Information for New and Continuing Graduate Students

Computer Science Department
California Polytechnic State University
1 Grand Avenue
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0354

Phone: 805-756-2824
FAX: 805-756-2956
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This is intended to give new and current Computer Science graduate students some basic, essential information to help you with your desire to obtain a Master’s degree. We encourage you to ask questions in the Computer Science Department office, seek advice from other students, and Computer Science faculty. The Graduate Faculty Coordinator is Dr. Alex Dekhtyar (dekhtyar@calpoly.edu).

**Important Contacts**

**Computer Science Office Staff, 14-254**
- **Computer Science Front Desk** x62824
  - [computer-science@calpoly.edu](mailto:computer-science@calpoly.edu)
  - Student activities, graduate program, curriculum/registration, faculty hiring

  - **Susanne Brownlee** x67229
    - [sabrownl@calpoly.edu](mailto:sabrownl@calpoly.edu)
    - Student fee, department website, student payroll, budget, travel

**Computer Science Lab Staff, 14-235**
- **Alan Pence** x67185
  - [apence@calpoly.edu](mailto:apence@calpoly.edu)
  - System Administrator

- **Brian Hagen** x67191
  - [bhagen@calpoly.edu](mailto:bhagen@calpoly.edu)
  - System Administrator

- **Student Assistants** x67180

**Computer Science Graduate Resources**
- **Alex Dekhtyar** x62387
  - [dekhtyar@calpoly.edu](mailto:dekhtyar@calpoly.edu)
  - Faculty Graduate Coordinator for CSC Department

**Graduate Programs Office** x62328
- [grad@calpoly.edu](mailto:grad@calpoly.edu)
  - Questions about admissions, policy and processes for graduate students
  - Questions about thesis guidelines, thesis submission and acceptance
GENERAL INFORMATION

This information has been compiled to help graduate students get acquainted with Cal Poly and the Computer Science Department. We encourage you to get involved in the department and in the graduate program and to become an advocate for your population of students. We also encourage you to become a member of the Computer Science graduate student association (GSA). Feel free to send your comments and/or suggestions for improvement of this document to the Graduate Faculty Coordinator (dekhtyar@calpoly.edu) in the CSC Department department.

Computer Science Department Office
An important location to know is the CSC Department Office. This office is home to the department chair and administrative support staff. Commonly requested curriculum information can be found outside the office. Nearby bulletin boards contain information about student organizations, events, scholarships, colloquia, thesis defense, and career placement information. Graduate student forms are available online at http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/forms/forms.html.

Windows Accounts
Computer Science majors automatically receive permanent Windows CSC domain accounts (until graduation) that are valid in every CS lab: 14-235, 14-255, 14-256, 14-257, 14-301, 14-302, and 14-303. Login name (userid) is the same as your mycalpoly.edu login name (login@calpoly.edu) – take the name before @ symbol and drop the “@calpoly.edu”.

E-Mail Accounts
E-mail is the primary means of communication between you and the department, so it is important that you regularly check your Cal Poly email account. Regular emails will be sent by the CSC Department Office to keep you informed of talks, meetings, and other items of interest. If you’d like your email to be sent to a different server, let us know.

Web Site
Consult the Computer Science website at http://www.csc.calpoly.edu for general department information, faculty information, and current news.

Grad Lab
Due to the current budget situation, the Graduate Student lab, 14-305, is accessible to enrolled Computer Science graduate students during normal lab hours only. To obtain access to this lab, please email csladmins@calpoly.edu and Card Swipe access to 14-305.

Computer Labs
Computer science graduate students can expect to use a variety of PCs, workstations, and servers. Some will be shared campus resources and some will be exclusive to computer science majors. The Computer Systems Lab’s (CSL) special use labs include: software engineering, computer graphics, animation and virtual reality, distributed systems, database systems, human-computer interaction, artificial intelligence, operating systems, and networking/communications. Lab descriptions can be found at http://www.csc.calpoly.edu. The graduate lab, 14-305 is accessible by Card Swipe access (see the preceding paragraph).

