

CSU Bakersfield
Division of Graduate Studies

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Graduate Program Checklist

A checklist outlining State of California, CSU, EO, and CSUB regulations and policies regarding graduate program culminating experiences and associated requirements for the format, evaluation, and storage/recording for graduate program documentation related to culminating experiences.

Program policy requirements related to Culminating Experience development, oversight, and evaluation:

___ Graduate faculty:

- ___ Criteria are developed for designation of graduate faculty and a policy for periodic review is in place;
- ___ Graduate faculty are selected from among the tenured and tenure-track faculty from the department/program/unit in which the degree is to be conferred;
- ___ At the discretion of departments/programs/units and based on their formal criteria and policy for periodic review, emeritus faculty from the department/program/unit in which the degree is to be conferred may also be considered for Graduate faculty standing;
- ___ Criteria must set minimum expectations for scholarly activity and productivity and may be more rigorous than standard departmental criteria for tenured or tenure-track faculty;
- ___ Graduate faculty may serve for a limited term (max 5-year) prior to re-evaluation; and
- ___ Only Graduate faculty may serve as a student's Graduate Committee Chair.

___ Graduate Committees:

- ___ Each student has a Graduate Committee for the development and evaluation of their Culminating Experience.
- ___ Graduate Committees must be comprised of a minimum of three members;
- ___ Graduate Committee membership must include a majority of Graduate faculty from the department/program/unit in which the degree is to be earned;
- ___ Policy is developed on Graduate Committee member selection:
 - ___ In some programs requiring a culminating thesis or dissertation, students may select the members of their Graduate Committee in consultation with their advisor (provided that individuals meet committee membership requirements), and
 - ___ In some programs requiring a culminating project or examination, Graduate Committee membership may be decided by the program; and
- ___ Graduate Committee membership must be approved by both the graduate program director and the department chair.

___ Culminating experiences must be classified as one of the following products (California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Division 5, Chapter 1, Subchapter 2, Article 7, (b), (3)):

- (1) thesis/dissertation,
- (2) project, or
- (3) comprehensive examination.

Culminating experiences checklists:

See individual checklists below for each type of culminating experience. Graduate programs should have policies and procedures in place that meet these requirements.

Thesis/Dissertation

Proposal development and project oversight:

- ___ Graduate Committee Chair (advisor) is assigned to assist the student with their thesis/dissertation proposal and project.
- ___ A Graduate Committee (with a minimum of 3 members and a majority of Graduate faculty) is formally assigned to the student and project, overseeing the development, progress, and completion of the student culminating experience.
- ___ The Graduate Committee is responsible for:
 - ___ determining the feasibility and merit of the proposal/plan;
 - ___ reviewing the proposal/plan;
 - ___ familiarizing the student with university policies concerning the handling of dangerous materials, laboratory and fieldwork safety, and maintenance of standards of quality, ethics, and professional performance;
 - ___ reviewing and approving the methodology and any instrument or questionnaire used in data collection; and
 - ___ ensuring that the student project/proposal is reviewed and approved by the appropriate campus-level committee (e.g., IRB or IACUC).
- ___ Students are only permitted to proceed with their proposed project after approval from their Graduate Committee.
- ___ Policies are in place to document formal approval of a student's plan or proposal from the Graduate Committee, signifying that

- ___ The Graduate Committee evaluates the culminating experience to determine if it meets university standards;
- ___ Successful completion of the culminating experience and the conferral of a program degree are dependent on majority approval from the Graduate Committee and may only be conferred with their documented approval;
- ___ Certification for the completion of the culminating experience must be provided prior to graduation and the awarding of the graduate degree through:
 - (1) designation of culminating experience course credit, or
 - (2) an alternative acceptable form of reporting to the Evaluations Office and the Office of Academic Programs;
- ___ In consultation with the other members of the Graduate Committee, the chair shall determine the final grade and/or assigning of complete credit for the culminating experience. The Graduate Committee Chair is responsible for accurately reporting the grade/completion status agreed upon by the Graduate Committee; and
- ___ All final and approved theses/dissertations must be formally filed electronically with the CSUB Library.

Project

Project development and oversight:

- ___ Graduate Committee Chair (advisor) is assigned to assist student with their culminating project/activity plan;
- ___ A Graduate Committee (with a minimum of 3 members and a majority of Graduate faculty) is formally assigned to the student and project, overseeing the development, progress, and completion of the student culminating experience;
- ___ The Graduate Committee, when appropriate and related to the project, is responsible for:
 - ___ determining the feasibility and merit of the proposal/plan,
 - ___ reviewing the proposal/plan,
 - ___ familiarizing the student with university policies concerning the handling of dangerous materials, laboratory and fieldwork safety, and maintenance of standards of quality, ethics, and professional performance,
 - ___ reviewing and approving the methodology and any instrument or questionnaire used in data collection, and
 - ___ ensuring that the student project/proposal is reviewed and approved by the appropriate campus-level committee (e.g., IRB or IACUC).
- ___ Students are only permitted to proceed with their proposed project after a favorable determination has been made by their Graduate Committee;
- ___ Policies are in place to document formal approval of a student's plan or project proposal from the Graduate Committee, signifying that the student has permission to proceed with the project as outlined in the proposal or plan; and
- ___ A copy of the student's approved proposal/plan should be retained by the program.

Format and content:

- ___ The project demonstrates originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and an academic rationale; and
- ___ The finished project must be described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project's significance, objectives, methodology, and conclusion or recommendation(s).

Evaluation and documentation:

- ___ An oral defense and/or public presentation of the project is required;
- ___ The Graduate Committee shall determine the final approval of the project;
- ___ The Graduate Committee evaluates the culminating experience to determine if it meets university standards;

(2) an alternative acceptable form of reporting to the Evaluations Office and the Office of Academic Programs;

_____ In consultation with the other members of the Graduate Committee, the chair shall determine the final grade and/or assigning of complete credit for the culminating experience. The Graduate Committee Chair is responsible for accurately reporting the grade/completion status agreed upon by the Graduate Committee; and

_____ A record of the examination questions and responses shall be retained by the respective graduate program.