and meet occupational needs for advanced interdisciplinary work. The Certificate of Advanced Study is not a degree program. Certificate programs are shorter in duration than master's or doctoral degree programs. They include no less than 12 semester units, and normally do not exceed 16 semester units of study. Certificate programs may address current needs that are expected to be short term (less than 3 years in duration) or long term. Development of both "free-standing" and "supplementary" certificate programs is encouraged when expertise and resources permit support for such programs. "Free-standing" graduate certificate programs are those developed in an area of advanced study in which the university does not offer a related graduate degree. "Supplementary" graduate certificate programs are those that are offered where a related degree is currently offered by the university.

All approved CAS programs will be described in the university General Catalog. Students seeking the CAS are expected to meet established admission and exit requirements for the Division of Graduate Studies (see below). Each program includes a coherent set of postbaccalaureate academic courses and may also include related non-course assignments (such as workshops, fieldwork, and practice). A culminating experience such as a thesis/project is not permitted. Upon satisfactory completion of the certificate program, a Certificate of Advanced Study is awarded, and unlike other certificates (e.g., Certificate of Completion), the CAS is also posted to the student's transcript.

CAS programs are subject to established university review and standards of distinction appropriate to work at the graduate level. These graduate certificates may be offered at the postbaccalaureate, post-master's or postdoctorate level as appropriate to the faculty expertise and resources. Completion of a CAS has no impact on admission to other graduate degree programs; however, students admitted to a graduate degree program

may concurrently pursue additional study through an approved graduate certificate program. In all cases, the student must demonstrate that at least 9 units of the CAS program are not also used for any other prior, planned or concurrent degree program. Performance in a certificate program may be considered in the review of applications for admission to degree programs.

Program Administration

The Division of Graduate Studies administers graduate certificate programs leading to the awarding of a Certificate of Advanced Study (CAS). Final authority for the issuance of the CAS resides with the dean of Graduate Studies. Programs are housed within the appropriate academic unit or department and may be offered in cooperation with the Division of Extended Education or with external institutions and organizations. All certificate programs are subject to periodic program review requirements and curriculum approval processes of the university.

Program Faculty

Core faculty members must be eligible for appointment as members of the graduate consultative body (*Academic Policy Manual 223-2 & 223-3*). Other non-university members who have requisite knowledge and professional experience may serve as adjunct or part-time program faculty members according to written procedures of the principal academic unit(s) housing the program. Each CAS program has a faculty program coordinator who serves as the principal adviser and source of program information. Program advisory committees determine program-specific admission requirements, program curriculum, professional/ethical standards, and exit requirements. General university requirements and policies such as those for admission to graduate study, time limits, program completion requirements, appeals, etc., as established for graduate degree programs also apply to students pursuing a graduate certificate. Program faculty members are responsible for reconsidering students for receipt of the CAS. Program Advisory Boards may include external members from the community or beyond, as is appropriate.

Fiscal Issues

Established fees or tuition for self-support programs should be individually determined for each CAS as appropriate. Fiscal arrangements must address both the expenses and the revenues for certificate programs and be discussed and agreed to by all of the units involved. Fiscal projections should include the extent to which enrolled certificate students are paying tuition as individuals or through company or agency support. Flexibility in the methods of funding and delivery of CAS programs is encouraged.

Procedures for Admitting and Advancing Students

General university requirements and policies such as those for admission to graduate study, time limits, program completion requirements, appeals etc. as established for graduate degree programs also apply to students pursuing a graduate certificate. The following specific procedures/notations will apply as well.

Admission to Graduate Certificate Programs

- New students applying for admission to Certificates of Advanced Study must submit the Graduate/Postbaccalaureate Application for Admission with evidence of prior degrees, standardized test scores (GRE, MAT, GMAT, TOEFL, etc.).
- Continuing post-baccalaureate students must submit a Change of Degree form to the Division of Graduate Studies.
- An additional CAS program application may be requested by the department.
- Only students who meet Division of Graduate Studies admission requirements for classified post-baccalaureate standing will be considered. This includes submission of acceptable TOEFL scores for international students.
- Upon recommendation of the program faculty, successful applicants will be admitted to classified postbaccalaureate standing. Classified graduate standing status is reserved for students admitted to graduate degree programs.