CSC Study Support Center
The CSC study support center offers free assistance on an individual basis to students in the introductory CSC courses: CSC/CPE 101, 102, 103 and 141. Tutoring may also be available on some nights for CSC/CPE 357. Tutoring is provided by carefully chosen upper-class students from the CSC and CPE majors. The center provides assistance Sunday through Thursday evenings. Flyers giving more information on the time and location of the tutoring will be posted at the beginning of the second week of each quarter. Students
interested in tutoring should contact Dr. Clint Staley (cstaley@calpoly.edu). More information can be found at [http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/resources/tutoring](http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/resources/tutoring).

**Information Resources**

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<td>College of Engineering homepage</td>
<td><a href="http://ceng.calpoly.edu/">http://ceng.calpoly.edu/</a></td>
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<td>CSC Dept homepage</td>
<td><a href="http://www.csc.calpoly.edu">http://www.csc.calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<td>Catalog</td>
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<td>Academic calendar</td>
<td><a href="http://www.catalog.calpoly.edu">http://www.catalog.calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<td>CSC Graduate Coordinator</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dekhtyar@calpoly.edu">dekhtyar@calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<td>CENG Advising Center</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eadvise.calpoly.edu">http://www.eadvise.calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<td>Graduate Education Office</td>
<td><a href="http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/forms/forms.html">http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/forms/forms.html</a></td>
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<td>GWR Information</td>
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<td>Media Distribution Services (audiovisual equipment checkout)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.mds.calpoly.edu/">http://www.mds.calpoly.edu/</a></td>
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<td>Maps of the campus</td>
<td><a href="http://www.maps.calpoly.edu">http://www.maps.calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<td>Parking</td>
<td><a href="http://afd.calpoly.edu/police/services_parking.asp?pid=7">http://afd.calpoly.edu/police/services_parking.asp?pid=7</a></td>
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<td>Performing Arts Center</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.calpolynews.calpoly.edu">http://www.calpolynews.calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<td>On-Campus Telephone directory</td>
<td><a href="http://www.servicedesk.calpoly.edu/telephone_support/phonedirectory.html">http://www.servicedesk.calpoly.edu/telephone_support/phonedirectory.html</a></td>
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<td>General support services, web resources, news, policies, plans, systems and facilities, support organizations</td>
<td><a href="http://www.servicedesk.calpoly.edu">http://www.servicedesk.calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Help Desk</td>
<td><a href="http://www.helpdesk.calpoly.edu">http://www.helpdesk.calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Information Technology Services (ITS) - computing resources, services, policies, help desk</td>
<td><a href="http://www.servicedesk.calpoly.edu">http://www.servicedesk.calpoly.edu</a></td>
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<th>Teaching Assistant (TA) Resources</th>
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<td>Lots of links to campus computing, library, calendars, academic personnel, publications, maps, etc; SLO cultural resources, government, outdoor activities, housing, public transportation</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cla.calpoly.edu/~dschwart/newfaculty/newfacultyresource.html">http://www.cla.calpoly.edu/~dschwart/newfaculty/newfacultyresource.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA Coordinator for Computer Science</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sabrownl@calpoly.edu">sabrownl@calpoly.edu</a></td>
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San Luis Obispo County

Central coast visiting guide http://www.centralcoast.com
SLO visiting guide http://www.visitslo.com
The Tribune newspaper http://www.visitslo.com
Public schools http://www.greatschools.net/california/san-luis-obispo/public/schools
http://www.slocoe.org/resource/maps/gmaps

Housing websites http://www.housing.calpoly.edu
http://www.slorent.com
http://www.slorentals.net
http://www.california-west.com/sloads
http://www.regmgmt.com
http://www.sanluisobispo.com

Student Resources
Enrolled students – records, testing, library, financial aid, clubs, housing, policies http://www.calpoly.edu/student/enrolled.html

ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICIES

Formal Study Plan
All graduate students, as well as Blended BS+MS students, are required to file an approved Formal Study Plan before completing the 12-th unit of the coursework to be counted toward the MS degree. This form lists 45 units of graduate coursework planned to be taken toward the Master’s degree.

Formal Study Plan GPA Requirement
A 3.0 GPA or above is required in all graduate coursework listed in the Formal Study Plan. Graduate students are not eligible to repeat courses and remove the lower grade points from calculation of the GPA.

Graduate Writing Requirement (GWR)
Graduate students are required to attempt to pass the GWR their first quarter of study. GWR completion information is available from the Writing & Rhetoric Center at (805) 756-2067, writingcenter@calpoly.edu or online at http://www.writingcenter.calpoly.edu/content/gwr/gwr_faq.

Continuous Enrollment Requirement for Graduate Students
Effective Fall quarter 2009, graduate students will be required to maintain continuous enrollment from the time of first enrollment in a graduate program until completion of the degree. Continuous enrollment will be defined as being enrolled during Fall, Winter, and Spring quarters each year. However, if you plan to graduate Summer Quarter, you must be enrolled in Continuous Enrollment during the summer.

One mechanism for meeting this requirement is to register in a special course designated for this purpose during terms in which students are not regularly enrolled. The course designated for continuous enrollment purposes is GS S597 Continued Graduate Study. It is listed in the University catalog and taken through Cal Poly Extended Education. It is a variable-unit course graded credit/no-credit. Credits in GS S597 do not count toward meeting degree requirements.

Students who fail to fulfill this continuous enrollment requirement will not be permitted to graduate - even if all degree requirements have been completed - until payment has been made for all quarters of non-enrollment (for example, the student may register in GS S597 through Extended Education, for a number of units equal to the number of non-enrolled quarters).
All students must be enrolled during the quarter in which they graduate. Enrollment information is available at http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/students/continuous.html.

**Applicability**
The continuous enrollment requirement applies to all CSC graduate students. Note that students on approved university leaves of absence as defined in the University Catalog (Medical Leave, Planned Educational Leave) will not be required to enroll during the leave period.

**Registration, adding/dropping, withdrawing, repeating, and auditing policies**

**Registration**
Prerequisite requirements for undergrad courses may be waived for graduate students (talk to the instructor teaching the course). If you experience any difficulty trying to register for a lower-level course, contact the instructor teaching the course for assistance and a permission number may be issued to override the registration system.

**Adding/Dropping Classes After Registration**
Adding and dropping classes is allowed on PeopleSoft on your mycalpoly.edu until the end of the official deadline for the quarter. Instructions explaining the adding/dropping of classes are on the portal.

**Withdrawing From a Course**
Before the end of the 7th week of instruction, a student may petition to withdraw from a course for serious and compelling reasons. The student will receive a "W" for the course only if both the instructor and the Department Chair approve the petition. The Graduate Coordinator acts on behalf of the CSC Department Chair in evaluating a graduate student’s "serious and compelling reasons" for withdrawal. After obtaining the instructor’s signature, graduate students should submit the Withdrawal form to their Graduate Coordinator.

**Repeating a Course**
Graduate students may repeat a course as long as the catalog course description states that the course may be repeated for credit. However, both grades will be reflected in the calculation of the GPA. Graduate students are not eligible to repeat courses and remove the lower grade points from calculation of the GPA.

**Audit Policy (MS)**
An auditor is a student who attends a course for no credit. Enrollment in a course as an auditor is permitted only after students otherwise eligible to enroll on a credit basis have had an opportunity to do so. Fees apply to courses taken as an audit.

**Cheating**
The department expects students to be honest and behave with integrity. Cheating incidents are referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities; this Office interprets and enforces campus regulations and protects the legal rights of students. Online information can be found at http://www.osrr.calpoly.edu.
Advancement to Candidacy for Conditional Admits

Preparatory Courses
Advancement to candidacy requires that an applicant without a CS degree must complete the following preparatory courses (before starting the graduate coursework) and receive a "B" or better grade in each:

- CPE 103 Fundamentals of Computer Science III (4)
- CPE 307*/308 Software Engineering I (4)
- CPE 315 Computer Architecture (4)
- CPE 349 Design and Analysis of Algorithms (4)
- CPE 357 Systems Programming (4)
- CPE 430 Programming Languages I (4)
- CSC 445 Theory of Computation I (4)
- CPE 453 Introduction to Operating Systems (4)

*CPE 307 is the preferred course.

Preparatory courses **must** be taken for a grade. Their prerequisites may be taken Credit/No Credit. In special circumstances the Graduate Coordinator may add or remove courses from the list, depending on your background. If you are unsure of the preparatory courses you need to take, make an appointment with the Graduate Coordinator as soon as possible.