Proposing a Program of Study/Certificate Program Requirements

- Immediately following completion of a student's first semester of coursework, a Proposed Program for the Certificate of Advanced Study form (Appendix A) must be filed in the Division of Graduate Studies.
- Each CAS program must adhere to the following requirements:
 - Contain a minimum of 12 approved postbaccalaureate semester units (Limited to upper-division 100 series courses, graduate 200 series courses, and professional 300 series courses taken through regular or extension enrollment at California State University, Fresno), with not less than 50% of the total units in graduate 200-series courses. Prerequisite courses are in addition to and not considered to be part of the approved program.
 - Traditional letter grades are required in all courses taken.
 - Courses must be earned through regular or extension enrollment at California State University Fresno. Transfer work is not acceptable.
 - At least 9 units must be unique to the CAS program and consist of coursework not used toward the completion of any other previous, planned or concurrent degree/program. Other graduate-level units may be double counted toward a graduate degree or CAS with prior permission of the graduate program.
 - Courses older than 5 years will not apply.

Application and Eligibility for the Certificate to be Awarded

- An Application for the Award of the Certificate of Advanced Study (Appendix B) must be filed within the first two weeks of the semester or term in which the program is to be completed.
- Candidates are eligible for the certificate when so recommended by the faculty program coordinator and upon completion of the program within a 5-year period with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (a “B” average) in CAS program coursework. Grades below a “C” and grades of “I”, “SP”, or “RD” are not permitted toward the CAS program.

Guidelines for Proposing Certificates of Advanced Study

Following initial discussions with the academic dean and the dean of Graduate Studies, proposals for new Certificate of Advanced Study programs should be developed by the academic unit(s) housing the program. A formal request for approval and ten copies of the proposal should be submitted to the graduate dean following approval at the department and school/college level. For consideration by the Division of Graduate Studies, proposals for new Certificate of Advanced Study programs must contain the following information:

- ❖ A consultative approval page with appropriate endorsements (school/college graduate or curriculum committee and dean).
- ❖ Proposed title of the Certificate of Advanced Study, Name(s) of academic units offering the program.
- ❖ A statement of the educational objectives of the program and the expected student learning outcomes.
- ❖ A statement of the proposed course sequence associated with the certificate, including titles and course descriptions both for existing courses and any new courses that may be developed. Include new course proposal and catalog program change forms.
- ❖ A matrix matching the proposed courses and the expected student learning outcomes.
- ❖ A plan for how learning will be assessed, when and how frequently, and how the information will be used to improve the program.
- ❖ A description of program admission and exit requirements.
- ❖ A statement of the need for the proposed program and the basis for such a need, supported by either externally or internally derived data. (See Sample Survey Instruments provided below.)

- ❖ Names of the core faculty members associated with or contributing to the certificate program, either by teaching one or more of the courses associated with the program or participating in the design of the course sequence. For adjunct faculty associated with the program, include up-to-date curriculum vitae.
- ❖ The name of the faculty member who will be designated as the coordinator of the program, for purposes of communication with the DGS and signature authority.
- ❖ A budget analysis with narrative as requested by the University Budget Committee Available from the DGS Web site: www.csufresno.edu/gradstudies/faculty/facguide.shtml.

Approval of New Certificate Programs

All new certificate programs are reviewed under the processes of the Academic Senate as is required for new graduate degree programs. This would include review by the Graduate Committee, Budget, and Executive committees, and the Academic Senate.

Approved 1982 APM 260-2

Revised and approved, University Graduate Committee, 10/02/01

Revised by DGS for the Web page, 11/17/09