**If a grade in any preparatory course is below a B-, an academic probation letter from the CENG Advising Center will be mailed to you.** If you receive a letter, make an appointment with the Graduate Coordinator to discuss your options and obtain his/her signature on the letter.
Preparatory Courses Flow Chart
The following chart outlines the preparatory courses and their prerequisites. Please discuss taking any of the preparatory course prerequisites with the Graduate Coordinator.

Math 118/119
Pre-Calculus

CSC 141
Discrete Structures

CSC/CPE 101
Fundamentals of CS I

CSC/CPE 102
Fundamentals of CS II

CSC/CPE 103
Fundamentals of CS III

CSC/CPE 225
Introduction to Computer Organization

CSC/CPE 349
Design and Analysis of Algorithms

CSC/CPE 357
Systems Programming

CSC/CPE 315
Computer Architecture

CSC 445
Theory of Computation I

CSC/CPE 430
Programming Languages I

CSC/CPE 307* or 308
Software Engineering I

CSC/CPE 453
Operating Systems

Diagram of preparatory courses (8 courses) and their prerequisites (located above the dotted lines) to be taken prior to the 45 units for the Master’s degree in Computer Science.

*CSC/CPE 307 is the preferred course.
CURRICULUM INFORMATION

Degree Requirements
All graduate students, as well as Blended MS+BS students, are required to file an approved Formal Study Plan with the Computer Science Department office no later than the end of the quarter in which they complete the 12-th unit of coursework to be counted toward the Master’s degree. The Formal Study Plan identifies specific courses to be taken to fulfill requirements of the MS degree; it may be amended with approval of the Graduate Coordinator. Only those letter-graded courses in which A, B, or C is earned, count towards satisfying the total unit requirement for the MS degree. Students must earn a 3.0 overall GPA in the courses taken in the Formal Study Plan.

The MS degree requires at least 45 units beyond the undergraduate degree. Courses must be chosen according to the following requirements:

Core graduate courses: .......................................................... 20 units
Select five courses from the following list:
- CSC 508 Software Engineering I (4)
- CSC 509 Software Engineering II (4)
- CSC 520 Computer Architecture (4)
- CSC 530 Language and Translators (4)
- CSC 540 Theory of Computation II (4)
- CSC 541 Numerical Methods (4)
- CSC 550 Operating Systems (4)
- CSC 556 Computer Security (4)
- CSC 560 Database Systems (4)
- CSC 564 Computer Networks: Research Topics (4)
- CSC 568 Distributed Systems (4)
- CSC 569 Distributed Computing (4)
- CSC 570 Current Topics in Computer Science (2-4)
- CSC 572 Computer Graphics (4)
- CSC 580 Artificial Intelligence (4)
- CSC 581 Computer Support for Knowledge Management (4)

Electives to be selected with Graduate Coordinator's approval: ........ 16 units
Electives must be 400-500 level courses, and are typically in CSC

Thesis coursework .............................................................. 9 units
- CSC 590 Thesis Seminar (1)
- CSC 596 Thesis I (2)
- CSC 597 Thesis II (3)
- CSC 599 Thesis III (3)

TOTAL ................................................................. 45 units

For more information or advisement, students should communicate with the Graduate Coordinator.

Courses
Yearly course offerings planned by the department are available at http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/courses.
REQUIRED FORMS

During your life as a graduate student, certain forms must be filed at various stages towards graduation; look for email reminders from the Computer Science Department office to the “computer-science-graduatestudents” email alias. All graduate forms are available online at http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/forms/forms.html unless otherwise noted.

**Formal Study Plan**
Graduate students must file this form with the CSC Department office during the quarter in which they complete the 12-th unit of coursework to be counted toward the Master’s degree. Courses required as part of the conditional admittance to the program (preparatory courses) do not count toward the Master's degree and are not listed on the Formal Study Plan. The Formal Study Plan must total 45 units of core/electives classes.

Blended BS+MS students must file Formal Study Plan with the CSC Department office during the quarter in which they complete the 12-th unit of coursework to be counted toward the Master’s degree; students should also file an undergraduate technical elective form with the CENG Advising Center.

**Amendment to Formal Study Plan**
Changes to the Formal Study Plan may be made by filing Amendment to Formal Study Plan form with the CSC Department office. This form may be filed as many times as needed.

**Advancement to Candidacy**
As soon as graduate students have completed any conditional requirements and satisfied the GWR, they must file this form. It must be filed at least two quarters prior to graduation. Evaluations Office must have this form to do your graduation evaluation. Same requirement applies to Blended BS+MS students.

**Request for Graduation Evaluation**
Records Office will not process this form earlier than two quarters prior to graduation. No evaluation will be done until the Formal Study Plan and Advancement to Candidacy forms are filed. This form is available online at http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/forms/forms.html. Same requirement applies to Blended BS+MS students.

**Post-Baccalaureate Change of Objective Form for Blended BS+MS Students**
Blended BS+MS students are to keep track of the completion of 180 units to allow the filing of the Post-Baccalaureate Change of Objective form. The 180 units can include transfer units and AP credit. Blended BS+MS students should inform the Computer Science Department office via email in the quarter they will meet or exceed 180 units that count towards the BS or MS degree. The student will pick up the Post-Baccalaureate Change of Objective form and deliver to the College of Engineering Dean’s office. After the Dean’s signature is obtained the form will be sent to the Graduate Education.

**Petition to Extend the Seven-Year Limit (Petition for Special Consideration)**
The time allowed to complete all coursework in the Formal Study Plan, including thesis, is seven years. The University, at its option and in exceptional cases, may extend the time frame. Students who wish to request an extension of the seven year limit must speak to, and gain approval, from the Graduate Faculty Coordinator prior to filing the Petition for Special Consideration with the Graduate Education Office.
FINANCIAL AID

Engineering students feel enough pressure pursuing their education without having to worry about money. Cal Poly’s Financial Aid Department has several services for students who need financial assistance. Further information about the services is available at the Financial Aid Office. Their website is http://financialaid.calpoly.edu/_finaid/apply/index.htm.

Scholarships
Each year students with good grade point averages can apply for and receive scholarships in amounts ranging from $500 to $5,000. All applicants must complete the normal Cal Poly scholarship application process. This includes filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Step-by-step instructions are available at http://financialaid.calpoly.edu/_finaid/apply/index.htm. The University scholarship application deadline is March 2, and applications are filed in the Financial Aid Office. The Computer Science awards are presented in May at the CSC Banquet.

Other scholarship opportunities are sent to graduate students via “computer-science-graduatestudents” email alias or listed on the Graduate Education website at http://financialaid.calpoly.edu/_finaid/types_aid/index.htm. Department scholarship information is available online at http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/resources/scholarships.

OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME

Instructional Student Assistant Positions
Computer Science Department may employ graduate students as instructional student assistants. Sometimes graduate students are also used as laboratory assistants or graders in more advanced courses.

Criteria for employment include (1) good academic standing as a graduate student, (2) evidence of (or the promise of) skill as a teacher, and (3) knowledge of the content of the course to be taught, and (5) currently enrolled. Preference is given to applicants who have already been graduate students on campus for at least one quarter; however, new graduate students are encouraged to apply.

Graduate students interested in an ISA appointment in CSC should submit an application, transcripts, current resume and a teaching preference list to the department. Applicants lacking experience as a paid teacher or tutor are encouraged to attach a description of their experience as a volunteer teacher, coach, or mentor. Forms are available at http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/jobs/ta. Questions may be directed to the Graduate Faculty Coordinator.

Student Assistant Grader/Tutor
Graduate students may also earn money grading for upper level courses or working in the CSC Study Support Center. The pay range for graduate students is approximately $11.00 to $14.00 per hour. Contact the Computer Science Department office if you are interested in being a grader and contact Dr. Clint Staley (cstaley@calpoly.edu) if you are interested in being a tutor.

Research Assistantships
Several faculty in the CSC Department are involved in research projects each quarter. Students should check the Computer Science Department’s web site for information on research areas of individual faculty members.

Co-Ops
Graduate students may decide to get some industry experience before they finish their degree by taking CSC 594 or CSC 595 units for co-op for one or two quarters. Generally co-ops are a good avenue to gain
valuable experience in a desired field, make contacts and earn additional money. Graduate students may not use co-op units, 12 for full time and 6 for half-time employment, towards the degree.

**Non-Resident Tuition Waivers**
A limited number of non-resident tuition waivers are available for out-of-state graduate students. Tuition waivers will normally be for four consecutive quarters, beginning with the first term of enrollment, and are non-renewable (students may be able to establish California residency during that period). International students are also eligible.

A request for tuition waiver for Fall quarter admission must be received by June 1. A request for tuition waiver for Winter quarter must be received by December 1. More information is available on-line at [http://grad.calpoly.edu/resources/non-resident.html](http://grad.calpoly.edu/resources/non-resident.html). Questions may be addressed to the Graduate Education office (email: grad@calpoly.edu, phone: (805)756-2328).

**FELLOWSHIPS**

**JL Moore Fellowship**
Cal Poly BS graduates and admitted CSC MS students interested in a Ph.D. in computer science are eligible to apply for the Computer Science Department fellowship. The department offers several Endowed Fellowships of up to $10,000 each per year for full time doctoral study in computer science in any recognized computer science department. Ongoing support for up to a total of three years may be provided. Fellowship recipients must be enrolled in [and admitted to] a recognized doctoral program in computer science in the USA

- Applicants must have a BS or MS degree from the Computer Science Department of Cal Poly, SLO (in any major) or are currently enrolled in the BS or MS program in the CSC Department (in any major) and will graduate during the Fellowship application year.
- Applicants must intend to pursue a Ph.D. degree in CSC at a recognized university in the US.
- Applicants must have a strong academic record, promising successful completion of Ph.D. degree
- Applicants must be United States citizens or permanent resident aliens of the United States.

**Fellowship Application Deadline:** March 1st
Find more information at [http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/resources/moore-doctoral-fellowship](http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/resources/moore-doctoral-fellowship). Questions may be directed to the Graduate Faculty Coordinator.

Renewals are possible for up to three years of continued progress towards a Ph.D. in Computer Science. **Renewal Deadline:** March 1st

**Graduate Equity Fellowship**
This program seeks to increase the diversity of students completing graduate degree programs in the CSU and encourages continuation on to doctoral programs and consideration of university faculty careers. It provides fellowships for economically disadvantaged students, especially from groups that are underrepresented among graduate degree recipients in their areas of study, and promotes faculty mentoring and research opportunities. More information and application are available at [http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/resources/fellowship.html](http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/resources/fellowship.html).
THESIS AND GRADUATION

Computer Science graduate students must complete a thesis and related coursework to fulfill their thesis requirement. A committee-approved copy must be completed and filed in accordance with university specifications. Guidelines to be followed in preparing final copy for filing with the university can be obtained from the Graduate Education Office or at http://www.grad.calpoly.edu/forms/forms.html.

Thesis Guidelines

What is a Master's Thesis?

- A written product of a systematic study of a significant problem
- Identifies the problem, states the major assumptions, explains the significance of the undertaking, sets forth the sources for and methods of gathering information, analyzes the data, and offers a conclusion or recommendation
- Evidences originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, and thorough documentations
- Normally, an oral defense of the thesis is required
- Potentially publishable.

Finding a Thesis Advisor and Thesis Registration

Students need to look for a Computer Science faculty member as their thesis advisor who has some interest or experience in the area they wish to pursue. Each student will work together with the advisor on their thesis preparation, documentation, and presentation. A faculty interest list can be obtained from the Computer Science Department office or online at http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/faculty.

Registration for thesis, CSC 596, 597, 599, is done online. Students wanting to enroll in CSC 596, 597, 599 must obtain a supervisory enrollment form on-line at http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/forms or outside the CSC Department office. The form should be filled out and signed by the student’s thesis advisor and brought to the CSC office, 14-254, for the permission number to enroll. CSC 596 is two units and is taken by graduate students who are starting their thesis work; this course should be taken in conjunction with CSC 590, one unit seminar. The following quarter, students will enroll in CSC 597, a three unit independent study section with their thesis advisor. The final quarter of thesis work, students will enroll in CSC 599, a three unit independent study section with their thesis advisor. The total thesis units necessary for your degree adds up to 9 units.

Jointly-Authored Thesis

It is the position of university’s Graduate Studies Committee that the graduate thesis or project is to be an individual student experience. Only in extraordinary cases should students collaborate on theses or projects. In such cases, the need for collaboration must be clearly justified. Each student must have a designated piece of the work for which he/she is individually and independently responsible and which, alone, meets the definitions provided in Title V and the Cal Poly Catalog. Each student must be judged independently by the Thesis Committee and must prepare a separate, written thesis report in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree. Similarly, each student must be responsible during the thesis defense for his/her portion of the work.

Thesis Defense

Graduate students should review their MS transcript and plan to finish all coursework prior to their defense. Also:

1. Students should have a Thesis Committee selected at least 2 weeks before their defense; this committee should include student’s thesis advisor and two other members.
2. Students should deliver a final copy of the rough draft of their thesis to the advisor and all committee members at least two weeks prior to their defense.
3. Students should fill out and submit with their thesis the Master’s Thesis/Project Approval Form which can be found at https://www.csc.calpoly.edu/forms/.

The Computer Science Department office will assist with the scheduling of the defense by locating a room and preparing flyers and announcements.

**Thesis Checklist**

Students must verify the completion of the following forms (each student has a file in the CSC Department office which includes copies of all submitted forms; this file can be checked if needed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When to Complete</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before completing the 12th unit of grad study</td>
<td>Formal Study Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When a change is made to the Formal Study Plan</td>
<td>Amendment to Formal Study Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After completing 180 units toward BS or MS</td>
<td>Post baccalaureate Change of Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least 2 quarters prior to graduation</td>
<td>Advancement to Candidacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 quarters prior to graduation</td>
<td>Request for Graduation Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other forms a student may have filed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When to Complete</th>
<th>Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If an extension to the 7 year time limit is needed</td>
<td>Petition for Special Consideration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All graduate forms are available on-line at [http://www.rgp.calpoly.edu/gradpolicies.html](http://www.rgp.calpoly.edu/gradpolicies.html). Forms are approved by the thesis advisor and Graduate Coordinator, and then returned to the Computer Science Department office for processing. The office will obtain the other necessary signatures.

**Planning Your Thesis Defense**

Please follow the steps outlined below to schedule and complete your thesis for the CSC Department:

1. Choose a date and time for your defense; allow two hours. Confirm this date and time with your advisor and committee members.
2. After you have a confirmed date and time for your defense, contact the CSC Department office ([computer-science@calpoly.edu](mailto:computer-science@calpoly.edu)) to schedule your defense. Let the office know the following in an email message:
   - The date and time of your defense
   - Your advisor and committee member names
   - The title of your thesis and an abstract
   - What, if any, special technical needs you will require for your presentation, e.g. laptop projection in classroom; include a room preference or special CSC Department lab.
3. The department office will secure a room for your defense and advertise your defense to students and faculty prior to your scheduled date.
4. Leave an email address with the department office so you can be contacted, if necessary, and a permanent address to mail copies of your bound thesis.

**After Your Defense**

Final approval of your thesis involves two steps: (1) Thesis Committee approval for content, and (2) Graduate Education Office approval for format. For more details on the approval process review the Thesis Guidelines at [http://www.rgp.calpoly.edu/gradthesis.html](http://www.rgp.calpoly.edu/gradthesis.html). The CSC Graduate Degree Completion Checklist at [http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/forms](http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/forms) will help ensure you have taken care of everything necessary to complete your degree.
**Preparing for Graduation**

It is your responsibility to make sure you have satisfied all of your course requirements prior to graduation. The Evaluations Office will send a memo to you and to the department outlining any missing courses or any incomplete grades that may still appear on your transcript. If you received a grade I or RP earlier for CSC599, do NOT expect your thesis advisor to remember to change it. It is a good idea for you to request and then verify that the grade has been changed after final approval of your thesis.

**Commencement**

The following should be done prior to your participation in Commencement:

1. A Request for Graduation Evaluation must be filed two quarters prior to your planned graduation date. A copy of your Formal Study Plan and Advancement to Candidacy form must be attached.
2. A Formal Study Plan must be on file in the Computer Science Department office.
3. An Advancement to Candidacy form must be on file in the Computer Science Department office.
4. The GWR must be satisfied.

Information on participating in University Commencement ceremonies may be found at [http://commencement.calpoly.edu](http://commencement.calpoly.edu). The CSC Department hosts a graduation ceremony for its graduates every Spring quarter (check the department website in mid-May for details). The Fall University program offers a reception following Commencement.

**Note:** Participation in Commencement ceremonies is not equivalent to having met graduation requirements.